

India - Brahmaputra Cruise

Naturetrek Tour Report

3 - 15 February 2009



Domestic Water Buffalo by Georgie Reekie



Brahmaputra River - Roger Hull



Black Kite - George Reekie



Indian Pond Heron - George Reekie



Golden Langur - George Reekie



Elephant back trek - George Reekie

Report compiled by Nick Acheson with photos by kind courtesy of participants Georgie Reekie and Roger Hull



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 with (tremendous) local support from a host of others on board R.V. Sukapha

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 Jenny Hull
 Chris Gove
 Susan Gove
 George Reekie
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 Ann-Karin Hounslow
 Margaret Hodson
 Ian Macbeth
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 Andrew Glass
 Judith Glass
 Stephen Locke
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 Jeremy Hepworth
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 Martin Sheppard
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Summary:

What a perfect way to spend ten days – lazing aboard a luxurious boat with our every need met; gazing out onto the great landscapes of the Brahmaputra, beer in hand; watching myriad birds and mammals along the river's shore; and visiting temples and villages where people competed with each other to be welcoming and kind. Simply delightful! Thanks for the success of the tour are, of course, owed to many. First among them are our hosts on board Sukapha for their spectacular service – Kunal and his tireless staff, Sanjay and Udit, the Master and his ever jovial and efficient crew, our boatmen Abdul and Islam, our drivers, and above all our charming and knowledgeable guides, Imran and Babajan. Thanks must also go to Assam herself and to all the wonderful people and creatures which inhabit her jungles, waters and grasslands. We were privileged to visit you...

Day 1

Wednesday 4th February

This morning we whisked you (via a sprinkling of White-rumped Vultures – now regarded by BirdLife International as critically endangered – and Black Drongos – not even remotely endangered) from Kolkata airport to your elegant hotel in city centre; lunch was partaken of; and in the afternoon we headed to the Botanical Gardens of Kolkata for a gentle stroll and an introduction to some of eastern India's beautiful birds. An Asian Koel and a Common Hawk-Cuckoo serenaded us from the trees of this attractive site as we watched Coppersmith, Blue-throated and Brown-headed Barbets, Common and Jungle Mynas, Greater Coucal and Rose-ringed Parakeet. Black Kites and a Booted Eagle drifted overhead, Five-striped Palm-Squirrels scampered lightly through the forest and sooty-grey Common Langurs romped through the grass (the sootiness was geographical variation I think, rather than pollution). In the evening some of you braved the quixotic bustle of Kolkata's streets in search of supper while others dined amid the splendour of the delightful Oberoi Grand Hotel.

Day 2

Thursday 5th February

First on our agenda this morning was our flight to Assam. We collected you early from your hotel and retraced our steps to the airport for our short and comfortable flight northeast to Jorhat. From the left of the plane we had a glorious view of lofty Kanchenjunga (believed until 1852 to be the highest mountain in the world, and still mightily miffed at losing the accolade) and many of his snow-clad friends. At Jorhat we were efficiently collected by Sanjay and Imran (setting the tone for the outstanding efficiency of all our local staff throughout the cruise) and driven for an hour through the charming countryside of Assam. Tiny black goats and dumpy toffee-coloured cows chomped by the roadsides, Purple Swamphens, Indian Pond Herons and Purple Herons crowded the ditches and marshes, and immaculate houses with bright gardens met our gaze wherever we looked.

On arriving at the great sandy beaches of the Brahmaputra and boarding our boat – R. V. Sukapha – we were met by the smiling crew bearing fruit juice. You were quickly settled into your spacious cabins and a late lunch was served. After lunch, we took a well-earned rest on the deck, books in the hands of some, beers in the hands of others, and binoculars in the hands of yet others (and all three in the hands of some of the most ambitious). Common Cranes stood handsomely on a nearby sandbank and in no time at all the sun was casting its gold and pink light across the vastness of the Brahmaputra as it dipped below the horizon.

After supper, our first evening's entertainment largely consisted of learning to put on our splendidly orange life jackets. We wore them grudgingly at first, but by the end of the cruise we would grow to love them and I fancy I even saw one or two of you trying to smuggle one home in your luggage.

Day 3

Friday 6th February

By dawn today, many of you were on the top deck of Sukapha, taking photos or simply admiring the majesty of the river in the cold, early-morning light. Through the dimmest dawn light we saw distant Small Pratincoles, accompanied by their trilling and twittering calls, and small groups of Eurasian Curlews sped by.

This morning was devoted to our first major outing – to Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary – in search of the eponymous ape and a host of other great creatures.

After another drive through attractive and fascinating Assamese landscapes we reached the sanctuary where – in a way which brings a warm, fuzzy glow to a tour-leader’s heart – a small family of Hoolock Gibbons sat waiting for us in a tree above the guard station at the entrance. We watched them for some time – handsome black males and juveniles and a tastefully chocolate-mousse-hued female complete with newborn infant – until we were distracted by the second charismatic creature to be found before we’d left the car-park. Two Malabar Giant Squirrels (and yes, they really are giant) were found by the sharp eyes of the park guards in a nearby tree. Having admired the squirrels to our satisfaction we strode off into the forest for a wonderful walk. A brilliant Ruby-cheeked Sunbird shone from a tangle of vines and nearby Common Iora and Oriental White-eye were seen. Red-breasted Parakeets called from the treetops, Ashy Woodswallows soared over the canopy, and we were once again treated to lengthy looks at a family of Hoolock Gibbons about their business. Even more of a treat, some of you felt, was the chorus of gibbon-song that accompanied us around the forest.

On returning to the entrance of the park we were shown the shape of things to come in terms of Sukapha’s hospitality – in our absence Kunal and his team had prepared an excellent breakfast in the garden of the guard station. That breakfast was frequently interrupted is no comment on the excellence of the breakfast; rather it is a comment on the excellence of the creatures which appeared while we were enjoying it. An Orange-headed Thrush was found, much admired and much photographed behind the guard station, and a family of coy Capped Langurs put in occasional appearances.

The best of the Capped Langurs was yet to come however. After breakfast we once again walked into the forest and hadn’t got far before we encountered the same family of monkeys disporting themselves among the trees and vines by the track. Our walk ended at a crossroads where on one side we watched a perched Blue-bearded Bee-eater and on the other we were delighted by a Crimson Sunbird and an Orange-bellied Leafbird. So many beautiful, charismatic birds in one forest!

On the drive back to the Brahmaputra we stopped at a roadside swamp to admire Bronze-winged Jacanas, Asian Openbills, Lesser Adjutants, Lesser Whistling-Ducks, Spotbills and Grey-headed Lapwings. And as we reached the shore we were treated to a small flock of Bar-headed Geese on the beach and to the lovely sight of a huge train of domestic buffalo, including skipping calves, being driven through the shallows.

In the afternoon we sailed for the first time, en route to Majuli Island and on reaching it we took a brief walk through a village in the golden light of the afternoon. Children beamed their impossibly big smiles at us, Green Bee-eaters zipped overhead, Chestnut-tailed Starlings gorged themselves from the flaming flowers of Silk Cotton Trees. And we were happy to be there.

Day 4

Saturday 7th February

This morning we visited Majuli, described as the world’s biggest river island (and frankly it concerns me a little that there’s someone out there who claims to have measured them all). Biggest or not, it is a delightfully beautiful place. We first stopped at a marsh outside a village where we were treated to one of our favourite scenes of the whole trip. Everywhere we looked there were birds and yet everywhere we looked there were also smiling people and tail-wagging dogs.

Citrine Wagtails, Rosy Pipits and Streaked Weavers fed in the muddy fields around the marsh; Temminck's Stints, Green and Wood Sandpipers trotted through the shallows; Northern Lapwings and Black-headed Gulls flapped by; and a straight-from-the-fieldguide cameo of Great, Intermediate, Cattle and Little Egrets was also to be seen.

Next we visited our first Mising tribal village where ladies spun and wove, mustard-seed dried on trays in the sun, handsome pigs rooted in the shadows and – as was the case everywhere we went in Assam – everybody greeted us with bright eyes and beautiful smiles. We drifted to a thatch-built stilt-house where, as we sat cross-legged, Mising rice wine and a local chicken dish were provided for us to sample. Driving from the village we encountered stately Lesser Adjutant Storks (and their not-so-stately offspring) nesting in the tops of trees.

Our final stop this morning was at the beautiful Kamalabari Monastery where we were privileged to watch monks perform their entrancing, time-honoured dance in honour of the incarnations of Vishnu. The short walk back to the vehicles was brightened by Silk Cotton Trees decked with blossom, Common Mynas and Red-whiskered Bulbuls.

This afternoon we set sail in earnest – more books, more beers and, for those sporting binoculars, plenty to watch. Gangetic River Dolphins broke the endless expanses of water alongside Sukapha; Pallas' Fish-Eagle, Short-toed Eagle, Short-eared Owl and Long-legged Buzzard were all seen over the banks and beaches of the river; Gadwall, Ruddy Shelduck and Bar-headed Geese were present in their thousands. And as we reached our mooring, and the people of the nearby village came out to see us, we bemused them completely by performing a Mexican wave and trying to persuade them to return the compliment.

Day 5

Sunday 8th February

Today was largely spent sailing but before we set sail we visited the lovely village of Jamuguri. Here, as on Majuli Island, we were met with smiles in every home. Those of a birdier persuasion also had plenty to keep them busy, with good views on offer of Greenish Warbler, Baya Weaver, the ever popular Indian Roller and many other handsome birds.

Having visited the village, taken a thousand photos (where has George got to?), and bought beautiful local textiles, we returned to Sukapha and set sail for the rest of the day, passing shores dotted with countless ducks, with the beady eyes of hungry Peregrines and a White-tailed Eagle trained on them. On our left side Kaziranga National Park soon appeared and with it came our first views of Greater One-horned Rhino (the master of Sukapha kindly reversed for us all to have a better look!), Asian Elephant, Hog Deer, Barasingha, Wild Water Buffalo, Grey-headed Fish-Eagle and Great Pied Hornbill. To watch all this with beers in hand, as Gangetic Dolphins surfaced all around us – who could ask for more?

Day 6

Monday 9th February

The celebrated Siva temples of the village of Vishwanath were our first destination today. While Udit explained the history and spiritual significance of two very different temples here, we also turned our eyes to the skies and the trees for Oriental Honey-Buzzard, Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker (what a cracker!), Coppersmith Barbet, and familiar Tree Sparrows.

This afternoon we made our first foray into the wild landscapes of Kaziranga National Park, exploring the Central Range of the park by jeep. Greater One-horned Rhinos abounded, Asian Elephants made vain attempts to hide in the undergrowth, and Hog Deer, Barasingha and Wild Boar carpeted the edges of every waterhole. Two of our jeeps – lucky things – were even treated to a Tiger emerging from the long grass and strolling along the edge of a wetland. The birds came thick and fast too, with notable highlights being several rare Swamp Francolins, a Dusky Eagle Owl chick in its nest and an Asian Barred Owlet. An interesting olfactory experience was our stop under a truly stench-ridden roost of the now critically endangered Slender-billed Vulture. And as we drove back through the dusk we watched a family of elephants with a tiny infant playing in a lake as Spot-billed Pelicans swam in the shallows nearby.

All this and in the evening, as a complete surprise to her, we celebrated Ann's birthday with a cake lovingly prepared by the boat staff.

Day 7

Tuesday 10th February

And for something completely different, today we drove to Nameri National Park where we boarded rubber rafts and, guided by the skilful paddles of local tribal people (including the brother of our very own Babajan), we drifted down a bright river. The river chattered as it flowed over stones, Black Bulbuls squeaked and whistled from the flame-flowered Silk Cotton Trees, the skies were filled with the wings of hundreds of Small Pratincoles, and nobody felt the need to say a word.

Goosanders prowled the shallows, rare Ibisbills probed among the rocks with their slender bills, River Terns drifted by on silvery wings, Great Thick-knees crouched on a beach and a Pallas' Fish-Eagle took exception to a Jungle Crow approaching its nest. The only thing to shatter the idyll was an occasional squirt from a water-pistol which had somehow fallen into the hands of the Macbeths.

A delicious lunch was taken at a nearby lodge where two Oriental Hobbies scowled from a tree, a family of Capped Langurs lazed in another tree, and we visited a breeding programme for the highly endangered Pygmy Hog. All in all, a marvellous way to spend a day!

But for those who had chosen to stay at Sukapha, other pleasures were in store. Babajan took you on a walk, through riverside forest and clouds of butterflies, to a peaceful temple where you saw the only Assamese Macaque of the whole trip.

And on our return the staff and crew of Sukapha boat played volleyball on the beach, assisted by the bravest and strongest-limbed of the Naturetrekkers. After supper we returned to the beach, where by torchlight local youngsters danced on the sands, a dance telling of love, spring and new life.

Day 8

Wednesday 11th February

For many, this morning was the most magical of an altogether wonderful trip. We left Sukapha before dawn in order to reach the Central Range of Kaziranga for an early morning elephant-ride through the great grasslands of the park.

Countless rhinos, including mothers and their young, allowed us close and countless photos were taken; our placid elephants, and their skilled mahouts, led us through herds of Wild Water Buffalo, Hog Deer and Barasingha; Siberian Stonechats stood guard atop the grass-clumps, while Plain Prinias wove their way through them; a critically endangered Bengal Florican burst from the plain; and our lives slowed to the gentle pace of our swaying elephants as we all watched, silent and spellbound.

After an hour on the elephants – though it seemed like a lifetime – we made our way to the little-visited Western Range of the park where a fine breakfast was taken at the gate. Our tummies full, we drove into the park for a delightful safari. The by-now normal cast of wonderful creatures (rhinos and deer in great numbers) were joined here by a crisp White Pelican overhead in perfect light, a Greater Adjutant Stork circling in a stack of Lessers, Crested Serpent-Eagles and Changeable Hawk-Eagles on late-morning thermals and a Brown Fish-Owl at his roost. From a tower over a lake we watched Greenshank and Spotted Redshank, an Avocet and a family of graceful Black-necked Storks as a party of Smooth-coated Otters played on the shore before swimming the length of the lake in front of us. A magical continuation of a magical morning!

In the evening, more volleyball was played on the shore and as the players strode (and limped) back aboard Sukapha, Black-crowned Night-Herons quacked overhead through the dusk as they left for their nightly business. Another cake was served this evening, this time for Jenny's birthday.

Day 9

Thursday 12th February

An Osprey wheeled over the boat at dawn this morning, and fishermen tied their tiny boat to Sukapha and came aboard to sell their night's catch. Over breakfast we set sail (we'd got quite good at multi-tasking by this point) en route to Orang National Park. As we sailed we watched Hen Harriers over the riverside grasslands, listened to the blithe songs of Oriental Skylarks and saw our only White-tailed Stonechat of the tour.

Having reached our destination we moored and, in the afternoon, boarded jeeps for a lovely drive through Orang. Here Rhinos are rare and the only evidence we saw of them was their dung. However, birds abounded in the Silk Cotton forest and scrub. Alexandrine and Rose-ringed Parakeets shrieked from the blossom-laden trees, accompanied by hordes of Chestnut-tailed Starlings, Common Mynas and Red-vented Bulbuls. Greater Flameback, Hair-crested Drongo, Verditer Flycatcher and Grey-breasted Prinia were all seen but the highlight was a large flock of Fire-capped Tits. This exceptional sight flummoxed your great and glorious leaders for a moment (and let's face it, we're not easily flummoxable) and it may well prove to be the first record of this normally montane species for Assam. As we drove back to Sukapha Black Francolins and Striated Babblers called from the grass and in the evening our hosts treated us to a delicious barbecue on the beach and wistful singing of Assamese and Bengali folksongs.

Day 10

Friday 13th February

At dawn this morning we heard Swamp Francolins chiming through the mists and shortly afterwards Oriental Skylarks began their aimless songs. The larks' twitterings were soon drowned by the hoots of distant Hoolock Gibbons. At breakfast we again set sail, bound for the village of Ganesh Pahar. A young Golden Eagle over the sands was the highlight of the trip, but the usual great flocks of ducks, principally Gadwall, were also to be seen.

In the afternoon we made the difficult approach to Ganesh Pahar in the hands of our superb boatmen Abdul and Islam. The village is home to a fascinating mix of Assamese people and Bihari settlers and the differences between the homes, the dress, and the forms of worship of these two ethnic groups were carefully explained to us. Here each Bihari family had a tulsi (basil) altar and the Assamese people were busy planting rice shoots in their paddies. Lesser Adjutants and self-important Common Mynas strutted through the rice and everywhere we looked there were fat domestic ducks, shiny black goat-kids and rotund puppies.

In the evening our return to Sukapha was complicated by the boat apparently having disappeared but soon enough we found it and once again Abdul and Islam showed their mettle, guiding us through treacherous shallows back home to the boat.

Day 11

Saturday 14th February

In the morning today we set sail for the last time, bound for the Assamese metropolis of Guwahati. From our mooring in the river we visited the celebrated Umananda Temple on Peacock Island. I'd like to say we admired the introduced population of Golden Langurs here but, to be quite honest, we derided them. Too portly to bound through the trees like proper langurs, they sat, quite literally, on the fence and (apparently on advice from Marie-Antoinette) ate cake (hardly nature red in tooth and claw!) Here too – and slightly more wild-looking – we found Spot-throated Babbler and Purple Sunbird. At least a couple of the gentlemen bought temple offerings to the gods by way of Valentine's Day presents for their wives!

This afternoon we made an unattractive-sounding trip to the rubbish dump at Gorchuk outside the city. Ghastly as it sounded, this was one of the most memorable outings of the whole cruise. As we reached the dump we saw at least a hundred Greater Adjutants – a tremendous chunk of the remaining world population of this endangered bird – and swirling thousands of Black Kites (both Black and Black-eared subspecies). Perhaps the real highlight, however, was the chance to meet the graceful Bangladeshi people who, tiny children included, clamber over the dunes of rubbish every day, in search of anything that can be sold.

From the dump, half of the group went straight back to Sukapha while the other half tarried a while in a market, admiring baskets of live pigeons and freshly-caught fish, brilliantly-coloured cloth and tooth-meltingly sugary sweets.

Day 12

Sunday 15th February

Our last visit was to the thought-provoking Kamakhya temple on a hill above Guwahati. Here the divine mother, Shakti, is appeased by sacrifices of pigeons and goats offered by seething hordes of Assamese people. We seethed with them for a while before heading back to Sukapha one last time for lunch. And in the afternoon, bidding heartfelt farewells to the people of Sukapha, we headed for the airport where after a delay of a couple of hours we flew back to Kolkata for a final night in the grandeur of the Oberoi.

Day 13

Monday 16th February

This morning some of you headed to the airport for your flight back to the UK, others headed for the Sunderbans with Sujan, and I stayed in Kolkata for my flight to Nagpur.

Behind us we left the mighty Brahmaputra, ever-changing but changeless, and our many Assamese hosts – on board Sukapha, in every village and temple we visited, and in the jungles and grasslands.

Thank you all for making such a fantastic trip – thank you for your sensitivity to the people and landscapes of Assam; for your tremendous enthusiasm for its birds, mammals, butterflies and wild places; for your thousand questions about India's nature and culture; and for your constant smiles and frequent laughter. Speed back to India – Sujan and I will be delighted to see you here again.

Excerpt from our Naturetrek Newsletter (May 2009)

Written by Nick Acheson (Naturetrek Tour Leader)

'Oh, it's just another rhino.' That's not the sort of thing you hear every day; but it's *exactly* the sort of thing you hear if you're leading Naturetrek's fantastic new Brahmaputra Cruise. Ho hum, just another Greater One-horned Rhinoceros. Now, I'm a big fan of rhinos. It's just that when you're astride an elephant, rolling across the misty grasslands of the fabled Kaziranga National Park, and you've already seen thirty rhinos that morning (in addition to the twenty-five you saw the day before), and then a critically endangered Bengal Florican flashes its persil-white wings over a plain dotted with countless hundreds of Hog Deer, Wild Buffalo, Wild Boar and Barasingha, all to the sound of Bengal Bushlarks, it's hard to lend your full attention to yet another rhino emerging from the grass.

But that's just the way things are along the Brahmaputra. You hardly know where to look. Take our visit to Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary for example. On our first Brahmaputra Cruise, in February 2009, we rolled up at the sanctuary gate and were met by park rangers frantically pointing to the trees above their guard station, where a family of Hoolock Gibbons was perched – inky black males and youngsters and a dusky-brown female clutching a tiny newborn. While we watched the delightful play of the gibbons, there was more frantic pointing from the rangers – to the opposite side of the clearing where they'd found two magnificent Malayan Giant Squirrels. Later, during our breakfast there, a family of apricot-hued Capped Langurs appeared by the same clearing, causing cups of tea to go flying in the rush to see them.

The breakfast, I should add, despite our locale in the middle of nowhere, was delicious and was served with flawless attention to detail and with big smiles. It must be said that *everything* done by the staff and crew of our vessel, R.V. Sukapha, is done with impeccable grace, flawless attention and enormous smiles. Sukapha's cabins are spacious, well-appointed and spotlessly clean, and the meals, always precisely on time, are delicious, especially when served on a beach, under the stars, with crewmembers singing plaintive songs in Assamese against the murmur of the mighty Brahmaputra.

Sukapha herself is undoubtedly a highlight, on a tour which frankly is packed full of wildlife and cultural highlights. One day we're visiting Mising tribal villages where the local people graciously invite us into their homes to see their traditional crafts and share their rice wine. The next day we're entranced by monks drumming and dancing, as they have for centuries, in honour of Lord Vishnu.

And yet another day we're visiting Nameri National Park where, paddled expertly by local tribesmen, we're drifting on rubber rafts down a bright river, with Ibisbills and Common Mergansers patrolling the stony shallows, Great Thick-knees prowling the beaches, and the sharp calls of Small Pratincoles and River Terns overhead.

But to watch wonderful wildlife, you need hardly leave the refined comfort of Sukapha's top deck. In winter the banks of the vast Brahmaputra teem with waterfowl, cormorants, herons and gulls; and trained on them are the hungry eyes of Peregrine, Pallas' Fish-Eagle, White-tailed Eagle, Golden Eagle and Long-legged Buzzard. Kingfishers, martins, bee-eaters and swallows crowd the skies and a Grey-headed Fish-Eagle or a Great Pied Hornbill perches in riverside forest. Cheers go up from the group for each Gangetic Dolphin that leaps clear of the great river. And in February, as Sukapha passed Kaziranga to the south, we saw a glorious Asian Elephant tusk, a herd of Wild Buffalo, innumerable Hog Deer and, yes, a Greater One-horned Rhino. Just another rhino.

If you think you could bear to see so many rhinos, with an incomparable supporting cast of elephants, monkeys, gibbons, and birds, set against the great landscapes of Assam, and all the while be cared for by our gracious, beaming Assamese hosts – if you really think you could bear it – join us for our unrivalled Brahmaputra Cruise.

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Species lists

Birds

Key: s = species seen; h = species heard; f = species seen in a semi-wild / feral state

Common name	Scientific name	February 2009											
		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>			s	s								
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>		s	s	s	s	s		s	s	s	s	
Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>								s				
Spot-billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>			s	s	s	s		s	s	s		
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	
Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s			s	
Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>			s	s	s	s		s	s	s	s	
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>			s	s	s	s		s	s	s	s	
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>		s	s	s								
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>			s	s	s	s		s	s	s	s	
Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s				
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		s	s	s	s	s	s	s			s	
Indian Pond-Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s		s	s	
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s		s	s	
Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striatus</i>					s	s						
Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>								s				
Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s		s	
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>					s				s	s		
Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>					s	s		s	s			
Black-necked Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i>					s	s		s	s			
Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptotilos javanicus</i>			s	s		s	s	s	s	s	s	
Greater Adjutant	<i>Leptotilos dubius</i>								s			s	
Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>			s									
Lesser Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>		s	s	s		s					s	
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>			s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	
Bar-headed Goose	<i>Anser indicus</i>			s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s		
Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>		s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	
Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>					s							
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>			s			s		s		s		
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>		s	s	s	s	s		s	s	s	s	
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>			s	s	s	s		s	s	s		
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>					s	s	s		s	s	s	
Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>			s	s	s	s		s	s	s		
Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>			s	s	s			s	s	s		
Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>											s	
Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>			s					s				
Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>				s	s	s						
Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>					s	s						
Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>		s	s	s	s				s	s		
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>					s	s						
Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>							s					
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>					s	s	s	s	s	s		
Oriental Honey-Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>						s	s					
Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>				s								
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	s	s						s	s	s	s	

Common name	Scientific name	February 2009											
		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Pallas' Fish-Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucoryphus</i>				s	s	s	s	s				
White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>					s							
Grey-headed Fish-Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>					s	s		s				
White-rumped Vulture	<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>	s											
Slender-billed Vulture	<i>Gyps tenuirostris</i>							s		s			
Himalayan Griffon	<i>Gyps himalayensis</i>					s	s		s	s			
Red-headed Vulture	<i>Sarcogyps calvus</i>								s				
Short-toed Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>				s	s					s		
Crested Serpent-Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>			s		s	s	s	s				
Eurasian Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>				s					s			
Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>										s	s	
Pied Harrier	<i>Circus melanoleucos</i>									s			
Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>				s	s					s	s	
Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>				s	s	s		s	s			
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>					s				s	s		
Booted Eagle	<i>Aquila pennatus</i>	s			s								
Eastern Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>										s		
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>												s
Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus cirrhatous</i>									s	s		
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>			s				s	s	s	s	s	
Oriental Hobby	<i>Falco severus</i>								s				
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>			s		s				s	s		
Black Francolin	<i>Francolinus francolinus</i>											h	
Swamp Francolin	<i>Francolinus gularis</i>							s		s			h
Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>							s		s			
Kalij Pheasant	<i>Lophura leucomelanos</i>							s		s			
Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>									s			
Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>		s										
Brown Crake	<i>Amauornis akool</i>							s					
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amauornis phoenicurus</i>		s		s			s					
Purple Swampphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>		s	s	s								
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>			s	s			s					
Common Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>				s			s					
Bengal Florican	<i>Houbaropsis bengalensis</i>									s			
Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>				s								
Bronze-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>			s	s					s			
Ibisbill	<i>Ibidorhyncha struthersii</i>								s				
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>									s			
Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>									s			
Great Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus recurvirostris</i>								s				
Small Pratincole	<i>Glareola lactea</i>		s	s		s		s				s	
River Lapwing	<i>Vanellus duvaucelii</i>								s				s
Grey-headed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus cinereus</i>			s	s			s		s	s		
Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>			s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s		
Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>				s	s				s	s		
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>					s	s						
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>				s	s	s	s					
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>									s			
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		s		s	s							
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>									s			

Common name	Scientific name	February 2009											
		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>				s		s						
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>				s	s	s	s	s	s			
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		s		s		s	s		s			
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>				s		s						
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>				s	s	s	s					s
Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>				s	s	s					s	
Pallas' Gull	<i>Larus ichthyaetus</i>			s	s	s	s	s		s			
Brown-headed Gull	<i>Larus brunnicephalus</i>			s			s	s				s	
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>		s	s			s						
River Tern	<i>Sterna aurantia</i>					s		s	s				
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>									s			
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	s	s										
Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>							s	s	s			
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>			s		s	s				s	s	
Red Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i>						s	s			s		
Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
Yellow-footed Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicoptera</i>	s						s	s		s		
Green Imperial-Pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>							s	s				
Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>			s						s	s		
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	s					s	s		s	s	s	
Blossom-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula roseata</i>									s			
Red-breasted Parakeet	<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>	s		s			s	s	s	s	s		
Common Hawk-Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus varius</i>	h											h
Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopacea</i>	h											
Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>	s						s		s			s
Lesser Coucal	<i>Centropus bengalensis</i>							s		s			
Dusky Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo coromandus</i>							s					
Brown Fish-Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>									s			
Asian Barred Owlet	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>				h			s					
Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>										s		
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>					s							
Asian Palm-Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>	s		s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
House Swift	<i>Apus nipalensis</i>	s	s										
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>							s		s			s
Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>							s					
White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>		s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	
Blue-bearded Bee-eater	<i>Nyctornis athertoni</i>			s					s		s		
Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	s	s	s	s					s	s	s	
Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>			s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	
Dollarbird	<i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>									s			
Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>						s	s					
Oriental Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros albirostris</i>				s			s					s
Great Pied Hornbill	<i>Buceros bicornis</i>				h		s	s	s	s			
Lineated Barbet	<i>Megalaima lineata</i>	s		s	h	h	s	s	s	s	s	s	
Blue-throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima asiatica</i>	s		h			h	s	h	s			
Blue-eared Barbet	<i>Megalaima australis</i>			h									
Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>	s	h	h	h		s		h	h			
Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Celeus brachyurus</i>			s									
Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>	s											

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		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Greater Flameback	<i>Chrysocolaptes lucidus</i>										s		
Bengal Bushlark	<i>Mirafra assamica</i>									s			
Sand Lark	<i>Calandrella raytal</i>		s						s				
Oriental Skylark	<i>Alauda gulgula</i>										s	s	
Plain Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>		s	s	s	s	s	s	s		s	s	s
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>			s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>			s									
Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>							s					
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>		s	s	s			s					s
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>			s								s	
Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>			s		s						s	s
Rosy Pipit	<i>Anthus roseatus</i>				s					s			
Large Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>									s	s		
Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina melaschistos</i>			s	s								
Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>										s		
Short-billed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus brevirostris</i>			s							s		
Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>			s							s		
Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pyconotus jocosus</i>				s		s		s				
Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pyconotus cafer</i>	s		s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s		s
Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>								s				
Orange-bellied Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis hardwickii</i>			s									
Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>			s				s			s		
Blue-capped Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola cinclorhynchus</i>				s								
Blue Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>								s			s	
Blue Whistling-Thrush	<i>Myophonus caeruleus</i>									s			
Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Zoothera citrina</i>			s									
Black-breasted Thrush	<i>Turdus dissimilis</i>							s					
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>											h	
Grey-breasted Prinia	<i>Prinia hodgsonii</i>											s	
Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>									s	s		
Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>			s	s	s	h			h			
Hume's Leaf-Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus humei</i>			s						h	s		
Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>					s					h		
Western Crowned-Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus occipitalis</i>			s									
Striated Grassbird	<i>Megalurus palustris</i>								s		s		
Taiga Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>				h								
Little Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula westermanni</i>									s			
Verditer Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias thalassina</i>										s		
Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>			s	s	s	s	s					
Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>			s	s	s	s	s	s			s	
White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>			s						s			
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochuros</i>								s				
Plumbeous Water-Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus fuliginosus</i>												
Siberian Stonechat	<i>Saxicola maura</i>			s	s	s	s	s	s	s			
White-tailed Stonechat	<i>Saxicola leucura</i>										s		
Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>								h	h			
Spot-throated Babbler	<i>Pellorneum albiventre</i>												s
Striped Tit-Babbler	<i>Macronous gularis</i>			h									
Chestnut-capped Babbler	<i>Timalia pileata</i>									h			

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		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Striated Babbler	<i>Turdoides earlei</i>										s		
Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striatus</i>	s									s		s
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>			s	s	s			h	h	s		s
Fire-capped Tit	<i>Cephalopyrus flammiceps</i>										s		
Ruby-cheeked Sunbird	<i>Chalcoparia singalensis</i>												
Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>	s											s
Crimson Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga siparaja</i>			s							s		
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum cruentatum</i>							s					
Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	s		s					s	s	s	s	s
Maroon Oriole	<i>Oriolus traillii</i>			h									
Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>				s								s
Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>		s			s	s			s	s		
Grey-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius tephronotus</i>			s	s	s	s	s	s	s		s	s
Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>			s									
Hair-crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentotus</i>									s	s		
Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>			s						s			
Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	s		s	s	s				s			s
House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	s	s		s	s			s	s			s
Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	s		s		s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
Spot-winged Starling	<i>Saroglossa spiloptera</i>										s		
Common Hill Myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>								h				
White-vented Myna	<i>Acridotheres grandis</i>			s				s	s	s		s	s
Jungle Myna	<i>Acridotheres fuscus</i>	s	s	s		s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
Asian Pied Starling	<i>Gracupica contra</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s			s	s	s	s
Chestnut-tailed Starling	<i>Sturnia malabarica</i>			s	s	s	s				s		
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	s	s	s	s	s	s			s		s	s
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>							s					s
Streaked Weaver	<i>Ploceus manyar</i>				s								
Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>					s	s						

Mammals

Common name	Scientific name	February 2009										
		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus giganteus</i>				s		s					
Assamese Macaque	<i>Macaca assamensis</i>							s				
Rhesus Macaque	<i>Macaca mulatta</i>	s		s			s		s			s
Common Langur	<i>Presbytis entellus</i>	s										
Capped Langur	<i>Trachypithecus pileatus</i>			s					s			
Golden Langur	<i>Trachypithecus geei</i>											f
Hoolock Gibbon	<i>Bunopithecus hoolock</i>			s								
Smooth-coated Otter	<i>Aonyx cinerea</i>								s			
Indian Grey Mongoose	<i>Herpestes edwardsi</i>								s			
Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris</i>						s					
Gangetic Dolphin	<i>Platanista gangetica</i>			s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
Asian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>					s	s		s			
Greater One-horned Rhino	<i>Rhinoceros unicornis</i>					s	s		s			
Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>						s		s	s		
Barking Deer	<i>Muntiacus muntjak</i>			s		s						
Hog Deer	<i>Axis porcinus</i>					s	s		s	s		
Barasingha	<i>Cervus duvaucelii</i>					s	s		s			
Wild Water Buffalo	<i>Bubalus bubalis</i>					s	s		s	s		
Five-striped Palm-Squirrel	<i>Funambulus pennanti</i>	s										
Hoary-bellied Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus pygerythrus</i>				s	s	s		s	s		
Malayan Giant Squirrel	<i>Ratufa bicolor</i>			s								
Black-naped Hare	<i>Lepus nigricollis</i>								s			