

Himachal Pradesh INDIA

From 13-9 to 9-10 2008

Rapport from a jeep safari and a trek across
The Great Himalayan National Park.

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Introduction

The tour was planned to last 4 weeks with the first half being a jeep safari from Delhi over the Spiti region which falls in the extended Tibetan plateau, as well as around the newly declared Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP). The second part was planned to be a trek across GHNP. We had three goals with the tour: Seeing the culture and people in Spiti, trekking across GHNP and over the all of course birding, maybe even see the elusive Western Tragopan. We succeeded 2 of our 3 goals. We had a really successful trek across GHNP with beautiful clear weather. We saw 131 species of birds, which may not sound of much for a 4 week tour, but we found the quality of the bird watching high with many mountain species. We didn't succeed with the jeep safari; it got a little too adventurous. Due to weather condition we never managed to get to the Spiti plateau, but we are planning to try again, the area is too interesting to forget.

The names used are according to a newly published book with Danish, English and Latin bird names.

Over the internet we have found Sunshine Himalayan Adventures, who very professional had been sparring with ideas and finally arranged everything for this tour. They are making various tours and are also capable of arranging tours as desired. The manager Ankit Sood can be contacted at:

sunhimalaya@gmail.com

Their programme can be seen here: <http://www.sunshineadventure.com/>

I can be contacted for further information at: Krusepost@Gmail.com

13-9-2008. Day 1

We have been looking forward to this day ever since we started planning for this combined birding, adventure and cultural tour. We had month ago arranged us with a cheap flight with Lufthansa from Copenhagen to Delhi via Munich.

14-9-2008. Day 2

We arrived at Delhi's Ghandi airport 7am after a reasonable pleasant flight. In the airport we meet up with Ankit Sood from Sun Himalayan Adventure. He took us to a peaceful hotel central in Delhi where we arranged our luggage and had a few hours sleep.

At lunch time we had a delicious meal at restaurant Moti Mahal. Indian cuisine is extremely tasteful when made well and this was.

We had been in India before so we were prepared for the cultural chock most tourists get in India.

Contrary the rich cultural life you will find in India, the traffic culture is completely absent.

Everyone tries to push along and horn is used to the extend where nobody pays attention any more.

Also Indians habits of discharging of rubbish wherever they are has to be learned to be ignored.

After lunch we visited a newly build temple complex, Aksharham. It's built in traditional style with lots of beautiful carvings in the rock. In addition there is a section where you can learn about Indian religion and Indian history. This part is more "Disneyland". We came to Delhi the day after some terrorists exploded several bombs in Delhi, so a lot of security checks were to be past.

Just before dark we visited Lodhi Gardens for at least to do some birding.

The days birdlist: Rose ringed Parakeet, House Crow, Black Kite, Common Myna and a lot of fruitbats.

15-9-2008. Day 3. Delhi to Chail (2226m)

Started the jeep safari driving out of Delhi at 7,30 in the morning. Our driver were Avneesh Devichand, a cousin of Ankit, so we were a party of four in the jeep. The traffic wasn't as bad as expected, but later it got more stocked when the roads got narrower.

Stopped for rest and tea after 2 hours at Karna lake.

Birdlist: Cattle Egret, Indian Pond Heron, Streak throated Swallow, Koel and Little Cormorant.

Stopped later for lunch and birding in Pinjore Gardens.

Birdlist: Rose ringed Parakeet, Alexandrine Parakeet, Jungle Babbler, Common Tailorbird and a Pied Cuckoo being fed by a Jungle Babbler.

From the jeep during the drive we further recorded: White throated Kingfisher, Indian Roller, Blackwinged Stilt, Common Myna and Black Kite.

We stopped overnight in Palace hotel in Chail. We were given a deluxe room situated in the park close to the hotel. The room was a hut which definitely had seen better days, but the surrounding nature was a beautiful start to the mountains.



16-9-2008. Day 4. Chail to Wildernes camp (2240m)

Early morning tea at 5,30 and then drove 4km to get to a forest area where it should be possible to see some pheasants.

Blue whistling thrush, Streaked Laughingthrush, Scaly bellied Woodpecker, Brown fronted Woodpecker, Kalij Pheasant, Hoopoe, Oriental Turtledove, Large billed Crow, Grey Bushchat, Bartailed Treecreeper, Greenbacked Tit and Euroasian Jay.

Back at the hotel we had our breakfast brought to the hut so we could enjoy the view.

Further driving took us to Kufri Nature Park, a zoo with the most interesting for us being the cages with pheasants. Here at least we could see what we hoped to see in the wild.

Further driving was on a road we at that time thought of as bad, and at some places not existing.

Later we should learn what bad roads were.

Had lunch at Hotel Hatu in Narkonda before driving 8 km into a valley to a small place called Wilderness Camp. A small hotel beautifully situated on a south side of a hill.

Common Kestrel, Redbilled Blue Magpie, Rock Bunting, Streaked Laughing Thrush, Indian Nutcracker and in the evening a Collared Owlet was calling.

17-9-2008. Day 5. Wildernes camp to Sarahan (2136m)

Morning birding for 2-3 hours on the steep hillside. The few houses we passed steamed when the sun hit them and smoke came from holes in the walls from the fire places.

Grey Bushchat, Rock Bunting, Streaked Laughingthrush, Black lored Tit, Humes leaf Warbler and Black Kite.

The drive further followed a river. At places the road was steep and went at places close to the edge with the river scaring far below.

Golden Eagle, Green Bee-eater and another Kalij Pheasant were the interesting species spotted on the way.

In Sarahand we stayed at hotel Srikanand, in a room with a balcony which, apart from a view to the snow covered Himalayan mountains produced some comfortable and good birding.

Great Barbet, Oriental Whiteeye, Black Francolin, Yellow Billed Blue Magpie and an Alpine Chough.

An evening walk further up the road gave:

Yellow Breasted Greenfinch, Asian Brown Flycatcher, Blue Whistling Thrush, Grey Bushchat, Common Myna, Streaked laughing Thrush, Black Bulbul, Scaly Bellied Woodpecker, Humes leaf Warbler, Ashy Drongo, Winter Wren, Grey headed Canary Flycatcher, Indian blue Robin, Whiskered Yuhino and Carrion Crow.

We ended the evening trip in Bhimakali temple in time for the evening prayer. We had to remove stockings, shoes and backpack before entering. There were so many people that we hardly couldn't get into the little room where the goddess statue (an reincarnation of Kali) sat under a big silver umbrella. The temple is beautiful built in traditional stile alternating wood and stones due to stability for earthquakes and with the upper floors bigger than the lower. Back at the hotel we enjoyed a bottle of local apple wine.



18-9-2008. Day 6. Sarahan to Mastrang Camp between Sangla and Chitkul (3190m)

Started the day walking to a pheasanery where they had a breeding plan for the Tragopan. We saw 5 Tragopan chicks.

After breakfast, which we enjoyed on our balcony, we drove further east. There is constantly someone working on the roads. During rainy periods rocks are coming down from above and must be removed. The bigger rocks even damage the roads. The road is narrow, the car drive close to the edge and there is often no fence before a vertical drop 4-500m down to the river. Quite scaring at the beginning, but one gets used to it. We eat Samosas and drank chai in a little roadside restaurant between Wangtu and Karcham. In Karcham we turned off from the main road towards Sangla. This road was even narrower and also here with a vertical drop on several hundred meters down to the river. The valleys are everywhere so narrow that there is no space for settlement at the bottom. Instead the houses and fields are placed at the mountain sides. Some places have mountain lifts to transport goods (and even people) up and down from the houses and fields to the roads. At this time of year it was apples which were transported to the markets by completely overloaded trucks, which then slowly fights its way on the narrow bumpy roads.

Overnight in Mastrang tent camp about 4km from Chitkul. When we got out of the car we were welcomed by a Himalyan Griffon and a Bearded Vulture.

Unfortunately we had an accident with our telescope which fall down on the rocks and smashed the focusing to an unusable state, damned. We went for a short walk around the camp, with a little rain starting. At this stage we didn't know the problems this rain should cause us later.



19-9-2008. Day 7. Rest day Mastrang Camp (3190m)

During the night we heard the rain on the tent and it rained still in the morning. The mountain tops around us are covered in snow. It must have been cold tonight the snow is nearly right down here to the tents, but the snow falling now is melting again. Some other guests from southern India are quite excited about seeing snow.

Due to the rain we changed the planned walking to Chitkul to drive there with the jeep. But we didn't get far before we were stopped of rocks falling from above onto the road. We were afraid we couldn't get back if more rocks fell down during the rain and would block the road. Instead we walked little around and birded in the rain, and sometimes snow. Afternoon was spend reading in our cosy tents.

Today's birdlist: Bearded Vulture, Himalayan Griffon, Rock Bunting, White Wagtail, Black Redstart, Yellow Breasted Greenfinch, Stonechat, Large Billed Crow, Red Fronted Serin, Slaty Blue Flycatcher, Snow Pigeon and Rosy Pipit.

20-9-2008. Day 8. Non planned stay at Sangla (2680m)

We had been informed by phone that there could be a problem getting back to main road 22 due to fallen rocks, but the road would maybe be opened in the afternoon if the rain stopped. So we enjoyed the morning birding around the camp in both rain and sun. We had a late start driving on. We didn't get far out of Sangla before the road was blocked by big rocks which had fallen onto it. Ankit and Avneesh tried to walk a little further to see how bad the problem was. It was bad, rocks had fallen everywhere and were still falling. They nearly got killed by a rock slide which suddenly started above them, but escaped with only Ankit getting some minor injuries. A bus and two cars was trapped further down between two rockslides, in the binoculars we could see the windows on the bus were smashed. So that was it, we drove back to Sangla and found a hotel room for the night. It wasn't easy because everyone was trapped there.

Today's birdlist: Rose Finch, Himalayan Griffon and House Sparrow were what I have noted.

In the afternoon we had a walk up to old Sangla and fort Kamru. Fort and temple was from 1200 and as usual we had to remove all leather before entering the temple.

21-9-2008. Day 9. Non planned stay at Sangla (2680m)

Had some early morning tea/coffee at 6,30. It has been raining all night but looked better now. So we did a morning birding walk around the hill side between apple orchards with Ankit.

Bird list: Green backed Tit, Himalayan Bulbul, Hoopoe, Goldfinch, Rock Bunting, Grey Bushchat, Oriental White Eye, Blyths leaf Warbler, Black Redstart, Grey Wagtail, White Wagtail, Greenish Warbler, Striked Laughing Thrush, Large Billed Crow and Rosy Pipit.

The weather cleared up later and it was nice to get some close dry again. We went to see if the road had been cleared. Shortly after Sangla a rock maybe 2x2m had fallen down, first smashed half the road away and fallen into a house further down, fortunately nobody were injured. So back to the hotel again for another night.



22-9-2008. Day 10. None planned stay at Sangla and on to a rest house near Sarahan (1998m)

It was raining when we woke up for our morning birding so we postponed it and slept until breakfast. It cleared up later and we had a walk through the village along the river. It was really

charming. We went in to see a woman weaving shawls. We went down to the river and among others saw our first water redstarts.

Birdlist: White capped Redstart, Plumbeous water Redstart, Bonelli Eagle, Booted Eagle, Himalayan Griffon, Shikra, White Wagtail, Yellow Wagtail, Grey Wagtail, Hoopoe, Black Redstart, Goldfinch, Three pipit, Upland Pipit and Pink browed Rosefinch.

At midday the weather had cleared up and Avneesh came and told us to pack up quickly. The road was open and it was advisable to try to get back to the main road at least. We hurried out, bought some bananas, biscuits and water for lunch and left Sangla. We drove down the mountain road from Sangla among fallen rocks as fast as it was safe. On the way we past 2 cows which had been killed from fallen rocks. Well down we found that the main road was not any better. Here we also had to fight with mud. And of course we got stuck at a place. Some workers helped pushing us out and well enough as rocks were falling around us. No one got hurt, not either the jeep.

A bridge on the main road had collapsed. We were told that it would take a month before it got repaired. Fortunately smaller cars were allowed to use some small roads owned by the electricity company. Only, that road was also hit by rock slides and wasn't cleared either. So a lot of cars, busses and trucks were stuck. Maybe it would be cleared later, maybe tomorrow we were told. So we went back to a rest house close to Sarahan where Ankit had succeeded in booking rooms for the night. On the way we had nice dinner in a restaurant. Sitting outside and looking at the lights on the mountain sides was a peaceful contrast to the tension from the day. At the rest house we had a much needed shower and enjoyed the singing from a party also staying in the rest house.

23-9-2008. Day 11. A rest house near Sarahan to Forest rest house in Sai Ropa (1380m)

Up at 6,00 for early morning birding along the road. Beautiful view to the snow covered mountains on the other side of the valley. The weather looks nice with a few showers.

Birdlist: Rufous Sibia, Black Bulbul, Himalayan Bulbul, Streaked Laughingthrush, Chestnut crowned Laughingthrush, Ashy Drongo, Verditer Flycatcher, Scaly bellied Woodpecker, Russet Sparrow, Long tailed Minivet, Grey Treepie, Tree Pipit, Grey Bushchat, Booted Eagle and Pink browed Rosefinch.

Went on at 11 o'clock and got around the damaged bridge. But again we got out in a long stretch of mud which had slid down from the mountains, but this time we managed without help.

Everywhere we had to drive around rocks, trees and holes in the road. Sometimes it looked like we only had 2 of the wheels on the road. Had lunch in a restaurant in a small town called Lohri. I lost my appetite when I saw the waiter grapping the rice in the pot with he's hands, but of course he's hands might have been cleaner than a spoon. We stopped again further up at a rest house in Anni, but it was occupied of government officials who were there to see the damage to the roads. While we were waiting to find out about the road further I saw and photographed a Crimson Sunbird. We also saw Bearded Vulture and Himalayan Griffon.

We finally decided to try to get over Jaori Pass (3100m) and into Kulu valley. It was a drive in darkness which I think was a shame because it looked very beautiful. We succeeded to get over and had some tea at the top (again in the rain). On the way down we bought some food which we had prepared in the rest house in Sai Ropa. So the day ended again with some nice Indian food eaten relaxed in Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP) rest house. We even had beer with the food.



24-9-2008. Day 12. Rest day in GHNP Forest rest house in Sai Ropa (1380m)

Early morning tea at 6,00 and then birding along the road in beautiful clear weather.

Birdlist: Crested Kingfisher, White Redstart, Plumbeous Water Redstart, Brown Dipper, Grey Wagtail, Yellow Wagtail, Grey hooded Warbler, Humes leaf Warbler, Scaly breasted Munia, Grey Bushchat, Common Myna, Yellow billed Blue Magpie, White Wagtail, Himalayan Swiflet, Large billed Crow, Common Kestrel, Himalayan Griffon, Bearded Vulture, Golden Eagle, Great Tit, Crimson Sunbird. Two top excitement that morning was Crested Kingfisher and Beaded Vulture+Himalayan Griffon+Golden Eagle viewed at same time in the binoculars.

After breakfast we went down to the river Tirthan and sat enjoying the weather and crystal clear view to the high Himalayas.

At 4 o'clock we had a walk up to a small village Deuli. Of new species we saw: White throated Fantail, Spotted Forktail, Striated Prinia, Grey headed Canary Flycatcher, Grey Treepie, Oriental Whiteeye.

25-9-2008. Day 13. Rest day in GHNP Forest rest house in Sai Ropa (1380m)

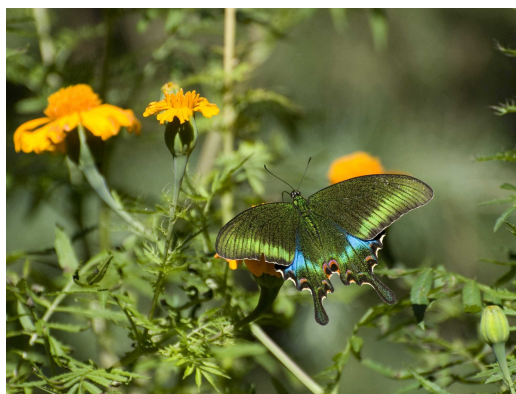
Morning birding along a small stream to a waterfall.

We had difficulty in getting across the stream due to the last days rain. On a tree the locals had brought offerings to the gods. This consisted in various items like an old silencer from a car, a metal tea mug etc. nailed onto a tree.

Of interesting species we saw: Speckled Piculet, Scaly bellied Woodpecker and Brown fronted Woodpecker.

In the afternoon we went to a hindu festival for some local gods in Goshaini. It was very interesting to see the locals bringing their gods in from other villages to meet the god from Goshaini. They were carried in and presented to the other gods in various ways. All under music from drums and horns. After the gods were placed in their position on the marked place people were celebrating and dancing.

An evening walk to Deuli gave a Little Forktail.



26-9-2008. Day 14. Sai Ropa to Rolla (2100m)

This was the day where our trek across GHNP was to begin. We started with the short drive to Goshaini where the driveable road ends. From there we started walking. Due to all the arrangements not all the porters were ready, but one of them started together with us. Later Ankits brother Panki, who were going to be our guide on the trek, caught up with us. And at lunch time the rest joined us so we now were the final group of 7 porters, Panki and ourselves. Lunch were taken at the gate of the national park in company of Water Redstarts and Brown Dippers. Before our goal at Rolla we passed an old man who was the only person still to live within the national park.

To days birdlist: Great Barbet, Striated Prinia, Verditer Flycatcher, Grey Wagtail, White Wagtail, Blue rock Thrush, Oriental Turtle Dove, Himalayan Swiflet, Asian brown Flycatcher, Plombous water Redstart, Brown Dipper, White copper Redstart, Green backed Tit and Grey headed Canary Flycatcher.

On the other side of the river was a land slide where we saw some Langur monkeys foraging.

Camping in tents close to the 2 huts at Rolla. In the evening we had the introduction round so we all knew who we were.

27-9-2008. Day 15. Rolla to Shilt (2925m)

Today we were warned about a short but steep climb and steep it was. Apart from being steep, the vegetation was high, thorny and the path not really existing. I don't know how our guide found the way. Our goal was Shilt, a meadow higher up the mountains. One of the attractions there was that Tragopans were breeding there, but of course we were out of season. At a place where we came out of the forest we had a Bearded Vulture circling at a distance where binoculars wasn't needed, a fantastic sight. Once we came out on the meadow the view was all the climbing worth.



In the afternoon we walked a little higher to a big rock where we sat and enjoyed the birds and the view.

Today's birdlist: Chestnut crowned Laughingthrush, Green backed Tit, Himalayan Griffon, Bearded Vulture, common Raven, Indian Nutcracker, Himalayan an Eagle Owl calling Monal, Greenish Warbler, Golden Eagle, Oriental Turtledove.

During the dinner which, we enjoyed at the evening fire, we heard an Eagle owl calling.

28-9-2008. Day 16. Rest day Shilt (2925m)

Today was planned as a rest day due to enhance our chances to see a Tragopan. This time of the year the Tragopan is mainly calling when the light comes up so we started 4 in the morning in total darkness. After half an hour's walk we sat down at a place our guides had heard it the previous evening. We did hear it calling twice, but it never showed up. At some stage in the darkness we caught a glimpse of a Bush Baby and later when the sun was up a young Ibex.

Rested during the middle of the day, but we had to choose as it was either cold in the shadow or hot in the sun.

On an evening walk we enjoyed the view of 2 Himalayan Monals walking peacefully around foraging on a rock shelf a little lower than we were. I think we enjoyed the view of this beautiful bird for more than half an hour. On the way back in the dusk we heard a Collared Owlet calling.

29-9-2008. Day 17. Shilt to Ghumtarao (3410m)

We started early this morning for having a last chance to see a Tragopan on the way from Shilt. Again we didn't succeed seeing it, but heard it. We had to walk quite a bit down before climbing steep up again in the high vegetation. Once we got higher up and into the pine forest, the vegetation got easier to walk in. On the way we saw one of our target birds, a Scaly breasted Wren Babler sneaking around under the bushes. We also had, Common Raven, Rufous vented Tit and many Monals flying out from the trees.

It took 5 hours to get up to the top at 3690m where we rested a while and saw Snow Pigeon, Bearded Vulture, Himalayan Griffon and Golden Eagle. Walking on from the top I felt dizzy and at lunch I realized I had lost my appetite, maybe due to the altitude or maybe because the plants send a strong smell in the warm sunshine.

After lunch I got the impression that we were close to Ghumtarao, but it still took 2-3 hours of walking, mostly traversing along an edge. When we finally reach Ghumtarao I felt completely exhausted, but was brought back to "life" by the soup the cook prepared for us.

In the evening we again heard an Eagle Owl calling.

30-9-2008. Day 18. Ghumtarao to Dehl (3420m)

Woke up to another cloudless morning. Rime made the tents stiff and the view to surrounding mountains indescribable. We started walking at 7,30, a little late due to we wanted the sun to melt the rim from the path. We climbed up to a pass on 3825m, on the way we saw Rufous breasted Accentor, Grey sided Bush Warbler and a flock of Snow Pigeons. From the pass we were supposed to traverse at about the same height to another pass from where there was an easy walk to Dehl. Due to a land slide which made the traverse dangerous we had to walk down to 3500m again and then up to a to a pass on 3840m. It doesn't sound of much, but at that altitude it's takes a lot of energy to walk up. Today it was Gitte's turn to feel completely exhausted, but it helped with two walking sticks. The porters were very helpful, one of them ran down the mountain again, after carrying he's own backpack up, he came down to carry our backpacks up.

Once we got up to the pass we didn't have much time for resting. Clouds were creeping up and we were afraid that new rain would start more landslides. But the clouds disappeared and we had a very pleasant walk the rest of the way to Dehl. For once it wasn't steep up or down, but on a level meadow. At a place the two first porters thought they saw a leopard. We weren't able to get up to them fast enough to see what it was. We thought it's more likely that it was a bear, seen at a distance, because there were a lot of tracks of bears around.

We finally got to Dehl at 5,30 everybody was tired from a long day trekking. First had the porters an important job to do. They prepared some food for sacrifice to the gods, they felt it was necessary to thank for everybody got safe over the mountains and specially the porters who crossed the land slide and gave us the information that it was too dangerous.

Today's bird list gave two new species; Common Buzzard and a Himalayan Snowcock right up in the pass.

1-10-2008. Day 19. Rest day Dehl (3420m)

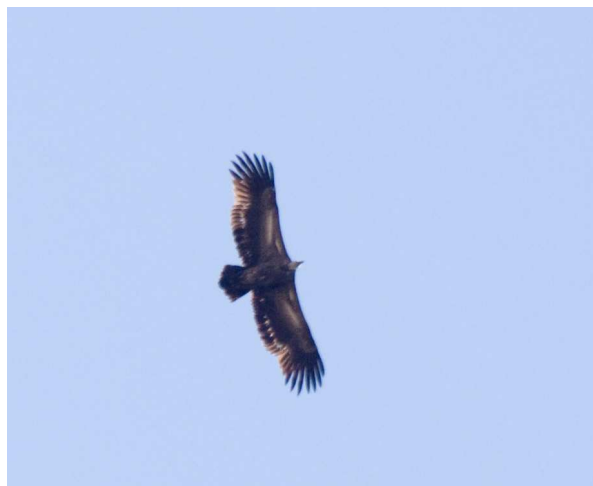
Gitte had got a thorn in her hand during our climbs in the high vegetation. The hand had got infected and had to be taken care of during the night. Woke up at 6 o'clock for morning birding. The tent was stiff of frost so it was nice with a hot cup of tea with sugar (it's hard to make Indians believe that I drink tea without sugar).

We sat at an edge of a deep gorge enjoying the sun rising and warming everything up. From there we could see no less than seven mountain ranges in the distance. Monals were flying from one side of the gorge to the other under us.

Birdlist: Himalayan Monal, Orange flanked Bush Robin, Tree Pipit, Upland Pipit, Rufous vented Tit, Common Raven, Common Buzzard, Hobby, Himalayan Swiflet, Large billed Crow, Snow Pigeon, Himalayan Griffon and Oriental Turtle Dove.

In the afternoon we walked a little back the path from yesterday to the area where we had seen track from a bear, but didn't see anything. On the way back we meet Panki and two porters. They had found a rare medical herb which should be good for your memory.

The afternoon gave three new species: Spot winged Tit, Chestnut tailed Minla and Himalayan Woodpecker.



2-10-2008. Day 20. Dehl to Shakti (2240m)

Started 7 o'clock on porridge and tea. Some part we walk between giant pine trees. Today we had to walk mostly down, but at a place we had to climb quite a bit up again for getting over a ridge. Especially one river ravine had a rich birdlife. At a place we were lucky to see another target bird in the scrub a Chestnut bellied Tessia, we also saw the Scaly breasted Wren Warbler again and later a Variegated Laughing Thrush were calling from a tree.

The porters found a tree full of Jammu berries. They climbed high up to get some and also brought some for us to taste. Very refreshing. We also found a yew tree full of berries which should be good protecting for cancer. More familiar was walnut trees

where we picked a lot both for dinner and just for eating. We stay in a room in Trekkers Hut in Shakti. Here was a little problem with fresh food because no supply has been able to come up in the valley. The mules couldn't get past some landslides.

Bird list from the day: Chestnut bellied Tessia, Scaly breasted Wren Warbler, Blue whistling Thrush, Plumbeous Water Redstart, Brown Dipper, Golden Eagle, Himalayan Griffon, Green headed Canary Flycatcher, Greenish Warbler and Yellow bellied Fantail.



3-10-2008. Day 21. Shakti to Lapah (2227m)

We birded a little before breakfast. Yellow breasted Fantail and Long tailed Minivet must be migrating south today, we found them in large numbers.

The trek today followed the river down the valley, sometimes very high above the river sometimes beside it. Every corner gave a new beautiful view. At a place we crossed the river and soon started climbing up the Lapah. It took a couple of hours before we got up to the charming village with many old houses and a temple being built. On the way up we wondered about people whistling loudly from one hill to another and were told that it was locals warning about us. We could be police and they could be working with their cannabis plants!

We stayed in the rest house and had brought hot water in the bathroom for washing, what a luxury. Dinner were made with the help of the villagers, they helped preparing our walnuts. Later someone came with milk. You don't pay for milk here, the gods forbid selling milk. It has to be given away. Today's bird list: Yellow breasted Fantail, Long tailed Minivet, Blue whistling Thrush, White capped Redstart, Brown Dipper, Little Forktail, Green backed Tit, Rufous vented Tit, Spot winged Tit, Great Tit, Blyth's leaf Warbler, Bar tailed Treecreeper, Great Barbet, Himalayan Barbet, Streaked Laughing Thrush, Grey Bushchat and Oriental Whiteeye.

4-10-2008. Day 22. Lapah to Shangarh (2349m)

Birded in the morning from 6 to 9: Scalybellied Woodpecker, Russet Sparrow, Green backed Tit, Rufous vented Tit, Streaked laughing Thrush, Grey Bushchat, Asian brown Flycatcher, Yellow breasted Greenfinch, Rufous Sibia, Greenish Warbler, Whiskered Yuhina, Grey hooded Warbler, Common Myna, Yellow bellied Fantail, Upland Pipit and Tree Pipit.

We started walking around 10 o'clock and walked in the heights on the hill side so we could see down the valley. At lunch we could see our goal Shangarh. But we didn't get there before after 5 because we had to walk into another valley and out on the other side. At the end we had a bit of climbing too. On the way we added: Common Raven, Long tailed Minivet, Great Barbet, Asian

House Martin, Indian Nutcracker, White tailed Nuthatch, Yellow billed blue Magpie and Oriental Turtledove to today's bird list.

In this place we had the first meat since we started the trek. In the whole area meat is forbidden by the gods, including eggs. But here the gods are more aggressive; they demand more offerings so meat is allowed.

5-10-2008. Day 23. Rest day Shangarh (2349m)

Gitte has got 3 bad infected wounds on her hands now, so she was not well at all. Most of the day is spend in a chair on the terrace. During the morning we are having the wounds cleaned and given some antibiotic which we get from a farm house close by. In the afternoon we are guided through a plantation with local medical herbs. A project which in the future should give some income to the local people. Later we are invited for tea in the farm house.

Bird list: Long tailed Minivet, Oriental turtle Dove, Booted Eagle, Yellow billed blue Magpie, Grey hooded Warbler, Eurasian Woodcock and White cheeked Nuthatch.



6-10-2008. Day 24. Shangarh to Neuli(1500m) and by jeep to Kullu

A bird party in the vegetation made the morning birding in Shangarh a pleasant farewell to the mountain birds: Spot winged Tit, Green crowned Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Black throated Bushtit and Rufous napped Tit.

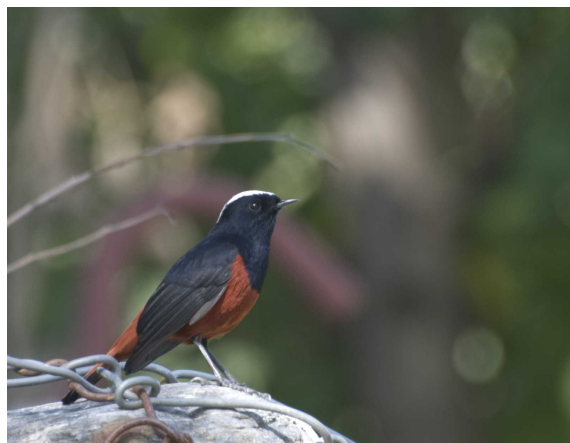
Thunder and rain, the only rain we had on the whole trek, made the last trek down to Neuli muddy and birding difficult. The only species we recorded were Himalayan Bulbul and Rufous Sepia.

From Neuli we went in a jeep taxi to Larji where we had to say goodbye to the porters, they were going home to Goushani on a different road than ours to Kullu. It had been very pleasant group of people, always smiling, happy and helpful not to forget. We meet Ankit again in Larji. We went with him and Panki to Kullu where we were accommodated in a room with their uncle and aunt. In the evening we went to a doctor for having he's view on Gitte's infected hands.

7 and 8-10-2008. Kullu (1093m)

The house we stayed in was right beside the river and gave some good birding: Long tailed Shrike, Yellow bellied blue Magpie, Great Tit, Common Myna, Grey hooded Warbler, Rufous fronted Prinia, Black Kite, Himalayan Griffon, Plombous water Redstart, White capped Redstart, Blue whistling Thrush, Grey Bushchat and Grey headed canary Flycatcher.

The days were spending resting, buying souvenirs and a tour to Manali. Manali is an old capital with a palace on top of a hill with a beautiful view over mountain and Kullu valley. We eat our lunch there in company with a Great Barbet.



9-10-2008 Flew out of Kullu in the morning. We then had 14 hours in Delhi before our plane to Zurich and Copenhagen where we arrived next morning.

Birdlist:

English name	Latin name	Danish name	Notat
Little cormorant	Phalacrocorax niger	Javaskarv	On the road from Delhi
Cattle Egret	Bulbicus ibis	Kohejre	On the road from Delhi
Indian pond heron	Ardeola grayii	Rishejre	On the road from Delhi
Booted Eagle	Hieraaetus pennatus	Dværgørn	
Golden Eagle	Aquila chrysaetos	Kongeørn	Fairly common
Black Kite	Milvus migrans	Sort Glente	Very common except at higher altitudes
Common Buzzard	Buteo buteo	Musvåge	
Bearded vulture	Gypaetus barbatus	Lammegrib	Fairly common in higher altitudes
Himalayan griffon	Gyps himalayensis	Himalayagrib	Common
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus	Vandrefalk	
Common Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus	Tårnfalk	
Eurasian Hobby	Falco subbuteo	Lærkefalk	
Black frankolin	Francolinus francolinus	Sort frankolin	
Indian peafowl	Pavo cristatus	Påfugl	
Kalij pheasant	Lophura leucomelanos	Kalijfasan	
Himalayan monal	Lophophorus impejanus	Glansfasan	Fairly common in high altitudes
Himalayan snowcock	Tetraogallus himalayensis	Himalayakongehøne	
Black-winged Stilt	Himantopus himantopus	Stytløber	On the road from Delhi
Eurasian Woodcock	Scolopax rusticola	Skovsneppe	
Snow pigeon	Columba leuconota	Snedue	Higher altitudes
Oriental Turtle Dove	Streptopelia orientalis	Østlig Turteldue	Common
Slatyheaded parakeet	Psittacula himalayana	Skifferhoved ædelparakit	Higher altitudes
Roseringed parakeet	Psittacula krameri	Alexanderparakit	
Plum headed parakeet	Psittacula cyanocephala	Blommehoved Ædelparakit	
Alexandrine parakeet	Psittacula eupatria	Stor Alexanderparakit	On the road from Delhi
Asian koel	Eudynamis scolopacea	Koel	On the road from Delhi
Jacobin cuckoo	Clamator jacobinus	Jacobinergøg	On the road from Delhi - Chick seen being feed by Jungle Babler
Collared owlet	Glaucidium brodiei	Halsbåndsspurveugle	Heard
Rock Eagleowl	Bubo bengalensis	Bengalhornugle	Heard
Himalayan swiftlet	Aerodramus brevirostris	Himalayasalangan	Migrating south in large numbers
Green bee-eater	Merops orientalis	Lille grøn Biæder	
Indian roller	Coracias benghalensis	Blåkronet Ellekrage	
Crested kingfisher	Megaceryle lugubris	Toppet stødfisker	At Sai Ropa
White throated kingfisher	Halcyon smyrnensis	Smyrnaisfugl	On the road from Delhi
Hoopoe	Upupa epops	Hærfugl	
Great barbet	Megalaima virens	Himalaya skægfulg	
Brownfronted woodpecker	Dendrocopos auriceps	Brunpandet flagspætte	Common
Scalybellied woodpecker	Picus squamatus	Skælbuget grønspætte	Common
Speckled piculet	Picumnus innominatus	Plettet dværgspætte	Close to Sai Ropa
Himalayan woodpecker	Dendrocopus himalayensis	Himalaya flagspætte	At higher altitudes

Streak throated swallow	Petrochelidon fluvicola	Indisk klippesvale	On the road from Delhi
Asian house martin	Delichon dasypus	Asiatisk bysval	
Red-rumped Swallow	Cecropsis daurica	Rødrygget Sval	
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica	Landsval	
Upland pipit	Anthus sylvanus	Himalaya piber	
Rosy pipit	Anthus roseatus	Rosapiber	
Olive-backed Pipit	Anthus hudgsoni	Taigapiber	
Tree Pipit	Anthus trivialis	Skovpiber	
Grey Wagtail	Motacilla cinerea	Bjergvipstjert	
White/Pied Wagtail	Motacilla alba	Hvid Vipstjert	
Yellow Wagtail	Motacilla flava	Gul Vipstjert	
Brown dipper	Cinclus pallasii	Asiatisk vandstær	Fairly common in fast running water
Black bulbul	Hypsipetes leucocephalus	Sortbulbul	
Himalayan bulbul	Pycnonotus leucogenys	Hvidkindet bulbul	
Grey bushchat	Saxicola ferrea	Grå bynkefugl	Very common except at high altitudes
Long tailed shrike	Lanius schach	Langhalet Tornskade	
Winter Wren	Troglodytes troglodytes	Gærdesmutte	
Rufous breasted accentor	Prunella strophiaata	Brunbrystet jernspurv	
Grey hooded warbler	Phylloscopus xanthoschistos	Hvidbrynet sanger	
Rufous fronted prinia	Prinia buchanani	Indisk Prinia	
Blyths leaf warbler	Phylloscopus reguloides	Rhododendronløvsanger	
Chestnut headed tesia	Oligura castaneocoronata	Kastaniehoved tesia	
Grey sided bush warbler	Cettia brunnifrons	Gråsidet busksanger	
Hume's Leaf Warbler	Phylloscopus humei	Himalayasanger	
Greenish Warbler	Phylloscopus trochiloides	Lundsanger	
Green crowned warbler	Seicercus burkii	Gulbrillet sanger	
Common tailorbird	Orthotomus sutorius	Indisk Skrædderfugl	
Striated prinia	Prinia crinigera	Stribet prinia	
Blyths leaf warbler	Phylloscopus reguloides	Rhododendronløvsanger	
Asian paradise flycatcher	Terpsiphone paradisi	Asiatisk Paradismonark	
Yellow bellied fantail	Rhipidura hypoxantha	Gulbuget Viftehal	
Asian Brown Flycatcher	Muscicapa dauurica	Brun Fluesnapper	
Dark sided flycatcher	Muscicapa sibirica	Sibirsk fluesnapper	
Slaty blue flycatcher	Ficedula tricolor	Skifferblå fluesnapper	
Grey headed canary flycatcher	Culicicapa ceylonensis	Gråhoved Fluesnapper	
White throated fantail	Rhipidura albicollis	Hvidstrubet Viftehal	
Verditer flycatcher	Eumyias thalassina	Irfluesnapper	
White capped redstart	Chaimarrornis leucocephalus	Flodrødstjert	Common in rivers
Spotted forktail	Enicurus maculatus	Plettet kløfthale	
Black Redstart	Phoenicurus ochruros	Husrødstjert	
Red-flanked Bluetail	Tarsiger cyanurus	Blåstjert	Seen at Dehl High altitude
Stonechat	Saxicola torquata	Sortstrubet Bynkefugl	
Plumbeous water redstart	Rhyacornis fuliginosus	Vandrødstjert	Common in rivers
Indian blue robin	Luscinia brunnea	Himalayanattergal	

Little forktail	Enicurus scouleri	Lille kløfthale	
Crimson sunbird	Aethopyga siparaja	Karminsolflugl	
Streaked laughingthrush	Garrulax lineatus	Himalaya skadedrossel	
Variegated laughingthrush	Garrulax variegatus	Broget skadedrossel	
Blue Rock Thrush	Monticola solitarius	Blådressel	
Blue whistling thrush	Myophonus caeruleus	Blå Fløjtedrossel	
Chestnut crowned laughingthrush	Garrulax erythrocephalus	Gyldenvinget Skadedrossel	
Jungle babler	Turdoides striata	Larmedrossel	On the road from Delhi - Feeding a Pied cuckoo chick
Scaly breasted wren babler	Pnoepyga albiventer	Skæltimalie	Seen climbing up to Shilt and again going down from Dhel
Green backed tit	Parus monticolus	Grønrygget musvit	
Rufous vented tit	Periparus rubidiventris	Brunbugetmejse	
Black lored tit	Parus xanthogenys	Kongemejse	
Rufous naped tit	Periparus rufonuchalis	Sortbrystet mejse	
Black throated bushtit	Aegithalos concinnus	Rødkappet halemejse	
Great Tit	Parus major	Musvit	
Spot winged tit	Periparus melanolophus	Himalayamejse	
White tailed nuthatch	Sitta himalayensis	Himalaya spætmejse	
White checked nuthatch	Sitta leucopsis	Hvidkindet spætmejse	
Bar tailed treecreeper	Certhia himalayana	Himalaya træløber	
Ashy dongo	Dicrurus leucophaeus	Askedrongo	
Black drongo	Dicrurus macrocercus	Sort Drongo	
Rock Bunting	Emberiza cia	Klippeværting	
Yellow breasted greenfinch	Carduelis spinoides	Himalayagrønirsk	Common
Red fronted serin	Serinus pusillus	Rødpandet irisk	
Scaly breasted munia	Lonchura punctulata	Muskatfinke	
European Goldfinch	Carduelis carduelis	Stillits	
Pink browed rosefinch	Carpodacus rodochroa	Rødbrynet rosenfinke	
Common Rosefinch	Carpodacus erythrinus	Karmindompap	
Russet sparrow	Passer rutilans	Rødbrun spurv	
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus	Gråspurv	
Common Myna	Acridotheres tristis	Maina	
Jungle myna	Acridotheres fuscus	Brun maina	
Large billed crow	Corvus macrorhynchos	Stornæbbet Krage	Very common
Common Raven	Corvus corax	Ravn	
House crow	Corvus splendens	Huskrage	
Alpine Chough	Pyrrhocorax graculus	Alpeallike	1 seen in Sarahan
Indian nutcracker	Nucifraga caryocatactes multipunctata	Himalayanøddekrige	Common at 3000m
Grey treepie	Dendrocitta formosae	Grå træskade	
Red billed blue magpie	Urocissa erythrorhyncha	Rødnæbet kitta	
Yellow billed blue magpie	Urocissa flavirostris	Gulnæbet kitta	Common in apple orchards
Eurasian Jay	Garrulus glandarius	Skovskade	
Carion crow	Corvus corone	Sortkrage	

Whiskered yuhina	Yuhina flavicollis	Gulnakket yuhina	
Rufous sibia	Heterophasia capistrata	Sortkappet sibia	
Chestnut tailed minla	Minla strigula	Brunhalet Minla	
Oriental whiteeye	Zosterops palpebrosus	Brillefugl	
Long Tailed Minivet	Pericrocotus ethologus	Langhalet Minivet	Migrating flocks in high altitudes