

BIRD TREKS

NORTHERN & WESTERN INDIA FANTASTIC BIRDS & ANCIENT CULTURE, with a very good chance of seeing a **TIGER!**

Wednesday, 2 February through Sunday, 20 February 2011: 19 days and 18 nights, which includes the international flights to and from **New Delhi**.

We'll visit New Delhi, Bharatpur, Taj Mahal, Red Fort of Agra, Keoladeo National Park, Nainital, Ranthambore, Ranthambore Jaipur, Holy Ganges River, Kumeria Reserve Forest, Dhikala, Wind Palace, Amber Fort, and Snow View Point.

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Northern & Western INDIA

2-20 February 2011

DAY AGENDA

- 1 Feb 2** Depart on your international flight to New Delhi, India. Let the adventure begin!
- 2 Feb 3** Arrive in **New Delhi** and transfer from the airport to a Delhi hotel, either **Ashok Country Resort** or **Hotel Dee Mark**.
- 3 Feb 4** **Delhi / Jaipur** Morning for leisure, later drive to Jaipur, stopping en route to bird and have lunch. Check into a heritage hotel, **Narain Niwas Palace**, or perhaps **Shapura House**. This is mainly a travel day, but more than 30-40 different birds are possible on the way. The common birds generally seen every day include **Rose-ringed Parakeet**, **Black Kite**, **Common Crow**, **Common and Bank Mynas**, **Collared and Laughing Doves**, **Rock Dove**, **Black-winged Stilt**, **Green Sandpiper**, **Cattle Egret**, **Red-vented Bulbul**, **Indian Robin**, and **Jungle and Large Grey Babblers**. The target birds will include **Yellow-wattled Lapwing**, **Southern Grey Shrike**, and **Comb Duck**. **Rhesus Macaque** and **Five-striped Squirrels** are seen almost daily.



The Taj Mahal - - Paul Ippolito

- 4 Feb 5 Jaipur / Ranthambore AM Visit the Amber Fort of Jaipur and the Wind Palace. PM Drive to Ranthambore National Park and check into **Tiger Den Resort**. The local guide will take us to all of the mentioned places. Possible birds include **Asian Koel, Brahminy Starling, Brahminy Kite, Dusky Crag Martin, Southern Gray Shrike, Bay-backed Shrike**, and another chance for **Yellow-wattled Lapwing**.
- 5 Feb 6 Ranthambore AM+PM Early morning and afternoon excursions to the Park by open jeep especially to look for **TIGER**, other wildlife, and a great variety of birds. This is the best day for **Tiger, Leopard**, and perhaps a **Sloth Bear** and **Ruddy Mongoose**. The park has a great variety of birds, but we'll look especially for **Plum-headed Parakeet, White-bellied Drongo, White-browed Fantail, White-naped Woodpecker, Painted Spurfowl, Jungle Bush Quail, Oriental Honey Buzzard, White-eyed Buzzard**, and **Marshall's Iora**.
- 6 Feb 7 Ranthambore AM Game viewing at the Park by vehicle for another chance to see a **Tiger** and many additional species of birds. PM We will do our birding at **Soorwal Lake** or **Uniyara Dam**. Target birds at the lake include **Painted Sandgrouse, Painted, Woolly-necked, and Asian Open-billed Storks, Pallas's Gull, Small Pratincole, Sarus and Demoiselle Cranes, Great Thick-Knee, Kentish Plover, Common, Jack, and Pintail Snipe, Black-tailed Godwit, Common and Spotted Redshank**, and many more. Our night is at the **Ranthambore Hotel**.
- 7 Feb 8 Ranthambore / Bharatpur AM Birding around the resort in dry habitat and outstanding nearby areas. We will search for **Rufous-fronted Prinia, Indian Bush Lark, Common Babbler**, and **Tawny and Paddyfield Pipits**. PM Drive to Bharatpur with stops for any special birds along the way, with lunch at Midway. Check into **Hotel Laxmi Villas** or **Kadamb Kunj Resort**.



A gorgeous TIGER!
 - - Paul Ippolito

8-9 Feb 9-10 Bharatpur We have one full day of birding in Keola Deo National Park and another day out of the park at **Bundh Baretha**, by walking and bicycle rickshaws. Both days will be great for all bird lovers and photographers. Bharatpur is a wonderful birding location, also called the 'City of Birds'. About 100 species are possible each day. The target birds include **Dusky Eagle Owl, Collared Scops Owl, Spotted Owlet, Large-tail Nightjar, Bar-headed Goose, Spot-billed Duck, Purple, Little, and Black-crowned Night-Herons Black-necked Stork, Greater Spotted Eagle, Cotton Pygmy Goose, Pheasant - tailed and Bronzed -**

[Day-by-day itinerary continues on page 3]

winged Jacanas, and many more are to be expected. Mammals commonly seen are Nilgai, Sambar and Spotted Deer, Golden Jackal, and Wild Boar. Three or four different bats may be found, including Flying Fox and Indian Pipistrelle. Indian Rock Python and Monitor Lizard are both possible.

- 10 Feb 11 Bharatpur / Agra / Bharatpur AM Visit the Taj Mahal and Red Fort of Agra in the morning light, with time for shopping. PM Drive for Bharatpur, en route visit the Fatehpur Sikri, a beautiful monument and old capital of Mughal Emperor Akbar. This is not a day of serious birding, but even then about 30 to 35 species are possible. Target birds include **Booted Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Shikra, and Black Ibis.**
- 11 Feb 12 Bharatpur / Fort Uncha Gaon Drive toward Corbett National Park, stay at Fort Uncha Gaon to avoid a very long drive all in one day. This is an old fort, built by Jat Maharajas in olden days before freedom, recently converted into a hotel. Excellent birding opportunities in this area.
- 12 Feb 13 Fort Uncha Gaon / Nainital Drive to Nainital, stopping at the Holy Ganges River to look for River Dolphin and birds. Check into Hotel Vikram Vintage Inn. This is a little longer drive than any other day, but about 30 to 40 birds can still be seen. Target birds include Indian Skimmer, Spotted Forktail, and various gulls and terns.



Spotted Owlet -- Paul Ippolito

13 Feb 14 Nainital Full day of birding in Sat Tal and perhaps at Snow View Point. We'll have box lunches at a nice location. This will be the greatest birding day of the trip. The Sat Tal has a nice variety of flycatchers, warblers, tits, nuthatches, jays, thrushes, laughing thrushes, woodpeckers, sunbirds, bush warblers, niltavas, minivets, and babblers, including **Red-billed Leiothrix and Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler**, drongos, accentors, and different parakeets including **Slaty-headed and Rose-breasted Parakeet**. Maybe about 45-50 new birds can be recorded for the day.

- 14 Feb 15 Nainital / Quality Inn AM Birding in Mongoli Valley or at the Snow View Point. The valley is very good for birding. PM Check into Quality Inn Jungle Resort, located in the Kumeria Reserve Forest. Today's target birds are **Black Bulbul, Striated, White-throated, and White-crested Laughing Thrushes, Blue-fronted Redstart, and Great Barbet**. Then we will have another stop at the Kosi River to look especially for **Ibisbill and Wallcreeper**.

[Day 15 begins on page 4]

- 15 Feb 16 **Quality Inn / Dhikala** AM Birding around the resort. PM Later drive to **Dhikala Tourist Rest House** that is operated by the Forest Department. It is located 32 kilometers inside Corbett National Park. This will be an excellent day for birds and wildlife. There is a chance to see **Tigers, Elephants, Barking Deer (Muntjack), Marsh Crocodile, Alligator (Gharial), and Indian Smooth Otters**. Some of the target birds are **Tawny Fish Owl and Brown Fish Owl, Red Jungle Fowl, Kalij Pheasant, Collared Falconet, Lesser Fish Eagle, Green Magpie, Stork-billed Kingfisher, and Black-headed Oriole**.
- 16 Feb 17 **Dhikala** AM+PM Excursion to the park by open jeep, especially to look for **Tigers, Elephants, and other wildlife and birds**. This will be another excellent birding day. A great abundance of birds can be found. Some that we will look for include **Lesser Coucal, Bright-headed and Zitting Cisticolas, Crested Bunting, Yellow-eyed Babbler, Jungle, Ashy, and Plain Prinias, Large Cuckoo Shrike, White-rumped Needletail, Scarlet and Long-tailed Minivets, Ashy and Black-crested Bulbul, Hodgson's Bush Chat, Changeable Hawk Eagle, Mountain Hawk Eagle, Red-headed Vulture, Black Francolin, Jungle and Asian Owlets, and many more exciting species**.
- 17 Feb 18 **Dhikala / Quality Inn** This day about 40 to 50 birds can be recorded on the drive to the Quality Inn. We will search especially for **Little Forktail and Brown Dipper**.
- 18 Feb 19 **Quality Inn / Delhi** Drive to the **Delhi Hotel** in Delhi, stopping to bird and have lunch on the way. Check into hotel. A room will be provided to wash up and change. We will have our farewell dinner, then transfer to the International Airport to catch the return flights to the US.

Participants who are taking the one-week extension to **Kanha and Bandhav Garh National Park** will stay in Delhi hotel.

- 19 Feb 20 Arrive home, after an incredible two-week experience in **INDIA!**

Ranthambore

- - *Paul Ippolito*



[Important details on page 5]

Leader Bird Treks Tour to INDIA will be led by **Om Prakash Mudgal**. Here is what OP (his nickname) says about himself: “I am from a farmer’s family, 53 years old, based in Bharatpur, and have about 20 years of birding experience in India, especially in the northwest. I worked as a nature guide in Keola Deo National Park, Bharatpur from 1987 to 1999. Now I am leading and organizing birding trips to India since 2000.” **Bob Schutsky** will be the Bird Treks escort and co-leader. Bob has been leading tours around the world for more than 15 years.

Price \$3895 from New Delhi, based upon double occupancy and a minimum of six participants. Single accommodations can be arranged for an extra fee of \$595.

Includes Expert guide service, all boat rides, all transportation within India, all entrance fees, all meals and lodging for the entire tour, beginning the night of February 3rd. Also included are transfers to and from the airport, still camera fees, and an Elephant ride.

Does not include the cost of alcoholic beverages and beverages during meals, items of a personal nature, video camera fees in the parks and monuments, or international air transportation to New Delhi and airport departure tax. Upon request **BIRD TREKS** will help you obtain the best possible airfare and coordinate arrivals into New Delhi. As opposed to most Bird Treks tours, tips are not included in the tour fee.

Extra Services We offer the services of our exclusive Bird Treks travel agent, **Lori Heathcote**, in arranging your air travel. Lori has 25 years of experience in the travel industry and is a veteran birder. Contact her through Bailey Travel at **1-800-224-5399**, or you can e-mail her directly at lori@baileytravel.com. By dealing with Lori you have the security of a 24-hour toll-free telephone number in case of any travel emergency. She can also assist you with all pre- and post-tour travel plans. There may be a fee for these services.

Deposit A \$900 deposit will assure your reservation on the tour. The balance of the fee is due 2 November 2010. Send your deposit **SOON** so that we can secure the least expensive air fare to New Delhi and reserve your spot on this exciting, exotic tour.

Refund & Cancellation Policy With written notice more than 90 days prior to the first day of the tour, 100% of your deposit will be refunded, minus a \$100 service fee. With 30-90 days notice, you will receive a 50% refund of the full cost of the tour. No refund can be made with less than 30 days notice. You will receive a full refund if you provide a replacement for your spot on the tour. No partial refund can be given once a tour begins. We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect your investment. Contact Access America at **1-800-284-8300** and mention BIRD TREKS (ACCAM #F021096). You can apply by phone or via the Internet at www.accessamerica.com.



Long-tailed Minivet
- - Paul Ippolito

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