

India: Birds & Mammals Tour

Trip Report (a combined report of our In Search of Snow Leopards and Birding & Tigers extension tour)

By Marta Curti & Angel Muela

December 2 - 15, 2022



One of five Dhole (wild dogs) we observed in Tadoba National Park. Photo by Angel Muela

India is home to an extraordinary amount of biodiversity, and is just one of 17 countries categorized as “megadiverse.” It has a surprisingly high level of endemism, and is home to more than 7% of the world’s mammals, and 6.2% of the world’s reptiles, plus numerous amphibians, insects, and other invertebrates. Additionally, more than 1,000 bird species can be found in the myriad of habitats on the Indian Subcontinent. This 13-day birding and wildlife tour started in Tadoba National Park. Tadoba has one of the highest populations of **Bengal Tigers** in India. In four days, we were able to see four tigers, and some other wild felines such as **Leopards** and a **Jungle Cat**, as well as a **Sloth Bear**, and a many great birds including **Crested Serpent-Eagle**, **Indian Scops-Owl**, and **Greater Racket-tailed Drongo**. We then continued our journey to Leh, Ladakh, in the Himalayas, in the northern Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. Known as “Little Tibet,” the region is steeped in Buddhist culture. Leh is also the gateway to Hemis National Park - home to a number of wildlife species. One of the most sought after of these, of course, is the Snow Leopard. On this trip, we were extremely lucky. We saw not just one, but four **Snow Leopards**, as well as some sought after birds such as **Wallcreeper**, **Ibisbill**, **White-browed Tit-Warbler**, and **Tibetan Partridge**. In total, we observed 19 mammal species, two reptile species, and 88 bird species on this tour.

Whitehawk guides: Marta Curti and Angel Muela

Local guides: Shahanaz Baig, Rishin Basu, Stanzin Tharpa, Gyalton Shangku, Targais Thukjay

Highlights of the trip



Watching courting Blue Sheep in action: one of the trip highlights. Photo by Angel Muela

1. The sight of three **Snow Leopards** (a mother and two grown cubs) lounging in the sun for many hours, occasionally lifting their heads, licking their paws, and standing up to change position.
2. Observing a **Wallcreeper** for several minutes as it flitted about on a small rock wall, and then hopped along small stones in the river.
3. Witnessing a **Bearded Vulture** in action as it twice picked up a bone from the ground and dropped it - classic behavior for this species and the first time anyone in our group had witnessed it!
4. Being able to see a pair of **Golden Eagles** chasing each other across the sky above our camp - one clutched prey in its talons while the other pursued it.
5. Enjoying the spectacular scenery on our daily hikes in Rumbak Valley.
6. Our night safari in Tadoba National Park where we saw three species of wild cats: **Bengal Tiger, Leopard, and Jungle Cat.**

7. Getting to observe and photograph a **Changeable Hawk-eagle** perched for a long time beneath a troop of **Northern Plains Gray Langurs**.
8. Being the only jeep around when we spotted a female **Bengal Tiger** on our night safari and getting the chance to watch and photograph her for quite a while before she slowly stood up and walked into the forest.
9. Watching a male and female **Blue Sheep** engaging in courtship behavior.
10. Enjoying delicious Indian cuisine throughout the tour.



A beautiful Changeable Hawk-Eagle showing off its impressive crest. Photo by Angel Muela

Detailed Trip Report

Day 1: December 2 – Tadoba National Park

The first half of our group met in New Delhi on the night of 1 December. On 2 December, our tour officially started with a morning flight to Nagpur. Upon our arrival, we drove for about three hours before arriving to Tadoba National Park. Because we were in a rush to make it in time for our first safari this afternoon, we didn't stop for any birding along the way. However, from the car, we were able to observe a few species such as **Black-winged Kite** and **Asian Green Bee-eaters**. We arrived at the park at 2:00 p.m. We had a quick (but delicious) lunch at our lodge - the Tadoba Jungle Camp. We then met our driver and guide, Shahanaz, at the Khutwanda Gate. Shahanaz

was the first female guide in the park and helped pave the way for other women guides. She was excellent!

Tadoba National Park encompasses approximately 600 km² of mostly southern tropical dry deciduous forests. Teak and Crocodile Bark are some of the prominent tree species found here. As soon as we entered the park, we observed a few **Wild Boars** foraging in the open fields, as well as a small herd of the beautiful **Spotted Deer**. We also observed some of the more common bird species we would see throughout much of the tour including **Asian Green Bee-eater**, **White-throated Kingfisher**, **Red-vented Bulbul**, and the ubiquitous and aptly named **Jungle Babbler**. We also got a fabulous look at a **White-eyed Buzzard** perched on a dead snag against a bright blue sky.



One of several White-eyed Buzzards seen on our trip. Photo by Angel Muela

As we traveled deeper into the park, we came upon more mammals including small herds of the impressive **Sambar Deer**, more Spotted Deer, and troops of **Northern Plains Gray Langurs**. On our first afternoon, we spotted 25 different species of birds, most of which were lifers for the group. Some of the highlights included a close-up and long view of a **Changeable Hawk Eagle** perched below a troop of langurs, and a **Rufous Treepie** perched on the antlers of a **Spotted Deer**. We also observed large numbers of **Gray Jungle Fowl** foraging in the vegetation close to the side of the road, **Greater Coucal**, **Rose-ringed Parakeets**, and the stunning **Sirkeer Malkoha** hopping through the bushes. Toward the end of our first safari, our guide heard word of a tiger sighting. We rushed to the area, but unfortunately, we missed seeing the cat by a few minutes. Though disappointed, thankfully, we would soon get our chance to see these amazing felines in the wild.



Our very first looks at a Bengal Tiger coming toward us. Photo by Michael Roy

Day 2-3: December 3 & 4 – Tadoba National Park

Over the next two days we would enjoy two morning safaris, two afternoon safaris and one night safari. During our tour we visited several different zones of the park including Telia Lake, the Dewada Buffer Area, and Junona, Khutwanda, and Devada-Adegaon Gates. On the morning of the 3rd, we had been in the park for a few hours, searching for tigers and enjoying some birding from our jeep. Our group got several more lifers including **Green Imperial Pigeon**, **Yellow-footed Green Pigeon**, **Red-naped Ibis**, and **Orange-headed Thrush**. Suddenly, our guide got a call that tigers had been spotted along the buffer zone. Without hesitation, the driver literally began racing to the site, which was a bit far away. We braced ourselves as the jeep sped along the narrow, dusty, forest roads for about 10 minutes. We arrived just in time! A **female tiger and her two grown cubs** had crossed the park boundary and were slowly meandering through the vegetation of a local farm. We got great views of all three tigers - one rolled on its back, waving its giant paws in the air. This was an amazing sighting and the first time the group had seen tigers in the wild.

After the tigers disappeared into the vegetation, we hung around for a while to see if they would show up again. Though the tigers didn't return that morning, a **Spotted Owlet** appeared and perched not too far from our vehicle. We also spotted a flock of **Brahminy Starlings** flitting through the trees. We also enjoyed close-up views of the massive **Gaur**! It was a great and productive morning!

The following morning, we would have another surprise in store for us. One of our first sightings was of a **Shikra** perched in a tree. It remained long enough for us to get great views and photographs. As we drove, we spotted **Sloth Bear** tracks in the dust, but little did we know that just an hour or so

later, we would be observing one of these magnificent bears foraging for food just meters from our car! On the afternoon safari we didn't get any new mammal species, but had great sightings of massive **Marsh Crocodiles** lounging on the banks of several lakes, our first and only sighting of a **Stork-billed Kingfisher**, and a pair of nesting **Gray-headed Fish Eagles** with young! Though we had heard word that a tiger had crossed the road not too far from us, and we saw fresh tiger tracks, we decided to end this safari a little early, in order to prepare for our night safari.

Night Safari (4 December) - We met our driver at around 6:30 and drove to the park entrance, where we picked up our local guide, Rishin, who was fabulous and had an amazing eye for spotting wildlife. Our first sighting was of a **Jerdon's Nightjar** sitting in the middle of the road. And then another perched low next to the side of the road. They stayed long enough for our group to get some nice shots. After only a few minutes, our guide spotted an **Indian Hare** hopping about the open. Not soon after, we saw a **Jungle Cat** skulking across a large field. A **Savannah Nightjar** also made an appearance. If this is all we had seen, we would have been satisfied. Just being in the park at night was such a cool experience - with such a different feel than visiting the park during the day. But little did we know what was in store for us. After about half an hour, our guide spotted a female **tiger** ("W" - named for the "w" shaped stripes on her head) sitting down on the side of the road. She appeared to have a small wound on her right shoulder, which she licked continuously. She remained that way for several minutes and we were really able to take in just how beautiful she was. After a while, she lazily got up, sniffed a tree, and wandered into the forest. What a sighting! But, the night was not over yet. Further up the road, our guide spotted more



Some of the wildlife seen on our night safari: Bengal Tiger, Leopard, Jungle Cat and Jerdon's Nightjar.
Photos by Michael Roy

movement. We sped up a little and were rewarded with the sighting of **two leopards!** They traveled through the forest, and then popped onto the road not too far from our jeep. We were able to observe them for several minutes as they meandered along the roadway. After a while, they veered off into the forest again and disappeared into the night. This was definitely one of the highlights of our trip.

Day 4: December 5 – Tadoba National Park and Return to Delhi

We had one final morning tour with Shahanaz. Little did we know we were in for a real treat. Our first stop was to see a pair of **Indian Scops Owls** perched just outside a hole in a tree branch. We took some great photos and continued our search for whatever other animals might show up. We also got some nice views of **Ruddy Mongoose**. After about an hour, we saw our first **Dhole**, followed by four more! We were the only jeep in sight and got to watch this small pack for a long time as they trotted along the road, marking their territory and sniffing the air. That afternoon, we grabbed our packed lunches and headed to the airport for our return to Delhi, where we met and had dinner with the rest of our group.

Day 5: December 6 - Leh, Ladakh

This morning, we took a very early flight to Leh. The journey itself was amazing. The last 20 minutes or so of our flight, we passed directly over the snow-capped peaks and valleys of the Himalayas. Upon our arrival we were met by our local guides and taken to our hotel. Because of the high altitudes of Leh (over 3,000 meters) the first day of this tour is designed for resting and acclimatizing. It is very important to not engage in any intense physical activity, so, we all enjoyed resting and relaxing in our nice hotel - Zen Ladakh - and feasting on some delicious Indian cuisine.

Day 6: December 7 - Shang Valley

Today was supposed to be another day for resting and acclimatizing. Our plan was to do some birding along the Indus River and then head to the Thikse Monastery after lunch. When we woke up that morning, little did we know what was in store for us. Our guides arrived at the hotel at around 8 a.m. and told us that they had word of a snow leopard sighting (a female and two grown cubs) in the Shang Valley, about 60 kilometers away. We knew there was a chance that we would drive all that way and the leopards would be gone. But, we also knew we had to try. We quickly hopped in the car and rushed to the site. When we arrived, we saw two pickup driving away and our hearts sank. We thought for sure the leopards had already left the area. But, to our surprise, another field team had seen us and were actually coming to pick us up! We hopped into their trucks and drove about 5 minutes up a bumpy road. We then climbed a small hill, where we were met by another group of people searching for these elusive cats. We all took turns at the scope and were thrilled to see the obvious outline of a sleeping **Snow Leopard**. Over the course of the afternoon, we would realize that there was not one, not two, but three cats cuddled up together in the sun. We watched them occasionally lift their heads, lick their paws, and change position. Even though they weren't extremely active, being able to observe these cats for so many hours was such a thrill. We also got our first sighting of **Blue Sheep** as an added bonus. At around 4:30 p.m. we left the area and returned to our hotel to get ready for our camping adventure in the Rumbak Valley of Hemis National Park.



Though it seems like there are only two Snow Leopards in the photo, there are actually three. We saw them huddled together on a far off ridge on our first day. This photo was taken by the youngest member of our group, Oliver (14 years old)

Day 7-9: December 8-10 - Rumbak Valley

The first morning wasn't as cold as expected, at around -10 C. Today, we packed up our bags and drove approximately 1.5 hours to our camp in Rumbak Valley, at 3,900 meters. There is now a road that was built to support the community of Rumbak Village, so we were able to drive with our gear all the way. Along the route, we enjoyed some fabulous views of the mountains, and the stark landscape dotted with prayer flags and stupas. When we arrived at camp, our tents were already set up. We dropped our things into the tents, set up our sleeping bags and enjoyed a delicious lunch! Afterwards, while the local trackers scanned the hillsides in search of snow leopards, the rest of the group took a short walk towards Rumbak Village to explore and to do some birding. We were pleasantly surprised by our sightings! While watching a pair of **Chukars** foraging nearby, we spotted a **Brown Dipper** in the stream right by our camp. We then saw a flock of around 11 **Tibetan Partridges** running along the path across the river from us. Though we would see them every day while in Rumbak, this species is normally quite hard to see! While scanning the river, we also spotted a hard to see **Common Snipe** walking in the water. We returned to camp around 3:30 p.m. - the time when snow leopards may begin to become active again, but we didn't find any today. Instead, we got some great views of a couple of **Bearded Vultures** soaring above us - one actually came past us right at eye level! We also got to watch a pair of **Golden Eagles** chasing each other across the sky!



Common Snipe in Rumbak. Photo by Angel Muela



Tibetan Partridge in Rumbak. Photo by Angel Muela

The following morning, we woke up to a surprise - snow! And much colder temperatures, probably around -20 C. After a great breakfast and some scanning of the surrounding mountains, we geared up for a walk along the river bed. As we walked, it continued to snow, covering the entire valley in a light dusting, turning everything white. We walked for about two and a half hours, passing prayer flags and stupas, and some stunning scenery. As we walked, we spotted a small herd of **Blue Sheep** running down a rocky slope. We had the opportunity to watch them for several minutes as they ran part way down the mountain. December is breeding season for Blue Sheep and we had the opportunity to observe some courtship behavior. Further up the riverbed, we spotted a new mammal for the trip - **Royle's Pika** scurrying among the rocks.

On top of our wonderful mammal sightings, we got a new bird species - and a lifer for much of the group - a **Himalayan Griffon** soaring in the distance above the ridge. We also were lucky enough

to observe a **Bearded Vultures** dropping and picking up a bone. After enjoying lunch in the field, we hiked back to our camp in the late afternoon.

The next morning, we hiked to Rumbak Village. Today, we enjoyed our first good sightings of **Robin Accentors**. We saw them all over the village, perched on roof tops and stacks of wood. We also had our first sighting of a **Hill Pigeon** perched on a window ledge. After our walk, we stopped at a local house where we enjoyed a cup of chai tea and had the opportunity to try butter tea - which is literally what it sounds like. Salty tea made with butter. As we walked back to camp, we stopped to photograph some of the beautiful homes in the village and the stupas, covered with dozens of stones which had been engraved with the mantra of compassion "om mani padme hum." We then returned to camp for a bit of rest during our final night of camping in the park. As evening was setting in, Gyaltsen called us up to the viewing point. We arrived just in time to see a **Northern Goshawk** perched for a few moments before taking off in a high speed chase of another bird - likely a Tibetan Partridge.



Stones carved with the mantra of compassion in Rumbak Village. Photo by Angel Muela



Our first morning in Rumbak Valley, we woke up to a snow-covered landscape. Photo by Marta Curti

The next morning we, we woke to see the nearly full moon hovering just above the mountains. It was beautiful. Around breakfast time, our guides heard word that a snow leopard had killed three domestic goats near the town of Matho. Though we didn't have all of the details we decided it was worth a visit to the area, in case the cat was still hanging around. On our way, we spotted a small herd of **Ladakh Urials** far above us. We stopped for a few photos before continuing on our way. After we arrived at the site of the kill (the owners of the goats had already removed the carcasses), we spent some time scanning the hillside, but didn't see anything. Around lunch time, we slowly made our way back to Leh. As we did, we picked up some new bird species for our trip including **Black-throated Thrush** and at our lunch stop, three **Ibisbills** (one juvenile and two adults) - lifers for the entire group. We also saw a number of the lovely **White-winged Redstarts** in the bushes along the river. Back in Leh, a few of us walked to check out the local market, where we spotted an **Eurasian Sparrowhawk** flying overhead, before having dinner and enjoying a comfortable evening at our hotel.

Day 10 -12: December 11-13 - Ulley (also spelled Ullay and Ule) Valley

After breakfast, we began our drive to Ulley Valley which is about 2 hours from Leh. Along the way, we were lucky enough to see a large herd of **Ladakh Urials** alongside the road. We stopped for a

few moments to observe them and take some photographs. We then continued on our way. We also stopped at a beautiful scenic overlook where the Indus and Zaskar Rivers merge.



Lovely views of the Indus and Zaskar Rivers. Photo by Marta Curti



A herd of Ladakh Urials seen alongside the road on our way to Ullay Valley. Photo by Angel Muela

About an hour into our drive, the landscape began to change dramatically. Large boulders dotted the landscape around us, and snow-capped peaks rose up in the distance. We enjoyed the scenery so much, the drive went by quickly. We arrived at our homestay just in time for lunch and quickly settled in. It was quite a change from our camping experience, and we were very appreciative of having a common room with a wood-burning stove. As we enjoyed lunch, our

guides scanned the nearby slopes. They spotted a new species for us for this trip. Two large, stunning **Siberian Ibex** males were wandering in the hills across from our homestay.

On December 12, we drove to Hemis Sukpachen Village. It was a lovely drive along winding roads: meandering past the partially frozen river dotted with red and orange willows, sharp mountain peaks, and open fields. Right away, we saw a small herd of **Ladakh Urials** running up the hillside. We had another view of an **Eurasian Wren**, saw our first and only **House Sparrow** of the trip, and saw flocks of **Horned Larks** and **Chukars** in the barren fields. We returned to our homestay in the evening and enjoyed a delicious dinner by the wood stove. This was the first really clear night and the sky was amazing. Though it was very cold, we all took a few minutes to appreciate the starry night.

On our last morning, we were having breakfast when one of the local assistants walked in and simply said “**snow leopard.**” We quickly gathered cameras and coats and ran to the roof of the homestay, where our local trackers had been scanning for cats all morning. Though this individual was far off, we all got to see one more of these elusive cats walking among the rocks close to a mountain peak before it disappeared among the rocks. It was a great ending to our time in Ulley Valley!



The entire team on our final morning in Ulley Valley, soon after seeing one last snow leopard of the trip!

After packing up, we said our goodbyes to our homestay hosts and our support team and returned to Leh. We made a stop at the Thikse Monastery - a Tibetan-style Monastery located on the top of a small hill. We spent about half an hour viewing the beautiful art, stupas, and wall paintings. In the center of Maitreya Temple, there is a two story tall Buddha. We then returned to our hotel in Leh for dinner and a relaxing evening.



A view of Thikse Monastery. Photo by Angel Muela

Day 13: December 14 - Delhi and end of tour

This morning we headed to the Leh airport at 10:30 a.m. A short hour and a half later, we arrived in Delhi. We dropped off our things at the hotel and then headed out to explore the city. After a short walk, a quick Metro ride, and a hectic ride in a Tuk-Tuk we arrived at the Red Fort - an historic fort located in Old Delhi. We explored the beautiful, ornately decorated complex until dark and then walked around the nearby market before heading to the hotel. We enjoyed one final dinner together and the tour officially ended.

Thanks!

We want to thank all the participants for their enthusiasm, patience, good humor and team work! Thanks for being a part of this tour. Also, we owe a debt of gratitude to the lodges, homestays, and teams of expert trackers, guides, chef, and support crew, who always went above and beyond their obligations in order to provide our group with the best possible experience.

Wildlife Observation List

Birds

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Clements, J. F., T. S. Schulenberg, M. J. Iliff, S. M. Billerman, T. A. Fredericks, J. A. Gerbracht, D. Lepage, B. L. Sullivan, and C. L. Wood. 2021.

	Common Name in English	Scientific Name	Notes
1	Lesser Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>	Seen frequently in the ponds at Tadoba NP (67 seen in total)
2	Cotton Pygmy-Goose	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>	7 individuals observed in Tadoba National Park
1	Tibetan Partridge	<i>Perdix hodgsoniae</i>	Several flocks in the fields around our camp in Rumbak Valley (57 total seen)
2	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	Seen everyday in Tadoba National Park (23 total seen)
3	Red Spurfowl	<i>Galloperdix spadicea</i>	Seen nearly every day in Tadoba National Park (19 total seen)
4	Gray Junglefowl	<i>Gallus sonneratii</i>	Seen everyday in Tadoba National Park (34 total seen)
5	Chukar	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>	Seen in Rumbak Valley and Ulley Valley nearly daily (78 total seen)
6	Jungle Bush-Quail	<i>Perdica asiatica</i>	1 seen in Tadoba National Park
7	Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	Seen regularly in Leh, Ladakh
8	Hill Pigeon	<i>Columba rupestris</i>	Seen in Rumbak Village
9	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Common; 6 seen in Tadoba National Park
10	Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>	Very common; seen every day in Tadoba National Park and on the drive from and to Nagpur
11	Yellow-footed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicopterus</i>	7 seen over the course of our time in Tadoba National Park
12	Green Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>	Two birds seen in Tadoba National Park
13	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>	Common; seen nearly daily in Tadoba National Park
14	Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Taccocua leschenaultii</i>	1 bird seen in Tadoba National Park
15	Jerdon's Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus atripennis</i>	At least 3 seen on our night drive in Tadoba National Park

Common Name in English	Scientific Name	Notes
16 Savanna Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>	At least one seen on our night drive in Tadoba National Park
17 Gray-headed Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio poliocephalus</i>	2 birds seen in a pond by the Buffer Zone in Tadoba National Park
18 White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	1 seen in Tadoba National Park
19 Indian Thick-Knee	<i>Burhinus indicus</i>	1 at Tadoba National Park
20 Ibisbill	<i>Ibidorhyncha struthersii</i>	3 seen in the river near Leh, Ladakh
21 Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	Seen regularly in Tadoba National Park
22 Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1 seen in the stream near our campsite in Rumbak Valley
23 Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	8 seen in total Tadoba National Park surrounds
24 Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>	2 seen in Tadoba National Park
25 Little Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo niger</i>	Commonly seen in Tadoba National Park and surrounds
26 Gray Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	2 seen in Tadoba National Park
27 Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	3 seen in Tadoba National Park
28 Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Commonly seen in Tadoba National Park and surrounds
29 Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Commonly seen in Tadoba National Park and surrounds
30 Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	Very common; seen every day in Tadoba National Park
31 Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	Two seen in Tadoba National Park
32 Red-named Ibis	<i>Pseudibis papillosa</i>	Commonly seen in Tadoba National Park and surrounds
33 Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	1 bird seen in Tadoba National Park, chasing a White-eyed Buzzard; seen on drive from Nagpur to Tadoba
34 Bearded Vulture	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>	Very common in Hemis National Park; seen everyday and a total of 21 observed
35 Himalayan Griffon	<i>Gyps himalayensis</i>	4 seen around Rumbak Valley
36 Crested Serpent-Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>	1 seen on route to Tadoba National Park from our hotel; another observed in the park

Common Name in English	Scientific Name	Notes
37 Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>	2 seen in Tadoba National Park
38 Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	Seen regularly in Hemis National Park; 9 individuals total seen
39 White-eyed Buzzard	<i>Butastur teesa</i>	4 seen in Tadoba National Park; one being chased by a Black-winged Kite
40 Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	2 seen in Tadoba National Park
41 Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	1 seen flying over Leh, Ladakh
42 Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	1 seen from our camp in Rumbak Valley
43 Gray-headed Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus ichhyaetus</i>	3 seen in Tadoba National Park; 2 adults and one large nestling at a nest
44 Indian Scops Owl	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>	2 seen in Tadoba National Park
45 Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>	1 seen at Buffer Zone in Tadoba National Park; an adult and young seen at a nest outside the park boundaries
46 Indian Gray Hornbill	<i>Ocyceros birostris</i>	1 seen flying over Tadoba Jungle Camp Lodge
47 Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	2 birds seen at Tadoba National Park
48 Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>	1 in Tadoba National Park
49 White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	Common; seen daily in Tadoba National Park. 15 in total
50 Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	3 birds seen in Tadoba National Park
51 Asian Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	Very common; seen every day in Tadoba National Park and on the drive to and from Nagpur
52 Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	5 seen in Tadoba National Park
53 Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Leiopicus mahrattensis</i>	1 seen at the Devada-Adegaon Gate, Tadoba National Park
54 Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>	2 seen in Tadoba National Park
55 Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>	9 total seen in Tadoba National Park

Common Name in English	Scientific Name	Notes
56 Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	Very common; seen every day in Tadoba National Park
57 Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>	8 seen at the Khutwanda Gate route in Tadoba National Park
58 Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	2 seen in Tadoba National Park
59 Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	5 birds seen at the PanAmerican highway;
60 Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>	1 seen at Bayano Lake
61 White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>	1 seen in Tadoba National Park
62 Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	Common; seen daily in Tadoba National Park. 15 in total
63 White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>	2 seen in Tadoba National Park
64 Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>	At least 2 seen in Tadoba National Park
65 Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	Common; seen daily in Tadoba National Park. 15 in total
66 Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	Common throughout Hemis National Park
67 Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	Seen regularly in Hemis National Park
68 Yellow-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	Seen often in Hemis National Park; 12 total
69 Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	Seen in Tadoba National Park
70 Cinereous Tit	<i>Parus cinereus</i>	1 seen at our hotel in Leh, 2 seen in Ulley Valley
71 Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	Several flocks on route to Ulley Valley and in Hemis Sukpachen (20 total seen)
72 Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	Seen everyday in Tadoba National Park (23 total seen)
73 White-browed Tit-Warbler	<i>Leptopoecile sophiae</i>	2 seen at our camp in Rumbak Valley
74 Tawny-bellied Babbler	<i>Dumetia hyperythra</i>	1 in Tadoba National Park
75 Jungle Babbler	<i>Argya striata</i>	Seen everyday in Tadoba National Park (61 total)
76 Wall Creeper	<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>	1 seen at a small rock wall and at the stream between our camp in Rumbak Valley and Rumbak Village

Common Name in English	Scientific Name	Notes
77 Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	1 seen at the stream near our camp in Rumbak Valley; 1 seen in Hemis Sukpachen
78 Brown Dipper	<i>Cinclus pallasii</i>	1 seen in the stream near our camp in Rumbak Valley
79 Brahminy Startling	<i>Sturnia pagodarum</i>	6 seen in a farm (buffer zone) of Tadoba National Park
80 Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Geokichla citrina</i>	2 in Tadoba National Park
81 Black-throated Thrush	<i>Turdus atrogularis</i>	4 seen around Shey Ponds and outskirts of Leh
82 Oriental Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	2 in Tadoba National Park
83 White-winged Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus erythrogastrus</i>	28 observed; commonly seen around Leh
84 Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>	1 seen in Tadoba National Park
85 Robin Accentor	<i>Prunella rubeculoides</i>	Seen in Rumbak Village and Ulley Valley outside our homestay
86 Brown Accentor	<i>Prunella fulvescens</i>	Seen outside our homestay in Ulley Valley
87 House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	1 seen in Ulley Valley
88 Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>	A flock of around 11 seen in Ulley Valley

Reptiles

1 Marsh Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus palustris</i>	3 seen in various ponds in Tadoba National Park
2 Bengal Monitor	<i>Varanus bengalensis</i>	1 seen in Tadoba National Park



Bengal Monitor photographed in Tadoba National Park. Photo by Angel Muela

Mammals

1	Snow Leopard	<i>Panthera uncia</i>	3 seen at Shang; 1 seen in Ulley
2	Siberian Ibex	<i>Capra sibirica</i>	2 seen in Ulley
3	Bharal	<i>Pseudois nayaur</i>	Seen nearly every day in Rumbak Valley; and in Shang
4	Ladakh Urial	<i>Ovis vignei vignei</i>	Seen leaving Rumbak Valley, a large herd on the way to Ulley, and in Ulley.
5	Royle's Pika	<i>Ochotona roylei</i>	Seen on a day hike from Rumbak Valley
6	Bengal Tiger	<i>Sanguinus geoffroyi</i>	3 seen at the Buffer Zone; one at Junona Gate, Tadoba National Park
7	Ruddy Mongoose	<i>Herpestes smithii</i>	Seen a few times in Tadoba National Park
8	Spotted Deer	<i>Axis axis</i>	Seen daily in Tadoba National Park
9	Sambar Deer	<i>Rusa unicolor</i>	Seen regularly in Tadoba National Park
10	Sloth Bear	<i>Melursus ursinus</i>	1 seen in Tadoba National Park
11	Jungle Cat	<i>Felis chaus</i>	1 seen on our night drive in Tadoba National Park
12	Dhole	<i>Cuon alpinus</i>	5 seen on our last day in Tadoba National Park
13	Indian Hare	<i>Lepus nigricollis</i>	Seen on the night drive in Tadoba National Park
14	Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	Common; seen most days in Tadoba National Park
15	Three-striped Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus palmarum</i>	Seen occasionally in Tadoba National Park
16	Indian Muntjac	<i>Muntiacus vaginalis</i>	Rare; 2 seen in Tadoba National Park
17	Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>	2 seen during our night drive in Tadoba National Park
18	Northern Plains Gray Langur	<i>Semnopithecus dussumier</i>	Very common; seen daily in Tadoba National Park and our our drive to and from Nagpur
19	Gaur	<i>Bos gaurus</i>	Seen daily in Tadoba National Park