

# Wise Birding Holidays

Bird and mammal watching tours



## SRI LANKA: Endemic Birds, Bears and Whales

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December - Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2015

**Tour Participants:** John Tomsett, Janina Tomsett, Keith Myatt, Sue Healey and Peter Alfrey

**Leaders:** Chris Townend & Upali Ekanayake

### HIGHLIGHTS OF TRIP

**Sloth Bear:** A wonderful surprise on our first evening in Yala NP as a large male walked down the dirt road towards us in the late afternoon light.

**Serendib Scops Owl:** Great views of this mythical owl day roosting in the Sinharaja Forest was certainly one of the tour highlights.

**Jungle Cat:** A day sighting in Uda Walawe NP and a night sighting near Yala NP were both excellent encounters allowing for good views and photographic opportunities.

**Bryde's Whale:** A whale watching boat from Mirissa gave us excellent views of three animals as well as a small group of Spinner Dolphins.

**Sri Lanka Spurfowl:** Seeing both male and female birds at very close range in the Sinharaja Forest was a real treat for what is often a very difficult species to see.

**Food:** No trip to Sri Lanka can pass without reference to the fantastic and varied food that is always so well presented and tastes delicious!



**Male Sloth Bear, Yala NP and Male Sri Lanka Spurfowl, Sinharaja Forest**

*Despite being plagued by unseasonal heavy rain during our first week which caused us to miss some endemic birds, this was a fantastic tour packed with fabulous birds, wonderful mammals, amazing reptiles, colourful butterflies, fantastic food and beautiful landscapes.*

### **Friday 4th December**

We arrived into a pleasantly warm Colombo airport greeted by our first Common Mynas and House Crows before heading north to Waikkal for our first night. We arrived at the hotel crossing the River Gin on the small ferry and were greeted with a cool drink before checking into our rooms. John and Janina had already acclimatised to Sri Lanka's climate, having arrived ahead of the tour a few days earlier.

A short stroll along the beach and adjacent river allowed time to see a few birds before dinner. Highlights included Black-crowned Night Heron, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, White-breasted Waterfowl, Red Wattled Lapwing, Pied and White-breasted Kingfishers. On the beach a lovely flock of Lesser Sandplovers had at least one Greater Sandplover amongst them as well as Sanderling. As we headed back to the hotel at dusk a few Indian Flying Foxes flew overhead. All in all, a pleasant and relaxing start to the tour!

### **Saturday 5th December**

The early birders, (Keith and Sue) enjoyed views of a Slaty-legged Crake in the glimmers of dawn. We then started the day with a very relaxing boat trip which started the bird trip list off well with a number of the commoner, but nonetheless stunning species with some great views too! Highlights included Yellow Bittern, Blyth's Reed Warbler, Shikra, Indian Thick-Knee, Lesser Sri Lanka Flameback, Blue-tailed Bee-Eater, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Purple-rumped Sunbird, Western Koel, Red-vented Bulbul, Oriental Magpie-Robin, Indian Swiftlet, Oriental Darter, Little and Indian Cormorants and a White-bellied Sea Eagle. Not a bad start before breakfast!

During breakfast we were entertained by the numerous Palm Squirrels in the hotel garden! After breakfast some of the group returned to the beach briefly where a impressive mixed tern flock included Greater Crested Tern, Lesser Crested Tern, Common Tern, Little Tern and Gull-billed Tern. Nearby we enjoyed more views of both Lesser and Greater Sandplover. We then packed and headed east towards Kitulgala. En route we saw our first White-bellied Drongo and a quick roadside stop produced good scope views of Ashy Woodswallow, Asian Openbill plus numerous Cattle Egrets.

We arrived in time for lunch at our picturesque hotel located with a wonderful view across the Kelani River. It was a very relaxing affair with a wonderful selection of local food as a Black Eagle and Alexandrine Parakeets tempted us away from the lunch table and out into the gardens! After lunch, we headed out to explore the forest edge but no sooner had we set out than the rain started! It was pretty heavy, so we waited back at the hotel for it to stop before venturing back out. By late afternoon, the rain finally stopped and as if by magic, two endemics appeared! A couple of Sri Lanka Grey Hornbills and a flock of Sri Lanka Green Pigeons both sat in roadside trees. We then took a walk along small path to an open area on the edge of the forest. Here, Yellow-billed Babblers, Green Leaf-Warbler and Asian Brown Flycatcher all gave good views along with our next endemics, an Emerald-collared (Layard's) Parakeet seen in flight, numerous Sri Lanka Hanging Parrots, a group of Orange-billed Babblers and then at dusk we finally tracked down a calling Chestnut-backed Owlet to finish the day.

### **Sunday 6th December**

We awoke to a clear and bright morning and did some birding in the garden. We simply waited for the birds to find us we sat and watched a fruiting Governor's Plum Tree, soon to be know as the "magic tree" as it was simply a magnet for birds. Here we enjoyed great eye-level views of White-throated (Legge's) Flowerpecker, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot and the beautiful endemic form of Red-rumped Swallow (Sri Lanka Swallow) flew overhead. A check of the rear hotel garden was also productive with Loten's Sunbird, Square-tailed Black Bulbul, great views of a Common Hawk-Cuckoo and some excellent scope views of Lesser Hill Myna. Once again, an impressive start before breakfast though even during

breakfast it didn't stop as we scoped our first beautiful Chestnut-headed Bee-Eaters across the river and a lovely Crested Goshawk, both visible from the breakfast table!

After breakfast we crossed the Kelani River on the suspension bridge and explored the area of gardens and forest in this scenic area. John, Janina and Chris had their first views of a Sri Lanka Junglefowl before even crossing the river and then the birds came fast and furious. Black-capped Bulbul, three Oriental Honey Buzzards, Brown-breasted Flycatcher and our first encounter with the very impressive Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel that posed nicely. A little further along the trail a Green-billed Coucal was calling but refused to show itself. A superb Grey-capped Emerald Dove posed wonderfully in the morning sunlight before returning to its shaded nest and then we were treated to a singing Spot-winged Thrush as it kept a close eye on the incubating female on the nest. A minimum of three Sri Lanka Jungle Fowl posed for cameras and calling Indian Pittas refused to show themselves. A small group of Dark-fronted Babblers weaved their way through nearby vegetation and a posing Tickell's Blue Flycatcher was far from camera shy! A skulking Brown-capped Babbler was more of a challenge as it quickly scuttled along the ground. Keith did well to find a nesting White-rumped Munia and then a little further along the path we enjoyed excellent scope views of Brown-headed Barbets feeding on fruits before we arrived at the river and enjoyed a cool drink from a local store before returning to our hotel for lunch.

We headed back out for a late afternoon and evening birding session, but unfortunately the weather had other ideas! It simply poured down with torrential rain and despite sitting it out in our minibus, it refused to abate all afternoon! Therefore, we returned to the hotel and hoped tomorrow would improve!

### **Monday 7th December**

A gloomy start but the "magic tree" which was still performing as we enjoyed more views of White-throated (Legge's) Flowerpecker, Common Iora, Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot as well as Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Indian Swiftlets overhead and Stork-billed Kingfisher along the river. Whilst enjoying breakfast and the great views from our breakfast table, Pete spotted a beautiful white morph Asian Paradise Flycatcher.

After breakfast we headed further east towards the Highland zone and the city of Nuwara Eliya at an altitude of just over 1,800M. The journey was an ever changing landscape as we began winding through the hills, passing through various tea plantations. An obligatory stop at the Devon Falls waterfall was much needed as we relaxed in the beautiful landscape and enjoyed tea and cake at one of the tea plantations whilst Crested Serpent Eagle and a brief Black Eagle passed overhead. Another brief stop en route gave some good views of the very distinctive and grey-looking Great Tit which some authorities consider to be a distinct species, Cinereous Tit. Our first Sri Lanka White-Eyes showed briefly before it was time to continue our journey. As we neared the city of Nuwara Eliya an opportune stop beside some wet grassland produced some good views of Pintail Snipe and we then proceeded to a very "birdy" forest area on the edge of the Galway's Land National Park close to our hotel. Here, we savoured an excellent 30 minutes with at least 100 Sri Lanka White-eyes busily feeding in small flocks, our first stunning Yellow-eared Bulbuls along with at least three Grey-headed Canary-Flycatchers, Greenish Warbler, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Sri Lanka Scimitar Babblers, more Great Tits and the endemic Dusky Striped Squirrel. We then checked into our hotel and enjoyed an enormous lunch!

After lunch, we mustered the energy to do some more birding and try and work off our food! We headed to Victoria Park, a place now famous in birding circles for often holding a number of top quality birds throughout the winter months. Highlights were

Forest Wagtail, Indian Pitta and a cracking male Indian Blue robin. At dusk we tried for Brown Wood Owl but despite hearing it, the bird failed to show itself.

## **Tuesday 8th Dec**

It was a very early start today as we met at around 04.30hrs for tea and listened to the sound of heavy rain on the windows! Regardless of the weather, we ventured out into the darkness and headed off in our vehicle to the Horton Plains. A Black-naped Hare and a Sambar Deer en route were two very much appreciated new mammal species before arriving just before dawn at the Horton Plains NP ticket office. Frustratingly, it was still raining, so news that perhaps one of the hardest Sri Lankan endemics birds, the Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush, was singing close to the ticket office did not fill us full of optimism, but we had to try! We spent a while listening and waiting to no avail and so proceeded to try another area. By now, the weather was pretty awful and unsurprisingly there was very little bird activity, but a Sri Lanka Bush Warbler was heard. We returned to the ticket office again but all was quiet. Determined not to give in, we explored a trail where despite the rain, we had some good success with excellent views of a Sri Lanka Woodpigeon perched right out in the open and a Blue Verditer Flycatcher showed well. All to the atmospheric sounds of grunting Purple-faced Leaf Monkeys (or Bear Monkeys as this Highland race is known), the cheerful calls of Sri Lanka Scimitar Babblers and the ubiquitous crowing of the Sri Lanka Jungle Fowl. We slowly walked back to the Oringo Pool where the weather finally showed signs of improvement and we even began to see some blue sky! Another very close calling Bush Warbler refused to show itself whilst a couple of Velvet-fronted Nuthatches flew over and and an Indian Blue Robin sang nearby whilst we enjoyed our packed breakfast.

After breakfast we headed on towards the aptly named World's End and taking in the view of Adam's Peak as the cloud finally cleared a little. Pied Bushchats and Paddyfield Pipits were plentiful along our route and as we arrived at our stop we were treated to fabulous views of Pacific (Hill) Swallows collecting mud from the car park and a very tame Common Tailorbird. We took time to enjoy some tea and coffee and even saw the sun for a while! Highlights here included a smart group of Tri-coloured Munias, fabulous Yellow-eared Bulbuls and countless Sri Lanka White-Eyes. A short walk into some grassy areas also revealed our first Zitting Cisticola, more Great Tits and then Sue picked up a harrier which after closer scrutiny revealed itself to be a young male Pallid Harrier. We then slowly re-traced our steps towards the entrance gate to the park. Frustratingly, the rain returned and once again it curtailed our attempts to find the Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush and Sri Lanka Bush Warbler.

A stop at some woodland en route to our hotel seemed fairly quiet and we finally returned for a late lunch. Despite our best efforts to venture out again after lunch, the heavy rain once again prevented us, so we made do with more tea and some relaxation after our early start!

## **Wednesday 9th December**

This morning we returned to Victoria Park in the hope of finding some new species, but it was still raining! It was hard work, but we were determined not to give in! A female Pied Thrush was the best bird of the morning which showed itself to a few of the group and a small group of Scaly-breasted Munias were also new for the trip. Other notable birds included a couple of singing Indian Blue Robins, Indian Pond Herons, White-breasted Waterhen and a rather soggy looking Forest Wagtail.

After breakfast, it was still raining but we attempted one final try for Sri Lanka Bush Warbler as this would be our last chance for the species. Once again bird activity was very quiet but a perched Shikra was a good spot by Keith and we enjoyed our last

views of Yellow-eared Bulbul and Sri Lanka White-eye before retracing our steps towards Kitulgala. A lunch stop at the Plantation Hotel beside the River Kelani was a pleasant affair before continuing our journey towards to the town of Ratnapurna, famous for its gem stone mining and of course a compulsory stop for tea!

At dusk we arrived in the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve of Sinharaja Forest and checked into the rustic Blue Magpie Lodge famous for great birding on the doorstep. Here, we enjoyed some fabulous local cuisine as well as an Indian Palm Civet by torchlight.

### **Thursday 10th December**

Today everyone was eager to explore our new surroundings as we had breakfast overlooking a small wetland area. An Indian Pitta was calling nearby and White-breasted Kingfishers, Sri Lanka Green Pigeons, Red-vented Bulbuls and a superb juvenile Changeable Hawk Eagle entertained us whilst eating breakfast. Our first Yellow-fronted Barbet also gave good scope views. It was then time to transfer to our jeep and head off to explore the Sinharaja Forest. Of course no visit to Sinharaja Forest is complete without a jeep drive! Our driver did well to negotiate the seemingly endless bumpy track and numerous bends and after 40 minutes we finally arrived at the top. Here, we took a short break to take in the view and to savour a tree full of Sri Lanka Green Pigeons and our first Purple-faced Leaf Monkeys. At the entrance gate we met our local guide Guna and a small group of Ashy-headed Laughing-thrushes feeding beside the path allowed for some good views. We then followed our local guide to the site of one of our key target species, the mystical Serendib Scops Owl. This species was first described from its mystery call in 1995 but amazingly it was not seen until 2001 when it was finally described as a new species. As we followed our guide, the excitement mounted and after some clambering off the trail and through the humid forest we were soon manoeuvred into position and there in the scope was this magical species as it sat on its roost branch just metres from us - Fantastic!

Once everyone was satisfied with the Serendib Scops Owl we headed back onto the main trail where a small group of Sri Lanka Hill Mynas showed in the scope before once again, our local guide Guna came up trumps! We followed him as he scrambled down a slight slope and across a small pool and then there in front of us, just above eye level were two wonderful Sri Lanka Frogmouths, male and female huddled next to each other - simply wonderful.

We continued along the trail accompanied by a tame Sri Lanka Jungle Fowl whilst reptiles and insects continued to distract us. We had close views of Reed-like Kukri and Common Bronze-Back snakes, a characterful Sri Lanka Kangaroo Lizard and we were all mesmerised by Ceylon Tree Nymph butterflies. New birds weren't far away either, as our first Sri Lanka Crested Drongo showed in amongst a fast moving flock of birds before we arrived at the Research Station. Here, posing Sri Lanka Blue Magpies and Velvet-fronted Nuthatches allowed for good photographic opportunities before we crossed a small river where we spent the rest of the morning birding this area. Activity was fairly quiet until a superb male Malabar Trogon gave fabulous views as well as Black-naped Monarch and the brown form of Asian Paradise Flycatcher.

During our lunch break the endemic Layard's Striped Squirrel entertained us before we returned back to the main trail to try and find another bird flock. En route we were lucky to find another couple of Common Bronze-Backs and the bird highlight was most definitely finding a small group of the fast declining White-faced Starling that showed very well. We finally headed back to our jeep where a Purple-faced Leaf Monkey caused amusement as it posed for us and we then spent the last hour of daylight birding around the lodge. Bird of the evening was down to Keith as he enjoyed a great fly past from a Brown-backed Needletail!

## **Friday 11th December**

Once again, another early start and into the jeep as we returned to the forest ridge and the wonderful sights and sounds of Sinharaja Forest. We targeted a different area today close to the Education Centre and despite a rainy start, the weather soon cleared and bird activity followed. A Green-billed Coucal showed very well, as did a Sri Lanka Crested Drongo that perched prominently on a nearby dead tree. Scarlet Minivets, Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrikes, Velvet-fronted Nuthatches and White-throated (Legge's) Flowerpeckers were a constant distraction and a Sri Lanka Spurfowl called in the valley below. A White-faced Starling posed at the top of a dead tree and an all too brief Chestnut-backed Owlet was heavily mobbed by nearby passerines as it flew off deep into the forest. We then walked for a while and a flock of Ashy-headed Laughing-thrushes gave more prolonged views compared to the previous day. Sri Lanka Blue Magpie and Lesser Yellownape kept our interest before, once again, we met with our local guide Guna. We walked the trails very quietly and slowly hoping for the very shy Sri Lanka Scaly Thrush but had no joy but the now very familiar Sri Lanka Jungle Fowl and another calling Spurfowl were present. We continued our quest to find another bird flock, as we knew that would be where our remaining target species would be found, the Red-faced Malkoha. It took a while to track a flock down and Guna soon heard the Malkoha calling so we quickly tried to find a gap in the forest to view the approaching flock, but then just at the wrong moment, the heavens opened and it poured down! We waited a good 20-30 minutes for the heavy rain shower to pass, but by this time the flock had disappeared and our chance had gone! Regardless of a little bad luck, it was still great to be out in the forest enjoying more views of previously seen bird species along with other wildlife including Green Garden Lizard and Blue Glassy Tiger butterflies.

After a relaxing lunch at the Blue Magpie we did some birding from the dining area where amongst other species a preening Emerald Collared (Layard's) Parakeet was the highlight. We then set off on a late afternoon stroll along the Pitakele Road where our luck changed for the better and we were treated to some first class non-stop birding! An adult Changeable Hawk Eagle gave superb views as we walked past the regular nest tree and then an Oriental Honey Buzzard soared above us in the now warm sunshine. A Black-headed Cuckoo-Shrike called nearby and was seen briefly before another bird showed very well in the scope. A Green-billed Coucal sat up in the open briefly and Red-rumped (Sri Lanka) Swallows glided overhead. A Common Wood-Shrike also showed well along with a full suite of Bulbuls including White-browed Bulbul. This quiet road was full of bird activity and we enjoyed good views of both Leafbirds, Common Iora, Brown-headed Barbet and the simply stunning Sri Lanka (Crimson-fronted) Barbet as it sang from the very top of a nearby tree. Woodpeckers gave a good show with both Lesser Sri Lanka Flameback and Lesser Yellownape and a juvenile Changeable Hawk Eagle gave exceptional views. A Ruddy Mongoose then appeared from behind a large rock under the watchful eye of the Hawk Eagle! We slowly descended back down the road to the sound of noisy Yellow-billed Babblers and the odd Brown Shrike. A pair of Green-billed Coucals then performed at the junction of the road before the final bird of the day, a Banded Bay Cuckoo, perched above our lodge and sang at dusk before we all returned for a celebratory beer.

## **Saturday 12th December**

Today, we were up before dawn, as today was Spurfowl day! Once again we were back into our jeep and took yet another bouncy track, this time to a local resident couple's house who had very kindly been allowing birders into their home specifically to see Sri Lanka Spurfowl. This species has always been considered one of the most tricky endemic birds to see in Sri Lanka. The loud and repetitive call is a common sound of the forests but to see one is always considered a challenge due to their notoriously shy nature. However, during the last year or two a pair of these birds

have become fairly regular visitors to a local resident's garden and as a result the birds have become a little more tolerant to humans. So shortly after first light, we all squeezed into a room overlooking the back garden in the hope that this special bird would show itself. Patience was the name of the game this morning as it seemed a rather dominant male Sri Lanka Junglefowl was determined to spoil the party and was chasing off our target species. However, as we waited there were constant distractions with a female Indian Blue Robin and Black-capped Babbler showing intermittently and both adult and juvenile Spot-winged Thrush, but still no Spurfowl! Then finally, the waiting was over as both male and female Sri Lanka Spurfowl appeared just metres from the house and gave exceptional views for a good 10-15 minutes before disappearing back into the forest - Success! We returned to the Blue Magpie Lodge for breakfast which included some lovely honey pancakes(!) and then it was time to depart for our next destination as the second part of our Sri Lanka adventure began.

We spent the morning travelling east across the impressive Rakwana Mountain range where a timely stop in the mountains gave a great raptor session as both Black Eagle, Rufous-bellied Eagle and Crested Serpent-Eagle all soared above us for a few minutes. We then descended down to the dry lowlands and our hotel in close proximity to the Uda Walawe National Park. A brief stop at a wetland area gave our first views of the stunning Painted Stork and equally impressive Pheasant-tailed Jacanas as well as a single Citrine Wagtail and Baya Weavers too.

After a relaxing lunch, we were all ready for our first afternoon game drive in the park and we soon found ourselves in a very different habitat compared with the last few days. Mixed grasslands, woodland patches and the odd interspersed wetland soon produced many new bird and mammal species. Highlights were many and included raptors such as Booted Eagle, Black-winged Kite and numerous Changeable Hawk Eagles. Our first views of Malabar Pied Hornbills were certainly a highlight as was the stunning Orange-breasted Green Pigeon and Indian Roller. Jerdon's Bush Lark, Yellow-eyed Babbler, Coppersmith Barbet and Grey-bellied Cuckoo were all new species, as were a trio of Prinias with Ashy, Plain and Jungle all seen well. Of course any visit to Uda Walawe would not be complete without seeing Elephants and we were not to be disappointed with at least twelve animals seen well, including youngsters! Two Golden Jackals were also great to see, but mammal highlight for most was a great spot by Sue of a Jungle Cat that we all watched stalking waders at a nearby pool! It failed to succeed with its hunting, but amused us all the same as we were constantly distracted by nearby Marsh Sandpiper and both Yellow-wattled and Red-wattled Lapwings. Spot-billed Pelicans showed very well during a short stop by the lake along with Grey-headed Fish Eagle. As the sun began to drop, we slowly headed back to our hotel and an Indian Peafowl perched high up on a dead tree as the sun set behind it - Magical!

### **Sunday 13th December**

Today we had the second of our jeep drives in Uda Walawe NP. Bird activity seemed a little quiet at first but things soon livened up as our jeep driver took us through a very muddy pool and we came stuck! Luckily it wasn't long until another jeep came to our rescue and pulled us out. New birds today included Grey-breasted Prinia to complete a full set of Prinias, along with a fine Jacobin Cuckoo and Blue-faced Malkoha, more good views of Blyth's Pipit were also appreciated as were the ubiquitous, but no less impressive Elephants. We enjoyed breakfast overlooking one of the large wetland areas where Water Buffalo, Spotted Deer and Sambar Deer were watched in the morning sunshine along with views of Great Thick-Knee and Indian Thick-Knee and both Gull-billed Tern and Whiskered Tern. We slowly returned to the entrance gate of the park and just as we had almost given up hope on what has to be Sri Lanka's most impressive Parakeet, the Plum-headed Parakeet, an eleventh hour bit of luck produced both a male and female perched high up in a close dead tree by the entrance gate!

Happy with our morning haul of birds, we made one last stop, this time at our local guide's house where an exquisite Indian Scops Owl peered down at us from the rafters. We then returned to our hotel, packed our vehicle and we continued our journey south-east towards the coast and the town of Tissamaharama or "Tissa" for short. Here, we checked into our hotel with attractive gardens and enjoyed lunch before heading off to the world famous Yala National Park for an evening jeep drive.

Once in the park, we spent our time slowly driving around in the hope of finding Leopard for which the park is probably most famous. However, little did we know it would be a far harder mammal to find that would be our highlight! An assortment of waders were the first species to welcome us into the park and included Lesser Sandplover and Greater Sandplover, Little Stint, Pacific Golden Plover plus a small group of Garganey. We then enjoyed some fabulous views of a dust bathing Hoopoe as the stunning Asian Green Bee-Eaters perched within touching distance from us. A scan of some nearby grasslands revealed some good views of a Brahminy Starling with nearby Rose-coloured Starlings too, but it was Pete's excitement as he called an "Ortolan-type" bunting that soon had everyone's attention. It didn't take long until the possibility of it being a Grey-necked Bunting seemed more likely, albeit still a vagrant to Sri Lanka! The cameras were soon working overtime ensuring the record was fully documented and it soon confirmed our suspicions of being a male Grey-necked Bunting and only Sri Lanka's 2nd record! Janina did well to contain her excitement at the rare bunting(!) and we continued on our journey further into the park. A couple of Barred Buttonquails then gave superb views as a male and female dust bathed in the middle of the track we were travelling along. A little further along the track we stopped and scanned over a grassland area with a wetter area beyond when our driver alerted us that we really should look at the road ahead! There in the centre of the road was a highly impressive male Sloth Bear slowly pacing down the road towards us! The light was simply perfect as it was now late afternoon and the animal just continued getting closer and closer until at the last minute, it seemed to finally realise that there was a jeep in its way and it veered off to the right of us, running for a few metres before it disappeared behind thick scrub - A superb introduction to Yala and very much harder to see than Leopard in the park! Our jeep was now full of smiles and we continued our exploration of the park enjoying the different views in the changing light. Final highlights were a small group of Little Pratincoles sitting on a sand bank, close views of Yellow-eyed Babbler and a daylight view of Black-naped Hare. At dusk we saw our first hawking Jerdon's Nightjar and a single Indian Nightjar flew over the bus before we arrived back at our hotel.

### **Monday 14th December**

Today we spent the whole day in Yala National Park. It was a long but very enjoyable day as we explored the full extent of the park. We took our time to savour the views of both the mammals and birds seen from the previous day. Our packed breakfast was enjoyed beside a beautiful sandy beach alongside a rather sobering memorial to those who lost their lives during the Tsunami in December 2004. We spent the rest of the morning heading towards the border of Block 1 (one of five designated blocks making up Yala NP of which only 2 are accessible to tourists). At the Menik Ganga River we enjoyed some shade and had lunch in the company of the unruly Toque Macaques and the far more reserved and well mannered Tufted Grey Langurs.

New species today included the often tricky Sirkeer Malkoha, Purple Swamphen, close views of Pintail Snipe, White-winged Tern, Yellow-crowned Woodpecker and Tawny-bellied Babbler. Some of the afternoon was spent watching a recent Leopard kill of a young Water Buffalo that was being scavenged by Golden Jackals. There was clearly a Leopard close-by but our chances of seeing it were very small given the continual presence of the guarding adult Buffalos. Despite the lack of any Leopard sighting it



was interesting and quite sad to see the mother of the dead Water Buffalo calf still trying to defend the dead body from the Golden Jackals. We tried one last area often frequented by Leopards but had no luck and we returned to the entrance gate at dusk ready for another great meal at our hotel.

After dinner, for those that still had the energy, we ventured off in another jeep for a night drive on the outskirts of Yala. We headed off in the rain and it didn't look too promising but within 30 minutes we started spotlighting in dry conditions and enjoyed some excellent views of a number of great mammals. Sightings included a fabulous close encounter with a Jungle Cat, an all too brief Crested Porcupine and at least four amazing looking White-spotted Mouse-Deer. Asian Elephant, Asian Palm Civet (Toddy Cat), Ruddy Mongoose and an Indian Gerbil were also seen well. A close perched view of a Jerdon's Nightjar was also a highlight before we returned to our hotel at around midnight and everyone collapsed into their beds in need of sleep!

### **Tuesday 15th December**

A slightly later start and a relaxed breakfast at the hotel was very much appreciated before we headed out to explore the Pannagamuwa Wetlands, near Tissa. It was a bright sunny morning and things started well with three Cotton Pygmy-Geese sat on a lake beside the roadside. A leisurely stroll alongside the wetlands was very productive with some great views of Purple Heron, Yellow Bittern, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Crested Treeswift, Grey-headed Fish Eagle and White-bellied Sea Eagle as well as numerous amazing butterflies and dragonflies. However, it was two species in particular that were the real star performers of the morning. A super male White-naped Woodpecker and a beautiful Jungle Owlet, both of which showed exceptionally well for everyone to enjoy. A nearby visit to a huge colony of roosting Indian Flying Foxes was a true spectacle before we returned to our hotel for some relaxation. The hotel garden yielded good views of Thick-billed Flowerpecker, John did well to find a Blue-faced Malkoha and Sue located a pair of mating Indian Star Tortoises!

After lunch at our hotel we set out one final time for an evening jeep drive in Yala NP. We savoured the lovely late afternoon light and simply absorbed the wonderful sights and sounds of Yala where a lovely selection of waders were very much the highlight with Little Pratincoles, Great Thick-Knees, Marsh Sandpiper, Pintail Snipe and Pacific Golden Plover. A soaring Lesser Adjutant was a very welcome addition to the bird list and regardless of no Leopard sighting we enjoyed our last views of Sambar Deer, Spotted Deer, Wild Boar and of course Asian Elephants.

### **Wednesday 16th December**

This morning we left our hotel early with packed breakfasts and headed to nearby Bundala National Park, a designated Ramsar site. Once again, we made the now familiar transfer to jeeps and headed off into the reserve. Our first stop gave some very good views of a singing Clamorous Reed Warbler and Yellow Bittern. We then arrived at the information centre where we visited an impressive viewing area looking across a vast wetland. A thorough scan revealed the impressive sight of literally hundreds of terns way into the distance. A couple of Caspian Terns were new for the trip and Janina did well to pick out a couple of Yellow Bitterns hiding in the vegetation. We then returned to our jeeps and explored the reserve further. We enjoyed fabulous views of the very photogenic Tufted Grey Langurs and slowly passed the now very familiar Yellow-wattled Lapwings, Paddyfield Pipits and numerous Asian Green Bee-Eaters. As we neared the salt pans we could see they were literally full of birds! A Western Reef Egret and a family of Eurasian Spoonbills gave very close views along with our first Oriental Skylarks of the tour. A Common Ringed Plover and Curlew were two of the scarcer wader species seen, but it was perhaps the mixed tern flocks that

were the most impressive with Caspian Tern, Greater Crested Tern, Lesser Crested, Gull-billed Tern, Common Tern, Whiskered Tern and Little Tern all present. Here we enjoyed our breakfast surrounded by waders and terns - bliss!

Later in the morning we travelled to the Kalametiya Sanctuary where we saw no new bird species but there was a good selection of previously seen species and an even more impressive selection of butterflies and dragonflies including the aptly named Variegated Flutterer. Birds here included Paddyfield Pipit, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Red-rumped (Sri Lanka) Swallow, Yellow Wagtail, a brief Blue-faced Malkoha, Oriental Honey Buzzard and a large flock of Lesser Sandpipers.

We then continued our journey west and along the south coast where we enjoyed a lunch stop before arriving at our beachside hotel in the town Mirissa.

### **Thursday 17th December**

Today was a very different day, as we all headed out to sea!

We took the short walk to the small harbour where we joined our whale watching boat and headed out off the coast for just a few kilometres to an area now known as an important feeding area for cetaceans. A Pomarine Skua harrying terns was the first new bird as we headed out searching for our first cetaceans and it wasn't long until we came across some dolphins, a small group of Spinner Dolphins. Around 15 animals were in a tight group. Although well known for their playful behaviour, these animals seemed uninterested in us and just continued on their way but the animals' very long beaks could be clearly seen as a few animals breached clear of the water. A small group of 4+ tatty looking Bridled Terns were seen well as we continued our search for whales and then we were distracted by a large blow ahead of our boat. This was a sure sign that a large whale was within our reach, so we continued in the direction of the blow and were soon enjoying some close views of a Bryde's Whale. During the next hour or so, we were treated to some very close views of at least three different animals. The views even allowed us to see the diagnostic three rostrum ridges on the head of the animal. As we returned to *terra firma* a falcon flew over the boat and landed in a coconut palm, revealing itself to be an Amur Falcon, a scarce visitor to Sri Lanka and a new bird for the tour.

After some lunch at our hotel we spent the afternoon relaxing and/or exploring the nearby fishing harbour where displaying White-bellied Sea Eagles along with Whiskered Tern, White-winged Tern and Gull-billed Tern all entertained us.

### **Friday 18th December**

Today was our last full day so we left our hotel at around 06.00am with packed breakfasts and we headed to the nearby Hiyare Forest Reserve. Our day started with one of the most impressive songsters of the region, the White-rumped Shama that finally showed well as it sang from deep within the forest. A Fork-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo was equally impressive as it sat and posed in a nearby tree. We then spent the morning enjoying species we hadn't seen for a few days such as Sri Lanka Green Pigeon, Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Sri Lanka (Crimson-fronted) Barbet, Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot, Emerald-collared (Layard's) Parakeet, Yellow-browed Bulbul and Square-tailed Black Bulbul. Sadly, the hoped for Greater Sri Lanka Flameback failed to materialise. A number of injured bird and mammal species in captivity and waiting for release were interesting to see at the sanctuary and included Brown Wood Owl, and Crested Porcupine. It was then time to continue our journey back towards Colombo where we were to spend our final night, but not without one final birding session!

Having had time to re-pack and relax at our final hotel on the outskirts of Colombo, we headed out to a nearby wetland to enjoy Sri Lanka's great birds for one last time.

Amongst the commoner species, Yellow Bittern, Ashy Wood-Swallow and Tawny-bellied Babbler were the pick of the best, but it was the Black Bittern at the end of the day which topped the lot and a great way to finish our last day's birding. We then returned to our hotel and enjoyed one last meal together and discussed the highlights of the last two weeks in the wonderful country that is Sri Lanka!

### **Saturday 19th December**

After breakfast at our hotel, we took the short drive to Colombo airport where we took our daytime flight back to the UK.

**Conservation Donation** – Following this tour to the Sri Lanka £180 was transferred to the Wise Birding Holiday's central conservation fund. This shall be used to support a conservation project in the future, yet to be determined.

For the last three years Wise Birding Holidays has been supporting a number of small conservation projects. However, we now believe that to make a bigger difference to conservation it seems better to pool the donations from most of our tours into one central fund. Once a target amount has been reached this money will then be used to support a single project in the hope of achieving more for species conservation. At present this amount stands at just over £1,000. Some tours will still continue to donate money to help some of the smaller projects that we feel will still benefit from such smaller donations. Please visit our [Conservation News](#) and [Latest News](#) links to find out more.



**Team Sri Lanka!**



**Two Endemics:** Sri Lanka Blue Magpies, Sinharaja (above)  
and Sri Lanka Junglefowl, Kitulgala (below)





The **endemic** Serendib Scops Owl, Sinharaja (above)  
and male/female Sri Lanka Frogmouths, Sinharaja (below)





Sinharaja Forest Reserve (above) and the  
**endemic** Green-billed Coucal, Sinharaja (below)





Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel, Galway's Land NP (above) and the **endemic** Purple-faced Leaf Monkey, Sinharaja (below)





**Pacific (Hill) Swallow, Horton Plains (above) and the very distinctive form of Great Tit, Horton Plains (below)**







**Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Kitulgala (above) and the beautiful white morph Asian Paradise Flycatcher, Sinharaja (below)**





Common Bronzeback, Sinharaja (above) and the **endemic** Sri Lanka Kangaroo Lizard, Sinharaja (below)





The **endemic** Sri Lanka Spurfowl in Sinharaja Forest were one of the trip highlights





**Two endemics:** Spot-winged Thrush, Kitulgala (above)  
and the Yellow-fronted Barbet, Sinharaja (below)





**Two endemics:** Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot, Kitulgala (above) and the Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler, Galway's Land NP (below)





**Two endemics from the Horton Plains:**  
the stunning Yellow-eared Bulbul (above) and the Sri Lanka White-Eye (below)





Jeep drives in Uda Walawe NP (above) and Asian Elephants, Udawalawe NP (below)





**Jungle Cat sightings: one in Uda Walawe NP (above) and one outside Yala NP (below)**







Asian Green Bee-Eater, Yala NP (above) and Chestnut-headed Bee-Eater, Yala NP (below)





**Male/female Barred Buttonquails, Yala NP (above)  
Jerdon's Bushlark, Uda Walawe NP (below)**





Indian Peafowl, Uda Walawe NP (above) and Malabar Pied Hornbill, Uda Walawe NP (below)





**Elephant Rock, Yala NP (above) and Black-naped Hare, Yala NP (below)**





**Male Sloth Bear, Yala NP (above) and Golden Jackal, Yala NP (below)**





Jungle Owlet, near Tissa (above) and Indian Scops Owl, near Tissa (below)





**Male White-naped Woodpecker, near Tissa (above)  
Juvenile Changeable Hawk-Eagle, Sinharaja (below)**





**This Grey-necked Bunting in Yala NP (above) was only the 2nd record for Sri Lanka!  
Jerdon's Nightjar, near Yala NP (below)**







**Ruddy Mongoose, Sinharaja (above) and Indian Flying Fox, near Tissa (below)**





Asian Openbill colony, Yala NP (above) and Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Yala NP (below)





**Spot-billed Pelican Uda Walawe NP (above)  
and Yala NP looking towards Elephant Rock (below)**





**Jacobin Cuckoo, Udawalawe NP (above)  
and Orange-breasted Green Pigeon, Yala NP**





**Tufted Grey Langurs, Bundala NP (above)  
and Clamorous Reed Warbler, Bundala NP (below)**





**Greater Sandplover with Lesser Sandplovers, near Waikkal(above)  
and Greater Crested and Lesser Crested Terns, near Waikkal (below)**





**Bryde's Whales during our boat trip from Mirissa Harbour**





Indian Star Tortoise, near Tissa (above)

# Wise Birding Holidays

Bird and mammal watching tours



## Wise Birding Holidays Ltd

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#	Common name	Scientific name	#	Species Notes
1	<b>Sri Lanka Spurfowl</b>	<b><i>Galloperdix bicalcarata</i></b>	1	Fabulously close views of both male and female on the 12th and heard on two other days
2	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	2	Recorded on 7 days during the second half of the tour including displaying males. A bird at the Blue Magpie lodge was thought not to be a truly wild bird.
3	<b>Sri Lanka Junglefowl</b>	<b><i>Gallus lafayettii</i></b>	3	Recorded on 12 days during both sections of the tour
4	Lesser Whistling-duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>	4	Recorded on 7 days, mostly during the second half of the tour except for a few birds on the 5th whilst on the Gin River
5	Cotton Pygmy-goose	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>	5	Three birds, a male and two females were seen well on the morning of the 15th near Tissa
6	Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>	6	Small flocks recorded on 3 days whilst in Yala and Bundala National Parks
7	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	7	A flock of 30+ birds flew over us whilst birding Bundala NP on then 16th
8	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	8	Recorded at wetland sites between 12th and the 15th with numbers ranging between 1-3 birds
9	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	9	Recorded on 11 days mostly as feral birds around habitation, though birds in Yala and Uda Walawe were thought to be pure
10	<b>Sri Lanka Woodpigeon</b>	<b><i>Columba torringtoniae</i></b>	10	A single bird gave great views in the top of a dead tree in the Horton Plains on the 7th
11	Western Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia suratensis</i>	11	A very common but beautiful dove recorded almost daily
12	Grey-capped Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>	12	A very beautiful dove recorded on 5 days with the best views at the Blue Magpie Lodge
13	Orange-breasted Green-pigeon	<i>Treron bicinctus</i>	13	Another stunning pigeon, First seen at Uda Walawe on the 12th and the next 4 days and finally at Hiyare on the 18th
14	<b>Sri Lanka Green-pigeon</b>	<b><i>Treron pompadora</i></b>	14	Commonly recorded in the wet zone forests on 6 days
15	Green Imperial-pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>	15	Sri Lanka's largest pigeon recorded on 10 days from forests to gardens
16	Sri Lanka Frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus moniliger</i>	16	A superb daylight encounter with both male and female at a day roost in Sinharaja on the 10th
17	Jerdon's Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus atripennis</i>	17	Recorded on 3 evenings around Yala NP with the best views of a perched bird on the evening of the 14th during a night drive
18	Indian Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus asiaticus</i>	18	A single bird flew over our minibus at dusk on the evening of the 12th whilst leaving Yala NP
19	Crested Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>	19	Recorded on 7 days with some good views of birds drinking at Uda Walawe and Yala NPs
20	Brown-backed Needletail	<i>Hirundapus giganteus</i>	20	The ever vigilant Keith had a single bird over the Blue Magpie on the afternoon of the 11th
21	Indian Swiftlet	<i>Aerodramus unicolor</i>	21	Recorded almost daily
22	Asian Palm-swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>	22	Recorded almost daily
23	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>	23	At least two birds were seen well in Uda Walawe on the morning of the 13th
24	Little Swift (House)	<i>Apus affinis</i>	24	Very localised with birds recorded on 4 days including birds at the nest in Bundala on the 16th
25	<b>Green-billed Coucal</b>	<b><i>Centropus chlororhynchos</i></b>	25	Heard on 4 days and finally seen well in Sinharaja with 4 birds on the 11th
26	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>	26	The much commoner cousin of the above species was recorded on 10 days
27	Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Taccocua leschenaultii</i>	27	A single bird on the 14th in Yala NP showed briefly but well whilst feeding on a cricket
28	Blue-faced Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus viridirostris</i>	28	Recorded on three days whilst in Yala NP, Kalametiya Sanctuary and our hotel near Tissa for John
29	Jacobin Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i>	29	This showy black and white cuckoo showed well on 4 days
30	Western Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>	30	Other than a number of obliging birds on the 5th, recorded on 6 days during the second part of the tour
31	<b>Banded Bay Cuckoo</b>	<b><i>Cacomantis sonneratii waiti</i></b>	31	Recorded on 3 days, first seen briefly at Kitulgala and then better views at the Blue Magpie on the 11th and heard on the 12th
32	Grey-bellied Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis passerinus</i>	32	Recorded on 3 days whilst birding Uda Walawe and Yala NPs
33	Fork-tailed Drongo-cuckoo	<i>Surniculus dicruoides</i>	33	A great view of a single bird on the 18th at Hiyare Reserve
34	Common Hawk-cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx varius</i>	34	Heard on the 5th at Kitulgala and seen well in our hotel garden on the 6th
35	Slaty-legged Crane	<i>Rallina eurizonoides</i>	35	Keith and Sue saw a bird at first light on the morning of the 5th in a mangrove area by our hotel

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#	Common name	Scientific name	#	Species Notes
36	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	36	A common species associated with water recorded on at least 12 days
37	Purple Swampphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	37	Seen well on 4 days during the second half of the tour
38	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	38	Very localised and recorded on just 2 days near Tissa and in Bundala NP
39	Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>	39	A single bird seen circling above us in Yala NP on the afternoon of the 15th
40	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>	40	This beautiful Stork is always a highlight of the wetland areas and was recorded from the 12th - 16th
41	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	41	Recorded on 7 days and in both sections of the tour including an impressive breeding colony in Uda Walawe and Yala NPs
42	Asian Woollyneck	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>	42	Seen only in Yala NP
43	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	43	Recorded daily between 12th -16th with the largest numbers in Bundala NP including adults and Juveniles
44	Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	44	Recorded daily between the 12th -16th
45	Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>	45	Recorded on only 4 days on the 5th, 15th, 16th and 18th in suitable wetland habitat
46	Black Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus flavicollis</i>	46	Our final new species of the trip with a single bird that showed well at a wetland near the airport on the 18th
47	Black-crowned Night-heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	47	Recorded on 7 days
48	Green-backed (Striated) Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>	48	Fairly localised in the right habitat and recorded on 4 days
49	Indian Pond-heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	49	One of the commonest heron species recorded on 10 days in any wet areas and paddy fields
50	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	50	Recorded almost daily
51	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	51	Recorded on 7 days in small numbers
52	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	52	A relatively common species in wetland areas recorded on 7 days
53	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	53	Recorded on 9 days
54	Intermediate Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>	54	Less common than its great white cousin and recorded on 5 days
55	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	55	Recorded on 7 days
56	Western Reef-egret	<i>Egretta gularis</i>	56	Uncommon and recorded on just 3 days, including a dark morph by Chris on the 13th
57	Spot-billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>	57	Common in the NPs of Udawalawe, Yala and Bundala, recorded on 5 days
58	Little Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo niger</i>	58	A very common species recorded almost daily
59	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	59	The scarcest of the cormorants recorded on just two days
60	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>	60	Slightly less common than Little Cormorant and recorded on 7 days
61	Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>	61	Recorded on 5 days during the second half of the tour
62	Indian Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus indicus</i>	62	Two birds on the 5th during our boat trip and again in Uda Walawe on the 13th and near Tissa on the 15th
63	Great Thick-knee	<i>Esacus recurvirostris</i>	63	Recorded in the NPs of Uda Walawe, Yala and Bundala between 13th - 16th
64	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	64	Recorded on 5 days at various wetland sites
65	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	65	Singles recorded on the 14th, 15th and 16th
66	Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	66	Recorded in Yala and Bundala NPs with the largest numbers at Bundala on the 16th
67	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	67	A single bird at Bundala NP on the 16th was a good record
68	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	68	Small numbers in Yala and Bundala NPs
69	<b>Kentish Plover</b>	<b><i>Charadrius alexandrinus seebohmi</i></b>	69	Recorded in good numbers between the 13th and 16th
70	Lesser Sandplover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>	70	Recorded on 6 days including the beach at Waikkal, Yala And Bundala NPs and Kalametiya

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#	Common name	Scientific name	#	Species Notes
71	Greater Sandplover	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>	71	One or two birds in with Lesser Sandplovers on the beach at Waikkal on the 4th and 5th were the only sightings
72	Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>	72	Sightings were confined to Yala, Bundala NPs and Kalametiya Sanctuary
73	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	73	Much commoner than the above species and recorded throughout the tour on 9 days
74	Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>	74	Recorded on 3 days on suitable wetlands with Lily pads near Tissa and in Yala Np
75	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	75	A group, of 5 birds on our first evening at Waikkal was the only sighting
76	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	76	A single bird at Bundala NP on the 16th was the only sighting
77	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	77	Recorded only on the 16th with small flocks at Bundala NP and larger flyover flocks at Kalametiya
78	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	78	1-2 birds recorded in Yala and Bundala NPs on the 13th, 15th and 16th
79	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	79	Small groups recorded in Yala and Bundala NPs on the 13th and 16th
80	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	80	The only birds were on the beach at Waikkal on the 4th and 5th
81	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	81	Recorded daily between 13th and 16th at Yala and Bundala NPs
82	Pintail Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>	82	Two distant birds were seen near Nuwara Eliya on the 7th followed by much closer views in Yala and Bundala NPs
83	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	83	A common wander recorded on 10 days
84	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	84	Single birds Recorded on just 2 days whilst in Yala NP on the 13th and 14th
85	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	85	Small numbers recorded daily between the 12th and 16th
86	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	86	Small numbers recorded daily between the 12th and 16th
87	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	87	Small numbers recorded daily between the 12th and 16th
88	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	88	Small numbers recorded daily between the 12th and 16th
89	Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>	89	Excellent views in the open on a number of occasions on 5 days whilst in Uda Walawe, Yala and Bundala NPs
90	Little Pratincole	<i>Glareola lactea</i>	90	Great views of this lovely pratincole whilst in Yala and Bundala NPs on 4 days
91	Brown-headed Gull	<i>Larus brunnicephalus</i>	91	Localised on the coast recorded on 3 days whilst at Waikkal, Yala and Bundala
92	Bridled Tern	<i>Onychoprion anaethetus</i>	92	At least 4 birds in heavy moult were seen well on our whale watching trip from Mirissa on the 17th
93	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	93	Good numbers recorded on a maximum of 5 days - See below
94	Saunders's Tern	<i>Sternula saundersi</i>	94	This species is thought to be unidentifiable in winter plumage and so some of the above species may relate to this species. Birds at Waikkal on the 5th and Uda Walawe on the 12th looked possible candidates with large amounts of black in the primaries.
95	Common Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	95	Recorded on at least 6 days at Waikkal, Yala, Udawalawe, Bundala and Mirissa
96	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	96	At least 12+ birds seen very well at Bundala NP on the 16th
97	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	97	Good numbers recorded daily between the 12th and the 18th
98	White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	98	Recorded daily between 14th-17th with good numbers at Bundala and Mirissa also
99	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	99	The odd bird recorded on the 5th at Waikkal and Mirissa on the 17th
100	Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>	100	Seen very well on 3 days, on the beach at Waikkal and at Bundala and off Mirissa
101	Greater Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>	101	Recorded on 3 days at Waikkal, Bundala and Mirissa
102	Pomarine Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	102	A single bird from the whale watching boat harassing terns on the 17th
103	Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>	103	Great views of this beautiful owl near Pannagamuwa Wetlands on the 15th
104	<b>Chestnut-backed Owlet</b>	<b><i>Glaucidium castanotum</i></b>	104	Seen very well on the evening of the 5th at Kitulgala and again briefly at Sinharaja on the 10th and heard on two other days

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105	<b>Serendib Scops-owl</b>	<i>Otus thilohoffmanni</i>	105	One of the tour highlights was scoping a close day roosting bird in Sinharaja Forest near the Education Centre on the 10th
106	Indian Scops-owl (Collared)	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>	106	Great views of a day roosting bird near Uda Walawe on the 13th plus a wild captive bird due for release at Hiyare
107	<b>Brown Wood-owl</b>	<i>Strix leptogrammica ochrogenys</i>	107	Heard at Galway's Land NP on the evening of the 7th plus a wild captive bird due for release at Hiyare
108	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	108	Recorded on 3 days and seen well at Uda Walawe and Bundala NPs
109	Oriental Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	109	This attractive raptor was recorded on 6 days with a max. count of 3 on the 6th at Kitulgala
110	<b>Crested Serpent-eagle</b>	<i>Spilornis cheela spilogaster</i>	110	A vocal eagle recorded on 5 days with excellent perched views in Yala NP
111	<b>Changeable (Crested) Hawk-eagle</b>	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus ceylanensis</i>	111	Some wonderfully close encounters of adults and juveniles of this showy species recorded on 10 days
112	Rufous-bellied Eagle	<i>Lophotriorchis kienerii</i>	112	A single bird on the 12th whilst crossing the Rakwana Mountains showed very well
113	Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malaiensis</i>	113	Single birds on the 5th, 7th and 12th all gave good views
114	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	114	A single light phase bird showed well on our first evening in Uda Walawe on the 12th
115	Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>	115	An immature male hunting over the Horton Plains was a good find by Sue on the 8th
116	Crested Goshawk	<i>Accipiter trivirgatus</i>	116	A single bird perched at Kitulgala was scoped from our hotel on the 6th
117	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	117	1-2 birds recorded on 6 days throughout the tour from Waikkal to Mirissa
118	White-bellied Sea-eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	118	Some excellent views of this impressive Sea-eagle recorded throughout the tour on 7 days
119	Grey-headed Fish-eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>	119	Less common than the above species confined mostly to the NPs of Uda Walawe, Yala and Bundala on 5 days
120	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>	120	A common raptor seen well and recorded on 11 days
121	<b>Malabar Trogon</b>	<i>Harpactes fasciatus fasciatus</i>	121	A calling male was seen very well on the 10th at Sinharaja and heard again on the 11th
122	<b>Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill</b>	<i>Ocyrceros gingalensis</i>	122	Small numbers (max. count 3) recorded on 4 days at Kitulgala, Yala And Hiyare Reseve
123	Malabar Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros coronatus</i>	123	This impressive hornbill was seen very well in Uda Walawe and Yala NPs on 4 days
124	Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	124	Recorded daily between the 12th and 15th with at least 4 birds on one day in Yala NP
125	Asian Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	125	A stunning bee-eater and very common in Uda Walawe, Yala and Bundala NPs
126	Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>	126	The least common of all the bee-eaters recorded on 4 days from Kitulgala to Yala with a max. day count of 3+ birds
127	Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>	127	By far the commonest bee-eater seen almost daily
128	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	128	This colourful species was recorded on 6 days during the second half of the tour
129	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	129	Mostly single birds common in the right habitat and recorded 7 days
130	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	130	Locally common recorded on 4 days
131	Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>	131	The most impressive of the kingfishers recorded on 9 days sometimes heard only
132	White-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	132	The commonest kingfisher and not always associated with water seen on 13 days
133	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i>	133	Seen very well on 2 days and heard on another two days between the 12th and the 15th
134	<b>Sri Lanka (Crimson-fronted) Barbet</b>	<i>Psilopogon rubricapillus</i>	134	First seen well close to the Blue Magpie Lodge on the 11th and then again at Hiyare on the 18th
135	Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Psilopogon zeylanicus</i>	135	A familiar call from the tour from various wooded areas recorded on 9 days and seen very well
136	<b>Yellow-fronted Barbet</b>	<i>Psilopogon flavifrons</i>	136	After a couple of days of hearing the species we finally had excellent views at the Blue Magpie. recorded on 5 days.
137	White-naped Woodpecker	<i>Chrysocolaptes festivus</i>	137	A cracking male bird showed very well at a wetland near the Pannagamuwa Wetlands on the 15th
138	<b>Lesser Sri Lanka Flameback (Lesser Goldenback)</b>	<i>Dinopium psarodes</i>	138	This impressive woodpecker was recorded on 6 days during both halves of the tour
139	Lesser Yellownape	<i>Picus chlorolophus</i>	139	Often following bird flocks this attractive woodpecker was seen on 3 days

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#	Common name	Scientific name	#	Species Notes
140	Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Leiopicus mahrattensis</i>	140	A single bird was seen well but briefly in Yala NP on the 14th
141	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	141	A seemingly scarce species recorded on only 2 days
142	Amur Falcon	<i>Falco amurensis</i>	142	A female-type was a surprise at Mirissa as it flew over the whale watching boat near the harbour and landed in a nearby coconut palm tree
143	<b>Sri Lanka Hanging-parrot</b>	<b><i>Loriculus beryllinus</i></b>	143	Excellent views of this tiny parrot seen well on 7 days at Kitulgala, Sinharaja and Hiyare
144	Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>	144	Heard on both the 11th and 12th, this beautiful parakeet was finally seen at Uda Walawe on the 13th where a male and female showed very well
145	<b>Emerald-collared (Layard's) Parakeet</b>	<b><i>Psittacula calthrapae</i></b>	145	Recorded on 3 days with the best views from the Blue Magpie Lodge on the 11th
146	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>	146	This larger cousin of the Rose-ringed Parakeet was recorded on 7 days
147	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	147	The commonest of all the parakeets recorded throughout the tour on 11 days
148	Indian Pitta	<i>Pitta brachyura</i>	148	Heard throughout the tour on 9 days and a very tame bird was seen very well at Victoria Park
149	Jerdon's Bushlark	<i>Mirafra affinis</i>	149	The high pitched song became a familiar sound during the second half of the tour seen very well on 5 days
150	Ashy-crowned Sparrow-lark	<i>Eremopterix griseus</i>	150	Small groups of this smart passerine were seen daily between the 13th and 16th whilst in The NPs of Uda Walawe, Yala and Bundala
151	Oriental Skylark	<i>Alauda gulgula</i>	151	Excellent views of up to 5 birds at the Bundala salt pans on the 16th
152	Collared Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	152	Single birds at Bundala and the wetland near Colombo airport on the 16th and 18th
153	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	153	A very common species recorded almost daily
154	Pacific Swallow (Hill)	<i>Hirundo tahitica</i>	154	Superb views of this very attractive hirundine as birds collected mud for nests on the Horton Plains on the 8th
155	<b>Red-rumped Swallow (Sri Lanka Swallow)</b>	<b><i>Cecropis daurica hyperythra</i></b>	155	This stunning swallow considered by some as an endemic was recorded on 6 days
156	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>	156	A very common pipit in suitable habitat first recorded on the Horton Plains and seen daily between the 12th and the 16th
157	Blyth's Pipit	<i>Anthus godlewskii</i>	157	Very good views in Uda Walawe on the 12th and 13th and also good to hear the call
158	Forest Wagtail	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>	158	This very attractive wagtail was recorded on 3 days in Victoria Park and Yala
159	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	159	Small numbers seen on 2 days in Uda Walawe, Bundala and Kalametiya
160	Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>	160	A single male was seen on the 12th near Uda Walawe
161	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	161	Fairly common during the first half of the tour recorded on 5 days
162	Black-headed Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina melanoptera</i>	162	Two birds seen on the 11th near the Blue Magpie and a bird in Uda Walawe on the 13th
163	Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>	163	Some excellent views of this colourful flycatcher recorded on 4 days
164	Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>	164	Excellent views of birds on the 10th and 11th whilst in Sinharaja
165	<b>Common Wood-shrike (Sri Lanka Wood-shrike)</b>	<b><i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus affinis</i></b>	165	Another species considered by some as an endemic species and recorded on 3 days
166	<b>Black-capped Bulbul</b>	<b><i>Pycnonotus melanicterus</i></b>	166	This colourful bulbul with distinct black cap was recorded in both halves of the tour on 4 days
167	<b>Red-vented Bulbul</b>	<b><i>Pycnonotus cafer cafer</i></b>	167	The commonest of all the bulbuls seen almost daily on at least 14 days
168	<b>Yellow-eared Bulbul</b>	<b><i>Pycnonotus penicillatus</i></b>	168	Undoubtedly the best looking bulbul recorded between the 7th and 9th whilst in the highlands
169	<b>White-browed Bulbul</b>	<b><i>Pycnonotus luteolus insulae</i></b>	169	Recorded on 6 days and first recorded at Sinharaja
170	<b>Yellow-browed Bulbul</b>	<b><i>Acritillas indica guglielmi</i></b>	170	Another colourful bulbul recorded during both halves of the tour on 6 days
171	<b>Square-tailed Black Bulbul</b>	<b><i>Hypsipetes ganeesa humii</i></b>	171	A very distinctive bulbul often singing from high points recorded on 7 days
172	Jerdon's Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i>	172	First seen well at our hotel in Kitulgala and then again whilst in Sinharaja
173	Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>	173	Similar to the above species but with golden forehead and recorded on 4 days
174	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>	174	This colourful species sits in its own unique family and was recorded throughout the tour on 8 days

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175	Indian Blackbird	<i>Turdus simillimus kinnisii</i>	175	The rain prevented us from seeing this endemic subspecies but it was heard on the 8th at the Horton Plains.
176	Pied Thrush	<i>Zoothera wardii</i>	176	A female and a brief male were seen on the 9th by some of the group in Victoria Park, but the heavy rain prevented us from relocating the bird
177	<b>Spot-winged Thrush</b>	<b><i>Zoothera spiloptera</i></b>	177	First seen very well at Kitulgala on the 6th and then an adult feeding a juvenile on the 12th near Sinharaja. Heard on two other days
178	Indian Blue Robin	<i>Luscinia brunnea</i>	178	A singing male seen in Victoria Park by some on the 9th and then a female showed well on the 12th near Sinharaja. Heard on 2 other days
179	Oriental Magpie-robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	179	A very common species throughout recorded on at least 12 days
180	White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus leggei</i>	180	A singing male showed very well at Hiyare Reserve on the 18th
181	Indian Robin	<b><i>Saxicoloides fulicatus leucopterus</i></b>	181	This distinctive species was seen daily between the 12th and the 16th
182	Pied Bushchat	<b><i>Saxicola caprata atratus</i></b>	182	Seen very well on the Horton Plains and Nuwara Eliya on the 8th and 9th
183	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>	183	Fairly common in the forests recorded on at least 3 days
184	Brown-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa muttui</i>	184	Similar to the above species though the pale legs are good feature to look for, recorded on 4 days
185	<b>Dull Verditer (Dull Blue) Flycatcher</b>	<b><i>Eumyias sordidus</i></b>	185	A singing bird showed well at the Horton Plains on the 8th
186	Tickell's Blue-flycatcher	<b><i>Cyornis tickelliae jerdoni</i></b>	186	This stunning flycatcher was seen very well on 3 days at Kitulgala and Sinharaja
187	Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	187	Another very beautiful flycatcher seen very well on 3 days whilst in the Highlands
188	White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>	188	Also known as the drunken piper, this obliging species was recorded on 4 days
189	Black-naped Monarch	<b><i>Hypothymis azurea ceylonensis</i></b>	189	Yet another great flycatcher recorded on 4 days from Sinharaja to Uda Walawe and Yala
190	Asian Paradise-flycatcher	<b><i>Terpsiphone paradisi ceylonensis</i></b>	190	Both the brown and spectacular white forms were seen well, recorded on 9 days
191	Common Tailorbird	<b><i>Orthotomus sutorius sutorius</i></b>	191	More often heard the seen and with us throughout the tour recorded on 12 days
192	Grey-breasted Prinia	<b><i>Prinia hodgsonii pectoralis</i></b>	192	Heard on 2 days and seen very well at Uda Walawe on the 13th
193	Jungle Prinia	<b><i>Prinia sylvatica valida</i></b>	193	First seen well at Uda Walawe on the 12th and recorded again the following day
194	Ashy Prinia	<b><i>Prinia socialis brevicauda</i></b>	194	Seen very well at Uda Walawe on the 12th and again the following day
195	Plain Prinia	<b><i>Prinia inornata insularis</i></b>	195	The commonest of the Prinias seen at various locations and recorded on 6 days
196	Zitting Cisticola	<b><i>Cisticola juncidis omalurus</i></b>	196	First recorded on the Horton Plains othe 8th and later seen at Uda Walawe on the 12th and 13th
197	<b>Sri Lanka Bush-warbler</b>	<b><i>Elaphrornis palliseri</i></b>	197	The rain the Horton Plains caused us to miss this endemic though we did hear a bird calling that refused to show itself
198	Blyth's Reed-warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>	198	Typically skulking but a number of good views during the tour recorded on 8 days
199	Clamorous Reed-warbler	<i>Acrocephalus stentoreus</i>	199	A singing bird performed really well in the reeds at Bundala NP on the 16th
200	Green Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus nitidus</i>	200	A familiar sound of the forests and seen well on occasions recorded on 8 days
201	Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>	201	A singing bird on the 7th at Galway's Land NP was the only sighting of this species
202	Large-billed Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus magnirostris</i>	202	Seen briefly but well at Galway's Land NP on the 7th and heard on another 3 days
203	Yellow-eyed Babbler	<b><i>Chrysomma sinense nasale</i></b>	203	Seen very well in Uda Walawe on our first evening on the 12th and again on the 13th and heard on the 14th and 15th also
204	Dark-fronted Babbler (C and SW forms)	<b><i>Rhopocichla atriceps siccata / nigrifrons</i></b>	204	This smart babbler was recorded on 3 days with the best views in Kitulgala and Sinharaja
205	Tawny-bellied Babbler	<b><i>Dumetia hyperythra phillipsi</i></b>	205	Good views in Yala NP on the 14th and the airport wetland on the 18th
206	<b>Sri Lankan Scimitar-babbler</b>	<b><i>Pomatorhinus melanurus</i></b>	206	This very distinctive babbler with yellow down- curved bill was recorded on 5 days and first seen very well in Galway's Land NP
207	<b>Brown-capped Babbler</b>	<b><i>Pellorneum fuscocapillus</i></b>	207	One of the more skulking babblers typically walking on the ground recorded at Kitulgala on the 6th and near Sinharaja at the Spurfowl site on the 12th
208	<b>Orange-billed Babbler</b>	<b><i>Turdoides rufescens</i></b>	208	This distinctive ginger babbler was recorded on 6 days in the forests of Kitulgala and Sinharaja
209	Yellow-billed Babbler	<b><i>Turdoides affinis taprobanus</i></b>	209	The most common of all the babblers recorded almost daily

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210	Ashy-headed Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax cinereifrons</i>	210	Recorded on 2 days in Sinharaja with 4 birds on the 10th and 6 birds on the 11th
211	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	211	This very grey subspecies is considered by some to be a distinct species (Cinereous Tit) and was recorded on the 7th, 8th and 9th
212	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>	212	This very attractive species was seen well on 3 days at the Horton Plains and Sinharaja with a max. count of 4 birds on the 11th
213	<b>Purple-rumped Sunbird</b>	<b><i>Leptocoma zeylonica zeylonica</i></b>	213	The commonest of all the Sunbirds recorded throughout the tour on 12 days
214	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>	214	Confined to the second half of the tour in the dry zone and recorded on 5 days
215	<b>Loten's Sunbird</b>	<b><i>Cinnyris lotenius lotenius</i></b>	215	The largest of the three Sunbirds recorded on the 5th - 8th and heard on the 18th
216	<b>Thick-billed Flowerpecker</b>	<b><i>Dicaeum agile zeylonicum</i></b>	216	Recorded on the 15th only with excellent views in our hotel garden at Tissa
217	<b>White-throated (Legge's) Flowerpecker</b>	<b><i>Dicaeum vincens</i></b>	217	Some excellent views of this attractive species with the best views at Kitulgala and Sinharaja on 4 days
218	Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos ceylonense</i>	218	A very common flowerpecker recorded in both the wet and dry zones and seen on 9 days
219	Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>	219	Recorded on 4 days
220	<b>Sri Lanka White-eye</b>	<b><i>Zosterops ceylonensis</i></b>	220	Confined mostly to the Highlands and Mid Hills but also Sinharaja and recorded on 4 days
221	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	221	A common species encountered in most wooded areas recorded on 9 days
222	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>	222	A common species recorded on 12 days including the <i>lucioensis</i> race or Philippine Shrike
223	<b>Sri Lanka Crested Drongo</b>	<b><i>Dicrurus lophorinus</i></b>	223	Seen well in the Sinharaja Forest on two days and heard on one other
224	<b>White-bellied Drongo</b>	<b><i>Dicrurus caerulescens leucopygialis</i></b>	224	A common species seen throughout the tour and recorded on a least 9 days
225	Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>	225	A beautiful species recorded on just three days with a max. count of 5 on the 15th
226	<b>Sri Lanka Blue Magpie</b>	<b><i>Urocissa ornata</i></b>	226	Excellent views in the Sinharaja Forest recorded on 3 days with a max. count of 4 birds on the 10th
227	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	227	A common species found mostly in the lowland areas recorded on 9 days
228	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	228	A common species recorded on 12 days
229	Southern (Lesser) Hill Myna	<i>Gracula indica</i>	229	Good scope views from our hotel in Kithulgala on the 6th
230	<b>Sri Lanka Hill Myna</b>	<b><i>Gracula ptilogenys</i></b>	230	Four birds were scoped in Sinharaja on the morning of the 10th having just seen Serendib Scops Owl. Also heard on the 5th and 6th
231	Rose-coloured Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>	231	A single bird first seen in on the edge of Sinharaja on the 11th but seen in the greatest numbers in Yala NP and recorded on 5 days
232	Brahminy Starling	<i>Sturnia pagodarum</i>	232	A great starling recorded in small numbers in Yala NP with a single on the 13th and two birds on the 14th and then a single at Bundala on the 16th
233	<b>White-faced Starling</b>	<b><i>Sturnornis albofrontatus</i></b>	233	Excellent views in Sinharaja Forest on the 10th and 11th with a max. count of 6 birds on the 10th
234	<b>Common Myna</b>	<b><i>Acridotheres tristis melanosternus</i></b>	234	A very common species recorded on 15 days
235	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	235	A locally common species mostly around habitation recorded on 9 days
236	Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>	236	Seen well on two days in the Uda Walawe and nearby area
237	Indian Silverbill	<i>Euodice malabarica</i>	237	A beautiful passerine recorded on the 12th and 14th whilst in Uda Walawe and Yala NPs
238	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	238	A very attractive Munia recorded on 8 days
239	White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>	239	A distinctive Munia recorded on 4 days
240	Tricoloured (Black-headed) Munia	<i>Lonchura malacca</i>	240	First recorded at the Horton Plains on the 8th and then seen on 5 other days
241	Grey-necked Bunting	<i>Emberiza Buchanani</i>	241	A great find by Pete and thought to be only the second confirmed record for Sri Lanka, but possibly overlooked as a rare but more regular visitor?

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<b>MAMMALS</b>				
1	Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus giganteus</i>	1	Recorded on 5 days with the most impressive sighting being the tree roosting groups near Tissa
2	<b>Orange</b> Toque Macaque	<b>Orange</b> <i>Macaca sinica</i>	2	Recorded on 7 days
3	Tufted Grey (Hanuman) Langur	<i>Semnopithecus priam</i>	3	The most impressive of the primates recorded on 4 days in Yala and Bundala NPs
4	<b>Orange</b> Purple-faced Leaf Monkey	<b>Orange</b> <i>Trachypithecus vetulus</i>	4	An impressive looking primate seen well on at least 4 days with the closest views in Sinharaja Forest
5	Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>	5	Seen very well on 3 days with two animals on the 12th and 13th and up to six on the 14th
6	Sloth Bear	<i>Melursus ursinus</i>	6	One of the tour highlights was a fantastic encounter with a large male on the evening of the 13th in Yala NP
7	Asian Palm Civet (Toddy Cat)	<i>Paradoxurus hermaphroditus</i>	7	One was seen during a night drive near Yala NP on the evening of the 14th
8	Small Indian Civet	<i>Viverricula indica</i>	8	A single was seen by torch light near the Blue Magpie on the 9th and another near Yala on the night of the 14th
9	Ruddy Mongoose	<i>Herpestes smithii</i>	9	The commonest mongoose with some good views and recorded on 5 days
10	Stripe-necked Mongoose	<i>Herpestes vitticollis</i>	10	Good to see this tricky mammal in the Horton Plains in the rain on the morning of the 8th
11	Jungle Cat	<i>Felis chaus</i>	11	Wonderful views of a hunting animal in Uda Walawe on the afternoon of the 12th and another near Yala on the night of the 14th
12	Asian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>	12	Some fabulous encounters including very young animals. Sightings confined to the NPs with a max. count of 12 on the 12th in Uda Walawe
13	Wild Pig	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	13	Recorded on 3 days whilst in Yala NP
14	<b>Orange</b> White-spotted Mouse-deer	<b>Orange</b> <i>Tragulus meminna</i>	14	Great views of at least four animals seen well on a night drive near Yala NP on the evening of the 14th
15	Spotted Deer	<i>Cervus axis</i>	15	Small groups seen on 3 days whilst in Yala NP
16	Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolour</i>	16	First seen in the Horton Plains and then again in Yala NP recorded on 4 days in total
17	Water Buffalo	<i>Bubalus bubalis</i>	17	Recorded on 4 days from the 12th, though this species is mostly considered to stem from domesticated animals rather than truly wild specimens in Sri Lanka
18	<b>Orange</b> Layard's Striped Squirrel	<b>Orange</b> <i>Funambulus layardi</i>	18	Seen very well on the 10th in Sinharaja Forest
19	Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus palmarum</i>	19	A very common mammal recorded on at least 14 days
20	<b>Orange</b> Dusky Striped Squirrel	<b>Orange</b> <i>Funambulus sublineatus</i>	20	Recorded in the Highlands on the 7th and 8th
21	Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel	<i>Ratufa macroura</i>	21	Recorded on 6 days including both the Highland and wet lowlands races
22	Indian Gerbil	<i>Tatera indica</i>	22	A single seen well whilst spotlighting near Yala on the evening of the 14th
23	Roof Rat	<i>Rattus rattus</i>	23	A single recorded on the 12th at our accommodation
24	Crested Porcupine	<i>Hystrix indica</i>	24	An all too brief sighting of an animal during a night drive near Yala on the evening of the 14th. A second animal was seen in captivity on the 18th
25	Indian Hare/Black-naped Hare	<i>Lepus nigricollis</i>	25	This attractive Hare was first seen in the early morning of the 7th en route to the Horton Plains and again on the 13th in Yala NP with 2 animals
26	Spinner Dolphin	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>	26	A group of 15 animals were seen on a boat trip out from Mirissa
27	Bryde's Whale	<i>Balaenoptera edeni</i>	27	At least 3 animals were seen very well from a boat trip out from Mirissa
28	Indian Hog Deer	<i>Hyelaphus porcinus</i>	28	This introduced species seen on the 18th in captivity



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<b>REPTILES</b>				
1	Common Bronze Back	<i>Dendrelaphis tristis</i>	1	At least two recorded on the 10th at Sinharaja Forest
2	Russell's Viper	<i>Daboia russelii</i>	2	A dead specimen was seen at Hiyare Forest Reserve on the 18th
3	<b>Reed-like Kukri Snake</b>	<b><i>Oligodon calamarius</i></b>	3	A single seen well in Sinharaja Forest on the 10th
4	<b>Sri Lankan Keelback Water Snake</b>	<b><i>Xenochrophis asperimus</i></b>	4	Seen well on our last evening in the water just before seeing Black Bittern!
5	Common House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>	5	Recorded on at least 7 days
6	Common Skink	<i>Eutropis carinata lankae</i>	6	Recorded on 2 days
7	Green Garden Lizard	<i>Calotes calotes</i>	7	Recorded on at least 3 days
8	Common Garden Lizard	<i>Calotes versicolor</i>	8	Recorded on at least 4 days
9	<b>Sri Lanka Kangaroo Lizard</b>	<b><i>Otocryptis wiegmanni</i></b>	9	Seen very well in Sinharaja Forest on the 10th and the 11th
10	Land Monitor	<i>Varanus bengalensis</i>	10	Recorded on 4 days whilst in Uda Walawe and Yala NPs
11	Water Monitor	<i>Varanus salvator salvator</i>	11	Recorded at various sites on at least 7 days
12	Parker's Hard-shelled Terrapin/Parker's Black Turtle	<i>Melanochelys trijuga parkeri</i>	12	One was seen whilst driving at dusk near Tissa on the 14th
13	Indian Star Tortoise	<i>Geochelone elegans</i>	13	Recorded on 2 days
14	Mugger or Marsh crocodile	<i>Crocodylus palustris</i>	14	Recorded on 4 days whilst in Uda Walawe and Yala NPs
<b>BUTTERFLIES</b>				
<b><i>Nymphalidae</i> - Brush-footed Butterflies</b>				
1	<b>Ceylon Tree Nymph</b>	<b><i>Idea iasonia</i></b>	1	Recorded in Sinharaja only
2	Blue Glassy Tiger	<i>Ideopsis similis</i>	2	Recorded in Sinharaja only
3	Glassy Tiger	<i>Parantica aglea</i>	3	Recorded in Yala only
4	Plain Tiger	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>	4	Recorded in Yala only
5	Common Crow	<i>Euploea core</i>	5	Recorded in Uda Walawe, Yala and Mirissa
6	Leopard	<i>Phalanta phalantha</i>	6	Recorded in Bundala and Kalametiya
7	Cruiser	<i>Vindula erota</i>	7	Recorded in Sinharaja only
8	Grey Pansy	<i>Junonia atlites</i>	8	Recorded in Waikaal only
9	Peacock Pansy	<i>Junonia almana</i>	9	Recorded in Bundala only
10	Common Sailor	<i>Neptis hylas</i>	10	Recorded in Yala only
11	Gladeye Bushbrown	<i>Nissanga patnia</i>	11	Recorded in Kitulgala and Sinharaja
12	Common Evening Brown	<i>Melanitis leda</i>	12	Recorded in Yala only

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#	Common name	Scientific name	#	Species Notes
13	White Four-ring	<i>Ypthima ceylonica</i>	13	Recorded in Sinharaja only
14	Common Palmfly	<i>Elymnias hypermnestra</i>	14	Recorded in Sinharaja only
15	Tamil Yeoman	<i>Cirrochroa thais</i>	15	Recorded in Kitulgala only
16	Baronet	<i>Symphhaedra nais</i>	16	Recorded in Bundala only
<b>Papilionidae - Swallowtails</b>				
1	<b>Ceylon Birdwing</b>	<b><i>Troides darsius</i></b>	1	<b>Recorded in Mirissa only</b>
2	Crimson Rose	<i>Pachliopta hector</i>	2	Recorded in Kitulgala, Uda Walawe, Yala, Tissa and Mirissa
3	Common Rose	<i>Pachliopta aristolochiae</i>	3	Recorded in Sinharaja, Yala and Bundala
4	Lime Butterfly	<i>Papilio demoleus</i>	4	Recorded in Yala only
5	Blue Mormon	<i>Papilio polymnestor</i>	5	Recorded in Sinharaja only
<b>Pieridae - Whites &amp; Sulphurs</b>				
1	Psyche	<i>Leptosia nina</i>	1	Recorded in Kitulgala only
2	Jezebel	<i>Delias eucharis</i>	2	Recorded in Tissa and Mirissa
3	White Orange Tip	<i>Ixias marianne</i>	3	Recorded in Yala and Bundala
4	Mottled Emigrant	<i>Catopsilia pyranthe</i>	4	Recorded in Yala only
5	Small Salmon Arab	<i>Colotis amata</i>	5	Recorded in Yala only
6	Common Grass Yellow	<i>Eurema hecabe</i>	6	Recorded in Kitulgala, Sinharaja and Yala
7	Lemon Emigrant	<i>Catopsilia pomona</i>	7	Recorded in Kitulgala only
<b>Lycaenidae - Blues and Hairstreaks</b>				
1	Gram Blue	<i>Euchrysops cnejus</i>	1	Recorded in Kitulgala only
2	Common Lineblue	<i>Prosotas nora</i>	2	Recorded in Bundala only
3	Common Pierrot	<i>Castalius rosimon</i>	3	Recorded in Mirisa only
<b>Hesperiidae - Skippers</b>				
1	Tropic Dart	<i>Potanthus confucius</i>	1	Recorded in Waikaal only
2	Indian Skipper	<i>Spialia galba</i>	2	Recorded in Sinharaja only

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#	Common name	Scientific name	#	Species Notes
<b>DRAGONFLIES &amp; DAMSELFLIES</b>				
<b>Chasers</b>				
1	Asian Pintail	<i>Acisoma panorpoides</i>	1	Recorded at the Pannagamuwa Wetlands only
2	Pied Parasol	<i>Neurothemis tullia</i>	2	Recorded at the Pannagamuwa Wetlands only
3	Sombre Lieutenant	<i>Brachydiplax sobrina</i>	3	Recorded at the Pannagamuwa Wetlands only
4	Oriental Scarlet	<i>Crocothemis servilia</i>	4	Recorded at the Pannagamuwa Wetlands only
5	Orange-winged Groundling	<i>Brachythemis contaminata</i>	5	Recorded at the Pannagamuwa Wetlands only
6	Green Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum sabina</i>	6	Recorded at the Pannagamuwa Wetlands only
7	Black-tipped Percher	<i>Diplacodes nebulosa</i>	7	Recorded in Bundala only
8	Variegated Flutterer	<i>Rhyothemis variegata</i>	8	Recorded at the Pannagamuwa Wetlands only
<b>Gossamerwings</b>				
1	<b>Shining Gossamerwing</b>	<b><i>Euphaea splendens</i></b>	1	Recorded in Kitulgala only
<b>Jewelwings</b>				
1	Oriental Greenwing	<i>Neurobasis chinensis</i>	1	Recorded in Kitulgala and the Pannagamuwa Wetlands
<b>Pond Damselflies</b>				
1	Yellow Waxtail	<i>Ceriagrion coromandelianum</i>	1	Recorded at the Pannagamuwa Wetlands only

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Bird and mammal watching tours

