West India
Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra

20th January – 3rd February 2013

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Participants: John Archer, Chris and Mandy Farman, Doug Ormston, Graeme Spinks, Peter and Maggie Waterman and Peter and Dorothy Webster

A region long neglected has now become a popular destination due to the large number of very rare and continually decreasing subcontinent endemics reliant on the natural grasslands of Central and West India. We managed a clean-sweep of all but one of the specialities of the region, with pride of place going to the regal Indian Bustard which showed so well. Although we recorded just 299 species the list of megas was impressive; Green Avadavat, Macqueen’s Bustard, Hypocolius, Sociable Plover, Sykes’s Nightjar, White-naped Tit, Crab-Plover, 13,000 Demoiselle Cranes, 35,000 Common Crane, Stoliczka’s Bushchat, Mottled Wood Owl and to finish off, the critically endangered Forest Owlet Add in some impressive mammals including the majestic Asiatic Lion, and this was a wonderful visit to one of India’s most exciting areas.

We were all happy to meet up in Delhi on-time, which was quite a feat considering four of us had our flights cancelled courtesy of Heathrow’s T5 inability to deal with a bit of snow! We spent our first morning birding the small but bird-filled wetlands at Sultanpur, a short distance from Delhi’s much appreciated new airport. Whether we arrived at dawn or not was difficult to discern due to the thick fog, it was also rather
chilly! Fortunately the resident Sind Sparrows, a recent colonist which followed the man-made irrigation channels to the area from the Punjab, were still around and we found a small group in the thorny bushes before they headed off to feed in the surrounding fields. A few minutes later we located our next target, Brooks’s Leaf Warbler, a range-restricted phyllosc that breeds high in the western Himalaya but is found around here in small number during the winter. Typically it was its distinctive call that gave it away before we studied its subtly distinct characters – yellowish suffusion to the face, pale base to the lower mandible and unmarked tertials from its much commoner companion, Hume’s Leaf Warbler. A partial walk around the lake revealed plenty of wildlife shapes in the thick mist including some Ferruginous Duck and Comb Duck among the large number of more common species, a single Black-necked Stork chick poked its head out of the nest, and a few Painted Storks were dotted around, though Sarus Crane remained a heard only as the fog was too thick to see them! The surrounding bushes held a few of the more common resident and wintering migrants; Bay-backed Shrike, Rufous Treepie, Ashy Prinia, Yellow-eye Babbler and Indian Robin being the most appreciated. Typically it was only as we left that the fog lifted and the sun broke through the crisp, cool air! A detour to some nearby fields for Indian Courser worked out well as we found 3 of these stunning subcontinent endemics feeding, along with Long-billed Pipit and the first large flock of Greater Short-toed Lark that would just grow and grow in flock size as the tour progressed.

After all this fun and enjoying the cool, clean air it was back to Delhi for a wash, lunch and drive to the crowded Old Delhi Station to take the 17-hour overnight train west through Rajasthan to the golden city of Jaisalmer, situated close to the Pakistan border in the Thar Desert for a two-night stay. With our permits for Desert National Park ready for the following day, we spent an afternoon at the Fossil Wood Park. Though the fossils may not have been so impressive, our bird list eventually was. Under the intense sun we walked towards a rocky outcrop, enjoying our first group of inquisitive Rufous-fronted Prinia, Variable Wheatear, at least 12 Striolated Bunting - a surprising total for an often elusive species and we even flushed a roosting Sykes’s Nightjar, which we relocated on the ground for better looks. Once at the outcrops we quickly located a wintering Red-tailed Wheatear, a regional speciality.

Heading out of the park we checked the taller bushes, picking up much the same until a huge Indian Eagle Owl flushed just metres from us, gliding away only to perch on an exposed branch, peering at us with its piercing orange eyes, seemingly not too happy at being woken-up early – not a bad start to the tour!

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**Sind Sparrow and Indian Courser, Sultanpur**

A full day in Desert National Park was always going to be a highlight of the tour, and today didn’t disappoint. Starting off with a scan of the Bustard ‘enclosure’ revealed plenty of roaming cattle and goats and a degradation of the natural grassland required by the bustards. A few Indian Gazelle and Nilgai competed with the cattle, though no bustards were in sight.

As the bustards had been seen recently further down the road, we opted out of using the local transport, the infamous ‘Camel Carts’, and stuck to our air-conditioned bus, with the carts following behind. Though this gave us an hour’s head-start, our tails were firmly between our legs when they eventually caught up with us frantically waving us over to point to a huge, regal Great Indian Bustard stood motionless by the roadside a few hundred metres behind us! We watched, with a tint of sadness as the bustard casually strode along the edge of a clearing – this critically endangered species, endemic to India has a very bleak future and its continued survival may only be for a few more years due to the continual devastating loss of its native grassland habitat.

Even before finding the bustard, a sighting of Jungle Cat led us to another species with a bleak future, the grassland-dwelling endemic Stoliczka’s Bushchat, which has an even more restricted range than the bustard. In the shimmering heat haze eagles and vultures were circling up on the warm thermals. Those
that came close enough (and some very close!) were identified as Tawny and Steppe Eagles, Eurasian Griffon and Egyptian Vultures with the odd White-backed and Monk Vulture.

An excellent lunch (who could ever grow tired of Indian curries for lunch and dinner every day for 15 days!) with plenty of birds attracted in by water availability such as Jungle Babblers and Indian Silverbill looking for scraps among the Common Babblers and Indian Desert Jirds while overhead a Lagger flew through and the resident pair of distinctive 'Punjab' Ravens came to inspect us inspecting them.

We headed back out to a different area of grassland picking up a variety of hoped for and expected species, including good numbers of Black-crowned Finch-Lark, Southern Grey Shrikes, Asian Desert Warbler, nice views of a minula Lesser Whitethroat, a pair of Graceful Prinia, several 'Desert' Red Foxes, then a roadside male Stolizcka's Bushchat popped up and proved very co-operative and confiding as we watched it sally up high, flashing its wheatear-like tail pattern, and actually, reminding us more of a wheatear than a chat. An Imperial Eagle then appeared, swooping low overhead, along with a few other Aquila and vultures, including an immature Himalayan Griffon among its more numerous Eurasian relatives. We found 3 parties of Cream-coloured Courser and a couple of huge flocks of 1000+ Bimaculated Larks but with the sun starting to set we headed back to Jaisalmer, with a random stop providing wonderful views of a male Red-tailed Wheatear as the sun set over the white dunes.

_Apre-dawn start the following day took us to the greatest spectacle of the tour, 'The cranes of Khichan', though early morning vehicle troubles almost curtailed this, we finally arrived shortly after sunrise at this small village in the middle of nowhere. From our strategic roof-top watch-point, wave after wave of hundreds of Demoiselle Cranes soon began to appear from the distant sand-dunes, flying around, over and below us, the sheer noise of the birds was deafening as they were literally metres from us. This continued for two hours as the birds appeared wary of jumping over into the feeding area below us. Eventually, after several false-alarms three birds plucked up the courage and landed into the grain-filled 'compound'. Our own and the locals guesstimate was some 8,000-10,000 cranes coming and going, a quite incredible sight with a moving carpet of silky-grey bodies, contrasting with jet black heads and red eyes. A poor family of Brown Rock Chat barely got a glance, despite being only one of two pairs during trip! After a couple of hours soaking in one of Asia’s finest spectacles things started to quieten down, so we headed south-east for the long drive to Mount Abu, experiencing the busy Indian roads with little to shout about until a Red-necked Falcon appeared on the roadside wires for a brief moment of excitement.

With just a single morning at Mount Abu we had no time to waste. The whole reason for visiting this hill station, a cool area rising above the heat of the surrounding plains, was for another of India's very special, rare and localised endemic – Green Avadavat. After briefly being distracted by a couple of feeding flocks, one of which contained our first of several Sulphur-bellied Warbler, male Ultramarine Flycatcher, White-spotted Fantail and Indian Yellow Tits, we found our first group of avadavats. Walking further down a charming narrow street on the edge of a village we passed a small croft that was heaving with Green Avadavat, perhaps over 50 of them and over the next hour we had a continual stream of showy birds with everyone clicking away. Once memory cards were filled (if they weren't already after the cranes!) we moved on, pausing for a flock of Crested Bunting while on our way down for a brief midday forest birding session - the most notable sighting being a couple of Northern Plains Langur jumping into our bus in search of biscuits, hastily retreating as our bus driver chased after them with his stick!

A long afternoons drive as we headed into 'dry' Gujarat and reached our wonderful remote lodge besides the Little Rann of Kutch just before dusk, and a short birding session in the wetlands opposite for a few...
new, though common species with a *feldegg* Western Yellow Wagtail and our first Sykes’s Warblers of the trip being noteworthy.

Just hearing the name of ‘The Little Rann of Kutch’ conjures up images of an oasis in a desert, birds and animals around every corner and some wild, remote and beautiful scenery. However, during much of the dry season it is little more than a saline wasteland; the cracked, parched earth carries on, and on, and on, with a grassy margin, the only thing that breaks the horizon is the exotic, thorny acacia, introduced long ago from Africa, that has now spread throughout the region. In the early morning we drove along the margins in search of Macqueen’s Bustard that winters here in ever decreasing numbers and though it took some time, and a false alarm as a Short-eared Owl rose up we eventually found a couple of wary birds which culminated in a wonderful close fly-by just when we were ready for it.

A non-avian highlight here was the endemic Indian Wild Ass, with several singles and herds feeding close-by as we headed into the heart of the nothingness. Our driver drove around and around until he chose the spot to start our scanning – still a great expanse of absolutely nothing! Needless to say, some kids soon appeared from nowhere, then eventually in the drivers successful attempt to totally disorientate us, an adult Greater Hoopoe-Lark feeding two fledged chicks appeared just front of us. Retreating back to our accommodation a village waterhole held a tight 3000+ strong flock of Demoiselle Crane. As we had driven past here pre-dawn we noticed the eye-shine of Sykes’s Nightjars in the roadside scrub, so returning to the same spot in the heat of the day in an attempt to relocate proved worthwhile as we flushed up 2-3 before finding one sat under a shaded bush, wonderfully camouflaged.

Our afternoon was spent doing what European birders love doing most – scanning a huge body of reed-fringed water brimming with wildfowl and waterbirds. Highlights included 2 Dalmatian Pelican, along with a couple of Great White that dwarfed everything around them, even the Eurasian Spoonbills. Both Lesser and Greater Flamingos were flocking in their hundreds, Bar-headed Geese was a relief for Chris and Mandy, a single River Tern, a sprinkling of Pallas’s Gulls and Glossy Ibis’s completed the ‘big things’ loaﬁng around. Bluethroat and Indian Reed Warbler hid in the lakeside vegetation and as the temperature dropped and the light began to fade the shoreline was filled with mammals coming out to drink – families of Wild Pig, Indian Wild Ass and an added bonus were two Blackbuck, a very rare and rarely seen ungulate in the Little Rann. Though we were only allowed inside this area for 30 minutes after dusk it was a wonderful experience, Indian Fox, Indian Hare and a Jungle Cat all appeared, along with several Indian Nightjars.

With our quick success we departed Little Rann pre-dawn to head south, to Gir National Park, for a rather uneventful 300km journey before arriving at Gir in the mid-afternoon. Red-naped Ibis and Yellow-wattled Lapwing were new, and would be a regular feature, particularly the former through the rest of the tour. A bit of forest birding from the comfort and safety of the roadside produced much of what we would expected the forests here – Tickell’s Blue Flycatcher, Common Woodshrike, Common Iora, Small Minivets and once dusk descended a pair of Jungle Nightjars hawked in front of us.

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**Demoiselle Cranes, Keechan and Red-tailed Wheatear, Desert NP**

Gir National Park is the last refuge of the once widespread ‘Asiatic’ Lion. Persecution has wiped out the taxon from afield as Morocco, and numbers are now at around 400, with politics now preventing it from expanding its range to former haunts. Thanks to Gir’s quite ridiculous policy of three, 2-hour long game drives a day (and 500 rupees camera fees per drive) along with random passport checks and each vehicle having to do a different route, splitting the group, it’s a bit of a mess entering, and re-entering the park, taking the gloss off this exciting day – fortunately the saving grace for the day was the lions themselves! We ended up with several sightings between us, with everyone seeing one or two males and fabulous
looks of two females and in the afternoon a family group lying under the shady bush ripping apart a rather unfortunate Spotted Deer.

Mammals were well represented with large numbers of Spotted Deer, with a sprinkling of Nilgai and Sambar Deer, though James and John continued their misfortune with their bogey mammal, Leopard. A group of tourists were still watching and pointing at one just 100m ahead but slipped off literally two seconds before we arrived – gutted!

Bird-wise it was fairly quiet, mainly due to us being so captivated by the lions – that’s our excuse anyway! Crested Hawk Eagles were typically conspicuous here and a Greater Spotted Eagle circled overhead, though the noisy groups of tourists didn’t help in our unsuccessful search for roosting Mottled Wood Owl but this didn’t seem to bother a Jungle Nightjar that was roosting just metres from the road. The usually well-filled reservoir was just a few puddles, a clear sign of how poor the monsoon had been this season with Mugger Crocodiles basking around each puddle and a few River Terns graced us with their presence.

It was to be another long day’s drive, as we set off for the 400km journey north-west to the Greater Rann of Kutch, passing for hours and hours through agriculture except for one huge reservoir that held nearly 200 Great White Pelicans, and much smaller numbers of Dalmations, a pair of Great Thick-knee, White-browed Wagtail and just huge numbers of more common species. We reached the small village of Nakhatrana in westernmost Gujarat in time for some late afternoons birding. Though things didn't start off well as we failed to find any Sykes’s Lark in their favoured fields, but just a few Indian Bushlarks, so we headed off in search of Painted Sandgrouse. A small feeding flock contained Jungle Prinia, and after much scanning no sandgrouse, but we did find a small flock of Sykes’s Lark feeding just metres away, and after 15 minutes of watching them we were starting to leave when Frank suddenly spotted a pair of Painted Sandgrouse sitting motionless among the larks – stunning camouflage produced by this beautiful bird, and I'm not even sure if everyone saw the female sat next to the male!

We had two full days in this area, exploring a range of different habitats in search of the regions specialities. Our main reason for visiting this area was for the increasingly small numbers of Hypocolius that winter here, though 50+ were quite easy to find just a few years ago, we felt ourselves lucky finding 2 single males, feeding separately in the early morning sunshine, busy scoffing down berries with loads of bulbuls and sparrows, its behaviour so reminiscent of its closest relatives, the waxwings.

Our very belated breakfast stop was uneventful in this parched environment whilst we were left scratching our heads at how the hundreds of Common Crane families around us managed to find any food, as well as reading the ingredients labels and e-number content on our locally-produced jams and marmalade! Just a few hundred metres further on a pair of Sociable Plover stood motionless in the heat-haze – a real result finding a pair of this critically endangered species that winters in tiny numbers in Gujarat each winter, though now rather sporadically. Driving round the corner a further 15 just lazed about offering fine views as we stayed in our vehicles to minimize disturbance.

**Demoiselle Cranes, Keechan and Asiatic Lion, Gir NP**
Back out in the afternoon it was to the 'Thorn forest', a large area of rocky ground with short, sparse native acacias dotting the landscape. Within 15 minutes we had a pair of the rare, endemic White-naped Tit actively feeding in front of us, surely one of the most striking and beautiful of Parus tits. Even while watching these, our next target turned up - a pair of Marshall’s Iora, perhaps an even finer looking species. Once we had our fill of these we moved on, finding a Sirkeer Malkoha creeping along the ground like a rock-runner run out of gas. We headed back over to the birding area of the previous afternoon, locating the sandgrouse and larks once more and finally finding a male Orphean Warbler feeding beneath a number of fly-catching Siberian Chiffchaff and Rufous-fronted Prinia. A stunning sunset nearly ended the day, with a night-drive following that produced little but yet another very tame Indian Nightjar and a few more hares.

Hypocolius and White-naped Tit, Bhuj

Sociable Plover and Crab-Plover, Bhuj

Our second morning was a little quieter, though pre-dawn we picked up a 'Desert' Wild Cat in the middle of a field being mobbed by some irate Red-wattled Lapwings. Breakfast from the Bustard Watch-tower produced no bustards in their ever decreasing habitat here (even less than our visit 12 months previous) but along the road a female Black Francolin was in the middle of the road, not too fuzzed by all of our prying eyes. We took a narrower road, finally locating two Grey-necked Bunting which had been conspicuous by their absence thus far, and a walk around saw us bump into a group of Indian Thick-knee and, eventually, fine views of two male Black Francolin.

Having been up to our eyeballs in grass and scrub for a week now, we headed to the coast for a change of scenery, and birds. Even the sight of a flock of gulls inspired us to give them a good grilling – predominantly Heuglin’s, with a sprinkling of Steppe Gulls, a couple of Slender-billed and the least
exciting, but rarest of all, a Common Gull – according to the Field Guide, perhaps the first for Gujarat and second for coastal India. Anyway, we weren’t here for gulls and interest soon waned so we headed for the beach. Crab-Plover was one of the first species found, though they appeared just oddly shaped black-and-white things in the intense, distant heat-haze, so closer we went, ending up with fantastic views of a group while crab-eating, and chasing each other as they followed the fishermen – though they soon understood the difference between a fisherman and a photographer!

A small number of waders included Terek Sandpiper and neat looks at Kentish, Lesser and Greater Sandplovers in the same telescope view. A pair of Great Thick-knee on our return completed a very pleasant mornings birding. A rush back to the grasslands saw us spend the last hour of daylight at Charri Lake, which was heaving with waterbirds, 90% of which were Coot, thousands of them! Finally we picked up White-tailed Plovers here, a surprising omission until now, 100+ swamphens, two Black-necked Grebe - a regional rarity, and in the surrounding bushes, two Paddyfield Warbler and an opistholecuca Variable Wheatear. As we had more-or-less cleaned-up on our potential targets we spent sunset at the point where Common Cranes fly over to roost on the nearby lake, we were all unprepared (me included!) for this spectacular avian treat as perhaps as many as 30,000 Common Cranes passing low over and besides us, calling to each other in tight groups, hundreds, thousands at a time, with this continual stream lasting for almost half an hour. As darkness fell, we drove back, with several Sykes’s Nightjars appearing in the spotlight, including a very, very tame perched view – a fitting end to a wonderful week in a Gujarat.

Next morning was the dawn of another travel day, flying from Bhuj to Nagpur, deep in rural Maharashtra via a stop in Mumbai for a change of plane and a change in food – pizza time for all but 3 of us! Arriving into Nagpur in the early evening we drove a couple hours west, ready for the climax to the tour, though the small hotel we stayed in was full to rafters with wedding goers, leaving us to all crammed into room 203 for dinner on the beds!

There was one single reason for making the long journey to Maharashtra, to visit the remote Melghat Tiger(-less) Reserve and our quest to find the critically endangered Forest Owlet. Having gone missing for 113 years, it was rediscovered in 1997 but is still very little-known, especially away from Melghat. After some roadside chai, cheese sandwiches and wedding cake (!) we headed straight to an area known to hold the owlet. Our search was relatively short-lived as after walking up a track for a few hundred metres we heard the distinctive tones of the owlet and just a few minutes later we had a pair duetted in the bare canopy beside us. We spent the next hour-or-so enjoying the owlets, pushing their heads forward and peering down at us. Once we had more than our fill of this once mythical bird we had a full afternoon and following morning at our disposal. The smaller cousin, Jungle Owlet was equally co-operative, and a White-browed Fantail even struck the vocal owl in its attempt to chase off the predator, we later found one hunting in the lights above our dinner-table. White-naped Woodpeckers were vocal and easily found, though little else of note was found in the dry-forest which was even drier than usual. In the evening a distant hoot of a Mottled Wood Owl was the closest we thought we had got to this night-bird.

Pre-dawn and a final attempt at locating some night-birds started well as a couple Indian Giant Flying Squirrels fed above us at breakfast. Choosing a different road, and a totally random stop for one last throw of the dice, at these times you feel destined to dip, until a very close hoot in front of us and a flash of the torch had us all gasping as a Mottled Wood Owl was sat just metres from us on a bare branch, some of us had to stand back to fit this intricately marked Strix into our camera! After five minutes of joy we, and the owl, moved on. Dawn was now approaching and an Indian Scops Owl was next up, with a bird
spotlit as it flew towards and over us, though the usual frustration ensued when a pair of park rangers told us to get off this road as a Leopard had been poached the previous day – very disappointing to hear this news, and even more disappointing to see how the rangers and directors, who were all notable by their absence the previous morning reacted to this. So our mornings birding took us to a different area, but was still better than expected. A feeding flock contained Brown-cheeked Fulvetta, Pale-billed Flowerpecker, Pygmy Woodpeckers, Indian Yellow Tits, Red-whiskered Bulbul, Black-rumped Flameback, and a Jungle Owlet coming over to inspect the action!

Trying to get away from the noisy road led us to a dry-streambed which held a party of Olive-backed Pipits, and a couple of Tickell’s Thrush, though a calling Malabar Whistling Thrush stayed out of sight. The long drive back to Nagpur was eased by a couple of productive stops; first-stop for a fantastic lunch, while the second-stop proved most educational with Blyth’s Reed, Sykes’s and Booted Warblers all in the same area, with a few other bits-and-pieces and a large colony of Streak-throated Swallow, a subcontinent endemic and a surprise White-browed Bulbul for some. Our final dinner was a typically tasty affair, as the buffet mixed western with Indian for those that had enjoyed, or endured two-weeks of fabulous Indian cuisine, and a toast to the great birds, and to the fun times that throughout the tour.

Mottled Wood Owl and Forest Owlet, Melghat

For information regarding our tours to western India please click here. Alternatively please contact us via e-mail to arrange custom tours to India.

More photos from the tour:

Long-billed Pipit and Bank Myna, Delhi
Common Babbler and Black-crowned Finch-Lark (top)
Lagger Falcon and ‘Punjab’ Raven (middle)
Imperial Eagle and Cream-coloured Courser (bottom)
White-eared Bulbul and Southern Grey Shrike, Desert NP (top)
Green Avadavat and Indian Robin, Mount Abu (middle)
Dalmatian Pelican and Greater Hoopoe Lark, Little Rann of Kutch (bottom)
Asiatic Lions, Gir National Park (top)
Shikra and Jungle Nightjar, Gir NP (middle)
Indian Desert Jird, Desert NP and Common Gull, Bhuj (bottom)
Heuglin’s Gull and Steppe Gull, Bhuj (top)
Indian Wild Ass and Golden Jackal (middle)
Red-necked Falcon and Painted Sandgrouse, Bhuj (bottom)
Sykes’s Lark and Marshall’s Iora, Bhuj (top)
Desert Wheatear and capistrata Variable Wheatear, Bhuj (middle)
Common Cranes, Bhuj (bottom)
PODICIPEDIFORMES: Podicipedidae
Little Grebe Tachybaptus ruficollis
Great Crested Grebe Podiceps cristatus
Black-necked Grebe Podiceps nigricollis

PELECANIFORMES: Pelecanidae
Great White Pelican Pelecanus onocrotalus
Dalmatian Pelican Pelecanus crispus

PELECANIFORMES: Phalacrocoracidae
Indian Cormorant Phalacrocorax fuscicollis
Great Cormorant Phalacrocorax carbo
Little Cormorant Phalacrocorax niger

PELECANIFORMES: Anhingidae
Oriental Darter Anhinga melanogaster

CICONIIFORMES: Ardeidae
Grey Heron Ardea cinerea
Purple Heron Ardea purpurea
Eastern Great Egret Ardea [alba] modestus
Intermediate Egret Egretta intermedia
Little Egret Egretta garzetta
Western Reef Heron Egretta gularis
Indian Pond Heron Ardeola grayii
Eastern Cattle Egret Bubulcus coromandus
Black-crowned Night Heron Nycticorax nycticorax

CICONIIFORMES: Ciconiidae
Painted Stork Mycteria leucocephala
Asian Openbill Anastomus oscitans
Woolly-necked Stork Ciconia episcopus
Black-necked Stork Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus

CICONIIFORMES: Threskiornithidae
Black-headed Ibis Threskiornis melanocephalus
Red-naped Ibis Pseudibis papillosa
Glossy Ibis Plegadis falcinellus
Eurasian Spoonbill Platalea leucorodia

PHOENICOPTERIFORMES: Phoenicopteridae
Greater Flamingo Phoenicopterus roseus
Lesser Flamingo Phoenicopterus minor

ANSERIFORMES: Anatidae
Lesser Whistling-Duck Dendrocygna javanica
Greylag Goose Anser anser
Bar-headed Goose Anser indicus
Ruddy Shelduck Tadorna ferruginea
Comb Duck Sarkidiornis melanotos
Eurasian Wigeon Anas penelope
Gadwall Anas strepera
Eurasian Teal Anas crecca
Indian Spot-billed Duck Anas poecilorhyncha
Northern Pintail Anas acuta
Northern Shoveler Anas clypeata
Common Pochard Aythya ferina
Ferruginous Pochard Aythya nyroca
Tufted Duck Aythya fuligula

FALCONIFORMES: Pandionidae
Osprey Pandion haliaetus
**FALCONIFORMES: Accipitridae**
- Oriental Honey Buzzard: *Pernis ptilorhynchus*
- Black-shouldered Kite: *Milvus migrans govinda*
- Black Kite: *Neophron percnopterus*
- White-rumped Vulture: *Gyps bengalensis*
- Eurasian Griffon: *Aegypius monachus*
- Himalayan Griffon: *Gyps himalayensis*
- Monk Vulture: *Circaetus gallicus*
- Crested Serpent Eagle: *Spilornis cheela*
- Black Kite: *Elanus caeruleus*
- Western Marsh Harrier: *Circus aeruginosus*
- Pallid Harrier: *Circus macrourus*
- Montagu’s Harrier: *Circus pygargus*
- Shikra: *Accipiter badius dussumieri*
- Accipiter badius cenchroides
- Eurasian Sparrowhawk: *Accipiter nisus nisensis*
- White-eyed Buzzard: *Butastur teesa*
- Eurasian Buzzard: *Buteo buteo vulpinus*
- Long-legged Buzzard: *Buteo rufinus*
- Greater Spotted Eagle: *Aquila clanga*
- Tawny Eagle: *Aquila rapax*
- Steppe Eagle: *Aquila nipalensis*
- Imperial Eagle: *Aquila heliaca*
- Booted Eagle: *Aquila pennata*
- Crested Hawk Eagle: *Nisaetus cirrhatus*

**FALCONIFORMES: Falconidae**
- Eurasian Kestrel: *Falco tinnunculus*
- Red-necked Falcon: *Falco chicquera*
- Laggar Falcon: *Falco jugger*

**GALLIFORMES: Phasianidae**
- Black Francolin: *Francolinus francolinus*
- Grey Francolin: *Francolinus pondicerianus*
- Indian Peafowl: *Pavo cristatus*

**GRUIFORMES: Turnicidae**
- Barred Buttonquail: *Turnix suscitator*

**GRUIFORMES: Gruidae**
- Demoiselle Crane: *Anthropoides virgo*
- Sarus Crane: *Grus antigone*
- Common Crane: *Grus grus*

**GRUIFORMES: Rallidae**
- Grey-headed Swamphen: *Porphyrio [porphyrio] poliocephalus*
- Common Moorhen: *Gallinula chloropus*
- Eurasian Coot: *Fulica atra*

**GRUIFORMES: Otididae**
- Indian Bustard: *Ardeotis nigriceps*
- Macqueen’s Bustard: *Chlamydotis macqueenii*

**CHARADRIIFORMES: Recurvirostridae**
- Black-winged Stilt: *Himantopus himantopus*
- Pied Avocet: *Recurvirostra avosetta*

**CHARADRIIFORMES: Dromadidae**
- Crab-plover: *Dromas ardeola*

**CHARADRIIFORMES: Burhinidae**
- Indian Thick-knee: *Burhinus bengalensis*
- Great Thick-knee: *Burhinus recurvirostris*
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<td>Cream-coloured Courser</td>
<td><em>Cursorius cursor</em></td>
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<td>Indian Courser</td>
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<td>Small Pratincole</td>
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<td>Yellow-wattled Lapwing</td>
<td><em>Vanellus malabaricus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red-wattled Lapwing</td>
<td><em>Vanellus indicus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociable Lapwing</td>
<td><em>Vanellus gregarius</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-tailed Lapwing</td>
<td><em>Vanellus leucurus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey Plover</td>
<td><em>Pluvialis squatarola</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Ringed Plover</td>
<td><em>Charadrius dubius jerdoni</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentish Plover</td>
<td><em>Charadrius a. alexandrinus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Sandplover</td>
<td><em>Charadrius mongolus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Sandplover</td>
<td><em>Charadrius leschenaultii</em></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARADRIIFORMES: Scolopacidae</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common Snipe</td>
<td><em>Gallinago gallinago</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-tailed Godwit</td>
<td><em>Limosa limosa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar-tailed Godwit</td>
<td><em>Limosa lapponica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurasian Whimbrel</td>
<td><em>Numenius phaeopus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurasian Curlew</td>
<td><em>Numenius arquata</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terek Sandpiper</td>
<td><em>Xenus cinereus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Sandpiper</td>
<td><em>Actitis hypoleucus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Sandpiper</td>
<td><em>Tringa ochropus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotted Redshank</td>
<td><em>Tringa erythropus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Greenshank</td>
<td><em>Tringa nebularia</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruddy Turnstone</td>
<td><em>Arenaria interpres</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsh Sandpiper</td>
<td><em>Tringa stagnatilis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Sandpiper</td>
<td><em>Tringa glareola</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Redshank</td>
<td><em>Tringa totanus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Stint</td>
<td><em>Calidris minuta</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temminck's Stint</td>
<td><em>Calidris temminckii</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunlin</td>
<td><em>Calidris alpina</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanderling</td>
<td><em>Calidris alba</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruff</td>
<td><em>Philomachus pugnax</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARADRIIFORMES: Laridae</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steppe Gull</td>
<td><em>Larus [cachinnans] barabensis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heuglin's Gull</td>
<td><em>Larus [fuscus] heuglini</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pallas's Gull</td>
<td><em>Larus ichtyaetus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown-headed Gull</td>
<td><em>Larus brunnicephalus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-headed Gull</td>
<td><em>Larus ridibundus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slender-billed Gull</td>
<td><em>Larus genei</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Gull</td>
<td><em>Larus canus</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARADRIIFORMES: Sternidae</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gull-billed Tern</td>
<td><em>Gelochelidon nilotica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caspian Tern</td>
<td><em>Hydroprogne caspia</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiskered Tern</td>
<td><em>Chlidonias hybrida</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Tern</td>
<td><em>Sterna aurantia</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PTEROCLIFORMES: Pterocidae</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse</td>
<td><em>Pterocles exustus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painted Sandgrouse</td>
<td><em>Pterocles indicus</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLUMBIFORMES: Columbidae</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rock Dove</td>
<td><em>Columba livia intermedia</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriental Turtle Dove</td>
<td><em>Streptopelia orientalis erythrocephala</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurasian Collared Dove</td>
<td><em>Streptopelia orientalis meena</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Collared Dove</td>
<td><em>Streptopelia decaocto</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotted Dove</td>
<td><em>Streptopelia tranquebarica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laughing Dove</td>
<td><em>Streptopelia chinensis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow-footed Green Pigeon</td>
<td><em>Treron phoenicopterus chlorigaster</em></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PSITTACIFORMES: Psittacidae</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexandrine Parakeet</td>
<td><em>Psittacula eupatria</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose-ringed Parakeet</td>
<td><em>Psittacula krameri</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plum-headed Parakeet Psittacula cyanocephala

**CUCULIFORMES: Cuculidae**
- Asian Koel Eudynamys scolopaceus
- Sirkeer Malkoha Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii
- Greater Coucal Centropus sinensis parroti

**STRIGIFORMES: Strigidae**
- Indian Scops Owl Otus [lettia] bakkamoena
- Indian Eagle Owl Bubo bengalensis
- Mottled Wood Owl Strix ocellata
- Forest Owlet Heteroglaux blewitti
- Jungle Owlet Glaucidium radiatum
- Spotted Owlet Athene brama indica
- Short-eared Owl Asio flammeus

**CAPRIMULGIFORMES: Caprimulgidae**
- Jungle Nightjar Caprimulgus indicus
- Sykes's Nightjar Caprimulgus mahrattensis
- Indian Nightjar Caprimulgus asiaticus

**APODIFORMES: Hemiprocnidae**
- Crested Treeswift Hemiprocne coronata

**APODIFORMES: Apodidae**
- Asian Palm-Swift Cypsiurus balasiensis
- Alpine Swift Tachymarptis melba
- Little Swift Apus affinis

**CORACIIFORMES: Alcedinidae**
- Common Kingfisher Alcedo atthis
- White-throated Kingfisher Halcyon smyrnensis
- Pied Kingfisher Ceryle rudis

**CORACIIFORMES: Meropidae**
- Green Bee-eater Merops orientalis orientalis
- Merops orientalis beluschicus

**CORACIIFORMES: Coraciidae**
- Indian Roller Coracias benghalensis

**CORACIIFORMES: Upupidae**
- Eurasian Hoopoe Upupa epops

**PICIFORMES: Capitonidae**
- Brown-headed Barbet Megalaima zeylanica
- Coppersmith Barbet Megalaima haemacephala

**PICIFORMES: Picidae**
- Indian Pygmy Woodpecker Dendrocopos nanus
- Yellow-fronted Woodpecker Dendrocopos mahattensis
- Black-rumped Flameback Dinopium benghalense
- White-naped Woodpecker Chrysocolaptes festivus

**PASSERIFORMES: Alaudidae**
- Indian Bushlark Mirafra erythroptera
- Greater Hoopoe-Lark Alaemon alaudipes
- Black-crowned Finch-Lark Eremopterix nigriceps
- Ashy-crowned Finch-Lark Eremopterix griseus
- Rufous-tailed Lark Ammomanes phoenicura
- Desert Lark Ammomanes deserti
- Bimaculated Lark Melanocorypha bimaculata
- Greater Short-toed Lark Calandrella brachydactyla longipennis
- Crested Lark Galerida cristata chendoola
- Sykes's Lark Galerida deva

**PASSERIFORMES: Hirundinidae**
**Plain Prinia**

**PASSERIFORMES: Sylviidae**
- Paddyfield Warbler
- Blyth’s Reed Warbler
- Indian Reed Warbler
- Booted Warbler
- Sykes’s Warbler
- Common Tailorbird
- Siberian Chiffchaff
- Sulphur-bellied Warbler
- Brooks’ Leaf Warbler
- Hume’s Leaf Warbler
- Greenish Warbler
- Eastern Orphean Warbler
- Asian Desert Warbler
- Lesser Whittethroat
- Desert Whittethroat

**PASSERIFORMES: Muscicapidae**
- Red-breasted Flycatcher
- Taiga Flycatcher
- Ultramarine Flycatcher
- Tickell’s Blue Flycatcher
- Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher
- Bluethroat
- Oriental Magpie Robin
- Indian Black Robin
- Black Redstart
- Stoliczka’s Bushchat
- Siberian Stonechat
- Pied Bushchat
- Variable Wheatear
- Red-tailed Wheatear
- Desert Wheatear
- Isabelline Wheatear
- Brown Rock-chat

**PASSERIFORMES: Rhipiduridae**
- White-spotted Fantail
- White-browed Fantail

**PASSERIFORMES: Monarchidae**
- Black-naped Monarch
- Asian Paradise Flycatcher

**PASSERIFORMES: Timaliidae**
- Yellow-eyed Babbler
- Common Babbler
- Large Grey Babbler
- Jungle Babbler
- Brown-cheeked Fulvetta

**PASSERIFORMES: Paridae**
- White-naped Tit
- Cinereous Tit
- Indian Yellow Tit

**PASSERIFORMES: Sittidae**
- Velvet-fronted Nuthatch

**PASSERIFORMES: Nectariniidae**
- Purple Sunbird
PASSERIFORMES: Dicaeidae
Agile [Thick-billed] Flowerpecker  
Dicaeum agile
Pale-billed Flowerpecker  
Dicaeum erythrorhynchos

PASSERIFORMES: Zosteropidae
Oriental White-eye  
Zosterops palpebrosus

PASSERIFORMES: Dicruridae
Black Drongo  
Dicrurus macrocercus
Ashy Drongo  
Dicrurus leucophaeus longicaudatus
White-bellied Drongo  
Dicrurus caerulescens

PASSERIFORMES: Corvidae
Rufous Treepie  
Dendrocitta vagabunda
House Crow  
Corvus splendens
Indian Jungle Crow  
Corvus culminatus
'Punjab' Raven  
Corvus [corax] subcorax

PASSERIFORMES: Sturnidae
Bank Myna  
Acridotheres ginginianus
Common Myna  
Acridotheres tristis
Brahminy Starling  
Temenuchus pagodarum
Rosy Starling  
Pastor roeseus
Eurasian Starling  
Sturnus vulgaris

PASSERIFORMES: Passeridae
House Sparrow  
Passer domesticus
Sind Sparrow  
Passer pyrrhrontus
Yellow-throated Petronia  
Petronia xanthocollis

PASSERIFORMES: Ploceidae
Baya Weaver  
Ploceus philippinus philippinus

PASSERIFORMES: Estrildidae
Red Avadavat  
Amandava amandava
Green Avadavat  
Amandava formosa
Indian Silverbill  
Euodice malabarica
Scaly-breasted Munia  
Lonchura punctulata

PASSERIFORMES: Fringillidae
Common Rosefinch  
Carpodacus erythrinus

PASSERIFORMES: Emberizidae
Crested Bunting  
Melophus lathami
Grey-necked Bunting  
Emberiza buchanani
Striolated Bunting  
Emberiza striolata

MAMMALS
South Indian Tree Shrew  
Anathana elioti
Rhesus Macaque  
Macaca mulatta
Northern Plains Grey Langur  
Semnopithecus entellus
Indian Giant Flying Squirrel  
Petaurista philippensis
Northern Palm Squirrel  
Funambulus pennanti
Southern Palm Squirrel  
Funambulus palmarum
Indian Desert Jird  
Meriones hurrianae
Indian Hare  
Lepus nigricolis
Indian Flying Fox  
Pteropus giganteus
Jungle Cat  
Felis chaus
'Desert' Wild Cat  
Felis silvestris
Asiatic Lion  
Panthera leo persica
Indian Grey Mongoose  
Herpestes edwardsi
Desert (Red) Fox  
Vulpes vulpes pusilla
Indian Fox  
Vulpes bengalensis
Golden Jackal  
Canis aureus
Indian Wild Ass  
Equus hemionus
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eurasian Wild Pig</td>
<td>Sus scrofa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blackbuck</td>
<td>Antilope cervicapra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian Gazelle</td>
<td>Gazella bennettii</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nilgai</td>
<td>Boselaphus tragocamelus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spotted Deer</td>
<td>Axis axis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red Muntjac</td>
<td>Muntiacus muntjak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambar</td>
<td>Rusa unicolor</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

299 species recorded including 1 heard only

*Sunset over Bhuj, Gujarat* © James Eaton/Birdtour Asia

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