

EDITORIAL

After last year's bumper issue this edition might seem slim. It does however have the mix of articles that our members appreciate. There is the latest report from our regular trips to Ascension. The visit was able to achieve the aims sooner than expected due to the low number of breeding birds. Whether this is a blip or signs of something more serious only time will tell. In addition there is an article from our President looking back at the development of the Mai Po Marsh reserve in Hong Kong. I was based in Hong Kong and Brunei in the early eighties but it was during my pre-birding (feathered variety) and pre-marriage days. I seemed to have missed a real treat and maybe I will now have to go back to see what I missed. You may be expecting articles on all our organised events however this time you may feel disappointed. In fact you are fortunate as there could be a lot of articles by myself so I have concentrated on the extreme trip rather than the genteel AGM; anyway birding in snow is more dramatic than trudging through rain on Branton Burrows. A certain member had given up earlier in the rain but sprang from his car when he discovered that we had all seen a Garganey close by.

We do go further afield and Birding through SUSAT will be familiar to a number of our elder members when they were birding on operations. Of course they did not have some of the optics now available but then again cries of "look there" may have had the same results. In addition some of regular intrepid explorers have again provided articles on their trips to other countries. The Iceland article reminds me of a time when I was co-driver on an Iceland Rally pointing out ducks on the lake as we sped alongside the edge. My friend was slightly more interested in me calling out the pace notes!

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SOOTY TERNS *ONYCHOPRION FUSCATA* ON ASCENSION ISLAND,
SOUTH ATLANTIC – OCT 2009
INTEGRATED POPULATION MONITORING PROGRAMME –
PRELIMINARY REPORT № 24

(B. John Hughes and Colin Wearn)

Seabird populations on Ascension Island, South Atlantic have declined during the last two centuries and the decline is attributed to predation from non-native species. The eradication of cats and control of rats were identified as the solution to restoring the seabird population. Feral cats were eradicated from the Sooty Tern colony in 2002 and the last feral cat on the island was culled in April 2004. The Army Ornithological Society (AOS) monitored Sooty Terns, the dominant avian species, on the island for 12 years prior to the restoration programme and every breeding season since. During the period 1990-1998 the AOS completed three base-line surveys of the Sooty Tern breeding populations. The mean population size was estimated at 368 000 birds (range 302 000 – 417 000, Ratcliffe *et al.* 1999). Cats were killing Sooty Terns at an average rate of 33 adults per night, no evidence of rat predation was seen and the mean Rat index was 3.5 ± 2.6 rats per 100 trap nights ($n = 4$, Hughes *et al.* 2008).

In this report we catalogue the activities of the AOS field expedition to Ascension from 7-20 October 2009 and summarise the outcomes of the restoration programme on Sooty Terns. The AOS have monitored Sooty Terns for ten breeding seasons post cat eradication. Sooty Terns on Ascension have a sub-annual breeding season and breed five times in every four years. Ninety man-days were spent gathering field data. The study included:

- Checking for cat predation
- Estimating the Sooty Tern breeding population
- Ringing Sooty Terns
- Calculating the adult sex ratio of Sooty Terns
- Estimating Sooty Tern fledging success
- Egg measurements
- Measuring muscle score and the weight of Sooty Tern chicks
- Collecting data on Sooty Tern prey
- Re-trapping Sooty Terns
- Rat Predation
- Recording aerial fatalities
- Trapping Mynas at Mars Bay
- Survey of Brown Noddy at Waterside
- Monitoring the Letterbox study site
- Training staff from the Conservation Office
- Outcomes of the restoration programme

Checking for cat predation On Ascension Feral Cats are known to predate adult Sooty Terns. Daily, corpses of adult were collected, examined and buried. The modal number of corpses found was one bird per day. Despite reports by the Conservation Office of cat predation in the tern colony earlier in the 2009 season we found no evidence of any cat predation.

Sooty Tern Population Fewer than the average number of Sooty Terns returned to breed in the October 2009 season. The breeding population was $\approx 240,000$ birds and shows no sign of recovery (Fig 1). A more precise figure will be calculated when the surveys of the sub-colonies have been processed.

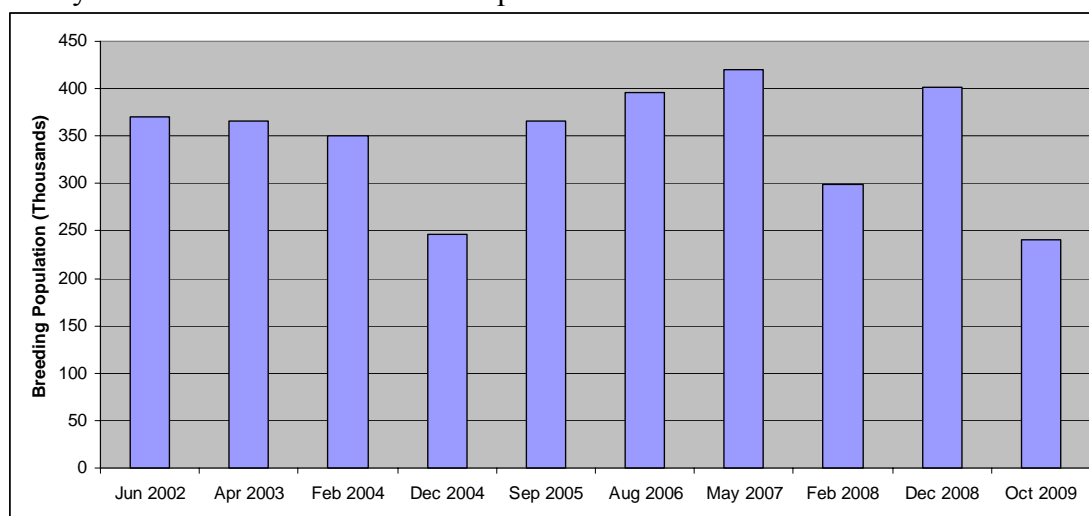


Figure 1. Estimated numbers of Sooty Terns breeding on Ascension Island from 10 censuses that took place after the Cat eradication programme. Note that the sub-annual breeding cycle results in birds breeding twice in 2004 and 2008.

Sooty Tern Ringing At Waterside 800 and at Mars Bay 133 ready to fledge chicks were ringed. A further 100 chicks about a month old were coloured ringed at Mars Bay for the purpose of quantifying rat predation and starvation rates. The Conservation Office was requested to monitor these colour ringed chicks.

Adult Sex Ratio (ASR) A sex discrimination function (Reynolds *et al* 2008) and biometric measurements of ringed Sooty Terns were used to calculate the adult sex ratio in the tern colony. On average males outnumbered females by around 44%. This season, to confirm our findings, we used historical data to calculate the ratio of male and female terns killed by cats and contemporary records of aerial fatalities where birds in both cases were sexed by examination of the reproductive organs. The ASR expressed as the proportion of the population made up of males was 0.61.

Fledging Success Counts of ready to fledge chicks on study sites at Waterside and Mars Bay were made to provide an estimate of fledging success. This season the Sooty Tern breeding colony was split into ten sub-colonies of which only three sub-colonies produced chicks that fledged. Fledging success in the sub-colonies at Waterside and Mars Bay was ≈ 0.13 and 0.24 juveniles per m^2 respectively.

Egg Measurements We measured 100 eggs and will compare the means with our records from previous seasons. Birds in good condition lay larger eggs.

Muscle score and chick weight Weak chicks were observed sitting quietly in the colony and some chicks were seen picking up dropped food off the ground both suggesting food shortage. We measure the weight and muscle score of ≈ 1000 chicks. Most has a muscle score of 1 or less. The weight data awaits analysis.

Food for chicks We kept detailed records of the prey fed to chicks and more than 90% of the food was squid. Tuna was not being caught on the island during the expedition. Sprats (driven to the surface by Tuna) are the stable diet for chicks and were in very short supply. Food shortage was recorded prior to cat eradication but this is the first season where it has occurred post cat eradication.

Re-trapping We planned our visit for the end of the Sooty Tern breeding season to obtain field data on fledging success. As a result only one sub-colony containing birds incubating egg was available for re-trapping. 40 Sooty Terns were re-trapped.

Rat Predation Evidence of severe rat predation was found in the tern colony in October 2009. Heavy rat predation was expected and predicted (Hughes & Wearn 2005 and Hughes & Wearn 2006). To measure the extent of predation corpses of dead chicks killed by rats were counted in 10m² quadrats. The mean density of chicks predated by rats was 1.6 ± 2.2 chicks per 10m² (range 0 – 9, $n = 68$). On 13 October 2009 rats had killed ≈ 4800 chicks in the three surviving sub-colonies. We were unable to evaluate the extent to which rats had caused desertion in the other seven sub-colonies. Rat trap lines were set at Waterside on 12 & 13 October (Fig 2) and at Mars Bay on 14 & 15 October 2009. The rat index was 74.5 and 36.8 C/100TN respectively and the highest index we have recorded. This evidence of a rapid increase in the rat population is supported by sighting of rats during day light hours on 15 and 16 October on the approach track to Waterside and from non targeted trapping of 13 rats in Myna traps at Mars Bay.



Figure 2. Rats caught on the edge of the tern colony at Waterside by 28 break back traps set on 12 October 2009.

Aerial fatalities One, now disused, aerial complex near the airhead continues to be a significant hazard to Sooty Terns. During the expedition 2 or 3 adult Sooty Terns per day were killed by the aerals.

Trapping Mynas Ten Mynas were trapped on the edge of the Sooty Tern colony at Mars Bay. The birds all juveniles were ringed with red rings on both legs, their biometrics recorded and then released. The fact that all the Mynas trapped were juveniles and that seven of the ten were re-trapped in the colony suggests that Myna predation in the Sooty Tern colony is carried out by just a few juveniles that are selective feeders and not by the majority of the Myna population.

Brown Noddy One large Brown Noddy juvenile (within a week of fledging) was seen at Waterside. Seven Noddy were holding territory at Waterside suggesting that another Brown Noddy breeding season was about to commence.

Letterbox Study Site Five of the team visited Letterbox on 10 October and six on 14 October to monitor this site. No evidence of nesting by the Ascension Island Frigate or the Red-footed Booby was found. Forty Masked Boobies (Fig 3) including some juveniles were ringed and also one booby with sub-lingual oral fistula. The habitat had changed and the peninsula was covered in dry grass *Enneapogon cenchroides* and currently supported populations of mice and Waxbills.



Figure 3. Masked Booby roost in dry grass *Enneapogon cenchroides* on the Letterbox study site Ascension Island

Staff Training and Support On 9 October we briefed the team at the Conservation Office on our plans for the expedition and agreed a programme of training. The AOS provided 14.5 days of training in population surveys, rat indexing and ringing to six members of staff from the Conservation Office. We completed ringing reports for the

conservation office, provided full details of our rat indexing and uploaded surveys of the Sooty Tern colonies into the island's GIS data base. On 20 October we provided the office with a report of our activities. Previous training has been successful and both Raymond Benjamin and Nathan Fowler are skilled at trapping birds. We are very grateful for records of 46 ringed Sooty Terns re-trapped on 18 August 2009 and of 18 re-trapped on 22 September 2009.

Outcomes of the restoration programme The major success of the restoration programme for Sooty Terns is the improvement in adult survival during the breeding season. Despite the improvement no increase in the breeding population has occurred and the Sooty Tern population maybe in decline. A substantial amount of evidence collected over ten breeding seasons point to poor productivity as the cause of the latest population decline. Severe predation from Rats was observed at Mars Bay in 2005 when during a 40 day period following the ringing of 200 chicks, we recovered 93 (46%) from Rat predation events (Hughes *et al* 2008). In January 2009 rats were instrumental in the failure of 97,000 Sooty Tern nests at Waterside. High rat indexes and high counts of predated chicks in October 2009 confirm our conclusion that Rat control measures are inadequate. The restoration programme with respect to Sooty Terns is failing and the primarily cause is a rapid increase in the rat population in the tern colony.

The Future Financial constraints in the MoD very nearly led to the cancellation of the AOS expedition to Ascension in October 2009. These constraints are likely to increase and intensify so no AOS expedition is planned for 2010 however, it is hoped to mount another in 2011. A review of the rat control measures in the tern colony and implementation of improved measures is urgently needed and this should be done before the terns return next season. The first chick of the next season is likely to hatch on 28 May 2010 and it is imperative that the success of this season is monitor.

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MAI PO MARSH RESERVE

(Field Marshal Sir John Chappel)

I have written something on my own recollections of conservation matters between the late 1950s and early 1980s. They are based on some notes I wrote for the Ministry of Defence some years ago.

I was fortunate to serve on and off five times in Hong Kong, each tour was for 2 or 2 ½ years. The first time was in 1959 and the last ended in 1982. On the first four tours we lived in the New Territories (I had never spent a night on the Island until 1980). The first camp I was in was called Norwegian Farm, just by San Tin, overlooking the northern part of Mai Po and the border. Most of what follows concentrates on this area. I was very fortunate to be in Hong Kong each time the protection, preservation, conservation or management of this area took a step forward.

The New Territories of Hong Kong in the late 1950's were very rural. The old villages were distinct entities, surrounded by paddy fields. There were very few trees and almost no pig farms or fish ponds. Urban sprawl had not then started. San Tin, Mai Po and the Deep Bay Marshes were wild places. The Kei-Wais (tidal prawn ponds) were fully operative. There was plenty of reed bed and mud flat but not much Mangrove. This seemingly wild area was of course artificial in that it was much influenced by man – particularly the man-made prawn ponds. It was also however, much abused by man. Shooting, trapping and netting was uncontrolled and widespread. The birds which used this area were harried constantly. Nevertheless it was a special area for birds. There were a few members of the Army stationed in the New Territories who cherished this area, and who badgered the local District Officers to do something about the illegal slaughter of birds. Almost no one in Hong Kong was interested – indeed very few had ever heard of Mai Po. Fortunately the District Officers were both sympathetic and helpful.

Amongst those present in the 1959-1960 period was Maxwell Macfarlane, who was one of the early HBWS members, and who was stationed with the Royal Artillery at Sekkong; and Bryan Webster of The Royal Fusiliers who was in the Brigade Headquarters there.

It was quite difficult to walk around the marshes in those days. The Kei-Wais, which were 'owned' by communities across the border, were not easily accessible. The story moves on though the 1960s when enormous changes took place in agriculture with much of the marsh drained for fish ponds, and much filled in for housing or for pig and chicken farming. The fish ponds were quite deep and had little attraction for waders.

Unrestricted building encroached all round the area. In addition there was a great increase. During the decade in the flow of refugees across the land border; and in the late 1960s the Cultural Revolution spilled over into Hong Kong. This led to a new border fence and road being built and in the Army being given responsibility for the border security. Eventually and at great cost to the Government, the border fence was extended right along the outside of the prawn ponds and inside the Mangrove and mud flats. To some concerned environmentalists this was thought to herald the final destruction of the Mai Po Marsh. In fact it created the opportunity for something much more positive. Military control meant control over access; military patrols seeking out illegal immigrants (which was the new re-classification of refugees) meant a constant oversight over the whole area and this in turn helped to end illegal trapping inside the fence; better controlled road access allowed for useful environmental studies and also made easier the construction of board walks and hides. The building of the fence required the building of a road alongside. This was built along the outer edge of the old Kei-wais and the sluices of each one were saved and repaired – many had fallen into disuse. The road and fence also had an ecological effect on the mangrove outside the fence – but that's another story.

It was during this time in the early 1970s that Peter Scott came out to visit and the Governor (Sir Murray Maclehoze) and I took him out to the Shek Shan mound at Mai Po. Peter Scott said that the only wildfowl species that he had not seen in the wild was the Falcated Duck. I have no idea why he'd never seen a wild one but anyway a nice male presented itself below the mound! Another valued ally on board – and some valuable reports and support from Slimbridge.

During this same period of the 1960s and 1970s, the conservation status of various areas of Hong Kong was gradually upgraded (reserves, protected areas etc). The pressure of a few dedicated people, mostly HKBWS members, greatly helped to achieve this. The most difficult thing to persuade Government to do was to assert control over changes of land usage.

Then on the last of my five tours around 1980, a further substantial boost was given when the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Hong Kong was founded as a new national chapter. The normal WWF convention is that a proportion of any money raised has to be spent "in country". And there was only one worthwhile project in view which Mai Po was. It has to be admitted that very few of the worthy citizens who joined and supported WWF Hong Kong had heard of Mai Po but that did not matter. An outline plan, based on waiting for funding and Government commitment was produced. It came not a moment too soon because work had also begun on finding a site for the new airport and the Deep Bay Marshes were one of the leading contenders.

The rest is well known. Each year more pieces of land have been bought or brought in; the carrying capacity of this small area has been greatly increased by proper land management; a visitor centre, hides, walks, plantings have all made this a very special reserve; and finally the area achieved Ramsar status just before the handover in 1997.

This was never military land. Much of the work was done by a few dedicated officials and amateurs with generous support from a large number of people. I take pleasure in the fact that I was there at some of the key moments. As Adjutant in the 1950s; then

Company Commander in the 1960s. Commanding Officer and Brigade Commander in the 1970s and finally as Commander British Forces and therefore a member of the Executive Council in the 1980s. In the latter role I was able to put in a word or two on behalf of Mai Po. My civilian colleague and ally throughout these decades was Sir David Akers-Jones, initially as District Officer and latterly as the Secretary for the New Territories, also an EXCO Member. He was a great ally and supporter inside Government.

When I first saw this area 50 years ago, not one local Hong Kong child had heard of the word environment or conservation and none had ever visited a nature reserve – for the simple reason that there were none.

In case this all sounds as though I had a leading role in these events, this is not so. It does however illustrate that time scales in conservation are long, both to allow for change of outlook and for the management of habitats to attain the desired balance.

There are further lessons to be drawn from this story. The good military virtue of maintaining the aim is evident. Also that it is possible to accommodate security requirements with good land management practice. Indeed it is usually possible as it was at Mai Po, to turn these security or defence efforts to advantage. Quite apart from anything else, the defence budget was able to subsume some of the costs. We can always help to influence Governments, business and communities both by our example and our enthusiasm.



Siskin

SOMERSET GATHERING AND BLASHFORD LAKES
21/22 FEBRUARY 2009

(Lt Col Roger Dickey)

After a gap year to allow for a relocation of the RV to Somerton, the Somerset Gathering for 2009 included visits to the RSPB reserve at Greylake, Steart Point on Bridgwater Bay, and Ashcott Corner/Ham Wall, with the following day spent at Blashford Lakes in Hampshire.

This venture is always a huge gamble with the weather which was perfect, and the tides which were not but the Levels came up trumps with Greylake (which is maturing into a first rate site) delivering over 100 Common Snipe close to the hide, 2000 Lapwing and over 100 Golden Plover and 20 Black-tailed Godwit. The local male Merlin was joined by a juvenile who helped to put up the more elusive ducks and waders but undoubtedly the bird(s) of the day were 2 adult female Hen Harriers that made repeated close passes in front of the hide to the consternation of the Snipe. A pair of Bewick's Swans helped to add variety to a steadily growing list.

Probably best not to talk too much about Steart, which on a good day is a real haven for raptors and waders. This wasn't a good day. The waterline was a couple of miles away and the Knot, Sanderling, Golden Plover and Dunlin were hardly perched on the end of our bins.

So back to the Levels and Ashcott Corner where the wind was picking up and high water levels meant more ducks than waders with the overwintering Goldeneye and Goosanders adding interest. Now here is the difficult bit. Knowing that we would see Great White Egret and Cattle Egret at Ham Wall, an obliging fly past of both species almost in formation, back to their roosting site just as dusk was approaching, prompted me to turn to my anticipated appreciative audience. Unfortunately this event coincided with the truly impressive hundreds of thousands of Starlings that settle over the reedbeds each evening.....and no-one looking at the egrets. It's hard being a bird guide!

The night bird life of Somerset is always worth watching and, true to form, having set up a hide in a corner of the Unicorn at Somerton, we were not disappointed. They visit this watering hole mid evening prior to flying off to a lek somewhere in Yeovil, as yet undiscovered by the author. Plumage varies, presumably related to readiness to mate, and surprisingly for the time of year, all seemed to be in advanced moult despite inclement weather conditions; the subject of considerable debate during the later evening.

The following day saw a joint gathering of AOS and RNBWS at Blashford Lakes. The site is interestingly varied in habitat and for a single day, produces good numbers of diverse species. Not rare but the quantities of Siskin, Brambling and Lesser Redpoll were exceptional. Deliberately in reverse order, on the lakes were 5-600 Black-tailed Godwit, Black-necked Grebe, Goosander, Goldeneye and many others requiring patience and good optics to dig into the more remote corners. But the jewel of this particular site was undoubtedly the Bittern that sat obligingly but virtually

invisible just in front of the observation hide. Only a few metres away and by no means hidden from view, it required total concentration to separate plumage from reed stalk – a true master of camouflage!

AOS TRIP TO SCOTLAND

(Andrew Bray)

A group of intrepid explorers met in Wiltshire early evening on a Thursday in early June for the very long drive to the Cairngorm area of Scotland. It included our attached Canadian who was still trying to rack up his numbers before an imminent departure back to his homeland. On the way they collected an additional member who had taken up residence in a service station on the M6. The journey was long and uneventful however the timing was perfect as we arrived at the RSPB reserve of Insh marsh just before dawn broke. It was a rather dull dawn, damp and cool livened by the singing of a Blackcap and Garden Warbler. We decided that as we were in Scotland then the high road must be taken. The high road soon became the low road then once again the high road and undulated all the way round. Beside the marsh area the path took us through woods, along a river and across the heather. We had already bagged 26 species and breakfast was still a long way off. Next stop was Insh Church for Osprey before heading into Aviemore for a well deserved and needed full fat boy breakfast. Fortunately no-one in town remembered me and the incident is just a fleeting moment in the College Adjutant's memory. The next stop was Loch Garten as Capercaillie had been seen there recently. As one would expect on a CAOS trip the star bird should be there preening itself ready for our arrival but it was not around.



Slavonian Grebe

We did have superb views of Siskin, Redstart and Osprey. We went for a walk in the drizzle around Loch Mallachie next door where we did manage to see another bird on the most wanted list – Crested Tit. One of the team also managed to tick parents-in-law of his divorced wife. Did we set up a defensive line, man the barricades or leave him to his fate – what do you think we did? Well we did but it turns out he gets on very well with them and they are fellow birdwatchers – greetings all round. Our next stop was Findhorn Valley and the road that

goes on and on to nowhere. Not that anyone in the minibus knew this except the driver. On the way we stopped to look at Dipper and Cuckoo however eagles did not show. It was a long drive for a no show however at the end were very large herds of Red Deer. We then retraced our steps but diverted to take the mountain pass to Loch Ruthven. Here was another bird on the 'must see before we leave' list – Slavonian

Grebe. This bird did put in appearance and so did some of its mates. This was a fitting end to the day as we headed to Inverness and a night in Redhorn Bks. Despite the early finish (it was not yet dusk) we celebrated a good day's birding with a pint of ale or two.

Next morning we were up early for a trip around the harbour though bird life on the water seemed to be missing except for a large gull flock. We did see Hooded Crow - another bird off the list. The Canadian member of the party had a number of UK birds that were still missing. We stopped on the A9 at Slochd Pass in the rain to search a cutting for Ring Ouzel. We looked and froze when at last it called. Now we were on a mission to find it and through perseverance and downright attitude of never give up we all managed to see the elusive bird. Our next stop was Lochindorb another water expanse in the middle of nowhere but at least the road did go somewhere. The Red-necked Diver for which it is a cert had not read the guide books nor updated itself on the internet. There were however a lot of Greylag Geese and hundreds of goslings. We then drove to Grantown-on-Spey for breakfast. Next stop was Loch Eilian where we looked for all sorts of birds and only found Spotted Flycatcher back at the start.

Not too worry as the sun was shining and next on the list was a trip up Cairngorm to see Ptarmigan. The trip started off well but soon the visibility disappeared and as we stepped outside at the café we were glad we had some inclement weather gear. Who would expect to be standing in a blizzard in June! At least the Snow Bunting was in its element. We re-grouped outside the bakers in Aviemore to decide our fate. We were still missing various birds that had to be seen. We decided to retrace some of steps as it would not be dark until late. First stop was Loch Garten and just as we were going to give up hope there



Cairngorm Party



Snow Bunting

was that sound, a loud grack. We trained scopes towards the direction when a head appeared and finally the top half of a body for all to see a male Capercaillie. Then a second male appeared for a short while to the left; which one to look at? In the end both of them as they stayed in view for a decent length of time to allow everyone in the centre to see them. This was a first views for many of us and the size of the birds was incredible. Was this the change of fortune we required? At Lochindorb the Black-necked Diver put on excellent show.

On the route to the next site a Short-eared Owl flew in front and along side us. We hung a left down the Findhorn Valley off the A9 but still no eagles (well we can't win every one). The road over the pass to Loch Ruthven seemed different – must have slept the first time we drove it as it was scarier the second time or was it because we

could see as there was no rain? At Loch Ruthven Red-throated Diver appeared in the gloom to then put on a show showing itself off in full Technicolor. We then headed back to Inverness for a celebratory curry before turning in for the night. We had a short lie in before loading up the minibus for that awfully long journey south. In the end we saw 72 species in 2 days with a ridiculously long drive either side but we did manage to bag most birds on the must see list. Canadian domestic birding will not be the same as CAOS trips and that may be a good thing but at least we sent him off with more birds on his UK list and some memories of extreme birding!

AOS VISIT TO PORTLAND BIRD OBSERVATORY

(Hilary Nash)

This year we chose the weekend 11th to 13th September, with 15 spaces and we shared the Observatory with the RNBWS.

When we arrived on the Friday the weather, fine with a north-easterly wind, looked promising for migration with a chance of both quantity and quality. After introducing ourselves to the resident Little Owl in the nearby quarry we headed for supper in “*The Pulpit*” pub.

Saturday morning dawned fine with a stiff north-easterly. It was clear there had been considerable migration but little had stopped in the Observatory Area. Thousands of Hirundines were moving through, mainly Barn Swallows and House Martins as well as parties of Alba and Flava Wagtails, Meadow Pipits and Linnets. There was a large flock of Gannets feeding in “The Race” just off Portland Bill, but the settled weather meant that most of the sea-bird movement was off-shore and out of view. The odd Shearwater and Auk flew by, but so infrequently that sea-watching proved unrewarding. A few warblers were seen in the “Top Fields” but were difficult to relocate as the wind kept them in cover.

Most decided to see what Radipole and Lodmoor had to offer which of course involved a mandatory stop at Ferrybridge, mainly for the excellent bacon butties, though there were a couple of Sanderlings as well as the usual Dunlins and Turnstones to be seen. Radipole produced nothing unexpected but the Hooded Merganser – from last year -was still around. (The jury is still out as to whether it is of wild origin or an escape, but the latter is more likely). Lodmoor had a few waders the best being 4 Curlew Sandpipers, a couple of Black-tailed Godwits and a Knot.

The Saturday night meal was again in the Ghurkha Restaurant where we all stuffed ourselves on the fixed price menu. We are not the only people who like this eating house and the seating was decidedly *gemütlich*.

Sunday morning was still fairly bird-less though it did produce the only new bird to add to the AOS Portland List – a Water Pipit and we had close up views of a Pied Flycatcher that had been caught. On a final visit to the “Top Fields” a Peregrine flew over and a group of Carrion Crows decided to mob it. The falcon a large female

was in no mood to be messed and a couple of serious stoops had the Crows diving for cover squawking in panic. It was a magic moment.

LIST OF BIRD SPECIES SEEN IN 2005 TO 2009

English Name	Scientific Name	<u>2005</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Black Throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>	X			
Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>			X	
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	X	X	X	X
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	X	X	X	X
Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	X			X
Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>			X	
Balearic Shearwater	<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>	X		X	
Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>	X			
Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	X	X	X	X
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	X	X	X	X
Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristorelis</i>	X	X	X	X
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	X	X	X	X
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	X	X	X	X
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	X	X	X	X
Canada Goose	<i>Anser canadensis</i>	X	X	X	X
[Barnacle Goose]	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	X			
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	X	X	X	X
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	X	X	X	X
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	X	X	X	X
Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	X	X	X	X
Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	X		X	
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	X	X	X	X
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	X	X	X	X
Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	X			
Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	X	X	X	X
Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	X	X		
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>			X	
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	X		X	X
Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>			X	
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	X	X	X	X
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	X	X	X	X
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>		X	X	
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	X	X		X
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>		X	X	
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>			X	
Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	H	H	H	X
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	X	X	X	X
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	X	X	X	X
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	X	X	X	X
Ringed Plover	<i>Chararius hiaticula</i>	X	X	X	X
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	X	X	X	X
Knot	<i>Calidris canuta</i>		X		X
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>		X	X	X

Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	X	X	X	X
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	X	X	X	X
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>		X		X
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>			X	
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	X			
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		X	X	X
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	X		X	
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	X	X	X	X
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	X			
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	X		X	X
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	X			
Parasitic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	X			
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	X	X	X	X
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>			X	
Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>			X	
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	X	X	X	X
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	X	X	X	X
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	X	X	X	X
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	X			X
Sandwich Tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	X	X	X	X
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>		X		
Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>			X	
Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>				X
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	X	X	X	X
Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	X	X	X	X
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	X	X	X	X
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>			X	
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>			X	X
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus major</i>		X	X	
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	X		X	X
Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>				
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	X	X	X	X
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	X	X		X
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	X	X	X	X
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	X	X	X	X
Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>				X
Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>	X	X	X	X
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	X	X	X	X
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>			X	
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	X	X	X	X
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	X	X	X	X
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>			X	
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	X	X	X	X
Hedge Accentor	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	X	X	X	X
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	X	X	X	X
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>		X	X	X
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	X	X	X	X
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	X		X	
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola ruberta</i>	X	X	X	X
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>			X	

Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	X	X	X	X
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		X	X	
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>		X	X	
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>			X	
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>		X	X	X
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	X	X	X	
Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>		X	X	
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	X	X	X	X
Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>			X	
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>		X	X	
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	X	X	X	X
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	X	X	X	
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>			X	
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	X	X	X	X
Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>		X		X
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	X	X	X	X
Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	X	X	X	X
Bearded Reedling	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>	X		X	
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	X	X	X	X
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	X	X	X	X
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	X	X	X	X
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	X	X	X	X
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>				X
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	X	X	X	X
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	X	X	X	X
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	X		X	
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	X	X	X	X
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	X	X	X	X
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	X	X	X	X
Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>				
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>			X	
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		X		
Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>				
Corn Bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>				
<u>Escapes</u>					
White-cheeked (Bahama)	<i>Anas bahamensis</i>			(X)	
Pintail					
Hooded Merganser	<i>Lophodytes cucullatus</i>			(X)	X
Southern Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes orix</i>			(X)	
Total Species		86	87	100	79



The author looking for a sniper in Desert Sharooz, NE Musa Qaleh

BIRDING THROUGH SUSAT

(Gunner Chris Dickey)

On the 25th September 2008, I left the Royal Citadel Plymouth under the cover of darkness to begin my six month deployment in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. Being a member of a six man FST (Fire Support Team) of 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery and being the lowest rank, I went armed with my minimi machine gun with SUSAT weapon sight, 4,000 rounds of link, a lot of water bottles, my digital camera, 'Birds of the Middle East' and everyone's spare kit.

My team (C/S Opal 58), was flown out to Musa Qaleh, a large trading town found on the river confluence of the Musa Qaleh and Bagni wadis. Our task was to support the light infantry on all of their patrols; D Coy 5 Scots. Having been briefed by some of the AOS members before departure, I embarked on what would be the most primitive and extreme form of birding; birding 'on the hoof' around the FLET (Forward Line of Enemy Troops).

My first operation with 5 Scots taking on a Taliban stronghold; 'Kats', saw a number of first's for me. After being dropped off by Mastiff APV, we then fought for ten straight hours in the blistering heat in confined, house to house fighting. Apart from firing my weapon in anger for the first time, being shot at and blown up by RPGs and seeing my first dead Taliban, I came across a new bird. Unfortunately, the Hoopoe that I spotted flying to the ground from the tree came in a lull of the battle. Being shocked by the proximity of the bird (a few feet away), I let out a 'Oh my God', which unfortunately, everyone else mistook as meaning we were about to be out flanked on my side, thus causing a huge uproar!



Chaffinch through my SUSAT

5 Scots soon ended their tour and my team were integrated with B Coy 2 RGR. The Musa Qaleh wadi is a 300m wide river bed with a braided river running north/south. The wadi acts as a natural path for migratory birds, which did not disappoint. Within Musa Qaleh, Myhnas, Sparrows, Kestrel and Magpie were common place. However, with the winter migration beginning in October, morning sangar duty took on a new light for me. Barn Swallow, Black Headed and Little Gull were a few of the species heading south, while Raven, Saker Falcon, Egrets and Heron were all overwintering with us. It was during my two hour sanger duties that I was able to have

both my binos and spotters' guide out and primed for action. Whilst on patrol, when I did not know the species I was looking at, I took to either drawing or jotting down distinctive details, which I could then use once back in the FOB (Forward Operating Base) with my guide to hand.

It was at the beginning of November, that I was given my R+R. When I returned, my team was split into pairs and I given the job of joining the 1 Rifles OMLT (Operational Mentor and Liaison Team), who were responsible for training two companies of ANA (Afghan National Army). The job meant moving to a new camp, in the desert region north east of Musa Qaleh. From there, I patrolled every day with the OMLT, usually heading north to the FLET, to see if we could upset someone's day. It was during this time that I was able to see some more species including Hobby, Chukar, Rock Dove and Long Legged Buzzard. Our role generally involved interacting with the local inhabitants to gain information but also involved some major operations including some quite bizarre ones, for example; looking for a Russian legacy minefield through the use of advancing whilst in extended line. Being higher up in the desert overlooking the villages, my 10x42 binos came into their own, not only to spot weaponry under Taliban clothing but also to spot the smaller species of birds like the Masked Wagtail and Chaffinch. A memorable incident was when we were trying to find a sniper who had hidden his weapon under his shirt and tried to escape. Whilst looking through the binos for the culprit, a bird flew across my sight and landed in the desert. Being a blip in the desert I was impressed that I found the bird so I said 'aaha'. Unfortunately everyone thought I'd found the shooter and weren't impressed when I could show them the whereabouts of a Hobby instead. The winter period lasted from November through to late January during which time frosts were common and heavy rain turned every road, track and path into a thick soup. The desert at this time greened up with grass sprouting out through the soil crust and flowers showing their faces amongst the rocks.

With only a month and a half left of the tour, I moved back into the Green Zone to Patrol Base (PB) Woqab with the Gurkhas. From this small base I continued my

patrols around the local area, which included the wheat fields and the Hasi Rashid gardens. By now I had written blogs on the AOS website about species I had positively identified and also given descriptions of ones I couldn't. Working in the Green Zone around March meant that I saw a few more species including the migratory ones. These included Blackbirds, Mistle Thrush, Eversmann's Redstart, Common Swift, Barn Swallow, Great White Egret, Kestrel and Saker Falcon. During my time at Woqab, I was involved in some more operations and numerous resupplies to the wadi. It was during these times, covering the wadi to the north whilst lying in the river bed, that I saw Common Kingfisher and Black Kite, both fishing.



The Musa Qaleh Wadi

My final operation in Musa Qaleh was to deny the Hasi Rashid Gardens to the Taliban. The gardens were pomegranate orchards with some tall evergreen trees in the middle. Unfortunately the operation turned into a cordon-op after we found six 105mm HE shells wired together in a 'daisy chain' bomb. Whilst baking in the sun on the roof of a house covering the north east, two Ring-necked Parakeets flew into the trees, obviously inhabitants of the gardens. Under Taliban rule it was forbidden to keep parrots so could they have been captive birds set free? The cordon-op did however allow me to find the whereabouts and establish the exact numbers in a heronry. Although the explosive shells had been detached, the detonators with some of the explosives needed to be destroyed. As it was dusk when they blew up, I was able to count every heron that took off at Mach 3 when the explosive went off at the base of their trees. I counted fourteen. If that's not an efficient way of counting heronry numbers, I don't know what is?!

Once off the ground and back in Bastion where the coffee is strong, the showers are hot and the food is edible, I was able to go for morning runs again. During these

periods of cool and general quiet (unless the US marines were scaring off everything with their squads jogging and chanting) I came across Blue-cheeked Bee Eater, Crested Lark and Verreaux's Eagle.

Although using a SUSAT is a crude form of birding, my experiences of ornithology in Afghanistan have been immensely enjoyable with many memorable encounters, which have helped improve my identification and knowledge of birds in their habitats. I can also safely state that Afghan birding is not for the faint-hearted and will probably be the most extreme form of birding that I will ever do. CAOS trip anyone?!

ICELAND 10-14 JUL 09

(Mark Easterbrook)

Introduction

Having already identified that Voyages Jules Verne provided a fairly economic way of visiting Iceland as mentioned at Ref A, my wife and I along with John & Val Sanders decided we'd like to visit the island. We had always planned to visit however; it was essential to plan it at a suitable time to see Brunnich's Guillemot. I contacted Edward Rickson, who although unavailable provided fantastic site information and administrative guidance on how to see the Guillemot – Many Thanks.

Daily Itineraries

Day 1

An evening departure at 2110 from London Heathrow saw us arriving in Iceland at 2250 (1 hour behind), in broad daylight. It took us approximately an hour to get from the Airport at Keflavik to our hotel (Park Hotel) in Reykjavik. We were safely tucked up in bed by half midnight.

Day 2

The tour was not solely for birding purposes so we undertook the tour provided with the holiday to Thingvellir, where we saw Redpolls, 2 Red-necked Phalarope, a couple of Whooper Swan and numerous Redshanks and Redwings. Later at Gulfoss we saw a Northern Wheatear, whilst at the geyser at Geyser we saw a couple of Snipe. Oystercatchers, Golden Plover and Fulmars were fairly common along the road.



There she blows

Day 3

We hired a car today (City Cars £93.50 for one day), on the advice of Edward Rickson (a local expat birder) and headed off towards the Snaefellsness peninsula to the North West of Reykjavik. During the journey we added Arctic Skuas (mainly dark phase), Ravens and several Ringed Plover. Arriving at the seabird breeding cliffs just to the West of Arnastapi we soon caught a whiff of the guano and after a little searching located 12 breeding Brunnich's Guillemots with chicks. Common Guillemots, Razorbills, Kittiwakes, Puffins and Greater Black-backed Gulls were also noted here and a light phase Arctic Skuas harassed them.



Breeding Brunnich's Guillemott West of Arnastapi

Along the peninsula a juvenile Snow Bunting was seen amongst the lava flow and at Rif Harbour numerous Red-necked Phalaropes were seen on a roadside pond with a Black Guillemot and seven Purple Sandpipers being in the harbour. The area was covered with breeding Arctic Terns and a solitary Dunlin put in an appearance.



Red-necked Phalarope - Rif

During the journey back along the peninsula to Borgarnes we saw several Slavonian Grebes in full breeding regalia, two Red-throated Divers, many Whimbrels and several more Arctic Skuas. In the Harbour four Icelandic race Black-tailed Godwits and circa twenty Dunlins were seen.

Day 4

A whale watching trip from Reykjavik harbour gave us more views of Puffins at Lundy Island along with more Arctic Skuas and our only Herring Gulls of the trip. Later at sea a Great Skua was noted and numerous seabirds were disturbed by a breaching Hump Back Whale. At least six Minke Whales were seen and during the journey back to port a singular Manx Shearwater was noted.



Fulmar Reykjavic Pelagic



Hump Back Whale - Reykjavic Pelagic

The rest of the day was spent in Reykjavik, sightseeing although a visit to the pond in the centre of the town revealed the presence of three Whooper Swans, a female Scaup

and a first summer Iceland Gull. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were very numerous here whilst the odd Black-headed Gull dived in between them.



1st Summer Iceland Gull - Reykjavic

Day 5

A 1000 pick up from the hotel and a mid morning visit to the Blue Lagoon brought nothing new and we soon departed Iceland on the 1610 flight, arriving at Heathrow at 2000.

Species List

<i>Common Name</i>	<i>Scientific Name</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia Stellata</i>	2	Snaefellsness peninsular – roadside pond
Slavonian Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	5	Snaefellsness peninsular – roadside ponds
Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	50+	Pelagic
Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	1	Pelagic
Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	4	Pelagic
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	3	Borgarnes Harbour
Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	4	Seen throughout
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	15+	In suitable habitat
Common Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	2	Roadside ponds
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	3	Seen throughout
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	20+	Snaefellsness peninsula
Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	1	Female in Reykjavik
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	5+	Small family groups seen throughout
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	4	Common throughout
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	2	Snaefellsness peninsula
Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	2	1s & 2s throughout
Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>	7	Rif Harbour
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	20+	Borgarnes Harbour
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	2	1s & 2s throughout
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa islandicus</i>	4	Borgarnes Harbour and 1s along the roadside
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	7	Common throughout

Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	15	Common throughout
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	c700	Rif roadside pond and 2 at Thingvellir
Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	5	Pelagic and common along the S peninsula
Great Skua	<i>Catharacta skua</i>	1	Pelagic
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	20	Borgarnes Harbour and several throughout
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>	30+	Reykjavik numerous around the capital
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus argenteus</i>	2	Pelagic
Iceland Gull	<i>Larus glaucoides</i>	1	1 st Summer at Reykjavik central pond
Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	40+	Common on the Snaefellsness peninsula
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	30+	Common on the Snaefellsness peninsula and during the Pelagic
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	800+	Snaefellsness peninsula and Pelagic
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	1000 +	Rif Harbour – common breeding species
Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	30+	Snaefellsness peninsula and pelagic
Brunnich's Guillemot	<i>Uria lomvia</i>	12	Breeding cliffs west of on the Snaefellsness peninsula
Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>	20+	In the sea off the breeding cliffs west of on the Snaefellsness peninsula
Black Guillemot	<i>Cepphus grylle</i>	1	Rif Harbour
Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	800+	Lundey Is off Reykjavik and several at the breeding cliffs west of Aranstapi
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	2	1s & 2s throughout
White Wagtail	<i>Mortacilla alba alba</i>	2	1s & 2s throughout
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes islandicus</i>	2	at Thingvellir - breeding
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	8	Snaefellsness peninsula and 1s & 2s throughout
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	1	Male in the botanical gardens Reykjavik
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	12+	Common breeding around the S Geysir
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	4	Common on the Snaefellsness peninsula
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	12+	Common around the capital
Lesser Redpoll	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>	5	Around the old Parliament area at Thingvellir
Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	1	Juv on the lava flow on the Snaefellsness peninsula

Summary

With the target bird in the bag the trip was a success. Although Iceland is fairly expensive, with the correct timing and a little preparation and hunting around bargains can be found. An interesting Island with many birding and tourist opportunities and I recommend a visit.

TRIP TO CAPE TOWN AND THE WESTERN CAPE

(Anne Nason)

Not everyone spends part of their holiday in the local sewage works, but that is exactly what Ian and I did on our latest trip to South Africa! However, the Cape Town sewage works at Strandfontein are much more scenic than their function would suggest, and it is one of the best places to see waterbirds in the Cape area. Our visit to Strandfontein occupied only one of the five days we spent in Cape Town before we ventured inland to Ceres via Paarl (and another sewage works) and finally to Langebaan and the West Coast National Park on the Atlantic seaboard. There are a large number of endemics or near-endemics in the Western Cape, and in spite of only having a bird guide for one day, we managed to see a goodly number.

We flew BA direct to Cape Town on the 1st March - a twelve hour flight - picked up a hire car at the airport and drove to the Guesthouse booked for us by Lawsons, the South African firm based at Nelspruit who guided the AOS trip to South Africa last year. They had booked us into Afton Grove Guesthouse at Noordhoek on the Cape Peninsula run by Chris and Louise Spengler and it was an excellent choice. Traffic going in and out of central Cape Town in the rush hour is nose to tail, and to be at Noordhoek within easy reach of many special birding spots was ideal. Cape Town was experiencing a heatwave whilst we were there, and to return to the cool tree-lined garden and pool in the evening was very pleasant. Chris is a birder himself and was able to direct us to the local birding places, like Kommetjie (pronounced Komicky) Beach so Afton Grove was a real 'home from home'.



Blue Crane

Lawsons had booked us a birdguide for one day, Mariana Delport, who drove us out to the Overberg farming area at Bot River, about 100km east of Cape Town on the N2, through the Sir Lowry Pass, to photograph Blue Cranes on the stubble fields. A flock of over 40 birds were feeding on the fallen grain and fortunately they were not too far from the road as we drove along a farm track, as they are fairly wary. These birds were persecuted by farmers, but although now protected their status is still

vulnerable. Later, we spotted several small flocks of Blue Crane on our journey inland which was encouraging. With Mariana we also saw Jackal Buzzard, Capped

Wheatear, Stonechat and Zitting Cisticola, and watched a Reed Cormorant catching frogs in a farm dam.

Mariana next took us to Betty's Bay to see African Penguins as it is a more natural area than Boulders Beach, and all four species of Cormorant – White-fronted, Crested, Cape and the less common Bank Cormorant which has a diagnostic white rump. Finally, she hoped to show us the Cape Rockjumper at Rooi Els, but because of the strong wind, the Cape Rockjumper remained elusive. However, we spotted a Cape Grassbird, Orange-breasted Sunbird, and White-necked Raven.



African Penguin

A male Klipspringer on a rock high above us remained motionless for at least half an hour. On our way back a Pale Chanting Goshawk was spotted, which was apparently an uncommon sighting for the coastal area.

Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens at Constantia were probably the highlight of the trip. In spite of the heat, we had an excellent morning in the gardens which are on the side of a hill, and required a longish walk for Ian carrying his heavy camera and stand as



Orange-breasted Sunbird

the protea garden is at the highest point. However, the reward was excellent photographs of the Orange-breasted Sunbird feeding on protea nectar, although again we missed out on the Cape Sugarbird. The best time to visit Cape Town is in the spring when the birds are breeding, but of course we were there in autumn. Cape Spurfowl, Cape Robin, Cape White-eye and Cape Bulbul are all common in the garden, and one could happily spend a whole day there.

Travelling around the coastal road on Cape Peninsula produced Cape (Kelp) Gull, Hartlaub's Gull, Swift Tern, Sandwich Tern, Black Oystercatcher and Red-winged Starling amongst others. A visit to the Cape of Good Hope National Park and Cape Point was interesting from the historical and geographical perspective but as far as birds were concerned not particularly productive, although had we had a copy of SASOL's "Southern African Birdfinder"

by Claire Spottiswoode et al at that point, we might have been more focused. Olifant's (Elephant's) Bay produced Jackal Buzzard, Black Oystercatcher, Familiar Chat and Sacred Ibis. The latter are common throughout the whole area. The park is stocked with antelope and zebra but we only came across bontebok and eland.

So now to the matter of the Strandfontein sewage works! Access is through Zeekoevlei Nature Reserve and on arrival at the reserve we were told to turn right at the gate of the sewage plant where we could drive freely round the pans. At the gate we were dismayed to discover that the public route around the pans was closed for repairs, but the day was rescued as Ian was allowed inside to see the acting Manager and get permission to drive through the sewage works to the large settling pans, where the road was not under repair. In fact the Manager of the works actively encourages bird watchers. Surrounded by reedbeds and with mountains in the background, the large pans are more like a nature reserve than a sewage works. We spent a whole afternoon photographing Greater Flamingo, Great White Pelican, Avocet, Cape Teal, Red-billed Teal, African Purple Swamphen, Glossy Ibis and a variety of gulls, waders and wildfowl. Egyptian Geese have almost become a pest in the Cape Town area.



Cape White-eye

On the 7th March we set off for Ceres via Stellenbosch where we stopped at the Kanonkop Wine Estate for a wine tasting. On reaching Paarl we went straight to the 'Bird Sanctuary' which is in fact, the Paarl sewage works, but like Strandfontein it is quite a scenic area and was very productive from the waterbird point of view. Here Ian photographed Red-knobbed Coot, White-winged Tern assuming breeding plumage, Common Sandpiper, Blacksmith Lapwing and a Crowned Lapwing chick.

From Paarl we crossed Bain Kloof Pass, thirty kilometres of hairpin bends up a spectacularly steep road. This pass was one of the first routes from the Cape into the interior. Many of the early routes over the passes were chosen by following animal trails, on the principle that animals would take the easiest route. Near the summit we stopped briefly at Bain Kloof trading post where we spotted Bar-throated Apalis and a party of Chacma Baboons. Baboons are fairly common throughout this area, even close to Cape Town, and there were frequent notices urging people to "Beware of Baboons."

Before reaching Ceres we crossed Michell's Pass, stopping at the Tolhuis for refreshments and the chance of a few more bird species. Beside the small pond we saw Olive Thrush and Cape Bunting as we enjoyed a cool beer.

The Village Inn in Ceres was a pleasant guesthouse, although the service did not live up to the surroundings, but arriving on a Saturday evening during a heatwave was probably not the most auspicious time.

The following day we had booked a guide to take us into the Tanqua Karoo, a fairly remote semi-desert area designated as a biodiversity hotspot. Claus Riding proved to be an excellent guide as he knew the Tanqua Karoo intimately, although he explained that he was not a birder. The vegetation is mainly of succulents, and in the spring the desert bursts into flower. The gravel is the cause of many punctures, there is very little traffic and no mobile phone communication, so it was a relief to have Claus guiding us with his experience of the area.

We set off at 6.30 and our first stop was at Karoopoort, now only a few old buildings but formerly an important meeting place for Trekkers with their ox-wagons coming through the various passes into the valley. Near the old hotel pomegranates were ripening on the trees, and behind was an avenue of fig trees. Karoo Chats were fairly common here, and we also saw Cape Sparrow, Acacia Pied Barbet, and Greater Striped Swallow. We drove on along the gravel road with frequent stops for photographs of Jackal Buzzard and Pale Chanting Goshawk on the telegraph posts, as well as



Greater Striped Swallow

sightings of Secretary Bird and White-necked Raven. At Eierkop, a small kopjie rising out of the plain, we stopped briefly as it is a known site for several unusual species, but with Ian's camera equipment it was impossible to scramble up the steep sides, so we drove on to Skitterykloof (better not translated!) where there was a small oasis with a reed-bordered dam and several shady trees. We enjoyed a picnic lunch and some excellent birding, with Fairy Flycatcher, Spotted Flycatcher, Bokmakierie and White-backed Mousebird. Again we missed many of the "specials" but as our time was limited and it is easier to photograph the more obvious birds, we were fully satisfied with our day in the Tanqua Karoo. In the evening Claus invited us to his house to put our photographs onto a disc and also to enable Ian to photograph the juvenile African Goshawk which had nearly been killed by their cat on its first flight, as the nest was in a huge oak tree in their garden.

Next day we drove on to Langebaan on the Atlantic Coast via Veldriff on the Berg river, where there is a Cerebos salt works and the pans attract a wide variety of waterbirds. A bird hide projects into one of the pans just before crossing the bridge by the Riviera Hotel. Here there were Flamingoes, Pelicans and Reed Cormorants but also a number of Palearctic waders like Common Greenshank, Black-winged Stilt, and Grey Plover too. The surrounding area is very dry and at one point we saw at

least eight Black-headed Herons crowded onto a water trough – probably the only available water for miles.

Langebaan, is a small seaside town 30 kilometres from Veldriff, where we stayed at the very comfortable Glenfinnan Guesthouse. Kay made us most welcome and gave us good advice about local birding. There are no trees in her front garden but the back of the house looks onto a scrubby area with a thorn tree right beside her wall, so it was an excellent place for Ian to photograph White-backed Mousebirds, Pied Starlings and Yellow Canaries. That evening she directed us to the quarry where we waited patiently to see the Verreaux's Eagles which roost in the quarry. During the breeding season they nest in the quarry, but by this time of the year the young had fledged. Our patience was rewarded as just as we had decided to walk back to the car the two large eagles circled around and landed on the top of a hill. Bokmakierie and Pied Starling were also common in the quarry area. As we drove off, a Southern Black Korhaan came right up to the car and afforded Ian some excellent shots.



Black Oystercatcher and Cattle Egret

We had a full day in the West Coast National Park but unfortunately we did not time the visit to the bird hide at the best tide, as the water was so distant that the birds were hard to see but Ian took long shots of Cape Shelduck, Caspian Tern and near the hide, Cape, or Orange-throated Longclaw. In fact the restaurant at the Geelbek Conservation Centre proved to be a better place for photography as the birds were ridiculously tame. A male Yellow Bishop in eclipse plumage even landed on our table and Cape Weavers stole nuts from under our noses.

Ostriches were common in the park and Black Shouldered Kites not uncommon. We managed to spot an Osprey eating a fish on the top of a telegraph pole. Ian photographed a Karoo Scrub Robin (similar to a Karoo Chat) but has a white eye-stripe. We drove round to Kraal Bay at the northern end of the lagoon, where there was a

bathing spot which looked very inviting but of course no one had told us to take our swimming things and it was too public for skinny dipping!

On our last day we drove slowly down to Cape Town stopping first at the Koeberg Nature Reserve next to South Africa's only Nuclear Power Station. Initially we thought that it would be difficult to find birds in the heat of the day, but at the Conservation Centre there were trees and an irrigated lawn which attracted the birds in numbers, so we saw a male Malachite Sunbird in eclipse plumage, a juvenile Klaas's Cuckoo, and Red-faced Mousebirds amongst others.

At Blaubergerstrand we stopped to have lunch by the sea and photograph Table Mountain across Table Bay, as well as some familiar Hartlaub's gulls. We flew out that night after a very interesting and satisfying holiday, having enjoyed beautiful sunny days with hardly a cloud in the sky. About 80 of Ian's photographs from this trip have now been posted onto the African Bird Club's website, www.birdquest.net/afbid.

BIRD LIST FOR CAPE TOWN AND THE WESTERN CAPE

African Penguin (E)	<i>Sphenicus demersus</i>
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>
White-breasted Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax lucidus</i>
Cape Cormorant (E)	<i>Phalacrocorax capensis</i>
Bank Cormorant (E)	<i>Phalacrocorax neglectus</i>
Reed Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i>
Crowned Cormorant (E)	<i>Phalacrocorax coronatus</i>
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>
Yellow-billed Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Hadedda Ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>
African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>
Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>
Lesser Flamingo	<i>Phoeniconais minor</i>
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>
South African Shelduck (E)	<i>Tadorna cana</i>
Yellow-billed Duck	<i>Anas undulata</i>
Cape Teal	<i>Anas capensis</i>
Red-billed Teal	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>
Cape Shoveller (E)	<i>Anas smithii</i>
Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectroperus gambensis</i>
Secretary Bird	<i>Sagittarius serpentarius</i>
Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
Verreaux's Eagle	<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>
African Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>
Steppe Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>

Jackal Buzzard (E)	<i>Buteo rufofuscus</i>
African Goshawk	<i>Accipiter tachiro</i>
Southern Pale Chanting Goshawk (NE)	<i>Melierax canorus</i>
African Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus ranivorus</i>
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>
Rock Kestrel	<i>Falco rupicolus</i>
Cape Francolin	<i>Pternistes capensis</i>
Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>
Blue Crane (E)	<i>Anthropoides paradiseus</i>
African Purple Swampphen	<i>Porphyrio madagascariensis</i>
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>
Southern Black Korhaan (E)	<i>Eupodotis afra</i>
African Black Oystercatcher (E)	<i>Haematopus moquini</i>
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Three-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>
Crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>
Blacksmith Lapwing	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Common Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Cape Gull	<i>Larus vetula</i>
Grey-headed Gull	<i>Larus cirrocephalus</i>
Hartlaub's Gull (E)	<i>Larus hartlaubii</i>
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>
Swift Tern	<i>Sterna bergii</i>
White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonius leucopterus</i>
Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>
Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>
Cape Turtle (Ring-necked) Dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>
Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>
Klaas's Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>
Speckled Mousebird	<i>Colius striatus</i>
White-backed Mousebird (E)	<i>Colius colius</i>
Red-faced Mousebird	<i>Urocolius indicus</i>
Malachite Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo cristata</i>
Acacia Pied Barbet (NE)	<i>Tricholaema leucomelas</i>
Cape Long-billed Lark (E)	<i>Certhilauda curvirostris</i>
Red-capped Lark	<i>Calandrella cinerea</i>
Rufous-naped Lark	<i>Mirafra africana</i>
Barn (European) Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
White-throated Swallow	<i>Hirundo albigularis</i>
Red-breasted (Rufous-chested) Swallow	<i>Hirundo semirufa</i>
Greater Striped Swallow (E)	<i>Hirundo cucullata</i>

Rock Martin	<i>Hurindo fuligula</i>
Brown-throated Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>
Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>
Cape Crow	<i>Corvus capensis</i>
Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>
White-necked raven	<i>Corvus albicollis</i>
Cape Bulbul (E)	<i>Pycnonotus capensis</i>
Olive Thrush	<i>Turdus olivaceus</i>
Capped Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe monticola</i>
Familiar Chat	<i>Cercomela familiaris</i>
Karoo Chat (NE)	<i>Cercomela schlegelii</i>
African Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>
Cape Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha caffra</i>
Karoo Scrub-Robin (E)	<i>Erythropygia coryphoeus</i>
Little Rush-Warbler (Af. Sedge Warbler)	<i>Bradypterus baboecala</i>
Bar-throated Apalis	<i>Apalis thoracica</i>
Long-billed Crombec	<i>Sylvietta rufescens</i>
Cape Grassbird (E)	<i>Sphenoeacus afer</i>
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
Levaillant's Cisticola	<i>Cisticola tinniens</i>
Karoo Prinia (E)	<i>Prinia maculosa</i>
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
African Dusky Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa adusta</i>
Fairy Flycatcher	<i>Stenostira scita</i>
Cape Wagtail	<i>Motacilla capensis</i>
Long-billed Pipit	<i>Anthus similis</i>
Cape Longclaw (E)	<i>Macronyx capensis</i>
Common Fiscal Shrike	<i>Lanius collaris</i>
Southern Boubou (E)	<i>Laniarius ferrugineus</i>
Bokmakierie (E)	<i>Telephorus zeylonus</i>
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Pied Starling (E)	<i>Spreo bicolor</i>
Red-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus morio</i>
Malachite Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia famosa</i>
Orange-breasted Sunbird (E)	<i>Nectarinia violacea</i>
Southern Double-collared Sunbird (E)	<i>Nectarinia chalybeus</i>
Cape White-eye (E)	<i>Zosterops pallidus</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Cape Sparrow (NE)	<i>Passer melanurus</i>
Cape Weaver (E)	<i>Ploceus capensis</i>
Yellow Bishop (Yellow-rumped Whydah)	<i>Euplectes capensis</i>
Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>
Yellow Canary (NE)	<i>Serinus flaviventris</i>
Cape Bunting (NE)	<i>Emberiza capensis</i>

MALAYSIA
OCTOBER 17- 29 2008

(Keith Cherry)

Although the North Herts Bird Club had already been on a short trip to Finland in May, it only proved to be an appetiser for our main trip to Malaysia. Unfortunately we could only muster five people, namely, Trevor Brownsel, Richard Pople, Tony Hukin, John Tomkins and myself. Trevor set about the arrangements and booked up the trip with Endemicguides.com, a locally based company with a good reputation. We would be visiting three sites, Kuala Selangor Nature Park, Fraser's Hill, and finally Taman Negara National Park.

ITINERARY

October 17th Early morning flight from Heathrow with Gulf Air to Bahrain. Changed aircraft for flight to Kuala Lumpur.
October 18th Meet guide and transfer to Kuala Selangor area, birding all day. Check into to our resort accommodation, the De Palma Inn.
October 19th Birding Kuala Selangor area, transfer to Fraser's Hill, via Krau Forest, our accommodation being the Shahzan Inn.
October 20th Birding Fraser's Hill.
October 21st Birding Fraser's Hill.
October 22nd Birding Fraser's Hill.
October 23rd Birding Fraser's Hill, transfer to Taman Negara National Park, our accommodation will be the Mutiara Resort.
October 24th Birding Taman Negara.
October 25th Birding Taman Negara.
October 26th Birding Taman Negara.
October 27th Birding Taman Negara, transfer to Concorn Inn Hotel via Krau Forest.

TRIP REPORT

Day's 1&2: Friday/Saturday October 17&18th.

After a delay of one hour, due to the late arrival of our minibus, we set off for Heathrow terminal 3 where we would be boarding our 10:00 hrs Gulf Air flight to Bahrain. After the expected tedious procedures we eventually got on board the aircraft at 09:30 and departed at 10:40. We soon settled down for our 6hrs 10 minutes flight. After a 1hour 30 minutes transfer we boarded our Gulf Air flight to Kuala Lumpur and faced another 7hour 30 minutes in the air. It has to be done! No in-flight problems so we arrived at Kuala Lumpur tired but full of great expectations. We met up with our guide Lee Kok Chung, ("Lee") and our driver "Winston", both of who are Malay Chinese. We loaded up and set off for a coastal area within Kuala Selangor. It was not long before we started seeing birds including numerous White-breasted Kingfishers, also Pacific Swallow, Common Mynah, Brown Shrike and a Black-shouldered Kite. We turned off the main road into a small fishing village. We walked a short distance to a covered verandah overlooking a Tidal Creek, bordered by areas of mangrove and occasional scrub. On the muddy banks were various waders including Greater Sand Plover, Lesser Sand Plover, Marsh Sandpiper, Curlew

Sandpiper and a solitary Terek Sandpiper. We soon added Collared Kingfisher, Black-capped Kingfisher, Intermediate Egret, Great-White Egret, Large Billed Crow and several of the unattractive but amazing Lesser Adjutant Stork. A Brahminy Kite gave good views as it did a graceful fly past, soon to be followed by a small flock of



Lesser Adjutant Stork

rapidly moving Blue-tailed Bee-eater's. Other birds that were seen included Javan Mynah, Glossy/ White- bellied Swiftlet, Black-crowned Night Heron, Striated Heron, Brown-throated Sunbird and the common Yellow-vented Bulbul. The main target bird for this site is the Milky Stork but no luck today.

Moving on from there, our next stop was an elevated roadside verge overlooking an area of mixed habitat, consisting of trees, scrub and grasses. It was not long before birds were being picked up including a perched Long-tailed Parakeet, Common Flameback, Dollarbird, Oriental Honey Buzzard, Hill Mynah, Black-bellied Malkoha and

Edible-nest Swiftlet. We moved on and stopped at a site looking for Chinese Pond Heron, we drove along the side of a small stream and it was not long before we spotted our quarry. A huge Estuarine (Salt Water) Crocodile was also seen close by. The last location of the day was a vast area of Paddy Fields. Following the roads through the fields we saw Cinnamon Bittern, Watercock, Ashy Drongo, Black-naped Oriole, Scaly-breasted Munia and Asian Koel.

It was now time to call an end to what had been a long, tiring, but exciting day. We made our way to our accommodation seeing, Barn Owl and Pied Hornbill on route. We were in for a shock when we arrived as our original hotel had been double booked and we were to stay in inferior chalets at the Firefly Resort. The chalets were built above a mangrove lagoon, very picturesque but of poor quality. If that was not bad enough, those in the three man room were expected to share a double bed. As you can imagine after being on the go for nearly 36 hours all we needed was a good night's sleep. After lodging our protest, Lee managed to sort it out and we were given an extra chalet. While Trevor, Richard and I got ready for dinner John and Tony found the energy to take a short boat ride to observe the areas special event, Fireflies, flashing in synchrony where thousands of Fireflies flash their glow in the Mangrove (Berembang) trees. We all showered and changed for dinner but the very high humidity soon made that a pointless exercise. We now faced another shock and disappointment! We set out on the trip thinking that we had paid for half board but the reality was, we were on bed and breakfast only, so we were now faced with having to pay for our evening meals. Coupled with the fact that a can of beer was 4 pounds we were feeling a bit fed up!

Day 3: Sunday 19th October:

We arose to a very hot and humid day, temperatures that we were going to have to get used to, and after breakfast we loaded the van and set off to the Kuala Selangor Nature Park. We stopped at a lake surrounded by areas of woodland. There is a system of boardwalks through the woodland that make exploring the areas much easier with the occasional tower hide for canopy views. It was not long before we were picking up new birds, including, Pink-necked Pigeon, Ashy Minivet, Pied Fantail, Ashy Tailorbird, Tiger Shrike, Chestnut-bellied Malkoha, Laced Woodpecker, Ruby-cheeked Sunbird, Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker, Little Bronze Cuckoo, Golden-bellied Gerygone and a stunning Crested Serpent Eagle perched close by. We did try climbing one of the towers that was being renovated, but apart from me banging my head on a scaffold beam, nothing of value was added.

Lee decided to return to the tidal creek to try again for Milky Stork. Despite spending quite some time there the Storks failed to show but a White-bellied Sea Eagle was added to our list. We were, however, treated to the thrilling sight of a family group of five Asian Short Clawed Otters as they made their way along the creek towards us.

Keeping out of the sun it was time to move on to Fraser's Hill and some very welcome cooler temperatures. On route we stopped at a pond for Lesser Whistling Duck and also added Little Grebe. Also seen were Striated Swallow, Osprey, Black-thighed Falconet and Rufescent Prinia. By the time we arrived at Fraser's Hill it was close to darkness. We had to wait for 19:00 hrs before we could proceed, as the road in and out is only wide enough for one line of traffic, so entry and egress is strictly timed. When we arrived at Shahzan Inn we again had the sharing a double bed problem, so once again Lee had to explain our reluctance to this situation and another room was forthcoming. After our evening meal a short walk produced a perched Brown Wood Owl, a nice way to end the day

Day 4: Monday 20th October:

Fraser's Hill was originally established as an early 19th century British hill station and the centre of this small town still has a gentle English village feel about it. Some of the early buildings are still standing including the old Post Office. The hill station is surrounded by mature montane forest with a good network of roads and trails that make looking for the colourful montane birds a lot easier.



The Old Post Office

Up at 06:45 for birding before breakfast. Firstly we tried a well known area for Malayan Whistling Thrush but no luck. We went for a short drive to the front of a nearby hotel and as we arrived a good bird wave was going through. Every man for himself was the cry! We all managed to see the vast majority of the birds; Mountain

Bulbul, Orange-bellied Leafbird, Little Pied Flycatcher, Long-tailed Sibia, Chestnut-capped Laughing Thrush, along with many more including Streaked Spiderhunter, Black-throated Sunbird, Greater Yellownape Woodpecker, Fire-tufted Barbet, Imperial Mountain Pigeon and Silver-eared Mesia. After catching our breath we returned to the hotel for a good breakfast.



Chestnut-capped Laughing Thrush

Lee decided that we would walk the Semantan Road which leads to the waterfall. The much cooler temperatures made walking a more pleasant experience. As we walked it was not long before a Javan Cuckoo Shrike was seen, soon to be followed by Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, a perched Black and Crimson Oriole and flyover by a Crested Serpent Eagle. As we approached the track to the waterfall a small tree held a large flock of Everett's White-eye. A Green-billed Malkoha took our attention as it

flew across a small gully to our left and was briefly joined by an erratic and noisy Little Spiderhunter. As we walked down the track to the waterfall a beautiful Rajah Brooks Birdwing Butterfly flew around the reeds bordering the small river. As the river picked up pace we saw one of the main reasons for coming here, a pair of stunning Slaty-backed Forktail's. These were shortly followed by Black-crested Bulbul, Paradise Flycatcher, Blue-winged Leafbird, Black Laughing Thrush, Crimson Winged Woodpecker and a Blythe's Hawk Eagle.

A birding trip abroad would not be complete without a visit to the local rubbish dump and this trip was to be no exception. The dump was fairly quiet with Grey Wagtail, Verditer Flycatcher and Bar-winged Flycatcher Shrike being seen quite quickly. We were almost in the process of moving on when the cry Hornbill! went up from Lee. As we looked out from the dump and into the valley below, two Rhinoceros Hornbill's flew across from right to left. This bird had been on everybody's wish list so naturally spirits were greatly lifted. Lee decided to move on so we walked for a short way along Hemmant trail and saw Large Niltava and Mountain Fulvetta. It was time to return to the hotel for lunch and the weather turned to heavy rain.



Slaty-Backed Forktail

The rain storms were starting to form a pattern, with heavy rain in the evening and similar strength storms at lunchtime. Fortunately the lunchtime rains only last for an hour or so, so very little birding time is lost. During the afternoon we walked the New Road and new birds came thick and fast in the form of Red-headed Trogon,

Chestnut-crowned Warbler, Golden Babbler and Black Eagle. We stopped for a short break at a bend in the road with an open aspect to see what birds may fly through. Lee spotted a Binturong (Cat Bear), high in the tree line on the adjacent hill side. It was feeding in a ripe fig tree. This is a very scarce animal that is rarely seen in daylight, so we were all thrilled to see it. As if that was not good enough it was soon to be



Large Niltava

joined by a Great Hornbill! Great views were had of both. New birds started to become a bit harder to find but Buff-rumped Woodpecker, Brown Barbet, Dark-sided Flycatcher and Speckled Piculet were seen.

Day 5: Tuesday 21st October:

As usual we checked out the shaded gulley by the entry gate for the Malaysian Whistling Thrush, but no luck, we did however see two Slaty-backed Forktail's flying into and around a roadside culvert. This

morning's visit to the hotel only produced House Swift and the very colourful Black-browed Barbet as new additions to the list, and we also picked up a migratory Richard's Pipit on the golf course. After breakfast we walked the Semantan and Waterfall roads again, with very little luck. After a lot of effort only Ashy Bulbul was new to our list, due entirely to the fact that we did not hit on a bird wave. Torrential rain brought proceedings to an abrupt halt so we retired for lunch. Lee had planned to walk the Bishop's trail this afternoon, but changed his mind as it would now be far too wet. So we walked the New Road again but new birds were once again hard to find, with Grey-throated Babbler, Black-crested Bulbul and an elusive Banded Broadbill being all we had seen. We then picked up a beautiful Blue Nuthatch and the stunning Sultan Tit. There are no guarantees when it comes to birding and luck is always the most precious commodity.

To finish the day we went to a roadside lookout that overlooked a deep tree filled valley. Lee had seen Wreathed Hornbill use this area as a roost, so we all hoped we would be lucky this time. After quite a while a Wreathed Hornbill flew across the valley. It landed in a tree where we all had great views. As the light



Green Magpie

started to fade a large feeding flock of Silver-rumped Swift's brought the days birding to a close. That evening we had a prolonged torrential rainstorm and when we went to a local Chinese restaurant for dinner, only to find it had run out of rice, we knew it had not been our day.

Day 6: Wednesday 22nd October:

New day: Renewed enthusiasm. Our usual and last chance search for the Malaysian Whistling Thrush proved once again to be unsuccessful, so we moved on to the nearby hotel. The only new bird here today was a real stunner in the shape of a Green Magpie that fed on red berries as it noisily moved around the trees. We returned for breakfast before setting out to walk the Gap Road. We set off in the minibus down the Gap Road only to find that the overnight rain had caused a landslide to such an extent that the road was blocked. We had no option than to walk, sooner than had been planned. It was not long before we were seeing birds, including Blue-winged Minla, Orange-backed Woodpecker, Crimson-winged Woodpecker and Grey-chinned Minivet. We then went off road along a trail seeking one of the hardest birds to see in the area, the Malaysian Rail Babbler! Lee started to play its call and after what seemed ages Lee indicated that it was getting closer. Any bird that walks on the forest floor is always very difficult to see and this one was proving extremely difficult. Luckily and eventually, everyone managed to get acceptable views so we were all delighted that one of our ambitious target birds was actually seen.

After leaving the trail we immediately picked up a Red-bearded Bee-eater and an Ochraceous Bulbul. The search for the Rail Babbler had taken up more time than we realised and it was now time for lunch. Fortunately the landslide had now been cleared so we were relieved when the minibus turned up as we did not fancy the long uphill walk that would have been in front of us. During lunch a large black bird was seen flying high over the trees towards us. As it came closer, it soon became obvious that it was a Black Hornbill, which is very unusual to be seen at this altitude. That



Streaked Spiderhunter

afternoon we set off to walk the Bishop's Trail. This trail is probably the best known in Fraser's Hill as it can, if you are lucky, produce good bird waves containing a good number of species. The trail was slippery and therefore quite hard to walk on and the rise in temperature made it more unpleasant. The leeches were everywhere we stood or walked and were a constant problem, especially for John, who managed to attract as many as the rest of us

put together. The only new birds that were seen were Rufous-browed Flycatcher, White-browed Shrike Babbler and a Pygmy Blue Flycatcher that was only seen by John. After the pre-tour build up that we gave this trail, it has to go down as a huge disappointment. We now moved on to try the loop road that leads to the Telegraph Station. The main target species here was the Cutia, which has been seen here in the past. Alas it was not to be seen, but we did see Asian Brown Flycatcher, Fire-tufted Barbet, Streaked Spiderhunter, Sultan Tit and Pale Martin.

Day7: Thursday 23rd October:

Up at 04:00hrs for a 05:00 hrs leave for Taman Nagara, via Krau Forest: After a couple of hours we stopped at what was to be a very productive site. We parked the minibus on the road and walked between a small collection of dwellings into an area of secondary regrowth and man made fishpools. No sooner had we started to walk than we were seeing birds. A Crimson-winged Woodpecker was soon followed by Fork-tailed Swift, Green Iora, Common Iora, Purple-backed Starling and a Yellow Bittern which, sat nervously at the edge of a fishpool. A few minutes further on we saw Rufous Woodpecker, Black Cuckoo, Longbilled Spiderhunter, Olive-winged Bulbul and a number of Blue-rumped Parrots flew through the clearing at high speed. After jumping over a small muddy pool we moved into another lightly wooded area which held Raffles Malkoha, Banded Bay Cuckoo and Stripe-throated Bulbul. On the way back to the minibus we added Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker and Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot. Just as we arrived at the minibus a Golden-whiskered Barbet landed into a tree opposite and then a Pied Hornbill landed in a tree behind us. It was a shame to move on but move on we must. At Krau forest we parked near the entrance to the Deerland Park and started to walk the road that runs through the forest.

As you can imagine it was not long before we were into the birds including Little Spiderhunter, Ruby-cheeked Sunbird, Striped Tit Babbler, Blue-naped Monarch, Orange-bellied Flowerpecker, Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker and a Thick-billed Spiderhunter was seen by a few of the group. As we walked on the heat and humidity was starting to climb making even a steady walk quite unpleasant. We picked up Hairy-backed Babbler, Dark-throated Oriole, Yellow-bellied Bulbul, Grey-cheeked Bulbul, Buff-vented Bulbul and White-rumped Shama before the heat finally got to a few of us and we decided to call it a day and head for Taman Nagara.

Taman Nagara National Park is a huge park covering some 4300 kms with a long list of birds to its credit. Having said that, finding birds involves walking trails that can be tough enough in their own right, but coupled with the usual heat and humidity, can



On the River Taxi

become quite hard to endure. Some trails involve fairly steep climbs and descents with tree roots as your steps and the occasional rope provided to assist you. Birds can be hard to come across on these trails but no trip to Malaysia would be complete without a visit to this vibrant place.

Having left Krau Forest early we made another stop beside a track which led towards the old Airport Runway. We walked the track seeing Black-thighed Falconet, Black and Red Broadbill, Scarlet-

rumped Trogon, Chestnut-winged Babbler, Crimson-breasted Flowerpecker, Black and Yellow Broadbill on the way and Red-wattled Lapwing and Paddyfield Pipit at the runway. After this quite productive interlude we rejoined the Mini bus and set off

for Taman Nagara. Catching a River Taxi is the only way to get across to the Mutiara Resort. These are very frequent and cost 5 Ringets (£1). On the other side we dragged our bags up several flights of stairs only to be told at the top that we should have used the luggage hoist. Thanks for telling us Lee! Darkness was beginning to descend as we made the fifteen minute walk to our chalets and we were extremely hot by the time we reached them. The accomodation here is provided by seperate chalets which are air conditioned and comfortable. Single beds are provided, but in the three man room there was only two! Here we go again! Our bedding arrangements have been a source of frustration ever since we got here so Tony had to spend the first night on the couch. Moral of the story: Make sure you have an even number of people. After a refreshing shower we were all looking forward to what tomorrow might bring.

Day 8 : Friday 24th October :

The Mutiara Taman Resort is ideally situated where the Tembeling and the Tehan River's meet, giving ideal access to both the forest and river systems. The area around the resort consists mainly of dense lowland rainforest, a particularly difficult environment for birdwatching, especially if you are accustomed to more open situations

Today was a long and hot one during which we walked around the resort area seeing Blue-throated Bee-eater, Grey-breasted Spiderhunter, Streaked Bulbul, Buff-vented Bulbul and Lesser Green Leafbird. We spent the rest of the morning walking Lubok Simpon Trail. Without labouring the humidity point too much, it is essential to have lots of water when walking these trails. There can be periods of inactivity on the trails, so at times it can be fairly hard work for little reward. New birds were being seen though such as Black-winged Flycatcher Shrike, Straw-headed Bulbul, Scaly-crowned Bulbul, Abbot's Babbler, Grey-bellied and Yellow-bellied Bulbul's. A Rhinoceros Hornbill landed in a tree above our heads and a Banded Pitta led us a merry song and dance until we had all managed to see it. Our final bird of the morning was a Crested Partridge which was seen by most of the group.



Mutiara Taman Resort

After lunch we set off on theTahan Bumbun trail. These trails link in with other trails so there is a difficulty being sure as to which trail we finish on. It was a typically hard walk, but we did see birds such as a family party of Crested Fireback Pheasants that walked, for a short while, on the trail ahead of us before melting into the forest. Other new birds included Thick-billed Green Pigeon, Banded Woodpecker, Buff-rumped Woodpecker, Black Drongo, Purple-naped Sunbird, Red-throated Barbet and a migrant Crow-billed Drongo.

Our evenings here are obviously confined to the resort. There is a very good restaurant with plenty of beer available, should the need arise! There are escorted Mammal Walks every evening and plenty of people seem to take advantage of the opportunity. As for us, all wanted to do was relax, having walked enough during the day. That's where the beer comes in!

Day 9: Saturday 25th October:

We started the day with our usual stroll around the resort, the only new birds being Cream-vented Bulbul and Dark-throated Tailorbird. During this walk we managed to 'lose' John. He dashed off to the toilet with the instructions that we would be heading for the campsite being shouted to him. It transpired that we deviated off the route and John dutifully followed his instruction. After quite some time Lee went to look for him, while we waited near a fruiting Fig tree, only for John to appear from the direction of the campsite. He was extremely hot and pretty exhausted having rushed to the campsite and then down the trail thinking we had gone on ahead. Needless to say he was not amused. We had lost a lot of time so we all made our way to the trail leading from the campsite, seeing Short-tailed Babbler, Greater Leafbird, Red-eyed Bulbul and numerous Asian Fairy Bluebirds'. We then boarded a river taxi and crossed the River Tembeling to do some birding along the other bank. This proved to be quite productive with Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Fiery Minivet, Scarlett Minivet, Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker and Plain Sunbird being seen.



Stork-billed Kingfisher

This afternoon we waited to pick up a boat for a trip along the Tembeling River. The short boat trip did not produce much so we stopped at the river's edge to walk a trail. This trail took us close to a settlement of Indigenous Native Malaysian. The trail produced four new birds namely Crested Jay, Moustached Babbler, the beautiful Green Broadbill and the stunning Garnet Pitta which, after hearing it, Lee patiently called in until it bounced across the track in front of us. Other nice birds we saw included Black-and Yellow Broadbill, Red-bearded Bee-eater and Rufous-crowned Babbler. This brought the day's birding to a satisfying close.

Day 10: Sunday 26th October:

This morning's stroll produced only a Spectacled Bulbul as an addition to the list. We then made our way to the jetty to board two long tailed canoes for a trip up the Tahan River. The powerful outboard motors propelled us at quite a speed so the cool air was fantastic. We slowed down to look at a Greater Coucal. This was soon followed by a perched Lesser Fish Eagle and a Stork-billed Kingfisher was seen well by everyone.

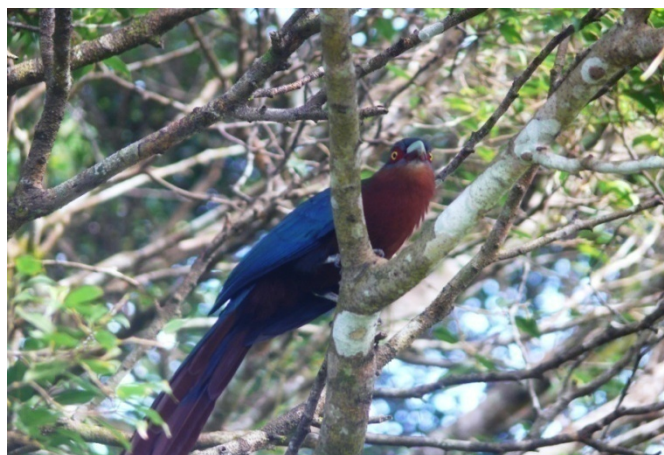
The canoes were brought close in to the river bank, prior to a small area of rapids, and after removing our boots and socks we waded the short distance to the bank. We set out on the Lata Berkoh Trail. The trail is fairly flat so quite easy to walk. Being a Sunday there were several people out on the trail which made listening for birds harder than usual. The birds were being very shy, but at a picnic/camp site we saw probably the rarest bird of the trip, namely a Scarlet-breasted Flowerpecker. Only one



Lesser Fish Eagle

or two of the group had seen the bird before it flew off, so we were greatly relieved when, thanks to Lee's persistence, he managed to relocate the bird and we all admired it as it sat preening. It was only the second time that Lee had seen this bird and the first time in Malaysia so he was extremely pleased. This seemed a fitting moment to return for lunch. The return boat trip produced a number of perched Whiskered Treeswift's.

After lunch Richard and John decided to pass on the afternoon walk, but not before we added Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher to our list, so the remainder set off on what proved to be the toughest trail yet. Again the birds were proving hard to come by and coupled with some steep climbs and descents things were quite unpleasant. However we did eventually pick up some new birds including the tiny Rufous Piculet, the stunning Chestnut-naped Forktail, White-necked Babbler and another chance to see Orange-backed Woodpecker and Green Broadbill. We returned to our chalets, pretty tired but overall pleased with the days birding.



Chestnut-breasted Malkoha

Day 11: Monday 27th October:

Our last morning at Taman Negara and our usual morning walk produced Asian Fairy Blue bird, Chestnut-breasted Malkoha, Green Iora, Chestnut-winged Babbler, Greater Racket- tailed Drongo, Purple-necked Sunbird and a Changeable Hawk Eagle soared overhead.

We packed up our gear, loaded up the River Taxi and crossed the river for the last time. Winston was waiting for us on the other side so we loaded up and set off for the airport with another visit to Krau Forest scheduled on route. We arrived at Krau Forest and Winston dropped us off at the end of the road that dissects the Forest, near the entrance to the Biological Station. Emerald Dove was seen, even before we had

got out of the bus. As we walked back towards the Deerland Park entrance we saw Spectacled Spiderhunter, Dark-throated Oriole and Plain Sunbird and added Short-tailed Babbler, Sooty-capped Babbler and a very elusive Large Wren Babbler to our list. The two that had missed the Thick-billed Spiderhunter on our previous visit were delighted when one put in an obliging appearance. At this point it was 16:30 hours and John asked Lee when we would be setting off for the hotel as it was about a three hour drive away. It seemed that Lee intended to bird as long as possible and then set off. After a short discussion we decided to set off now rather than arrive at the hotel very late, with little chance of getting an evening meal. We arrived at the Concorn Inn Hotel, unloaded and bade farewell to Lee and Winston. We settled in and reflected on what had been great trip, tough at times, but an exhilarating experience. The following morning we departed the hotel, via their courtesy bus, to Kuala Lumpur Airport for our flight home via Bahrain. At Bahrain Airport we added Indian Roller to our trip list. Birdwatchers never rest!



North Herts Bird Club at Taman Nagara

Trip Summary:

Travel: Flights with Gulf Air were good with very little delays.

Accommodation: Overall the Hotels were of a good standard apart from the Firefly Resort which was disappointing.

Costs: Endemic Guides £798: Accommodation and Breakfast Flights£524

Weather: Predictably Hot and Humid

Reference Books:

Birds of South- East Asia : Craig Robson, ISBN: 978-1-84330-746-4.

Trip List Locations:

KLA:	Kuala Lumpur Area
TRC:	Tidal River Creek
PFA:	Paddy Fields Area
KSA:	Kuala Selangor Area
FHA:	Fraser's Hill Area
KFA:	Krau Forest Area
TN:	Taman Nagara
TRAN:	Transit

TRIP LIST:

Little Grebe	Transit to Fraser's Hill
Grey Heron	KLA, TRC
Purple Heron	PFA
Great Egret	TRC
Intermediate Egret	TRC
Little Egret	TRC
Chinese Pond Heron	KSA, KFA
Cattle Egret	Transit to Fraser's Hill
Striated Heron	TRC
Black-crowned Night Heron	TRC
Yellow Bittern	KFA
Cinnamon Bittern	PFA
Lesser Adjutant Stork	TRC
Lesser Whistling Duck	Transit to Fraser's Hill
Osprey	Transit to Fraser's Hill
Oriental Honey Buzzard	KLA, KSA, FHA,
Black-shouldered Kite	KLA, KSA
Brahminy Kite	TRC, KSA
White-bellied Sea Eagle	TRC
Lesser Fish Eagle	TN
Crested Serpent Eagle	KSA, FHA, TN
Black Eagle	FHA
Changeable Hawk Eagle	TN
Blyth's Hawk Eagle	FHA
Black-thighed Falconet	FHA, KFA
Crested Partridge	TN
Red Junglefowl	Heard
Crested Fireback Pheasant	TN
White-breasted Waterhen	PFA
Watercock	PFA
Red-wattled Lapwing	TN
Common Ringed Plover	TRC
Lesser Sand Plover	TRC
Greater Sand Plover	TRC
Whimbrel	TRC

Common Redshank	TRC
Marsh Sandpiper	CA
Wood Sandpiper	TRC
Terek Sandpiper	TRC
Common Sandpiper	TRC
Curlew Sandpiper	TRC
White-winged Tern	TRC
Spotted Dove	KLA
Little Cuckoo-Dove	FHA
Emerald Dove	KFA
Peaceful Dove	KSA
Little Green Pigeon	TN
Pink-necked Green Pigeon	KSA
Thick-billed Green Pigeon	TN
Mountain Imperial Pigeon	FHA
Feral Pigeon	Most Areas
Blue-rumped Parrot	KFA
Long-tailed Parakeet	KSA, KFA
Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot	TN
Banded Bay Cuckoo	KFA
Little Bronze Cuckoo	KSA
Asian Drongo Cuckoo	KFA
Asian (Common) Koel	PFA
Black-bellied Malkoha	KSA
Chestnut-bellied Malkoha	KLA, FHA
Green-billed Malkoha	FHA
Raffles Malkoha	Transit to Krau Forest, TN
Chestnut-breasted Malkoha	TN
Greater Coucal	TN
Barn Owl	PFA
Brown Wood Owl	FHA
Glossy Swiftlet	TRC
Edible-nest Swiftlet	KSA
Silver-rumped Needletail	FHA
Asian Palm Swift	PFA
Fork-tailed Swift	KLA, KFA
House Swift	FHA
Whiskered Treeswift	TN
Scarlet-rumped Trogon	TN
Red-headed Trogon	FHA
Stork-billed Kingfisher	TN
White-throated Kingfisher	Most Areas
Black-capped Kingfisher	TRC, KSA, TN
Collared Kingfisher	TRC, KSA
Red-bearded Bee-eater	FHA, TN
Blue-throated Bee-eater	FHA, TN
Blue-tailed Bee-eater	TRC
Indian Roller	Bahrain Airport
Dollarbird	KSA, KFA
Oriental Pied Hornbill	KSA, FHA, TN

Black Hornbill	FHA
Rhinoceros Hornbill	FHA, TN
Great Hornbill	FHA
Wreathed Hornbill	FHA
Fire-tufted Barbet	FHA
Gold-whiskered Barbet	KFA
Red-throated Barbet	TN
Black-browed Barbet	FHA
Brown Barbet	FHA
Speckled Piculet	FHA
Rufous Piculet	TN
Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker	KSA
Rufous Woodpecker	KFA
Banded Woodpecker	TN
Crimson-winged Woodpecker	FHA, KFA, TN
Greater Yellownape	FHA
Laced Woodpecker	KSA,
Common Flameback	KSA,
Orange-backed Woodpecker	FHA, TN
Buff-rumped Woodpecker	FHA, TN
Buff-necked Woodpecker	TN
Black-and-red Broadbill	TN
Banded Broadbill	FHA
Black-and- yellow Broadbill	KFA, TN
Green Broadbill	TN
Banded Pitta	TN
Garnet Pitta	TN
Barn Swallow	KLA, KSA, TRC
Pacific Swallow	TRC, KSA
Red-rumped Swallow	Transit to Fraser's Hill
Striated Swallow	Transit to Fraser's Hill
Grey Wagtail	TRC, FHA
Oriental (Paddyfield) Pipit	TN
Richards Pipit	FHA
Javan Cuckoo-shrike	FHA
Pied Triller	FHA
Ashy Minivet	FHA
Fiery Minivet	TN
Scarlet Minivet	TN
Grey-chinned Minivet	FHA
Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	FHA
Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike	KFA
Straw-headed Bulbul	TN
Black-headed Bulbul	KFA
Black-crested Bulbul	FHA
Grey-bellied Bulbul	TN
Stripe-throated Bulbul	KFA
Yellow-vented Bulbul	All Areas
Olive-winged Bulbul	KFA
Cream-vented Bulbul	TN

Red-eyed Bulbul	TN
Spectacled Bulbul	TN
Ochraceous Bulbul	FHA
Grey-cheeked Bulbul	KFA
Yellow-bellied Bulbul	KFA, TN
Hairy-backed Bulbul	KFA, TN
Buff-vented Bulbul	KFA, TN
Streaked Bulbul	TN
Ashy Bulbul	FHA
Mountain Bulbul	FHA
Greater Green Leafbird	TN
Lesser Green Leafbird	TN
Blue-winged Leafbird	FHA
Orange-bellied Leafbird	FHA
Common Iora	KSA, KFA
Green Iora	KFA, TN
Rufescent Prinia	FHA
Mountain Tailorbird	FHA
Common Tailorbird	FHA
Dark-necked Tailorbird	TN
Ashy Tailorbird	KSA
Arctic Warbler	KSA
Eastern Crowned Leaf-Warbler	TN
Chestnut-crowned Warbler	FHA
Yellow-bellied Warbler	FHA
Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher	TN
Dark-sided Flycatcher	FHA
Asian Brown Flycatcher	KLA, FHA, TN
Rufous-browed Flycatcher	FHA
Little Pied Flycatcher	FHA
Verditer Flycatcher	FHA
Large Niltava	FHA
Pygmy Blue Flycatcher	FHA
Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher	FHA
Oriental Magpie Robin	KSA, FHA, KFA,
White-rumped Shama	KFA, TN
Chestnut-naped Forktail	TN
Slaty-backed Forktail	FHA
White-throated Fantail	FHA
Pied Fantail	KSA
Black-naped Monarch	KFA
Asian Paradise Flycatcher	FHA
Black Laughingthrush	FHA
Chestnut-capped Laughingthrush	FHA
Abbott's Babbler	TN
Short-tailed Babbler	TN, KFA
Moustached Babbler	TN
Sooty-capped Babbler	KFA
Scaly-crowned Babbler	TN
Rufous-crowned Babbler	TN

Large Wren-Babbler	KFA
Golden Babbler	FHA
Grey-throated Babbler	FHA
White-necked Babbler	TN
Chestnut-winged Babbler	TN
Striped Tit-Babbler	TN
Silver-eared Mesia	FHA
White-browed Shrike-Babbler	FHA
Black-eared Shrike-Babbler	FHA
Blue-winged Minla	FHA
Mountain Fulvetta	FHA
Long-tailed Sibia	FHA
White-bellied Yuhina	FHA
Malaysian Rail-babbler	FHA
Golden-bellied Gerygone	KSA
Great Tit	TRC, KSA
Sultan Tit	FHA
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	TN
Blue Nuthatch	FHA
Ruby-cheeked Sunbird	KSA, KFA
Plain Sunbird	TN, KFA
Brown-throated Sunbird	TRC, KFA
Purple-naped Sunbird	TN
Copper-throated Sunbird	Heard
Black-throated Sunbird	FHA
Thick-billed Spiderhunter	KFA
Spectacled Spiderhunter	TN
Long-billed Spiderhunter	KFA
Little Spiderhunter	FHA, KFA, TN
Grey-breasted Spiderhunter	TN
Streaked Spiderhunter	FHA
Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker	KFA, TN
Crimson-breasted Flowerpecker	TN
Scarlet-breasted Flowerpecker	TN
Orange-bellied Flowerpecker	KFA
Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	FHA
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	KFA
Everett's White-eye	FHA
Dark-throated Oriole	KFA
Black-naped Oriole	KSA
Black-and-crimson Oriole	FHA
Asian Fairy Bluebird	TN
Tiger Shrike	KSA, TN
Brown Shrike	KLA, KSA
Black Drongo	TN
Ashy Drongo	KSA
Crow-billed Drongo	TN
Bronzed Drongo	FHA, KFA
Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo	FHA
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	FHA, KFA, TN

Crested Jay	TN
Black Magpie	KFA
Green Magpie	FHA
House Crow	KLA, TRC
Large-billed Crow	TRC, KSA, TN
Asian Glossy Starling	KSA
Common Hill Myna	KSA, KFA, TN
Javan Myna	KLA
Common Myna	KLA, KSA
Purple-backed Starling	KFA
White-rumped Munia	FHA
Scaly-breasted Munia	PFA, TN
Tree Sparrow	KLA