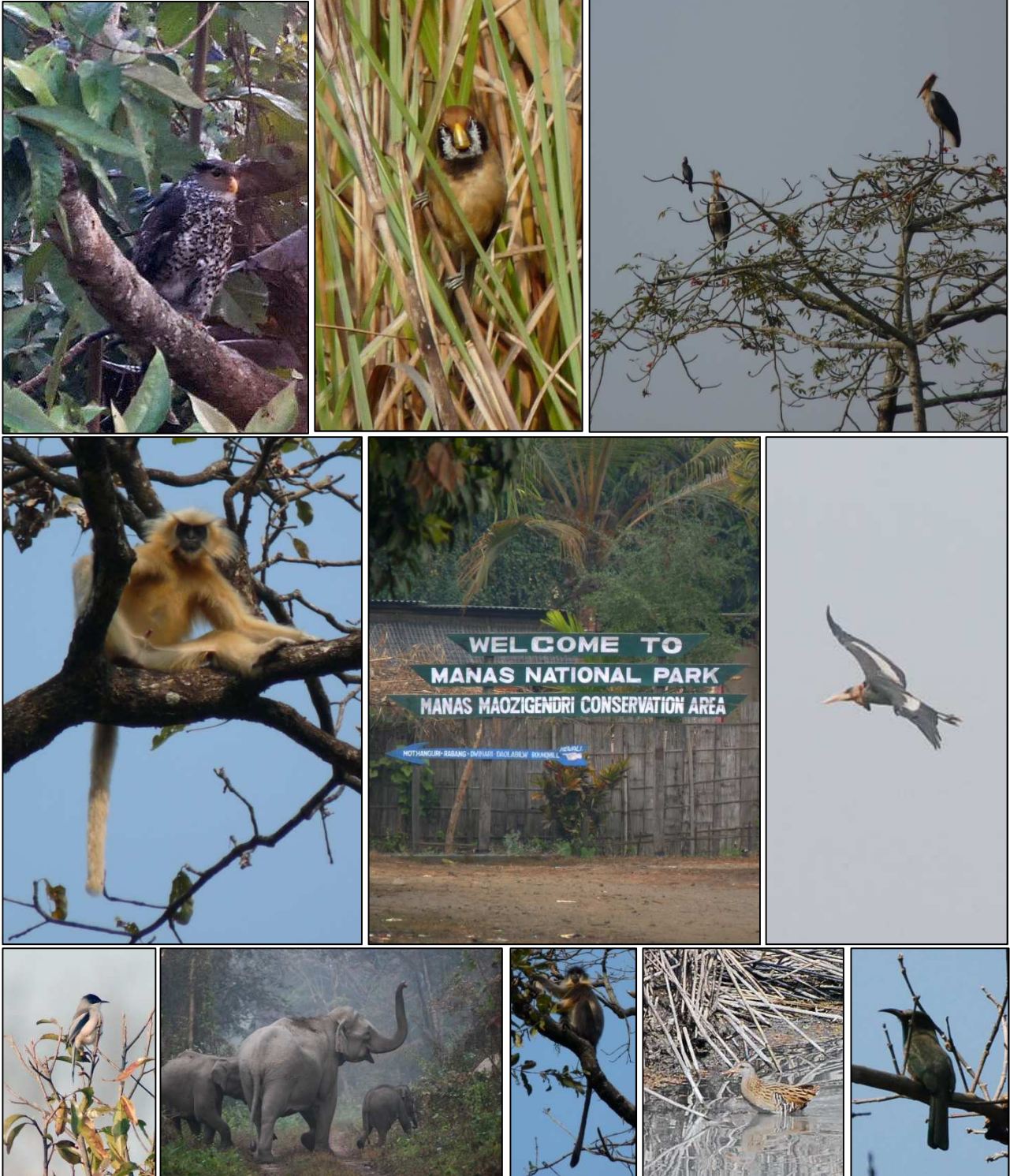


MANAS NATIONAL PARK (Assam) - January 2011

BIRDING & MAMMALING

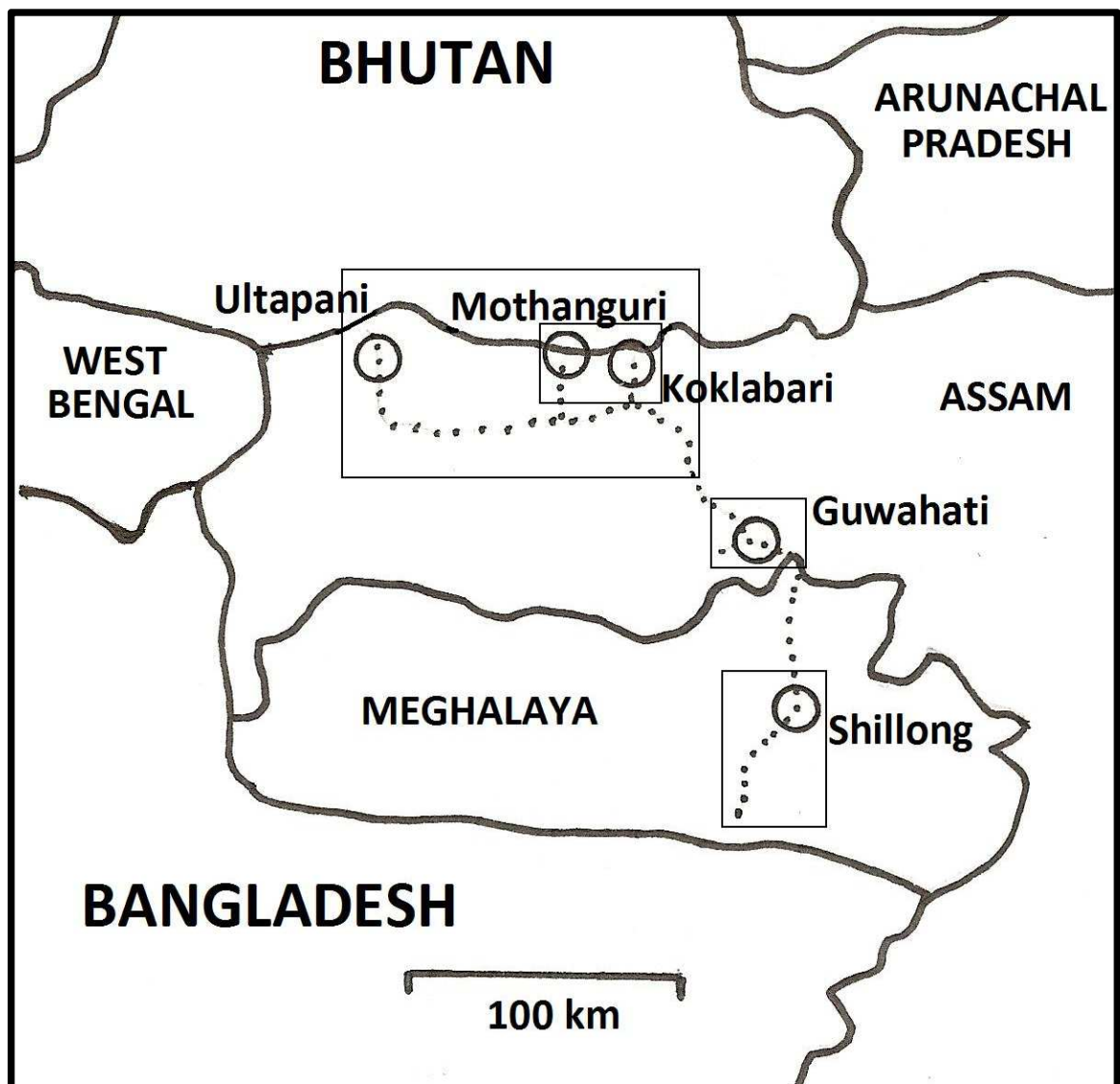
With additional notes from Khasi Hills (Meghalaya) and around Guwahati (Assam)



UFFE GJØL SØRENSEN[©] & HANS JØRGEN BRUUN PEDERSEN[©]

ITINERARY

- 19/1 Early domestic flight Delhi directly to Guwahati. 09.00-13.30 drive Guwahati to Koklabari. 13.30-15.00 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari). 15.00-17.30 Seed farm (Koklabari).
- 20/1 06.00-13.50 drive to grassland, 13.50-15.00 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 15-17.30 drive to Bhutan border, 16.30-16.45 walk in Bhutan.
- 21/1 06.15-08.45 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 09.00-13.45 drive to Mothanguri, 13.45-18.00 around Mothanguri.
- 22/1 06.00-11.00 drive to grassland near Uchlia, 11.00-13.30 Mothanguri, 13.30-15.10 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 15.10-16.40 elephant ride near Bansbari, 16.40-19.30 drive to Mothanguri (after dark).
- 23/1 05.40-07.00 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 07.00-07.15 Bansbari, 07.15-12.00 drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 12.00-17.30 Ultapani, 17.30-21.15 drive (after dark) Ultapani to Koklabari.
- 24/1 06.15-09.30 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), drive to Guwahati 09.30-14.00, 10.30-11.00 stop E of Singimari village (app. 10 km N of bridge), 14.00-17.30 drive to Shillong.
- 25/1 Daybreak and early morning at Mawjrong View Point. Midday around Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji). Late afternoon Shillong Hills.
- 26/1 09.30-10.00 Deepor Beel, 10.15-10.25 Guwahati dump, 10.25-10.45 drive to Airport. Domestic flight 13.00-17.00 Guwahati to Delhi (with stopover in Bhagalpur (Bihar)).



INTRODUCTION

This report deals with notes on birds and mammals (and a few reptiles & one amphibian) from a visit to Assam and Meghalaya during the period 19-26/1 2011.

Manas National Park was the main goal of this visit – this legendary park has been high on our priority list of areas that we wanted to see, ever since our first visit to India 25 years ago. Finally this was possible, and we were not disappointed. Manas NP is a fabulous area with a mixture of grassland and forest, which is second to none. Due to tribal conflicts Manas NP has been out of reach for a number of years. This has now changed, and a number of community-based projects are rapidly improving the opportunities for visits to the area. We stayed at Manas Jungle Lodge owned by the Manas Maozigendri Ecotourism Society. Recent information about birding and mammaling in Manas is scarce, but we improvised during our field days in good collaboration with the staff at Manas Jungle Lodge.

A number of the top-mammals were seen: Tiger, Indian One-horned Rhino, Asian Elephant (daily), Golden Langur, Capped Langur and Wild Buffalo. We tried to find the Pygmy Hog and Hispid Hare but without success. Grass was high everywhere during our visit, and the rest of Manas is dense forest. This makes mammal-spotting difficult. Besides, numbers of mammals are still quite low - but they are now recovering after the rebel years, where widespread poaching took place. For the time being Manas is not the place to expect large numbers of mammals – but whenever you find some, they are sure to be interesting.

Birding in Manas is excellent with many prolific species including mega-birds like the threatened Greater and Lesser Adjutant Storks, Swamp Francolin, Black-breasted Parrotbill and Finn's Weaver. In addition we very much enjoyed species like Spot-bellied Eagle Owl, Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Long-tailed & Silver-breasted Broadbills, White-tailed Blue Robin, Rufous-rumped Grassbird, Sultan Tit, Spot-winged Starling and many more.

Flying in and out of Guwahati, we also decided to make a brief visit to the nearby Khasi Hills – well knowing that is was not the optimal season and likely to give only an incomplete experience of this unique area. Indeed, birding proved difficult, and furthermore our brief visit was hampered by an upcoming general strike which we just managed to escape (see 'Practicalities'). But we did find the endemic Tawny-breasted Wren-babbler and moreover came across fine species like Crested Finchbill, Rusty-fronted Barwing, Grey Sibia, Assam Laughing Thrush and the 'Khasi Hills' Prinia – the distinct subspecies of Black-throated Prinia, which may well be a separate species.

Northeast India holds many other interesting places, but as our visit was limited to these few days we had to focus.

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Market day at Koklabari



New forest-guard post at grassland in the eastern part of Manas NP

PRACTICALITIES

Technical arrangement: We placed the responsibility for the overall technical arrangements in the safe hands of Wild World India (www.wildworldindia.com). Vikram Singh and Gavrav Jain did an excellent job, which completely fulfilled our expectations. Furthermore, when two unforeseen problems occurred, they handled these issues efficiently in collaboration with our guide Abidur Rahman: (1) Soon after returning to our hotel in Shillong after dark on 25/1 it became clear that a general strike in the entire state of Meghalaya had been declared for the next day (Republic Day). This meant that roadblocks could be expected, and we were likely to get stuck on this our final day where we had a scheduled late afternoon flight back to Delhi from Guwahati. Within 15 minutes we evacuated the hotel and started driving towards Guwahati. Fear of road blocks being established already during the evening proved to be unfounded – however we did have problems finding an open gas-station, where we could have the almost empty tank filled up. Before the evacuation as well as during the drive we were in close contact with WWI over the phone, and we had hardly left Shillong, before the booking of a new hotel in central Guwahati was confirmed. (2) Our late afternoon domestic flight to Delhi was advanced four hours, i.e. cutting out most of the available field-time on our final day. An improvised programme was decided with brief visits to the wetland Deepor Beel and the famous Guwahati dump with Greater Adjutants.

Accommodation: We were based at Manas Jungle Camp at Koklabari (the first two nights and the last night). It is a well-working community-based lodge with a few roomy bungalows (each having attached bathrooms with hot water)). There are mosquito-nets over each bed. The nice food is local and vegetarian. In addition we spent two nights at the Government Rest House at Mothanguri. It will be difficult to find any rest house with a better location: On a high bank overlooking the border river to Bhutan. We had an excellent room with attached bathroom. Hot water was provided in a bucket. Good vegetarian food was served in the local cantina. At both places, beer can be provided upon request – and it was Bhutanese! For the time being there is no accommodation around Ultapani (the west of the wider Manas area). Other options for accommodation are found around Bansbari. The cities of Shillong and Guwahati have plenty of hotels.

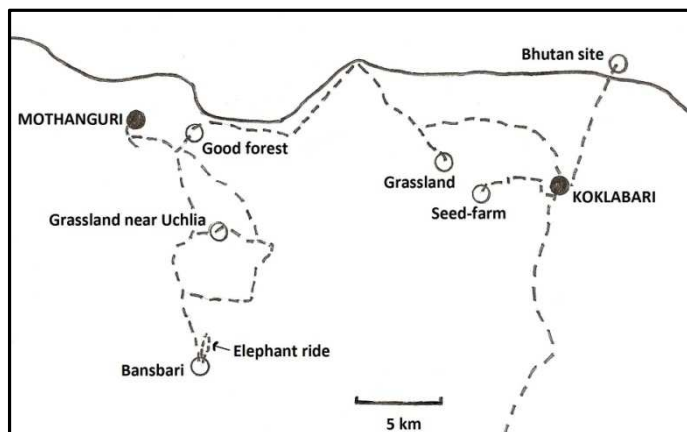
Season: Mid-winter is OK for a visit to Manas but March-April is better for a number of breeding birds, e.g. Bengal Florican. Mid-winter seems definitely too early for the Khasi Hills. Not only did we experience a bitterly cold morning, but bird activity was mainly restricted to early morning and late afternoon.

Transport: We had a pre-hired vehicle with driver for the transfer from the Guwahati airport to/from Manas and for the visit to Meghalaya. For all transport in Manas we used a small open jeep belonging to Manas Jungle Camp. For the longer drive outside Manas NP from Bansbari to Ultapani and back to Koklabari, the jeep was replaced by a small hardtop vehicle. There is only one bridge crossing the Brahmaputra River near Guwahati and it can be a serious bottleneck for the traffic. En route towards Manas early in the morning there were no problems but when we were heading for Khasi Hills and had to pass in at mid the day it took us three hours to cross the river.

MANAS NATIONAL PARK

If you are a dedicated birder, we cannot too strongly recommend that you are based at Manas Jungle Lodge. This lodge is located at a stream right at the Park boundary. Birding from the lodge and around it is excellent. Elephants can be heard from the lodge in the evening! The nearby Koklabari village has a lively market.

Birds are found everywhere, but we give a few comments to some of the areas visited within the core-area of Manas National Park (see map). *Seedfarm:* Farmland with many birds. It is a key-site for Bengal Florican, but the species is difficult to see in mid-winter, when the males are not displaying. Three species of harrier, Pied Harrier being the most numerous. *Grassland:* Here is a forestguard post with a watchtower. An (abandoned) colony of Finn's Weaver was visible from the post. The area is reached through very



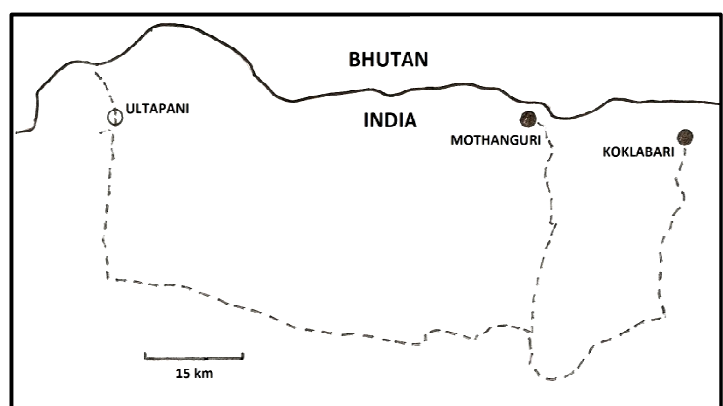
good forest. *Good forests*: Old forest with Long-tailed Broadbill, Greater Necklaced Laughing-Thush and a good chance to see Red-headed Trogon. *Grassland near Uchilia*: The road runs on a dike through dense grassland with ponds next to the road. Multiple waterbirds, incl. crakes, Yellow Bittern etc. Black-breasted Parrotbill and other skulking birds can be found.



Top-guide is Rustom Basumatary (3rd from right above). Rustom is brilliant in the field and knows Manas very well. He is dedicated and just as eager as yourself to find both birds and mammals. The Manager Haribilash Basumatary (4th from left) is also very helpful - he and the rest of the team did their utmost to fulfill our wishes. Visiting birders are still few and no doubt detailed knowledge of the area will improve in the years to come.

MANAS BIOSPHERE RESERVE

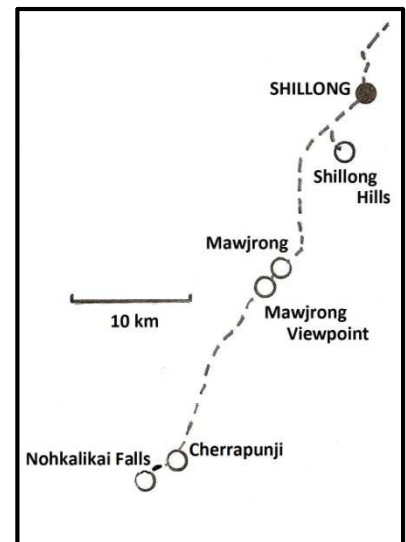
From the Mothanguri Rest House it is possible to see Golden Langurs across the border-river on the Bhutanese side – but pretty far away. We wished to have a better look, and Rustom & Haribilash quickly arranged a visit to the forests west of Manas National Park. These forests are part of the more than five times larger Manas Biosphere Reserve (in which Manas NP is the core-area). We visited another community-based project in the village of Ultapani. From Manas NP it is a long drive on the main road towards West Bengal (see map) to reach Ultapani. Already when we entered the forests and were approaching the village we had the first of six troops of Golden Langurs. Obviously the protection of this species has improved dramatically as the troops are rather habituated and allow you to have close look. One troop crossed from one side of the road to the other along branches right above us. The people from the Biodiversity Conservation Society in Utaalpani were exceptionally helpful, Baba Kumar Brahma Chaudhury (1st from left in front row on photo p. 6) and Khanga Bahadun Magan (2nd from left in front row). BKBC took us around the forest with more langur-troops and plenty of birds. Further we met with Nirmal Kanti Dey (1st from right in front row), who is actively working to have the local communities more involved in nature protection. Our guide, Rustom Basumatary, is 2nd from left in rear row.





KHASI HILLS (MEGHALAYA)

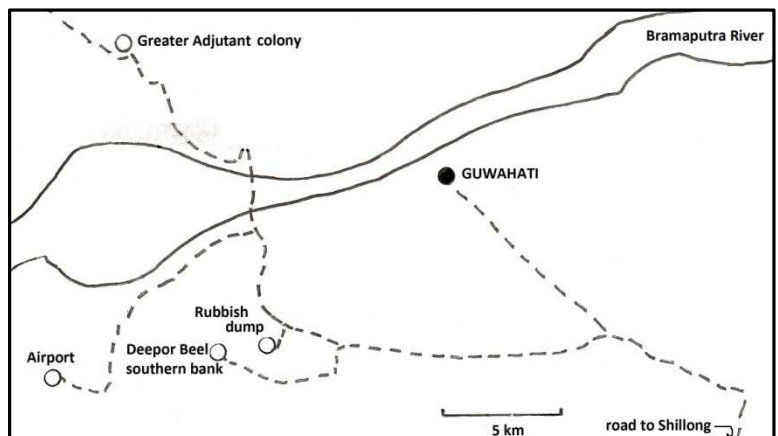
Khasi Hills is a fairly isolated highland – south of the Brahmaputra plains and north of Bangladesh. Reaching an altitude of almost 2000 m this highland makes an interesting ‘island’ – which is also shown by the presence of at least one endemic bird species (Tawny-breasted Wren-babbler). Unfortunately most of the original forest is gone, but it is possible to visit patches of good habitat still holding a number of the interesting species characteristic for the southern part of NE India. Like the tribal people here, the birds also have Burmese affinities. Our birding became restricted to only one full day (see details under ‘Practicalities’). We visited three classic sites: Mawjrong Viewpoint, Nohkalikai Falls and Shillong Hills.



GUWAHATI AREA

During our last few hours before checking in at the Airport we visited two sites near Guwahati: The wetland Deepor Beel and the famous rubbish dump holding one of the highest known concentrations of Greater Adjutant Stork.

During the visit to Khasi Hills and Guwahati, we were accompanied by the top-professional and dedicated birder, Abidur Rahman. Abid is based at Kaziranga, but is taking birders to all the top-sites in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. He has fabulously good ears and knows the calls of every local bird. He is always working on tape-recording the birds in NE India.





Final packing in Guwahati Airport - our driver (left) and Abid (right) watching

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Warm thanks to all mentioned above, who all contributed to the success of the visit - hope to see you all again. Additional warm thanks to Klaus Malling Olsen, Rune Bisp Christensen, Jon Lemberg, N.Naoroji (in litt.) and Marc Brazil (in litt.) for good discussions of various identification issues and to Lene Smith & Kaj Halberg for the proof-reading of the report.

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Khasi Hills Guide Abidur Rahman – e-mail: abid79rahman@gmail.com (allindiabirdingtours.com)

OBSERVATIONS

Notes of all observations are listed on the following pages. Mammals p. 8-9. Birds p. 10-24. Reptiles and amphibians p. 24-25.

During the trip we managed to get photos of 11 species of mammals and 52 species of birds. This is indicated by an * in front of the name of each of these species (or subspecies).

Photographers in this report:

Page number, T = Top, C = Centre, B = Bottom, L = Left, R = Right

Hans Jørgen: 1TL, 1CR, 1B (all), 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, 14L, 14R, 16, 19TR, 19B, 20, 24B, 25TR, 25BR, 26B.

Uffe: 1TC, 1TR, 1CL, 1CC, 3, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14C, 19TL, 19TC, 21, 24T, 24C, 25TL, 25R, 25BL, 26T

MAMMALS

1. ***Black Giant Squirrel** *Ratufa bicolor*. 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 3 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 2 Mothanguri.
2. **Himalayan Striped Squirrel** *Tamias maclellandi*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland. *Seen high in the canopy – clearly smaller than the Hoary-bellied Himalayan Squirrel and with stripes on the back.*
3. ***Hoary-bellied Himalayan Squirrel** *Callosciurus pygerythrus*. 19/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 10 drive to grassland, 22/1 1 Mothanguri, 3 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 1 chased by two Yellow-throated Martens but taken by a Changeable Hawk Eagle drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
4. **Small Indian Civet** *Viverricula indica*. 22/1 1 drive (after dark) Bansbari to Mothanguri.

5. **Tiger** *Panthera tigris*. 21/1 1 Mothanguri. *A magnificent experience. Late in the afternoon, we were having a rest on the terrace of the Mothanguri Rest House - enjoying the spectacular view across the border-river towards the hills of Himalaya on the Bhutanese side. A troop of Golden Langur climbed to the tree-tops on the Bhutanese side where also in a patch of riverine grassland the Bhutanese King was on a photo-safari on his favourite elephant – almost incognito with dedicated staff on only five additional elephants and swarms of security staff watching from the nearest forest edge. His target was a grandiose Wild Buffalo bull.*



i

During this event a male Sambar came running towards the forest - pretty close to the King and obviously alarmed with its tail standing right up. A scanning with our binoculars told us why: A tiger was slowly crossing the scene from the left – at first completely out in the open on the sandy dried-up riverbed. Our spontaneous loud yell: TIGER brought chaos to the otherwise quiet rest house – excited people coming from all directions. In the telescope the big cat was absolutely fantastic. After a while it changed direction and disappeared into dense grassland. Only once it came out again shortly but soon it was gone – a striped back vanishing in the vast grassland was the last sight. From our position the tiger was >500 m away – but when it was nearest to the King, the distance was probably less than 200 m. Unfortunately, the King and his staff were totally focused on the Wild Buffalo and never saw the Tiger. It would have been a little fun to see the reaction from the senior security officer – the one continuously walking next to King's elephant. Seeing a tiger in Manas is not easy at all – and to see it from the rest house is very exceptional. We became known as 'the people seeing tiger from the rest house'.



The scene of the tiger observation - only a few minutes later

Unidentified Mongoose *Herpestes* sp. 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.

6. **Crab-eating Mongoose** *Herpestes urva*. 21/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
7. ***Yellow-throated Marten** *Martes flavigula*. 23/1 2 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
8. **Unidentified Bat**. 25/1 1 Shillong Hills.
9. ***Golden Langur** *Trachypithecus geei*. 21/1 9 (in Bhutan) Mothanguri, 22/1 5 (in Bhutan) Mothanguri, 23/1 40+ (6 flocks) (see photo below and on front-page) Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
10. ***Capped Leaf Monkey** *Trachypithecus pileatus*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 21/1 15 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 4 Mothanguri, 22/1 3-4 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 5 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
11. **Rhesus Macaque** *Macaca mulatta*. 20/1 2 drive to Bhutan border.
12. **Wild Boar** *Sus scrofa*. 20/1 3 drive to grassland, 22/1 5 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 1 drive (after dark) Bansbari to Mothanguri, 23/1 5 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
13. **Gaur** *Bos gaurus*. Not seen, only tracks: 21/1 tracks drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.
14. ***Red Muntjac** *Muntiacus muntjac*. 20/1 1 heard drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 1 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 1 drive (after dark) Bansbari to Mothanguri.
15. ***Sambar Deer** *Cervus unicolor*. 20/1 tracks drive to grassland, 21/1 tracks drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 1 Mothanguri, 22/1 2 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 29 drive (after dark) Bansbari to Mothanguri.
16. ***Hog Deer** *Axis porcinus*. 22/1 20 around Bansbari, 23/1 3 around Bansbari.
17. ***Wild Water Buffalo** *Bubalus arnee*. 21/1 15 Mothanguri, 22/1 dung drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 15 Mothanguri, 1 drive (after dark) Bansbari to Mothanguri, 23/1 3 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
18. ***Greater Indian Rhinoceros** *Rhinoceros unicornis*. 23/1 1 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
19. ***Indian Elephant** *Elephas maximus indicus*. 19/1 heard Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 11 (see photo) drive to grassland, 21/1 1 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 7 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.

Possible records of other species: 22/1 grassland near Bansbari, pellets from a hare were bravely claimed to be from Hispid Hare *Caprolagus hispidus*. However, Indian Hare *Lepus nigricollis* could also be a possibility.



Asian Elephants W of Koklabari



Golden Langur near Ultapani

BIRDS - Systematic names follows the IOC-list (www.worldbirdnames.org)

1. **Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*. 19/1 1 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 26/1 38 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
2. **Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*. 21/1 12 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 50+ (breeding) drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
3. **Little Cormorant** *Microcarbo niger*. 19/1 10 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 22/1 10+ drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 24/1 10 drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 26/1 30+ Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
4. **Oriental Darter** *Anhinga melanogaster*. 19/1 1 drive Guwahati to Koklabari.
5. **Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*. 19/1 2 Seed farm (Koklabari), 24/1 1 drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 26/1 1 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
6. **Eastern Great Egret** *Ardea [albus] modesta*. 19/1 1 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 23/1 1 drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 26/1 75+ Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
7. **Intermediate Heron** *Egretta (Mesophoyx) intermedia*. 19/1 2 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 26/1 1+ Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
8. **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*. 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 23/1 1 drive Bansbari to Ultapani.
9. **Eastern Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus [ibis] coromandus*. 19/1 30 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 10 Seed farm (Koklabari), 23/1 9 Bansbari, 24/1 50+ drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 26/1 50+ Deepor Beel (Guwahati), 50+ dump near Guwahati airport.
10. **Indian Pond Heron** *Ardeola grayii*. 19/1 20 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 10 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 10 Seed farm (Koklabari), 21/1 5 drive to Bhutan border, 22/1 50 grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 2 Bansbari, 50+ drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 24/1 5 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 50+ drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 26/1 20 Deepor Beel (Guwahati), 10 dump near Guwahati airport.
11. **Yellow Bittern** *Ixobrychus sinensis*. 22/1 2 grassland near Uchlia.
12. **Cinnamon Bittern** *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*. 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
13. ***Asian Openbill** *Anastomus oscitans*. 19/1 30 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 23/1 1 drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 24/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 2 drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 26/1 150+ Deepor Beel (Guwahati).

14. **Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*. 22/1 2 grassland near Uchlia.

15. ***Lesser Adjutant** *Leptoptilos javanicus*. 19/1 6 (1 by nest, see photo) drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 11 Seed farm (Koklabari), 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 3 grassland near Uchlia, 24/1 1 E of Singimari village, 26/1 1 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).

16. ***Greater Adjutant** *Leptoptilos dubius*. 22/1 1 grassland near Uchlia, 24/1 25+ (14 nests) E of Singimari village, 26/1 29 Deepor Beel (Guwahati), 100+ dump near Guwahati airport. *The breeding site near Singimari is one of the known breeding sites, although exact location was reported as not known, except for being somewhere within Kamrup District (BirdLife International 2001). Approximate coordinates for the colony we saw: N26 13.168 E 91 37.987. We counted 14 nests – but this is undoubtedly a minimum figure. 6 nests contained 2 large pullus each just about to fledge. The 8+ empty nests could reflect vacated nests. 8-19 nests were reported from the site for the years 1989-1997.*



Juvenile Lesser Adjutant on a nest



Greater Adjutant circling over at low altitude

17. **Lesser Whistling-Duck** *Dendrocygna javanica*. 10/1 5 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 26/1 500+ Brahmaputra river near Guwahati airport.
18. **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*. 19/1 2 drive Guwahati to Koklabari.
19. **Gadwall** *Anas strepera*. 24/1 75+ drive Koklabari to Guwahati.
20. **Common Teal** *Anas crecca*. 22/1 4 drive grassland near Uchlia.
21. **Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*. 24/1 16 drive Koklabari to Guwahati.
22. **Goosander** *Mergus merganser*. 19/1 1 female drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 21/1 1 female Mothanguri, 22/1 1 female Mothanguri.
23. **Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*. 19/1 1 Seed farm (Koklabari), 21/1 1 Mothanguri.
24. **Black-shouldered Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*. 19/1 2 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 8 Seed farm (Koklabari).
25. ***Pariah Kite** *Milvus migrans govinda*. 19/1 10+ drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 24/1 15 drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 10 E of Singimari village, 26/1 at least a few present Deepor Beel & dump near Guwahati airport.
26. ***Black-eared Kite** *Milvus [migrans] lineatus*. 24/1 2 E of Singimari village, 26/1 140 Deepor Beel (Guwahati), 200+ dump near Guwahati airport. *Beautiful look at this wintering sp/spp from the Himalaya. Upper 3 photos of same adult bird. Lower row three juvenile birds.*



27. ***Himalayan Vulture** *Gyps himalayensis*. 24/1 1 E of Singimari village.
28. **Crested Serpent Eagle** *Spilornis cheela*. 20/1 4 drive to grassland, 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 4 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 2 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 2 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
29. **Western Marsh-harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*. 19/1 2 Seed farm (Koklabari).
30. **Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus* 19/1 3-4 female/immature Seed farm (Koklabari).
31. ***Pied Harrier** *Circus melanoleucos*. 19/1 5+ males 10+ females/immature Seed farm (Koklabari).
32. ***Crested Goshawk** *Accipiter trivirgatus*. 20/1 1 probably this species drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 1 + 2 in display drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 1 with nest-material drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
33. **Shikra** *Accipiter badius*. 19/1 1 immature Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 2 + 1 probably this species drive to grassland, 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari),
34. **Himalayan Buzzard** *Buteo [buteo] burmanicus*. 19/1 1 likely this species Seed farm (Koklabari). *Seen briefly gliding over. Proportions didn't fit Long-legged Buzzard B. rufinus, making it likely it was this recent split (sometimes named B. refectus).*
35. ***Indian Black Eagle** *Ictinaetus malayensis*. 20/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
36. ***Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis*. 26/1 1 2nd calendar year Deepor Beel (Guwahati), 1 2nd calendar year dump near Guwahati airport.
37. ***Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus*. 24/1 1 dark phase E of Singimari village.
38. **Rufous-bellied Eagle** *Lophotriorchis (Hieraaetus) kienerii*. 20/1 1 adult 2 immature drive to grassland.
39. **Changeable Hawk Eagle** *Nisaetus (Spizaetus) limnaeetus*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 1 immature (see photo) afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 1 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 1 Ultapani (west of Manas NP). *The immature bird on 20/1 had a fairly distinct crest, but it falls under the variation of the so-called 'stunted crest' of this species (Naoroji 2006, R.Naoroji pers.comm.).*
40. **Collared Falconet** *Microhierax caerulescens*. 19/1 1 Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 22/1 1 Mothanguri (seen on the Bhutanese side), 23/1 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
41. **Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*. 19/1 1 Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 drive to Bhutan border, 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 1 drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 25/1 1 Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji).
42. **Red-necked Falcon** *Falco chicquera*. 19/1 2 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 2 Seed farm (Koklabari).
43. **Swamp Francolin** *Francolinus gularis*. 22/1 1 heard near Bansbari.
44. **Red Junglefowl** *Gallus gallus*. 20/1 1 male 2 females drive to grassland, 21/1 heard walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 2 females drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 2 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 1 female afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 1 female Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
45. **Kalij Pheasant** *Lophura leucomelanos*. 22/1 2 males 1 female drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 25/1 1 Shillong Hills.



46. **Indian Peafowl** *Pavo cristatus*. 19/1 15 Seed farm (Koklabari), 22/1 6 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 10 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 1 male Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
47. ***Eastern Water Rail** *Rallus [aquaticus] indicus*. 22/1 1 (see photo below, left) grassland near Uchlia.



48. **Brown Crake** *Amaurornis akool*. 21/1 4 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 2 drive grassland near Uchlia, 24/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
49. **White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus*. 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 24/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
50. ***Ruddy-breasted Crake** *Porzana fusca*. 22/1 1 (see photo above, right) grassland near Uchlia.
51. **'Grey-headed' Purple Swamphen** *Porphyrio [porphyrio] poliocephalus*. 23/1 1 drive Bansbari to Ultapani.
52. **Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*. 22/1 50+ grassland near Uchlia.

Bengal Florican *Houbaropsis benghalensis*. Not seen during the late afternoon visit to the seed farm on 19/1 – always a difficult species to see if it is not displaying.

53. **Bronze-winged Jacana** *Metopidius indicus*. 23/1 1 drive Bansbari to Ultapani.
54. ***Small Pratincole** *Glareola lactea*. 21/1 1 Mothanguri, 22/1 200 (at dusk over river, see photo) Mothanguri.
55. **Red-wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus indicus*. 19/1 1 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 1 Seed farm (Koklabari), 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
56. **Pintail Snipe** *Gallinago stenura*. 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
57. **Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*. 19/1 1 heard Seed farm (Koklabari), 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 24/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
58. **Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*. 26/1 1 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
59. **Common Sandpiper** *Actitis (Tringa) hypoleucos*. 21/1 1 Mothanguri, 26/1 1 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
60. **Rock Pigeon** *Columba livia*. 19/1 + drive Guwahati to Koklabari.



61. **Oriental Turtledove** *Streptopelia orientalis*. 19/1 4 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 4 Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 25 drive to grassland, 21/1 25+ walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 10 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 + drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 25/1 10 Shillong Hills.
62. **Red Turtle-dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica*. 21/1 25+ walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 26/1 + Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
63. **Spotted Dove** *Stigmatopelia (Streptopelia) chinensis*. 19/1 25+ drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 1+ Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 30 Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 25 drive to grassland, + drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 50+ walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), + drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 + drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, + afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 + Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
64. ***Ashy-headed Green-Pigeon** *Treron phayrei*. 20/1 1 (see left photo) drive to grassland.
65. ***Yellow-footed Green Pigeon** *Treron phoenicopterus phoenicopterus*. 19/1 20 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 400+ Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 50 (see central photo) drive to grassland, 21/1 30 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 24/1 4 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
66. ***Pin-tailed Green Pigeon** *Treron apicauda*. 20/1 4 (see right photo) drive to grassland, 21/1 2 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 3 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.



67. **Green Imperial Dove** *Ducula aenea*. 21/1 5 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 2 + heard drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 20 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
68. ***Mountain Imperial-Pigeon** *Ducula badia*. 23/1 10+ Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
69. **Alexandrine Parakeet** *Psittacula eupatria*. 22/1 2 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 2 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
70. **Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*. 19/1 10 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
71. **Blossom-headed/Plum-headed Parakeet** *Psittacula roseata/cyanocephala*. 20/1 2 drive to grassland. Unfortunately, the pair took off immediately and was only seen briefly. The geographical location could indicate that the former species is the most likely.
72. **Red-breasted Parakeet** *Psittacula alexandri*. 20/1 2 drive to grassland, 3 drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 15 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 40 Mothanguri, 22/1 20 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 5 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
73. ***Common Hawk-Cuckoo** *Hierococcyx (Cuculus) varius*. 24/1 1 drive Koklabari to Guwahati.
74. **Asian Koel** *Eudynamis scolopacea*. 24/1 2 drive Koklabari to Guwahati.

75. **Green-billed Malkoha** *Phaenicophaeus tristis*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 21/1 2 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 23/1 1 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
76. **Lesser Coucal** *Centropus bengalensis*. 21/1 1 immature drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 3 probably this species drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 1 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
77. **Greater Coucal** *Centropus sinensis*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 2 drive to Bhutan border.
78. ***Spot-bellied Eagle Owl** *Bubo nipalensis*. 22/1 1 (see photo on front-page) drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
79. ***Asian Barred Owlet** *Glaucidium cuculoides*. 20/1 1 + heard drive to grassland, 1 heard Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 1 heard walk in Bhutan, 21/1 1 heard walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 1 + 1 heard drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 2 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
80. **Spotted Owlet** *Athene brama*. 23/1 1 near Koklabari.
81. **Large-tailed Nightjar** *Caprimulgus macrurus*. 20/1 1 (+ 2 un-identified nightjars) drive to Bhutan border, 22/1 3 afternoon drive after dark from Bansbari to Mothanguri.
82. **Himalayan Swiftlet** *Androdramus (Collocalia) brevirostris*. 20/1 50 drive to grassland, 21/1 20 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 5 Mothanguri, 22/1 100+ Mothanguri, 23/1 1 drive Bansbari to Ultapani.
83. **Asian Palm-Swift** *Cypsiurus balasiensis*. 19/1 20+ drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 20/1 2 drive to grassland, 24/1 5 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari). *Dark and rather short-tailed so likely of the ssp. infumatus found from NE India eastwards.*

Dark-rumped Swift *Apus acuticauda*. 25/1 none Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji). *This species is not supposed to be around in mid-winter – but information on this is a little contradictory. So we visited the site without seeing any swifts – our visit was during mid day and only later did we realize that if swifts are present during the non-breeding season they are is probably more likely to be seen at dusk or dawn, as they could easily be widespread and high during the day (as e.g. Little Swifts seen in Central India earlier in January).*
84. **Crested Tree-swift** *Hemiprocne coronata*. 19/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 10+ drive to grassland, 21/1 10 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.
85. **Stork-billed Kingfisher** *Pelargopsis capensis*. 22/1 1 drive grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 1 heard Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
86. ***White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis*. 19/1 40 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 4 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 5 Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 2 drive to grassland, 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 5 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 2 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 2 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 15 drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 24/1 15 drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 26/1 5 Deepor Beel (Guwahati), 1 dump near Guwahati airport.
87. ***Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*. 19/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 2 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 3 Mothanguri, 22/1 3 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 1 drive Bansbari to Ultapani.
88. **Crested Kingfisher** *Megaceryle lugubris*. 21/1 2 Mothanguri.
89. **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis*. 24/1 1 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
90. ***Blue-bearded Bee-eater** *Nyctornis athertoni*. 21/1 2 (see photo on front-page) drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.

91. **Little Green Bee-eater** *Merops orientalis*. 19/1 10 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 26/1 1 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
92. ***Chestnut-headed Bee-eater** *Merops leschenaulti*. 20/1 4 drive to grassland, 2 drive to Bhutan border.
93. **'Black-billed' Indian Roller** *Coracias [benghalensis] affinis*. 19/1 6 Seed farm (Koklabari), 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 2 drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP), 24/1 5 drive Koklabari to Guwahati.
94. **Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland.
95. **Oriental Pied Hornbill** *Anthracoceros albirostris*. 21/1 2 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 3 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
96. ***Great Hornbill** *Buceros bicornis*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 1 walk in Bhutan, 21/1 2 + 15 Mothanguri, 23/1 6 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).

*Manas used to be famous for its high numbers of large hornbills, and our rather few records could indicate a negative impacts from the illegal logging that took place during the years when the area was out of control. E.g. when you drive from Bansbari to Mothanguri you find mainly secondary forest with only few of the really large trees suited to hold nests of these large hole breeders. However, we were told about very significant concentrations in the Ultapani area with up to 450 Great Hornbills coming to a single night-roost. We didn't see Rufous-necked Hornbill (*Aceros nipalensis*) and Wreathed Hornbill (*A. undulatus*).*

97. ***Great Barbet** *Megalaima virens*. 23/1 2 + heard Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
98. **Lineated Barbet** *Megalaima lineata*. 19/1 2 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 20/1 25+ drive to grassland, 2 drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 10 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 5 Mothanguri, 22/1 + drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, + afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 heard Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
99. ***Blue-throated Barbet** *Megalaima asiatica*. 20/1 2 drive to grassland, 2 drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 5 heard Mothanguri, 22/1 + drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, + afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 24/1 1 drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 25/1 1 heard Shillong Hills.
100. **Eurasian Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*. 22/1 2 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
101. **Grey-capped Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos canicapillus*. 20/1 6 drive to grassland, 23/1 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
102. **Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos macei*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 26/1 1 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
103. **Rufous Woodpecker** *Celeus brachyurus*. 21/1 5 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.

104. ***Lesser Yellownape** *Picus chlorolophus*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 21/1 1 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 23/1 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).

105. **Grey-faced Woodpecker** *Picus canus*. 20/1 2 drive to grassland.

106. ***Greater Flameback** *Chrysocolaptes lucidus*. 19/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 21/1 1 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri. Besides, a couple of unidentified Flamebacks *Dinopium/Chrysocolaptes* sp. 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.

107. **Long-tailed Broadbill** *Psarisomus dalhousiae*. 21/1 flock heard drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.



108. **Silver-breasted Broadbill** *Serilophus lunatus*. 22/1 5 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
109. **Grey-throated Sand-martin** *Riparia [paludicola] chinensis*. 21/1 10 Mothanguri, 25/1 1 Bansbari, 26/1 30+ Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
110. **Eurasian Crag-martin** *Ptyonoprogne (Hirundo) rupestris*. 20/1 1 drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 2 Mothanguri, 25/1 4 Mawjrong View Point, 10 Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji).
111. **Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*. 19/1 2 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 21/1 5 Mothanguri, 23/1 30 drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 24/1 30 E of Singimari village, 26/1 100+ Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
112. **Nepal House-martin** *Delichon nipalense*. 20/1 50+ drive to grassland, 50 drive to Bhutan border.
113. **Paddyfield Pipit** *Anthus rufulus*. 19/1 1 Seed farm (Koklabari), 23/1 1 Bansbari, 26/1 1 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
114. **Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*. 19/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
115. ***Rosy Pipit** *Anthus roseatus*. 19/1 1 Seed farm (Koklabari), 22/1 2 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 2 Bansbari.
116. **Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola*. 19/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 2 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 26/1 5 Deepor Beel (Guwahati), 10 dump near Guwahati airport.
117. **Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*. 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 25/1 1 Mawjrong View Point.
118. **White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba ssp.* 19/1 5 Seed farm (Koklabari). *Minimum three subspecies recorded:*
a. White Wagtail *Motacilla alba dukhunensis/baicalensis*. 25/1 1 Mawjrong View Point, 26/1 2 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
b. *White-faced White Wagtail *Motacilla [alba] leucopsis*. 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 26/1 1 juvenile probably this subspecies Rubbish Dump at Guwahati.
d. Hodgson's (Pied) Wagtail *Motacilla [alba] alboides*. 19/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 2 drive to grassland, 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 2 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 5 Mothanguri, 22/1 2 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 1 Mothanguri, 23/1 1 Bansbari, 24/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
119. **Large Cuckoo-shrike** *Coracina macei*. 20/1 5 drive to grassland, 23/1 4 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
120. **Black-winged Cuckoo shrike** *Coracina melaschistos*. 19/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
121. **Long-tailed Minivet** *Pericrocotus ethologus*. 20/1 10 drive to grassland, 23/1 5 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
122. ***Scarlet Minivet** *Pericrocotus [flammeus] speciosus*. 20/1 15 drive to grassland, 21/1 20 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 10 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 30 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
123. ***Common Woodshrike** *Tephrodornis pondicerianus*. 21/1 15 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 6 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 5 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
124. ***Crested Finchbill** *Spizixos canifrons*. 25/1 2 drive Mawjrong View Point, 2 Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji).
125. ***Black-crested Bulbul** *Pycnonotus [melanicterus] flaviventris*. 19/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 10 drive to grassland, 21/1 20 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 15 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 10 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).

126. **Red-whiskered Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus*. 20-22/1 common, up to 50+ noted Manas NP, 23/1 + Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
127. **Red-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus cafer*. 19-24/1 very common Manas NP, 25/1 2 Mawjrong View Point, 4 Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji), 4 Shillong Hills, 26/1 + Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
128. ***Flavescent Bulbul** *Pycnonotus flavesceus*. 25/1 6 Mawjrong View Point, 2 Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji).
129. **White-throated Bulbul** *Alophoixus flaveolus*. 21/1 8 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
130. **Mountain Bulbul** *Ixos (Hypsipetes) maclellandii*. 25/1 2 Mawjrong View Point, 6 Nohkalikai Falls.
131. ***Black Bulbul** *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*. 25/1 2 Shillong Hills.
132. **Common Iora** *Aegithina tiphia*. 19/1 4 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 15 drive to grassland, 21/1 10 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 23/1 5 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
133. **Golden-fronted Leafbird** *Chloropsis aurifrons*. 20/1 10 drive to grassland, 21/1 2 possibly this species drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 5 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
134. **Orange-bellied Leafbird** *Chloropsis hardwickii*. 20/1 2 walk in Bhutan, 22/1 5 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
135. **Siberian Rubythroat** *Luscinia calliope*. 22/1 1 male grassland near Uchlia.
136. ***Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica*. 22/1 5 (1 white-spotted ssp) grassland near Uchlia, 25/1 1 Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji).
137. **Magpie Robin** *Copsychus saularis*. 19/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 1 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 1 Mothanguri, 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 5 Ultapani (west of Manas NP), 24/1 4 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
138. **White-rumped Shama** *Copsychus malabaricus*. 21/1 4 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 2 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 1 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
139. **Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*. 21/1 2 Mothanguri.
140. **Blue-fronted Redstart** *Phoenicurus frontalis*. 25/1 2 Mawjrong View Point, 1 male Shillong Hills.
141. ***White-capped Water Redstart** *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*. 21/1 5 Mothanguri, 22/1 1 Mothanguri, 25/1 1 Bansbari.
142. **Plumbeous Redstart** *Rhyacornis fuliginosa*. 21/1 5 Mothanguri, 22/1 2 Mothanguri.
143. **White-tailed Blue Robin** *Myiomela leucura*. 21/1 1 male drive Koklabari to Mothanguri. *An unexpected observation. The bird was seen twice from the bridge closest to Mothanguri (where also both Forktails were seen).*
144. **Black-backed Forktail** *Enicurus immaculatus*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 21/1 2 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 2 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 1 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
145. **Slaty-backed Forktail** *Enicurus schistaceus*. 21/1 1 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.
146. ***Common Stonechat** *Saxicola [torquata] maurus*. 19/1 20+ Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 1 male drive to grassland, 1 male drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 1 male walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 5 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 10 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 1 male

Bansbari, 24/1 1 male Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 1 male drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 25/1 2 Mawjriong View Point, 4 Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji). Several birds looked like the one bird shown below (two left photos): Restricted white neck-patch (or broad dark nape) and rich rufous underside except for paler central belly – richest on breast, continuing along breast-sides and including undertail-coverts. We believe these must be *ssp. przewalskii*, despite the fact that this subspecies is often illustrated with even darker brick-red underside.



147. **Grey Bushchat** *Saxicola ferreus*. 19/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 6 drive to grassland, 2 drive to Bhutan border, 22/1 1 male drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
148. **Chestnut-bellied Rock-thrush** *Monticola rufiventris*. 20/1 1 male drive to grassland, 25/1 2 males Mawjriong View Point.
149. ***Eastern Blue Rock-thrush** *Monticola [solitarius] philippensis*. 21/1 1 male drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 25/1 1 male (see photo, above right) Mawjriong View Point, 1 male Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji). The first bird was short-billed and with striking reddish vent. The bird was seen in quite dense forest with no rocks around. The two other birds were both all blue and in typical rocky outcrop habitat. All three birds likely to be *ssp. pandoo* from the Himalaya, but the first being an integrate ('affinis') between *ssp. pandoo* and the eastern *ssp. philippensis*. These have recently been split, called Eastern Rock Thrush (Zuccon, D., and P.G.P.Ericson (2010). *Mol. Phylogenet. Evol.* 55, 901-910).
150. **Blue Whistling Thrush** *Myophonus caeruleus*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 21/1 1 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 1 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 24/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 25/1 1 Mawjriong View Point, 1 Shillong Hills.
151. **Grey-bellied Tesia** *Tesia cyaniventer*. 21/1 2 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 23/1 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
152. ***? Unidentified Bush Warbler** *Cettia sp.* 21/1 1 Grassland near Uchlia. This small, tailless bird has been a real ID-troublemaker. It was only seen very briefly but HJ managed to get the photos below. The lacking tail and distinct supercilium brought Asian Stubtail (*Urosphena squameiceps*) up as an option, but we feel certain that this species can be excluded on a number of subtle details (e.g. no faint darker feather tips on crown/back, pale fringes to tertials, leg colour not pale). Next option considered has been Dusky Warbler (*P.fuscatus*) - but in case so a strange combination of all whitish supercilium and darkish underside. Rather we find that structure and plumage-details fits well with one of the small Cetti-warblers (cf. Kennerley & Pearson 2010). Several species are possible, e.g. Aberrant (*C. flavolivacea*), Brownish-flanked (*C. fortipes*), and Hume's (*C. brunnescens*). In addition, juvenile birds of other *Cettia*-species look similar (– if not January should be out of season for this age-class?). All in all: A LBJ (Little Brown Job) without its tail. Tricky!

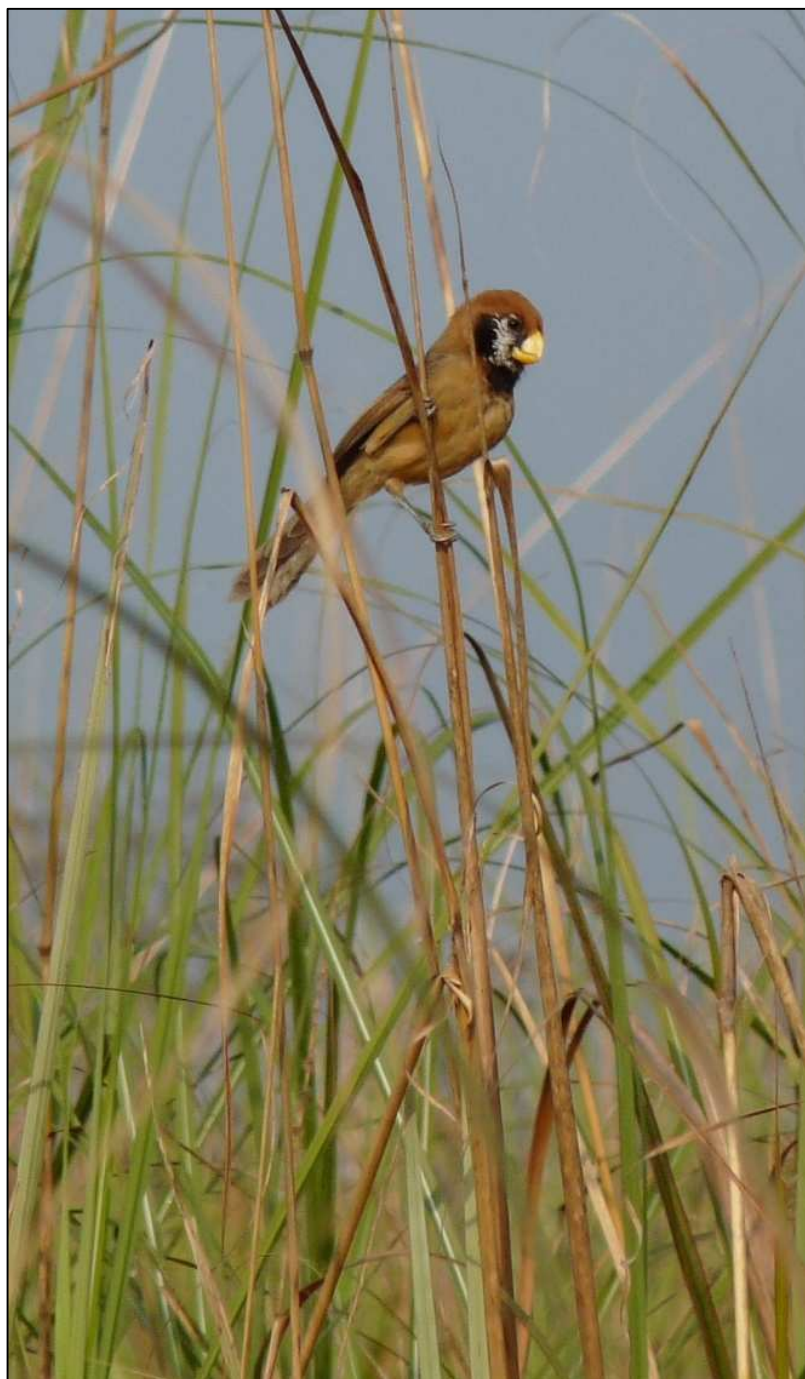


- Unidentified Warbler** *Phylloscopus* sp. 20/1 3 drive to grassland, 21/1 2 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 1 (*P.inornatus*?) drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 25/1 1 (*P.inornatus*?) Shillong Hills.
155. **Tickell's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus affinis*. 19/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
156. **Ashy-throated Warbler** *Phylloscopus maculipennis*. 25/1 3 Mawjrong View Point.
157. **Lemon-rumped Warbler** *Phylloscopus chloronotus*. 25/1 1 Shillong Hills.
158. **Blyth's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus reguloides*. 20/1 2 drive to grassland.
159. **Grey-hooded Warbler** *Phylloscopus (Seicercus) xanthoschistos*. 25/1 1 Shillong Hills.
160. **Striated Grassbird** *Megalurus palustris*. 21/1 2 singing walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
161. **Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis*. 22/1 3 heard drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
162. **Black-throated Prinia** *Prinia atrogularis khasiana*. 25/1 3 + heard Mawjrong View Point, 2 Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji), 2 Shillong Hills.
163. **Rufescent Prinia** *Prinia rufescens*. 20/1 2 drive to grassland.
164. **Grey-breasted Prinia** *Prinia hodgsonii*. 21/1 1 drive to Bhutan border.
165. **Ashy Prinia** *Prinia socialis*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
166. **Rufous-rumped Grassbird** *Graminicola banghalensis*. 22/1 2 Bansbari.
167. ***Red-throated Flycatcher** *Ficedula [parva] albicilla*. 19/1 5 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 2 drive to grassland, 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 2 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 23/1 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP), 24/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
168. **Little Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula westermanni*. 20/1 3 drive to grassland, 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 21/1 1 male drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.
169. ***Slaty-blue Flycatcher** *Ficedula tricolor*. 22/1 1 male 1 female (see photo) grassland near Uchlia.
170. **Small Niltava** *Niltava macgrigoriae*. 21/1 2 males drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.
171. **Rufous-bellied Niltava** *Niltava sundara*. 21/1 1 male drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.
172. ***Pale-chinned Flycatcher** *Cyornis poliogenys*. 20/1 1 drive to grassland.
173. **Pale Blue-Flycatcher** *Cyornis unicolor*. 19/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
174. **Grey-headed Flycatcher** *Culicicapa ceylonensis*. 19/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 15 drive to grassland, 21/1 5 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 2 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 24/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
175. **Puff-throated Babbler** *Pellorneum ruficeps*. 22/1 2 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
176. **White-browed Scimitar Babbler** *Pomatorhinus schisticeps*. 21/1 1 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.



Female Slaty-blue Flycatcher

177. **Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler** *Pomatorhinus ruficollis bakeri*. 25/1 2 heard Mawjrang View Point. The Assamese subspecies, *bakeri*, may be a distinct species, separated from the Himalayan ssp. *ruficollis*.
178. **Tawny-breasted Wren-Babbler** *Spelaornis longicaudatus*. 25/1 1 + 3+ heard Mawjrang View Point. *Endemic species*.
179. **Striated Babbler** *Turdoides earlei*. 22/1 2 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 6 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
180. **Jungle Babbler** *Turdoides striata*. 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
181. **Red-billed Leiothrix** *Leiothrix lutea*. 25/1 3 Mawjrang View Point.
182. **Rusty-fronted Barwing** *Actinodura egertoni*. 25/1 6 Mawjrang View Point.
183. **Blue-winged Minla** *Minla cyanoouoptera*. 25/1 1 Shillong Hills.
184. ***Grey Sibia** *Heterophasia gracilis*. 25/1 6 Shillong Hills.
185. **Whiskered Yuhina** *Yuhina flavicollis*. 25/1 10+ Mawjrang View Point.
186. ***Black-breasted Parrotbill** *Paradoxornis flavirostris*. 22/1 3 + 2 heard grassland near Uchlia. *Enjoy the photos (including one on the front page) of this magnificent bird. The first bird was located because of its distinct call. Along the next few hundred meters the remaining birds were located by restricted use of play-back - only a few seconds were sufficient to obtain response. The population must be significant. The occurrence of this highly threatened species in Manas seems only recently documented (cf. Chourhury 2011. Forktail 27: 111-112).*
187. **Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush** *Garrulax pectoralis*. 21/1 5 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.
188. **Rufous-necked Laughingthrush** *Garrulax ruficollis*. 22/1 15 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia.
189. **Assam Laughingthrush** *Garrulax (Trochalopteron) chrysopteron*. 26/1 heard Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji).
190. **Cinereous Tit** *Parus [major] cinereus*. 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 24/1 2 drive Koklabari to Guwahati.
191. **Green-backed Tit** *Parus monticolus*. 25/1 2 Shillong Hills.



Black-breasted Parrotbill

192. **Black-spotted Yellow Tit** *Parus spilonotus*. 25/1 4 Shillong Hills.
193. **Sultan Tit** *Melanochlora sultanea*. 21/1 3 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.
194. **Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch** *Sitta [castanea] cinnamoventris*. 23/1 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
195. ***Crimson Sunbird** *Aethopyga siparaja*. 20/1 2 male 1 female drive to grassland.
196. **Fire-tailed Sunbird** *Aethopyga ignicauda*. 25/1 1 eclipse Mawjrong View Point.
197. **Green-tailed Sunbird** *Aethopyga nipalensis*. 21/1 1 Manas.
198. ***Streaked Spiderhunter** *Arachnothera magna*. 19/1 5+ Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 4 drive to grassland, 2 drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 5 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 5 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 3 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 5 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
199. **Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum cruentatum*. 20 2 males drive to grassland, 21/1 1 female walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 24/1 1 female Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
200. **Oriental White-eye** *Zosterops palpebrosus*. 19/1 20 Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 40 drive to grassland, 22/1 5 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 23/1 10 Ultapani (west of Manas NP), 24/1 5 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
201. **Black-hooded Oriole** *Oriolus xanthornus*. 19/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 21/1 1 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP), 24/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
202. **Maroon Oriole** *Oriolus traillii*. 21/1 2 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 23/1 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
203. **Asian Fairy-Bluebird** *Irena puella*. 20/1 25 drive to grassland, 21/1 6 walk in Bhutan, 21/1 15 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 10 Mothanguri, 22/1 20 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 10 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 5 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
204. **Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus*. 19/1 8 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 2 Seed farm (Koklabari), 23/1 1 drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 24/1 3 drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 26/1 1 Deepor Beel (Guwahati), 1 dump near Guwahati airport.
205. **'Black-headed' Long-tailed Shrike** *Lanius schach tricolor*. 19/1 1 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 5 Seed farm (Koklabari), 22/1 2 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 2 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
206. **Grey-backed Shrike** *Lanius tephronotus*. 19/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 6 drive to grassland, 5 drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 4 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 12 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 3 Mothanguri, 22/1 5 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 5 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 5 drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 5 Ultapani (west of Manas NP), 24/1 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 2 drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 26/1 2 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
207. **Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus*. 19/1 + drive Guwahati to Koklabari, + Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), + Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 1? Drive to Bhutan border, 23/1 1 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 24/1 + Bansbari, 26/1 + Deepor Beel (Guwahati), + dump near Guwahati airport.
208. **Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus*. 20/1 10+ drive to grassland, 2 drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 5 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 1 Ultapani (west of Manas NP), 24/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
209. **Bronzed Drongo** *Dicrurus aeneus*. 21/1 25 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.

210. **Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo** *Dicrurus remifer*. 20/1 2 drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 1 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
211. **Hair-crested Drongo** *Dicrurus hottentottus*. 19/1 5 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 10 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 40 Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 25+ drive to grassland, + drive to Bhutan border, 21/1 5 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 30+ drive Koklabari to Mothanguri, 22/1 50+ drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, + afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 + drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, + Ultapani (west of Manas NP), 24/1 + Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
212. ***Greater Racket-tailed Drongo** *Dicrurus paradiseus*. 20/1 5 drive to grassland, 22/1 1 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 23/1 1 drive Mothanguri to Bansbari, 2 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
213. **Ashy Woodswallow** *Artamus fuscus*. 19/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 1 drive to grassland, 23/1 1 Ultapani (west of Manas NP), 24/1 10 N of Guwahati.
214. **Rufous Treepie** *Dendrocitta vagabunda*. 19/1 2 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 2 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 20/1 2 drive to grassland, 23/1 + drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 24/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).
215. **House Crow** *Corvus splendens*. 19/1 + drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 23/1 + drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 24/1 +++ Guwahati, 26/1 + Deepor Beel (Guwahati), + dump near Guwahati airport.
216. **'Eastern' Large-billed Crow** *Corvus [macrohynchus] leuclantii*. 19/1 + drive Guwahati to Koklabari, + Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 22/1 1 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 24/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 25/1 4 Mawjrong View Point, 20 Shillong Hills. *Surprisingly few seen*.
217. **Spot-winged Starling** *Saroglossa spiloptera*. 22/1 15 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia, 30 afternoon game drive Mothanguri to Bansbari.
218. **Chestnut-tailed Starling** *Sturnia (Sturnus) malabaricus*. 19/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 32 Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 4 drive to grassland, 21/1 10 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 24/1 6 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 26/1 5 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
219. **Asian Pied Starling** *Gracupica (Sturnus) contra*. 19/1 + drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 100 Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 5 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 21/1 2 walk from Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 24/1 5 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), + drive Koklabari to Guwahati.
220. **Great Myna** *Acridotheres grandis*. 24/1 2 Mans Jungle Camp (Koklabari). *Our only confirmed record of this species – but others may have been missed among the many Jungle Mynas*.
221. **Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis*. 19-23/1 widespread Manas NP, Assam and around Guwahati.
222. **Jungle Myna** *Acridotheres fuscus*. 19/1 20 drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 20 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari), 100 Seed farm (Koklabari), 20-24/1 very common Manas NP.
223. **Hill Myna** *Gracula religiosa*. 20/1 7 drive to grassland, 23/1 4 Ultapani (west of Manas NP).
224. ***House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*. 19/1 + drive Guwahati to Koklabari, 23/1 + drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 26/1 + Nohkalikai Falls (Cherrapunji).
225. **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*. 23/1 3 drive Bansbari to Ultapani, 24/1 2 drive Koklabari to Guwahati, 26/1 3 Deepor Beel (Guwahati).
226. **Streaked/Black-throated Weaver** *Ploceus manyar/benghalensis*. 19/1 1 w.pl. Seed farm (Koklabari). *Insufficient views of a prominent streaked weaver in winter plumage – in flock with the larger Finn's Weaver (which see).*

227. **Baya Weaver** *Ploceus philippinus*. 22/1 4 drive Mothanguri to grassland near Uchlia. A buff tone to the undersides indicate the eastern subspecies *burmanicus*.
228. **Finn's Weaver** *Ploceus megarhynchus*. 19/1 25 w.pl. Seed farm (Koklabari), 20/1 abandoned colony with 15 old nests in the canopy of a solitary tree in the grassland (see photo). The flock contained only birds in non-breeding plumage. They were larger than the one Streaked/Black-throated Weaver and characterised by heavy bills and pale undersides.



REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

1. **Tuck too** *Gekko gekko*. 21/1 1 (see photo) Mothanguri.
2. **Gecko sp.** 21/1 1 Mothanguri.
3. **Bengal Monitor** *Varanus benghalensis*. 21/1 1 drive Koklabari to Mothanguri.
4. **Burmese Python** *Python molurus bivittatus*. 22/1 1 (see photos below) near Bansbari.
5. **Unidentified Toad** *Bufo sp.* 22/1 1 Manas Jungle Camp (Koklabari).



BUTTERFLIES

Forest around Ultapani was particularly rich in butterflies. We took a few pictures of the glory.



Top left: Peacock Pansy *Junonia almanac*. Top central: Yellow Orange Tip *Ixias pyrene* Top right: Sailor sp. *Neptis sp.*
Bottom left: False Tiger Moth *Dyshania militaris* (left) & Purple Sapphire ? *Heliophorus epicles* (right). Bottom right: Fluffy Tit *Zeltus amasa*.

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A catch of small fish being prepared for the market (near Ultapani)



Intensive field days in fabulous grassland