

CAMBODIA

(Including Laos)

1/6 MARCH – 18 MARCH 2011

TOUR REPORT

This year's tour to Cambodia was one with a major difference, featuring a successful pre-extension to see the newly described Bare-faced Bulbul in neighbouring Laos. We were also able to visit Bokor once again, where Chestnut-headed Partridge and Blue Pitta added the finishing touches to a spectacular trip. We recorded 331 species, which included marvellous encounters with Giant and White-shouldered Ibises, Sarus Crane, Bengal Florican, Spot-billed Pelicans, Grey-headed Fish Eagle, White-rumped Falcon, Sooty Babbler and Asian Golden Weavers. We began in Laos on the Mekong River where we saw Jerdon's Bushchat, then revisited that great river in Cambodia where we were thrilled by Mekong Wagtails and a frenzied display by eight Irrawaddy Dolphins. In the dry woodlands we found Rufous-winged Buzzards, Pale-capped Pigeons, daytime Spotted Wood Owls and Brown Fish Owls, a wide variety of stunning Woodpeckers that included Black-headed, Great Slaty and Rufous-bellied, and in open country we saw gorgeous Pied Harriers, Oriental Pratincoles and Siberian Rubythroats. We even devoted time to visit some of the finest temples at Angkor Wat such as the tree-root festooned Ta Phrom, with its Black Bazas and Red-breasted Parakeets.

We assembled at the airport in Vientiane, and drove into this rather sleepy city to check into our comfortable hotel. With few birds available in the environs of the capital, we opted to do a little sightseeing on our first afternoon and explore some ornate temples. Very early the next morning we drove in pick-ups on some very dusty and potholed roads to an area alongside the Mekong River, where we spent a pleasant few hours birding alongside the mostly dry river, and our main target of Jerdon's Bushchat gave itself up fairly quickly. We found three or four males that perched up singing on the riverine vegetation, plus we saw River Lapwings, Shikra, White-crested Laughingthrushes, Black-crested, Sooty-headed and Stripe-throated Bulbuls, Wire-tailed Swallow, Grey-throated Sand Martin, Rufescent Prinia and Red-breasted Parakeets. Returning to Vientiane, we paused for lunch before hitting the road to the central part of the country and the Annamite highlands. Travelling on good roads, we quickly reached the area of impressive limestone pinnacles and crags, still with good forest on many of its slopes. We paused at the roadside where we found Green-eared Barbet, Black-headed Bulbul and Velvet-

fronted Nuthatch, and at a viewpoint overlooking the spectacular landscape of jagged pinnacles we spotted some demure looking fellows perched out on a crag – Bare-faced Bulbul! There were five birds in view, having a little social gathering before going to roost. So, having found our primary target so promptly, we had much time with which to acquire better views! We continued to our hotel for the night, a rather comfortable riverside resort where we were served some great Lao food.

The following morning we explored the roadside forest in this limestone karst area, finding a steady drip-drip of birds that included Thick-billed Flowerpeckers, an Orange-breasted Trogon, Great Iora, Scarlet Minivets, plus a few Bare-faced Bulbuls that sat safely on their limestone towers. Along a side trail we found a Long-tailed Broadbill attending its ragged nest strung high above the ground from a tall tree, and we also found Hill Blue Flycatcher, Crimson Sunbird, and a Crested Serpent Eagle that called loudly as it soared high overhead carrying a metre-long snake. The habitat here consists of some very good quality evergreen forest, complete with impressively large trees, yet the avifauna is very impoverished, seemingly as a result of excessive subsistence bird hunting. Our afternoon was painfully quiet – a Wreathed Hornbill was glimpsed as it sped away quickly, an Asian Fairy Bluebird appeared warily and an Oriental Hobby shot past with a Swiftlet in its talons.

The next day we paid closer attention to the limestone crags, and located a pair of Sooty Babblers furtively creeping about on the rocks. The forest was again rather quiet, but we managed to find several more Bare-faced Bulbuls, Mountain Hawk Eagle, Crested Goshawk, Green-eared Barbet, and a Radde's Warbler. Late in the morning we found another three Sooty Babblers, and had a closer look at these endearing fellows and they ferreted about on the limestone. The mercury rose to 34 degrees C today, and we retreated to our well-appointed lodge for a break and an excellent lunch, while on the river adjacent us were Grey and Amur Wagtails, a nice *philippensis* race Blue Rock Thrush, Common Kingfisher and some Chinese Pond Herons. For our afternoons entertainment we explored a trail through some excellent quality lowland evergreen forest, and found Dollarbird, both Blue-winged and Golden-fronted Leafbirds, a Rufous Woodpecker and a Speckled Piculet. Our last morning in the forests of Na Hin took us up a trail and into some rich evergreen jungle – the birding was no easier but we did manage to find Grey-throated, Spot-necked and Buff-breasted Babblers, Hainan Blue Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied Warbler and Black-throated Sunbird, while down a steep trail we heard a Red-collared Woodpecker which refused to be lured into view. The heat built up once more and we brought our visit to a close, heading back to Vientiane for a final night in this endearing country.

The following morning we headed out to the airport and boarded our plane for the fairly short ride to Siem Reap. The plane left early and on arrival in Siem Riep we completed Cambodian entry formalities swiftly, and met our guide, Nara. Transferring to our boutique hotel we were joined by the rest of our group arriving from London. It was very hot, but nevertheless we headed out to the temples of Angkor Wat. We had a pleasant

afternoon exploring Angkor Thom and the wonderfully decorated Bayon temple, plus the tree-root infested Ta Phrom temple where the trees were loud with the sound of dozens of Red-breasted and the odd Alexandrine Parakeet, a flock of Black Baza circled over the huge trees, plus we saw Asian Brown Flycatcher and Common Hill-myna.

Away early to the massive lake of the Tonle Sap, we boarded a motorboat before sunrise in order to reach the Prek Toal waterbird sanctuary on the far side, eating our breakfasts on board as we chugged across the currently rather shallow waters. As we went we met Whiskered Terns, Brown-headed Gulls, and our first of many Indian Cormorants, and on reaching a floating village we boarded small canoes for the final leg of the journey, penetrating up ever-narrower creeks to where the waterbird colony is located. Small outboard motors meant that our journey was a little easier, but the water was very shallow and some of us scraped along the bottom at times! As we approached the viewing platform we passed concentrations of Oriental Darters and Spot-billed Pelicans, hordes of Great and Intermediate Egrets, Yellow and Cinnamon Bitterns, Little Heron, and we had a great look at a confiding Grey-headed Fish Eagle. On reaching the precarious viewing platform in a tall tree, we took turns to look out over the noisy colonies of Painted Storks, searching for the lone Milky Stork nest, which was eventually pointed out to us – devoid of parents but with two large chicks. Greater Adjutants soared in the air showing off their huge size and bold plumage to full effect, and Lesser Adjutants also circled around with Asian Openbill Storks and the odd Black-headed Ibis. After lunch on the bank we chugged back to where our launch was parked and returned across the Tonle Sap as the day drew to a close.

Our second day's birding in Cambodia took us to the fascinating area of Ang Trapaeng Thmor, a man-made water body surrounded by rich wetlands, woodland and arable country. Arriving at dawn we paused for breakfast among the dry rice paddies where we found our first Eastern Marsh Harriers, Oriental Pratincoles, Spotted Redshanks, Red-throated Pipits, Dusky Warbler and Oriental Reed Warbler, Australasian Bushlarks sang overhead, and we saw three different Ruddy-breasted Crakes walking out onto the dusty tracks. As we approached the lake we saw some splendid male Pied Harriers, and then a lengthy and bumpy drive around to the northern side of the reservoir took us to where the concentration of Sarus Cranes was situated. We counted 180 birds here, dancing and bugling and flying about. Also here were Greater Spotted Eagle, Black and Black-shouldered Kites, Painted Storks and a few Asian Openbills. On some wet areas we found both Bronze-winged and Pheasant-tailed Jacanas, Lesser Whistling Ducks, Cotton Pygmy Geese and Watercock. We found our first Rufous-winged Buzzard sat in a tree, plus Pied Kingfishers and Blue-tailed Bee-eaters. In the afternoon we returned to the marshy margins and found Black-backed Swampheens, Comb Ducks, White-browed Crakes, a fly-by Spot-breasted Woodpecker, Plaintive Cuckoos, Pied Fantails, a flock of Racket-tailed Treepies, and some Baya Weavers and Plain-backed Sparrow coming to drink at a pool.

The following morning we reached the main temple of Angkor Wat just as the sun rose over the spires, and having completed our photo-opportunity we strolled around the

temple groves finding the only Black-capped Kingfisher of the tour and an Asian Barred Owl, fitting in a closer look at the temple friezes before returning to pack up and head for more remote parts. At a roadside stop we saw trio of Crested Serpent Eagles, three Black Baza and a Shikra over the forest, and further along in the heat of the day we found an obliging pair of White-rumped Falcons at the roadside, a very welcome thrill! Also here we found our first Small Minivets attending a small cup-like nest, and at another roadside stop we found Common Flameback, Dollarbird and Rufous-winged Buzzards. We reached our lodgings set amid the open woodlands of Tmat Boey, and took an afternoon stroll here finding Common Woodshrike, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Spotted Owllet, Red Collared Doves and a Taiga Flycatcher. As the day drew to a close, six White-shouldered Ibises flew into some tall dead trees at their favoured roost site, giving us a great view as they stood panting in the heat. A great end to the day, and certainly the highest count of Ibises ever seen on this tour. Back at our lodgings the cicadas were deafening, their cacophony meant that in order to do our birdlist we had to huddle together to be heard! Not only that, they crashed into us as we ate dinner, doing the breaststroke in the gravy, or spraying us with liquid as we walked under the trees!

Our search for the Giant Ibis began early the next morning, with a 0430hrs departure and a drive for several kilometres along dusty forest tracks. We walked in the dark, hoping to catch a bird at its roost site before it left, but after a while it became clear that all the targeted roost sites were vacant. We then trekked around the forest, checking the trapaengs of the area that were all but dry, at best having a little soft mud remaining where the birds could perhaps feed. As we walked, we disturbed a couple of Giant Ibises from a tiny pond that quickly disappeared into the forest, leaving us wanting better views. We continued walking through the hot woodland, finding numerous other birds such as colourful Black-headed Woodpeckers, Grey-capped and Yellow-crowned Woodpeckers, Changeable Hawk Eagle, Blossom-headed Parakeet, Indian Cuckoo, Common Dollarbird, Large Cuckooshrike, Black-hooded Oriole, Common and Large Woodshrikes, White-browed Fantail, Burmese Shrike, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch and Brown Prinia. As we returned towards our cars we found a single Giant Ibis that perched up in a tree, and on trying to approach it we disturbed a group of four that took off from a trapaeng which then circled around calling, before heading off into the forest. Wonderful!

A break in the midday was necessary as the temperature hit 36 degree C in the shade, then we set off on an afternoon Owl hunt. First we found a roosting Brown Fish Owl, then our attention was diverted by a Giant Ibis that flew unannounced into a nearby tree and presented itself for good views! Next we found a pair of Spotted Wood Owls, beautiful beasts with cute ginger faces peering back at us with a dead-eyed expression. As the evening arrived we saw Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Vinous-breasted Myna and Red-rumped Swallow, and the elusive Chinese Francolin was spotted, uttering his grating call while sitting high in a tree. As darkness fell, a Brown Boobook emerged and sat calling from a dead tree.

The next day we explored an area along a river valley, and began with a pair of Woolly-necked Storks stood in their roost tree, another view of a Chinese Francolin, and in among

the bushes we found a pair of Ruby-cheeked Sunbirds and a pair of Swinhoe's Minivets, and a lively male Van Hasselt's Sunbird sang from trees along the riverbank. A pair of Stork-billed Kingfishers also lived here, a colourful male Orange-breasted Green Pigeon perched up nicely, and a few Green Imperial Pigeons flew by. A pair of Tickell's Blue Flycatchers skulked in a thicket, and on a large trapaeng we found a pair of Black-necked Storks with two well-grown youngsters, plus a Changeable Hawk Eagle, Greater Flameback, Rufous Woodpecker, Vernal Hanging Parrot, Banded Bay Cuckoo, Indochinese Cuckooshrike and Bronzed Drongo. A final afternoon foray found Neglected Nuthatch, White-crested Laughingthrushes, Black-naped Orioles, and a fine White-shouldered Ibis flew by, then as the day drew to a close we hit a mother lode of Woodpeckers, with a stunning male Rufous-bellied Woodpecker and a trio of Great Slaty Woodpeckers that gave us a good little display. Once darkness fell, Large-tailed and Savanna Nightjars began calling, as did an Oriental Scops Owl. Walking towards it, it quickly popped into view and showed remarkably well, even if the views were mostly of his vent!

A final few hours of birding in this wonderful place, and we had a close but brief look at four Pale-capped Pigeons that paused momentarily above our heads. We located a fruiting tree, which provided us with great views of some Yellow-footed Green Pigeons, and we also saw Two-barred Warbler, Asian Brown Flycatcher, Red-billed Blue Magpie and a dark morph Changeable Hawk Eagle, before it was time to bid farewell to our hosts and our rustic lodgings. We headed for the grasslands of the Tonle Sap flood plain, where after driving along a tortuously potholed track we huddled in the shade of a lone tree as the thermometer hit 37.1 C in the shade and scanned the grassy plain. Before long we found a Bengal Florican fairly close by, and after watching him stalk through the grass for a while he did just what we had been hoping for – he erupted into the air, black neck puffed out, white wings whirring and legs kicking frantically. Awesome! As the heat abated slightly we scanned along wetter edges, finding many Bluethroats, Black-browed Reed Warbler, Common Snipe, Striated Grassbird, Oriental Reed Warbler, Zitting Cisticola, and many Red-throated Pipits.

We made an early morning foray out onto the plain close to Kompong Thom, but the habitat here is significantly degraded from what it once was, having been turned from seasonally inundated grasslands into permanent rice fields that were now barren and ploughed. We saw some Pacific Golden and Little Ringed Plovers, the remnants of a pond had numerous Black-browed Reed Warblers, and a couple of Siberian Rubythroats here showed well. We also found Plain Prinia, Pintail Snipe, Greater Spotted Eagle, Eastern Marsh Harriers and a couple of Sarus Cranes dropped in. We walked onto some fields where Oriental Pratincoles became very agitated, circling overhead and chirruping away in alarm. A quick search failed to reveal any nests, so watching where we put our feet we beat a careful retreat.

We hit the road for our next destination, the town of Kratie that lies on the Mekong River. Arriving in the mid-afternoon, we drove to where Irrawaddy Dolphins were cavorting in a section of the river that is now famous for them. They were more active than I can ever

remember seeing them; it seemed that the chasing of females was afoot, and we saw at least 8 animals, churning up the water as they raced around the still waters. We then took to the water on small boats, getting closer views of the Dolphins, and heading out among the small islands where we eventually found our target bird, the Mekong Wagtail. A species of great character, we were able to watch it clambering about in the tops of the mid-river bushes. Also here we found some charming Small Pratincoles, Osprey, Grey-throated Sand-martins, Oriental Darters, and thousands of Little Cormorants that headed downstream. We made a short stroll across some nearby fields, finding a surprise male Chestnut-eared Bunting – a smart individual indeed, and probably just the fourth record for the country.

In the early morning we explored some productive habitat close to the town, finding a pair of Chestnut-capped Babblers and a Rusty-rumped Warbler that posed at length in the open, a showy Black Bittern sat up on a bush, several Yellow Bitterns appeared in the open, and Cinnamon Bitterns and Greater Painted Snipe were flushed from denser patches. We found a handful of Asian Golden Weavers that included some bright males, a single Streaked Weaver, a male Siberian Rubythroat, Rufous Woodpecker, Racket-tailed Treepie, Striated Grassbird and Yellow-bellied Prinia. As the heat built up once more, it was time to drive again, on a long journey around Phnom Penh and down to the coast. We arrived in Kampot at sundown, hoping that there wouldn't be any last minute bureaucratic hitches regarding our visit to Bokor. As it happened, we had special permission to go there, but the road construction company didn't want us getting in the way of their heavy vehicles.

Driving up the (mostly) fast new road, we quickly reached the top of the mountain before construction traffic had commenced. The extent of the project here is quite staggering, as blasting continues along parts of the road, and cement mixers and heavy trucks thunder up and down the roads continuously. We paused at the top for a little roadside birding, and saw our first Barred Cuckoo Doves, Mountain Imperial Pigeons, Moustached Barbets and Fire-breasted Flowerpeckers, then pushed onto a trail that was still in good condition and far enough away from the bulldozing and tree-felling. Along this narrow path, birding was a little difficult for so many of us, but we saw Wreathed Hornbill, White-bellied Erpornis, Ruby-cheeked Sunbirds, Lesser Racket-tailed Drongos, Velvet-fronted Nuthatches, some lively Streaked Wren Babblers, Puff-throated Babbler, a migrant Blue-and-White Flycatcher, and had glimpses of Plain-tailed Warbler and Siberian Blue Robin. We also found Blue Whistling Thrush and Black-throated Sunbird, then in the afternoon we explored another track where found three more Blue-and-White Flycatchers, a flock of Chestnut-flanked White-eyes and an elusive White-browed Scimitar Babbler. At the end of the day, a brief stop on the way down the mountain produced a Blue-bearded Bee-eater and Blue-eared Barbet.

The next day we zoomed up to the top of the mountain and set out on the narrow forest trail once again. Birding was somewhat slower today with it being gloomy and drizzly, but an Indochinese Green Magpie showed us his silhouette, Oriental White-eyes showed better, more Streaked Wren Babblers appeared, and a Vivid Niltava popped into view –

seemingly a national first. A pair of Long-tailed Broadbills showed very well, but a couple of Red-headed Trogons were less forthcoming. A pair of Large Scimitar Babblers showed fairly well as we trudged back up the trail, and in another area of forest we found a posing Blue-winged Leafbird, Black-winged Cuckooshrike, Oriental Honey Buzzard, and a White-tailed Leaf Warbler showed well for us. On a vague and narrow trail along the escarpment edge, we surprised a Blue Pitta male that called insistently, and our sharp-eyed local guide Nara slipped off to one side and quickly located it. He then managed to get everybody onto it one by one as it sat posing and preening on a log. A rare view of a stunning bird! The experience was further magnified as it was a lifer for Nara, and indeed we chose this as our 'Bird-of-the-Trip'. As we headed downhill at the end of the day, we found a spectacular pre-roost gathering of 20 Great Hornbills sat in roadside trees.

We headed up the mountain one last time, and resumed our search for the Chestnut-headed Partridge on narrow trails. We heard one burst into song close by, and after a little while he came towards us. It then hopped onto a log and decided to freeze, staying put for several minutes as we drank in his chestnut and black plumage, spattered with white flecks and chevrons. Hurrah! It had taken a while, but we found it, and what a beauty it is. We also found a vocal White-browed Shrike Babbler with his mate, an Orange-breasted Trogon, White-browed Scimitar Babblers, another fine male Blue-and-White Flycatcher and a pair of Mugimaki Flycatchers. During the inevitably quieter afternoon we viewed some of the old buildings dating from the French period that were destroyed by the Khmer Rouge, soon to be joined by new hotels and apartments. A few last birds appeared such as Ashy Minivets, House Swift, Asian Brown Flycatcher, Common Hill-myna and Wreathed Hornbills, then at the final whistle we then got stuck at a roadblock as diggers worked on the blasted hillside, and had to wait as huge trucks ferried great boulders from the road.

A final morning of birding took us around the nearby salt pans. The pickings were pretty slim – there was no concentration of shorebirds as hoped, but we kept at it and after a while had accumulated a few nice birds. We found several Caspian Terns, Red-necked Stints and Eurasian Curlews, Collared Kingfisher and a fine White-bellied Sea Eagle. Oriental Skylarks sung over the drier parts, and a last stop revealed a mixed flock of Lesser and Greater Sand Plovers, one of the latter in breeding plumage, and a closer inspection of the far corners of the ponds turned up two female Malaysian Plovers – a good bird with which to end our tour on. Tearing ourselves away, we headed off to Phnom Penh airport, and all headed our separate ways. It had been a great birding adventure, with a great finale of good birds at Bokor to leave us with good memories of a rewarding and exciting trip.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL)

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H)

PHASIANIDAE

Chinese Francolin *Francolinus pintadeanus*: We heard many around Tmatboey, and Nara's sharp eyes picked out a calling bird sat high in a tree. The following morning we found another perched up in a bush, so altogether a good suite of encounters on this year's tour.

Chestnut-headed Partridge *Arborophila cambodiana*: The main prize at Bokor, but never easy to find, dependent on locating calling birds. Our task looked as if it would be more difficult this year, with all of the bulldozing and construction going on up there. We heard them calling distantly on the first two days, then on our third morning we managed to get close to a calling bird and were able to lure him in for a fantastic prolonged view, when it jumped up onto a log and sat immobile, blinking at us for several minutes as we drank in its richly coloured plumage. Wonderful! A Cambodian near-endemic.

Red Junglefowl *Gallus gallus* (NL): Heard calling on a couple of occasions at Tmat Boey, and one was seen from the cars on our final morning there.

ANATIDAE

Lesser Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna javanica*: A flock were seen at Prek Toal, more were seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor and also at Kratie.

Comb Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos*: A few dozen birds were seen distantly at Ang Trapaeng Thmor

Cotton Pygmy-Goose *Nettapus coromandelianus*: Some good looks at these attractive fellows at Ang Trapaeng Thmor. Older bird books may refer to these as 'Quacky Ducks'!

Indian Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha*: Odd singles and small groups were seen at Prek Toal, Ang Trapaeng Thmor, Stung and Kratie, and also on the Mekong in Laos.

PODICEPEDIDAE

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*: A few seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor.

CICONIIDAE

Milky Stork *Mycteria cinerea*: Well, we didn't ever see the adult, but the nest pointed out to us from the platform at Prek Toal had two fluffy white chicks within. Classified in the 2008 IUCN Red List Category as 'Vulnerable' with a declining world population that is estimated at just 5,000.

Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala*: Hundreds were seen at Prek Toal where we saw plenty of nests, plus a good number at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and also around

Kompong Thom where we saw a couple of smaller flocks. Another large waterbird with a rapidly declining population...

Asian Openbill *Anastomus oscitans*: 100+ seen around Prek Toal area, and a small number also seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor.

Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus*: Six were seen in the air en-route to Tmat Boey, and in the forests around Tmat Boey we saw several birds on two dates.

Black-necked Stork *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*: A rare find, with a pair seen on a trapaeng at Tmat Boey that had two young with them, the female of the pair identifiable by its yellow eye.

Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilos javanicus*: Some 15+ seen at Prek Toal were the only ones of the tour.

Greater Adjutant *Leptoptilos dubius*: Some distant views of a bird seen perched on a treetop from the observation platform at Prek Toal, but at least five more were seen in the air where they actually offered better views, showing their silvery upperwings. Classified in the 2008 IUCN Red List Category as 'Endangered', with a rapidly declining world population which is estimated at just 800 - 1000 birds, with as many as 75 pairs estimated in the Tonle Sap area.

THRESKIORNITHIDAE

Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus*: Several were seen around Prek Toal, though never commonly.

White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni*: A wonderful view of five birds that flew in to roost in a large bare tree on our first evening in Tmat Boey, fanning their throat pouches. Also a single was seen in flight on our final afternoon there. Classified in the 2008 IUCN Red List Category as 'Critically Endangered', with a rapidly declining world population estimated at just 330 birds, so almost as rare as the Big One!

Giant Ibis *Pseudibis gigantea*: With a little bit of nail-biting I have to confess, being greeted with the news that the birds had become difficult to see just prior to our arrival. We made the pre-dawn pilgrimage to known roost sites, only to hear one a very long way away. We persevered in a more standard search method – walking a lot, and eventually bumping into them! Our first encounter was with two birds that flushed off a small hidden pond (the local ranger had forgotten that it was there!) and disappeared off into the forest, then we found one that landed in a tree near to another pond, allowing some perched views in the shimmer of the midday sun. It eventually joined four others that flew from the pond and gave us a nice fly-by. Later that same day we were distracted from watching a roosting Brown Fish Owl by a fine Ibis that sat in a tall tree, giving us some great views at it stood panting on a high branch. I wonder how much longer they can survive, as the forests get thinner, and the nearby main road is now fully metalled. Classified in the 2008 IUCN Red List Category as 'Critically Endangered', with a rapidly declining world population that is estimated at just 200 birds.

ARDEIDAE

- Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*: Several birds in flight seen along the creeks at Prek Toal, one at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and four seen - mostly incredibly well - at Kratie.
- Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*: One seen briefly at Prek Toal, and another two flushed at Kratie.
- Black Bittern *Dupetor flavicollis*: A great look at one, sat on top of a bush in the early morning at Kratie.
- Black-crowned Night-heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*: A good number were seen at Prek Toal.
- Little Heron (Striated H) *Butorides striata*: Just two seen, along the creeks at Prek Toal.
- Chinese Pond-heron *Ardeola bacchus*: Seen throughout, including Laos, with biggest numbers seen at Prek Toal, many coming into their rich chestnut breeding plumage.
- Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*: A few seen in Laos, then many more seen in Cambodia, typically while driving through agricultural areas.
- Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*: Many seen around the wetland in the Siem Riep area, a few around the Kompong Thom area, and a concentration of 25 seen on the Kampot salt pans.
- Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*: Several seen at Prek Toal, a few more at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and a single near Kratie.
- Eastern Great Egret *Ardea modestus*: Common at Prek Toal and Ang Trapaeng Thmor, with others seen near Tmat Boey and at Kampot.
- Intermediate Egret *Mesophoyx intermedia*: Good numbers of these along the waterways at Prek Toal, more seen around Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and a single noted at Kratie.
- Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*: Seen in number in the Siem Riep wetland sites and at Kampot, with smaller numbers noted at Kratie, and a single in Laos.

PELECANIDAE

- Spot-billed Pelican *Pelecanus philippensis*: At least 200+ seen at Prek Toal, with some great views of birds feeding in the channels just ahead of our canoes. Also three were seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor. Classified in the 2008 IUCN Red List Category as 'Near Threatened' with a world population estimated in 2006 at 13,000 – 18,000, the Tonle Sap hosts as much as 10% of the world population.

PHALACROCORACIDAE

- Little Cormorant *Phalacrocorax niger*: Some small numbers were seen at both Prek Toal and Ang Trapaeng Thmor, then a couple of thousand were seen flying down the Mekong river at Kratie in long lines, presumably heading to roost somewhere. A few also seen at Kampot.
- Indian Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*: Much the most numerous Cormorant at Prek Toal, with hundreds seen there.
- Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*: Seen in number at Prek Toal, a few more at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and a handful at Kratie.

ANHINGIDAE

Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*: A good number were seen at Prek Toal (not actually counted but we must have seen 50+) and also a handful were seen on the Mekong at Kampi.

FALCONIDAE

White-rumped Pygmy-falcon *Polihierax insignis*: A pair came to investigate us at the roadside, on our journey from Siem Riep to Tmat Boey. The male gave us a long look, as he hid from the midday sun under the shade of some leaves. Always a thrill to see.

Oriental Hobby *Falco severus*: We had a good look at one that came shooting past us at Na Hin, with a Swiftlet in its talons.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*: A single on the river at Kampi.

Black Baza *Aviceda leuphotes*: A migrant flock of 11 birds were seen over Angkor Thom on our first afternoon in Cambodia, then three were seen en-route to Tmat Boey, and another three were seen on our way out of there.

Oriental Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*: A single bird gave us a good look as it cruised over the forest at Bokor.

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus*: Numerous around Ang Trapaeng Thmor, with others seen en-route to Tmat Boey, around Kompong Thom and at Kratie.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*: AT least six birds seen around Ang Trapaeng Thmor. These would be resident birds of the race *govinda* which are quite uniform in comparison to the migrant Black-eared Kite *M. lineatus*.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*: Just two seen around Prek Toal, and a single immature at Kompong Thom.

White-bellied Sea-eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*: Great views of an adult that came sailing past us at the Kampot salt pans.

Grey-headed Fish-eagle *Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus*: Two seen at Prek Toal, the first of which was sat over the creek as we paddled up it, and was very reluctant to move out of the way! Classified as 'Near Threatened' in BirdLife's "Threatened Birds of the World" due to its localised and declining population.

Crested Serpent-eagle *Spilornis cheela*: A soaring bird carrying a snake was seen at Na Hin in Laos, four were seen between Siem Riep and Tmat Boey, and a few singles were seen around Tmat Boey itself.

Eastern Marsh-harrier *Circus spilonotus*: Great numbers were seen around Ang Trapaeng Thmor with at least 30 birds seen, then another eight birds were seen near Kompong Thom. An impressive haul!

Pied Harrier *Circus melanoleucos*: At least six birds were seen around Ang Trapaeng Thmor, including some smart males, and another was seen near Kompong Thom.

Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*: Two or three were seen over the forests at Na Hin in Laos.

Shikra *Accipiter badius*: Seen frequently in the dry forests of Tmat Boey, with others seen around Angkor Wat and also in Laos.

Rufous-winged Buzzard *Butastur liventer*: Our first appeared in a tree at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, then they were commonly encountered around Tmat Boey.

Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*: Two individuals wheeled around over the fields beside Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and another single was seen distantly near Kompong Thom.

Mountain Hawk Eagle *Nisaetus nipalensis*: A brief look at an over-flying bird at Na Hin.

Changeable Hawk-eagle *Nisaetus limnaetus*: Four sightings in the Tmat Boey area, including a very smart dark morph.

OTIDIDAE

Bengal Florican *Houbaropsis bengalensis*: We huddled in the shade of a lone tree overlooking the grasslands at Stung as the shade temperature hit 37.1C. (The highest of the trip - in the sun it was pushing 50 C!) A male emerged from the grass at fairly close range, and eventually did as we hoped - launching himself into his display flight, erupting into the air, black neck puffed out, white wings whirring and legs kicking frantically. Awesome! Another one or two males were also present, disappearing into the shimmer. The rediscovery of this globally threatened species in Indochina was one of Sam Veasna's major achievements in his all too short conservation career. Classified as 'Critically Endangered' in the 2008 IUCN Red List Category, with a rapidly declining world population that is estimated at just 250-1000, with up to 50% of the world population in Indochina, the rest surviving in India and Nepal. The habitat here is much reduced from what it was just five years ago, and we saw none at all closer to Kompong Thom where all the grassland has been ploughed up and turned into rice fields. At current rates of habitat loss it is projected that they may become extinct in Cambodia by 2012! (source: BirdLife International website.)

RALLIDAE

Ruddy-breasted Crake *Porzana fusca*: One emerged onto the mud by the tree platform at Prek Toal, then at Ang Trapaeng Thmor we saw four individuals all emerging onto dusty tracks completely in the open! Other birds were glimpsed at Kompong Thom and Kratie.

White-browed Crake *Porzana cinerea*: At least five seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, walking in the open.

Watercock *Gallinula cinerea*: A nice surprise to find two of these at Ang Trapaeng Thmor.

Black-backed Swamphen *Porphyrio indicus*: A fair number of these seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, lurking in the lotus beds. Also seen at Prek Toal and Kratie.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*: Noted at Prek Toal, Ang Trapaeng Thmor and Kratie.

GRUIDAE

Sarus Crane *Grus antigone*: After failing to find them in the fields en-route to Ang Trapaeng Thmor, we had a marvelous experience close to the lake, finding the main flock which numbered at least 180 or more, prancing about calling and flying about majestically. This form is the smallest and darkest and has a few minor plumage differences from the nominate race of South Asia and *gilliae* of Australia. Classified as 'Vulnerable' in the 2008 IUCN Red List Category with a declining world population which is estimated at just 20,000 individuals, with only 1300 – 1800 of this subspecies *sharpii* remaining in Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar.

TURNICIDAE

Barred Buttonquail *Turnix suscitator* (NL): One seen at Kratie.

PLUVIALIDAE

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*: Four flew over at Stung, and a couple were seen in fields near Kompong Thom.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*: A single seen at Kampot salt pans.

RECURVIROSTRIDAE

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*: Two seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor.

VANELLIDAE

River Lapwing *Vanellus duvaucelii*: An unexpected find on the Mekong in Laos, where we found five or more.

Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus*: Three at Ang Trapaeng Thmor and a single in the woods near Tmat Boey.

CHARADRIIDAE

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*: A couple were seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, a few near Kompong Thom and a handful seen on the Mekong at Kampi.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*: A fair number seen on the salt pans at Kampot.

Malaysian Plover *Charadrius peronii*: At least two birds showing ginger sides to the head and breast were seen at Kampot, obviously paler above than the adjacent Kentish Plovers, but not as richly coloured as birds seen a week later in Thailand. I suspect these were immature birds, not yet in full breeding glory.

Lesser Sand Plover (Mongolian P) *Charadrius mongolus*: A few seen on Kampot salt pans, with one or two acquiring breeding colours.

Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii*: The majority of Sand Plovers at Kampot seemed to be this species, with at least ten seen.

JACANIDAE

Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*: Not uncommon at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, also a couple were seen at Prek Toal.

Bronze-winged Jacana *Metopidius indicus*: Numerous at Ang Trapaeng Thmor on the marshy margins.

ROSTRATULIDAE

Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*: A bird was put to flight at Kratie, offering a reasonable view before it went down out of sight.

SCOLOPACIDAE

Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*: Single birds were seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor and near Kompong Thom.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*: Two seen at Stung, and four at Kratie.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*: Six on Kampot saltpans.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*: A couple were seen in Laos, and in Cambodia we saw a couple at Kampi and a few more at Kampot.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*: At least a dozen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor where they appear to favour the ponds among the paddyfields.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*: A few at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, a single at Kampi and several at Kampot.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*: A flock of 20 took flight at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and a single presented itself for a good view at Stung.

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*: A couple of dozen birds at Kampot made it the most numerous shorebird there!

GLAREOLIDAE

Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*: An estimated 80 birds were around the fields at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and they were in good number at Stung and Kompong Thom. At the latter site we strayed near to where birds may have been nesting, and were noisily mobbed as we moved carefully through the fields.

Small Pratincole *Glareola lactea*: A great view of two of these cute shorebirds on the sandbanks at Kampi.

STERNIDAE

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*: At least eight seen on the saltpans at Kampot.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*: Numerous on the Tonle Sap, and a small number were seen along the Mekong as we skirted Phnom Penh.

LARIDAE

Brown-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus*: Three seen on the Tonle Sap were the only ones of the trip.

COLUMBIDAE

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*: Available.

Pale-capped Pigeon *Columba punicea*: At Tmat Boey we had a brief view of a group of four that landed in a tree above us, before seeing us and making a very quick exit!

- Red Collared-dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*: Seen commonly from Siem Riep to Tmat Boey and across to Kratie.
- Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*: Like the above, common and widespread, and also a few seen in Laos.
- Barred Cuckoo-dove *Macropygia unchall*: Quite common at Bokor, frequently heard and often seen flying about.
- Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*: A handful were seen in the Na Hin forest in Laos.
- Peaceful Dove *Geopelia striata*: Several found around Ang Trapaeng Thmor, also seen in Vientiane.
- Orange-breasted Green-pigeon *Treron bicincta*: A good example perched up for us at Tmat Boey, looking absurdly colourful.
- Yellow-footed Green-pigeon *Treron phoenicopterus*: We had some great views of these on our last morning at Tmat Boey, coming to a fruiting tree.
- Wedge-tailed Green-pigeon *Treron sphenura*: Some reasonable looks at odd ones at Bokor.
- Green Imperial-pigeon *Ducula aenea*: Frequently seen around Tmat Boey, often in flight over the forest.
- Mountain Imperial-pigeon *Ducula badia*: Seen often at Bokor where they are still fairly common.

PSITTACIDAE

- Vernal Hanging-parrot *Loriculus vernalis*: Single birds were seen flying over at Tmat Boey and at Na Hin forest.
- Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria*: Three showed well at Ta Phrom temple, and a couple more were seen at Tmat Boey.
- Blossom-headed Parakeet *Psittacula roseata*: Seen daily around Tmat Boey, occasionally perching up for a good view.
- Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri*: Often seen zipping about noisily at Tmat Boey, the most we saw however was at the Ta Phrom temple, where at least 50 birds were making a lot of noise! Also seen along the Mekong in Laos.

CUCULIDAE

- Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus*: Heard at Tmat Boey, and a single bird was seen in flight.
- Himalayan Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus*: A single was seen at Tmat Boey, as we squinted through the branches at the Black-necked Storks. These birds are probably this species on range, now split from the Oriental Cuckoo *C. optatus* and Sunda Cuckoo *C. lepidus*. It would however be impossible to tell them apart in the field unless they were calling, so this is a fairly speculative identification.
- Banded Bay Cuckoo *Cacomantis sonneratii*: One was seen at Na Hin, and another two were seen at Tmat Boey, with good views of a perched male there.
- Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus*: Three were seen around the wetland at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and a couple of singles were seen around Kratie in similar habitat.

Square-tailed Drongo Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris*: Briefly glimpsed at Na Hin in Laos, and heard on the Mekong near Vientiane, and also at Tmat Boey.

Asian Koel *Eudynamis scolopaceus*: Odd ones seen, at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, Angkor Wat and at Tmat Boey.

Green-billed Malkoha *Rhopodytes tristis*: Three were seen along the creeks at Prek Toal, and at Bokor we saw a few.

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*: Heard often in both Laos and Cambodia, with a couple of sightings at Tmat Boey and in the Siem Riep area.

Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis*: A few were seen around the Kratie wetlands.

STRIGIDAE

Oriental Scops-owl *Otus sunia*: A nice encounter with this charming little Owl, which revealed itself very promptly at Tmat Boey and gave us several looks, even though the views were mostly of its vent!

Brown Fish-owl *Ketupa zeylonensis*: A roosting bird at Tmat Boey was a nice find, even if we did get distracted by a Giant Ibis!

Spotted Wood-owl *Strix seloputo*: Great looks at a roosting pair at Tmat Boey, sat high in a tall tree. Cute faces but evil eyes!

Collared Owlet *Glaucidium brodiei* (H): Heard several times at Bokor, and also at Na Hin.

Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides*: We saw these day-loving fellows at Na Hin, Angkor Wat and Tmat Boey.

Spotted Owlet *Athene brama*: Two seen at Tmat Boey.

Brown Boobook *Ninox scutulata*: One seen very well at Tmat Boey as it emerged at dusk, and sat calling from bare trees.

CAPRIMULGIDAE

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus* (H): A few were heard at Tmat Boey, though they didn't want to come closer, possibly deafened by the cicadas!

Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis* (H): One heard fairly distantly at Tmat Boey.

APODIDAE

Himalayan Swiftlet *Aerodramus brevirostris*: The hordes of Swiftlets at Na Hin were most likely to be this species. While not listed for Laos by Robson, numerous observers have reported the birds here as this species.

Germain's Swiftlet *Aerodramus germani*: We saw flocks of these around Kampot and Bokor.

Brown-backed Needletail *Hirundapus giganteus*: Several sightings of these at Na Hin, we also saw four at Angkor Wat.

Asian Palm-swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis*: Common over open country, also seen over Bokor and in Laos.

Fork-tailed Swift *Apus pacificus*: A small flock was seen over the limestone hills at Na Hin.

House Swift *Apus affinis*: Small numbers seen in Vientiane, Siem Riep and over Bokor.

Crested Treeswift *Hemiprocne coronata*: Common in the woods around Tmat Boey, with some great looks at perched birds there.

TROGONIDAE

Orange-breasted Trogon *Harpactes oreskios*: A quick view of one shooting across the road at Na Hin, and another seen in the forest at Bokor that stayed mostly but not completely out of view.

Red-headed Trogon *Harpactes erythrocephalus*: Heard at Na Hin, and also at Bokor where of several birds encountered, a couple were glimpsed by some of us.

CORACIIDAE

Indian Roller *Coracias benghalensis*: A pleasingly common feature of the woods around Tmat Boey, also seen on the Mekong in Laos and at Angkor Thom.

Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*: A single seen at Na Hin and a couple around Tmat Boey.

ALCEDINIDAE

Banded Kingfisher *Lacedo pulchella* (H): Heard in the forest at Bokor.

Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis*: A pair nesting along a river near Tmat Boey were a nice surprise.

White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*: A single in Laos and two singles in Cambodia were all that were seen on the tour.

Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata*: A single was seen at Angkor Wat along the moat.

Collared Kingfisher *Todiramphus chloris*: Just one, shining in the sun at Kampot salt pans.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*: One viewable from our resort at Na Hin, several seen around Prek Toal and Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and some odd singles seen around Kompong Thom and Kratie.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*: A few seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor

MEROPIDAE

Blue-bearded Bee-eater *Nyctyornis athertoni*: Heard at Na Hin, and a pair found at Bokor watched at length, perching up close to their nest hole in a bank.

Little Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis*: Regularly encountered throughout our stay in Tmat Boey.

Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*: Seen frequently in Cambodia, typically around wetter habitats.

Chestnut-headed Bee-eater *Merops leschenaulti*: Along the Mekong near Vientiane we saw several feeding low down along the river bed, and also saw some in the forest at Tmat Boey.

UPUPIDAE

Common Hoopoe *Upupa epops*: A few singles at Tmat Boey, also seen at Angkor Wat.

BUCEROTIDAE

Oriental Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros albirostris*: Seen on at least four occasions at Tmat Boey, usually announcing themselves with their raucous calls.

Great Hornbill *Buceros bicornis*: Still plenty of these beasts at Bokor, we saw a pre-roost gathering of at least 20 birds as we descended from the mountain.

Wreathed Hornbill *Aceros undulatus*: A bird was glimpsed at Na Hin, while at Bokor we had several views of birds flying over the forest, with as many as 15 seen on our last day there.

RAMPHASTIDAE

Lineated Barbet *Megalaima lineata*: Three were seen on the Mekong near Vientiane, and then regularly at Tmat Boey and at the Ta Phrom temple.

Green-eared Barbet *Megalaima faiostricta*: A great view of a calling bird at Na Hin. That kind of behaviour will lead him to being someone's tasty snack!

Moustached Barbet *Megalaima incognita*: Commonly encountered at Bokor, with some great close views of some of them.

Blue-eared Barbet *Megalaima australis*: A small number seen at Bokor, also heard in Laos.

Coppersmith Barbet *Megalaima haemacephala*: A pair perched up nicely at Ta Phrom. Also seen on our first morning in Laos.

PICIDAE

Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus*: An elusive single at Na Hin was the only one of the tour.

White-browed Piculet *Sasia ochracea* (H): One heard on our first morning Laos was the only encounter of the tour.

Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Hypopicus hyperythrus*: A good look at a splendid male at Tmat Boey.

Grey-capped Woodpecker *Dendrocopos canicapillus*: Not uncommon at Tmat Boey where we saw many.

Spot-breasted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos analis*: A flight view of a calling bird at Ang Trapaeng Thmor. This is recently split from Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker *D. macei*.

Yellow-crowned Woodpecker *Dendrocopos mahrattensis*: Two seen in the dry woodlands around Tmat Boey.

Rufous Woodpecker *Micropternus brachyurus*: Single birds were seen at Na Hin, Tmat Boey, and a vocal one at Kratie.

White-bellied Woodpecker *Dryocopus javensis*: One flew over at Tmat Boey, not a great view really!

Greater Yellownape *Chrysophlegma flavinuca* (H): A couple were heard at Tmat Boey.

Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus* (H): Heard at Tmat Boey, also in Laos by the Mekong.

Black-headed Woodpecker *Picus erythropygius*: Several seen at Tmat Boey on one day only, also heard on other days.

Red-collared Woodpecker *Picus rabieri* (H): One was heard calling from way down a very steep slope at Na Hin, and would not be lured closer.

Common Flameback *Dinopium javanense*: Our first was seen en-route from Siem Riep, then a few more were seen around Tmat Boey.

Greater Flameback *Chrysocolaptes lucidus*: Seen on a couple of occasions at Tmat Boey, and a further single was seen at Bokor.

Great Slaty Woodpecker *Mulleripicus pulverulentus*: A great look at a noisy trio on our last evening in the forests of Tmat Boey.

EURYLAIMIDAE

Long-tailed Broadbill *Psarisomus dalhousiae*: One was found attending a ragged dangling nest on our first day at Na Hin, then two more were seen at Bokor. Always a favourite.

PITTIDAE

Blue Pitta *Pitta cyanea*: Our 'bird-of-the-trip', and quite rightly so given the great view we had of a stunning male at Bokor. Once he was done calling loudly, he sat and preened, pulsing electric blue and flame orange as he did so.

Eared Pitta *Anthocincla phayrei* (H): One was heard at Na Hin.

ACANTHIZIDAE

Golden-bellied Gerygone (Flyeater) *Gerygone sulphurea* (H): Heard in the tatty mangroves at Kampot salt pans.

VIREONIDAE

White-browed Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius flaviscapis*: A great look at a pair in the forest at Bokor.

White-bellied Erpornis (W-b Yuhina) *Erpornis zantholeuca*: Not uncommon in the forest at Bokor where we found several.

CAMPEPHAGIDAE

Large Cuckooshrike *Coracina macei*: A few were seen in the forest at Tmat Boey.

Indochinese Cuckooshrike *Coracina polioptera*: A small number were seen in the dry forests around Tmatboey. The form concerned is the nominate race, the palest and thereby less confusable with Black-winged.

Black-winged Cuckooshrike *Coracina melaschistos*: A single bird was seen at Bokor.

Rosy Minivet *Pericrocotus roseus*: A bird seen with Ashy Minivets at Angkor Thom on our first afternoon in Cambodia appeared to be an immature male of the nominate race, and a write-in for this tour.

Swinhoe's Minivet *Pericrocotus cantonensis*: A pair of these subtle birds were watched at length at Tmat Boey.

Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus*: A flock of eight were seen at Angkor Thom, then at Bokor we found a few more, including a flock of ten.

Small Minivet *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*: Commonly encountered in the dry woods of Tmat Boey, our first sighting was of a pair a nest, en-route from Siem Riep.

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus speciosus*: One of the few visible birds at Na Hin, also seen at Bokor and en-route to Tmat Boey.

ORIOLIDAE

Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*: Some good looks at these at Tmat Boey, also seen at Angkor Wat and at Bokor.

Black-hooded Oriole *Oriolus xanthornus*: Regularly seen around Tmat Boey.

GENERA INCERTA SEDIS

Large Wood-Shrike *Tephrodornis gularis*: Seen on a couple of days in the dry woodland at Tmat Boey.

Common Wood-Shrike *Tephrodornis pondicerianus*: More common than the above at Tmat Boey, and more typical of the dry woodlands.

Bar-winged Flycatcher-Shrike *Hemipus picatus*: Seen several times at Na Hin, plus a couple of sightings at Tmat Boey.

AEGITHINIDAE

Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia*: Heard frequently and seen regularly at Tmat Boey, and also seen at Kratie.

Great Iora *Aegithina lafresnayei*: A single at Na Hin was the only sighting.

RHIPIDURIDAE

White-browed Fantail *Rhipidura aureola*: Seen on a couple of days at Tmat Boey, with some good views of friendly birds.

Pied Fantail *Rhipidura javanica*: Common around Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and also seen around Kompong Thom, Kratie and Kampot.

DICRURIDAE

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*: Common in open country, particularly around Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and a small number were seen in open woodland at Tmat Boey.

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*: Seen in all the forests that we visited in both countries.

Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus*: One at Tmat Boey was the only one seen.

Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus remifer*: Seen often in the Bokor forests.

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradiseus*: Seen and heard regularly at Tmat Boey.

Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*: Frequently encountered, in Laos, at Angkor Wat, Tmat Boey, Kratie and Bokor.

MONARCHIDAE

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea*: A few sightings in the forest at Na Hin, Tmat Boey and Bokor.

CORVIDAE

Eastern Jungle Crow *Corvus leuillantii*: Scattered sightings along our route in Cambodia, with a small number seen in Laos on our first day. This is split out of Large-billed Crow *C. macrorhychos* complex.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*: Surprisingly this was a write-in; a pair seen in the woodland en-route to Tmat Boey, of the *leucotis* race.

Indochinese Green Magpie *Cissa hypoleuca*: At least three birds seen at Bokor, but so sneaky and never availing themselves for a proper view.

Red-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*: A couple of sightings at Tmat Boey.

Rufous Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda*: Just a couple seen, including one in the yard of our lodge at Tmat Boey.

Racket-tailed Treepie *Crypsirina temia*: Our first were a group of nine perched up in a bamboo at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, a single was seen at Tmat Boey, and up to five birds showed well at Kratie, calling loudly.

LANIIDAE

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*: Scattered sightings in open country, including in clearings up on the Bokor plateau.

Burmese Shrike *Lanius colluriooides*: Three were seen on our first morning at Tmat Boey.

NECTARINIIDAE

Van Hasselt's Sunbird *Leptocoma brasiliana*: A fine songster was found along the river bank at Tmat Boey, another write-in for this tour.

Purple Sunbird *Cinnyris asiaticus*: Frequently encountered at Tmat Boey.

Olive-backed Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis*: Odd birds were encountered in the Siem Riep area, at Tmat Boey, Kratie and Kampot.

Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja*: Some fine males were seen on two days at Na Hin.

Black-throated Sunbird *Aethopyga saturata*: A few were seen at Na Hin, then we had good views of several of the endemic *cambodiana* race at Bokor.

Ruby-cheeked Sunbird *Chalcoparia singalensis*: A pair were seen at Tmat Boey, and another two in a bird-flock at Bokor.

Streaked Spiderhunter *Arachnothera magna*: One was seen briefly at Na Hin.

Little Spiderhunter *Arachnothera longirostra*: A couple were seen and others heard in the forest at Na Hin. Also heard at Bokor.

DICAEIDAE

Thick-billed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum agile*: Clearly too small to shoot, we saw quite a few at Na Hin, and a single at Tmat Boey.

Plain Flowerpecker *Dicaeum minullum*: A single seen briefly at Na Hin.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*: Fairly common at Bokor, these birds are of the *cambodianum* race that lacks red on the underparts, which is endemic to western Cambodia and adjacent south-east Thailand.

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum*: A single outside our Vientiane hotel was the only one of the tour.

CHLOROPSEIDAE

Blue-winged Leafbird *Chloropsis cochinchinensis*: Seen often at Na Hin forests, and also at Bokor.

Golden-fronted Leafbird *Chloropsis aurifrons*: Two were seen at Na Hin, and at Tmat Boey we saw several.

IRENIDAE

Asian Fairy-bluebird *Irena puella*: A single nervous bird was seen at Na Hin, while at Bokor they were common.

PLOCEIDAE

Streaked Weaver *Ploceus manyar*: A single seen at Kratie.

Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus*: We saw plenty at Ang Trapaeng Thmor where we watched them drinking at a puddle, and also seen at Kampi.

Asian Golden Weaver *Ploceus hypoxanthus*: Four gorgeous fellows seen perched up on the bushes at Kratie.

ESTRILDIDAE

White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata*: A few were seen at Tmat Boey, and many more at Kratie marsh.

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*: A flock was seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, with many also seen at Kampi.

PASSERIDAE

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*: Seen in Vientiane, at Ang Trapaeng Thmor and at Kompong Thom.

Plain-backed Sparrow *Passer flaveolus*: Good views of our first at Ang Trapaeng Thmor where they were quite common, also found in several other areas of open country.

Eurasian Tree-sparrow *Passer montanus*: Commonly encountered around human habitation.

MOTACILLIDAE

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*: Very numerous at Ang Trapaeng Thmor where we found perhaps 80 or more, also several seen in open fields at Stung and Kompong Thom.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*: Seen around our lodge at Na Hin, around clearings at Tmat Boey, and along the access road at Bokor.

Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus*: Regularly encountered in cultivated areas in Cambodia.

Amur Wagtail *Motacilla [alba] leucopsis*: Up to four seen on the river by our lodge at Na Hin.

Mekong Wagtail *Motacilla samveasnae*: Another great Cambodian bird, with lots of charisma. We had good looks of at least two on the mid-stream islands of the Mekong River at Kratie, perching up in the bushes as they do. Only recently discovered, it is nice to see such a clearly defined species.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*: Seen on the river by our lodge at Na Hin, and also the access road at Bokor.

Eastern Grey-headed Wagtail *Motacilla [tschutschensis] macronyx*: Several seen in the fields around Kompong Thom.

EMBERIZIDAE

Chestnut-eared Bunting *Emberiza fucata*: A splendid male was found in fields at Kampi, probably just the fourth record for the country.

SITTIDAE

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis*: Scattered sightings; at Na Hin, Tmat Boey, and at Bokor.

Neglected Nuthatch *Sitta neglecta*: At Tmat Boey we only managed to find a single bird. These birds have recently been raised to species level, separating it from Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch *S. cinnamoventris*, which is the one that typically occur at higher elevations from the Himalayas to southern China.

STURNIDAE

White-vented Myna *Acridotheres grandis*: Seen regularly in open country in Cambodia, with a handful also seen in Laos on our first morning.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*: Common in open country, also found in Laos.

Vinous-breasted Myna *Acridotheres burmannicus*: Seen on a couple of days at Tmat Boey, usually in flight. This *leucocephalus* form is rather different to the red-billed nominate form one sees in Burma, but no-one appears to have split it yet!

Black-collared Starling *Gracupica nigricollis*: Seen regularly at Tmat Boey, also at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and on the Mekong near Vientiane.

Asian Pied Starling *Gracupica contra*: A single flew by at Ang Trapaeng Thmor.

Common Hill-myna *Gracula religiosa*: Three were seen on the lower slopes of Bokor, we also saw several birds at Na Hin.

MUSCICAPIDAE

Siberian Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope*: Both male and female birds were seen well out in the open at Kompong Thom, and another male was seen at Kratie.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*: Numerous around the fields at Stung, we also found them near Kompong Thom and in fields near Kratie.

Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane*: A male was seen at Bokor, but only by the first on the trail.

Blue Rock-thrush *Monticola solitarius*: Seen around our lodge at Na Hin, also along the access road up to Bokor.

Eastern Stonechat *Saxicola maurus*: Commonly encountered in open country in Cambodia. Most if not all of would be referable to the subspecies *stejnegeri*.

Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata*: Seen along the Mekong in Laos, then commonly in open country in Cambodia, and in the woods at Tmat Boey.

Jerdon's Bushchat *Saxicola jerdoni*: A highlight of our Laos pre-extension, with three or four birds seen along a stretch of the Mekong river near to Vientiane. All the

birds seen were males, perching up and singing from the mid-river vegetation in the mostly dry river, just a stone's throw from Thailand!

Blue Whistling-thrush *Myiophonus caeruleus*: A good look at one at Bokor.

Hainan Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis hainanus*: Two males seen in the forest at Na Hin.

Hill Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis banyumas*: Two were seen at Na Hin on our first morning.

Tickell's Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis tickelliae*: Some views of a furtive pair within a thicket at Tmat Boey.

Vivid Niltava *Niltava vivida*: A male appeared in the forest at Bokor, showing the wedge of orange on its throat to us as he responded to our Collared Owlet recording. This would appear to be the first recorded occurrence in Cambodia.

Mugimaki Flycatcher *Ficedula mugimaki*: A pair were seen well in the forest at Bokor.

Taiga Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla*: First seen in Vientiane, then more were found at Tmat Boey, and they were fairly common at Kratie.

Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica*: A single at the Ta Phrom temple, several around Tmat Boey, and a single at Bokor.

Blue-and-White Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana*: A nice surprise to find these handsome migrants in the forest at Bokor, we saw a total of five.

Oriental Magpie-robin *Copsychus saularis*: A few scattered sightings along our route.

White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus*: Heard in Laos, and single was seen at Tmat Boey.

STENOSTIRIDAE

Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*: We forgot to write this in at the time, but a couple of birds were seen on two of our days at Na Hin.

ALAUDIDAE

Australasian Bushlark *Mirafra javanica*: Fairly numerous at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, we also found a couple at Stung.

Indochinese Bushlark *Mirafra erythrocephala*: A small number were seen at Tmat Boey, typically perching up on bushes.

Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula*: Heard around Kompong Thom, and seen at the Kampot salt pans.

PYCNONOTIDAE

Black-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus atriceps*: A couple of singles were at Na Hin, and a couple were seen by the river at Tmat Boey.

Black-crested Bulbul *Pycnonotus flaviventris*: The 'bulletproof-bulbul' of Laos, unaccountably numerous in comparison to other species there! A few were also seen at Tmat Boey and Bokor.

Stripe-throated Bulbul *Pycnonotus finlaysoni*: Several seen at Na Hin, also seen at Tmat Boey, and at Bokor where they were certainly common by voice.

Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus goiavier*: Several seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, and around Kratie they were fairly common.

Bare-faced Bulbul *Pycnonotus hualon*: No trouble finding this fellow, we scored within minutes of arriving among the limestone pinnacles of Na Hin. Five were scoped distantly on our first evening, then over the next two days we had progressively better views as they perched on the very tips of the crags. Not the most handsome of new discoveries, but an interesting new endemic that went unnoticed for so long one can only wonder if there are more thrills to be found out there.

Streak-eared Bulbul *Pycnonotus blanfordi*: Scattered sightings along our route.

Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*: Several seen in Vientiane city, and a couple more at our lodge in Na Hin.

Sooty-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster*: Very common at Tmat Boey, also seen by the Mekong in Laos.

Grey-eyed Bulbul *Iole propinqua*: Two were seen in Na Hin forest, uttering their nasal call, and also at Bokor.

Ochraceous Bulbul *Alophoixus ochraceus*: Fairly common at Bokor, plus a couple were seen briefly at Na Hin.

HIRUNDINIDAE

Asian House-martin *Delichon dasypus*: Small groups were seen on two days at Na Hin.

Common Sand-martin *Riparia riparia*: Quite a few hawking around Angkor Thom, over the Tonle Sap, and out on the plain at Stung.

Grey-throated Sand-martin *Riparia chinensis*: Several were seen by the Mekong in Laos, then many more were seen further down the same river at Kampi. Rasmussen & Anderton in 'Birds of South Asia' split Plain Martin *R. paludicola* into this Asian species, and Brown-throated Sand Martin *R. paludicola* of Africa.

Dusky Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne concolor*: A couple were seen around the limestone crags at Na Hin.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: Seen frequently in open country, at Ang Trapaeng Thmor there were hundreds.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*: Two were seen along the Mekong in Laos, and another two were seen at Na Hin, by our lodge.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*: Seen regularly over the forest at Tmat Boey.

PHYLLOSCOPIDAE

Yellow-bellied Warbler *Abroscopus superciliaris*: Seen on two days in the forests of Na Hin.

Plain-tailed Warbler *Seicercus soror*: A very skulking fellow, of numerous calling birds at Bokor we managed some occasional glimpses as they disappeared into the undergrowth!

White-tailed Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus ogilviegranti*: Some great views eventually of some very energetic songsters at Bokor.

Pale-legged Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes* (H): Heard at Bokor.

Two-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*: Heard on a number of occasions at Na Hin, eventually one was seen at Tmat Boey.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*: Common and frequently encountered in all the forests.

Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*: Four were seen at Na Hin, in typical fashion along the roadsides, plus one other was seen at Tmat Boey.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*: Common in the ditches and wet edges at Ang Trapaeng Thmor and Kratie, with odd ones also seen at Tmat Boey and around Kompong Thom.

TIMALIIDAE

Chestnut-flanked White-eye *Zosterops erythropleurus*: A flock of some 30 birds fed noisily in treetops at Bokor, though it wasn't always easy to see the colour on their flanks.

Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus*: Several seen at Bokor.

Sooty Babbler *Stachyris herberti*: One of the highlights of our visit to Laos, we found two small parties feeding unobtrusively on the rocks at Na Hin. This is endemic to central Laos and central Annam of neighbouring Vietnam.

Spot-necked Babbler *Stachyris striolata*: Two birds played hide-and-seek with us in a roadside thicket at Na Hin.

Grey-throated Babbler *Stachyris nigriceps*: Two or three birds were glimpsed only at Na Hin.

Large Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus hypoleucos*: A pair made a better than 'typical appearance' at Bokor, at times showing well as they circled us curiously.

White-browed Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus schisticeps*: Seen on all three days in the forest at Bokor, although not always obliging us with good looks!

Pin-striped Tit-babbler *Macronus gularis*: Vocal and common by voice at Bokor and at Na Hin, with occasional individuals seen at both localities.

Chestnut-capped Babbler *Timalia pileata*: A couple perched up and showed very well in the early morning at Kratie.

Buff-breasted Babbler *Pellorneum tickelli*: A pair called from the undergrowth at Na Hin and showed reasonably well.

Puff-throated Babbler *Pellorneum ruficeps*: A good view of a responsive and vocal bird at Bokor.

Streaked Wren-babbler *Napothera brevicaudata*: One was seen at Na Hin, then at Bokor we found them to be rather common, with four seen in one day with others heard additionally.

White-crested Laughingthrush *Garrulax leucolophus*: A large group were seen by the Mekong in Laos, and a few were seen at Tmat Boey.

ACROCEPHALIDAE

Black-browed Reed-warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*: Seen very well around Kompong Thom, with others seen at Prek Toal, Stung and Kratie.

Oriental Reed-warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis*: Numerous birds seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor and also near Kompong Thom and Kratie.

MEGALURIDAE

Rusty-rumped Warbler (Pallas's Grasshopper W) *Locustella certhiola*: A good prolonged view of one that came out to see us at Kratie, one of several birds heard there. Also heard at Prek Toal.

Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata*: Singles of these skulking birds were seen by the Mekong in Laos, at Kratie and best of all in a clearing at Bokor, climbing about inside a bush.

Striated Grassbird *Megalurus palustris*: Several of these robust fellows were seen, at Stung and at Kratie.

CISTICOLIDAE

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*: Three seen in the grass at Stung.

Bright-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis*: A couple were seen in grass at Kampi at near to Kratie.

Dark-necked Tailorbird *Orthotomus atrogularis*: Not uncommon at Na Hin, with a couple of others seen at Prek Toal, Ang Trapaeng Thmor and Tmat Boey.

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*: Seen in Vientiane, Siem Riep and Kratie.

Rufescent Prinia *Prinia rufescens*: Seen commonly at Tmat Boey, also by the Mekong in Laos.

Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris*: Seen well at Kratie, also heard at Kompong Thom.

Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata*: Seen commonly at Kompong Thom and around Kratie.

Brown Prinia *Prinia polychroa*: Seen well on a couple of occasions in the dry woodland at Tmat Boey.

MAMMALS

Finlayson's Squirrel (Variable S) *Callosciurus finlaysoni*: The deep rufescent squirrel with a white tail-ring at Angkor Wat and Tmatboey was of the race *annelatus* and the more uniform chestnut-red animals at Bokor should be of the race *cinnamomeus*.

Cambodian Striped Squirrel *Tamiops rodolphei*: These tiny things were seen at Na Hin, Tmatboey and Bokor.

Golden Jackal *Canis aureus*: One seen well at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, loping along through the paddyfields.

Flying Fox sp. *Pteropus sp.*: The trees full of roosting bats at Ang Trapaeng Thmor probably refers to Lyle's Flying Fox *P. lylei*.

Long-tailed Macaque (Crab-eating M) *Macaca fascicularis*: Several were seen along the roadsides and around the temples at Angkor Wat, with a vocal single up a tree at Prek Toal.

Northern Pig-tailed Macaque *Macaca leonina*: Two large beasties headed off the roadside and into cover at Bokor.

Pileated Gibbon *Hylobates pileatus*: Heard singing magnificently at Bokor.

Northern Tree-Shrew *Tupaia belangeri*: A single was seen at Na Hin. This species has a very wide distribution across Southern and South-east Asia and is also referred to as the Malay Tree-Shrew.

Irrawaddy Dolphin *Orcaella brevirostris*: My best ever views this year, with a magnificent encounter with up to eight in the deep water pools in the Mekong at Kratie, but they were making such a fuss it was difficult to keep track! There seemed to be some courtship or mating behaviour going on, with presumably the female being chased around excitedly by males. Apparently just 70 survive in the Mekong and this population is sadly declining, largely due to by-catch from gill-netting, and collisions with fast boats.

Eurasian Wild Boar *Sus scrofa*: A group of six seen at Tmat Boeya, all piglets!

Eld's Deer *Cervus eldii*: At least five of these rare beasts seen at Ang Trapaeng Thmor, all females or young.