

Just Tigers!

Naturetrek Tour Report

4 - 16 March 2016



Royal Bengal Tiger



Royal Bengal Tiger



Yellow-wattled Lapwing



Sambar

Tour report and images compiled by Yusuf Rizvi



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Tour participants: Yusuf Rizvi (leader) with three Naturetrek clients

Day 1

Friday 4th March

The tour started with an overnight British Airways flight from Heathrow to Delhi, India

Day 2

Saturday 5th March

It was a clear, warm and sunny day when the flight landed at Delhi airport about 9.30am. We checked in at the Novatel hotel, Aero city and then, after lunch, set off for Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary. We saw quite a few birds including some water birds at the sanctuary. We returned to the hotel by 5.30pm and after a briefing about plans for the next day, we had time to relax.

Day 3

Sunday 6th March

It had rained overnight and was overcast as we started from our hotel around 10.30am for some sightseeing. We first went to Qutub Minar where we met our local guide and she shared her knowledge about the complex. Then we went to see the India Gate, followed by a drive around the Lutyen's Delhi where some impressive buildings stand.

We had our lunch at Pindi restaurant before going to see Humayun's Tomb. After seeing the tomb, we went straight to the railway station at Hazrat Nizamuddin where we got our packed dinner, boarded the train and settled down for our overnight journey to Jabalpur, which departed at 5.50pm.

Day 4

Monday 7th March

Our overnight train reached Jabalpur at 9.30am and went to the Hotel Narmada Jackson where we had a chance to wash and change before having breakfast. It then took a little over three hours to reach Kanha for our stay at Tuli Tiger Resort. Upon arrival we checked in and had lunch and some rest before starting the afternoon safari. We went to the Kisli area for our first safari in the park and saw some mammals including Gaur, Spotted Deer, Swamp Deer and Indian Muntjac.

After the drive we came back to the lodge and in the evening we did the checklist before having dinner and then retiring to bed.

Day 5

Tuesday 8th March

It was a bit cold first thing in the morning. After tea and coffee we set off for our safari drive. On the drive we saw quite a few birds and mammals, and heard a few distress calls, but had no luck with spotting a Tiger.

After lunch we went for our afternoon safari. We saw quite a few birds including Bar-headed Geese, and again heard a few distress calls.

In the evening we did the checklist followed by dinner.

Day 6

Wednesday 9th March

The morning was again slightly cold, and it turned into a hot but cloudy day. On our morning safari we saw quite a few birds and witnessed interesting interactions between a troop of Common Langurs.

The park was closed in the afternoon so we went to visit the local market in the nearby village of Mocha. It was interesting to see all the different items being sold in the market.

Day 7

Thursday 10th March

Today was clear, hot and sunny. We went on morning and evening drives which were interesting with lots to see, except predators, although we heard a few calls. An interesting bird was the White-rumped Shama.

Day 8

Friday 11th March

For our morning safari we headed to the Mukki zone which was quite a drive away. Once in the Mukki zone we found quite a few Tiger tracks. We had our breakfast at Sounder Camp and then went to check the main road before driving back to Kisli zone. Yusuf was telling the group that sometimes Tigers have been seen crossing in this area from a particular crossing point, and as we reached the point, we saw a dominant male Tiger nicknamed Bheema crossing the road! It was our exclusive sighting and the only sighting in the Mukki zone this morning. Everyone got very excited at the first Tiger sighting of the tour, and Mark managed to take some photographs.

The afternoon drive was a bit quieter. We saw some birds and common mammals including Sambar Deer, Common Langur and Gaur. Our day ended with the checklist followed by dinner.

Day 9

Saturday 12th March

Today was clear, hot and sunny, and a lucky day for us as we were rewarded with a good Tigress sighting. Initially we heard a few distress calls by Spotted Deer near Shravan Taal. When they stopped we went to Link 7 road. On reaching there we learned that a Tigress had been spotted near the water hole and then she had gone out of view. It seemed as though she was patrolling her territory and it was evident that she might come out at any time. We waited for about half an hour, listening to the slightest hustle and bustle in the bushes. Then at last she came out on the grassland and started walking towards the road. From where we were parked we got some amazing photographs.

On our afternoon safari we went to the Sarai zone. After crossing Sulkum Nala we found the tracks of a large male Tiger. We started tracking the Tiger and then found the tracks of other male, this one slightly smaller and made not too long ago. We then heard a few alarm calls at a distance and also heard a Tiger growling.

In the evening we did the checklist followed by a flavoursome dinner.

Day 10

Sunday 13th March

The morning was partly cloudy and not so cold due to being overcast. Today we were going to the Mukki zone. On the way we were looking around and saw a Leopard leap across the track very quickly. As we reached the

spot it had vanished, calls started. We waited for a few minutes to see if it would come back into view but it didn't so we carried on. During our morning safari we saw quite a few birds and mammals, and also heard a few calls, but no predators showed themselves.

The afternoon was sunny and we enjoyed our safari drive but again, had no luck with predator sightings.

Day 11

Monday 14th March

Today was our last drive in the park. When we reached the park gate it was overcast and drizzling. During the safari we saw a number of birds and heard some alarm calls but nothing else.

After lunch and settled our bills and by 12.45pm we were on our way to Jabalpur. We arrived at 3.45pm and went to the Kalchuri Residency for tea and to use the facilities. We then went to the station to catch the 5.45pm overnight train to Agra. We settled in to our seats and had a packed dinner during the journey.

Day 12

Tuesday 15th March

The train was on time when we reached Agra. We immediately set off from the station to the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel where we had breakfast. After a wash and change in the rooms we met our local guide for the Agra tour. We started our sightseeing at 11.30am. First we went to see the Taj Mahal. After spending two hours at this marble wonder we visited the Baby Taj. Next we had a restaurant lunch before visiting Agra fort. After the fort we had a short visit to the marble workshop which showcases marble artworks, and then went straight to railway station.

We had a packed dinner on the train before reaching Hazrat Nizamuddin railway station. From there we went straight to Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi where we said our thanks and goodbyes to Yusuf and boarded our flight back to the UK.

Day 13

Wednesday 16th March

After an overnight British Airways flight, we landed back in the UK and another Naturetrek adventure came to an end.

Naturetrek Facebook

We are delighted to launch the Naturetrek Facebook page so that participants of Naturetrek tours can remain in touch after the holiday and share photos, comments and future travel plans.

Setting up a personal profile at www.facebook.com is quick, free and easy. The [Naturetrek Facebook page](#) is now live; do please pay us a visit!

Species Lists

Mammals (✓=recorded but not counted)

	Common name	Scientific name	March											
			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
1	Royal Bengal Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris tigris</i>								✓	✓			
2	Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>										✓		
3	Rhesus Macaque	<i>Macaca mulatta</i>	✓	✓	✓									✓
4	Common Langur	<i>Presbytis entellus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Ruddy Mongoose	<i>Herpestes smithii</i>								✓				
6	Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
7	Indian Tree Shrew	<i>Anathana ellioti</i>									✓			
8	Three-striped Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus pennarum</i>	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolor</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
10	Barasingha (Swamp Deer)	<i>Cervus duvauceli branderi</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
11	Chital (Spotted Deer)	<i>Cervus axis</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
12	Indian Muntjac (Barking Deer)	<i>Muntiacus muntjak</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			
13	Nilgai (Blue Bull)	<i>Boselaphus tragocamelus</i>	✓											
14	Gaur	<i>Bos gaurus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
15	Indian Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa cristatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Birds

1	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓			
2	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>	✓			✓	✓		✓					
3	Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
4	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	✓											
5	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	✓											
6	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
7	Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
8	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
9	Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
10	Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
11	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>	✓		✓									

	Common name	Scientific name	March											
			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
12	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>				✓								
13	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>				✓					✓			
14	Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>						✓						
15	Red-naped Ibis	<i>Pseudibis papillosa</i>			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
16	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	✓											
17	Lesser Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>						✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
18	Bar-headed Goose	<i>Anser indicus</i>				✓								
19	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	✓											
20	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	✓			✓	✓							
21	Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>	✓											
22	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	✓											
23	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	✓											
24	Crested (Oriental) Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
25	Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
26	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓
27	White-rumped Vulture	<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>				✓					✓	✓		
28	Indian Vulture	<i>Gyps indicus</i>				✓				✓				
29	Red-headed Vulture	<i>Sarcogyps calvus</i>				✓								
30	Short-toed Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>									✓			
31	Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
32	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
33	White-eyed Buzzard	<i>Butastur teesa</i>				✓					✓			
34	Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciatus</i>								✓				
35	Tawny Eagle	<i>Aquila rapax</i>	✓											
36	Rufous-bellied Hawk-Eagle	<i>Lophotriorchis kienerii</i>								✓				
37	Changeable (Crested) Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>										✓		
38	Jungle Bush Quail	<i>Perdica asiatica</i>							✓					
39	Red Spurfowl	<i>Galloperdix spadicea</i>				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
40	Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
41	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
42	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amauornis phoenicurus</i>	✓											
43	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	✓											

	Common name	Scientific name	March											
			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
44	Common Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	✓											
45	Greater Painted Snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>								✓				
46	Indian Stone-curlew (Thick-knee)	<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>						✓				✓		
47	River Lapwing	<i>Vanellus duvaucelii</i>	✓											
48	Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
49	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
50	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	✓											
51	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>								✓	✓		✓	
52	Rock Dove (Common Pigeon)	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓		✓							✓	✓
53	Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>			✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	
54	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		✓					✓				✓	✓
55	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
56	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	✓			✓	✓					✓	✓	
57	Yellow-footed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicoptera</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
58	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
59	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
60	Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>						✓	✓			✓		
61	Common Hawk-cuckoo	<i>Cuculus varius</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓	
62	Southern Coucal	<i>Centropus parroti</i>			✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	
63	Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>			✓					✓		✓		
64	Indian Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo bengalensis</i>												✓
65	Crested Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		
66	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>				✓					✓	✓		
67	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smymensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
68	Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
69	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
70	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
71	Indian Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrocus birostris</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
72	Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Megalaima zeylanica</i>					✓	✓						
73	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>				✓	✓							
74	Black-rumped Flameback (Lesser Goldenback)	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
75	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	

	Common name	Scientific name	March										
			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
76	Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>						✓					✓
77	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>		✓	✓			✓				✓	✓
78	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
79	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
80	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>			✓	✓							
81	Large Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>						✓	✓				
82	Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>						✓					
83	Orange (Scarlet) Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>			✓								
84	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
85	Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>				✓	✓	✓					
86	Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Zoothera citrina</i>			✓	✓	✓						
87	Tickell's Thrush	<i>Turdus unicolor</i>						✓					
88	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>				✓							
89	Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>						✓			✓	✓	
90	Oriental Magpie-robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
91	White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>			✓				✓			✓	
92	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		
93	Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>	✓			✓							
94	Siberian Stonechat	<i>Saxicola maurus</i>				✓	✓						
95	Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>			✓	✓				✓			
96	Indian (Asian) Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>				✓							
97	Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
98	Brown-cheeked Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe poiocephala</i>				✓							
99	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	✓			✓							
100	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>						✓					
101	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>						✓	✓				
102	Crimson Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga siparrajai</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓						
103	Oriental White-Eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>			✓	✓		✓					
104	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>						✓	✓				
105	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
106	Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>	✓					✓			✓		
107	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Common name	Scientific name	March										
			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
108	Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>					✓						
109	White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>				✓				✓	✓	✓	
110	Spangled Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
111	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
112	Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
113	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	✓										✓
114	Indian Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus culminatus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
115	Bank Myna	<i>Acridotheres ginginianus</i>	✓										✓
116	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
117	Asian Pied Starling	<i>Gracupica contra</i>	✓			✓	✓					✓	✓
118	Brahminy Starling	<i>Temenuchus pagodarum</i>					✓	✓		✓		✓	
119	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>					✓			✓	✓	✓	
120	Chestnut-shouldered Petronia	<i>Petronia xanthocollis</i>			✓					✓	✓	✓	
121	Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>								✓			

Other fauna

1	Indian Flapshell Turtle	<i>Lissemys punctata</i>				✓	✓	✓					
2	House Gecko species			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					

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