

# Southern India's Western Ghats Species List | November 9 – 23, 2024 with Naturalist Journeys



**Compiled by Naturalist Journeys host Peg Abbott with local guides Avijit Sarkhel and Danish Trogon and 7 participants: Arlana, Arden, Janet, David, Scott, Fran and Larry.**

**Main Safari:** We had an exceptional fifteen days for the main journey in Southern India and the Western Ghats. This trip was a show-stopper event with incredibly scenic landscapes and time in a rich region with brilliant birds and biodiversity, plus the extension to the remote Andaman Islands replete with endemics. Our Naturalist Journeys group thoroughly enjoyed this quiet side of India, scoring high on success of finding 57 endemics (out of 62 possible in the area visited). With the main tour and Andaman Islands extension (separate eBird Trip Report) we saw 14 species of owls, experiencing some of the best night birding we have ever done. We saw all 11 species with Malabar in their name, 6 of the 7 with Nilgiri in the name, and had excellent viewing and photographic opportunities of so many epic species. Highlights included: White-bellied Treepies feeding; watching a rain-drenched Legge's Hawk Eagle preen; seeing two Black Baza fly in to a dead snag to preen as mist closed in; close views of Malabar Gray Hornbill; tallying up nine species of woodpeckers including two day-glow flamebacks; scoping 8 species of bulbuls and getting close up views of endemic laughingthrushes and babblers; having time to study 17 species of Old World Flycatchers including 7 endemics and the very range restricted Kashmir Flycatcher, a wintering species just arriving back to the Western Ghats. We were dazzled by five species of sunbird, two species of leafbirds, and we found some of the more difficult species such as Malabar Imperial Pigeon and Gray-headed Bulbul. Mammals were amazing too, the top sighting was in Nagarhole Tiger Reserve watching a pack of Indian Wild Dog (Dhole) chase and take down a Spotted Deer (Chital). Giant Squirrels, Elephants, and a lounging Leopard in a tree... This journey was one to celebrate, with 318 bird species total. On the main journey 257 species were recorded (31 endemics) and on the extension 117 species were seen (18 endemics) with 61 species unique for the tour.

**Andaman Extension:** An extraordinary start to our Naturalist Journeys Southern India tour as an extension, we saw all but one of the endemics for the southern part of Andaman Island in our four days there, thanks to the expert guidance of Danish Trogon and Avijit Sarkhel, both from India. We danced around some inclement weather, but made the most of all of our days. Highlights were many with good looks at Andaman Cuckoo-Dove, Andaman Green Pigeon, Andaman Nightjar, soaring Andaman Serpent Eagle, loads of wintering waders, and cracking looks at secretive Ruddy Kingfisher among the mangroves. We saw Stork-billed Kingfisher regularly, and had great looks at Andaman Woodpecker, a large and impressive species. Long-tailed Parakeets were prolific, and we were able to sort out Andaman vs. Oriental Cuckooshrikes with excellent views. Andaman Drongo and Andaman Treepie were common, and an Andaman Bulbul hung out by our outdoor dining patio at Big Tree Resort (highly recommended). Walking from the lodge we saw all the endemic small owls and density was high. Andaman Shama was in the forest while Andaman Flowerpecker was around plantings and gardens as well as forest trails. A great mix of forest and wetlands, coastal habitats kept us busy, time

spent here very worthwhile, adding 61 species to our total count for the main tour and extension. Details are included below.

The eBird links combined below detail the 323 species of birds our group observed during the tour and extension. If you're new to eBird, be sure to click "Show All Details" on the right side of the list to expand the report and reveal where and when each of the birds were seen and how many.

## [Andaman Islands Extension November 5-9, 2024 | eBird Trip Report](#)

## [South India / Western Ghats Journey | November 9-23, 2024 | eBird Trip Report](#)

Following is a list of the birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians we were fortunate to observe during the trip.

END = India endemics

AND END = Andaman Island Endemics

RS-SL = Regional specialty, India + Sri Lanka

RS-N = Regional specialty, small overlap to neighboring nations

HO = Heard only

\*Seen on Andaman Island extension only

(E-#) = number of days of extension seen

(M-#) = number of days of main journey seen

### **Birds: Family or Species Common Name: Scientific Name**

(117 species Andaman Extension, 256 Species Main Tour, total with some overlap is xxx species in 73 families).

### **DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS: Anatidae — (7)**

**Lesser Whistling-Duck** *Dendrocygna javanica* — (E-3) (M-1) On Andamans, good views in all wetland areas with marsh grasses and reeds. We saw a female with five chicks in a lake across from extensive rice fields as we drove to Periyar Tiger Reserve.

**\*Cotton Pygmy-Goose** *Nettapus coromandelianus* — (E-1) Seen only once in the Andamans in a large area of wetland with grasses, three individuals.

**Garganey** *Spatula querquedula* — (M-1) A lone female was spotted in the lake across from rice fields on the road from Munnar to Periyar.

**Indian Spot-billed Duck** *Anas poecilorhyncha* — (M-4) First seen on the mainland at the large reservoir we stopped at on our way to Nagerhole in good number. Seen swimming and roosting up on the bank. We then saw them occasionally on travel days in larger ponds. A few were seen on the lake across from rice fields in Kerala, in the valley before Periyar.

**Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta* — (M-1) We saw 250+ in the lake across from rice fields in Kerala, they were swimming, preening, resting in reed grasses and out in the open, so many!

**Green-winged (Common) Teal** *Anas crecca* — (M-1) Five individuals were spotted in with the 250+ Northern Pintail at the lake across from rice fields in the valley between Munnar and Kerala.

**\*Andaman Teal (AND – END)** *Anas albogularis* — (E-1) One individual, spotted by Danish, seen well in flight and swimming. It was in tan area of thick lily pads and flowers so came in and out of view.

### **PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae — (13)**

**Rock Pigeon** *Columba livia* — (E-5, M-10) Seen in all cities and towns of Andaman Islands, and also some large farms in

flocks of 80+, every color pattern imaginable. Seen on the main journey in all large towns.

**Nilgiri Wood-Pigeon (END)** *Columba elphinstonii* — (M-3) Seen on our river trip in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP, twice at Doddabetta Peak, and from the grounds of Olive Brook Resort, scope views there.

**\*Andaman Wood-Pigeon (AND – END)** *Columba palumboides* — (HO E-1) We searched quite a bit for this endemic canopy loving species, visiting two last forest areas our final morning. We managed to hear them in the distance, but no sightings, other than for our sure-footed guide that could climb a slick trail in the rain...

**\*Red Collared-Dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica* — (E-5) Plentiful on the Andamans, in mix of forest and open habitats, calling often.

**Spotted Dove** *Spilopelia chinensis* — (E-1, M-9) The common dove of the mainland areas visited. We saw our first one on the ground, showing off its fancy spotted collar, at Ramanagara (Rock Wonderland). We often saw a dozen or more a day, very common.

**Laughing Dove** *Spilopelia senegalensis* — (M-2) We saw them on our first safari drive in Nagerhole NP, but they were less common than Spotted.

**\*Andaman Cuckoo-Dove (AND – END)** *Macropygia rufipennis* — (E-2) Furtive, we were fortunate to see one particularly well in a tree it was feeding in, so we watched it navigate between branches in short bursts of flight, showing off its deep rufous colors. We had another fly by in a thick forest area when we paused for a coffee/tea break.

**Asian Emerald Dove** *Chalcophaps indica* — (E-2, M-2) We heard this species when walking the biodiversity park trail in the rain. Luckily several of our group were able to find it again our return visit there in bright sun our final morning.

**Gray-fronted Green-Pigeon (END)** *Treron affinis* — (M-3) First seen in tall trees above us on the road at Olive Brook Resort, we then saw them from two vantage points in Thattekad Bird Sanctuary on following days.

**\*Andaman Green-Pigeon (AND – END)** *Treron chloropterus* — (E-1) We saw three individuals perched in a tall dead snag showing their colors nicely, the only sighting of our trip.

**Yellow-footed Green-Pigeon** *Treron phoenicopterus* — (M-2) Two were perched up in a dead snag at Nagerhole NP, giving us a chance to study the plumage including the broad wing bands of color.

**Green Imperial-Pigeon** *Ducula aenea* — (E-4, M-4) The most plentiful large pigeon, we saw them often, flying and perched. Our final morning on Andamans, when on a push to find the Andaman Wood Pigeon we studied many, their green wings shining in the sun. Looking for Malabar Imperial Pigeon in Kerala, we also saw this more plentiful species first, sunning on high perches in the morning. The island subspecies is distinctive.

**Malabar Imperial-Pigeon (END)** *Ducula cuprea* — (M-1) From a beautiful high perch we had success – two birds perched and scoped before they flew up the valley – large and impressive birds with luscious chocolate colored wings.

#### **PARTRIDGES AND PHEASANTS: Phasianidae — (5)**

**Indian Peafowl** *Pavo cristatus* — (M-7) Arden had this on his wish list and that was granted our first morning at Nagerhole NP where they were common. We saw lots of strutting males here and females often nearby. They would pose up on stumps, on fence posts, and at times in trees.

**Red Spurfowl (END)** *Galloperdix spadicea* — (M-1) A portion of our group had one bird cross the road and burst into loud calling; we then had a pass by at the birding hide that same afternoon at Thattekad.

**Gray Junglefowl (END)** *Gallus sonneratii* — (M-4) First seen on the Kabini River Boat Safari, a male with several females. We then found them to be pretty common in Nagerhole NP, seen on most of the 5 safari drives we took while there.

**Gray Francolin** *Ortygornis pondicerianus* — (M-2) Seen regularly and in good number in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve NP from the boat trip and also the game drives.

**Painted Bush-Quail (END)** *Perdicula erythrorhyncha* — (M-2) Our first encounter was heard only, standing above a view of tea fields, we could hear them a football field away and with Danish's coaching waited a good hour or so in hopes. At a second high point with view of a gravel pit and shrubby slope, we pulled in and Arden said, "Quail, right here!". They were on the moss covered, cement parking barriers walking along – if the bus windows were open, we could have about touched them. A male and female, all too quick for photos but what a memory. We saw a few others at a distance, down on the quarry site.

### **CUCKOOS: Cuculidae — (10)**

**\*Andaman Coucal** *Centropus andamensis* — (E-4) Seen several times well, and heard often, at times a pair dueting.

**Greater Coucal** *Centropus sinensis* — (M-8) Seen on the mainland, quite bold around our lodgings at Nagerhole NP.

**Blue-faced Malkoha (RS-N)** *Phaenicophaeus viridirostris* — (M-1) Driving from Nagerhole to Ooty, Avi spotted this secretive species, a pair in dense roadside shrubbery. With a little patience and some yoga-style positions to get everyone looking out the left side of the bus window, we got views of its striking blue-rimmed eye and bill.

**Pied Cuckoo** *Clamator jacobinus* — (M-2) One individual seen walking a private farm we birding at en route to Ooty, in trees that dotted an open pasture.

**Asian Koel** *Eudynamis scolopaceus* — (E-2, M-4) We first saw a spotted female in a thicket at the start of one of our walks in lush forests on the Andamans, then not long after saw the striking black male with its intense red eye. On the mainland we got good looks around our hotel and a flyby in the Kabini village at Nagarhole.

**\* Violet Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus* — (E-1) We heard an individual above us in a mixed flock with Small Minivet and Larry was able to get a glimpse as it stayed mainly atop the canopy.

**Banded Bay Cuckoo** *Cacomantis sonneratii* — (M-1) Seen briefly on the loop walk at Chinnar as we moved towards Munnar.

**Gray-bellied Cuckoo** *Cacomantis passerinus* — (M-1) Seen as we moved through the Anamalai Tiger Reserve.

**Common Hawk-Cuckoo** *Hierococcyx varius* — (M-3) On a walk late morning at Kabini River Lodge, Danish heard and then found this species, we got good scope views. We had several on the farm walk en route to Ooty; they called incessantly.

**\*Indian Cuckoo** *Cuculus micropterus* — (E-2) We were able to get one in scope view on a forest trail, and then had one fly over the school ballyard as we waited for darkness to search for Andaman Masked Owl one evening.

### **NIGHTJARS: Caprimulgidae — (4)**

**Great Eared-Nightjar** *Lyncornis macrotis* — (M-2) We saw a couple individuals in flight after hearing them call while viewing from the Inchathotty Suspension Bridge. A few days later we heard them from the grounds of Birds Murmur Camp.

**Jungle Nightjar** *Caprimulgus indicus* — (HO M-1) Peg heard one outside her cottage just after nightfall at Kabini River Cottages.

**\*Andaman Nightjar (AND – E)** *Caprimulgus andamanicus* — (E-2) We had a glimpse and some calling on one night of our walks from Big Tree Lodge, then had cracking looks in the spotlight in an open area the following night, with ample photo opportunities.

**Jerdon's Nightjar** *Caprimulgus atripennis* — (M-1) We heard one early in the morning as we waited for the paperwork to be completed by our guide in Nagerhole NP.

### **FROGMOUTHS: Podargidae — (1)**

**Sri Lanka Frogmouth** *Batrachostomus moniliger* — (M-1) Danish had help from some other local guides in a patch of Thattekad Bird Sanctuary, and we got a call to go – we went and quietly entered a thick understory of the forest. We found two tucked tight together, so well hidden in the dappled light. We stood almost underneath them and still had to search. A very special find with time to study them a bit.

### **SWIFTS: Apodidae — (7)**

**Brown-backed Needletail** *Hirundapus giganteus* — (E-2, M-2) We saw this handsome large swift clan member first from the clearing by our cottages at Big Tree on the Andamans, then again on a forest trail, both times mixed in with Plume-toed Swiftlets.

**\*Plume-toed Swiftlet** *Collocalia affinis* — (E-5) Very common and numerous, almost constantly in view on all of our days in the Andamans.

**Indian Swiftlet (RS+SL)** *Aerodramus unicolor* — (M-9) Seen at Ramanagara (Rock Wonderland) and then on the first day we explored Nagerhole NP. We saw them at great distance on many days, usually when we were following the flight course of a raptor in flight.

**\*White-nest Swiftlet** *Aerodramus fuciphagus* — (E-2) Probably undercounted, as there were so many Plume-toed Swiftlets about we stopped sorting them out regularly once we'd seen them well and studied the differences. Less common than Plume-toed.

**Alpine Swift** *Apus melba* — (M-1) Several individuals seen on the loop walk at Chinnar from the Visitor's Center there where we had lunch.

**Little Swift** *Apus affinis* — (COK-1, M-4) First seen at the airport at COK departing for the Andamans, and then seen on the mainland at an opening in the forest we stopped to bird while in Nagerhole NP, 4-5 individuals.

**Asian Palm Swift** *Cypsiurus balasiensis* — (M-1) We saw this species first on the mainland, when we stopped to scan the large reservoir, Ramamman Kere, driving to Nagerhole NP.

### **TREESWIFTS: Hemiprocnidae — (1)**

**Crested Treeswift** *Hemiproctne coronata* — (M-3) We were really pleased to find a dozen or more of this handsome species, perched like swallows on a high tension powerline cut through Nagerhole NP. They were feeding so we saw them fly up and back to perches repeatedly.

### **RAILS, CRAKES, AND ALLIES: Rallidae — (7)**

**Eurasian Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus* — (E-2, M-2) Present in a few of the wetlands we visited on the Andamans, less common than the swampheens.

**Eurasian Coot** *Fulica atra* — (M-2) We saw this species in a wetland on our travel day to Nagerhole NP, then later on the trip at a roadside wetland.

**Gray-headed Swampheen** *Porphyrio poliocephalus* — (E-4, M-2) Prolific in some of the wetlands visited on the Andamans, with numbers up to 100+! We saw a few on our travel day to Nagerhole NP in a wetland, along with the coot.

**Watercock** *Gallinix cinerea* — (M-1) Peg spied a female of this species out walking on aquatic vegetation, feeding. This was at a casual roadside pond stop which turned out to be very productive and all got scope views.

**White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus* — (E-3, M-3) Not common, but found in some small ponds and edges of wetlands on the Andamans. We watched one displaying and got some good photo and viewing opportunities. We saw one in a pocket wetland in Nagerhole NP.

**\*Andaman Crake (AND – END)** *Rallina canningi* — (E-1) We worked at seeing this elusive endemic species of the forest, but with due diligence we got some views, and heard up to four individuals.

**Slaty-legged Crake** *Rallina eurizonoides* — (HO M-1) We heard this very distinct call and tried to lure it out in an open area with dense margins while at Thattekad.

### **STILTS AND AVOCETS: Recurvirostridae — (1)**

**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus* — (M-1) Good numbers, 40+ at the large reservoir we stopped at to scan on the way to Nagerhole NP.

### **PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae — (7)**

**\*Pacific Golden-Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* — (E-5) Common on the Andamans, seen in open fields feeding, as well as all of the wetlands we visited.

**Yellow-wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus malabaricus* — (M-1) At first, we noticed only one individual seen at a roadside wetland we stopped to bird at, called Jallipatti Lake where it was standing alone in a clearing. Driving away from that site there were a dozen or more resting in an open field.

**\*Gray-headed Lapwing** *Vanellus cinereus* — (E-1) Nine were seen in a small pond in a large open field area, on the



Andamans, the only ones of the extension sighted.

**Red-wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus indicus* — (M-8) First seen along the Kabini River on the mainland on our boat safari, we then had them at almost every small wetland in Nagerhole NP.

\***Tibetan (Lesser) Sand-Plover** *Charadrius mongolus* — (E-5) We found this species in groups, often at the far side of mudflats or shore areas of wetlands on the Andamans.

\***Greater Sand-Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii* — (E-1) A few individuals were seen in with the more numerous Lesser Sand Plover in a field area we scanned driving from the airport to the Andamans and on to Big Tree Cottages.

\***Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus* — (E-1) Found on the Andamans on our final morning on mudflats at a wetland we'd visited earlier but not at a tide that allowed as close of viewing. A dainty small plover with a small thin bill that is quite distinct.

### **JACANAS: Jacanidae — (2)**

**Pheasant-tailed Jacana** *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* — (M-1) A non-breeding plumage individual was seen in the wetlands across from extensive rice fields we stopped at.

**Bronze-winged Jacana** *Metopidius indicus* — (M-1) We saw an adult with two chicks maneuvering among pond vegetation in a roadside pond as we left Banyon Tree Farm Stay.

### **SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae — (10)**

\***Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus* — (E-5) Seen at several of the wetlands on the Andamans that had shorelines or mudflats, a few individuals at a time.

\***Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata* — (E-2) We found one individual and saw it on two different days while in the Andamans, in just about the same place. The second day we also saw it in flight, a good confirmation of species as Whimbrel occurred here as well.

\***Pin-tailed Snipe** *Gallinago stenura* — (E-2) Found in a wetland area on the Andamans with Extensive grass, and the first time by a small pond we saw 20+, the second time four or five, quite impressive to see that many together.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos* — (E-4, M-3) Found along wetland edges and in harbors and on rocky stretches of beaches on the Andamans that we scanned. Its distinctive bobbing made them easy to see. On the mainland they were common, though not numerous, at wetlands. We did see one big group of 10+ on a sandy island in the Kabini River. They occurred at small ponds along the routes we drove in Nagerhole NP.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus* — (E-1, M-1) Just one individual spotted by Avi and Larry at the same time, in very clean, sharp plumage, seen in a grassy section of one wetland on the Andamans.

\***Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola* — (E-2) This lovely patterned shorebird was not common, but we found a few to get scopes on in wetland areas around small ponds of the Andamans.

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* — (M-1) On the mainland, seen with a group of Common Sandpiper on an island in the Kabini River.

\***Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus* — (E-4) Quite common in open wetland areas, particularly when there were shore areas and mud flats of the Andamans.

\***Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea* — (E-3) All sightings were on the Andamans, where they were common.

\***Long-toed Stint** *Calidris subminuta* — (E-3) With searching for species on the Andamans, we pulled out a few of this species, working grassy areas, often in company of Pin-tailed Snipe and Wood Sandpiper.

### **GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae — (4)**

\***Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica* — (E-1) Seen our final morning checking the causeway with water on both sides and a lot of activity. We got photos as we watched it surface feed, unusual for the area at this time.

**Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybrida* — (M-1) Seen at the big reservoir, Ramamman Kere.

\***Black-naped Tern** *Sterna sumatrana* — (E-3) Lone individuals seen perched and flying in open wetland areas.

**River Tern** *Sterna aurantia* — (M-1) Several individuals seen on the Kabini River in Nagerhole NP on our boat safari,

surface feeding and flying.

#### **GREBES: Podicipedidae — (1)**

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis* — (M-2) Present in two lakes we scanned, diving and feeding.

#### **STORKS: Ciconiidae — (2)**

**Asian Openbill** *Anastomus oscitans* — (M-4) Seen in wetlands of Nagerhole NP and along the Kabini River on our boat safari. We saw them just outside Nagarhole in flight as we were leaving the park. And at Jallipatti Lake.

**Painted Stork** *Mycteria leucocephala* — (M-1) Such a stunning species, we encountered large numbers, 100+ at the large reservoir we stopped at en route to Nagerhole NP. We then saw several up close and in beautiful light on the boat safari on the Kabini River.

#### **DARTERS AND ANHINGA: Anhingidae — (1)**

**Oriental Darter** *Anhinga melanogaster* — (M-3) We saw several individuals on the boat safari on the Kabini River, such an elegant species.

#### **CORMORANTS: Phalacrocoracidae — (3)**

**Little Cormorant** *Microcarbo niger* — (M-10) Numerous along the Kabini River, and a few ventured out to the smaller wetlands of the park.

**Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo* — (M-3) Nesting and present on the reservoir section of the Kabini River we did our boat safari on. We saw them distantly on our safari days when we'd drive down to the river shore.

**Indian Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis* — (M-1) Seen at the large pond with several duck species across from roadside rice fields that we stopped at as we headed to Thattekad.

#### **IBIS AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae — (4)**

**Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* — (M-2) Seen along the shoreline at the reservoir we stopped at in route to Nagarhole.

**Black-headed Ibis** *Threskiornis melanocephalus* — (M-1) We saw them at the reservoir in route to Nagarhole, and then on the boat safari on the Kabini River.

**Red-naped Ibis** *Pseudibis papillosa* — (M-1) We got best views of this beautiful species on the riverbanks of the Kabini River on our boat safari.

**Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia* — (M-1) A distant group was resting and feeding in a back cove of the reservoir we stopped at en route to Nagarhole.

#### **HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae — (12)**

**Black-crowned Night-Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax* — (M-1) Seen at Jallipatti Lake.

**\*Black Bittern** *Ixobrychus flavicollis* — (E-1) A great find in one of the grass-filled and reedy marshes on the Andamans we visited, it jumped from the reeds then flew the length of the area giving us a chance to see it.

**\*Yellow Bittern** *Ixobrychus sinensis* — (E-2) At the same grass and reed-filled marsh on the Andamans where we had the Black Bittern sighting, we watched a Yellow Bittern fly in and were able to get a scope on it, discovering a second individual at that time. Arlana was able to digiscope a photo of it, fun!

**\*Pacific Reef-Heron** *Egretta sacra* — (E-2) Seen close to shore on the Andamans in a rocky area we passed coming and going from the lodge to other field sites. We got good looks at it feeding.

**Striated Heron** *Butorides striata* — (E-1, M-2) Seen only at the grassy marsh we also saw bitterns in, two individuals while on the Andamans.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta* — (E-3, M-6) A few scattered individuals seen feeding on the Andamans, often mixed in with other egret species. On the mainland, seen in more mature wetland areas in Nagerhole NP and occasionally in

travel among farm ponds.

**Indian Pond-Heron** *Ardeola grayii* — (E-2, M-13) This showy smaller heron was not common, but present at quite a few of the wetlands in the Andamans. Seen along small rivers in Nagerhole NP. Several were on the lawn feeding rapidly on something at the botanic garden in Ooty.

**Eastern Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* — (E-4, M-12) Very common in open areas, around cattle and water buffalo and rice fields on the Andamans. In Nagerhole NP seen around Gaur and Elephant and many were seen where fields were being worked coming and going from our hotel to the entrance to Nagerhole NP.

**Great Egret** *Ardea alba* — (E-3, M-3) Less common than Medium Egret, on the Andamans though on our final day they were quite close and numbered about 15, working the edge of an exposed mudflat area. Seen in the mature wetlands regularly in Nagerhole NP.

**Medium (Intermediate) Egret** *Ardea intermedia* — (E-5, M-3) Very common on the Andamans, often seen in good number, in both wetland and agricultural areas. Seen in agricultural areas with wetlands on the mainland.

**Gray Heron** *Ardea cinerea* — (E-2, M-3) Widespread but not common on the Andamans, one or two individuals seen at a time in grassy wetland areas. Infrequent sightings, mainly along the reservoir section of the Kabini River in Nagerhole NP. Seen on travel days in wetlands.

**Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea* — (E-3, M-2) Seen in wetland areas, and then see flying in the harbor we took the ferry while on the Andamans. Seen on our first day in Nagerhole NP in a reedy marsh area of the park.

#### **PELICANS: Pelecanidae — (1)**

**Spot-billed Pelican** *Pelecanus philippensis* — (M-1) Seen at the large reservoir on the route to Nagerhole NP, at least 200+, swimming, feeding in groups, flying.

#### **OSPREY: Pandionidae — (1)**

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus* — (M-2) We saw several perched up on dead trees in the Kabini River on our safari, and when jeeps would go to the river shore, we spied a few more, probably the same individuals.

#### **HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES: Accipitridae — (23)**

**Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* — (M-1) A pair seen roadside in route to Niraamaya Lodge.

**Black Baza** *Aviceda leuphotes* — (M-1) A pair was observed from a high rock vantage point over a vast stretch of forest, it was magnificent to see them come down the valley, perch, preen and then disappear in mist that rolled in. So memorable.

**Oriental Honey-buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* — (M-3) One individual seen our first day by the Rock Wonderland we stopped at to try for Indian Vultures, one seen the next day just outside of Nagarhole NP, and another seen a few days later in route to Munnar at Jallipatti Lake.

**White-rumped Vulture** *Gyps bengalensis* — (M-1) A distant but distinct individual was seen as we searched for larks and pipits after seeing owls on a private reserve, just before our surprise night jeep ride to our lodgings.

**Indian Vulture** *Gyps indicus* — (M-1) Seen at the "Rock Wonderland" of granite monoliths we birded at en route to Nagarhole, a lone individual roosting on a cliff, good scope views.

**Crested Serpent-Eagle** *Spilornis cheela* — (E-2, M-8) It seemed odd to have two species of serpent-eagle on the Andaman archipelago, but this species frequented open country, while the other preferred forest areas. We got good views of perched birds with photo opportunities, and watched two feeding, one catching a crab (evidenced by Larry's photo) and the other a snake. Seen daily in Nagarhole NP, often close to the road.

**\*Andaman Serpent-Eagle (AND – END)** *Spilornis elgini* — (E-1) A very handsome raptor, with striking yellow face pattern and dark coloration with patterned tail, seen in the forest on our second day.

**Short-toed Snake-Eagle** *Circaetus gallicus* — (M-1) Seen from a viewpoint in Thattekad Bird Sanctuary.

**Legge's Hawk Eagle (RS+SL)** *Nisaetus kelaarti* — (M-1) Seen in the rain, a lone individual preening and shaking water off itself on a prominent branch, roadside stop at Gundumalai.



**Changeable Hawk-Eagle** *Nisaetus cirrhatus* — (E-2, M-2) We saw this species perched and flying and often were alerted to its presence by its loud calling while on the Andamans. We had one fly over the bus on the day we traveled from Ooty to Pollachi. In the A Anamalai Tiger Reserve, we had one right off the side of the road that tolerated the bus and our antics of trying for photos out the one window. We decided to try getting out and it was oblivious, curious and moving about, raising its crest inquisitively.

**Black Eagle** *Ictinaetus malaiensis* — (M-3) A distant individual seen on the travel day from Ooty to Pollachi. At Chennai, we had one fly right overhead, giving us terrific views.

**Booted Eagle** *Hieraetus pennatus* — (M-4) Fairly widespread, we had good views on several occasions.

**Bonelli's Eagle** *Aquila fasciata* — (M-2) A pair was seen in flight over the temple hill on the private estate we birded en route to Ooty. We were watching larks below and just caught view of their acrobatic flights above us.

**\*Eastern (Eurasian) Marsh Harrier** — (E-1) Avi was surprised to find this species and we got good looks of it courasing over an open part of a wetland we stopped at our final day. Distant but distinct with its bi-colored wing pattern, behavior and shape.

**Western (Eurasian) Marsh-Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus* — (M-1) Seen courasing over a wetland across from extensive rice fields that we spent quite a bit of time at, our only site with Northern Pintail and a few other duck species.

**Crested Goshawk** *Accipiter trivirgatus* — (M-1) Seen at a distance, on a favorite perch our guides knew to look for, at a rock overview spot while in Thattekad.

**Shikra** *Accipiter badius* — (M-5) Widespread. At one point an immature was perched on a snag not far from the road and we offloaded from the bus to scope it, causing quite a few honks amid traffic. There was a resident individual at Birds Murmur Camp that caused quite a stir.

**Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus* — (M-1) Leaving Banyon Tree Farm Stay, we spotted this species up on a phone wire, showing us the small head, long tail, and barred breast pattern – nice!

**Black Kite** *Milvus migrans* — (COK-1, M-2) Seen outside of Nagarhole NP in the local village and on travel days.

**Brahminy Kite** *Haliastur indus* — (E-1, M-6) To our delight, this beautiful raptor perched on a pole in open water on the causeway we stopped at several times. It took flight and we got wonderful views while on the Andamans. They were common on the mainland as well with good viewing in Nagarhole NP.

**\*White-bellied Sea-Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucogaster* — (E-5) What a raptor to have as one seen regularly on a journey, we found them in several wetlands, often alerted by call. We watched an immature catch a fish at close range in one open water area, and an adult come and grab a fish out of a pond as we scanned a marsh not far away.

**Gray-headed Fish-Eagle** *Haliaeetus ichhyaetus* — (M-1) We saw one individual, carrying prey, along the shore of the Kabini River reservoir on one of our game drives in Nagarhole NP.

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo* — (M-1) Much like our Red-tailed Hawk in appearance and behavior, we saw this species at the botanic garden in Ooty.

### **BARN OWLS: Tytonidae — (3)**

**Eastern Barn Owl** *Tyto alba* — (M-3) Heard on two mornings at Kabini River Lodge outside of Nagarhole NP. We heard another at Banyon Tree Farm Stay. We finally found one perched on a ledge of an old building in the city near Birds Murmur Camp, a few hearty souls of our group braved a heavy rain and busy street crossing to tick off owl #13 for the trip.

**\*Andaman Masked-Owl (AND – END)** *Tyto deroepstorffi* — (E-1) We drove to an area by a schoolyard, with a large apartment building. We watched carefully as darkness fell, and Arlana was the one to say, “it’s there!” much to our delight. It came out of a hole in a roof corner and perched on a small ledge. We put the spotlight on it, and watched as it woke up to hunt in the night. One of the highlights of the trip as without our local guide, Danish, we could never have found this endemic species.

**Sri Lanka Bay-Owl** *Phodilus assimilis* — (M-1) Just an incredible sighting, made possible by Danish’s team of local guides who went early into the forest at Thattekad to locate its roost for that day. We got close and stunning views.

### **OWLS: Strigidae — (11)**

**\*Andaman Scops-Owl (AND – END) *Otus balli*** — (E-1) All of our night outings were productive, and we were fortunate to hear this species and locate it readily our second evening walking out from Big Tree Cottages.

**Indian Scops-Owl *Otus bakkamoena*** — (M-1) Great views on our night walk, just after dark in trees of the driveway into Banyon Tree Farm Stay. Great views is Danish's spotlight.

**Oriental Scops-Owl *Otus sunia*** — (E-3, M-3) We saw the Walton's subspecies our first night out on the Andamans and then got exceptional looks of a pair, calling to each other and ignoring us, the same night we found the Andaman Masked Owl. They seem plentiful as we also heard them a third night. We saw this species again on the peninsula mainland in the Western Ghats.

**Brown Fish-Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis*** — (M-1) We had excellent sightings of this species in Nagarhole, the first one right at dawn so very surreal in dawn light with mist. We then found another in good light, on an open perch, later that morning. We watched them fly and perch as they sensed our presence. At dawn the one we watched was still hunting and made a pass down to the road and onward.

**Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl *Ketupa nipalensis*** — (M-1) Thanks to a local guide that is a colleague of Danish, we had just amazing views of one that he knows to roost in bamboo thickets on part of the private estate we birded in route to Ooty. This is such an impressive raptor, we got good scope views and several navigated a steep slope for a good, clear photo angle.

**Jungle Owlet *Glaucidium radiatum*** — (M-4) Seen in Nagarhole NP, and after we had a sighting, we heard several others there.

**Spotted Owlet *Athene brama*** — (M-1) A family group of three was seen on the private estate we birded at in route to Ooty. One was perched at eye-level on a thin branch of a small tree. The other two were in a roosting hole. One flew out sensing our presence, but the other lingered, looking very curious as photographers snapped away. The hole was in a sculptured tree, a lovely memory for all.

**Mottled Wood-Owl (END) *Strix ocellata*** — (M-2) We looked for this species one morning to no avail, but persistent Danish heard it calling, followed it to a dawn roost, and made sure we were able to see it. It was so well worth the effort, a very impressive owl. We heard it again at Banyon Tree Farm Stay.

**\*Andaman Boobook (AND – END) *Ninox affinis*** — (E-1) A very handsome, impressive owl. It was great to be out evenings (it got dark by 5:30PM so we were not out late) and this species had a distinctive call. It took a bit more work than the Hume's, but we laughed that we scrambled up a steep, short trail to see it well, then found an easy path down.

**Brown Boobook *Ninox scutulata*** — (M-4) Two readily flew up into a tree by the pool at our calling, posing for just a few moments at Niraamaya Lodge. We heard them from several other locations.

**\*Hume's Boobook (AND – END) *Ninox obscura*** — (E-2) Seen well on the Andaman's, located by call.

### **TROGONS: Trogonidae — (1)**

**Malabar Trogon *Harpactes fasciatus*** — (M-1) One of the favorite species of the trip, we had good views of a male on a forest walk in the Thattekad area.

### **HOOPOES: Upupidae — (1)**

**Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*** — (M-2) Seen a couple of times in the open woodlands of Nagarhole NP, we saw them on the ground feeding, perched and in flight.

### **HORNBILLS: Bucerotidae — (3)**

**Indian Gray Hornbill *Ocyrceros birostris*** — (M-1) We saw this species high in the tree canopy as we searched for Mottled Owl from Kabini Lodge outside Nagarhole NP.

**Malabar Gray Hornbill (END) *Ocyrceros griseus*** — (M-3) Two were seen at Niraamaya Lodge and we had additional sightings at three other locations, one to two individuals. Our best views by far were of a pair at the bird hide one of our last mornings.

**Malabar Pied-Hornbill (RS+SL) *Anthracoceros coronatus*** — (M-2) We saw a group of this incredible species in fruiting trees at the turn-around point of our cruise on the reservoir section of the Kabini River from our lodge, outside of Nagarhole NP.

### **BEE-EATERS: Meropidae — (3)**

**Asian Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis*** — (M-6) We saw two at a small wetland not far from Banyon Tree Farm Stay, they were feeding at the edge of the pond, great to see their colors in flight and perched. They were at Jalipatti Lake at close range and at the entrance of Birds Murrur Camp.

**Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*** — (E-5, M-4) This was the common bee-eater of our journey, seen regularly in flight, and perched. A couple of times we had them perch at close range and their mix of colors was stunning. They often came and went from the same perch, and when seen we found this species it was often several individuals. We had about ten hunting around the edge of a small wetland not far from Banyon Tree Farm.

**Chestnut-headed Bee-eater *Merops leschenaulti*** — (E-3, M-5) Far less common than the Blue-tailed, we did have good views of this colorful species while on the Andamans. It was quite common on the mainland, seen on many of the outings in Nagarhole NP, seen on our travel days. Memorable were three coming and going from a well-lit dead snag that also had three Green Imperial Pigeons on it, as we traveled through Anamalai Tiger Reserve to Munnar.

### **KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae — (6)**

**Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*** — (M-4) We saw this beautiful little gem at several locations, single individuals in small ponds or along river courses with quiet pools to fish in.

**\*Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis*** — (E-3) We got exceptional views of this heavy-billed species, which seemed to perch on wires or trees close to the causeway we drove often coming and going from our lodge. Larry got a stunning photo at close range – right moment at the right time! This was a species we encountered regularly on the Andamans.

**\*Ruddy Kingfisher *Halcyon coromanda*** — (E-1) Danish, our local guide, knew just where to look for this elusive species, but we actually had three sightings (of two individuals) in a marshy area we accessed by boardwalk. In thick mangroves we did a bit of yoga to capture some photos, then on one perch it was almost out in the open – a highlight of the trip as this is not an easy species to spot despite its wide range in southeast Asia.

**White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*** — (E-5, M-10) What a species to be so common, we saw numerous individuals, daily. Their loud rattle often alerted us. In sunlight their backs were so brilliant and a memorable sighting was three lined up on fence posts of a marsh, positioned with their backs to us aglow in early light. On the mainland we saw them often as they were common and widespread.

**\*Collared Kingfisher *Todiramphus chloris*** — (E-3) We saw one in the same spot by a rocky part of the beach we passed coming and going and then a few scattered individuals. Like the White-throated, its raucous call provided a big alert.

**Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*** — (M-1) Seen at the backwater of a dam adjacent to a local ball field, two individuals that called and we caught sight of them in flight. They perched on a visible stick at the end of an island for great scope views. Our only sighting of the trip.

### **ROLLERS: Coraciidae — (2)**

**Indian Roller *Coracias benghalensis*** — (M-2) We had two individuals on a travel day, seen up on a wire close to the road. It caused a vehicle pile out, everyone so excited to take in the colors and form of this impressive bird.

**Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*** — (E-2, M-2) This species is resident in the islands, ranging to Eastern Asia and down to Australia, where they are migratory. We saw them perched and in flight, just a few individuals, but a striking species.

### **ASIAN BARBETS: Megalaimidae — (4)**

**Malabar Barbet (END) *Psilopogon malabaricus*** — (M-6) A colorful and vocal species, once in the Thattekad area we saw

them often. Our first sighting was very high from Olive Brook Resort, but later we had cracking views at close range.

**Coppersmith Barbet** *Psilopogon haemacephalus* — (M-5) We had cracking views of this species, it came in to playback and literally danced on a phone wire above, so curious. It stayed some time in quiet, calling and perching out in the open, boldly. We saw a few more but more than that we heard their monotone calls at a number of locations, a metronome quality to the sound.

**Brown-headed Barbet** *Psilopogon zeylanicus* — (M-1) We had good views of a pair of this species walking out into a plowed field at the Anamalai Tiger Reserve Gate.

**White-cheeked Barbet (END)** *Psilopogon viridis* — (M-12) This species was present and calling often in the garden in front of our dining area at Kabini Lodge outside of Nagarhole. With some persistence we got good views. We encountered it again in the Anamalai Tiger Reserve.

### **WOODPECKERS: Picidae — (11)**

**Heart-spotted Woodpecker** *Hemicircus canente* — (M-4) Our first sighting was of a pair that seemed to be investigating a possible nest hole on a walk with a park ranger in the Periyar Tiger Reserve. Soon after, at our lodge, we had a courting pair calling loudly and flying all over the place. We then saw them at two locations in the Thattekad area, both times a pair.

**Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker** *Yungipicus nanus* — (M-2) We saw lone individuals, both times in a mixed flock. The first was during some roadside birding in the Thattekad area, the second our final outing the last morning, birding one last location.

**Yellow-crowned Woodpecker** *Leiopicus mahrattensis* — (M-1) We had superlative views of this species at close range, stopped at the wash rooms in Nagarhole section A for a break, it was a great place for birding with a patch of dead trees and the ability to be out of the vehicle. This species flew in, and worked several of the trees at very close range, oblivious to our presence.

**\*Freckle-breasted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos analis* — (E-3) This small woodpecker was often found in a mixed flock only on our Andaman extension, but we could hear its tapping. It often worked in the epiphytic plants, circling around tree limbs. After searching for the first one for some time, it sat boldly out on a limb and preened.

**Malabar (Greater) Flameback** *Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus* — (M-5) A recent split from Greater Flameback, this species called and flew back and forth in Nagarhole, across a road we stopped at to scan for possible Tigers or other mammals. Instead we had a bird explosion and we appreciated getting very good views of this patterned species. We saw them at several locations and then had stellar views at the bird hide, close range for photo ops much appreciated.

**Rufous Woodpecker** *Micropternus brachyurus* — (M-1) A final morning dilemma of riches, we heard one calling, then also the Gray-throated Babbler, an endemic, so we had to choose. Only Peg got a look at the woodpecker flying across an open area as we searched for the Gray-headed, but just too many good birds at once!

**Black-rumped Flameback** *Dinopium benghalense* — (M-5) One of the most common woodpeckers we encountered, seen at several locations. Best views were from the bird hide, where one came in and probed for the meal worms, they were feeding. Great photo ops, long remembered!

**Lesser Yellownape** *Picus chlorolophus* — (M-1) Seen on the grounds of Niraamaya Lodge and then again from a rock vantage point in the Thattekad area.

**Streak-throated Woodpecker** *Picus xanthopygaeus* — (M-3) Seen on two outings in Nagarhole NP, and then on our final day in the Thattekad area at Rajmalai National Park Viewpoint.

**White-bellied Woodpecker** *Dryocopus javensis* — (M-3) A striking and robust woodpecker, we saw them all three days on safari drives in Nagarhole NP.

**\*Andaman Woodpecker (AND – END)** *Dryocopus hodgei* — (E-4) Seen on two days and heard on two more, this large woodpecker was quite striking. Our best views were out on an open snag at some distance, but in good light for scope viewing.

### **FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae — (1)**

**Eurasian Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus* — (M-1) Seen flying over the rock outcrops at the Rock Wonderland (Ramanagara) we stopped to bird at our first day, as we headed to Nagerhole NP.

### **PARROTS: Psittacidae — (7)**

**\*Alexandrine Parakeet** *Psittacula eupatria* — (E-4) Quite a lovely parakeet, we had best views in early mornings when they would perch in view. We did see them flying and feeding in forest areas on the Andamans.

**Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri* — (M-5) On the mainland, we found them in more open and agricultural areas, recognizing them by their calls. Our first sightings were at Ramanagara in trees of an open field. We saw them at Anamalai Tiger Reserve, at the pond we stopped at not far from Banyon Tree Farm Stay, and other locations.

**Plum-headed Parakeet** *Psittacula cyanocephala* — (M-7) Quite common in Nagarhole NP, we saw them on many outings, and had some chances for photos and really good viewing when they'd perch – often in groups in the mornings.

**Malabar Parakeet (END)** *Psittacula columboides* — (M-6) Just a stunning parakeet with turquoise tones in the plumage, we saw them at a variety of locations, especially in the Thattekad area.

**\*Red-breasted Parakeet** *Psittacula alexandri* — (E-4) Not as common as the two other parakeet species on our Extension, we did get scope views of this species, and had them calling in flight on several days.

**\*Long-tailed Parakeet** *Psittacula longicauda* — (E-4) We saw this species regularly around Big Tree Cottages, often perched out in the morning on open tree limbs or dead snags. We saw them feeding in various forest areas, and at dusk standing on the school ballyard waiting for the Andaman Masked Owl, we saw several groups flying against a painted sky as the sun went down. Quite common, and at times mingling with other parrots.

**Vernal Hanging-Parrot** *Loriculus vernalis* — (E-4, M-5) We had distant views early on in the trip, then in the parking lot of a local restaurant, they were super close in small shrubs, feeding. We saw them in a mixed flock at the Biodiversity park our final morning.

### **PITTAS: Pittidae — (1)**

**Indian Pitta** *brachyura* — (M-1) We saw one on the grounds of Banyon Tree Farm Stay, alerted by its calling as it went to its night roost. We found that roost and observed it in the spotlight. We also heard them call on several occasions.

### **CUCKOOSHRIKES: Campephagidae — (7)**

**Small Minivet** *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus* — (E-3, M-3) Heard and seen by our guides the first day, we were glad to catch up with them on two other days, always in a group of six or more, and mixed in with other species, drongos, cuckoos, cuckooshrikes.

**Orange Minivet (RS+SL)** *Pericrocotus flammeus* — (M-4) The common minivet in the Thattekad area, seen often.

**\*Scarlet Minivet** *Pericrocotus speciosus* — (E-4) Quite a common canopy species, we saw them working through dense canopy to feed. With patience we could get clear views of yellow females, red males and orange subadult males.

**\*Oriental (Large) Cuckooshrike** *Coracina javensis*— (E-2) The paler of the two species with less patterned breast, and a bird of more open country, we would see on the edges of fields and clearings.

**Indian (Large) Cuckooshrike** *Coracina macei* — (M-1) Seen at Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP.

**\*Andaman Cuckooshrike (AND – END)** *Coracina dobsoni* — (E-2) The strikingly patterned cuckooshrike of forest habitats.

**Black-headed Cuckooshrike** *Lalage melanoptera* — (M-3) Seen as we drove through the Anamalai Tiger Reserve, then on our walk past a ball field out to a dam backwater, and in the last days while in the Thattekad area.

### **WHISTLERS: Pachycephalidae — (1)**

**\*Mangrove Whistler** *Pachycephala cinerea* — (E-1) A pair was observed at Shoal Bay.

### **OLD WORLD ORIOLES: Oriolidae — (3)**

**Indian Golden Oriole** *Oriolus kundoo* — (M-5) This species was fairly common in the woods of Nagerhole Tiger Reserve



at Kabini Lodge there. We also saw it at Niraamaya Lodge and vicinity later in the journey.

**Black-naped Oriole** *Oriolus chinensis* — (E-4, M-1) Fairly common on the Andaman Islands. One seen at Birds Murmur Camp near the entry.

**Black-hooded Oriole** *Oriolus xanthornus* — (M-3) Seen at Birds Murmur Camp and a few other wooded locations.

### **WOODSWALLOWS: Artamidae — (2)**

**Ashy Woodswallow** *Artamus fuscus* — (M-5) Seen well flying and perched in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve, at Chinnar and while we walked along the dam backwater near Thattekad.

**\*White-breasted Woodswallow** *Artamus leucorhynchus* — (E-2) Seen from a lookout at the rear of our lodge in the Andaman's and at Shoal Bay.

### **VANGAS AND ALLIES: Vangidae — (3)**

**Malabar Woodshrike (END)** *Leprodornis sylvicola* — (M-1) Seen on the walk we took with a forest guard at Periyar Tiger Reserve.

**Common Woodshrike** *Tephrodornis pondicerianus* — (M-3) Seen in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve, and on a roadside stop in the Anamalai Tiger Reserve.

**Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike** *Hemipus picatus* — (M-2) A very patterned flycatcher, we saw it perched and feeding in a mixed flock on two occasions.

### **IORAS: Aegithinidae — (1)**

**Common Iora** *Aegithina tiphia* — (M-8) Reminiscent of one of our North American tanagers, we admired this species, found singly or in pairs, throughout the trip.

### **FANTAILS: Rhipiduridae — (1)**

**White-browed Fantail (RS-N)** *Rhipidura aureola* — (M-1) Seen only once, but good views, in a forested area of Anamalai Tiger Reserve.

### **DRONGOS: Dicruridae — (6)**

**Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus* — (E-1, M-8) Common and widespread, vocal. Tolerant of human settlements and seen in the wild.

**Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus* — (E-1, M-9) Very common, widespread and vocal.

**White-bellied Drongo (RS+SL)** *Dicrurus caeruleus* — (M-4) Seen in forested areas, we had good looks and photo opportunities, in wilder habitat.

**Bronzed Drongo** *Dicrurus aeneus* — (M-6) Widespread, but less common than the other drongos.

**\*Andaman Drongo (AND – END)** *Dicrurus andamensis* — (E-5) The common drongo on the Andaman Islands.

**Greater Racket-tailed Drongo** *Dicrurus paradiseus* — (E-5, M-9) Such a great bird, though common we never failed to marvel as they flew about showing off those long streamer tails. At one lodge they were quite tame, hanging out behind the kitchen in a small ravine, catching insects and returning to the same perch. A few came into our close view from the bird hide, great for photo opportunities.

### **MONARCH FLYCATCHERS: Monarchidae — (2)**

**Black-naped Monarch** *Hypothymis azurea* — (E-2, M-1) Such a pretty bird, we saw it both on the extension and the main journey, at close range and in mixed flocks. On the mainland it was at the end of our trip, on a lush forested walk in the Thattekad area at Rajmalai National Park (where they were tarring the road, but we got beyond them).

**Indian Paradise-Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone paradisi* — (M-3) Seen on the grounds at Kabini, and in the lush forest at Rajmalai NP.

### **SHRIKES: Laniidae — (3)**

**Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus* — (E-5, M-6) Very common, often perching for long periods and returning to the same perch. Sometimes on wires along roadsides.

**Bay-backed Shrike** *Lanius vittatus* — (M-2) A really stunning shrike, first seen on the walk on a private estate before our night jeep adventure, then in the field we found cisticolas and other open country species in behind one of our coffee stops.

**Long-tailed Shrike** *Lanius schach* — (E-1, M-4) Fairly widespread, often in more open areas, perched.

### **CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae — (5)**

**Rufous Treepie** *Dendrocitta vagabunda* — (M-4) A large bird with a large personality, we never tired of them. They were often present on outings in forested Nagerhole Tiger Reserve, then we had great views walking around the ball field and dam backwater area while in Thattekad. Final views were close up at the bird hide area, probing meal worms out of various perches.

**White-bellied Treepie** *Dendrocitta leucogastra* — (M-5) This was a startling and stunning bird. We got some of our best looks right at Niraamaya Lodge. They were in the edge vegetation as we walked around the ball field and dam backwater, but by far our best times with them were at the bird hide. They were shy at first and then took over, chasing other species away in their quest to feed on meal worms.

**\*Andaman Treepie (AND – END)** *Dendrocitta bayleii* — (E-4) The common treepie on the Andaman Islands.

**House Crow** *Corvus splendens* — (E-5, M-11) Ubiquitous and common.

**Large-billed Crow** *Corvus macrorhynchos* — (M-14) Seen just about everywhere and often.

### **FAIRY FLYCATCHERS: Stenostiridae — (1)**

**Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher** *Culicicapa ceylonensis* — (M-2) We saw this species on a forest walk near our fortress of a hotel, feeding back and forth and perching at eye-level. Also at the botanical gardens in Ooty they were quite visible and tame. They were present in the mixed flock we saw at the Munnar Dam Area.

### **TITS AND CHICKADEES: Paridae — (2)**

**Asian (Cinereous) Tit** *Parus cinereus* — (M-9) Common and widespread, confiding. Best views were at the Ooty Botanical Garden and on the forest walk near our “fortress” hotel.

**Indian Yellow Tit (END)** *Machlolophus aplonotus* — (M-2) A lovely species, seen both times in mixed flocks. The first view was just below Eravikulam NP at the government school turnoff we birded briefly. The second was a good view, but tricky as we were on a busy roadway.

### **LARKS: Alaudidae — (3)**

**Jerdon’s Bushlark** *Mirafra affinis* — (M-1) Seen on a private estate, Vibudhimalai Murugan Temple Hill, just a few, but chasing each other and perching up on small bushes.

**Indian Bushlark** *Mirafra erythroptera* — (M-1) Great views of a lone individual in the open field we birded in after a coffee break on one of our travel days.

**Malabar Lark (E)** *Galerida malabarica* — (M-1) Seen on a private estate, Vibudhimalai Murugan Temple Hill, a good number of them being vocal and feeding among the rocky terrain.

### **CISTICOLAS AND ALLIES: Cisticolidae — (4)**

**Common Tailorbird** *Orthotomus sutorius* — (M-7) Our first views were on the first travel day west from Bangalore, at the Rock Wonderland.

**Jungle Prinia** *sylvatica* — (M-1) Seen in the open field behind a roadside coffee stop on a travel day. It perched up boldly and sang much of the time we were there.

**Ashy Prinia *socialis*** — (M-2) Seen at Ramanagara, the Rock Wonderland, perched up and singing. Also in the reedy vegetation at Jalipatta Lake.

**Plain Prinia *inornata*** — (M-2) Seen well in the open field behind a roadside coffee shop, a stop that proved to give us several unique sightings for the tour. Also seen at Jalipatta Lake.

### **REED WARBLERS: Acrocephalidae — (3)**

**Booted Warbler *Iduna caligata*** — (M-1) Two individuals were seen in small shrubs on the loop walk we made at Chinnar.

**Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*** — (M-3) Seen several times in shrubby, dense vegetation.

**Clamorous Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus*** — (E-1, M-1) A lovely warbler, located by call, in reedy vegetation.

### **GRASSHOPPER WARBLERS: Locustellidae — (1)**

**Broad-tailed Grassbird (END) *Schoenicola platyurus*** — (M-1) This was a "short walk" turned into a bit of an expedition with some wild footing and then finding the grass it was living in was Elephant Grass and largely over our heads. We positioned ourselves and saw some distant birds, doing their vertical short flights from the ground up to a perch and back down. It was fun, but resulted in not more than glimpses.

### **SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae — (5)**

**Dusky Craig-Martin *Ptyonoprogne concolor*** — (M-4) Seen in Eravikulam NP, and other rock areas later in the trip by Thattekad.

**Hill Swallow *Hirundo domicola*** — (M-2) Seen mainly near Munnar, 3-5 at a time.

**\*Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*** — (E-2) Seen only in the Andaman Islands.

**Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*** — (E-2, M-5) Quite common and numerous when we did find them with 30+ at two lake locations.

**Eastern Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*** — (M-5) We saw them a lot at the start of our trip, at Ramanagara, the Rock Wonderland, at Ramamman Kere, the big reservoir, at Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and then we picked them up again walking across a ballfield over to a dam backwater amongst cattle grazing in open lands.

### **BULBULS: Pycnonotidae — (9)**

**Yellow-browed Bulbul (RS+SL) *Iole indica*** — (M-4) Seen at the end of our trip in the Thattekad and Rajmalai National Park area, from viewpoints and walking forested roads.

**Square-tailed Bulbul *Hypsipetes ganeesa*** — (M-2) A flocking species, seen at Olive Brook Resort and nearby Eravikulam NP.

**Gray-headed Bulbul (END) *Brachypodius priocephalus*** — (M-2) The first day we just heard the metallic note of this bird, but our final morning we gave it another try. Two were calling, and we found one and got good looks at this furtive, fruit-eating species.

**\*Andaman Bulbul (AND – END) *Brachypodius fuscoflavescens*** — (E-3) We were lucky to have one close to the lodge, giving us good looks on several occasions.

**Flame-throated Bulbul (END) *Rubigula gularis*** — (M-5) Peg first spotted this species by the market at higher elevation at Doddabetta Peak where we looked for some endemics and specialties. We then found them quite readily our last four days in the Thattekad area. We got particularly good looks walking a road in Rajmalai National Park with a mixed flock, and from a viewpoint early that morning in the same area.

**White-browed Bulbul (RS+N) *Pycnonotus luteolus*** — (M-2) Seen in three areas, never common. The first seen were with the malkoha that Avi saw and we quickly reversed for on a travel day.

**Yellow-throated Bulbul (END) *Pycnonotus xantholaemus*** — (M-1) We made a special effort to see this endemic, in a patch of more open, rocky terrain along the road that Danish knew of. He roamed up and down and located a pair by call. It was some time before we got good views, and when we did it was a pair sitting together on an open branch,

photographable and a major score!

**Red-whiskered Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus* — (COK-1, M-18) Extremely common, quite tame, but such a beauty! It was one of Janet's favorites. We often saw them in pairs or small groups, feeding on berries or striking a photogenic pose.

**Red-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus cafer* — (E-4, M-9) Quite common, but not as much so as the Red-whiskered, though they were often found together in clearings or areas of human settlement.

### **LEAF WARBLERS: Phylloscopidae — (5)**

**Tickell's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus affinis* — (M-3) A small active warbler seen mainly near Ooty and Doddabetta Peak. Our high count was 8 on one outing at that higher elevation.

\***Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus* — (E-2) Seen casually in shrubby patches on roadside stops, lone individuals.

**Green Warbler** *Phylloscopus nitidus* — (M-5) Seen in lush habitats, Ooty, Doddabetta Peak, Niraamaya Lodge, Rajmalai NP. Often seen with other species, gleaning on forest shrubs.

**Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides* — (M-3) Seen our first full day at Ramanagara, the Rock Wonderland, and then three locations on the day we explored Eravikulam NP.

**Western Crowned Warbler** *Phylloscopus occipitalis* — (M-2) Seen as lone individuals, in mixed flocks, one on the quick stop we made at the government school road below Eravikulam NP, and the other time in a large mixed flock at Rajmalai National Park on one of our final days.

### **SYLVIID WARBLERS: Sylviidae — (2)**

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Curruca* — (M-1) Peg spotted this species behind our coffee stop, which inspired a walk around an open field that was quite productive.

**Yellow-eyed Babbler** *Chrysomma sinense* — (M-1) We had excellent looks at a perched and calling bird at the private estate walk at Vibudhimalai Murugan Temple Hill. Its beady little red eye was memorable!

### **WHITE-EYES AND YUHINAS: Zosteropidae — (1)**

**Indian White-eye** *Zosterops palpebrosus* — (M-5) Quite common, often going around in flocks in forested areas. We had high counts of 15 at a time in Ooty and Doddabetta Peak.

### **TREE-BABLERS AND ALLIES: Timaliidae — (3)**

**Tawny-bellied Babbler (RS+SL)** *Dumetia hyperythra* — (M-2) Seen on a walk we did at the Anamalai Tiger Reserve at Topslip. We heard them one other day, but our best views were there.

**Dark-fronted Babbler (RS+SL)** *Dumetia atriceps* — (M-2) We saw this species in the lower shrubs by the forest floor while on a walk with forest guards at Periyar Tiger Reserve, and then we had them in the big mixed flock on one of our final days in the Thattekad area at Rajmalai National Park.

**Indian Scimitar-Babbler (END)** *Pomatorhinus horsfieldii* — (M-6) Fairly widespread, half of our encounters were heard only. We had cracking views of them on our walk at Ooty, from our fortress hotel there adjacent to a patch of Shola cloud forest.

### **GROUND BABBLERS: Pellorneidae — (1)**

**Puff-throated Babbler** *Pellorneum ruficeps* — (M-2) We worked hard to find one at close range, just below our feed at we walked through the market at Doddabetta Peak. We then saw them again at Chinnar.

### **LAUGHINGTHRUSHES AND ALLIES: Leiothrichidae — (6)**

**Nilgiri Laughingthrush (END)** *Montecincla cachinnans* — (M-1) Seen incredibly well on a walk in Shola cloud forest just outside our fortress hotel at Ooty. Their piercing red eyes under thick white "eye brows" were memorable.

**Palani Laughingthrush (END)** *Montecincla fairbanki* — (M-2) We saw this species on two days while at Eravikulam NP and Munnar.

**Large Gray Babbler (RS-N)** *Argya malcolmi* — (M-1) We had four in a group at a lovely pond we stopped at leaving Banyon Tree Farm Stay.

**Rufous Babbler (END)** *Argya subrufa* — (M-1) A pair was seen on our walk with the forest guards at Periyar Tiger Reserve, in dense vegetation across and below us on a trail.

**Jungle Babbler** *Argya striata* — (M-7) Highly vocal and common, moving about in little gangs at Birds Murmur Camp and other locations.

**Yellow-billed Babbler (RS+SL)** *Argya affinis* — (M-3) Our first sighting was a small group of three in the tops of small shrubs walking a private estate at Vibudhimalai Murugan Temple Hill. We then found them in groups of 6-7 at Anamalai Tiger Reserve and Chinnar.

### **NUTHATCHES: Sittidae — (2)**

**Velvet-fronted Nuthatch** *Sitta frontalis* — (M-5) Fairly common and often in mixed flocks. Our best views were at the botanic gardens in Ooty.

**Indian Nuthatch (RS-N)** *Sitta castanea* — (M-2) A beautiful species seen at our rest room stop in a big dead snag, two days in a row while in Nagerhole NP.

### **STARLINGS AND MYNAS: Sturnidae — (9)**

**\*Common Hill Myna** *Gracula religiosa* — (E-1) Seen on one occasion in the Andaman Islands.

**Southern Hill Myna (RS+SL)** *Gracula indica* — (M-8) A gaudy species that loved to sit up in blooming flowers, we encountered them quite frequently in flocks of 3-7 individuals.

**Indian Pied Starling** *Gracupica contra* — (COK-1) Seen at the airport in Kolkata as we started the extension with a flight to Port Blair.

**Brahminy Starling** *Sturnia pagodarum* — (M-2) A few individuals were seen in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP.

**Chestnut-tailed Starling** *Sturnia malabarica* — (M-8) Very common and seen in large flocks. Our high count was 50 at a time in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP.

**Malabar Starling (END)** *Sturnia blythii* — (M-6) Striking with a white head, this species was widespread with high counts of 20 at a couple of locations.

**\*White-headed Starling (AND – END)** *Sturnia erythropygia* — (E-2) Seen on two days of our extension to the Andamans, in lush forest habitats, often poking and probing in trees almost like nuthatches, very agile and inquisitive.

**Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis* — (E-5, M-9) Widespread and common, often in open fields and around human settlement.

**Jungle Myna** *Acridotheres fuscus* — (M-4) Seen at Nagerhole and Periyar Tiger Reserve, less common than other starlings but present.

### **THRUSHES: Turdidae — (2)**

**Orange-headed Thrush** *Geokichla citrina* — (M-2) A furtive species, we saw it at the end of our trip at Thattekad and Rajmalai National Park.

**Indian Blackbird (RS+SL)** *Turdus simillimus* — (M-1) Seen at high elevation, best views at the lookout point above tea fields where we waited for Painted Bush Quail.

### **OLD WORLD FLYCATCHERS: Muscicapidae — (18)**

**Asian Brown Flycatcher** *Muscicapa dauurica* — (E-1, M-1) Seen at the Periyar Tiger Reserve, and quite confiding at our lodge on the Andaman Islands and at Niraamaya Lodge.

**Brown-breasted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa muttui* — (M-1) We saw this species from one of the rock viewpoints we scanned from early mornings and later that same day in a forest patch, towards the end of our journey in the Thattekad area.

**Indian Robin** *Copsychus fulicatus* — (M-3) Seen in more open areas, first at the Rock Wonderland at Ramanagara.

**Oriental Magpie-Robin** *Copsychus saularis* — (E-3, M-10) Quite common, we enjoyed its musical calls and common



presence, often cocking its tail as it fed on downed logs of the forest floor.

**White-rumped Shama** *Copsychus malabaricus* — (M-2) Heard only at the start of the trip, it was then spotted by Arlana for our group on our walk along the river at Chinnar.

**\*Andaman Shama (AND – END)** *Copsychus albiventris* — (E-3) We worked at good views of this species but were rewarded, a lovely species with a showy tail while on the islands.

**Nilgiri Sholakili (END)** *Sholicola major* — (M-1) This species has been studied in depth for its variation, that led to a split in species, across a divide of the Western Ghats, proof of the genetic effects of isolation on Sky Island Mountain ranges. Great to find it just outside our fortress hotel in Ooty in a small patch of Shola cloud forest.

**White-bellied Sholakili (END)** *Sholicola albiventris* — (M-2) Seen at Eravikulam NP and nearby in Munnar, we had really good chances to study this species and how it differed from the closely-related Nilgiri Sholakili, formerly called shortwings.

**Nilgiri Flycatcher (END)** *Eumyias albicaudatus* — (M-1) Seen well, a lovely blue color we admired. It was surprisingly common in the one area observed, at Eravikulam NP.

**White-bellied Blue Flycatcher (END)** *Cyornis pallidipes* — (M-1) Seen by a few of the group as one of many species in an explosive mixed flock we encountered walking a road in the Thattekad Bird Sanctuary, an area of huge trees and open understory.

**Blue-throated Flycatcher** *Cyornis rubeculoides* — (M-2) We saw this species at Kabini River Lodge in Nagerhole NP, and then as we walked to the Inchathotty Suspension Bridge to look for nightjars, in dense forest at eye level, a secretive species.

**Tickell's Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis tickelliae* — (M-4) Our first two encounters were with a calling bird, heard only, and then we found them near Chinnar, and again at Thattekad.

**Indian Blue Robin** *Larvivora brunnea* — (M-3) Seen in the Shola forest patch at Ooty, at Munnar and on the grounds of Olive Brook Resort, a very birdy location on our trip.

**Malabar Whistling-Thrush (END)** *Myophonus horsfieldii* — (M-3) We heard its characteristic, non-melodic whistling at dawn and dusk at Olive Brook Lodge, and finally got a good look driving out of there when it perched out in the open near the river in a grove of tall trees. They were also vocal and present at Niraamaya Retreat, where we heard and saw them well.

**Black-and-orange Flycatcher (END)** *Ficedula nigrorufa* — (M-3) First seen on the morning walk in our first experience in the Shola Forest unique to the Western Ghats. It was down at the road level so we got really close views. We then found them in the forest at Eravikulam NP, and Peg saw one coming down from the hike we took to look for the grassbird from Olive Brook Lodge.

**Kashmir Flycatcher** *Ficedula subrubra* — (M-1) This species has a very narrow range, breeding in Kashmir and wintering in a small part of the Western Ghats. Peg found one on our stroll around the Botanic Gardens in Munnar, and we all worked to locate it again for all to see, a lone individual probably just arriving back.

**Blue Rock-Thrush** *Monticola solitarius* — (M-1) Seen on the day we explored the “Rock Wonderland” en route to Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP.

**Pied Bushchat** *Saxicola caprata* — (M-5) We saw several individuals at a time, in more open habitats of the Western Ghats, often from viewpoints at higher elevations and in Eravikulam NP.

#### **FLOWERPECKERS: Dicaeidae — (4)**

**Thick-billed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum agile* — (M-2) A new species just at the end of our trip, seen at Birds Murmur Camp and at the high viewpoint we went to find Malabar Imperial Pigeon and the Black Baza.

**Pale-billed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum erythrorhynchos* — (M-3) This was the flowerpecker seen commonly at Kabini Lodge just outside Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP.

**Nilgiri Flowerpecker (END)** *Dicaeum concolor* — (M-3) This species was easy to recognize with its curved beak. We saw them at close range, feeding in flowers, in several locations.

**\*Andaman Flowerpecker (AND – END)** *Dicaeum virescens* — (E-3) Seen on the extension only, we saw them in the

garden at Big Tree Cottages, and on some of our walks there.

### **SUNBIRDS: Nectariniidae — (6)**

**Purple-rumped Sunbird** *Leptocoma zeylonica* — (M-8) Widespread and common.

**Crimson-backed Sunbird (END)** *Leptocoma minima* — (M-6) Common from Munnar and south to Thattekad, seen in that second half of our trip commonly. Best seen at close range on plantings at Birds Murmur Camp.

**Purple Sunbird** *Cinnyris asiaticus* — (M-5) Very common and widespread, often seen with other sunbird species.

**\*Ornate (Olive-backed) Sunbird** *Cinnyris jugularis* — (E-3) The common sunbird seen in the Andamans.

**Loten's Sunbird (RS+SL)** *Cinnyris lotenius* — (M-5) First seen at Olive Brook Lodge in the gardens, we then found them quite commonly in Thattekad Bird Sanctuary.

**Little Spiderhunter** *Arachnothera longirostra* — (M-3) Seen from both of our rock viewpoints while in Thattekad, and also seen quite close in a village garden as we walked in Periyar Tiger Reserve with forest guards.

### **FAIRY-BLUEBIRDS: Irenidae — (1)**

**Asian Fairy-bluebird** *Irena puella* — (E-3, M-3) Fairly common, often seen with mixed flocks.

### **LEAFBIRDS: Chloropseidae — (2)**

**Jerdon's Leafbird (RS+SL)** *Chloropsis jerdoni* — (M-2) We got good views of two individuals working a hedgerow of thick vegetation when we walked out into a plowed field just before the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve Gate. They were electric in color, feeding on spiders in a big mass of webbing so we could get them into scope view.

**Golden-fronted Leafbird** *Chloropsis aurifrons* — (M-6) We found this species first at Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP, at Periyar Tiger Reserve, and numerous other locations. On a rocky outcrop in the Thattekad area, we had really good views as it probed for insects at close range in shrubs jutting out of the rocks.

### **WAXBILLS: Estrildidae — (6)**

**Indian Silverbill** *Euodice malabarica* — (M-1) First seen on a phone wire from the bus, we then had a big group as we walked out in a field behind one of our coffee stops, not far from Chinnar.

**Scaly-breasted Munia** *Lonchura punctulata* — (E-1, M-2) First seen off the causeway we drove multiple times in the Andamans, close to the guard railing. Then seen on the mainland at Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP.

**Black-throated Munia** *Lonchura kelaarti* — (M-2) Seen at Periyar NP and then a big group was encountered by the dam backwater we saw so many species at while in Thattekad.

**White-rumped Munia** *Lonchura striata* — (E-2, M-2) Seen at Port Blair and near Big Tree Resort. We had looks on the main tour at Anamalai Tiger Reserve at Topslip.

**Tricolored Munia** *Lonchura malacca* — (M-1) Great views of a lone individual perched up in plain view as we walked at the Rock Wonderland, heading to Nagarhole. It stayed atop a large shrub for some time, so we could see it well in the scope.

**Red Avadavat** *Amandava amandava* — (M-1) Seen only on our walk at the Rock Wonderland in route to Nagerhole NP, its day glow red quite shocking. We were spread out at the time, some still scoping the Tricolored Munia, so only some of the group got to see this species.

### **OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae — (2)**

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* — (E-4, M-4) Seen around human settlements, often when we got gas or paused for coffee.

**Yellow-throated Sparrow** *Gymnoris xanthocollis* — (M-1) Seen at Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP.

### **WAGTAILS AND PIPITS: Motacillidae — (6)**

**Gray Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea* — (E-4, M-8) Common and widespread.

**\*Eastern Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla tschutschensis* — (E-2) Seen a couple of times in open fields where we scanned for shorebirds on the Andaman Islands.

**White-browed Wagtail** *Motacilla maderaspatensis* — (M-8) First seen as we stepped out of the bus at our first birding stop at the Rock Wonderland, then often at Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP, at a coffee break at Ayur Retreat where we saw the Common Rosefinch. Usually seen 1-3 individuals but at one stop we had up to 7.

**Paddyfield Pipit** *Anthus rufulus* — (M-2) A pair was seen on our walk on a private estate at Vibudhimalai Murugan Temple Hill, and then we had another chance to view this species on the ball field we walked through to a dam backwater area while in Thattekad.

**Nilgiri Pipit (END)** *Anthus nilghiriensis* — (M-1) Stories to tell, this one took an epic effort and two locations but we were finally victorious, walking down a side road to stare up at a wide rock face where a pair was present and feeding in shrubby cracks.

**\*Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus* — (E-3) Seen in open areas on the Andaman Islands.

### **FINCHES AND EUPHONIAS: Fringillidae — (1)**

**Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus* — (M-1) A chance find by Peg and Avi, wandering off from a roadside coffee break. We were able to bring all the group to see it, a female hanging out with a mixed flock, in low shrubs by the roadside. It resembles a House Finch back home.

### **MAMMALS: — (25)**

**Indian Flying Fox** *Pteropus giganteus* — (6) We saw these big fruit eating bats hanging from their tree top day perches at several locations, our best views from Kabini River Lodge outside of Nagerhole Tiger Reserve. On our final evening, stopping for a pit stop ahead of owling, we saw several flying and really appreciated their size at that time.

**\*Andaman Flying Fox (AND-END)** *Pteropus melanotus* — (E-1) Our first encounter with these large hanging bats, on a day roost our guide knew of on the Andaman Islands.

**Indian (Black-naped) Hare (RS-N)** *Lepus nigricollis* — (M-1) Seen on the private estate walk at Vibudhimalai Murugan Temple Hill, a lone individual.

**Three-striped Palm Squirrel** *Funambulus palmarum* — (E-1, M-4) Very common, introduced on the Andamans, and widespread on the rest of our journey, it looks a lot like a chipmunk on our side of the world.

**Dusky Palm Squirrel (RS+SL)** *Funambulus sublineatus* — (M-3) Common in the Thattekad area

**Jungle Palm Squirrel (END)** *Funambulus tristriatus* — (M-1) Small and dark, this species is endemic to the Western Ghat mountains.

**Indian (Malabar) Giant Squirrel (END)** *Ratufa indica* — (M-7) This is a large, patterned squirrel. Our first sightings were lone individuals and somewhat distant, but not disturbing them, we could watch their acrobatic movements in the tree canopy, definitely a realm they are confident in. On one occasion at Thattekad several individuals were quite close and were fun to watch and photograph.

**Grizzled Giant Squirrel (END)** *Ratufa macroura* — (M-1) Seen near Chinnar, this species is limited to a small part of the Western Ghats so we were lucky to find one near the visitor center we stopped at for lunch.

**Gray Slender Loris (RS+SL)** *Loris lydekkerianus* — (M-1) Seen in Thattekad, a tiny fur ball tucked up into a small tree, we could see its little hands clutching the branch and at times its big eyes. This was found by one of Danish's team going ahead of us to scout, a wonderful way for us to find a difficult mammal and providing more wildlife-oriented work opportunity for locals – we appreciated this effort a lot.

**Nilgiri Langur (END)** *Semnopithecus johnii* — (M-3) A dark, almost black langur, we first saw this species from our lodge near Periyar Tiger Reserve, the Nimamayaa Retreat, out by the pool. We heard their roaring in the evening and mornings, and saw several others on our days in the park.

**Tufted Gray Langur (RS+SL)** *Semnopithecus priam* — (M-1) Seen in lush forest on our drive to Ooty, just one individual.

**Indian (Malabar) Gray Langur** *Semnopithecus hypoleucos* — (M-3) Quite common and seen daily, troops of them, in

Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP

**Bonnet Macaque** *Macaca radiata* — (M-8) The most common primate we saw, often in very big groups roaming the edge of the road. They are very comfortable around humans, too much so, but fun to watch.

**Stripe-necked Mongoose (RS+SL)** *Urva vitticollis* — (M-2) Endemic to the Western Ghats, we got very good views of this species while on safari drives in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP.

**Indian Gray Mongoose** *Urva edwardsii* — (M-1) Seen just once, notably larger, on our final morning drive in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP.

**Ruddy Mongoose (RS+SL)** *Herpestes smithii* — (M-1) A deep rusty color, we saw this mammal ripping apart a termite mound near the road in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP, our middle day there.

**Smooth-coated Otter** *Lutrogale perspicillata* — (M-1) A lone individual was resting on a small island in the river we passed by coming and going from Olive Brook Resort to our various field sites. We looked each day following, but that was our only lucky sighting.

**Dhole** *Cuon alpinus* — (M-1) Noted by all as one of the highlights of the trip, we were so happy to stumble across a pack of four along the road in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP, and watch them getting up from their rest time, greet each other and move off to hunt. They disappeared into the forest and we were all smiles at the success of seeing them when we heard a close Chital alarm call. In seconds down the road we saw a chase seen, with a Chital running for its life, sprinting downhill at high acceleration, leaping the road with all four legs extended – such power. But even faster, also all legs off the ground and spread was the lead Dhole, and it was gaining on it. A second member of the pack was not far behind and out of sight of us they brought down the deer. We found it again close to the river shore, and watched the other two pack members locate it as well. We watched the dynamics between them as they fed, and we were far enough not to alter their behavior at all. They were quite wary, looking all directions and repeatedly one, gulping meat down as fast as they could. They share space with Tigers, so we could understand their caution. Such a rare thing to see, our National Geographic moment on this trip for sure.

**Leopard** *Panthera pardus* — (M-2) The first Leopard we saw was behind the vehicle, so those in front were not able to see it dash across the road and into the forest. But fortunately we got a second and most impressive second chance with one sprawled out on a high limb, ready for the day's rest. It changed positions several times and gave a big yawn. We had all the time we wanted with it and only two vehicles present, so memorable! Seen in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve.

**Asian Elephant** *Elephas maximus* — (M-2) Seen on several of our safari drives in Nagerhole, the first was at the forest edge and blended in so well we almost went by it until Arlana and David said STOP! A group of three were quite close the vehicle, enough we moved off, with a calf, feeding. Another group was in the powerline cut, with several close to us curling their trunks around branches to pull them loose, also with a calf. That was a larger group spread out quite a bit.

**Wild Boar** *Sus scrofa* — (M-3) Quite common in Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP, we saw all ages from piglets to big boars, often mixed in with the herds of Chital.

**Gaur** *Bos gaurus* — (M-5) Seen on each of our safari drives in Nagerhole NP, and then on some drives in the highlands, including the spot that we waited for Painted Bush Quail to hopefully appear.

**Nilgiri Tahr (END)** *Nilgiritragus hylocrius* — (M-1) Seen in Eravikulam NP, a park created to preserve habitat for them. Studied by George Schaller and described by him in a chapter of one of his books called *Cloud Goats*, this mammal is found only in high elevations of the Western Ghats. We first saw them above us on the mountain, so stately in that scenery. They nimbly worked their way across a sheer rock face, feeding. Several were headed for – the parking lot! It turns out some of them are highly habituated, and rangers are present to try to stop adoring tourists from feeding them. We were there on a sunny Sunday, a glorious day, and it was fun to see extended Indian families there having a grand time, vocal and colorful, engrossed in taking selfie photos – we had fun people watching too.

**Sambar (Deer)** *Rusa unicolor* — (M-3) A large stately member of the deer family, quite like our elk in form. We saw solitary individuals and they were much shyer than the Chital.

**Chital (Spotted Deer)** *Axis axis* — (M-5) This animal was so common, herd after herd after herd, in Nagerhole NP, that the predators must be living well. We saw all ages, from young to old, and all sizes, a couple of huge males with giant racks, and a lot of young bucks just growing antlers till in velvet. There is no synchronization of antler growth and females breed year round, quite different to our temperate climate in North America. Babies are born year round. Their

alarm calls helped us try to track predator action, and while we did not see Tigers, they were seen on the days we were there, in a different section of the reserve. We got close one afternoon, but not close enough, but we could hear sequential deer alarm calls. We will all long remember one on the run for its life, leaping across the road with all four legs in the air, with a pack of Dhole behind it.

#### **REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS: — (9)**

**Asian Common Toad** *Duttaphrynus melanostictus* — (M-1) Seen around our lodge at Nagerhole Tiger Reserve and NP.

**Common Asian Tree Frog** *Polypedates leucomystax* — (M-1) A giant individual seen in the dining and pool area of Niraamaya Lodge one morning.

**Mugger Crocodile** *Crocodylus palustris* — (M-1) Seen on our boat safari in Nagerhole NP, about a 7-foot individual riding quite low in the water.

**Indian Black Turtle** *Melanochelys trijuga* — (M-2) Seen at several of the inland ponds at Nagerhole NP.

**Asian House Gecko** *Hemidactylus frenatus* — (M-1) Seen at one of our lodgings.

**Agama Lizard** — (1) Found and photographed on the rock viewpoint known as the Lava Dome that we visited one morning on our birding in the Thattekad area.

**Bengal Monitor** *Varanus bengalensis* — (M-1) Nagerhole NP.

**Common Water Monitor** *Varanus salvator* — (E-2) Seen a couple of times in on the Andaman Island, one quite impressive in size.

**Western Ghats Flying Lizard** *Draco dussumieri* — (M-1) Seen perched on a tree in the forest at Thattekad, flaring out its throat patch.

#### **NOTABLE INVERTEBRATES**

**Northern Golden Orb Weaver** *Nephila pilipes* — Very common, we saw them alongside quite a few of the forest trails we walked and marveled at their size and color patterns.

**Wandering Violin Mantis** *Gongylus gongylodes*— We found two of these on the bushes outside one of our coffee stops, quite an amazing insect and fun to watch, video and photograph.

**Red Velvet Mite** *Trombididae sp.*— Found while walking a private estate in search of owls, larks and other species. This is a big mite and as the name implies, quite furry.

**Leech** *Hirudinea sp.* — Too common, we wore our leech socks and few had contact, except for a good lesson learned, don't put your pack down as they climb aboard when you put it back on...

**Rhino Beetle** *Dynastinae sp.* — Always impressive!

**Firefly** *Lampyridae sp.*— Seen in Thattekad on our night owling walks, dozens of them, always such a delight to find.