

Field Guides Tour Report

# Cambodia 2015

Feb 7, 2015 to Feb 20, 2015 Phil Gregory & Srun Sikol

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE.



One of the 4 wonderful (and rare) Bengal Floricans we saw at Prolay (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

This was our fifth Field Guides tour to this fascinating country, slightly earlier in the season and blessed this year with cooler weather with even some unseasonal rain at Kompong Thom. The pace was quite relaxed, and staying for some days at both Siem Reap and Tmatboey was really nice, whilst the temples remain a world-class venue with an enticing mix of good birds to liven things up -- White-throated Rock-Thrush, Forest Wagtail, and Black Baza, for example. Another good thing about the tour is that much of the money we pay goes directly back into grass-roots level conservation, where relatively little seems to achieve a lot, and valuable employment is provided for the excellent guides and drivers.

We managed the major great rarity targets much as advertised, with outstanding photo opportunities for many. We just managed to get out to Tower 2 so we could be closer to Greater Adjutant than usual, getting amazing views of one on the boat trip in. We saw a couple of Milky Storks here too, which was a help as ATT was very dry with no storks this year.

Sarus Crane and Eld's Deer showed nicely, and we had 6 species of owl again -- Spotted Wood-Owl (at ATT again), Spotted Owlet (also at ATT), Brown Fish-Owl (on nest), Oriental Scops-Owl, Brown Hawk-Owl, and Asian Barred Owlet. Major stars were of course the amazingly rare Giant and White-shouldered ibises, for which Cambodia is the very last remaining stronghold and of which we got great views on the first afternoon.

Woodpeckers featured nicely, with Black-headed, Great Slaty, White-bellied, Laced, Streak-throated, Gray-capped, Yellow-crested, and Rufous-bellied all seen well. New species for me at Tmatboey were Orange-breasted Trogon on nest, Abbott's Babbler and Rufescent Prinia. Savanna Nightjar at Veal Krous was again excellent at dusk, hawking over the pond as it was still quite light, whilst 3 species of Critically Endangered (CR) vulture (White-rumped, Slender-billed, and Red-headed) were excellent and gave wonderful views on the carcass from the hides (which we entered pre-dawn to minimize disturbance).

Bengal Florican at Kompong Thom (Prolay) was very good with 3 males and a female, plus we had a very good Pied Harrier. Yellow-breasted Bunting was again very nice at KT later, and Asian Golden Weaver had a colony of 6 nests at Kratie, near the site from 2014. Mekong Wagtail was easy this year, as was Little Pratincole and the bizarre Irrawaddy Dolphin, and our return to Phnom Penh this year got us fantastic looks at the newly described Cambodian Tailorbird, a very neat way to end.

The great rarities of the tour did not disappoint, with excellent looks at Giant and White-shouldered ibises, Greater Adjutant, Milky Stork, Bengal Florican, the 3 vultures, and Asian Golden Weaver. The waterbird colony at Prek Toal is a fabulous experience, and the dry dipterocarp woodlands are a fascinating place, so great for owls and woodpeckers too. Mekong Wagtail and now Cambodian Tailorbird must also rate highly!

My thanks to Srun for his good, very cheerful, and entertaining company, plus excellent organizational and birding skills. Thanks to the Sam Veasna Center for their usual very fine job, and to the assorted drivers and local guides who did so much for us.

Also thanks to Karen at Field Guides HQ for a fine job with the tour logistics, and to the group for being good company. I look forward to travelling with you on future adventures.

#### Our itinerary:

- Feb 09 -- Phnom Kroam morning and afternoon, plus visit to SVC in Siem Reap
- Feb 10 -- Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom
- Feb 11 -- Tah Prom/Taney and Preah Khan temples
- Feb 12 -- Prek Toal and Tonle Sap lake
- Feb 13 -- Ang Trapaeng Thmor (ATT)
- Feb 14 -- Prolay grasslands and Tmatboey Kor Koh Thnol
- Feb 15 -- Steung Chuk River and Kor Koh Thnol
- Feb 16 -- Trapaeng Beong and Trapaeng Chambok at Tmatboey
- Feb 17 -- Kor Koh Thnol then Veal Krous Vulture restaurant
- Feb 18 -- Veal Krous and Kompong Thom grasslands
- Feb 19 -- KT grasslands then to Kratie via Mekong ferry
- Feb 20 -- Kratie/ Mekong River trip and then to Phnom Penh

#### KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: \* = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

# **BIRDS**

### Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

LESSER WHISTLING-DUCK (Dendrocygna javanica) – 40 at Preah Khan reservoir and 5 at ATT were all that we saw.

**COMB DUCK (OLD WORLD)** (Sarkidiornis melanotos melanotos) – 20 at Phnom Kroam paddies were unexpected there, then we had about 120 at ATT including several combed males. This is actually Knob-billed Duck, split from Comb Duck of South America by most.

**COTTON PYGMY-GOOSE** (Nettapus coromandelianus) – 9 at Phnom Kroam including one that flew into a mist net and was lucky enough to struggle free; 12 at Preah Khan reservoir and then an excellent count of 150 at ATT Feb 13.

**INDIAN SPOT-BILLED DUCK** (Anas poecilorhyncha haringtoni) – Very few, just 30 at ATT and a couple at Prolay grasslands and then Kratie. **GARGANEY** (Anas querquedula) – Very distant views of at least 40 at ATT.

# Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

CHINESE FRANCOLIN (Francolinus pintadeanus) – Most folks saw this at Tmatboey, with Doris getting her very own fine male on one occasion. **RED JUNGLEFOWL** (Gallus gallus) – 3 flushed up at Tmatboey and it was heard crowing daily there.

### Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LITTLE GREBE (LITTLE) (Tachybaptus ruficollis poggei) – One at Preah Khan reservoir and heard at Prek Toal.

#### Ciconiidae (Storks)

ASIAN OPENBILL (Anastomus oscitans) – 150 at Phnom Kroam and about 100 at Prek Toal, with 10 around ATT.

WOOLLY-NECKED STORK (ASIAN) (Ciconia episcopus episcopus) – Three at Steung Chuk River Feb 15, with one next day, then 4 at Veal Krous Feb 18; this is split by HBW/BirdLife as Asian Woolly-necked Stork.

**BLACK-NECKED STORK** (Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus asiaticus) – A distant and hazy view of 4 of this rare bird at ATT on Feb 13, with what looked like 2 dark juvs with the adults.

**LESSER ADJUTANT** (Leptoptilos javanicus) – 20 at Prek Toal, and 2 at Veal Krous.

GREATER ADJUTANT (Leptoptilos dubius) – An outstanding view of one by the river at Prek Toal, which gave great photo ops (and was Dean's bird of the trip), and a far distant bird from the platform. The next day we had 3 at the Eld's Deer grasslands, and 4 at ATT, a very unusual sighting from this area.

MILKY STORK (Mycteria cinerea) – Two and a half at Prek Toal, with a fine adult perched up on the way in, and another from the platform with a hybrid somewhat closer by. A rare bird that is easy to miss.

PAINTED STORK (Mycteria leucocephala) – 2 at Phnom Kroam, 100 at Prek Toal then three day records of 3 at the KT grassland areas.

# Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

**INDIAN CORMORANT** (Phalacrocorax fuscicollis) – 500 at Prek Toal and then at ATT, with about 1400 cormorants over at Kratie late one afternoon, many of which seemed to be this species.

GREAT CORMORANT (EURASIAN) (Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis) – Just a few at Prek Toal.

LITTLE CORMORANT (Phalacrocorax niger) - Seen in the paddies at Phnom Kroam, then a few at ATT and Prek Toal before quite a lot at Kratie.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ORIENTAL DARTER (Anhinga melanogaster) - A single at Phnom Kroam, then about 50 at Prek Toal and 3 at ATT.

### Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

SPOT-BILLED PELICAN (Pelecanus philippensis) – Fantastic views of about 120 at Prek Toal, a rare waterbird these days with this probably the largest surviving colony now.

### Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

YELLOW BITTERN (Ixobrychus sinensis) – 2 at Phnom Kroam, then singles at Prek Toal and ATT.

**CINNAMON BITTERN** (Ixobrychus cinnamomeus) – Just one at Prek Toal.

**BLACK BITTERN** (Ixobrychus flavicollis) – One was seen on the way into Prek Toal, on the Siem Reap channel side, and I think some folks saw it at Prek Toal.

**GRAY HERON** (Ardea cinerea) – Five day records of small numbers, with 15 at Prek Toal the most.

**PURPLE HERON** (Ardea purpurea) – Five day records, with 6 at Prek Toal the most.

GREAT EGRET (EURASIAN) (Ardea alba alba) – 150 at Prek Toal and 120 at ATT.

**INTERMEDIATE EGRET** (Mesophoyx intermedia intermedia) – 2 at Phnom Kroam paddies were the only ones we noted.

LITTLE EGRET (LITTLE) (Egretta garzetta garzetta) – 70 at Phnom Kroam and lots of Prek Toal, with small numbers elsewhere.

CATTLE EGRET (ASIAN) (Bubulcus ibis coromandus) – 150 at Prek Toal were the most, we had small numbers at other wetland sites.

CHINESE POND-HERON (Ardeola bacchus) – 200 at Phnom Kroam paddies, and 70 at Prek Toal, this was seen most days and none were in breeding dress as yet. How to tell from Javan in this plumage is still uncertain.....

**STRIATED HERON** (Butorides striata) – Just one at Prek Toal.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (EURASIAN) (Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax) – About 170 at Prek Toal.

# Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

**BLACK-HEADED IBIS** (Threskiornis melanocephalus) – A good trip for them, we had 30+ at Prek Toal with a flock of 10 at one stage, this is another rare and endangered waterbird.

WHITE-SHOULDERED IBIS (Pseudibis davisoni) – Very nice views of 8 at Kor Koh Thnol at Tmatboey on Feb 14, with 5 flying close by and one perched up a tall dead tree. Just a few hundred birds survive, most in Cambodia, where 844 were counted in Oct 2014.

**GIANT IBIS** (Pseudibis gigantea) – We were lucky with 5 on the first afternoon Feb 14 at Kor Koh Thnol at Tmatboey, with some nice flight views and then at roost in a dead tree. They have been elusive of late it seems. The world population is around 230-350 birds, almost all in Cambodia. Two singles were seen later by a few folks at Tmatboey and then at Veal Krous by Dean and Maggie.

# Pandionidae (Osprey)

**OSPREY** (Pandion haliaetus) – Two sightings of singles, at Preah Khan and ATT.

# Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

**BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE** (Elanus caeruleus) – Three day records only, with 2 at ATT the most. This is the Black-winged Kite of Europe and Africa, Black-shouldered Kite is the Australian species.....ah those Clements names!

ORIENTAL HONEY-BUZZARD (Pernis ptilorhynchus) – A single at Tmatboey.

**BLACK BAZA** (Aviceda leuphotes) – 3 at Angkor included one perched, then 6 at Tah Prom, with some lovely perched views there, a really striking species. Also a single moving through at ATT on Feb 13.

**RED-HEADED VULTURE** (Sarcogyps calvus) – A single on Feb 17 then there were 3 adults at the cow carcass at Veal Krous on Feb 18. We noted the eye colour difference with the sexes, seeing two females (dark) and one male (yellow). The pink dewlap was hanging like paddles and it is one very striking species with that great heavy bill. Sadly now very rare and listed as Critically Endangered like almost all the other Asian Vultures.

WHITE-RUMPED VULTURE (Gyps bengalensis) – 12 on Feb 17 and a good count of 34 on Feb 18 at Veal Krous, some great looks, with a few immatures present too.

**SLENDER-BILLED VULTURE** (Gyps tenuirostris) – One on Feb 17 and 9 on Feb 18, the latter a very good count of this Critically Endangered species.

CRESTED SERPENT-EAGLE (Spilornis cheela) – Some good views from Tmatboey, where it was quite vocal.

SHORT-TOED EAGLE (Circaetus gallicus) - One at ATT on Feb 13 was unexpected, a shame the light was so bad when we saw it.

**GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE** (Clanga clanga) – Four singles from the ATT area on Feb 13, where this seems to be a regular winter visitor these days

RUFOUS-WINGED BUZZARD (Butastur liventer) – Six day records from the Tmatboey/Veal Krous area, max 3 birds.

**EASTERN MARSH-HARRIER** (Circus spilonotus) – 3 day records, with a fine male near ATT and several female/imm. birds from Kompong Thom.

**PIED HARRIER** (Circus melanoleucos) – Two wonderful males on Feb 13 around ATT and 2 female/imm. birds the same day, and a fine male at Kompong Thom grasslands Feb 19. One of the most striking of all the harriers.

SHIKRA (Accipiter badius) - Seven day records, max 3 birds, and some good looks starting at Angkor, it was the default Accipiter as usual.

**BLACK KITE (BLACK)** (Milvus migrans govinda) – A rather rare birds in Cambodia, we saw 5 at the ATT grasslands.

BRAHMINY KITE (Haliastur indus) - Two from Prek Toal included one immature, it's surprisingly scarce in Cambodia.

GRAY-HEADED FISH-EAGLE (Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus) – 5 seen at Prek Toal, always a crowd pleaser as they sit so well.

# Otididae (Bustards)

**BENGAL FLORICAN** (Houbaropsis bengalensis) – Very nice looks at 3 males and a female at Prolay on Feb 14, the white wings are just amazing in flight. Another very rare bird. The Cambodian name is "ksub" which mimics the feeble whistled flight call!

# Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

WHITE-BREASTED WATERHEN (Amaurornis phoenicurus) - One at the pond at Veal Krous was the only record.

WHITE-BROWED CRAKE (Porzana cinerea) - Two at Phnom Kroam and one from ATT, odd to see this Australian species here!

WATERCOCK (Gallicrex cinerea) - One in non-breeding dress was flushed at Phnom Kroam paddies, always an elusive species.

PURPLE SWAMPHEN (BLACK-BACKED) (Porphyrio porphyrio indicus) - One at Phnom Kroam and 30 at Prek Toal. This is the black-backed

grey-headed taxon indicus, and the whole group is up for splitting.

EURASIAN MOORHEN (Gallinula chloropus) – Just 2 at the Preah Khan reservoir were the only record.

#### Gruidae (Cranes

**SARUS CRANE** (Grus antigone sharpii) – 4 in some paddies en route to ATT, and about 6 in the Eld's Deer area there, with 3 at Prolay grasslands later. Another very rare bird in Cambodia and of an endemic race. They call rather differently to the Australian birds too.

#### Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-WINGED STILT (Himantopus himantopus) – 70 at Phnom Kroam paddies and 70 at ATT were it for the trip.

### Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

**RED-WATTLED LAPWING** (Vanellus indicus atronuchalis) – A few at ATT and Tmatboey, also at Veal Krous and Kompong Thom. This eastern race has been split by HBW/BirdLife as it has much more black on the neck than the western birds.

**LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (SOUTHERN)** (Charadrius dubius jerdoni) – 10 at Phnom Kroam paddies and 1 at Kratie over the Mekong. They call rather differently to western birds, see my cut on XC and the IBC.

# Jacanidae (Jacanas)

PHEASANT-TAILED JACANA (Hydrophasianus chirurgus) – 15 at Phnom Kroam paddies then 10 at ATT, all non-breeding dress.

BRONZE-WINGED JACANA (Metopidius indicus) - Ten breeding dress birds in a paddyfield en route to ATT were the only record.

### Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

COMMON SANDPIPER (Actitis hypoleucos) - One at Phnom Kroam, a scarce species here.

GREEN SANDPIPER (Tringa ochropus) – One at Veal Krous pond.

**SPOTTED REDSHANK** (Tringa erythropus) – 9 flying over Kompong Thom grasslands on Feb 19 were the only record.

**COMMON GREENSHANK** (Tringa nebularia) – Heard at ATT, one at Prolay grasslands and heard again at Kompong Thom.

**WOOD SANDPIPER** (Tringa glareola) – 15 at Phnom Kroam and two singles later in the trip from Kompong Thom.

**TEMMINCK'S STINT** (Calidris temminckii) – Two at Phnom Kroam paddies on Feb 9, a very good trip bird.

**LONG-TOED STINT** (Calidris subminuta) – 5 at Phnom Kroam paddies on Feb 9 were a surprise.

PIN-TAILED SNIPE (Gallinago stenura) – One at Prolay grasslands, and a couple in the fields at Kratie, the lack of white trailing edge and small size is helpful.

# Turnicidae (Buttonquail)

**SMALL BUTTONQUAIL** (Turnix sylvaticus) – We flushed 4 close together at Prolay grasslands on Feb 14, getting quite good flight views, and Phil and Srun saw one at KT grasslands later.

**BARRED BUTTONQUAIL** (Turnix suscitator) – One at Tmatboey on day 7 Feb 15, seen well in flight, then 4 at Trapaeng Chambok Feb 16, all flushed from the same small area, with another showing really well several times for Dennis and I in the lower hide at Veal Krous Feb 18. We saw the pale eye and greyish legs, and I hope to post my video to IBC.

# Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

**ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE** (Glareola maldivarum) – Seen at Phnom Kroam with 50 birds, then 30 at ATT and 30 at the Kompong Thom Prolay site, with 10 at KT on Feb 18. I am sure these things over winter here in Cambodia, but most of the population winters in Western Australia.

SMALL PRATINCOLE (Glareola lactea) – Nice views of 2 in flight over the Mekong at Kratie Feb 20.

# Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

WHISKERED TERN (Chlidonias hybrida) - About 70 in non-breeding dress on Lake Tonle Sap.

# Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (Columba livia) – Just a few Feral Pigeons in the urban areas. [I]

**PALE-CAPPED PIGEON** (Columba punicea) – Some very nice looks at probably 4 birds along the creek at our site from 2 years ago, we managed to get a couple in the scope too; one looked to be an immature with a greyish cap. A very rare bird that is hard to find.

**RED COLLARED-DOVE** (Streptopelia tranquebarica) – Six day records, with 7 at ATT the most.

SPOTTED DOVE (Streptopelia chinensis) - Small numbers around Tmatboey, ATT and Kompong Thom.

ZEBRA DOVE (Geopelia striata) - A few around Phnom Kroam and Siem Reap, also at Kratie and Kompong Thom.

**ORANGE-BREASTED PIGEON** (Treron bicinctus) – Just a single at the Steung Chuk river at Tmatboey, with various unidentified Treron flying by.

**THICK-BILLED PIGEON** (Treron curvirostra) – 10 at Tah Prom where a fig was in fruit, and 3 at Tmatboey.

YELLOW-FOOTED PIGEON (Treron phoenicopterus) – A single at Tmatboey Feb 15, then 2 birds on Feb 17. One of the scarcer green pigeons, the yellow legs showed well.

GREEN IMPERIAL-PIGEON (Ducula aenea) - Three day records from Tmatboey, max. 4 at the Pale-capped Pigeon site.

# Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

LARGE HAWK-CUCKOO (Hierococcyx sparverioides) – Great views of an immature of this amazingly Accipiter-like species at Preah Khan temple.

**HIMALAYAN CUCKOO** (Cuculus saturatus) – 4 day records, from Phnom Kroam, Preah Khan and then Tmatboey, all singles. A hepatic phase female was the the river at Tmatboey. Formerly called Oriental Cuckoo but now split by voice, with Oriental further south supposedly.

BANDED BAY CUCKOO (Cacomantis sonneratii) - Two singles seen nicely at the river at Tmatboey.

PLAINTIVE CUCKOO (Cacomantis merulinus) - Common out in the lotus ponds at Phnom Kroam where we saw 10 birds, also seen at ATT.

VIOLET CUCKOO (Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus) - A nice view of a vocal male at Tmatboey river.

**FORK-TAILED DRONGO-CUCKOO** (Surniculus dicruroides dicruroides) – A single outside Angkor Thom, and another next day Feb 11 at Tah Prom where we saw it last year too. The small slender bill is a useful feature to pick up on, otherwise it is amazingly drongo-like!.

ASIAN KOEL (Eudynamys scolopaceus) - Heard daily at Tmatboey and a male was seen at last on one day.

GREEN-BILLED MALKOHA (Phaenicophaeus tristis) - This was seen 3 times, the best at Veal Krous pond.

**GREATER COUCAL** (Centropus sinensis) – Heard on 3 days and seen at Tmatboey one day.

LESSER COUCAL (Centropus bengalensis) – Seen at Phnom Kroam, Prolay grasslands and Kompong Thom grasslands.

# Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (Tyto alba) - One roosting deep in a thicket at ATT was a nice find.

### Strigidae (Owls)

ORIENTAL SCOPS-OWL (Otus sunia) – We tried several times and finally got one very well when it came in quickly and without calling, glad Douglas eventually got onto it too!

**BROWN FISH-OWL** (Ketupa zeylonensis) – A fine bird on a nest at Tmatboey.

ASIAN BARRED OWLET (Glaucidium cuculoides) – Seen at Angkor Wat and then at Tmatboey, and heard quite often in the daylight in the drier forests.

**SPOTTED OWLET** (Athene brama) – Two fine birds in daylight near ATT, and one near Tmatboey.

SPOTTED WOOD-OWL (Strix seloputo) - The bird at ATT was still around and gave good views.

**BROWN BOOBOOK** (Ninox scutulata burmanica) – Heard at dawn at Angkor, then seen at dusk at Trapaeng Chambok at Tmatboey.

#### Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

**LARGE-TAILED NIGHTJAR** (Caprimulgus macrurus bimaculatus) – A male in the riparian forest at Kol Koth Thmol at Tmatboey, and heard at a couple of other sites.

INDIAN NIGHTJAR (Caprimulgus asiaticus asiaticus) – This was singing very well at Veal Krous and glimpsed by some of us, our first ever on the tour.

SAVANNA NIGHTJAR (Caprimulgus affinis monticolus) – Calling well at dawn and dusk at Veal Krous, and a splendid bird hawked over the pond in the late afternoon again.

#### Apodidae (Swifts)

**BROWN-BACKED NEEDLETAIL** (Hirundapus giganteus) – 10 at Angkor Thom gave reasonable flight views.

HIMALAYAN SWIFTLET (Aerodramus brevirostris) – 2 en route to ATT, and one at the Steung river at Tmatboey.

**GERMAIN'S SWIFTLET** (Aerodramus germani) – Just a single at Angkor Wat this trip, and only seen very briefly, these things are elusive and seem to vary in numbers.

ASIAN PALM-SWIFT (Cypsiurus balasiensis) - Common and seen most days.

### Hemiprocnidae (Treeswifts)

CRESTED TREESWIFT (Hemiprocne coronata) – Some great looks at them in the dry dipterocarp woodlands at Tmatboey and Veal Krous.

#### Trogonidae (Trogons)

**ORANGE-BREASTED TROGON** (Harpactes oreskios) – This was a new Cambodian bird for me, with a female sat incubating atop a broken off stump in the riparian forest at Tmatboey. It was quite hard to make out, and sadly on my next trip here the female was killed and the nest abandoned.

#### Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

**COMMON KINGFISHER (COMMON)** (Alcedo atthis taprobana) – Six day records, the first at Phnom Kroam.

STORK-BILLED KINGFISHER (Pelargopsis capensis) – A brief look at one at Tmatboey river, and then the lovely one at the Veal Krous pond.

WHITE-THROATED KINGFISHER (Halcyon smyrnensis perpulchra) – One in the forest at Kor Koh Thnol.

**BLACK-CAPPED KINGFISHER** (Halcyon pileata) – Five day records, from Angkor, Preah Khan, Prek Toal and Tmatboey, one spectacular kingfisher.

PIED KINGFISHER (Ceryle rudis leucomelanurus) – Very scarce again, just 1 at ATT and 4 at Kompong Thom grasslands, which were making some very strange calls reminiscent of Green Sandpiper- cut posted in IBC and XC. Curious that they are so scarce here.

### Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

**BLUE-BEARDED BEE-EATER** (Nyctyornis athertoni athertoni) – Two at the river at Tmatboey were a nice find, calling occasionally and eventually showing nicely.

**GREEN BEE-EATER** (Merops orientalis ferrugeiceps) – Seen at Prek Toal, ATT and then near Tmatboey. I predict a number of splits in the complex, these don't look like the Arabian or African races, and HBW/BirdLife now split this one as Asian Green Bee-eater.

BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER (Merops philippinus) – Five day records, widespread but only in small numbers.

CHESTNUT-HEADED BEE-EATER (Merops leschenaulti leschenaulti) – Just 3 at Tmatboey this trip, another spectacular member of the family.

### Coraciidae (Rollers)

**INDIAN ROLLER** (Coracias benghalensis affinis) – Six day records of this striking bird, starting at Phnom Kroan and with a max. of 3. HBW now split this as Indochinese Roller.

# Upupidae (Hoopoes)

**EURASIAN HOOPOE** (Upupa epops) – Seen nicely at Tmatboey, just 2 birds but also very vocal and heard on a couple of other days.

# Bucerotidae (Hornbills)

ORIENTAL PIED-HORNBILL (Anthracoceros albirostris) – Just 2 day records, max 4 at Tmatboey.

# Megalaimidae (Asian Barbets)

**COPPERSMITH BARBET** (Psilopogon haemacephalus) – One seen well at Angkor, and a couple at the temples next day.

BLUE-EARED BARBET (Psilopogon duvaucelii) – Heard at Tmatboey by the river, I have yet to see this one in Cambodia. [\*]

LINEATED BARBET (Psilopogon lineatus) – Lovely views from Angkor and Tah Prom, and very vocal here and at Tmatboey, one of the typical sounds of the dry forest.

### Picidae (Woodpeckers)

GRAY-CAPPED WOODPECKER (Dendrocopos canicapillus) – Four day records of this diminutive bird from Tmatboey.

YELLOW-CROWNED WOODPECKER (Dendrocopos mahrattensis) – Two day records, a pair were seen well at Kor Koh Thnol, and another at Trapaeng Beong.

RUFOUS-BELLIED WOODPECKER (Dendrocopos hyperythrus) – Two from Trapaeng Beong were the only record, one of the scarcer species.

WHITE-BELLIED WOODPECKER (Dryocopus javensis) – A fine male from Tmatboey, one of the largest woodpeckers.

LACED WOODPECKER (Picus vittatus) – A female at Tah Prom was a surprise, this is a species we seldom find; I taped 3 calls and have posted them on IBC and XC.

STREAK-THROATED WOODPECKER (Picus xanthopygaeus) – Just one at Kor Koh Thnol, another of the seldom seen species, and sound cuts posted in IBC and XC.

**BLACK-HEADED WOODPECKER** (Picus erythropygius) – Seen twice from the Tmatboey area, with very vocal birds chasing about, one of the great woodpeckers.

**COMMON FLAMEBACK** (Dinopium javanense) – Two at Tmatboey and one at Veal Krous.

GREATER FLAMEBACK (Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus guttacristatus) - One at Trapaeng Beong at Tmatboey.

HEART-SPOTTED WOODPECKER (Hemicircus canente) - One near the river at Tmatboey, always hard to see well.

**GREAT SLATY WOODPECKER** (Mulleripicus pulverulentus) – We struggled with them this time and only got lucky at Veal Krous, where two fine birds put on a great show, with wing-flicking and noisy calling. One of the largest of the extant woodpeckers and always a treat to see.

#### Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

WHITE-RUMPED FALCON (Polihierax insignis) – A male was perched not too far from the road as we were going to Tmatboey, and we heard another in the forest there. Quite a rare species.

#### Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots)

ALEXANDRINE PARAKEET (Psittacula eupatria) – Just 4 at Tah Prom were the only sighting.

BLOSSOM-HEADED PARAKEET (Psittacula roseata) – Small numbers in the dry dipterocarp forest at Tmatboey and Veal Krous.

RED-BREASTED PARAKEET (Psittacula alexandri) - Very vocal at Angkor Thom, Angkor Wat and Tah Prom.

VERNAL HANGING-PARROT (Loriculus vernalis) – Heard at Tmatboey only. [\*]

### Vangidae (Vangas, Helmetshrikes, and Allies)

LARGE WOODSHRIKE (Tephrodornis gularis) – Seen twice at Tmatboey, with 4 birds one day and 2 on another, a species that we often miss.

**COMMON WOODSHRIKE** (Tephrodornis pondicerianus) – Three day records from Tmatboey, max 6 birds, and with one sitting on nest.

BAR-WINGED FLYCATCHER-SHRIKE (Hemipus picatus) – One was seen near ATT, and we had another by the river at Tmatboey.

#### Artamidae (Woodswallows)

ASHY WOODSWALLOW (Artamus fuscus) - Just a single at Meichrey on the way back from Prek Toal.

# Aegithinidae (Ioras)

**COMMON IORA** (Aegithina tiphia) – Two day records from Tmatboey, max. 6 birds. Often a member of mixed flocks.

**GREAT IORA** (Aegithina lafresnayei) – Just one from near the river at Tmatboey.

### Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes)

**SMALL MINIVET** (Pericrocotus cinnamomeus) – Quite common in the dry forests at Tmatboey.

**SCARLET MINIVET** (Pericrocotus speciosus) – A couple of nice sightings of this beauty from Tmatboey.

ASHY MINIVET (Pericrocotus divaricatus) – 15 at Angkor, obviously migrants, and a surprise migrant bird in the grasslands at Prolay.

BROWN-RUMPED MINIVET (Pericrocotus cantonensis) – A single at the river at Tmatboey, a scarce species that is good to get.

LARGE CUCKOOSHRIKE (Coracina macei) – A couple of sightings from Tmatboey.

INDOCHINESE CUCKOOSHRIKE (Lalage polioptera) – Also seen at Tmatboey.

# Laniidae (Shrikes)

**BROWN SHRIKE** (Lanius cristatus) – Five day records, the first at Phnom Kroam, and an unexpected one in the dry forest at Tmatboey.

BURMESE SHRIKE (Lanius collurioides) – Very nice in the dry forest at Tmatboey where they seemed very vocal this year.

## Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

**BLACK-NAPED ORIOLE** (Oriolus chinensis) – Seen at Phnom Kroam and then at the Angkor temples.

**BLACK-HOODED ORIOLE** (Oriolus xanthornus) – Good views in the dry forest of Tmatboey, but very small numbers.

### Dicruridae (Drongos)

**BLACK DRONGO** (Dicrurus macrocercus) – Widespread, seen almost every day in small numbers with a max. of 70 on Feb 13, and it looked as if many were migrants.

ASHY DRONGO (Dicrurus leucophaeus) - A few around Angkor and the temples, all of the ashy type.

**BRONZED DRONGO** (Dicrurus aeneus) – Two singles from Tmatboey.

**HAIR-CRESTED DRONGO** (Dicrurus hottentottus) – A few at Tmatboey only.

GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO (Dicrurus paradiseus) – Seen a couple of times around the temples.

# Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

MALAYSIAN PIED-FANTAIL (Rhipidura javanica) – Seen at ATT and Kratie.

WHITE-BROWED FANTAIL (Rhipidura aureola) – Nice looks at a couple of singles at Tmatboey.

#### Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

**BLACK-NAPED MONARCH** (Hypothymis azurea) – Four day records, with three singles from the temple complexes and and then 3 at Tmatboey, including a beautiful blue male in sunlight at the river.

ASIAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER (Terpsiphone paradisi) - One from Tah Prom was the only sighting, always very elusive on this tour.

### Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

RED-BILLED BLUE-MAGPIE (Urocissa erythrorhyncha) - A single at Tmatboey, seen at the feeders again.

RUFOUS TREEPIE (Dendrocitta vagabunda) - One en route to ATT was unexpected, then we had a couple of sightings at Tmatboey.

RACKET-TAILED TREEPIE (Crypsirina temia) – One at Phnom Kroam, and a couple from Prek Toal.

LARGE-BILLED CROW (LARGE-BILLED) (Corvus macrorhynchos macrorhynchos) – Widespread in small numbers, and sounding totally unlike their Japanese counterparts! Split as Southern Jungle Crow by Robson in his field guide.

# Alaudidae (Larks)

AUSTRALASIAN BUSHLARK (Mirafra javanica horsfieldii) – Two at Prolay grasslands, singing well.

INDOCHINESE BUSHLARK (Mirafra erythrocephala) – Seen twice at Tmatboey with 4 birds on the first day.

ORIENTAL SKYLARK (Alauda gulgula) – One at Prolay grasslands was seen well, and some were singing nicely there, strange to hear a Skylark singing here.

#### Hirundinidae (Swallows)

**GRAY-THROATED MARTIN** (Riparia chinensis) – Just 4 over the Mekong at Kratie on the last day.

BANK SWALLOW (Riparia riparia) - 20 at Phnom Kroam, 20 at ATT and about 50 at Kompong Thom grasslands. The Sand Martin of Eurasia.

BARN SWALLOW (Hirundo rustica) – Quite widespread, but no big numbers beyond 150 at Phnom Kroam.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW (Cecropis daurica) – Just one was seen by some at Phnom Kroam, and then 4 near Tmatboey.

### Sittidae (Nuthatches)

**BURMESE NUTHATCH** (Sitta neglecta) – Good views of 2 at Tmatboey, this has a checkered taxonomic history as Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch, then Neglected Nuthatch and now Burmese Nuthatch!

**VELVET-FRONTED NUTHATCH** (Sitta frontalis) – Just one from Tmatboey.

# Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)

**BLACK-HEADED BULBUL** (Pycnonotus atriceps) – A fruiting fig at Tah Prom had about 15 of them, a very distinctive species that we usually only see in small numbers.

**BLACK-CRESTED BULBUL** (Pycnonotus flaviventris) – Seen at Tah Prom and Tmatboey, singles only.

SOOTY-HEADED BULBUL (Pycnonotus aurigaster) - Small numbers from around Tmatboey and Veal Krous.

STRIPE-THROATED BULBUL (Pycnonotus finlaysoni) – Nice views of a couple of this striking species at the Tmatboey river.

YELLOW-VENTED BULBUL (Pycnonotus goiavier) – Good views from Phnom Kroam, then around Siem Reap and the temples and then at Kompong Thom- I posted a cut of the pre-dawn song on IBC.

STREAK-EARED BULBUL (Pycnonotus blanfordi) – 4 at Phnom Kroam, then odd singles from the temples and up to 8 at the river at Tmatboey.

**GRAY-EYED BULBUL** (Iole propinqua) – Heard by a fruiting fig in the riparian forest at Tmatboey, a distinctive nasal call and my first from Cambodia. [\*]

# Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)

DUSKY WARBLER (Phylloscopus fuscatus) – A good trip for them, we had a couple at Phnom Kroam, then singles at Tmatboey and more from Veal Krous and Kratie.

RADDE'S WARBLER (Phylloscopus schwarzi) – A couple seen at Tmatboey.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER (Phylloscopus inornatus) – Heard much more than seen, we did get to look at a couple at the temples.

**ARCTIC WARBLER** (Phylloscopus borealis) – The mystery greyish and heavily moulting warbler at Tmatboey river seems best suited to this species, with the long supercilium. The Birdforum query seemed to agree on this one and not Two-barred, contra Craig Robson.

PALE-LEGGED LEAF WARBLER (Phylloscopus tenellipes) – This has a very distinctive metallic "zik" call, and we saw a couple at Tah Prom, complete with pale legs.

# Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

**BLACK-BROWED REED-WARBLER** (Acrocephalus bistrigiceps) – Seen nicely at Phnom Kroam and then at Prek Toal, Prolay and Kompong Thom, quite a distinctive species.

MANCHURIAN REED-WARBLER (Acrocephalus tangorum) – Ah yes well, Srun thought the two at Prolay were this species, I was hoping Raymond's photos might sort them out? Now confirmed, yay!

**ORIENTAL REED-WARBLER** (Acrocephalus orientalis) – 4 at Phnom Kroam and 3 other day records of singles of this large species.

# Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

STRIATED GRASSBIRD (Megalurus palustris) – Seen very well at Phnom Kroam and Kompong Thom, it is a very striking and quite vocal bird.

LANCEOLATED WARBLER (Locustella lanceolata) – One skulking mouse-like in the grass at Prolay was a typical encounter with this mega-skulker.

# Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

**ZITTING CISTICOLA (ZITTING)** (Cisticola juncidis tinnabulans) – Seen at Prolay grasslands.

GOLDEN-HEADED CISTICOLA (Cisticola exilis equicaudatus) – Heard at Phnom Kroam. [\*]

COMMON TAILORBIRD (Orthotomus sutorius) - Four day records this year but Common seems a misnomer.

**DARK-NECKED TAILORBIRD** (Orthotomus atrogularis) – Heard at several sites and then seen well at the Steung Cheuk River at Tmatboey.

CAMBODIAN TAILORBIRD (Orthotomus chaktomuk) – Easy this year, we got onto 3 very quickly as we came back to Phnom Penh not far from the road either but not drowned by traffic noise. This recently described species is a Cambodian endemic in the 4 Arms Plains, and resembles a cross between Dark-necked and Ashy Tailorbird. [E]

BROWN PRINIA (Prinia polychroa) – Three days records from Tmatboey.

**RUFESCENT PRINIA** (Prinia rufescens) – Seen twice at Tmatboey and Veal Krous, I think the first time we have seen the species.

YELLOW-BELLIED PRINIA (Prinia flaviventris) – One seen well in reeds from the boat on the Mekong.

PLAIN PRINIA (Prinia inornata) – 4 at Phnom Kroam and a few at Kompong Thom and Kratie.

<u>Timaliidae (Tree-Babblers, Scimitar-Babblers, and Allies)</u>

CHESTNUT-CAPPED BABBLER (Timalia pileata) - A nice view of 2 at Phnom Kroam, and heard at Veal Krous.

Pellorneidae (Ground Babblers and Allies)

**ABBOTT'S BABBLER** (Turdinus abbotti) – A new Cambodian bird for me, they were very vocal at the river at Tmatboey and we eventually saw a couple in the riparian forest.

Leiothrichidae (Laughingthrushes and Allies)

WHITE-CRESTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH (Garrulax leucolophus) - Seen very well at Tmatboey, they now come to the feeders there.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

ASIAN BROWN FLYCATCHER (Muscicapa latirostris) – Seven day records of singles.

**ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN** (Copsychus saularis) – Five day records, seen nicely several times.

WHITE-RUMPED SHAMA (Copsychus malabaricus) – This skulker came good at Tah Prom and sat up nicely, a very striking species.

HAINAN BLUE-FLYCATCHER (Cyornis hainanus) – Sen a couple of times at Angkor.

**VERDITER FLYCATCHER** (Eumyias thalassinus) – Seen twice at the temples.

**BLUETHROAT** (Luscinia svecica) – One at Phnom Kroam, then a couple at Prolay grasslands.

SIBERIAN RUBYTHROAT (Calliope calliope) – Heard by a small pond at Tmatboey. [\*]

TAIGA FLYCATCHER (Ficedula albicilla) – Five day records, seen well at the temple complexes.

WHITE-THROATED ROCK-THRUSH (Monticola gularis) – 2 on Feb 10 at Angkor Wat, both female plumage, then a fine male next day at Preah Khan, one of the specials from the Angkor area.

**BLUE ROCK-THRUSH** (Monticola solitarius pandoo) – A male of this blue-bellied taxon was at Angkor Wat, and there was a female bird at Preah Khan of uncertain taxon.

BLUE ROCK-THRUSH (Monticola solitarius philippensis) – One of this rusty bellied taxon was at Tah Prom, probably a split too in due course.

**SIBERIAN STONECHAT (SIBERIAN)** (Saxicola maurus przewalskii) – Small numbers starting at Phnom Kroan, with 6 there the most. Expect more splits in the Stonechat-complex in due course, this will likely be Stejneger's Stonechat.

PIED BUSHCHAT (Saxicola caprata) – Four day records, starting at Phnom Kroam and ending at Kratie.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

**COMMON HILL MYNA** (Gracula religiosa) – 6 at Angkor Feb 10 and 10 at Tah Prom next day, it has become very uncommon due to trapping.

**GREAT MYNA** (Acridotheres grandis) – Five day records of what is usually called White-vented Myna, the most being 30 in the paddies en route to ATT.

COMMON MYNA (Acridotheres tristis) - Small numbers were widespread, we sure see far more in Queensland unfortunately!

VINOUS-BREASTED STARLING (Acridotheres burmannicus) – 30+ at Veal Krous Feb 17 and 8 there next day near the vulture's carcass.

**BLACK-COLLARED STARLING** (Gracupica nigricollis) – One at Phnom Kroam, 2 at Tmatboey and 2 at Veal Krous, always a very low density species.

WHITE-SHOULDERED STARLING (Sturnia sinensis) – 20+ at Phnom Kroam, it is an irruptive winter visitor here and this was a good year for them

CHESTNUT-TAILED STARLING (Sturnia malabarica) – One at ATT and a couple at Veal Krous.

Chloropseidae (Leafbirds)

GOLDEN-FRONTED LEAFBIRD (Chloropsis aurifrons) – Seen well at Tmatboey, with 4 at the feeders there on one day.

Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

SCARLET-BACKED FLOWERPECKER (Dicaeum cruentatum) – Heard at Tmatboey. [\*]

Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

RUBY-CHEEKED SUNBIRD (Chalcoparia singalensis) - Singles at Tmatboey and then Veal Krous.

PLAIN-THROATED SUNBIRD (Anthreptes malacensis) - A pair at the SVC centre in Siem Reap and another pair at ATT.

PURPLE SUNBIRD (Cinnyris asiaticus) - A male at ATT and 2 males and a female from Tmatboey

**OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD (OLIVE-BACKED)** (Cinnyris jugularis flammaxillaris) – One male from Tah Prom and another at the Steung Chuk River. This complex is long overdue for splitting as they sound nothing like the Australian birds.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

**EASTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (MANCHURIAN)** (Motacilla tschutschensis macronyx) – 10 at Phnom Kroam were all of this gray-headed macronyx type which lacks a supercilium, with singles of this taxon also later at Prolay and then the Mekong ferry. The taxonomy of the group still remains unsettled.

WHITE WAGTAIL (CHINESE) (Motacilla alba leucopsis) – One male at Phnom Kroam was a good find by Dennis of a species we don't usually see on the tour, and this was a fine white-faced male.

MEKONG WAGTAIL (Motacilla samveasnae) – Great looks at 3 on the bushy islands in the Mekong, the boatman know just where to go and we scored quickly this year! This species was described as recently as 2001, being previously overlooked, and commemorates Cambodian ornithologist Sam Veasna of SVC fame.

ORIENTAL PIPIT (Anthus rufulus) – 10 at Phnom Kroam, then good views at ATT and the grasslands. Paddyfield Pipit is a much more evocative name.

OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT (Anthus hodgsoni) – Heard at Veal Krous only this time. [\*]

RED-THROATED PIPIT (Anthus cervinus) - One en route to ATT, then 2 at Kompong Thom and one at Kratie.

FOREST WAGTAIL (Dendronanthus indicus) – Two at Angkor Wat, skulking in the forest interior and a very striking species that seems to be regular

here now.

### Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING (Emberiza aureola) – Seen very well at Kompong Thom, with 40 on one afternoon including several males in pretty good plumage. A declining migrant.

### Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (Passer domesticus) – 30 at Kompong Thom grasslands were a surprise, this recent colonist seems to be expanding fast

**PLAIN-BACKED SPARROW** (Passer flaveolus) – One male and 20 females at Phnom Kroam, then 4 near ATT, quite a scarce species and I wonder how it gets along with House Sparrows?

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (Passer montanus) - Widespread in the suburban areas.

### Ploceidae (Weavers and Allies)

STREAKED WEAVER (Ploceus manyar) - Just two at Kratie paddies, this is quite elusive these days.

BAYA WEAVER (Ploceus philippinus) – 4 at ATT, 4 at Kompong Thom then 20+ near Kratie.

**ASIAN GOLDEN WEAVER** (Ploceus hypoxanthus) – Another rare bird that is a victim of trapping, but luckily this site near Kratie with 5 nests was found just a couple of days ago, and we had brilliant looks at both sexes.

#### Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

**RED AVADAVAT** (Amandava amandava) – A fine red male at Prolay grasslands and a flock of 6 females types flying by later, a scarce species also in sharp decline due to trapping.

WHITE-RUMPED MUNIA (Lonchura striata) – A small flock by the Steung Chuk River, and a couple at Kratie.

SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA (Lonchura punctulata) – 20 at Phnom Kroam, and 6 at Kratie.

#### MAMMALS

LYLE'S FLYING FOX (Pteropus lylei) - The camp in the centre of Siem Reap is always worth a look, we saw about 80 of them here.

LARGE FLYING FOX (Pteropus vampyrus) – The camp of flying foxes in the bamboo clumps at ATT is this larger species, we saw maybe 100+ animals.

CRAB-EATING MACAQUE (Macaca fascigularis) - Long-tailed Macaques were common at Bayon, the only place we saw them this time.

**FINLAYSON'S SQUIRREL** (Callosciurus finlaysoni) – This is the handsome reddish chestnut beast with the white ring around the base of the tail that we saw at Angkor and at the river at Tmatboey.

INDOCHINESE GROUND SQUIRREL (Menetes berdmorei) – Seen running over a track at Tmatboey by a few folks.

**IRRAWADDY DOLPHIN** (Orcaella brevirostris) – Some good sightings of this rare species from the Mekong at Kratie, they surfaced with a loud sighing blow near the boat several times and we saw maybe 6 or 7 animals. It is a major local industry here but the population is now very small and endangered.

**COMMON JACKAL** (Canis aureus) – Great looks at one tearing at the cow carcass at Veal Krous, driving away the vultures for some 15 minutes or so. It had a huge bulging full belly at the end. Two others then came in shortly after, with different back markings, and also fed for a while. Usually called Golden Jackal, a much nicer name.

SMALL ASIAN MONGOOSE (Herpestes javanicus) - One at Tmatboey, then one at Veal Krous.

MUNTJAC (BARKING DEER) (Muntiacus muntjak) – Heard giving a coughing bark at Veal Krous late in the afternoon, it went on for some minutes [\*]

ELD'S DEER (Rucervus eldii) - Six at ATT included two fine brow-antlered stags, a very rare species too.

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

# **HERPS**

- --Tokay Geckoes were heard at many sites, especially at Tmatboey camp where they have a loud oddly human sounding "Gek-ko" call.
- -- Eastern Butterfly Lizard (Leiopsis reevesii) seen at Tmatboey.

### OTHER CREATURES

Dennis seemed to have an affinity with rodents, and his visitor at Tmatboey was, I suspect, Cambodian Rice Rat (Rattus argentiventer), which is apparently good to eat and the subject of considerable trade between Cambodia and Vietnam!

Totals for the tour: 253 bird taxa and 10 mammal taxa