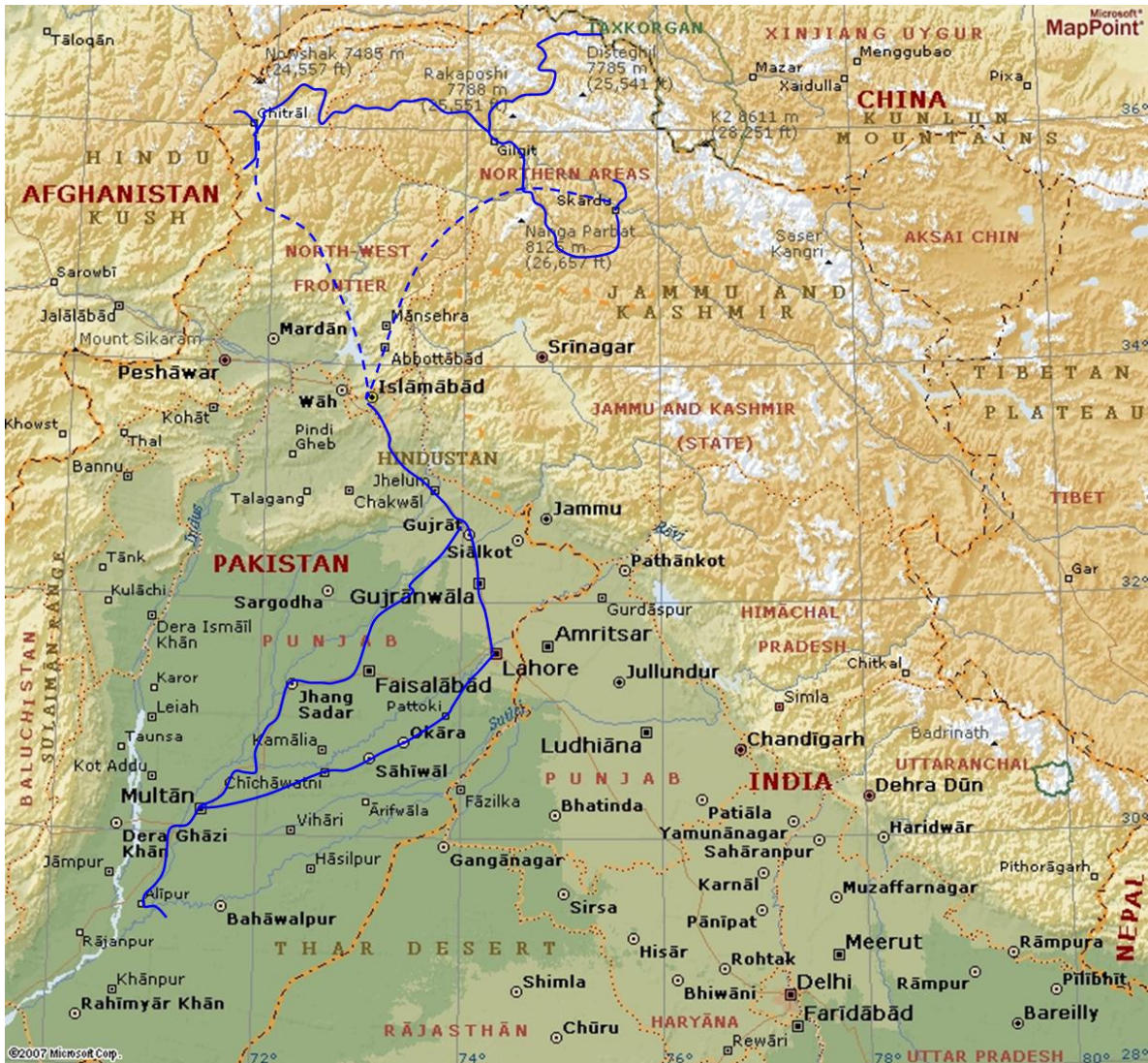


NORTHERN & CENTRAL PAKISTAN

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Introduction

In October and November 2007 my girlfriend Aniek de Graaf and I independently visited northern and central Pakistan (see map). Why visit Pakistan?? Well, why not! An important reason for us was to visit our friends, who work in Islamabad. But it was also an opportunity to see this little visited country with many western Himalaya and Indus Plain bird specialties.

In this report I'd like to show that Pakistan is definitely underestimated and visiting this country these days is not as difficult or dangerous as one might think. Travel is easy and Pakistani are one of the most hospitable, helpful and friendly people in the world. Nevertheless, don't take it lightheartedly. Some areas are off limits (tribal areas) and extra attention is required for some parts of Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), Baluchistan and Sindh. Recently bombings have taken place in large cities including Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore. Always inform yourself about the latest security situation at your country's Foreign Ministry (site) and Embassy and check with locals (e.g. hotel staff, who are mostly good and reliable sources). Take normal precautions and be attentive as you do on trips abroad and you'll have a fantastic experience.

Flight

The cheapest option was a flight with Gulf Air from Amsterdam to London (operated by KLM) and from there to Muscat and on to Islamabad (c €620). Although we had 3½ hours in London this was too short for transporting our luggage to the right plane, so in Islamabad unfortunately our luggage turned out to be still in London. After two days our luggage arrived at the next flight and without too much hassles we could pick it up.

Visa

A visa (€47) is necessary for most visitors. A visa will only be issued if you show a copy of your return ticket. The visa is valid for most parts of the country, but the tribal areas and (sensitive) border areas are excluded for obvious reasons. Chitral (in NWFP) is situated in a sensitive zone close to the Afghan border, so we needed to register with local Superintendent of Police. The Temporary Registration Form was issued easily and free of charge at the very friendly Foreigners' Registration at the police station of Chitral.

Along the roads in the north you encounter many army or police checkpoints where you need to register. At these points the police or army is very friendly to tourists (often offering tea on remote spots) and registration never gave any problem (they all wanted to look through your bins, but just for their interest).

Accommodation

Accommodation is widely available in all kinds of ranges. In Islamabad we had the advantage to stay with friends. In Shigar we stayed in the expensive, but very scenic Shigar Fort Residence (www.shigarfort.com). In the mountains accommodation was very basic. In Karimabad, Gilgit and Chitral there's some more choice. In Central Pakistan, especially in large cities, all ranges of accommodation are widely available. We mostly chose mid-range hotels which are quite cheap in Pakistan.

Transport

All forms of transport are available. We took a flight into the north from Islamabad to Skardu and back from Chitral to Islamabad (with PIA c €50 each way per person) as it saved lots of time and the route from Chitral to Islamabad was not very safe at that time. The flight from Islamabad to Skardu with PIA in a shortened Boeing 737 is considered one of the most spectacular flights. As no radar is used, only at clear days the plane will go, regardless the schedule. The route goes straight towards the huge and high Nanga Parbat (8125m; flying at the same level as the summit!) and quickly descends between the high mountains in the (desert) Skardu valley. One disadvantage of flying is that you have to re-confirm your flight personally at the office of PIA (God knows why).

Buses cover the main routes in the country. However, in the mountains buses are not so frequent. Being a birder, renting a car or 4x4 jeep is a good (though not cheap) option as you can take different routes and stop wherever you like. The roads are not always in good condition due to landslides and many roads (except for the KKH) are not paved. Furthermore, some roads are along steep cliffs and ravines, so some travel in the north is not for the faint-hearted! In Baltit (Skardu) we rented a Toyota Landcruiser with driver for three days to cover the track Shigar – Deosai Plains – Gilgit – Gojal - Khunjerab Pass – Karimabad for €200 (\$300) at the hotel. In Skardu you may be able to get a better deal. In Karimabad we negotiated a 4x4 Jeep for 5 days to and around Chitral at Hidden Valley Tours for €200, including a driver and a guide (the latter liked to join us because he expected us to be his last customers before the winter and he wanted to visit some friends in Chitral). Using the service of a guide made things a lot easier (e.g. language and re-confirming the flight ticket in Gilgit) and the guide is recommended.

In central Pakistan we used buses (mostly of the reliable Daewoo Company). In Multan we rented a taxi and guide to Uch Charif and Panjnad Head. In cities taxis (passenger Suzuki's), local busses and autorickshaws are widely available.

If you don't like to organize transport yourself, there are some reliable tour operators in the country (see Lonely Planet). Hunza Guides Pakistan is one of them (mostly offering mountain expeditions) and they offer very reliable transport as well as tailor-made tours.

References

For travel we used Lonely Planet's Pakistan & the Karakoram Highway (2004 ed.) and Trekking in the Karakoram & Hindukush (2002 ed.). For birding the best field guides are the two volumes Rasmussen Guide (2005, Lynx Edicions), but they are a little too heavy to take along in the field. Therefore I made photocopies of texts of the difficult

groups and took the (already used) pocket sized 'Pocket Guide to the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent' (2000, Helm) and Krys Kazmiercak's 'A Field Guide to the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent' (2000, Helm Field Guides) with me. The forthcoming Birds of Pakistan (expected Nov 2008, Helm) is derived from the former, with more specified texts. Unfortunately, the excellent two volume 'The Birds of Pakistan' by T.J. Roberts is hard to get and even harder to carry, but it is the only good handbook.

There is very little information about birding in Pakistan. Pakistan's short chapter in Nigel Wheatley's 'Where to watch birds in Asia' (Helm, 1996) is still very useful, although Palas Valley for example seems to be off limits now. At the moment, only Birdquest leads birdtrips to Pakistan. It has a very good trip report from the 2005 tour (<http://www.birdquest.co.uk/pdfs/report/PAKISTAN%20REP%2005.pdf>). Furthermore Anssi Kullberg's Islamabad Bird Report, 2002 is very valuable ([http://www.camacdonald.com/birding/asiapakistan\(AnssiTripReport\).htm](http://www.camacdonald.com/birding/asiapakistan(AnssiTripReport).htm)). Also check the site of the recently formed Birdwatchers Club of Pakistan which is pretty helpful (<http://www.wildlifeofpakistan.com/PakistanBirdClub/index.html>). Detailed accounts of some Pakistan specialities are presented.

Visited sites

ISLAMABAD AREA

The area around the capital is very good for birding. The city itself is very green with lots of trees everywhere and it has broad tree fringed lanes. In and around the garden of my friends house (which is closely situated near the Margalla hills) I observed, amongst others, Hoopoe, Grey Treepie, White-throated Fantail, Hume's Warbler, Grey-hooded warbler, Indian Robin, Jungle Babbler, Long-tailed Shrike and, surprisingly, a **Brown Rock Chat**. There are two main birding spots: Margalla Hills and Rawal Lake. Both are easily accessible (by taxi and foot). Nathiagali involves a day trip from the capital.

Margalla Hills

The Margalla Hills are just situated north of the town. The hills reach a height of 1600m and form the beginning of the Himalaya Range. The hills are covered with bushes and low deciduous forest. Good walking trails cover the whole area (check <http://bbs.keyhole.com/ubb/showthreaded.php?Number=336693> for a Google earth/maps kmz file of all the trails), although some are not so well maintained (I felt a few meters in a ravine when walking alone high up in an overgrown part of a trail from the ridge towards the mosque; fortunately I wasn't that hurt). We visited the area a few times as it was closely situated near our friends' house, especially trail 2 to Daman-e Koh. One of Pakistan specialities, **White-cheeked Tit**, has a population in the Margalla Hills. I observed the species twice, both times higher up in the hills: at the ridge trail (2) and near Pirsohawa (3). Along the western ridge trail nice surprises were a female **Meadow Bunting** and a (skulking) male **White-bellied Redstart**. Also, two Striated Prinias were observed. (Fairly) common birds here were Blue-throated Barbet, Long-tailed Minivet, Himalayan Bulbul, Rufous Treepie, Bar-tailed Treecreeper, Spot-winged Tit, Oriental White-eye, Hume's Warbler, Grey-hooded Warbler, Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler and Jungle Babbler. Later, further into the mountains near Piroshowa, we took a blocked, dead end road followed by a path eastwards which yielded Ultramarine Flycatcher (3) and Himalayan Red-flanked Bluetail (3). I observed two males of the latter also at trail 2 in a small gorge covered with dense bushes.

Rawal Lake

Rawal Lake is situated on the eastern side of the city and can easily be reached by taxi. On the north side it is accessible through the new Lake View Park which is very busy in weekends, but still it is good to explore the trees, bushes, reeds and lake. Especially the eastern side of the park is relatively quiet (and under construction). Unfortunately, I only visited Rawal Lake once (Lake View Park on Friday 2nd of Nov), but still I managed to see some nice species, amongst others White breasted Waterhen, Wryneck (1), Oriental Turtle Dove (2 *meena*), Shikra, Coppersmith Barbet (2), Blue-throated Barbet (5), Long-tailed Shrike, Long-tailed Minivet (4 males), Blue whistling Thrush (2), Grey Bushchat (male and female), Bar-tailed Treecreeper (3), Lemon-rumped Warbler (1), White-browed Wagtail (2).

Nathiagali

This nicely situated hill resort is situated some three hours driving north of Islamabad in southernmost NWFP. Nathiagali lies in a lower part at the end of the Himalaya Range at 25-2600m and is part of a remaining relatively large forested area. It can be reached by bus from Abbottabad or Rawalpindi (change in Murree), but it is more

convenient to take a taxi or rent a car. We were fortunate to join our friends with their own car on Eid Day. We walked along a forest path just at the north side of the ridge. The surroundings of Murree and especially Ayubia NP will probably harbour the same species, if not more. Along the road just west of Ayubia there is magnificent pine and fir forest and here some goodies can be seen from the road. We observed **Himalayan Woodpecker**, Coppersmith Barbet, Rufous Treepie, Large billed Crow (very common), Raven, **White-cheeked Nuthatch**, Spot-winged Tit and Green-backed Tit. Along the forested ridge we saw Brown-fronted Woodpecker (male), **Himalayan Woodpecker** (2), **Scaly-bellied Woodpecker** (3), **White-eyed Buzzard**, **Yellow-billed Blue Magpie** (20), **White-cheeked Nuthatch** (15), Bar-tailed Treecreeper (4), Spot-winged Tit (>50), **Rufous-naped Tit** (3).

NORTHERN AREAS

The Northern Areas, part of Kashmir, is Pakistan's most northern district. It offers, besides stunning mountain scenery, some great and often restricted bird species, due to its favorable position. Valleys with original vegetation (forest and bushes) are good for birding. High altitude species are, like always, hard to find.

Shigar

Shigar is beautifully situated in the Shigar Valley near Skardu in Baltistan, Northern Areas at 2400m. The fertile land bordering the river contrasts with the dry surrounding land and mountains. In October the birdlife is not very rich here, but there are still some nice species present. We birded the fertile land, the tree filled village and the garden of the Fort. The garden held a male **Tickell's Thrush**, Blue Whistling Thrush (2 singing males), Nightjar (1), **Mountain Chiffchaff** (2), Hume's Warbler (2), Streaked Laughingthrush (10) and 4 *caniceps* Goldfinches. Alpine Chough (>2), Chough (200), Craig Martin (20) and Booted Eagle (2) flew overhead. Next day we birded the path along the Bauma Lungma (river) into the mountains. In some dense *Hippophae* bushes along the river (at 2430m) I discovered my first (a male and a female) **White-browed Tit Warblers**, first skulking but finally with superb views, together with a **Brown Accentor**. Furthermore we saw Brown Dipper (1), *personata* White Wagtail (male), Red-throated Flycatcher (2), White capped Water Redstart (1), Blue Whistling Thrush (4), Hume's Warbler (2), Chiffchaff spec (2). Magpie and Great Tit were common in the village.

Satpara Valley

The unpaved track from Skardu (2290m) towards the high altitude plateau of Deosai (>4000m) follows the steep Satpara Valley. The landscape is very dry. There are some bushes along the river where there is no grazing. On some parts of the slopes higher up grow junipers. At 3100m (N 35° 9'29.48" E 75°36'33.16") at the best *Hippophae* bush along the whole track, we observed a flock of 6 males **White-winged Redstarts** together with 4 (2 males+ 2 females) **White-browed Tit Warblers**, 4 **Red-fronted Serins** and a **Brown Accentor**. A little further, 4 **Robin Accentors** and a male Blue-capped Redstart could be well observed in some *juniperus*. At 3800m a Dipper was present.

Deosai National Park

Deosai NP comprises an immense (3630 sq km), grassy, high altitude plateau which is nowhere lower than 4000m. The park is a refuge for the rare Himalayan Brown Bear. Deosai plain is snowbound for about 8 months a year. As a result, bird life is very poor. Shore Lark is common in the summer, but already almost absent in October. We observed only two birds. Beside the larks, only a Dipper, three migrating Heuglin's Gulls (at 4200m at Sheosar Lake) and a female Desert Wheatear at 4180m are worth mentioning (but the views were fantastic).

Astor Valley

From the 4266m high Sheosar Pass we left the Deosai plain and entered a side valley of the rough and remote Astor Valley. From the Sheosar pass you have stunning views of the Nanga Parbat (8125m). The upper Astor valley is quite gentle sloping, but it is getting steeper and steeper towards the Indus valley and the Karakoram Highway (KKH). There are some forest fragments which can be quite good for birds (e.g. around Astor, but we didn't visit them). In the upper valley we passed some parts with junipers and rocks (34-3600m) with at least 8 **Robin Accentors** and 15 Rock Buntings in total. In the Pine-Juniper zone I observed a nice **Larger-spotted Nutcracker** (*multipunctata*, which is even whiter than on the plates), a flock of 20 Plain Mountain Finches, Rock Bunting (5), Large-billed Crow (20) and Alpine Chough (10). In villages Streaked Laughingthrush, Blue Whistling-thrush, Great Tit, Large-billed Crow and Magpie were present. In the lower Astor Valley (Astor village to KKH) a **Himalayan Accentor**, 30 Crag Martins, a Streaked Laughingthrush and a male *personata* White Wagtail were observed.

Karakoram Highway & Khunjerab Pass

The famous and spectacular Karakoram Highway stretches for more than 800km in Pakistan from Havelian to the Khunjerab Pass on the border with China at a mind-blowing 4934m. The pass is closed in winter from 31 October to 1 May (but check), so, on the the 20th we were just in time. The road itself follows the Indus and the Hunza Valley, which cross the very high and steep Karakoram Range. Famous mountains directly bordering the KKH are Nanga Parbat (8125m, 7 kilometers higher than the road) and Rakaposhi (7790m, still 5500 meters higher than the road). The valley bottom is fertile with arable land, poplars, fruit trees and bushes. Higher up, only *Hippophae* bushes border the river and streams and junipers on some the slopes. Nevertheless most of the immense landscape consists of bare rocks and higher up also some huge glaciers and snow. As a result in this harsh landscape birdlife isn't abundant. Nevertheless, some good species can be seen.

Between Gilgit and Hunza (between Sultanabad and Jutal, in gentle sloping rocky terrain on the east side of the road) we observed at least two **Hume's Wheatears** and a Wallcreeper. As it gets higher from Gulmit onwards, other species appear. Between Gulmit and Gojal we saw a **Brown Accentor**, two **Scaly-bellied Woodpeckers**, a high Hoopoe, a Little Owl (in rocky, uninhabited terrain) and at least 15 **White-winged Redstarts** (mostly two males together, once a flock of four females) in *Hippophae* bushes along the road.

The last part of the road, from Sust to Khunjerab Pass through Khunjerab National Park, crosses very steep gorges and steep, barren, rocky and snow covered slopes. I checked the slopes frequently for Himalayan Snowcock, but this is definitely the worst time to find the species as they are at their highest up into the mountain (just before winter) and they don't call, so no bird was seen at all during the trip. (Willow) Forest is only present in some parts along the river, for example at the checkpoint of Dhee, where we saw a Chaffinch (which is a good species here!), together with two **Red-fronted Serins** (which I personally prefer...). The highlight was my find of fresh tracks of **Snow Leopard** along the road in a muddy part of the river at c 3700m! Unfortunately we did not find this mythical animal. Further, we observed a few Brown Accentors, a Golden Eagle, a fine Himalayan Griffon and two flocks (3 and c30) of winter plumaged **Brandt's Mountain Finches**. At the pass in the cold plateau at 4934m only two **Rosy Pipits** and a soaring Lammergeier were present. Near the pass a group of Himalayan Ibex foraged along the road.

On the way back we stayed some days in the Hunza Valley. This fertile valley along the KKH is beautifully situated and therefore it is one of the most touristic places in North Pakistan - all in perspective, of course. Especially at this time of the year the scenery was fantastic since all trees were red and yellow. However, from a birder point of view this time of the year is relatively poor with only the few resident species (Carrion Crow, Alpine Chough, Chough, Magpie, Great Tit, Blue Whistling Thrush, Streaked Laughingthrush, *caniceps* Goldfinch and Rock Bunting) present which you find in most valleys here at this altitude (cf Shigar, Skardu, Astor etc.). Further, the path to Ultar Meadow - through a steep gorge with *Hippophae* and other bushes along the stream - yielded a White-capped Water Redstart, a fine male Blue-capped Redstart, a Hume's Warbler and three Tree Pipits. Unfortunately after an hour walking the path was blocked due to a land slide.

Ghizar & Laspur Valley

Both river valleys lie *en route* from Gilgit to Chitral. They are separated by the Shandur Pass at 3810m, which is only one of the two gateways to Chitral. In the lower parts you cross villages and agricultural land. Higher up there is typical mountain landscape with very dry slopes with some bushes and still some agricultural activity. The river valley is bordered by bushes and trees. The high plateau and river valley at and near the pass is covered with moist and rocky grassland. Highlights were a male Plumbeous Water Redstart, 2 White-capped Water Redstarts, two Wall Creepers, a Blue Rock Thrush and a Long-tailed Shrike. Higher up (from c3000m) **White-winged Redstarts** appeared again. We saw at least 18 birds in small (2-7) flocks in bushes and on the rocks in the meadows near the pass. Three **Hume's Larks** were present on the pass in a flock of 50 Shore larks. Furthermore, flocks of Shore Lark (>100), **Red-fronted Serin** (2 in willows and roses at a small stream at 3450m), **Brown Accentor** (4), Plain Mountain Finch (2) and Twite (>50), Rock Bunting (>50) were observed during the trip.

CHITRAL

The Chitral District, situated in Pakistan's northwest corner in the Hindu Kush mountain range along the Afghan border, is remote and isolated. It is only accessible by air or by two high mountain passes. In 2007 only 1000 tourists (33 Dutch), including expats and diplomats, made it up here (we were 1009 and 1010). Because of its remoteness development is relatively slow. According to distribution maps many good 'Himalayan' species are present,

especially high forest birds. We visited two areas: The famous Kalasha Valley of Bumboret and Chitral Gol National Park. The latter turned out to be the best birding area visited during this trip.

Chitral Gol National Park

Chitral Gol NP is a very beautiful park just 30 kilometers NW of Chitral town close to the Afghan border. It is quite easily reached by following the (first paved and good, later gravel and narrow!) road winding up the mountain, which starts at PIA Chowk in Chitral town. Nevertheless, hardly any foreigners make it up all the way to here. In 2007 we were only the second and third foreigner visiting the park office at Chaghbini (at 2925m) that year. The landscape is stunning, the cedar forest is fantastic and bird life is very good, even in October. We observed lots of sought-after bird here. Besides, this is THE place to see **Snow Leopard** (although we didn't...). Later, I found out that BBC's Life of Mammals fantastic Leopards shots were taken here. January is the month in which it is said you have the biggest chance (1 out of 2) to see this magnificent creature here. In January most of the Chitral Markhors, the main prey of the leopard, have moved down into in the valley en they are followed by 1 to 3 animals. In October we were joined by the warden and observed quite a few Chitral Markhors (IUCN categorized 'Endangered'), but, despite intensive searching, no leopard.

The entrance road crosses the Mountain Oak zone. Here we found flocks of Waterpipit (8) and **Black-headed Jays** (2 and 4) and three superb **Spectacled Finches**, the latter foraging along the road in grass at 2400m. We walked the level trail from the warden's house over the ridge to a saddle at the Ishperudeh stream through fantastic Cedar and Pine forest. Higher up grow junipers. In some places Hazel is present in the undergrowth. Here we found >8 skulking **Black-throated Accentors**. In the Cedar-Pine forest we observed, amongst others, Black-throated Thrush (>25 migrating birds; once a flock of 20 birds), Mistle Thrush (2), **Himalayan Woodpecker** (2), **Scaly-bellied Woodpecker** (1), Large-billed Crow (40), Alpine Chough (5), *casiotus* Wood Pigeon (>150), **Snow Pigeon** (4), Sparrowhawk, Golden Eagle (2 ad), Larger-spotted Nutcracker (6), Blue-capped Redstart (2), **Kashmir Nuthatch** (4), **White cheeked Nuthatch** (6), **Rufous-naped Tit** (>15), Spot-winged Tit (>30), Chaffinch (2), Brambling (2), Linnet (4), a marvelous flock of >300 Plain Mountain Finches, **Blyth's Rosefinch** (a male and two females), **White-winged Grosbeak** (4, at least 2 males) and an **Orange Bullfinch**.

Bumboret Valley

The Bumboret Valley is one of the three intriguing Kalasha Valleys. The Kalasha are a non Muslim community. The Kalasha live in three fertile mountain valleys very close to the Afghan border. Although we visited the site for cultural reasons, some nice birds were observed. At the graveyard in Krakal I found a **Brooke's Leaf-warbler** in a 'flock' of at least 30 Hume's Warbler. Five **White-cheeked Tits** were present in a mixed species flock between Batrik and Brun. Two soaring Lammergeiers, 4 White-capped Water-redstarts and a Citrine Wagtail were also observed.

PUNJAB

The lowlands of Punjab offer good birding. Especially the rivers and fresh water areas are good and offer some restricted species. However, we've hardly birded here as most visits were in large cities and with a more cultural goal. Still, some good species were observed. Many birds were seen from the bus, during transportation (and stops) between cities which cross mostly through agricultural landscape and villages. Panjnad Head and surroundings was, quite briefly, visited by taxi (from Multan to Uch). Good birds seen in Punjab were **Brown Rock Chat** (I was surprised to see this species that regularly in villages in Punjab around Multan) and two forms (*capistrata* and *ophistioleuca*) of **Variable Wheatear** (I already saw many *picata* in S Iran).

Panjnad head

At Panjnad Head (as is in the name) five rivers and channels come together. There are extensive reed beds here. Along the road channel, there are pools with lush vegetation. Here we observed **Pheasant-tailed Jacana** (1), **Indian River Tern** (2), **Streak-throated Swallow** (3), Wire-tailed Swallow (1), Oriental Honey Buzzard (1), Brown-fronted Woodpecker (1), Clamorous Reed Warbler (4 singing), Plain Prinia (8), Yellow-bellied Prinia (1), **Rufous-vented Prinia** (>2), **Striated Babbler** (a flock of 7) and **Sind Sparrow** (2), which was quite good considering the unfavorable time of the day (during the hottest hours) and the short time of the visit.

Itinerary

- 11 October 2008: flight Amsterdam – Islamabad, stop-over London and Muscat
- 12 October 2008: morning arrival Islamabad; Islamabad; slept in friends' home
- 13 October 2008: Islamabad, birded Margalla Hills Ridge trail down to Faisal Mosque; slept at friends' home
- 14 October 2008: (Eid Day) Islamabad, day trip to Nathiagali; slept at friends' home
- 15 October 2008: Islamabad; slept in friends' home
- 16 October 2008: flight Islamabad – Skardu. Transfer to Shigar; slept in Shigar Fort
- 17 October 2008: Shigar, trail along Bauma Lungma; slept in Shigar Fort
- 18 October 2008: jeep Shigar – Skardu – Satpara Valley – Deosai NP – Astor Valley, slept in Astor
- 19 October 2008: jeep Astor – KKH - Gilgit – Karimabad – Gulmit, slept in Gulmit
- 20 October 2008: jeep Gulmit – Khunjerab Pass – Karimabad, slept in Karimabad
- 21 October 2008: Karimabad, slept in Karimabad
- 22 October 2008: Karimabad, trail to Ultar Meadow, slept in Karimabad
- 23 October 2008: jeep Karimabad – Gilgit – Ghizar Valley to Phandur, slept in Phandur
- 24 October 2008: jeep Phandur– Shandur Pass – Chitral, slept in Chitral
- 25 October 2008: Chitral, Kalasha Valley, slept in Chitral
- 26 October 2008: Chitral, Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP, slept in Chitral
- 27 October 2008: flight Chitral – Islamabad, taxi to Rawalpindi, and bus to Lahore, slept in Lahore
- 28 October 2008: Lahore, visit Old City, slept in Lahore
- 29 October 2008: Lahore, visit cricket match Pakistan - South Africa, slept in Lahore
- 30 October 2008: bus Lahore – Multan, slept in Multan
- 31 October 2008: taxi Multan – Panjnad Head – Uch Charif, slept in Multan
- 1 November 2008: bus Multan – Rawalpindi, taxi to Islamabad, slept at friends' home
- 2 November 2008: Islamabad, Rawal Lake, slept at friends' home
- 3 November 2008: Islamabad, Trail 2 Margalla Hills (to Daman-e Koh), slept at friends' home
- 4 November 2008: flight back to Amsterdam, with stop-overs in Al Manamah (Bahrain) and London



Larger-spotted Nutcracker, Chitral Gol NP, 26/10



male Blyth's Rosefinch, Chitral Gol NP, 26/10



male Kashmir Nuthatch, Chitral Gol NP, 26/10



female Blyth's Rosefinch, Chitral Gol NP, 26/10



White-cheeked Nuthatch, Nathiagali 14/10



male Blue-capped Redstart, Chitral Gol NP, 26/10



Rufous-naped Tit, Chitral Gol NP, 26/10



Himalayan Bulbul, Margalla Hills, 3/11



Large-billed Crow, Chitral Gol, 26/10



Hoopoe, Islamabad, 15/10



male Himalayan Woodpecker, Nathiagali, 14/10



Bank Myna, Faisalabad, 1/11

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF OBSERVATIONS

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

5 Jhang to Faisalabad (Multan to Rawalpindi) 1/11

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

4 Chenab River, M2 Faisalabad to Rawalpindi 1/11; 2 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Great Egret *Casmerodius albus*

2 Motorway Rawalpindi to Lahore 27/10; 4 Multan to Uch 31/10

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

1 Panjnad Head 31/10; 30 Multan to Rawalpindi 1/11; 30 Chenab River, M2 Faisalabad to Rawalpindi 1/11; 25 Jhelum River, M2 Faisalabad to Rawalpindi 1/11; 8 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Indian Pond-Heron *Ardeola grayii*

5 Lahore to Multan 30/10; >55 Multan to Uch 31/10; 5 at a roadside pool near Panjnad Head, 31/10; 3 Uch Charif to Multan 31/10; 1 Multan to Rawalpindi 1/11; 1 Jhang to Faisalabad (Multan to Rawalpindi) 1/11; 2 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Common in the lowlands

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

1 adult perched in dense overhanging tree, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*

3 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

40 Panjnad Head 31/10; 7 Chenab River, M2 Faisalabad to Rawalpindi 1/11; 3 Rawal Lake 2/11

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

23 Panjnad Head, 31/10

Oriental Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

1 Uch Charif 31/10

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

Regularly observed in the Punjab lowlands

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Abundant in the lowlands of Punjab

Lammergeier *Gypaetus barbatus*

1 soaring at 4934m, Khunjerab Pass (also on the Chinese side), 20/10; 2 soaring, Bumboret valley, 25/10

Himalayan Griffon *Gyps himalayensis*

1 soaring, Khunjerab National Park, 20/10

Western Marsh-Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

5 over reed beds Panjnad Head 31/10

Shikra *Accipiter badius*

1 hunting Satpara Valley, 18/10; 1 hunting, gardens of Lahore Fort 28/10; 1 adult Lahore to Multan 30/10; 1 Uch Charif 31/10; 1 Uch Charif to Multan 31/10; 1 hunting Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 1 trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

1 female/immature hunting, garden Shigar Fort, 16/10; 1 male hunting, Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

1 adult hunting and perched, Khunjerab National Park, 20/10; 1 hunting Laspur Valley, Chitral 24/10

White-eyed Buzzard *Butastur teesa*

1 adult soaring, Nathiagali, 14/10

Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax*

2 in a field, Lahore to Multan 30/10

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

1 adult perched on rock Khunjerab NP, 20/10; 1 adult hunting, Chitral Gol NP, 26/10

Booted Eagle *Aquila pennata*

1 dark phase circling, Shigar Fort, 17/10 ; 1 light phase, Skardu, 18/10; 1 light phase Uch Charif 31/10

Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

1 male hunting just before Murree 14/10; 1 at c4050m Deosai Plain, 18/10; 1 Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

1 ad and 2 ads & 1 juvenile hunting along ridge Margalla Hills, 13/10; 1 with prey, high rock Shigar 17/10; 1 hunting Karimabad, 19/10

Chukar *Alectoris chukar*

1 KKH Sultanabad-Rahimabad, 19/10

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*

1 foraging on overgrown path, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

6 at a roadside pool near Panjnad Head, 31/10; 11

Jhang to Faisalabad (Multan to Rawalpindi) 1/11; 1 call Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

50 Satpara Lake, 18/10; 20 Teru lake, Ghizar Valley 24/10; 200 Shandur Lake (at pass at 3810m), 24/10

Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*
1 at a roadside pool near Panjnad Head, 31/10

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*
Locally common in the Punjab lowlands: 40 Lahore to Multan 30/10; 4 in pool near river crossing Multan to Uch 31/10; 180, 30, 30 and 4 in pools Multan to Rawalpindi 1/11; 1 Jhang to Faisalabad (Multan to Rawalpindi) 1/11

Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus*
Fairly common on fields in the Punjab lowlands

White-tailed Lapwing *Vanellus leucurus*
1 ad in submerged arable field, Multan to Uch Charif, 31/10

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*
1 Gilgit River, Gilgit 23/10; 1 Ghizar Valley 23/10; 2 at large bridge Panjnad Head 31/10

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*
1 in a river side pool Uch Charif to Multan 31/10; 8 Jhang to Faisalabad (Multan to Rawalpindi) 1/11

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
1 in pool near a river crossing Multan to Uch 31/10

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*
3 Multan to Jhang (Multan – Rawalpindi) 1/11

Heuglin's Gull *Larus heuglini*
An amazing observation of 3 adults migrating Sheosar Lake 4180m on 18/10

Indian River Tern *Sterna aurantia*
1 ad on sandflat at large bridge and 2 further on foraging, Panjnad Head 31/10; 11 Jhelum River, M2 Faisalabad to Rawalpindi 1/11

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*
Feral Pigeon was common in cities in the lowlands. However, wild birds were only seen on a few occasions:
1 Lower Astor Valley, 19/10; 1 along the KKH from Indus – Astor crossing to Gilgit, 19/10; 5 Salt Range, M2 Rawalpindi to Lahore 27/10; 1 Salt Range, M2 Faisalabad to Rawalpindi 1/11

Snow Pigeon *Columba leuconota*
4 flying down in the valley, Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Common Wood-Pigeon *Columba palumbus*
>150 in a restless large flock of the *casiotis* subspecies Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Oriental Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*
2 *meena* perched, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*
Common in Islamabad and the lowlands of Punjab

Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*
1 garden Islamabad 16/10; 1 garden of Lahore Fort 28/10; 1 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 1 trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11

Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*
Common to fairly common in Punjab cities but not observed in Islamabad/Rawalpindi

Yellow-footed Pigeon *Treron phoenicopterus chlorigaster*
To my surprise, a flock of 20 in the garden of Lahore Fort 28/10

Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*
Common in the Punjab lowlands including Islamabad, where, for example, a flock of >50 was present in Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Asian Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea*
1 calling Uch Charif 31/10; 1 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*
1 Multan to Uch 31/10; 1 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Little Owl *Athene noctua*
1 in rocky, uninhabited terrain between Sust and Passu, KKH, 20/10

Spotted Owlet *Athene brama*
1 calling at night, Islamabad 13/10

House Swift *Apus nipalensis*
2 Islamabad 12/10; 10 Islamabad 14/10; 40 Islamabad 16/10; 30 Old City Lahore 28/10; 20 National Stadium Lahore 29/10; 25 Multan to Uch 31/10; 3 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
1 Panjnad Head 31/10; 2 (1 perched) Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*
Regularly observed in the Punjab lowlands

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*

6 perched and fishing Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis*

2 Multan to Uch 31/10

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater *Merops persicus*

7 perched, Lahore to Multan 30/10

Indian Roller *Coracias benghalensis*

Common in lowlands

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

1 Islamabad 12/10; 1 surprisingly high up near Khyber, KKH at 2658m 20/10; 1 Uch Charif 31/10; 1 Panjnad Head 31/10; 6 Uch Charif to Multan 31/10; 1 Multan to Rawalpindi 1/11

Blue-throated Barbet *Megalaima asiatica*

4 birds, ridge hike, Margalla Hills 13/10; 5 ad calling and seen, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 3 trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11

Coppersmith Barbet *Megalaima haemacephala*

1 Margalla Hills to Murree 14/10; 2 adults Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Eurasian Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

1 calling ('kwoink' call) at 4.30h Shigar Fort, 16/10

Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

1 foraging on the ground and shortly perched in a bush, Rawal Lake 2/11

Brown-fronted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos auriceps*

1 male and 1 female showing well in a mature pine forest, Nathiaghali, 14/10

Yellow-crowned Woodpecker *Dendrocopos mahrattensis*

1 bird in a tree along the channel Panjnad Head to Uch Charif

Himalayan Woodpecker *Dendrocopos himalayensis*

1 male along the road just before Murree 14/10; 2 birds in mature Pine Forest Nathiaghali, 14/10; 2 Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Scaly-bellied Woodpecker *Picus squamatus*

1 bird, 1 male and 1 female in mature pine forest Nathiaghali, 14/10; 1 Gulmit, 20/10; 1 Passu 20/10; 1-2 Karimabad 20/10, 21/10, 22/10 and 23/10; 1 Altit 22/10; 1 Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Hume's Lark *Calandrella acutirostris*

3 well observed at Shandur Pass (3800m) in a flock of 50 Horned Larks, 24/10

Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

2, Deosai NP, 18/10; Large flocks at and near (all >3000m) Shandur Pass (3800m), 24/10: 40 Teru – Shandur Pass (3285m), 25 Shandur Pass (3810m), 80 Shandur – Laspur (3600m)

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*

1 Multan to Jhang (Multan – Rawalpindi) 1/11

Grey-throated Sand-martin *Riparia chinensis*

30 at the Jhelum river crossing, Motorway Rawalpindi to Lahore 27/10; 4 Lahore to Multan 30/10; >100 Panjnad Head 31/10

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

3 birds Margalla Hills, 13/10; 10 Margalla Hills, 14/10; 10 Islamabad, 16/10; >150 Multan to Uch 31/10; 1 Multan to Rawalpindi 1/11

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*

1 adult Uch Charif, 31/10

Eurasian Crag-Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*

20, Shigar Fort, 16/10; 3 high rock, Shigar 17/10; 30 Lower Astor Valley 19/10; 8 foraging Gilgit River, Gilgit 23/10; 30 Ghizar Valley 23/10; 15 road to Chitral Gol NP 26/10; 3 Airport Chitral town 27/10

Streak-throated Swallow *Petrochelidon fluvicola*

3 Uch Charif, 31/10

Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus*

2 foraging Khunjerab Pass (4934m), 20/10

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

1 migrating Islamabad 15/10; 1 migrating Karimabad 21/10; 2 pale *haringtoni* foraging, well seen, Altit 22/10

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

8 foraging at the extensive alpine meadow at Birmogh Lasht, Chitral Gol NP 26/10

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Fairly common to scarce in Islamabad area, mountain valleys of NA and NWFP and also Punjab. Almost all checked birds belonged to *personata* race.

personata: 1 ad male Shigar 16/10 and 2 males 17/10; 2 males Skardu 18/10; 1 male Lower Astor Valley 19/10; 4 Passu 20/10; 1 Sust 20/10; 4 (2 males) Sust – Passu 20/10; 4 Gilgit River, Gilgit 23/10; 1 Teru lake, Ghizar Valley 24/10; 28 (sleep flock) Chitral town 24/10; 1 Bumboret Valley 25/10; 8 Multan to Uch 31/10; 2 Uch Charif to Multan 31/10; 4 Multan to Rawalpindi 1/11; 1 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11
alba/dukhunensis: 1 stream Deosai Plain 4100m, 18/10; 1 male Jhang to Faisalabad (Multan to Rawalpindi) 1/11

White-browed Wagtail *Motacilla madaraspatensis*
3 Panjnad Head, 31/10; 2 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake
2/11

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*
1 Bumboret Valley 25/10

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
1 Bauma Lungma Shigar 16/10 and 17/10; 3 Gilgit
River, Gilgit 23/10; 2 Bumboret Valley 25/10; 1
Multan to Rawalpindi 1/11

Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*
1 male and 2 females Margalla Hills 13/10; 4 males
(how red!), Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 4
overhead, trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

White-eared Bulbul *Pycnonotus leucotis*
5 Lahore to Multan 30/10; at least 8, some with crest
(hybrid with Himalayan or subspecies with crest?),
Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Himalayan Bulbul *Pycnonotus leucogenys*
Common in Margalla Hills; 2 Lake View Park, Rawal
Lake 2/11

Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer*
Very common in the Islamabad area

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*
2 near view point, Chaghbini, Chitral Gol NP, 26/10

White-throated Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*
1 *cashmirensis* (brown belly) at 3800m in a stream
with ice, Satpara Valley, 18/10 and 1 *cashmirensis*
(brown belly) at 4175m in a half-frozen stream,
Deosai NP, 18/10

Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*
1 adult in Bauma Lungma river, Shigar, 16/10

Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
2 (dark) around low rocks, Shigar, 17/10; 1 Hunza,
19/10; 2 Ultar Nala, Karimabad 22/10

Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris*
2 on rocks near the alpine meadow at Birmogh Lasht,
Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Himalayan Accentor *Prunella himalayana*
1 perched on a rock, Lower Astor Valley, 19/10

Robin Accentor *Prunella rubeculoides*
4 in juniper at 3150m Satpara Valley, 18/10; 3 in
rocky juniper (at c 3520m) and 5 in comparable rocky
juniper habitat at c3450m, Upper Astor Valley, 18/10

Brown Accentor *Prunella fulvescens*
1 ad. Hippophae bushes along Bauma Lungma

(2430m), 17/10; 1, Satpara Valley (3100m), 18/10; 1
Passu, KKH, 20/10; 2 Khunjerab National Park, 20/10;
4 Teru – Shandur pass in bushes and rocks, 24/10

Black-throated Accentor *Prunella atrogularis*
at least 8 individuals seen well, though briefly in low
dense Hazel bushes near a saddle at the Ishperudeh
Nala, Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Blue Rock-Thrush *Monticola solitarius*
1 male at 3950m near pass Satpara Valley/Deosai
plain 18/10; 1 male Ghizar Valley 23/10; 1 male
Laspur Valley 24/10

Blue Whistling-Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus*
3 Skardu 16/10; 5 Shigar 16/10; 6 singing (only early
mornings and evening) and foraging, Shigar, 17/10; 1
Skardu 18/10; 1 Satpara village 18/10; 3 (1 singing)
Astor 19/10; 2 (1 singing) Karimabad 21/10 and
22/10; 2 Ultar Nala, Karimabad 22/10; 4 Altit 22/10; 2
singing Karimabad 23/10; 1 Karimabad – Gilgit 23/10;
3 Ghizar Valley 23/10; 1 singing Phandar (2915m),
Ghizar Valley 24/10; 1 Teru, Ghizar Valley 24/10; 2
Bumboret Valley 25/10; 2 probably wintering
individuals, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Tickell's Thrush *Turdus unicolor*
1 fine male foraging close by in a hawthorn, garden
Shigar Fort, 16/10

Dark-throated Thrush *Turdus ruficollis*
23 (one flock of 20 birds on the Ridge trail, including
some males), Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*
2 Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Rufous-vented Prinia *Prinia burnesii*
>2 Panjnad Head 31/10

Striated Prinia *Prinia crinigera*
2 in dense bush at the top of the ridge Margalla Hills
13/10.

Grey-breasted Prinia *Prinia hodgsonii*
2 foraging close by, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11;
2 trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11

Plain Prinia *Prinia inorata*
8 Panjnad Head 31/10; 3 at a roadside pool near
Panjnad Head, 31/10

Graceful Prinia *Prinia gracilis*
1 Panjnad Head 31/10

Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris*
1 Panjnad Head 31/10; 2 foraging, Lake View Park,
Rawal Lake 2/11

Ashy Prinia *Prinia socialis*

6 in one flock foraging in low bushes and dead branches, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*

4 singing Islamabad 15/10; 3 foraging, mostly on the ground close to bushes, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 3 trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11

Clamorous Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus*

4 singing Panjnad Head 31/10

White-browed Tit-Warbler *Leptopoeile sophiae*

1 male and 1 female, *Hippophae* bushes along Bauma Lungma, Shigar (2430m), 17/10; 2 males and 2 females, *Hippophae* bushes, Satpara Valley, Skardu (3100m), 18/10

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus (collybita) tristis*

3 along Bauma Lungma, Shigar 16/10 and 4 on 17/10; 7 foraging Sor Laspur (2800m) 24/10; 1 Rehol, Chitral 24/10; 4 Krakal Graveyard, Bumboret Valley 25/10; 2 Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10; 10+ foraging mostly close to the ground in herbs and bushes, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11; 5 trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

Mountain Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus sindianus*

2 well seen in trees along Bauma Lungma, Shigar 17/10

Brooks' Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus subviridis*

1 -2 in a flock of 30 Hume's Warbler at, Bumboret Valley, 25/10: one to two green tinged, pale colored birds with a yellow supercilium and creamy white underparts, 2 whitish wingbars from which the 1 was clearly accentuated and with an equal posture as Hume's Warbler.

Lemon-rumped Warbler *Phylloscopus chloronotus*

1 foraging, in bird wave, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Hume's Warbler *Phylloscopus humei*

Observed almost daily in Islamabad area, Northern Areas and NWFP from 16/10 onwards: 2 along Bauma Lungma, Shigar, 16/10 and 17/10; 1 Ultar Nala, Karimabad (c2500m) 22/10; 2 Karimabad 23/10; 1 Gilgit River, Gilgit 23/10; 3 Phandar (2915m), Ghizar Valley 24/10; 2 foraging Sor Laspur (2800m) 24/10; 1 Rehol, Chitral 24/10; 1 Chitral town 25/10; >20 in Holly Oaks, Krakal graveyard, Bumboret Valley 25/10; 4 Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10; 2 E7 Islamabad 2/11; 2 F7 Islamabad 2/11; 2 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 9 trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh),

Margalla Hills 3/11; 7 trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11; 1 Monal Restaurant, Margalla Hills 3/11

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

1 Sor Laspur (2800m) 24/10; 2 Chaghbini (2925m) Chitral Gol NP 26/10; 2 trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11

Grey-hooded Warbler *Seicercus xanthoschistos*

7 birds, most of them in mixed species flocks, Ridge, Margalla Hills, 13/10; 1 garden Islamabad, 16/10; 3 in bird wave, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 6 trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11; 3 trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

4 trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11; 1 trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

2 first winter plumage, well observed, along Bauma Lungma, 17/10

Ultramarine Flycatcher *Ficedula superciliaris*

3 females/first winters foraging in bushes, trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

Himalayan Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger rutilans*

3 of which 1 beautiful male briefly seen, flicking with tail and alarming, in tiny dry river valleys with dense cover, trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11; 1 calling, trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis*

2 males, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 2 trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11

Indian Robin *Saxicoloides fulicatus*

1 male, Uch Charif 31/10

Blue-capped Redstart *Phoenicurus caeruleocephala*

1 male, Satpara Valley (3200m), 18/10; 1 winter plumaged male, Ultar Nala (c2600m), Karimabad 22/10; 1 winter plumaged male and 1 female, Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10; 1 male trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

White-winged Redstart *Phoenicurus erythrogastrus*

Almost all birds were present in *Hippophae* bushes: at least 6 males at 3100m, Satpara valley, 18/10; 2 males at 2500m, Gulmit, 20/10; 6 males at c 2490m, near Passu, 20/10; 3 males at c 2465m, beyond Passu, 20/10; 4 females at 2500m, Passu, Northern Areas 20/10; 3 males at 2947m, Ghizar river, Teru, 24/10; 2 males and 2 females at 3281m Teru to Shandur pass, 24/10; 2 males at 3300m, Teru to Shandur pass 24/10; 2 females together with two

Brown Accentors at 3357m near Shandur pass, 24/10; 5 males and 4 females c 3600m, Upper-Laspur, 24/10; 4 males at 3300m, Lower-Laspur, 24/10

White-capped Redstart *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*

1 ad. foraging in Bauma Lungma (at 2430m), Shigar 17/10; 1 ad Ultar Nala (2500m), Karimabad 22/10; 2 Ghizar Valley 23/10; 1 alarming at our hotel balcony Chitral town 25/10 and 27/10; 2 Bumboret Valley 25/10

Plumbeous Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosa*

1 male, Gilgit River, Gilgit 23/10

White-bellied Redstart *Hodgsonius phaenicuroides*

Surprisingly, 1 skulking male at the ridge Margalla Hills 13/10

Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata*

1 male near Mazarfghad, Uch Charif to Multan 31/10

Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferreus*

1 male & 1 female foraging in low bushes and dead branches, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 1 female near the ZOO, trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11

Hume's Wheatear *Oenanthe albonigra*

2 adults in rocky, gently sloping terrain c10 km past Sultanabad, just before Jutal, (Karimabad – Gilgit) 23/10

Variable Wheatear *Oenanthe picata*

1 male *capistrata* Uch Charif to Multan 31/10; 1 male *capistrata* Multan to Jhang (Multan to Rawalpindi) 1/11; 2 *opistholeuca* Jhang to Faisalabad (Multan to Rawalpindi) 1/11; 1 male *capistrata* Jhang to Faisalabad (Multan to Rawalpindi) 1/11

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*

1 female foraging at 4180m near Sheosar Lake, Deosai NP, 18/10

Brown Rock Chat *Cercomela fusca*

>10 in and around villages Uch Charif to Multan 31/10; 1 Multan to Jhang (Multan to Rawalpindi) 1/11; 1 E7 Islamabad 2/11

White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis*

1 individual in our friend's garden, Islamabad, 16/10

Streaked Laughingthrush *Garrulax lineatus*

Common in and around villages Northern areas and NWFP, subspecies *gilgit*: 25 Shigar, 16/10; 15 Shigar 17/10; 2 Satpara village 18/10; 2 Upper Astor Valley 18/10; 1 Lower Astor Valley (far away from habitation), 1 singing male Karimabad 21/10 and

22/10; 15 (of which at least 5 singing males from 17.30u to dark) Altit 22/10; 4 (2 singing) Karimabad – Gilgit 23/10; 3 Ghizar Valley 23/10; 1 singing Phandar, Ghizar Valley 24/10; 1 singing Sor Laspur (2800m) 24/10

Rusty-cheeked Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus erythrogenys*

7 (with a little patience well observed!) trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11; 2 trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

Black-chinned Babbler *Stachyris pyrrhops*

1 bird, Ridge trail, Margalla Hills, 13/10

Common Babbler *Turdoides caudate*

2 Multan to Rawalpindi 1/11; 3 M3 (Faisalabad – M2) 1/11

Striated Babbler *Turdoides earlei*

a flock of at least 7 skulking birds in dense bushes and reed at Panjnad Head, 31/10

Jungle Babbler *Turdoides striata*

20+ (4 families), Ridge, Margalla Hills, 13/10; 1 Margalla Hills, 14/10; 3 F7 Islamabad 2/11; 30 (c4 family groups), Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 1 Monal Restaurant, Margalla Hills 3/11

White-cheeked Tit *Aegithalos leucogenys*

2 birds observed in a large mixed species flock at some fruiting trees at the ridge Margalla Hills, 13/10; At least 5 birds were present in a mixed species flock (with Great Tit) between Batrik and Brun, Bumboret Valley, 25/10; 3 ind. trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

Rufous-naped Tit *Periparus rufonuchalis*

3, Fir forest, Nathiaghali, 14/10; >15 in Cedar-Pine-Fir zone along the ridge trail, Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Spot-winged Tit *Periparus melanolophus*

4 birds, ridge Margalla Hills, 13/10; >50 along the road and at Nathiaghali, 14/10; >40 in Cedar-Pine-Fir zone along the ridge trail, Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Great Tit *Parus major*

Common in the Islamabad area and valleys and villages in Northern Areas and NWFP. Probably all belonged to the *cashmirensis* subspecies

Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus*

1 bird, ridge Margalla Hills, 13/10; 2, Ayubia, 14/10

Kashmir Nuthatch *Sitta cashmirensis*

4 at the ridge trail, Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10

White-cheeked Nuthatch *Sitta leucopsis*

20 birds in firs and pines along the road and at Nathiaghali, 14/10; 6 birds, ridge trail, Chaghbini Chitral Gol NP 26/10

Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria*

1 on a rock wall next to KKH, just before Jutal (Karimabad to Gilgit) 23/10; 2 on rock wall Laspur Valley to Buni 24/10

Bar-tailed Treecreeper *Certhia himalayana*

4 well observed, forest above Nathiaghali, 14/10; 1 in Walnut tree, Bumboret Valley 25/10; 3 foraging on tree bark, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 7 again good views, trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11; 2 trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

Purple Sunbird *Cinnyris asiaticus*

1 in hotel garden, Lahore 28/10; 1 winter plumaged male garden of Lahore Fort 28/10

Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus*

40+, most of them in a large flock, Ridge, Margalla Hills, 13/10; 20+, in a large flock with tits and warblers, Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11; 50+ (3 flocks) trail 2 (E7 to Daman-e Koh), Margalla Hills 3/11; 10 trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*

1 *erythronotus* on top of a bush, Teru, Ghizar Valley 24/10; 1 *caniceps* near the National Stadium Lahore 29/10; 1 Multan to Uch Charif 31/10; 1 adult Panjnad Head 31/10; 2 Multan to Rawalpindi 1/11; 1 M3 (Faisalabad – M2) 1/11; 1 E7 Islamabad 2/11; 1 Lake View Park, Rawal Lake 2/11

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*

Regularly observed in Punjab lowlands including around Islamabad: 1 (tailless individual) Margalla Hills 14/10; 13 Multan to Uch 31/10; 4 Uch Charif to Multan 31/10; 2 at a roadside pool near Panjnad Head, 31/10; 21 Uch Charif to Multan 31/10; 5 Multan 31/10; 7 Multan to Jhang (Multan – Rawalpindi) 1/11; 15 Jhang to Faisalabad (Multan to Rawalpindi) 1/11; 3 M3 (Faisalabad – M2) 1/11; 1 M2 Faisalabad to Rawalpindi 1/11; 1 Islamabad Airport 4/11

Black-headed Jay *Garrulus lanceolatus*

Two flocks (2 and 4 birds) along the dirt road in the "Holly" Oaks zone (probably *Quercus balloot*), Chitral Gol NP, 26/10

Yellow-billed Magpie *Urocissa flavirostris*

20 birds (in 4-5 flocks), Fir forest, Nathiaghali, 14/10

Rufous Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda*

Fairly common in Islamabad, Margalla Hills and Punjab

Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica*

Common in valleys and villages in Northern Areas and NWFP e.g. Shigar, Skardu, Astor, Gilgit, Karimabad, Gulmit and Chitral. All of the white rumped *bactriana* subspecies.

Larger-spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga multipunctata*

1 in Pine-Juniper zone, Upper Astor Valley, 18/10; 6 in Pine-Cedars zone, Chitral Gol NP, 26/10

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

a flock of at least 100, Shigar Fort, 16/10 and 200 on 17/10; 5 c4050m Deosai Plain 18/10; 18 Upper Astor Valley, 18/10; 12 Khunjerab NP (2 on China part of the border); >10 (far outnumbered by Yellow-billed), Karimabad 21/10 and 22/10; 5 Teru to Shandur Pass 24/10

Yellow-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax graculus*

at least 2 in a large flock with Chough, Shigar Fort, 16/10 and 17/10; 2 at 3950m near pass Satpara Valley/Deosai plain 18/10; 1 KKH to Gilgit, 19/10; 50 Karimabad on 20/10 and >500 in large flocks on 21/10 and 22/10; 30 Teru to Shandur Pass 24/10; 5 Chitral Gol NP 26/10

House Crow *Corvus splendens*

Abundant in lowlands; 1 Chitral town 27/10

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Common in Hunza, especially on fields in Karimabad, and in Chitral town

Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*

>200 *en route* to Nathiaghali, 14/10; 15 in Pine-juniper zone and 10 around villages, Upper Astor Valley, 18/10; 15 Astor, 19/10; 2 KKH to Gilgit, 19/10; 5 along KKH Gilgit to Hunza, 19/10; 4 Karimabad to Gilgit 23/10; >50 probably this species here, Bumboret Valley 25/10; >40 Chitral Gol NP 26/10; >50 Chitral town 27/10; 2 trail near Pirsohawa, Margalla Hills 3/11

Common Raven *Corvus corax*

5 birds *en route* to Nathiaghali, 14/10; 4 Khunjerab National Park, 20/10

Bank Myna *Acridotheres ginginianus*

Locally fairly common in Punjab, but always in lower numbers than Common Myna

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*

Abundant in Punjab lowlands and Chitral

Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus*

6 winter plumaged birds in the garden of Lahore Fort 28/10; 9 Lahore to Multan 30/10; 1 Multan to Uch 31/10

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

30 in a well known compact flock, Ghizar Valley 23/10; 1 and a flock of 30 Uch Charif to Multan 31/10

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Common in lowlands and in valleys in Northern Areas

Sind Sparrow *Passer pyrrhonotus*

2 birds in bushes at a roadside pool near Panjnad Head, 31/10

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Common in and around Chitral and in Bumboret Valley with flocks of tens of birds, totaling >150.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

2, willow trees at KSF HQ, Dhee, KKH, 20/10; 2 migrating, Chaghbini, Chitral Gol 26/10

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

2 migrating, Chaghbini, Chitral Gol NP, 26/10

Eurasian Goldfinch *Carduelis (carduelis) caniceps*

4, garden Shigar Fort, 16/10; 4, Karimabad 23/10

Plain Mountain-Finch *Leucosticte nemoricola*

20 in Pine-juniper zone, Upper Astor Valley (3200m), 18/10; 2 Teru – Shandur (c3300m), 24/10; >300 in one huge, shy flock, Ridge trail, Chitral Gol NP, 26/10

Brandt's Mountain-Finch *Leucosticte brandti*

3 winter plumaged birds were well seen and a flock of 30 more briefly both between Dhee and Khunjerab Pass at c 3900m on the KKH, 20/10

Blyth's Rosefinch *Carpodacus grandis*

1 male and 2 females in Pine-Cedar zone Chitral Gol, 26/10

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

2 Chaghbini, Chitral Gol NP, 26-10

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

50 in a compact flock at a streamside meadow at 3600m near Shandur Pass, Teru – Shandur pass 24/10

Eurasian Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

4 Chaghbini, Chitral Gol 26/10

Fire-fronted Serin *Serinus pusillus*

4 foraging in *Hippophae* bush, Satpara Valley (3100m), 18/10; 2 in bushes KSF headquarters, Dhee, 20/10; 2 in low willows and *rosa* bushes along a mountain stream (3450m), Teru – Shandur pass, Ghizar 24/10

Orange Bullfinch *Pyrrhula aurantiaca*

1 calling along the ridge trail Chitral Gol, 26/10

White-winged Grosbeak *Mycerobas carnipes*

4 birds (at least 2 males) along the ridge trail Chitral Gol, 26/10

Spectacled Finch *Callacanthus burtoni*

3 female birds along the road in the Mountain Oak zone Chitral Gol NP, 26/10

Indian Silverbill *Euodice malabarica*

1 Multan to Uch 31/10

Meadow Bunting *Emberiza stewarti*

1 female close by on the ground in a grassy patch at the Ridge, Margalla Hills, 13/10

Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*

Small to larger flocks were fairly common in Margalla Hills, Northern Areas and NWFP

All photo's were taken by the author. Altitudes were measured with a Suunto Observer