

Arunachal Pradesh, India: an ornithological diary from December 2005

Rishad Naoroji & Harkirat Singh Sangha

Naoroji, R. & Sangha, H.S. 2006. Arunachal Pradesh, India: An ornithological diary from December 2005. *Indian Birds* 2 (5): 120–131.
 Rishad Naoroji, Godrej Bhavan, 5th Floor, 4A Home Street, Fort, Mumbai 400001, India. Email: rishadn@gmail.com
 Harkirat Singh Sangha, B-27 Gautam Marg, Hanuman Nagar, Jaipur 302021, Rajasthan, India. Email: sangha@datainfosys.com

Objectives

The state of Arunachal Pradesh (India) is extremely rich in bird life being located at the intersection of the Palaearctic, Indo-Malayan and Indian subcontinent regions. Its extraordinary avian diversity requires more intensive study. Most interesting birding areas are remote, ornithologically unexplored and difficult to get to. Logistics pose a major problem. The terrain is very steep and birds are difficult to spot through dense vegetation.

We visited the Siang Valley up to Mouling National Park in February 2004 and to Gelling during December 2005. Our objectives were to survey the altitudinal status and distribution of birds along the Siang Valley, in and around Gelling up to the Line of Control (LOC); also western Arunachal. Our team consisted of Rishad Naoroji, Harkirat Singh Sangha, Mehboob Alam and Tsering Norboo.

Over a decade, we plan to survey birds throughout the entire state of Arunachal Pradesh, including its major river valleys. Each area will need to be visited at least thrice during different seasons. The following is an extract from a diary that RN kept during the December 2005 survey. Scientific names have not been inserted in the body of the text to maintain fluidity of the narrative. A checklist with Latin names, covering both our visits over consecutive years, is provided as an Appendix.

6.xii.2005: Landed at Guwahati and proceeded to Kaziranga. Night halt at Kohora. Dinner with Niranjana Kumar Vasu (Field Director).

7.xii.2005: Dibrugarh.

8.xii.2005: Leave Dibrugarh at 08:00 hrs and reach Orium Ghat 17:00 hrs. No time to buy provisions.

Among other birds such as innumerable Brahminy Duck, Large Cormorants and a few Pallas's Gulls, the most notable sighting was of five Common Crane at 15:00 hrs at Silone Sapre. One Osprey seen.

9.xii.2005: Pasighat—supplies. Afternoon to Tuting. Got dark early so spent the night at Boling in a room provided by Border Roads Organisation (BRO).

10.xii.2005: Left for Tuting at 05:00 hrs. The Siang is a spectacular sight before dawn, throughout the hills. Clouds attracted to the river settle close along its surface following its every contour and forming a misty replica of the river snaking its way through the deeply carved river gorge. Then as the sun warms up the area by 07:30–07:45 hrs, the clouds rise, enveloping the surroundings in mist, which soon dissipates. A mesmerizing, pre-dawn sight. Before Riga village saw a Common Buzzard. Riga youths have given their village a bad reputation for stopping vehicles, hiding behind masks and intimidating passengers for cash, mainly at night. Soon saw another Common Buzzard and a Common Kestrel.

11:00 hrs: Brunch at Moying. Before Mossing saw Black Bulbul and Black-backed Forktail. Otherwise only Spotted Forktail. Mehboob saw a Brown Dipper. Along Niggong River near Mossing village—Plumbeous Redstart, Little Forktail, Bronzed Drongo.

Onward to Migging and thence to Tuting: saw Barking Deer (Red-brown type) en route. Reach Tuting at night. Hospitality with 17 Kumaon Battalion.

11.xii.2005: Tuting at a standstill due to the Siang Festival. Rahul Gandhi flagged off the International Rafting competition from Tuting to Pasighat (after a 40-minute ceremony and speech). Due to the festival, porters not ready to go to Gelling tomorrow, so will have to stay an extra day. At the food stalls, squirrels and bats were on the menu under 'Arunachal cuisine'. One old lady had a huge flowing headdress of matted grass studded with squirrels, two fish and 15 Rufous-necked Hornbill casques and bills (see back-cover for photograph)—and the locals complain that there are no more hornbills left to hunt! Today in Arunachal hornbills are seen as artwork only on state roadways buses. Pheasants and large birds are noticeably absent.

Saw a Grey-backed Shrike, which was calling incessantly. Harkirat saw a Common Snipe flying past at dusk.

12.xii.2005: Saw quite a few passerines but no large birds nor raptors.

11:25 hrs: Warm sun. Two pale, less rufous marked, Common Buzzard—*japonicus*.

Morning birds: White Wagtail, Little Forktail, Rufous-bellied Flycatcher, Silver-eared [Leiothrix] Mesia, Red-whiskered Bulbul, Jungle / Large-billed Crow, Large Niltava, Another Forktail-Slaty-backed ?, Yellow-[bellied] Fantail-Flycatcher, White-throated [Fantail]-Flycatcher, Plumbeous Redstart, Daurian Redstart, Rufous-necked Laughingthrush.

Harkirat off to Jiddu village across the [Siang] river. Saw Green-backed Tit, Common Stonechat—*przewalskii*, 7–8 White-rumped Munias, Common Kestrel female over army campus.

13.xii.2005: Tuting to Bona via Kapu by army jeep. From Bona to Gelling on foot. Red-vented Bulbul, Scarlet Minivet, Brown Dipper on stream before final climb. Also single Black Baza, Grey Treepie, Red-billed Leiothrix [Chestnut-throated], Black-eared Shrike-Babbler and Himalayan Whistling-Thrush. Final climb very steep. Glad when it was over. Gelling is a small village with a few Adis and resident Monpas (Buddhists). The inspection bungalow (IB) very cozy and clean. Night temperature in the room 9°C. Altitude 1,100 m, not really high; Point 2,073 m (along the LOC) one of the highest foothill peaks around Gelling.

14.xii.2005: By 05:00 hrs, quite bright. In the morning Harkirat spotted Rufous-breasted Accentor. Tsering and I visited the *Gompa* (Buddhist monastery). The Siang, and to

the south-east, snow covered hills on east bank clearly visible. These high hills were visible and photographed from Mouling National Park two years ago. Below the hills an area called Menchoka, where an army camp exists; worth visiting as Blyth's Tragopan reported and well worth checking out for raptors.

13:00 hrs: Scanning the slopes, Tsering spotted two Black Eagles over the ridge of Point 2,073 m. Later we saw a third and then a fourth.

14:50 hrs: From IB later saw a Common Buzzard—*japonicus*—soaring over the same slopes north of the IB. Walking in the town, see everyone very active, performing their daily chores. Arunachalis have taken to speaking Hindi—so it seems, unlike other north-eastern states that speak it out of compulsion. Hindi film music blares as I walk down the main and only road down to the helipad.

Plenty of Red-vented Bulbuls in the 'jhumed', degraded areas.

15:30 hrs: Harkirat and Mehboob gone off birding in the morning after breakfast. Not yet back. Waiting eagerly for news—hopefully many new species.

Harkirat's observations: Near IB—Rufous-breasted Accentor, Green-backed Tit. After breakfast, harvested field—[Brown-eared] Ashy Bulbul, Great Barbet (Himalayan), unidentified falcon, White-naped Yuhina, Black-throated Sunbird, Yellow-bellied Fantail-Flycatcher, Red-tailed Minla, unidentified duck, Dusky Warbler.

15.xii.2005: Sun rises above the high ridges bathing Gelling in warm 'movement activating' sunshine. Below the IB, Gelling village and the deep gorge-river visible only if we climb higher on the opposite ridge behind Gelling. Today we go to Kepang La Right Pass overlooking Tibet. Only an hour-and-a-half's trek, we were told.

09:00 hrs: Common Buzzard *japonicus* takes the thermals over the slopes and river valley and then perches. Breakfast and ready for Kepang La Pass. Feeling good and eating well. Unlike in Mumbai, very hungry and large meals digested quickly.

11:45 hrs: Common Buzzard juvenile. Tail and wings finely streaked. Darkish dusky (not as prominent as in adult) trailing edge to secondaries and pale-ish head. Harkirat saw one juvenile Himalayan Griffon.

The going was especially tough when we crossed a stretch of logged huge trees (at least 25–30 m) and had to negotiate over and through them at a steep incline through the secondary growth. Unlike the western and central Himalaya, the available tracks used by locals go straight up; the shortest route. No meandering track to ease the climb. We went up to the LOC at Kepang La and looked down into Tibet / China.

List of non-raptorial birds: Red Junglefowl reported by Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) *jawans*. Must be very few due to severe hunting pressure as we didn't see or hear any. Great Barbet, Blue-throated Barbet, Chestnut-crowned [Flycatcher] Warbler, [Black spotted Yellow] Yellow-cheeked Tit, Chestnut-headed Tesia. Heard but couldn't see or identify obvious calls of Laughingthrushes.

The return was harrowing, steeply straight down and no track. Slipping, sliding with nothing to hold on to. Also the eternal fear of the problematic knees giving way. Made our way west to a stone *chorten* where Chinese offerings observed

in the form of cigarette packets, almost-empty beer cans, soft drink bottles and packets of biscuits labelled both in Chinese and English. This to 'show' their presence. Today was their day of patrolling. The Indians do the same. Take the Chinese 'artifacts' and replace them with their own to 'demonstrate' their presence.

From the *stupa*, the return was even more harrowing. Hardly a track and steeper. Nettles lined the track and we had to in many places link hands for support. Tsering was invaluable, carrying both camera bags and assisting me down the very narrow sloping track. One slip and a fall down the slope would have resulted in some injury. If I had to work in this area, in a few weeks I too would become more sure footed like the ITBP lads.

The Chinese patrol on well maintained tracks, very easy to walk on. They even patrol on horses. ITBP and the army have not bothered to even make or improve the natural trails available in the forest used by the local Tsanglas for generations. The walk turned out to be a three-and-a-half hour difficult trek.

Each day getting colder. Night temperature around 4°C.

16.xii.2005: 07:30 hrs: An *Accipiter* sp. near the IB. Against the light, facing away from us, but could make out dark brown back and upperparts thinly edged white; dark head and nape and jutting from the sides pure white visible extremities of the under tail-coverts. Hopefully we will see it again. Most likely a Shikra.

08:45 hrs: Common Buzzard *japonicus* (same individual as yesterday) observed soaring over the area. The only corvid here is the Jungle Crow. Too low for Choughs. One Common Kestrel.

14:50 hrs: Single Black Eagle quarters the ridge above IB. A large group of Green-backed Tits in the bamboo clump adjoining the IB where they roost.

Harkirat's observations in forests below Gelling on Bona road: Black-throated Sunbird, Common White-eye, Grey-backed Shrike, Jungle Crow, [Yellow-naped] Whiskered Yuhina, White-bellied Yuhina, Small Niltava, Bronzed Drongo, [Black-browed] Collared Treepie, Black Bulbul, [Brown-eared] Ashy Bulbul, Yellow-bellied Fantail-Flycatcher, Chestnut-headed Tesia, White-spectacled [Flycatcher] Warbler, Green Magpie, Whistling-Thrush, both Greater and Lesser Necklaced Thrushes, [Red-headed] Black-throated Tit, Nepal [Tit-Babbler] Fulvetta, Asian Barred Owllet.

Very cold at night though height comparatively less due to proximity to Tibetan Plateau.

17.xii.2005: Daurian Redstart in scrub near IB. Common Tailor Bird near IB.

Rufous-necked Thrush uttered harsh, grating calls, very different from normal calls.

Common Kestrel—a single individual seen everyday.

11:30 hrs: Harkirat gone down with Mehboob to the forest to seek out new birds. Saw [Beavan's Prinia] Rufescent Prinias. I've decided to walk to the forest edge beyond ITBP camp to watch for soaring raptors. While cresting the ridge above the *Gompa*—see the same *Accipiter*. Appears to be either Shikra or Eurasian Sparrowhawk. Just got a glimpse, not enough to confirm identity; under parts very pale with wing markings hardly discernable.

Higher foothill summit ridges covered with Larch *Larix griffithiana*.

12:30 hrs: At ITBP camp—a single Black Eagle quarters the ridge.

12:40 hrs: Immature Bonelli's Eagle quarters the slope. Dusky Warbler.

18.xii.2005: Dusky Warbler.

11:00 hrs: At ITBP camp to observe soaring raptors. Pair of *Accipiters* soars overhead. One, largish, appears to be female Sparrowhawk. Long tail and white under tail-coverts clearly visible. At long range underbody appears white, reflecting light. Common Buzzard *japonicus* (pale type) flies overhead.

12:30 hrs: Then the *Accipiter* pair soars over the ridge.

Harkirat's observations: Little Grebe, [Red-headed] Black-throated Tit, Nepal [Tit-Babbler] Fulvetta, Black Eagle, Rufous-faced [Flycatcher] Warbler (new), Grey-[headed] hooded [Flycatcher] Warbler (new), Chestnut-headed Tesia, [Rufous-bellied] Mountain Bulbul (new), [Black-browed] Collared Treepie, Grey-throated Babbler (new), Yellow-bellied Fantail-Flycatcher, [Streaked] Striated Laughingthrush, [Brown-eared] Ashy Bulbul, Silver-eared [Leiothrix] Mesia, White-naped Yuhina (new), [Pied] Barwinged Flycatcher-Shrike (new), Collared Owllet (new) spotted after alarm calls of Black-throated Sunbird directed at it, Common Rosefinch (new).

19.xii.2005: Early morning Harkirat, Tsering, and Mehboob off to Point 2073. Tsering has taken my 400 mm lens to take photos (close-up) of Tibet, Namche Barwa and Gyala Peri. After reaching Kegang La (c 1,425 m) they turned right and walked along the ridge line (c 1,600 m) leading to Point 2073; the track being the McMahan Line. After crossing an extensive ringal (bamboo) covered area (c 1,850 m) they reached Point 2073. It was extremely cold due to very strong winds blowing south from the Tibetan Plateau; even holding binoculars was uncomfortable. They took shots of the two peaks about 40 km away and Chinese Battalion Headquarters below. There were many birds to watch but they could stay only half an hour as the *jawan* escorting them did not allow them to stay longer. A good decision, as Indian and Chinese patrols come face to face on this track. In fact the day we left Tuting for the plains, Brigadier Rai informed us at Along that Indian and Chinese patrols came face to face on this very track. On way to ITBP camp I left the main track and took a side trail that I thought to be a short cut. Ended up on a very steep track going vertically straight up to Point 2073. I knew I was on the wrong track and shouted to the ITBP camp which I could see. I carried on till I reached the tree line (bottom half '*jhumed*') where the Liaison Officer was waiting for me and guided me back on a foot wide path (which I would have missed) to the camp. On the track I happened to look up and saw a juvenile Mountain Hawk-Eagle circling low above me. Light excellent and if the camera had not been sent to Point 2073, I would have got excellent identification pictures. Every detail visible, including the dark cheeks.

12:45 hrs: Black Eagle pair performs a spectacular undulating display; half in India, half in Tibet / China. The courtship of this species has commenced. One individual flies straight from LOC ridge across the Siang Valley to the

hill opposite the IB. The other quarters the LOC slope. A few days ago two pairs were observed on the LOC ridge. One pair probably breeds on the Tibetan side.

Tsering, and later, the others descend. Tomorrow Tuting.

On way and on Point 2073 Harkirat saw: [Common] Hill Partridge (new), Green Magpie, Striated Bulbul (new), [Bar-throated] Chestnut-tailed Minla (new), Rufous-vented Yuhina (new), Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch (new) race *cinnamoventris*, [Austen's] Streaked-throated Barwing (new), Crimson-breasted [Pied] Woodpecker (new).

20.xii.2005: Women porters barged in at 06:00 hrs to take the luggage. We were not packed and were still in bed. Two coffees later I was invigorated and packed and dressed in record time. The women were eager to move (rightly so) as they had to get back to Gelling. Left at 08:00 hrs and after four hours of walking reached the road-head beyond Bona where the army vehicles were waiting. Reached Tuting at 13:00 hr. Between Gelling to Bona saw Common Kestrel, Common Buzzard—*japonicus*, Black Eagle near Bona, Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo, [Black-browed] Collared Tree Pie, Black Bulbul, Red-whiskered Bulbul in a field, [Lloyd's] Coral-billed Scimitar Babbler (approximately seven birds feeding on or digging out insects on wild banana stems; a spectacular sighting even for a raptor aficionado), [Gold-headed] Golden Babbler, White-naped Yuhina, [Yellow-naped] Whiskered Yuhina, White-throated Fantail-Flycatcher (nominated race), Chestnut-headed Tesia, Grey-[headed] hooded [Flycatcher] Warbler, Plumbeous Redstart, Green-backed Tit, White Wagtail, Black-throated Sunbird.

At Bona photographed a hunter with a freshly killed Himalayan Palm Civet (see backcover for photograph). Everything that walks or flies is snared or shot. We observed many people carrying guns.

Night halt Tuting.

21.xii.2005: To Along. Extremely misty. Mist cleared only by 13:00 hrs. Five Black Eagles seen totally. One Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Plumbeous Redstart, Slaty-backed Forktail, White-capped Water Redstart, Brown Dipper, Bronzed Drongo, Common Kestrel, Spotted Forktail.

Two years ago at Mouling National Park, we had regularly observed two pairs of Crested Serpent-eagles in February. On this trip not a single sighting of the species throughout the Siang valley, possibly indicating some seasonal movement.

22.xii.2005: Along to Silapather via Likabali. Heavy mist again. After breakfast a very interesting half hour visit with our host, Brigadier Rai. He promised us logistics for a visit to the Subansiri valley next year. The journey was overcast till 14:00 hrs but a much better drive than traveling along the south bank from Dibrugarh to Tezpur. After leaving Along our first halt was at Ego and while our driver lunched we watched birds on the river. A shop / smelting unit at Ego was making / selling Daos (Kukri-like knife carried by nearly every one). Daos of different sizes and quality were available at prices ranging from Rs 100/- to Rs 1,200/-. Habitat interesting with mix of '*jhumed*' and original forest. A pleasant six-hour drive produced: Himalayan Swiftlets over Along, Red-vented and Whiskered Bultuls, Streaked Spiderhunter.

13:30 hrs: Two Black Eagles.

13:00 hrs: One adult Rufous-bellied Eagle, Common Kestrel (relatively common), Bronzed Drongo, Scarlet Minivet, Grey-back Shrike, Brown Dipper at Ego, Slaty-backed and Spotted Forktails.

Along the route good views of the Brahmaputra from certain high points. Night halt circuit house in N. Lakhimpur.

23.xii.2005: Lakhimpur to Eco Camp–Nameri. Buffer zone (important elephant corridor W to E) deforested and planted with mustard. Politics are the bane of habitat protection and the Assam government did not take a firm step in favour of conservation. At Borolli River, Pallas's and juvenile Peregrine. Rafters have had good sightings of as many as five to eight Ibisbill while rafting down from Bhalukpong to bend of river nearest to Eco Camp.

Other birds seen around Eco Camp: Brown-capped Woodpecker, Hill Myna, Lineated and Blue-throated Barbets among others.

24.xii.2005: Up at 04:00 hrs, left Eco Camp at 05:15 hrs for the long haul to Tawang which we reached at 17:40 hrs. The road between Bomdila and Dirang mostly devoid of natural vegetation ('*jhumed*' or plantations) no birds and no scenic value; very monotonous. Saw three Common Buzzards and one being mobbed high on the Sela Pass 4,152 m by as many as 10–15 Jungle Crows. One Common Kestrel observed hunting on the way up to the pass. No Choughs seen. Sela Pass barren, high and forbidding. Very little bird life. Sela Pass frozen and also the lake at the beginning of the downward stretch. Very, very, very, cold. No other raptors seen and extremely few birds. Stopped at Jaswant Garh. A temple commemorating Jaswant Singh of Garhwal Rifles stands here. In 1962 the site witnessed bloody action. A cordoned off area adjacent to the temple contains the buried remains of 100 Chinese who died fighting. At Tawang enjoying the hospitality of the 190 Mountain Brigade. Surprisingly, at this altitude, no Choughs—only Jungle Crows.

25.xii.2005: Very cold at night, "4°C. Next morning visited Tawang Gumpa. Not as impressive as I thought it to be. At one time the Tawang area was covered with pristine deodar forests. Only a remnant good patch of forest around the Gumpa where we saw: Jungle Crow performing aerial aerobatics similar to Choughs, Black-faced Laughingthrush, White-throated Laughingthrush, [Cinnamon Tree] Russet Sparrow—altitude record.

On way to Bum La (where invading Chinese first entered Arunachal). While gaining altitude could see Sela Pass on the opposite side of the valley. White-throated Redstart, Common Buzzard – *japonicus* on the plateau 4,000 m, Alpine Accentor.

Very interesting Tundra-like habitat on the plateau. Completely frozen-zero or in the minus even in the strong sun. The numerous lakes frozen with some dare-devil tourists walking on them at their own risk. Like Sela Pass—jagged rocky peaks (not mountains) up to 6,061 m. Bleak and forbidding. Could actually feel the altitude slightly, but not as much as Ladakh. A large flock of [Hodgson's] Plain Mountain Finch (40-50 birds) just before Bum La. A gurdwara visited by army personnel stands here. At the pass, a platoon of 1st Sikh under Joginder Singh held

a position on 1B Ridge when the Chinese attacked in 1962. For his gallantry and leadership he was awarded the Param Vir Chakra.

26.xii.2005: Early start for Nameri. Throughout the journey Blue Whistling Thrushes very common. In the valley below Tawang saw 8–9 Spotted Nutcrackers on Chir Pine feeding on cone nuts at Depustrik. Black-faced Laughingthrush just after passing Jaswant Garh on the ascent to Sela Pass. Before reaching top of Sela Pass flock of Spot-winged Rosefinch at 3,750 m. One splendid male and two females. Five to six White-throated Redstarts including one male. Just before Bomdila a Mountain Hawk-Eagle. Habitat around Bomdila heavily degraded. Rest of the journey uneventful. Reach Eco Camp at 20:00 hrs.

27.xii.2005: 09:45 hrs: Nameri National Park. At the Potasali Rest House. Not disappointed. Adult Peregrine on look-out on the topmost branches of a very tall Bhelo tree. Many years ago in a single day saw Changeable Hawk-Eagle, Peregrine, Black Eagle, Pallas's, Crested Serpent Eagle and Rufous-bellied Eagle perched on and in flight around this tree.

10:45 hrs: Peregrine takes off purposefully in level flight across the river and out of view after circling high for 5–7 minutes.

11:45 hrs: No soaring raptors or calls. Even the common Crested Serpent Eagle and Oriental Honey-buzzard not seen or heard. No wintering Himalayan Griffon or Slender-billed Vultures.

15:30 hrs Leave by early afternoon as nothing of interest.

28.xii.2005: Harkirat and Mehboob went rafting down Bhoroli to see the Ibisbill. Saw four Ibisbill soon after they started at 08:05 hrs. Also saw Plumbeous Redstart, White-capped Water Redstart, Crested Serpent-eagle, Common Mergansers—8, Mallard—2, Greenshank—2, Green Sandpiper, Common Sandpiper, Greater and Little Cormorants.

At Eco Camp in the morning before rafting: four Greater Flamebacks, one Daurian Redstart female, two Oriental Honey-buzzards soon after leaving Eco Camp.

Drive from Eco Camp. Up to 13 miles at least four Common Stonechats indicating forests have now disappeared.

Acknowledgements

Chief of Army Staff Gen. J.J. Singh, PVSM, AVSM, VSM, ADC for his continued interest and assistance for our projects; Brigadier M.M.S. Rai, Cdr., 5 Mountain Brigade, C/o 99 APO for his much appreciated hospitality; Gen. R.P.S. Malhan, YSM, SM, Additional Director General Staff Duties for infrastructural support at Tawang; Colonel Prakash Tewari, Director, Policy (Ecology) Environment & Ecology Cell, Land, Works & Environment Dte organized permissions, infrastructure support and advised accordingly; Major R.K. Anuj, 17 Kumaon, C/o 99 APO provided logistic support at Tuting; ITBP at Gelling were extremely hospitable and helpful; Ranesh Roy, Joint Camp Director from Eco Camp; Manjul Barua for hospitality and logistics in 2004; Arun Kumar Roy organized logistics from Guwahati in 2005. Tsering Nurboo and Mehboob Alam Hussain's field assistance was invaluable.

Table 1. Birds recorded in West Siang and West Kameng districts, Arunachal Pradesh-February 2004 & December 2005.

S.No.	Species	Habitat	Gelling, Tuting	Tawang Bum La Sela Pass	Other sites	No.	Comments
1	Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Waterbody in F	Dompo Cho, G			1	Three birds. A recent record from Mehao (Katti <i>et al.</i> 1992)
2	Little Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>	R			Kameng R, Tura	1	
3	Black Baza <i>Aviceda leuphotes</i>	Fe	G			1	One in the evening. Namdapha record (Birand & Pawar 2004)
4	Oriental Honey-Buzzard <i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	Degraded F			PG	1	
5	Himalayan Griffon <i>Gyps himalayensis</i>	F	Kepang La, G			1	One juvenile. New record for Arunachal Pradesh
6	Crested Serpent-Eagle <i>Spilornis cheela</i>	F	T			1	
7	Common Buzzard <i>Buteo b. japonicus</i>	Fe/OAs/C	G T	SP TA	Bona	4	CO
8	Black Eagle <i>Ictinaetus malayensis</i>	F	G		Bona Along	4	Up to 4 in a day at G. CO
9	Bonelli's Eagle <i>Hieraaetus fasciatus</i>	F	G			1	One seen regularly along McMahon Line
10	Booted Eagle <i>H. pennatus</i>	Degraded F area			65 Mile	1	Between PG & Moying
11	Rufous-bellied Eagle <i>H. kienerii</i>	F with pockets of C			Near Along	1	
12	Mountain Hawk-Eagle <i>Spizaetus nipalensis</i>	Degraded hill F			Near Bomdila	1	
13	Common Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	J hillsides / C	G T		Bona	4	Fairly CO
14	Common Hill-Partridge <i>Arborophila torqueola</i>	F hills	G			–	Heard frequently
15	Red Junglefowl <i>Gallus gallus</i>	F	G			–	Reported by ITBP soldiers
16	Common Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	-	T			1	Seen in flight
17	Pin-tailed Green-Pigeon <i>Treron apicauda</i>	F			MNP	1	

S.No.	Species	Habitat	Gelling, Tuting	Tawang Bum La Sela Pass	Other sites	No.	Comments
18	Spotted Scops-Owl <i>Otus spilocephalus</i>	F			MNP	-	Regularly heard at night.
19	Collared Owlet <i>Glaucidium brodiei</i>	F	G			1	Mobbed in the day by Black-throated Sunbird
20	Asian Barred Owlet <i>G. cuculoides</i>	Sec F	G, T		PG	2	
21	Himalayan Swiftlet <i>Collocalia brevirostris</i>	F hillside F			Along, MNP	1 1	c. 35
22	Small Blue Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>	R			Ego	1	
23	Great Barbet <i>Megalaima virens</i>	F	G T		Bona, BP	4	
24	Lineated Barbet <i>M. lineata</i>	F	G			1	
25	Blue-throated Barbet <i>M. asiatica</i>	F	G			1	
26	Fulvous-breasted Pied Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos macei</i>	F			MNP	1	
27	Crimson-breasted Pied Woodpecker <i>D. cathpharius</i>	Moist F	G			1	
28	White Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	Grassy areas around army camp	T G		Along	4	Quite CO at T & G helipad
29	Yellow Wagtail <i>M. flava</i>	As above	T			4	As above
30	Oriental Tree Pipit <i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	OA/C			Bona	1	
31	Scarlet Minivet <i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>	F F	G		BP, MNP	2	
32	Pied Flycatcher-Shrike <i>Hemipus picatus</i>	F F	G		MNP	3	
33	Red-whiskered Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	J areas / Sec F F	G T		 MNP	2	

S.No.	Species	Habitat	Gelling, Tuting	Tawang Bum La Sela Pass	Other sites	No.	Comments
34	Red-vented Bulbul <i>P. cafer</i>	Sec F / J area / scrub. F	G		Along, PG. MNP	4	
			T			4	
35	White-throated Bulbul <i>Alophoixus flaveolus</i>	F F	G		MNP	1	
36	Brown-eared Bulbul <i>Hemixos flavala</i>	F	G		MNP	2	
						1	
37	Rufous-bellied Bulbul <i>Hypsipetes mccllellandii</i>	F	G			2	
38	Black Bulbul <i>H. leucocephalus</i>	Mature F / J areas	G		Near Boling	3	
39	Orange-bellied Chloropsis <i>Chloropsis hardwickii</i>	F F	G		Bona, MNP	2	
						2	
40	Asian Fairy-Bluebird <i>Irena puella</i>	F	G			1	
41	Grey-backed Shrike <i>Lanius tephronotus</i>	C/scrub	T		BP	4	
42	Brown Dipper <i>Cinclus pallasii</i>	S	G		Ego	2	Snow covered area with pockets of exposed cliffs & scree slopes
43	Alpine Accentor <i>Prunella collaris</i>	[See last column]		Klemta (near BL)		1	
44	Rufous-breasted Accentor <i>P. strophciata</i>	Scrub	G			1	
45	Blue Whistling-Thrush <i>Myophonus caeruleus</i>	F, near water F	G T	TA	Bona PG, MNP	4	
						3	
46	Oriental Magpie-Robin <i>Copsychus saularis</i>	Sec F / garden			PG	2	
47	White-throated Redstart <i>Phoenicurus schisticeps</i>	Alpine scrub open F		Ptso near TA & SP		2	Bomdilla & Mayodia (Singh 1994)
48	Daurian Redstart <i>P. aureus</i>	Sec F, scrub, C F	G		MNP	3	
						2	
49	White-capped Redstart <i>Chaimarrornis leucocephalus</i>	R/S			Ego	1	

S.No.	Species	Habitat	Gelling, Tuting	Tawang Bum La Sela Pass	Other sites	No.	Comments
50	Plumbeous Redstart <i>Rhyacornis fuliginosus</i>	R/S	G		Ego Mossing	3	
51	Little Forktail <i>Enicurus scouleri</i>	Rocky torrent	T		Mossing	2	
52	Black-backed Forktail <i>E. immaculatus</i>	R in moist F			Mossing	1	
53	Slaty-backed Forktail <i>E. schistaceus</i>	S			Ego	1	
54	Spotted Forktail <i>E. maculatus</i>	F S F			PG–T road MNP	4 3	CO throughout journey along Brahmaputra (Siang) River.
55	Common Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquata przewalskii</i>	Scrub/grassy area	G T			2	
56	Grey Bushchat <i>S. ferrea</i>	F			MNP	3	
57	White-throated Laughingthrush <i>Garrulax albogularis</i>	Light F on slope		TA		1	
58	Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush <i>G. monileger</i>	F/bamboo F	G		MNP	3 2	
59	Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush <i>G. pectorlis</i>	As above F	G		MNP	3 2	
60	Striated Laughingthrush <i>G. striatus</i>	F			Dirang	1	
61	Rufous-necked Laughingthrush <i>G. ruficollis</i>	Scrub, Fe	G T			3	
62	Black-faced Laughingthrush <i>G. affinis</i>	Light F/ shrubs		TA SP		2	
63	Red-faced Liocichla <i>Liocichla phoenicea</i>	Degraded F area			Near Moying	1	
64	Coral-billed Scimitar Babbler <i>Pomatorhinus ferruginosus</i>	F			Near Bona	1	Seven birds

S.No.	Species	Habitat	Gelling, Tuting	Tawang Bum La Sela Pass	Other sites	No.	Comments
65	Gold-headed Babbler <i>Stachyris chrysaea</i>	F under-growth F	G		MNP	2	
						2	
66	Grey-throated Babbler <i>S. nigriceps</i>	As above	G			2	
67	Rufous-bellied Shrike-Babbler <i>Pteruthius rufiventer</i>	Degraded F area			Near Moying	1	
68	Silver-eared Leiothrix <i>Leiothrix argentauris</i>	F F	G		Bona, MNP	2	
						2	
69	Red-billed Leiothrix <i>L. lutea</i>	F/C	G			1	
70	Cutia <i>Cutia nipalensis</i>	Degraded F area			Near Moying	1	
71	Chestnut-throated Shrike-Babbler <i>Pteruthius melanotis</i>	F	G			2	
72	Rusty-fronted Barwing <i>Actinodura egertoni</i>	Sec F	G			3	
73	Austen's Barwing <i>A. waldeni</i>	F	G			3	
74	Bar-throated Minla <i>Minla strigula</i>	F	G T			3	
75	Red-tailed Minla <i>M. ignotincta</i>	F F	G T		MNP	4	
						4	
76	Nepal Tit-Babbler <i>Alcippe nipalensis</i>	F under-growth F	G		MNP	3	
						3	
77	Striated Yuhina <i>Yuhina castaniceps</i>	F			MNP	2	
78	White-naped Yuhina <i>Y. bakeri</i>	F/Sec growth F	G		MNP	3 2	This restricted range species was not uncommon in G
79	Yellow-naped Yuhina <i>Y. flavicollis</i>	F / Sec growth. F	G		MNP	3	
			T			3	
80	White-bellied Yuhina <i>Y. zantholeuca</i>	F / Sec growth. F	G		MNP	1	

S.No.	Species	Habitat	Gelling, Tuting	Tawang Bum La Sela Pass	Other sites	No.	Comments
81	Beavan's Prinia <i>Prinia rufescens</i>	Harvested paddy field, grassy area at Fe	G			1	Seven birds near G
82	Chestnut-headed Tesia <i>Tesia castaneocoronata</i>	Under-growth F	G T		MNP	4	
83	Brown-flanked Bush-Warbler <i>Cettia fortipes</i>	Scrub	G T			3	Fairly CO at G & T
84	Common Tailorbird <i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	Scrub / C	G			2	
85	Dusky Warbler <i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	Scrub	G			2	Itanagar (Singh 1994)
86	Gold-spectacled Flycatcher-Warbler <i>Seicercus burkii</i>	F under-growth	G			3	
87	Grey-headed Flycatcher-Warbler <i>S. xanthoschistos</i>	F F	G		MNP	3 2	
88	White-spectacled Flycatcher-Warbler <i>S. affinis</i>	F F	G		MNP	3 2	
89	Grey-cheeked Flycatcher-Warbler <i>S. poliogenys</i>	F			MNP	2	
90	Chestnut-crowned Flycatcher-Warbler <i>S. castaniceps</i>	F F	G		MNP	1 1	
91	Rufous-faced Flycatcher-Warbler <i>Abroscopus albogularis</i>	F			MNP	1	
92	Small Niltava <i>Niltava macgrigoriae</i>	F understorey	G			1	
93	Rufous-bellied Niltava <i>N. sundara</i>	Sec growth	T			2	
94	Yellow-bellied Fantail-Flycatcher <i>Rhipidura hypoxantha</i>	F F	G		MNP	4 3	Very common

S.No.	Species	Habitat	Gelling, Tuting	Tawang Bum La Sela Pass	Other sites	No.	Comments
95	White-throated Fantail-Flycatcher <i>R. albicollis</i>	Sec F	T			3	
		F			MNP	2	
96	Red-headed Tit <i>Aegithalos concinnus</i>	F / Sec F	G			3	
97	Rufous-fronted Tit <i>A. iouschistos</i>	F / Sec growth	G			1	
98	Great Tit <i>Parus major</i>	F			MNP	1	
99	Green-backed Tit <i>P. monticolus</i>	Sec F / scrub As above	G		MNP	4 2	
100	Black-spotted Yellow Tit <i>P. sibilotus</i>	Sec F / C F	G		MNP	2 2	
101	Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch <i>Sitta castanea cinnamoventris</i>	F	G			2	
		F			MNP	1	
102	White-tailed Nuthatch <i>S. himalayensis</i>	Mossy F	Area around 2073, G			1	2,000 m.
103	Bar-tailed Tree-creeper <i>Certhia himalayana</i>	F	G			2	
104	Green-tailed Sunbird <i>Aethopyga nipalensis</i>	F			MNP	3	
105	Black-throated Sunbird <i>A. saturata</i>	F/ Sec F	G T			4	
106	Streaked Spiderhunter <i>Archnothera magna</i>	F			BP	1	
107	Oriental White-eye <i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>	F / Sec F	G		BP	4	
		F	T		PG, MNP	4	
108	Hodgson's Mountain-Finch <i>Leucosticte nemoricola</i>	Grassy / stony ground		BL		1	
109	Common Rosefinch <i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	Scrub / C	G			3	Only one or two records from Arunachal Pradesh (Singh 1994)
110	Spot-winged Rosefinch <i>C. rodopeplus</i>	Dwarf rhododendron / shrubbery		SP		2	Earlier recorded from Mayodia (Singh 1994)

S.No.	Species	Habitat	Gelling, Tuting	Tawang Bum La Sela Pass	Other sites	No.	Comments
111	White-rumped Munia <i>Lonchura striata</i>	Scrub / grassy area Fe	T		Jiddu village, T. MNP	2 1	Recorded only from Mouling (Birand & Pawar 2004).
112	Cinnamon Tree Sparrow <i>Passer rutilans</i>	Village / C		TA		1	
113	Eurasian Tree Sparrow <i>P. montanus</i>	Village / C			Bona, between T & G	3	Recorded from Yingkiang (Newton 2002)
114	Black Drongo <i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	F			MNP	3	
115	Bronzed Drongo <i>D. aeneus</i>	F / Sec F	G T		BP	3	
116	Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo <i>D. remifer</i>	F/Fe F	G		Bona, MNP	2 2	
117	Common Green Magpie <i>Cissa chinensis</i>	F F	Kepang La. G		MNP	2	
118	Grey Treepie <i>Dendrocitta formosae</i>	Fe / C	G T			3	
119	Black-browed Treepie <i>D. frontalis</i>	F F	G		MNP	2 2	
120	Spotted Nutcracker <i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>	Light F & C			Depustrik	1	Between TA & SP
121	Large-billed Crow <i>Corvus [macrorhynchos] japonensis</i>	Human habitations/ Also barren OA	G T	TA SP	Bona along PG	4	10+ soaring above SP

Abundance ranking (Nos): 1=one, 2=two–three, 3=four–ten, 4=ten+.

Abbreviations

BL=Bum La.
BP=Brahmaputra Point.
C=Cultivation.
CO=Common.
F= Forest.
Fe=Forest edge.
G=Gelling.
J=*Jhuned*.
MNP=Mouling National Park.
No=Number of sightings.
OA=Open area/s.
R=River.
S=Stream.

Sec=Secondary.
SP=Sela Pass.
TA=Tawang.
T=Tuting.

References

- Birand, A. & Pawar, S. 2004. An ornithological survey in north-east India. *Forktail* 20: 15–24.
Katti, M., Singh, P., Manjrekar, N., Sharma, D. & Mukherjee, S. 1992. An ornithological survey in eastern Arunachal Pradesh. *Forktail* 7: 75–89.
Newton, P.N. 2002. Bird records from the Siang River valley, Arunachal Pradesh, India. *Forktail* 18: 156–157.
Singh, P. 1994. Recent bird records from Arunachal Pradesh. *Forktail* 10: 65–104.