

West Bengal and Sikkim, India, Jan Vermeulen

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GENERAL INFORMATION

This is an account of a 16 days trip to northern West Bengal & Sikkim in Northeast India from 29 March -14 April 2002. There were four of us on the trip: my long-time friends Vital van Gorp and Eric Wille and **Peter Lobo (Adventure Gurudongma)**, who was our guide for the whole period. For the three of us it was our third visit to India.

www.allindiabirdingtours.com , **All India Birding Tours with Peter Lobo**
Expert guiding, top rate logistics, reliable and efficient service. References available:

E-mail: birdingindia@gmail.com

Two months ago we decided to travel to this area after we had cancelled our trip to Nepal due to the civil unrest in that country.

Darjeeling and Kalimpong in West Bengal and the state of Sikkim are a part of the Eastern Himalayan region and provide some excellent birding, though few birders venture into Sikkim. This is a tiny area, with fantastic variations. The terrain rises sharply from the plains of Bengal at near sea level to the snow capped Singelila Range rising up to over 8000 meters in elevation - all in crow fly distance of under 100 km. This telescoping of terrain has created distinct altitudinal zones in respect of humidity, rainfall, climate and vegetation. This factor is responsible for the great variety and

abundance of the resident bird life, making this area arguably one of the richest areas of its size anywhere in the world. It is estimated that more than 30 percent of the species of the Indian Subcontinent can be spotted in this region.

Sikkim is perched between Nepal in the west, Bhutan in the east and Tibet (China) in the north.

Sikkim, an extremely mountainous region in the eastern Himalayas, is spread below the world's third highest mountain Khanchendzonga (8585m) revered by the Sikkimese as their protective deity. Though measuring just 65 km by 115 km - the size of Switzerland - it ranges from sweltering deep valleys - a mere 300m above sea level to lofty snow peaks such as Khanchendzonga. Formerly an independent kingdom, since 1975 it has been a tiny land-locked province to India.

Sikkim has 600 species of birds, or about half of the over 1200 species to be found in India.

We made an eight days trekking into the Tholung Valley, an area never visited by any (western) birder.

FLIGHT

We flew to New Delhi from Amsterdam for € 590 with KLM - service quite good and flight on time. This flight took approximately 8 hours. The flight to Bagdogra was with Jet Airways for € 260 return. The time difference with the Netherlands was 3½ hours. The security around airports in India was remarkable. Two x-rays and metal detectors, hand luggage & body search and baggage identification!

VISA

You do need a visa for India, currently € 50. When applying for an India visa, application must be made for entry to foreign tourists are permitted a stay of 15 days in Sikkim. I applied for one at the consulate in The Hague. This is easily obtainable for 15 days. A separate trekking permit is required for birding treks in Tholung Valley and Gurudongma Tours & Treks took care of that.

MONEY

The official currency of India is the rupee. Take travelling cheques with you or cash. The exchange rate at the bank in New Delhi was 4500 Rs to US\$100.

FOOD AND DRINK

Many birdwatchers rule out third world destinations as options for holidays fearing strange food, language barriers, sickness, bugs, and galore and intense heat. They needn't have any such reservations about Sikkim however.

Bottled mineral water is widely available, stick to this and bottled soft drinks or Dansberg Blue beer (630cl).

The Indian food is excellent and of a high standard.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Theft is really not a problem in Sikkim & West Bengal. The people are very friendly, easy going and helpful. They smile and greet you and almost without exception respond to a greeting or smile.

For vaccinations consult your own doctor for up to date advice. Generally you should be immunised or "topped up" against hepatitis A and B, Tetanus, Typhoid and Polio. In addition to this you are recommended to take Malaria tablets.

We had virtually no health problems and saw surprisingly few mosquitoes, the only real nuisance being loads of leeches in the Tholung Valley in Sikkim. Leeches are a real pest and you can pick them up not just in the forest but also in damp grass (grazing

cattle!), often when you least expect it. Although there is no complete answer to the problem, as precaution wear long trousers tucked securely into your socks and spray insect repellent liberally on your clothing and boots! If they do get on to you, you can simply flick or pull them off. They don't leave their head in you or cause infections.

LANGUAGE

English is a widespread lingua franca and the first language for many educated people. Nearly everywhere English will get you through.

WEATHER

The weather in Sikkim and West Bengal is extremely variable and can be very unpredictable as we found out ourselves. We had rain, hail, fog and sunshine, but most days we had excellent weather. We had one day of hail and rain in Lava and three days of rain at the Tholung Valley in Sikkim. Be prepared for any kind of weather! Most birders visit northeast India between November and April, which is the "dry " season. April is an are ideal month as residents birds are in full song and the rich red rhododendron flowers are attractive to the birds, but most northern migrants are still present. It is best to do as much birding in the early morning as possible as many species are less active in the afternoon.

EQUIPMENT

A tape recorder and the "Birdsongs of Nepal" and "Birdsongs of the Himalaya" by Scott Connop are quite useful for drawing in birds. These tapes can be ordered at Wildsounds in England. E-mail: sales@wilsounds.com

With the help of the tape recorder we played the songs of a few birds. Sometimes we recorded the song or call and played it back again. A good torch is a must. A telescope is useful at rivers and very useful for viewing canopy species especially from roadsides.

TRANSPORT AND ROADS

Road conditions in Sikkim vary, but are generally fairly good, though barely wide enough for passing other cars, cows, goats and wandering people. The driving is entertaining unless you are the nervous type. Drivers use the horn the entire time even when the road is empty. The custom seems to be hoot and let the world know you are there.

NOMENCLATURE & TAXONOMY

I have decided to follow the English names of James F. Clements (Birds of the World, A Check List, Fifth Edition, 2000).

COMMON BIRDSPECIES

The following list of birds we saw frequently and if you spend any sort of time in the right habitats you will too:

Oriental Turtle Dove, Himalayan Swiftlet, Great Barbet, Olive backed Pipit, Short billed Minivet, Red vented Bulbul, Black Bulbul, Blue Whistling Thrush, Grey winged Blackbird, Blyth's Leaf Warbler, Golden spectacled Warbler, Grey hooded Warbler, Rufous gorgeted Flycatcher, Verditer Flycatcher, Grey headed Canary Flycatcher, Blue fronted Redstart, White capped Redstart, Plumbeous Redstart, Grey Bushchat, Striated Laughingthrush, Rufous capped Babbler, Golden Babbler, Rufous winged Fulvetta, Rufous Sibia, Whiskered Yuhina, Stripe throated Yuhina, Green backed Tit, House Crow, Common Myna, Eurasian Tree Sparrow.

For a detailed report of species and numbers please refer to the systematic list at the end of this report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to Henk Hendriks for providing the tape of Himalayan birdsongs.

REFERENCES

BOOKS

James F. Clements. Birds of the World. A Check List.

B. Grewal. A Photographic Guide to Birds of India and Nepal.

Richard Grimmett, Carol Inskipp, Tim Inskipp. **Birds of the Indian Subcontinent.**

Richard Grimmett, Carol Inskipp, Tim Inskipp. Birds of Nepal.

Krys Kazmierczak. **A Field Guide to the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent.**

Krys Kazmierczak & Raj Singh. A Birdwatcher's Guide to India.

Michael Walters. Complete Checklist. Vogels van de Wereld.

Nigel Wheatley. Where to watch birds in Asia.

There are two excellent field guides for India: Grimmett, Inskipp & Inskipp, a field guide-sized set of plates from their 1998 **Birds of the Indian Subcontinent** tome with facing page id. text and range maps for all species, and **Kazmierczak** with paintings by my countryman Ber van Perlo, facing page id. text, and range maps for all species. Quite a lot of artists did the plates in Grimmett et al.; most of them have more artistic talent to van Perlo who did all the plates in Kazmierczak.

We tended to use both guides in the beginning. This changed over time. We found that **Kazmierczak's** text was **consistently better** and more focused on the key state-of-the-art id. characters, and it included vocalisations (missing from the field guide version of Grimmett; one must refer to their weighty volume for those details). And although the artistic talent in Grimmett et al. was more pleasing to the eye, time and again the van Perlo painting was more accurate. Finally, from a usage standpoint, the Kazmierczak was far superior with its English index as the last page, its shortcut to the groupings on each plate inside the front cover, the placement of range maps adjacent to the plates, and its normal Old World taxonomic arrangement. Thus, in the end, the Kazmierczak turned out to be the better field guide for India although one surely needs both guides for any visit. In many respects both guides are absolute necessities. Time and again it took the use of the combination of books to come up with the identification and I still have two mystery birds on my list, although Eric managed to film both birds.

Krys Kazmierczak's "A Birdwatcher's Guide to India" is very useful at the planning stage.

REPORTS AND ARTICLES

Seb Buckton and Pete Morris. India and Nepal, December 1989 - June 1990.

Raf Drijvers. India & Nepal, February 1992, December 1993 - May 1994 & January 1995 - May 1995.

Iwein Mauro. India & Nepal, 14th January - 01 June 1996.

Jon Hornbuckle. Report on a birding trip to Northeast India, 17 February - 21 March 1998.

Henk Hendriks. Northeast India, March 7 - April 20 1998.

Prasad Anand. Lava, Darjeeling, North Bengal India Birding Trip, April - May 1999.

Oriental Bird Club. Indian Birding Itineraries - Darjeeling.

SOFTWARE

BIRDBASE & BIRDAREA

I use this software to keep track of the birds I have seen and to make lists of any country, labelling endemics and birds previously seen in that country, outside it, or both. BirdArea can produce checklists of the birds of any country of Clements' world birds.

USEFUL ADDRESS

Gurudongma Tours & Treks

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Kalimpong 734301

India

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Website: www.allindiabirding.com

I cannot praise Gurudongma Tours & Treks enough - it was an absolutely fabulous trip without any significant difficulty - pulled off in a difficult and extremely bureaucratic country. Having Gurudongma Tours & Treks arrange our trip was by far the best decision we could have made.

ITINERARY

March 29 Chaam * Amsterdam * Delhi

March 30 Delhi * Bagdogra * Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary * Kalimpong

WEST BENGAL

March 31 Kalimpong * Algarah * Lava * Algarah * Kalimpong

April 1 Kalimpong * Algarah * Lava (Rachet Forest) * Algarah * Kalimpong

April 2 Kalimpong * Algarah * Lava (Neora Valley NP) * Algarah * Kalimpong

April 3 Kalimpong * Algarah * Lava (Jeep Track - Neora Valley NP) * Algarah * Kalimpong

SIKKIM

April 4 Kalimpong * Melli * Namchi * Damthang Forest * Singtam * Dikchu * Mangan

April 5 Mangan * Lower Tholung Valley * Tsana Wilderness Lodge Camp

April 6 Lower Tholung Valley area

April 7 Tsana Wilderness Lodge Camp * Tholung Gompa * Tholung House Wilderness Lodge

April 8 Tholung House Wilderness Lodge * Upper Tholung Valley * Temrong Camp

April 9 Temrong Camp * Upper Tholung Valley * Tholung House Wilderness Lodge

April 10 Tholung Gompa area * Hot Springs

April 11 Tholung Gompa * Lower Tholung Valley * Tsana Wilderness Lodge Camp

April 12 Tsana Wilderness Lodge Camp * Mangan * Dikchu * Singtam * Kalimpong

WEST BENGAL

April 13 Kalimpong * Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary * Bagdogra * Guwahati * Delhi

April 14 Delhi * Amsterdam * Chaam

NOTES ON SITES

The notes about Lava are only information supplementary to Krys Kazmierczak's excellent "A Birdwatcher's Guide to India", the essential guide to the bird sites of India.

For a detailed report of species and numbers please refer to the systematic list at the end of this report.

WEST BENGAL

LAVA & SURROUNDINGS

Lava has been on the birding map for many years and the mid altitude forest (1600 - 2400m) near the village supports a number of eastern Himalayan specialities. However birding was restricted to areas close to the main road.

Lava, at an altitude of 2200 metres, 32 km from Kalimpong, is a large forest village, growing into a small town.

It is an eco-tourism destination. The West Bengal Forest Development Corporation operates a tourist complex and a Nature Interpretation Centre. Accommodation is available by prior booking. The village also has some private lodges and the surrounding areas are covered with large tracts of reserved forests. The Neora Valley National Park and Ratchet Reserve Forest are close by and are wildlife reserves. Entry is restricted and permits have to be obtained from the Wildlife Wing.

The forests have rough roads and walking trails. Birding is feasible from the main roads, however for deeper entry it is advisable to obtain permission and a guide.

Birds seen here during our trip:

Bar headed Goose, Crested Serpent Eagle, Crested Goshawk, Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Eurasian Buzzard, Black Eagle, Mountain Hawk Eagle, Kalij Pheasant, Oriental Turtle Dove, Spotted Dove, Barred Cuckoo Dove, Large Hawk Cuckoo, Common Cuckoo, Oriental Cuckoo, Green billed Malkoha (Kalimpong), Greater Coucal, Brown Wood Owl (Kalimpong), Asian Barred Owllet, Himalayan Swiftlet, Great Barbet, Golden throated Barbet, Grey capped Woodpecker, Greater Yellownape, Barn Swallow, Grey Wagtail, Olive backed Pipit, Black winged Cuckoo Shrike, Short billed Minivet, Striated Bulbul, White cheeked Bulbul, Red vented Bulbul, Black Bulbul, Maroon backed Accentor, Chestnut bellied Rock Thrush, Blue Whistling Thrush, Plain backed Thrush, Grey winged Blackbird, Grey sided Thrush, Dark throated Thrush, Grey bellied Tesia, Brownish flanked Bush Warbler, Aberrant Bush Warbler, Tickell's Leaf Warbler, Buff barred Warbler, Ashy throated Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Blyth's Leaf Warbler, Golden spectacled Warbler, Grey hooded Warbler, Grey cheeked Warbler, Chestnut crowned Warbler, Black faced Warbler, Broad billed Warbler, Siberian Flycatcher, Rufous gorgeted Flycatcher, Snowy browed Flycatcher, White gorgeted Flycatcher, Little Pied Flycatcher, Slaty blue Flycatcher, Sapphire Flycatcher, Verditer Flycatcher, Large Niltava, Rufous bellied Niltava, Grey headed Canary Flycatcher, Red flanked Bluetail, Rufous breasted Bush Robin, Blue fronted Redstart, White capped Redstart, Plumbeous Redstart, Little Forktail, Spotted Forktail, Common Stonechat, Grey Bushchat, Yellow bellied Fantail, White throated Fantail, White throated Laughingthrush, Striated Laughingthrush, Grey sided Laughing Thrush, Scaly Laughingthrush, Blue winged Laughingthrush, Chestnut crowned Laughingthrush, Red faced Liocichla, Spot breasted Scimitar Babbler, Rusty cheeked Scimitar Babbler, White browed Scimitar Babbler, Long billed Wren Babbler, Rufous throated Scimitar Babbler, Spotted Wren Babbler, Rufous capped Babbler, Golden Babbler, Grey

throated Babbler, Silver eared Mesia, Red billed Leiothrix, Black headed Shrike Babbler, White browed Shrike Babbler, Black eared Shrike Babbler, Rusty fronted Barwing, Hoary throated Barwing, Blue winged Minla, Chestnut tailed Minla, Red tailed Minla, Yellow throated Fulvetta, Rufous winged Fulvetta, White browed Fulvetta, Nepal Fulvetta, Rufous Sibia, White naped Yuhina, Whiskered Yuhina, Stripe throated Yuhina, Rufous vented Yuhina, Black throated Tit, Black browed Tit, Coal Tit, Green backed Tit, Yellow cheeked Tit, Yellow browed Tit, White tailed Nuthatch, Eurasian Treecreeper, Rusty flanked Treecreeper, Brown throated Treecreeper, Green tailed Sunbird, Fire tailed Sunbird, Little Spiderhunter, Bay backed Shrike, Long tailed Shrike, Ashy Drongo, Hair crested Drongo (Kalimpong), Green Magpie, Grey Treepie, House Crow, Large billed Crow, Common Myna, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, White rumped Munia, Plain Mountain Finch, Crimson browed Finch, Dark breasted Rosefinch, Dark rumped Rosefinch, Tibetan Serin, Brown Bullfinch, Red headed Bullfinch, Gold naped Finch, Little Bunting.

Other birds that can be seen:

Hill Partridge, Rufous throated Partridge, Satyr Tragopan, Wedge tailed Green Pigeon, Speckled Wood Pigeon, Ashy Wood Pigeon, Emerald Dove, Lesser Cuckoo, Mountain Scops Owl, Fork Tailed Swift, Ward's Trogon, Great Hornbill, White browed Piculet, Crimson breasted Woodpecker, Lesser Yellownape, Long tailed Broadbill, Mountain Bulbul, Orange bellied Leafbird, Long billed Thrush, Chestnut Thrush, Eyebrowed Thrush, Dusky Thrush, Rusty bellied Shortwing, Gould's Shortwing, Lesser Shortwing, White browed Shortwing, Chestnut headed Tesia, Slat bellied Tesia, Russet Bush Warbler, White spectacted Warbler, Pygmy Blue Flycatcher, Golden Bush Robin, White browed Bush Robin, Blue fronted Robin, Spotted Laughingthrush, Coral billed Scimitar Babbler, Scaly breasted Wren Babbler, Cutia, Golden breasted Fulvetta, Fire tailed Myzornis, Black Throated Sunbird, Streaked Spiderhunter, Fire breasted Flowerpecker, Maroon Oriole, Common Rosefinch, Red Crossbill.

MAHANANDA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

The Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary constitutes the terai and bhabar forests of the lower catchment area of the Mahananda river and covers an area of 160 km². The main road from Bagdogra to Kalimpong passes through this sanctuary, but foreigners need written permission from the office of the Chief Wildlife Warden in Calcutta to bird anywhere other than along the road.

We had not planned to visit this area so we had to make a short stroll along the road and spent two hours at a picnic site in the park. We did not see many birds, but I am sure that given time we would have seen many more birds.

Birds seen here during our trip:

Lesser Adjutant, Red naped Ibis, Black Baza, Oriental Honey Buzzard, Black Kite, White rumped Vulture, Slender billed Vulture, Crested Serpent Eagle, Besra, Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Eurasian Buzzard, Eurasian Kestrel, Oriental Turtle Dove, Red breasted Parakeet, Asian Koel, Green billed Malkoha, Greater Coucal, Chestnut headed Bee eater, Indian Roller, Eurasian Hoopoe, Indian Grey Hornbill, Great Barbet, Scarlet Minivet, Large Cuckoo Shrike, Red vented Bulbul, Jungle Babbler, Black hooded Oriole, Long tailed Shrike, Hair crested Drongo, Rufous Treepie, Large billed Crow, House Crow, Common Hill Myna, Common Myna, Asian Pied Starling, White rumped Munia.

SIKKIM

THOLUNG VALLEY

The mossy oak rhododendron forests, coniferous forests and bamboo stands in the Tholung Valley support some beautiful East Himalayan specialities. We were the first (western) birders ever visiting this area!

The Tholung Valley is located in the shadow of the almost 6900m high Siniolchu and the 5200m Lamo Anden.

This valley is virtually uninhabited with a minuscule population (less than 50) of Lamas, yak herdsman, wood cutters, cow and sheep grazers.

The valley is approximately 540 km² in area. The upper reaches comprise glaciers, snow clad peaks, alpine lakes, moraine and meadows. The lower half of the valley has mixed open forest with amazing biodiversity. The altitudinal variation, variety of trees and shrubs, lack of human population and vehicular traffic combine to make it a haven for birds, and a prime birding site. A very good walking trail (lower part of the valley) with offshoots of grazing trails provides access for birding. The entire length of the walking trail from Lingsha to Tholung Gompa is a birding hot spot. Productive birding is also available for about 3 km on the trail connecting Be with Lingsha.

The one frustration was not being able to go above 3000m where a number of the high altitude Himalayan specialities occur.

Under normal circumstances the route is open in April, but sometimes there is unseasonal snow above 3000 meters.

Birds seen here during our trip:

Crested Serpent Eagle, Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Northern Goshawk, Upland Buzzard, Satyr Tragopan, Kalij Pheasant, Whimbrel, Ashy Wood Pigeon, Oriental Turtle Dove, Large Hawk Cuckoo, Asian Koel, Greater Coucal, Brown Wood Owl, Asian Barred Owllet, Himalayan Swiftlet, Fork tailed Swift, House Swift, Great Barbet, Golden throated Barbet, Rufous bellied Woodpecker, Darjeeling Woodpecker, Crimson breasted Woodpecker, Bay Woodpecker, Yellow rumped Honeyguide, Nepal Martin, Citrine Wagtail, Olive backed Pipit, Rosy Pipit, Black winged Cuckoo Shrike, Short billed Minivet, Striated Bulbul, Red vented Bulbul, Black Bulbul, Orange bellied Leafbird, Winter Wren, Blue capped Rock Thrush, Chestnut bellied Rock Thrush, Blue Whistling Thrush, Plain backed Thrush, Long tailed Thrush, Scaly Thrush, White collared Blackbird, Grey winged Blackbird, White browed Shortwing, Striated Prinia, Hill Prinia, Chestnut headed Tesia, Slaty bellied Tesia, Brownish flanked Bush Warbler, Tickell's Leaf Warbler, Buff barred Warbler, Ashy throated Warbler, Lemon rumped Warbler, Large billed Leaf Warbler, Blyth's Leaf Warbler, Yellow vented Warbler, Golden spectacled Warbler, Grey hooded Warbler, Chestnut crowned Warbler, Ferruginous Flycatcher, Rufous gorgeted Flycatcher, Snowy browed Flycatcher, White gorgeted Flycatcher, Little Pied Flycatcher, Ultramarine Flycatcher, Slaty blue Flycatcher, Verditer Flycatcher, Large Niltava, Small Niltava, Rufous bellied Niltava, Grey headed Canary Flycatcher, Blue fronted Redstart, White capped Redstart, Plumbeous Redstart, Little Forktail, Spotted Forktail, Common Stonechat, Grey Bushchat, Yellow bellied Fantail, White throated Laughingthrush, Striated Laughingthrush, Scaly Laughingthrush, Black faced Laughingthrush, Pygmy Wren Babbler, Spotted Wren Babbler, Rufous capped Babbler, Golden Babbler, Cutia,

White browed Shrike Babbler, Black eared Shrike Babbler, Hoary throated Barwing, Blue winged Minla, Chestnut tailed Minla, Red tailed Minla, Rufous winged Fulvetta, White browed Fulvetta, Nepal Fulvetta, Rufous Sibia, White naped Yuhina, Whiskered Yuhina, Stripe throated Yuhina, Rufous vented Yuhina, Black throated Tit, Green backed Tit, Yellow cheeked Tit, Yellow browed Tit, White tailed Nuthatch, Rusty flanked Treecreeper, Wallcreeper, Gould's Sunbird, Green tailed Sunbird, Black throated Sunbird, Fire tailed Sunbird, Little Spiderhunter, Streaked Spiderhunter, Fire breasted Flowerpecker, Maroon Oriole, Grey backed Shrike, Black Drongo, Ashy Drongo, Gold billed Magpie, Grey Treepie, White rumped Munia, Plain Mountain Finch, Black headed Mountain Finch, Dark breasted Rosefinch, Scarlet Finch,

Other birds that can be seen:

Black Eagle, Himalayan Monal, Spotted Dove, Snow Pigeon, Slaty headed Parakeet, White rumped Needletail, Greater Yellownape, Lesser Yellownape, Long tailed Shrike, Green Magpie, Grey Chinned Minivet, Small Minivet, White Eared Bulbul, White cheeked Bulbul, Mountain Bulbul, Striated Yuhina, White Crested Laughingthrush, Pygmy Blue Flycatcher, Yellow bellied Warbler, Black faced Warbler, White browed Tit Warbler, Rufous breasted Bush Robin, Grey crested Tit, Sultan Tit.

TEESTA RIVER VALLEY

En route from Bagdogra - Kalimpong and during our drive from Kalimpong to Mangan in Sikkim we drove quite a while along this river. It is worthwhile to stop here a few times and check the river banks.

Birds seen here during our trip:

Great Cormorant, Great Egret, Indian Pond Heron, Eurasian Buzzard, Shikra, Red Junglefowl, River Lapwing, Green billed Malkoha, White throated Kingfisher, Crested Kingfisher, Chestnut headed Bee eater, Indian Roller, Dollarbird, Great Barbet, Greater Yellownape, Black backed Wagtail, Small Minivet, Scarlet Minivet, Black crested Bulbul, White cheeked Bulbul, Red vented Bulbul, Black Bulbul, Golden fronted Leafbird, Orange bellied Leafbird, Common Iora, Blue Rock Thrush, Chestnut bellied Rock Thrush, White capped Redstart, Hair crested Drongo, Green Magpie, Himalayan Swiftlet, Oriental White eye.

Other birds that can be seen:

Kalij Pheasant, Ibisbill (winter), Small Pratincole, Pin tailed Green Pigeon, Blyth's Kingfisher, Pale headed Woodpecker, Rufous bellied Niltava, Common Hill Myna.

DAMTHANG FOREST

En route from Kalimpong to Mangan we made a short stop at this forest near the very small village of Damthang.

A very good walking trail in the centre of the village provides easy access for birding.

Birds seen here during our trip:

Eurasian Buzzard, Eurasian Kestrel, Green billed Malkoha, Dollarbird, Black winged Cuckoo Shrike, Short billed Minivet, Chestnut bellied Rock Thrush, Blue Whistling Thrush, Grey winged Blackbird, Buff barred Warbler, Blyth's Leaf Warbler, Golden spectacled Warbler, Grey hooded Warbler, Black faced Warbler, Rufous gorgeted Flycatcher, Verditer Flycatcher, Rufous bellied Niltava, Grey headed Canary Flycatcher, Red flanked Bluetail, Blue fronted Redstart, Grey Bushchat, White

throated Fantail, White crested Laughingthrush, Chestnut tailed Minla, Red tailed Minla, Rufous Sibia, Whiskered Yuhina, Rufous vented Yuhina, Black throated Tit, Green backed Tit, Chestnut bellied Nuthatch, Green tailed Sunbird, Ashy Drongo, Maroon Oriole, Brown Bullfinch.

DAILY LOG

Friday 29 March

Our trip started with a KLM flight from Amsterdam to Delhi. We landed at the airport around midnight (3½ hours time difference with the Netherlands). We then took a taxi and spent the night at the nearby very expensive Radisson Hotel.

Saturday 30 March

We left Delhi at 10.00 a.m. for our two hours spectacular flight along the southern flank of the Himalayas to Bagdogra in West Bengal. Peter Lobo was waiting with a jeep for us at the airport. En route to Kalimpong we made a short stop at the Mahananda WLS. Amongst the birds we did see here were a group of Slender billed Vultures, Red breasted Parakeet, Indian Roller, Indian Grey Hornbill, Great Barbet and Scarlet Minivet.

In the late afternoon we arrived in Kalimpong, a sleepy little town in West Bengal, tucked away in the foothills of the eastern Himalayas. At an altitude of 1250 metres, the picturesque town of Kalimpong is definitely a place to visit in this region. Once a part of Sikkim, this town was an important centre for trade and commerce for Tibetans from the north and the headquarters of the Governor of Bhutan. During our visit to West Bengal we stayed at General J.M. "Jimmy" Singh's house on the Hilltop with a breath taking view of the eastern Himalayas.

We made a walk on the Hilltop and amongst the birds we encountered were Green billed Malkoha, Asian Barred Owlet, White cheeked Bulbul, Common Tailorbird, Blyth's Leaf Warbler, Blue fronted Redstart, Hair crested Drongo and the ubiquitous Green backed Tit.

On our first evening, luxuriating in this plenitude, a beer in hand I felt euphorically divorced from the frenzy and frenetic lunacy of my everyday world.

Sunday 31 March

After a refreshing night's sleep we started early on our second day and found us en route to the little known resort of Lava and I noted with satisfaction that the skies were clear and Khanchendzonga loomed grey on the horizon, a featureless silhouette.

We were soon in the forest on a perfect spring morning and the first few hours we spent on the lower part of the Algarah road. Quite a variety of birds frequented this area amongst them Asian Barred Owlet, a Greater Yellownape that dwarfed the diminutive Grey capped Woodpecker, Black winged Cuckoo Shrike, Grey winged Blackbird, Dark throated Thrush and White throated Laughingthrush whilst overhead we saw a group of Bar headed Geese flying north. A mobile Green Magpie did its best to stay just out of reach, but best of all however was a Red faced Liocichla, a difficult to find bird in the Himalayas, which gave good views.

We walked along the road from km 7 to Lava. Here we saw the vociferous Sibia and our first flocks of Red tailed and Chestnut tailed Minlas. There was much activity and amongst the other birds we saw were Buff barred, Grey hooded, Grey cheeked, Chestnut crowned Warbler, the demure Black faced Warbler, a single Broad billed

Warbler, a pair of Black headed Shrike Babblers, White browed Shrike Babbler, Black eared Shrike Babbler, Grey sided Laughingthrush, Rusty fronted Barwing, Whiskered, Stripe throated & Rufous vented Yuhina.

It was already noon when we arrived at Lava and here we made a stroll in the superb Paktham Forest. There was less activity, but we added Plain backed Thrush, Large & Rufous bellied Niltava, the rare Rufous breasted Bush Robin and Gold naped Finch to our rapidly growing list.

After a warm lunch under a shady tree in the forest, the late afternoon saw us again birding along the Algarah Road (km 2 - 7) adding Little Pied Flycatcher, Spot breasted Scimitar Babbler, Rufous capped Babbler, Red billed Leiothrix, Blue winged Minla, Yellow browed Tit and Nepal Fulvetta to our fast growing bird list.

We then returned to Kalimpong, where Tara, General Singh's housekeeper, had prepared a wonderful dinner for us.

Monday 1 April

It rained heavily during the night, but again the skies were clear when we left Kalimpong at 4.45 a.m.

The Ratchet Forest Reserve near Lava was our destination today. We arrived at 6.30 and we followed the trail and began to explore the excellent forest. April Fool's Day was no joke and we spent all morning in this forest and although most of it was secondary forest, we saw many birds amongst them Kalij Pheasant, Grey bellied Tesia, Brownish flanked Bush Warbler, Tickell's Leaf Warbler, Sapphire Flycatcher, White tailed Robin, Streak breasted Scimitar Babbler, Long billed & Spotted Wren Babbler, Grey throated Babbler, Hoary throated Barwing, Rusty flanked Treecreeper, Little Spiderhunter, a party of Maroon backed Accentors, Dark rumped Rosefinch, a large group of Dark breasted Rosefinches and Tibetan Serins.

A small waterfall hosted a Spotted Forktail and while having lunch we admired a pair of displaying Crested Goshawks.

In the afternoon we again headed to the Algarah road and spent the rest of the day here. We saw a lot of birds and amongst the 'new' ones we saw were Rufous throated Wren Babbler, Chestnut crowned Laughingthrush and Red headed Bullfinch.

In the evening the general again entertained us with great stories about his military career.

Tuesday 2 April

At 5.00 o'clock we headed to the Neora Valley near Lava. In Lava we saw a single Little Bunting and a large group of Plain backed Mountain Finches. We started our birding day in beautiful weather and amongst the birds we saw before 10 a.m. were Blue winged Laughingthrush, Yellow throated & White browed Fulvetta and Brown Bullfinch. Eric was able to film a party of very obliging Red headed Bullfinches at less than three metres. Other memorable encounters included a small party of Crimson browed Finches and several more stunning Fire tailed Sunbirds. Hereafter the temperature dropped and we had rain and hail till midday and had to seek shelter in our jeep.

We then headed to the Paktham Forest and made a stroll in the forest. We again encountered a few large foraging flocks with Rusty fronted Barwing, Chestnut tailed Minla, Red tailed Minla, Rufous winged Fulvetta, Whiskered Yuhina, Stripe throated

Yuhina, Green backed Tit amongst them, whilst overhead we saw a Black Eagle and many Himalayan Swiftlets.

Wednesday 3 April

We set off very early the following morning for our last day in the Lava area. Our search for the Blue fronted Robin in the gully failed miserably and hereafter we headed to the Jeep Track. This track was very disappointing, as there was hardly any forest left and we did not see many birds. Amongst the birds seen here were Mountain Hawk Eagle, Little Forktail and Little Pied Flycatcher.

Heavy rain and hail started again and the Alгарah road was very slippery. Luck was with us as we obtained good views of a Grey sided Thrush and a few km before we reached Alгарah we saw a group of beautiful Silver eared Mesias.

In the late afternoon we visited an old fort near Alгарah and here we added Barred Cuckoo Dove and Rusty cheeked Scimitar Babbler to our trip list.

Thursday 4 April

A travel day. Next morning clear conditions gave us an unparalleled view of the main Himalayan range in Sikkim and we started our long drive to our next destination. Two Red Junglefowls walking on the road marked our entrance into the Teesta Valley in Sikkim, where other notable events included a flight view of a Crested Kingfisher and superb views of Black crested Bulbul, Golden fronted Leafbird, Common Iora and a pair of Blue Rock Thrushes.

Heading north we came to the very small village of Damthang where we visited the nearby forest. Working this mountain was not easy but we eventually managed to locate Green billed Malkoha, Black faced Warbler, Rufous belied Niltava, Rufous vented Yuhina, Brown Bullfinch and best of all two very obliging Maroon Orioles. En route to the Teesta Valley we had excellent views of a noisy group of White-crested Laughingthrushes and two Dollarbirds. In the late afternoon we arrived at the small town of Mangan, where we stayed in the relative luxury of a private house of an aunt of Joe, our trekking leader in the Tholung Valley.

We ended our day with a short walk in the hills above Mangan, where we had good views of our only Crested Bunting of the trip.

Friday 5 April

At 5.00 a.m. we were picked up by a jeep and headed to the Tholung Valley. The very rough road down to the valley was very much a 4-wheel drive road and we only made moderate progress. After a two hours trip the very rough road ended and we had breakfast at a local farm in Lingsha. Then our trek started: 10 porters, a cook, a guide and 3 handy men accompanied us. The route was an upward climb, strewn with boulders, the first three kilometres not smooth at all.

In the mixed open forest a wealth of species were to vie for our attentions amongst them Asian Barred Owllet, Fork tailed Swift, Golden throated Barbet, Blue capped Rock Thrush, Striated Prinia, Ferruginous Flycatcher, White gorgeted Flycatcher, White browed Shrike Babbler, Gould's Sunbird, Black throated Sunbird and Streaked Spiderhunter.

We probably saw a Yellow rumped Honeyguide guarding a Rock Bee colony, but the distance was too far to positively identify the bird even with a telescope. At 2.00 p.m. we arrived at the Tsana Wilderness Lodge (1750m), actually a fairly large log cabin. This was to be our first night halt.

After lunch we made a stroll in the open area around the cabin and along the Ringpi Chu River. Skulkers such as Slaty bellied Tesia and Pygmy Wren Babbler were seen, the last one coming so close that it was impossible to focus out.

Along the river we had excellent views of Fire breasted Flowerpeckers and a single Crimson breasted Woodpecker.

The night we spent in the Buddha room of the "lodge".

Saturday 6 April

We slept well and woke up to a bright day with clear sunshine. We spent all day in the vicinity of our lodge (1500 - 2000m). The habitat was superb and this area was very birdy and produced some excellent birds. Many of the species were of course the same ones as at Lava, such as Grey hooded Warbler, Snowy browed Flycatcher, Siberian Flycatcher, Golden Babbler and Dark breasted Rosefinch. However we encountered 'new' species and amongst them were Yellow vented Warbler - a rare and little known Phylloscopus - and Small Niltava, Scaly Laughingthrush, Gold billed Magpie and the stunning Scarlet Finch.

Sunday 7 April

Rising early to climb up towards Tholung Gompa we entered the mossy oak forest.

The birding during the early morning hours was slow, with hardly any new sightings at all. As we climbed the mountain a pair of Bay Woodpeckers was a good find and other birds included Darjeeling Woodpecker, Hill Prinia, Large billed Leaf Warbler, Little Forktail and Hoary throated Barwing. We heard a Cutia calling, but failed to find this most wanted species.

The last kilometres the track was very steep. It was passed 2.00 p.m. when we reached Tholung Gompa (2400m).

Vital paid a visit to the monastery, not a large one and very well maintained. The small Tholung Gompa area is small and boasts only a handful of houses and here we saw our first Yaks and many leeches. We put our stuff in the Tholung Gompa Wilderness Lodge.

The rest of the day we explored the Tholung Gompa area where Rosy Pipits flitted about and White collared Blackbird, Chestnut headed Tesia and Plain Mountain Finch were amongst many species all seen well.

We spent the night at a cabin near the monastery. The nights were cold in the upper Tholung Valley and we needed to tuck up with hot water bottles.

Monday 8 April

Next morning it was very cloudy and we were climbing again. The weather started worsening and we still had a steep upward climb ahead of us. At some places there was no clear trail and we had to plod through forests of varying density, uneven rocks and through downward flowing streams. The only salve the route offered were the flowering rhododendrons and the many birds these flowers attracted. Black faced Laughingthrushes sang sweetly from the rhododendron scrub and hopped across the track in plain view to us all. The wail of a Satyr Tragopan was heard a few times, but it refused to come out. Amongst the other birds we encountered were Upland Buzzard, Hoary throated Barwing, Nepal Fulvetta and Stripe throated & Rufous vented Yuhina. The last part of our trekking we had to cross a few glaciers, but we all made it across in one piece. It was past 3.00 p.m. when we reached Temrong Camp (2950m). The

porters erected our sleeping tents and made a campfire complete with folding chairs and tables. The rest of the day we birded in the vicinity of the camp noting Darjeeling Woodpecker, Rosy Pipit, Winter Wren, Slaty blue Flycatcher and Plain Mountain Finch.

Just after "dinner", it started raining again and a hailstorm followed soon after. We slunk into our tents, wondering if we had been so off-key that the mountain gods had decided to step in and make us stop.

Tuesday 9 April

Next morning, we woke up to ice on our tents. The sky was not clear, but the rain had stopped. We started birding and we had great views of Rusty flanked Treecreeper and Scaly Thrush. However, by eight a.m., the skies became overcast again and the light faded quickly, followed by rain. We had become used to these sudden changes and continued birding.

Going down we came upon a landslide blocking our path. A wide swathe of the track had been washed away and the surface looked treacherously slippery. But the only way to go was ahead. Our handy men built a new "bridge" and we managed to cross the stream. Our shoes were soaked and the conditions were beginning to tell on our bodies (and our minds). When we arrived at the lodge, we started to dry out our shoes and wet kits over the fire in our bedroom.

In the afternoon we made a stroll in the vicinity of the monastery and had great views of the rare Long tailed Thrush and a very tame first summer Black headed Mountain Finch, a real surprise at this height. Eric was able to film the bird at less than one metre!

Wednesday 10 April

Next morning the sky was clear and we made a walk to the nearby hot springs on the other side of the river. We had to cross the river on a wooden suspension bridge I did not trust, but we made it with a whole skin.

It was worthwhile the "risk" and we were successful in obtaining excellent views of Ashy headed Wood Pigeon, Bay Woodpecker, Plain backed Thrush, Scaly Thrush, Chestnut headed Tesia, Pygmy Wren Babbler, Lemon rumped Warbler and White browed Fulvetta. However, the undoubted highlight of the day was a pair of very co-operative White browed Shortwings only two metres away almost at eye level.

The weather gods did not smile for the next two days and in the afternoon the mountains hid behind a pall of thick, impenetrable clouds and then consistent heavy rain sabotaged further birding, driving us back into the cover of our cabin.

Later on we were drinking the local "chang" beer at the campfire, but I preferred the lager beer.

Thursday 11 April

Early the following morning we took a bird walk in the forest near the hot springs and saw a good variety of birds amongst them Golden spectacled Warbler, Rufous gorgeted Flycatcher, White throated Laughingthrush, Black throated Tit, Yellow browed Tit and Ashy Drongo. After breakfast we took the walk downhill to the Tsana Wilderness Lodge.

We heard the Cutia twice, but again failed to find the bird, no doubt the greatest disappointment of our trip.

A little disheartened we left the mossy oak forest. During the rest of the walk downhill

we had a flight view of a Rufous bellied Woodpecker and other memorable birds we encountered were Tickell's Leaf Warbler, Yellow bellied Fantail, Scaly Laughingthrush, Spotted Wren Babbler and Grey backed Shrike.

However, as the day progressed the rain started and became worse and worse and we had to stay a while in the log cabin.

Despite the rain we saw some good birds near the cabin amongst them a real surprise, Ultramarine Flycatcher!

Friday 12 April

After breakfast the next morning we took four hours to walk the 8-km to Lingsha. We had excellent weather and amongst the many birds seen were Crested Serpent Eagle, Striated & Hill Prinia, a male Ultramarine Flycatcher, Large Niltava, Blue winged Minla, Maroon Oriole and Nepal Martin.

At Linsha we said goodbye to Joe and the porters and a jeep transferred us to Mangan, en route adding a beautiful Wallcreeper to our trip list.

On our way back to West Bengal we made a few stops in the Teesta River Valley adding Great Cormorant, River Lapwing and Black backed Wagtail to our list. In the late afternoon we arrived at Kalimpong for our goodbye dinner at the general's house.

Saturday/Sunday 13/14 April

At 6.00 a.m. we left General Singh's house and headed to Bagdogra for our Jet Airways flight to New Delhi. Our last birding morning was warm and sunny and the trip now almost over, our final stop on the way to the airport was at Mahananda WLS. We walked along the road and also spent two hours at a picnic site. We saw a rich variety of birds in the sanctuary, adding Lesser Adjutant, Red naped Ibis, Black Baza, Besra, Greater Coucal, Large Cuckoo Shrike, Black hooded Oriole and Common Hill Myna to our birding tally.

At 13.30 we left Bagdogra and flew via Guwahati to Delhi. We left India at midnight and returned to The Netherlands at Schiphol airport at 6.15 in the morning.

Sikkim is a fabulous country, the name of the state derived from Sukhim meaning "happy home, a place of peace".

And indeed the people are a delight, amazingly friendly and genuinely warm. The culture is so different, the scenery varied and spectacular and the birding was great. Amongst a host of good birds seen, highlights for me were some quite difficult to find species including Grey sided & Long tailed Thrush, Broad billed Warbler, Yellow vented Warbler, Ultramarine Flycatcher, Rufous breasted Bush Robin, Black headed Shrike Babbler and Black headed Mountain Finch. However we still failed to find a bunch of good birds, e.g. Rusty bellied Shortwing, Blue fronted Robin, Fire tailed Myzornis and Golden breasted Fulvetta, while Gould's Shortwing, Long billed & Dusky Thrush were seen by an English birder (in fact the only birder we saw during the trip) in Lava, while we were there. Sometimes I get the feeling we are just a bunch of "great dippers".

The final total for the two weeks trip was 238 species of birds and I finished the trip with 73 lifers.

Chaam, 30 April 2002,

If you need any help or further information, contact me at the following address and I'll try and help if I can!

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Systematic list of birds for West bengal and Sikkim, Jan Vermeulen

This list follows the taxonomy, names and sequence of James F. Clements (*Birds of the World, A Check List, Fifth Edition, 2000*). This fifth edition is based primarily on the higher taxonomic sequence outlined in the "Handbook of the Birds of the World" series published by Lynx Edicions.

Species in brackets are the English names in "A Field Guide to the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent" by Krys Kazmierczak & Ber van Perlo, but only mentioned when these differ substantially from the Clements Check List.

The Dutch names follow the translated "Complete Checklist of Birds of the World" (Complete Checklist van Vogels van de Wereld) of Michael Walters.

Numbers quoted are estimates of the minimum numbers seen.

The following abbreviations are used:

(W) = West Bengal

(S) = Sikkim

WLS = Wildlife Sanctuary

15+ = a minimum of 15 birds

1. **GREAT Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax carbo*, Aalscholver**

A single one along the Teesta River (S).

2. **Great Egret, *Ardea alba*, Grote Zilverreiger**

2 along the Teesta River (W).

3. **Indian Pond-Heron, *Ardeola grayii*, Indische Ralreiger**

A fairly common bird en route Bagdogra – Kalimpong (W).

4. **Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis*, Koereiger**

A common bird en route Bagdogra – Kalimpong (W).

5. **RED-NAPED (BLACK) IBIS, *Pseudibis papillosa*, Wrattenibis**

6 at the Mahananda WLS (W).

6. **Lesser Adjutant, *Leptoptilos javanicus*, Javaanse Maraboe**

2 at the Mahananda WLS (W).

7. **BAR-HEADED GOOSE, *Anser indicus*, Indische Gans**

5 flying north over Lava (W).

8. **BLACK BAZA, *Aviceda leuphotes*, Zwarte Koekoekswouw**

2 at the Mahananda WLS (W).

9. **Oriental Honey-buzzard, *Pernis ptilorhynchus*, Aziatische Wespendif**

3 at the Mahananda WLS (W).

10. **Black Kite, *Milvus migrans*, Zwarte Wouw**

15+ en route Bagdogra – Kalimpong (W).

11. **WHITE-RUMPED VULTURE, *Gyps bengalensis*, Bengaalse Gier**

A single bird at the Mahananda WLS (W).

12. **SLENDER-BILLED Vulture, *Gyps tenuirostris*, Dunsnavelgier Long-billed Vulture** is now split into the above and **Indian Vulture** (*Gyps indicus*). 25+ at the Mahananda WLS (W).

13. **Crested Serpent-Eagle, *Spilornis cheela*, Indische Slangenarend** 1 at Lava (W), 1 near Singtam (S), 1 at the lower Tholung Valley (S) and 2 at the Mahananda WLS (W).
14. **Crested Goshawk, *Accipiter trivirgatus*, Kuifhavik**
A pair at the Algarah Road near Lava (W).
15. **Shikra, *Accipiter badius*, Shikra**
Single ones along the Teesta River (S), at the lower Tholung Valley (S) and at the Mahananda WLS (W).
16. **Besra, *Accipiter virgatus*, Besrasperwer**
2 at the Mahananda WLS (W).
17. **EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK, *Accipiter nisus*, Sperwer**
Singles at Lava (W) and the lower Tholung Valley (S) and 2 at the Mahananda WLS (W).
18. **NORTHERN GOSHAWK, *Accipiter gentilis*, Havik**
A single observation at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
19. **EURASIAN BUZZARD, *Buteo buteo*, Buizerd**
Single ones at Lava (W) and Damthang Forest (S) and 2 at the Mahananda WLS (W).
20. **UPLAND BUZZARD, *Buteo hemilasius*, Mongoolse Buizerd**
A splendid observation at the upper Tholung Valley (S).
21. **Black Eagle, *Ictinaetus malayensis*, Indische Zwarte Arend**
A single bird at Lava (W).
22. **MOUNTAIN Hawk-Eagle, *Spizaetus nipalensis*, Aziatische Kuifarend**
4 in the Lava area (W).
23. **Eurasian Kestrel, *Falco tinnunculus*, Torenavalk**
2 near Singtam (S) and 2 at the Mahananda WLS (W).
24. **SATYR TRAGOPAN, *Tragopan satyra*, Rood Saterhoen**
Heard at the upper Tholung Valley (S).
25. **RED JUNGLEFOWL, *Gallus gallus*, Bankivahoen**
3 near Kalimpong (W).
26. **KALIJ PHEASANT, *Lophura leucomelanos*, Nepalfazant**
Single ones along the Algarah road (W), at Lava (Rachet Forest) and at the Tholung Valley (S).
27. **RIVER LAPWING, *Vanellus duvaucelii*, Indische Sporenkievit**
3 along the Teesta River (W).
28. **Whimbrel, *Numenius phaeopus*, Regenwulp**
Twice heard while flying over the Tholung Valley (S).
29. **Rock Dove, *Columba livia*, Stadsduif**
Common in villages and towns.
30. **ASHY WOOD-PIGEON, *Columba pulchricollis*, Leigrijze Houtduif**
8 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa – Hot Springs) in Sikkim.
31. **ORIENTAL TURTLE-DOVE, *Streptopelia orientalis*, Oosterse Tortel**
Up to 4 a day; seen almost every day of the trip.
32. **SPOTTED DOVE, *Streptopelia chinensis*, Parelhalstortel**
Only one near Algarah (W).
33. **BARRED CUCKOO-DOVE, *Macropygia unchall*, Gestreepte Koekoeksduif**
4 near Algarah at the fort (W).
34. **RED-BREASTED PARAKEET, *Psittacula alexandri*, Alexanderparkiet**
10+ at the Mahananda WLS (W).
35. **LARGE HAWK-CUCKOO, *Cuculus sparverioides*, Grote Sperwerkoekoek**
Heard every day of the trip, but seen only once along the Algarah Road (W).

36. **COMMON CUCKOO, *Cuculus canorus*, Koekoek**
 Heard a few times in the Lava area (W).
37. **ORIENTAL CUCKOO, *Cuculus saturatus*, Boskoekoek**
 Heard at Paktham Forest near Lava (W).
38. **Asian Koel, *Eudynamys scolopacea*, Indische Koël**
 Heard at the lower Tholung Valley (S) and 3 seen at the Mahananda WLS (W).
39. **GREEN-BILLED Malkoha, *Phaenicophaeus tristis*, Grote Groensnavelmalkoha**
 1 at Kalimpong (W), 2 along the Teesta River (S), 1 at Damthang Forest (S) and 3 at the Mahananda WLS (W).
40. **Greater Coucal, *Centropus sinensis*, Chinese Spoorkoekoek**
 Often heard, but seen only 2 birds at the Mahananda WLS (W).
41. **Brown Wood-Owl, *Strix leptogrammica*, Bruine Bosuil**
 1 at Kalimpong (W) and heard at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
42. **ASIAN BARRED OWLET, *Glaucidium cuculoides*, Koekoeksdwerguil**
 4 at Kalimpong (W), 1 at Lava (W) and small numbers at the Tholung Valley (S).
43. **HIMALAYAN SWIFTLET, *Aerodramus brevirostris*, Himalayasalangaan**
 Fairly common in the Lava area and in the Tholung Valley (S).
44. **FORK-TAILED SWIFT, *Apus pacificus*, Siberische Gierzwaluw**
 4 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
45. **HOUSE SWIFT, *Apus nipalensis*, Aziatische Huisgierzwaluw**
 20+ at Kalimpong (W), common at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
46. **White-throated Kingfisher, *Halcyon smyrnensis*, Smyrnaijvogel**
 Small numbers along the Teesta River (W/S).
47. **CRESTED Kingfisher, *Megaceryle lugubris*, Chinese Reuzenijvogel**
 A single bird along the Teesta River (S).
48. **Pied Kingfisher, *Ceryle rudis*, Bonte IJsvogel**
 A single observation along the Teesta River (W).
49. **Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, *Merops leschenaulti*, Bruikopbijeneter**
 20+ along the Teesta River (W/S).
50. **Indian Roller, *Coracias benghalensis*, Indische Scharrelaar**
 8 en route Bagdogra – Kalimpong (W).
51. **DOLLARBIRD, *Eurystomus orientalis*, Dollarvogel**
 2 near Singtam (S).
52. **Eurasian Hoopoe, *Upupa epops*, Hop**
 A single bird at the Mahananda WLS (W).
53. **indian Grey Hornbill, *Ocyrceros birostris*, Wigstaarttok**
 A single bird at the Mahananda WLS (W).
54. **GREAT Barbet, *Megalaima virens*, Grote Baardvogel**
 A fairly common species in the visited areas, with numbers up to 8 a day.
55. **GOLDEN-THROATED BARBET, *Megalaima franklinii*, Goudkeelbaardvogel**
 1 along the Algarah Road (W) and 2 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
56. **GREY-CAPPED WOODPECKER, *Dendrocopos canicapillus*, Grijskapspecht**
 A single one along the Algarah Road (W).
57. **RUFOUS-BELLIED WOODPECKER, *Dendrocopos hyperythrus*, Bruinkeelspecht**
 A single bird at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
58. **DARJEELING WOODPECKER, *Dendrocopos darjellensis*, Darjeelingspecht**
 4 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) and 2 at the upper Tholung Valley in Sikkim.

59. **CRIMSON-BREASTED WOODPECKER, *Dendrocopos cathpharius*, Roodborstspecht**
3 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
60. **GREATER YELLOWNAPE, *Picus flavinucha*, Grote Geelkuifspecht**
3 in the Algarah area (W) and 2 along the Teesta River (S).
61. **BAY WOODPECKER, *Blythipicus pyrrhotis*, Rooddoorspecht**
Up to 4 a day in the Tholung Valley (S).
62. **BARN SWALLOW, *Hirundo rustica*, Boerenzwaluw**
10+ at Kalimpong and Algarah (W).
63. **NEPAL MARTIN, *Delichon nipalensis*, Nepalese Huiszwaluw**
10+ at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
64. **BLACK-BACKED WAGTAIL, *Motacilla lugens*, Zwartrugkwikstaart**
A single bird along the Teesta River (S).
65. **CITRINE WAGTAIL, *Motacilla citreola*, Citroenkwikstaart**
A splendid observation of a bird in breeding plumage at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
66. **GREY WAGTAIL, *Motacilla cinerea*, Grote Gele Kwikstaart**
2 along the Algarah Road (W).
67. **OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT, *Anthus hodgsoni*, Siberische Boompieper**
A common and widespread species.
68. **ROSY PIPIT, *Anthus roseatus*, Wijnborstpieper**
Up to 50 a day in the Tholung Valley (S).
69. **Large Cuckoo-shrike, *Coracina macei*, Grote Rupsvogel**
2 at the Mahananda WLS (W).
70. **Black-WINGed Cuckoo-shrike, *Coracina melaschistos*, Rouwrupsvogel**
1 along the Algarah Road (W), 1 at Damthang Forest (S) and 5 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
71. **Small Minivet, *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*, Kleine Menievogel**
2 along the Teesta River (S).
72. **SHORT-BILLED MINIVET, *Pericrocotus brevirostris*, Kortsnavelmenievogel**
A common species in the mountains.
73. **Scarlet Minivet, *Pericrocotus flammeus*, Scharlaken Menievogel**
2 at the Mahananda WLS (W) and 2 along the Teesta River (S).
74. **STRIATED BULBUL, *Pycnonotus striatus*, Gestreepte Bulbuul**
Up to 10 a day in the Lava area (W) and at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
75. **BLACK-CRESTED BULBUL, *Pycnonotus melanicterus*, Goudborstbulbuul**
7 along the Teesta River (S).
76. **WHITE-CHEEKED (HIMALAYAN) BULBUL, *Pycnonotus leucogenys*, Witwangbulbuul**
A few in Kalimpong and at Lava (W) and a few at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
77. **RED-VENTED BULBUL, *Pycnonotus cafer*, Roodbuikbulbuul**
A very common and widespread species in the lower areas.
78. **BLACK BULBUL, *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*, Zwarte Bulbuul**
4 at Lava (W), up to 15 a day at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
79. **Golden-fronted Leafbird, *Chloropsis aurifrons*, Goudvoorhoofdvladvogel**
3 along the Teesta River (S).
80. **ORANGE-BELLIED LEAFBIRD, *Chloropsis hardwickii*, Oranjebuikvladvogel**
2 along the Teesta River (S) and up to 4 a day at the lower Tholung Valley (S).

81. **Common Iora, *Aegithina tiphia*, Gewone Iora**
2 in the trees along the Teesta River (S).
82. **WINTER WREN, *Troglodytes troglodytes*, Winterkoning**
4 at the upper Tholung Valley (S).
83. **MAROON-BACKED ACCENTOR, *Prunella immaculata*,
Bruinrugheggenmus**
Up to 8 a day in the Lava area (W).
84. **Blue-capped Rock-Thrush, *Monticola cinclorhynchus*, Bergrotslijster**
3 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
85. **CHESTNUT-BELLIED ROCK-THRUSH, *Monticola rufiventris*,
Roodbuikrotslijster**
Small numbers in the Lava area (W), 2 at Damthang Forest (S) and 4 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
86. **Blue Rock-Thrush, *Monticola solitarius*, Blauwe Rotslijster**
3 along the Teesta River (S),
87. **BLUe Whistling-Thrush, *Myiophonus caeruleus*, Himalayafluitlijster**
A very common and widespread species.
88. **PLAIN-BACKED THRUSH, *Zoothera mollissima*, Himalayalijster**
2 at the Paktham Forest near Lava (W) and 2 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
89. **LONG-TAILED THRUSH, *Zoothera dixonii*, Langstaartlijster**
A single one at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
90. **SCALY THRUSH, *Zoothera dauma*, Goudlijster**
2 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
91. **WHITE-COLLARED BLACKBIRD, *Turdus albocinctus*, Witkraaglijster**
Up to 10 a day at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
92. **GREY-WINGED BLACKBIRD, *Turdus boulboul*, Grijsvleugelmerel**
A fairly common and widespread species.
93. **GREY-SIDED THRUSH, *Turdus faae*, Hopeilijster**
A splendid observation of this rare species along the Algarah Road (W).
94. **DARK-THROATED THRUSH, *Turdus ruficollis*, Zwartkeellijster**
5 along the Algarah Road (W).
95. **WHITE-BROWED SHORTWING, *Brachypteryx montana*, Blauwe
Kortvleugel**
2 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa – Hot Springs) in Sikkim.
96. **STRIATED PRINIA, *Prinia criniger*, Bergprinia**
3 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
97. **HILL PRINIA, *Prinia atrogularis*, Witborstprinia**
2 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
98. **CHESTNUT-HEADED TESIA, *Tesia castaneocoronata*,
Kastanjekoptesia**
Up to 4 a day at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
99. **SLATY-BELLIED TESIA, *Tesia olivea*, Goudkruintesia**
A single one at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
100. **GREY-BELLIED TESIA, *Tesia cyaniventer*, Grijsbuiktesia**
A single bird at Lava (Rachet Forest) in West Bengal.
101. **BROWNISH-FLANKED BUSH-WARBLER, *Cettia fortipes*,
Bergstruikzanger**
A few times heard. Seen at Lava (Rachet Forest) in West Bengal and at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
102. **ABERRANT BUSH-WARBLER, *Cettia flavolivacea*, Groene
Struikzanger**
3 at Paktham Forest near Lava (W).

103. **COMMON TAILORBIRD, *Orthotomus sutorius*,
Langstaartsnijdervogel**
2 at Kalimpong (W).
104. **TICKELL'S LEAF-WARBLER, *Phylloscopus affinis*, Himalayaboszanger**
1 at Lava (W) and 2 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
105. **BUFF-BARRED WARBLER, *Phylloscopus pulcher*,
Goudbandboszanger**
Seen in small numbers most days of the trip.
106. **ASHY-THROATED WARBLER, *Phylloscopus maculipennis*,
Grijskeelboszanger**
5 at Lava (W) and 4 at the Tholung Valley (S).
107. **LEMON-RUMPED WARBLER, *Phylloscopus proregulus*, Pallas'
Boszanger**
A single one at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
108. **GREENISH WARBLER, *Phylloscopus trochiloides*, Grauwe Fitis**
1 at Lava (Neora Valley) in West Bengal.
109. **BLYTH'S LEAF-WARBLER, *Phylloscopus reguloides*, Blyths Boszanger**
A fairly common and widespread species.
110. **YELLOW-VENTED WARBLER, *Phylloscopus cantator*,
Orpheusboszanger**
A splendid observation at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
111. **GOLDEN-SPECTACLED WARBLER, *Seicercus burkii*,
Goudoogboszanger**
Seen almost every day. Up to 15 a day in the Tholung Valley (S).
112. **GREY-HOODED WARBLER, *Seicercus xanthoschistos*,
Grijskopboszanger**
Seen in small numbers almost every day. Up to 7 a day in the Lava area (W).
113. **GREY-CHEEKED WARBLER, *Seicercus poliogenys*,
Grijswangboszanger**
Up to 3 a day in the Lava area (W).
114. **CHESTNUT-CROWNED WARBLER, *Seicercus castaniceps*,
Kastanjekopboszanger**
3 along the Algarah Road (W), up to 10 a day at the Tholung Valley (S).
115. **BLACK-FACED WARBLER, *Abroscopus schisticeps*,
Zwartmaskerboszanger**
25+ at the Racht Forest in Lava (W), a few elsewhere in the Lava area and 3 at Damthang Forest (S).
116. **BROAD-BILLED WARBLER, *Tickellia hodgsoni*, Breedbekboszanger**
A splendid observation along the Algarah Road (W).
117. **SIBERIAN (DARK-SIDED) FLYCATCHER, *Muscicapa sibirica*,
Roetvliegenvanger**
Single birds at Paktham Forest near Lava (W) and at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
118. **FERRUGINOUS FLYCATCHER, *Muscicapa ferruginea*,
Roestvliegenvanger**
Up to 5 a day at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
119. **RUFOUS-GORGETED FLYCATCHER, *Ficedula strophiatea*,
Roestvlekvliegenvanger**
6 at Lava (W), 1 at Damthang Forest (S), common at the Tholung Valley (S).
120. **SNOWY-BROWED FLYCATCHER, *Ficedula hyperythra*,
Witbrauwvliegenvanger**
2 at Lava (W), 2 at the lower Tholung Valley (S) and 1 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.

121. **WHITE-GORGETED FLYCATCHER, *Ficedula monileger*,
Witbefvliegenvanger**
2 along the Algarah Road (W) and 1 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
122. **LITTLE PIED FLYCATCHER, *Ficedula westermanni*,
Ekstervliegenvanger**
2 at Lava (W), up to 3 a day at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
123. **ULTRAMARINE FLYCATCHER, *Ficedula superciliaris*,
Witkeelvliegenvanger**
2 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
124. **SLATY-BLUE FLYCATCHER, *Ficedula tricolor*, Leiblauwe
Vliegenvanger**
1 at Ratchet Forest in Lava (W), 5 at the upper Tholung Valley (S).
125. **SAPPHIRE FLYCATCHER, *Ficedula sapphira*, Saffiervliegenvanger**
A single bird at Ratchet Forest near Lava (W).
126. **VERDITER FLYCATCHER, *Eumyias thalassina*, Azuurvliegenvanger**
A common and widespread species.
127. **LARGE NILTAVA, *Niltava grandis*, Kobaltniltava**
5 at Lava (W) and 4 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
128. **SMALL NILTAVA, *Niltava macgrigoriae*, Kleine Niltava**
Up to 4 a day at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
129. **RUFOUS-BELLIED NILTAVA, *Niltava sundara*, Roodbuikniltava**
Up to 3 a day at Lava (W), 2 at Damthang Forest (S) and 4 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
130. **GREY-HEADED CANARY-FLYCATCHER, *Culicicapa ceylonensis*,
Grijskopvliegenvanger**
A common and widespread species.
131. **RED-FLANKED BLUETAIL (ORANGE-FLANKED BUSH-ROBIN),
Tarsiger cyanurus, Blauwstaart**
Up to 7 a day in the Lava area (W) and 3 at Damthang Forest (S).
132. **RUFOUS-BREASTED BUSH-ROBIN, *Tarsiger hyperythrus*, Blyths
Blauwstaart**
A splendid observation at Paktham Forest near Lava (W).
133. **ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN, *Copsychus saularis*, Dayallijster**
A single bird at Mangan (S).
134. **BLUE-FRONTED REDSTART, *Phoenicurus frontalis*,
Himalayaroodstaart**
A fairly common and widespread species.
135. **WHITE-CAPPED REDSTART, *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*,
Rivierroodstaart**
Seen in small numbers along streams etc. almost every day.
136. **PLUMBEOUS REDSTART, *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*, Waterroodstaart**
1 along the Algarah Road (W), up to 10 a day at the Tholung Valley (S).
137. **WHITE-TAILED ROBIN, *Cinclidium leucurum*, Witstaartcallene**
4 at the Ratchet Forest in Lava (W) and 1 along the Algarah Road (W).
138. **LITTLE FORKTAIL, *Enicurus scouleri*, Kleine Vorkstaart**
2 at the Jeep Track near Lava (W), 4 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
139. **BLACK-BACKED FORKTAIL, *Enicurus immaculatus*,
Zwartrugvorkstaart**
A single bird along the Teesta River (W).

140. **SPOTTED FORKTAIL, *Enicurus maculatus*, Gevlekte Vorkstaart**
A single one at the Ratchet Forest in Lava (W) and 2 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
141. **COMMON STONECHAT, *Saxicola rubicola*, Roodborsttapuit**
Single ones along the Algarah Road (W) and at Mangan (S).
142. **GREY BUSHCHAT, *Saxicola ferrea*, Grijs Paapje**
A common and widespread species.
143. **YELLOW-BELLIED FANTAIL, *Rhipidura hypoxantha*, Geelbuikwaaierstaart**
6 at the Ratchet Forest in Lava (W), up to 8 a day in the Tholung Valley (S).
144. **WHITE-THROATED FANTAIL, *Rhipidura albicollis*, Witkeelwaaierstaart**
Up to 8 a day in the Lava area (W), 2 at Damthang Forest (S).
145. **WHITE-THROATED LAUGHINGTHRUSH, *Garrulax albogularis*, Witkeellijstergaai**
7 along the Algarah Road (W), up to 20 a day at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
146. **WHITE-CRESTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH, *Garrulax leucolophus*, Witkuiflijstergaai**
4 near Singtam (S).
147. **STRIATED LAUGHINGTHRUSH, *Garrulax striatus*, Gestreepte Lijstergaai**
A fairly common species in the visited areas.
148. **GREY-SIDED LAUGHINGTHRUSH, *Garrulax caerulatus*, Witbuiklijstergaai**
4 along the Algarah Road (W).
149. **SCALY LAUGHINGTHRUSH, *Garrulax subunicolor*, Goudvleugellijstergaai**
6 at Neora Valley near Lava (W), 12 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
150. **BLUE-WINGED LAUGHINGTHRUSH, *Garrulax squamatus*, Blauwvleugellijstergaai**
4 at Neora Valley near Lava (W).
151. **BLACK-FACED LAUGHINGTHRUSH, *Garrulax affinis*, Zwartmaskerlijstergaai**
Up to 6 a day at the upper Tholung Valley (S).
152. **CHESTNUT-CROWNED LAUGHINGTHRUSH, *Garrulax erythrocephalus*, Roodkoplijstergaai**
Up to 5 a day in the Lava area (W).
153. **RED-FACED LIOCICHLA, *Liocichla phoenicea*, Roodmaskertimalia**
A single one along the Algarah Road (W).
154. **SPOT-BREASTED SCIMITAR-BABBLER, *Pomatorhinus erythrocnemis*, Gevlekte Kruiplijster**
2 along the Algarah Road (W) and 3 at the Ratchet Forest near Lava (W).
155. **RUSTY-CHEEKED SCIMITAR-BABBLER, *Pomatorhinus erythrogenys*, Roodwangkruiplijster**
A single one at the fort near Algarah (W).
156. **WHITE-BROWED SCIMITAR-BABBLER, *Pomatorhinus schisticeps*, Witbrauwkruiplijster**
A single bird at Neora Valley near Lava (W).
157. **STREAK-BREASTED SCIMITAR-BABBLER, *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*, Roodkeelkruiplijster**
Up to 3 a day in the Lava area (W).

158. **LONG-BILLED WREN-BABBLER, *Rimator malacoptilus*, Dwergkruiplijster**
A single observation at Ratchet Forest near Lava (W).
159. **PYGMY WREN-BABBLER, *Pnoepyga pusilla*, Mossluiptimalia**
Up to 3 a day at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
160. **RUFOUS-THROATED WREN-BABBLER, *Spelaeornis caudatus*, Roodkeelsluiptimalia**
Heard at Lava (W) and seen a glimpse of one bird.
161. **SPOTTED WREN-BABBLER, *Spelaeornis formosus*, Gevlekte Sluiptimalia**
Heard at Lava and seen at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
162. **RUFOUS-CAPPED BABBLER, *Stachyris ruficeps*, Roodkopboomtimalia**
Up to 6 daily in the Lava area (W), a total of 6 birds at the Tholung Valley (S).
163. **GOLDEN BABBLER, *Stachyris chrysaea*, Gouden Boomtimalia**
4 at Lava (W), up to 8 daily at the Tholung Valley (S).
164. **GREY-THROATED BABBLER, *Stachyris nigriceps*, Grijskeelboomtimalia**
1 at Ratchet Forest near Lava (W) and 4 along the Algarah Road (W).
165. **JUNGLE BABBLER, *Turdoides striatus*, Junglebabbelaar**
10+ at the Mahananda WLS (W).
166. **SILVER-EARED MESIA, *Leiothrix argentauris*, Zilveroortimalia**
A group of 7 birds along the Algarah Road only a few km from Algarah (W).
167. **RED-BILLED LEIOTHRIX, *Leiothrix lutea*, Japanse Nachtegaal**
2 along the Algarah Road (W).
168. **CUTIA, *Cutia nipalensis*, Cutia**
At three different places heard at the Tholung Valley (S), but we failed to see this most wanted species.
169. **BLACK-HEADED SHRIKE-BABBLER, *Pteruthius rufiventer*, Zwartkopklauwiertimalia**
A pair at Paktham Forest near Lava (W).
170. **WHITE-BROWED SHRIKE-BABBLER, *Pteruthius flaviscapis*, Witbrauwklauwiertimalia**
4 at Lava (W), 5 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
171. **BLACK-EARED SHRIKE-BABBLER, *Pteruthius melanotis*, Zwartoorbriltimalia**
4 at Paktham Forest near Lava (W) and 4 at Ratchet Forest near Lava (W), 4 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
172. **RUSTY-FRONTED BARWING, *Actinodura egertoni*, Grijskopstreepvleugel**
Fairly common in the Lava area (W).
173. **HOARY-THROATED BARWING, *Actinodura nipalensis*, Nepalese Streepvleugel**
2 at Ratchet Forest near Lava (W), up to 5 a day at the Tholung Valley (S).
174. **BLUE-WINGED MINLA, *Minla cyanouroptera*, Blauwvleugelminla**
10+ along the Algarah Road (W) and 2 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
175. **CHESTNUT-TAILED MINLA, *Minla strigula*, Ornaatminla**
Rather common in the Lava area, 15+ at Damthang Forest (S) and 3 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
176. **RED-TAILED MINLA, *Minla ignotincta*, Roodstaartminla**
Rather common in the Lava area, 2 at Damthang Forest (S) and 4 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
177. **YELLOW-THROATED FULVETTA, *Alcippe cinerea*, Geelkeelnontimalia**
2 at Neora Valley near Lava (W).

178. **RUFOUS-WINGED FULVETTA, *Alcippe castaneiceps*, Roodvleugelnontimalia**
A common and widespread species.
179. **WHITE-BROWED FULVETTA, *Alcippe vinipectus*, Witbrauwnontimalia**
5 at Neora Valley near Lava (W), 6 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
180. **NEPAL FULVETTA, *Alcippe nipalensis*, Nepalese Nontimalia**
4 at Lava (W) and 2 at the upper Tholung Valley (S).
181. **RUFOUS SIBIA, *Heterophasia capistrata*, Zwartkapsibia**
A very common species in the visited areas.
182. **WHITE-NAPED YUHINA, *Yuhina bakeri*, Roodkopmeestimalia**
2 at Neora Valley near Lava (W) and 5 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
183. **WHISKERED YUHINA, *Yuhina flavicollis*, Baardmeestimalia**
10 – 50+ daily in the visited areas.
184. **STRIPE-THROATED YUHINA, *Yuhina gularis*, Vlekkeelmeestimalia**
Small numbers in the Lava area (W), up to 20+ daily in the Tholung Valley (S).
185. **RUFOUS-VENTED YUHINA, *Yuhina occipitalis*, Roodbuikmeestimalia**
Up to 5 a day in the Lava area (W), 3 at Damthang Forest (S) and 9 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
186. **BLACK-THROATED TIT, *Aegithalos concinnus*, Roodkruinstaartmees**
5 – 20+ daily in the Lava area (W), 4 at Damthang Forest (S), 5 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
187. **BLACK-BROWED (RUFOUS-FRONTED) TIT, *Aegithalos iouschistos*, Roestwangstaartmees**
2 at Lava (W).
188. **COAL TIT, *Periparus ater*, Zwarte Mees**
4 at Neora Valley near Lava (W).
189. **GREEN-BACKED TIT, *Parus monticolus*, Bergkoolmees**
Seen each day of the trip (5 – 25+).
190. **YELLOW-CHEEKED TIT, *Parus spilonotus*, Geelwangmees**
1 at Racht Forest near Lava (W), 5 at Lava (W) and up to 6 a day at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
191. **YELLOW-BROWED TIT, *Sylviparus modestus*, Boszangermees**
6 at Lava (W), 3 at the lower Tholung Valley (S) and up to 4 a day at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa).
192. **CHESTNUT-BELLIED NUTHATCH, *Sitta castanea*, Bruine Boomklever**
2 at Damthang Forest (S).
193. **WHITE-TAILED NUTHATCH, *Sitta himalayensis*, Witstaartboomklever**
Up to 6 daily in the Lava area (W), 1 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) and 2 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
194. **WALLCREEPER, *Tichodroma muraria*, Rotskruiper**
A single bird at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
195. **EURASIAN TREECREEPER, *Certhia familiaris*, Taigaboomkruiper**
A single one along the Algarah Road (W).
196. **RUSTY-FLANKED TREECREEPER, *Certhia nipalensis*, Nepalese Boomkruiper**
Singles at Racht Forest near Lava (W) and at Lava (W), 4 at the upper Tholung Valley (S) and 2 at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
197. **BROWN-THROATED TREECREEPER, *Certhia discolor*, Bruinkeelboomkruiper**
A single bird along the Algarah Road (W).

198. **GOULD'S SUNBIRD, *Aethopyga gouldiae*, Goulds Honingzuiger**
A single bird at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
199. **GREEN-TAILED SUNBIRD, *Aethopyga nipalensis*, Groenstaarthoningzuiger**
Up to 10+ daily at Lava (W), 1 at Damthang Forest (S) and small numbers in the the Tholung Valley (S).
200. **BLACK-THROATED SUNBIRD, *Aethopyga saturata*, Zwartkeelhoningzuiger**
Up to 3 a day at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
201. **FIRE-TAILED SUNBIRD, *Aethopyga ignicauda*, Vuurstaarthoningzuiger**
Up to 4 a day at Lava (W), 10+ at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
202. **LITTLE SPIDERHUNTER, *Arachnothera longirostra*, Kleine Spinnenjager**
Up to 8 a day in the Lava area (W), 2 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
203. **STREAKED SPIDERHUNTER, *Arachnothera magna*, Gestreepte Spinnenjager**
Up to 2 a day at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
204. **FIRE-BREADED FLOWERPECKER, *Dicaeum ignipectus*, Indische Honingvogel**
Up to 4 a day at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
205. **ORIENTAL WHITE-EYE, *Zosterops palpebrosus*, Indische Brilvogel**
4 at the Mahananda WLS (W) and 4 along the Teesta River (S).
206. **Black-hooded Oriole, *Oriolus xanthornus*, Zwartkopwielewaal**
2 at the Mahananda WLS (W).
207. **MAROON ORIOLE, *Oriolus traillii*, Indische Bloedwielewaal**
2 at Damthang Forest (S) and up to 8 daily at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
208. **BAY-BACKED SHRIKE, *Lanius vittatus*, Bruinrugklauwier**
A single one along the Algarah Road (W).
209. **Long-tailed Shrike, *Lanius schach*, Langstaartklauwier**
Singles along the Algarah Road (W) and along the Teesta River (W).
210. **GREY-BACKED SHRIKE, *Lanius tephronotus*, Himalayaklauwier**
A single bird at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
211. **BLACK DRONGO, *Dicrurus macrocercus*, Fluweeldrongo**
A few in the more open areas in West Bengal and Sikkim.
212. **Ashy Drongo, *Dicrurus leucophaeus*, Grijze Drongo**
Small numbers at Lava (W) and the Tholung Valley (S).
213. **HAIR-CRESTED (SPANGLED) Drongo, *Dicrurus hottentottus*, Haarkuifdrongo**
Small numbers at Kalimpong and 10+ at the Mahananda WLS (W).
214. **GOLD-BILLED (YELLOW-BILLED) MAGPIE, *Urocissa flavirostris*, Geelsnavelkitta**
Up to 10 a day at the Tholung Valley (S).
215. **GREEN MAGPIE, *Cissa chinensis*, Groene Kitta**
1 along the Algarah Road (W), 2 along the Algarah Road (S) and 1 at Damthang Forest (S).
216. **Rufous Treepie, *Dendrocitta vagabunda*, Rosse Boomekster**
3 at the Mahananda WLS (W).
217. **GREY TREEPIE, *Dendrocitta formosae*, Grijsborstboomekster**
Small numbers in the Lava area (W) and 2 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
218. **House Crow, *Corvus splendens*, Huiskraai**
Common near cities and villages.

219. **Large-billed Crow, *Corvus macrorhynchos*, Dikbekkraai**
Small numbers in the Lava area (W) and also at the Mahananda WLS (W).
220. **COMMON HILL MYNA, *Gracula religiosa*, Grote Beo**
5 at the Mahananda WLS (W).
221. **JUNGLE MYNA, *Acridotheres fuscus*, Junglemaina**
A few en route Bagdogra – Kalimpong (W).
222. **COMMON MYNA, *Acridotheres tristis*, Treurmaina**
A common and widespread species.
223. **ASIAN PIED STARLING, *Gracupica contra*, Eksterspreeuw**
10+ at the Mahananda WLS (W).
224. **HOUSE SPARROW, *Passer domesticus*, Huisemus**
A few at Kalimpong (W) and Mangan (S).
225. **EURASIAN TREE SPARROW, *Passer montanus*, Ringmus**
A common and widespread species.
226. **WHITE-RUMPED MUNIA, *Lonchura striata*, Spitsstaartbronzemannetje**
5 at Neora Valley near Lava (W), a few along the Algarah Road (W) and at Mangan (S) and 3 at the Mahananda WLS (W).
227. **PLAIN MOUNTAIN-FINCH, *Leucosticte nemoricola*, Hodgsons Bergvink**
50+ at Lava village (W) and 75+ at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
228. **BLACK-HEADED (BRANDT'S) MOUNTAIN-FINCH, *Leucosticte brandti*, Brandts Bergvink**
A first summer bird at the Tholung Valley (Tholung Gompa) in Sikkim.
229. **CRIMSON-BROWED FINCH, *Pinicola subhimachalus*, Himalayahaakbek**
4 at Neora Valley near Lava (W).
230. **DARK-BREASTED ROSEFINCH, *Carpodacus nipalensis*, Donkere Roodmus**
100+ at Racht Forest near Lava (W) and 25+ at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
231. **DARK-RUMPED ROSEFINCH, *Carpodacus edwardsii*, Bruine Roodmus**
A single observation at Racht Forest near Lava (W).
232. **TIBETAN SERIN, *Serinus tibetanus*, Tibetaanse Kanarie**
15+ at Racht Forest near Lava (W).
233. **BROWN BULLFINCH, *Pyrrhula nipalensis*, Bruine Goudvink**
4 at Lava (W) and 2 at Damthang Forest (S).
234. **RED-HEADED BULLFINCH, *Pyrrhula erythrocephala*, Roodkopgoudvink**
3 at Lava (W) and also 3 at Neora Valley near Lava (W).
235. **GOLD-NAPED FINCH, *Pyrrhoptes epauletta*, Goudkruinvink**
1 at Lava (W) and 2 at Racht Forest near Lava (W).
236. **SCARLET FINCH, *Haematospiza sipahi*, Scharlaken Dikbek**
3 females at the lower Tholung Valley (S).
237. **CRESTED BUNTING, *Melophus lathami*, Kuifgors**
A single one on a wire at Mangan (S).
238. **LITTLE BUNTING, *Emberiza pusilla*, Dwerggors**
A single bird in Lava village (W).

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF MAMMALS

This list follows the taxonomy, names and sequence of the Mammal Data by BirdBase & BirdArea by Andrew Duff and Ann Lawson.

Numbers quoted are estimates of the minimum numbers seen.

1. **BLACK GIANT SQUIRREL, *Ratufa bicolor***

Seen in small numbers at Lava (W) and the Tholung Valley (S).

2. **ORANGE-BELLIED HIMALAYAN SQUIRREL, *Dremomys lokriah***

At least one in the Lava area (W).

3. **HIMALAYAN STRIPED SQUIRREL, *Tamiops macclellandi***

A few in the Lava area (W).

4. **ASSAM MACAQUE, *Macaca assamensis***

Seen in small numbers in the Lava area (W).

5. **RHESUS MONKEY, *Macaca mulatta***

Common en route from Bagdogra - Kalimpong (W).

6. **HIMALAYAN TAHR, *Hemitragus jemlahicus***

2 at the lower Tholung Valley (S).