

Wildlife & History Tour Report- December 2014



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Report Compiled by:

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Day 01 Sunday 21st December

The group arrived at 1.40 pm after a one hour delay and we left the Airport at 2.50 pm. On the Katunayake highway we see the Rock Pigeon & Brahminy Kite. We then reach the Talangama tank and see the Blue Tail Bee-eater, Red Wattled-lapwing, Indian Pond Heron, Little Egret, Intermediate Egret, Asian Open Bill, Barn Swallow, Whiskered Tern, Spot Billed Pelican, Black-headed Ibis & Little Cormorant. When we reach the southern highway we see the Kalu River and the Bentotata River.

We reach our hotel at 5.50 pm and check in to our rooms and met at the restaurant at 8.00 pm for dinner.

Day 02 Monday 22nd December

We started the day at 6.15 am with tea and proceeded to the Mirissa pier for the day's whale watching tour with picnic breakfast. There was slight rain when we started the day but as we head in to the ocean the rains ceased. At the pier we were able to see a Gull-billed Tern and in the ocean we saw Caspian Tern, Great Crested Tern and Parasitic Jaeger. The ocean was very calm and we were able to see a Bryde Whale close to the boat and in the distance we then see a Blue Whale blow and we manage to get a close to it before it dove in to the deep with its tail raised. A pod of Spinner Dolphins decided to grace our presence and one even decided to spin out of the ocean to display its talents to us. As we were heading back in to the pier a sea turtle appeared very close to the boat but did not stay for long to be identified.

We reached the pier at 11.30 am and in the pier we encounter a Common Garden Lizard, Indian Palm Squirrel and a few butterflies. After reaching the hotel at 12.00pm we had lunch and met at the lobby at 3.00pm to leave for some bird watching to a nearby pond where we encounter Indian Cormorant, Little Grebe, White-breasted Water Hen, Whistling Duck, White-throat Kingfisher, Cotton Pygmy Goose, Rose-winged Parakeet, White-bellied Drongo, Green Imperial Pigeon, Black-hooded Oriole, Red-vented Bulbul, Yellow-billed babbler, Common Myna, Indian Swiftlet and a Hard-shelled Terrapin. We then proceed to another forest patch and encounter Purple Swamp Hen, Common Moor Hen, Cattle Egret, Purple Heron, Yellow Bittern & Pheasant-tailed Jacana.

We head back to the hotel at 6.00pm and meet for the checklist at 7.30pm. Since it was a group member's birthday today we had a small surprise party with Champagne and Cake during the dinner. Lights out after dinner.

Day 03 Tuesday 23rd December

We started the day once again with tea at 6.15am and proceeded to the pier amidst heavy rain but fortunately the rains ceased as we were boarding the vessel. At sea we first encounter a Brydes Whale once again although the visibility was very poor with fog. We were lucky to see a pod of about 50 Risso's Dolphins which was a very unusual and rare sighting. After searching the ocean for more than 5 hours we were still unable to spot a Blue Whale and decided to head back to the pier. At the pier we see a Striated Heron on top of a boat. We reach the hotel by 1.00pm and after lunch at around 3.00 we left for the Kirala forest. We encounter Brown-headed Barbet, Greater Coucal, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Sri Lanka Swallow, White-breasted Water Hen, Orange-breasted Green Pigeon, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Peacock, Lesser Whistling Duck, Purple Heron, White-bellied Drongo, Common Iora, Black-headed Oriole, White-browed Bulbul, Blyths reed Wobbler, Asian Brown Fly-catcher, Asian Paradise Fly-catcher, Long-billed Sunbird, Purple-rumped Sunbird, Scaly-breasted Munia, Yellow-billed Babbler, Asian Koel, Pied Kingfisher, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, House Crow, Large-billed Crow, Purple Swamp Hen and Little Cormorant. We head back to the hotel by 6.00pm and meet for the checklist at 7.30pm and wrap the day with dinner at 8.00pm.

Day 04 Wednesday 24th December

We once again have our tea at 6.15am before we head out to the pier amidst heavy rain and it ceases before we board the vessel. Once again visibility was very low but we managed to see a Baracuda skipping over the water in an attempt most likely to get away from a predator from below. We then meet a pod of Spinner Dolphins and we see a few Flying fish break out of the water. We reach the pier at around 1.00pm and head back to the hotel for lunch. After lunch we visit a Stilt Fishing community in Habaraduwa and spend a few minutes admiring this unique fishing style that is only seen in Sri Lanka. We see a Greater Crested Tern and a Lesser Crested Tern in this area. We then reach the Galle Fort and see a House Sparrow amidst the colonial architecture. We head back to the hotel at 7.00pm and do the checklist at 8.00pm. After dinner the group head back to their rooms for the night.

Day 05 Thursday 25th December

We left Mirissa at 8.15 am and proceeded to Yala which was our next destination. On the way we see the Purple-faced Leaf Monkey, Black-winged Stilt, Black-tailed Godwit, Dart, Eurasian Spoon Bill, Little Cormorant, Spot-billed Pelican, Painted Stork, Large Egret, Grey Heron, Gull Billed Tern, Paddy field Pipit, Yellow Bittern and Black Crowned Night Heron. The rains were very heavy during the journey and we reached the hotel around 1.45pm after an unexpected delay due to a vehicle ahead of us being stuck in the eroded road. We were restricted from taking alternative routes due to flooding and decided to stick to the main road. After a late lunch we planned to do a bit of walking around the hotel but due to the heavy rains we were forced to stay in. We did the checklist at 7.30pm and had dinner at 8.30pm before heading to our rooms for the night. The heavy rains continued throughout the night.

Day 06 Friday 26th December

The rains were still coming down but had reduced from the previous day yet the whole area around the hotel and the Yala village was inundated. We had our picnic breakfast and were waiting for the Jeeps to arrive but due to the flooding the jeeps were unable to come to the hotel. However we still managed to see a few birds around the hotel and visited a lake nearby the hotel. Here we see the Small Pratincole, Common Red Shank, Common Green Shank, Ruddy Turn Stone, Pin-tailed Snipe, Sanderline, Little Stint, Kentish Plover, Mongolian Plover, Eurasian Pygmy, Jungle Fowl and Purple Sunbird. After lunch the jeeps were able to come to the hotel and we head out to the Yala National Park. We managed to see many birds in the area but did not come across the Leopard and the Bear. As it was getting dark we decided head back to the hotel and did the check list at 7.30pm and had dinner at 8.00pm

Day 07 Saturday 27th December

The rains had stopped this morning and we left the hotel 5.30am with picnic breakfast and lunch and entered the Yala park at 6.00am. We once again see many birds in the morning session and stopped for breakfast near Patanangala. Since the by-roads in the park were inundated all the jeeps in the park were queued on the main road and traffic was very slow moving. The rains had changed the whole parks layout and we decided to have lunch inside the Jeep as accesses to the eating locations were limited. Since the traffic was too much we decide to go near the beach to catch a small break. After a few minutes here we got the message of a Leopard in the area and drove to the location where we see a Leopard perched on a branch but it didn't stay for long. After a little while we managed to see another Leopard also perched on a branch in a

different location. After leaving the park we were able to see an Asian Elephant in the distance crossing the main road and disappear in to the jungle. We reached the hotel at 6.30pm and did the checklist at 8.00pm and had dinner at 8.30pm

Day 08 Sunday 28th December

We left the hotel after breakfast at 8.15am and proceeded to Colombo via Tissamaharama where we see a few temples in the area. We then go to the Bundala National Park and we encounter the Glossy Ibis which is very rare in Sri Lanka and Cinnamon Bittern. We see many birds on the way before we stop for lunch in Udawalawe at 1.00pm. We reach the Airport hotel by 8.15pm in the evening and had dinner soon after.

Day 09 Monday 29th December

We met at the restaurant at 7.30am for breakfast and did the last checklist for the tour and counted a total of 190 birds and 19 mammals. We left the hotel at 9.30am to the Airport in time to catch the flight.

Bird List

	Common name	Scientific name
1	Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>
2	Sri Lanka Spurfowl	<i>Galloperdix bicalcarata</i>
3	Sri Lanka Junglefowl	<i>Gallus lafayetii</i>
4	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
5	Lesser Whistling-duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>
6	Cotton Pygmy-goose	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>
7	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>
8	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>
9	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>
10	Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>
11	Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>
12	Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>
13	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
14	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
15	Yellow Bittern	<i>Lxobrychus sinensis</i>
16	Cinnamon Bittern	<i>Lxobrychus cinnamomeus</i>
17	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
18	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>
19	Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>
20	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
21	Purpul Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
22	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
23	Great Egret	<i>casmerodius albus</i>
24	Intermediate Egret	<i>Mesophoyx intermedia</i>
25	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
26	Spot-billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>
27	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
28	Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>

29	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>
30	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
31	Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>
32	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
33	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
34	White-bellied Sea Eagle, White-bellied Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>
35	Gray-headed Fish Eagle	<i>Lcthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>
36	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>
37	Oriental Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
38	Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>
39	Black Eagle	<i>Lctinaetus malayensis</i>
40	Changeble Hawk Eagle	<i>Spizaetus cirrhatus</i>
41	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>
42	Watercock	<i>Gallicrex cinerea</i>
43	Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>
44	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
45	Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>
46	Indian Thick-knee, Eurasian Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus(oediconemus) indicus</i>
47	Great Thick-knee	<i>Esacus recurvirostris</i>
48	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
49	Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>
50	Red-wattled lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
51	Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>
52	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
53	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
54	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrus alexandrinus</i>
55	Lesser sand Plover, Mongolian Plover	<i>charadrius mongolus</i>
56	Greater Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>
57	Pin-tailed Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>
58	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
59	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
60	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>
61	Common Red shank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
62	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
63	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
64	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
65	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
66	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
67	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
68	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>
69	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
70	Small Pratincole	<i>Glareola lactea</i>
71	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>
72	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>
73	Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bengalensis,</i>
74	Greater Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>

75	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>
76	Common Pigeon, Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
77	Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba torringtoniae</i>
78	Spotted Dove	<i>Stigmatopelia chinensis</i>
79	Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>
80	Orange-breasted Green Pigeon	<i>Treron bicinctus</i>
81	Sri Lanka Green Pigeon	<i>Treron (Pompadora) pompadora</i>
82	Green Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>
83	Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot	<i>Loriculus beryllinus</i>
84	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
85	Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>
86	Layard's Parakeet	<i>Psittacula calthropae</i>
87	Jacobin Cuckoo, Pied Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i>
88	Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>
89	Grey-bellied Cuckoo, Plaintive Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis passerinus</i>
90	Asian Koel	<i>Endynamys scolopacerus</i>
91	Blue-faced Malkoha	<i>Rhopodytes viridirostris</i>
92	Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Taccocua leschenaultii</i>
93	Red-fased Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus pyrrhocephalus</i>
94	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>
95	Sri Lanka Frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus moniliger</i>
96	Gray Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus indicus</i>
97	Jerdon's Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus atripennis</i>
98	Indian Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus asiaticus</i>
99	Serendib Scops Owl	<i>Otus thilohoffmanni</i>
100	Indian Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia unicolor</i>
101	Asian Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>
102	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>
103	House Swift, Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>
104	Crested Treeswift , Gray-rumped Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>
105	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>
106	Green Bee-eater, Little Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>
107	Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>
108	Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>
109	Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>
110	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
111	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
112	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
113	Malabar Trogon	<i>Harpactes fasciatus</i>
114	Common Hoopoe, Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
115	Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Megalaima zeylanica</i>
116	Yellow-fronted Barbet	<i>Megalaima flavifrons</i>
117	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>
118	Sri lanka Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrceros gingalensis</i>
119	Malabar Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros coronatus</i>
120	Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos nanus</i>

121	Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos mahrattensis</i>
122	Crimson-backed Goldenback, Crimson-back Woodpecker	<i>Chrysocolaptes(lucidus) stricklandi</i>
123	White-naped Woodpecker	<i>Chrysocolaptes festivus</i>
124	Indian Pitta	<i>Pitta brachyura</i>
125	Black-headed Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina melanoptera</i>
126	Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>
127	Scarlet Minivet,Flame Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>
128	Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>
129	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
130	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>
131	Marshall's Iora	<i>Aegithina nigrolutea</i>
132	Jerdon's Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i>
133	Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>
134	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>
135	Sri Lanka Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa ornata</i>
136	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
137	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>
138	Sand Martin, Pale Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
139	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
140	Sri Lanka Swallow	<i>Cecropis (daurica) hyperythra</i>
141	White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caeruleus</i>
142	Sri Lanka Drongo, Sri Lanka Crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus (paradiseus) lophorhinus</i>
143	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
144	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>
145	Blyth's Pipit	<i>Anthus godlewskii</i>
146	Jerdon's Bushlark	<i>Mirafra affinis</i>
147	Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark	<i>Eremopterix griseus</i>
148	Black-capped Bulbul, Black-headeed Yellow Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus melanicterus</i>
149	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>
150	White-browed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus luteolus</i>
151	Yellow-browed Bulbul	<i>Acritillas indica</i>
152	Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>
153	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i>
154	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>
155	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
156	Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>
157	Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>
158	White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>
159	Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>
160	Asian Paradise-flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>
161	Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus melanurus</i>
162	Dark-fronted Babbler	<i>Rhopocichla atriceps</i>
163	Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense</i>
164	Orange-billed Babbler	<i>Turdoides rufescens</i>
165	Yellow-billed Babbler	<i>Turdoides affinis</i>
166	Ashy-headed Lughingthrush	<i>Garrulax cinereifrons</i>

167	Sri Lanka Hill Myna, Sri Lanka Myna	<i>Gracula ptilogenys</i>
168	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
169	White-faced Starling	<i>Sturnornis albofrontatus</i>
170	Brahminy Starling	<i>Sturnia pagodarum</i>
171	Rosy Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>
172	Spot-winged Thrush	<i>Zoothera spiloptera</i>
173	Indian Blue Robin	<i>Luscinia brunnea</i>
174	Oriental Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
175	Indian Robin, Black-backed Robin	<i>Saxicoloides fulicatus</i>
176	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>
177	Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>
178	Legge's Flowerpecker, White-throated Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum vincens</i>
179	Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>
180	Purple-rumped Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia zeylonica</i>
181	Purple Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia asiatica</i>
182	Loten's Sunbird, Long-billed Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia lotenia</i>
183	Sri Lanka White-eye	<i>Zosterops ceylonensis</i>
184	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>
185	Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>
186	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
187	Indian Silverbill, White-throated Silverbill	<i>Lonchura malabarica</i>
188	White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>
189	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>
190	Black-headed Munia	<i>Lonchura malacca</i>

Mammals List

	Common name	Scientific name
1	Toque Macaque	<i>Macaca sinica</i>
2	Grey Langur	<i>Presbytis entellus</i>
3	Purple-faced Leaf Monkey	<i>Presbytis vetulus</i>
4	Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>
5	Ruddy Mongoose	<i>Herpestes smithii</i>
6	Rusty-spotted Cat	<i>Felis rubiginosa</i>
7	Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>
8	Indian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>
9	Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>
10	Spotted Deer (Chital)	<i>Cervus axis</i>
11	Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolor</i>
12	Water Buffalo	<i>Bubalus arnee</i>
13	Indian Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus palmarum</i>
14	Grizzled Giant Squirrel	<i>Ratufa macroura</i>
15	Indian Hare	
16	Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus gigantea</i>
17	Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>
18	Bryde's Whale	<i>Balaenoptera edeni</i>
19	Spinner Dolphin	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>