



TRIP REPORT

By Chris Holtby & Dave Thrussell, UK.

Camera Equipment –

DT: Canon 40D with a 100-400mm lens.

CH: Canon 40D with a 300mm F4 lens, a 1.4x converter, and a Speedlite 430EX

Guided by Amila Salgado (<http://gallicissa.blogspot.com> , www.birdwingnature.com)

Having previously birded such top destinations as Texas, The Gambia, Kenya, Israel and Costa Rica independently, our decision for 2010 was to break a stubborn habit, arrange for a professional guide and to tie ourselves to a proven itinerary. Researching the web and studying reports produced Amila Salgado.

He was selected due to his deep knowledge as a passionate and enthusiastic naturalist, and in spite of his ignorance of bees (local joke).

One of Amila's many irresistible qualities was his avowed intent to go for the Sri Lankan endemics (all 33 of them, as per Rasmussen [2005]). He offers an intensive birding experience (and it is, we can assure you) which he calls his 'Absolute Birding' tour.

We booked our flights with Sri Lanka Airlines through <http://www.holidaygenie.com> and left the rest to Amila.

Our itinerary.

Day 01 (14 Mar.) Arrive in Sri Lanka and transfer to Kithulgala for two nights.

Day 02 (15 Mar.) Explore patches in Kithulgala including the Kithulgala rain forest.

Day 03 (16 Mar.) Drive to Sinharaja Rainforest for three nights. P.m. Explore Sinharaja.

Day 04 (17 Mar.) Full day birding in Sinharaja for lowland endemics/mixed species bird flocks.

Day 05 (18 Mar.) Full day birding in Sinharaja & peripheral patches for remaining targets.

Day 06 (19 Mar.) Drive to Udawalawe for dry zone specialties. One night at Udawalawe.

Day 07 (20 Mar.) Drive to Tissa for 3 nights. Explore wetlands and local patches at Tissa.

Day 08 (21 Mar.) Bundala National Park for shorebird & Yala National Park for birds and big game.

Day 09 (22 Mar.) Morning optional visit to Yala National Park. Afternoon local birding.

Day 10 (23 Mar.) Local birding. Drive to Nuwara Eliya for two nights. Many birding stops en route.

Day 11 (24 Mar.) Explore a combination of patches including Victoria Park.

Day 12 (25 Mar.) Drive down to Kandy for one night. Owling at Kandy.

Day 13 (26 Mar.) Royal Botanical Gardens. Drive to Katunayake for final night.

Day 14 (27 Mar.) Departure.



Day 01–02 (14-15 March, 2010) Kithulgala.

Landing at Katunayake Airport 20 miles north of Colombo at 02.30 a.m. we were met by Amila and his driver at the terminal door. The theme was set immediately. We went birding...

After a short 5-minute drive from the airport we stopped in a private garden for a pair of Indian Scops-Owls but, not unreasonably, it was pitch black and our brain receptors had been left on the plane. We managed to fail to impress our guide by almost completely missing the owls and failing to get any meaningful photos. CH managed a nice shot of an overhead lamp and its accompaniment of moths with his untried Speedlite flashgun, but no Indian Scops Owls. Amila must have feared the worst...

En route we stopped at Amila's residence, had our first taste of superlative Sri Lankan tea, courtesy of his gracious mother's hospitality at 3 in the morning, and picked up the considerable amount of equipment he required for our journey around Central/South Sri Lanka. We had a quick tour of Amila's garden and pond, (CH got his flashgun in sync):



Sri Lanka Hourglass Tree Frog *Polypedates cruciger*

Undaunted, Amila pointed out a Spot-billed Pelican roost at the top of a tree which we also struggled to see. Amila is blessed apparently with full night vision in both eyes...he decided we should drive till dawn and have a go at seeing some birds in daylight. What followed was literally a revelation.

We arrived at our lodge at Kithulgala, situated bordering the Kelani River, to be welcomed by a dawn chorus and birds popping all around us. It was one of those rare sensory-overload experiences, a never-to-be-forgotten dawn with nearly every bird a lifer. We woke up...

The early morning list read Orange-billed Babbler, Yellow-billed Babbler, White-bellied Drongo, Red-vented Bulbul, Common Tailorbird, Brown-headed Barbet, Black-rumped Flameback, Long-billed Sunbird, Bright-green Warbler, Green Imperial Pigeon, Indian Pond Heron, Spot-winged Thrush, Sri Lanka Swallow, Layard's Parakeet, Black-hooded Oriole, Jungle Crow, Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot, White-throated Kingfisher, Spotted Dove, Oriental Magpie-Robin, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Green-billed Coucal, Indian Swiftlet, Lesser Yellownappe, Black Bulbul, Eastern Cattle Egret, Common Myna, Black-capped Bulbul, Little Cormorant, Oriental Honey Buzzard, White-backed Munia, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Orange Minivet, Emerald Dove, Brown-breasted Flycatcher, and Stork-billed Kingfisher.

During our 2 night stay here we were to see 78 species, 69 of these were well-photographed, including a whopping 20 of the 33 target endemics.

The highlight had to be the recently discovered (first heard in 1995, first seen in 2001, and formally described in 2004) Serendib Scops Owl. Crossing the sacred Kelani river in a dug-out canoe without getting the optics wet is a fun challenge but the hillside climb for this bird in the darkness should not be attempted unguided. Amila's expertise in locating this owl was simply amazing! Unsurprisingly, of all the endemics, this takes pride of place at the top of the tree...



Serendib Scops-Owl *Otus thilohoffmanni*

The same area also holds Sri Lanka Frogmouth (a near endemic), Crested Serpent Eagle (easily looked for from the Kithulgala Rest House Hotel boasting pictures of the famous *Bridge On The River Kwai* (1957), which was filmed here), Black-naped Monarch, Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher, Purple-rumped Sunbird, Brown Hawk-Owl (expert knowledge required to locate the day roost site), Stork-billed Kingfisher, Common Iora, Dark-fronted Babbler, Pale-billed Flowerpecker and Blue-tailed Bee-eater among many others.

Endemics seen well and photographed* in the Kithulgala area:

Orange-billed Babbler *Turdoides rufescens*

Spot-winged Thrush *Zoothera spiloptera*

Sri Lanka Swallow *Hirundo hyperythra*

Layard's Parakeet *Psittacula calthropae*

Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus beryllinus*

Green-billed Coucal *Centropus chlororhynchus*

Black-capped Bulbul *Pycnonotus melanicterus*

Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill *Ocyceros gingalensis*

Yellow-fronted Barbet *Megalaima flavifrons*

Sri Lanka Green-Pigeon *Treron pompadora*

Sri Lanka Junglefowl *Gallus lafayetii*

Chestnut-backed Owlet *Glaucidium castanonotum*

Brown-capped Babbler *Pellorneum fuscicapillum*

Sri Lanka Spurfowl *Galloperdix bicalcarata*

Sri Lanka Myna *Gracula ptilogenys*

Sri Lanka Blue Magpie *Urocissa ornate** (stupidly, neither of us captured this most enigmatic endemic)

Sri Lanka Crested Drongo *Dicrurus lophorinus*

Sri Lanka Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus melanurus*

Serendib Scops-Owl *Otus thilohoffmanni*

Legge's Flowerpecker *Dicaeum vincens* (20)



Orange-billed Babbler
Turdoides rufescens



Spot-winged Thrush
Zoothera spiloptera



Sri Lanka Swallow
Hirundo hyperythra



Yellow-fronted Barbet
Megalaima flavifrons



Sri Lanka Junglefowl
Gallus lafayetii



Chestnut-backed Owlet
Glaucidium castanonotum



Sri Lanka Green-Pigeon
Treron pompadora pompadora



Sri Lanka Scimitar-Babbler
Pomatorhinus melanurus



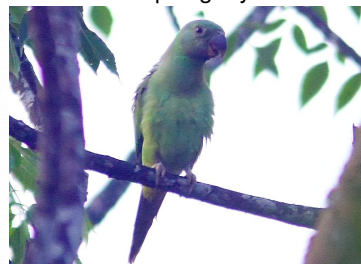
Sri Lanka Myna
Gracula ptilogenys



Green-billed Coucal
Centropus chlororhynchus



Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot
Loriculus beryllinus



Layard's Parakeet
Psittacula calthropae

Our lodge also hosted several non-endemic target birds, including the Indian Pitta, which showed incredibly well in the gloomy morning light, down to a few feet. With patience and much adjustment of settings on the 40D, we managed to capture some good images of the only Oriental Dwarf (Black-backed) Kingfisher of the trip. Several endemics were within a short walk from the hotel including the Sri Lanka Crested Drongo.



Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher *Ceyx erithacus erithacus*



Sri Lanka Crested Drongo *Dicrurus lophorinus*

And the lizards were quite colourful too:



Hump-nosed Lizard *Lyriocephalus scutatus*



Green Forest Lizard *Calotes calote*

Day 03–05: (16-18, March, 2010)- Sinharaja.

Sinharaja 'world heritage' rain forest is Sri Lanka's last remaining viable area of primary rainforest containing a substantial number of the country's endemic trees, plants, insects, reptiles and birds. Thus, birding in the totally different terrain here reverts to that in a classic jungle environment, requiring patience, stealth and tracking skills. A trained pair of ears is essential equipment too.

The dark, impenetrable forest made not only the locating of species difficult, but also obtaining worthwhile images a real challenge.

Amila expressed surprise at our willingness and enthusiasm for shooting avian gems through the gloomy light conditions of the forest depths. Being a 'good light photographer', he admitted that he rarely bothered to attempt bird photography in the low light conditions in the forest. When he followed suit with his own Canon 40D coupled with 100-400 zoom lens, he was somewhat surprised at what may be achieved albeit with fairly extreme settings. The real shock was probably that neither of us bother with a tripod, preferring to shoot and move wherever the birds may take us. Without this positive attitude, a number of forest dwellers and skulkers would have remained uncaptured, including the endemic and enigmatic Ashy-headed Laughingthrush and Brown-capped Babbler.



Ashy-headed Laughingthrush *Garrulax cinereifrons*



Brown-capped Babbler *Pellorneum fuscicapillum*



Red-faced Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus pyrrocephalus*



Sri Lanka Frogmouth *Batrachostomus moniliger*

At Sinharaja, Amila's skills came to the fore again. His knowledge of calls, (even at ridiculously far distances), enabled us to see a further 8 endemics in around the forest reserve. Even so, many of the new species here are available at the edge of the reserve.

However, the best site for one of the real stars—Sri Lanka Scaly Thrush—was to be found deep in the primary forest, near one of its many streams. Even Amila made use of a local tracker for finding it. This supreme skulker is rarely seen well, let alone photographed. And its high-pitched calls were completely off our hearing range! The tracker, (whose equipment amounted to an umbrella stuck in the ground to mark the pathway into the undergrowth and no optics whatsoever), found one, and led us to it in complete silence. There was only room for one camera at a time and we were terrified of the shutter noise, but the thrush obliged down to 15 feet, as it foraged in the leaf litter.



Sri Lanka Scaly Thrush *Zosterops imbricata*

The endemic target list had been reduced to 6 of 33 after 5 days at 2 sites. Endemics seen well and photographed at and around Sinharaja:

- Ashy-headed Laughingthrush *Garrulax cinereifrons*
- Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon *Columba torringtoni*
- Red-faced Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus pyrrhocephalus*
- White-faced Starling *Sturnus senex*
- Sri Lanka White-eye *Zosterops ceylonensis*
- Sri Lanka Scaly Thrush *Zoothera imbricate*
- Sri Lanka Small Barbet *Megalaima rubricapilla* (27)



Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon *Columba torringtoni*



White-faced Starling *Sturnus senex*



Black-capped Bulbul *Pycnonotus melanicterus*



White-naped Woodpecker *Chrysocolaptes festivus*



Legge's Flowerpecker *Dicaeum vincens*

Our base was situated in very close proximity to the forest. It was extremely well-placed to walk to the reserve and bird the edges. It also offered good food and exceptional views from the verandah which was another good spot for Indian Pitta and raptors.

The dreaded leeches at Sinharaja are a problem and full length trousers and leech socks are a must. Mosquitoes were much less bothersome. Snakes are present and wellies are the footwear of preference, especially if venturing off-track in the forests. We saw none on the whole trip (and we had ignored Amila's advice to bring wellies). This lack of proper footwear did cost us the chance of seeing Indian Jungle Nightjar (Grey Nightjar)—which would have been night bird no.13. It was heard quite well, but Amila refused to take us to it off the beaten track through untamed wilderness.

Amila's Absolute Birding tour is not for the frail of mind or body. But If you are willing to work hard and immerse yourself in the unique delights of the primary rainforest, you may be rewarded with the once-in-a-lifetime experience of seeing and/or photographing a Sri Lanka Spurfowl.



Sri Lanka Spurfowl *Galloperdix bicalcarata* female

Day 06 (19–20 March) Udawalawe

Udawalawe was our first introduction to dry zone birdlife, which included Barred Buttonquail Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark, Little Green Bee-eater, Jerdon's Bush Lark and Orange-breasted Green Pigeon, all of which may be well-photographed here. You must hire a local guide/driver, and the park is accessed by means of 'open-topped' Land Rovers. The local guides vary in terms of knowledge and flexibility. Amila barked a few orders at ours and he stopped when told (which was very often!).

The Udawalawe area, and the site that followed, Tissa, had many wetland areas, which are very well-worth exploring to increase the trip list. Birds seen here included Black-headed Ibis, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Lesser Whistling Duck, Yellow Bittern, Black Bittern, Cotton Pygmy Goose, Purple Heron, Oriental Darter and Grey-headed Fish-Eagle. The light here was excellent and some difficult species quite obliging. The grounds of the hotel held Grey-breasted Prinia and Jerdon's Leafbird, which were not commonly seen elsewhere.



Little Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis orientalis*



Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*



Grey-breasted Prinia *Prinia hodgsonii*



Jerdon's Leafbird *Chloropsis jerdoni*



Jerdon's Bush Lark *Mirafra affinis*



Sri Lanka Woodshrike *Tephrodornis affinis*

Single endemic seen and photographed

Sri Lanka Woodshrike *Tephrodornis affinis* (28)

Other forest/grassland birds found at Udawalawe NP and vicinity included Scaly-breasted Munia, Sirkeer Malkoha, Grey-bellied Cuckoo (the only one of the tour), Pied Cuckoo (ditto), Alexandrine Parakeet, Asian Paradise Flycatcher, Black-shouldered Kite, Painted Stork, White-browed Fantail, Red-wattled Lapwing, Jungle Prinia (the only one of the tour), Indian Peafowl (only common here and Yala), Indian Robin, Indian Roller, Malabar Pied Hornbill (very scarce elsewhere), Crested Hawk Eagle, White-browed Bulbul, White-naped Woodpecker, Plum-headed Parakeet (not seen elsewhere – get it here), Thick-billed Flowerpecker (the only one of the tour), Coppersmith Barbet, Indian Nightjar, Oriental Skylark, Baya Weaver, and Tricoloured Munia.

Watercock is found at Tissa, but you'll need a guide with expert local knowledge as to its exact wetland location and the precise times it shows, miss its short flights and you won't see it, let alone photograph it. With Amila's guidance we did both. On the other hand Amila's scouts were unable to phone with positive news of the Brown Fish Owl's day roost site (he is well-connected).

One of Amila's unannounced treats took the form of unscheduled visits to a 'hidden' wilderness area close to Tissa, where he claimed, without going into specifics (something he was very proficient at—in case he failed to deliver!) he would invariably see something new and unexpected on each visit. At midday, it was extremely hot in more ways than one, and it was here we experienced one of those magical birding moments when a Sirkeer Malkoha crept, mouse-like from behind a mound of dry earth, pausing and panting, towards three completely static and silent photographers, whilst being hit with a blizzard of shutter activations from three Canon 40D's—all in burst mode!



Sirkeer Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus leschenaultia*

Amila's 'patch' also produced some birds which were not only unexpected but also difficult to find, like a day-roosting Jungle Owlet and the distinctive Great Tit *P. m. mahrattarum*. Also found here were Black-headed Cuckooshrike, Purple Sunbird, Bar-winged Flycatcher-Shrike and exceptionally close views of Plain Prinia. A calling White-rumped Shama was located by Amila but views were difficult and, probably to his frustration, neither of us could photograph it, so it was treated somewhat casually, especially by CH.

Day 07–09 (21–23 March) Tissamaharama, Bundala National Park, Yala National Park and many 'patches'.

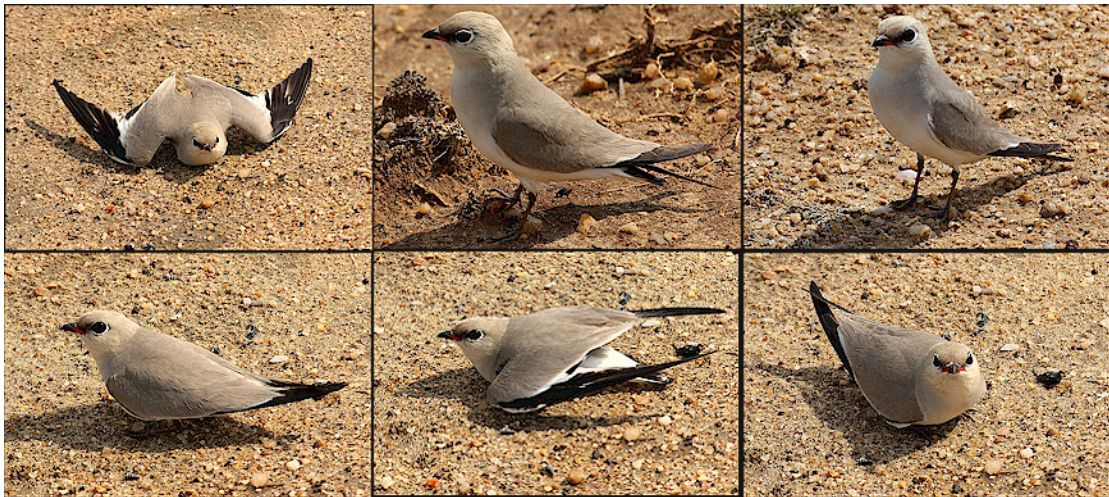
Bundala NP and saltpans offered the most magically perfect photographic light conditions of anywhere on the tour. This is where all those missing waders are to be listed and captured. Again a site guide is mandatory, and the park is accessed by means of an open-backed safari vehicle. By 9.00 a.m. the sun's intensity overhead was increased by its reflection off the salt below. Sun cream and a brimmed hat is the order of the day here.

The somewhat enigmatic Yellow-wattled Lapwing is fairly easy here along with Indian Thick-knee, Pintail Snipe, Great-Thick-knee, Blue-faced Malkoha, the only Brown-headed Gull of the trip, Indian Cormorant, Indian (Clamorous) Reed Warbler (very tricky to see elsewhere), and Paddyfield Pipit.



Yellow-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus malabaricus* Indian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus s. meridionalis*

But the abiding memory for us all will be that of a pair of Small Pratincole *Glareola lactea* which alighted, circled and returned to within meters of the vehicle on the track between the salt pans. The distraction display to our car, feigning injury, meant chicks nearby and we held back – with camera shutters chattering. A notebook went overboard in the excitement and was thought lost by a mortified CH, as it contained all his field notes of the trip. The others seemed unconcerned as there were some distant ducks to be scoped and identified. (It was refound on the track).



Small Pratincole *Glareola lactea*

Bundala added 29 species to the trip list (including several waders, notably, 'Eastern' Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa melanuroides* and Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*). Amila made a phone call and soon we arrived at the private house of another graciously polite friend of his who was also playing host to a pair of day-roosting Indian Scops-Owls. He was happy for us to snap away on his rear verandah.



Indian Scops-Owl *Otus bakkamoena*

Spending a day in the back of a Land Rover in searing heat makes the refuge offered by an afternoon return to our cosy hotel a very attractive prospect, especially since it has a swimming pool and an equally enticing natural pond for dragonflies. The variety and scintillating beauty of Sri Lanka's *Odonata* insects are not to be underestimated.



Dawn Dropwing



Asian Pintail



Asian Groundling



Yellow Waxtail



Shining Gossamerwing



Sapphire Flutterer



Aggressive Riverhawk



Black-tipped Flashwing



Blue Percher

The Hotel grounds also held the most confiding early morning Indian Pitta of the trip. It was foraging as usual in the front garden, but when it became conscious of our presence, it flew to the lower branches of a tree directly above CH's lens! It appeared uninterested, tame almost, and posed proudly, imperiously almost, for the camera, a bit like an impatient film star trying get rid of a nuisance paparazzo. This has to be the most obliging of all the world's Pitta species (at the least, we need to find out if that's true!).



Indian Pitta *Pitta brachyura*

Yala NP is one of the National Parks in Sri Lanka and its most popular with tourists but none of the huge fleet of 4x4's touring round the tracks seemed to be birding. And they weren't. Leopard is the draw for this mass scramble and radio messages between drivers ensure the queues to see one 'siesta-ing' in a tree resembled a sort of manic motorised cat twitch – with hired drivers jostling for position and converting best vantage points straight into cash.

If traffic jams and bullying your way into parking spaces is your bag, Yala is for you. The leopard we saw was apparently completely unconcerned; it alone maintained its dignity whilst all around were losing theirs. A later sighting of another leopard walking down the track in front of us alone was much more natural and appealing, but it still lacked feathers and wings. (NFF, sorry Amila!)

Yala did hold avian highlights for us:

100+ Garganey, Brahminy Kite, Barred Buttonquail, White-browed Fantail, Yellow-eyed Babbler, Jerdon's Bushlark, Malabar Pied Hornbill, Jerdon's and Little Indian Nightjar among others.



Brahminy Kite
Haliastur indus indus

Barred Buttonquail
Turnix suscitator leggei

White-browed Fantail
Rhipidura aureola compressirostris

Day 10–11 (23–24 March) Nuwara Eliya, Victoria Park and Hakgala Botanical Gardens.

Next morning, with a scheduled return visit to Yala NP unanimously not taken up, we were able to revisit Amila's local patch with a view to improving our photo ticks.

So, en route to the cooler hills of Nuwara-Eliya, we paused at the magical site of the Sirkeer Malkoha once again. While the White-rumped Shama was performing slightly better in terms of viewing, the Jungle Owlet confirmed by its presence again that this was a day roost site. Yellow-billed Babbler, 'Southern' Coucal, Indian Blue Robin, Jerdon's Leafbird and White-naped Woodpecker—a new site tick for Amila—were also seen well. But it was time to move on.

A lunch stop on the long journey at Ella, overlooking a steep sided valley at 1042m above sea level was good for hirundines: Little Swift, Barn Swallow, Indian Swiftlet and Hill Swallow. However, to photograph the latter, a visit to the upper floor of the local tea factory was required on the way to Kandy.

Just outside Hakgala, there is a roadside market at a bus stop in the form of a couple of ramshackle huts selling confectionary and sundries. You'd never suspect the steep path behind them leads down to a rocky mountain stream to which one of Sri Lanka's most difficult-to-see endemics descends each evening. The female did the scouting work and called to the male to join her, as if to say the coast is clear. When we arrived, it wasn't.

Unhesitatingly, and with complete inevitability of total obedience in his master's voice, Amila invited the local villager lady to do her washing some other time. She obliged and after a short wait we were treated to very brief, very gloomy views of a female Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush. CH will photograph anything in any light but even his best efforts were unusable.

Little did we know Amila had an alternative site up his sleeve for dawn. One of our guide's less-endearing traits in our view was to keep all his gems hidden under layers of secrecy and to exhibit a stonewall obstinacy to communicate ahead of time. This occasionally led to interesting discussions about, and creeping doubts over his tactical awareness. We shouldn't have bothered with any of this, he was proved right every step of the way.

Climbing the steep forested valley sides above the town of Nuwara-Eliya next morning scored Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Sri Lanka White-eye, Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher, Blyth's Reed Warbler and photographs of 2 of the missing endemics (29). The pair of Sri Lanka Whistling Thrushes calling to each other as they descended by a fast flowing stream, posing just long enough to be photographed, will live long in the memory – a truly scintillating species.



Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush *Myophonus blighi* Sri Lanka Bush-Warbler *Bradypterus palliseri*

Moving down into town and a visit to the busy suburban Victoria Park was rewarded with another non-endemic target bird—Pied Thrush, a pair feeding at the edge of the rubbish-strewn stream along with Common Sandpiper, Forest and Grey Wagtail.



Pied Thrush *Zosterops wardii*

Soon after this, we drove north from Nuwara picking up Pied Bushchat on a wire over the road. This was a prelude to the discovery of endemic No. 31, Yellow-eared Bulbul. And driving through Sri Lanka's highest and most extensive grasslands in Ambewala, we were rewarded with the trip's only Black-throated Munia in a mixed flock that contained Tricoloured and Scaly-bellied Munias. Our only Indian Blackbird *Turdus simillimus kinnisii* was noted here, a split from Eurasian Blackbird. Pied Bushchat and preening Paddyfield Pipit on roadside posts offered an excellent photographic opportunity from the car.



Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata atrata* Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus malayensis*

Worryingly, we had failed to connect anywhere with Crimson-backed (Greater) Flameback, an endemic we should have seen at Kithulgala or Sinharaja. Amila had a small diversion in mind.

An unscheduled visit to an upper montane forest yielded Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Sri Lanka White-eye, Yellow-eared Bulbul, Orange Minivet, Bright-green Warbler and endemic no. 32, Dull-blue Flycatcher—which presented stunning views at eye-level.



Yellow-eared Bulbul *Pycnonotus penicillatus* Dull-blue Flycatcher *Eumyias sordida*

A session of intensive listening by Amila as we walked and drove the mountain road finally ended in a shout of excitement as a female Crimson-backed Flameback (33) flew onto a tall tree next to the road. A male joined her and the set was complete...we had seen all of the endemic bird species of Sri Lanka in just over 10 days and photographed all but one of them.



Crimson-backed Flameback *Chrysocolaptes stricklandi* ♂ & ♀

Day 12–13 (25–26 March) Hakgala Botanical Gardens, Udawattekele Forest Reserve.

Dawn saw us in Hakgala Botanical Gardens which proved to be highly productive. The target bird was Kashmir Flycatcher and much fun was had following a stunning male from tree to tree trying to photograph it. Here, we also had Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher, Dull-Blue Flycatcher, Brown-breasted Flycatcher, Oriental Magpie Robin, Sri Lanka White-eye.



Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*



Kashmir Flycatcher *Ficedula subrubra*



Sri Lanka White-eye *Zosterops ceylonensis*



Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui*



Dull-Blue Flycatcher *Eumyias sordida*



Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis ceylonensis*

March is a peak month for observing butterflies in Sri Lanka, and proved pleasant distractions during our birding walks. Like her dragonflies, many of Sri Lanka's *Lepidoptera* are stunning and a selection is attached here including the largest*:



Common Bluebottle

Common Tiger

Blue Tiger

White Four-Ring

Common Jezebel

Metallic Cerulean

Red Helen

Common Leopard

Sri Lanka Birdwing*

Arriving in Kandy in mid-afternoon, we enjoyed a splendid curry and rice lunch at an excellent restaurant overlooking the city while watching White-bellied Sea-Eagles soar over the lake. Later, we had close views of Little Cormorants too.



White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

Little Cormorant *Phalacrocorax niger*

An unscheduled visit to the Udawattekele Royal Forest yielded 2 more stunning night birds—Brown Wood Owl and Spot-bellied Eagle Owl, both of which provided amazing views, and record shots.

Other noteworthy specials here included Southern Hill Myna, Asian Paradise Flycatcher (♂ & ♀), Crimson-backed Flameback (♂ & ♀) again, Black Bulbul, Alexandrine Parakeet and White-rumped Shama (this time CH was extremely interested, even climbing (slithering) down a steep-sided ravine to get a better shot!).



White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus*



Southern Hill Myna *Gracula indica*



Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria*



Brown Wood Owl *Strix leptogrammica*



Forest Eagle-Owl *Bubo nipalensis*

Day 13–14 (26–27 March) Royal Botanical Gardens, and Sigiriya.

The following morning found us in the Royal Botanical Gardens at Peradeniya, near Kandy. The park is steeped in history with the Avenue of Palms and a Cannonball Tree planted by King George V and Queen Mary in 1901. Our bird tally here included Purple-rumped Sunbird, Spotted Dove, the endemic Sri Lanka Small Barbet, Alexandrine Parakeet, Yellow-browed Bulbul, Common Myna, Asian Palm Swift, Black-hooded Oriole, Brown-headed Barbet, White-bellied Drongo, Long-billed Sunbird (♂ & ♀), Brahminy Kite, Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher, and Pale-billed Flowerpecker. The Giant Indian Fruit Bat colony was both huge and spectacular.



Sri Lanka Small Barbet *Megalaima rubricapilla*



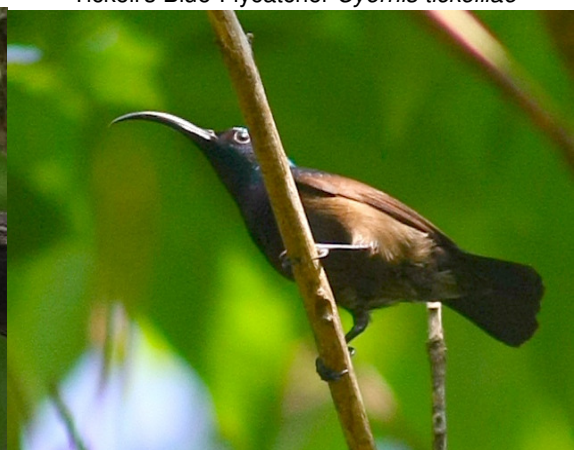
Black-hooded Oriole *Oriolus xanthornus*



Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher *Cyornis tickelliae*



Pale-billed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum erythrorhynchos*



Long-billed Sunbird *Nectarinia lotenia*

The park grounds and forest surrounding the Sigiriya Rock Palace were our next port of call and it's worth checking upwards to the palace ruins for Shaheen (Peregrine) Falcon *Falco (peregrinus) peregrinator*. Photos are possible but you'll probably need more than the 400mm reach of DT's lens; you could always climb the 1,500 steps to the summit for a better look...

At Sigiriya we scored Crimson-backed Flameback (♂ & ♀), Common Iora (but no Marshall's regrettably), Asian Paradise Flycatcher (both white and rufous morphs). As the evening approached, we placed ourselves in a secluded mid-forest patch strategically close to a series of puddles. What followed next was truly a memorable experience, as an array of difficult-to-see forest species showed up in clear view, one after the other.

This star-studded drinking party included Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, White-rumped Shama, Dark-fronted Babbler, Brown-capped Babbler, Emerald Dove, Indian Blue Robin (♂ & ♀) and Orange-headed Thrush. The photos are somewhat distant, (the birds were all very sensitive to our intrusion on their late drinking and bathing rituals), and at high ISO settings in the gloom but remain an evocative set for the authors.



Orange-headed Thrush *Zosterops citrina*



Indian Blue Robin *Luscinia brunnea*



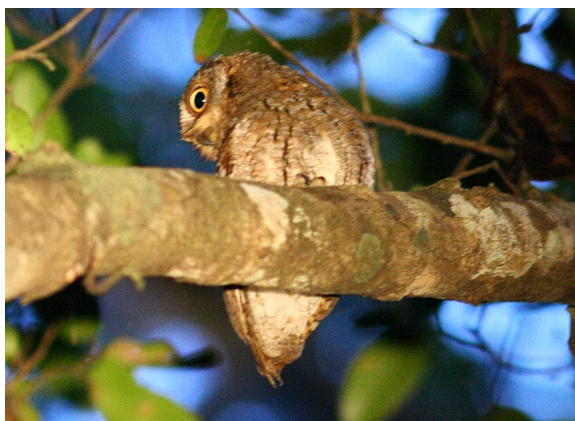
White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus*



Brown-capped Babbler *Pellorneum fuscicapillum*

Some intensive searching with high-powered torches yielded two more owl species here, Oriental Scops-Owl *Otus sunia leggei*—a rare gem, and Brown Fish-Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis zeylonensis*, the latter CH somehow contrived to miss despite an obvious fly past caught in Amila's flashlight.

Next morning at the well-located accommodation at Sigiriya, Sri Lanka Green Pigeon and Sri Lanka Grey Hornbills were showing well in a tree in the car park.



Oriental Scops-Owl *Otus sunia*



Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill *Ocyrocus gingalensis*

One particular target bird which had eluded Amila's best efforts to locate at its main site at the botanical gardens at Kandy and elsewhere was Common Hawk Cuckoo. On the route from Sigiriya to the Airport near Galewala we caught up with one by the roadside, confirming once and for all Amila's impression that we were blessed with an amazing degree of serendipity.

33 endemics in the first 10 days and 12 of the available 15 night birds on the tour, 230 species seen with 180 photographed set new records for Amila's Absolute Birding Tour.

One final highlight remained to stamp a suitably stunning seal on our Sri Lanka adventure in the shape of a ridiculously confiding adult male Black-rumped Flameback, as it foraged on termites on the tree trunks lining the entrance road to a hotel at Katunayake – our final stop.



Black-rumped Flameback *Dinopium benghalense psarodes* ad. ♂

Date	Night	English Name	Latin Name
14.3.10	Night	Indian Scops-Owl	Otus bakkamoena bakkamoena
14.3.10		Spot-bellied Pelican	Pelecanus philippensis
14.3.10		Yellow-billed Babbler	Turdoides affinis taprobanus
14.3.10		Orange-billed Babbler	Turdoides rufescens
14.3.10		White-bellied Drongo	Dicrurus caerulescens leucopygialis
14.3.10		Red-vented Bulbul	Pycnonotus cafer cafer
14.3.10		Common Tailorbird	Orthotomus sutorius sutorius
14.3.10		Brown-headed Barbet	Megalaima zeylanica zeylanica
14.3.10		Red-Backed Woodpecker	Dinopium benghalense psarodes
14.3.10		Long-billed Sunbird	Nectarinia lotenia lotenia
14.3.10		Bright-green Warbler	Phylloscopus nitidus
14.3.10		Sri Lanka Green Imperial-Pigeon	Ducula aenea pusilla
14.3.10		Indian Pond Heron	Ardeola grayii
14.3.10		Spot-winged Thrush	Zoothera spiloptera
14.3.10		Sri Lanka Swallow	Hirundo hyperythra
14.3.10		Layard's Parakeet	Psittacula calthropae

14.3.10		Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus ceylonensis</i>
14.3.10		Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos culminatus</i>
14.3.10		Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot	<i>Loriculus beryllinus</i>
14.3.10		<i>White-throated Kingfisher</i>	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis fusca</i>
14.3.10		Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis ceylonensis</i>
14.3.10		Sri Lanka Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis ceylonensis</i>
14.3.10		Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons insularis</i>
14.3.10		Green-billed Coucal	<i>Centropus chlororhynchus</i>
14.3.10		Indian Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia unicolor</i>
14.3.10		Lesser Yellownape	<i>Picus chlorolophus wellsii</i>
14.3.10		Sri Lanka Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus humii</i>
14.3.10		Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>
14.3.10		Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis melanosturnus</i>
14.3.10		Black-capped Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus melanicterus melanicterus</i>
14.3.10		Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>
14.3.10		Oriental Honey-Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus ruficollis</i>
14.3.10		White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata striata</i>
14.3.10		Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>
14.3.10		Orange Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus flammeus</i>
14.3.10		Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica robinsoni</i>
14.3.10		Brown-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa muttui</i>
14.3.10		Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis capensis</i>
14.3.10		<i>Little Egret</i>	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
14.3.10		Indian Blue Robin	<i>Luscinia brunnea brunnea</i>
14.3.10		Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus javanicus</i>
14.3.10		<i>Brown Shrike</i>	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
14.3.10		<i>Grey Wagtail</i>	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
14.3.10		Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea ceylonensis</i>
14.3.10		Dark-fronted Babbler	<i>Rhopocichla atriceps nigrifrons</i>
14.3.10		Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher	<i>Ceyx erithacus erithacus</i>
14.3.10		Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae jerdoni</i>
14.3.10		Purple-rumped Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia zeylonica zeylonica</i>
14.3.10		White-bellied Sea-Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>
14.3.10		<i>Striated Heron</i>	<i>Butorides striatus chloriceps</i>
14.3.10		Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyroceros gingalensis</i>
14.3.10		Indian Pitta	<i>Pitta brachyura</i>
14.3.10		Tawny-bellied Babbler	<i>Dumetia hyperythra philipsi</i>
14.3.10		Southern Hill Myna	<i>Gracula indica</i>
14.3.10		Yellow-fronted Barbet	<i>Megalaima flavifrons</i>
14.3.10		Sri Lanka Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron pompadora pompadora</i>
14.3.10		Sri Lanka Junglefowl	<i>Gallus lafayetii</i>
14.3.10		Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus cinnamomeus</i>
14.3.10	Night	Chestnut-backed Owlet	<i>Glaucidium castanonotum</i>
15.3.10		<i>White-breasted Waterhen</i>	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>
15.3.10		Indian Besra	<i>Accipiter virgatus besra</i>
15.3.10		Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus indus</i>
15.3.10		Yellow-browed Bulbul	<i>Iole indica guglielmi</i>
15.3.10		Crested Serpent-Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela spilogaster</i>
15.3.10		Brown-capped Babbler	<i>Pellorneum fuscocapillum</i>
15.3.10		Sri Lanka Spurfowl	<i>Galloperdix bicalcarata</i>
15.3.10		Sri Lanka Myna	<i>Gracula ptilogenys</i>
15.3.10	Night	Brown Hawk-Owl	<i>Ninox scutulata hirsuta</i>
15.3.10		Sri Lanka Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa ornata</i>
15.3.10		Sri Lanka Crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus lophorinus</i>
15.3.10		Sri Lanka Scimitar-Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus melanurus</i>
15.3.10		Asian Palm-Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis batasiensis</i>
15.3.10		<i>Common Kingfisher</i>	<i>Alcedo atthis taprobana</i>

15.3.10	Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i> <i>ceylonense</i>
15.3.10	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i> <i>multicolor</i>
15.3.10	Night Sri Lanka Frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus</i> <i>moniliger</i>
15.3.10	Night Serendib Scops-Owl	<i>Otus thilohoffmanni</i>
16.3.10	<i>Rose-ringed Parakeet</i>	<i>Psittacula krameri</i> <i>manillensis</i>
16.3.10	Forest Wagtail	<i>Dendronanthus</i> <i>indicus</i>
16.3.10	Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i> <i>palpebrosus</i>
16.3.10	Legge's Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum</i> <i>vincens</i>
16.3.10	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i> <i>parroti</i>
16.3.10	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i> <i>dauurica</i>
16.3.10	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i> <i>protegatus</i>
16.3.10	Black-headed Cuckoo-Shrike	<i>Coracina melanoptera</i> <i>sykesi</i>
16.3.10	Ashy-headed Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax cinereifrons</i>
16.3.10	Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba torringtoni</i>
16.3.10	Red-faced Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus pyrrhocephalus</i>
17.3.10	White-faced Starling	<i>Sturnus senex</i>
17.3.10	Sri Lanka White-eye	<i>Zosterops</i> <i>ceylonensis</i>
17.3.10	Asian Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i> <i>ceylonensis</i>
17.3.10	Brown-backed Needletail	<i>Hirundapus giganteus</i> <i>indicus</i>
17.3.10	Malabar Trogon	<i>Harpactes fasciatus</i>
17.3.10	Sri Lanka Scaly Thrush	<i>Zoothera imbricata</i>
17.3.10	Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malayensis</i> <i>perniger</i>
17.3.10	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i> <i>bakeri</i>
18.3.10	Large-billed Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus magnirostris</i>
18.3.10	Crested Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>
18.3.10	Rufous-bellied Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus kienerii</i> <i>kienerii</i>
18.3.10	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopacea</i> <i>scolopacea</i>
18.3.10	Sri Lanka Small Barbet	<i>Megalaima rubricapilla</i>
19.3.10	Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i> <i>leggei</i>
19.3.10	Asian Open-bill Stork	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>
19.3.10	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i> <i>indicus</i>
19.3.10	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia intermedia</i>
19.3.10	Crested Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus cirrhatus</i> <i>ceylanensis</i>
19.3.10	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i> <i>punctulata</i>
19.3.10	Grey-breasted Prinia	<i>Prinia hodgsonii</i> <i>leggei</i>
19.3.10	Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix grisea</i>
19.3.10	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i> <i>jerdoni</i>
19.3.10	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>
19.3.10	Common Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
19.3.10	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i> <i>cinerea</i>
19.3.10	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i> <i>indicus</i>
19.3.10	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i> <i>brevicauda</i>
19.3.10	Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i> <i>leggei</i>
19.3.10	Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>
19.3.10	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>
19.3.10	Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
19.3.10	Little Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i> <i>orientalis</i>
19.3.10	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i> <i>omalura</i>
19.3.10	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>
19.3.10	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i> <i>eupatria</i>
19.3.10	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i> <i>gutteralis</i>
19.3.10	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
19.3.10	Jungle Prinia	<i>Prinia sylvatica</i> <i>valida</i>
19.3.10	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> <i>sinensis</i>
19.3.10	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i> <i>ceylonensis</i>
19.3.10	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybridus</i> <i>javanica</i>
19.3.10	Intermediate Egret	<i>Mesophoyx intermedia</i> <i>intermedia</i>

19.3.10		<i>Wood Sandpiper</i>	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
19.3.10		Orange-breasted Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron bicincta leggei</i>
19.3.10		Malabar Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros coronatus</i>
19.3.10		Black-backed Robin	<i>Saxicoloides fulicata leucoptera</i>
19.3.10		Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>
19.3.10		Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii leschenaultii</i>
19.3.10		Jerdon's Bush Lark	<i>Mirafraga affinis</i>
19.3.10		Grey-bellied Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis passerinus</i>
19.3.10		Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis indica</i>
19.3.10		White-browed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus luteolus insulae</i>
19.3.10		White-naped Woodpecker	<i>Chrysocolaptes festivus tantus</i>
19.3.10		<i>Pied Cuckoo</i>	<i>Oxylophus jacobinus jacobinus</i>
19.3.10		Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>
19.3.10		Thick-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum agile zeylonicum</i>
19.3.10		<i>Sri Lanka Hoopoe</i>	<i>Upupa epops ceylonensis</i>
19.3.10		<i>Black-crowned Night Heron</i>	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
19.3.10	Night	Indian Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus asiaticus eidos</i>
19.3.10		<i>Purple Heron</i>	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
19.3.10		Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala indica</i>
20.3.10		<i>Great White Egret</i>	<i>Egretta alba modesta</i>
20.3.10		Jerdon's Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i>
20.3.10		<i>Little Swift</i>	<i>Apus affinis affinis</i>
20.3.10		White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola compressirostris</i>
20.3.10		Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>
20.3.10		Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>
20.3.10		<i>Little Grebe</i>	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
20.3.10		<i>Grey-headed Wagtail</i>	<i>Motacilla flava thunbergi</i>
20.3.10		Sri Lanka Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis affinis</i>
20.3.10		Purple Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia asiatica asiatica</i>
20.3.10	Night	Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum radiatum</i>
20.3.10		<i>Common Sandpiper</i>	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
20.3.10		<i>Common Redshank</i>	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
20.3.10		<i>Purple Swampphen</i>	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>
20.3.10		<i>Little Tern</i>	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>
20.3.10		<i>Gull-billed Tern</i>	<i>Sterna nilotica</i>
20.3.10		<i>Ringed Plover</i>	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
20.3.10		<i>Lesser Sand Plover</i>	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>
20.3.10		Lesser Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>
20.3.10		<i>Little Stint</i>	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
20.3.10		Oriental Skylark	<i>Alauda gulgula australis</i>
20.3.10		Cotton Pygmy Goose	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus coromandelianus</i>
20.3.10		Grey-headed Fish-Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>
20.3.10		Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>
20.3.10		Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus philippinus</i>
20.3.10		<i>Eurasian Spoonbill</i>	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
20.3.10		<i>Common Moorhen</i>	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
20.3.10		Tricoloured Munia	<i>Lonchura malacca malacca</i>
20.3.10		Black Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus flavicollis flavicollis</i>
20.3.10		Water Cock	<i>Gallicrex cinerea</i>
21.3.10		Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>
21.3.10		Indian Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus indicus</i>
21.3.10		<i>White-winged Black Tern</i>	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>
21.3.10		Clamorous Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus stentoreus meridionalis</i>
21.3.10		Pintail Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>
21.3.10		<i>Greenshank</i>	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
21.3.10		<i>Eurasian Curlew</i>	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
21.3.10		<i>Eastern Black-tailed Godwit</i>	<i>Limosa limosa melanuroides</i>

21.3.10		<i>Pacific Golden Plover</i>	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>
21.3.10		<i>Marsh Sandpiper</i>	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
21.3.10		<i>Pied Kingfisher</i>	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
21.3.10		Great Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus recurvirostris</i>
21.3.10		Blue-faced Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus viridirostris</i>
21.3.10		<i>Shikra</i>	<i>Accipiter badius badius</i>
21.3.10		Brown-headed Gull	<i>Larus brunnicephalus</i>
21.3.10		Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>
21.3.10		<i>Crested Tern</i>	<i>Sterna bergii velox</i>
21.3.10		<i>Lesser Crested Tern</i>	<i>Sterna bengalensis</i>
21.3.10		<i>Caspian Tern</i>	<i>Sterna caspia caspia</i>
21.3.10		<i>Ruddy Turnstone</i>	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
21.3.10		<i>Grey Plover</i>	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
21.3.10		Small Pratincole	<i>Glareola lactea</i>
21.3.10		<i>Curlew Sandpiper</i>	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
21.3.10		<i>Kentish Plover</i>	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus seebohmi</i>
21.3.10		<i>Garganey</i>	<i>Anas querquedula</i>
21.3.10		Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense nasale</i>
21.3.10	Night	Jerdon's Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus atripennis aequabilis</i>
22.3.10		<i>Great Tit</i>	<i>Parus major mahrattarum</i>
22.3.10		White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus leggei</i>
22.3.10		Streaked Weaver	<i>Ploceus manyar flaviceps</i>
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23.3.10		Hill Swallow	<i>Hirundo domicola</i>
23.3.10		Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis ceylonensis</i>
23.3.10		Sri Lanka Whistling-Thrush	<i>Myophonus blighi</i>
23.3.10		<i>Rose-coloured Starling</i>	<i>Sturnus roseus</i>
24.3.10		Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis frontalis</i>
24.3.10		Sri Lanka Bush Warbler	<i>Bradypterus palliseri</i>
24.3.10		Pied Thrush	<i>Zoothera wardii</i>
24.3.10		Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata atrata</i>
24.3.10		Yellow-eared Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus penicillatus</i>
24.3.10		Black-throated Munia	<i>Lonchura kelaarti kelaarti</i>
24.3.10		Indian Blackbird	<i>Turdus simillimus kinnisii</i>
24.3.10		Dull Blue Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias sordida</i>
24.3.10		Crimson-backed Flameback	<i>Chrysocolaptes stricklandi</i>
25.3.10		Kashmir Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula subrubra</i>
25.3.10	Night	Brown Wood Owl	<i>Strix leptogrammica ochrogenys</i>
25.3.10	Night	Forest Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo nipalensis blighi</i>
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26.3.10		Shaheen Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus peregrinator</i>
26.3.10		Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Zoothera citrina citrina</i>
26.3.10	Night	Brown Fish-Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis zeylonensis</i>
26.3.10	Night	Oriental Scops-Owl	<i>Otus sunia leggei</i>
26.3.10		Common Hawk-Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus varius ciceliae</i>
		Endemics = 33	
		Night = 12	
		Sighted = 230	
		Photographed = 180	
		Life Ticks = 171	

Amila's blog post about our trip can be viewed at:
<http://gallicissa.blogspot.com/2010/09/absolute-birdingmarch-2010.html>