



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Sri Lanka

Endemic Birds & Big Game I

24th January to 3rd February 2018 (11 days)

Trip Report



Indian Pitta by Stephan Lorenz

Trip report compiled by Tour Leader: Stephan Lorenz

Tour Summary

What do you do when the group has seen all Sri Lankan endemics well and there are still one and a half days left on the tour? Well, you go birding, of course, and that's exactly what we did. This year's January tour proved highly successful and we enjoyed quality views of all endemics well before the tour was over, allowing us to finish with some leisurely birding and exploration of the Sinharaja Rain Forest. Of course, we even added a few more birds to the list, finishing at a respectable 248 species. The endemics are always at the forefront of this tour, and we enjoyed excellent views of all, including the often tricky Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush, Sri Lanka Bush Warbler, and Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon in Horton Plains National Park. While in the world-famous Sinharaja Rainforest, we got above average views of Sri Lanka Thrush, multiple White-faced Starlings, and the bird of the trip for most, a roosting Serendib Scops Owl. The tour also offered a plethora of near-endemics and other specialities, some rarely recorded, but we had multiple Legge's Hawk-Eagles, including one perched for twenty minutes. Also, we recorded 9 species of owls, saw two species of nightjars, and added localised Marshall's Iora, Sirkeer Malkoha, and Blue-faced Malkoha. Of course, we also took in the variety of mammals that call Sri Lanka's excellent national parks home, with the undoubted highlight being a Rusty-spotted Cat that was seen well after dark near Yala National Park. In between, we enjoyed Sri Lankan hospitality and many fine meals.



Sri Lanka Thrush by Stephan Lorenz

Tour in Detail

The first day started with a pick-up at the Colombo airport and further pick-ups at a hotel in the centre of the capital. We wove our way through heavy traffic towards Kithulgala, our first birding site of the trip. During the drive from the airport to the city, we picked up our first Spot-billed Pelicans and Brahminy Kites. Once we left the city, we found paddy fields and wetlands lining the road and saw



Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot by Stephan Lorenz

some of the widespread herons, egrets, storks and ibis that we would become very familiar with during the coming days. We reached our accommodations on the banks of the Kelani River after dark, quickly settled in, and enjoyed the first dinner together; chatting about the birds we were hoping to see.

Our first morning in Sri Lanka began slightly overcast, and it cleared eventually with very warm temperatures during the middle of the day. We started at dawn and explored gardens and plantations near our hotel, fairly quickly locating our main endemic target for the

morning, a pair of Chestnut-backed Owlets that sat up for good scope studies. Additional birds for the morning included our first Sri Lanka Junglefowl, Yellow-billed and Orange-billed Babblers side by side, Lesser Yellownappe of the distinct *wellsi* ssp., the endemic Red-backed Flameback, Sri Lanka Swallow, Black-headed Cuckooshrike, and many Sri Lanka Hanging Parrots, all before breakfast! After returning to the hotel, the birds continued right from the open-air restaurant that overlooked the Kelani River. Here we found endemic Black-capped Bulbuls nesting, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher in the nearby bamboo, and an Asian Openbill walking upstream.

After breakfast, we headed across the swing bridge, always fun, to explore the forest edge and gardens on the far side. The birding continued to be excellent, even mid-morning, and we added skulky Dark-fronted Babblers, perched Sri Lanka Green Pigeons, Green Imperial Pigeons, stunning Orange Minivets,

and the endemic Layard's Parakeet that fed very close to the track; while Oriental Honey Buzzard, Crested Serpent Eagle, Crested Hawk-Eagle, Black Eagle, and White-bellied Sea Eagle all made an appearance overhead. After making a loop, we enjoyed the first ferry ride across the Kelani River, seeing the distinctive Grizzled Giant Squirrel near the landing. We took a break after lunch to wait out the heat of the day and then returned to the far side of the river in the late afternoon. Birding was excellent again and we added Common Emerald Dove, scoped two Banded Bay Cuckoos, Brown-headed Barbet, Yellow-browed Bulbuls and Loten's Sunbird; but best of all, we tracked down the secretive Green-billed Coucal and scoped a vocal pair of Crimson-fronted Barbets – both uncommon endemics. We walked towards the forest edge with plans to enter at dusk to do some owling, but while



Layard's Parakeet by Stephan Lorenz



Green-billed Coucal by Stephan Lorenz

we waited for it to become dark we were lucky again with a pair of Sri Lanka Mynas right next to Southern Hill Mynas for great comparisons. Suddenly, an Indian Pitta, likely on its way to roost, flew in right next to us, showing off for more than five minutes. Just when we thought it couldn't get any better, a large bird flew into the tree right above us at dusk, a quick look revealed a massive owl, and a flick of the spotlight showed a Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl – *definitely a surprise*. Our actual owling only got us close to a calling Brown Hawk-Owl before we returned for dinner at the hotel.

We did a short pre-breakfast excursion to the nearby birding site from the previous morning and were able to add excellent views of Shikra, a calling Common Hawk-Cuckoo in the scope, endemic Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, localised Tawny-bellied Babblers, and White-rumped Munias. We left the Kithulgala area mid-morning and started the lengthy drive into the highlands towards Nuwara Eliya.

Along the way, we stopped near the scenic St Clair Falls and added Booted Eagle and Black-winged Kite to our growing raptor tally.

In Nuwara Eliya, we checked into the hotel and enjoyed another delicious lunch of typical Sri Lankan fare before starting the afternoon's birding along a forest track on the edge of town. The woodland here was fairly quiet, but we still added some endemics in the form of roving flocks of Sri Lanka White-eyes, retiring Dull-blue Flycatcher, and the first Yellow-eared Bulbuls. One particularly busy feeding flock also contained the first Cinereous Tits, Grey-headed Canary-Flycatchers, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, and Large-billed Leaf Warbler – which showed particularly well – of the trip. Yet, it was a near-endemic that stole the show for the afternoon, when we spotted a perched Legge's Hawk-Eagle across the valley after hearing its call, and we spent twenty minutes soaking in as many details through the scope as possible of this magnificent raptor. The final stop of the day took us to a rather nondescript trail along a steep gully, where we recorded some of the same species, but in the end our patient wait paid off handsomely when a Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush emerged from the thickets to perch on a bare branch twice right at dusk; and with the help of a weak torch, we could even appreciate some of its blue tones – *another highlight finish for the day.*



Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill by Stephan Lorenz



Yellow-eared Bulbul by Stephan Lorenz

We left our hotel in Nuwara Eliya very early in order to get to the higher elevations in Horton Plains National Park in the best time for bird activity. A day in this UNESCO World Heritage site is always a highlight of any visit to Sri Lanka. We reached our first stake-out before first light and had to wait about twenty minutes, but were rewarded with point-blank views of several Sri Lanka Wood Pigeons as they came down to the ground to drink – *this species can sometimes be difficult to see well.* With this quick success, we drove to the entrance gate where the typically long queue was already lined up, so we left our jeeps and continued on foot along the park's main road. This strategy paid off as we located a pair of Sri Lanka Bush Warblers that offered uncharacteristically good views. For the remainder of the morning, we worked our way along the park road and enjoyed a picnic breakfast at the trailhead area. Throughout the morning, we ended up with very good views of Sri Lanka Scimitar Babblers, Green Warbler, more Sri Lanka Bush Warblers, Hill Swallows, Pale-billed Flowerpecker, and endemic Dull-blue Flycatchers showed particularly well; while Crimson-backed Flameback remained distant.

By mid-morning, we staked out an area near the visitor centre

and eventually had good views of an Indian Blackbird; while a flock Tricolored Munias landed right next to us. We took the winding road back to Nuwara Eliya for lunch and rested a bit before moving on to Victoria Park. The list of target birds here was short, but some of them were known skulkers. The first was spotted along the small stream where the distinctive Forest Wagtail fed along the muddy edge, but it took a bit more searching to find the retiring Kashmir Flycatcher – *all of us enjoyed scope views of a beautiful male, not an endemic, but a very special bird indeed*. We collected in a promising area and, yet again, patient waiting rewarded us. A hoped-for Pied Thrush made a brief appearance and then proved elusive, but after we shifted positions we located one male, then another and another. Suddenly a small flock of Pied Thrushes flew up into the tree in front of us. *All of the birds were males and we had them in the scope for as long as we wanted*. Now we tried another shady spot and quickly found a single female Indian Robin that hopped out into the open for lengthy views. Retracing our steps, we found two Indian Pittas gracing the trail in the late afternoon and everyone enjoyed the good photo opportunities before returning to the hotel.



Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush by Stephan Lorenz

We started the day early on the edge of Nuwara Eliya, trying to find the near-endemic Black-throated Munias that had recently nested in the area. Not having any luck, we moved on for a brief visit to the city's race track where we flushed a Pin-tailed Snipe, but only I glimpsed an elusive Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler in the reeds; while everybody heard its distinctive churring calls. After breakfast and packing up, we left Nuwara Eliya to make our way back into the lowlands. We broke the lengthy journey with an hour-long stop at a bird sanctuary along the way, where we found a roosting Brown Wood Owl and also saw our only Brown-capped Babblers of the trip alongside other species we had seen previously, including a brief Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon. For lunch, we stopped at a restaurant overlooking the scenic valley below, and arrived in the Tissamaharama by mid-afternoon.



Sri Lanka Wood Pigeons by Stephan Lorenz

We stopped at Debarawewa Lake and new birds came rather quickly as the shallow wetlands were filled to the brim with waterbirds. Lesser Whistling Ducks were present in flocks; while we only found a single female Cotton Pygmy Goose with eight youngsters. All herons and egrets were present, including Grey, Purple and Indian Pond Herons, and good comparisons between Great, Intermediate and Little Egrets. Two Yellow Bitterns showed nicely, clinging to reeds, but we had to wait until the last minute to spot a Black Bittern that showed nicely among some taller reeds. Grey-headed Swampheens, Eurasian Moorhens and even

Watercocks all showed very well; while the sections of denser lily pads were decorated with breeding plumaged Pheasant-tailed Jacanas.

Open water held Spot-billed Pelicans, and a Stork-billed Kingfisher flew into a tree just in front of us right on cue. We took a break from sorting through waterbirds to scope a pair of Jungle Owlets in a nearby yard. As the afternoon was waning, we drove a loop along a dirt road and checked additional areas of wetlands and reed beds, finding the first Pied Kingfisher and at the last minute the uncommon Streaked Weaver, with three birds giving brief and distant views in the scope. We raced to our next stake-out, but in the end shouldn't have worried, as a pair of the uncommon White-naped Woodpeckers sat next to their nesting hole for minutes on end. It was fascinating to watch the interactions between the White-naped Woodpeckers, Rose-ringed Parakeets, and even a Red-backed Flameback that all showed interest in the cavity. We finished the evening watching the enormous Indian Flying Fox roost before heading to the hotel for check-in and dinner.



Purple-faced Langur by Stephan Lorenz

We had a full day ahead of us in the beautiful and very birdy Yala National Park. A very early start and late finish netted us more than 100 species for the day, with many highlights. Yala National Park contains a mixture of wetlands, dry forest, scrub and open grasslands, and we explored each habitat. The main endemic of this dry zone park is the Sri Lanka Woodshrike, and we had several wonderful



Sri Lanka Woodshrike by Stephan Lorenz

encounters with this species throughout the day. In the wetland areas, we observed a plethora of storks, ibis, herons, egrets and shorebirds, with some of the favourites including stunning Painted Storks, a single female Garganey among a group of Lesser Whistling Ducks, Indian Cormorants, Eurasian Spoonbills, several stoic Great Thick-knees, and Yellow-wattled Lapwings. The forests and scrubland yielded many additions to our list, with Orange-breasted Green Pigeons, Blue-faced Malkohas, Grey-bellied Cuckoos, Malabar Pied Hornbills, Brown-capped and Yellow-crowned Woodpeckers, Yellow-billed Babblers, Jerdon's Leafbird, White-browed Bulbuls, and a vocal duo of White-rumped Shamas being especially notable. The open grasslands were also full of birds, with displaying Jerdon's Bushlarks around every corner, flocks of foraging Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Larks, and a brief Blyth's Pipit among the numerous Paddyfield Pipits. Bee-eaters were everywhere, including Green, Blue-tailed, and Chestnut-headed, providing endless photographic opportunities. Two additional standouts for the group were a roosting Brown Fish Owl that we watched at length and several sightings of the localised Marshall's Iora, with especially good views during our picnic lunch. Yala NP is not

only famous for its birdlife, but also a wide variety of mammals, and while we weren't fortunate enough to glimpse one of its most famous denizens, the Leopard, we did see many Asian Elephants, including swimming youngsters, herds of Chital, Sambar, Tufted Grey Langur, Indian Hares, Ruddy Mongoose, and Wild Boar. At dusk, we left the park and enjoyed the spectacle of dozens of Small Pratincoles foraging above salt pans, fluttering about like nightjars. Speaking of nightjars, a quick foray at a stake-out resulted in good views of several calling Indian Nightjars, but the highlight of the day was yet to come. As we pulled onto the main road a medium-sized mammal dashed across and a quick stop by the driver got our attention. I turned on the torch to find a Rusty-spotted Cat walking slowly into the grass, it climbed up a bit for good views, and then vanished in the scrub. *This is a very rare cat to see, let alone so well.* We enjoyed a well-earned dinner back at our accommodations after such a full and exciting day.

We headed out the door with a packed breakfast for a fairly early start and drove the thirty minutes to Bundala National Park with plans to explore the extensive freshwater marshes and salt pans. Bundala didn't disappoint, and before we even reached the park new birds were coming fast. We climbed from the jeeps and walked along the entrance road leading through wide open marshland. Here we found many shorebirds feeding on the exposed mudflats, including Little and Temminck's Stints, Common Greenshanks, Common Redshanks, Marsh, Common, and Wood Sandpipers, and Little Ringed Plovers; while Pacific Golden Plovers piped from the grassy fields. In the surrounding brushland, we scoped Eurasian Collared Doves – an uncommon species in Sri Lanka, and showy Jacobin Cuckoos; while three Garganeys zipped past. The area also provided excellent studies of herons and egrets with good views of Yellow Bittern, but the Cinnamon Bittern was seen only briefly. Ashy and Plain Prinias were in full song, and Clamorous Reed Warblers climbed into view with Yellow-eyed Babblers passing by noisily.



Asian Elephants by Stephan Lorenz



Jerdon's Bushlark by Stephan Lorenz

Afterwards, we moved on to the salt pans with a new set of shorebirds, and additions included Grey Plover, Lesser and Greater Sand Plovers, *uncommon* Common Ringed Plovers, Black-tailed Godwits, Ruddy Turnstones, Ruff, Curlew Sandpiper, and best of all, close studies of Small Pratincoles roosting in the middle of the road. The grassy verge of the road held a pair of Oriental Skylarks among Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Larks and while taking a brief rest from scanning through the flocks of shorebirds, we chanced upon a Sand Martin flying past – *a rare bird in Sri Lanka.*

One final stop overlooking a large freshwater lake got us onto a sleepy pair of Indian Thick-knees sitting in an open patch and the only Little Grebe of the trip bobbed at some distance on the lake, all the

while a magnificent Grey-headed Fish Eagle watched the scene from a massive limb overhanging the road. All too soon, it was time to move on, but we added another pair of Blue-faced Malkohas on the drive out. After checking out of the hotel, we continued towards Udawalawe National Park. It had rained heavily all morning in the Udawalawe area, but by the time we had boarded our safari jeep and headed into the park the weather had mostly cleared. The park is famous for Asian Elephants and rightly so, since we saw many very well. The other mammal highlight was a Golden Jackal that trotted down the road. Yet, that particular afternoon excursion will forever be remembered as the day of the cuckoos and malkohas. These species can usually be a bit secretive, but since the heavy rains had passed many were sitting up on exposed perches, seemingly attempting to dry out, and we recorded an unprecedented number of a dozen Sirkeer Malkohas, numerous Grey-bellied Cuckoos, several Blue-faced Malkohas, Greater Coucals, Jacobin Cuckoos, and some even lucked into an uncommon Chestnut-winged Cuckoo. Our second Woolly-necked Stork looked somewhat bedraggled on a snag, and Changeable Hawk-Eagles were almost abundant. Other highlights included point-blank views of Barred Buttonquail, a fruiting fig full of Malabar Pied Hornbills, the only Thick-billed Flowerpecker of the trip, Yellow-crowned Woodpecker, and distant Red-rumped Swallows. We drove towards our accommodations at dusk, stopping briefly along the way to spotlight a calling Jerdon's Nightjar that showed very well perched on an open branch.



Sri Lanka Blue Magpie by Stephan Lorenz

We started the morning with some leisurely birding near our hotel and soaked in scope views of some of the same species we had already seen, although a brief Blyth's Pipit stood out and two Red-rumped Swallows flew overhead for better views than the previous day. After breakfast, we started the drive to Sinharaja, but before leaving the area we made one last stop at a local house, where we scoped an Indian Scops Owl roosting underneath the eave – *our luck with owls for the trip was holding!* The drive to Sinharaja Rainforest, another UNESCO World Heritage Site, was long and windy, but we were treated to some spectacular scenery of steep, forest-clad mountains. After a bit of a rest, we ventured



Yellow-fronted Barbet by Stephan Lorenz

out in the late afternoon to bird along the entrance area of the park and the road through the village. The highlights of the afternoon included a pair of Crimson-backed Flamebacks, the first Sri Lanka Drongo, a perched Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher, scoped Plum-headed Parakeets, and three Black-throated Munias. A short owling session near the lodge after dinner produced a calling Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl and excellent views of a Sri Lanka Frogmouth.

Our first morning in the beautiful lowland rainforest of Sinharaja was quite phenomenal,

and the endemics just fell into place like a simple eight-piece puzzle. First we made our way up the hill in two jeeps with a packed breakfast, and a strategic wait resulted in scope views of the uncommon White-faced Starling.

After a picnic breakfast, we entered the reserve on foot and quickly found a Spot-winged Thrush feeding on the edge of the trail for excellent scopes studies. Minutes later, we heard the faint calls of a Sri Lanka Thrush, one of the tougher endemics to see well, but another patient wait resulted in wide open views of the bird perched right in front of us. After such early success, the remaining endemics came relatively easily, with calling Sri Lanka Spurfowl and a single, mega feeding flock that held Red-faced Malkoha, Orange-billed Babblers, Ashy-headed Laughingthrushes chattering right in front of us, another White-faced



Spot-winged Thrush by Stephan Lorenz

Starling, Black-naped Monarch, and species we had seen well before. We walked to the old research station and waited with high hopes for word about a certain scops owl, and while we waited a Legge's Hawk-Eagle soared above. Just before noon, another feeding flock materialised and we enjoyed extended scope studies of Malabar Trogons, more Red-faced Malkohas and White-faced Starlings – *not uncommon at all during our visit* – and Sri Lanka Drongos. We walked back to the entrance, stopping for a pair of roosting Sri Lanka Frogmouths along the way, and took the jeeps to Martin's Lodge for lunch, enjoying the views and excellent meal. The third Legge's Hawk-Eagle of the trip flew over, more White-faced Starlings flew in, and a cooperative pair of Black-throated Munias perched up, allowing everyone to get excellent views. After a delicious meal and some tea, we got word of a scops owl. The walk was not as bad as expected, and ten minutes down the trail all of us had great scope



Sri Lanka Junglefowl by Stephan Lorenz

views of a rusty Serendib Scops Owl as it watched us intently from its tangle. So we cleaned up on all the remaining endemics during our first full day at Sinharaja, and just in time, as the heavens opened up for the remainder of the late afternoon. During the late afternoon and evening, we rested at our comfortable accommodations.

This was our final full day in the area and the last of the hoped-for birds had been nibbled down to only two remaining crumbs. We still wanted views of Sri Lanka Spurfowl and Slaty-legged Crake, both which had only been heard at this point. Some elected to

leave a bit earlier, and were rewarded with excellent views of a Brown Hawk-Owl; while the remainder of the group arrived at dawn to get into position for the spurfowl. Soon after sunrise, a Slaty-legged Crake made an appearance and then a second individual even showed for lengthy views. Spot-winged Thrushes hopped about and a pair of Green-billed Coucals sat out in the open; while Sri Lanka

Junglefowl scratched the ground. Suddenly, a male Sri Lanka Spurfowl ran into view, quickly joined by a female, and the pair remained in full view for several minutes as we enjoyed the final endemic of the tour – *success*. For the rest of the morning, some of us elected to return to the Sinharaja Reserve to spend some leisure time marvelling at the forest, butterflies, and reptiles; while others caught up with better views of a few endemics. A single Indian Cuckoo was a good find. The remainder of the group staked out the valley visible from the porch at Martin's Lodge, where, by now, familiar endemics made many appearances and a careful vigil for raptors produced Legge's Hawk-Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, and a very brief pair of Rufous-bellied Eagles. After lunch, the afternoon rains arrived and we settled back in at our lodgings. Just as we were about to start dinner, we heard a Sri Lanka Bay Owl – *yes, this mythical creature called within earshot of the lodge*. Needless to say, we abandoned dinner and gave it a good try, but despite hearing the owl very close, we could not find an angle or way into the dense forest on the steep slope.

We enjoyed one final morning outing in the area before packing and starting the drive back to Colombo. We kept watch from the bus and were able to spot the only Ashy Woodswallow of the trip among hordes of Barn and Sri Lanka Swallows, Little Swifts, Indian Swiftlets, and Crested Treeswift. We stopped for lunch near Colombo, took a break at a small park for a final leg stretch, and then bid our farewells to this beautiful island nation, having experienced some of the best birding Sri Lanka has on offer.

Annotated List of species recorded

Note: Number in brackets () indicate number of days on the tour the species was recorded.
List powered through the report generator of our partner iGoTerra.

Birds (248 in total: 247 seen, 1 heard)

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Gill, F and D Donsker (Eds). 2017. IOC World Bird List (v 7.3).

Status codes: **E** = Endemic, **NE** = Near-endemic, **I** = Introduced

IUCN codes: **CR** = Critically endangered, **EN** = Endangered, **VU** = Vulnerable, **EW** = Extinct in the Wild, **NT** = Near Threatened, **DD** = Data Deficient

Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl Anatidae

Lesser Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna javanica*

(4) 40 Tissamaharama 28.1, 20 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 15 Bundala NP 30.1 and 1 en route 3.2.

Widespread and numerous in larger wetlands.

Cotton Pygmy Goose *Nettapus coromandelianus*
coromandelianus

(1) 6 Tissamaharama 28.1.

We studied a single female with five ducklings in the scope at Debarawewa Lake.

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

(2) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 3 Bundala NP 30.1.

A single female-plumaged bird was seen well among a flock of Lesser Whistling Ducks in Yala NP and three seen briefly again in flight at Bundala NP.

Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies Phasianidae

Sri Lanka Spurfowl (E) *Galloperdix bicalcarata*

(3) Up to 2 Sinharaja NP 1-3.2.

After we heard one or two in the Sinharaja Forest Reserve we were treated to prolonged views as a pair came into a clearing to feed.

Sri Lanka Junglefowl (E)

Gallus lafayettii

(9) 4 Kitulgala 25.1, 4 Kitulgala 26.1, 3 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 5 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and up to 6 Sinharaja NP 31-3.2.

Common and widespread endemic, we heard the distinctive call in many places and saw several of the striking males very close.

Indian Peafowl

Pavo cristatus

(5) 1 heard Kitulgala 26.1, 10 en route 28.1 and 15 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Common and seen in full display at Bundala NP.

Grebes Podicipedidae

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis albescent

(1) 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

Only a single seen distantly on the large lake at Bundala NP.

Storks Ciconiidae

Painted Stork (NT)

Mycteria leucocephala

(4) 15 en route 28.1 and 20 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

This beautiful stork was plentiful in national park wetlands.

Asian Openbill

Anastomus oscitans

(8) 2 en route 24.1, 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Kitulgala 26.1, 5 en route 28.1, 10 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2 and 1 en route 3.2.

Widespread and seen in nearly all wetlands and paddy fields while travelling.

Woolly-necked Stork (VU)

Ciconia episcopus episcopus

(2) 1 en route 28.1 and 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

Only two seen, one en route and another perched in a tall tree at Udawalawe NP.

Ibises and Spoonbills Threskiornithidae

Black-headed Ibis (NT)

Threskiornis melanocephalus

(4) 15 Tissamaharama 28.1, 30 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 en route 3.2.

Common in several wetlands.

Eurasian Spoonbill

Platalea leucorodia leucorodia

(4) 12 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

This striking bird was seen well and close, especially in Yala NP.

Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns Ardeidae

Yellow Bittern

Ixobrychus sinensis

(2) 2 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

Seen exceptionally well in the scope as it sat up in the reeds at Debarawewa Lake.

Cinnamon Bittern

Ixobrychus cinnamomeus

(1) 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

Seen briefly as it disappeared among dense reeds at Bundala NP.

Black Bittern

Dupetor flavicollis flavicollis

(1) 1 Tissamaharama 28.1.

As we were leaving the Debarawewa Lake we spotted one perched up in the reeds from the bus for exceptional views of this secretive species.

Black-crowned Night Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax

(2) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 6 Bundala NP 30.1.

A few sightings.

Striated Heron

Butorides striata javanica

(1) 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

Only a single bird seen in flight at the salt pans in Bundala NP.

Indian Pond Heron

Ardeola Greyii

(6) 5 Nuwara Eliya area 27.1.

The most common and widespread heron.

Eastern Cattle Egret

Bubulcus coromandus

(7) 20 en route 27.1.

Abundant in open areas.

Grey Heron

Ardea cinerea cinerea

(7) 1 en route 24.1, 1 en route 26.1, 2 Nuwara Eliya area 27.1 and 5 Tissamaharama 28.1.

Common with one perched on a bathing water buffalo in Yala NP being especially memorable.

Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea manilensis

(3) 2 Tissamaharama 28.1.

A few seen in larger wetlands, a striking heron.

Great Egret

Ardea alba modesta

Observed 4 days in total.

Common.

Intermediate Egret

Ardea intermedia intermedia

(5) 1 Kitulgala 25.1.

Fairly common, offering great comparisons with previous species.

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta garzetta

(5) 1 Kitulgala 25.1.

Common.

Pelicans *Pelecanidae*

Spot-billed Pelican (NT)

Pelecanus philippensis

(6) 5 en route 24.1, 25 Tissamaharama 28.1, 20 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 en route 3.2.

First seen in the Colombo area and then many, including nesting birds, in Tissamaharama.

Cormorants and Shags *Phalacrocoracidae*

Little Cormorant

Microcarbo niger

(9) 4 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 en route 27.1, 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 en route 3.2.

The most common cormorant of the trip.

Indian Cormorant

Phalacrocorax fuscicollis

(2) 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 10 Bundala NP 30.1.

First seen in Yala NP and again great views in Bundala NP.

Great Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis

(3) 1 en route 24.1 and 2 Bundala NP 30.1.

Uncommon throughout the trip.

Anhingas *Anhingidae*

Oriental Darter (NT)

Anhinga melanogaster

(3) 5 Tissamaharama 28.1, 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 2 Bundala NP 30.1.

Good views in several wetlands.

Hawks, Eagles, and Kites *Accipitridae***Black-winged Kite***Elanus caeruleus vociferus*

(2) 1 en route 26.1 and 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

Seen well as we drove into the highlands from Kithulgala and seen perched in Udawalawe NP.

Crested Honey Buzzard*Pernis ptilorhynchus ruficollis*

(4) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 en route 3.2.

A common and widespread raptor during the trip.

Crested Serpent Eagle*Spilornis cheela spilogaster*

(6) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 en route 26.1, 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1, 1 en route 31.1, 2 Sinharaja NP 2.2 and 8 en route 3.2.

The most numerous raptor during the trip with pairs regularly seen calling and flying high above the forest.

Changeable Hawk-Eagle*Nisaetus cirrhatus ceylanensis*

(5) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 6 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

This large raptor gave especially good views in Yala NP and is always numerous in Udawalawe NP.

Legge's Hawk-Eagle*Nisaetus kelaarti*

(3) 1 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1, 2 Sinharaja NP 1.2 and 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

We enjoyed lengthy scope studies of a perched adult near Nuwara Eliya and then saw up to two per day soaring above the rainforest of Sinharaja.

Rufous-bellied Eagle*Lophotriorchis kienerii kienerii*

(1) 2 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

Brief fly over from the porch at Martin's Lodge Sinharaja.

Black Eagle*Ictinaetus malaiensis perniger*

(4) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 1 en route 31.1 and 1 en route 3.2.

We enjoyed some really good views in Kithulgala of this elegant eagle.

Booted Eagle*Hieraaetus pennatus*

(1) 1 en route 26.1.

During a brief break, we saw a distant light morph bird soaring from the St. Clair Tea Castle.

Crested Goshawk*Accipiter trivirgatus layardi*

(1) 1 Sinharaja NP 31.1.

Brief views of a soaring bird at Sinharaja.

Shikra*Accipiter badius badius*

(5) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Kitulgala 26.1, 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2 and 2 en route 3.2.

Common.

Brahminy Kite*Haliastur indus indus*

(7) 2 en route 24.1, 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 en route 26.1, 1 en route 28.1, 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 4 Bundala NP 30.1.

Common especially around water.

White-bellied Sea Eagle*Haliaeetus leucogaster*

(5) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

We noted several and even saw some of the nests.

Grey-headed Fish Eagle*Haliaeetus ichthyaetus*

(1) 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

We had great close views of an adult that perched on a big limb overhanging the road near the large lake in Bundala NP. Distant views in Udawalawe NP.

Himalayan Buzzard*Buteo burmanicus*

(1) 1 Horton Plains NP 27.1.

We saw a single bird perched distantly and then likely the same individual in flight in Horton Plains NP.

Rails, Gallinules, and Coots *Rallidae*

Slaty-legged Crake

Rallina eurizonoides amauroptera

(2) 1 heard Sinharaja NP 31.1 and 2 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

Fantastic views of not just one, but two individuals during our early morning vigil in the clearing Sinharaja.

White-breasted Waterhen

Amaurornis phoenicurus phoenicurus

(7) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Kitulgala 26.1, 3 en route 27.1, 4 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Common in many habitats.

Watercock

Gallicrex cinerea

(2) 3 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

We saw this species well at Debarawewa Lake and even had good scope studies, all birds were in nonbreeding plumage.

Grey-headed Swampphen

Porphyrio poliocephalus poliocephalus

(3) 10 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Common at Tissamaharama.

Common Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus chloropus

(2) 3 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

Very few noted with the best views at Debarawewa Lake.

Buttonquails *Turnicidae*

Barred Buttonquail

Turnix suscitator leggei

(2) 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 4 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

This buttonquail often shows very well and did again on this trip with clear views on the ground in Yala NP and Udawalawe NP, where one was flushed by the Golden Jackal that trotted down the road.

Thick-knees *Burhinidae*

Indian Stone-curlew

Burhinus indicus

(1) 3 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 2 Bundala NP 30.1.

We found a roosting pair in open grassland for close views and saw them again distantly in Udawalawe NP.

Great Stone-curlew (NT)

Esacus recurvirostris

(3) 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 2 en route 31.1.

Several great views in Yala NP.

Stilts and Avocets *Recurvirostridae*

Black-winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

(4) 2 en route 24.1, 10 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 20 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

A common shorebird in freshwater wetlands.

Plovers and Lapwings *Charadriidae*

Yellow-wattled Lapwing

Vanellus malabaricus

(2) 6 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 4 Bundala NP 30.1.

Good views of several in short grass areas in Yala NP.

Red-wattled Lapwing*Vanellus indicus lankae*

(6) 1 en route 24.1, 2 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 4 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 10 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Common.

Pacific Golden Plover*Pluvialis fulva*

(2) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 4 Bundala NP 30.1.

Good views of singles in Yala NP and seen again in Bundala NP.

Grey Plover*Pluvialis squatarola squatarola*

(2) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 4 Bundala NP 30.1.

This species prefers open mudflats and was uncommon with sightings in Yala and Bundala NP.

Common Ringed Plover*Charadrius hiaticula tundrae*

(1) 2 Bundala NP 30.1.

A pair of these birds was a surprise in Bundala NP, an uncommon species in the area.

Little Ringed Plover*Charadrius dubius jerdoni*

(2) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

Good views of one or two in the main wetlands.

Kentish Plover*Charadrius alexandrinus seebohmii*

(2) 10 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 20 Bundala NP 30.1.

Abundant on saltwater mudflats.

Lesser Sand Plover*Charadrius mongolus atrifrons*

(2) 15 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 30 Bundala NP 30.1.

Large flocks in Bundala NP.

Greater Sand Plover*Charadrius leschenaultii leschenaultii*

(1) 2 Bundala NP 30.1.

We noted two birds among the previous species at Bundala NP.

Jacanas Jacanidae**Pheasant-tailed Jacana***Hydrophasianus chirurgus*

(3) 20 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

It was especially memorable to see large numbers of breeding plumaged birds at Debarawewa Lake with many showing stunning long tails as they picked about the lily pads, one of the group's favorites.

Sandpipers and Allies Scolopacidae**Black-tailed Godwit (NT)***Limosa limosa melanuroides*

(1) 60 Bundala NP 30.1.

Large flocks at Bundala NP.

Ruddy Turnstone*Arenaria interpres interpres*

(1) 5 Bundala NP 30.1.

A few seen among the large concentrations of shorebirds at Bundala NP.

Ruff*Calidris pugnax*

(1) 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

A single bird that was swimming in deeper water confused us at first, but revealed its identity as it flew onto the exposed mud.

Curlew Sandpiper*Calidris ferruginea*

(1) 30 Bundala NP 30.1.

Good-sized flocks at Bundala NP.

Temminck's Stint*Calidris temminckii*

(1) 2 Bundala NP 30.1.

Only two noted among Little Stints in the grassy wetlands along the entrance road to Bundala NP.

Little Stint*Calidris minuta*

(2) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 10 Bundala NP 30.1.

First noted at Yala NP and then numerous at Bundala NP.

Pin-tailed Snipe*Gallinago stenura*

(2) 1 Nuwara Eliya area 28.1 and 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Seen briefly at the race course in Nuwara Eliya.

Common Sandpiper*Actitis hypoleucos*

(3) 2 Nuwara Eliya area 27.1, 5 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 5 Bundala NP 30.1.

Widespread.

Green Sandpiper*Tringa ochropus*

(1) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Only a single noted in a small pond in Yala NP.

Common Redshank*Tringa totanus*

(2) 5 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 50 Bundala NP 30.1.

Abundant in Bundala NP.

Marsh Sandpiper*Tringa stagnatilis*

(2) 3 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 40 Bundala NP 30.1.

Very common in Bundala NP.

Wood Sandpiper*Tringa glareola*

(2) 10 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 10 Bundala NP 30.1.

Fairly common and widespread.

Common Greenshank*Tringa nebularia*

(2) 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 20 Bundala NP 30.1.

Not as numerous, but still noted several especially in Bundala NP where we enjoyed good studies of many shorebird species.

Pratincoles and Coursers Glareolidae**Small Pratincole***Glareola lactea*

(2) 20 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 10 Bundala NP 30.1.

The flock that foraged at dusk as we left Yala NP was memorable as they appeared like nightjars and seen again the following day in Bundala NP roosting on track.

Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers Laridae**Brown-headed Gull***Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus*

(1) 6 Bundala NP 30.1.

A few among terns in Bundala NP.

Gull-billed Tern*Gelochelidon nilotica nilotica*

(3) 4 Tissamaharama 28.1, 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 10 Bundala NP 30.1.

Widespread with many good views.

Caspian Tern*Hydroprogne caspia*

(1) 20 Bundala NP 30.1.

Scoped at Bundala NP.

Greater Crested Tern*Thalasseus bergii velox*

(1) 6 Bundala NP 30.1.

Distant scope views among congregations of terns Bundala NP.

Lesser Crested Tern*Thalasseus bengalensis bengalensis*

(1) 3 Bundala NP 30.1.

Distant scope views among congregations of terns Bundala NP.

Little Tern

Sternula albifrons sinensis

(2) 5 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 20 Bundala NP 30.1.

All small terns identified to this species, with one in breeding plumage at Bundala NP.

Whiskered Tern

Chlidonias hybrida hybrida

(6) 2 en route 24.1, 20 Tissamaharama 28.1, 20 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 en route 3.2.

The most common and widespread tern of the trip.

Pigeons and Doves Columbidae

Rock Dove

Columba livia var. domestica

Observed 1 day in total.

Common.

Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon (VU) (E)

Columba torringtoniae

(2) 5 Horton Plains NP 27.1 and 1 en route 28.1.

We enjoyed great, close views in the early morning on the way to Horton Plains above Nuwara Eliya as the birds descended to the ground to drink. Glimpsed again Surrey Bird Sanctuary.

Eurasian Collared Dove

Streptopelia decaocto decaocto

(1) 4 Bundala NP 30.1.

Uncommon in Sri Lanka and only seen along the entrance road to Bundala NP.

Spotted Dove

Spilopelia chinensis ceylonensis

(10) 4 Kitulgala 25.1.

Abundant.

Common Emerald Dove

Chalcophaps indica robinsoni

(4) 3 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Sinharaja NP 31.1, 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2 and 1 Sinharaja NP 3.2.

Good views in Kithulgala and Sinharaja of this beautiful dove.

Orange-breasted Green Pigeon

Treron bicinctus leggei

(3) 15 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 20 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

Common in Yala NP with close views in excellent light.

Sri Lanka Green Pigeon (E)

Treron pompadora

(6) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 3 Kitulgala 26.1, 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and up to 5 Sinharaja NP 31-2.2.

Not numerous but regularly seen, especially in wetter forest, we finally had good scope views of males in Sinharaja.

Green Imperial Pigeon

Ducula aenea pusilla

(9) 4 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Kitulgala 26.1, 4 Tissamaharama 28.1, 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 1 en route 30.1 and up to 3 Sinharaja NP 31-3.2.

Common and widespread.

Cuckoos Cuculidae

Green-billed Coucal (VU) (E)

Centropus chlororhynchos

(3) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 heard Sinharaja NP 1.2 and 2 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

We managed somewhat obscured, but good views in Kithulgala and had close views of a pair in Sinharaja during our morning vigil at the spurfowl clearing.

Greater Coucal

Centropus sinensis parroti

(7) 2 heard Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Kitulgala 26.1, 1 heard Horton Plains NP 27.1, 1 en route 28.1 and 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Common by voice and seen well especially in Udawalawe NP.

Sirkeer Malkoha

Taccocua leschenaultii leschenaultii

(1) 9 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

We had unprecedented numbers at Udawalawe NP, where many sat up on exposed perches after heavy morning rains, this is often a tricky species to see.

Red-faced Malkoha (VU) (E)

Phaenicophaeus pyrrhocephalus

(1) 3 Sinharaja NP 1.2.

The first large feeding flock we bumped into in the Sinharaja Forest Reserve held one that came right overhead for good views, more seen in the high canopy in the second large feeding flock.

Blue-faced Malkoha

Phaenicophaeus viridirostris

(2) 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 2 Bundala NP 30.1.

Excellent studies of several in three different national parks as birds perched up to dry out, usually also a bit skulky.

Chestnut-winged Cuckoo

Clamator coromandus

(1) 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

Seen by some in Udawalawe NP.

Jacobin Cuckoo

Clamator jacobinus jacobinus

(2) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 4 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 2 Bundala NP 30.1.

Excellent views especially in Udawalawe NP of this distinct cuckoo.

Asian Koel

Eudynamis scolopaceus scolopaceus

(5) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Tissamaharama 28.1, 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 4 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

Heard often and males and females seen well.

Banded Bay Cuckoo

Cacomantis sonneratii waiti

(1) 2 Kitulgala 25.1.

We obtained extended scope studies of two birds calling from a bare tree in the Kithulgala area.

Grey-bellied Cuckoo

Cacomantis passerinus

(2) 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 10 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

Many seen in Udawalawe NP where we seemed to bump into one around each corner, including neat hepatic morph females.

Common Hawk-Cuckoo

Hierococcyx varius ciceliae

(2) 1 heard Kitulgala 25.1 and 1 Kitulgala 26.1.

After hearing it call the previous day we finally tracked it down for scope views, an uncommon bird on this itinerary.

Indian Cuckoo

Cuculus micropterus micropterus

(1) 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

Seen briefly by some in the Sinharaja Forest Reserve.

Barn-Owls Tytonidae

Sri Lanka Bay Owl

Phodilus assimilis assimilis

(1) 1 heard Sinharaja NP 2.2.

Although it called close and for a long time we could not find access or an angle to see it in the dense forest on the steep slope above, incredibly we were able to hear it from the lodge itself.

Owls Strigidae

Serendib Scops Owl (EN) (E)

Otus thilohoffmanni

(1) 1 Sinharaja NP 1.2.

After some searching, the local guides located one on a day roost that we were able to enjoy through the scope in good light. Voted bird of the trip.

Indian Scops Owl

Otus bakkamoena bakkamoena

(1) 1 en route 31.1.

After checking several roost sites we finally struck gold at a house near Udawalawe where one roosted underneath the eave of a house.

Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl*Bubo nipalensis blighi*

(1) 1 Kitulgala 25.1.

A surprise addition to the list especially since it flew in unexpectedly at dusk as we waited on the edge of the forest in Kithulgala. It landed in the tree right above us and we could see it well in the torchlight.

Brown Fish Owl*Ketupa zeylonensis zeylonensis*

(1) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Seen well by all on a day roost in Yala NP.

Brown Wood Owl*Strix leptogrammica ochrogenys*

(1) 1 en route 28.1.

Seen well on a day roost Surrey Bird Sanctuary.

Jungle Owlet*Glaucidium radiatum radiatum*

(1) 2 Tissamaharama 28.1.

A calling pair seen well in a backyard in the Tissamaharama area.

Chestnut-backed Owlet (NT) (E)*Glaucidium castanotum*

(1) 2 Kitulgala 25.1.

One of the first endemics of the tour, we saw a vocal pair well in the scope during our first morning outing in the Kithulgala area.

Brown Hawk-Owl*Ninox scutulata hirsuta*

(2) 1 heard Kitulgala 25.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

Heard well during our evening outing in the Kithulgala area and seen well by some that elected to go out early in Sinharaja.

Frogmouths Podargidae**Sri Lanka Frogmouth***Batrachostomus moniliger moniliger*

(2) 1 Sinharaja NP 31.1 and 2 Sinharaja NP 1.2.

Seen well by some at night in Sinharaja and seen in the scope by all after we located a roosting pair during the day in the Sinharaja Forest Reserve.

Nightjars and Allies Caprimulgidae**Jerdon's Nightjar***Caprimulgus atripennis aequabilis*

(2) 1 heard en route 29.1 and 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

First heard, but we did better the following night with long views in the spotlight of one perched on an exposed branch.

Indian Nightjar*Caprimulgus asiaticus eidos*

(1) 2 en route 29.1.

Calling birds seen just after dark near Yala NP.

Treeswifts Hemiprocnidae**Crested Treeswift***Hemiproctne coronata*

(6) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 30 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1, 5 Sinharaja NP 31.1, 5 Sinharaja NP 2.2 and 5 en route 3.2.

This stunning species was common.

Swifts Apodidae**Indian Swiftlet***Aerodramus unicolor*

(5) 30 Kitulgala 25.1, 20 Kitulgala 26.1, 10 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 10 en route 3.2.

Abundant, the most common swift.

Brown-backed Needletail

Hirundapus giganteus indicus

(2) 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 2 Sinharaja NP 31.1.

Seen briefly flying high over Udawalawe NP with better views above Sinharaja.

Asian Palm Swift

Cypsiurus balasiensis balasiensis

(5) 1 en route 24.1, 2 Sinharaja NP 2.2 and 2 en route 3.2.

Not numerous but seen in many locations.

Little Swift

Apus affinis singalensis

(6) 20 Kitulgala 25.1, 5 Kitulgala 26.1, 10 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 2 en route 31.1 and 10 en route 3.2.

Common.

Trogon Trogonidae

Malabar Trogon

Harpactes fasciatus fasciatus

(2) 4 Sinharaja NP 1.2 and 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

We enjoyed repeated scope views of males and females accompanying some of the larger feeding flocks in the Sinharaja Forest Reserve.

Rollers Coraciidae

Indian Roller

Coracias benghalensis indicus

(5) 1 en route 28.1, 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 1 en route 31.1.

Relatively common in open areas.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae

Stork-billed Kingfisher

Pelargopsis capensis capensis

(4) 1 heard Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Kitulgala 26.1, 1 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 3.2.

The best views were at Debarawewa Lake, where one perched right in front of us for scope views.

White-throated Kingfisher

Halcyon smyrnensis fusca

(7) 2 en route 24.1, 4 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Tissamaharama 28.1, 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 1 en route 3.2.

Common

Common Kingfisher

Alcedo atthis taprobana

(3) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

Best seen in Yala NP.

Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher

Ceyx erithaca erithaca

(1) 1 Sinharaja NP 31.1.

Wow, one came flying in and even landed on the edge of some cane for long binocular views showing off its stunning colours, a tiny kingfisher that usually just zips past like a bullet.

Pied Kingfisher

Ceryle rudis leucomelanurus

(4) 1 Tissamaharama 28.1, 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 4 Bundala NP 30.1 and 1 en route 31.1.

Many close views and photo opportunities in Bundala NP.

Bee-eaters Meropidae

Green Bee-eater

Merops orientalis ceylonicus

(4) 4 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 30 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

We never tired of them although the species lined the roads in Yala NP.

Blue-tailed Bee-eater

Merops philippinus

(9) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 4 Tissamaharama 28.1, 10 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and up to 2 Sinharaja

NP 1-3.2.

Common and widespread.

Chestnut-headed Bee-eater

Merops leschenaulti leschenaulti

(3) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 5 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Best seen in Yala NP, the least common bee-eater of the trip.

Hoopoes Upupidae

Eurasian Hoopoe

Upupa epops ceylonensis

(2) 3 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

Good, repeated views in Yala NP of this neat species, including a pair foraging on the ground.

Hornbills Bucerotidae

Malabar Pied Hornbill (NT)

Anthracoceros coronatus

(2) 6 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 12 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

One fig tree in Udawalawe NP held at least ten, also many good views in Yala NP.

Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill (E)

Ocyrceros gingalensis

(6) 2 Kitulgala 26.1, 4 en route 28.1 and up to 2 Sinharaja NP 31-3.2.

Fairly common and widespread with super close views in Surrey Bird Sanctuary.

Asian Barbets Megalaimidae

Brown-headed Barbet

Psilopogon zeylanicus zeylanicus

(4) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 en route 28.1 and 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Uncommon, but seen well.

Yellow-fronted Barbet (E)

Psilopogon flavifrons

(7) 5 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 heard Kitulgala 26.1, 1 en route 28.1 and up to 10 Sinharaja NP 31-3.2.

Abundant in wetter forest.

Crimson-fronted Barbet (E)

Psilopogon rubricapillus

(3) 3 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Sinharaja NP 31.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

Not common, but we scoped a close, calling pair in Kithulgala.

Coppersmith Barbet

Psilopogon haemacephalus indicus

(4) 1 heard en route 28.1, 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 4 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 2 en route 31.1.

This colourful, small barbet was best seen in Udawalawe NP.

Woodpeckers Picidae

Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker

Yungipicus nanus gymnophthalmos

(2) 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

We saw two pairs in Yala NP and another in a nesting hole Sinharaja.

Yellow-crowned Woodpecker

Leiopicus mahrattensis mahrattensis

(2) 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

Good views in Yala NP in the first large clearing and luckily we had another female in Udawalawe for those that missed it earlier.

Lesser Yellownape

Picus chlorolophus wellsi

(3) 4 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Sinharaja NP 1.2 and 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

Good views of this distinctive subspecies in Kithulgala. This woodpecker usually accompanies feeding flocks.

Red-backed Flameback (E)

Dinopium psarodes

(3) 4 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Kitulgala 26.1 and 1 Tissamaharama 28.1.

Common and widespread with several scope views especially on a fence post in Kithulgala.

Crimson-backed Flameback (E)

Chrysocolaptes stricklandi

(4) 1 heard Nuwara Eliya area 26.1, 1 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 2 Sinharaja NP 31.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 3.2.

After we scoped a distant individual in Horton Plains NP we managed long and close views of a pair in Sinharaja, a memorable endemic.

White-naped Woodpecker

Chrysocolaptes festivus tantus

(1) 2 Tissamaharama 28.1.

We made a dash to the stake-out in the evening and were rewarded with a pair at its nest hole that we could scope for many minutes and enjoyed watching interactions with Rose-ringed Parakeets and a Red-backed Flameback that all showed interest in the nesting cavity.

Falcons and Caracaras *Falconidae*

Common Kestrel

Falco tinnunculus

(1) 1 en route 29.1.

Very brief flyby at dusk as we left Yala NP.

Old World Parrots *Psittaculidae*

Plum-headed Parakeet

Psittacula cyanocephala

(2) 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 2 Sinharaja NP 31.1.

Seen by some in Udawalawe and scope views for all perched on a palm in the Kudawa Village, Sinharaja.

Layard's Parakeet (E)

Psittacula calthrapae

(2) 1 Kitulgala 25.1 and 4 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

Our best views were of an individual feeding close to the track in Kithulgala.

Alexandrine Parakeet (NT)

Psittacula eupatria eupatria

(2) 2 Kitulgala 25.1 and 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

Flight views first and then seen perched at a distance in Udawalawe NP.

Rose-ringed Parakeet

Psittacula krameri manillensis

(4) 10 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 20 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Common and widespread.

Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot (E)

Loriculus beryllinus

(7) 10 Kitulgala 25.1, 5 Kitulgala 26.1, 1 en route 28.1, 1 Sinharaja NP 31.1, 6 Sinharaja NP 2.2 and 4 Sinharaja NP 3.2.

This endemic parrot often shot past like green bullets, but we had one feeding in a fruiting tree right next to us in Kithulgala.

Pittas *Pittidae*

Indian Pitta

Pitta brachyura

(4) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 3 Nuwara Eliya area 27.1, 1 heard en route 29.1 and 2 heard Udawalawe NP 30.1.

We saw one for several minutes as it landed in a tree right above us at dusk at the forest edge at Kithulgala with more good sightings on the trail in Victoria Park.

Woodshrikes and allies *Tephrodornithidae*

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike

Hemipus picatus leggei

(5) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 4 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1 and up to 2 Sinharaja NP 31-2.2.

An uncommon member of several feeding flocks.

Sri Lanka Woodshrike (E)

Tephrodornis affinis

(1) 6 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

We enjoyed several good sightings in Yala NP of small family groups, this endemic is essentially restricted to the dry zone of Sri Lanka.

Woodswallows, butcherbirds and allies *Artamidae*

Ashy Woodswallow

Artamus fuscus

(1) 1 en route 3.2.

Brief views en route back to Colombo.

Ioras *Aegithinidae*

Common Iora

Aegithina tiphia multicolor

(7) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Kitulgala 26.1, 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1, 1 Sinharaja NP 1.2 and 2 Sinharaja NP 3.2.

Seen well in several flocks.

Marshall's Iora

Aegithina nigrolutea

(2) 6 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

We enjoyed especially good views around the picnic site in Yala NP, an uncommon species in Sri Lanka, but two pairs flitted around us.

Cuckoo-shrikes *Campephagidae*

Black-headed Cuckooshrike

Coracina melanoptera sykesi

(2) 1 Kitulgala 25.1 and 1 Kitulgala 26.1.

Brief views of a male high up in a tree in Kithulgala.

Small Minivet

Pericrocotus cinnamomeus cinnamomeus

(4) 2 Tissamaharama 28.1, 6 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 4 Sinharaja NP 31.1.

Seen well in dry forest sites.

Orange Minivet

Pericrocotus flammeus

(8) 4 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 2 en route 28.1, 6 Sinharaja NP 31.1 and 4 Sinharaja NP 3.2.

More common than previous species and seen well perched in tall trees.

Shrikes *Laniidae*

Brown Shrike

Lanius cristatus cristatus

(8) 1 Kitulgala 26.1, 1 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 1 Nuwara Eliya area 28.1, 6 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

Widespread and common.

Old World Orioles *Oriolidae*

Black-hooded Oriole

Oriolus xanthornus ceylonensis

(8) 3 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Kitulgala 26.1, 2 en route 28.1, 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1, 1 Sinharaja NP 1.2 and 2 en route 3.2.

Good views of this stunning species in several locations.

Drongos *Dicruridae*

White-bellied Drongo

Dicrurus caerulescens leucopygialis

(8) 10 Kitulgala 25.1, 4 Kitulgala 26.1, 2 en route 28.1, up to 2 Sinharaja NP 31-2.2 and 2 en route 3.2. Common.

Sri Lanka Drongo (E)*Dicrurus lophorinus*

(4) Up to 4 Sinharaja NP 31-3.2.

Good views of this vocal drongo in the Sinharaja area.

Fantails *Rhipiduridae***White-browed Fantail***Rhipidura aureola compressirostris*

(3) 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 1 en route 31.1.

Best seen in Yala NP where this active species flitted through low woodlands, often accompanying feeding flocks.

Monarch Flycatchers *Monarchidae***Black-naped Monarch***Hypothymis azurea ceylonensis*

(3) Up to 1 Sinharaja NP 31-2.2.

Only a few seen in Sinharaja.

Indian Paradise Flycatcher*Terpsiphone paradisi*

(8) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Kitulgala 26.1, 1 Tissamaharama 28.1, 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and up to 2 Sinharaja NP 31-2.2.

Fairly common and we enjoyed studies of white morph males in the scope.

Crows, Jays, and Magpies *Corvidae***Sri Lanka Blue Magpie (VU) (E)***Urocissa ornata*

(3) Up to 3 Sinharaja NP 1-3.2.

We observed some near an active nest in Sinharaja and then had exceptionally close views at our accommodations in Sinharaja.

House Crow*Corvus splendens protegatus*

Observed 1 day in total.

Common and widespread in lowlands.

Indian Jungle Crow*Corvus culminatus*

Observed 1 day in total.

Abundant.

Fairy Flycatchers *Stenostiridae***Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher***Culicicapa ceylonensis ceylonensis*

(2) 2 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1 and 1 Horton Plains NP 27.1.

Seen in the highlands of Sri Lanka with good views near Nuwara Eliya.

Chickadees and Tits *Paridae***Cinereous Tit***Parus cinereus mahrattarum*

(3) 2 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1 and 2 en route 27.1.

Several sightings around Nuwara Eliya.

Larks *Alaudidae***Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark***Eremopterix griseus*

(3) 40 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 10 Udawalawe NP 30.1, 2 Bundala NP 30.1 and 4 en route 31.1.

We saw flocks of them in Yala NP and Udawalawe with many males in breeding plumage.

Jerdon's Bush Lark*Mirafrja affinis*

(3) 8 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 20 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 6 en route 31.1.

Birds were showing well and in full display, including an active nest in Yala NP and then again abundant in Udawalawe NP.

Oriental Skylark

Alauda gulgula gulgula

(1) 2 Bundala NP 30.1.

We heard the beautiful song in Bundala NP and eventually scoped the pair along the edge of the salt pans.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

Black-capped Bulbul (E)

Pycnonotus melanicterus

(5) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Kitulgala 26.1 and up to 2 Sinharaja NP 1-3.2.

Surprisingly uncommon during the tour, but we found a nest building pair near the restaurant at our accommodations in Kithulgala and had more views in the Sinharaja area.

Red-vented Bulbul

Pycnonotus cafer haemorrhousus

Observed 11 days in total.

Abundant.

Yellow-eared Bulbul (NT) (E)

Pycnonotus penicillatus

(2) 2 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1 and 20 Horton Plains NP 27.1.

Many excellent views in Horton Plains NP.

White-browed Bulbul

Pycnonotus luteolus insulae

(5) 1 Kitulgala 26.1, 6 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1, 1 en route 31.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

More common in drier habitats with several good views in Yala NP.

Yellow-browed Bulbul

Acritillas indica

(5) 6 Kitulgala 25.1 and up to 10 Sinharaja NP 31-3.2.

Widespread in wetter forest.

Square-tailed Bulbul

Hypsipetes ganeesa humii

(6) 30 Kitulgala 25.1 and up to 30 Sinharaja NP 1-3.2.

Abundant in wetter forest.

Swallows Hirundinidae

Sand Martin

Riparia riparia taczanowskii

(1) 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

A rare bird in Sri Lanka, but we had a single individual fly right past us at the salt pans in Bundala NP.

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

(8) 5 Horton Plains NP 27.1.

A common and widespread migrant in all habitats.

Hill Swallow

Hirundo domicola

(2) 3 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1 and 10 Horton Plains NP 27.1.

Excellent views near our hotel in Nuwara Eliya and seen again in Horton Plains NP.

Red-rumped Swallow

Cecropis daurica erythropygia

(2) 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 2 en route 31.1.

Another scarce migrant to Sri Lanka we had first distant views in Udawalawe NP and saw them again closer the following morning.

Sri Lanka Swallow

Cecropis hyperythra

(4) 4 Kitulgala 25.1, 4 Kitulgala 26.1, 2 en route 31.1 and 10 en route 3.2.

Seen well several times, but many noted during our final day en route to Colombo.

Leaf-Warblers Phylloscopidae

Green Warbler*Phylloscopus nitidus*

(4) 1 Horton Plains NP 27.1 and up to 1 Sinharaja NP 1-3.2.

Heard often and occasionally seen, with our best views in Horton Plains NP.

Large-billed Leaf Warbler*Phylloscopus magnirostris*

(4) 1 heard Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1, 1 heard Horton Plains NP 27.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 1.2.

Good studies of this vocally distinct bird, especially the first one we saw outside of Nuwara Eliya.

Reed-Warblers and Allies *Acrocephalidae***Clamorous Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus stentoreus meridionalis*

(1) 4 Bundala NP 30.1.

Excellent views as they clambered among the reeds along the entrance road to Bundala NP.

Blyth's Reed Warbler*Acrocephalus dumetorum*

(5) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Kitulgala 26.1, 1 Nuwara Eliya area 27.1, 1 Nuwara Eliya area 28.1 and 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

The most common migrant warbler.

Grassbirds and Allies *Locustellidae***Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler***Locustella certhiola*

(1) 1 Nuwara Eliya

Sri Lanka Bush Warbler (E)*Elaphrornis palliseri*

(2) 1 heard Nuwara Eliya area 26.1 and 4 Horton Plains NP 27.1.

We managed very good views of this skulky species along the side of the main road through Horton Plains NP.

Cisticolas and Allies *Cisticolidae***Zitting Cisticola***Cisticola juncidis*

(4) 2 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 1 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 1 Bundala NP 30.1.

Calling birds seen at our picnic spot in Horton Plains and again outside of Udawalawe NP.

Grey-breasted Prinia*Prinia hodgsonii pectoralis*

(4) 2 Tissamaharama 28.1, 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 2 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 1 en route 31.1.

First noted during a brief stop on the way to the Tissamaharama area and seen very well again at our picnic stop in Yala NP.

Jungle Prinia*Prinia sylvatica valida*

(2) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

A vocal bird was seen well by all in Yala NP.

Ashy Prinia*Prinia socialis brevicauda*

(4) 2 Nuwara Eliya area 27.1, 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 2 en route 31.1.

The most widespread prinia.

Plain Prinia*Prinia inornata insularis*

(5) 1 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1, 1 Tissamaharama 28.1, 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 4 en route 31.1.

Common in shrubby habitats.

Common Tailorbird*Orthotomus sutorius*

(6) 4 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 3.2.

Common, with the lowland and highland subspecies noted.

Babblers *Timaliidae***Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler (E)***Pomatorhinus melanurus*

(3) 1 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1, 2 Horton Plains NP 27.1 and 4 heard Sinharaja NP 1.2.

This vocal species was best seen in Horton Plains NP where a pair approached us closely.

Tawny-bellied Babbler*Dumetia hyperythra phillipsi*

(1) 6 Kitulgala 26.1.

Good views in Kithulgala near the grassy patch and again across the river from our accommodations.

Dark-fronted Babbler*Rhopocichla atriceps*

(3) 3 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 1.2.

Best seen in Kithulgala where three skulking birds eventually revealed themselves.

Fulvettas and Ground Babblers *Pellorneidae***Brown-capped Babbler (E)***Pellorneum fuscicapillus*

(3) 1 heard Kitulgala 25.1, 1 heard Kitulgala 26.1 and 2 en route 28.1.

Only a single pair seen, but well, in Surrey Bird Sanctuary.

Laughingthrushes *Leiothrichidae***Orange-billed Babbler (NT) (E)***Turdoides rufescens*

(5) 12 Kitulgala 25.1 and 20 Sinharaja NP 1.2.

This endemic was very common in Kithulgala and Sinharaja and during our first morning in Kithulgala offered great direct comparisons with species below.

Yellow-billed Babbler*Turdoides affinis taprobanus*

(8) 20 Kitulgala 25.1 and 15 Sinharaja NP 3.2.

Common and conspicuous in open habitats.

Ashy-headed Laughingthrush (VU) (E)*Garrulax cinereifrons*

(2) 8 Sinharaja NP 1.2 and 2 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

The first large flock in Sinharaja held several of these large and noisy laughingthrushes that all of a sudden were clambering about the undergrowth right next to us for great views. Also seen at the spurfowl clearing where one perched briefly on the telephone wires!

Old World Warblers *Sylviidae***Yellow-eyed Babbler***Chrysomma sinense nasale*

Observed 1 day in total.

Seen in Bundala NP and then quite common in Udawalawe NP.

Yuhinas, White-eyes, and Allies *Zosteropidae***Oriental White-eye***Zosterops palpebrosus egregius*

(6) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Kitulgala 26.1, 2 en route 28.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

Fairly common in lowland sites and occurring side by side with following species in Sinharaja.

Sri Lanka White-eye (E)*Zosterops ceylonensis*

(4) 20 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1, 20 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 1 Sinharaja NP 31.1 and 6 Sinharaja NP 1.2.

Abundant in Horton Plains NP where we encountered several roving flocks.

Nuthatches *Sittidae***Velvet-fronted Nuthatch***Sitta frontalis frontalis*

(6) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1, 1 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 1 Sinharaja NP 31.1, 1 Sinharaja NP 1.2 and 1 Sinharaja NP 3.2.

Occasionally noted in feeding flocks.

Starlings *Sturnidae***Sri Lanka Hill Myna (NT) (E)***Gracula ptilogenys*

(3) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Kitulgala 26.1 and 2 Sinharaja NP 1.2.

Our first full day in Kithulgala ended with scope views of this endemic.

Southern Hill Myna*Gracula indica*

(2) 3 Kitulgala 25.1.

Best scope views in Kithulgala, where we could compare it directly with previous species.

Common Myna*Acridotheres tristis melanosternus*

Observed 1 day in total.

Widespread.

Brahminy Starling*Sturnia pagodarum*

(1) 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Uncommon during our visit, with a single close sighting in Yala NP.

White-faced Starling (E)*Sturnornis albofrontatus*

(2) 8 Sinharaja NP 1.2 and 6 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

Proved to be quite numerous during our visit to the Sinharaja area with excellent views especially from the porch at Martin's Lodge.

Thrushes and Allies *Turdidae***Pied Thrush***Geokichla wardii*

(1) 4 Nuwara Eliya area 27.1.

After waiting for some time suddenly at least four males appeared, sitting up in trees for good scope views, an absolutely stunning migrant to Sri Lanka.

Spot-winged Thrush (E)*Geokichla spiloptera*

(3) Up to 2 Sinharaja NP 1-3.2.

Confiding in Sinharaja.

Sri Lanka Thrush (NT) (E)*Zoothera imbricata*

(2) 1 Sinharaja NP 1.2 and 1 Sinharaja NP 2.2.

During our first morning in Sinharaja we located a calling bird along the stream and after a fifteen-minute wait had clear, good views of it perched on a branch at eye level. This can be a difficult bird to get a good view of, but everyone in the group had close looks.

Indian Blackbird*Turdus simillimus kinnisii*

(2) 1 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1 and 2 Horton Plains NP 27.1.

This can be a surprisingly tricky bird to get good views of, but staking out a particular patch in Horton Plains NP rewarded us with great views.

Old World Flycatchers *Muscicapidae***Indian Robin***Copsychus fulicatus leucopterus*

(3) 1 en route 28.1 and 20 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

This bird proved almost abundant in the open grasslands and shrubland of Yala NP.

Oriental Magpie-Robin*Copsychus saularis ceylonensis*

(6) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 4 Nuwara Eliya area 27.1 and 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Fairly common.

White-rumped Shama*Copsychus malabaricus leggei*

(1) 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Two vocal birds were seen well in Yala NP by some in the group.

Asian Brown Flycatcher*Muscicapa dauurica poonensis*

(2) 1 Kitulgala 25.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 31.1.

Occasionally seen, this migrant prefers more open forest or forest edge.

Brown-breasted Flycatcher

Muscicapa muttui

(7) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Nuwara Eliya area 27.1, 1 en route 28.1 and up to 2 Sinharaja NP 31-3.2.
Common in denser forest.

Tickell's Blue Flycatcher

Cyornis tickelliae jerdoni

(2) 1 Kitulgala 25.1 and 1 en route 28.1.

Best seen in the tall bamboo right next to the restaurant at our Kithulgala accommodations.

Dull-blue Flycatcher (NT) (E)

Eumyias sordidus

(2) 2 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1 and 4 Horton Plains NP 27.1.

Several excellent views especially in Horton Plains where we scoped calling birds.

Indian Blue Robin

Larvivora brunnea brunnea

(1) 1 Nuwara Eliya area 27.1.

We found a confiding female in Victoria Park.

Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush (EN) (E)

Myophonus blighi

(1) 1 Nuwara Eliya area 26.1.

Our wait paid off when the male came out of the thickets to perch on an open branch twice right at dusk, everyone had quick but good looks.

Kashmir Flycatcher (VU)

Ficedula subrubra

(1) 1 Nuwara Eliya area 27.1.

After a long search, we found a male perched on the edge of the creek in Victoria Park for good scope views.

Pied Bush Chat

Saxicola caprata atratus

(3) 6 Horton Plains NP 27.1 and 2 Nuwara Eliya area 28.1.

Common on Horton Plains where they sat up in the grasslands during our visit and enjoyed the unusually mild and dry weather.

Leafbirds Chloropseidae

Jerdon's Leafbird

Chloropsis jerdoni

(1) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Uncommon with only single sightings in Yala NP, but everyone had at least one view.

Golden-fronted Leafbird

Chloropsis aurifrons insularis

(3) 5 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Kitulgala 26.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 1.2.

Common in the Kithulgala area where we enjoyed several scope studies.

Flowerpeckers Dicaeidae

Thick-billed Flowerpecker

Dicaeum agile zeylonicum

(1) 1 Udawalawe NP 30.1.

A single seen high in the fruiting fig tree in Udawalawe NP.

Legge's Flowerpecker (NT) (E)

Dicaeum vincens

(2) 1 Kitulgala 25.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 1.2.

Only one seen, but we saw it well in the scope across the Kelani river in Kithulgala. Brief fly by in Sinharaja.

Pale-billed Flowerpecker

Dicaeum erythrorhynchos ceylonense

(6) 1 Kitulgala 25.1, 2 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and up to 1 Sinharaja NP 1-3.2.

Common especially by voice.

Sunbirds and Spiderhunters Nectariniidae

Purple-rumped Sunbird*Leptocoma zeylonica zeylonica*

(9) 6 Kitulgala 25.1 and 2 Kitulgala 26.1.

The most common and widespread sunbird.

Purple Sunbird*Cinnyris asiaticus asiaticus*

(4) 1 en route 26.1.

Common in Yala NP where many came to a stand of flowering shrubs at our picnic spot.

Loten's Sunbird*Cinnyris lotenius lotenius*

(4) 2 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 en route 26.1 and 2 Horton Plains NP 27.1.

This sunbird with its oversized bill showed very well several times.

Old World Sparrows *Passeridae***House Sparrow***Passer domesticus indicus*

Observed 1 day in total.

Widespread in towns and even the small picnic spot in the middle of Yala NP.

Weavers and Allies *Ploceidae***Streaked Weaver***Ploceus manyar flaviceps*

(1) 3 Tissamaharama 28.1.

Distant views in reed beds in Tissamaharama, an uncommon bird in Sri Lanka.

Baya Weaver*Ploceus philippinus philippinus*

(1) 6 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

We saw them well near their nests at a small colony in Yala NP, including a stunning male in full breeding plumage that was busy weaving and calling.

Waxbills and Allies *Estrildidae***Indian Silverbill***Euodice malabarica*

(1) 4 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

Some of us saw them very well in Yala NP as they fed on grass seeds right next to the track.

White-rumped Munia*Lonchura striata striata*

(5) 6 Kitulgala 25.1, 1 Kitulgala 26.1, 2 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1, 4 Sinharaja NP 31.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 3.2.

First seen very well in Kithulgala with the occasional sighting after that.

Scaly-breasted Munia*Lonchura punctulata punctulata*

(4) 4 Tissamaharama 28.1, 40 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 6 Sinharaja NP 31.1.

The most numerous and common munia.

Black-throated Munia*Lonchura kelaarti kelaarti*

(5) 2 heard Horton Plains NP 27.1 and up to 6 Sinharaja NP 31-3.2.

We searched for them around the Nuwara Eliya area without success and then had several great sightings of this localised munia around Sinharaja with some building nests.

Tricolored Munia*Lonchura malacca*

(3) 5 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 2 Tissamaharama 28.1 and 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

A small flock landed near us while we staked out Indian Blackbirds in Horton Plains NP.

Wagtails and Pipits *Motacillidae***Forest Wagtail***Dendronanthus indicus*

(1) 5 Horton Plains NP 27.1.

We had excellent views of several in Victoria Park, Nuwara Eliya with lengthy studies of individuals foraging along the creek.

Western Yellow Wagtail*Motacilla flava*

(2) 20 Udawalawe NP 30.1 and 2 Bundala NP 30.1.

Large numbers on the edge of the reservoir in Udawalawe NP.

Grey Wagtail*Motacilla cinerea cinerea*

(4) 1 en route 31.1.

Widespread.

Paddyfield Pipit*Anthus rufulus*

(5) 3 Horton Plains NP 27.1, 3 Nuwara Eliya area 28.1 and 6 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1.

A common pipit of open grasslands.

Blyth's Pipit*Anthus godlewskii*

(2) 1 Yala NP - Buthawa Wewa 29.1 and 1 Sinharaja NP 31.1.

Seen by some in Yala NP and scoped again in the morning outside Udawalawe NP.

Mammals (19 in total: 19 seen)**Status codes:** E = Endemic, NE = Near-endemic, I = Introduced**IUCN codes:** CR = Critically endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, EW = Extinct in the Wild, NT = Near Threatened, DD = Data Deficient**Elephants *Elephantidae*****Asian Elephant***Elephas maximus maximus*

Observed 3 days in total.

Old World monkeys *Cercopithecidae***Toque Macaque***Macaca sinica*

Observed 2 days in total.

Tufted Grey Langur*Semnopithecus priam thersites*

Observed 3 days in total.

Purple-faced Langur*Trachypithecus vetulus*

Observed 2 days in total.

Rabbits, Hares *Leporidae***Indian Hare***Lepus nigricollis*

Observed 2 days in total.

Squirrels *Sciuridae***Layard's Palm Squirrel***Funambulus layardi*

Observed 3 days in total.

Common Palm Squirrel*Funambulus palmarum*

Observed 3 days in total.

Dusky-striped Squirrel*Funambulus sublineatus*

Observed 2 days in total.

Grizzled Giant Squirrel*Ratufa macroura*

Observed 2 days in total.

Cats *Felidae***Rusty-spotted Cat***Prionailurus rubiginosus*

Observed 1 day in total.

The mammal highlight of the trip, seen close to the road as we left Yala NP after dark.

Mongoosees *Herpestidae*

Indian Brown Mongoose

Herpestes fuscus

Observed 1 day in total.

Ruddy Mongoose

Herpestes smithii

Observed 3 days in total.

Stripe-necked Mongoose

Herpestes vitticollis

Observed 1 day in total.

Wolves, Coyote, Foxes, Jackals *Canidae*

Golden Jackal

Canis aureus

Observed 1 day in total.

Pigs *Suidae*

Wild Boar

Sus scrofa

Observed 2 days in total.

Deer *Cervidae*

Chital

Axis axis

Observed 1 day in total.

Sambar

Rusa unicolor

Observed 1 day in total.

Cattle, Antelopes, Sheep, Goats *Bovidae*

Domestic Water Buffalo

Bubalus bubalis

Observed 3 days in total.

Old World Fruit Bats *Pteropodidae*

Indian Flying Fox

Pteropus giganteus

Observed 1 day in total.

Reptiles (11 in total: 11 seen)

Status codes: E = Endemic, NE = Near-endemic, I = Introduced

IUCN codes: CR = Critically endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, EW = Extinct in the Wild, NT = Near Threatened, DD = Data Deficient

Tortoises *Testudinidae*

Indian Star Tortoise

Geochelone elegans

Observed 1 day in total.

Agamas *Agamidae*

Common Green Forest Lizard

Calotes calotes

Observed 2 days in total.

Mountain Horned Agama (E)

Ceratophora stoddartii

Observed 1 day in total.

Lyre Head Lizard (E)

Lyriocephalus scutatus

Observed 1 day in total.

Wiegmann's Agama (E)

Otocryptis wiegmanni

Observed 2 days in total.

Geckos Gekkonidae

Common House Gecko

Hemidactylus frenatus

Observed 2 days in total.

Monitor Lizards Varanidae

Bengal Monitor

Varanus bengalensis bengalensis

Observed 1 day in total.

Water Monitor

Varanus salvator salvator

Observed 1 day in total.

Colubrid snakes Colubridae

Green Vine Snake

Oxybelis fulgidus

Observed 1 day in total.

Oriental Rat-snake

Ptyas mucosa

Observed 1 day in total.

Crocodiles and relatives Crocodylidae

Mugger Crocodile

Crocodylus palustris

Observed 3 days in total.

Rockjumper Birding Ltd
Vanilla Village, Royal Road
Black River
Mauritius

Tel: (USA & Canada) toll-free: 1-888-990-5552
Email: info@rockjumperbirding.com
Alternative email: rockjumperbirding@yahoo.com
Website: www.rockjumperbirding.com