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12 = 27<sup>th</sup> नोव्हेंबर 2022



## Introduction

We booked a custom tour through [Indian Nature Tours](#) to visit 3 areas of Northern India The deserts of Gudgerat, The hills of Madhya Pradesh and the Plains of Uttar Pradesh. The goal was to see 5 iconic rare species – Asian Wild Ass, Asian Lion, Blackbuck, Tiger and Indian Gharial, and I also wanted to see Sarus cranes along the way. They booked all accommodation, internal flights and transfers, all accommodation and safaris in the parks, we were accompanied with a guide for the whole trip. We flew with BA from Heathrow to Dehli.



## Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November

Our overnight flight arrived in the early hours and we were met by our guide to transfer airport terminals for our delayed connecting flight to Ahmedabad, we arrived here at lunchtime but one of the cases was somehow still in Dehli much to the annoyance of my wife. A couple of hours later we checked into our hotel and headed off for a jeep safari in the Wild Ass Sanctuary at the Little Rann of Kutch, Wild Ass were easily spotted along with a nice selection of birds including a nice imperial eagle and a couple of spotted eagles. We headed back to the hotel but took a short drive once dark to look for nightjars, we did not find any but had a nice golden jackal. I ran the moth trap and we searched for owls finding a pair of rather noisy spotted owlets who spent most of the night outside our room.



Wild Ass



Common Crane



## Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November

It was an early start for another safari into the sanctuary, an Indian fox was one of the first encounters we had before visiting the lesser flamingo flock at the far end of the reserve. We encountered greater spotted eagles, hobby and steppe eagle before heading back for brunch. There were a few butterflies round the gardens and a few birds round the pond including some nice little green bee-eaters.

We had an afternoon drive to a different part of the sanctuary in search of striped hyena but first we searched for roosting short eared owls finding several confiding ones. As dusk drew in we headed to the hyena den to stake it out a sounder of wild boar came past disturbing a returning hyena and they all scattered. Our guide had an idea where the hyena would emerge so we headed there and he was spot on the hyena emerged and we got a few photos in the fading light. It was dark as we drove back for dinner and I set up moth trap by our chalet.



Indian Fox



Striped Hyena

## Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November

Another early start this time we headed to Nawatlab wetlands, which was much drier than expected but we still managed to find a nice selection of birds.

Lunch was had at the hotel before driving to the Gir national park which we arrived at dusk, we were staying at the excellent Gir birding lodge where I set up my moth trap for the evening.



Red Naped Ibis



Hanuman langur

## Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November

An early start to enter the forest on a safari drive, we encountered a ruddy mongoose and a patrol vehicle pulled over as we had a puncture which was quickly replaced with the spare wheel. We rounded a corner and two jeeps were stopped with a patrol motorcycle, they were watching three lion cubs resting and we had some nice views although the sun was not in the best position. We headed back to the hotel for a late breakfast and birded the lodge grounds. An excellent selection of birds surrounded the feeders and water pools a family of tailorbirds were very confiding, a nice group of tawny bellied babblers, Asian koel, plus loads of others. A walk round the camp produced a very nice selection of birds including Tickell's blue flycatcher. The afternoon drive was good we had a ruddy mongoose and near the end of the drive we encountered a male lion sat in the road we had amazing views as he walked right past the jeep, it was time to leave the park so we headed off. I ran the moth trap again overnight.



Ruddy Mongoose



Indian Scops Owl



Asian Lion

## Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November

We had one last drive early morning again paradise flycatcher and spotted eagle the pick of the birds, halfway through the drive we encountered two young male lions by the side of the road they showed very well for 15 mins before walking off roaring as they went – awesome. We headed back to camp for lunch before heading off to Velavadar arriving late afternoon. We did an evening drive round the local roads, passing the reserve where numerous Blackbuck were seen. We were unsuccessful with nightjars but did get a nice golden jackal.

I ran the moth traps and finally I had managed to purchase some bait for the small mammal traps I deployed these as well in the camp.



Spotted Owlet



Asian Paradise Flycatcher

## Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November

An early start checking the mammal traps I had caught a bush rat, we headed into the reserve as it opened following another jeep from our hotel it promptly stopped for a jungle cat which both jeeps had good views as it wandered parallel to the track. Blackbuck were everywhere including some rutting males and it was an excellent drive we saw lots of nice birds as well.

We had lunch back at the hotel, after which I wandered round the grounds photographing the butterflies and the resident little cormorant who lived on the pond.

We headed back into the reserve early afternoon for another drive round this time visiting the wetland area as well where we spotted two distant wolves resting on a mound, there were no closer tracks to their location so we had to be satisfied with distant views. There were plenty of waterbirds including spot billed ducks as well as smaller birds such as Sykes warbler, Sykes lark. The reserve has the largest harrier roost in the work almost 200 birds roost here and harriers were everywhere. Montagu's the most numerous but plenty of Marsh and a few Pallid harriers roosting, it was an awesome sight. As dusk fell we headed out of the reserve and visited some local sandy grassland where we quickly located a Sykes nightjar. I ran the Moth trap and mammals traps again.



Little Cormorant



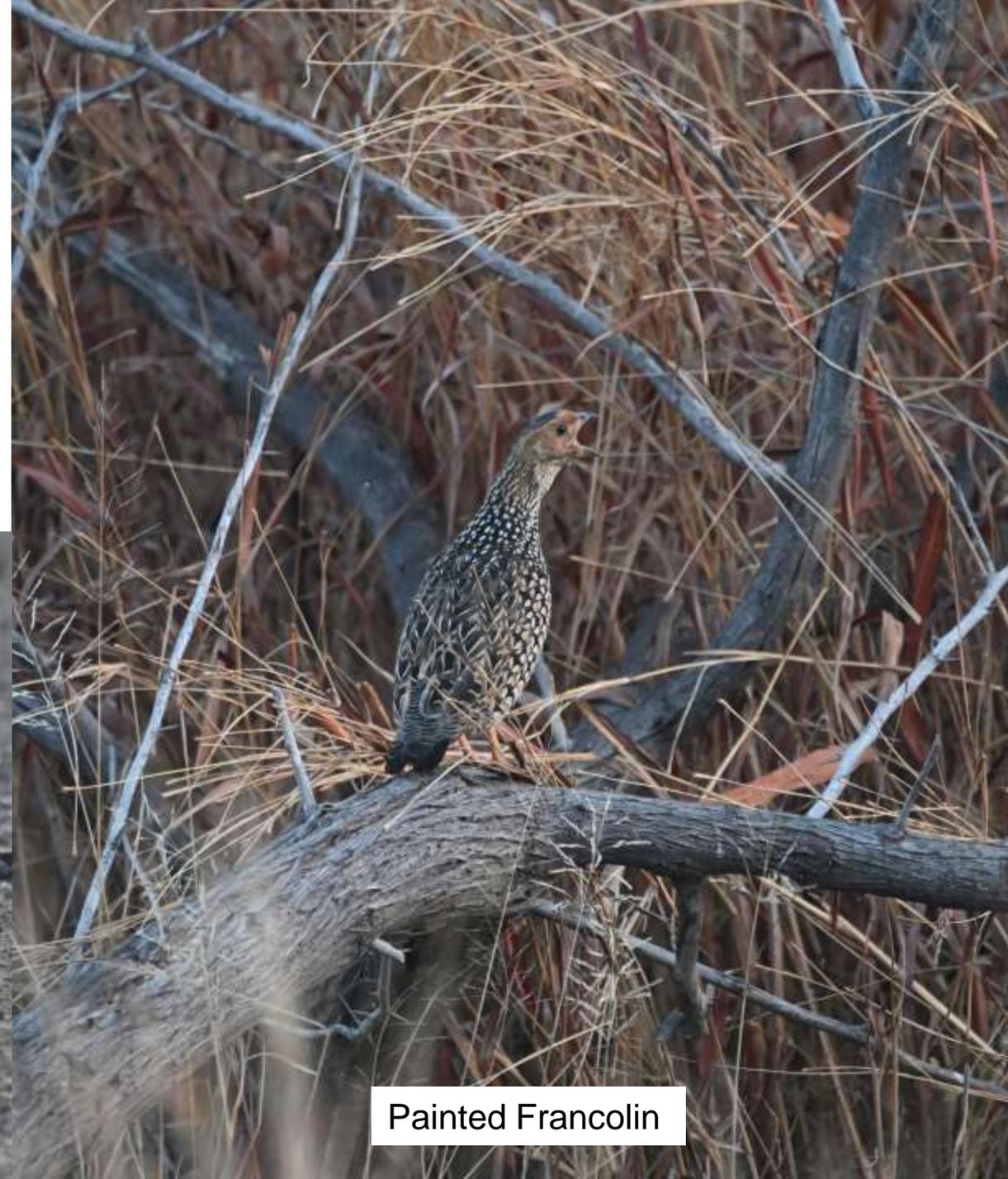
Blackbuck

## Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November

The mammal traps produced two bush rats. We headed round some local roads before our drive, finding Indian stone curlew and wild boar. Once in the reserve our early morning drive was crazy we kept bumping into Jungle cats we had 6 in total during the drive, absolutely amazing. The birding was similar to the previous day but we had good sightings of lesser kestrel and amazing views of painted francolins. We headed back to the lodge for lunch before driving back to Ahmedabad for the night.



Montagu's Harrier



Painted Francolin



Jungle Cat



## Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November

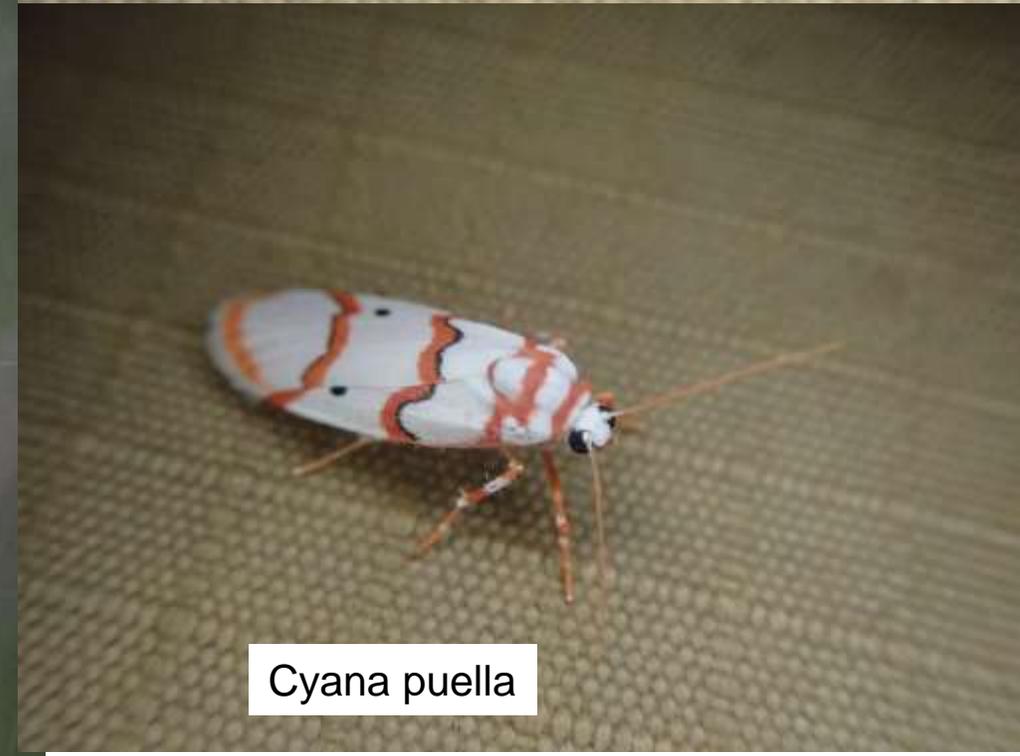
The early morning flight to Nagpur followed by a drive to Kanha took until 1pm, after some lunch I did a little round the camp before we had a guided walk into the surrounding jungle and river. Few birds but plenty of insects plants and some impressive giant wood spiders. I ran the moth trap and mammal traps, the latter had nothing during the whole stay here but the moth trap produced some nice moths despite being the low season, the owner of the camp was into moths so joined me a couple of times to see the catch.



Giant Wood Spider



*Oeonistis altica*



*Cyana puella*



Five Striped Palm Squirrel

## Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November

The early morning drive gave us our first encounters with the very rare Barasingha deer and we saw several along with a few Indian muntjac, spotted deer were everywhere along with a few Sambar here and there. Forest owlet and Crested serpent eagle were the pick of the birds, the mammal highlight was a sloth bear in the middle of the road as we rounded a corner, it took one look and headed off. We headed back to the Camp for lunch and took it easy until the afternoon drive where we found several sounders of wild boar and we found a pack of 7 jackals trying to bring down an injured Spotted deer stag. The stag used us as cover to escape as the jackals were weary of the jeep. The stag limped away into the scrub the jackals regrouped rounded the jeep and followed it and the inevitable ensued. We headed back to camp but diverted quickly down a side road, but the tiger had just gone into the scrub and was out of view. Moth trap again produced some nice moths



Black-naped monarch

## Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November

The early morning drive we headed to a different part of the reserve where a tigress with two cub was located in long grass 400 m from the track, the WWF spotters were monitoring her from elephants, we waited as long as we could, but she never left the grass, we encountered some Indian scimitar babblers on the way back.

I birded round the lodge a brown headed barbet was nice along with a few butterflies after lunch.

The afternoons drive was frustrating for some reason, that could not be explained to me we did not return to the tigress we staked out in the morning, jeeps that did had brilliant views. We drove round the same tigerless area of the forest as the previous day seeing very little.

I ran the moth traps again with a few nice moths



Crested Serpent Eagle



Hanuman langur

## Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November

The early morning drive we did the usual drive in the usual area, jackals, wild boar, all the usual deer, painted spurfowl was the only new bird on the drive.

We birded the lodge area between drives and managed to see quite a number of birds Indian nuthatch, lesser flameback, black capped monarch the pick.

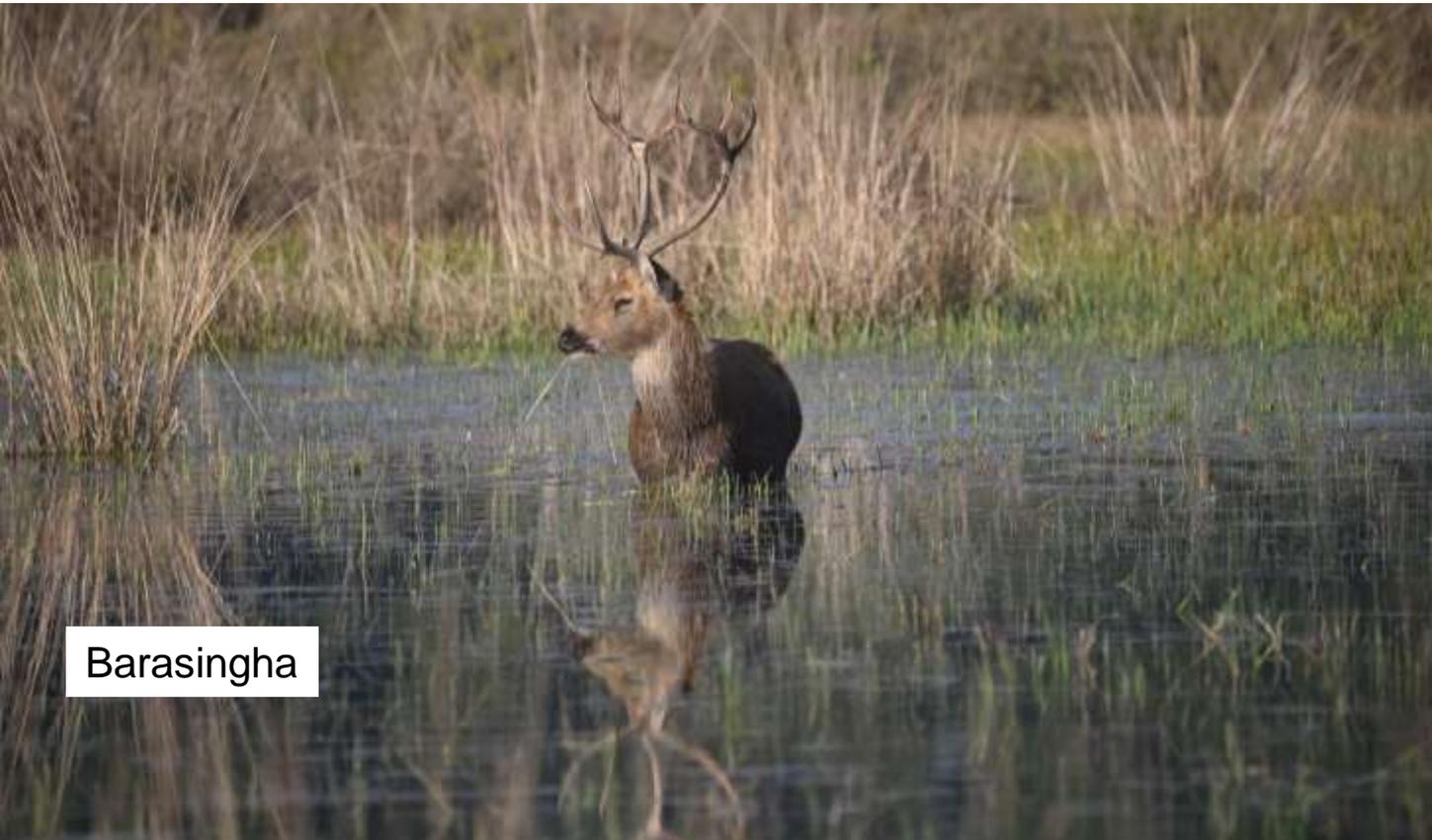
The afternoon was almost identical to the morning drive, a couple of Indian muntjac of note plus all the usual stuff a bit frustrating really that we did not change the area.



Golden Jackal

## Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November

We did the same drive as the last two we picked up very fresh pug marks but could not locate a tiger, so we moved on 10 mins later another jeep found the tiger we were searching for but it had gone when we revisited that area. We had lunch at the camp and was shown a Baron moth caterpillar expertly camouflaged on mango leaves. We drove back to Nagpur, tigerless and a little frustrated. We flew to Dehli for the night.



Barasingha



Common Baron Caterpillar

## Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November

We drove to Chambal arriving for a late lunch, we birded the gardens and then ventured into the surrounding farmland where we picked up a good number of birds canary headed flycatcher, large grey babbler, Indian hornbill, and some flying fox bats

After dinner we searched the grounds and surrounding area for nocturnal wildlife, we did pretty well with a palm civet, brown wood owl, Indian scops owl, Indian hare, spotted owlet but the highlight was a small Indian civet in the fields around the camp. I ran the moth trap and the mammal trap had a very early capture a Little Indian Field Mouse before bed.

Common Palm Civet



Indian Peafowl



Indian Flying Fox



Indian Grey Hornbill

## Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November

We headed out early and birded some random area of farmland mixed with some scrub, there was a good selection of birds the highlights were a confiding Sirkeer Malkhoa, Black francolin, bush lark, Eurasian sparrowhawk. We arrived at the Chambal sanctuary for our boat trip, a rather low key affair compared to the Visitor centres of the other sites we visited. The boat trip was good we had a nice selection of birds including a common shelduck a mega rarity in India and had the guides very excited, our enthusiasm was obviously less so, we were more interested in the flock of Bar headed geese.



The main target of the trip was the Indian Gharial which was almost wiped out but is now recovering and the Chambal river holds the biggest population. We encountered about 20 individuals on the trip along with marsh mugger crocodiles and some turtles including the rare Red Crown Turtle. Other notable sightings were Osprey, Laggar Falcon, sand lark, black bellied tern.

Sirkeer malkoha



Indian Gharial

We had lunch then headed out in search of Sarus cranes, it did not go quite as smoothly as expected, a bridge was closed and the detour caused us getting a bit lost we eventually got back on track but were running out of light and time to get to the right area where the cranes feed. Success - still a little way from the core area two Sarus cranes were feeding in a field, they got disturbed by some dogs but landed a short distance away and we managed to watch them displaying a little. We managed to get a bit closer for some nice photos before heading back to the lodge.

After dinner I took a wander round the camp looking for nocturnal wildlife, I can across a large insect eating bat in a small building, but it flew off, it was clearly a dining site as there were insect parts and a few droppings underneath. I did not see anything else so checked on the moths.



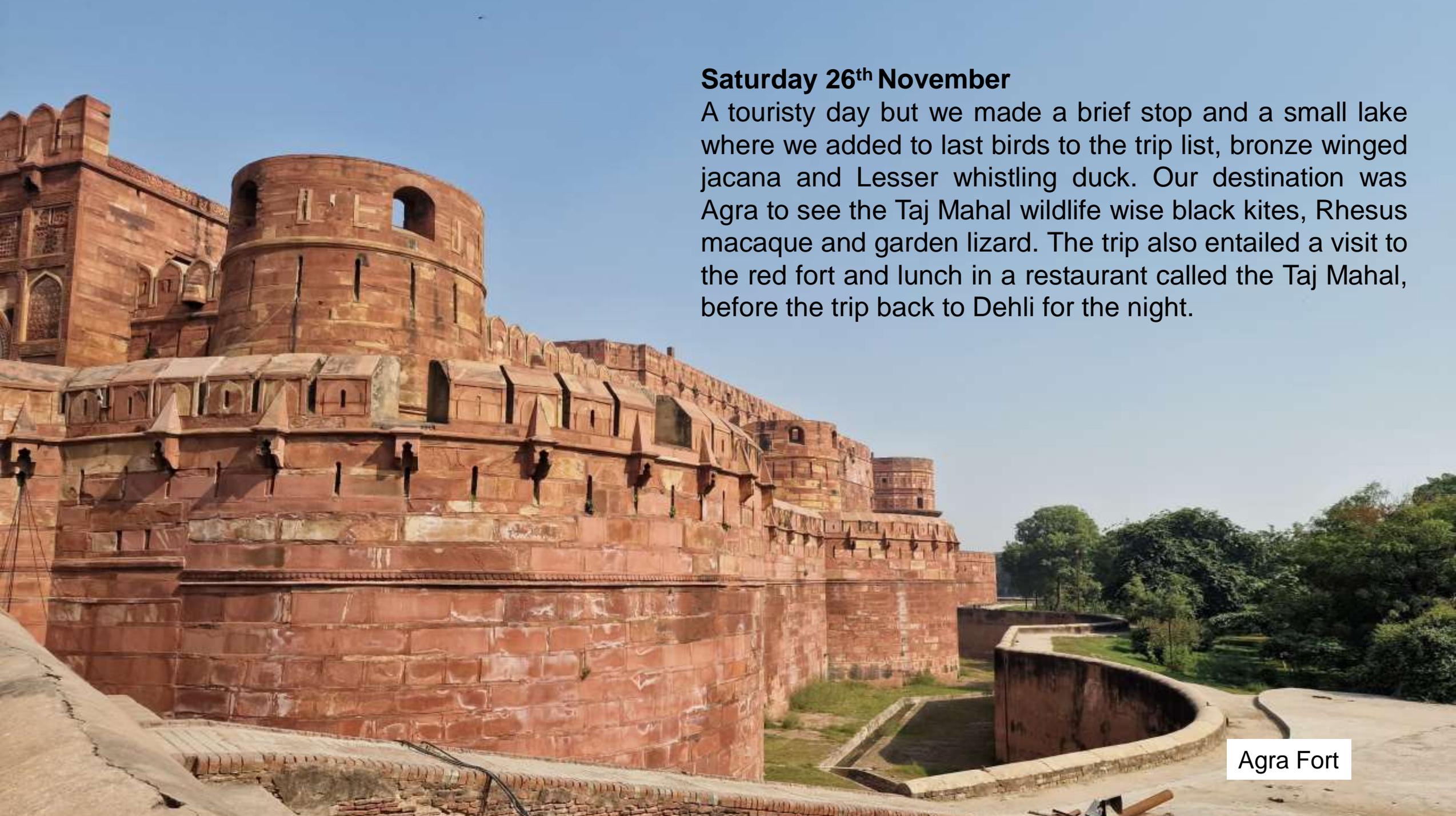
Trigonodes hyppasia



Tridrepana albonotata



Sarus



## **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November**

A touristy day but we made a brief stop and a small lake where we added to last birds to the trip list, bronze winged jacana and Lesser whistling duck. Our destination was Agra to see the Taj Mahal wildlife wise black kites, Rhesus macaque and garden lizard. The trip also entailed a visit to the red fort and lunch in a restaurant called the Taj Mahal, before the trip back to Dehli for the night.

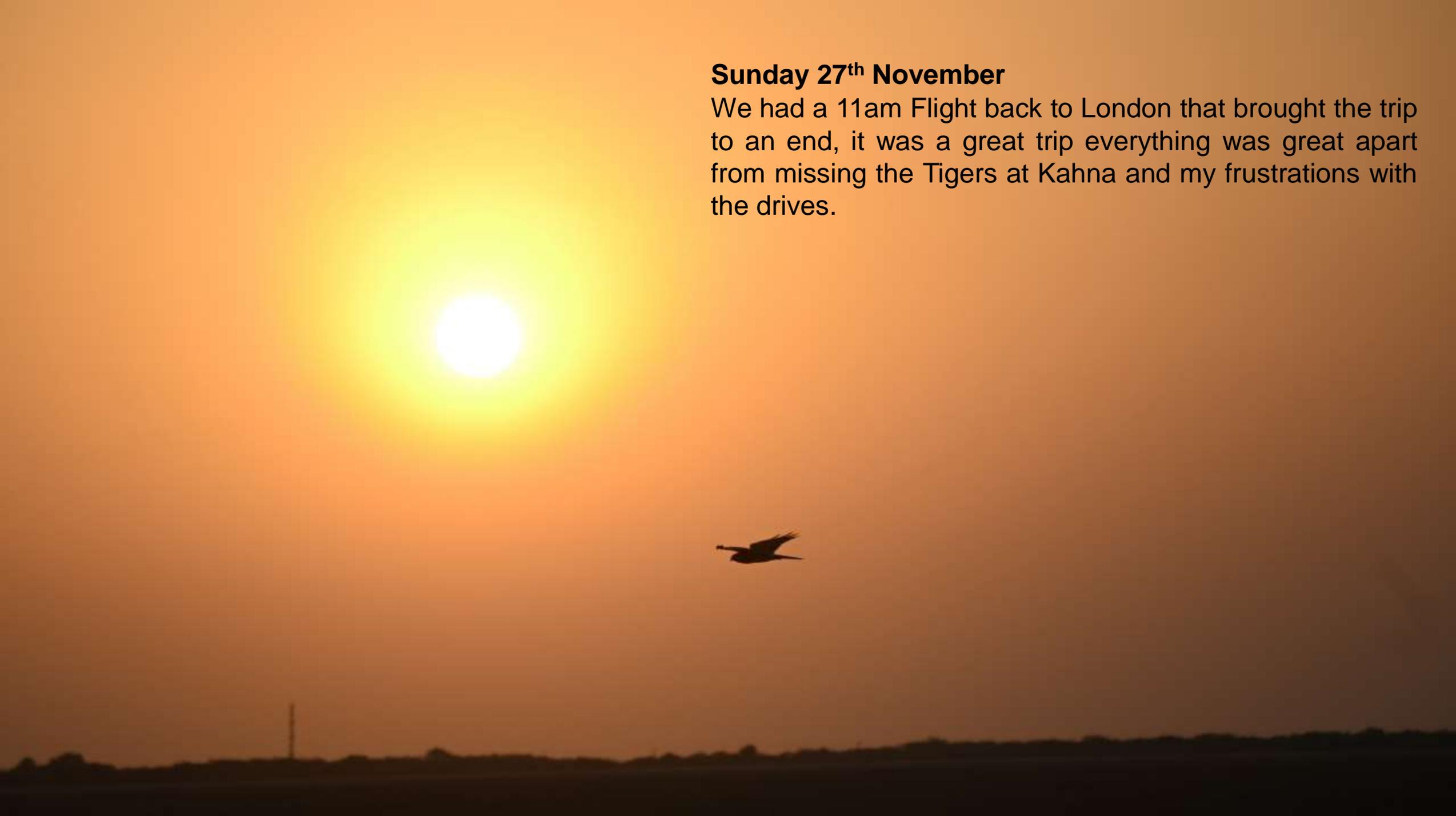
Agra Fort



Taj Mahal

## **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> November**

We had a 11am Flight back to London that brought the trip to an end, it was a great trip everything was great apart from missing the Tigers at Kahna and my frustrations with the drives.





# बिरेड = 248



Greylag Goose	Lesser White fronted Goose	Ruddy Shelduck
Gadwall	Wigeon	Indian Spot Billed Duck
Shoveler	Pintail	Garganey
Teal	Pochard	Painted Francolin
Grey Francolin	Common Quail	Indian Peafowl
Little Grebe	Greater Flamingo	Lesser Flamingo
Painted Stork	Asian Openbill	Wolly Necked stork
Black necked Stork	Black headed Ibis	Red Naped Ibis
Glossy ibis	Eurasian Spoonbill	Black Crowned Night heron
Striated Heron	Indian Pond Heron	Eastern cattle Egret
Grey Heron	Purple Heron	Great White Egret
Little Egret	Western Reef Heron	Great White Pelican
Little Cormorant	Oriental Darter	Black Winged Kite
Crested Honey Buzzard	Crested Serpent Eagle	Short Toed Snake eagle
Greater Spotted eagle	Tawny Eagle	Steppe Eagle
Eastern Imperial eagle	Bonelli's Eagle	Shikra
Western Marsh Harrier	Pallid Harrier	Montagu's Harrier
Black Kite	White Eyed Buzzard	White Breasted Waterhen
Grey Headed Swamphen	Common Moorhen	Eurasian Coot
Sarus Crane	Common Crane	Barred Buttonquail
Indian Stone Curlew	Great Stone Curlew	Black Winged Stilt
Avocet	Yellow Wattled Lapwing	Red Wattled Lapwing
Little Ringed Plover	Kentish Plover	Common Snipe
Black tailed Godwit	Redshank	Marsh Sandpiper
Common Sandpiper	Ruff	Temminck's Stint
Little Stint	Pallas's Gull	Saunder's Tern
River Tern	Chestnut Bellied Sandgrouse	Rock Dove

Collared Dove	Red Turtle Dove	Spotted Dove
Laughing Dove	Yellow Footed Green Pigeon	Greater Coucal
Asian Koel	Indian Scops Owl	Brown Fish Owl
Spotted Owlet	Short Eared Owl	Syke's Nightjar
Little Swift	Indian Roller	European Roller
White Throated Kingfisher	Common Kingfisher	Pied Kingfisher
Little green Bee-eater	Blue Cheeked Bee-eater	Eurasian Hoopoe
Coppersmiths Barbet	Eurasian Wryneck	Common Kestrel
Lesser kestrel	Eurasian Hobby	Plum Headed parakeet
Ring Necked Parakeet	Common Woodshrike	Common Iora
Small Minivet	Isabelline Shrike	Red Tailed Shrike
Bay Backed Shrike	Long Tailed Shrike	Southern grey Shrike
Indian Golden Oriole	Black Drongo	Ashy Drongo
White Browed Fantail	Indian paradise Flycatcher	Rufous Treepie
House Crow	Large Billed Crow	Cinerosus Tit
Rufous Tailed Lark	Ashy Crowned Sparrow Lark	Oriental Skylark
Syke's Lark	Crested Lark	Hume's Short Toed Lark
Greater Short toed Lark	White Eared Bulbul	Red vented Bulbul
Barn Swallow	Wire tailed Swallow	Dusky Crag Martin
Red Rumped Swallow	Hume's Leaf Warbler	Clamorous Red Warbler
Sykes Warbler	Zitting Cisticola	Grey Breasted prinia
Graceful Prinia	Ashy Prinia	Plain Prinia
Common Tailorbird	Tawny Bellied babbler	Common babbler
Jungle babbler	Lesser Whitethroat	Oriental White-eye
Bank Myna	Common Myna	Rosy Starling
Indian Robin	Oriental Magpie Robin	Tickell's Blue Flycatcher
Bluethroat	Red Breasted Flycatcher	Black redstart
Siberian Stonechat	Pied Bushchat	Isabelline Wheatear
Desert Wheatear	Thick Billed Flowerpecker	Purple Sunbird
House Sparrow	Yellow Throated Sparrow	Black breasted Weaver
Baya Weaver	Indian Silverbill	Scaly Breasted Munia
Western Yellow Wagtail	Citrine Wagtail	Grey Wagtail
White Wagtail	White Browed Wagtail	Paddyfield Pipit
Long Billed Pipit	Tree Pipit	Blyth's reed Warbler
Plain Martin	Cotton Pygmy Goose	Painted Spurfowl
Black Stork	Lesser Adjuant	Great Cormorant
White Rumped Vulture	Griffon Vulture	Changeable Hawk Eagle
Jungle Owlet	Crested Treeswift	Blue Bearded Bee-eater
Indian Grey Hornbill	Brown headed Barbet	Brown Capped Pygmy Woodpecker
Black Rumped Flameback	White Naped Woodpecker	Alexandrine Parakeet
Scarlet Minivet	Large Cuckooshrike	Black Winged Cuckooshrike
Black Hooded Oriole	White Bellied Drongo	Greater Racket Tailed Drongo
Blue Monarch	Rufous Treepie	Indian Jungle Crow
Indian Scimitar Babbler	Brown Cheeked Fulvetta	Puff Throated Babbler
Indian Nuthatch	White Rumped Sharma	Golden Fronted Leafbird
Lesser Yellow Naped Woodpecker	Bar Headed Goose	Common Shelduck
Comb Duck	Black eared Kite	Eurasian Sparrowhawk
Long Legged Buzzard	Osprey	Egyptian Vulture

Laggar Falcon	Black Francolin	Bronze Winged Jacana
River Lapwing	Wood Sandpiper	Common Sandpiper
Black Bellied Tern	Sirkeef Malkoha	Brown Hawk Owl
Indian Bushlark	Sand Lark	Blue Rock Thrush
Orange Headed Thrush	Large Grey Babbler	Jungle Prinia
Rufous Fronted Prinia	Grey Headed Canary Flycatcher	Siberian Chiffchaff
White Capped Bunting	Common Rosefinch	Red Avadavat
Brahminy Starling	Asian Pied Starling	



# herps = 15

Marsh Mugger	Common Indian Monitor	Garden Lizard
Red Snake	Indian Flapshell Turtle	Gharial
Indian tent Turtle	Indian Python	Red Crown Turtle
Softshell Turtle	Yellow Green House Gecko	Indian marbled toad
Frog sp	House Gecko	





# इद्योदत्तदे लोकेइ



Syntomoides imaon	Euproctis lunata	Asota producta
Cyana puella	Amerila eugenia	Oeonistis altica
Trigonodes hyppasia	Sphrageidus simlensis	Eublemma accedens
Thyas coronate	Ammatho cuneonotatus	Artaxa digramma
Eurrhyarodes bracteolalis	Tridrepana albonotata	Botyodes asialism
Orvasca subnotata	Eublemma accedens	Trigonodes hyppasia
Loboschiza koenigiana	Ornithospila submonstrans	Eurrhyarodes bracteolalis
Euproctis lunata		

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Common Picturewing	Mole Cricket	Blue Banded Bee
Carpenter Bee	Coromandel Marsh Dart	Blue Marsh Hawk
Pied Paddy Skimmer	Giant wood spider	Blue Ground Skimmer
Fulvous Forest Skimmer	Stick Insect sp	