

Sri Lanka - Endemic Birds

Naturetrek Tour Report

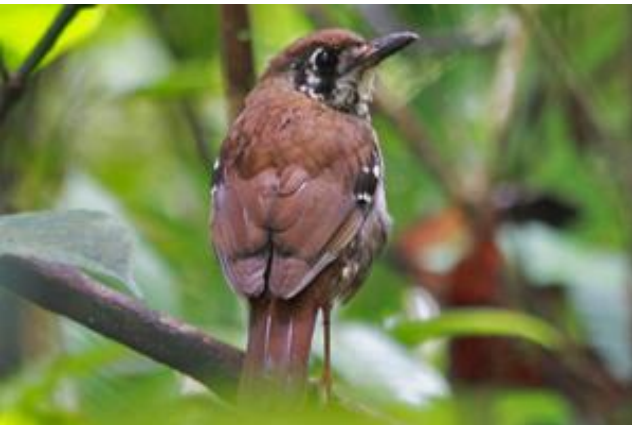
12 - 21 August 2017



Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot



Yellow-eared Bulbul



Spot-winged Thrush



Collared Scops Owl

Report and images compiled by Saman Kumara & Indika Jayatissa



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Together with nine Naturetrek clients

Highlights

An impressive total of 31 of the 33 endemic birds of Sri Lanka were seen during this tour. We only missed Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon and Sri Lanka Spurfowl due to the unusual inclement weather. A rare and interesting sighting on the tour was to see Sri Lanka Scaly Thrush three metres above ground, breaking character from a ground dwelling bird, and we were there to witness it. Although the weather was not in our favour, we managed to spot a total of 152 species of birds along with 17 mammal species and 11 species of reptiles and amphibians, making the tour an all-round success.

Day 1

Saturday 12th August

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

Day 2

Sunday 13th August

Kitulgala

The flight arrived in Sri Lanka at 12.30pm. After the group met the leaders, we left the airport at 1.40pm. During our journey to Kitulgala we encountered Common Myna, Red-vented Bulbul, Spotted Dove, Ashy Woodswallow, Red-wattled Lapwing, White-throated Kingfisher, Black-headed Ibis, Asian Openbill, Yellow-billed Babbler, Indian Pond Heron, Purple Heron, Great Egret, Crested Honey Buzzard, Rufous-bellied Hawk-Eagle, Brahminy Kite, Rock Dove, Asian Palm Swift, Little Swift, Black-hooded Oriole, White-bellied Drongo, House Crow, White-browed Bulbul, Sri Lanka Swallow, Common Tailorbird and Oriental Magpie Robin.

Amidst rain we reached Kitulgala at 5pm and visited the nearby village where we encountered more birds including Orange-billed Babbler, Spot-winged Thrush, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Indian Cormorant, Emerald Dove, Yellow-browed Bulbul, Black-rumped Flameback (Lesser Goldenback), Rose-ringed Parakeet and Green Imperial Pigeon.

We checked in to the hotel at 6.20pm and met for dinner at 7.15pm. After dinner we did our checklist and had a briefing about the next day's program before calling it a night.

Day 3

Monday 14th August

Kitulgala

We started the day at 5.30am by visiting the nearby forest patch where Chestnut-backed Owlet, Brown-capped Babbler, Sri Lanka Green-billed Coucal, Sri Lanka Junglefowl, Shikra, Greater Coucal, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Brown-headed Barbet, Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot, Bar-winged Flycatcher-Shrike, Common Iora, Orange Minivet, Black-capped Bulbul, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch and Purple-rumped Sunbird were encountered.

After breakfast in the hotel we set out to the Kitulgala Rainforest by crossing the river in dug out rafts. Our birding in the forest yielded most of the birds seen earlier. We returned to the hotel for a late lunch and then set out to the nearby rubber plantation where we encountered Black-headed Cuckooshrike, Large Cuckooshrike, Jerdon's Leafbird, Oriental White-Eye, Legge's Flowerpecker, Pale-billed Flowerpecker, Crimson-fronted Barbet, White-browed Fantail, Jungle Crow, Layard's Parakeet, Indian Cuckoo and Indian Swiftlet.

We were back in the hotel by 6.15pm and met for dinner at 7.15pm, which followed with the checklist and a briefing for the next day.

Day 4

Tuesday 15th August

Nuwara Eliya

We did a pre-breakfast walk around the Kitulgala village and returned to the hotel for breakfast. Subsequently we checked out of the hotel at 9.30am and headed to Nuwara Eliya for our next two-night stay in the central mountains of the island.

We reached our hotel at 12.30pm and after having our lunch, set out to the nearby Victoria Park. Here we witnessed Sri Lanka White-Eye, Yellow-eared Bulbul, Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler, White-breasted Waterhen, Great Tit, Dark-fronted Babbler, Purple Sunbird and House Sparrow. We left the park and visited another forest patch and encountered Dull-Blue Flycatcher here.

We returned to the hotel and gathered in the restaurant to do the checklist, which was followed by dinner.

Day 5

Wednesday 16th August

Nuwara Eliya

At 4.30am we had our tea/coffee and then left for Horton Plains. During our trek on the plains we saw the elusive Whistling Thrush, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher, Sri Lanka Bush Warbler, Crimson-backed Flameback (Goldenback), Pied Bushchat, Black-headed Munia, Hill Swallow and Loten's Sunbird.

Later in the evening we visited the Bomuru Ella forest and saw most of the birds seen in the morning, along with a Rhinoceros-horned Lizard.

We came back to the hotel at 6.30pm and, after the checklist, we had dinner and then went to bed.

Day 6

Thursday 17th August

Embilipitiya

We did a pre-breakfast birding session early in the morning and after returning to the hotel for breakfast, we checked out and proceeded to Embilipitiya. En route we stopped at Surrey Bird Sanctuary where we saw Brown Wood Owl.

Indian Roller, Woolly-necked Stork, Indian Peafowl, Oriental Darter, Crested Treeswift, Common Kingfisher, Green Bee-eater, Coppersmith Barbet, Sri Lanka Woodshrike, Black-naped Monarch and Thick-billed

Flowerpecker were sighted during our drive to the hotel, and at the hotel gardens we saw the Collared Scops Owl.

The evening proceeded with the usual routine of dinner, checklist and briefing before calling it a night.

Day 7

Thursday 18th August

Udawalawe National Park - Sinharaja

With a packed breakfast, we left the hotel and proceeded to Udawalawe National park for a jeep safari. We encountered Marshall's Iora, Grey-breasted Prinia, Jungle Prinia, Yellow-crowned Woodpecker, Sirkeer Malkoha, Blue-faced Malkoha, Sri Lanka Green Pigeon, Greater Cormorant, Changeable Hawk-Eagle, Barred Buttonquail, Black-winged Stilt, Kentish Plover, Lesser Sand Plover, Little Ringed Plover, Whiskered Tern, Jerdon's Bushlark, Oriental Skylark and Ashy Prinia. Other wildlife sighted in the park included Asian Elephant, Water Buffalo, Grey Mongoose, Land Monitor, Mugger Crocodile, Spotted Deer and Wild Boar.

After lunch at the Nivahana restaurant, we proceeded to Sinharaja. We checked in to the Blue Magpie Lodge at 4.45pm and did a bird walk around the village, observing Green Imperial Pigeon, Oriental White-Eye and Yellow-billed Babbler before rain made us retreat to our hotel.

We met again at 7pm for our evening routine of checklist, briefing and dinner.

Day 8

Saturday 19th August

Sinharaja Rainforest

We started the day at 5.15am with tea/coffee and then proceeded to the Sinharaja rainforest in jeeps. At the ticket counter we witnessed Sri Lanka Blue Magpie. Inside the rainforest we saw Sri Lanka Myna, Scaly Thrush, Sri Lanka Crested Drongo, Red-faced Malkoha, White-faced Starling, Ashy-headed Laughingthrush, Malabar Trogon and Sri Lanka Frogmouth, along with Sri Lanka Birdwing and Sri Lanka Tree-Nymph butterflies and Green Pit Viper. After a crawl through some bushes we were finally able to see Serendib Scops Owl in its roost.

We returned to the hotel at 6pm and had our dinner at 7.15pm. On our way to dinner we witnessed a Brown Fish Owl perched on a tree top in the hotel garden. We called it a night after the checklist was marked.

Day 9

Sunday 20th August

Katunayake

We started the day at 5.15am after a cup of tea and left for the Ketalapatala area amidst heavy rain in search of Sri Lanka Spurfowl. Although we did hear its call we were not able to see the bird.

We returned to the hotel at 11am and after lunch we checked out and proceeded to Katunayake for our last night's stay. En route we visited a Buddhist temple and reached the hotel by 6pm. En route we saw Black-crowned Night Heron, Pied Kingfisher and Asian Koel.

At 7.30pm we did the checklist followed by dinner.

Day 10

Monday 21st August

After breakfast we checked out and headed to the airport for our flight back to the UK, where another Naturetrek adventure came to an end.

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Species Lists (Bold text denotes endemic or near endemic; some previous names shown in brackets)

Birds:

	Common name	Scientific name
1	Sri Lanka Junglefowl	<i>Gallus lafayettii</i>
2	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
3	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>
4	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>
5	Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>
6	Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>
7	Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>
8	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
9	Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>
10	Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>
11	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
12	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
13	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
14	Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>
15	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
16	Spot-billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>
17	Little Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo niger</i>
18	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>
19	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
20	Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>
21	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
22	Crested Honey Buzzard (Oriental Honey-buzzard)	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
23	Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>
24	Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>
25	Legge's Hawk-Eagle (Mountain Hawk-Eagle)	<i>Nisaetus kelaarti</i>
26	Rufous-bellied Hawk-Eagle	<i>Lophotriorchis kienerii</i>
27	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>
28	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
29	White-bellied Sea Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>
30	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>
31	Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>
32	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
33	Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>
34	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
35	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
36	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>
37	Lesser Sand Plover (Mongolian Plover)	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>
38	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrid</i>
39	Rock Dove (Common Pigeon)	<i>Columba livia</i>
40	Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>
41	Common Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>
42	Sri Lanka Green Pigeon	<i>Treron pompadora</i>
43	Green Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>
44	Green-billed Coucal	<i>Centropus chlororhynchus</i>
45	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>
46	Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Taccocua leschenaultia</i>
47	Red-faced Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus pyrrocephalus</i>
48	Blue-faced Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus viridirostris</i>
49	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>
50	Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>
51	Serendib Scops Owl	<i>Otus thilohoffmanni</i>
52	Indian Scops Owl (Collared Scops Owl)	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>
53	Brown Fish Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>
54	Brown Wood Owl	<i>Strix leptogrammica</i>
55	Chestnut backed Owlet	<i>Glaucidium castanotum</i>
56	Sri Lanka Frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus moniliger</i>
57	Crested Treeswift (Gray-rumped Treeswift)	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>
58	Indian Swiftlet	<i>Aerodramus unicolor</i>
59	Brown-backed Needletail	<i>Hirundapus giganteus</i>
60	Asian Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>
61	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>
62	Little Swift (House Swift)	<i>Apus affinis</i>

63	Malabar Trogon	<i>Harpactes fasciatus</i>
64	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>
65	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
66	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
67	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
68	Green Bee-eater (Little Green Bee-eater)	<i>Merops orientalis</i>
69	Chestnut-headed Bee-Eater	<i>Merops leschenaultia</i>
70	Malabar Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros coronatus</i>
71	Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyroceros gingalensis</i>
72	Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Psilopogon zeylanicus</i>
73	Yellow-fronted Barbet	<i>Psilopogon flavifrons</i>
74	Crimson-fronted Barbet	<i>Psilopogon rubricapillus</i>
75	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i>
76	Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos mahrattensis</i>
77	Black-rumped Flameback (Lesser Goldenback)	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>
78	Crimson-backed Flameback (Crimson-backed Goldenback)	<i>Chrysocolaptes stricklandi</i>
79	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
80	Layard's Parakeet	<i>Psittacula calthrapae</i>
81	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
82	Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot	<i>Loriculus beryllinus</i>
83	Bar-winged Flycatcher-Shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>
84	Sri Lanka Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis affinis</i>
85	Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>
86	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>
87	Marshall's Iora	<i>Aegithina nigrolutea</i>
88	Large Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>
89	Black-headed Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina melanoptera</i>
90	Orange Minivet (Scarlet Minivet)(Flame Minivet)	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>
91	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>
92	White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>
93	Sri Lanka Drongo (Sri Lanka Crested Drongo)	<i>Dicrurus lophorinus</i>
94	White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>
95	Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>
96	Sri Lanka Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa ornata</i>
97	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
98	Indian Jungle Crow (Large-billed Crow)	<i>Corvus culminatus</i>
99	Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>
100	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
101	Jerdon's Bush Lark	<i>Mirafraga affinis</i>
102	Oriental Skylark	<i>Alauda gulgula</i>
103	Black-capped Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus melanicterus</i>
104	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>
105	Yellow-eared Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus penicillatus</i>
106	White-browed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus luteolus</i>
107	Yellow-browed Bulbul	<i>Acritillas indica</i>
108	Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>
109	Hill Swallow	<i>Hirundo domicola</i>
110	Sri Lanka Swallow	<i>Cecropis hyperythra</i>
111	Sri Lanka Bush Warbler	<i>Elaphornis palliseri</i>
112	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
113	Grey-breasted Prinia	<i>Prinia hodgsonii</i>
114	Jungle Prinia	<i>Prinia sylvatica</i>
115	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i>
116	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>
117	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
118	Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus melanurus</i>
119	Tawny-bellied Babbler	<i>Dumetia hyperythra</i>
120	Dark-fronted Babbler	<i>Rhopocichla atriceps</i>
121	Brown-capped Babbler	<i>Pellorneum fuscicapillus</i>
122	Orange-billed Babbler	<i>Turdoides rufescens</i>
123	Yellow-billed Babbler	<i>Turdoides affinis</i>
124	Ashy-headed Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax cinereifrons</i>
125	Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense</i>
126	Oriental White-Eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>
127	Sri Lanka White-Eye	<i>Zosterops ceylonensis</i>
128	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>
129	Sri Lanka Hill Myna (Sri Lanka Myna)	<i>Gracula ptilogenys</i>
130	Southern Hill Myna (Lesser Hill Myna)	<i>Gracula indica</i>

131	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
132	White-faced Starling	<i>Sturnornis albofrontatus</i>
133	Spot-winged Thrush	<i>Geokichla spiloptera</i>
134	Sri Lanka Thrush (Sri Lanka Scaly Thrush)	<i>Zoothera imbricata</i>
135	Indian Blackbird	<i>Turdus simillimus</i>
136	Indian Robin	<i>Copsychus fulvicatus</i>
137	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
138	Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>
139	Dull-blue Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias sordidus</i>
140	Pied Bush Chat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>
141	Jerdon's Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i>
142	Thick-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum agile</i>
143	Legge's Flowerpecker (White-throated Flowerpecker)	<i>Dicaeum vincens</i>
144	Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>
145	Purple-rumped Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia zeylonica</i>
146	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>
147	Loten's Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris lotenius</i>
148	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
149	White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>
150	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>
151	Tricolored Munia (Black-headed Munia)	<i>Lonchura malacca</i>
152	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>

Mammals:

	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	Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>
5	Grey Mongoose	<i>Herpestes edwardsii</i>
6	Brown Mongoose	<i>Herpestes fuscus</i>
7	Asian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>
8	Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>
9	Muntjac	<i>Muntiacus muntjac</i>
10	Spotted Deer	<i>Cervus axis</i>
11	Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolor</i>
12	Water Buffalo	<i>Bubalus Bubalis</i>
13	Indian Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus palmarum</i>
14	Grizzled Giant Squirrel	<i>Ratufa macroura</i>
15	Dusky Striped Squirrel	<i>Funambulus sublineatus</i>
16	Indian Hare (Black-naped Hare)	<i>Lepus nigricollis</i>
17	Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus gigantea</i>

Reptiles & Amphibians:

	Common name	Scientific name
1	Sri Lanka Green Pit Viper	<i>Trimeresurus trigonocephalus</i>
2	Bengal (Land) Monitor	<i>Varanus bengalensis</i>
3	Asian Water Monitor	<i>Varanus salvator</i>
4	Oriental (Common) Garden Lizard	<i>Calotes versicolor</i>
5	Green Garden Lizard	<i>Calotes calotes</i>
6	Black-cheek Lizard	<i>Calotes nigrilabris</i>
7	Sri Lanka Kangaroo Lizard	<i>Otocryptis wiegmanni</i>
8	Rhinoceros-horned Lizard	<i>Ceratophora stoddartii</i>
9	Mugger Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus palustris</i>
10	Common House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>
11	Common Skink	<i>Eutropis carinata</i>