



## Southern India: Birds and Wildlife of the Western Ghats

11 - 26 January 2025

**TOUR LEADER:** Nick Athanas

**INDIAN GUIDE:** Ashwin HP

*Report and photos by Nick Athanas*



*Mottled Wood-Owl, one of eleven species of owls seen on this remarkable tour*

While Tropical Birding has run several short trips and extensions in South India over the years, this was our first “full-length” two-week+ set-departure tour to this amazing region – and it was a blast, with an incredible variety of birds, mammals, and other wildlife along with rich culture and amazing food. Picking favorites on a trip like this is a challenge, but one family of birds really stood out from the others – **owls!** We saw eleven species of owls during this 16-day trip, including some truly spectacular ones like **Sri Lanka Bay Owl**, **Mottled Wood-Owl**, **Rock Eagle-Owl**, and **Brown Fish-Owl**. Four of these were seen on day roosts, thanks to the excellent local guides we had in some locations. **Woodpeckers** were a big hit too, also with eleven species, though the unique **Heart-spotted Woodpecker** was a clear favorite with the group. We did quite well with the regional endemics, seeing almost all the possibilities on the itinerary including the gaudy **Black-and-orange Flycatcher**, **Painted Bush-Quail**, **Malabar Flameback**, **Malabar Woodshrike**, **White-bellied Treepie**, **Malabar Lark**, **Gray-headed**, **Flame-throated**, and **Yellow-throated Bulbuls**, **Nilgiri** and **Palani Laughingthrushes**, **White-bellied** and **Nilgiri Sholakilis**, **White-bellied Blue Flycatcher**, and the surprisingly beautiful **Nilgiri Pipit**. While not an endemic, **Indian Pitta** was also a huge favorite along with the strange **Great Thick-knee**. Mammals play a huge part in this tour, and we had several days where much of our time was devoted to searching for and watching mammals. Some of our close encounters of the “furred” kind were two memorable encounters with patrolling **Leopards**, a couple of minutes with two young **Tigers** that ended all too soon, a family of **Dhole** including two frolicking puppies, lots of **Asian Elephants**, a brief sighting of a **Sloth Bear**, several species of **mongoose** and **primates**, of which the handsome **Lion-tailed Macaque** was a clear winner. Our trip ran smoothly thanks in large part to Ashwin (“Ash”), our Indian guide and “fixer” – super knowledgeable, friendly, helpful, and just an all-around great guy.



*We had two superb Leopard sightings during our safari driver in Nagarhole Tiger Reserve*

Our trip started in Thattekad, by far the best birding area of the entire tour, located along the base of the Western Ghats mountain range in the state of Kerala. Part of this region is a protected bird sanctuary with tall, impressive tropical forest, but even the areas outside the reserve are relatively intact and offer superb birding. We had three full days and a morning in this incredibly rich area, more time than any other site on the tour, and there was plenty to keep us busy. Thattekad is also a Mecca for Indian birders and photographers, and it was amazing to see so many people out enjoying nature. The high density of birders also means many superb local guides are based here – our guide for this section as well as the following few days, Danish, was an absolute force – a talented birder and incredibly driven to find as many of the target species as possible – he truly is superb.

We spent most of our mornings in the Thattekad area near Urulanthanni – the tall forest with relatively open understory and the rocky outcrops providing natural canopy viewpoints made for superb birding. Species here included **Gray-fronted Green-Pigeon**, **Malabar Imperial Pigeon**, nesting **Legge’s Hawk-Eagle**, **Malabar Trogon**, **Malabar Barbet**, **Speckled Piculet**, **Heart-spotted Woodpecker**, **Brown-capped Pygmy-Woodpecker**, **Lesser Yellownape**, **White-naped Woodpecker**, **Plum-headed** and **Malabar Parakeets**, **Vernal Hanging-Parrot**, **Small** and **Orange Minivets**, **Indian Golden Oriole**, **Malabar Woodshrike**, **Ashy Drongo**, **Asian Tit**, **Yellow-browed**, **Gray-headed**, and **Flame-throated Bulbuls**, **Indian Paradise-Flycatcher**, **White-bellied Blue Flycatcher**, **Asian Fairy Bluebird**, **Velvet-fronted Nuthatch**, **Southern Hill Myna**, **Malabar Starling**, **Nilgiri Flowerpecker**, **Purple-rumped** and **Crimson-backed Sunbirds**, and **Black-throated Munia**.



*Malabar Trogon*

The local guides know about day roosts for several key birds and mammals including **Sri Lanka Bay Owl** (the best place in the world to see this species), **Sri Lanka Frogmouth**, and **Gray Slender Loris** (a tiny primate). The frogmouth proved to be the easiest and Danish quickly located one on the first day. The bay owl was trickier – it was not in its “usual spot” the first couple of days, but one of the other guides that Danish works closely with, Sanu, phoned him up to say he found one in a different spot, and told us to come. It was a bit of a trek going well off trail, but it was well worth it! Danish also managed to spot **Gray Slender Loris**, two of them on a day roost in a very well hidden spot. It was not the best view though, and I didn’t get any photos of it.



*Sri Lanka Bay Owl*



*Sri Lanka Frogmouth*

Thattekad is an amazing place for nightbirds. We went out every evening to look for an many owls and nightjars as we could find, since there would be few chances for owling later in the trip. In total we saw seven species of owl: **Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl**, **Mottled Wood-Owl**, **Brown Boobook**, **Indian** and **Oriental Scops-Owls**, and **Jungle Owlet** to go along with the bay owl. **Jerdon's** and **Great Eared Nightjars** added to our nightbird total.

One afternoon was spent in one of the famous photo blinds in the area, giving us point blank views and superb shots of some truly special birds, among them **Malabar Gray Hornbill**, **White-cheeked Barbet**, **Malabar** and **Black-rumped Flamebacks**, **Greater Racket-tailed Drongo**, **Rufous** and **White-bellied Treepies**, **Jungle Babbler**, **Malabar Starling**, **Orange-headed Thrush**, and **Blue-throated Flycatcher**. Right at the end of the day, after everyone else (including the guy who feeds the birds) had left for the day, the real prize came in – an **Indian Pitta**! A truly special bird, and while we saw it in a couple of other places on the trip, we were able to watch this one for over ten minutes.

Other afternoons around Thattekad were spent in secondary habitats including clearings, ponds, and rice paddies. These areas were often teeming with birds and could be very good for raptors too, so were a lot of fun despite the elevated humidity levels. Species included **Lesser Whistling-Duck**, **Fork-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo**, **Asian Green**, **Blue-tailed**, and **Chestnut-headed Bee-eaters**, **Common**, **White-throated**, and **Stork-billed Kingfishers**, **River Tern**, **Oriental Darter**, **Streak-throated Woodpecker**, **Black-hooded Oriole**, **Black Drongo**, **Loten's Sunbird**, **White-browed Wagtail**, and raptors like **Black Baza**, **Oriental Honey-Buzzard**, **Black** and **Rufous-bellied Eagles**, **Crested Serpent-Eagle**, **Shikra**, and **Crested Goshawk**.



*White-bellied Treepie is one of the most stunning birds of southern India*



*Malabar Gray Hornbill (above) and Indian Pitta (below) – our best views of both came from the blind*





*Malabar Starling (above), Indian Scops-Owl (below)*







*Malabar Flameback at the bird blind near Thattekad*

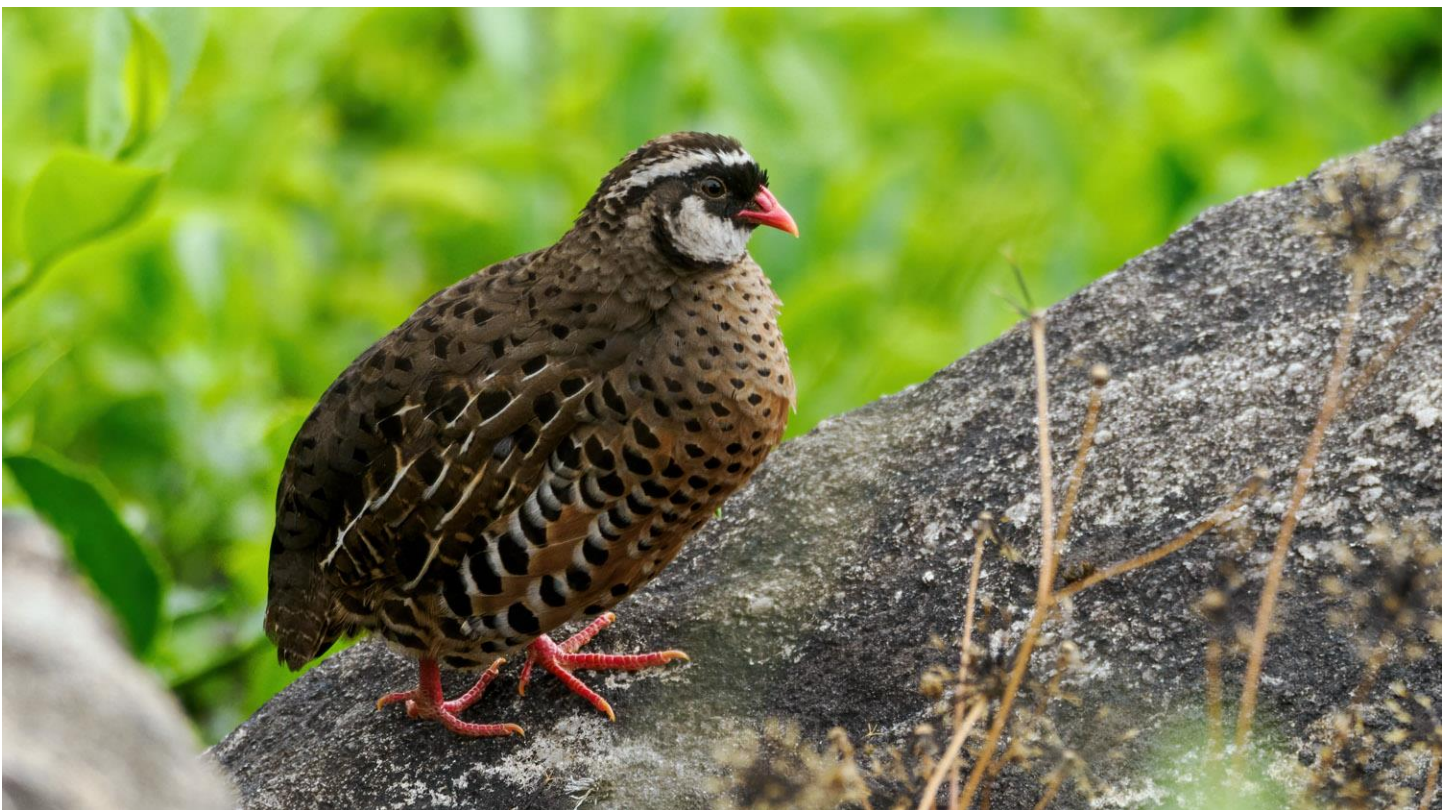
Our next destination of the tour was Munnar in the highlands of Kerala. At around 5000 ft (1500 m), the cooler temperatures were very welcome after the heat and humidity of the lowlands. We had a specific set of targets to focus on, which we searched for in forest patches and tea plantations around Munnar as well as in the popular Eravikulam National Park. These days of the tour corresponded with the Pongal holiday celebrated by the Tamils, and it seemed like half the state of Tamil Nadu went to the national park on the same day we did... Fortunately the birds here are used to people and we still saw our targets. The key endemics we saw here were **Painted Bush-Quail**, **Nilgiri Wood-Pigeon**, **Palani Laughingthrush**, **White-bellied Sholakili**, **Black-and-orange Flycatcher**, **Nilgiri Flycatcher**, **Malabar Whistling-Thrush**, and **Nilgiri Pipit**, while more widespread species included **Bonelli's Eagle**, **Indian Swiftlet**, **Long-tailed Shrike**, **Hill Swallow**, **Square-tailed Bulbul**, **Tickell's Leaf-Warbler**, **Greenish Warbler**, **Indian White-eye**, **Indian Scimitar-Babbler**, **Indian Yellow Tit**, **Purple Sunbird**, and **Common Rosefinch**.



*Palani Laughingthrush, endemic to the southern Western Ghats*



*White-bellied Sholakili (above) and Painted Bush-Quail (below), two more localized endemics*



Heading north from Munnar, we left Kerala and entered the state of Tamil Nadu, stopping at Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary along the way. It's right along the border at lower elevations, and the habitat is distinctly drier compared to where we'd been. Our main target was the local **Yellow-throated Bulbul**, which we saw pretty quickly along the highway, then took a walk inside the reserve with a park ranger. What would have been the best sighting was not to be as a Brown Fish-Owl flew off a day roost, unseen by us, just as the ranger spotted it. However, we did find a few new trip birds like **Yellow-crowned Woodpecker**, **White-browed Bulbul**, **Yellow-billed Babbler**, and **Jerdon's Leafbird**. We spent two nights in a nice resort in a palm plantation south of Pollachi. We used this hotel as our base to visit the Valparai region, which we did as a long day trip. Birds were largely the same as what we had seen earlier in the trip, but we did have our first **White-bellied Drongo**, our best sighting of **Great Hornbill**, and the trip's only **Blue-bearded Bee-eater**. Ashwin spotted a Brown Fish-owl as we were driving, but again the bird flew away before the rest of us saw it, frustrating! Perhaps the main reason to visit Valparai is to see **Lion-tailed Macaque**, a very handsome monkey that we saw well at close range:



It was great to see them, however, I need to be totally honest with any of you thinking about taking this trip in the future. Considering how few bird species we saw on this day, we may remove this excursion from next year's trip, which would mean we would likely miss the macaque.



*Great Hornbill at our breakfast spot in the Valparai hills.*

After leaving Pollachi, we headed north into higher elevations on the Western Ghats in The Nilgiris, a county with several “hill stations” still well preserved from colonial times. We broke up the trip with a breakfast stop in some grasslands, finding a bunch of open country birds that were new like **Spotted Owlet**, **Indian Gray Hornbill**, **Indian Roller**, **Bay-backed Shrike**, **Jerdon’s Bushlark**, **Zitting Cisticola**, and **Booted Warbler**. We reached Kotagiri by lunch, where we met up with another excellent local guide (Yeshwanth), who would be with us for a couple of days. He first took us to a local stakeout for **Kashmir Flycatcher**, which winters in this area in small numbers, finding a stunning male after a short wait, along with **Ashy Prinia**. Later in the afternoon we had our first **Nilgiri Laughingthrushes** of the trip before heading to our hotel in Ooty at a very cool 8000 ft (2450m.). While checking in, they insisted we visit their tea garden, which was not a bad thing as they served the best masala chai that I’ve ever had anywhere!

The next day and following morning we spent looking for our remaining highland targets. Rainy, cold, and misty weather on the first morning was a bit of a drag, but it cleared up and I can’t really say it cost us birds. Most species cooperated, but one in particular was very frustrating, the shy **Nilgiri Thrush**. On our third attempt to look for it, one flew up and landed directly in front of me, but before I could point it out to anyone else it flew away and was never seen again. **Nilgiri Sholakili** performed better, singing on an open perch for a long time despite the rain. At a city park in Coonoor, we finally caught up with **Brown Fish-Owl**, ending its “nemesis” status, though we had to be satisfied with seeing just its

head peering out of a nest cavity. Other species from this area included **Puff-throated Babbler**, **Indian Blackbird**, **Indian Blue Robin**, **Blue-capped Rock-thrush**, **Rufous Babbler**, **Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher**, a day-roosting **Brown Wood-Owl**, and more sightings of great birds like **Black-and-orange Flycatcher** and **Indian Scimitar-Babbler**.



*Nilgiri Laughingthrush*



*Black-and-orange Flycatcher*



*Rufous Babbler*

After our two night in Ooty, we headed north down the mountains into the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, meeting another local guide Rajesh. He pointed out a roosting **Jungle Nightjar** as we went down but said we could not get out of the car to look at it, because, well, we were in a tiger reserve... hard to argue with that. We spent one night in Jungle Hut Lodge near Masinagudi, which is quite nice despite the rustic-sounding name, and in fact we may spend two nights there on future trips. There was a good mix of forest, scrub, grassland, and wetlands that gave a nice diversity of bird species. Some of the target species we saw with Rajesh's help were **Jungle Bush-Quail**, **Red-headed Vulture**, **Spot-breasted** and **White-eyed Fantails**, **Malabar Lark**, **Yellow-eyed Babbler**, and **Indian Nuthatch**. We missed White-bellied Minivet, which is a difficult bird anywhere, and made more complicated by the fact that the best areas to see it are in the tiger reserve where you are not permitted to get out of the vehicle. There were plenty of other more widespread species here too, making for good birding almost any time of day, like **Indian Spot-billed Duck**, **Yellow-footed Green-Pigeon**, **Barred Buttonquail**, **Asian Woolly-necked Stork**, **Indian Cormorant**, **Black-headed Ibis**, **Changeable Hawk-Eagle**, **Booted Eagle**, **Greater Spotted Eagle**, **Spotted Owlet**, **Eurasian Hoopoe**, **Coppersmith Barbet**, **Common Woodshrike**, **Brown-cheeked Fulvetta**, **Brahminy Starling**, **White-rumped Shama**, and **Pied Bushchat**, to mention a few.



*Spotted Owlets at a day roost (above), Spot-breasted Fantail (below)*



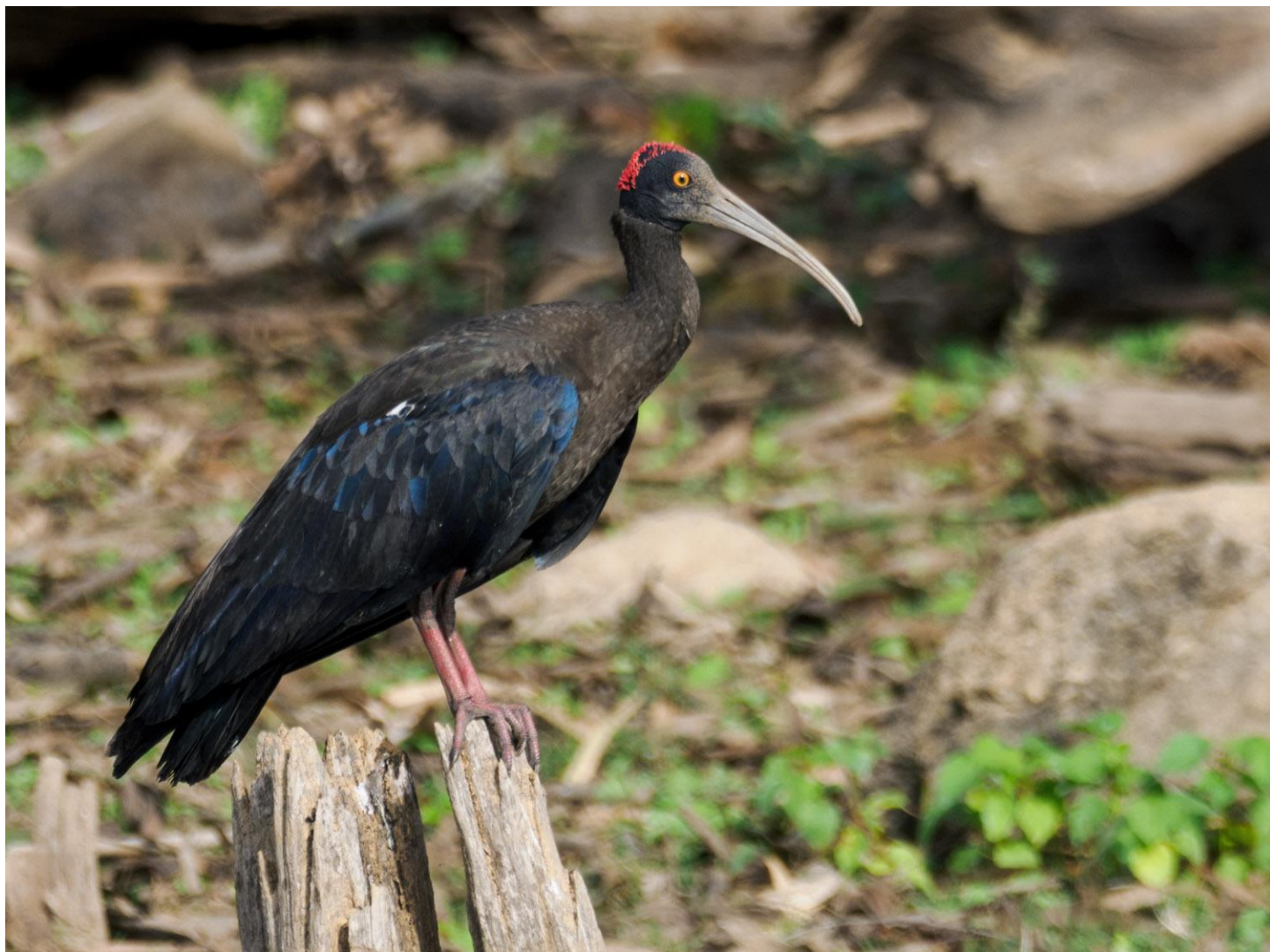


By this point in the tour, almost all our “target birding” was done, and the next few days were more of a safari experience. We spent three nights in the Kabini sector of Nagarahole Tiger Reserve in two different lodges, both excellent. Normally we’d prefer to spend all three nights in one place, but the required getting space in the high season can be tricky, and the second lodge got us our only **Tawny-bellied Babblers**, so it worked out OK. We had two afternoon and two morning jeep rides in the reserve as well as an afternoon boat safari. Ashwin managed to secure his favorite safari driver, Sadek, who was superb, and he and Ash worked great as a team.

The mammals on this part of the trip are at least as important as the birds, and we had decent luck with them, though we wished some had stayed around longer. Especially the **Tigers**! It was during our very last safari drive, and by that point were pretty sure we were going to miss them, when Sadek started shouting excitedly and sped up. At first we couldn’t see them in the thick forest, but finally he found a spot to see one of them through the trees and jammed on the brakes. He was almost dismissive – “it’s a young one! Barely bigger than a Leopard!” I think were his words. Didn’t matter, it was still awesome, though I was too busy watching it to try to photograph it before it moved behind the trees. There were two of them, and we saw them off and on for the next couple of minutes before they both disappeared. Ash didn’t think they would come out again, so we didn’t waste time and headed a mile down the road to where **Dholes** had been reported by another driver and sure enough there was a family group right by the road. In many ways they were better than the tigers as we saw two parents at close range and two youngsters that were tearing around the clearing, obviously having fun. I did manage to get a shot of one of the adults. Dhole is sometimes also called **Asiatic Wild Dog**.



In addition to those great mammals sightings, we saw two **Leopards** very well, lots of **Chital** (AKA Spotted Deer, favorite prey item of the big cats) one **Sloth Bear** for about five seconds before it took note of use and lumbered off, lots of **Asian Elephants** including several impressive “tuskers”, **Gaur**, **Stripe-necked** and **Ruddy Mongooses**, **Wild Boar**, **Northern Red Muntjac**, **Sambar**, and **Malabar Sacred Langur**. We also saw lots of birds on these drives; most were things we had seen previously during the tour, but there were a few new species like **Malabar Pied Hornbill**, **Bronze-winged Jacana**, **Common Hawk-Cuckoo**, **Blue-faced Malkoha**, and a few **shorebirds**. The river safari we did one afternoon was also great for birds. We arrived a bit late for the boat due to the aforementioned **Tawny-bellied Babblers** (Ash had called the boat driver and told him to stall!). The other passengers soon forgave him as he basically commandeered the outing and served as the guide for the entire boat and did a great job at it too. During the boat ride we had superb views and some great photo opportunities of not just waterbirds, but some nice land birds too, like **Bar-headed Goose**, **Indian Peafowl**, **Gray Junglefowl** (some passengers not part of the TB group refused to photograph the “chickens”, but hey, their loss, they are truly beautiful birds), **Red-wattled Lapwing**, **Small Pratincole**, **Painted Stork**, **Red-naped Ibis**, numerous **herons** and **egrets**, **Osprey**, **Black-winged Kite**, **Changeable Hawk-Eagle**, **Brahminy Kite**, **Gray-headed Fish-Eagle**, **Malabar Pied Hornbill**, **Blue-tailed Bee-eater**, **Peregrine Falcon**, and **White-browed Wagtail**.



*Red-naped Ibis*



*Gray Junglefowl, the "chicken"!*



*Indian Peafowl*

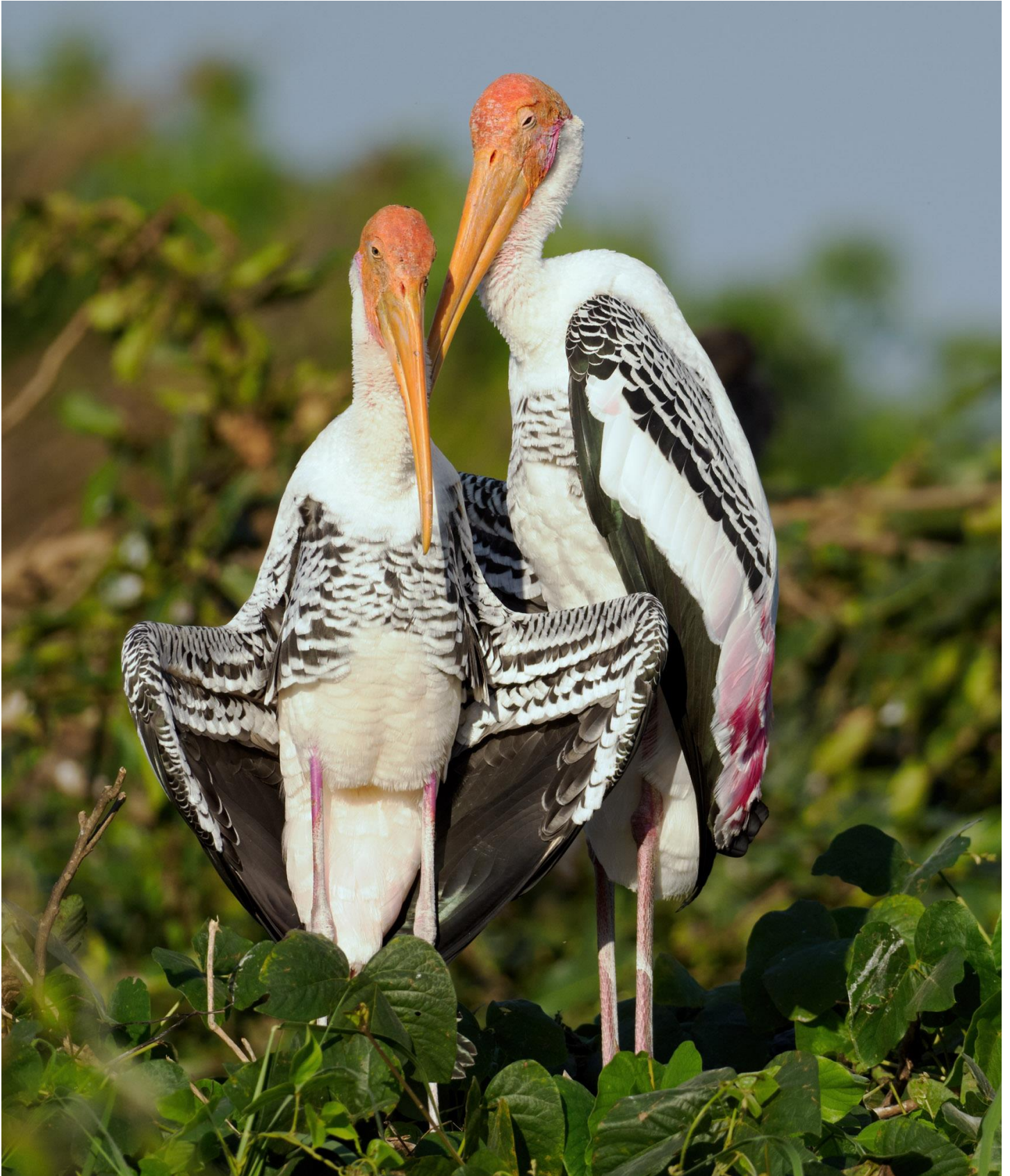


*Changeable Hawk-Eagle*

After leaving Kabini, we spent a day in and around the city of Mysore, Ashwin's home town. We successfully targeted several really cool birds in the morning, notably **Large Gray Babbler** and **Rock Eagle-Owl**, seeing a few other species in the process like **Jungle Prinia**, **Wire-tailed Swallow**, **White-rumped Munia**, and **Red Avadavat**. However the "main course" for the day was an afternoon visit to Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, where numerous species nest along the Kaveri River. The best way to see them is by rowboat – a rather odd means of conveyance, but it worked out and the rower was an excellent bird spotter. **Great Thick-knee** was perhaps the main attraction here as we saw at least five, but the real draw of this site is just seeing so many birds up close, many of them nesting, in great afternoon light – species like **River Tern**, **Asian Openbill**, **Painted Stork**, **Black-headed Ibis**, **Eurasian Spoonbill**, **Little and Medium Egrets**, **Spot-billed Pelican**, and **Pied Kingfisher**. A special mention goes to **Glossy Ibis** – a widespread species we had all seen before, but when a flock of 100+ in breeding plumage flew right past us, catching the light perfectly, they drew gasps from everyone. The huge **Mugger Crocodiles** that were lounging around on rocks were fun to see as well.



*Great Thick-knee*



*Painted Stork*



*Asian Openbill*

The last day of the trip was something of a wildcard day. However, since there were reports of a nesting **Indian Vulture** at Ramdevara Betta Vulture Sanctuary, we decided that was the best place to go this morning. Vultures used to number in the millions in South Asia until the populations of several species completely collapsed in the 1990s. The cause was eventually traced to the drug Diclofenac, which farmers gave to their cows as a painkiller and anti-inflammatory. The vultures ingested the drug when eating cow carcasses, which led to kidney failure and death. The drug was banned for veterinary use in 2006, but the populations have only just started to recover and South Asian vulture species are still critically endangered. We were in luck this morning, as not only was the nest active, but an adult was tending to the nest when we arrived giving us excellent (though very distant) views – a scope was essential. This site also produced several other new trip birds, **Egyptian Vulture**, **Short-toed Snake-Eagle**, **Dusky Crag-Martin**, and **Sykes's Warbler**, making it a great final morning. After that we headed towards the megalopolis of Bangalore (Bengaluru). Another wetland stop before lunch got us a decent number of birds though nothing new for the trip. Making our way through Bangalore to our hotel ended up taking hours thanks to nightmarish traffic, making for a very late lunch. Since some of the group had very early flights out, we just had a relaxing afternoon in the nice hotel before a final farewell dinner to reminisce over some of our favorite sightings. It was truly a memorable tour, and thanks to all of you for helping to make it a fun and successful trip!



*Indian Vulture on a nest at Ramdevvara Betta Vulture Sanctuary*

## **BIRD LIST**

The list includes everything that was seen by at least one of the group, including the guides. Taxonomy follows: Clements, J. F., P. C. Rasmussen, T. S. Schulenberg, M. J. Iliff, T. A. Fredericks, J. A. Gerbracht, D. Lepage, A. Spencer, S. M. Billerman, B. L. Sullivan, M. Smith, and C. L. Wood. 2024. The eBird/Clements checklist of Birds of the World: v2024. Downloaded from <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/clementschecklist/download/>

**(E)=Endemic to India**

**GO=guide only.** There were no “heard only” species.

### **Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl (Anatidae)**

Lesser Whistling-Duck

Bar-headed Goose

Indian Spot-billed Duck

*Dendrocygna javanica*

*Anser indicus*

*Anas poecilorhyncha*

### **Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies (Phasianidae)**

Indian Peafowl

*Pavo cristatus*



Red Spurfowl (E)

Gray Junglefowl (E)

Gray Francolin

Jungle Bush-Quail

Painted Bush-Quail (E)

**Pigeons and Doves (Columbidae)**

Rock Pigeon

Nilgiri Wood-Pigeon (E)

Eurasian Collared-Dove

Spotted Dove

Laughing Dove

Asian Emerald Dove

Gray-fronted Green-Pigeon (E)

Yellow-footed Green-Pigeon

Green Imperial-Pigeon

Malabar Imperial-Pigeon (E)

**Cuckoos (Cuculidae)**

Greater Coucal

Blue-faced Malkoha

Asian Koel

Banded Bay Cuckoo

Fork-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo

Large Hawk-Cuckoo

Common Hawk-Cuckoo

**Nightjars and Allies (Caprimulgidae)**

Great Eared-Nightjar

Jungle Nightjar

Jerdon's Nightjar

**Frogmouths (Podargidae)**

Sri Lanka Frogmouth

**Swifts (Apodidae)**

Indian Swiftlet

Alpine Swift

Little Swift

Asian Palm Swift

**Treeswifts (Hemiprocnidae)**

Crested Treeswift

**Rails, Gallinules, and Coots (Rallidae)**

Eurasian Moorhen

Eurasian Coot

Gray-headed Swamphen

White-breasted Waterhen

**Thick-knees (Burhinidae)**

Great Thick-knee

**Stilts and Avocets (Recurvirostridae)**

Black-winged Stilt

**Plovers and Lapwings (Charadriidae)**

Little Ringed Plover

Yellow-wattled Lapwing

Red-wattled Lapwing

**Jacanas (Jacanidae)**

*Galloperdix spadicea*

*Gallus sonneratii*

*Ortygornis pondicerianus*

*Perdicula asiatica*

*Perdicula erythrorhyncha*

*Columba livia*

*Columba elphinstonii*

*Streptopelia decaocto*

*Spilopelia chinensis*

*Spilopelia senegalensis*

*Chalcophaps indica*

*Treron affinis*

*Treron phoenicopterus*

*Ducula aenea*

*Ducula cuprea*

*Centropus sinensis*

*Phaenicophaeus viridirostris*

*Eudynamys scolopaceus*

*Cacomantis sonneratii*

*Surniculus dicuroides*

*Hierococcyx sparverioides*

*Hierococcyx varius*

*Lyncornis macrotis*

*Caprimulgus indicus*

*Caprimulgus atripennis*

*Batrachostomus moniliger*

*Aerodramus unicolor*

*Tachymarptis melba*

*Apus affinis*

*Cypsiurus balasiensis*

*Hemiprocnis coronata*

*Gallinula chloropus*

*Fulica atra*

*Porphyrio poliocephalus*

*Amaurornis phoenicurus*

*Esacus recurvirostris*

*Himantopus himantopus*

*Thinornis dubius*

*Vanellus malabaricus*

*Vanellus indicus*

Bronze-winged Jacana

**Sandpipers and Allies (Scolopacidae)**

Common Sandpiper

Green Sandpiper

Wood Sandpiper

Common Redshank

**Buttonquail (Turnicidae)**

Barred Buttonquail

**Pratincoles and Coursers (Glareolidae)**

Small Pratincole

**Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers (Laridae)**

Whiskered Tern

River Tern

**Grebes (Podicipedidae)**

Little Grebe

**Storks (Ciconiidae)**

Asian Openbill

Asian Woolly-necked Stork

Painted Stork

**Anhingas (Anhingidae)**

Oriental Darter

**Cormorants and Shags (Phalacrocoracidae)**

Little Cormorant

Great Cormorant

Indian Cormorant

**Ibises and Spoonbills (Threskiornithidae)**

Glossy Ibis

Black-headed Ibis

Red-naped Ibis

Eurasian Spoonbill

**Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns (Ardeidae)**

Black-crowned Night Heron

Little Egret

Striated Heron

Indian Pond-Heron

Eastern Cattle-Egret

Great Egret

Medium Egret

Gray Heron

Purple Heron

**Pelicans (Pelecanidae)**

Spot-billed Pelican

**Osprey (Pandionidae)**

Osprey

**Hawks, Eagles, and Kites (Accipitridae)**

Black-winged Kite

Egyptian Vulture

Black Baza

Oriental Honey-buzzard

Red-headed Vulture

Indian Vulture (E)

*Metopidius indicus*

*Actitis hypoleucos*

*Tringa ochropus*

*Tringa glareola*

*Tringa totanus*

*Turnix suscitator*

*Glareola lactea*

*Chlidonias hybrida*

*Sterna aurantia*

*Tachybaptus ruficollis*

*Anastomus oscitans*

*Ciconia episcopus*

*Mycteria leucocephala*

*Anhinga melanogaster*

*Microcarbo niger*

*Phalacrocorax carbo*

*Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*

*Plegadis falcinellus*

*Threskiornis melanocephalus*

*Pseudibis papillosa*

*Platalea leucorodia*

*Nycticorax nycticorax*

*Egretta garzetta*

*Butorides striata*

*Ardeola grayii*

*Ardea coromanda*

*Ardea alba*

*Ardea intermedia*

*Ardea cinerea*

*Ardea purpurea*

*Pelecanus philippensis*

*Pandion haliaetus*

*Elanus caeruleus*

*Neophron percnopterus*

*Aviceda leuphotes*

*Pernis ptilorhynchus*

*Sarcogyps calvus*

*Gyps indicus*

Crested Serpent-Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>
Short-toed Snake-Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>
Legge's Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus kelaarti</i>
Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>
Rufous-bellied Eagle	<i>Lophotriorchis kienerii</i>
Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malaiensis</i>
Greater Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga clanga</i>
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>
Crested Goshawk	<i>Lophospiza trivirgata</i>
Shikra	<i>Tachyspiza badia</i>
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
Gray-headed Fish-Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
<b>Barn-Owls (Tytonidae)</b>	
Sri Lanka Bay-Owl	<i>Phodilus assimilis</i>
<b>Owls (Strigidae)</b>	
Indian Scops-Owl	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>
Oriental Scops-Owl	<i>Otus sunia</i>
Rock Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo bengalensis</i>
Brown Fish-Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>
Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl	<i>Ketupa nipalensis</i>
Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>
Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>
Mottled Wood-Owl	<i>Strix ocellata</i>
Brown Wood-Owl	<i>Strix leptogrammica</i>
Brown Boobook	<i>Ninox scutulata</i>
<b>Trogons (Trogonidae)</b>	
Malabar Trogon	<i>Harpactes fasciatus</i>
<b>Hoopoes (Upupidae)</b>	
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
<b>Hornbills (Bucerotidae)</b>	
Great Hornbill	<i>Buceros bicornis</i>
Indian Gray Hornbill	<i>Ocyroceros birostris</i>
Malabar Gray Hornbill (E)	<i>Ocyroceros griseus</i>
Malabar Pied-Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros coronatus</i>
<b>Bee-eaters (Meropidae)</b>	
Blue-bearded Bee-eater	<i>Nyctyornis athertoni</i>
Asian Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>
Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>
Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>
<b>Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)</b>	
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>
White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
<b>Rollers (Coraciidae)</b>	
Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>
Dollarbird	<i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>

**Asian Barbets (Megalaimidae)**

Malabar Barbet (E)

Coppersmith Barbet

White-cheeked Barbet (E)

**Woodpeckers (Picidae)**

Speckled Piculet

Heart-spotted Woodpecker

Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker

Yellow-crowned Woodpecker

Malabar Flameback (E)

White-naped Woodpecker

Common Flameback

Black-rumped Flameback

Lesser Yellownape

Streak-throated Woodpecker

White-bellied Woodpecker

**Falcons and Caracaras (Falconidae)**

Eurasian Kestrel

Peregrine Falcon

**Old World Parrots (Psittaculidae)**

Rose-ringed Parakeet

Plum-headed Parakeet

Malabar Parakeet (E)

Vernal Hanging-Parrot

**Pittas (Pittidae)**

Indian Pitta

**Cuckooshrikes (Campephagidae)**

Small Minivet

Orange Minivet

Indian Cuckooshrike

**Old World Orioles (Oriolidae)**

Indian Golden Oriole

Black-naped Oriole

Black-hooded Oriole

**Woodswallows, Bellmagpies, and Allies (Artamidae)**

Ashy Woodswallow

**Vangas, Helmetshrikes, and Allies (Vangidae)**

Malabar Woodshrike (E)

Common Woodshrike

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike

**Ioras (Aegithinidae)**

Common Iora

**Fantails (Rhipiduridae)**

Spot-breasted Fantail (E)

White-browed Fantail

**Drongos (Dicruridae)**

Black Drongo

Ashy Drongo

White-bellied Drongo

Bronzed Drongo

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo

*Psilopogon malabaricus**Psilopogon haemacephalus**Psilopogon viridis**Picumnus innominatus**Hemicircus canente**Yungipicus nanus**Leiopicus mahrattensis**Chrysocolaptes socialis**Chrysocolaptes festivus**Dinopium javanense**Dinopium benghalense**Picus chlorolophus**Picus xanthopygaeus**Dryocopus javensis**Falco tinnunculus**Falco peregrinus**Psittacula krameri**Psittacula cyanocephala**Psittacula columboides**Loriculus vernalis**Pitta brachyura**Pericrocotus cinnamomeus**Pericrocotus flammeus**Coracina macei**Oriolus kundoo**Oriolus chinensis**Oriolus xanthornus**Artamus fuscus**Tephrodornis sylvicola**Tephrodornis pondicerianus**Hemipus picatus**Aegithina tiphia**Rhipidura albogularis**Rhipidura aureola**Dicrurus macrocercus**Dicrurus leucophaeus**Dicrurus caerulescens**Dicrurus aeneus**Dicrurus paradiseus*

**Monarch Flycatchers (Monarchidae)**

Black-naped Monarch

Indian Paradise-Flycatcher

**Shrikes (Laniidae)**

Brown Shrike

Bay-backed Shrike

Long-tailed Shrike

**Crows, Jays, and Magpies (Corvidae)**

Rufous Treepie

White-bellied Treepie (E)

House Crow

Large-billed Crow

**Fairy Flycatchers (Stenostiridae)**

Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher

**Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice (Paridae)**

Asian Tit

Indian Yellow Tit (E)

**Larks (Alaudidae)**

Jerdon's Bushlark

Malabar Lark (E)

**Cisticolas and Allies (Cisticolidae)**

Common Tailorbird

Jungle Prinia

Ashy Prinia

Plain Prinia

Zitting Cisticola

**Reed Warblers and Allies (Acrocephalidae)**

Booted Warbler

Sykes's Warbler

Blyth's Reed Warbler

Clamorous Reed Warbler

**Swallows (Hirundinidae)**

Dusky Crag-Martin

Hill Swallow

Barn Swallow

Wire-tailed Swallow

Eastern Red-rumped Swallow

**Bulbuls (Pycnonotidae)**

Yellow-browed Bulbul

Square-tailed Bulbul

Gray-headed Bulbul (E)

Flame-throated Bulbul (E)

White-browed Bulbul

Yellow-throated Bulbul (E)

Red-whiskered Bulbul

Red-vented Bulbul

**Leaf Warblers (Phylloscopidae)**

Tickell's Leaf Warbler

Green Warbler

Greenish Warbler

Large-billed Leaf Warbler

*Hypothymis azurea**Terpsiphone paradisi**Lanius cristatus**Lanius vittatus**Lanius schach**Dendrocitta vagabunda**Dendrocitta leucogastra**Corvus splendens**Corvus macrorhynchos**Culicicapa ceylonensis**Parus cinereus**Machlolophus aplonotus**Plocealauda affinis**Galerida malabarica**Orthotomus sutorius**Prinia sylvatica**Prinia socialis**Prinia inornata**Cisticola juncidis**Iduna caligata**Iduna rama**Acrocephalus dumetorum**Acrocephalus stentoreus**Ptyonoprogne concolor**Hirundo domicola**Hirundo rustica**Hirundo smithii**Cecropis daurica**Acritillas indica**Hypsipetes ganeesa**Microtarsus priocephalus**Rubigula gularis**Pycnonotus luteolus**Pycnonotus xantholaemus**Pycnonotus jocosus**Pycnonotus cafer**Phylloscopus affinis**Phylloscopus nitidus**Phylloscopus trochiloides**Phylloscopus magnirostris*

**Sylviid Warblers and Allies (Sylviidae)**

Lesser Whitethroat

*Curruca curruca***Parrotbills (Paradoxornithidae)**

Yellow-eyed Babbler

*Chrysomma sinense***White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies (Zosteropidae)**

Indian White-eye

*Zosterops palpebrosus***Tree-Babblers, Scimitar-Babblers, and Allies (Timaliidae)**

Tawny-bellied Babbler

*Dumetia hyperythra*

Dark-fronted Babbler

*Dumetia atriceps*

Indian Scimitar-Babbler (E)

*Pomatorhinus horsfieldii***Ground Babblers and Allies (Pellorneidae)**

Puff-throated Babbler

*Pellorneum ruficeps***Laughingthrushes and Allies (Leiothrichidae)**

Brown-cheeked Fulvetta

*Alcippe poioicephala*

Nilgiri Laughingthrush (E)

*Montecincla cachinnans*

Palani Laughingthrush (E)

*Montecincla fairbanki*

Large Gray Babbler

*Argya malcolmi*

Rufous Babbler (E)

*Argya subrufa*

Jungle Babbler

*Argya striata*

Yellow-billed Babbler

*Argya affinis***Nuthatches (Sittidae)**

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch

*Sitta frontalis*

Indian Nuthatch

*Sitta castanea***Starlings (Sturnidae)**

Southern Hill Myna

*Gracula indica*

Rosy Starling

*Pastor roseus*

Brahminy Starling

*Sturnia pagodarum*

Chestnut-tailed Starling

*Sturnia malabarica*

Malabar Starling (E)

*Sturnia blythii*

Common Myna

*Acridotheres tristis*

Jungle Myna

*Acridotheres fuscus***Thrushes and Allies (Turdidae)**

GO Nilgiri Thrush (E)

*Zoothera neilgherriensis*

Orange-headed Thrush

*Geokichla citrina*

Indian Blackbird

*Turdus simillimus***Old World Flycatchers (Muscicapidae)**

Asian Brown Flycatcher

*Muscicapa dauurica*

Brown-breasted Flycatcher

*Muscicapa muttui*

Indian Robin

*Copsychus fulicatus*

Oriental Magpie-Robin

*Copsychus saularis*

White-rumped Shama

*Copsychus malabaricus*

Nilgiri Sholakili (E)

*Sholicola major*

White-bellied Sholakili (E)

*Sholicola albiventris*

Nilgiri Flycatcher (E)

*Eumyias albicaudatus*

Verditer Flycatcher

*Eumyias thalassinus*

White-bellied Blue Flycatcher (E)

*Cyornis pallidipes*

Blue-throated Flycatcher

*Cyornis rubeculoides*

Tickell's Blue Flycatcher

*Cyornis tickelliae*

Indian Blue Robin

*Larvivora brunnea*

Malabar Whistling-Thrush (E)

*Myophonus horsfieldii*

Black-and-orange Flycatcher (E)	<i>Ficedula nigrorufa</i>
Rusty-tailed Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula ruficauda</i>
Kashmir Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula subrubra</i>
Blue-capped Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola cinclorhyncha</i>
Blue Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>
Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>
<b>Flowerpeckers (Dicaeidae)</b>	
Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>
Nilgiri Flowerpecker (E)	<i>Dicaeum concolor</i>
<b>Sunbirds and Spiderhunters (Nectariniidae)</b>	
Purple-rumped Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma zeylonica</i>
Crimson-backed Sunbird (E)	<i>Leptocoma minima</i>
Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>
Loten's Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris lotenius</i>
Little Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera longirostra</i>
<b>Fairy-bluebirds (Irenidae)</b>	
Asian Fairy-bluebird	<i>Irena puella</i>
<b>Leafbirds (Chloropseidae)</b>	
Jerdon's Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i>
Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>
<b>Weavers and Allies (Ploceidae)</b>	
Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>
<b>Waxbills and Allies (Estrildidae)</b>	
Indian Silverbill	<i>Euodice malabarica</i>
Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>
Black-throated Munia	<i>Lonchura kelaarti</i>
White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>
<b>GO</b> Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>
<b>Old World Sparrows (Passeridae)</b>	
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Yellow-throated Sparrow	<i>Gymnoris xanthocollis</i>
<b>Wagtails and Pipits (Motacillidae)</b>	
Forest Wagtail	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>
Gray Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
White-browed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla maderaspatensis</i>
Nilgiri Pipit (E)	<i>Anthus nilghiriensis</i>
Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>
<b>Finches, Euphonias, and Allies (Fringillidae)</b>	
Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>

## MAMMAL LIST

Taxonomy mostly follows iNaturalist.

Grey Slender Loris	<i>Loris lydekkerianus</i>
Bonnet Macaque	<i>Macaca radiata</i>
Lion-tailed Macaque	<i>Macaca silenus</i>
Nilgiri Langur	<i>Semnopithecus johnii</i>

Tufted Gray Langur  
Malabar Sacred Langur (Black-footed Langur)  
Dhole (Asiatic Wild Dog)  
Leopard  
Tiger  
Asian Palm Civet  
Sloth Bear  
Indian Grey Mongoose  
Stripe-necked Mongoose  
Ruddy Mongoose  
Asian Elephant  
Wild Boar  
Chital (Spotted Deer)  
Northern Red Muntjac (Barking Deer)  
Sambar  
Gaur  
Nilgiri Tahr  
Indian Flying-Fox  
Jungle Palm Squirrel  
Three-striped Palm Squirrel  
Indian (Malabar) Giant Squirrel  
Sri Lankan (Grizzled) Giant Squirrel

*Semnopithecus priam*  
*Semnopithecus hypoleucos*  
*Cuon alpinus*  
*Panthera pardus*  
*Panthera tigris*  
*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*  
*Melursus ursinus*  
*Urva edwardsii*  
*Urva vitticollis*  
*Urva smithii*  
*Elephas maximus indicus*  
*Sus scrofa*  
*Axis axis*  
*Muntiacus vaginalis*  
*Rusa unicolor*  
*Bos gaurus*  
*Nilgiritragus hylocrius*  
*Pteropus giganteus*  
*Funambulus tristriatus*  
*Funambulus palmarum*  
*Ratufa indica*  
*Ratufa macroura*

## **HERPS**

Mugger Crocodile  
Indian Black Turtle (Indian Pond Terrapin)  
Asian Common Toad (Common Indian Toad)  
Dussumier's Litter Skink  
Western Ghats Flying Lizard  
Common Green Forest Lizard  
Oriental Garden Lizard

*Crocodylus palustris*  
*Melanochelys trijuga*  
*Duttaphrynus melanostictus*  
*Sphenomorphus dussumieri*  
*Draco dussumieri*  
*Calotes calotes*  
*Calotes versicolor*