











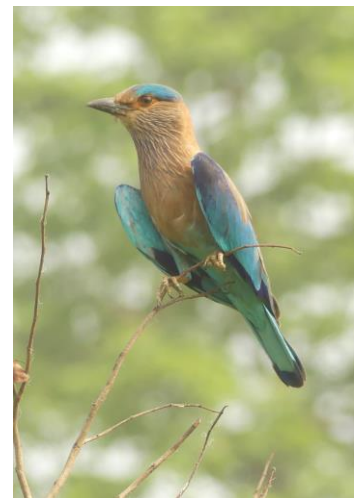


ROYLE SAFARIS

Wild Nepal

Destination: Nepal **Duration:** 11 Days **Dates:** 1st May – 11th May 2018

-  Fresh Tiger tracks heading to and from our chosen watch point from the morning
-  A record number of 115 Rhinos which represented approximately 50 individuals
-  Seeing >140 species of birds; including the critically endangered Bengal Florican
-  Finding some rare reptiles including Gharial and a huge 4-5m long Rock Python
-  Seeing the notorious bull Asiatic Elephant '*Ronaldo*' as he fed a safe distance away
-  Spotting 19 Rhinos whilst on foot and getting some very close encounters!
-  Spotting 4 Sloth Bears, including having great sightings of one on the road close by
-  Cruising the Rapti River looking for Crocodiles, Gharial and many different birds
-  Exploring the fascinating Buddhist and Hindu sites of old Kathmandu city
-  Finding evidence from at least 4 different Tigers whilst driving and walking the park



Tour Leader / Guides

Martin Royle (Royle Safaris Tour Leader)
Rajesh & Dinar (Kathmandu- Chitwan Drivers)
Sanjay, Raju & Dev (Chitwan (Sapana) naturalist guides)
Cheran (Chitwan jeep driver)
Depesh (Kathmandu Cultural Guide)

Participants

Mr. Stuart Hill
Mrs. Dawn Howarth
Mr. Simon Howarth
Mrs. Donna Steiner
Mr. Oyvind Sveen

Overview

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Day 1: | Kathmandu |
| Days 2-9: | Sapana Village Lodge (Chitwan National Park) |
| Day 10: | Kathmandu |
| Day 11: | Home |



Day by Day Breakdown

Overview

Walking through the long grass of Nepal's Terai region in search of the elusive tiger or majestic one-horned rhino is one of the most thrilling and adventurous things any wildlife enthusiast can do. This 11 day tour took ourselves deep into the Terai (the subtropical belt of forest and alluvial grasslands from Uttarakhand in North West India through to Burma in the East), which is home to the last remaining Asian one-horned rhinos (a population predominantly split between Chitwan National Park (~600) in Nepal and Kaziranga National Park in India (~2,000)) as well as a large meta-population of tigers, sloth bears, Asiatic elephants, leopards and many other species of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. This park is of global importance because many of the species that have big populations here are endangered and incredibly rare elsewhere such as tigers, one-horned rhinos, Asiatic elephant, hog deer, Bengal florican and the critically endangered gharial. Here the gharial is represented in good numbers. With Chitwan holding the second largest population in the world and around 20% of the global total (only 50!)

Whilst exploring the Terai (principally in search of the very difficult to see tiger) we would explore a section of Nepal's largest and most popular national park; Chitwan. We would enter these parks with the expert guidance of experienced naturalists from the local area and would experience the parks on foot, by jeep and by traditional dug-out canoe (as well as having the option to have an elephant back safari). This varied way of visiting the park increased the chances of seeing a huge range of wildlife and some of the fantastic mammal and bird sightings we had in a short amount of time testimony to that.

In addition to visiting the parks in search of the wildlife we were also treated to a couple of the local Tharu people's dances. Including the always comical Peacock Dance. Nepal has a long and good history of conservation in and around the Terai and it is through community projects like the cultural dance performances and the great work that Sapana Lodge conduct with local communities such as women's handicraft trade that is enabling the local people to earn directly or indirectly from having plentiful wildlife nearby. Our cultural immersion will be complimented by a village tour and an opportunity to see how the local people live in harmony with the forest. This is one of the few instances where you experience the local culture first hand. There is no show put on, this is not rehearsed and it really gives you an insight into their way of life. As a result the level of poaching, illegal fishing, habitat encroachment, overgrazing, fire wood collection and deforestation is lower here than anywhere else in South Asia.

There are still some aspects of Nepal's 'eco'-tourism and the way the park is used which are not quite there in terms of acceptability to a Western standard; but the fact that the park boast increasing rhino, tiger, hog deer, leopard, sloth bear and stable gharial numbers means that they are doing many things right and this needs to be focused on. In time all the other aspects of the park will fall into place, and hopefully other Tiger parks around the Indian Subcontinent will begin to learn from the success that Chitwan is having by making all the local people feel involved in the conservation and responsible for the wildlife.



Day 1 **Kathmandu**

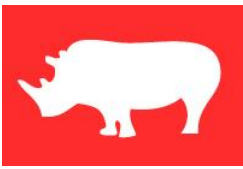
Arrival & Sightseeing

First to arrive today was Stuart in the mid morning, Martin collected him from the airport and on the way back to the hotel also collected Oyvind from his hotel (having arrived the night before), after checking Stuart and Oyvind into the hotel Martin went back to the airport to get Donna. In the meantime Simon and Dawn (who had arrived a couple of days previously) had made their own way to the hotel and had checked in. So at around 13:30 Martin and Donna arrived and the whole group was together in the hotel.

The hotel is in the heart of Kathmandu, the buzzing district of Thamel and the explosion of colours, people, shops, restaurants ect make it a perfect place to be based for a few days. The weather was very hazy, not unusual for this time of year, but Stuart had managed to see some of the Himalayas from the plane as he approached Kathmandu. At 14:00 our cultural guide Depesh came to the hotel and Dawn and Simon went out for a some sightseeing this afternoon. Everyone else decided to stay at the hotel and rest.

The sightseeing would take in 2 of Nepal's most important and sacred sites, first would be probably the holiest Hindu site in Nepal. Pashupatinath temple complex, this is the largest Hindu temple in the world, comprising no less than 492 individual temples. Built in the 15th Century and located on the banks of the Bagmati River some of the temples are the most famous and well known cremation sites in the country. With people coming from all of Nepal to be cremated here.

The second site visited today was the largest Stupa in the world, Boudnath Stupa. The stupa is a great place to understand the importance of repeated mantras and prayer to Buddha, every circumbulation of the stupa reinforces your faith in Buddha as does every time the prayer wheels you spin as does every time the wind flutters



through the colourful prayer flags with the 'om mani padme hom' mantra printed on them over and over again, as does every time that same mantra is spoken and when combined with the rubbing of prayer beads the reinforcement is even more heightened. Also the location where all of these things is done is important and with this being the largest and most significant stupa in the world it is the reason for people to have come from all over Nepal, Asia and the world to pray here.

Then at 19:00 we all met in the hotel reception and walked the short way to the iconic Kathmandu Guest House for our first meal together in Nepal. It was at dinner tonight where we had our first mammal of the trip, as an Asian house shrew scurried around on the floor looking for insects.

Day 2 Chitwan National Park

Travel & Cultural Tour

This morning we left the hotel at 5am and departed out of the city and southwards to Chitwan. The journey takes you out of the Kathmandu Valley and through the Shivalik hills before entering the flat lowlands of the Terai. Here you transect the interspersed Tharu villages, industrial Indian border towns, rice paddies and community buffer zone forests. In fact it is these community zone forests which have made the Nepalese Terai a real success with conservation. The wildlife (including Tigers, Rhinos and Elephants) can all move freely between the 9 protected areas in the Terai and this landscape will form a crucial part of Panthera's long term project for a Tiger Corridor linking North West Indian Tiger populations with ones through Nepal, North East India, Bhutan and Burma.

Well after around 5-6 hours of winding mountainous roads we reached the small and now very touristy village of Sauraha and after a very short jeep transfer we arrived at the accommodation just outside of the Sauraha and in a much quieter location.

We made really good time and arrived at the lodge at 09:15, so we checked in and had some time to relax before lunch. The views out over the river and grassland yielding some nice birds including white storks, Indian and little cormorants, white-breasted waterhen a nice close up pair of brown-capped pygmy woodpeckers, a black drongo and a spotted dove busy building a nest above our heads.

After lunch we had a walk into a nearby Tharu village and along the way saw many birds including the common species around here such as common mynah, intermediate egret, black drongo, barn swallow, plain martins, spotted doves, house & eastern jungle crows, Asian pied starling, white-breasted kingfishers and around the lodge we spotted a nice oriental pied hornbill in a nearby fig tree.

At the village we were told about the method of making the huts, bamboo and wood and then mud and elephant dung to line the walls and then traditionally elephant grass thatch for the roof (although nowadays this is mostly corrugated metal), we were also told about the Tharu culture of tattooing the woman's hands and forearms after they are married as we had some ginger tea with them. It was a brief introduction into the Tharu way of life, seeing the modern and traditional ways of life mixing in the village and then walking through the rice paddies, wheat fields, mustard plantations and fields of bananas, potatoes and other crops before coming back to the lodge.

Oyvind and Stuart had a walk down to the village and the Rapti River this afternoon and they spotted a mother and calf rhino, the calf had crossed the river and was within touching distance of people in the village. The mother being a collared individual was clearly too used to people and had become too familiar and was neglecting her duties as a mother. Also seen at the river were 3 gharial and 2 mugger crocodiles as well as many kingfishers including the common pied kingfisher.

We then all met up at the restaurant for dinner and a good night's rest as tomorrow would be an early start as we would head into the park in search of the rhinos, tigers and other wildlife of the forest and grasslands.



Day 3 Chitwan National Park

Wildlife Watching

This morning we rose early and after some tea and coffee headed out to enter the park a little after sunrise with Sanjay, we crossed the Rapti River into the park and met our jeep driver Cheran and proceeded on our full day jeep safari.

The bird life was prolific early this morning with many species around the village, on the river and in the forest. Prominent species being Indian grey hornbill, Indian pond herons, spotted doves, Indian peafowl, Alexandrine parakeets, Asian pied starling, chestnut-tailed starlings, jungle & common mynahs and black drongos. But our first great sighting of the day was a small group of critically endangered gharial. Three of these incredible reptiles were just in the water off a sandy spit opposite where we would get the canoe over to the park.

Setting off we headed through the mosaic of riverine forest and grassland at first, seeing a large number of lesser coucals perched on the elephant grass and spreading their wings and tails to dry off after the night of heavy rain.



Also common this morning were Indian peafowl, we had some nice males on the road, including a young one doing his best display, but falling short as his tail feathers were far from fully grown.

It started quite quiet for mammal sightings, but the birds around the grasslands were abundant. The most common being the red-vented and red-whiskered bulbuls and the jungle mynahs. Another fantastic bird sighting we had early was a few stunning male Asian paradise flycatchers. These were found in the sal forest and we actually found a location a little later on which was a hotspot for this species and at least 5 different males were all flying around in the forest together; looking like streamers floating gracefully in the air.

More bird sightings included female peafowl with young chicks and a female red jungle fowl with her one remaining chick. Interspersed with the bird sightings we also had sightings of several groups of chital and a few individual wild boars foraging next to the road. We then stopped for breakfast at a watch tower overlooking a small lake. As we had a relaxing breakfast we spotted a grey-headed fish eagle coming in and stopping at a tree overlooking the lake, it stayed for a while and then took off again, the eagle was followed by a white stork and then a pair of rhinos (female and her 3 year old calf) came down, but the grass was so long we had views of their backs and ears for a while but they disappeared into the vegetation. But the highlight of this breakfast stop was a changeable hawk eagle flying over, being mobbed by several Indian jungle crows as it was carrying a freshly caught a short-tailed bandicoot rat.

Travelling further into the sal forest we found some impressive strangler figs, their twisting vines having enveloped and killed off one tree and now spreading out and grabbing hold of the next tree.

We had some more nice bird sightings in the sal forest including a pair of common kingfishers over a small stream and several beautiful woodpeckers. In fact throughout the day we had great sightings of lesser and greater yellownapes, golden flamebacks, grey-headed woodpeckers and a grey-capped pygmy woodpecker towards the end.

It was shortly after a stop for a lesser yellownape and a golden flameback that we spotted a sloth bear. The bear was foraging (as they often are), head to the ground and sniffing away for termites under the surface. They are quite active after rainfall and on cool mornings as the termites are more active in the damp conditions and the cool air is better for them in their shaggy black coat. We had prolonged views as the bear was not concerned with our presence, but the vegetation was quite thick, so we didn't have amazing views but could see him coming back and forth and stopping at least twice to dig away a little. As he was busy foraging he spooked a young male Indian muntjac nearby.

We then entered some more grassland and found a pair of rhinos again, they were distant and it mostly their backs we could see above the grass. So we didn't stop long and carried on, finding a flock of red jungle fowl including cockerels, hens and chicks and then a mother and another 3 year old calf rhino. They were closer to the road, but still not offering fantastic views.

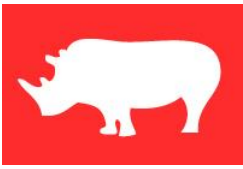
So we headed to the crocodile and turtle breeding centre in the middle of park. This breeding centre is doing a great job and has resulted in a large number of gharial being released (>1,000), albeit with limited success. But a 1% increase in population from each reintroduction is better than no increase so it is a worthwhile venture by the park as the population of wild gharials in Chitwan is increasing slowly; and it also allows people to get up close to the various age categories of gharial, they recently (2 years ago) lost their large breeding male (who was approaching 7m long and a hell of a specimen – he died of old age); his mantle was taken by a ~5m male in the main breeding tank.

As well as breeding gharials they also have reintroduced mugger crocodiles as well as some of the 10 species of freshwater turtles which should be found here. The mugger crocodiles (like most crocodile species worldwide) do very well when they are breed and reintroduced and their numbers are very strong again, however for some unknown reason when the gharials are released (even when they are released at the size and age of sexual maturity with very few if any natural predators) they do not survive very long. With only 5.5% recruitment to the population and 7.7% survival after the first 2 years of reintroduction their numbers are still dwindling. There are only around 250 breeding individuals in the world and with a total population around 1,800, they are critically endangered and need all the help they can get.

After leaving here we continued our safari and after a brilliant pair of grey-headed woodpeckers feeding on the ground in front of our vehicle we came across a troop of terai langurs. They were directly above us at first and did their best to throw stuff down on us and urinate on us. We luckily had moved a little way back by then and watched as they playfully and energetically moved through the trees, whilst others in the troop foraged on the ground around 30m into the forest.

As we continued towards a large grassland and a watch tower we would have lunch at, we found a mother and fawn hog deer very close to the road, rhesus macaques, a brief of a pair of black bazas and a juvenile grey-headed fish eagle perched on a fallen tree over a lake. At the grassland we had hit rhino central, we had 7 different rhinos here in the 2 hours we stayed, driving along (and getting some close sightings, including one who wanted to charge us and we had to take evasive action) and having lunch at the tower.

Due to the storm last night the road further along was closed as we would not be able to cross a river we would have to to continue. So we turned around and slowly headed back, it had began to lightly rain on the way back and we didn't see too much, a few more rhinos (but none as close as we had already seen), many chital, several wild boar and of course a wealth of birdlife, the highlight being a fully grown adult male peafowl displaying on the road.



We then made it back as the sun sank lower over the forest, crossed the river; there were five gharial in the same place we had seen three this morning. Three were basking on the spit, it was easy to see their size now, being around 2.8-3m long here.

Back at the hotel we showered and met for dinner before retiring for the night. Hoping for no rain tonight so the river would be passable tomorrow.

Day 4 Chitwan National Park

Wildlife Watching

This morning we once again had tea and coffee at the lodge and then headed down to the canoes at the Rapti River entrance. Oyvind, Simon and Dawn walked down and the rest caught up with them in the shuttle bus and met up at the canoes. We crossed over and boarded our jeep again. We would head into some different areas today as we searched for wildlife and in particular the elusive tiger. There were less birds around in the grasslands this morning, the dry night being the reason birds didn't have to be perched high on the grass stems to dry themselves as they had to yesterday. We did spot some roosting Indian peafowl and a young Bengal monitor basking on a branch in the morning sun. The cool temperatures all day yesterday meaning that many reptiles would have to bask earlier and for longer today.

A little further along we found *Ronaldo*, he is one of the main wild bull elephants in the park. He is a notorious elephant and is known for siring many of the government elephants as we enters the breeding centre near Sauraha and mates with the captive females. He also has a worse reputation as he is responsible for a few human deaths. He is not a happy elephant and has been known to charge vehicles, people and just about anything he doesn't like the look or smell of. Luckily for us he was around 100m away in the grass and he was very happily eating away. Occasionally stopping to throw grass stems over his back for protection from the sun that was growing in intensity as the morning wore on.

We watched him for around 20 minutes from the road and he seemed to be coming closer and so we waited for a better view, we wanted to see his tusks that had remained beneath the veil of the aptly named elephant grass up until now. But he turned away and started to wander back and away from us. So we decided to drive a little way forward and have breakfast in a watch tower just a little ahead of the path he had seemed to choose. So we breakfasted here and enjoyed the views out over the grassland, we could see him feeding, now in the shade of a small stand of silk cotton trees. Where he stayed for a long while, in fact we had finished breakfast and he hadn't moved any closer to us, so we decided to leave and see what else we could find instead.

On leaving the tower we headed through the grassland and into the sal forest, just as we were about to enter the first section of sal forest we spotted a Bengal florican. This is one of the world's rarest birds, critically endangered and with a population in Nepal of just 65 pairs we were incredibly lucky to see one. This male was perched on the top of a termite mound and allowed excellent views for a prolonged time. On entering the sal forest we had some further great bird sightings including the stunning male Asian paradise flycatchers again, golden flamebacks, common hawk cuckoos, velvet-fronted nuthatches, scaly-breasted woodpecker, scarlet minivets and black-hooded orioles. We then spotted our second new mammal species for the day, a small herd of guar, females and calves of various ages. These impressive bovids are the largest wild species of cattle in the world and the males can weight over 1 tonne. After leaving this maternal herd we found a lone male, it is not uncommon for old males to be left alone to fend for themselves, as they get too old to fight for breeding rites they become solitary or form small bachelor herds.

As the run rose higher and higher it pierced through the forest canopy and the temperature increased significantly. We then carried on through the forest towards the river we couldn't cross yesterday, along the way the same hog deer was there in the same area as she is usually in there. We found a rhino close to the road but in a small lake, the relaxed old rhino was probably the same one we had seen close to the road yesterday, it had the right ear notched and the horn had been nibbled away by birds over the years. We watched him for a while, even watched him blow bubbles in the water as he got deeper and deeper to cool off. There were more rhinos cooling off in the water as we carried on and we also had a nice crested serpent eagle soaring overhead and then another one of Nepal's endangered species the lesser adjutant.

We then crossed the Naryani River and headed towards the old lodge grounds of Tiger Tops Lodge. We had lunch here and sat and waited, this is a good view point out over the river and flood plain. However there were a couple of other groups here and so the area was a little noisy. We did see several nice species of birds including pied kingfishers, little-ringed plovers, red-wattled lapwings and white-throated kingfishers.

We then left as we started to head back towards the grasslands, we found a couple of troops of terai langurs. We watched them as they played around in the trees and fed on the fresh leaves of various large trees. Another highlight of the sal forest before we left for the grasslands was some wonderful chestnut-headed bee-eaters perched close to the road.

The rest of the safari was not as productive as the first half, we saw several more rhinos grazing, some wild boar and small groups of chital. The main highlight on the way down was a rhino feeding in the forest and very close to the road, we were able to approach to around 5m away and watch as this very relaxed rhino browsed and crossed the road in front of us. Then our last sighting of note was a female sambar and her fawn crossing the road and feeding just next to the road as we came to the end of the grassland and started to enter the riverine forest.

We then returned to the lodge and within 10 minutes of arriving the most incredible storm erupted, first the rain came lashing down and then the wind picked up. The rain streaming horizontally across the lodge gardens at



around 100kmph and then out of nowhere the hail stone. Some not much smaller than ping-pong balls! We withstood the storm in our rooms, looking out in awe at the incredible spectacle. It was official the monsoon had come early, this was the first real sign of the oncoming monsoon. It would be 4-6 weeks early if it was the monsoon, we hoped for an isolated incident as we wouldn't fancy being caught out in the park in such a storm. It lasted for around 30 minutes and then died down to nearly nothing, we then had dinner and a beer for bed.



Day 5 Chitwan National Park

Wildlife Watching

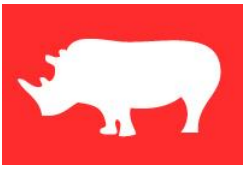
This morning started at the same time and in the same fashion, with us being shuttled to the canoe point and entering the park. However it wouldn't be a jeep we would be exploring the park by, instead we had Raju come and help Sanjay and we would explore the park on foot today. Walking is an incredible experience, there is nowhere else on the planet where you can walk around tigers, leopards, sloth bears, rhinos and elephants outside of Nepal.; and so we were in for a treat whatever happened today. As we crossed the river we saw a couple of woolly-necked storks before entering the riverine forest.

The forest is full of rhino apple trees, the forest floor is littered with them, however they are all very small and a long way from ripened. Walking through we saw so many broken branches and trees (some enormous trees) which had been felled by the storm last night. Wildlife wise we saw a bachelor herd of chital in the forest and had brief views of a changeable hawk eagle perched high in a silk cotton tree before a flock of Indian jungle crows came and mobbed it away.

Sanjay told us about some of the edible plants in the forest including various edible ferns and some of the fungus that can be very nutritious another small organism that is common and conspicuous is the red cotton bug. They are sap suckers that prefer the silk cotton trees to climb on and use their piercing mouth parts to extract the sweet sap from.

We then entered the grassland for the first time, the vast majority of today would be walking in the grassland, it is a little nerve wracking as sometimes you are walking through grass that is over 2m tall and very thick; all without knowing if there is a rhino, elephant, bear or tiger just next to you. So we proceed with caution and by listening to the advise of the guides and in cases of emergency doing what they say when they say it. Walking along the road we found tracks from rhino, many species of birds including Indian peafowl as well as small Indian mongoose and small Indian civets from last night. At a viewpoint over the Rapti River we spotted some mugger crocs in the water and basking on the banks. Along the trail there was an Asian house shrew which was dead and had likely been killed by the hail last night as it was squashed but not eaten at all. Carrying on around the river we found lots of evidence of wild boar digging up the road as the forage for roots and rhizomes, we found a couple of wild boar as well as Indian rollers and the commonly seen grassland species of birds including red-whiskered & red-vented bulbuls, jungle mynahs and lesser coucals.

Walking along we heard a purple heron calling and in between the deep guttural calls of the heron we heard the deep intake of breath of rhinos, so we changed direction and headed towards a small lake. Once we arrived we knew instantly we made the right decision as we had 8 rhinos in and around the lake in one view. They were all relaxed, either resting and cooling off in the water or feeding on the banks or the grass just on the lake edge. It was amazing to the watch them at such close quarters on foot, as they got closer to each other they started to vocalise and you could watch and listen to their socialising as they chilled out in this very relaxed spot. As we watched and took it all in an elephant with some mahouts came out of the grassland and towards the lake, as the elephant approached the rhinos were visibly distressed. By now some other groups of hikers had arrived and all of a sudden some of the rhinos that had left the lake to head into the grassland to get away from the elephant started to cough, that loud and repeated exhalation call is a threat call for rhinos. These two rhinos had come to close to each other without realising the other was there. This is a problem they started to fight and chase each other around. When rhinos are fighting and running in the grass we do not know what they will do or what direction they will come out of the grass in. So we don't wait to find out (if we waited it may be too late if the rhinos are running in our direction), so we (and the other tourists) all ran in the same direction as the rhinos. The rhinos were around 70m away from us across a marshy part of the lake in the grass, we could hear them and it was most likely that the winning rhino would chase the loser away to the road. Here the winner would likely stop and the loser would continue (all pent up with aggression and adrenaline) along the road and in our direction. The only possible safe place around here was a small but quite steep hill around 50m away from us (but in the same direction as the rhinos were running (parallel to us). We all made it up the hill as the lower rhino came out around 50m away from us and started walking down the road towards us (towards were we would have been standing in the open and exposed just 1 minute earlier). The rhino was obviously still pent up and we watched as it walked towards the hill, when it came too close for comfort the local guides all throw stones in its direction and beat the ground with their sticks and we made some noise to scare the rhino away. It worked and the rhino headed into the grass and away from us. However with so



many other rhinos around the lake, many of which had gone into the grass after the elephant it was an unpredictable situation. So we waited for 15-20 minutes.

Once the rhinos we could see had all gone deep into the grass and the ones that remained in the lake continued their foraging the other tourists all grouped together and headed down the hill and away the direction we had come from. They left too early and it was around 50m into their walk when another pair of rhinos in the grass nearby started fighting and they all ran back to the hill. Luckily these rhinos were running in the opposite direction and we could watch them (from our vantage point on the hill) as they headed away from us all. So everyone was back up on the hill again for another 15-20 minutes as waited for the situation to calm down again. Also from the hill we could spot some of the semi-wild water buffalo that are being bred here for reintroduction in the near future.

We stayed on the hill for a good while longer as the rest of the hikers left and continued on their journey the way they had tried earlier. This time they made it and we waited as we were taking another path, a path that skirted the lake and would take us around 10m away from at least one rhino which was feeding just next to the lake on the other side of the path.

We walked down the hill and along that same path, we made slow and silent progress as we made it between the lake (with 4 rhinos still in it) and the rhino feeding on the other side of the trail (just around 10m away), but oblivious to us. Feeding and relaxed rhinos are completely fine (unless you do something stupid) and it is because of the vast knowledge of rhino behaviour that the local guides have that enables so many people to walk around so many rhinos with no serious encounters. We came to a nice shady area, this region once used to be a village and there where many mango trees around, the mangoes are not ripe at this time of year, but we tried some that had fallen and whilst bitter they were tasty. It was close to here that Raju spotted an Indian cobra, however with many snakes at around midday, they are hot enough that once they are disturbed they disappear into cover so fast. After a rest in the shade of a couple of mango trees we headed back through the grass and towards the river, we spooked several groups of chital in the grass before getting to the river. The river during May is very low and confined to the main channel, so the vast flood plain (which is the extent of the river in flood) is mostly sand banks, grassy islands and stagnant bodies of water, it was whilst walking passed on of these bodies of water (hoping for a tiger resting in it) we came across a pair of rhinos. We all spooked each other and we just heard the explosion of rhinos leaving the water and careering through the grass (again we didn't know the direction) and we all scattered, most of us headed towards Raju and behind a tree, some of us such as Simon and Martin headed in different directions. At this point Raju started beckoning us all over to the tree he was next to, when we all arrived we found a huge female rock python there. The girth was enormous and easily over 60cm and it was a good estimate for this python to be around 4-5m long, however it was already heading into a massive pile of rotting vegetation before we arrived and after the commotion of us and the rhinos the python quickly disappeared. We dug a little way down into the mound, but couldn't see the huge snake and so decided to leave her in peace. She could well have eggs underneath this vegetation and so leaving her in peace was a good idea.

We continued along the river bank and had lunch in a large watch tower. In fact we would stay here for a while as we waited and watched for a possible tiger, this tower offers a great view out over the river and the flood plain and it was a good location to see a tiger come out from their daytime sleeping place to get a drink as the temperature cooled in the afternoon. As we waited here we had some nice sightings, a few different rhinos including one in the river and one running passed the tower (showing just how fast they can move when they want to, the effortlessness of their movement over the rugged terrain also highlighting why you don't wait until you have seen the rhino burst out of the grass before running); several chital, a foraging osprey patrolling the river back and forth and some other nice birds including green & chestnut-headed bee-eaters.

However just as it was getting towards prime tiger time we were joined by other groups and they were not quiet at all, so we left here and headed to the next tower around 1km away. From here we scanned and waited again. We didn't see any tigers here and the only further sightings of note were another rhino quite close, we had to walk along the road in front of this rhino (whilst it had it head raised (trying to smell us) and ears out and erect in our direction), hog deer, a pair of close lesser adjutant storks (showing their large size) and our first direct evidence of tiger. A very old scat on the road, full of deer and wild boar hair. However we should have seen many tiger tracks around here on this hike, but the violent storm last night washed everything away. We then walked along the beach to the canoes and headed back to the lodge after a great day, a long day, a hot day and a day filled with adventure. We all showered and quickly made it to the restaurant for a cold drink.

Day 6 Chitwan National Park

Wildlife Watching

This morning we left at the usual time and headed to the main canoe point. On the way out we had an Asian house shrew around the jeep at the lodge. Once here we got a different size canoe and went along the Rapti River on a canoe safari, this is another great way to experience the park, it is particularly good for birds and along the way we spotted many white-breasted & pied kingfishers as well as Indian & little cormorants, red-wattled lapwings, white-browed wagtails, chestnut-headed bee-eaters, great, intermedate & little egrets as well as cattle egrets. It is also a good way to see the two species of crocodilian here, and we saw a few of both gharial and mugger crocodiles as we slowly cruised down the river. Probably the highlight of the cruise was various fishing anhingas, having no oils in their feathers (like most aquatic fowl (ducks, swans, geese etc) have) they sink when they land and only their thin



and elongated necks are above the surface as they swim along, they then dive under and swim after fish, coming the surface to swallow the fish and then heading to the shore or a branch to perch and spread their wings to dry off. We then left the canoe and continued our journey on foot, we had Dev to work with Sanjay today and we started off with some fresh tiger tracks. A male tiger had crossed the river here and walked up into the forest this morning, a short distance away we found tracks from a female also heading in the same direction (they were a little older, but both from the last 24 hours).

Almost immediately a ruddy mongoose crossed our path and ran off into the riverine forest. We then had breakfast in the forest, near a couple of trees showing the scars from having sloth bears climbing up them in search of honey, after breakfast we hiked through the forest some more and came to a tree that is used by tigers for scent marking. The deep gashes on the trunk showing the strength and sharpness of the tiger and its claws. Heading into the mosaic of grassland and riverine forest we followed a road and along the trail of a sloth bear from this morning, seeing its fresh prints and where it had dug down to look for ants and termites just off the side of the road. It was in general very quiet this morning and we didn't see much as we headed to a watch tower for a while, the tower was complete with fresh bear dung. A lot of it and still fresh enough that it stunk. The same bear we had been following had clearly not heard the common saying of where bears should shit...in the woods...and not on benches in watch towers!

We continued to the last watch tower we got to last night, this is as good a location as any for tigers, however we would only have any chance before the domesticated elephants were brought here in the middle of day to feed. At this point the presence of so many elephants and their mahouts makes sure that any tigers stay hidden for a good and long period. At the tower we had really nice views of an osprey as it patrolled its territory looking for food in the river, but the only other sighting this morning was a female and 3 year old calf rhino and a male, it is quite unusual to see a breeding female and male in such close quarters when the mother had a calf still very close to her. They were quite distant but these three rhinos took our rhino tally up to a round 50 in just 3.5 days!

From here we headed back to the lodge and then everyone went for the elephant bathing. At around 11:30 we went down with a couple of the lodge's elephants and mahouts to the nearby river to help in the elephant's daily bath time. Elephants love water, it is not an understatement to say that they cannot get enough of a long bath and being scrubbed and scratched in the right places by people is just about as close to elephant heaven as it is possible to get. It is also great fun for us, to get this close and personal with these wonderful animals and see the bond shared between mahout and elephant that will last a lifetime.

The rest of the afternoon was free for people to explore the village, surroundings or just relax around the lodge and then in the evening we went to the Tharu community centre for a cultural performance, we were shown the stick dances, these dances include the traditional weapon of the Tharu people (sticks) and they would beat them together and against other people's sticks rhythmically in a frenzied dance that makes you wonder how they don't break fingers every time they do it. This dance was originally designed to teach fighting techniques and to train warriors, we were also shown dances for weddings, comedy (including a man in drag trying to impress a clowning male admirer), harvest songs, a dance for the festival of light in March, a fire dance and of course the comical peacock dance, which is always interesting to watch.

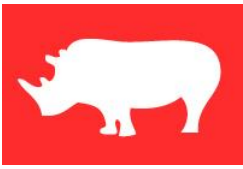
From here we left and went back to the lodge for dinner as we prepared for the first of three back to back full jeep safaris again as the quest for tigers heated up.



Day 7 **Chitwan National Park**

Wildlife Watching

This morning at the canoe point we had nice views of a young rhino and a mugger crocodile as Sanjay worked some magic and were able to get into the park as the first jeep, the first people in the park and it paid off almost immediately. Within the first 10 minutes we had seen all four species of deer, all close to the road. This was followed by wild boar and then a wonderful sloth bear on the road. We spooked the male bear as we turned a corner and he was just 5m away heading towards us. He stood for a second and then ran off into the grass. We turned the engine off and waited quietly, we started to hear him moving through the grass and then start to dig into a termite mound. The sound of his large claws raking away the near concrete like mound loud and clear. The heavy breathing and sucking sound made when he started to suck up the termites was also great to hear. We then heard him move off and we could see the grass moving as he headed back towards the road. We reversed a little way and got fantastic views when he came back out and crossed the road. He only crossed to the road verge on the other side and started to feed again briefly. He then moved into the grass and watching the grass move we saw him head deeper and deeper into the grass and away from us.



We drove quickly towards our chosen tiger view point deep in the park and didn't stop for the various deer, boar, rhinos, five-lined palm squirrels and birds we saw. Only making stops for another sloth bear (this one right next to the vehicle when we spooked it and it ran into the forest, but not before it stopped and stared right at us), and 5 rhinos all in a small lake. They were a lone adult and two mother and calves. All relaxed and feeding on the aquatic vegetation. We stopped here for a while and got some great views and as one mother and calf moved towards another we could see their interaction well. We also made a stop for a troop of rhesus macaques, mostly because one of them had (either intentionally or accidentally) crapped right on the head of Sanjay. Luckily he was wearing a cap, because it wasn't a small load.

This morning there were many chital around and we also had views of more sambar, red muntjacs and an Indian grey mongoose just off the road and foraging around some fallen trees. One of the interesting sightings we had was of a troop of terai langurs with a herd of chital, these two species have one of the most commonly highlighted symbiotic relationships and we saw some of this. The monkeys up in the trees feeding and inadvertently dropping leaves down, the deer then eat these fresh leaves that they could never get to. And they repay the langurs with one of the forest's best early defensive mechanisms as the chital have incredible hearing, eyesight and senses of smell. Allowing the langur to come down to the ground to get more food and in general foraging, play and interact with each other without having to be so cautious.

As we approached the Narayani river and our stake out point we found some nice tiger evidence, first some tracks from yesterday (an adult female moving along the road towards the river), then some very deep and fresh (from the last 24 hours) scratches on a roadside tree. Then nearer the sandy floodplain we had male and female tiger tracks intersecting that were both from last night. It was good to know that at least 2 different tigers were active around this area in the last day or so, but we really hoped they would still be around. We had no way of knowing that, but focused for the rest of the day in this area. We arrived at a nice look out on the river bank and waited for around half an hour at first, but it was still quite early for tiger activity around the river. We did see some river birds such as river lapwings, pied kingfishers and little egrets and a pair of rhinos around but nothing else. So we continued on through the sal forest and hillsides in search of wildlife.

Our next amazing sighting was a flock of 4 great hornbills flying through the forest, one of which landed in an exposed tree and allowed us great views of it as it fed and moved a little through the branches. Moving around we had views of huge lesser adjutant storks, more great hornbills, resting rhinos in the forest and in mud wallows, many chital, langurs and then incredibly a new species of bird for both Martin and Sanjay (even Cheran had only seen the species once before), we had a pair of beautiful long-tailed broadbills. We followed them for a few minutes, this brightly coloured bird being another birding highlight of this tour. From the Siberian rubythroat, Bengal florican and now the long-tailed broadbill we were doing very well for rare birds so far.

We skirted the hills around here, visited another bend in the Narayani River and then made it back to our stake out area around midday. We had lunch and made ourselves comfortable for the next 3.5 hours. However we were out of luck and other than some great hornbills (or the same one repeated) flying over the river, a couple of rhinos and some chital we didn't see anything special at the river this afternoon.

On the way back we saw many more rhinos, huge numbers of chital (particularly in the sal forests), numerous birds again (including nice common hawk cuckoos, black drongos, Indian pittas, brilliant Indian rollers, red-vented & red-whiskered bulbuls, jungle mynahs and Indian peafowls to name a few). But other than a bathing rhino very close to the road we didn't see anything noteworthy. We arrived back at the lodge and had dinner in the presence of an early golden jackal wandering alongside the river and various bats including fulvous fruit bats, greater Asiatic yellow house bats, little Nepalese horseshoe bats and Indian pipistrelles.

Tomorrow we would try the same thing again, maybe heading to another area for the stake out, but we would decide tomorrow based on fresh tracks.

Day 8 **Chitwan National Park**

Wildlife Watching

This morning we once again headed out into the park, it was much warmer this morning than yesterday and so it was unlikely we would have good luck with sloth bears as we did yesterday. However we hoped that the heat would draw tigers out to the rivers where we could view them. Along the way we found a huge male wild boar running across the road in the riverine forest and then in the grassland a small Indian mongoose on the road, standing up and looking at us like a meerkat and then scurrying away into the thick grass. In the thick grassland we had very brief views of a lesser florican flying low over the grass for around 10m before it dived down into the grass again.

It was a very quiet morning as we drove deep into the park and towards the look out over the river, on our way we had some nice sightings but nothing extra special. They included a male rhino in a lake, a nice Bengal monitor on the banks of a lake and a couple of red muntjacs in the sal forest.

We had breakfast on the go and headed straight to the far side of the park to focus on this area for the day, heading through the largest section of grassland there were the usual rhinos but we carried on. Near the river crossing we found male tiger tracks leaving the watch point of the river and then coming back towards the other side. We hoped this was a good sign. It is not always good to see fresh tiger tracks as they tend to move in one direction and therefore where they have recently been is not somewhere they are likely to come back to in the immediate future. However with the fact that this tiger had moved from one side to the other in just a matter of hours, it could mean he has a kill nearby, or he at least has a reason to stay around this area. So we headed to a new area quickly to scout



it out and decided that we would definitely stake out this look out for the late afternoon. So in the meantime we headed to a stunning lake called Devi Tal. It used to be a very good place for rhinos and tigers but for some reason in the last few years fewer and fewer animals were seen here. It may have something to do with the massive population of invasive water hyacinths here. Around Devi Tal were huge numbers of oriental dollarbirds as well as an osprey hunting over the lake, eventually being mobbed by some red-wattled lapwings.

We then headed back to the shore of the Narayani River to begin our tiger stakeout. The nearest army post had heard a tiger calling until midnight last night and the direction of that was in a good location for any tiger still in the area to come down for a drink at this location. So we settled in and started our watch, we spotted the usual riverside birds (as well as a pair of great hornbills flying back and forth over the river) and a rhino in the distance, but in general it was quiet during the heat of the day.

It wasn't until around 3pm when we started to hear chital alarm call, it was coming from the location where we suspected the tiger would be hiding around. But it was still a little distant, so we carried on and watched. Unfortunately due to the army check points in the park we had to cross we had to leave at around 15:15 which is just getting to when the tigers would be coming out into the open. So we had to leave just as some hog deer came out and came down to the river to drink. We then started our drive back in the slightly cooler heat of the day, but it was still stifflingly hot. There was a troop of langurs in the trees near the river crashing through the branches and quickly on the other side of the river we spotted a sloth bear. The bear was stood in the thick grass stock still and listening and smelling the small water hole nearby, clearly wanting to go for a drink but not sure about something, as we stopped and watched we then heard some movement in the grass around the waterhole and clearly that was what the bear was listening to. The bear could just hear it much earlier than we could, then we heard a big splash and some coughing and it was obvious to us and the bear that it was a rhino. So the bear took off into the grass and began to skirt the small pool in favour of a safer place to go for drink.

As we continued on back towards Sauraha we heard more chital alarm calling, but it was all quite distant from the road and so we carried on, we did see many rhinos on the way back including a female and her 1 year old calf very close to the road. We had some very nice views actually as we left the grassland and headed into the sal forest. Then in the riverine forest near the entrance of the park we had a sow wild pig cross the road with a litter of very young piglets in tow.

This was the last sighting of note today and we returned to the lodge, had dinner and during the night were awoken by a loud thunder storm accompanied by very spectacular fork lightning.

Tomorrow would be our last day in the forest and our last chance for a tiger, we had very unlucky so far and had done everything we could to maximise chances of a sighting but alas so far it was not to be. We hoped for different luck tomorrow.



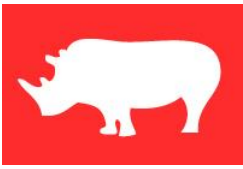
Day 9 Chitwan National Park

Cultural Tour

This morning was much cooler than yesterday, the storm last night had dropped more rain than we initially thought and there were puddles along the road for most of the day. It also meant that the river crossing to the best area for tigers would be impassable today and so we focused on driving many of the roads around the sal forest. Some of the areas we hadn't spent much time in and also some areas where many vehicles do not go at all.

The morning was quite quiet in general, the birds were good including Asian paradise flycatchers, jungle mynahs, oriental magpie robins, Indian pittas and two pairs of the huge lesser adjutant storks. Also in the sal forest we found a lone bull gaur resting on the ground and then had a very close and great sighting in great light of a rhino. The rhino was busy browsing when we arrived and we stopped and watched him, but once we turned the engine off, he started to get scared (as he couldn't hear us anymore and their eyesight is so bad, we had just disappeared and this made him nervous) and he backed off and away. In one of the larger lakes here we spotted a couple of Indian softshell turtles at the surface of the lake and just basking a little in the morning sun.

We had breakfast in the sal forest along the banks of the lake, we were surrounded by many chital and Terai langurs around this lake, they were very active in the cool morning and were feeding and moving around without a care in the world. Driving a little further we came to a couple of hikers and their guides and they were waiting along a straight section of road in the shade of a large sild cotton tree. They had heard a tiger roaring in the forest at the backside of a nearby check point and were waiting in this area for the tiger to come out and cross the road. They had chosen the place as it offered the best views over a long stretch of road, but it was not the most likely place for



the tiger to come out of this section of forest. Being in a jeep we had access to get to that place and so that is what we did. We then explored this area of the forest in depth, not just looking for the tiger directly, but also looking for alarm calls from prey animals and just looking for nervous animals in general. But we couldn't find anything, however it was not a complete bust as we did find a pair of muntjacs and also had great views of a crested serpent eagle which was being very aggressively mobbed by an ashy woodswallow.

After this section of sal forest we went towards the tallest watch tower in the forest for our lunch, it offers a great view out over a large grassland area and we hoped to see some tiger activity around here. Along the way we stopped for a very nice grey-headed fish eagle sighting just next to the road and perched in the ideal lighting for photography.

Lunch was pleasant up on the top floor of the tower, the breeze doing its best to keep us cool as the temperature continued to rise. Whilst up here we spotted another grey-headed fish eagle, a female sambar deer and handful of rhinos and heard one get into a little spat with another and go running off wheezing into the forest. After lunch we left the tower and slowly drove the grassland road, our last chances to see a tiger were rapidly approaching, we would try every lake and waterhole on the way back and even stake out the only river crossing on this side of the park. But our first stop was for the same old rhino we had seen at least twice before, it fact it was in pretty much the exact same place where we had first seen it. A large diagonal slit in its right ear and its bird pecked horn being a very good indicator of this individual. It is also one of the most relaxed rhinos in park as we stopped right in front of it and watched it casually looking at us and feeding on the grass. Watching its prehensile top lip curling the grass and plucking them into his large mouth, before it started to chew loudly.

We were not to be in luck and we didn't get a tiger sighting, however we did see a record number of mammals species and individual rhinos and also ticked off nearly all of the rare and endangered bird species of the park, so whilst we were all a little disappointed, it was hard to be unhappy with the way the safaris had gone. It was not for lack of trying, and as if to typify that we spent the last 2 hours of the park being open, driving every road we could, scanning and scouring every part of the forest and grassland we came across. We did see many langurs in several troops, rhinos in the grassland, wild boar, herds of chital, an incredible amount of bird life (the highlight of which was a pair of shikra – one which flew off and away and one that allowed for good views, showing how good the mimicry of the common hawk cuckoo is as this is the species they are mimicking) and even a stick insect! But never our main target.

So we left the park for the last time and headed back over the river and towards the village, our last large mammal being the semi tame young rhino who was always hanging around the village and park headquarters. We had to walk passed him at a distance of around 2m, which is just about as close as anyone will ever peacefully get to a wild rhino in the world.

Back at the hotel we had our final evening meal as a group, as Martin would be staying on in Sapana Lodge as two more clients arrive tomorrow morning for another 5 full day safaris.

Day 10 **Kathmandu**

Travelling

This morning everyone (except Martin) left the lodge at 8am to make their way back up the winding road to Kathmandu. On arrival they met Raju and checked into the hotel in Thamel and then the rest of the day was free for them to all do as they pleased.

Day 11 **Kathmandu**

Departure

Today everyone was transferred to the airport from the hotel in time to catch their return flights home.

Species List

Wild Nepal May 2018

Mammals (* = heard or signs only)

| | Common Name | Binominal Name |
|----|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Indian hog deer | <i>Axis porcinus</i> |
| 2 | Gaur | <i>Bos gaurus</i> |
| 3 | Wild water buffalo | <i>Bubalus arnee</i> |
| 4 | Golden jackal | <i>Canis aureus</i> |
| 5 | Sambar | <i>Cervus unicolor</i> |
| 6 | Asiatic Elephant | <i>Elaphus maximus</i> |
| 7 | Five-lined palm squirrel | <i>Funambulus pennantii</i> |
| 8 | Small Indian mongoose | <i>Herpestes auropunctatus</i> |
| 9 | Indian grey mongoose | <i>Herpestes edwardsii</i> |
| 10 | Ruddy mongoose | <i>Herpestes smithii</i> |
| 11 | Indian Hare | <i>Lepus nigrocollis</i> |
| 12 | Rhesus Macaque | <i>Macaca mulatta</i> |
| 13 | Sloth Bear | <i>Melursus ursinus</i> |
| 14 | Indian Muntjac | <i>Muntiacus muntjak</i> |
| 15 | Himalayan white-bellied rat | <i>Niviventer niviventer</i> |
| 16 | Leopard | <i>Panthera pardus</i> |
| 17 | Tiger | <i>Panthera Tigris</i> |
| 18 | Indian Pipistrelle | <i>Pipistrellus coromandra</i> |
| 19 | Himalayan field rat | <i>Rattus nitidus</i> |
| 20 | One-Horned Indian Rhino | <i>Rhinoceros unicornis</i> |
| 21 | Little Nepalese horseshoe bat | <i>Rhinolophus subbadius</i> |
| 22 | Fulvous fruit bat | <i>Rousettus leschenaultii</i> |
| 23 | Greater Asiatic yellow house bat | <i>Scotophilus heathii</i> |
| 24 | Teari grey langur | <i>Semnopithecus hector</i> |
| 25 | Nepal grey langur | <i>Semnopithecus schistaceus</i> |
| 26 | Asian house shrew | <i>Suncus murinus</i> |
| 27 | Eurasian wild pig | <i>Sus scofra</i> |
| 28 | Small Indian civet | <i>Viverricula indica</i> |

| May | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| | | 4 | 3 | 3 | | 3 | 5 | 3 | | |
| | | | 6 | | | | | 1 | | |
| | | | | 4† | | | | | | |
| | | | 1 | 1 | 3 | | 1 | 2 | | |
| | | | 3 | | | 8 | * | 1 | | |
| | | * | 1 | | | | * | * | | |
| | | | | | | 3 | 2 | 2 | | |
| | | | | * | | | 1 | | | |
| | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | |
| | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| | | 8 | 5 | | 1 | 11 | 3 | 1 | 3 | |
| | | 1 | * | * | * | 2 | 1 | * | | |
| | | 1 | | | | 3 | 3 | 4 | | |
| | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | * | * | * | * | | | |
| | | | | 4 | | | 1 | 2 | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| | 2 | 14 | 13 | 19 | 3 | 31 | 21 | 14 | | |
| | 2 | 1 | | 3 | 3 | 1 | | 2 | | |
| | | | | 2 | | 1 | | 2 | | |
| | | | | 2 | 3 | | | 2 | | |
| | | 9 | 21 | | | 16 | 1 | 28 | | |
| | 2 | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | * | 1 | | | | | |
| | | 11 | 1 | 1 | | 16 | 18 | 13 | | |
| | | | | * | * | | | | | |

†Semi wild in a large fenced compound awaiting reintroduction

Birds (* = heard or signs only)

| | Common Name | Binominal Name |
|----|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Shirka | <i>Accipiter badius</i> |
| 2 | Jungle Mynah | <i>Acridotheres fuscus</i> |
| 3 | Common Myna | <i>Acridotheres tristis</i> |
| 4 | Common sandpiper | <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i> |
| 5 | Eurasian Kingfisher | <i>Alcedo atthis</i> |
| 6 | White-throated Kingfisher | <i>Alcedo leucogaster</i> |
| 7 | Brown Crake | <i>Amaurornis akool</i> |
| 8 | White-breasted waterhen | <i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i> |
| 9 | Asian Openbill | <i>Anastomus oscitans</i> |
| 10 | Oriental Darter | <i>Anhinga melogastor</i> |
| 11 | Oriental Pied Hornbill | <i>Anthracoceros albirostris</i> |
| 12 | Paddyfield Pipit | <i>Anthus rufulus</i> |
| 13 | Great Egret | <i>Ardea alba</i> |
| 14 | Intermediate egret | <i>Ardea intermedia</i> |
| 15 | Purple Heron | <i>Ardea purpurea</i> |
| 16 | Indian Pond Heron | <i>Areola grayii</i> |
| 17 | Ashy woodswallow | <i>Artamus fuscus</i> |
| 18 | Black baza | <i>Aviceda leuphotes</i> |
| 19 | Cattle Egret | <i>Bubulcus ibis</i> |
| 20 | Great hornbill | <i>Buceros bicornis</i> |
| 21 | Striated heron | <i>Butorides striata</i> |
| 22 | Lesser Coucal | <i>Centropus bengalensis</i> |
| 23 | Greater Coucal | <i>Centropus sinensis</i> |
| 24 | Pied Kingfisher | <i>Ceryle rudis</i> |
| 25 | Common emerald Dove | <i>Chalcophaps indica</i> |
| 26 | Little ringed plover | <i>Charadrius dubius</i> |
| 27 | Greater flameback | <i>Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus</i> |
| 28 | Yellow-eyed Babbler | <i>Chrysomma sinense</i> |
| 29 | Greater yellownape | <i>Chrysophlegma flavinucha</i> |
| 30 | White stork | <i>Ciconia ciconia</i> |
| 31 | Woolly-necked Stork | <i>Ciconia episcopus</i> |
| 32 | Black Stork | <i>Ciconia nigra</i> |

| May | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|------|------|------|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| | | | | | | | | 2 | | |
| | | ~116 | ~230 | ~165 | ~20 | ~105 | ~90 | ~155 | 4 | |
| | ~83 | 12 | ~40 | 9 | ~50 | ~20 | 12 | ~15 | ~100 | ~10 |
| | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | |
| | | 4 | | | | 1 | | 1 | | |
| | 1 | 8 | 4 | | 8 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 1 | |
| | | | | | 2 | | | | | |
| | 1 | 3 | | | | | | 2 | 1 | |
| | | 1 | 1 | 17 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 3 | 1 | |
| | | | 1 | | 7 | | | | | |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| | 2 | 1 | | 2 | 2 | 8 | 1 | | 1 | |
| | 2 | 1 | | 4 | 4 | ~20 | | 1 | | |
| | | 2 | | 6 | 1 | | 1 | | | |
| | | 2 | 4 | 14 | | 4 | 5 | 4 | 2 | |
| | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| | | 2 | | | | | | | | |
| | ~26 | ~10 | * | | 9 | | | | 18 | ~20 |
| | | | | | | 7 | 1 | | | |
| | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| | | 15 | 6 | 11 | 3 | 6 | 13 | 8 | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | |
| | 5 | | 2 | 1 | 4 | 11 | 7 | | | |
| | | | 1 | | | 4 | 3 | 3 | | |
| | | | 4 | | | 2 | | | | |
| | | | | | | 2 | 2 | | | |
| | | | 2 | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| | 5 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | |
| | | | | 3 | | 3 | | | | |
| | | | 1 | | | | | | | |

| | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 70 | Yellow bittern | <i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i> |
| 71 | Long-tailed Shrike | <i>Lanius schach</i> |
| 72 | Bay-backed Shrike | <i>Lanius vittatus</i> |
| 73 | Yellow-crowned woodpecker | <i>Leiopicus mahrattensis</i> |
| 74 | Lesser Adjutant | <i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i> |
| 75 | Siberian rubythroat | <i>Luscinia calliope</i> |
| 76 | Striated grassbird | <i>Megalurus palustris</i> |
| 77 | Chestnut-headed bee-eater | <i>Merops leschenaulti</i> |
| 78 | Green Bee-eater | <i>Merops orientalis</i> |
| 79 | Bronze-winged Jacana | <i>Metopidius indicus</i> |
| 80 | Black Kite | <i>Milvus migrans</i> |
| 81 | Grey Wagtail | <i>Motacilla cinerea</i> |
| 82 | White-browed Wagtail | <i>Motacilla maderaspatensis</i> |
| 83 | Asian Brown Flycatcher | <i>Muscicapa dauurica</i> |
| 84 | Egyptian vulture | <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> |
| 85 | Black-crowned Night Heron | <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i> |
| 86 | Indian grey hornbill | <i>Ocyrceros birostris</i> |
| 87 | Indian golden oriole | <i>Oriolus kundo</i> |
| 88 | Black-hooded Oriole | <i>Oriolus xanthornus</i> |
| 89 | Common tailorbird | <i>Orthotomus sutorius</i> |
| 90 | Osprey | <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> |
| 91 | Cinereous tit | <i>Parus cinereus</i> |
| 92 | Eurasian tree sparrow | <i>Passer montanus</i> |
| 93 | Indian Peafowl | <i>Pavo cristatus</i> |
| 94 | Puff-throated babbler | <i>Pellorneum ruficeps</i> |
| 95 | Scarlet Minivet | <i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i> |
| 96 | Rosy minivet | <i>Pericrocotus roseus</i> |
| 97 | Sirkeer malkoha | <i>Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii</i> |
| 98 | Green-billed malkoha | <i>Phaenicophaeus tristis</i> |
| 99 | Great Cormorant | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> |
| 100 | Indian cormorant | <i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i> |
| 101 | Hulme's Leaf Warbler | <i>Phylloscopus humei</i> |
| 102 | Grey-headed woodpecker | <i>Picus canus</i> |
| 103 | Lesser yellownape | <i>Picus chlorolophus</i> |
| 104 | Scaly-bellied woodpecker | <i>Picus squamatus</i> |
| 105 | Streak-throated woodpecker | <i>Picus xanthopygaeus</i> |
| 106 | Indian pitta | <i>Pitta brachyura</i> |
| 107 | White-browed scimitar babbler | <i>Pomatorhinus schisticeps</i> |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|----|----|---|-----|----|----|-----|------|-----|
| | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| | | 2 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 1 | 3 | | 6 | | 4 | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 5 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 11 | 12 | 4 | | |
| | 3 | | | 9 | | | | | | |
| | | | | 2 | | | | | | |
| ~10 | 2 | | | | | | | | 4 | ~10 |
| | | | 2 | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | | | 3 | 4 | | | 1 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| | 2 | 3 | 3 | | | | | | | |
| | | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | 2 | | | |
| ~100 | ~100 | 3 | 3 | 4 | ~10 | 8 | 4 | ~10 | ~150 | |
| | | 30 | 13 | 5 | 2 | 26 | 22 | 9 | | |
| | | | 2 | | | | | | | |
| | | 4 | 2 | | | 5 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | |
| | | 1 | | | 3 | | | | | |
| | 1 | | | 1 | 3 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| | | 6 | 3 | | | 1 | 1 | 5 | | |
| | | 3 | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 1 | | | 1 | | 3 | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2 | 13 | | | 7 | 3 | 3 | | |
| | | | | | | 1 | | | | |

| | | |
|-----|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 108 | Grey-crowned prinia | <i>Prinia cinereocapilla</i> |
| 109 | Grey-breasted prinia | <i>Prinia hodgsonii</i> |
| 110 | Plain prinia | <i>Prinia inornata</i> |
| 111 | Ashy Prinia | <i>Prinia socialis</i> |
| 112 | Long-tailed broadbill | <i>Psarisomus dalhousiae</i> |
| 113 | Red-naped Ibis | <i>Pseudibis papillosa</i> |
| 114 | Lineated barbet | <i>Psilopogon lineatus</i> |
| 115 | Rose-ringed Parakeet | <i>Psittacula krameri</i> |
| 116 | Red-breasted parakeet | <i>Psittacula alexandri</i> |
| 117 | Plum-headed parakeet | <i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i> |
| 118 | Alexandrine Parakeet | <i>Psittacula eupatria</i> |
| 119 | Red-vented Bulbul | <i>Pycnonotus cafer</i> |
| 120 | Black-crested Bulbul | <i>Pycnonotus flaviventris</i> |
| 121 | Red-whiskered Bulbul | <i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i> |
| 122 | White-browed fantail | <i>Rhipidura aureola</i> |
| 123 | Grey-throated martin | <i>Riparia chinensis</i> |
| 124 | Indian nuthatch | <i>Sitta castanea</i> |
| 125 | Velvet-fronted nuthatch | <i>Sitta frontalis</i> |
| 126 | Spotted dove | <i>Spilopelia chinensis</i> |
| 127 | Crested Serpent eagle | <i>Spilornis cheela</i> |
| 128 | Changeable Hawk-eagle | <i>Spizaetus cirrhatus</i> |
| 129 | Grey-throated babbler | <i>Stachyris nigriceps</i> |
| 130 | Eurasian collared dove | <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> |
| 131 | Oriental Turtle Dove | <i>Streptopelia orientalis</i> |
| 132 | Laughing Dove | <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i> |
| 133 | Chestnut-tailed starling | <i>Sturnia malabarica</i> |
| 134 | Lesser florican | <i>Sypheotides indicus</i> |
| 135 | Ruddy Shelduck | <i>Tadorna ferruginea</i> |
| 136 | Asian paradise flycatcher | <i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i> |
| 137 | Little green pigeon | <i>Treron olax</i> |
| 138 | Yellow-footed green pigeon | <i>Treron phoenicoptera</i> |
| 139 | Common Greenshank | <i>Tringa nebularia</i> |
| 140 | Large grey babbler | <i>Turdoides malcolmi</i> |
| 141 | Jungle Babbler | <i>Turdoides striatus</i> |
| 142 | Red-billed blue magpie | <i>Urocissa erythroryncha</i> |
| 143 | River Lapwing | <i>Vanellus duvaucelii</i> |
| 144 | Red-Wattled Lapwing | <i>Vanellus indicus</i> |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|------|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|--|
| | | | | | | 3 | 1 | | | |
| | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | |
| | | | 3 | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | 2 | | | | |
| | | | 1 | 1 | | | 2 | 6 | | |
| | | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | |
| | | | 16 | 7 | | 3 | 3 | ~20 | | |
| | | | 8 | | | 6 | | | | |
| | | | 11 | 3 | | 8 | | 5 | 7 | |
| | | | 3 | 1 | 11 | 6 | | | 1 | |
| | ~44 | ~132 | ~230 | ~231 | ~10 | ~150 | ~150 | ~80 | ~120 | |
| | 2 | | | | | | | | | |
| | 4 | ~205 | ~220 | ~200 | | ~70 | ~130 | ~70 | 7 | |
| | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| | ~30 | ~25 | ~35 | | ~34 | ~20 | ~15 | | | |
| | | 4 | 2 | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| | | 3 | 2 | | | | | | | |
| | ~56 | 18 | ~45 | 11 | 2 | 33 | ~60 | ~73 | ~35 | |
| | | 1 | 3 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 2 | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | |
| | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 17 | 7 | 2 | 10 | 19 | 38 | | |
| | | | 7 | | | 1 | 1 | 2 | | |
| | | | 1 | 4 | | 2 | | 2 | | |
| | 1 | 16 | 13 | 2 | | 11 | 9 | 22 | | |
| | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| | | | | 2 | | | | | | |
| | | 10 | 9 | | | 3 | 3 | 9 | | |
| | | | | | | 3 | 1 | | | |
| | | 2 | 6 | | | 2 | 4 | 6 | | |
| | | | | | | 2 | | | | |
| | | | | 3 | | | 1 | | | |
| | | 37 | 17 | 9 | ~25 | 40 | 5 | 7 | | |
| | | | | | | | 2 | | | |
| | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | |
| | | 3 | | 13 | 12 | 2 | 10 | 2 | | |

Reptiles (* = heard or signs only)

| | Common Name | Binominal Name |
|----|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Indian Garden Lizard | <i>Calotes versicolor</i> |
| 2 | Mugger Crocodile | <i>Crocodylus palustris</i> |
| 3 | Gharial | <i>Gavialis gangeticus</i> |
| 4 | Brooke's house gecko | <i>Hemidactylus brookii</i> |
| 5 | Yellow-belled house gecko | <i>Hemidactylus flaviviridis</i> |
| 6 | Asian House Gecko | <i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i> |
| 7 | Indian cobra | <i>Naja naja</i> |
| 8 | Indian softshell turtle | <i>Nilssonia gangetica</i> |
| 9 | Indian rock python | <i>Python molurus</i> |
| 10 | Bengal monitor | <i>Varanus bengalensis</i> |
| 11 | Yellow monitor | <i>Varanus flavescens</i> |

| May | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| | 1 | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | |
| | 2 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | |
| | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | | | |
| | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| | 2 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 4 | | | |
| | | | | 1‡ | | | | | | |
| | | | | 4 | | | | 2 | | |
| | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 3 | | | | 2 | 1 | | |
| | | | | | | 1 | | | | |

‡Raju only

Amphibians (* = heard or signs only)

| | Common Name | Binominal Name |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Indian toad | <i>Duttaphrynus melanostictus</i> |
| 2 | Indian Skittering Frog | <i>Euphlyctis cyanophlyctis</i> |
| 3 | Indian Pond Frog | <i>Euphlyctis hexadactylus</i> |
| 4 | Long-legged cricket frog | <i>Zakerana syhadrensis</i> |

| May | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| | | | | 2 | | 1 | | | | |
| | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | 1 | | | | |

Freshwater Fish (* = heard or signs only)

| | Common Name | Binominal Name |
|---|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Labeo boga | <i>Labeo boga</i> |
| 2 | Butter catfish | <i>Ompok bimaculatus</i> |
| 3 | Chola barb | <i>Puntius chola</i> |

| May | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|-----|-----|---|-----|---|---|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| | | | ~10 | ~10 | | ~10 | | 3 | | |
| | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| | | | | | 2 | | 2 | | | |