

Sri Lanka - Endemic Birds

Naturetrek Tour Report

27 February - 7 March 2016



Layard's Parakeet



Green-billed Coucal



Orange-billed (Sri Lanka Rufous) Babbler



Legge's Flowerpecker

Report and images compiled by Saman Kumara



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

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

F: +44 (0)1962 736426

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour Participants: Saman Kumara (leader) together with five Naturetrek clients

Highlights

The tour yielded some superb sightings of the endemic birds of Sri Lanka. In total we saw 184 bird species including a very rare sighting of Sri Lanka Blue Magpie, recorded at Kitulgala; a first on this tour. Additionally 13 mammal species and nine species of reptile were recorded, along with other interesting sightings.

Day 1

Saturday 27th February

The tour started with a flight from the UK to Sri Lanka.

Day 2

Sunday 28th February

At 12.45pm our flight arrived at Colombo Airport, where we met Saman. We left the airport at 1.50pm and en route to Kithulgala we spotted a number of birds including Sri Lanka Swallow, Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot, Pied Kingfisher, Little Cormorant, Indian Cormorant, Asian Openbill, White-bellied Drongo, Crested Serpent Eagle, Changeable Hawk-Eagle, Shikra and White-breasted Waterhen.

On reaching Kithulgala we were greeted with a cup of tea and, after checking in, we birded around the hotel premises encountering White-rumped Munia, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater and Black-headed Oriole. We came back to the hotel at 6pm and met again at 7pm to do the checklist before dinner.

Day 3

Monday 29th February

We started the day with tea at 5.45am before heading out at 6am for some pre-breakfast birding. We walked towards Kalukohuthenna village and encountered Chestnut-backed Owlet, Sri Lanka Junglefowl, Sri Lanka Green Pigeon, Black-capped Bulbul, Spot-winged Thrush, Yellow-fronted Barbet and Legge's Flowerpecker.

We returned to the hotel at 8.30am for breakfast. After breakfast we left for the Mahakandarawo rainforest. In the rainforest we spotted Sri Lanka Blue Magpie which was a very rare sighting in Kitulgala as this species is mainly recorded only in Sinharaja. We also encountered Malabar Trogon, Brown-capped Babbler, Black-naped Monarch, Grey Hornbill, Southern (Lesser) Hill Myna, Green Warbler, Blue-tailed Bee-eater and Indian Swiftlet.

We returned to the hotel at 1.30pm for lunch and a little time to relax. Later we went on a birding walk around Kitulgala village and encountered Crimson-backed Flameback, Oriental White-Eye and Orange-billed Babbler.

We headed back to the hotel at 6pm and again met up for the checklist at 7pm before dinner.

Day 4

Tuesday 1st March

We again started our day at 5.45am with tea, and then headed out for another pre-breakfast birding session, spotting many of the same birds as before. We returned to the hotel by 7.45am and had breakfast before checking out at 9am.

Next we drove to Nuwara Eliya, en route encountering White-bellied Sea Eagle, Black-headed Ibis and Common Kingfisher. We reached our hotel in Nuwara Eliya at 12.45pm and had lunch.

At 3pm we visited Victoria Park where we spotted Indian Pitta, Common Sandpiper, Grey Wagtail, Pied Thrush, Indian Blue Robin, Forest Wagtail and Sri Lanka White-Eye. After Victoria Park we visited the Seethaeliya forest and encountered the elusive and shy Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush.

We headed back to the hotel at 6.20pm and met up for the checklist at 7pm before dinner.

Day 5

Wednesday 2nd March

After tea at 5.30am, we left for Horton Plains, reaching the park entrance at 6.30am. In the park we saw Sri Lanka Bush Warbler, Dull-blue Flycatcher, Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon, Yellow-eared Bulbul, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Hill Swallow, Pied Bushchat, Zitting Cisticola, Paddyfield Pipit, Common Snipe and Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler, along with Sambar Deer, Giant Squirrel, Purple-faced Leaf Monkey, Dusky Squirrel and Black-lipped Lizard.

We returned to the hotel at 3.15pm for a late lunch. We then set out at 5pm to Victoria Park where we encountered Forest Wagtail, Pied Thrush and Yellow-eared Bulbul. We came back to the hotel at 6.15pm and, after the checklist, had dinner and went to bed.

Day 6

Thursday 3rd March

We started the day at 7.30am with breakfast, and then checked out of the hotel at 9am. We headed towards Embilipitiya and en route visited the Surrey Estate where we encountered Brown Wood Owl, Brown-breasted Flycatcher and Rose-ringed Parakeet. We then visited Ella Rest House for lunch and enjoyed views overlooking the valley below while doing a bit of birding. Here we spotted Rufous-bellied Hawk-Eagle, Black Eagle, White-rumped Munia and Pale-billed Flowerpecker.

We reached Thanamalvila tank around 3.30pm and stopped to do some birding. Sightings included Indian Peafowl, Darter, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Black-winged Stilt, Red-wattled Lapwing, Greater Sand Plover, Gull-billed Tern, Indian Roller, Malabar Pied Hornbill and Indian (Black-backed) Robin. We then continued to Udawalawe tank where we encountered Sri Lanka Woodshrike, Citrine Wagtail, Large Cuckooshrike, Black-headed Cuckooshrike, Barn Swallow, Yellow Wagtail, Jerdon's Bushlark, Paddyfield Pipit, Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark, White-browed Bulbul, Ashy Prinia, Barred Buttonquail and White-browed Fantail.

We reached our next hotel by 6.15 pm and saw Collared Scops Owl in the hotel garden. After checking in, we met at 7.30pm to do the checklist before dinner.

Day 7

Friday 4th March

Together with a picnic breakfast, we left the Centauria Hotel and proceeded to Udawalawe National Park for a Jeep Safari. Inside the park we encountered Tawny-bellied Babbler, Yellow-eyed Babbler, Blyth's Reed Warbler, Plain Prinia, Jungle Prinia, Sirkeer Malkoha, Plum-headed Parakeet, Black-shoulder Kite, Booted Eagle,

Changeable Hawk-Eagle, Grey-headed Fish Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Brahminy Kite, Spot-billed Pelican and Painted Stork, along with Asian Elephant, Water Buffalo, Torque Macaque, Ruddy Mongoose, Spotted Deer and Indian Palm Squirrel.

We left the park at noon and had lunch at a nearby restaurant. After lunch we proceeded to Sinharaja Blue Magpie Lodge. We reached our next hotel at 5.30pm and were welcomed with a cup of tea. We met again at 7.30pm to do our checklist before dinner.

Day 8

Saturday 5th March

We had breakfast at 5.30am and then went to the Sinharaja Rainforest where we encountered Sri Lanka Hill Myna, Layard's Parakeet, White-faced Starling, Ashy-headed Laughingthrush, Scaly Thrush, Red-faced Malkoha and Sri Lanka Blue Magpie, along with Kangaroo Lizard, Oriental (Common) Garden Lizard, Torque Macaque, Purple-faced Leaf Monkey, Palm Squirrel and Giant Squirrel.

We returned to the hotel at 3pm and relaxed for the rest of the afternoon. We later met at 7.30pm to do the checklist before dinner.

Day 9

Sunday 6th March

We started the day at 5am and after a cup of tea, left for the Ketalapatala area to look for Sri Lanka Spurfowl, which showed itself around 7.30am. We also saw Sri Lanka Spot-winged Thrush, Orange-billed Babbler, Brown-breasted Flycatcher and Sri Lanka Junglefowl. We returned to the hotel at 8am and had breakfast before checking out by 10am with a picnic lunch.

We reached the Kelaniya temple at 12.30pm where we stopped for our picnic. We then reached our next hotel at 2pm and had a free afternoon. We later met at 7pm to do the checklist which was followed by dinner.

Day 10

Monday 7th March

After breakfast we checked out and drove to the airport, where we said goodbye and thanks to Saman. We then boarded our flight back to the UK, where another Naturetrek adventure came to an end.

Naturetrek Facebook

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

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

Species Lists

Birds (Bold red text indicates endemic or near endemic species);(Names in brackets are previous names)

	Common name	Scientific name
1	Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>
2	Sri Lanka Spurfowl	<i>Galloperdix bicalcarata</i>
3	Sri Lanka Junglefowl	<i>Gallus lafayetii</i>
4	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
5	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>
6	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>
7	Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>
8	Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>
9	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
10	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
11	Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>
12	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
13	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
14	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
15	Great Egret	<i>Casmerodius albus</i>
16	Intermediate Egret	<i>Mesophoyx intermedia</i>
17	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
18	Spot-billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>
19	Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>
20	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>
21	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
22	Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>
23	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
24	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
25	White-bellied Sea Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>
26	Gray-headed Fish Eagle	<i>Lcthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>
27	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>
28	Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>
29	Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malaiensis</i>
30	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>
31	Rufous-bellied Hawk-Eagle	<i>Lophotriorchis kienerii</i>
32	Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus (Spizaetus) cirrhatus</i>
33	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amauornis phoenicurus</i>
34	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
35	Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>
36	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
37	Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>
38	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
39	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
40	Lesser Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>
41	Greater Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>
42	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
43	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
44	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
45	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
46	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
47	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
48	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
49	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>

Common name	Scientific name
50 Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>
51 Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>
52 Rock Dove (Common Pigeon)	<i>Columba livia</i>
53 Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba torringtoniae</i>
54 Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>
55 Common Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>
56 Orange-breasted Green Pigeon	<i>Treron bicinctus</i>
57 Sri Lanka Green Pigeon	<i>Treron pompadora</i>
58 Green Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>
59 Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot	<i>Loriculus beryllinus</i>
60 Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>
61 Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
62 Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>
63 Layard's Parakeet	<i>Psittacula calthropae</i>
64 Jacobin (Pied) Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i>
65 Lesser Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus poliocephalus</i>
66 Grey-bellied (Plaintive) Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis passerinus</i>
67 Asian Koel	<i>Endynamys scolopacerus</i>
68 Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Taccocua leschenaultii</i>
69 Red-faced Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus pyrrhocephalus</i>
70 Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>
71 Green-billed Coucal	<i>Centropus chlororhynchus</i>
72 Serendib Scops Owl	<i>Otus thilohoffmanni</i>
73 Collared Scops Owl	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>
74 Chestnut backed Owlet	<i>Glaucidium castanotum</i>
75 Brown Wood Owl	<i>Strix leptogrammica</i>
76 Indian Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia unicolor</i>
77 Brown-backed Needletail	<i>Hirundapus giganteus</i>
78 Asian Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>
79 Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarpis melba</i>
80 Little (House) Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>
81 Crested (Gray-rumped) Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>
82 Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>
83 Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>
84 Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>
85 Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>
86 White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
87 Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
88 Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
89 Malabar Trogon	<i>Harpactes fasciatus</i>
90 Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Megalaima zeylanica</i>
91 Yellow-fronted Barbet	<i>Megalaima flavifrons</i>
92 Crimson-fronted Barbet	<i>Megalaima rubricapillus</i>
93 Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>
94 Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyroceros gingalensis</i>
95 Malabar Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros coronatus</i>
96 Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos nanus</i>
97 Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos mahrattensis</i>
98 Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>
99 Crimson-backed Flameback	<i>Chrysocolaptes stricklandi</i>
100 Indian Pitta	<i>Pitta brachyuran</i>
101 Sri Lanka Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis affinis</i>
102 Large Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>

Common name	Scientific name
103 Black-headed Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina melanoptera</i>
104 Orange (Scarlet)(Flame) Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>
105 Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>
106 Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
107 Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>
108 Marshall's Iora	<i>Aegithina nigrolutea</i>
109 Jerdon's Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i>
110 Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>
111 Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>
112 Sri Lanka Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa ornata</i>
113 House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
114 Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>
115 Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
116 Hill Swallow	<i>Hirundo domicola</i>
117 Sri Lanka Swallow	<i>Cecropis hyperythra</i>
118 White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caeruleus</i>
119 Sri Lanka Drongo	<i>Dicrurus lophorhinus</i>
120 Forest Wagtail	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>
121 Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
122 Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
123 Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>
124 Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>
125 Jerdon's Bushlark	<i>Mirafra affinis</i>
126 Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix griseus</i>
127 Black-capped (Black-headed Yellow) Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus melanicterus</i>
128 Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>
129 Yellow-eared Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus penicillatus</i>
130 White-browed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus luteolus</i>
131 Yellow-browed Bulbul	<i>Acritillas indica</i>
132 Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>
133 Jungle Prinia	<i>Prinia sylvatica</i>
134 Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i>
135 Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>
136 Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
137 Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
138 Sri Lanka Bush Warbler	<i>Bradypterus palliseri</i>
139 Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>
140 Sykes's Warbler	<i>Iduna rama</i>
141 Green Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus nitidus</i>
142 Large-billed Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus magnirostris</i>
143 White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>
144 Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>
145 Indian (Asian) Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>
146 Brown-capped Babbler	<i>Pellorneum fuscicapillus</i>
147 Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus melanurus</i>
148 Dark-fronted Babbler	<i>Rhopocichla atriceps</i>
149 Tawny-bellied Babbler	<i>Dumetia hyperythra</i>
150 Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense</i>
151 Orange-billed (Sri Lanka Rufous) Babbler	<i>Turdoides rufescens</i>
152 Yellow-billed Babbler	<i>Turdoides affinis</i>
153 Ashy-headed Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax cinereifrons</i>
154 Sri Lanka Hill Myna	<i>Gracula ptilogenys</i>
155 Southern (Lesser) Hill Myna	<i>Gracula indica</i>

	Common name	Scientific name
156	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
157	White-faced Starling	<i>Sturnornis albofrontatus</i>
158	Rosy Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>
159	Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush	<i>Myophonus blighi</i>
160	Pied Thrush	<i>Zoothera wardii</i>
161	Spot-winged Thrush	<i>Zoothera spiloptera</i>
162	Sri Lanka Thrush	<i>Zoothera imbricata</i>
163	Indian Blackbird	<i>Turdus millimus</i>
164	Indian Blue Robin	<i>Luscinia brunnea</i>
165	Oriental Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
166	Indian (Black-backed) Robin	<i>Copsychus fulicatus</i>
167	Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>
168	Brown-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa muttui</i>
169	Dull-blue Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias sordidus</i>
170	Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>
171	Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>
172	Legge's (White-throated) Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum vincens</i>
173	Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>
174	Purple-rumped Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma zeylonica</i>
175	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>
176	Loten's (Long-billed) Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris lotenius</i>
177	Oriental White-Eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>
178	Sri Lanka White-Eye	<i>Zosterops ceylonensis</i>
179	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>
180	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
181	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
182	Indian (White-throated) Silverbill	<i>Euodice malabarica</i>
183	White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>
184	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>

Mammals List

	Common name	Scientific name
1	Toque Macaque	<i>Macaca sinica</i>
2	Grey Langur	<i>Semnopithecus (Presbytis) entellus</i>
3	Purple-faced Leaf Monkey	<i>Trachypithecus (Presbytis) vetulus</i>
4	Indian Grey Mongoose	<i>Herpestes edwardsii</i>
5	Ruddy Mongoose	<i>Herpestes smithii</i>
6	Indian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>
7	Spotted Deer (Chital)	<i>Cervus axis</i>
8	Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolor</i>
9	Water Buffalo	<i>Bubalus arnee</i>
10	Indian Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus palmarum</i>
11	Grizzled Giant Squirrel	<i>Ratufa macroura</i>
12	Dusky Squirrel	<i>Funambulus sublineatus</i>
13	Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus gigantean</i>

Reptiles & 'Others' List

	Common name	Scientific name
1	Common Rat Snake	<i>Ptyas mucosus maximus</i>
2	Bengal (Land) Monitor	<i>Varanus bengalensis</i>
3	Asian Water Monitor	<i>Varanus salvator</i>
4	Black-cheek Lizard	<i>Calotes nigrilabris</i>

	Common name	Scientific name
5	Sri Lanka Kangaroo Lizard	<i>Otocryptis wiegmanni</i>
6	Oriental (Common) Garden Lizard	<i>Calotes versicolor</i>
7	Mugger Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus palustris</i>
8	Soft shelled Terrapin	<i>Lissemys punctata</i>
9	Hard Shelled Terrapin	<i>Melanochelys trijuga parkeri</i>