

# Temples and Tigers - The Best of Northern India

(plus Ranthambore Extension)

Naturetrek Tour Report

4-20 February 2005

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Report compiled by Chris Kehoe



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## Day 1

Saturday 5th February

Delhi

Overcast, quite cool

Most of the group assembled at the Trident Hilton in New Delhi, others, including the tour leader, were meeting the main group later. After lunch, and accompanied by staff from our ground agents, Travel Inn, including Dhruba Dhatta who was to be our companion throughout, a visit was made to the bird rich River Yamuna at Okhla, the top birding site in Delhi. Large numbers and variety of wetland species were found during the afternoon, including some species not seen subsequently such as Greater Flamingo and Brown-headed Gull alongside more familiar fare such as Pied Avocet, Black-headed Gull and both Northern Lapwing and Common Starling.

## Day 2

Sunday 6th February

Khajaroa

Drizzle then sunny and warm

Straight after breakfast, and having met up with the tour leader who had just returned from another tour, we were on our way to Delhi's domestic airport and a flight to Khajaroa in Madhya Pradesh. Everything went smoothly and the flight, via Varanasi, was almost on time. We disembarked into an altogether sunnier and warmer Central India at just after 13.00. There was time to settle into the very pleasant Jass Trident Hotel in Khajaroa and to have a spot of lunch before we drove the short distance to the main temple complex. The rest of the afternoon was spent admiring the spectacular and enigmatic temples of Khajaroa with the assistance of a

local guide and enjoying the varied birdlife in the lovely parkland setting, this gave us our first views of numerous species, most of which were to become familiar in the coming days.

## Day 3

Monday 7th February

Panna

Sunny and warm

A 45 minute pre-breakfast drive took us to the Ken River Lodges on the outskirts of Panna NP, surely one of the best kept secrets in India. After checking-in and breakfast the rest of the morning was spent exploring the immediate vicinity of the lodges and the River Ken beyond. This brought a good selection of birds including, Indian Bushlark, Common Ioras, several Crested Serpent Eagles, Blue Rock Thrush and a couple of Great-Thick-knees. A pair of Stork-billed Kingfishers were in residence right below the tree top restaurant. Here we met David and Barbara Lovell who had arrived at Panna a couple of days earlier.

After lunch we embarked on our first jeep safari into the National Park proper. Everyone managed good views of the various common mammals present: Nilgai, Chital and Sambar; and some saw Chinkara, a species everyone would catch up with eventually. One lucky jeep load had great views of an uncharacteristically active Sloth Bear. Birdlife was also notable with Grey-headed Fish Eagle particularly pleasing but also included several White-eyed Buzzards and Long-billed Pipits amongst others.

## Day 4

Tuesday 8th February

Panna

Sunny and warm

A pattern of pre-dawn starts began today as we gathered in darkness for hot drinks and biscuits in the courtyard of the Ken River Lodges before setting off on a four hour game drive in the nearby park. Our four jeeps split up on arrival and met up again for a packed breakfast a few hours later. Today we met for breakfast, and to share stories of what we had seen, on a high plateau where a colony of Indian Vultures were nesting in a spectacular gorge below us. The first of several Rufous-tailed Larks posed for the scope and an overhead Tawny Eagle lingered long enough for all of its telltale features to be checked and double-checked. No big cats had been seen but in various parts of the park a selection of new birds had been encountered including White-bellied Minivets, Painted Sandgrouse, Barred Buttonquail and Jungle Bush Quail. Some were luckier still when a Jungle Cat was spotted on the roadside near the park exit and allowed photo opportunities. This individual had some injuries on its face, the results of a territorial spat perhaps, but we were later to discover that these wounds did not hamper it too badly.

A lunch break from 11-2, when the park was closed, saw us relaxing and birding at the Lodges before we boarded the jeeps again for an afternoon and evening drive. The undoubted highlight for one jeep was the discovery of a Leopard late-on but everyone else enjoyed a varied and bird filled afternoon with a few Golden Jackals, Wild Boar and the usual deer and antelopes thrown in, all in a setting that you frequently felt you had

entirely to yourselves. A particular highlight for many was an Orange-headed Thrush that behaved beautifully, it was to repeat its performance for those that had missed tomorrow too.

In the evening we returned to our now spotlight equipped jeeps and set off on a night drive that took us to an auxiliary camp about 25km away where dinner was served. Everyone managed some sort of view of Palm Civets during drive with one or two jeeps also encountering Indian Fox, Porcupine and Small Indian Civet but no large carnivores were found. It had been a long day and everyone quickly retired to bed on our return to the Lodges at around 11pm.

## Day 5

Wednesday 9th February

Panna

Sunny and warm after early mist

Prior warnings that Panna could be chilly in the mornings had so far not been borne out but today was an exception, significant cloud had rolled in from the north and the air was moist and cool. Consequently the park looked completely different, being shrouded in mist. Familiar roadside species like Chital and Sambar suddenly took on a more ethereal dimension as they faded in and out of sight in the rolling mist. We gathered for breakfast on a plateau opposite where we had had breakfast yesterday but the gorge below us was invisible in the mist, at least when we arrived; by the time we left it was clearing well. Birdlife picked up considerably as the clouds began to burn off and highlights included a Wryneck, Sulphur-bellied Warblers and a mixed feeding party containing several Long-tailed and Small Minivets.

The afternoon session produced a Brown Fish Owl for some and a Singing Bushlark for others but we still had several new areas of the park to explore so there was no shortage of variety to keep our interest.

## Day 6

Thursday 10th February

Panna to Orchha

Sunny and warm

Our final game drive at Panna produced a Jungle Cat for those that had missed it earlier, evidently the same as the last individual, though with face wounds now healing well, it was stalking and pouncing on insects and totally unconcerned by our close proximity. Another highlight today was a large gathering of sunbathing vultures that included both White-backed and Indian and a couple of Red-headed. One jeep was lucky to find a Brown Fish Owl roosting while others saw Tawny-bellied and Yellow-eyed Babblers.

After lunch we said our goodbyes to the staff at the Ken River Lodges and boarded our bus for the five hour drive to Orchha. Rather bumpy roads during the early stages of the journey soon gave way to a better surface and we made good time and had a little daylight left to enjoy the surroundings on our arrival at the lovely Sheesh Mahal hotel.

## Day 7

Thursday 11th February

Orchha

Sunny and warm/ hot

Keen birders in the group were up at dawn to investigate the birdlife in the immediate vicinity of the hotel, quite a good range of species were found: our first Bluethroat was seen and Spotted Owlets, Grey-breasted Prinias and Yellow-eyed Babblers all performed well; a major surprise came in the shape of three overflying Pallas's Gulls. After breakfast we set off on a guided walk of the town and some of its major architectural features, first stop was at the nearby river where several spectacular pyramidal temples were reflected in the clear waters. We then moved on to the Raj Mahal Palace and the nearby Jehangir Mahal. The cool stone gave relief from the rather hot sun as we ambled around and a brief visit to a nearby temple was followed by a stroll through the pleasant and authentic seeming town market. Lunch at the hotel was followed by a period of rest and relaxation, though some took the opportunity to go birding near the hotel again. At 16.00 we set off for nearby Jhansi where we were to catch the Shatabdi Express to Agra. The train was an hour or so late but our seats were particularly comfortable, the carriage being more like an aeroplane than a train. At Agra we quickly transferred to our hotel for the night.

## Day 8

Friday 12th February

Agra

Sunny and warm/ hot

An early start saw us on our way to the legendary Taj Mahal for dawn where we spent an hour and a half watching the changing light play subtle variations on the white marble and had a full guided tour inside and around the grounds. There was ample time for photo opportunities, or to have a look on the nearby river for birds before we made our way back to the hotel for breakfast having missed the crowds. After breakfast we were on our way to the Red Fort and another guided insight into India's Mughal past, this offered a different perspective of the Taj Mahal too and allowed its true scale to be more easily appreciated. After lunch at the hotel we had time for a little shopping before setting off on the short drive to the spectacular abandoned city of Fatehpur Sikri. After an hour or so we set off again and just before darkness fell we arrived at the Laxmi Vilas Palace at Bharatpur for a three night stay.

## Day 9

Saturday 13th February

Bharatpur

Sunny and warm/ hot

Our first day at the fabled Keoladeo Ghana National Park at Bharatpur began with a focus on owls and within a few minutes of disembarking from the bus we were enjoying excellent views of a pair of Collared Scops Owls wedged into the entrance of their tree hole. Moving out into the dry grasslands beyond, we were soon surrounded by new or interesting birds and a very close male Pallid Harrier was much appreciated. A few minutes later we were setting up scopes on a Dusky Eagle Owl at its nest with a well grown youngster. Moving deeper into the grasslands we were in pursuit of Indian Coursers and soon found a rather large flock of these

exquisite birds with Common Cranes and a perched Imperial Eagle also in view. Nearby bushes held Isabelline Shrike and Wryneck before we found a large group of feeding lapwings: Red-wattled, Yellow-wattled and White-tailed Lapwings were all around but there was no sign yet of our main quarry, the endangered Sociable Lapwing. Pressing on we soon found three Sociable Lapwings in a different area where they fed almost alone and while enjoying them another Isabelline Shrike appeared and we were able to watch Crested and Oriental Skylarks and several Paddyfield Pipits and 'Siberian' Stonechats.

It was now time to visit the wetlands and before having our packed lunches at the Keoladeo Temple we were able to witness some of the spectacle for which KGNP, Bharatpur is internationally renowned. Roadside pools were full of waterbirds such as storks (including Painted, Black-necked and Woolly-necked), numerous herons and egrets, wildfowl, spoonbills and three species of ibis. A leisurely lunch at the temple allowed the heat of midday to be avoided but that same heat produced thermals and, with them, an ever changing cast of eagles overhead, today providing us with Steppe, Greater Spotted and the rare Indian Spotted Eagle.

A superb Black Bittern just opposite the Temple gave stellar views for such a renowned skulker before we walked the short distance to the main wetland. The large expanse of shallow water before us held numerous waterbirds and our first enormous Sarus Cranes. Bronze-winged Jacanas vied for our attention with a host of other waterbirds before a small looking tern attracted comment and was eventually confirmed as a winter plumage Black-bellied Tern, a rarity here. A bird-filled day concluded with an amble back to the nearby temple where we were met by a fleet of cycle rickshaws which delivered us back to our waiting bus.

## Day 10

Sunday 14th February

Bharatpur

Sunny and warm/ hot

Our second day at Bharatpur commenced with a stroll into the woodland near the entrance where one of the park staff had located a roosting Brown Hawk Owl, everyone enjoyed great scope views. A walk around the forest nursery produced a couple of Spotted Owlets and perched Oriental Honey Buzzards. Our route to the temple today took us through the wooded habitat on the eastern boundary of the reserve and although the woods were quiet we were rewarded with a hoped for Long-tailed Nightjar that baffled everyone with its cryptic plumage after Pramod, our local guide, had miraculously located it in the leaf litter. Soon after, local knowledge was put to use again as Pramod led us to two Porcupine holes with immense Rock Pythons lounging outside. A return to the wetlands near the temple was punctuated by very close views of a pair of Sarus Cranes, before we again settled down for a leisurely lunch at the temple-cum-raptor watch point. A Siberian Rubythroat in the overgrown ditch around the temple gave everyone the runaround, though a few got glimpses, and a Brook's Leaf Warbler was briefly seen.

Most of the afternoon was spent enjoying the spectacle of massed waterbirds near the temple with a particular highlight being the surprise appearance of a small flock of Little Pratincoles, a rarity here and a new bird for Pramod!

## Day 11

Monday 15th February

Bharatpur/ Delhi or Ranthambore

Sunny and warm

As most of the group were leaving on the Ranthambore extension this morning it was just David, Jill and Lucy who visited the National Park today (where they succeeded in seeing the rubythroat at the temple) but before this we combined forces and visited the Bharatpur Canal where good numbers of waders and ducks kept us entertained for an hour before breakfast. A Jack Snipe here was a good find. Having said our goodbyes to those returning to the park, and later to Delhi, the rest of the group caught the Golden Temple Express for the three hour transfer to Sawai Madhopur, the closest station to Ranthambore. The journey passed swiftly and uneventfully and we were soon arriving at the Nagaraoh Hotel near the park entrance and soon after we were setting off on our first game drive at Ranthambore.

After the relative tranquillity of Panna NP the visitor numbers and associated administrative mayhem at Ranthambore came as a bit of a culture shock but once inside the park the presence of other vehicles isn't too intrusive. Rather than the separate jeeps we were used to at Panna, our vehicle at Ranthambore was a canter, like a 16 seater jeep, but countering the disadvantages of its slow manoeuvrability and relatively noisy engine was the fact that everyone was now together and had a good high vantage point during our drives. A close encounter with a Painted Spurfowl was a particular highlight of this first drive but everyone was naturally on high alert for Tigers. More so than at Panna, there is a sense that a Tiger could appear at any moment at Ranthambore and the number of near misses seems higher there, but we were unsuccessful today and, as it turned out, on subsequent days.

## Day 12

Tuesday 16th February

Ranthambore

Sunny and warm/ hot

We left our hotel shortly after 6 am for a pre-dawn rendezvous with the park beauracracy but were soon inside the park and following pugmarks. Eventually, in the absence of results, we concentrated on the birdlife around the waterholes and lakes, seeing a couple of Great Thick-knees and a nice selection of birds generally. We had a late breakfast at our hotel on our return at 10.00 but before our 14.00 hrs return to the park we managed to fit in lunch and a good birding session in the semi-desert just outside our hotel entrance. Highlights during the latter included a couple of Southern Grey Shrikes, several Rufous-fronted Prinias, Variable and Desert Wheatears and, surprisingly, flocks of Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse totalling 63 birds.

Back at Ranthambore NP our guides decided that in the absence of any strong indicators of the location of any particular Tigers a strategy of covering as much ground as possible was needed, a strategy that also seemed to ensure we got the thickest coating of dust possible. Covering lots of ground in the hope of encountering a Tiger on the road or hearing an alarm call while passing does not leave too many opportunities to enjoy other things the park has to offer but we did manage to squeeze in some quality time near the lakes again and added Pheasant-tailed Jacana to our growing bird list.

## Day 13

Wednesday 17th February

Ranthambore

Sunny and warm/ hot

We returned to a gentler pace today with most of our morning spent in the vicinity of the lakes at Ranthambore, where Pheasant-tailed Jacanas were seen, and, following a hot tip, we arrived just in time to see a Leopard lounging on the ramparts of the fort high above us before walking off and jumping down into the fort; not a close view but very atmospheric. The absence of actual Tiger sightings continued with no visitors having seen one since before our arrival, however, park staff had heard and seen a female with cubs near the main gate and what seemed like a very close encounter came near there when a group of very alarmed deer were found staring intently into a hollow just out of sight but only 30 m away. This was probably the closest we got to success but this same animal was known to be nearby during the coming days, its pugmarks were seen often and it was even heard on one occasion; at times it seemed like a battle of wills!

Other than an absence of Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse our brunchtime jaunt into the semi-desert at the hotel was as productive as yesterday and also produced a Common Garden Lizard and a couple of Painted Sandgrouse.

Much of the afternoon was spent scouring the undergrowth above the first lake past the main entrance where the tigress had been seen by staff an hour before the park reopened. In fact staff had been monitoring its exact whereabouts from a closed road but it seemed settled in this out of bounds area for now. However, it was thought likely that it would hunt that night so as the evening wore on we waited and waited for any signs of its activity, none came. However, we did manage to amass quite a good total of small birds as one of our parking places overlooked trees and bushes that attracted many birds, the particular highlight here was a fine male Crested Bunting but a couple of Greenish and Hume's Warblers, a Red-breasted Flycatcher and both Yellow-legged Green Pigeons and apparently wild Rock Doves kept our interest.

We were treated to a meeting with Ratan Ratnasingh, the first NP director, and a key player in the whole of Project Tiger, before returning to our hotel, and he gave a very succinct summary of both the park itself and wider issues in Tiger conservation in India and was altogether charming and authoritative. He expressed some concern about the recent lack of sightings but had no explanation for this.

## Day 14

Thursday 18th February

Ranthambore

Sunny and warm/ hot

Soon after dawn we were once again examining the footprints of the tigress and her two cubs near the park gate, park staff said that she had finally moved off at 6.am, it was now 6.45. We followed the projected direction of movement but gained no clue as to their current whereabouts. A diversion came in the form of a very well camouflaged Painted Snipe where a stream crossed the track but the Tigress and cubs had given everyone the slip again. David and Barbara Lovell left us at lunchtime to travel to Jaipur for a short tour extension there.

After discussions with our guide and driver it was agreed that a return to a more energetic strategy would be appropriate and after lunch we set off on a long drive through a varied and attractive landscape of plateau grassland and wooded valleys. Unbeknown to us our guide and driver had taken the decision to diverge from the route they had agreed with the park officers and took us off into the wilds on an unauthorised route; our 'capture' by forest guards on an anti poaching patrol saw us return towards the entrance feeling somewhat thwarted.

## Day 15

Friday 19th February

Ranthambore/ New Delhi

Sunny and warm/ hot

One final drive was left before returning to Delhi and we covered quite a lot of ground on, new to us, roads through well wooded country. A couple of alarm calls spurred us on until we made an early return to the entrance to discover other vehicles gathered there watching a Leopard. This one was posing half way up the cliff below the fort, rather closer than the last, and it meant that between us we had now seen three Leopards! seeing Leopards is normally much more difficult than seeing Tigers, at least in areas where Tigers are thriving!

Hopefully we were just extremely unfortunate in not seeing a Tiger at Ranthambore but there must be a lingering doubt that there are not as many Tigers there now as there should be, or recently have been....

By noon we were back aboard the Golden Temple Express bound for Delhi and by mid evening were checking into the Uppal's Orchid Hotel where we enjoyed a meal in the fine Thai Restaurant and prepared for an early hours departure.

## Day 16

Saturday 20th February

Inbound

Our transfer to the airport and all airport formalities went smoothly before we departed towards a cold and snowy Britain, a journey that would allow us to reflect on visits to some of the least known and charming and best known and spectacular sights India has to offer. Despite not being a concerted birding trip we had managed to amass a list of well over 200 species, including a broad cross section of commoner lowland birds and several top notch rarities. We had also encountered a very large range of Indian mammals during the tour, including encounters with rarely seen animals such as Leopards and civets. India is highly varied yet unique in so many ways and we had managed to see a broad cross section of contemporary Indian life, from village to metropolis, while also gaining an insight into the miraculous opulence of the Mughal and Rajput past and the dimmer but equally fascinating pre-historic cultures that left their legacy in the form of some truly amazing temples.

## Systematic list

### Birds

Nomenclature and taxonomy generally follows Grimmett and Inskipp's *The Birds of Northern India* (2003) which follows the treatments in *The Birds of the Indian Subcontinent* (1999) by the same authors with the exception of their revised taxonomic treatments of Indian Spotted Eagle and the Long-billed Vulture complex. Figures in brackets refer to the number of days the species was recorded out of the 11 days of the main tour, i.e. not including the Ranthambore extension). Species in square brackets are not counted as they were either heard only, seen only by the tour leader or the identification was not quite certain.

#### **Barred Buttonquail** *Turnix suscitator* (1:11)

A handful were seen at Panna NP

#### **Grey Francolin** *Franolinus pondicerianus* (5:11)

Regularly seen in small groups at Panna NP and especially KGNP, Bharatpur, small numbers were also seen at Ranthambore NP

#### **Jungle Bush Quail** *Pedicularia asiatica* (1:11)

At least one flock containing ten birds was seen at Panna NP

#### **Painted Spurfowl** *Galloperdix lunulata* (0:11)

A briefly seen spurfowl at Panna NP was probably Painted but this sought after species was seen on several game drives at Ranthambore NP where some individuals showed very well indeed

#### **Indian Peafowl** *Pavo cristatus* (8:11)

Rather common and widespread though some of those seen in more urban areas were presumably of semi-feral origin

#### **Lesser Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna javanica* (1:11)

A flock of 15 flew over at Khajaroa. During the Ranthambore extension, small numbers were found on the lakes there

#### **Greylag Goose** *Anser anser rubirostris* (3:11)

Present in good numbers at KGNP, Bharatpur with smaller numbers at Okhla

#### **Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus* (3:11)

A handful at Okhla were followed by several hundred at KGNP, Bharatpur

#### **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea* (4:11)

Present in small numbers at many wetland sites

#### **Comb Duck** *Sarkidiornis melanotos* (2:11)

Up to 11 were at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Cotton Pygmy Goose** *Nettapus coromandelianus* (0:11)

A single female at Ranthambore NP was the only record

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera* (8:11)

Common, found in good numbers at almost all larger wetlands but absent from Ranthambore

**Eurasian Wigeon** *Anas Penelope* (3:11)

Present in small numbers at Okhla and Bharatpur

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos* (3:11)

Scarce, after the first at Okhla a small handful were found at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Spot Billed Duck** *Anas poecilorhyncha* (6:11)

A few were at Okhla but the majority of the birds seen were at KGNP, Bharatpur with occasional sightings on the Ken River near Panna NP

**Northern Shoveler** *Anas dypeata* (4:11)

After the first at Okhla this species was quite common at KGNP, Bharatpur. At Ranthambore small numbers were seen each day on the lakes

**Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta* (3:11)

Present in moderate numbers at most larger wetlands

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula* (3:11)

Three or four were mixed in with other wildfowl at KGNP, Bharatpur and a couple were at Bharatpur Canal

**Common Teal** *Anas creca creca* (4:11)

As with many wildfowl the bulk of the sightings came from Okhla and KGNP, Bharatpur. Small numbers were present at Ranthambore NP

**Common Pochard** *Aythya farina* (2:11)

Only seen at Okhla and Bharatpur Canal

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula* (2:11)

After small numbers at Okhla the only subsequent sighting was of six flying over Orchha

**Eurasian Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla* (1:11)

One showed well in bushes at KGNP, Bharatpur and another was opposite our hotel at Ranthambore

**Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos canicapillus* (4:11)

Seen quite regularly at Panna NP

**Yellow-crowned Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos mahrattensis palleseus* (5:11)

Seen most days in small numbers at Panna NP and also at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Black-rumped Flameback** *Dinopium benghalense* (8:11)

The commonest and most widespread woodpecker with records coming from all wooded locations

**Coppersmith Barbet** *Megalaima haemacephala* (7:11)

Quite common, though much more often heard than seen, three in a bare tree at Khajaroa gave particularly good views

**Indian Grey Hornbill** *Ocyrops birostris* (7:11)

Small numbers were seen at most wooded or parkland sites

**Common Hoopoe** *Upupa epops* (7:11)

A close knit flock of three feeding on the lawns at Khajaroa were followed by scattered singles elsewhere

**Indian Roller** *Coracias benghalensis benghalensis* (10:11)

Frequently seen, often along roadsides, birds were seen in display flights at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis* (5:11)

Small numbers were at and around Panna NP and at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Stork-billed Kingfisher** *Halcyon capensis capensis* (3:11)

A noisy pair were intermittently present in trees right below the restaurant at the Ken River Lodges

**White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon smytnensis* (11:11)

Common and very widespread, a frequent sight on roadside wires

**Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis leucomelanura* (6:11)

A handful at Panna were followed by obliging birds at KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore NP

[**Common Hawk Cuckoo** *Hierococyx varius varius*]

One was heard calling in the distance at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Asian Koel** *Eudynamis scolopacea* (2:11)

At least two showed well at Khajaroa and one posed for us at Agra while we were shopping

**Sirkeer Malkoha** *Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii* (2:11)

This sought after and enigmatic species was seen on two occasions at Panna NP

**Greater Coucal** *Centropus sinensis* (9:11)

Regularly encountered in a range of scrubby and grassland settings

**Alexandrine Parakeet** *Psittacula eupatria* (0:11)

A perched bird at Ranthambore was the only one seen, this species seems to be declining

**Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* (11:11)**

Common and widespread, one of very few species seen every day

**Plum-headed Parakeet *Psittacula cyanocephala* (6:11)**

Seen most days at Panna NP after the first were found at Khajaroa, also seen at Ranthambore

**House Swift *Apus affinis affinis* (11:11)**

Common and widespread, particularly prominent at Orchha where the temples apparently contained large colonies

**Crested Treeswift *Heniprocne corona* (2:11)**

Small groups were seen over Panna NP on a couple of occasions

**Collared Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena* (2:11)**

Two separate pairs showed very well roosting in trees at KGNP, Bharatpur. A roosting bird was seen at Ranthambore

**Dusky Eagle Owl *Bubo coromandus* (1:11)**

A pair attending a nest containing a large chick were seen at KGNP, Bharatpur on a couple of occasions. Two Eagle Owls seen in half light near the entrance to Ranthambore NP were probably this species

**Brown-Fish Owl *Keputa zeylonensis* (2:11)**

A pair showed themselves to some of the group at Panna NP and another was seen flying over the river at the Ken River Lodges with calling birds heard there

**Spotted Owlet *Athene brama indica* (4:11)**

After the first at Orchha a couple of pairs were seen at Bharatpur, also seen at Ranthambore

**Brown Hawk Owl *Ninox scutuata* (1:11)**

One was seen at roost at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macurus* (1:11)**

Good views of a roosting bird at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Rock Pigeon *Columba livia neglecta* (11:11)**

Birds resembling wild Rock Doves were seen at Panna NP (where more obviously feral birds also occurred) and at Ranthambore where no feral type birds were seen

**[Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*]**

One seen distantly in flight at Panna NP was only observed by the tour leader so is not counted in the species total

**Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis* (10:11)**

Common and very widespread

**Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis* (9:11)

Fairly common

**Red Collared Dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica* (1:11)

One showed well in a bare tree at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Eurasian Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto* (11:11)

Very common

**Yellow-footed Green Pigeon** *Treeron phoenicoptera phoenicoptera* (7:11)

Several showed well at Panna NP, KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore NP

**Sarus Crane** *Grus antigone* (2:11)

Small numbers, probably totalling five birds, were regularly seen at KGNP, Bharatpur. When returning towards Delhi from Sawai Madhopur several were in track side fields near Mathura

**Common Crane** *Grus grus* (3:11)

A flock of 12 flew over at Agra but the remaining 50 or so were all at KGNP, Bharatpur

**[Brown Crake** *Anaouornis akool*]

A small crake seen briefly at KGNP, Bharatpur was most likely this species

**White-breasted Waterhen** *Anaouornis phoenicurus* (4:11)

After a couple of rather fleeting sightings at Panna NP this species was more obliging at KGNP, Bharatpur, one was seen at Ranthambore

**Purple Swamphen** *Porphyrio porphyrio indica* (3:11)

A few at Okhla were followed by a large gathering at KGNP, Bharatpur, one was at Ranthambore NP

**Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus* (10:11)

Reasonably common at suitable waterbodies

**Common Coot** *Fulica atra* (4:11)

Small numbers were at Okhla with larger concentrations at KGNP, Bharatpur and a few at Ranthambore NP

**Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterodes exustus* (0:11)

Several flocks, totalling 63 birds, were in the semi-desert outside our hotel near Ranthambore on our first excursion there but only a couple were seen subsequently

**Painted Sandgrouse** *Pterodes indicus* (3:11)

One or two were seen most days at Panna NP and in the semi-desert habitat near Ranthambore NP

**Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago* (4:11)

A small handful were present Okhla and KGNP, Bharatpur with larger numbers at Bharatpur Canal, a couple were seen at Ranthambore NP

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus* (1:11)

One on the Bharatpur Canal was unexpected

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa limosa* (3:11)

Common at KGNP, Bharatpur with smaller numbers noted at a couple of other wetlands

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus* (3:11)

A handful were at Okhla, KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore NP

**Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus* (4:11)

Small numbers were at a few wetlands

**Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis* (4:11)

Small numbers were found at several wetlands including Okhla and KGNP, Bharatpur

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* (7:11)

Small numbers were found at several wetlands

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus* (9:11)

Present at small numbers at most wetlands visited

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola* (6:11)

Quite common

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos* (3:11)

Present in very small numbers at a couple of sites

**Little Stint** *Calidris minutilla* (3:11)

Only seen on the River Yamuna at Okhla and Agra where up to 50 were present and at the Bharatpur Canal where a few fed alongside Temminck's Stints

**Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii* (3:11)

Up to ten were at KGNP, Bharatpur with a similar number at the nearby Canal, a couple were at Ranthambore

**Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax* (5:11)

Present at several wetlands with the largest numbers at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Painted Snipe** *Rostratula benghalensis* (0:11)

A male showed well in streamside vegetation at Ranthambore NP

**Pheasant-tailed Jacana** *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* (0:11)

At least three were at the main lake at Ranthambore NP

**Bronze-winged Jacana** *Metopidius indicus* (3:11)

After one at Okhla, at least three were at KGNP, Bharatpur and a couple at Ranthambore

**Great Thick-knee** *Burhinus recurvirostris* (2:11)

One or two were seen on a couple of occasions at the Ken River Lodges and a pair showed well at Ranthambore NP

**[Eurasian Thick-knee** *Burhinus oedicnemus*]

One was heard at night at Ranthambore

**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus* (6:11)

Common away from Panna, present at almost all wetlands, including village ponds

**Pied Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta* (1:11)

A group of five were found at Okhla

**Northern Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus* (1:11)

One was at Okhla

**Yellow-wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus malabaricus* (2:11)

The KGNP, Bharatpur *vanellus* fest contained at least 40 of these scarce and striking birds, one was near our hotel at Ranthambore

**River Lapwing** *Vanellus duvaucelii* (2:11)

Rather localised and, appropriately enough, only seen at rivers with small numbers on the Yamuna at Okhla and Agra

**Red-wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus indicus indicus* (11:11)

Very common, widespread and noisy

**Sociable Lapwing** *Vanellus gregarius* (1:11)

Three members of this now critically endangered species were found in grasslands south of Sapin Mori, KGNP, Bharatpur, one of only two known regular wintering sites in the world

**White-tailed Lapwing** *Vanellus leucurus* (3:11)

After a handful were found at Okhla larger numbers (>50) were present at KGNP, Bharatpur, where several were in a large mixed lapwing flock in the dry grasslands

**Indian Courser** *Cursorius coromandelicus* (1:11)

At least 25 of these stunning birds were watched in dry grassland at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Small Pratincole *Glareola lactea* (1:11)**

About eight, two of which performed well, at KGNP, Bharatpur were very unusual there

**Pallas's Gull *Larus ichthyaetus* (1:11)**

A flock of three flew over during a pre-breakfast birding session behind our hotel in Orchha

**Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus* (1:11)**

Small numbers were on the Yamuna at Okhla

**Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* (1:11)**

Large numbers were seen at Okhla

**Black-bellied Tern *Sterna acuticauda* (1:11)**

At least two non-breeding plumage birds at KGNP, Bharatpur were an unusual find there

**River Tern *Sterna aurantia* (3:11)**

Up to ten were seen at Bharatpur and Ranthambore

**Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* (0:11)**

The only one seen was a one day bird at Ranthambore NP

**Oriental Honey Buzzard *Peris ptilorhynchus* (3:11)**

One over the temples at Khajaroa was followed by several sightings at KGNP, Bharatpur where a couple were seen perched, others were over Ranthambore

**Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus* (7:11)**

Widespread at low densities, though absent from KGNP, Bharatpur

**Black Kite *Milvus migrans gvinda* (8:11)**

Often abundant in urban settings, especially common in Delhi, but much scarcer or even absent in more rural areas

**Grey-headed Fish Eagle *Ichthyophaga adithyaetus* (4:11)**

A pair at Panna NP were seen on several occasions

**Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* (5:11)**

Particularly numerous around Orchha and Agra with occasional birds elsewhere

**White-rumped Vulture *Gyps bengalensis* (3:11)**

At least 10 were with Indian Vultures at Panna NP on our last morning there and up to three were seen at Orchha and Agra.

**Indian Vulture *Gyps indica* (5:11)**

Quite common at Panna NP, Orchha and Ranthambore

**Red-headed Vulture** *Sarogyps calvus* (6:11)

Two or three were seen on various occasions at Panna NP and singles were at KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore NP

**Crested Serpent Eagle** *Spilornis cheela cheela* (6:11)

Two or three were regularly seen at Panna NP, KGNP and Bharatpur and one was at Ranthambore NP

**Eurasian Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus* (4:11)

A handful at Okhla were followed by several at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrourus* (1:11)

Two, an immature male and a adult male flew past us on our first morning at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Shikra** *Accipiter badius* (7:11)

Quite common and widespread

**Tawny Eagle** *Aquila rapax vindhianus* (1:11)

A dark morph adult gave prolonged close flight views at Panna NP

**Indian Spotted Eagle** *Aquila hastata* (3:11)

Two at Okhla were followed by one or two at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Greater Spotted Eagle** *Aquila danga* (3:11)

After a couple at Okhla at least half a dozen were at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis* (5:11)

At least three characteristically patterned juveniles and a couple of older birds were at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca* (2:11)

An adult and a near-adult were seen at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Common Kestrel** *Falco tinniculus* (8:11)

Widely scattered in ones and twos

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis* (4:11)

Very small numbers were at Okhla, the Ken River and Bharatpur Canal with a few more at Ranthambore NP

**Darter** *Anhinga melanogaster* (6:11)

Small numbers were at the Ken River Lodges and up to 15 per day were seen at KGNP, Bharatpur, others were at Ranthambore NP

**Little Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax niger* (7:11)

20 or more were at larger wetlands such as the Ken River, KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore NP lakes

**Indian Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis* (4:11)**

A very similar pattern of occurrence and numbers to the preceding species

**Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis* (8:11)**

Up to 50 were at KGNP, Bharatpur with smaller numbers at wetlands elsewhere

**Little Egret *Egretta garzetta garzetta* (6:10)**

Most prominent at KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore NP with ones and twos elsewhere

**Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* (7:11)**

Present in small numbers on virtually all sizeable wetlands

**Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* (5:11)**

Up to 15 were seen with records divided between Okhla, Panna NP, KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore NP

**Great Egret *Casmerodius albus modestus* (aka *Egretta alba*) (11:11)**

Widespread and common with birds present at almost all wetlands of any size

**Intermediate Egret *Mesophoyx intermedia* (2:11)**

Only identified at KGNP, Bharatpur where found on waters with plenty of emergent vegetation

**Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* (7:11)**

Widespread but tended to occur in concentrations wherever feeding was good, for example around cattle or recently disturbed ground, absent in many areas

**Indian Pond Heron *Ardeola grayii* (9:11)**

Common and widespread, present at almost every damp patch

**Little Heron *Butorides striatus* (1:11)**

Only seen at KGNP, Bharatpur where two or three were seen around the Temple

**Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* (2:11)**

At least six were on the River Ken near Panna and about 25 were roosting in trees opposite the Keoladeo Temple at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Black Bittern *Dupetor flavicollis* (1:11)**

One of these normally very elusive birds gave fantastic views near the Temple at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* (2:11)**

About 30 at Okhla were followed by smaller numbers at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus* (5:11)**

Particularly prominent at KGNP, Bharatpur but with small numbers seen at several other sites

**Black Ibis** *Pseudibis papillosa* (2:11)

At least four were at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Eurasian Spoonbill** *Plalea leucorodia* (5:10)

Common at KGNP, Bharatpur with smaller numbers seen at a few other wetlands

**Painted Stork** *Myteria leucocephala* (4:11)

After a couple at Okhla, several were seen at KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore NP

**Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra* (2:10)

Singles (perhaps the same bird) were seen on two occasions at Panna NP

**Woolly-necked Stork** *Ciconia episcopus* (3:11)

At least two at Panna NP were followed by singles at KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore

**Black-necked Stork** *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus* (2:11)

Two imposing pairs of this sadly declining species were present at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Blue-winged Leafbird** *Chloropsis cochinchinensis jerdoni* (1:11)

One was seen by a few people at Panna NP and a couple of leafbirds seen in the grounds of our hotel at Khajaroa were presumably also this species

**Rufous-tailed (Isabelline) Shrike** *Lanius isabellinus arenarius* (2:11)

At least three birds were at KGNP, Bharatpur, all those wintering in India are believed to belong to the race *arenarius*, colloquially known as 'Chinese Shrike'

**Bay-backed Shrike** *Lanius vittatus* (5:10)

Small numbers of this delightful little shrike were seen at Panna NP, KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore NP

**Long-tailed Shrike** *Lanius schach* (11:11)

The commonest and most widespread shrike, seen frequently

**Southern Grey Shrike** *Lanius meridionalis lahtora* (0:11)

Up to three performed well in semi-desert near Ranthambore NP

**Rufous Treepie** *Dendrocitta agabunda* (9:11)

Widespread at fairly low densities

**House Crow** *Corvus splendens splendens* (11:11)

Common around settlements, but less frequently seen in wooded areas

**Large-billed Crow** *Corvus macrorhynchos culminatus* (9:11)

Generally found in more wooded settings than the last species, though with some habitat overlap, and never in such large concentrations

**Golden Oriole** *Oriolus oriolus kundoo* (1:11)

At least two were in trees outside our hotel in Khajaroa

**Large Cuckooshrike** *Coracina macei macei* (0:11)

Up to four were seen at Ranthambore NP

**Small Minivet** *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus* (3:11)

Regularly seen in small groups at Panna NP, a couple were at Ranthambore NP

**Long-tailed Minivet** *Pericrocotus ethologus* (3:11)

Although Scarlet Minivet reportedly occurs there this was the only large minivet identified with certainty at and near Panna NP where it was found in small flocks

**White-bellied Minivet** *Pericrocotus erythropygus* (1:11)

This much sought after central Indian speciality was encountered just once in Panna NP where a flock of about 10 showed well feeding low down in thin scrub and grass during our second morning drive there

**White-browed Fantail** *Rhipidura aureola* (5:11)

Although rather common and conspicuous at Panna NP this attractive species was not seen elsewhere

**Black Drongo** *Dicurus macrocerus* (11:11)

Very common, a frequent site on roadside wires

**White-bellied Drongo** *Dicurus caeruleus* (5:11)

Seen in small numbers at Panna and Ranthambore NP's

**Common Iora** *Aegithina tiphia* (3:11)

Seen with some regularity in and around Panna NP but never actually common, a couple were also seen at Ranthambore NP

**Common Woodshrike** *Tephrodornis pondicerianus* (4:11)

Found in small numbers at Panna NP and at Ranthambore

**Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitarius* (1:11)

A male was on a rooftop near the Ken River Lodges on our day of arrival and another was seen on a cliff-face at Ranthambore NP

**Orange-headed Thrush** *Zosterorhina wardii cyanotus* (2:11)

One showed very well on successive evenings in Panna NP and one was foraging in a dry streambed at the Ken River Lodges, all were of the particularly spectacular resident peninsular race

**Tickell's Thrush *Turdus unicolor* (2:11)**

At least three birds, including one adult male, were wintering on the wooded riverbank below the tree-top restaurant at the Ken River Lodges, they favoured the edge of the occasional stream produced by the washing up water!

**Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* (9:11)**

Very common, especially at Panna NP and KGNP, Bharatpur, though more often heard than seen

**Ultramarine Flycatcher *Ficedula superilliaris* (1:11)**

One was seen briefly at Panna NP

**Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassina* (3:11)**

Singles were seen on three occasions at Panna NP and the nearby Ken River Lodges

**Tickell's Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis tickelliae* (2:11)**

A couple of brief singles at Panna NP were followed by one at Ranthambore NP

**Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis* (6:11)**

Small numbers were at Panna NP and the Ken river Lodges and one was wintering at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* (3:11)**

A handful were found at Okhla, Orchha and KGNP, Bharatpur

**Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis* (8:11)**

Small numbers were found throughout

**Indian Robin *Saxicoloides fulica* (9:11)**

Quite common east of Bharatpur but scarcer further west, displaying birds were seen at Orchha

**Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros rufiventris* (9:11)**

Wintering birds were at a range of sites, including the garden of the Laxmi Vilas Palace, Bharatpur

**Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus* (*maurus* group) (2:11)**

After a couple near the Ken River Lodges, small numbers were found at KGNP, Bharatpur. Four subtly distinct races occur in India but all belong to the eastern group of subspecies which some authorities split as 'Eastern' or 'Siberian' Stonechat *S. maurus*

**Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata bicolor* (3:11)**

Small numbers were seen at Panna NP and KGNP, Bharatpur

**Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti* (0:11)**

At least three were in the vicinity of our hotel at Ranthambore

**Variable Wheatear *Oenanthe picata* (0:11)**

Two birds were seen in the semi desert opposite Ranthambore, both were of the *capistrata* type

**Brown Rock Chat** *Cercomela fusca* (9:11)

Small numbers were regularly seen in more arid areas, often in hotel grounds.

**Brahminy Starling** *Sturnus pagodarum* (9:11)

This superb looking species was present in small numbers throughout

**Common Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris* (1:11)

A handful were seen at Okhla

**Asian Pied Starling** *Sturnus contra* (9:11)

Common in the vicinity of water

**Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis tristis* (11:11)

Ubiquitous

**Bank Myna** *Acridotheres gignianus* (5:11)

Rather localised, sometimes the dominant myna but generally scarce and heavily outnumbered by Common Mynas

**Great Tit** *Parus major* (*cinereus* group) (4:11)

Seen frequently in small numbers at and around Panna and at Ranthambore

**Plain Martin** *Riparia paludicola* (3:11)

Small numbers were over wetlands, particularly the Ken River near the Panna NP offices and at Orchha, a couple were seen at Ranthambore NP

**Dusky Crag Martin** *Hirundo concolor* (4:11)

Small numbers were seen at Panna NP and Orchha. Quite common around the entrance to Ranthambore NP

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* (2:11)

Small numbers were over the River ken at Panna NP with migrants moving north over Bharatpur on our first day there

**Wire-tailed Swallow** *Hirundo smithii* (7:11)

Small numbers were present most days over the River Ken near Panna and at both Orchha and KGNP, Bharatpur

**Red-rumped Swallow** *Hirundo daurica* (7:11)

A handful were seen most days at Panna NP and KGNP Bharatpur

**Red-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus cafer* (11:11)

Very common and widespread

**Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis* (1:11)

One was near the Ken River Lodges and another was heard but not seen near our hotel at Ranthambore

**Rufous-fronted Prinia** *Prinia buchanani* (0:11)

Quite common in the semi-desert opposite Ranthambore where several were in song

**Grey-breasted Prinia** *Prinia hodgsonii* (5:11)

Small, restless groups were found at Panna NP, Orchha and Ranthambore NP

**Ashy Prinia** *Prinia socialis* (4:11)

One or two were seen at various hotel gardens

**Plain Prinia** *Prinia inornata inornata* (2:11)

Very small numbers were at Orchha, KGNP, Bharatpur and opposite Ranthambore NP

**Oriental White-eye** *Zosterops palpebrosus* (9:11)

Very widespread, birds were recorded throughout except in the arid west at Ranthambore

**Blyth's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus dumetorum* (3:11)

Several were seen, and others heard, at Khajaroa and especially KGNP, Bharatpur

**Common Tailorbird** *Orthotomus sutorius* (10:11)

Widespread in small numbers with birds recorded at all sites

**Common Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita tristis* (3:11)

Small numbers were found at Okhla, Orchha and KGNP, Bharatpur

**Sulphur-bellied Warbler** *Phylloscopus griseolus* (3:11)

Two or three of these terrestrial warblers were seen at Panna NP

**Brook's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus subviridis* (1:11)

One was seen fairly well while calling from the crown of a tall *Acacia* at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Hume's Warbler** *Phylloscopus humei* (8:11)

This was the commonest warbler at KGNP, Bharatpur, small numbers were also seen at Ranthambore NP, Panna NP and a few other sites throughout

**Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides* (5:11)

This was the commonest warbler at the Ken River Lodges and was frequently seen in nearby Panna NP, otherwise scattered small numbers were found elsewhere including both KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore NP.

**Yellow-eyed Babbler** *Chrysomma sinense* (2:11)

Small groups were found at Panna NP and behind our hotel in Orchha

**Common Babbler** *Turdoides caudatus* (0:11)

Groups of up to six were found in the semi-desert near our hotel opposite Ranthambore NP

**Large Grey Babbler** *Turdoides malcolmi* (5:11)

Small numbers were seen at scattered sites throughout

**Jungle Babbler** *Turdoides striatus* (9:11)

Generally common and widespread

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca* (7:11)

Common at KGNP, Bharatpur but otherwise widespread at low densities. Historically, birds at Bharatpur have been assigned to Siberian race *blythi* but some of the birds there are rather pale and give churring tit-like calls, features more associated with the often neglected form *halimodendri* that breeds in the arid regions of Central Asia.

**Singing Bushlark** *Mirafra javanica* (1:11)

One was seen at Panna NP

**Indian Bushlark** *Mirafra erythroptera* (1:11)

One singing bird near the Ken River Lodges was followed by frequent encounters in the semi-desert opposite Ranthambore NP

**Rufous-tailed Lark** *Ammomanes phoeniceus* (3:11)

Seen occasionally in more open and stony parts of Panna NP

**Ashy-crowned Sparrow-lark** *Eremoptera grisea* (4:11)

Quite common at Panna NP with small numbers were at and around Ranthambore NP

**Crested Lark** *Galerida cristata* (1:11)

At least three were at Panna NP during one jeep safari and one was at KGNP, Bharatpur on our first full day there

**Oriental Skylark** *Alauda gulgula* (2:11)

A couple were seen in song flight at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Purple Sunbird** *Nectarinia asiatica* (11:11)

Present throughout at low densities

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* (*indica* group) (9:11)

Fairly common in most urban settings and in some more rural areas

**Chestnut-shouldered Petronia** *Petronia xanthocollis* (8:11)

Present in very large numbers in Central India, especially at Panna NP, and in smaller numbers further west in Rajasthan

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba personata* etc (6:11)

Locally common at Okhla with small numbers elsewhere. The most frequently encountered race was *personata* (sometimes split as 'Masked' Wagtail), followed by *alba/dukhensis* and *leucopsis*, although the races seemed to mix freely

**White-browed Wagtail** *Motacilla maderasensis* (9:11)

Small numbers were found at a wide range of wetlands

**Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola* (3:11)

Quite common at Okhla but otherwise only seen at KGNP, Bharatpur and Bharatpur Canal

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava* (4:11)

Fairly common at Okhla but otherwise scarce

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea* (6:11)

Seen most days at Panna NP and one flew over a Bharatpur

**Paddyfield Pipit** *Anthus rufulus* (3:11)

After the first at Khajaroa this species was not certainly seen again until we arrived at Bharatpur where it was common

**Tawny Pipit** *Anthus campestris* (1:11)

At least two were seen at Panna NP and a handful were found in the semi-desert opposite Ranthambore NP

**Long-billed Pipit** *Anthus similis* (2:11)

Several showed well on jeep drives through Panna NP where this was the commonest large pipit seen

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis* (4:11)

Large numbers were present in and around Panna NP where they favoured drier and more open areas than the next species

**Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni hodgsoni* (5:11)

Small numbers were found in the grounds of the Ken River Lodges and at Panna NP

**Indian Silverbill** *Lonchura malabarica* (2:11)

A small colony was present in the grounds of our hotel in Orchha, they were apparently occupying old weaver nests, also seen at KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore

**Rock Bunting** *Emberiza cia* (1:11)

One seen well at Panna NP may represent the first state record for Madhya Pradesh when fully documented

**White-capped Bunting** *Emberiza stewarti* (1:11)

One was seen on the high plateau of Panna NP during our breakfast stop there

## Mammals

**Rhesus Macaque** *Macca mulatta* (7:11)

Fairly common and widespread

**Hanuman Langur** *Presbytis entellus* (6:11)

Fairly common and widespread, commoner in heavy woodland than the previous species

**Sambar** *Cervus unicolor* (6:11)

Fairly numerous at KGNP, Bharatpur and common at Panna and Ranthambore

**Chital** *Cervus axis* (5:11)

Fairly numerous at KGNP, Bharatpur and common at Panna and Ranthambore

**Nilgai** *Boselaphus tragocamelus* (6:11)

Present in good numbers at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Chinkara** *Gazella gazella* (4:11)

Small numbers were seen in more stony parts of Panna NP and Ranthambore

**Indian Wild Boar** *Sus scrofa* (3:11)

Small numbers at Panna NP and KGNP, Bharatpur were followed by regular sightings at Ranthambore

**Common Jackal** *Canis aureus* (5:11)

Seen regularly at Panna, KGNP, Bharatpur and Ranthambore

**Leopard** *Panthera panthera* (1:11)

One was seen at close range by one jeep at Panna NP and two were found at Ranthambore

**Jungle Cat** *Felis chaus* (3:11)

One individual was seen on three occasions at Panna NP

**Sloth Bear** *Melursus ursinus* (1:11)

One was uncharacteristically active in the middle of the afternoon at Panna NP on our first visit, park staff felt it had probably been disturbed by a Tiger

**Grey Mongoose** *Herpestes edwardsii* (2:11)

Singles were seen at Okhla and KGNP, Bharatpur

**Indian Small Mongoose** *Herpestes auropuntuatus* (1:11)

One was seen at Panna

**Ruddy Mongoose** *Herpestes smithii* (0:11)

At least three were seen at Ranthambore NP

**Common Palm Civet** *Paradoxurus hermaphroditus* (2:11)

At least three or four were seen during our night drives outside Panna NP and those who chose not to venture out on the second jaunt were treated to one visiting the restaurant at the Ken River Lodges!

**Small Indian Civet** *Viverricula indica* (1:11)

A least two of these terrestrial pseudo-cats were seen during night drives outside Panna NP

**Indian Crested Porcupine** *Hystrix indica indica* (1:11)

One jeepload were lucky to get good views of two during a night drive near Panna NP, quills were found at a few sites.

**Indian fox** *Vulpes bengalensis* (1:11)

At least one was seen during a night drive at Panna

**Indian Hare** *Lepus nigricollis* (1:11)

A couple were seen at and near Panna NP and in semi-desert near Ranthambore

**(Northern) Five-striped Palm Squirrel** *Funambulus pennantii* (11:11)

Abundant in many parkland contexts

**Lesser Short-nosed Fruit Bat** *Cynopterus brachyotis* (1:11)

Several of these small bats were roosting under palm fronds at KGNP, Bharatpur

**Bat sp** (4:11)

Small (pipistrelle sized) bats were seen at Orchha

## Reptiles

**Indian Mud Turtle** *Lissemys punctata* (2:11)

What was believed to be this big soft-shelled turtle was seen at Panna, Bharatpur and Ranthambore

**Turtle/ Terrapin sp** (4:11)

Unidentified small turtles (or terrapins) were at a number of wetlands

**Desert Monitor Lizard** *Varanus griseus* (0:11)

One showed well at Ranthambore NP

**Common Garden Lizard** *Calotes versicolor* (0:11)

One was near our hotel opposite Ranthambore

**Marsh Mugger** *Crocodylus palustris* (2:11)

Small numbers were on the Ken River at Panna and on the larger lakes at Ranthambore NP

**Indian Rock Python** *Python molurus* (1:11)

Two of these huge snakes were seen outside their holes at KGNP, Bharatpur