

# Sultanpur & Yamuna River, India



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## General

During a week-long business trip I recorded some, at least to me, interesting birds during brief visits to Sultanpur and Yamuna River in Delhi.

I visited Sultanpur National Park near Gurgaon during one full morning and Yamuna River in southeast Delhi during a few late afternoon hours. The birding was rather unplanned and opportunistic. During one day I also visited Jaipur in Rajasthan, which is four hours drive southwest of Gurgaon.

## Weather

Very nice and pleasant with warm to hot clear days and rather warm nights.

## Site descriptions

For directions and general advice, see the excellent web-page [www.delhibird.net](http://www.delhibird.net).

Sultanpur is a wetland to the west of Delhi. Driving time from Gurgaon is at least one hour, but as everywhere in Delhi it is entirely dependant on the traffic (which is virtually always very bad!). I spent 3.5 hours slowly walking the perimeter of the wetland.



*View over Sultanpur*

Yamuna River is the large river that flows north to south through the eastern parts of Delhi. I spent some time walking along the small paved road on the east bank, but saw very little there, so instead we drove a couple of km south along the east bank. From this semi-paved road I walked down to the river across agricultural land. This part of the river held lots of terns and waders.

## Birds

Little Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax niger*

Six at Sultanpur and ten at Yamuna River.

Darter, *Anhinga melanogaster melanogaster*

Two at Sultanpur and five at Yamuna River.

Grey Heron, *Ardea cinerea cinerea*

Five at Sultanpur and 15 at Yamuna River.

Purple Heron, *Ardea purpurea manilensis*

Three at Sultanpur.

Intermediate Egret, *Egretta intermedia intermedia*

20 at Sultanpur and at least five at Yamuna River.

Little Egret, *Egretta garzetta garzetta*

Ten at Sultanpur and at least ten at Yamuna River.

Indian Pond-Heron, *Ardeola grayii*

30+ at Sultanpur, 20+ at Yamuna River and a few elsewhere.

Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis coromandus*

Common in most areas visited.

Painted Stork, *Mycteria leucocephala*

At least ten at Sultanpur and one at Yamuna River.

Asian Openbill, *Anastomus oscitans*

About 20 including breeding pairs at Sultanpur.

Black-headed Ibis, *Threskiornis melanocephalus*

Two at Yamuna River.

Greater Flamingo, *Phoenicopterus roseus*

One at Yamuna River.

Lesser Whistling-Duck, *Dendrocygna javanica*

100+ at Sultanpur.

Comb Duck, *Sarkidiornis melanotos melanotos*

20+ at Sultanpur.

Eurasian Teal, *Anas crecca crecca*

100+ at Sultanpur.

Spot-billed Duck, *Anas poecilorhyncha poecilorhyncha*

100+ at Sultanpur and 100+ at Yamuna River.

Northern Pintail, *Anas acuta*

30+ at Sultanpur.

Northern Shoveler, *Anas clypeata*

1000+ at Sultanpur. During a ten minutes period in the late morning there were a handful of large flocks of Shovelers and a few Pintails that fell out of the sky and landed in the lake.

Quite a spectacular sight.

Oriental Honey-Buzzard, *Pernis ptilorhynchus ruficollis*

Two at Sultanpur.

Black-shouldered Kite, *Elanus caeruleus vociferus*

About five at Sultanpur and two at Yamuna River.

Black Kite, *Milvus migrans govinda*

Very common in all visited areas. *The* scavenging raptor nowadays when all the vultures are gone.

Western Marsh-Harrier, *Circus aeroginosus aeroginosus*

One juvenile at Yamuna River.

Shikra, *Accipiter badius ssp*

One between Delhi and Jaipur and two at Yamuna River.

White-eyed Buzzard, *Butastur taesa*

Three or four birds, perhaps a family group, at Sultanpur.



*White-eyed Buzzard*

Grey Francolin, *Francolinus pondicerianus interpositus*

20+ at Sultanpur.

Rain Quail, *Coturnix coromandelica*

One flushed at Yamuna River.

Indian Peafowl, *Pavo cristatus*

Two nice males seen and a couple more heard at Sultanpur.



*Indian Peafowl*

Common Moorhen, *Gallinula chloropus ssp*

Two at Sultanpur.

Eurasian Coot, *Fulica atra atra*

10+ at Sultanpur.

Black-winged Stilt, *Himantopus himantopus*

200+ at Jaipur and 300+ at Yamuna River.

River Lapwing, *Vanellus duvaucelii*

Two at Yamuna River.

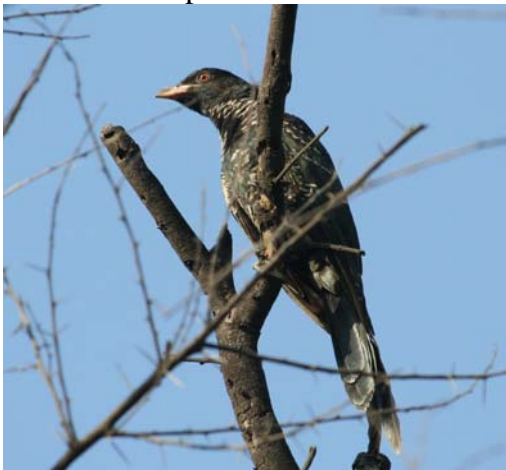
Red-wattled Lapwing, *Vanellus indicus indicus*

Frequently seen in most areas and common at Sultanpur and Yamuna River.

Little Ringed Plover, *Charadrius dubius ssp*

Two at Yamuna River.

- Lesser Sand-Plover, *Charadrius mongolus* ssp  
Two at Yamuna River.
- Black-tailed Godwit, *Limosa limosa limosa*  
One at Yamuna River.
- Eurasian Curlew, *Numenius arquata* ssp  
Four at Yamuna River.
- Common Redshank, *Tringa totanus* ssp  
One at Jaipur and 10+ at Yamuna River.
- Green Sandpiper, *Tringa ochropus*  
One at Sultanpur.
- Wood Sandpiper, *Tringa glareola*  
10+ at Jaipur and 50+ at Yamuna River.
- Common Sandpiper, *Actitis hypoleucos*  
Two at Jaipur and five at Yamuna River.
- Temminck's Stint, *Calidris temminckii*  
Four at Yamuna River.
- Ruff, *Philomachus pugnax*  
20+ at Jaipur, 300+ at Sultanpur and 1000+ at Yamuna River.
- Black-headed Gull, *Larus ridibundus*  
Five at Yamuna River.
- Black-bellied Tern, *Sterna acuticauda*  
Two at Yamuna River.
- Whiskered Tern, *Sterna Chlidonias hybrida* ssp  
200+ at Yamuna River.
- Rock Pigeon, *Columba livia intermedia*  
Common in all areas visited.
- Eurasian Collared-Dove, *Streptopelia decaocto decaocto*  
Common in all areas visited.
- Laughing Dove, *Streptopelia senegalensis cambayensis*  
Common in al areas visited.
- Yellow-footed Pigeon, *Treron phoenicoptera phoenicoptera*  
One plus two in central Delhi.
- Rose-ringed Parakeet, *Psittacula krameri borealis*  
Common in most areas visited, especially at Sultanpur and at Yamuna River.
- Plum-headed Parakeet, *Psittacula cyanocephala*  
One at Sultanpur.
- Asian Koel, *Eudynamys scolopacea scolopacea*  
Four at Sultanpur.



*Asian Koel*

Short-eared Owl, *Asio flammeus flammeus*

One at Yamuna River.

House Swift, *Apus nipalensis nipalensis*

Common around Delhi and a few at Sultanpur.

White-throated Kingfisher, *Halcyon smyrnensis smyrnensis*

A total of five scattered individuals, e.g. at Sultanpur and Yamuna River.

Green Bee-eater, *Merops orientalis ssp*

One in Jaipur, fairly common at Sultanpur and at Yamuna River.



*Green Bee-eaters*

Blue-tailed/Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, *Merops philippinus/persicus*

10+ at Sultanpur and several at Yamuna River.

Indian Roller, *Coracias benghalensis benghalensis*

A total of ten scattered individuals. Of those seen well, they were all the streak-breasted subspecies.

Eurasian Hoopoe, *Upupa epops ssp*

Frequently seen at Jaipur and around Delhi.

Indian Grey Hornbill, *Ocyrceros birostris*

Two half-way between Dalhi and Jaipur.

Brown-headed Barbet, *Megalaima zeylanica ssp*

One at Sultanpur.

Indian Bushlark, *Mirafra erythroptera sindiana*

One pair nest-building at Sultanpur.



*Indian Bushlark*

Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark, *Eremopterix grisea*

20+ at Sultanpur.

Crested Lark, *Galerida cristata chendoola*

Common at Sultanpur and a few at Yamuna River.



*Crested Lark*

Oriental Skylark, *Alauda gulgula* ssp

Common at Sultanpur and a few at Yamuna River.

Grey-throated Sand-Martin, *Riparia chinensis chinensis*

Common at Jaipur, Sultanpur and Yamuna River.

Dusky Crag-Martin, *Ptyonoprogne concolor concolor*

Common in Delhi.

Barn Swallow, *Hirundo rustica* ssp

Widespread and common at e.g. Yamuna River.

Wire-tailed Swallow, *Hirundo smithii filifera*

Several at Sultanpur and at Yamuna River.

White Wagtail, *Motacilla alba personata*

Small numbers seen around Delhi and Jaipur.

Yellow Wagtail, *Motacilla flava* ssp

Two at Sultanpur and a few at Yamuna River.

Grey Wagtail, *Motacilla cinerea* ssp

Two in Delhi.

Oriental (Paddyfield) Pipit, *Anthus rufulus rufulus*

Small numbers at Sultanpur and at Yamuna River.

Olive-backed Pipit, *Anthus hodgsoni yunannensis*

A few at Sultanpur.

Red-vented Bulbul, *Pycnonotus cafer* ssp

Fairly common in most areas visited.

Ashy Prinia, *Prinia socialis* ssp

A few at Sultanpur and one at Yamuna River.

Plain Prinia, *Prinia inornata* ssp

Common at Sultanpur and at Yamuna River.

Blyth's Reed-Warbler, *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

One at Sultanpur.

Sykes's Warbler, *Hippolais rama*

Three at Sultanpur.

Common Tailorbird, *Orthotomus sutorius guzuratus*

Two in Delhi and one at Sultanpur.

Sulphur-bellied Warbler, *Phylloscopus griseolus*

Two at Sultanpur.

Hume's Warbler, *Phylloscopus humei humei*

One at Sultanpur.

Greenish Warbler, *Phylloscopus trochiloides* ssp

One at Sultanpur, probably *viridianus* based on range.

Striated Grassbird, *Megalurus palustris tokiao*

One at Sultanpur.

Eastern Orphean Warbler, *Sylvia crassirostris jerdoni*

10+ at Sultanpur.

Oriental Magpie-Robin, *Copsychus saularis saularis*

Two at Sultanpur.

Indian Robin, *Saxicoloides fulicata cambaiensis*

Fairly common at Sultanpur.



*Indian Robin*

Black Redstart, *Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides/rufiventris*

Five at Sultanpur.

Common Stonechat, *Saxicola torquatus* ssp

10+ at Sultanpur.

Pied Bushchat, *Saxicola caprata bicolor*

10+ at Sultanpur and a few at Yamuna River.

Brown Rock-Chat, *Cercomela fusca*

A few in Delhi.

Large Grey Babbler, *Turdoides malcolmi*

Several large groups at Sultanpur and five at Yamuna River.

Jungle Babbler, *Turdoides striatus* ssp

Five at Yamuna River.



*Jungle Babbler*



Purple Sunbird, *Cinnyris asiaticus brevirostris*  
Common in Delhi, Sultanpur and at Yamuna River.

Oriental White-eye, *Zosterops palpebrosus egregia*  
Common at Sultanpur and a few in Delhi.

Eurasian Golden Oriole, *Oriolus oriolus ssp*  
Two at Sultanpur and two at Yamuna River.

Long-tailed Shrike, *Lanius schach erythronotus*  
Five at Sultanpur and one at Yamuna River.

Southern Grey Shrike, *Lanius meridionalis lahtora*  
Two near Jaipur.

Common Woodshrike, *Tephrodornis pondicerianus pallidus*  
One at Sultanpur.

Black Drongo, *Dicrurus macrocercus albirictus*  
Common.

Rufous Treepie, *Dendrocitta vagabunda ssp*  
Three at Sultanpur.

House Crow, *Corvus splendens splendens*  
Common.

Bank Myna, *Acridotheres ginginianus*  
Locally common, especially between Delhi and Jaipur.

Common Myna, *Acridotheres tristis tristis*  
Common.

Asian Pied Starling, *Gracupica contra contra*  
Locally common in Jaipur and Delhi.

House Sparrow, *Passer domesticus indicus*  
Common.

Yellow-throated Sparrow, *Petronia xanthocollis transfuga*  
Two at Sultanpur and one at Yamuna River.

Red Avadavat, *Amandava amandava amandava*  
10+ at Sultanpur and two at Yamuna River.