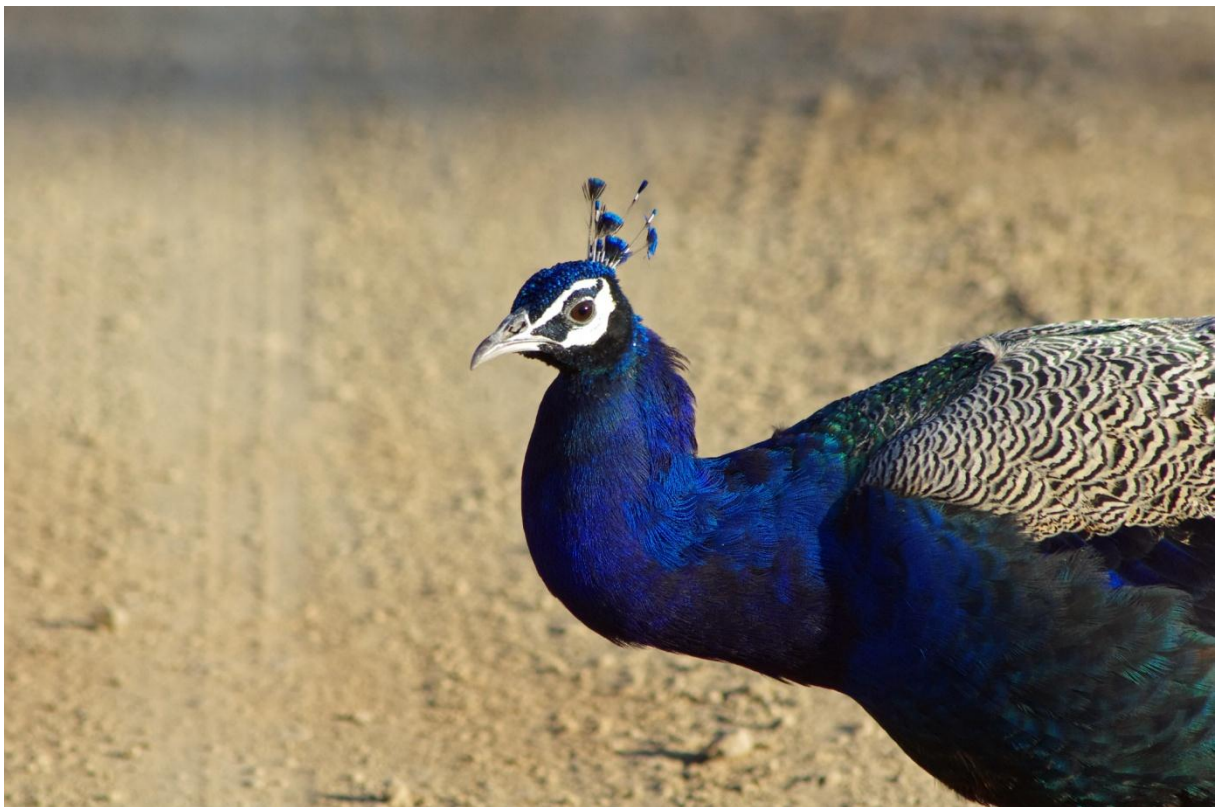


*Gujarat - India*

*22 dec 2012 - 5 jan 2013*



*Participants: Karl-Lennart Nilsson; Bibban Sandberg; Lars-Olof Sandberg; Stefan Sandberg, Sweden*

*Tragopan Tours*

## *Itinerary*

23/12      *We arrive at Ahmedabad airport, some of us without our luggage. After the usual extensive Indian paperwork, we head for Velavadar NP, which we reach after 4 hours on this Sunday morning with little traffic. The grasslands here offer good numbers of Blackbucks and Nilgai Antelopes. At dusk large numbers of harriers are coming in for roosting, Montagu's Harriers being most numerous. The night is spent at the excellent Blackbuck Lodge, which offered the only beer of the trip!*

24/12      *Morning trip in Velavadar NP. Several of the small Jungle Bush Quail are seen and flocks of Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse are flushed. Greater Short-toed Lark is ubiquitous and numerous, other larks include Rufous-rumped and Sykes's Lark. Departing before lunch, we endure a six hours drive at Christmas Eve heading for Lion Safari Camp at Sasan Gir.*

25/12      *Gir NP. The first lion safari starts in chilly morning darkness. No lions are seen in the dry forest, and only a few birds like Brahminy Kite, Small Minivet and Jungle Prinia appear. Before noon we hike the dry forest above our camp with the camp's local guide. The only White-bellied Minivet of the trip is seen here as well as Collared Scops-owl, Spotted Owlet and the rare Four-horned Antelope.*

*An afternoon safari at a different loop in the NP provides mammals like Spotted and Sambar Deer, and we are finally successful in watching a close-up of four Lions passing the road in front of us!*



26/12 Gir NP. Morning walk along the river side close to the lodge produce some new birds of the trip, like Asian Paradise Flycatcher. A long travel awaits us. Raptors along the way, like the endangered Indian Vulture, offer birding stops. We reach Rajkot and the luxurious Heritage Khirasara Palace in early afternoon. On a short evening walk, where people on the other side of the road live in corrugated sheet-metal (India is a country of contrasts) we find the first Varied Wheatear of the trip.

27/12 Rajkot – Bhuj – Nakhtarana. We spend the five following nights at CEDO (Center for Desert and Ocean) outside Nakhtarana. With the competent guide Veer we are soon off to Banni Grasslands. Here in the semi-desert we are surrounded by lots of Common Cranes (15 000 for sure). Among them, three fearless Demoiselle Cranes are strutting close to our van.

28/12 Great Rann of Kutch Early drive to thorn scrub habitat with toothbrush trees, sporting sought-after berries. Goodies like Sirkeer Malkoha, Bluethroat and Booted Warbler pass by. After long, a female of our target bird Grey Hypocolius flies past us.



*In the afternoon we are successful in our struggle for Stoliczka's Bushchat and the Indian Courser out in the vast semi-desert plains. We also make a stop at the lake Chari Dhand which supports good numbers of ducks, waders and Coots.*

*29/12 Great Rann of Kutch. Morning trip to the thornforest of Chaduva gives views of Jungle Cat and Golden Jackal en route. On arrival, we soon spot White-naped Tit, Marshall's Iora, Sykes's Lark and Rufous-fronted Prinia. Gatherings of Grey-necked Buntings are also found only here. In the afternoon we visit more rocky areas. Brown Rock Chat seems to breed at a small temple site. In a rocky crack a Desert Cat is hiding. After darkness we spot-light Indian Fox and the huge Rock Eagle Owl.*



*30/12 Great Rann of Kutch. We start in darkness heading for the desert. Two Sykes's Nightjars are lighted up by our torches. After sunrise, better views are also offered of the Grey Hypocolius. In the afternoon we drive to the coast off the city of Mandvi. The beaches hold a flock of Greater Flamingos as well as waders like Great Thick-knee, Whimbrels, Turnstone and Terek Sandpiper.*

*31/12 Great Rann of Kutch. Only 10°C when we start at 06.15 towards the Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary. We move around a lot and find Black*

*Francolin and several Short-toed Snake Eagles. We scan the tracts from different watchtowers all through the day, but not until 17:15 Veer finally finds a gathering of five Indian Bustards! This calls for an extra toast with lumpy yoghurt at the hotel dinner!*

*1/1-2013 Six hours of driving from Nakhtarana to Dasada and Rann Riders Lodge near Little Rann of Kutch. An afternoon-trip in the nearby grasslands produces Short-eared Owl and a handsome Macqueen's Bustard.*

*2/1 Little Rann of Kutch. Wearing only summer clothes in our open jeep, a very cold trip in the 8°C morning takes us out into the perfectly flat, barren salt desert after 1½ hour. Flocks of Khurs, or Asiatic Wild Ass, beautiful but shy, and enormous flocks of Greater Short-toed Larks are impressive though.*



*3/1 Little Rann of Kutch. The lake Navatalav is shimmering of rosy flamingoes. A total of 3000 flamingoes, with about as many Lesser as Greater ones. Plenty of ducks and different waders are also found here. In the afternoon we drive about 25 km south-east from Dasada. Two White-eyed Buzzards are perching on wire posts. Some kilometers away, we find about*

*twenty White-rumped Vultures, some of them on nests, and our first Egyptian Vultures.*

*4/1 A lazy walk takes around our lodge where we find some ponds in the open fields. Among others we see Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Larks, Citrine Wagtails and Tawny Pipits. Our driver Devi then starts the trip back to Ahmedabad. En route we get Woolly-necked Stork,*

*5/1 Departing from Ahmedabad in the early morning, back to non-vegetarian Europe!*



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### Species list

Abbreviations: Vel=Velavadar; GRK=Great Rann of Kutch; LRK=Little Rann of Kutch

Grey Francolin: most days, 1-10

Jungle Bush Quail: 8 Vel; 2 Gir

Barred Buttonquail: 2 Vel

Indian Peafowl: every day

Greylag Goose: 100+ LRK

Cotton Pygmy-goose: 1 female, Lions Camp, Gir

Ruddy Shelduck: 8 Lion Safari Camp, Gir

Common Shelduck: 5 LRK (Lake Navatalav)

Gadwall: 10-20 each at Gir, GRK; LRK

Eurasian Wigeon: 1 Gir; 200+ GRK; 260 LRK

Spot-billed Duck: 25 en route to Vel; 6 GRK; 25 LRK

Common Teal: 2 Gir; about 30 GRK and LRK

Garganey: 3 LRK

Northern Pintail: a few Vel; 90 GRK; ca 1100 LRK

Common Pochard: 25 GRK; 5 LRK

Yellow-crowned Woodpecker: 1 Gir NP

Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker: 1 Gir NP

Coppersmith Barbet: flera heard Gir NP

Hoopoe: 1 -2 at Gir, L+GRK

Indian Roller: often at telewire en route

Common Kingfisher: at river close to the camp, Gir

White-throated Kingfisher: 1-2 Gir+LRK; 10 GRK

Pied Kingfisher: 5 Gir; 4 GRK; 10 LRK

Green Bee-eater: every day, 10-50

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater: 1-2, Gir+GRK

Asian Koel: 1-2 at several spots

Sirkeer Malkoha: 2 in thornscrub, GRK

Greater Coucal: a few Gir+GRK sometimes only heard

Rose-ringed Parakeet: 10-60 daily. Not seen in central GRK

Plum-headed Parakeet: en route Gir-Rajkot



*Sirkeer Malkoha (Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii)*

*Alpine Swift: 10 Banni Grasslands, GRK*

*Little (House) Swift: 75+ GRK*

*Rock Eagle Owl (Bubo bengalensis): 1 Banni Grasslands, LRK*

*Spotted Owlet: 2 in treehole near the camp, Gir*

*Collared Scops-Owl: 2 in treehole near the camp, Gir*

*Short-eared Owl: 2 LRK*

*Sykes's Nightjar: 2 spotlighted, Banni Grasslands, GRK*

*Indian Nightjar: 1 at Banni Grasslands, GRK*

*Savanna Nightjar: 1 at road, LRK*

*Rock Pigeon: daily*

*Laughing Dove: almost daily*

*Red Collared Dove: 1 GRK*

*Eurasian Collared Dove: seen daily*

*Yellow-footed Green Pigeon: 10, Gir NP*

*Indian Bustard: 5 in Great Indian Bustard Sanct. (finally!)*

*Macqueen's Bustard: 1, LRK*

*Demoiselle Crane: 250 n. Bhuj; 500 at Nakhtarana area*



*Common Crane: seen-heard almost daily, most 15000, Banni Grasslands GK*  
*White-breasted Waterhen: 1 at the river, the Camp, Gir*  
*Purple Swampphen: 15, Lion safari camp, Gir; 75 Chari Dhand, GK*



*Demoiselle Crane (Grus Virgo)*

*Moorhen: ca 30 the camp, Gir; 20 LK*  
*Common Coot: 1 Vel; ca 2000 Chari Dhand, GK; 40 LK*  
*Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse: 10-50 in semiopen area, Vel, LK, GK*  
*Painted Sandgrouse: 2 GK*  
*Common Snipe: 12 Chari Dhand GK; 2 east Dasada*

*Black-tailed Godwit: 1 Gir; 75 GRK, 350 Lake Navatalav, GRK*  
*Whimbrel: 4 at coast, Mandvi*  
*Eurasian Curlew: 10 LRK; 80 GRK*  
*Spotted Redshank: 1 Navatalav, GRK*  
*Common Redshank: 10 Chari Dhand, 5 Mandvi; 2 GRK*

*Marsh Sandpiper: 2 GRK; 4 LRK*  
*Common Greenshank: 1-2 Gir, LRK, GRK*  
*Green Sandpiper: see above*  
*Wood Sandpiper: see above, but some more*  
*Terek Sandpiper: 1 Mandvi*

*Common Sandpiper: ca 25*  
*Little Stint: 6 GRK; 30 LRK*  
*Temminck's Stint: 2 Gir; 30 GRK; 90 GRK*  
*Dunlin: 10 Chari Dhand, 10 Mandvi*

*Ruff: 2 Gir, 5 Rajkot, 90 LRK*  
*Ruddy Turnstone: 10 coast, Mandvi*  
*Thick-knee (Burhinus indicus): 2 Gir*  
*Great Thick-knee: 12 coast, Mandvi*  
*Eurasian Oystercatcher: 15 Mandvi*  
*Black-winged Stilt: daily, 5-200*  
*Pied Avocet: 2 Chari Dhand, GRK 350 Lake Navatalav, LRK*



*Sociable Lapwing (Vanellus gregarius)*

*Grey Plover: 10 Chari Dhand; 15 LRK*  
*Little Ringed Plover: a few*  
*Kentish Plover: 40 LRK, 30 GRK*  
*Lesser Sand Plover: 15 Chari Dhand, 40 LRK*  
*Greater Sand Plover: 1 GRK, 20 LRK*  
*Yellow-wattled Lapwing: only at one occasion, 10 GRK*  
*Red-wattled Lapwing: daily 5-300*  
*Sociable Lapwing: 5 Banni Grasslands, GRK*

*Indian Courser: 4 GRK, 5 LRK*  
*Greater Black-headed Gull: 50 Chari Dhand, 2 GRK*  
*Brown-headed Gull: 200 Chari Dhand, 3 GRK*  
*Black-headed Gull: 10 Chari Dhand, 2 GRK*  
*Slender-billed Gull: 1 en route Rajkot-Bhuj*

*Gull-billed tern: 50 Chari Dhand, 12 GRK*  
*Caspian Tern: 1 Chari Dhand, 4 GRK*  
*River Tern: 30 en route Ahmedabad-Vel; 12 Gir, 1 LRK*  
*Lesser Crested Tern: 20 Chari Dhand*  
*Whiskered Tern: 100 Ahmedabad-Vel; 1 Gir, 8 GRK*

*Osprey: 2 at "Crocodile Pond", Gir NP*  
*Black Kite: common near/in towns*  
*Black-shouldered Kite: daily 1-10*  
*Brahminy Kite: 1 Gir NP, 1 juv Mandvi*  
*Egyptian Vulture: 2, 25 km s-o Dasada, 25 rubbish heap, w Ahmedabad*



*White-rumped Vulture (Gyps bengalensis)*

*White-rumped Vulture: 1 GRK, 20 seen 25 km s-e Dasada*  
*Indian Vulture (Gyps indicus): en route Gir-Rajkot*  
*Eurasian Griffon: 2 GRK, 3 Bustard Sanct, s-v Nakhtarana*



*Short-toed Snake Eagle: 4 at Vel; 5 Bustard Sanct; 2 LRK*  
*Eurasian Marsh Harrier: 8 Vel; 15 GRK; 10 LRK*  
*Montagus Harrier: 100+ Vel; 30 GRK; 15 LRK*  
*Pallid Harrier: 15 Vel; 4 GRK; 2 LRK*  
*Shikra: 3 Vel; 2 en route Gir-Rajk; 5 GRK; 4 LRK*  
*Eurasian Sparrowhawk; 1 female GRK; 4 LRK*  
*Oriental Honey-buzzard: 1 Gir NP; 7 GRK; 10 en route Bhuj-LRK*

*White-eyed Buzzard: 2, 20 km s-e Dasada*  
*Common Buzzard: 1 LRK*  
*Long-legged Buzzard: 1 Vel; 3 LRK*  
*Greater Spotted Eagle: 2 GRK; 1 LRK*  
*Tawny Eagle: 1-3 at Gir, LRK, GRK*



*Steppe Eagle (Aquila nipalensis)*

*Steppe Eagle: 1 Vel; 4 Gir; 4 GRK; 10 LRK*  
*Imperial Eagle: 2 LRK*  
*Bonelli's Eagle: 1 en route Gir-Rajkot*  
*Booted Eagle: 2 Vel; 1 GRK; 3 LRK*  
*Common Kestrel: almost daily, 1-10*

*Little Grebe: 1 en route Ahmedabad-Vel; 2 GRK*  
*Great Crested Grebe: 1 Chari Dhand, GRK*  
*Darter: about 20 Gir*  
*Little Cormorant: almost daily, 5-200*  
*Great Cormorant: 10 Gir; 1 Mandvi; 5 LRK*  
*Indian Cormorant: 2 Gir*  
*Little Egret: most days, 2-10*  
*Western Reef Egret: 10 en route Rajkot-Bhuj, 8 Mandvi, 3 LRK*  
*Grey Heron: most days, 1-10*  
*Purple Heron: 3 Gir*  
*Great Egret: most days, 1-10*

*Intermediate Egret: 1 Vel; 3 Gir; 5 GRK; 10 LRK*  
*Cattle Egret: seen every day, 2-100*  
*Indian Pond Heron: 5 Vel; 10 Gir; 20 GRK*  
*Black-crowned Night Heron: 10 Gir*  
*Greater Flamingo: 30 GRK; 250 Mandvi; 1600 LRK (1500 Navatalav)*  
*Lesser Flamingo: 3 Chari Dandh; 1500 Navatalav, LRK*  
*Glossy Ibis: 30 Gir, 30 en route Rajkot-Nakhtarana*  
*Black-headed Ibis: 10 Gir; 20 Mandvi; 1 LRK*

*Red-naped Ibis: 2 n. of Vel; 40 Gir; 20 en route to Mandvi, 2 Ahmedabad*  
*Eurasian Spoonbill: almost daily, 4-50*  
*Great White Pelican: 30 lake at GRK; 150, lakes LRK*  
*Dalmatian Pelican: 40 Chari Dhand; 10 LRK*  
*Painted stork: 20 en route A-bad/Vel; 40 Gir; 20 GRK; 6 LRK*  
*Asian Openbill: 20 Gir; a few LRK, en route to Ahmedabad*  
*Woolly-necked Stork: 2 en route, Dasada – Ahmedabad*

*Rufous-tailed Shrike: 2 n. Vel; 15 GRK; 18 LRK*  
*Bay-backed Shrike: 1 Gir; 1 GRK; 12 LRK*  
*Long-tailed Shrike: 6 en route to Vel; 10 Gir; 7 GRK; 4 LRK*  
*Southern Grey Shrike: 10 en route Bhuj-Dasada; 2 LRK*  
*Rufous Treepie: 2 Vel; 10 Gir*  
*House Crow: most days 8-200*  
*Large-billed Crow: 20 Vel; 8 Gir; 30 bushlands GRK*



*Red-naped Ibis (Pseudibis papillosa)*

*Eurasian Golden Oriole: 1 Rann Riders camp, Dasada (KLN)*

*Small Minivet: 4 at the camp, Gir; 3 Chaduva thorn forest*

*White-bellied Minivet: 1 female, dry forest above the Camp, Gir*

*White-browed Fantail: 7 Gir*

*Black Drongo: daily, 10 – 100*

*Asian Paradise Flycatcher: 1 Gir*

*Marshall's (White-tailed) Iora: 4 Chaduva thorn forest, GRK*

*Common Iora: 5 Gir*

*Common Woodshrike: 10 Gir; 10 Chaduva thorn forest*

*Asian Brown Flycatcher: 1 at Rann Riders camp, Dasada (L-O)*

*Red-breasted Flycatcher: 8 Gir; 3 Rann Riders camp LRK*

*Verditer Flycatcher: 1 Gir NP*

*Tickell's Blue Flycatcher: 2 Gir NP*

*Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher: 2 Gir*

*Bluethroat: 10 bushes Banni Grasslands, 5 in the garden Rann Riders*

*Oriental Magpie Robin: 6 Gir NP*

*Indian Robin: every day 2-30, most in Gir NP*



*Black Redstart: 4 seen in different places*  
*Stoliczka's (White-browed) Bushchat: 1 female Banni Grasslands, GRK*  
*Siberian Stonechat: daily, 2-40*  
*Pied Bushchat: 1 LRK*  
*Brown Rockchat: 2-3 at temple, rocky hills, GRK*  
*Variable Wheatear: 1 Rajkot; 25 LRK; 20 GRK*  
*Desert Wheatear: 40 Banni Grasslands GRK; 15 LRK*

*Isabelline Wheatear: 5 GRK; 7 LRK*  
*Rufous-tailed Wheatear: 6 GRK*  
*Brahminy Starling: about 30 Gir; 2 LRK*  
*Rosy Starling: almost daily; some days 500*  
*Common Myna: at habitation, 10-50/day*  
*Bank Myna: Ahmedabad 5; Rajkot-Bhuj 30; Mandvi 5*  
*White-naped (White-winged) Tit: 3 Chaduva thorn forest*  
*Great Tit: 3 Gir*



*White-naped Tit (Parus nuchalis)*

*Plain Martin (Riparia paliducola): 30 GRK; 12 LRK*  
*Dusky Crag Martin: 20 Gir, 15 GRK*

*Barn Swallow*: daily, 20-300  
*Wire-tailed Swallow*: 2-3 Vel+Gir; l.v. Gir/Rajkot 100,  
*Red-rumped Swallow*: 2-30 at diff. localities  
*Streak-throated Swallow*: 1 at coast, Mandvi  
*White-eared Bulbul*: a few en route; common GRK (30-100/day)  
*Red-vented Bulbul*: every day

*Grey Hypocolius*: 4-5, thorn scrub, Banni grasslands  
*Rufous-fronted Prinia*: 8 GRK (thorn forest)  
*Grey-breasted Prinia*: 1 Vel; 5 GRK  
*Plain Prinia*: 1 Vel; 12 GRK  
*Jungle Prinia*: 50 Gir  
*Ashy Prinia*: enstaka Gir+GRK  
*Oriental White-eye*: 25 Gir, 1 GRK



*Rufous-fronted Prinia (Prinia buchanani)*

*Paddyfield Warbler*: 3 Gir  
*Blyth's Reed Warbler*: 1 Gir, 1 GRK  
*Booted Warbler*: 4 GRK  
*Sykes's Warbler (Iduna rama)*: 1 Gir, 1 GRK  
*Common Tailorbird*: a few at Gir



*Common Chiffchaff*: 3 GRK  
*Greenish Warbler*: 6 Gir  
*Common Babbler*: most days, 10-30  
*Tawny-bellied Babbler*: 5 Gir  
*Jungle Babbler* ("7 sisters"): 12 en route n. Vel; 60 Gir  
*Lesser Whitethroat*: 25 GRK; 20 LRK  
*Desert Warbler*: 3 Banni Grasslands  
*Orphean Warbler*: 2 in "hypocolius area", GRK  
*Indian Bushlark*: 5, *Bustard Sanct*; (Naliya Grasslands)  
*Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark*: 10 Vel; 50 GRK; 16 LRK

*Rufous-tailed Lark*: 26 Vel+Gir; 12 GRK; 2 LRK  
*Greater Short-toed Lark*: impressive masses, open areas, 50-3000/day  
*Crested Lark*: 14 GRK; 8 LRK  
*Sykes's (Tawny) Lark*: 6 Vel; 8 Banni Grasslands, GRK



*Sykes's Lark (Galerida deva)*

*Purple Sunbird*: among flowering bushes, 1-10/dag  
*House Sparrow*: at habitation, 10-100  
*Chestnut-shouldered Petronia*: 6 Gir; 30 GRK  
*White Wagtail*: a few



*White-browed Wagtail: 12 Gir; 1 LRK*  
*Citrine Wagtail: a few in proper habitat*  
*Yellow Wagtail: a few en route;*  
*Grey Wagtail: 4 Gir*  
*Paddyfield Pipit: 1 LRK*  
*Tawny Pipit: most days, 1-6*

*Long-billed Pipit: 3, Bustard Sanct;*  
*Tree Pipit: 2 Velavadar*  
*Thick-billed Flowerpecker: 2 Gir*  
*Indian Silverbill: almost daily, 10-30/dag*  
*Common Rosefinch: 2 GRK*  
*Grey-necked Bunting: 20 Chaduva thornforest*  
*Striolated Bunting (Emberiza striolata): 2 Chaduva thornforest*

## Mammals



*Khur, Asiatic Wild Ass (Equus hemionus)*

*Asiatic Lion (Panthera leo persica): 4 Gir NP*

*Nilgai: Vel about 50; GRK 10; LRK about 170*

*Khur: about 140 LRK*

*Blackbuck: 500 Velavadar NP*

*Indian Gazelle (Chinkara): 10 LRK*

*Spotted Deer: about 350 Gir NP*

*Sambar Deer (Cervus unicolor): 8 Gir NP*

*Four-horned Antelope (Chowsinga): 2 near Lion Safari Camp, Gir*

*Southern Plains Grey Langur: 30 Gir NP*

*Jungle Cat (Felis chaus): 3 Vel; 3 LRK*

*Asiatic wildcat (Felis silvestris ornata): 2 at rocks Banni Grasslands, GRK*

*Golden Jackal: 4 GRK*

*Indian Fox: 2 GRK*

*Indian Slender Mongoose: 1 en route Gir-Rajkot*

*Indian Grey Mongoose: 2 Gir*

*Wild Boar: ca 30 Gir NP; 1 GRK; 2 LRK*

*Five-striped Squirrel: often seen en route*

*Indian Flying Fox: about 30, the river at Lions Safari Camp, Gir*

*Reptiles: Muger Crocodile, 20 Gir NP*



*Nilgai Boselaphus tragocamelus)*



*Blackbuck (Antelope cervicapra)*