

# India – Spring Flowers of Sikkim, Darjeeling & Kalimpong

Naturetrek Tour Report

24 May – 8 June 2015



*Aristolochia griffithii*



*Coelogyne ochracea*



*Primula calderiana*



*Rhododendron cinnabarinum*

Report & images compiled by Jenny Willsher



Naturetrek Mingledown Barn Wolf's Lane Chawton Alton Hampshire GU34 3HJ UK

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

F: +44 (0)1962 736426

E: [info@naturetrek.co.uk](mailto:info@naturetrek.co.uk)

W: [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk)

Tour Participants:	Alister Adhikari	Tour Leader
	Dipesh Tamang	Assistant
	Jenny Willsher	Naturetrek Naturalist
	Together with Naturetrek clients	

## Summary

Starting in the bustling atmospheric hill town of Darjeeling, our two weeks in the smallest of Indian states proved a fascinating mix of culture, tradition and natural history. Our travels in the mountainous North Sikkim, where the rainfall is naturally high, gave us dramatic waterfalls, luxuriant forests and other plant-rich areas but also the attendant complications of landslides and difficult road conditions. Botanical highlights included the beautiful Micanopsis, both blue and yellow, the forest of Rhododendrons at Yumthang, the contrasting habitats of lush forest of towering Himalayan Alder, Teak, *Albizia chinensis* and *Schima wallichii* – some so draped in epiphytes as to make their own plant communities, the clouded high meadows strewn with Primulas, and the dramatic flowers of the various Arisaemas and the banks of ferns and grasses. Birdlife was always present, whether it was the noisy common birds such as Common Mynah, House Crow, various Drongos, Blue Whistling Thrush, fleeting glimpses of bright forest birds such as Scarlet Minivet or, in the high valleys, brief glimpses of Golden and Black Eagle, black and white Snow Pigeons and the bright blue Grandala. The good humour and patience of the group alongside the calm, thoughtful competence of Alister, our local guide and tour leader, and the caring attention of his assistant, Dipesh, contributed hugely to the enjoyment of the trip, not to mention the skill of our drivers!

## Day 1

Sunday 24th May

London/Manchester to Dubai

Most of group departed from London Heathrow on the Emirates flight for Dubai. Others were met in Kolkata while others flew from Manchester.

## Day 2

Monday 25th May

Flight from Kolkata to Bagdogra then drive to Darjeeling

The group arrived in Kolkata where the temperature had been unusually high – over 40°C - and we were ferried to the cool Novotel where we were able to shower and change. Refreshed somewhat, we returned to the airport for our internal flight to Bagdogra. Here we were met by Alister and his assistant Dipesh, and we were soon settled into a fleet of vehicles for our journey to Darjeeling. Bagdogra is a transit hub so is a noisy, dusty, bustling place but is graced in places by large trees and drapes of various colours of bougainvillea. We were glad to reach the outskirts, passing through plantations of Assam tea and the attendant shade trees of *Albizia chinensis*, and start climbing up into the hills. One roadside sign warned of “Elephants Crossing”! There are extensive forests where elephants feed and they can be seen from the road but, unfortunately, sometimes they are in conflict with the local people. The only animal life were small groups of Rhesus Macaque monkeys on the roadside. The road was dramatic in its twists and turns as we climbed towards Darjeeling at 2200m, sometimes passing through stands of Giant Bamboo, while on the grassy banks were drifts of a miniature Bamboo and many ferns. Tiny settlements clung to the steep edges of the road. To break our journey, we stopped at a cafe in Kurseong where Alister ordered tea and *mo-mo's* (steamed dumplings) for us. Suitably refreshed, we moved on, following the lower

reaches of the Darjeeling Light Railway which proved a useful guide in some places, as we entered low cloud as darkness fell.

On arrival at the elegant Elgin hotel, we were greeted ceremoniously with cherry brandy and draped with white silk scarves. Dinner was ready for us so we were soon seated in the dining room being served a delicious meal by traditionally dressed staff and accompanied by a tinkling piano.

## Day 3

Tuesday 26th May

Darjeeling Light Railway, Lloyd Botanical Gardens, Zoological Gardens and Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Tea Factory

Dawn was early and the local birds were singing – Green-backed Tit, Blackbird, Red-vented Bulbul, Common Myna, White-tailed Nuthatch and Red-billed Leiothrix were seen from the attractive terrace where stands of bright blue Delphiniums and red Amaryllis contrasted with the white paintwork of the hotel. The low cloud swirled, giving brief glimpses of Darjeeling where it tumbled down the hillside. After breakfast, we set off for Darjeeling station where we boarded one of the carriages for the noisy, rattling journey up to Ghoom, the highest station on the railway, and the third highest station in the world, at 2247 m. The railway line followed the road, sometimes crossing it in a cacophony of hooting, brushing past the roadside shops and houses which afforded us intimate views of local life, and also extensive views of forest-clad hillsides. At Ghoom, we had a brief stop to explore the railway museum. The railway is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Our next stop was the Lloyd Botanical Gardens where we could get to grips with some of the local plants which we would meet in our travels. Huge trees of *Albizia chinensis*, *Schima wallichii* and Himalayan Alder (*Alnus nepalensis*), were festooned with epiphytes such as Sikkim Blushwort (*Aeschynanthus sikkimensis*), *Coelogyne cristata* and *Agapetes serpens*, and we met the first of many Cobra Lilies (*Arisaema tortuosum*). We also saw Black Cardamom, an important local crop, and the strange *Campylandra aurantiaca* with its long strap leaves and pineapple shaped flower buried at its base. Various shades of Datura (*Brugmansia suaveolens*) were dotted around, and bright green clumps of *Euphorbia sikkimensis*. We then made our way back through the narrow, crowded streets of the town to the Zoological Gardens and Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (HMI). The first director of HMI was Sherpa Tenzing Norgay, who lived and died in Darjeeling. It is one of India's most important training centres for mountaineering and offers some fascinating insights into mountaineering past and present.

We finished our day at a Tea factory, where we followed the process through to the tasting of the various grades and some bought souvenir packs.

## Day 4

Wednesday 27th May

Darjeeling – Gangtok – crossing into Sikkim

We said goodbye to the charismatic Elgin Hotel and headed north, travelling through luxuriant forests with banks of ferns, grasses and shrubs. Occasionally, we passed through plantations of *Cryptomeria japonica* which had been planted by the British for timber. We stopped to look at some Arisaemas (*A. tortuosum*, *A. concinnum*), the delicate blue flowered Hydrangea *Dichroa febrifuga*, and huge banks of the handsome fern *Gleichenia gigantea*. We descended to the wide Teesta river through Darjeeling Tea plantations, where our first orchid species was

spotted – the epiphytic *Dendrobium amoenum*. Then we continued on to the border at Rangpo, where we had lunch while the paperwork was sorted. On a tree in the restaurant carpark was a *Cymbidium aloifolium*.

We climbed up again into the forested hills over bumpy roads, and by late afternoon, were in the busy outskirts of Gangtok – the capital of Sikkim. The Hidden Forest Retreat was an orchid haven! On the terrace were banks of orchids – mostly native species, and the gardens were full of other flowers, fruit trees and vegetables. We were welcomed with tea and biscuits, a noisy display of Black Drongos in the garden and a torrential downpour of rain! The owners of the hotel are Sonam Topden Lachungpa and his wife. The manager is Kesang, one of their daughters. Sonam was a Forestry Minister and is now Chairman of the Sikkim Environment Authority. He has an extensive library of natural history books which proved a very useful reference for us.

## Day 5

Thursday 28th May

### Llisa Falls, Forest Conservation Area, Gangtok Roapway, Craft Centre

Birds in the garden included House Crow, Large-billed Crow, Oriental Magpie Robin, Silver-eared Mesia and the turquoise Verditer Flycatcher.

We enjoyed a very good breakfast of porridge, toast, pancakes and eggs. We then made our way up out of Gangtok, firstly stopping at the scenic Llisa Falls which were festooned with coloured prayer flags. Dipesh explained what the different colours represent- white for water/air, blue for sky, green for vegetation, red for fire, yellow for soil – and that they were hung where the breeze could disperse the prayers. Then we drove to a Forest Conservation Area which was partly set up by one of Sonam's daughters. It had only recently been established, so the well-labelled trees and shrubs were young. We were greeted by a noisy Green-billed Malkoha and saw Little Pied and Verditer Flycatchers in the gardens. It was a very attractive walk to a small waterfall where it seemed we were part of the attraction and were requested to be photographed by and with local tourists! We had an exclusive viewing of a greenhouse containing an amazing orchid display and then returned to the centre of Gangtok, to the Centre of Tibetology. We then got a birds-eye view from the Gangtok Ropeway – a cable car which plies across the centre of the town.

We had lunch in an attractive Tibetan Restaurant, decorated with colourful carved furniture, and then visited the craft centre where local crafts of carpet making, weaving, woodcarving and painting are taught and promoted. Tea and biscuits were promptly served on the terrace when we got back to the hotel.

After another very good dinner Alister had arranged for Sonam to talk to us about forestry in Sikkim. A high percentage of Sikkim, 82%, is forested and 40% is protected under the Forest Conservation Act introduced by Indira Gandhi. Although there is pressure on the land from an increasing population, high rise buildings are being encouraged, there is promotion at all levels of society to plant trees and environmental science is being promoted in schools. It was inspiring to listen to his dedication.

## Day 6

Friday 29th May

### Gangtok – Mangan – Lachung

Gangtok is noted for its amazing views of the mountain Kanchendzonga, the highest peak in Sikkim, and we were ever hopeful for views of those wonderful snow-capped peaks, but it lived up to its nickname of 'Sleeping Buddha' and doggedly remained asleep under various blankets of low cloud. We had a leisurely breakfast while Alister sorted the various permits for us to proceed north. As there was a delay, Kesang took the group around the garden explaining how they grew and hybridised orchids.

Eventually we were on our way. The scenery was amazing as we made our way along forest roads with tempting glimpses of hillsides, small settlements, rice paddies, tea plantations and then down into the Teesta valley to Mangan where we had lunch. We made short stops – for Bamboo Orchids (*Arundina graminifolia*), a dramatic waterfall – one of many, for a saprophytic orchid *Epipogium roseum* and more *Coelogyne* and *Dendrobium* orchids. Then onwards again, crossing and recrossing, the wide languid river to Chungthang where the Teesta is joined by the Zemu. Now we headed north-east towards Lachung. We saw some familiar plants such as Foxgloves and Elderflower!

We were greeted at our hotel by a welcome cup of tea and some of us began to feel the effects of the higher altitude.

## Day 7

Saturday 30th May

### Lachung – Dombang Valley – Rhododendron Reserve – Yumthang valley

After breakfast, Alister greeted us with bright yellow leech socks and photos were taken of us wearing this glamorous addition to our wardrobe! Our first stop, as we headed up the valley, was some scrubby habitat where the ground is dotted with small wild strawberries, *Androsace rotundifolius*, *Mezys tibetica*, bushes of *Piptanthus nepalensis* with its large yellow pea flowers, bushes of *Berberis* sp., the delicate *Rosa sericea*, the yellow *Rhododendron campylocarpum* and many spikes of *Primula denticulata*. Some of us were very excited to see our first Yaks! Then we proceeded into the Dombang Valley – a stunning steep sided valley. We were amongst old fruit trees where, among the lichen, ferns and other epiphytes, were many flowers of *Pleione bookeriana*. We later saw masses of this pink orchid in the surrounding trees. There was a large patch of *Iris clarkii*, with clumps of *Arisaema concinnum*. We walked along the road finding more rhododendrons in flower – *Rhododendron cinnabarinum* and *R. bailyi*. A Black Eagle launched off the cliff face above us, mobbed by smaller birds.

We turned round at this point and headed up into the Shingba Rhododendron Sanctuary, 43km<sup>2</sup> of rhododendron forest, where many species were at various stages of flowering. Some of us struggled to keep up with the various sizes and shapes of the leaves and colours of the flowers, but we can only agree with Richard, a confessed 'Rhodo' fan, who suggested it was enough to convert haters of *R. ponticum*, the plant that has become such a thug in so many areas in the UK! At a wet flush on the roadside, we found *Primula dickiana*, *Euphorbia wallichii* and *Gaultheria pyrolensis*. The bushes were draped with the white flowers of *Clematis montana*.

The scenery opened out and we got occasional glimpses of snow-capped peaks. Our vehicles then negotiated a dramatic moonscape of grey rocks – the result of a recent landslide - which had effectively dammed the river and created a small lake. Our lunch stop was at a tourist site near some hot springs. We used the tables at a small tea booth and Alister and Dipesh served us hot food bought up from the hotel, with bananas and hot sweet tea.

Then Alister took us to find *Meconopsis simplicifolia* and we all admired this stunning blue poppy. A yellow *Primula* was found by Lesley– at first thought to be *Primula sikkimensis* but later thought to be *P. elongata* var. *elongata*. We found groups of the purple *Primula calderiana* and *Fritillaria cirrhosa*. Turning back, we saw the handsome White-collared Blackbird feeding among the yaks, and a small flock of black and white Snow Pigeons.

On the last walk of the day, across the river near the springs, we found tall spikes of the yellow *Mecanopsis paniculata*.

## Day 8

Sunday 31st May

### Lachung – Yumthang Valley – Yume Samdang at 4,660m

It had been raining during the night and still was when we left the hotel and headed back up the valley, through the Rhododendron reserve. We passed the hot springs and the attendant tourist booths selling hats, gloves and scarves and then climbed higher, crossing more scree and swollen streams. One grassy area was scattered with masses of deep red *Primula calderiana*, including a few white spikes. Then on again, where the road cut through snow banks to a small rocky plateau with a lake. We were in low cloud so the terrain did not look too promising for flowers but the initial drabness of the scene belied its floral treasures and we found compact cushions of Himalayan Mandrake (*Mandragora caulescens*) with its spotted, lime-green flowers, and *Spongiocarpella purpurea* with its large purple pea flowers. We turned down a sandy track to another rocky plateau and, despite the altitude, enjoyed exploring the short turf, rocky crevices and streamsides finding various *Primulas* including the honey-scented *Primula sikkimensis*, *P. capitata* and *P. atrodentata*. Other plants included *Anemone vitifolia*, *Daphne retusa*, *Pinguicula alpina*, an Aster, various Louseworts including the yellow *Pedicularis longiflora* and various *Potentillas* including *Potentilla microphylla*. There were Snow Toad tadpoles in the shallow pools and Suzie found a toad. Ruth was suffering from the cold, so one of the drivers took her to the hot springs where she could warm her hands.

Two Golden Eagles were seen to glide down the valley, and small birds around the hot springs included White-headed Water Redstart, Robin Accentor, Rufous-bellied Accentor and, as we started our return, one of the drivers pointed out some bright blue birds – Grandalas. A group of seven thrush-sized birds seeming almost electric blue in the dull light. We returned to the hotel, with brief stops to photograph the fields of *Primulas* and for *Arisaema griffithii* – perhaps the most dramatic looking of this unusual plant group.

At log there was much discussion about the plants we had seen, particularly the *primulas*.

## Day 9

Monday 1st June

### Lachung – Chungthang – Lachen

Alister informed us that there was a 'little difficulty' on the road below Lachung so he felt it best to delay our departure. There had been a landslide the previous day, but he was confident it would be cleared later in the day. So we spent a good morning roadside botanising in a side valley south of Lachung. The hillside was dotted with *Euphorbia griffithii* and the banks were lush with many ferns including Bracken, *Osmunda* sp. and *Asplenium* spp. We found *Buddleia colvillea* with its large waxy red flowers, *Rhododendron lepidotum* with its delicate yellow blooms, a delicate little sundew *Drosera peltata* and the tiny blue pea *Parachetus communis*. There were lovely views down the Lachung Valley.

We had lunch at the hotel then headed down the valley. We had views across the valley to an army camp and settlement on a moraine plateau, and over and through waterfalls, till we came to the back of a traffic jam. We joined the queue and settled down to wait; some of the group had reading material or crosswords at the ready, others botanised, bird-watched or joined the crowds watching the clearing process. Eventually the road was deemed passable. We took a footpath to bypass the roadworks and watched for our drivers to come through. We all cheered soundly when they appeared and set off in good spirits. We reached Lachen in the dark and found our hotel, where we were greeted with cherry brandy and coloured silk scarves. After the drama and excitement of the day, our rooms were a haven. At supper, we raised our glasses and toasted Alister's calm confidence and the skill of the drivers!

## Day 10

Tuesday 2nd June

### Lachen – Yathang – Kalep valley – Chopta Valley

We woke to a lovely surprise – a bright sunny day – with views from the wooded garden of the Apple Orchard Hotel, across the colourful village of Lachen to the steep valley sides.

After breakfast, we headed up the valley, crossing and recrossing the Teesta (Tista), sometimes a muddy torrent, sometimes flowing through gravel beds, passing many small settlements and army camps. Our first botanical stop was for the unusual *Aristolochia griffithii*, a climbing member of the Birthwort family, with its large brownish-yellow trumpet-shaped flowers. As we discussed its unusual strategy to ensure pollination, there was a rumble and loud cracks from the other side of the valley and we witnessed a small landslide.

On the edge of one settlement, an enclosure of short grass was studded with *Primula sikkimensis*, and later we found a damp bank studded with a yellow form of *Primula calderiana*, *Cassiope fastigiata* and *Pinguicula alpina*. Just as some were thinking about a cup of coffee, we stopped beside The Cafeteria, Kalep, Lachen! We sat outside and enjoyed tea, coffee and biscuits.

We then took a walk up into a side valley of the Kalep river. Alister had prepared us – the walk was initially steep and would even out but we were at high altitude so we were to take it slowly. We made our way up through a small settlement where inquisitive children came out to ask us where we were going. We soon reached a paved track which made for slightly easier walking but some reached their limit sooner than others, and returned to the cafe under the care of Dipesh. Plants include the lovely Black Pea (*Thermopsis barbata*) with its silvery foliage and maroon flowers. Alister found two buds of *Cypripedium himalayicum* and one bud of *C. elegans*. The hardy few enjoyed their walk towards the valley while others made a leisurely return. The far side of the valley is a wash of yellow *Rhododendron campylocarpum* and pink *R. campanulatum*.

We had our lunch at the cafe and then drove further up the valley which, unfortunately, was scarred by a new road made by the military.

We made short stops on our return for Primulas, Pleiones and the views. Wandering yaks blocked the roads and, when we stopped at a waterfall for photos, the drivers took the opportunity to wash off the vehicles.

## Day 11

Wednesday 3rd June

### Lachen – Chungthang – Mangan – Gangtok

We now had to start our return from the high valleys. Much of the Lachen valley was new to us as we had come up in the dark, so we appreciated the stunning views and dramatic waterfalls, making a few photo stops. Many trees were festooned in epiphytes, including *Dendrobium amoenum*, and we also found the delicate white orchid *Bulbophyllum odoratissimum* (*tricephalum*) var *racemosum*. Other plants included the strange terrestrial orchid *Galeolus falconeri*, the lovely yellow bells of the epiphytic *Rhododendron dalabousii* and the white-flowered *R. madeni*. Also there were more banks of the huge fern *Gleichenia gigantea*. One vehicle saw a Yellow-throated Marten cross the road but it was soon out of view. We had our lunch at Mangan.

Then we drove on towards Gangtok, passing through areas of rice paddies where the seedling beds made slashes of bright green, and we paused to take photos of the working cows.

Our day ended with a dramatic thunderstorm and tremendous rain. Some took advantage of the library to check many of the plants we had seen - especially the primulas and ferns.

## Day 12

Thursday 4th June

### Gangtok - Kalimpong

We were headed back to the border today, but our first stop was at the Rumtek Monastery, one of Sikkim's most venerated monasteries, founded during the 12th century, where Dipesh talked us through some elements of Buddhism and the particular Black Hat sect (Karma Kagyu lineage) that are associated with this monastery. It is well-guarded as it is at the centre of a controversy over who succeeds the 16th Karmapa, who was very influential in the spread of Tibetan Buddhism to the West, but who died in 1981. We wandered through the highly decorated main building and up to the golden stupa.

Then we continued south down into the Teesta river valley where we saw familiar trees – *Schima wallichii*, Tree Ferns, the scarlet flowers of Coral Tree (*Erythrina arborescens*) and Flame Tree (*Delonix regia*), Pandanas, *Albizia chinensis* and the pink-flowered *Albizia julibrissin*, and large pink flower spikes of *Lagerstroemia indiga* – probably planted as roadside trees.

We had lunch at the border and, saying farewell to Sikkim, we headed back up into the hills again, passing more rice paddies and through a low forest of Chinquona trees. The bark from the young branches is collected and dried and is a source of quinine. We also saw more Bamboo Orchids.

We reached the outskirts of Kalimpong and were soon caught up in the traffic in the noisy, colourful, bustling streets. But once through, we turned into the peaceful gardens of the historic Himalayan Hotel, where we were greeted by tea and biscuits on the terrace before finding our rooms.

Similar to Darjeeling, Kalimpong once belonged to Sikkim, and later to Bhutan. But not a tea centre, it was once a centre for India's wool trade with Tibet. It is famous for its stunning views of Kanchenjunga, but the 'Sleeping Buddha' continued to elude us! The Himalayan Hotel was once the home of David Macdonald who was a British Political Officer in Sikkim and assisted the 13th Dalai Lama to escape from Tibet in 1910. It has a close

association with Himalayan history, having hosted many famous names from Everest expeditions, such as Mallory and Irving, Hillary and Tenzing, and many notable Tibetologists.

## Day 13

Friday 5th June

### Pineview Nursery – Paper Factory – Deolo Hill – The School – Lepcha Museum

Kalimpong is famous for its many plant nurseries. Our first stop was at the Pineview Nursery which specialises in Cactus. Its unusual history began with growing and exporting orchids, mostly to the USA, but they were not allowed to import dollars so Cactus seed became the currency, and the resulting plants are now shipped all over India.

Then we went to the Paper Factory where we witnessed the whole process from preparing and soaking the bark of the Indian Paper Tree (*Edgeworthia gardneri*). This was then broken down in a huge processor, where bleach or colouring could be added. The resulting pulp was then spread onto frames, squeezed to remove the water, then put out to dry before being cut to size or made into different products. One of the workers demonstrated patterning the paper with coloured inks. Then we purchased gifts of writing paper, notebooks and gift bags.

We then headed to the viewpoint at Deolo Hill but, as was our luck, the view was obliterated by low cloud. Then we visited the Graham School and the Lepcha Museum. This small private collection of Lepcha memorabilia is owned by Ren Sonan Tshering Lepcha. He proudly showed us his collection of musical instruments, demonstrating the various sounds of a bear-scarer, bird-caller and the lovely melancholy notes of flutes.

We then returned to the hotel through the chaotic streets of Kalimpong. Back on the veranda we enjoyed tea and biscuits, and later, another good dinner in these graceful surroundings.

## Day 14

Saturday 6th June

### Local market – lunch at hotel – meet Udai and Hemlata Pradhan

Some of the group opted out of the excursion to the market - preferring to relax on the terrace. Steve was tasked with identifying a very vocal bird that seemed to have been calling since we arrived and he managed to capture it on camera - a handsome Blue-fronted Barbet.

Alister led the rest of us through the bustling streets with Dipesh acting as sheepdog, ensuring no-one got lost. Saturday is the day when people come in from the surrounding areas to sell produce. The market area was a riot of bright colourful vegetables and fruit, bags of spices, herbs, pulses and flowers.

Alister explained the uses of many of the products – dried bark and pine needles for incense burning, dried fermented mustard greens for flavouring soup, small cakes of dried yeast for fermenting beer, fiddle heads and other various greens. It was quite an olfactory experience on many levels!

We returned to the hotel for lunch and then set off for our meeting with Alister's family.

Udai Pradhan is a renowned orchid specialist and writer, and Alister's father-in-law. Alister's sister-in-law is Hemlata Pradhan – an internationally renowned botanical artist, and she is developing the Himalayan Institute of Natural History and Art, where local children can develop their creative skills and learn about their environment and conservation. We were greeted like royalty: the children were very pleased to show us their work, from their simple sketches in their notebooks to more sophisticated pieces. We then saw samples of Hemlata's work which was stunning in its detail. If the *Mecanopsis simplifolia* had been for sale there would have been fierce competition for it! We were able to purchase cards and bookmarks of both Hemlata's work and that of her students. We were then treated to tea with sandwiches and cake and were able to talk with Udai about plants we had seen, and he talked about a book on Arisaemas he and Hemlata were working on. Alister introduced us to his wife Sanjivini and daughter Alana, who was a bit overwhelmed by the crowd of visitors. It was an inspiring afternoon and a rich ending to the tour.

Before dinner we thanked Alister and Dipesh for their hard work that made our visit so rich and enjoyable. They presented us with silk scarves and prayer flags of the mystic mantra “*Om Mane Padme Hum*” (Hail jewel in the lotus).

## Day 15

Sunday 7th June

Return to Bagdogra for flight to Kolkata

Before leaving Kalimpong we thanked our team of drivers and then set off for Bagdogra. Despite some delays, the group caught their flight, leaving with the wonderful botanical and other memories and experiences of this very special part of the Himalayas. Everyone in the group contributed to the whole experience whether it was their sense of humour, spotting flowers, sharing botanical knowledge or prompting debate about the plants, the habitat or the culture.

## Day 16

Monday 8th June

Return to the UK

## Receive our e-newsletter

Join the Naturetrek e-mailing list and be the first to hear about new tours, additional departures and new dates, tour reports and special offers. Visit [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk) to sign up.

## 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.

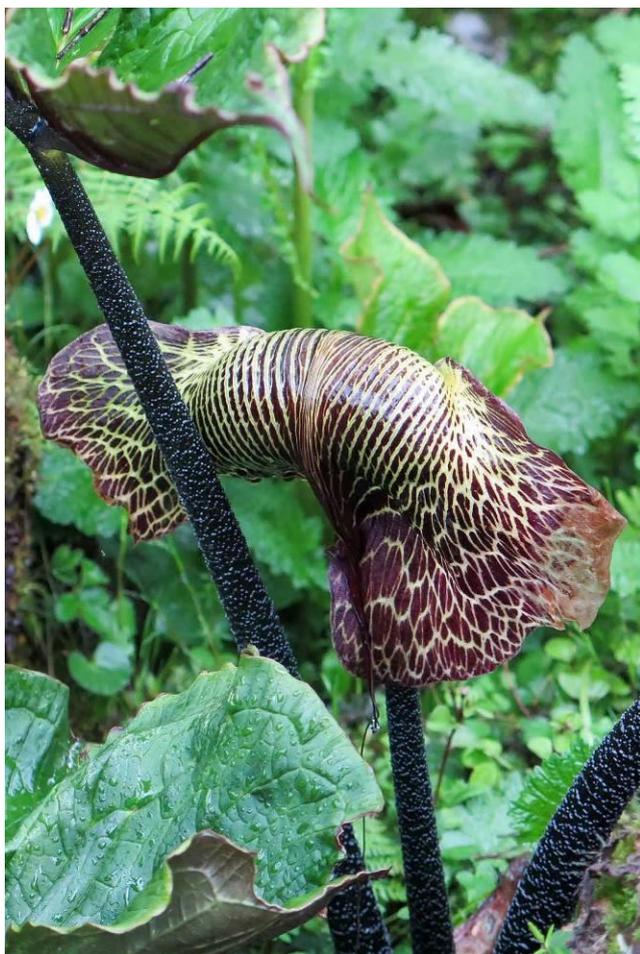
Setting up a personal profile at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) is quick, free and easy. The [Naturetrek Facebook page](#) is now live; do please pay us a visit!

## Species Lists

Birds (✓ = recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	<b>Common name</b>	<b>Scientific name</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	seen in river valleys
2	Cattle Egret	<i>Bulbulcus ibis</i>	Near Bagdogra
3	Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	Yumthang
4	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Yumthang
5	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	"
6	Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malayensis</i>	Dombang Valley
7	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	Yume Samgdang
8	Hill Pigeon	<i>Columba rupestris</i>	Yumthang
9	Snow Pigeon	<i>Columba leuconota</i>	"
10	Speckled Wood-pigeon	<i>Columba hodgsonii</i>	Lachung
11	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	"
12	Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	seen regularly
13	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Heard only
14	Green-billed Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus tristis</i>	Gangtok
15	House Swift	<i>Apus nipalensis</i>	
16	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	Nr Bagdogra
17	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	"
18	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	Heard only
19	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	seen occasionally
20	Blue-throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima asiatica</i>	Kalimpong – hotel garden
21	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Lachung
22	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	Common
23	Himalayan Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus leucogenys</i>	Kalimpong – hotel garden
24	Brown Dipper	<i>Cinclus pallasii</i>	? Teesta River nr Rangpo
25	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	
26	Rufous-breasted Accentor	<i>Prunella strophiaata</i>	Yume Samgdang
27	Robin Accentor	<i>Prunella rubeculoides</i>	"
28	Blue Whistling Thrush	<i>Myophonus caeruleus</i>	Lloyd Botanical garden, Gangtok
29	Grandala	<i>Grandala coelicolor</i>	Yume Samdang
30	White-collared Blackbird	<i>Turdus albocinctus</i>	Yumthang
31	Grey-winged Blackbird	<i>Turdus boulboul</i>	Lloyd Botanical garden, Gangtok
32	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Gangtok
33	Ashy-throated Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus maculipennis</i>	Yumthang
34	Little Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula westermanni</i>	Gangtok
35	Verditer Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias thalassina</i>	Gangtok
36	Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	Above Lachen
37	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	Yumthang
38	White-capped Water Redstart	<i>Chaimarrornis leucocephalus</i>	Yumthang
39	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	Gangtok, Kalimpong
40	Streaked Laughingthrush	<i>Trochalopteron (Garrulax) lineatus</i>	Gangtok
41	Silver-eared Mesia	<i>Leiothrix argenteauris</i>	"
42	Red-billed Leiothrix	<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>	Darjeeling
43	Rufous Sibia	<i>Heterophasia capistrata</i>	Heard regularly
44	Green-backed Tit	<i>Parus monticolus</i>	Darjeeling
45	White-tailed Nuthatch	<i>Sitta himalayensis</i>	"
46	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	Heard only
47	Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>	Common around Lachung
48	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	Gangtok
49	Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>	"
50	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>	"

51	Grey Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta formosae</i>	Lachen
52	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	
53	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	Common
54	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	"
55	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	"
56	Yellow-billed Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa erythrorhyncha</i>	Gangtok
57	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Darjeeling



*Arisaema griffithii*



Lachen



*Thermopsis barbata*

## Plants

Family	Genus	Species	English name, notes
Aceraceae	<i>Acer</i>	<i>campbellii</i>	Lloyd Botanical Gdns, Dombang valley
Amaryllidaceae	<i>Allium</i>	<i>pratii</i>	
	<i>Zephyranthes</i>	<i>carinata</i>	widespread, from Mexico
Anacardiaceae	<i>Cotinus</i>	<i>coggygria</i>	Smoke Tree, shrub
	<i>Rhus</i>	<i>wallichii</i>	shrub
Araceae	<i>Arisaema</i>	<i>griffithii</i>	Cobra Lily, above Lachen
	<i>Arisaema</i>	<i>concinnum</i>	“
	<i>Arisaema</i>	<i>consanguineum</i>	“
	<i>Arisaema</i>	<i>nepenthoides</i>	“
	<i>Arisaema</i>	<i>speciosum</i>	“
	<i>Arisaema</i>	<i>tortuosum</i>	Whipcord Cobra Lily, seen regularly,
	<i>Arisaema</i>	<i>jacquemontii</i>	Cobra Lily
	<i>Arisaema</i>	<i>galeatum</i>	“
	<i>Arisaema</i>	<i>echinatum</i>	“
	<i>Arisaema</i>	<i>propinquum</i>	“
	<i>Arisaema</i>	<i>utile</i>	Sikkim Cobra Lily, seen regularly, small plants
	<i>Remusatia</i>	<i>hookeriana</i>	tall arum spike, side of road
	Araliaceae	<i>Acanthopanax</i>	<i>cissifolius</i>
<i>Panax</i>		<i>pseudo-ginseng</i>	Ginseng, Yumthang
<i>Trevesia</i>		<i>palmata</i>	palmate leaves, shrub
Aristolochiaceae	<i>Aristolochia</i>	<i>griffithii</i>	above Lachen, climber
Asclepiadaceae	<i>Hoya</i>	? <i>sikkimensis</i>	nr landslide south of Chungthang
	<i>Hoya</i>	<i>polyneura</i>	umbel of flowers, nr landslide, south of Chungthang
Balsaminaceae	<i>Impatiens</i>	<i>cristata</i>	yellow flowers
	<i>Impatiens</i>	<i>glandulifera</i>	Himalayan Balsam
	<i>Impatiens</i>	<i>urticifolia</i>	yellow flowers, nettle -shaped leaves

Family	Genus	Species	English name, notes
	<i>Impatiens</i>	<i>decipiens</i>	pink flowers
Begoniaceae	<i>Begonia</i>	<i>picta</i>	white flowers
Berberidaceae	<i>Berberis</i>	spp	many species seen particularly above Lachung
	<i>Mahonia</i>	<i>nepalensis</i>	seen regularly
	<i>Podophyllum</i>	<i>hexandrum</i>	above Lachen
Betulaceae	<i>Alnus</i>	<i>nepalensis</i>	Himalayan Alder – quick growing, shade tree for Black Cardamom
	<i>Betula</i>	<i>utilis</i>	
Caprifoliaceae	<i>Leycesteria</i>	<i>formosa</i>	Himalayan Honeysuckle, Pheasantberry, shrub
	<i>Lonicera</i>	<i>cyanocarpa</i>	var <i>porphyrantha</i> , dark red funnel shaped flowers, shrub
	<i>Triosteum</i>	<i>himalayanum</i>	hairy perennial, green/purple flowers
Caryophyllaceae	<i>Cerastium</i>	<i>cerastioides</i>	
	<i>Gypsophila</i>	<i>cerastioides</i>	widespread,
Compositae	<i>Ageratum</i>	<i>conyzoides</i>	common roadside plant, pale lilac flowers
	<i>Ainsliaea</i>	<i>aptera</i>	
	<i>Anaphalis</i>	<i>nepalensis</i>	small white papery flowers
	<i>Artemisia</i>	<i>vulgaris</i>	wormwood
	<i>Bidens</i>	<i>pilosa</i>	common universal weed
	<i>Eupatorium</i>	<i>adenophorum</i>	common universal weed from Mexico
	<i>Galinsago</i>	<i>parviflora</i>	common universal weed from South America
	<i>Pseudognaphalium</i>	<i>affine</i>	yellow papery flowers
	<i>Erigeron</i>	<i>multiradiatus</i>	Himalayan Fleabane, Yume Samdang
	<i>Taraxicum</i>	spp	seen widely ,roadsides
Coriariaceae	<i>Coriaria</i>	<i>nepalensis</i>	shrub
Crassulaceae	<i>Rhodiola</i>	<i>himalensis</i>	Roseroot
	<i>Sedum</i>	<i>multicaule</i>	Stonecrop
Cruciferae	<i>Cardamine</i>	<i>macrophylla</i>	
	<i>Brassica</i>	<i>juncea</i>	Mustard greens – fermented and dried and used to flavour soup
Diapensiaceae	<i>Diapensia</i>	<i>himalaica</i>	above Lachung

Family	Genus	Species	English name, notes
Droseraceae	<i>Drosera</i>	<i>peltata</i>	Sundew, above Lachung
Elaeagnaceae	<i>Elaeagnus</i>	<i>latifolia</i>	
Ephedraceae	<i>Ephedra</i>	<i>gerardiana</i>	source of drug ephedrine
Equisetaceae	<i>Equisetum</i>	spp	various species seen
Ericaceae	<i>Agapetes</i>	<i>serpens</i>	epiphytic shrub seen regularly, bright red flowers
	<i>Cassiope</i>	<i>fastigiata</i>	above Lachen
	<i>Enkianthus</i>	<i>deflexus</i>	Himalayan Red Bells, above Lachung, shrub
	<i>Gaultheria</i>	<i>trichophylla</i>	Himalayan Snowberry
	<i>Pieris</i>	<i>formosa</i>	Lily-of-the-valley Tree
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>arboreum</i>	Red/pink, large flowers, mostly over
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>barbatum</i>	large shrub, deep red flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>campanulatum</i>	pale mauve/purple flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>falconeri</i>	Large shrub, creamy white/yellow flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>hodgsonii</i>	not seen in flower,
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>wightii</i>	large yellow bell-shaped flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>dalhousiae</i>	epiphytic, large yellow flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>anthopogon</i>	small shrub, yellow flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>triflorum</i>	pale yellow flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>glaucophyllum</i>	small shrub, white flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>nivale</i>	small low growing shrub, pink/mauve flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>thomsonii</i>	deep red flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>maddenii</i>	white/pink flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>campylocarpum</i>	pale yellow flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>cinnabarinum</i>	orange/red drooping bells
<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>setosum</i>	compact sub-shrub, purple flowers	
<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>camelliiflorum</i>	often epiphytic, small red/pink flowers	
<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>ciliatum</i>	small shrub, often procumbent on rocks, pink flowers	
<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>lepidotum</i>	subshrub, pink, red or yellow	

Family	Genus	Species	English name, notes
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>mekongiense</i>	large shrub, yellow flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>lowndesii</i>	subshrub, solitary or paired pale yellow flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>virgatum</i>	small shrub, pale pink flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>baileyi</i>	small shrub, small open wine red flowers
	<i>Rhododendron</i>	<i>aeruginosum</i>	large shrub, pink flowers
Euphorbiaceae	<i>Euphorbia</i>	<i>sikkimensis</i>	botanic garden, above Lachung
	<i>Euphorbia</i>	<i>wallichii</i>	above Lachung
	<i>Ricinus</i>	<i>communis</i>	widely seen
Fagaceae	<i>Castanopsis</i>	<i>indica</i>	evergreen tree
	<i>Quercus</i>	spp	conservation area, Gangtok
Fumariaceae	<i>Corydalis</i>	<i>?longifoliosa</i>	
Gentianaceae	<i>Gentiana</i>	spp	
Gesneriaceae	<i>Aeschynanthus</i>	<i>sikkimensis</i>	Sikkim Blushwort
	<i>Chirita</i>	<i>urticifolia</i>	
	<i>Corallodiscus</i>	<i>lanuginosus</i>	small lilac flowers
	<i>Didymocarpus</i>	<i>albicalyx</i>	purple tube-shaped flowers
Graminaceae	<i>Dendrocalamus</i>	<i>sikkimensis</i>	Giant Bamboo
	<i>Bambusa</i>	spp	Bamboo, many species seen
	<i>Thysanolaena</i>	<i>latifolia</i>	Tiger Grass, tall arching reed-like grass with plume of flowers
Hydrangeaceae	<i>Dichroa</i>	<i>febrifuga</i>	seen regularly, delicate blue hydrangea-like flowers
	<i>Philadelphus</i>	<i>tomentosus</i>	Lachung
Hypericaceae	<i>Hypericum</i>	<i>hookeriana</i>	shrub
Iridaceae	<i>Iris</i>	<i>clarkii</i>	Dombang
Lamiaceae	<i>Ajuga</i>	spp	Bugle, seen regularly
	<i>Salvia</i>	<i>campanulata</i>	yellow flowers
Lardizabalaceae	<i>Holboellia</i>	<i>latifolia</i>	Sausage Vine, twining shrub, white flowers
Leguminosae	<i>Albizia</i>	<i>chinensis</i>	shade tree, yellow/white flowers
	<i>Albizia</i>	<i>julibrissin</i>	Persian Acacia, shade tree, pink flowers

Family	Genus	Species	English name, notes
	<i>Cassalpinia</i>	<i>decapetala</i>	Cat's Claw, climber or shrub, yellow panicles
	<i>Bauhinia</i>	<i>variegata</i>	Orchid Tree/Mountain Ebony, naturalised from China
	<i>Cassia</i>	<i>fistula</i>	Golden Shower Tree/Indian Laburnum
	<i>Delonix</i>	<i>regia</i>	Flamboyant/Flame Tree
	<i>Astragalus</i>	<i>species</i>	Yume Samdang
	<i>Erythrina</i>	<i>arborescens</i>	Coral Tree
	<i>Indigofera</i>	<i>cassiodes</i>	shrub, lilac pink flowers
	<i>Parochetus</i>	<i>communis</i>	Blue Oxalis, small blue pea flowers
	<i>Piptanthus</i>	<i>nepalensis</i>	Evergreen Laburnum, bush with silvery foliage, yellow pea flowers, Lachung
	<i>Spongiocarpella</i>	<i>purpurea</i>	low growing, purple or yellow pea flowers, Yume Sandang
	<i>Thermopsis</i>	<i>barbata</i>	above Lachen
	<i>Trifolium</i>	<i>repens</i>	White Clover, common roadside plant
Liliaceae	<i>Clintonia</i>	<i>udensis</i>	Bead Lily
	<i>Cardiocrinum</i>	<i>giganteum</i>	in leaf only
	<i>Fritillaria</i>	<i>cirrhosa</i>	Yumthang and Chopta
	<i>Gagea</i>	spp	
	<i>Gagea (Lloydia)</i>	<i>serotina</i>	
	<i>Paris</i>	<i>polyphylla</i>	
	<i>Campylandra</i>	<i>aurantiaca</i>	strap leaves, compact flower spike at base, botanical garden
	<i>Chlorophytum</i>	<i>nepalensis</i>	starry white flowers on long stems, 'spider plant'
	<i>Ophiopogon</i>	<i>intermedius</i>	Lilyturf
	<i>Smilacina</i>	<i>oleracea</i>	a False Solomon's-seal
	<i>Smilacina</i>	<i>fusca</i>	
	<i>Streptopus</i>	<i>simplex</i>	white flowers
	<i>Hemerocallis</i>	<i>fulva</i>	Day Lily
Magnoliaceae	<i>Magnolia</i>	<i>campbellii</i>	not in flower
	<i>Magnolia</i>	<i>globosa</i>	above Lachung, not in flower
Melanthiaceae	<i>Aletris</i>	<i>pauciflora</i>	short stems of tiny pinkish flowers, grass like leaves

Family	Genus	Species	English name, notes
Melastomataceae	<i>Melastoma</i>	<i>normale</i>	Himalayan Melastome, shrub with mauve flowers
Meliaceae	<i>Melia</i>	<i>azedarach</i>	Indian Bead Tree/Persian Lilac
Moraceae	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>benghalensis</i>	large tree planted in villages for shade, sacred to Hindus
	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>religiosa</i>	Pipal Tree, as above
Oleaceae	<i>Jasminum</i>	<i>officinale</i>	
Orchidaceae	<i>Arundina</i>	<i>graminifolia</i>	Bamboo Orchid
	<i>Bulbophyllum</i>	<i>odoratissimum</i>	var <i>racemosum</i> . <i>B. trichocephalum</i> is a synonym.
	<i>Coelogyne</i>	<i>corymbosa</i>	Darjeeling
	<i>Coelogyne</i>	<i>ochracea</i>	
	<i>Cypripedium</i>	<i>elegans</i>	above Lachen
	<i>Cypripedium</i>	<i>himalaicum</i>	“
	<i>Dendrobium</i>	<i>amoenum</i>	seen regularly
	<i>Dendrobium</i>	<i>densiflorum</i>	Hidden Forest Retreat
	<i>Epipogium</i>	<i>roseum</i>	saprophytic orchid
	<i>Galeola</i>	<i>?lindleyana</i>	one spike found, flowers not open
	<i>Pleione</i>	<i>hookeriana</i>	masses seen in Dombang Valley
	<i>Spathoglottis</i>	<i>ixioides</i>	Daffodil Orchid, leaves only
	<i>Vanda</i>	<i>cristata</i>	Hidden Forest Retreat
Oxalidaceae	<i>Oxalis</i>	<i>corniculata</i>	seen regularly, yellow flowers
	<i>Oxalis</i>	<i>latifolia</i>	“ , pink flowers
Pandanaceae	<i>Pandanus</i>	<i>nepalensis</i>	Screw Pine, seen regularly in forests near the river
Papaveraceae	<i>Corydalis</i>	<i>juncea</i>	
	<i>Dicentra</i>	<i>macrocapnos</i>	yellow flowers
	<i>Dactylicapnos</i>	<i>species</i>	Bleeding Heart Vine
	<i>Meconopsis</i>	<i>paniculata</i>	Yumthang and Chopta
	<i>Meconopsis</i>	<i>simplicifolia</i>	“
Pinaceae	<i>Abies</i>	<i>densa</i>	East Himalayan Silver Fir, Dombang
	<i>Abies</i>	<i>spectabilis</i>	Himalayan Silver Fir

Family	Genus	Species	English name, notes
	<i>Larix</i>	<i>griffithiana</i>	East Himalayan Larch, Dombang, Yumthang
	<i>Picea</i>	<i>smithiana</i>	Himalayan Spruce
	<i>Pinus</i>	<i>wallichiana</i>	Himalayan Blue Pine, Dombang, Yumthang
	<i>Pinus</i>	<i>roxburghii/longifolia</i>	Long-leaved or Chir Pine, roadside south of Gangtok
Polygonaceae	<i>Aconogonum</i>	<i>molle</i>	?Japanese Knotweed, young shoots edible
	<i>Oxyria</i>	<i>digyna</i>	Mountain Sorrel, leaves are edible
	<i>Bistorta</i>	<i>vaccinifolia</i>	Red Carpet Knotweed
	<i>Bistorta</i>	<i>vivipara</i>	Alpine Bistort
	<i>Persicaria</i>	<i>capitata</i>	Pink Knotweed
	<i>Persicaria</i>	<i>nepalensis</i>	Nepal Knotweed
	<i>Polygonatum</i>	<i>kansuense</i>	tall spike, lilac flowers in leaf axils, Dombang
	<i>Polygonatum</i>	<i>hookeri</i>	low growing, pink flowers, seen widely
	<i>Polygonatum</i>	<i>multiflorum</i>	Solomon's Seal,
	<i>Rheum</i>	<i>nobile</i>	one very dead spike found at Yume Sandong, collected locally for medicinal use
	<i>Rheum</i>	<i>acuminatum</i>	Himalayan Rhubarb, Dombang Valley
	<i>Rumex</i>	<i>nepalensis</i>	Nepal Dock, common on waste ground
Primulaceae	<i>Androsace</i>	<i>rotundifolia</i>	common in and around Lachung
	<i>Primula</i>	<i>atrodentata</i>	small globular head of lavender flowers, Yume Samdang
	<i>Primula</i>	<i>calderiana</i>	flowers purple, Yume Samdang
	<i>Primula</i>	<i>capitata</i>	flat topped head of drooping purple flowers
	<i>Primula</i>	<i>elongata var elongata</i>	Dombang
	<i>Primula</i>	<i>denticulata</i>	globular head, flowers purplish with white or yellow eye
	<i>Primula</i>	<i>dickieana</i>	loose head of 1-6 pale yellow flowers, with darker yellow eye
	<i>Primula</i>	<i>smithiana</i>	
	<i>Primula</i>	<i>?stuartii</i>	
	<i>Primula</i>	<i>sikkimensis</i>	yellow drooping flowers, honey scented, above Lachen, Yume Sandang
Ranunculaceae	<i>Anemone</i>	<i>rivularis</i>	Botanical Garden, Yumthang
	<i>Anemone</i>	<i>vitifolia</i>	Grape Leaf Anemone

Family	Genus	Species	English name, notes
	<i>Anemone</i>	<i>polyanthus</i>	white flowers
	<i>Ranunculus</i>	spp	various species seen
	<i>Thalictrum</i>	<i>chelidonii</i>	small lilac flowers
	<i>Thalictrum</i>	<i>virgatum</i>	small white flowers
	<i>Clematis</i>	<i>montana</i>	seen widely in above Lachung, Yumthang
Rosaceae	<i>Cotoneaster</i>	<i>microphyllus</i>	dwarf shrub
	<i>Fragaria</i>	<i>nubicola</i>	Himalayan Strawberry, widespread at Lachung and Yumthang
	<i>Potentilla</i>	<i>microphylla</i>	Yume Samdang
	<i>Potentilla</i>	<i>eriocarpa</i>	
	<i>Rosa</i>	<i>sericea</i>	Small yellow flowers, seen regularly
	<i>Rubus</i>	<i>ellipticus</i>	Yellow Himalayan Raspberry, sharp to taste!
	<i>Sibbaldia</i>	<i>cuneata</i>	Yume Sandong
	<i>Spiraea</i>	<i>bella</i>	seen widely, tiny pink flowers
Rubiaceae	<i>Coffea</i>	<i>benghalensis</i>	shrub with white fragrant flowers
	<i>Mussaenda</i>	<i>roxburghii</i>	Shrub with random white leaves (calyx), seen widely at lower levels
	<i>Rubia</i>	<i>manjith</i>	bristly climber, a dye – manjith – is obtained from the roots
Salicaceae	<i>Salix</i>	<i>calyculata</i>	Dwarf Willow, red catkins
	<i>Salix</i>	<i>serpyllum</i>	Dwarf Willow, yellow catkins
	<i>Salix</i>	<i>sikkimensis</i>	Yumthang Valley
Sambucaceae	<i>Sambucus</i>	<i>adnata</i>	Low growing, elderflower heads, seen regularly
	<i>Sambucus</i>	<i>canadensis</i>	shrub, seen regularly
Saurauiceae	<i>Saurauia</i>	<i>nepaulensis</i>	shrub
Saururaceae	<i>Houttuynia</i>	<i>cordata</i>	Lizard Tail, Chameleon Plant, common roadside plants
Saxifragaceae	<i>Astilbe</i>	<i>rivularis</i>	False Spirea
	<i>Bergenia</i>	<i>purpurascens</i>	Purple Bergenia
	<i>Saxifraga</i>	<i>stolonifera</i>	Yumthang and Botanical Gardens
Scrophulariaceae	<i>Hemiphragma</i>	<i>heterophyllum</i>	ground covering creeper, pink flowers
	<i>Digitalis</i>	<i>purpurea</i>	naturalised from gardens

Family	Genus	Species	English name, notes
	<i>Lancea</i>	<i>tibetica</i>	stemless flowers of bright blue/purple
	<i>Mazus</i>	spp	small blue flowers
	<i>Pedicularis</i>	<i>longiflora</i>	yellow flowers ,Yume Sandang
	<i>Pedicularis</i>	<i>?nepalensis</i>	globular head of pink flowers,
	<i>Pedicularis</i>	<i>? trichoglossa</i>	single heads, deep pink
	<i>Veronica</i>	<i>laguniosa</i>	
Solanaceae	<i>Mandragora</i>	<i>caulescens</i>	Yume Samdang
	<i>Datura</i>	<i>suaveloens</i>	Widespread in forest and gardens
	<i>Solanum</i>	<i>viarum</i>	very spiny
Tamaricaceae	<i>Myricaria</i>	<i>rosea</i>	creeping tamarisk
Theaceae	<i>Schima</i>	<i>wallichii</i>	large tree, simple white flowers, seen widely at lower levels
	<i>Camellia</i>	<i>sinensis</i>	Tea plant – seen widely, infusion drank regularly and in quantity!
Thymelaeaceae	<i>Daphne</i>	<i>retusa</i>	Yume Sandang
	<i>Edgeworthia</i>	<i>gardneri</i>	Indian Paper Tree
Umbelliferae	<i>Cortia</i>	<i>depressa</i>	Low-growing, alpine plant
	<i>Heracleum</i>	<i>nepalense</i>	above Lachung
Urticaceae	<i>Elatostema</i>	<i>platyphyllum</i>	
	<i>Girardinia</i>	<i>diversifolia</i>	Large stinging nettle
	<i>Pilea</i>	<i>scripta</i>	stinging plant
Violaceae	<i>Viola</i>	<i>biflora</i>	seen widely, yellow flowers
	<i>Viola</i>	<i>betonicifolia</i>	lilac flowers
Vitaceae	<i>Vitis</i>	<i>jacquemontii</i>	shrub
Zingiberaceae	<i>Cautleya</i>	<i>spicata</i>	loose spike of red/yellow flowers
	<i>Cautleya</i>	<i>gracilis</i>	denser spike of flowers
	<i>Hedychium</i>	<i>elipticum</i>	globe of long narrow flowers
	<i>Hedychium</i>	<i>spicatum</i>	long spike of white flowers
	<i>Amomum</i>	<i>aromaticum</i>	Cardamom, seen cultivated