

Discover Sri Lanka: Birds, Wildlife, and Culture 2023

Trip Report

By Marta Curti & Angel Muela

28 Nov. - 9 Dec., 2023



Two of several Asian Elephants seen during our tour. Photo by Angel Muela

Sri Lanka is considered a biodiversity hotspot, and for good reason. It teems with endemic birds, reptiles, amphibians and plants found nowhere else on Earth. With numerous lakes and rivers, lush tropical rainforests, mangroves and coastal lagoons, misty highlands, and dry zone scrub jungles, Sri Lanka comprises of a wide range of picturesque landscapes and natural habitats. We were able to visit a few of these on this 12-day tour, from the high elevation Horton Plains National Park, to the drier forests of Yala National Park, and to the coast of Mirissa. We observed **190 bird species**, adding new species each day, including on our last day en route to the airport. We observed **25 mammals**, and **16 reptile and amphibian species**. We visited some important historical and cultural sites such as **Sigirya Rock** and the **Ancient City of Polonnaruwa**, and enjoyed and a bit of shopping at a local artisans cooperative and markets.

Tour Leaders: Marta Curti and Angel Muela

Local Guides: Ashan Piyasinghe and Wicky Wickramasekara

Highlights of the trip

1. At the end of our first safari in Wilpattu, when a **Sloth Bear** ambled right beside our jeeps and continued up the road in front of us.
2. Getting nice views of a **Gray Slender Loris** as it watched us through the branches during our night drive in Habarana.
3. Seeing more than 20 **Asian Elephants**, including a baby, on our safari in Hurulu Eco Park. And spotting a rare “**tusker**” elephant in Yala National Park.
4. Getting to watch two **Fishing Cats** and one **Indian Giant Flying Squirrel** on our night walk on the grounds of our hotel - The Other Corner.
5. Climbing to the top of Sigirya Rock and taking in the beautiful paintings and stunning views at this national monument.
6. Our morning in Horton Plains. Despite the rainy weather, we still had a great **Sri Lanka Leopard** sighting - a beautiful male sitting in the grass for several minutes. We enjoyed the spectacular landscapes, up-close encounters with a **Sambar Deer**, and photographing several endemic **Rhino Horned Lizards**.
7. Finding four owl species in one day: **Brown Wood-Owl**, **Brown Boobook**, **Jungle Owlet**, and **Indian Scops-Owl**.
8. Watching hundreds of **flying foxes** leaving their day roost as the sun set at Tissa Lake.
9. Spotting a **Blue Whale** - a first for the whole group - and a large pod of **Spinner Dolphins** in Mirissa.
10. Enjoying a traditional, home-cooked Sri Lankan lunch on our last day in Sri Lanka!



A young, female Sri Lanka Leopard in Wilpattu National Park. Photo by Angel Muela

Itinerary

Day 1: November 28 — Start of the Tour: Colombo to Hunuviladama Tank

Everyone's flights arrived early today, so we left the airport and were on the road headed to our first destination just outside Wilpattu National Park by 6 a.m. With a few short stops for breakfast and to pick up some snacks, we arrived at our hotel by mid morning. We were all tired from our long journey to get here, so our early arrival allowed us time to relax, swim in the hotel pool, and do some light birding on the grounds before lunch. **Blue-tailed Bee-eater**, **Indian Roller**, **Tricolored** and **Scaly-breasted munias**, **Black-headed Ibis**, and **Common Myna** were just a few of the species we observed just outside our decks.

After lunch, we took a short drive with our local guides, Ashan and Wicky, to the Hunuviladama Tank, a man-made reservoir where many locals come to bathe. Here, we picked up 28 more species, including two endemics - the **Red-backed Flameback** and the **Brown-capped Babbler**. We walked along a dirt path that skirted the water for about an hour and got great views of several **Malabar Pied-Hornbills**, both perched and flying. In an open field in the distance, we saw some beautiful male **Indian Peafowls** displaying. We also saw **Black-hooded Orioles**, one **White-throated Kingfisher** and one **Stork-billed Kingfisher**, each showing off its resplendent blue back, and a small flock of **Sri Lanka Green-Pigeons** that flew past us. Here, we spotted our first mammals for the tour: **Spotted Deer**, **Common Ground Squirrel** and a **Grizzled Giant Squirrel** feeding on a mango. After a while, some dark storm clouds rolled in and we made it back to the bus just in time to escape the downpour. Back at our lodge, we enjoyed some coffee and tea before dinner and some light birding as the sun began to set. **Red-wattled Lapwing**, **Purple**



One of many Malabar Pied-Hornbills we observed on our first afternoon in Sri Lanka. Photo by Angel Muela

Sunbird, Pale-billed Flowerpecker, and Brown-breasted Flycatcher all made an appearance on the lodge grounds.

We enjoyed our first dinner together and then a few of us wandered around the lodge after dark. We added our first reptiles and amphibians to our list, the **Paddy Field Frog** and endemic **Rohan's Globular Frog**, two **Spotted House Geckos**, and a species familiar to us all - the **Common House Gecko**.

We turned in early for the night, resting up before our first safari.

Day 2: November 29 — Full day Wilpattu National Park



Some birds of Wilpattu National Park: **Brown Fish-Owl** (left); **Orange-breasted Green Pigeon** (top right); **Stork-billed Kingfisher** (bottom right). Photos by Angel Muela

We woke up very early in the morning, departing our hotel by 6:00 a.m. in order to make it to the park gate early. Popularly dubbed as 'the land of the lakes', Wilpattu National Park is Sri Lanka's oldest and largest national park and encompasses a wide variety of habitats. We spent a full day in the park to maximize our wildlife viewing opportunities.

On our way to the park, we added a few more birds to our list including **Lesser Adjutant, Asian Woolly-necked Stork, and Yellow-billed Babblers**. Upon entering the park, we began to spot some interesting mammals. From the get-go, we saw a small family of **Tufted Gray Langurs** in the trees above us. We also observed many groups of the beautiful **Spotted Deer**, and saw a lone **Barking Deer** - all within the first few hours. Throughout the morning, we also had quite good luck with reptiles - observing a **Mugger Crocodile, Water Monitor**, and several **Land Monitors**

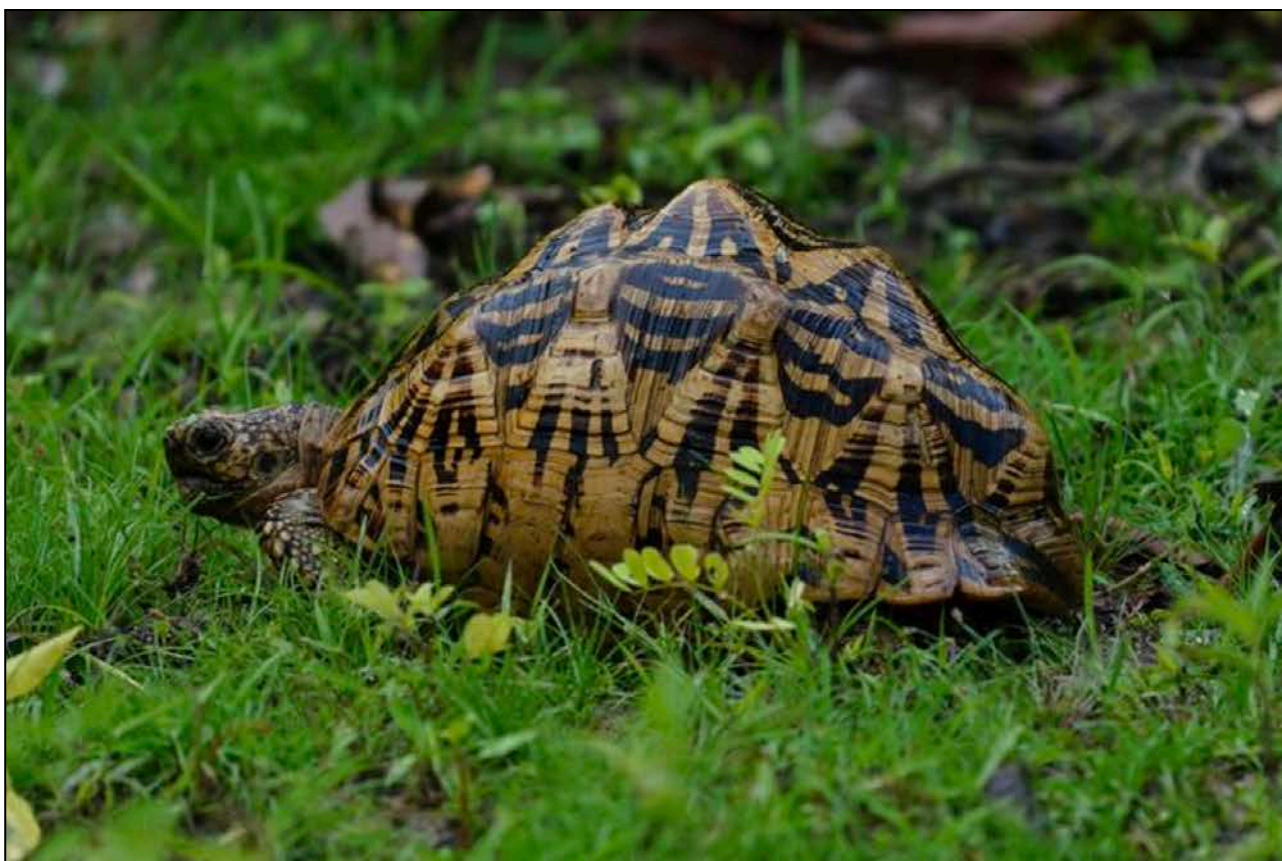
throughout the day. Of course, our highlight for the morning was our first look at the **Sri Lanka Leopard**. We were first alerted to its presence by a small troop of monkeys letting out an alarm call. We stopped the jeeps and waited patiently, when we noted some leopard tracks in the mud alongside the road. A few minutes later, a young female, just over a year old, crossed the road in front of one of our jeeps and then walked calmly into the forest. The entire group got to see her, though a few of us saw her only when she was within the vegetation. The monkeys continued to call, so we waited for a while, but seeing no more signs of her, we decided to continue on.

Soon after, we made a stop for lunch. Apart from the beautiful surroundings, a lone **Sri Lanka Junglefowl** wandered nearby. After seeing and trying to photograph so many in the forest, it was nice to see one out in the open. As we ate, we enjoyed observing the antics of a troop of **Toque Macaques** as they gathered around our jeeps, hoping to find (or steal) some food.

After lunch, we spent some time photographing several **Crested Serpent-Eagles**, who were perched at eye level and so close we felt we could reach out and touch them. It actually was a great day for raptors. We got some nice views of **Changeable Hawk-Eagle**, **Brahminy Kite**, **Shikra**, **Gray-headed Fish-Eagle**, and a few of us saw a **White-bellied Sea-Eagle** flying off with a fish and another Crested Serpent-Eagle feeding on what was likely a Green Vine Snake.

All in all, we saw more than 60 bird species in the park this day including **Asian Koel**, **Blue-faced Malkoha**, **Orange-breasted Green-Pigeon**, **Sri Lanka Gray Hornbill**, **Chestnut-headed Bee-eater**, **Brown Shrike**, **Jerdon's Bushlark**, and **Indian Paradise-Flycatcher**, to name just a few.

A few hours after lunch, dark clouds rolled in it began to rain heavily. We parked the jeeps and waited for the rain to lessen. After a while, with the rain still falling hard, we decided to continue on. We had some great sightings this afternoon - the **Black-naped Hare** and the hard-to-see **Star Tortoise** were some of the highlights. Until...



The beautiful Star Tortoise made an appearance after a rain shower in Wilpattu National Park. Photo by **Michael Roy**

a **Sloth Bear** made a surprise appearance, all thanks to a barely seen **Asian Elephant**. As we were driving along the dirt road, we saw several signs that an elephant had recently passed through - freshly snapped tree branches along its path and, of course, the tell-tale deep, round tracks it left behind. Some of the group caught fleeting glimpses of the elephant's backside as it disappeared into the forest. After the second jeep caught up, we were waiting for the elephant to reappear, when suddenly one of the jeep drivers spotted a Sloth Bear crossing the road. We quickly drove to the point where it had entered into the forest and the entire group could see - and hear- as it foraged for termites. To our delight, it then turned again and crossed the road, this time right in front of us. The entire group got some amazing views. It waddled up the road for a minute or two before disappearing again into the forest. This was one of the best sightings of the day.

We were very happy with our first safari experience. We left the park satisfied and ready for more the next day. At around 5:30 we returned to the lodge for a delicious dinner and some relaxation around the pool. A few **Indian Flying Foxes** passed overhead. After dark, we observed a **Brown Fish-Owl** perched on a post in some flooded fields. It was an amazing way to end the day.



Our first Sloth Bear sighting of the trip (Wilpattu National Park). Photo by Angel Muela

Day 3: November 30 — Full day Wilpattu National Park

We once again got an early start, departing our hotel at around 5:45 a.m. On the road to the park, we observed a **Crested Hawk-Eagle** perched in a bare tree along the road. Some of our group also saw the first **Brown Fish-Owl** out of the four total we would see today. This morning, we



Ruddy Mongoose photographed in Wilpattu NP. Photo by Angel Muela

added two new mammals to our list: **Ruddy Mongoose** and a lone **Golden Jackal**. We also got lucky with another **Sloth Bear** sighting as it walked in front of us along the road before entering the forest. We waited a while, hoping it might come out again, but it did not, so we moved on.

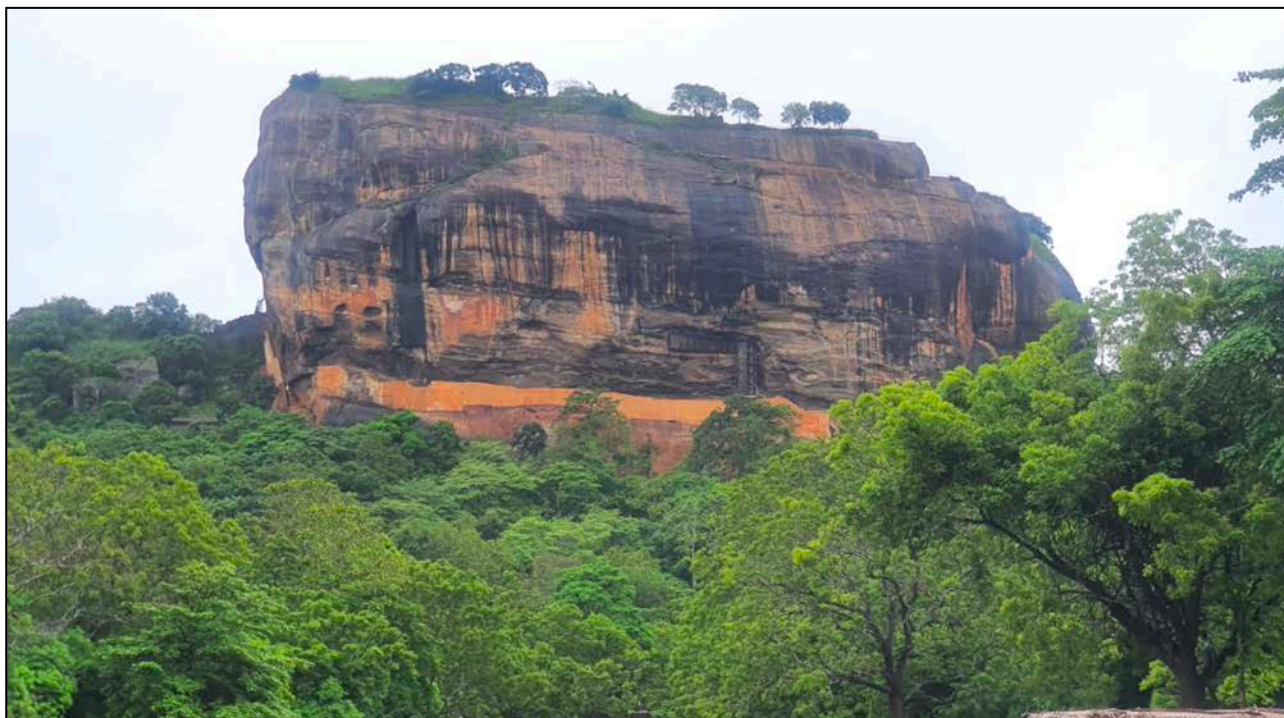
Today, we saw more than 70 bird species, with several new ones for the day including the rare **Black-capped Kingfisher**, as well as **Crested Treeswift**, **Tickell's Blue Flycatcher**, **Indian Blue Robin**, **Forest Wagtail**, **Black-naped Monarch**, and **Oriental Honey-buzzard**. We also saw a few more reptile species including the **Lowland Kangaroo Lizard** and a **Hard Shell Terrapin**.

We had another afternoon of heavy rains. In fact, it rained so hard that many of the park roads flooded, which made for an adventurous drive home. Our last wildlife sighting before departing the park was of the fourth **Brown Fish-Owl** of the day. It was perched at eye level and seemed happy to sit and pose for our photos.

We exited the park just as the sun was lowering on the horizon. It turned the Hunuviladama Tank a beautiful golden color. Back at our hotel, some of us enjoyed more time in the pool before a delicious dinner of traditional Sri Lanka Hoppers (a bowl-shaped pancake served with some delicious toppings) cooked right in front of us.

Day 4: December 1 — Habarana and Sigirya World Heritage Site

We had a leisurely morning today, enjoying a sit down breakfast on our last morning at the lodge. Before breakfast, we observed a juvenile **Shikra** perched in a nearby snag and saw our first **Baya Weaver** perched among a small flock of **Scaly-breasted Munias**. After breakfast, it began to drizzle and would rain off and on for the rest of the day. It was a good day to be traveling to our next destination which was two hours away - Habarana. Along the way, we stopped at a small lake



View of one of Sri Lanka's most famous landmarks, Sigiriya. Photo by Jose Vargas

and picked up a few more birds including **Spot-billed Pelican** and **Pheasant-tailed Jacana**. After lunch, we met a herpetologist at our hotel who was photographing an endemic **Sri Lanka Cat Snake** he had found on the property. While photographing the snake, we observed **White-browed Fantail** and **Indian White-eye** flitting in the trees above us.

This afternoon, we headed to the World Heritage Site of Sigiriya - an ancient rock fortress, and perhaps one of Sri Lanka's most well-known landmarks. While we waited to purchase our entrance tickets, we saw a **Common Kingfisher** in one of the ponds and two **Grizzled Giant Squirrels** in the trees. We then began our ascent, climbing a series of stairs along the side of the rock to reach the top. We were rewarded with some stunning views all around us. Part way down, we stopped at a cave entrance to view some of the beautiful rock paintings, before slowly making our way back to the vehicle. On the way down, we picked up another endemic bird species - the **Black-capped Bulbul**.

After dinner it was time for our night drive. Despite the light drizzle throughout the day, we decided to go ahead and try the drive, even though we weren't sure how productive it would be given the rain. Much to our delight and surprise, we saw some amazing species. Our first sighting was of a **Brown Fish-Owl** in some rice paddy fields, and then a roosting **Gray-headed Fish-Eagle**, and an **Indian Nightjar**. After about an hour into our drive, we came across one of the species we had most been hoping for - a **Gray Slender Loris**! It was climbing through some tree branches but paused long enough for all of us to get a great look at it as it looked back at us. Some of the group got really great looks at a second one, as well. Apart from this incredible sighting, we saw a **Jungle Cat** and some of the group got to see a **Fishing Cat** walking through a rice field. Our last sighting for the night was of two **Golden Jackals** that were weaving on and off the road. We watched them for a few minutes before they disappeared into the grass. We returned to our hotel around midnight and went to bed right away, since we had an early start the next day.

Day 5: December 2 — Ancient City of Polonnaruwa and Hurulu Eco Park

We left early this morning and headed to Polonnaruwa - about an hour's drive away. We made a short stop to observe a colony of **Indian Flying Foxes** on their day roost - it was quite the spectacle! Afterwards, we spent this rainy morning visiting the ruins of the Ancient City of Polonnaruwa, learning a bit more about Sri Lankan history and culture. We also added two new mammals to our list: the **Indian Gray Mongoose** and the **Purple-faced Leaf Monkey**. We also got our first sightings of **Alexandrine Parakeets** for the trip. We left the ruins at 10:00 a.m. and headed to the Hurulu Eco Park. We did an afternoon safari in this small, but beautiful park not too far from our hotel. Our main target here was **Asian Elephant** and we were not disappointed. The first one we saw was mostly hidden behind some tall vegetation. The second sighting was of a young male feeding, but also somewhat obscured by vegetation. As the safari continued, our sightings got better and better. We observed a lone male spraying himself with dirt from the road. The highlights were seeing a small herd of about 5, with a baby elephant in tow that crossed the road right in front of us. And to end the safari, we watched a herd of about 12 feeding just alongside the road. We also added a few more birds to our list - with the highlights being the **Black Eagle** and the **Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker**.

Back at our hotel, our guide Ashan, found a spectacular **Black-backed Dwarf-Kingfisher** - a hard-to-see and stunning bird - at the small creek running just past our rooms. Later in the evening a few of us enjoyed the pool and the fish foot spa.

After dinner, we took a night walk with the resident naturalist, Amal. We found a **Common Tailorbird** on its roost and watched how the scorpions glowed under a UV light. We followed Amal to the edge of a small dam and on the other side were two **Fishing Cats** who stayed around long enough for us to get some photos. As we continued our walk, a few in the group saw an **Asian Elephant** cross in front of them in the road. Our final sighting of the night was of an **Indian Giant Flying Squirrel** - a lifer mammal for the entire group. This was a great way to end an amazing day.



One of three Fishing Cats we saw on our trip. Photo by Angel Muela



Indian Giant Flying Squirrel seen on our night walk in Habarana. Photo by Michael Roy

Day 6: December 3 — Travel to the Central Highlands of Nuwara Eliya

Today was mostly a traveling day, as we drove from Habarana to Nuwara Eliya. Along the way, we stopped at a local Tea Factory for a quick tour and taste of locally grown tea. As we were leaving the factory, two **Legge's Hawk Eagles** soared overhead. When we arrived to Nuwara Eliya, we went straight to Victoria Park, a city park and picked up a few more lifers including some endemics. **Yellow-eared Bulbul**, **Velvet-breasted Nuthatch**, **Sri Lanka White-eye**, and **Kashmir Flycatcher** were the highlights of this visit. We then returned to our hotel for dinner and some relaxation in preparation for an early start tomorrow.



One of several Velvet-breasted Nuthatches seen on this tour. Photo by Angel Muela



One of many Brahminy Kites seen during our tour. Photo by Angel Muela

Day 7: December 4 – Morning in Horton Plains National Park

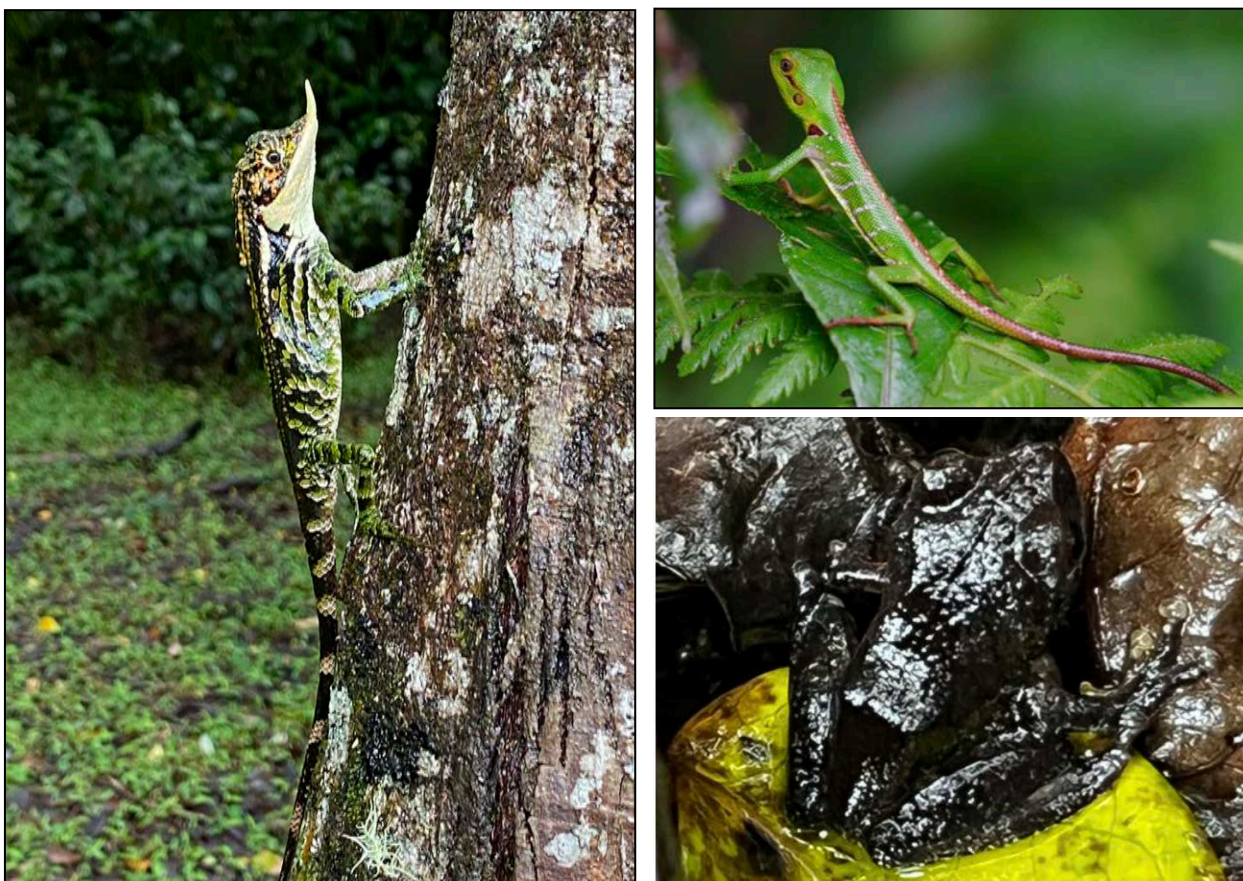
Today we woke up to a very rainy day. We left our hotel at 4:45 a.m. and drove an hour to the entrance of Horton Plain's National Park. Our goal was to search for leopards to try to get a better sighting for the entire group, so we made an effort to be the first ones at the park. We began our safari right at 6:00 a.m. Though it was rainy and very misty, we enjoyed the beautiful, unique landscape of these high elevation plains. Right away, we saw several **Sambar Deer**, singly or in groups, including some beautiful males with large antlers. We also got a few new species right away - **Indian Blackbird** and **Pied Bushchat**. When there was a short break in the rain, our drivers dropped us off and we began to walk along the road. There we spotted some **Sri Lankan White-eyes** and a few more **Yellow-eared Bulbuls**. We heard **Purple Leaf-faced Monkeys** (the highland race, also known as "bear monkeys") chattering in the trees, but we weren't able to see them. Suddenly, our drivers came rushing up in the jeeps. There had been a leopard sighting! We piled into the cars and headed to the location. Sure enough, we were all able to get terrific views of a male **Sri Lanka Leopard** sitting in the grass on a hillside. We watched it for around 5-10 minutes before it turned and wandered back into the forest. We all got terrific views of this beautiful cat sitting in the pouring rain.

We took a quick break after that for some coffee and tea and watched some **Large-billed Crows** and **Red-vented Bulbuls** in the trees around us. We also enjoyed getting close up photos and views of a male **Sambar Deer** who was standing beneath the overhang of the building next to the cafe, trying to avoid the rain.

We then drove to the opposite entrance to the park to search for the endemic **Rhino-horned Lizard**. We saw at least three! We also saw the **Black-lipped Lizard** and a few **Horton Plains Shrub Frogs**. Since the day was so rainy, we decided to cut it a bit short and began to make our

way out of the park, when we spotted a **Common Buzzard** and an **Eurasian Kestrel** perched relatively close to each other. After we exited the park, we picked up one more new endemic for the trip - the **Orange-billed Babbler**.

Though we didn't have great luck with the weather (the effects of a cyclone in the north of country were being felt across this island, and our jeep driver even commented that he couldn't remember a time when it had rained in the area in December), we still managed to get a great sighting of a leopard, a few new species of birds for the trip, and a few new reptiles and amphibians to boot!



Some reptiles and amphibians of Horton Plains: Rhino-horned Lizard (left) photo by Marta Curti; Black-lipped Lizard (top right) photo by Michael Roy; Horton Plains Shrub Frog (bottom right) photo by Michael Roy

After lunch, we headed to the Hakgala Botanical Gardens. We got to see the highland races of both the **Toque Macaque** (with their funny hairdos) and the **Purple-faced Leaf Monkey**. We also got a few new birds for the trip including **Sri Lanka Blue-Magpie**, **Black Bulbul**, and **Yellow-fronted Barbet**.

Day 8: December 5 — Nuwara Eliya to Tissa-Yala

Today we had another travel day. We left our hotel at 7:30 and began our drive south. After about an hour, we made a stop at Surrey Estate Bird Sanctuary to see a **Brown Wood-Owl** on its day roost. We also picked up some other really special birds including **Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot**, **Loten's Sunbird**, and **Sri Lanka Scimitar-Babbler**. En route, we made another stop in Ella and got nice views of a few different birds including **White-rumped Munia**, **Yellow-billed Babbler**, **Indian Robin**, **Crimson-fronted Barbet**, and **Small Minivet**.



Four of the owl species we observed in one day: Jungle Owlet (top left), Brown Wood-Owl (top right), Indian Scops-Owl (bottom left), Brown Boobook (bottom right). Photos by Angel Muela

We arrived at our hotel around 2:00 p.m., had a quick lunch, and were out again in search of owls on their day roost at the Wirawila Tissa Sanctuary. There was a heavy downpour that lasted about 20 minutes. Despite the rain, we got some nice views of a **Jungle Owlet**. The group then split up - some went to check out a nearby market, while a few others stayed behind to see and photograph three **Indian Scops-Owls**. We then all met up and went to Tissa Lake - a beautiful lake with trees full of roosting **Indian Flying Foxes** and dozens of water birds including **Spot-billed Pelican**, **Indian Cormorant**, and **Little Egret**. **Stork-billed Kingfishers**, **White-breasted Waterhen**, **Gray Herons**, and **Rose-ringed Parakeets** were some of the other birds we observed while waiting to watch the bats leave, en masse, at dusk. It was an amazing sight - watching hundreds of bats flying overhead, against the backdrop of a pink sunset. We also picked up a new species for the trip - **Yellow Bittern**. After dark, we returned to Wirawila Tissa Sanctuary in search of the **Brown Boobook**. It responded right away to calls and we were able to see it very well for several minutes. We then returned to our hotel after a long, but fruitful day.

Day 9: December 6 — Full day Yala National Park

On our last safari for the tour, we spent the day in Yala National Park. Before we entered the park, we spotted an **Asian Elephant**, two **Golden Jackals**, and some **Wild Boar** just before the park boundary. As we waited for the gate to open, we did some light birding from the jeep, scanning the local ponds that were active with bird life. We added a few new species for the trip including **Pied Kingfisher**, **Eurasian Spoonbill**, and **Black-crowned Night-Herons** that were congregating just after sunrise.

Once we entered the park, the effects of the recent heavy rainfall were clear. The park roads were partially flooded and quite damaged, so it made for some slow-going, which was just fine. As usual, we took our time - looking for any wildlife we could find. In the morning, we got some nice views of **Asian Elephants**, including a rare “**Tusker**”. We also saw some **Golden Jackals**, **Wild Boar**, **Spotted Deer**, **Mugger Crocodile**, **Ground Monitors**, **Changeable Hawk-Eagles** and a **Gray-headed Fish-Eagle**. All before noon!

We stayed inside the park for lunch, but our movements were restricted to a small area for two hours, when the park is closed to jeep traffic. However, we were still able to enjoy the beautiful views of the ocean and see an occasional **White-bellied Sea-Eagle** soar above. A few of the group also got to see the **Sri Lanka Woodshrike** - another endemic

. After the designated wait time, we began our afternoon safari. Though we were hoping to get another leopard sighting, it wasn't meant to be. However, the birding was great. We observed over 85 species, and added a few new ones to our trip list. Some of the highlights included **Jungle Nightjar**, **Ruddy-breasted Crake**, **Great Thick-knee**, **Brahminy Starling**, **Greater Racket-tailed Drongo**, **Barred Buttonquail**, **Pied Cuckoo**, **Sirkeer Malkoha**, **Yellow-crowned Woodpecker**, and **Red-backed Flameback**. We also saw some beautiful butterflies including **Crimson Rose**, **Common Rose**, **Lemon Immigrant**, and **Blue Glassy Tiger**. Some of us also watched a dung beetle doing its thing with some elephant dung. Our last sighting of the day was a small herd of elephants with one baby.

We returned to the hotel after dark for some much-needed rest.



A Barking Deer we observed in Wilpattu National Park. Photo by Angel Muela

Day 10: December 7 — Travel to Mirissa and Birding in Kirala Kele Sanctuary

We had a relaxing morning as we got ready to head to our next and final destination - Mirissa. On the way, we stopped at a Buddhist Stupa and a local vegetable market in Tissa-Yala before continuing on our journey. We arrived at our hotel in Mirissa around 1:30.



A Blue Whale seen in Mirissa. Photo by Angel Muela

After lunch, we visited the Star Fort, and old Dutch fort in the town of Matara. We stopped at a local fruit stand and tried some local fruits including amla fruit, a small, round, green fruit, which has a strong bitter taste at first. The flavor changes when you sip water! We then began birding in the Kirala Kele Sanctuary where we saw **Purple Herons, Gray-headed Swamphens, Eurasian Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Indian Pond Herons**, and added a few species for the trip including **Black Bittern, Watercock, and Jerdon's Leafbird**.

Day 11: December 8 — Whale Watching, Natural Pool Thalpe, Parrot Rock, and Kirala Kele Sanctuary

Today we started at 6:00 a.m. and headed out on a large ferry in search of two targets - Blue Whale and Spinner Dolphins. Within an hour or less, we spotted a **Blue Whale** swimming relatively close to our boat. There were a lot of other boats around, so after we got some good views, we headed to deeper water in search of dolphins. We found a large pod of **Spinner Dolphins** and watched them for quite a while as they swam in front of and beside the boat. We then headed back to the shallower areas and were able to see a Blue Whale again - getting several more nice views before heading back to shore. We also managed to get a **Striated Heron** - new for the trip, and several tern species including, **Lesser and Greater Crested, Caspian, Gull-billed and Bridled terns**.

We then returned to our hotel where we had the chance to enjoy the gym, the pool, the beach or the spa before lunch. This afternoon, a few people from the group went to visit the Natural Pool Thalpe and then to Parrot Rock to watch the sun set. Others returned to the Kirala Kele Sanctuary for more afternoon birding, adding two new species to our list: **Common Iora** and **Blythe's Reed Warbler**. We also saw a beautiful **Pied Parasol Dragonfly**.

We then all met up for our last dinner for the tour and turned in early.

Day 12: December 9 — Galle and Departure

This morning, we left our hotel around 8 a.m. and headed to Galle. On our way, we stopped to see the traditional stilt fishing and take some photos. Here, we added a new species to our list - **Common Tern!** We then made a stop at the Laskala market to purchase some local arts and crafts. We visited the local vegetable, fruit, and spice market and then made a quick stop at the Galle Dutch Fort, where we tried some locally made ice cream on Peddler's Lane, took in the views of the Indian Ocean, and did a bit more shopping. We then headed back towards Thalpe where Devi, an amazing cook, had prepared a traditional Sri Lankan meal for the group. We also



Our entire group on our way out for some whale watching in Mirissa

managed to get some nice looks at a **Red-backed Flameback** hopping in the trees. By around 1 p.m. we boarded the bus and drove three hours to the airport where we said our goodbyes to our wonderful local team before heading home.

Thanks!

As always, we want to thank all the participants for being part of this tour. We also thank all the great local guides and drivers that have accompanied us — in particular, Ashan and Wicky, who went above and beyond to make this an amazing experience for everyone. Our gratitude goes as well to the people on the ground that assisted us with logistics, Rajiv Welikala and Stefan De Run. And a warm thank you to the private citizen who went out of his way to let us know about the leopard being seen in Horton Plains, so that we could see it too.

Wildlife Observation List

Birds

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Clements, J. F., T. S. Schulenberg, M. J. Iliff, D. Roberson, T. A. Fredericks, B. L. Sullivan, and C. L. Wood. 2018.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
1 Lesser Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>	Over 100 seen in small groups at water bodies throughout the trip
2 Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	Common to very common most of the areas we visited
3 Sri Lanka Junglefowl	<i>Gallus Lafayette</i>	Fairly common and seen throughout the trip
4 Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Seen in Wilpattu and Yala National Parks
5 Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	Commonly seen on this tour
6 Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopenia chinensis</i>	Very common, seen nearly every day
7 Asian Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>	4 seen in Wilpattu National Park
8 Orange-breasted Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron bicinctus</i>	Seen often in Wilpattu and Yala National Parks
9 Sir Lanka Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron pomadera</i>	Common throughout the tour, seen in most locations
10 Green Imperial-Pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>	Seen commonly throughout the tour
11 Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>	1 seen in Wirawila Tissa Sanctuary, 1 in Yala National Park and 1 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
12 Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Taccocua leschenaultii</i>	1 bird in Yala National Park
13 Blue-faced Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus viridirostris</i>	6 seen in Wilpattu National Park
14 Pied Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i>	1 seen in Yala National Park
15 Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopaceus</i>	1 bird at the hotel grounds near Bandhavgarh
16 Gray-bellied Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis passerinus</i>	1 seen in Yala National Park
17 Fork-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo	<i>Surniculus dicruoides</i>	1 seen in Wilpattu National Park
18 Jungle Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus indicus</i>	One seen roosting during the day at Yala NP
19 Indian Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus asiaticus</i>	1 heard and 5 seen during a night drive near Tadoba NP
20 Indian Swiftlet	<i>Aerodramus unicolor</i>	12 seen in Polonnaruwa Historic Site, and 8 seen in Yala National Park
21 Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	Seen at Hunuviladama Tank and a flock of around 60 seen at Sigiriya Rock
22 Asian Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>	20 seen in total, in Matara and Sigiriya Rock
23 Crested Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>	9 seen in Wilpattu, 2 in Hurulu Eco Park, and 5 in Yala National Park

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
24	Eurasian Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	1 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
25	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	1 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
26	Gray-headed Swampphen	<i>Porphyrio poliocephalus</i>	40 seen in Yala NP and surroundings and in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
27	Watercock	<i>Gallicrex cinerea</i>	5 Seen in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
28	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	3 seen in Wilpattu NP, 1 in Polonnaruwa, 5 in Tissa Lake, and 6 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
29	Ruddy-breasted Crake	<i>Zapornia fusca</i>	1 seen in Yala NP
30	Great Thick-knee	<i>Esacus recurvirostris</i>	2 at Yala National Park
31	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Fairly common near water throughout tour
32	Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	9 seen in Wilpattu NP
33	Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>	4 seen in Wilpattu National Park
34	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	Very common throughout tour
35	Tibetan Sand-Plover	<i>Anarhynchus atrivifons</i>	20 in Wilpattu NP, and 2 in Yala NP
36	Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>	15 seen in Yala NP, Kirala Kele Sanctuary, and in waterways alongside the roads
37	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	3 seen in Wilpattu National Park
38	Pin-tailed Snipe	<i>Gallinago steur</i>	4 seen in Wilpattu NP, and 1 seen in Claughton Wild
39	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	2 in Wilpattu NP, 1 in Victoria Park, 3 in Yala NP, and 1 on Thalpe Beach
40	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	2 in Wilpattu NP
41	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	3 in Wilpattu and 2 in Yala
42	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	2 in Wilpattu, 2 in Yala NP
43	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	1 in Wilpattu
44	Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>	4 seen in Yala National Park
45	Bridled Tern	<i>Onychoprion anaethetus</i>	2 in Yala, and 2 seen while whale watching in Mirissa
46	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon Nilotic</i>	1 in Yala NP, and 2 while whale watching in Mirissa
47	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne cassia</i>	1 seen while whale watching in Mirissa
48	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	25 seen on tour, common around water
49	White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	1 seen in Yala National Park
50	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	1 seen in Thalpe Beach
51	Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>	1 seen while whale watching in Mirissa
52	Great Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus berg</i>	2 seen while whale watching in Mirissa, 5 seen on Thalpe Beach

Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
53 Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	Common throughout water ways
54 Asian Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>	1 at Hunuvidalama Tank, 3 in Wilpattu NP
55 Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>	1 at Hunuvidalama Tank, 2 in and near Yala NP
56 Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>	Common throughout, mostly near water.
57 Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>	Seen frequently near waterways throughout the tour
58 Little Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo niger</i>	1 seen in Wilpattu, and 3 In Yala National Park
59 Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	1 seen in Wilpattu National Park and 1 in Polonnaruwa
60 Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>	Seen frequently near waterways throughout the tour
61 Spot-billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>	3 Seen in Tissa Lake and 1 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
62 Black Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus flavicollis</i>	3 seen in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
63 Cinnamon Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>	1 seen in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
64 Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>	1 Seen in Tissa Lake and 5 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
65 Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	1 bird seen along Yala Road, and 3 in Yala National Park
66 Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Fairly common near water throughout tour
67 Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>	1 seen while whale watching in Mirissa; 1 seen in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
68 Indian Pond-Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	Common throughout the tour, seen in most locations
69 Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>	Seen in Claughton Wild, in Ella, and many in Yala National Park
70 Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	1 seen in Wipattu NP, 1 in Yala National Park, and 1 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
71 Medium Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>	1 seen in Hunuvidalama Tank, 2 in Tissa Lake, 1 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary, and in waterways along roads
72 Gray Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Common in water bodies
73 Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	1 in Wilpattu, 1 in Yala NP, and 4 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary, and in waterways along roads
74 Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	Seen frequently throughout the tour
75 Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	6 seen outside Yala National Park
76 Oriental Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	1 seen in Wilpattu National Park, and 1 in Surrey Estate Bird Sanctuary
77 Crested Serpent-Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>	Seen often in Wilpattu National Park
78 Legge's Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus kewaarti</i>	2 seen soaring above the Labookellie Tea Center

Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
79 Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>	Seen often throughout the tour in all national parks
80 Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malaiensis</i>	2 seen in Hurulu NP
81 Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	1 seen in Wilpuattu NP, and 1 juvenile seen in Cloughton Wild
82 Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>	17 seen, commonly observed in most areas visited throughout tour
83 White-bellied Sea-Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga leucogaster</i>	6 individuals observed in total. 2 in Wilpattu NP, 1 in Cloughton Wild, 1 in Polonnaruwa, and 2 in Yala NP.
84 Gray-headed Fish-Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus ichthyaeus</i>	6 seen in total, in Wilpattu and in and around Yala National Park.
85 Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	1 seen in Horton Plains NP
86 Indian Scops-Owl	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>	2 seen on a roost in Wirawila Tissa Sanctuary
87 Brown Fish-Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>	5 birds in total: 1 at night in Cloughton Wild, 3 in Wilpattu, 1 during night drive along Puwakpitiya Road
88 Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiator</i>	1 seen in Wirawila Tissa Sanctuary
89 Brown Wood-Owl	<i>Strix leptogrammica</i>	1 seen in Surrey Estate Bird Sanctuary
90 Brown Boobook	<i>Ninox scutulata</i>	1 seen in Wirawila Tissa Sanctuary
91 Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	1 seen in Yala National Park
92 Sri Lanka Gray Hornbill	<i>Ocyrceros gingalensis</i>	6 seen in Wilpattu National Park, and 1 in Sigiriya
93 Malabar Pied-Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros coronatus</i>	A total of 22 seen during this trip, in most national parks visited.
94 Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	11 seen throughout tour, in most parks visited
95 Black-backed Dwarf-Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	1 seen at The Other Corner
96 Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>	8 total seen throughout tour, relatively common
97 White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	38 seen, common throughout, mostly near water.
98 Black-capped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	1 seen in Wilpattu National Park
99 Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	3 seen in and outside of Yala National Park
100 Asian Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	Common throughout the tour in most locations
101 Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippines</i>	Common throughout the tour in most locations
102 Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>	5 seen in Wilpattu National Park
103 Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	Seen in Cloughton Wild and Wilpattu NP
104 Crimson-fronted Barbet	<i>Psilopogon rubricapillus</i>	1 seen in Ella
105 Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i>	1 seen in Hunuvidalama Tank, 2 in Hurulu Eco Park, and 1 at Tissa Lake

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
106	Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Psilopogon zeylanicus</i>	Fairly common throughout tour, 18 total seen.
107	Yellow-fronted Barbet	<i>Psilopogon flavifrons</i>	1 seen in Hakgala Botanical Gardens, 1 in Ella, and 1 in Surrey Estate Bird Sanctuary
108	Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Yungipicus nanus</i>	1 seen in Hurulu Eco Park
109	Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Leiopicus mahrattensis</i>	1 seen in Yala National Park
110	Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>	1 seen in Wilpattu National Park
111	Red-backed Flameback	<i>Dinopium parodies</i>	11 seen in total throughout tour
112	Eurasian Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1 bird seen in Horton Plains
113	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>	9 seen in Polonnaruwa
114	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	Common to very common throughout
115	Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>	1 seen in Yala National Park
116	Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot	<i>Loriculus beryllinus</i>	3 seen in Surrey Estate Bird Sanctuary, 1 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary, and 1 in Ella
117	India Pitta	<i>Pitta brachyura</i>	Seen in Wilpattu NP, Hurulu Eco Park, and 6 seen in Yala National Park
118	Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>	1 seen in Wilpattu National Park, 1 at Sigiriya, and 1 in Ella
119	Orange Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flames</i>	3 seen in Hakgala Botanical Gardens
120	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	22 seen total, observed in most parks throughout tour
121	Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>	16 seen in total
122	Sri Lanka Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis affinis</i>	1 seen at The Other Corner, and 3 in Yala National Park
123	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>	1 seen in Wilpattu National Park and 1 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
124	White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>	7 seen during the tour, in Hurulu Eco Park, The Other Corner, and in and around Yala NP
125	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	1 in Wilpattu National Park
126	White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>	1 at Surrey Estate Bird Sanctuary, 1 in Yala NP, and 5 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
127	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>	1 in Yala National Park
128	Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>	5 seen in Wilpattu National Park, and 1 in The Other Corner
129	Indian Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>	A total of 14 seen throughout the tour in most areas visited
130	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>	A total of 22 seen during this trip, in most national parks visited
131	Sri Lanka Blue-Magpie	<i>Urocissa ornata</i>	1 seen at Hakgala Botanical Gardens
132	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	1 seen near Polonnaruwa

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
133	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	Seen often throughout the tour
134	Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	3 seen in Victoria Park, 2 in Hakgala Botanical Gardens, and 1 in Surrey Estate Bird Sanctuary
135	Cinereous Tit	<i>Parus cinereus</i>	1 seen well by group in Ella
136	Jerdon's Bushlark	<i>Mirafra affinis</i>	2 in Wilpattu NP, and 3 in Hurulu Eco Park
137	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	9 total seen. Observed in most areas visited throughout tour
138	Gray-breasted Prinia	<i>Prinia hodgsonii</i>	1 seen in Yala National Park
139	Jungle Prinia	<i>Prinia sylvatica</i>	1 seen in Yala National Park
140	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i>	3 seen in Hurulu Eco Park and 1 in Yala National Park
141	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>	10 total seen throughout tour
142	Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>	2 seen in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
143	Bank Swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	2 seen in Yala National Park
144	Hill Swallow	<i>Hirundo domicola</i>	2 seen at Labookellie Tea Centre and 1 in Horton Plains
145	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Commonly seen throughout the tour
146	Sri Lanka Swallow	<i>Cecropis hypertyra</i>	Seen in Wilpattu, Claughton Wild, and Kirala Kele Sanctuary
147	Square-tailed Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes ganeesa</i>	2 seen in Hakgala Botanical Gardens
148	Black-capped Bulbul	<i>Rubigala melanictyra</i>	2 seen in Wilpattu NP and 1 at Sigiriya
149	White-browed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus lutreolus</i>	Seen throughout tour, in most areas visited
150	Yellow-eared Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus penicallatus</i>	24 total seen in Victoria Park, Horton Plains National Park and Hakgala Botanical Gardens
151	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	Common to very common throughout, seen nearly every day of tour
152	Green Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus nitidus</i>	17 total seen throughout tour
153	Large-billed Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus magnirostris</i>	6 see in Wilpattu NP, and 1 in Surrey Estate Bird Sanctuary
154	Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense</i>	2 birds seen in Hurulu Eco Park
155	Sri Lanka White-eye	<i>Zosterops ceylonensis</i>	31 total seen in Victoria Park, Horton Plains NP, and Hakala Botanical Gardens
156	Indian White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>	1 at The Other Corner, and 2 in Yala National Park
157	Dark-fronted Babbler	<i>Dumetia atriceps</i>	4 in Wilpattu National Park
158	Sri Lanka Scimitar-Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus melanurus</i>	4 in Surrey Estate Bird Sanctuary
159	Brown-capped Babbler	<i>Pellorneum fuscicapillus</i>	1 in Hunuviladama Tank and 1 in Wilpattu NP
160	Orange-billed Babbler	<i>Argya rufescens</i>	4 in Horton Plains National Park

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
161	Yellow-billed Babbler	<i>Argya affinis</i>	Commonly seen throughout the tour
162	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>	2 in Victoria Park, 2 in Hakgala Botanical Gardens
163	Southern Hill Myna	<i>Gracula indica</i>	1 heard at Surrey Estate Sanctuary
164	Rosy Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>	A few seen in Yala National Park
165	Brahminy Starling	<i>Sturnia pagodarum</i>	A few seen in Yala National Park
166	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	Common to very common in parks, rural and urban areas - seen almost everyday
167	Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Geokichla citrina</i>	3 seen in Wilpattu National Park
168	Indian Blackbird	<i>Turdus simillimus</i>	Seen in Horton Plains National Park
169	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>	1 seen at Wilpattu, 1 at Wirawila Tissa Sanctuary, and 2 ween in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
170	Brown-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa muttui</i>	1 seen at Cloughton Wild
171	Indian Robin	<i>Copsychus fulicatus</i>	Commonly seen throughout the tour
172	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	Common to very common in forested areas and borders
173	White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>	5 seen in Wilpattu National Park and 1 in Hurulu Eco Park
174	Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>	3 seen in Wilpattu National Park and 1 at Sigiriya Rock
175	Indian Blue Robin	<i>Larvivora brunnea</i>	4 total seen (or heard) in Wilpattu NP, Victoria Park, Hakgala Botanical Gardens, and Surrey Estate Bird Sanctuary
176	Kashmir Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula subrubra</i>	2 seen in Victoria Park
177	Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>	5 in Horton Plains National Park
178	Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>	1 at Cloughton Wild
179	Purple-rumped Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma zeylonica</i>	Seen in most sanctuaries visited, and 2 in Yala National Park
180	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>	1 at Cloughton Wild, and 4 in Yala National Park
181	Loten's Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris lotenius</i>	1 at Surrey Estate Bird Sanctuary, 2 in Ella, and 2 in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
182	Jerdon's Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i>	1 bird in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
183	Baya Weaver	<i>Places philippinus</i>	1 in Cloughton Wild, and 3 in Yala National Park
184	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	Commonly seen throughout the tour
185	White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>	28 total seen in Hurulu Eco Park, Ella, and Yala National Park
186	Tricolored Munia	<i>Lonchura malacca</i>	2 seen in Cloughton Wild, and 9 in Hurulu Eco Park
187	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	3 seen in Ramboda

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
188	Forest Wagtail	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>	1 seen in Wilpattu National Park
189	Gray Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	1 seen in Victoria Park, and 1 in Horton Plains
190	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>	1 in Wilpattu NP, 2 in Horton Plains, and 2 in Yala NP

Mammals

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
1	Black-naped Hare	<i>Lepus nigricollis</i>	Several seen during in Wilpattu National Park, and in and around Horton Plains National Park
2	Purple Faced Leaf Monkey	<i>Semnopithecus vetulus</i>	Seen at the Ancient City of Polonnaruwa, and the Highland Race "Bear Monkey" in Hakgala Botanical Gardens, as well as the southern race in Kirala Kele Sanctuary
3	Tufted Gray Langur	<i>Semnopithecus priam</i>	Small troops seen in Wilpattu National Park and Yala National Park
4	Toque Macaque	<i>Macaca sinica</i>	Small troops seen in Wilpattu National Park, and highland race in Hakgala Botanical Gardens
5	Grizzled Giant Squirrel	<i>Ratufa macroura</i>	Seen at Hunuvidalama Tank on our first day, and at Sig
6	Indian Giant Flying Squirrel	<i>Petaurista philippensis</i>	Seen on our night walk at The Other Corner
7	Common Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus palmarum</i>	Seen in Wilpattu National Park and on our first day in Hunuvidalama Tank
8	Spotted Deer	<i>Axis axis</i>	Very common in the national parks; seen in Wilpattu mostly, with a few observed in Yala NP
9	Sambar	<i>Rusa unicolor</i>	Seen in Wilpattu NP and Horton Plains
10	Barking Deer (Indian Muntjac)	<i>Muntiacus muntjac malabaricus</i>	Uncommon, seen in Wilpattu NP
11	Sri Lankan Wild Buffalo	<i>Bubalus bubalis</i>	Seen singly and in family groups in Wilpattu and Yala NP
12	Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	1 Seen in Wilpattu NP, and several groups observed in Yala NP
13	Sloth Bear	<i>Melursus ursinus</i>	2 Seen in Wilpattu NP
14	Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus giganteus</i>	Seen around Claughton Wild, at a roost outside P, and in Tissa Yala
15	Gray Slender Loris	<i>Loris lydekkerianus</i>	2 seen on a night drive in Habarana
16	Fishing Cat	<i>Prionailurus viverrinus</i>	One seen by some of the group on a night drive in Habarana, and 2 on our night walk at The Other Corner
17	Indian Gray Mongoose	<i>Urva edwardsii</i>	Seen at the Ancient City of Polonnaruwa
18	Ruddy Mongoose	<i>Herpestes smithii</i>	Fairly common, seen in every park visited
19	Jungle Cat	<i>Felis chaus</i>	One seen on a night drive in Habarana

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
20	Sri Lanka Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus kotiya</i>	Young female seen in Wilpattu, and one male seen in Horton Plains
21	Asian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>	Many seen in Hurulu Eco Park and Yala National Park
22	Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>	1 in Wilpattu, 2 on a night drive in Habarana, and several seen in and around Yala National Park
23	Bat	<i>Pipistrellus</i> sp.	1 on the grounds of The Other Corner
24	Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	At least one seen while whale-watching in Mirissa
25	Spinner Dolphin	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>	A large pod seen while whale-watching in Mirissa

Reptiles & Amphibians

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Notes
1	Mugger Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus palustris</i>	Several seen in Wilpattu and Yala National Parks
2	Common Land Monitor	<i>Varanus bengalensis</i>	Quite common; seen in Wilpattu and Yala National Parks
3	Asian Water Monitor	<i>Varanus salvator</i>	1 seen in Wilpattu NP, and another in the lake at Polunaruwa
4	Sri Lanka Soft-shelled Terrapin	<i>Lissemys ceylonensis</i>	Seen at Hunuvidadama Tank on our first day, and on safari in Hurulu Eco Park.
5	Star Tortoise	<i>Geochelone elegans</i>	Seen in Wilpattu National Park after a heavy rainfall
6	Common Garden Lizard	<i>Calotes versicolor</i>	See in Wilpattu NP and Yala NP
7	Lowland Kangaroo Lizard	<i>Otocryptis wiegmanni</i>	Seen in Wilpattu NP
8	Spotted House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus parvimaculatus</i>	Seen on grounds of Claughton Wild
9	Common House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>	Seen on grounds of Claughton Wild
10	Paddy Field Frog	<i>Fejervarya limnocharis</i>	Seen on grounds of Claughton Wild
11	Rohan's Globular Frog	<i>Uperodon rohani</i>	Seen on grounds of Claughton Wild
12	Hard-shelled Terrapin	<i>Melanochelys trijuga thermalis</i>	Seen in Wilpattu National Park and Star Fort in Marata
13	Sri Lanka Cat Snake	<i>Boiga ceylonensis</i>	Seen on the grounds of The Other Corner hotel (Habarana)
14	Rhino-horned Lizard	<i>Ceratophora stoddartii</i>	At least 3 seen in Horton Plains National Park
15	Black-lipped Lizard	<i>Calotes nigrilabris</i>	1 seen in Horton Plains National Park
16	Horton Plains Shrub Frog	<i>Pseudophilautus alto</i>	Several seen in Horton Plains National Park