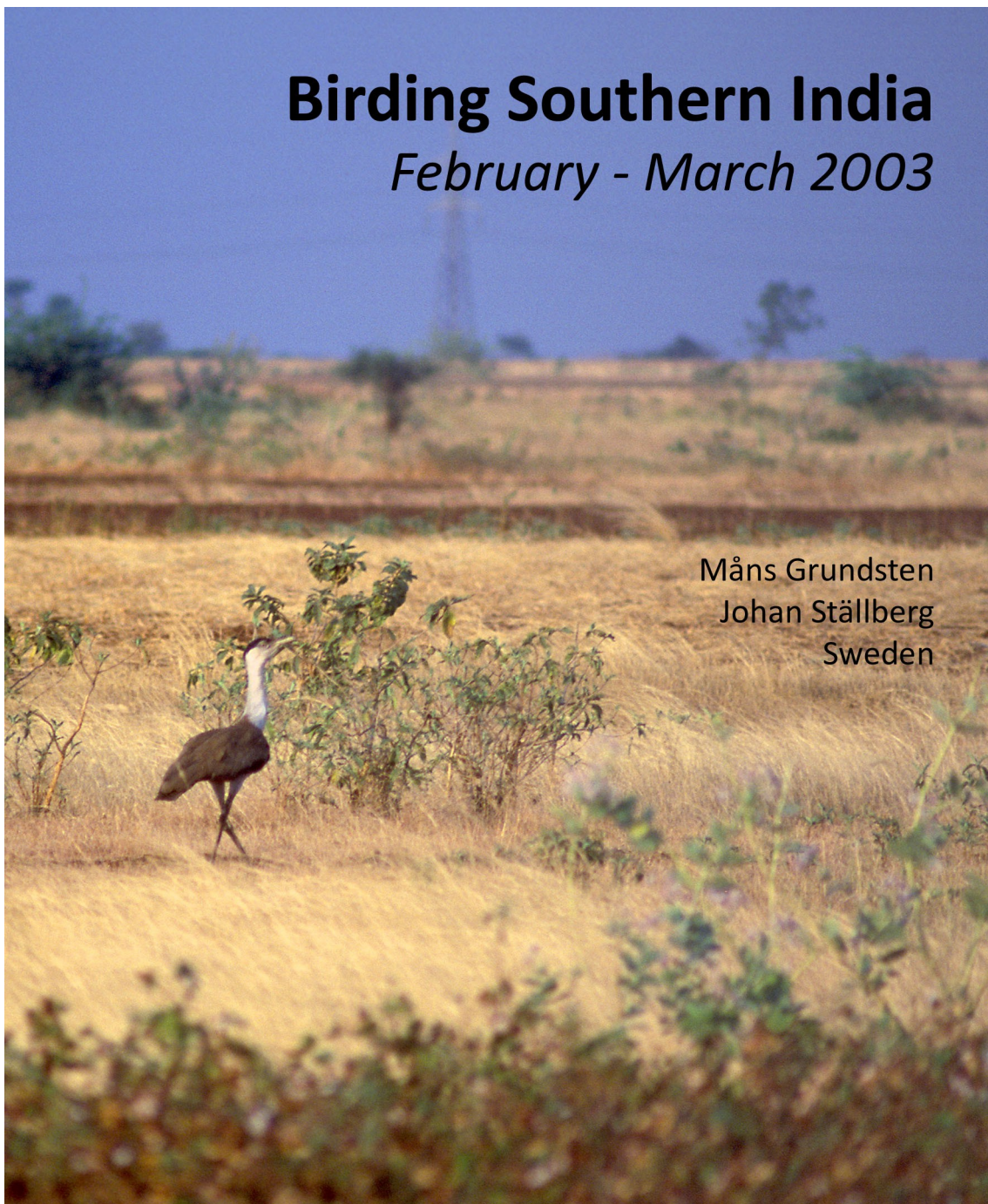


Birding Southern India

February - March 2003

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Southern India, February 25th to March 13th 2003

Front page

Great Indian Bustard, *Ardeotis nigricaps*, north-west of Rollapadu, Andra Pradesh, February 27th, increasingly rare and now critically endangered, known from just a few sanctuaries. One of three birds seen. Most oftenly observed at Desert NP, Rajasthan, NW India.

Participants

Måns Grundsten (compiler) & Johan Stållberg, Stockholm, Sweden. Version 2, 2014.

Highlights

- Spotting a Lesser Florican at Rollapadu! Truly one of Indias most elusive and seldom-seen species.
- A royal party of three magnificent Great Indian Bustards west of Rollapadu.
- The impressive harrier-roost at Rollapadu where 300 Montagu's and Pallid gathered at sunset.
- Flocks of buntings at Rollapadu; Black-headed, Red-headed and best of all Grey-necked.
- The cute endemic Black-and-orange Flycatcher at Ooty.
- Shola-birding at Cairnhill Forest with endangered Black-chinned Laughingthrush, Nilgiri Blue Robin and Thrush.
- Three Tawny Eagles soaring at Masinagudi.
- Scrambling our way upward from the Jungle Hut and finally rewarded with Nilgiri Pipit at the summit.
- A scarce Gaur running away above Jungle Hut.
- A roadside early-morning black-eyed Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl near Theppakadu.
- Indian Pittas, Indian Blue Robins and Orange-headed Thrushes in dried river beds around Masinagudi.
- Bamboo-bound cool-looking Grey-headed Bulbul at Nadugani.
- Natarajan finding a day-roosting Sri Lanka Frogmouth at Top Slip.
- Black-headed male Malabar Trogon at Top Slip.
- Night-walk at Top Slip with Common Hawk Cuckoo 'brain-fever'ing, and lots of calling nightjars and owls.

Introduction

The Western Ghats is home to many endemic birds and offers many fantastic birding experiences. We made a 16 day trip and included seldom-visited Rollapadu in Andra Pradesh to our itinerary since it seemed to be a fair chance of seeing Great Indian Bustard there. On general notice southern India differs a lot culturally from the northern parts of India. People are very friendly and helpful, and travelling independently was often easy. Our budget was restricted to 10 USD per person/day and most days this was more than enough. These two weeks in southern India was part of a longer trip to Asia. We arrived at Hyderabad from Delhi after three weeks in the north. After Coimbatore we continued to Mumbai and then to Bangkok.

Literature

Lonely Planet Guide - India (2002)

A Birdwatchers' Guide to India (1998), Krys Kazmierczak & Raj Singh, Prion Ltd.

Field Guide to the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent, Grimmett, Inskipp & Inskipp (1998)

Several trip-reports from internet now best found at cloudbirders.com

Itinerary

- 25.2: Arrival late evening at Hyderabad Airport from Delhi. Night-train to Kurnool.
 26.2: Rollapadu, arriving early morning from Kurnool via Nandikotkur.
 27.2: Rollapadu.
 28.2: Rollapadu until mid-day, transport to Bangalore (night-bus).
 1.3: Bangalore, night-bus to Ooty.
 2.3: Ooty, arriving early morning. Birding Botanical Gardens and Potatoe Research Station.
 3.3: Ooty, Cairnhill Forest. Transport during afternoon to Masinagudi arriving at evening.
 4.3: Masinagudi, Jungle Hut.
 5.3: Masinagudi, Sighur River and the Dam.
 6.3: Masinagudi, climbing the Nilgiris from Jungle Hut.
 7.3: Masinagudi, around the town and the Dam.
 8.3: Theppakadu, during the morning. Transport to Nadugani, arriving at noon, night at Gudalur.
 9.3: Nadugani, birding during the day, night at Gudalur.
 10.3: Transport from Gudalur to Pollachi via Ooty and Coimbatore, night at Pollachi.
 11.3: Getting permit for Top Slip at Pollachi during the morning. Arriving Top Slip at noon.
 12.3: Top Slip.
 13.3: Top Slip during the morning, transport to Coimbatore via Pollachi. Flight to Mumbai.



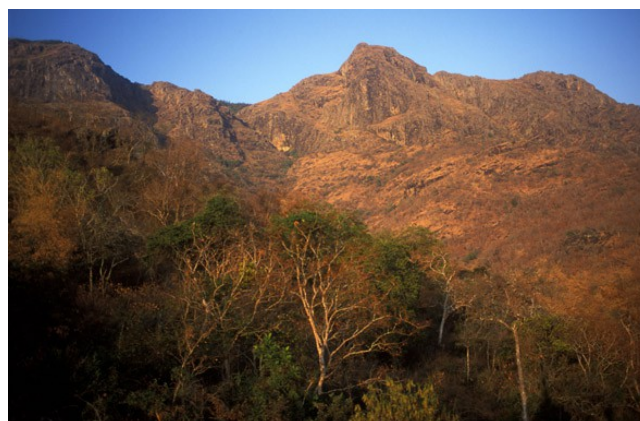
Sri Lanka Frogmouth at day-roost, Top Slip.



A few Blackbucks were seen at Rollapadu.



One of three White-naped Woodpecker at Theppakadu. Endemic to Southern India and Sri Lanka.



Morning glow on the Blue Mountains above Jungle Hut.

Site info including accommodation and transport (in chronological order)

Rollapadu

About Rollapadu you need to know two things, firstly you need a permit to stay at the education centre at Rollapadu. This permit can be obtained from the Forest Office in Nandikotkur. We didn't get a permit and had quite some hassle at Rollapadu. Luckily one of the officers from Nandikotkur had planned a trip to Rollapadu, and we ran into him on our arrival day and organized accommodation and permit at site. The advice to future visitors would be to get the permit at Nandikotkur to save some trouble. The second thing is that there are absolutely no food or water what so ever to be bought at Rollapadu! So you need to carry everything with you from Nandikotkur. We didn't know this before, so we had to take the bus back and forth to get some supplies. And you do need a lot of water, because it gets really hot during the days. About the birding then. The actual reserve is north of the nature centre, and there is a small watching tower close to a temple. From this watching tower there is quite a good view. We found the female Lesser Florican from this tower. The grasslands north of the nature centre are also where the magnificent harrier roost is. Just after dusk hundreds of harriers gather here to spend the nights together on the ground, that's very impressive. Nearby the nature centre there was a water pump which gathered nice amounts of larks and pipits (e.g. Sykes's Lark). Another great area was the Talamudipi Tank one km east of Rollapadu. From the tank we walked back westward through the scrub, where we found Grey-necked Bunting and Indian Bushlark. The main target of our staying here was off course the Great Indian Bustard. After discussing with the local guides, we realized that there were no Bustards on the reserve at the moment, but they knew a place north-west of Rollapadu where there might still be some birds around. At evening-time we arranged for a jeep and a guide (S. Jampa) from the nature centre. After half an hours driving the guide suddenly shouted stop and pointed out something just behind some bushes some hundred meters away, and there where three giant Great Indian Bustard, two males and one female. The Jeep cost us something like 800 R including petrol, and the guide 100 R.

Transport: Took an auto-rickshaw from Kurnool train station to Kurnool bus station for 40 R, then bus to Nandikothor 21 R /p then bus from Nandikotkur to Rollapadu 10 R /p.

Accommodation: We stayed at the Nature Education Centre 150 R /2p.

Best birds seen: Great Indian Bustard, Lesser Florican, Demoiselle Crane, River Tern, Small Pratincole, Indian Courser, Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, great numbers of harriers, Indian Spotted Eagle, Sykes's Lark, Yellow-billed Babbler, Grey-necked, Red-headed and Black-headed Buntings.

Others have seen: Painted Francolin, Rock Bush-quail, Pied Harrier.

Ooty

A nice climate brings lots of people to this former Hill station named Udthagamandalam or Ootacamund (which is shortened to Ooty). The best birding is mainly three places: The Botanical Gardens, the Potato Research station and Cairnhill Forest. All birds we saw at the Botanical Gardens (entry fee: 25 R/p) were seen elsewhere, so it's not essential for the itinerary. The Potato Research Station is said to be the best place for Nilgiri Wood Pigeon which we dipped out on, quite a disappointing place with few birds around. Cairnhill Forest is on the other hand very good, and essential for a good list of Western Ghat specialities. No Kashmir Flycatcher was seen, maybe it was a bit late in the season. The maps in Kazmierczak & Singh is good enough to understand where to go.

Transport: Bus from Bangalore to Ooty 182 R /p.

Accommodation: The recommended Reflections Guesthouse 250 /2p, which was a really nice place.

Best birds seen: Tickell's Leaf Warbler, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Western Crowned Warbler, Nilgiri Flycatcher, Black-and-orange Flycatcher, Nilgiri Blue Robin, Indian Scimitar Babbler, Indian Blue Robin. Black-chinned Laughingthrush, Nilgiri Thrush, Black-headed Cuckooshrike.

Others have seen: Kashmir Flycatcher is said to be a rare but regular winter guest at Cairnhill Forest, Nilgiri Wood Pigeon at the Potato Research station, Painted Bush-quail, Brown Wood Owl, Forest Wagtail.

Masinagudi

The Dam and around the town

Masinagudi is a small village just east of the large Mudumalai reserve. Within the reserve the birding possibilities are restricted during our staying the reserve was closed due to dry condition and risks of forest fires as well as

aggressive thirsty elephants. Northeast of the small town there is a water dam which naturally attracts birds. There are some nice bamboo thickets here as well.

Best birds seen: Red Spurfowl, Woolly-necked Stork 8, White-rumped Vulture 3, Tawny Eagle 3, Stork-billed Kingfisher, White-naped Woodpecker, Indian Pitta, Clamorous Reed Warbler, Thick-billed Warbler, Booted Warbler, Hume's Whitethroat.

Jungle Hut

South of Masinagudi there is an excellent guest house called Jungle Hut, if our budget had been a bit larger we had for sure chosen the Jungle Hut, its compounds are great birding areas, with Orange-headed Thrush, Indian Blue Robin and Indian Pitta not uncommonly seen. We spent one whole day of birding around the Jungle Hut.

Best birds seen: Blue-winged Parakeet, Malabar Grey Hornbill, Yellow-browed Bulbul, Indian Blue Robin, Orange-headed Thrush, Indian Pitta, Brown Fish-Owl, Malabar Starling, Malabar Woodshrike, Hill Swallow, Changeable Hawk-Eagle.

Others have seen: Sirkeer Malkoha, Grey-bellied Cuckoo, Jerdon's Nightjar, Loten's Sunbird, Indian Spotted Creeper.

Sighur River

This is the place for the White-bellied Minivet which we dipped out on. Also a reasonable chance of seeing Indian Elephants. We were dropped off at the the river crossing and picked up at the same place in the afternoon. On the way back to Masinagudi we stopped at the church close to Mavanhalla where we found Malabar Crested Lark and two Yellow-wattled Lapwings. The Sighur River was almost dried out, and we could easily walk in the river bed. After the morning hours it became really hot and the birding was slow. We found lots of fresh elephant droppings and at some point there was a lot of noise and trees were cracked in the forest above us, although we didn't see anything we do believe there were a few elephants there...

Best birds seen: Bonelli's Eagle, Black Eagle, Short-toed Snake Eagle, Indian Pitta, Indian Blue Robin, Malabar Whistling Thrush, Orange-headed Thrush, Blue-faced Malkoha,

Others have seen: White-bellied Minivet and Painted Bush-quail (on the road to Ooty at dawn) is the main target, Grey-headed Bulbul is possible.



Nilgiri Pipit, on grassy hills above Jungle Hut, endemic to Western Ghats, rarely seen outside Munnar.



Nilgiri Pipit habitat.

Climbing the Nilgiris

On our first visit to the Jungle Hut we were amazed by the nice-looking mountains above the slopes to the south. After talking to the owner of Jungle Hut we decided to try to climb one of the peaks. We arranged for a guide showing us the path going uphill during the early morning. After many hours of climbing, along a small track through dry forest and later on through a small shola close to a little stream and then on to a larger track, we reached higher grounds. Just before the little stream we saw a Gaur running away on the right-hand side.

The larger track soon went through large tea plantations covering the slopes. We left the main track and searched our way through the tea plantations further uphill on the right-hand side. Finally we reached above the plantation on to grassy hill slopes until we reached a summit with great views of the surrounding peaks and distant dry forests of the Mudumalai Reserve. At the very top of the grassy hill we amazingly found a few Nilgiri Pipits. This species is endemic to the Western Ghats and most people twitch it at Munnar. We guess the Nilgiri Pipit is more widespread than the guides suggest. Reaching these high grassy hills is not a part of the regular Southern India itineraries we've read in other trip-reports. Probably more interesting birds could be found here. Best birds seen: Blue-faced Malkoha 1, Tawny-bellied Babbler, Malabar Lark (on the summit), Nilgiri Pipit 5 (summit), Blue-capped Rock Thrush 2 f, Black-and-orange Flycatcher 1 f, Asian Brown Flycatcher 8, Rusty-tailed Flycatcher 1, Verditer Flycatcher 3, Indian Black-lored Tit, Peregrine Falcon 1.

Theppakadu

The last day at Mudumalai we tried the dry river beds of Theppakadu for some morning birding before we headed on towards Nadugani. Together with Israeli birder Dubi Shapiro whom we met at Masinagudi the previous day we shared a pre-dawn jeep taxi from Masinagudi, along the way we were fortunate enough to spot a magnificent Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl from the jeep. We searched for Grey-headed Bulbul at Theppakadu without any luck, and were told not to take caution and not to leave the road due to the presence of thirsty potentially angry elephants.

Best birds seen: White-rumped Vulture, Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl, Blue-bearded Bee-eater, White-naped Woodpecker, Rufous Woodpecker, Indian Scimitar Babbler, Asian Brown Flycatcher, Malabar Whistling Thrush.

Others have seen: Grey-headed Bulbul is the main target, Rufous Babbler in the bamboo thickets.

Transport: Bus Ooty-Masinagudi 85 R /p. Jeep taxi Masinagudi-Jungle Hut-Masinagudi 100 or 130 R. Jeep taxi Masinagudi-Sighur River-Masinagudi 200 R. Jeep taxi Masinagudi-Theppakadu c. 50 R.

Accommodation: .COM Guest House at the eastern outskirt of Masinagudi. A clean and newly built Guest House for 200 R /2p.

Nadugani

We were told buy a guide at Jungle Hut, Masinagudi that Top Slip was closed due to dry conditions, so we were suggested to try Nadugani for many of the same species. After reading Kazmierczak & Singh, Nadugani seemed to be an interesting place where very few birders go. On our last day at Masinagudi we met an Israeli birder who had previously been to Top Slip, so we decided to after all try for Top Slip following our visit to Nadugani. One problem with Nadugani is that it is difficult to find accommodation, which forced us back to Gudalur to find a cheaper room. Birding at Nadugani seemed quite hard. We never found the watchman's hut mentioned in Kazmierczak & Singh so all birding were made roadside. Most Indians who passed us seemed amused seeing two young Swedes carrying binoculars, and if they did not stay for a quick (or not so quick...) chat they horned at us. The early morning we spend at Nadugani was on the other hand extremely exciting since the road still was quite empty until later in the morning and bird activity was on its top. We had one marvellous bird-party with hundreds of birds including many *Phylloscopus*-warblers.

Transport: Cheap bus from Theppakadu to Gudalur and then from Gudalur to Nadugani. Took a rickshaw from Nadugani to the forest 5 km past Nadugani on the way to Nilambur in Kerala.

Accommodation: Venus Hotel in Gudalur 175 R /2p

Best birds seen: Malabar Barbet, Grey-headed Bulbul, Blue-capped Rock-thrush 1 m, Dark-fronted Babbler, Crimson-backed Sunbird, Indian Golden Oriole, Black Eagle, Rufous-bellied Eagle, Booted Eagle, Grey-fronted Green Pigeon, Brown-backed Needletail, Heart-spotted Woodpecker, Malabar Whistling Thrush, Thick-billed Warbler, Green Warbler, Rusty-tailed Flycatcher, White-bellied Blue Flycatcher.

Others have seen: Nilgiri Wood Pigeon, Malabar Trogon, Great Hornbill, White-bellied Treepie, Rufous Babbler, Wynaad Laughingthrush.

Top Slip

When going to Top Slip it is mandatory to get a permit at the Forest Department in Pollachi. We had some serious trouble getting a permit since we were told that the park was closed due to dry weather. We had to stay over night in Pollachi and when we got to the Forest Department the second day we finally got our permit after the Warden Officer said ok. From Pollachi there is a one hour bus journey to Top Slip. At Top Slip it is essential

to arrange with the famous guide Natarajan to be able to find many of the species. He wasn't available when we arrived but on the second day we arranged a tour with him. After an hour or so, he skilfully found a perched Sri Lanka Frogmouth of which we got amazing views. It's probably impossible to find the Frogmouth without Natarajans help. During one night we did a small tour with a torch-light along the road to Parambikulam searching for Owls and Nightjars. We heard Jerdon's Nightjar and Oriental Scops Owl and did get great views of a Brown Hawk Owl. We found Top Slip excellent for many difficult species but the birding was rather slow from time to time.

Transport: Bus Pollachi-Top Slip c.15 R /p

Accommodation: Bison Lodge at the Top Slip nature centre 150 R /2p.

Best birds seen: Grey-fronted Green Pigeon, Blue-faced Malkoha, Common Hawk Cuckoo, Malabar Barbet, White-naped Woodpecker, Heart-spotted Woodpecker, Indian Pitta, Thick-billed Warbler, Orange-headed Thrush, White-bellied Treepie, Little Spiderhunter, Brown Hawk Owl, Sri Lanka Frogmouth, Malabar Trogon, Rufous Babbler, White-bellied Blue Flycatcher, Jerdon's Nightjar, Great-eared Nightjar, Forest Wagtail, Wynaad Laughingthrush.

Others have seen: White-bellied Woodpecker, Common Flameback, Black-throated Munia, White-rumped Spinetail, Chestnut-winged Cuckoo.



Flight shot of the female Lesser Florican seen at Rollapadu February 26th. When first found, actually disappointed it wasn't a Great Indian Bustard, but in retrospect Bird of the trip!



Booted Warbler at Masinagudi. Note long wing-projection compared to Syke's.



Brown Fish Owl at Jungle Hut, Masinagudi.



Observation-tower at Rollapadu, from where the Lesser Florican was first found, scoped very distantly.

List of birds: Southern India, February 26th - March 13th 2003

Following IOC World Bird List 4.1 (January 2014) (www.worldbirdnames.org). In total: 239 species (15 species on the IUCN Red List, 23 endemics to Western Ghats, another 8 endemics shared with Sri Lanka only and another 38 region/near-endemics). Subspecies notations are foremost literature-based.

1. **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*
50 at Talamudipi Tank, Rollapadu 27.2
2. **Indian Spot-billed Duck** *Anas poecilorhyncha poecilorhyncha*
3. **Eurasian Teal** *Anas crecca crecca*
40 at Talamudipi Tank, Rollapadu 27.2
4. **Grey Francolin** *Francolinus pondicerianus pondicerianus*
Common at Rollapadu.
5. **Rain Quail** *Coturnix coromandelica*
1 flushed at Talamudipi Tank, Rollapadu
6. **Jungle Bush-quail** *Perdicula asiatica* **Endemic to Indian subcontinent**
E.g. A family group at Sighur River 5.3.
Bush-quail sp. *Perdicula* sp
A small family group at Rollapadu, possibly Rock Bush-quail.
7. **Red Spurfowl** *Galloperdix spadicea stewarti* **Endemic to Indian subcontinent**
1 male at Masinagudi 4.3, Sighur River, 1 female Nadugani 8.3
8. **Grey Junglefowl** *Gallus sonneratii* **Endemic to Indian subcontinent**
e.g. 4 Jungle Hut 4.3.
9. **Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis albescens*
10. **Painted Stork** *Mycteria leucocephala* **NT**
30 at Rollapadu 26.2
11. **Asian Openbill** *Anastomus oscitans*
150 at Rollapadu 28.2
12. **Woolly-necked Stork** *Ciconia episcopus episcopus*
1 at Rollapadu 28.2, 8 at the Dam, Masinagudi 7.3
13. **Black-headed Ibis** *Threskiornis melanocephalus* **NT**
1+3+1 Rollapadu 26-28.2
14. **Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*
15 at Rollapadu 28.2
15. **Black-crowned Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax*
3 at Masinagudi 4.3
16. **Striated Heron** *Butorides striata chloriceps*
2 at the Dam, Masinagudi 5&7.3
17. **Indian Pond Heron** *Ardeola grayii*
18. **Eastern Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus coromandus*
19. **Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea cinerea*
20. **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta garzetta*
21. **Little Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax niger*
22. **Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*
23. **Oriental Darter** *Anhinga melanogaster* **NT**
3 Madinagudi Dam 5.3.
24. **Crested Honey-Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhyncus ruficollis*
25. **Black-shouldered Kite** *Elanus caeruleus vociferus*
1 at Rollapadu 26.2, 1 Nadugani 9.3.
26. **Brahminy Kite** *Haliastur indicus indicus*
27. **White-rumped Vulture** *Gyps bengalensis* **CR**
3 at Masinagudi 7.3, 1 at Theppakadu 8.3

28. **Short-toed Snake Eagle** *Circaetus gallicus*
1 at Sighur River 5.3
29. **Crested Serpent Eagle** *Spilornis cheela melanotis*
30. **Western Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus*
1 at Rollapadu 26.2
31. **Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrourus* NT
In total c.300 Montagu's and Pallid Harriers around Rollapadu 26-28.2.
32. **Montagu's Harrier** *Circus pygargus*
33. **Shikra** *Accipiter badius*
2 at Rollapadu 26.2, 1 at Jungle Hut 4.3
34. **White-eyed Buzzard** *Butastur teesa*
1 at Rollapadu 26.2, 1 at Rollapadu 28.2
35. **Black Eagle** *Ictinaetus malayensis perniger*
2 at Sighur River 5.3, 1 at Nadugani 9.3.
36. **Indian Spotted Eagle** *Clanga hastata* VU Endemic to Indian subcontinent
1 adult at Talamudipi Tank, Rollapadu 27.2
37. **Tawny Eagle** *Aquila rapax vindhiana*
3 at Masinagudi 7.3
38. **Bonelli's Eagle** *Aquila fasciata*
1 at Sighur River 5.3
39. **Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus*
1 dark morph at Nadugani 8.3
40. **Rufous-bellied Hawk-Eagle** *Lophotriorchis kiernii kiernii*
1 ad at Nadugani 9.3
41. **Changeable Hawk-Eagle** *Spizaetus cirrhatu cirrhatu*
1 at Sighur River 5.3.
42. **Great Indian Bustard** *Ardeotis nigriceps* CR Endemic to Indian subcontinent
2 males + 1 female west of Rollapadu 27.2
43. **Lesser Florican** *Sypheotides indica* EN Endemic to Indian subcontinent
1 female at Rollapadu 26.2
44. **Demoiselle Crane** *Grus virgo*
45 at Rollapadu 28.2
- Buttonquail sp. *Turnix* sp.
2 at the Dam, Masinagudi 5.3, possibly Small Buttonquail
45. **Pied Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*
1 at Talamudipi Tank, Rollapadu 27.2
46. **Yellow-wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus malabaricus*
2 at Rollapadu 26.2, 2 at Masinagudi 5.3
47. **Red-wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus indicus*
48. **Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*
49. **Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*
1 Talamudipi Tank, Rollapadu 27.2.
- Snipe sp. *Gallinago* sp.
1-2 probable Pintail Snipes were seen at the Dam, Masinagudi 5 & 7.3
50. **Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*
51. **Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*
52. **Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*
53. **Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*
54. **Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*
55. **Indian Courser** *Cursorius coromandelicus*
3 at Rollapadu 27.2
56. **Small Pratincole** *Glareola lactea*
60 at Talamudipi Tank, Rollapadu 27.2

57. **River Tern** *Sterna aurantia* NT
1 flew past Rollapadu 26.2
58. **Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterocles exustus*
max 50 Rollapadu 26-27.2
59. **Rock Pigeon** *Columba livia* (domest.)
60. **Mountain Imperial Pigeon** *Ducula badia*
61. **Laughing Dove** *Streptopelia senegalensis*
62. **Red-collared Dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica*
63. **Eurasian Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*
64. **Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis*
65. **Emerald Dove** *Chalcophaps indica*
5 at Nadugani 8-9.3, 1 at Top Slip 12.3
66. **Grey-fronted Green Pigeon** *Treron pompadora* Endemic to Western Ghats
5 at Nadugani 8-9.3, 7 at Top Slip 11.3
67. **Yellow-footed Green Pigeon** *Treron phoenicoptera* ssp
1 at Masinagudi 4.3.
68. **Greater Coucal** *Centropus sinensis parroti*
69. **Blue-faced Malkoha** *Phaenicophaeus tristis* Endemic to Western Ghats and Sri Lanka
1 at Sighur River 5.3, 1 above Jungle Hut 6.3, 2 at Top Slip 11.3
70. **Asian Koel** *Eudynamys scolopaceus scolopaceus*
e.g. 5 at Jungle Hut 4.3.
71. **Common Hawk Cuckoo** *Hierococcyx varius varius*
2 heard at Top Slip 11-12.3
72. **Oriental Scops Owl** *Otus sunia rufipennis*
1 calling at Top Slip
73. **Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl** *Bubo nipalensis nipalensis*
1 seen at dawn between Masinagudi and Theppakadu
74. **Brown Fish Owl** *Ketupa zeylonensis leschenaultii*
1 at Jungle Hut
75. **Jungle Owlet** *Glaucidium radiatum malabaricum* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
1 at Top Slip 12-13.3
76. **Spotted Owlet** *Athene brama brama*
2 at Rollapadu 27.2
77. **Brown Hawk-Owl** *Ninox scutulata hirsuta*
1 seen with torchlight at Top Slip 12.3.
78. **Sri Lanka Frogmouth** *Batrachostomus moniliger roonwali* Endemic to Western Ghats and Sri Lanka
1 female seen at Top Slip 12.3
79. **Great Eared Nightjar** *Eurostopodus macrotis bourdilloni*
1 heard at Top Slip
80. **Jungle Nightjar** *Caprimulgus indicus indicus* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
5 heard at Top Slip 11.3
81. **Jerdon's Nightjar** *Caprimulgus atripennis atripennis* Endemic to Western Ghats and Sri Lanka
3 heard at Top Slip 11.3
82. **Indian Nightjar** *Caprimulgus asiaticus asiaticus*
3 heard at Rollapadu, 1 heard at Masinagudi
83. **Indian Swiftlet** *Collocalia unicolor* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
84. **Brown-backed Needletail** *Hirundapus giganteus indicus*
40 at Nadugani 9.3, 1 at Top Slip 11.3
85. **Asian Palm Swift** *Cypsiurus balasiensis balasiensis*
86. **Alpine Swift** *Apus melba* ssp
1 at the summit 6.3, 30 at the Dam, Masinagudi 5.3, 2 at Top Slip 12.3
87. **Little Swift** *Apus affinis singalensis*
88. **Malabar Trogon** *Harpactes fasciatus malabaricus* Endemic to Western & Eastern Ghats and Sri Lanka

- 1 pair + 1 male at Top Slip 12.3
89. **Indian Roller** *Coracias benghalensis indicus*
90. **Stork-billed Kingfisher** *Halcyon capensis capensis*
1 at the Dam, Masinagudi 7.3
91. **White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis fusca*
92. **Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis taprobana*
93. **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis travencorensis*
1 at Masinagudi Dam 5.3
94. **Blue-bearded Bee-eater** *Nyctyornis athertoni athertoni*
1 at Jungle Hut 4.3, 3 at Theppakadu 8.3
95. **Green Bee-eater** *Merops orientalis orientalis*
2 Jungle Hut 4.3.
96. **Chestnut-headed Bee-eater** *Merops leschenaulti*
3 at Nadugani 8.3.
97. **Eurasian Hoopoe** *Upopa epops ceylonensis*
98. **Malabar Grey Hornbill** *Ocyrceros griseus* Endemic to Western Ghats
e.g. 100 at Top Slip 11.3
99. **White-cheeked Barbet** *Megalaima viridis* Endemic to Western Ghats
Masinagudi, Nadugani
100. **Malabar Barbet** *Megalaima malabarica* Endemic to Western Ghats
e.g. 30 Nadugani 8.3
101. **Coppersmith Barbet** *Megalaima haemacephala indica*
e.g. 2 Jungle Hut 4.3.
102. **Eurasian Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla ssp*
1 at Rollapadu 27.2
103. **Heart-spotted Woodpecker** *Hemicircus canente*
3 at Nadugani 9.3, 3 at Top Slip 11-12.3
104. **Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos nanus cinereigula* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
2 above Jungle Hut 6.3, 1 at Masinagudi 7.3
105. **Yellow-crowned Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos mahrattensis mahrattensis* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
1 at Masinagudi 7.3
106. **Lesser Yellownape** *Picus chlorolophus chlorigaster*
1 at Sighur River 5.3, 1 at Top Slip 11.3
107. **Streak-throated Woodpecker** *Picus xanthopygaeus*
1 at Masinagudi 7.3, 1 at Theppakadu 8.3
108. **Black-rumped Flameback** *Dinopium benghalense tehminae* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
109. **Greater Flameback** *Chrysocolaptes lucidus socialis*
110. **White-naped Woodpecker** *Chrysocolaptes festivus festivus* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
1 pair at Masinagudi 7.3, 1 at Theppakadu 8.3, 3 at Top Slip 11.3
111. **Rufous Woodpecker** *Celeus beachyurus jerdonii*
1 pair + 1 female at Theppakadu 8.3
112. **Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus ssp*
113. **Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus peregrinator*
1 at the summit 6.3, 1 at Nadugani 9.3
114. **Vernal Hanging Parrot** *Loriculus vernalis vernalis*
115. **Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri manillensis*
116. **Blue-winged Parakeet** *Psittacula columboides* Endemic to Western Ghats
Common Masinagudi
117. **Indian Pitta** *Pitta brachyura* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
Seen at Jungle Hut, the Dam, Masinagudi, Sighur River, Nadugani and Top Slip
118. **Malabar Woodshrike** *Tephrodornis sylvicola* Endemic to Western Ghats
2 at Jungle Hut 6.3, 2 at Theppakadu 8.3 Endemic
119. **Ashy Woodswallow** *Artamus fuscus*

- 1 west of Masinagudi 7.3
- 120. Common Iora** *Aegithina tiphia multicolor*
2 at Jungle Hut 4.3
- 121. Large Cuckooshrike** *Coracina macei macei*
- 122. Black-headed Cuckooshrike** *Coracina melanoptera sykesi* **Near-endemic**
1 female at Cairnhill Forest 3.3, 1 male at the Dam, Masinagudi 7.3
- 123. Small Minivet** *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus cinnamomeus*
2 Jungle Hut 4.3, 3 Sighur River 5.3.
- 124. Orange Minivet** *Pericrocotus flammeus* **Endemic to Western Ghats and Sri Lanka**
3 at Sighur River 5.3
- 125. Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus*
1 Ooty 2.3, 1 Cairnhill Forest 3.3, 2 Theppakadu 8.3, 1 Top Slip 11.3.
- 126. Bay-backed Shrike** *Lanius vittatus*
- 127. Long-tailed Shrike** *Lanius schach caniceps*
1 at Ooty 2.3
- 128. Southern Grey Shrike** *Lanius meridionalis lathora*
- 129. Eurasian Golden Oriole** *Oriolus oriolus*
1 male at Rollapadu 28.2. Black confined only to lore and not around or behind eye. Rare winter vagrant.
- 130. Indian Golden Oriole** *Oriolus kundoo*
e.g. 15 at Nadugani 8-9.3
- 131. Black-hooded Oriole** *Oriolus xanthornus maderaspatenus*
2 Jungle Hut 4.3, 1 Top Slip 11.3.
- 132. Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus macrocercus*
- 133. White-bellied Drongo** *Dicrurus caerulescens caerulescens* **Endemic to Indian subcontinent**
1 Jungle Hut 6.3.
- 134. Bronzed Drongo** *Dicrurus aeneus aeneus*
- 135. Greater Racket-tailed Drongo** *Dicrurus paradiseus paradiseus*
- 136. White-spotted Fantail** *Rhipidura albogularis albogularis* **Endemic to Western and Eastern Ghats**
2 at Cairnhill Forest 3.3
- 137. White-browed Fantail** *Rhipidura aureola compressirostris*
2 at Jungle Hut 4.3
- 138. Black-naped Monarch** *Hypothymis azurea styani*
1 at Jungle Hut 4 & 6.3
- 139. Asian Paradise-Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone paradisi paradisi*
Ooty.
- 140. Rufous Treepie** *Dendrocitta vagabunda parvula*
5 at Jungle Hut 4.3
- 141. White-bellied Treepie** *Dendrocitta leucogastra* **Endemic to Western Ghats**
10 at Top Slip 11-13.3
- 142. House Crow** *Corvus splendens protegatus*
- 143. Indian Jungle Crow** *Corvus culminatus* **Endemic to Indian subcontinent**
- 144. Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher** *Culicicapa ceylonensis ceylonensis*
- 145. Cinereous Tit** *Parus cinereus mahrattarum*
- 146. Indian Black-lored Tit** *Parus xanthogenys travancorensis* **Endemic to Indian subcontinent**
1 above Jungle Hut 6.3, 1 at Nadugani 8.3
- 147. Indian Bushlark** *Mirafra erythroptera erythroptera* **Endemic to Indian subcontinent**
2 at Rollapadu
- 148. Rufous-tailed Lark** *Ammomanes phoenicurus testacea* **Endemic to Indian subcontinent**
max 5 Rollapadu 26-27.2
- 149. Malabar Lark** *Calerida malabarica* **Endemic to Western Ghats**
2 at the church, Sighur 5.3, 2 at the summit 6.3, 1 Masinagudi 7.3
- 150. Sykes's Lark** *Galerida deva* **Endemic to Indian subcontinent**

- 2 at Rollapadu 26.2
151. **Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark** *Eremopterix grisea* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
max 100 at Rollapadu 26-28.2, 1 at Masinagudi 7.3
152. **Grey-headed Bulbul** *Pycnonotus priocephalus* NT Endemic to Western Ghats
1 at Nadugani 8.3
153. **Flame-throated Bulbul** *Pycnonotus gularis* Endemic to Western Ghats
4 at Nadugani 8-9.3, 10 at Top Slip 11-13.3
154. **Red-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus cafer*
155. **White-browed Bulbul** *Alophoixus flaveolus flaveolus* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
Common.
156. **Yellow-browed Bulbul** *Iole indica indica* Endemic to Western Ghats and Sri Lanka
Jungle Hut, Top Slip
157. **Square-tailed Bulbul** *Hypsipetes ganeesa ganeesa* Endemic to Western Ghats and Sri Lanka
2 Jungle Hut 6.3, 4 Nadugani 9.3.
158. **Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* ssp
159. **Hill Swallow** *Hirundo domicola* Endemic to Western Ghats and Sri Lanka
2 at Jungle Hut 4.3
160. **Dusky Crag Martin** *Ptyonoprogne concolor concolor*
2 at Rollapadu 27.2, 10 above Jungle Hut 6.3.
161. **Red-rumped Swallow** *Cecropsis daurica* ssp
e.g. 80 above Jungle Hut 6.3.
162. **Streak-throated Swallow** *Petrochelidon fluvicola*
3 at Rollapadu 28.2
163. **Tickell's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus affinis* ssp
10 Ooty 2-3.3, 2 at Jungle Hut 6.3.
164. **Green Warbler** *Phylloscopus nitidus*
1 at Nadugani 9.3
165. **Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides* ssp
Common
166. **Large-billed Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus magnirostris*
1 at Cairnhill Forest 3.3, 1 at Jungle Hut 4.3, 1 at Nadugani 9.3
167. **Western Crowned Warbler** *Phylloscopus occipitalis* Near-endemic
1 at Cairnhill Forest 3.3, 1 at Masinagudi 4.3, 30 at Nadugani 9.3
168. **Clamorous Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus stentoreus meridionalis*
1 at Masinagudi Dam
169. **Blyth's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus dumentorum*
e.g. max 50 Rollapadu 26-28.2.
170. **Thick-billed Warbler** *Iduna aedon aedon*
1 at Masinagudi Dam 5-7.3, 1 at Nadugani 9.3, 3 at Top Slip 11-12.3
171. **Booted Warbler** *Iduna caligata*
3 seen around Masinagudi (a few unidentified Booted/Sykes's Warblers *Iduna caligata/rama* were also seen)
172. **Plain Prinia** *Prinia inornata franklinii*
173. **Indian Scimitar Babbler** *Pomatorhinus horsfieldii travancoreensis* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
1 at Cairnhill Forest 3.3, 5 at Top Slip 12.3
174. **Tawny-bellied Babbler** *Dumetia hyperythra albobularis* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
5+5 above Jungle Hut 6.3
175. **Dark-fronted Babbler** *Rhopocichla atriceps bourdilloni* Endemic to Western Ghats and Sri Lanka
5+3 at Nadugani 8-9.3
176. **Brown-cheeked Fulvetta** *Alcippe poiocephala brucei*
3 at Jungle Hut 4.3, 1 Jungle Hut 6.3, 8 at Nadugani 9.3
177. **Puff-throated Babbler** *Pellorneum ruficeps olivaceum*
E.g. Masinagudi.

178. **Large Grey Babbler** *Turdoides malcolmi* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
179. **Rufous Babbler** *Turdoides subrufus* Endemic to Western Ghats
1 at Top Slip 12.3
180. **Yellow-billed Babbler** *Turdoides affinis affinis* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
1 at Rollapadu 27.2, 1 at Masinagudi 5.3
181. **Wynaad Laughingthrush** *Garrulax delesserti* Endemic to Western Ghats
7 at Top Slip 13.3
182. **Black-chinned Laughingthrush** *Garrulax cachinnans* ssp EN Endemic to Western Ghats
10 at Cairnhill Forest 3.3
183. **Hume's Whitethroat** *Sylvia althaea*
max 5 at Masinagudi 4-8.3
184. **Yellow-eyed Babbler** *Chrysomma sinensis hypoleucum*
2 at Jungle Hut 6.3.
185. **Asian Fairy-bluebird** *Irena puella puella*
1 male at Jungle Hut 4.3, 2 Theppakadu 8.3, 5 Nadugani 9.3, 1 at Top Slip 11.3.
186. **Southern Hill Myna** *Gracula indica* Endemic to Western Ghats and Sri Lanka
2 at Masinagudi 7.3, many at Nadugani, 20 at Top Slip 11-12.3.
187. **Jungle Myna** *Acridotheres fuscus mahrattensis*
Common at Ooty
188. **Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis* ssp
189. **Malabar Starling** *Sturnus blythii* Endemic to Western Ghats
10 at Jungle Hut 4.3, 2 Masinagudi 7.3.
190. **Brahminy Starling** *Sturnus pagodarum* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
191. **Rosy Starling** *Sturnus roseus*
30 at Rollapadu 26.2, 3 at Bangalore 1.3.
192. **Malabar Whistling Thrush** *Myophonus horsfieldii* Endemic to Western Ghats
Seen at Sighur River, Theppakadu and Nadugani
193. **Orange-headed Thrush** *Geokichla citrina cyanota*
Seen at Jungle Hut and Sighur River, 2 at Top Slip 11.3
194. **Nilgiri Thrush** *Zoothera neilgherriensis* Endemic to Western Ghats
2 at Cairnhill Forest 3.3.
195. **Indian Blackbird** *Turdus simillimus* ssp Endemic to Indian subcontinent
5 at Ooty 2-3.3.
196. **Indian Blue Robin** *Luscinia brunnea brunnea*
1m1f Cairnhill Forest 3.3, max 8 Masinagudi 4-7.3
197. **Oriental Magpie-Robin** *Copsychus saularis ceylonensis*
198. **White-rumped Shama** *Copsychus malabaricus malabaricus*
2 Sighur River 5.3.
199. **Indian Robin** *Saxicoloides fulicatus fulicatus* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
200. **Nilgiri Blue Robin** *Myiomela major* EN Endemic to Western Ghats
1 male at Cairnhill Forest 3.3
201. **Siberian Stonechat** *Saxicola maurus indicus*
3 at Rollapadu 26.2
202. **Pied Bush Chat** *Saxicola caprata nilgiriensis*
203. **Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitarius* ssp
1 male at the summit above Jungle Hut 6.3
204. **Blue-capped Rock Thrush** *Monticola cinclohynchus* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
2 females above Jungle Hut 6.3, 1 male Nadugani 8-9.3
205. **Asian Brown Flycatcher** *Muscicapa dauurica pooensis*
8 above Jungle Hut 6.3, 1 at Theppakadu 8.3
206. **Brown-breasted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa muttui*
4 at Jungle Hut 4.3, 1 at Sighur River 5.3
207. **Rusty-tailed Flycatcher** *Muscicapa ruficauda* Near-endemic

- 1 above Jungle Hut 6.3, 3 at Nadugani 9.3
- 208. Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Ficedula parva*
1 at Rollapadu 27.2, 1 at Sighur River 5.3
- 209. Black-and-orange Flycatcher** *Ficedula nigrorufa* **NT** Endemic to Western Ghats
4 at Botanical Gardens, Ooty 2.3, 3 Cairnhill Forest 3.3, 1 female above Jungle Hut 6.3
- 210. Verditer Flycatcher** *Eumyias thalassina thalassina*
3 above Jungle Hut 6.3
- 211. Nilgiri Flycatcher** *Eumyias albicaudata* **NT** Endemic to Western Ghats
6 at Botanical Gardens, Ooty 2.3, 5 at Cairnhill Forest 3.3
- 212. White-bellied Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis pallipes* Endemic to Western Ghats
3 males and 1 female at Nadugani 9.3, 1 pair at Top Slip 12.3
- 213. Tickell's Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis tickelliae tickelliae*
10 Sighur River 5.3, 10 above Jungle Hut 6.3
- 214. Jerdon's Leafbird** *Chloropsis jerdoni* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
1 male at Jungle Hut 6.3, 1 at Masinagudi 7.3
- 215. Golden-fronted Leafbird** *Chloropsis aurifrons ssp*
1 at Jungle Hut 4.3, 2 at Theppakadu 8.3, 2 at Nadugani 8.3
- 216. Thick-billed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum agile agile*
1 above Jungle Hut 6.3.
- 217. Nilgiri Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum concolor* Endemic to Western Ghats
2 Botanical Gardens, Ooty 2.3
- 218. Purple-rumped Sunbird** *Nectarinia zeylonica flaviventris* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
- 219. Crimson-backed Sunbird** *Nectarinia minima* Endemic to Western Ghats
Seen at Nadugani and Top Slip
- 220. Purple Sunbird** *Nectarinia asiaticus asiaticus*
Common at Rollapadu.
- 221. Little Spiderhunter** *Arachnothera longirostra longirostra*
1 at the watchtower at Top Slip 12.3
- 222. House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus indicus*
- 223. Yellow-throated Sparrow** *Gymnoris xanthocollis*
4 at Masinagudi 7.3
- 224. Baya Weaver** *Ploceus philippinus philippinus*
100 at Rollapadu 28.2
- 225. Indian Silverbill** *Lonchura malabarica*
- 226. White-rumped Munia** *Lonchura striata striata*
- 227. Scaly-breasted Munia** *Lonchura punctulata punctulata*
- 228. Forest Wagtail** *Dendronanthus indicus*
1 at Top Slip 13.3
- 229. White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba ssp*
- 230. White-browed Wagtail** *Motacilla maderaspatensis* Endemic to Indian subcontinent
- 231. Paddyfield Pipit** *Anthus rufulus rufulus*
8 above Jungle Hut 6.3.
- 232. Blyth's Pipit** *Anthus godlewskii*
Seen at Rollapadu, Masinagudi and Nadugani
- 233. Tawny Pipit** *Anthus campestris*
3 at Rollapadu 27.2
- 234. Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis haringtoni*
100 at Rollapadu 26-27.2.
- 235. Nilgiri Pipit** *Anthus nilghiriensis* **NT** Endemic to Western Ghats
5 at the summit climbed 6.3 from Jungle Hut.
- 236. Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus ssp*
e.g. 20 at Ooty 2.3, 1 female Sighur River 5.3.
- 237. Grey-necked Bunting** *Emberiza buchanani ssp*

8 at Rollapadu 27.2

238. Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala*

10 at Rollapadu 26.2

239. Red-headed Bunting *Emberiza bruniceps*

max 10 Rollapadu 26-27.2



Morning roadside birding in dried forest at Theppakadu.



Great forest at Nadugani on the border between Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Notes on a few endemics/difficult birds not seen during the trip

Rock Bush-quail: Possible at Rollapadu.

Painted Bush-quail: Along the road between Ooty and Masinagudi (Kalhatty). Endemic to South India.

Nilgiri Wood-Pigeon: Best chance seems to be Munnar (Rajamalai), also possible at Ooty. Endemic to WG.

Sri Lanka Bay Owl: Thattekad. Endemic to WG and SL.

White-bellied Woodpecker: Top Slip.

Chestnut-winged Cuckoo: Winter guest. Top Slip

White-bellied Minivet: Sighur River, Masinagudi. Endemic to S and W India.

Yellow-throated Bulbul: Bodi Ghat. Endemic to Western Ghats.

White-bellied Blue Robin: Periyar. Endemic to Western Ghats.

Kerala Laughingthrush: Rajamalai. Endemic to Western Ghats.

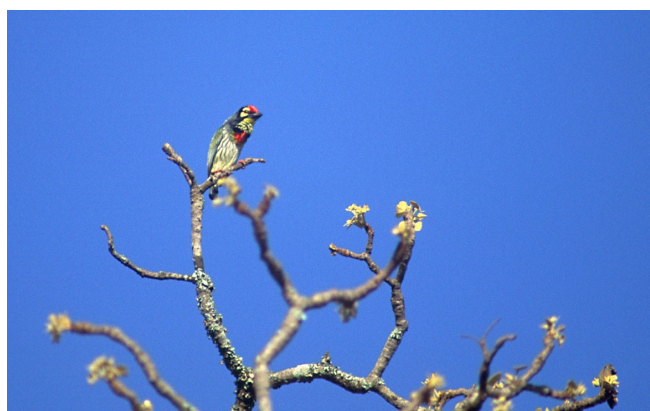
Broad-tailed Grassbird: Periyar. Endemic to Western Ghats. Apparently difficult outside breeding season.

Black-throated Munia: Top Slip. Endemic to WG and SL.

Tytlar's Leaf Warbler: Winter-guest from Kashmir. We had one provisional bird above Jungle Hut-Masinagudi



Tawny Pipit, First winter-bird at Rollapadu.



Coppersmith Barbet at Jungle Hut, Masinagudi.

Additional birding shots



Waiting for Rufous Babblers at Top Slip with Natarajan & son.

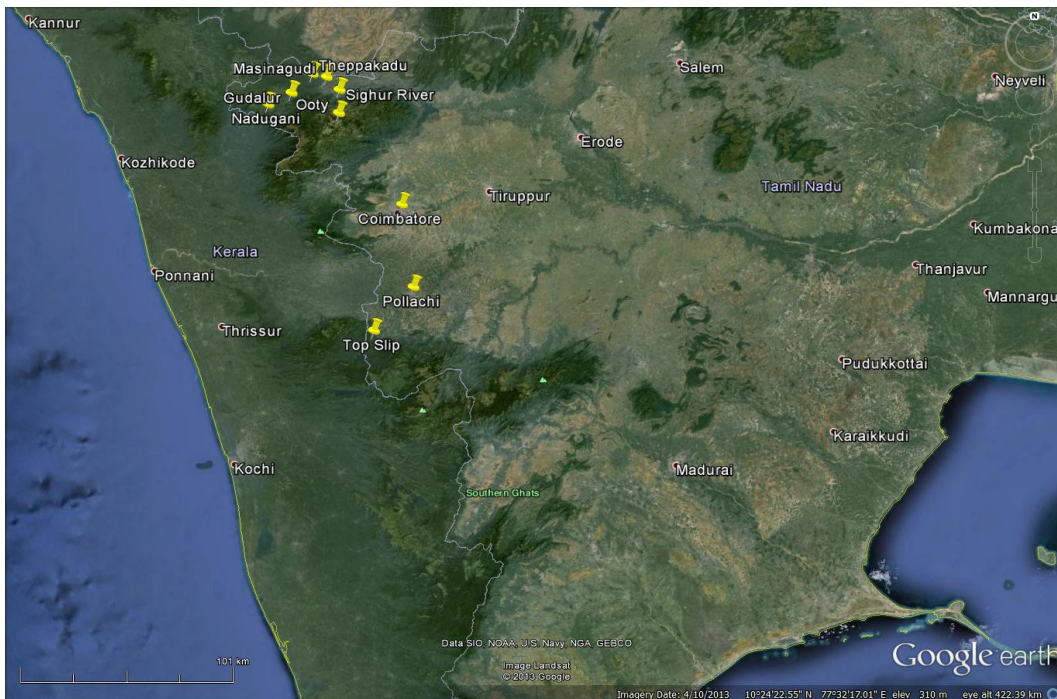


Bouldering in the dried river beds above Jungle Hut, good for Orange-headed Thrush and Indian Pitta.

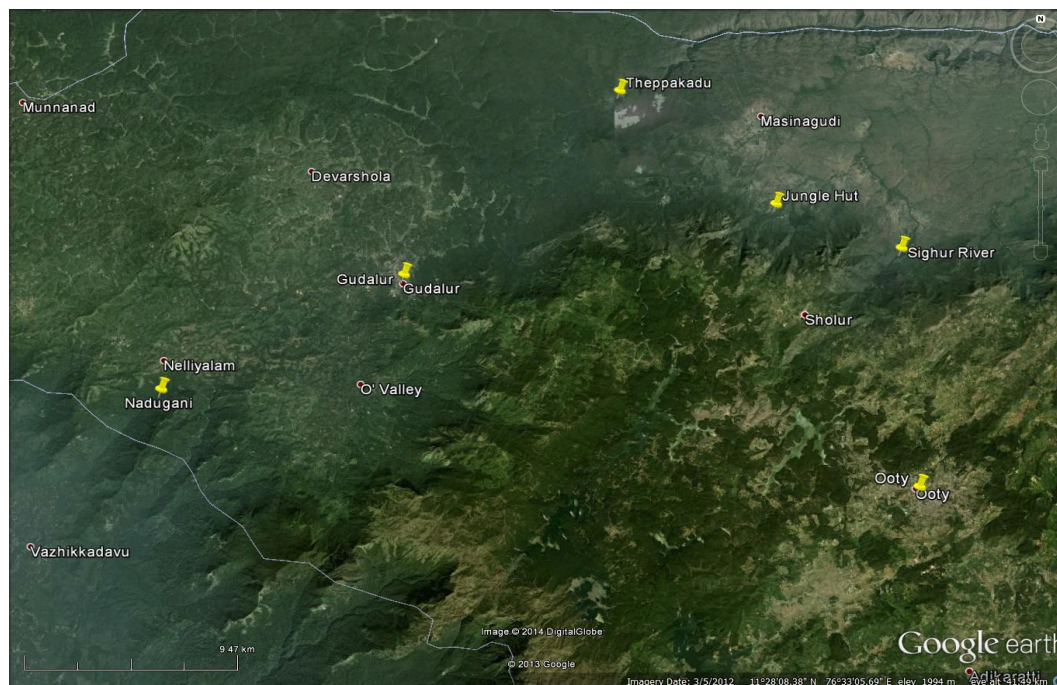


Rollapadu Nature Education Center, with basic accommodation. Note sign with Bustard and Florican!

Maps



Tamil Nadu, with main destinations pointed out.



Ooty-Mudumalai-Nadugani close-up.