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BHUTAN

Birding in a Himalayan Paradise



Great views of Ibisbill was one of the major highlights of our trip to Bhutan © Colin Bushell

Bhutan

Birding in a Himalayan Paradise

26 April – 10 May 2023

Leader: Colin Bushell

Itinerary

26 April Departure from UK.

27 April Arrival in Bangkok. Overnight in city hotel near airport.

28 April Fly Bangkok to Paro, Bhutan. Straight out birding from airport to Paro Chhu 2,300m for Ibisbills. Afternoon relaxing in hotel. Hot and sunny in the morning, windy at times. Overnight near Paro.

29 April Morning birding at Chele La 3,988m. Afternoon travel to Punakha, birding Dochu La 3,150m and stopping by Punakha river late afternoon. Chilly early with a few spots of rain. Overcast and foggy in the morning. Overnight Punakha.

30 April Punakha Valley to Pele La 3,350m. Yotong La 3,450m in the afternoon. Mainly overcast with some sunny spells. Rain at times. Overnight Bumthang 2,800m.

1 May Selthang La 3,400-3,570m, Ura Valley, Thrumshing La NP, Yongkola. Overcast with rain for much of the day. Overnight Trogon Villa.

2 May Yongkola: Morning and night birding on the Tsamang Road 1,400m. Afternoon birding Lingmethang Road 1,000m. Sunny in the morning, becoming overcast with showers in the afternoon. Overnight Trogon Villa.

3 May Yongkola: Morning on the Jainala Road 1,600m. Afternoon Lingmethang Road 700m. Overcast with sunny spells. Overnight Trogon Villa.

4 May Yongkola-Bumthang, birding at Thrumshing La 3,780m, Ura Valley and Shingner Valley. Overcast with some rain. Overnight Bumthang.

5 May Tharpaling Monastery 3,500m. Travel to Trongsa via Yotong La 3,450m. Afternoon birding Zhemgang Road from Trongsa 2,200m or visiting Trongsa Dzong. Fine and sunny. Overnight Trongsa.

6 May Trongsa to Punakha, birding Ngala, Pele La and Punakha river valley. Fine and sunny, becoming overcast with rain and hail. Overnight Punakha.

7 May Punakha Valley 1,300m to Jigme Dorji NP 1,300m. Visit to Punakha Dzong. Overcast with some showers. Overnight Punakha.

8 May Punakha to Paro, birding Lumitsawa, Lampelri Botanical Park, Dochu La and Paro Chha. Generally hot and sunny, overcast at Dochu La. Overnight near Paro.

9 May Transfer to Paro airport for flight to Bangkok. Overnight Bangkok or onward connections to UK.

10 May Arrival in UK.

Systematic List

Birds

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Passage migrant to Bhutan. One on 7 May on the Punakha River.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

At least 15 in the Punakha Valley on 7 May.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Seen on three dates in the Punakha Valley. A small flock of half a dozen birds frequented the same stretch of river we checked for White-bellied Heron.

Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Three on the Punakha River on 7 May.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

Four on the Punakha River on 7 May.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

A flock of eight or nine birds on the Punakha River on 29 April.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Three on the Punakha River on 29 April and a single there on 7 May.

Common Merganser (Goosander) *Mergus merganser*

A female on the Punakha River 29 April and two females there 7 May.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

One on the river near Punakha on 7 May.

Hill Partridge *Arborophila torqueola*

This retiring species was heard at Pele La, Tharpaling, Yotong La and Lampelri Botanical Park. The only time we were really close to any of these birds was at Pele La on 30 April, but it remained hidden.

Chestnut-breasted Partridge *Arborophila mandellii*

Heard on two dates in the Yongkola area.

Blood Pheasant *Ithaginis cruentus*

Several seen incredibly well at Chele La on 29 April and at Selthang La on 1 May.



Blood Pheasant © Colin Bushell

Satyr Tragopan *Tragopan satyra*

A bird of temperate and alpine elevations and one of those mythical Himalayan species unless you visit Bhutan! On 1 May, we saw at least four birds below Selthang La, including a stunning male that sat by the side of the road, at the forest edge. As with other pheasants on this tour, we found the best tactic for seeing these was watching from the bus!

On 4 May, we saw a female in the Shingar Valley and we heard one the following day on the way to Tharpaling.



Satyr Tragopan © Colin Bushell

Himalayan Monal *Lophophorus impejanus*

After seeing a couple at Chele La and three at Selthang La (all from the bus), we enjoyed splendid views of this huge pheasant at Tharpaling Monastery on 7 May, where several were seen.



Himalayan Monal © Colin Bushell

Kalij Pheasant *Lophura leucomelanos*

Two were seen scrambling up a misty slope of Chele La on 29 April and a female the next day at Doshong Goenba. Singles were seen on 6 May near Wangdue and 8 May below Lumitsawa.

Hodgson's Frogmouth *Batrachostomus hodgsoni*

Heard at Yongkola (2 May).

Himalayan Swiftlet *Aerodramus brevirostris*

Recorded on five dates.

White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus*

Seven on the first day in the field over the distant hillsides of Paro Chhu. The only others we saw were on the following day, when we saw a couple with swiftlets below Lampelri.

Blyth's Swift *Apus leuconyx*

Recorded on eight dates, although not in particularly large numbers.

Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis*

One on 8 May near Lumitsawa.

Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus*

We had great views of two at Yongkola on 2 May along the Lingmethang Road. We also heard one the following day in Yongkola.

Asian Koel *Eudynamys scolopaceus*

Heard on two dates near Punakha and a couple seen there (7 May).

Square-tailed Drongo-cuckoo *Surniculus dicururoides*

Seen on 2 May and 3 May in the Yongkola area.

Large Hawk-cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparveroides*

Recorded on nine dates; this ubiquitous, but rather elusive species gave us the run-around. After hearing it on quite a few occasions and only seeing it briefly, we finally saw one well on 2 May in Yongkola.

Hodgson's Hawk-cuckoo *Hierococcyx nisicolor*

After hearing it a few times in Yongkola, we saw one really well near Trongsa on 5 May.

Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus*

Unfortunately, we failed to see this species after hearing it (even at night!) on six dates.

Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus*

Another elusive cuckoo which was heard on six dates.

Himalayan Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus*

Recorded on eight dates, mainly by voice, but only really seen well at Yongkola on 2 May.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Recorded on ten dates, but only seen well in Jigme Dorji NP on 7 May.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Seen on seven dates, usually near small villages or towns.

Snow Pigeon *Columba leuconota*

Three seen on 1 May in the Ura Valley.

Speckled Wood Pigeon *Columba hodgsonii*

Three on 29 April at Chele La were surpassed by splendid views at Lampelri Botanical Park on 8 May.

Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

'OTD's, as they became known during the tour, were common and recorded daily.

Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis*

Seen in small numbers on four dates around Punakha.

Barred Cuckoo-dove *Macropygia unchall*

Recorded on three dates, but only seen on 3 May at Yongkola.

Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon *Treron sphenurus*

Found throughout the temperate zone and foothills, being the commonest *Treron* in Bhutan. Three were seen on 30 April in the Punakha Valley, then there were several days without seeing this attractive species, until we neared Punakha again. We saw them on 6 May on the way to Ngala and 8 May near Lumitsawa.



Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon © Colin Bushell

Black-tailed Crake *Zapornia bicolor*

Two were seen well near Paro on 28 April. Present in a roadside swamp, they readily popped into view in response to a short burst of playback.

Ibisbill *Ibidorhyncha struthersii*

This iconic bird was seen very well on the rocky shores and islands of Paro Chhu on 28 April and 8 May. Also found near Punakha (7 May) near the Dzong.

River Lapwing *Vanellus duvaucelii*

Common on temperate zone and foothill rivers. Numerous along the Paro Chhu and near Punakha. Seen on five dates.



River Lapwing © Colin Bushell

Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus*

Two seen near Punakha (7 May).

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

One along the Punakha River on 7 May.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Passage migrant to Bhutan. A flock of six on the river at Punakha on 7 May.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Seen on five dates on the rivers near Paro and Punakha.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Several on the river islands near Punakha on 7 May.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

One on the Punakha river on 8 May.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

One on the river near Punakha 7 May.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

One near Punakha on 7 May.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Seen on our last three days in the field but only in small numbers as we neared Punakha and onwards to Paro.

Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

One at Yongkola on 2 May.

Himalayan Vulture *Gyps himalayensis*

Definitely a bird of the high passes, with many seen at Pele La and Tharpaling.

Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela*

Seen on two dates in Yongkola (two on 2 May) and one near Trongsa on 6 May.

Mountain Hawk-eagle *Nisaetus nipalensis*

Singles seen on five dates, with particularly good views east of Wangdue and in Thrumshing La NP.

Rufous-bellied Eagle *Lophotriorchis kiernerii*

We saw a female near Yogkola on 3 May and a male the following day below Thrumshing La.

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malaiensis*

One near Doshong Goenba (30 April) and another in Yongkola (2 May).

Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*

One near Yotong La on 5 May.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two near Paro on 28 April and another between Punakha and Pele La on 30 April.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

At least two at Tharpaling (5 May).

Pallas's Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus leucoryphus*

An immature on the river near Punakha was seen on both 7 and 8 May.

Himalayan Buzzard *Buteo refectus*

Singles seen near Paro (28 April), near Punakha (29 April) and best of all, a perched bird near Yongkola (2 May).

Oriental Bay Owl *Phodilus badius*

Heard at Yongkola (2 May).

Collared Owlet *Taenioptynx brodiei*

Singles at Thrumshing La NP (1 May) and Yongkola (3 May).

Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides*

Heard near Yongkola on 2 May.

Mountain Scops Owl *Otus spilocephalus*

Heard near Yongkola on 2 May.

Collared Scops Owl *Otus lettia*

Heard near Yongkola (2 May).

Brown Wood Owl *Strix leptogrammica*

Heard near Yongkola (2 May).

Red-headed Trogon *Harpactes erythrocephalus*

One seen near Yongkola on 2 May.

Ward's Trogon *Harpactes wardi*

One of the important birds of any Bhutan tour and we had great views of a pair on 30 April west of Khele Kha.

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Seen on five dates. Most of the sightings were on the last four days as we neared Punakha and then drove on towards Paro.

Rufous-necked Hornbill *Aceros nipalensis*

Seen well on three days in the Yongkola area, with two seen on 2 May.



Rufous-necked Hornbill © Colin Bushell

White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*

A few seen on three dates near Punakha.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

One or two near Punakha on three dates.

Crested Kingfisher *Megaceryle lugubris*

Singles on three dates near Punakha.

Blue-bearded Bee-eater *Nyctyornis athertoni*

One seen very well at Yongkola 2 May.

Great Barbet *Psilopogon virens*

One of the most frequently encountered species of the tour (by voice, at least) and recorded on ten dates.

Golden-throated Barbet *Psilopogon franklinii*

Recorded on six dates. Not a difficult species to see, especially around Yongkola.

Blue-throated Barbet *Psilopogon asiaticus*

This was the hardest species of barbet to find. Recorded on only three dates but we only saw one well at Yongkola on 2 May.

Yellow-rumped Honeyguide *Indicator xanthonotus*

One frequenting the bees' nests on the cliffs east of Numling (4 May).

Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus*

Recorded on two dates at Yongkola and west of Punakha on 8 May.

White-browed Piculet *Sasia ochracea*

One at Yongkola (2 May).

Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Dendrocopus hyperythrus*

One seen well in Yongkola on 3 May.

Darjeeling Woodpecker *Dendrocopus darjellensis*

Heard at Yongkola and seen well at Pele La on 6 May.

Greater Yellownape *Chrysophlegma flavinucha*

This was our most frequently recorded species of woodpecker and it was recorded on five dates.

Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*

Two seen well on 2 May at Yongkola and heard on 6 May as we headed back to Punakha.

Bay Woodpecker *Blythipicus pyrrhotis*

Heard at Ngala on 6 May.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Two seen near Paro on 28 April, a single there on 8 May and one on 1 May in the Ura Valley.

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Five near Paro on 28 April.

Blue-naped Pitta *Hydrornis nipalensis*

Several birds heard near Lingmethang on 3 May.

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus*

One at Yongkola (2 May).

Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*

Recorded on five dates with the majority of birds being seen in the Yongkola area.

Short-billed Minivet *Pericrocotus brevirostris*

Recorded on four dates, mostly in Thrumshing La.

Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*

Seen on five dates, mostly in the Punakha Valley.

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus speciosus*

Seen on nine dates.

Black-winged Cuckooshrike *Lalage melaschistos*

Seen on four dates in the Punakha Valley, Yongkola and Lumitsawa.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*

One near Punakha on 7 May.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*

Seen on four dates, but nowhere numerous.

Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus*

An attractive species which was seen on every day of the tour.

Green Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius xanthochlorus*

One at Ngala (6 May).

Black-eared Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius melanotis*

Two near Numling on 4 May.

White-browed Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius aeralatus*

Heard on four dates with one seen at Numling (4 May).

White-bellied Erpornis *Erpornis zantholeuca*

Up to three were seen on two dates in the Yongkola area.

Maroon Oriole *Oriolus traillii*

Recorded on seven dates, mostly heard, but seen on three dates in the Yongkola area.

Slender-billed Oriole *Oriolus tenuirostris*

Seen on two dates (probably the same bird?) at the end of the tour near Punakha.

Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus*

Found on four dates; mainly around Yongkola, but singles also recorded in Jigme Dorji NP and the Punakha Valley at the end of the tour.

Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus remifer*

Two seen in Yongkola (3 May).

Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*

A series of sightings in the Yongkola area over three dates.

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*

Common and seen on ten dates.

White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis*

Seen on five dates beginning with a single on 1 May as we neared Yongkola, where most records came from.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

The pale gingery-crowned *bispecularis* subspecies, looking particularly 'beady-eyed', occurs in Bhutan. We saw them on four dates in the Punakha Valley and near Trongsa.

Yellow-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa flavirostris*

Seen on six dates but never numerous.

Common Green Magpie *Cissa chinensis*

Heard on two dates near Yongkola.

Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae*

Seen on five dates and most numerous near Yongkola.

Black-rumped Magpie *Pica bottanensis*

A very localised species on our tour, with records on four dates. Very numerous between Gaytsa and Bumthang and on the way to Tharpaling.

Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga caryocatactes*

Seen on six dates and very common in the pine forests below high passes.

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

Locally common and seen on six dates.

House Crow *Corvus splendens*

Just one near Punakha on 7 May.

Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*

Widespread and seen on eleven dates.

Yellow-bellied Fantail *Chelidorhynchus hypoxanthus*

Seen on just three dates in the temperate forest regions of Thrumshing La, Yotong La and Pele La.

Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*

Seen on four dates in the Punakha Valley and Yongkola area.

Yellow-browed Tit *Sylviparus modestus*

Seen at Yotonga La, Thrumshing La and Pele La.

Sultan Tit *Melanochlora sultanea*

Four at Yongkola on 2 May.

Rufous-vented Tit *Periparus rubidiventris*

Seen on five dates and mainly in the pine forests near high passes.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Quite common in coniferous forests and seen on five dates.

Grey-crested Tit *Lophophanes dichrous*

We saw this species on three dates, but it was most numerous at Chele La on 29 April.

Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus*

Widespread and seen on ten dates.

Yellow-cheeked Tit *Machlolophus spilonotus*

Seen regularly on three dates around Yongkola.

Striated Bulbul *Alcurus striatus*

A few on 3 May near Yongkola.

Mountain Bulbul *Ixos mcclellandii*

Two at Yongkola (2 May).

Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocapalus*

Common, widespread and seen daily.

Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer*

Quite common at mid-elevations with records from seven dates.

Himalayan Bulbul *Pycnonotus leucogenys*

One along the Lingmethang Road on 3 May.

Nepal House Martin *Delichon nipalense*

Recorded on five dates.

Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus*

Seen on just two dates in Thrumshing La NP.

Scaly-breasted Cupwing *Pnoepyga albiventer*

One seen extremely well (posing for 'scope views!) east of Numling on 4 May. Another was heard at Pele La on 6 May.

Pygmy Cupwing *Pnoepyga pusillia*

Seen on 30 April near Khele Kha and heard on two other dates during the tour.

Black-faced Warbler *Abroscopus schisticeps*

Seen on three dates. Easiest near Yongkola. Super looking little warblers.

Mountain Tailorbird *Phyllergates cucullatus*

Heard at Yongkola on 3 May.

Brown-flanked Bush Warbler *Horornis forticeps*

Recorded on six dates but only seen on 3 May when we worked hard to get views at Yongkola.

Grey-bellied Tesia *Tesia cyaniventer*

Heard on 30 April east of Wangdue and then seen very well indeed (2 birds) on 5 May near Trongsa.

Slaty-bellied Tesia *Tesia olivea*

Seen at Yongkola (2 May) and heard on 4 May nearby.

Grey-sided Bush Warbler *Cettia brunnifrons*

One seen on 5 May at Tharpaling Monastery.



Grey-sided Bush Warbler © Colin Bushell

Chestnut-crowned Bush Warbler *Cettia major*

One at Yongkola on 3 May.

Chestnut-headed Tesia *Cettia castaneocoronata*

One showed beautifully (on top of a bush!) at Pele La on 30 April. Also heard on two other dates.

Black-throated Bushtit *Aegithalos concinnus*

A frequently seen member of most mixed species flocks in the mountains. Recorded on six dates.

Rufous-fronted Bushtit *Aegithalos ioushistos*

Recorded on four dates, mainly in the Punakha Valley but also seen at Chele La.

Hume's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus humei*

One at Chele La.

Lemon-rumped Warbler *Phylloscopus chloronotus*

Seen on six dates and numerous in the flocks around the high passes.

Tickell's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus affinis*

Seen on two dates in Yongkola and at Lampelri Botanical Park.

Grey-cheeked Warbler *Phylloscopus poliogenys*

Seen on three dates in Yongkola.

Whistler's Warbler *Phylloscopus whistleri*

Widespread, if not particularly numerous. Recorded on six dates from Chele La through the Punakha Valley to Yongkola.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

We saw a couple at Chele La, but it was most common at Tharpaling, where we had singing birds showing well near our breakfast table.

Large-billed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris*

Seen or heard on six dates. One of the later spring migrants that had just arrived.

Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus castaniceps*

Seen on four dates. Most birds were recorded at Yongkola, but a few were seen near Trongsa.

Yellow-vented Warbler *Phylloscopus cantator*

Only seen on 2 May at Yongkola.

Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*

This delightful little 'Phyllosc' was with us most of the tour. It was seen on seven dates and a ubiquitous singer of the montane forests.

Grey-hooded Warbler *Phylloscopus xanthoschistos*

Fairly numerous and recorded on six dates.

Russet Bush Warbler *Lucustella mandelli*

Heard at Tharpaling and seen near Trongsa on 6 May.

Striated Prinia *Prinia crinigera*

One along the Lingmethang Road, Yongkola (3 May).

Black-throated Prinia *Prinia atrogularis*

Seen at Yongkola (2 May) and heard there the next day.

Rufescent Prinia *Prinia rufescens*

Seen at Yongkola (3 May).

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*

Seen on two dates near Trogon Villa during our stay at Yongkola.

White-browed Fulvetta *Fulvetta vinipectus*

Seen on six dates at most high passes we birded. Frequently seen in the mixed species flocks that responded to the owlet recording.

Great Parrotbill *Conostoma aemeodium*

Superb views of a couple of birds at Dochu La on 29 April.

Brown Parrotbill *Cholornis unicolor*

A party of several birds was seen at close quarters at Pele La on 30 April.

White-breasted Parrotbill *Psittiparus ruficeps* We saw four or five at Yongkola on 3 May.

Fulvous Parrotbill *Suthora fulvifrons*

We saw a small flock of birds at the very edge of a bamboo patch on Yotong La on 5 May.

Black-throated Parrotbill *Suthora nipalensis*

Perhaps the most ornate parrotbill seen and certainly mentioned as one of the best birds of the trip by some. We saw a nice little flock in the bamboo at Ngala.

Striated Yuhina *Staphida castaniceps*

Quite common at Yongkola, with Trongsa being the only other site where we saw this species.

Black-chinned Yuhina *Yuhina nigrimenta*

Seen on four dates, with more sightings as we returned to Paro at the end of the tour near Punakha.

Whiskered Yuhina *Yuhina flavicollis*

Widespread and seen on seven dates.

White-naped Yuhina *Yuhina bakeri*

Seen on just two dates near Yongkola.

Stripe-throated Yuhina *Yuhina gularis*

Recorded on six dates in the mixed species flocks of the montane forests.

Rufous-vented Yuhina *Yuhina occipitalis*

Seen on six dates with much the same status caveat as the above species.

Indian White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus*

Seen on six dates and most numerous in the Yongkola area.

Golden Babbler *Cyanoderma chrysaem*

A few seen along the Jainala Road, Yongkola on 3 May.

Rufous-capped Babbler *Cyanoderma ruficeps*

Recorded on eight dates, mostly by voice, but seen on three days.

Rufous-throated Wren-babbler *Spelaeornis caudatus*

One seen as we waited for landslides above Yongkola to be cleared on 4 May.

Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*

Heard at Yotong La on 30 April and seen well on 8 May when two birds showed very well near Lumitsawa.

Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler *Erythogenys erythrogenys*

Seen very well indeed on two dates at Yongkola and heard on 8 May as we returned to Paro.

Grey-throated Babbler *Stachyris nigriceps*

One seen well near Yongkola (2 May).

Yellow-throated Fulvetta *Schoeniparus cinereus*

Seen well on two dates in Yongkola.

Rufous-winged Fulvetta *Schoeniparus castaniceps*

Another of those birds we saw frequently in the flocks reacting to the owlet recording in the mountains. Seen on four dates.

Long-billed Wren-babbler *Napothera malacoptila*

One seen well at Yongkola on 3 May.

Nepal Fulvetta *Alcippe nipalensis*

Seen on four dates with most sightings coming from Yongkola and Trongsa areas.

Striated Laughingthrush *Grammatoptila striata*

Quite widespread and seen on seven dates.

Himalayan Cutia *Cutia nipalensis*

This delightful species was seen on two dates near Wangdue and Yongkola.

Scaly Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron subunicolor*

Only seen at Yongkola on 3 May when one appeared near our breakfast site.

Blue-winged Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron squamatum*

Another stunning laughingthrush, although tricky to see. We saw them on two dates around Yongkola.

Bhutan Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron imbricatum*

Recorded on five dates. A rather 'subtle' species and unobtrusive.

Black-faced Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron affine*

Widespread and quite numerous and recorded on seven dates.



Black-faced Laughingthrush © Colin Bushell

Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron erythrocephalum*

Recorded on four dates with particularly good views at Dochu La.

Rufous Sibia *Heterophasia picaoides*

Common in the montane forests and recorded on nine dates.

Hoary-throated Barwing *Actinodura nipalensis*

Seen on two dates around Yongkola and Pele La.



Hoary-throated Barwing © Colin Bushell

Blue-winged Minla *Actinodura cyanouroptera*

Recorded on five dates, but most regularly seen around Yongkola and Trongsa.

Bar-throated Minla *Actinodura strigula*

Seen on five dates and most regularly near the mountain passes such as Pele La.

Rusty-fronted Barwing *Actinodura egertoni*

Seen on two dates near Yongkola.

Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea*

Seen well east of Khele Kha and heard on three other days.

Silver-eared Mesia *Leiothrix argentaurus*

A couple seen well in Yongkola on 3 May.

Red-tailed Minla *Minla ignotincta*

A stunning species, seen on six dates, usually in mixed species flocks in montane forests.

Red-faced Liocichla *Liocichla phoenicea*

Seen once in Yongkola. Other records were 'heard onlys'.

Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax monileger*

Seen on two dates in Yongkola, sometimes with the following species.

White-crested Laughingthrush *Garrulax leucolophus*

We saw these in small flocks, as is the norm with this species, on two dates in Yongkola.

Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush *Ianthocincla rufogularis*

One, that made us work hard, was seen on 2 May in Yongkola.

Spotted Laughingthrush *Ianthocincla ocellata*

Definitely one of the birds of the tour. We encountered this most ornate of laughingthrushes on four dates.

Rufous-necked Laughingthrush *Pterorhinus ruficollis*

At least one bird frequented the garden of Trogon Villa near Yongkola and was seen well on four dates.

White-throated Laughingthrush *Pterorhinus albogularis*

Seen on seven dates and usually in small flocks in the montane forests.

Grey-sided Laughingthrush *Pterorhinus caerulatus*

One seen on 3 May at Yongkola after hearing it there the previous day.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Recorded on three dates.

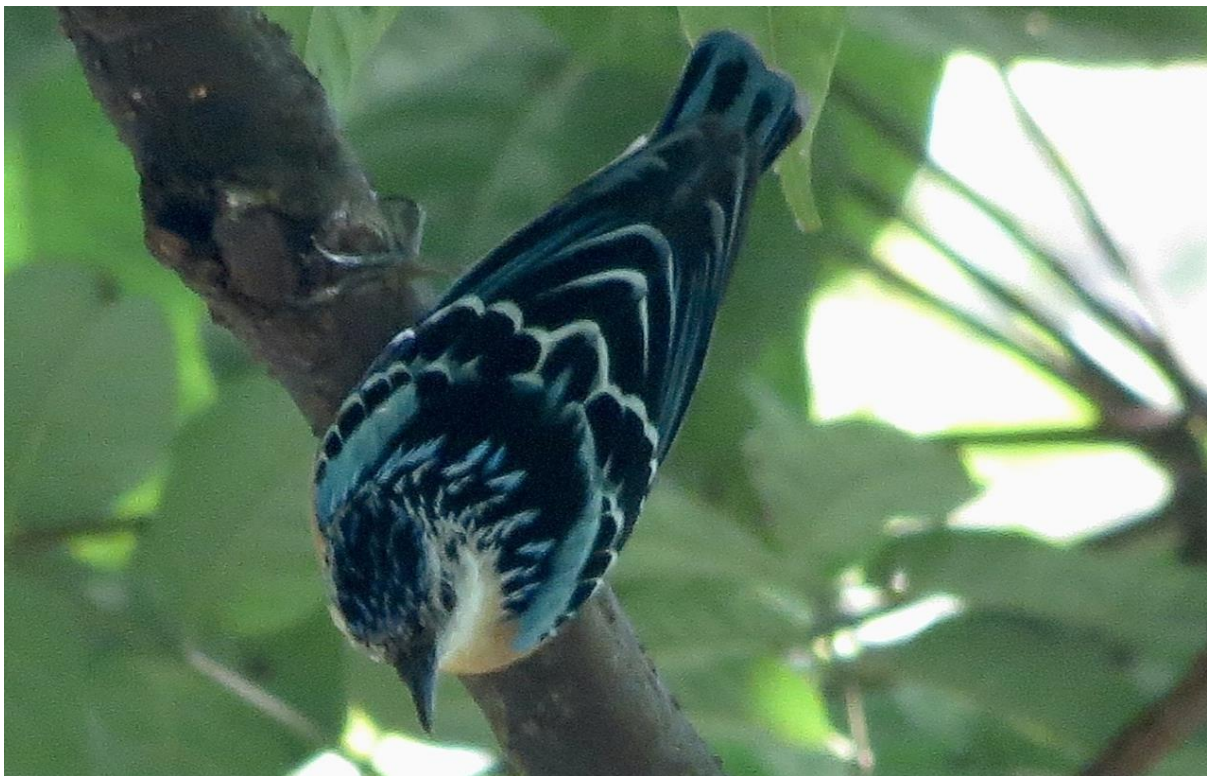
Spotted Elachura *Elachura formosa*

One seen quite well near Khele Kha on 30 April and heard in the same area on the return journey to Paro at the end of the tour.

Beautiful Nuthatch *Sitta formosa*

Two seen well at Yongkola on 2 May.

This species frequents a rather narrow elevational band in Bhutan, so Yongkola was the only area where we had the opportunity to see it. An important species to see, and one of Chubzang's 'Bhutan's Big Five'.



Beautiful Nuthatch © Colin Bushell

White-tailed Nuthatch *Sitta himalayensis*

Widespread, but by no means common. We saw it on six dates.

Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch *Sitta cinnamoventris*

Just one seen in Yongkola on 2 May.

Hodgson's Treecreeper *Certhia hodgsoni*

Seen well at Chele La and heard in Yongkola.

Sikkim Treecreeper *Certhia discolor*

One as we dropped down towards Yongkola on 1 May.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*

Common at lower elevations and seen on six dates.

Chestnut-tailed Starling *Sturnia malabarica*

Recorded on three dates around Punakha, but only a small number of birds seen around buildings on each day.

Scaly Thrush *Zoothera dauma*

One on 1 May below Selthang La was singing and it looked really good through the 'scope!

Grey-winged Blackbird *Turdus boulboul*

Two seen on 3 May near Yongkola.

White-collared Blackbird *Turdus albocinctus*

Common in all upland areas. Seen on seven dates.

Oriental Magpie-robin *Copsychus saularis*

Regularly found around human habitation and seen on six dates.

Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica*

Seen on six dates with most sightings coming from the Yongkola area.

White-gorgeted Flycatcher *Anthipes monileger*

It took a bit of time, but we saw one at Yongkola in the depths of undergrowth on 2 May. Also heard there the following day. A surprise entry as 'one of the birds of the tour' by some members of the group.

Pale Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis unicolor*

Several seen around Yongkola over the three days we spent there. A surprisingly good singer.

Blue-throated Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides*

A cracking male seen on 3 May at Yongkola and another on 8 May near Lumitsawa.

Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara*

Seen on three dates near Khele Kha, Yongkola and Lumitsawa. Another very handsome flycatcher.

Large Niltava *Niltava grandis*

The "Do Re Mi" song of this species became quite familiar as we walked the forest roads around Yongkola with good views of one on 3 May.

Small Niltava *Niltava macgrigoriae*

Seen well at Yongkola on 2 May and heard on two other dates.

Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassinus*

Often encountered on our travels and seen on nine dates.

Lesser Shortwing *Brachypteryx leucophris*

Single birds seen in Yongkola on 3 May and Trongsa on 5 May.

Himalayan Shortwing *Brachypteryx cruralis*

Seen in the Sengor Valley on 4 May and Lampelri Botanical Gardens on 8 May. Also heard on two other dates.

Indian Blue Robin *Larvivora brunnea*

A handsome singing male not far from Trongsa on 6 May. Another spring migrant that had just arrived.

White-tailed Robin *Myiomela leucura*

Seen only at Yongkola on 3 May, although we heard it on three other dates.

Himalayan Bluetail *Tarsiger rufilatus* Two at Chele La (one singing on top of a pine); six on 1 May as we crossed the high passes before dropping into Yongkola and also on 4 May when we retraced our steps from there to Bumthang.

Little Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus* Seen on the Nobling Death Drop waterfall on two occasions.

Spotted Forktail *Enicurus maculatus* One showed well on the road at Yongkola on 2 May as the Beautiful Nuthatch was found.

Pygmy Flycatcher *Ficedula hodgsoni*

This flycatcher proved to be a tricky customer and heard on two dates.

Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophciata*

We first came across this pretty flycatcher on 4 May when we saw three around Numling. We then found another six the following day between Yotong La and Trongsa and it was recorded again the following day near Ngala.

Ultramarine Flycatcher *Ficedula superciliaris*

Recorded on six dates and seen frequently. The rattling call became quite familiar on this tour. One of the late spring migrants to arrive in Bhutan.

Little Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula westermanni*

Recorded on four dates around Yongkola but only two sightings (the rest were heard).

Slaty-blue Flycatcher *Ficedula tricolor*

Only two sightings: one on 1 May near Seltheng La and another on 4 May in the Shingner Valley.

Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis*

A few stunning males at Chele La and a female at Tharpaling Monastery.

Plumbeous Water Redstart *Phoenicurus fuliginosus*

Frequently seen by rivers and recorded on nine dates. We watched a chick being fed on a river at Jigme Dorji NP.

White-capped Redstart *Phoenicurus leucocephalus*

Recorded on seven dates in much the same habitat as the above species.

Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush *Monticola rufiventris*

Seen on seven dates. The shape of this species sitting on an exposed roadside perch became a regular sight during our bus journeys.

Blue-capped Rock Thrush *Monticola cinclorhyncha*

Seen on four dates – all roadside birds spotted from the bus.

Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus*

A nice male seen near Yongkola on 3 May.

Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferreus*

A common roadside bird and seen on seven dates.

Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*

Seen on 7 May in the Jigme Dorji NP.

Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*

Found on five dates with most sightings coming from the Yongkola area and a few from the Punakha Valley.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*

Seen on four dates near Khele Kha, Yongkola, Trongsa and Jigme Dorji NP.

Mrs. Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae*

This startling sunbird was seen on six dates and most regularly at forest edge near the mountain passes.

Green-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga nipalensis*

Seen on seven dates and often with the above species.

Black-throated Sunbird *Aethopyga saturate*

Found on five dates and at lower elevations than the above two species.

Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja*

One on 3 May at Yongkola was our sole record.

Streaked Spiderhunter *Arachnothera magna*

A couple on two dates in Yongkola. Often seen near Trogon Villa.

Russet Sparrow *Passer cinnamomeus*

Widespread and fairly numerous with records from eleven dates.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Seen on eleven dates.

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulate*

Small numbers seen on two dates near Yongkola and Punakha.

Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris*

One seen at Chele La and another at Pele La on our return to Punakha on 6 May.

Altai Accentor *Prunella himalayana*

Four roadside birds were found as we descended into Trongsa on 5 May.

Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophiate*

Four seen well at Tharpaling Monastery.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Seen in Thrumshing La NP on 1 May.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Birds of the subspecies *alboides* were recorded on rivers on six dates.

White-browed Wagtail *Motacilla maderaspatensis*

One near Punakha on 7 May.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*

One in the Punakha area 7 May.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*

'OBP's' were widespread and quite common. Seen on seven dates with some singing from tall trees in the mountains.

Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus*

Seen at Pele La on 30 April and 6 May.

Collared Grosbeak *Mycerobas affinis*

Seen on two dates at Chele La and Selthang La.

Spot-winged Grosbeak *Mycerobus melanozanthos*

One near Khele Kha on 30 April.

White-winged Grosbeak *Mycerobus carnipes*

Seen on four dates at Chele La, Selthang La, Shingner Valley and Yotong La.

Red-headed Bullfinch *Pyrrhula erythrocephala*

Found at Selthang La and Pele La where at least four birds gave us plenty of opportunities to study this attractive species.



Red-headed Bullfinch © Colin Bushell

Blandford's Rosefinch *Agraphospiza rubescens*

A few at Selthang La on 1 May.

Golden-naped Finch *Pyrrhoptes epaulette*

Heard at Pele La on 6 May.

Dark-breasted Rosefinch *Procarduelis nipalensis*

Only seen at Tharpaling Monastery.

Plain Mountain Finch *Leucosticte nemoricola*

A huge flock of 200+ at Thrumshing La on 4 May.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Four distant birds at the Ura Valley on 1 May and four (much closer) at Pele La on 6 May.

Scarlet Finch *Carpodacus sipahi*

A female near Yongkola on 4 May and then a few encountered as we left Trongsa, travelling to Punakha on 6 May.

Himalayan Beautiful Rosefinch *Carpodacus pulcherrimus*

Two females in the Ura Valley on 1 May.

Dark-rumped Rosefinch *Carpodacus edwardsii*

One at Chele La with another near Thrumshing La on 4 May.

Himalayan White-browed Rosefinch *Carpodacus thura*

We saw quite a few in the morning at Chele La.

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Seen on three dates at Selthang La, Shingner Valley and Tharpaling.

Crested Bunting *Emberiza lathami*

Three at Yongkola and then males in Yongkola and at Punakha.

Mammals

Assamese Macaque *Macaca assamensis*

Seen on three dates.

Grey Langur *Semnopithecus entellus*

Seen on 30 April and 6 May between Punakha and Pele La.



Grey Langur © Colin Bushell

Golden Langur *Trachypithecus geei*

Five seen near Trongsa on 5 May.

Capped Langur *Trachypithecus pileatus*

Seen on two dates near Yongkola.

Hoary-bellied Squirrel *Callosciurus pygerythrus*

Seen in Yongkola on 2 May.

Orange-bellied Squirrel *Dremomys lokriah*

Just two sightings at Yongkola and Jigme Dorji NP.

Five-striped Palm Squirrel *Funambulus pennati*

Seen on three dates around Yongkola, Jigme Dorji NP and Lumitsawa.

Malayan Giant Squirrel *Rutufa bicolor*

One near Trongsa 5 May.

Large-eared Pika *Ochotona macrotis*

Seen on three dates, mainly in highland areas.

Himalayan Yellow-throated Marten *Martes flavigula*

One below Pele La on 6 May.

Sambar *Cervus unicolor*

One near Yongkola on 2 May.

Barking Deer *Muntiacus mutjak*

Heard at Yongkola.

Wild Boar *Sus scrofa*

Three seen as we descended through the Shingner Valley into Bumthang on 4 May.

Smooth-coated Otter *Lutrogale perspicillata*

One on the river in Jigme Dorje NP on 7 May.