

Field Guides Tour Report

CAMBODIA: ANGKOR TEMPLES & VANISHING BIRDS 2017

Feb 4, 2017 to Feb 18, 2017 Phil Gregory & Doug Gochfeld

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Here at Tmatboey, the group birds the unique dry dipterocarp forest habitat that we get to spend several days exploring for its unique mix of avifauna. Photo by guide Doug Gochfeld.

This was the eighth Field Guides tour to this fascinating country. It was earlier in the dry season again, with cooler weather, in what was a wetter year than the last. The pace was quite relaxed, and staying for some days at Siem Reap was really nice. The Angkor 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 great thing about the tour is that much of the money we pay goes directly back into grassroots level conservation, where a relatively small amount of money seems to achieve a lot, and valuable employment is provided for many excellent guides, drivers, boatmen, and other support staff throughout the country.

The major waterbird rarity targets were cooperative at a new site where we went to see Milky Stork at nest and got looks at a pair of exceptionally cooperative Greater Adjutants as well. In the Ang Trapeang Thmor (ATT) area, Sarus Crane showed and called very nicely, but sadly there were no Eld's Deer evident, which is a bit of a worry for this Critically Endangered species. Greater Painted-Snipe was a useful pick-up here and we were seemingly swimming in Pin-tailed Snipe, with an exceptional number of repeated flight views and listens. We had seven species of owl this time -- Spotted Wood-Owl and Spotted Owlet at ATT, Brown Wood-Owl, Brown Fish-Owl, and Brown Boobook seen, and Oriental Scops-Owl heard, at Tmatboey, as well as Asian Barred Owlet in multiple locations. Cambodia is the very last remaining stronghold for both Giant and White-shouldered Ibis, and we got nice views of the latter on the first afternoon at Tmatboey as well as on a nest later. Giant Ibis proved very hard this time around. We were warned that they had recently been difficult to pin down and so it proved, with some 5 attempts at dawn and dusk to locate it, with everyone hearing their resonant bugling calls, but only some eventually getting views. We had been spoiled in previous years where we had not had these travails.

Woodpeckers also eventually featured nicely, with Lesser Yellownape and Black-headed, Great Slaty (the largest extant woodpecker in the world), White-bellied, Gray-capped, Freckle-breasted, Laced, and Rufous-bellied woodpeckers all seen well. An obliging Indian Nightjar was on its nest at Tmatboey, and we saw Large-tailed very well at the vulture restaurant as well as briefly at Tmatboey. Baeng Toal vulture restaurant got off to a flying start, with a great show of gluttony by the regular trio of Critically Endangered (CR) vulture species (White-rumped, Slender-billed, and Red-headed). All were excellent and gave wonderful views, with the new, much closer, well-camouflaged blind enabling crippling views as the birds fed on the nearby carcass. The entire experience of the Baeng Toal Vulture Restaurant was a favorite of the trip for several people, with Claire and Carol noting it on their lists of best "birds" of the trip.

Views of Bengal Florican at Prolay grasslands were very good, with a male and 4 females, plus we had a Pied Harrier, and we again managed to identify Manchurian Reed-Warbler. Asian Golden Weaver was hard at Kratie but Mekong Wagtail was easy, as was the bizarre and now extremely rare Irrawaddy Dolphin, and there was a huge bonus in a Great Thick-knee on a sand bar, a lifer for Srun and now a very rare bird in Cambodia, this being the first reported for almost a year.

Seima was included in the trip this year after a successful foray there in 2015, and it added a good haul of species, with standouts being Rufous-bellied Eagle, a great range of bulbuls including Ashy, Ochraceous, Gray-eyed, Puff-throated, Red-whiskered, and Himalayan Black of both black and white-headed races, and Germain's Peacock-Pheasant (!!) for most of us, as it tumbled across the track in front of us at spitting distance. Pin-tailed and Ashy-headed Pigeons were seen very well, as was Mountain Imperial-Pigeon, and the Crimson and Black-throated sunbirds (the very local johnsi subspecies) were gorgeous, with both Little and Streaked Spiderhunter as well. One terrific sighting was a magnificent Great Hornbill that flew directly in front of us as we sat at Jahoo Gibbon Camp, and another lucky sight was the curious looking Hog-badger that rumbled across the track in front of us on our last full day. Nice views of the very rare Black-shanked Douc Langur were also had, in what is now the best area in the world to see these beasts. Folks enjoyed this part of the trip to the cooler higher tropical forest area on the Vietnam border and we will include it again in 2018.

The return to Phnom Penh this year got us good looks at the recently described Cambodian Tailorbird, before a dash to the airport for some, all in all a neat finale to the tour.

Our thanks to Srun for his very cheerful and entertaining company, plus his excellent organizational and birding skills, and the bottomless reservoir of Cambodian cultural information and folklore, which he shared generously! Thanks to the staff at Sam Veasna Center for their usual very fine job, and to the assorted drivers, boatmen 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 my co-leader Doug on just his second Asian tour, who benefited us all with his bird-finding skills and phenomenal memory for calls, plus photographic documenting and eBird delving. It was a memorable trip once again and we both look forward to traveling with you on future adventures near or far.

--Phil in Phnom Penh and Brisbane & Doug in New York

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) – A bunch around ATT, and then a small flock flying around the Manchurian Reed-Warbler spot at the Prolay Grasslands.

COMB DUCK (OLD WORLD) (Sarkidiornis melanotos melanotos) – We had a few of these moving around over the lotus beds out on the lake at ATT, giving prolonged flight views.

COTTON PYGMY-GOOSE (Nettapus coromandelianus) – We front-loaded this species on the trip, seeing it on 3 of the first 4 days, at Phnom Krom, the boat ride to the Prek Toal colony, and at ATT.

INDIAN SPOT-BILLED DUCK (Anas poecilorhyncha haringtoni) – Small numbers seen on five days.

GARGANEY (Anas querquedula) – A very large flock, numbering around 200 birds, flying around the stork colony at Prek Toal, and present at ATT as well. [b]

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

SCALY-BREASTED PARTRIDGE (Arborophila chloropus) – Heard only east of Mondulkiri. [*]

GREEN PEAFOWL (Pavo muticus) – Played hard to get at Seima. We heard one calling loudly and proudly, but it remained hidden in the forest, and never popped up into a tree for us to see. [*]

GERMAIN'S PEACOCK-PHEASANT (Polyplectron germaini) – This secretive and regionally restricted forest-dwelling game bird is very difficult to lay eyes on. We heard two east of Mondulkiri, and even this was considered some sort of victory, as you can often come away without detecting the species at all. However, we had an extremely fortuitous encounter on the last evening of the tour, around the logging track at Seima. As we gathered together to tighten up the group to walk the forest trail, Srun heard some rustling in the nearby understory and motioned for us all to stop. After a few seconds of the rustling coming closer, a Germain's Peacock-Pheasant tumbled out of the forest, and onto the trail right in front of us at point-blank range. It seemed surprised by our presence, and it was across the trail and back into the forest on the other side in less than a second, leaving us wondering if we had just hallucinated the whole event! This was, tellingly, a lifer visual encounter for Phil.

CHINESE FRANCOLIN (Francolinus pintadeanus) – A shocking view of one perched high in a tree on our first evening at Tmatboey. It stayed long enough for everyone to get a scope-filling view of this oft-heard, but rarely seen bird. It's conspicuous calling was a constant background noise every morning and evening that we were in dry dipterocarp forest habitat.

RED JUNGLEFOWL (Gallus gallus) – A few of these in more out-of-the-way habitats at Tmatboey, Baeng Toal, and Jahoo Gibbon Camp were wild birds, though the ones walking around the forest at Angkor were feral. [*]

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LITTLE GREBE (LITTLE) (Tachybaptus ruficollis poggei) – Phnom Krom, Lake Tonlé Sap, Prek Toal, and ATT. In addition to being seen well on the water, the ones on our Prek Toal boat trip even got up high and showed atypically extended views of its awkward and ungainly flight style.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

ASIAN OPENBILL (Anastomus oscitans) – Many seen well at Phnom Krom on day 1, and then a pile of them throughout the boat trip to Prek Toal, with perhaps up to 1,000 seen that day, including one stream of ~600 individuals flying over us as we were eating lunch at the stork colony.

WOOLLY-NECKED STORK (ASIAN) (Ciconia episcopus episcopus) – We had encounters with this species on two different days in Tmatboey, once with 6 birds perched in a tree in the dry dipterocarp, and then 4 birds circling far off in the distance from the overlook at the river.

LESSER ADJUTANT (Leptoptilos javanicus) – We encountered roughly a dozen on the boat ride at Prek Toal, and then had a brief bird flying over the forest at Tmatboey, and a very surprising young bird on the sandy shore of the Mekong River across from our hotel in Kratie. Like many waterbirds in the region, it is threatened by habitat loss, and the species is currently listed as Vulnerable.

GREATER ADJUTANT (Leptoptilos dubius) – We were very fortunate with Greater Adjutant this year. It can be a tricky species to nail down, but our very first adjutants of the boat trip to Prek Toal were two of these Endangered behemoths standing in a tree, and they allowed close approach and excellent views as our vessels slogged through the mats of invasive but very interesting water hyacinth that have overtaken the Tonlé Sap area.

MILKY STORK (Mycteria cinerea) – One boat had one of these circling very high with a flock of Painted Storks on the way into the colony, and then we were all treated to from-the-boat scope views of a couple of these very rare waterbirds. The Cambodian population, on the outer rim of the species' range, probably numbers around only 20 pairs, and the species is listed as Vulnerable by the IUCN. [N]

PAINTED STORK (Mycteria leucocephala) – We had over 300 of these well-named storks on our boat trip to Prek Toal, and also had a few at Phnom Krom, ATT, and the Prolay Grasslands. [N]

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

LITTLE CORMORANT (Microcarbo niger) – A few at Phnom Krom, scattered throughout the boat ride to Prek Toal, and then a few dozen around Kratie, with the highest density being on the Mekong River.

GREAT CORMORANT (EURASIAN) (Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis) – We had good views of this species, including in direct comparison with its smaller cousins, at Tonlé Sap.

INDIAN CORMORANT (Phalacrocorax fuscicollis) – The most numerous cormorant of the tour, we had nearly 1,000 around Lake Tonlé Sap and Prek Toal.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ORIENTAL DARTER (Anhinga melanogaster) – Relatively huge numbers of this Near Threatened species in the Prek Toal area, with well over 600 seen throughout the day. We also had 50 or so on the Mekong.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

SPOT-BILLED PELICAN (Pelecanus philippensis) – Nearly 100 of these seen on our Prek Toal boat ride, and a handful were seen on the drive to ATT. Prek Toal is the last place where appreciable numbers of this species breed in southeast Asia. They are so impressive that David H. selected these behemoths as one of his birds of the tour.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

- YELLOW BITTERN (Ixobrychus sinensis) Various individuals seen by several on the boat ride through Prek Toal.
- CINNAMON BITTERN (Ixobrychus cinnamomeus) Seen by several on the boat ride through Prek Toal, and then seen well by all in the rice paddy adjacent to the visitor's center at ATT.
- **BLACK BITTERN** (Ixobrychus flavicollis) This bird was encountered by a couple of people during the Prek Toal boat ride, and then there was one perched up on a bare bush when we got out to the ranger station at the stork colony.
- **GRAY HERON** (Ardea cinerea) Seen on four of the first five days, and then again by some on the Mekong. Not a very numerous species along our route.
- **PURPLE HERON** (Ardea purpurea) Reasonable views at Phnom Krom, and then excellent views during the boat trip through Prek Toal, where we had at least 8.
- GREAT EGRET (EURASIAN) (Ardea alba alba) Scattered wherever we were near large bodies of water, with ~30 on our ATT day.
- INTERMEDIATE EGRET (INTERMEDIATE) (Mesophoyx intermedia intermedia) This species was seen in several birding locations, as well as frequently while driving. There was a truly impressive feeding frenzy of ~200 them along the shore of Lake Tonlé Sap just before we went into Prek Toal
- LITTLE EGRET (WESTERN) (Egretta garzetta garzetta) Largest numbers were on the river on the way to Tonlé Sap, near the floating village.
- CATTLE EGRET (EASTERN) (Bubulcus ibis coromandus) Largest numbers were around the Baeng Toal Vulture Restaurant.
- CHINESE POND-HERON (Ardeola bacchus) Pond-Herons were seen on almost every day of the trip, and most or all of these are presumed to be the common Chinese Pond-Heron, though they are often indistinguishable from Javan Pond-Heron at this time of year.
- STRIATED HERON (Butorides striata) Briefly seen on both boat trips, in Prek Toal and along the Mekong River (the latter coming at the Thick-Knee spot).
- **BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (EURASIAN)** (Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax) Big numbers at Prek Toal, with single flocks of over 100 birds at a time flying around the marsh. We estimated a minimum of 400 seen from the boat.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

- GLOSSY IBIS (Plegadis falcinellus) Despite being a write-in species for the tour, we had ~100 at Prek Toal, and then David B. picked out a few at ATT the next day.
- **BLACK-HEADED IBIS** (Threskiornis melanocephalus) Prek Toal only, but great views out by the stork colony, and a few others seen in flight elsewhere during that day. The great views of this Near Threatened ibis made this species one of Jan's birds of the trip.
- WHITE-SHOULDERED IBIS (Pseudibis davisoni) We were welcomed to Tmatboey with a fantastically close flyby of this Critically Endangered species on our very first afternoon walk there. It then perched out in the open and vocalized several times, giving good views to all. A couple of days later we saw another adult sitting in an active nest. There are estimated to be ~1,000 of these left in the world, with an estimated 87%-95% of them in northern Cambodia. [N]
- GIANT IBIS (Pseudibis gigantea) They were tricky for everyone who attempted to see them this season, and this was the only of the endangered target birds that we had trouble with this tour. We made five dawn or dusk treks to try and find these around expected roost sites, and we heard their loud bugling chorus on three of these occasions, but only laid eyes on the species once. Worldwide population estimates for the (Critically Endangered, of course) species currently hover around the 300 mark.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (Pandion haliaetus) – One bird foraging over the lake at the Kratie rice fields and marshes.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

- **BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE** (Elanus caeruleus) Seen on a couple of occasions, including very early on the first day hovering over the fields at Phnom Krom. Our best views were at the Prolay Grasslands, where several perched up quite nicely for us.
- **ORIENTAL HONEY-BUZZARD** (Pernis ptilorhynchus) Seen on at least four different days, all during the second half of the tour. This included one very memorable all dark adult male at the river near Tmatboey.
- **BLACK BAZA** (Aviceda leuphotes) A couple of these had us running back and forth through the forest near the east entrance to Angkor Wat in search of clear views of them in the canopy, and then we had a couple of other flybys, including one at Koh-Ker that may have been up in the ozone layer by the time we stopped following it.
- **RED-HEADED VULTURE** (Sarcogyps calvus) Five of these hulking beasts on the first afternoon at the Vulture Restaurant, and then five or six in the area the next morning. We had a good mix of males and females, which can be distinguished by eye color. The population of this species, as with just about all asian vultures, has plummeted over the past 20 years, and it is now listed as Critically Endangered.
- WHITE-RUMPED VULTURE (Gyps bengalensis) Formerly considered one of the most abundant large birds of prey in the world, with a population numbering several million, this species is now Critically Endangered, like most of the other vulture species in Asia, due in large part to the use of diclofenac on cattle, in conjunction with the collapse of wild large ungulate populations in many parts of the region. We had a nice count of 28 individuals at once during our evening at Baeng Toal, and then 26 the next morning.
- **SLENDER-BILLED VULTURE** (Gyps tenuirostris) At least 3 during both of our sessions in the blind, and possibly up to 5 the first evening. There are only a couple of thousand of these slim-necked beasts left in the world, but the small Cambodian population (less than 150 individuals) has been stable since 2004 or so. In the meantime, there has been a 97% drop in the population in India and Nepal over the past 20 years. The species is, of course, listed as Critically Endangered.

- **CRESTED SERPENT-EAGLE** (Spilornis cheela) Seen almost every day from our arrival at Tmatboey onwards, and its distinctive call was heard several times as well, including over the lodge at Tmatboey.
- **CHANGEABLE HAWK-EAGLE** (Nisaetus limnaeetus) A distant dark-morph bird circling to the west of the lodge at Tmatboey, this form is one of the only raptors in the region that is uniformly dark with essentially no pale markings.
- **RUFOUS-BELLIED EAGLE** (Lophotriorchis kienerii formosus) We had a crisply plumaged juvenile flying over the forest on our last evening of birding, along the logging track at Seima. David H. did well to spot this bird when it was still fairly low, because it then circled for a few minutes until it had ascended to the stratosphere and we lost sight of it!
- **BLACK EAGLE** (Ictinaetus malaiensis) Excellent views of a young bird coursing around low over the forest remnant east of Mondulkiri on the morning of our last full day of birding.
- GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE (Clanga clanga) A distant view of a Clanga eagle in the distance at ATT was all we got on this low density winter visitor to the region.
- **RUFOUS-WINGED BUZZARD** (Butastur liventer) Quite common in the dry forest from ATT onwards through the Baeng Toal. Repeated excellent views, including a bird circling overhead with a stick in its talons at ATT.
- EASTERN MARSH-HARRIER (Circus spilonotus) Seen reasonably well at ATT and Prolay Grasslands, including some striking males.
- PIED HARRIER (Circus melanoleucos) We got on a young male near the village of Mechrey, seen from the bus, and then had a few at distance at ATT and Prolay.
- CRESTED GOSHAWK (Accipiter trivirgatus) A brief view of an adult terrorizing a stretch of bamboo at the Oromis Guest House.
- SHIKRA (Accipiter badius) The most widespread accipiter on the tour, we got some nice perched views at multiple locations, starting at Angkor Wat.
- **BLACK KITE** (Milvus migrans) A handful of these flying around the grasslands at ATT, including circling in a mixed flock with Eastern Marsh Harriers.
- **GRAY-HEADED FISH-EAGLE** (Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus) One bird seen from the boats in Prek Toal, perched in the top of a tree near a non-active nest.

Otididae (Bustards)

BENGAL FLORICAN (Houbaropsis bengalensis) – Excellent views this year, as a male flew by at point blank range, and we had scope views of multiple females in the grasslands themselves. The majority of the population of this Critically Endangered bustard is found in Cambodia, where the population estimates have dropped from ~3,000 to ~600 in the past twenty years, though luckily their current core habitats are now being protected.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

WHITE-BROWED CRAKE (Amaurornis cinerea) – Heard frequently at Prek Toal, and then one calling at the Kratie marshes, but we never had one in view. [*]

RUDDY-BREASTED CRAKE (Zapornia fusca) – Heard calling at the Kratie marshes. [*]

WATERCOCK (Gallicrex cinerea) – We had a look at one in flight twice at Phnom Krom, as it flew between dense rice paddies and lotus beds.

BLACK-BACKED SWAMPHEN (Porphyrio indicus indicus) – A gathering of over 100 individuals together at Phnom Krom on our first afternoon was the most memorable experience. The species was also seen at Prek Toal, ATT, and a single bird in a bush at the Kratie fields and marshes.

Gruidae (Cranes)

SARUS CRANE (Antigone antigone sharpii) – We had a particularly excellent Sarus Crane experience at the grasslands near ATT this year, with over 50 individuals seen, and some really great vocalizing heard. We also ran into a small group flying by out at the Prolay Grasslands.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

GREAT THICK-KNEE (Esacus recurvirostris) – A big surprise bonus bird on our Mekong River boat trip, this was the first report of the species in Cambodia in almost a year. This species has declined in Southeast Asia over the past couple of decades, and is now a very infrequently encountered rarity. This unexpected encounter provided one of Doug's birds of the tour.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-WINGED STILT (Himantopus himantopus) – Good flocks near Phnom Krom, at Prek Toal, and a particularly large gathering of over 200 at ATT.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER (Pluvialis fulva) – A big flock of 110 of these was a nice surprise at ATT. [b]

RED-WATTLED LAPWING (Vanellus indicus atronuchalis) - Seen well at ATT, and heard pre-dawn at Baeng Toal.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (DUBIUS/JERDONI) (Charadrius dubius jerdoni) – A handful of these in a couple of spots along the Mekong River during our boat trip out of Kratie.

Rostratulidae (Painted-Snipes)

GREATER PAINTED-SNIPE (Rostratula benghalensis) – We finally got a look at one of these in the ATT rice fields, after having sifted through over 20 snipe of other species first!

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

PHEASANT-TAILED JACANA (Hydrophasianus chirurgus) - Good views at Phnom Krom on morning #1, and then a handful at ATT.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

- **BLACK-TAILED GODWIT** (Limosa limosa) A low-density winterer in most of Cambodia, we got one of these in a flock of Black-winged Stilts on the way out of Phnom Krom on day 1, and then a few caught up with the distant group of 6 that flew by while we were on the boat on Tonlé Sap. [b]
- **LONG-TOED STINT** (Calidris subminuta) A group of three of these flew by calling quite close as we wrapped up our first morning's birding at Phnom Krom. [b]
- COMMON SNIPE (Gallinago gallinago) Outnumbered quite handily by the following species, we only had one bird ATT that we identified definitively as a Common Snipe. [b]
- **PIN-TAILED SNIPE** (Gallinago stenura) We had a couple along the roadside at Phnom Krom on our first morning, and then an astounding minimum of 22 at the rice fields at ATT, with many calling and giving good flight views, and a couple seen reasonably well on the ground. [b]

- **COMMON SANDPIPER** (Actitis hypoleucos) One of these on a rock in the Mekong River on our Mekong boat ride. [b]
- SPOTTED REDSHANK (Tringa erythropus) Phil spotted one of these in the muddy pools in the the roadside ditch as we drove into the Sarus Crane fields near ATT, and it turned out to be our only one of the tour. [b]
- COMMON GREENSHANK (Tringa nebularia) Small numbers at Phnom Krom, Prek Toal, ATT, and one at the Prolay Grasslands. [b]
- MARSH SANDPIPER (Tringa stagnatilis) At least two in flight around Phnom Krom, and then a group of three silently flying over the Sarus Crane location near ATT. [b]
- WOOD SANDPIPER (Tringa glareola) A handful each at Phnom Krom, Prek Toal, and ATT, and one last individual in the small pond at the Prolay Grasslands near the Manchurian Reed-Warbler spot. [b]

Turnicidae (Buttonguail)

SMALL BUTTONQUAIL (Turnix sylvaticus) – We flushed a few walking through some grass at the Prolay Grasslands, and most good reasonable inflight views of what was the sole representative of the family Turnicidae on our trip list.

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

- **ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE** (Glareola maldivarum) Seen mostly in flight, but quite frequently, well, and close at Phnom Krom, Prek Toal, ATT, and Prolay. We also had a couple of high flying birds just before we left the Cambodian Tailorbird spot near Phnom Penh on the final afternoon.
- **SMALL PRATINCOLE** (Glareola lactea) A few of us got good looks at the very striking wing pattern of this diminutive pratincole as two flew by us as we approached our first Mekong Wagtail during our boat trip on the Mekong River.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

- **BROWN-HEADED GULL** (Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus) We ran into a loose group of a dozen of these on Tonlé Sap as we returned from Prek Toal. This is fairly low density and local in the region, so it's always nice to catch up with this gull (indeed it's nice to see ANY gull in inland Southeast Asia).
- **CASPIAN TERN** (Hydroprogne caspia) The final bird added to the trip list, we had one of these fly over our cars, in the company of some medium-sized terns which it dwarfed, as we crossed the Mekong River into Phnom Penh.
- WHISKERED TERN (Chlidonias hybrida) A truly impressive showing of these along the marshy western shore of Tonlé Sap, with at least 2,000 individuals spread out over a mile or so.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

- **ROCK PIGEON** (Columba livia) Feral Pigeons in small numbers in settled areas. They especially like the roofs of large temples, even the ones at Angkor, creating an incongruous sight of the species flying over dense forest with no cliffs or cities in sight. [I]
- **RED COLLARED-DOVE** (Streptopelia tranquebarica) Scattered throughout, the largest concentrations were at Tmatboey and the Kratie rice fields. **SPOTTED DOVE** (Streptopelia chinensis) Widespread through the entire tour route. Common but not in extremely high densities.
- ASIAN EMERALD DOVE (Chalcophaps indica) After a couple of brief flybys, we had unusually excellent views of a few of these perched and feeding just above eye level around the logging track at Seima Forest. A real show-stopper of a dove when you get a good look at it.
- **ZEBRA DOVE** (Geopelia striata) Have expanded rapidly through the country, after the first records only a couple of decades ago. Now present throughout. Our largest number was at the Phnom Krom rice fields (~50).
- **PINK-NECKED PIGEON** (Treron vernans) We had one of these stunning males sitting up in a tree in the early morning sunlight at Tmatboey, and then we had an encore presentation of a pair perched atop a much shorter tree right next to our rest stop on the way back to Phnom Penh on the final day.
- **ASHY-HEADED GREEN-PIGEON** (Treron phayrei) A female perched up for ages at the Jahoo Gibbon Camp was a nice addition to the trip, and an unexpected lifer for Phil!
- **THICK-BILLED PIGEON** (Treron curvirostra) Really good and prolonged views of a few birds feeding in a fruiting tree at Ta Prohm, and then another few encounters at various places around Seima, including perched in direct comparison to the next species east of Mondulkiri.
- **PIN-TAILED PIGEON** (Treron apicauda) The most common Treron (Green-Pigeon) that we encountered around Seima. Not as widespread as Thick-billed, but we had 15 near the Oromis dam, and another 20 or so east of Mondulkiri. A very distinctive green-pigeon, with its long central tail feathers making it easy to identify in flight, a rare trait for this genus.
- GREEN IMPERIAL-PIGEON (Ducula aenea) Singles around Tmatboey, including at the river. One was briefly perched up in view at the Brown Boobook spot.
- MOUNTAIN IMPERIAL-PIGEON (Ducula badia) Encountered in the Seima area, and seen well around Oromis as well as east of Mondulkiri.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

- GREATER COUCAL (Centropus sinensis) In addition to the frequent din of their call in the background of our activities throughout the country, we had an unusually close encounter with one of these on the Mekong River. While approaching the area where our Irrawaddy Dolphins awaited, we noticed something floating down the river a couple of hundred yards away, and we couldn't tell if it was detritus or some marine animal. After some distant photos and seeing an orange bit pop out of the water, we realized it was not a marine animal at all, but actually a Coucal with nothing but its head above water! After sending what must have sounded like quite an odd radio transmission to the other boat ("There's a Coucal in the white water."), we diverted our boat in its direction, and after a couple of passes were able to rescue a sopping wet Greater Coucal from the clutches of the Mekong River. Coucal safely on board, we took a look at the dolphins while we let our new on-board visitor dry out in the sun and wind, and by the time we brought it back to shore it was mostly dry, and we were able to release it in appropriate habitat. It ended up as a win for all involved, but it will forever remain a mystery as to why it was in the river in the first place!
- LESSER COUCAL (Centropus bengalensis) Heard around Phnom Krom the first day. [*]
- **GREEN-BILLED MALKOHA** (Phaenicophaeus tristis) A really great trip for views of this normally secretive and wary species. Seen well along the road leaving the Prek Toal boat, then very well at Mechrey, and then several excellent views of the species at Seima for good measure.
- ASIAN KOEL (Eudynamys scolopaceus) Heard throughout, almost every day, and we had one fly over at Baeng Toal.
- **ASIAN EMERALD CUCKOO** (Chrysococcyx maculatus) A flyby of an adult male glowing in the morning sunlight during our second visit to the Stoeng Chhuk River near Tmatboey.
- VIOLET CUCKOO (Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus) Heard during our morning at the Stoeng Chhuk near Tmatboey. [*]
- **BANDED BAY CUCKOO** (Cacomantis sonneratii) After not hearing this in any of our time in the dry dipterocarp, we ran into a very vocal and then extremely cooperative bird on our first afternoon at Seima, posing in the scope until we had to tear ourselves away to look at Hanging-Parrots.

- PLAINTIVE CUCKOO (Cacomantis merulinus) Lots of calling and some reasonable views at Phnom Krom and ATT.
- **FORK-TAILED DRONGO-CUCKOO** (Surniculus dicruroides dicruroides) We had good views and good listens to a Drongo-Cuckoo east of Mondulkiri. We even got to watch this Drongo lookalike gulp down a caterpillar.
- LARGE HAWK-CUCKOO (Hierococcyx sparverioides) Great views of a bird hanging around the brush on the riverbank at the Stoeng Chhuk River

Strigidae (Owls)

- ORIENTAL SCOPS-OWL (Otus sunia) This species was heard quite well at both Tmatboey and Baeng Toal. [*]
- **BROWN FISH-OWL** (Ketupa zeylonensis) We had one of these looking straight at us from within the shadows of its nest cavity on the way to the river near Tmatboey. [N]
- ASIAN BARRED OWLET (Glaucidium cuculoides) Got good views twice during our trip to Angkor, the first one found by Srun in the canopy of a large tree at Angkor Wat just after breakfast, and then another one closer and out in the open as we were leaving Ta Prohm. It was also commonly heard throughout, though after these great views early on we didn't endeavor to lay eyes on any others.
- **SPOTTED OWLET** (Athene brama) Good views at ATT, and then a bonus bird at the Cambodian Tailorbird spot at the very end of the trip.
- **SPOTTED WOOD-OWL** (Strix seloputo) A really beautiful owl with its buffy facial disc and dark eyes, the local guides at ATT had one staked out on a day roost, much to all of our delights.
- **BROWN WOOD-OWL** (Strix leptogrammica) After a bit of a hike we got a view of one of these on a day roost that the local guides were tracking through the forest at Tmatboey.
- **BROWN BOOBOOK** (Ninox scutulata burmanica) A couple of very vocal birds pre-dawn on one of our early morning Ibis hikes, and on our way out we went back to the spot and located them in the daylight.

Caprimulgidae (Nightiars and Allies)

- **GREAT EARED-NIGHTJAR** (Lyncornis macrotis) One of these massive nightjars flew by us at dusk at the road camp on our first evening at Seima.
- **LARGE-TAILED NIGHTJAR** (Caprimulgus macrurus bimaculatus) Heard well frequently pre-dawn and post-dusk at both Tmatboey and Baeng Toal, and flushed and seen flying around by most in the daytime at Tmatboey as we left the Brown Wood-Owl site. Then a spectacular view for those few who stayed out late with the night birding excursion at the Vulture Restaurant camp.
- INDIAN NIGHTJAR (Caprimulgus asiaticus asiaticus) A great view of one of these on a nest at Tmatboey. [N]
- SAVANNA NIGHTJAR (Caprimulgus affinis monticolus) Heard well at Tmatboey, we flirted with one of these birds which stayed just out of reach during our night walk. [*]

Apodidae (Swifts)

- **BROWN-BACKED NEEDLETAIL** (Hirundapus giganteus) Good views of this during our morning walk at Baeng Toal. There were some other Needletails on our first evening at Seima, but the views weren't long enough or good enough to determine which species or Hirundapus they were.
- GERMAIN'S SWIFTLET (Aerodramus germani) Aerodramus Swiftlets are a very cryptic complex, and are not well understood. We were calling birds with obvious pale off-white rumps and contrast between the underparts and the upperparts/throat Germain's, and we're not 100% sure if we saw any other taxa in addition to this. Much more research on these birds is certainly warranted to lock down variation within the various species, as well as seasonal movements.
- HOUSE SWIFT (Apus nipalensis) A bit of a surprise, we had a few of these circling over broadleaf evergreen forest on our last evening birding Seima
- ASIAN PALM-SWIFT (Cypsiurus balasiensis) Abundant throughout the trip until we got to Seima, where they were present but not ubiquitous.

Hemiprocnidae (Treeswifts)

CRESTED TREESWIFT (Hemiprocne coronata) – This handsome and graceful Treeswift was a welcome addition to the tour once we got to the dry dipterocarp forests, and was seen daily thereafter.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

ORANGE-BREASTED TROGON (Harpactes oreskios) - Heard only on the trails below the Jahoo Gibbon Camp.

<u>Upupidae (Hoopoes)</u>

EURASIAN HOOPOE (Upupa epops) - Seen and heard several times, with views of perched birds at ATT and Baeng Toal.

Bucerotidae (Hornbills)

- GREAT HORNBILL (Buceros bicornis) This provided one of the great experiences of the trip. After our morning walk at the Jahoo Gibbon Camp we retired to the porch overlooking the nearby meadow for a brief rest and vigil of the open area. Only a minute or two after we arrived there, a Great Hornbill exploded out of the forest and flew very slowly over the clearing in front of us at treetop height. It even paused in some nearby trees to allow those who hadn't been up there for the initial sighting to get a second chance at it. Both Doug and Phil voted this as one of their birds of the trip.
- ORIENTAL PIED-HORNBILL (Anthracoceros albirostris) Encountered at Ta Prohm, Tmatboey, Baeng Toal, Seima (Jahoo Gibbon Camp), and then a big haul of nearly 20 individuals east of Mondulkiri on our last full day of birding.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

- **COMMON KINGFISHER (COMMON)** (Alcedo atthis taprobana) Phnom Krom, Prek Toal, ATT, and then Srun magicked up a well-camouflaged one at Oromis dam.
- **BANDED KINGFISHER** (Lacedo pulchella) We heard two of these secretive forest kingfishers below the Jahoo Gibbon Camp, but they stayed shrouded by the jungle and out of sight. [*]
- STORK-BILLED KINGFISHER (Pelargopsis capensis) Great views of a great bird! We encountered one of these appropriately-named kingfishers on the Stoeng Chhuk River near Tmatboey during our productive morning visit to the site.
- WHITE-THROATED KINGFISHER (Halcyon smyrnensis perpulchra) Ran into a few of these here and there, with the best views coming along the road on the way to ATT and at the Kratie marshes.

- **BLACK-CAPPED KINGFISHER** (Halcyon pileata) Good perched views of a distant bird on the first morning at Phnom Krom, and then at least three encountered during the Prek Toal boat trip.
- PIED KINGFISHER (Ceryle rudis leucomelanurus) This striking Kingfisher was seen on four days, including at Phnom Krom, and ATT, and showed well on the Mekong as well.

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

- **BLUE-BEARDED BEE-EATER** (Nyctyornis athertoni athertoni) A couple of squirrely individuals at the river near Tmatboey that gave scope views for some, though all saw them in flight.
- **GREEN BEE-EATER (RUSSET-CROWNED)** (Merops orientalis ferrugeiceps) This vibrantly colored bee-eater was seen in low densities but regularly once we got to open, dry habitats, and we ran into it for 6 days in a row in the middle of the tour. This a species ripe for splitting, so keep track of this one if you've seen a Green Bee-eater outside of SE Asia.
- **BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER** (Merops philippinus) Good numbers of this beautiful bee-eater at Phnom Krom and ATT, and scattered through much of the rest of our route, though it isn't common in the dry dipterocarp.
- CHESTNUT-HEADED BEE-EATER (Merops leschenaulti leschenaulti) A few at Tmatboey and some saw a few along the road in the Seima area.

Coraciidae (Rollers)

INDIAN ROLLER (BLACK-BILLED) (Coracias benghalensis affinis) – Seen in small numbers most days, with some great views atPhnom Krom, ATT, and Tmatboey. A real showstopper anytime you get a close one in good light.

Megalaimidae (Asian Barbets)

- **COPPERSMITH BARBET** (Psilopogon haemacephalus) This small but boldly marked barbet was seen in several places around Siem Reap, and then once more east of Mondulkiri.
- BLUE-EARED BARBET (Psilopogon duvaucelii) The common barbet species along the road through Seima, we also heard them around the Oromis area and at Jahoo Gibbon Camp. [N]
- RED-VENTED BARBET (Psilopogon lagrandieri) Heard calling loudly and repetitively east of Mondulkiri and eventually seen here as well.
- **GREEN-EARED BARBET** (Psilopogon faiostrictus) This big streaky barbet was seen teed up at the Seima road camp the first evening in that region, and then again the next day at Jahoo Gibbon Camp.
- LINEATED BARBET (Psilopogon lineatus) The default Barbet through most of the locations on the tour, with the exception of the Seima area. Their calls were an almost constant background noise at Tmatboey and Baeng Toal.
- **INDOCHINESE BARBET** (Psilopogon annamensis) Numerous in the Oromis area, and east of Mondulkiri. We saw this sharp-looking species well several times over the two days that we were in its habitat in Seima.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

GRAY-CAPPED WOODPECKER (Dendrocopos canicapillus) - Seen well repeatedly at Tmatboey, and then again near the Oromis dam.

FRECKLE-BREASTED WOODPECKER (Dendrocopos analis) - Seen well at ATT and Prolay.

- RUFOUS-BELLIED WOODPECKER (Dendrocopos hyperythrus) After whiffing on this gorgeous woodpecker at Tmatboey, we procured a ridiculously cooperative pair during our morning at Baeng Toal. This charismatic woodpecker was one of the birds of the trip for both Wim and David H.
- WHITE-BELLIED WOODPECKER (Dryocopus javensis) After a fleeting view of a vocal bird at Tmatboey, we tracked down a much more confiding individual at Baeng Toal that posed for everyone to study in the scopes at leisure.
- LESSER YELLOWNAPE (Picus chlorolophus) One bird heard well and then flying by very close at Tmatboey.
- **LACED WOODPECKER** (Picus vittatus) David B. found us one of these along the memorable logging track on our last evening of birding, and it ended up showing fairly well for the group.
- **BLACK-HEADED WOODPECKER** (Picus erythropygius) We got spoiled by repeated views of this gorgeous woodpecker at several spots, starting at ATT, but also including Tmatboey and Baeng Toal.
- **COMMON FLAMEBACK** (Dinopium javanense) The best views of this were at Tmatboey.
- GREATER FLAMEBACK (GREATER) (Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus guttacristatus) Seen a few times, at Baeng Toal and Seima, with our most cooperative individual being east of Mondulkiri.
- GREAT SLATY WOODPECKER (Mulleripicus pulverulentus) Now likely the largest (by length) extant woodpecker species. We had a phenomenal experience with a family of three giving us a great show with their raucous wing-flicking antics, and Wim and Sue both voted for this as one of their best birds of the tour.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

- WHITE-RUMPED FALCON (Polihierax insignis) A pair seen amazingly well at the pagoda near Koh-Ker, seen briefly copulating, and visiting a prospective nest hole in a dead tree. A very habitat-specific and sought-after species that we get regularly on this tour. Classified by the IUCN as Near Threatened, and another of Jan's birds of the tour. [N]
- **COLLARED FALCONET** (Microhierax caerulescens) Da, our lead driver, found and identified one quite close to the road while we were distracted looking for White-rumped Falcons, and we all enjoyed this remarkably accommodating individual, which ended up being one of Kristine's favorite birds of the tour.
- **EURASIAN KESTREL** (Falco tinnunculus) Not regularly seen on the tour, we had one right in Siem Reap, adjacent to the Flying-Fox colony at the Royal Gardens.
- PEREGRINE FALCON (Falco peregrinus) A nice fairly close flyby of an adult while we were on the boats on the Mekong River.

Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots)

- ALEXANDRINE PARAKEET (Psittacula eupatria) Excellent views of a couple of birds perched up for ages at Ta Prohm in the Angkor complex.
- **BLOSSOM-HEADED PARAKEET** (Psittacula roseata) Surprisingly common at ATT, as they are usually best at Tmatboey. Some really nice looks at this attractive parrot at both locations.
- **RED-BREASTED PARAKEET** (Psittacula alexandri) The most common Psittacid on the tour, these vocal and conspicuous birds were seen on most days, with single flocks numbering up to 50 individuals on multiple occasions.

VERNAL HANGING-PARROT (Loriculus vernalis) – This is typically a difficult species to get good looks at, and usually you are alerted to their presence when they call as they fly quickly overhead and disappear into the ether. This year, however, we had repeated phenomenal views of these adorable little parrots every day that we were at Seima Forest, after a couple of here-and-gone flybys at Tmatboey. In a couple of instances, we even got to see them hanging upside down as they fed.

Eurylaimidae (Asian and Grauer's Broadbills)

LONG-TAILED BROADBILL (Psarisomus dalhousiae) – We heard the distinctive and loud call of this bird a couple of times on the morning when we birded the road east of Mondulkiri. Alas, it decided to stay hidden in the inaccessible depths of the forest, and we never did get a visual. [*]

Vangidae (Vangas, Helmetshrikes, and Allies)

- **LARGE WOODSHRIKE** (Tephrodornis virgatus) Views of this species in the dry dipterocarp forest around Tmatboey, and some may have seen this on the walk out to the Vulture Restaurant on our first afternoon there.
- **COMMON WOODSHRIKE** (Tephrodornis pondicerianus) Repeated excellent views of this species. We found a male bringing food to young in a nest, and a female brooding that same nest at ATT. We then had some great below eye-level views of them in the forests around Tmatboey, where they were foraging close to the ground out in the open like Phoebes. [N]
- **BAR-WINGED FLYCATCHER-SHRIKE** (Hemipus picatus) Seen on multiple days, at Tmatboey, Baeng Toal, and Seima, with up to 3 together in one spot.

Artamidae (Woodswallows)

ASHY WOODSWALLOW (Artamus fuscus) – We saw a bunch of these soaring around high over the usual spot in Mechrey, and eventually had a couple come down and land for excellent scope views. Then, we had the species on multiple days at Seima, including an unexpected 8 flying high over the Oromis dam road.

Aegithinidae (Ioras)

- COMMON IORA (Aegithina tiphia) Repeated good views of this distinctive yellow-green species, one of very few on the tour that has the classic two white wing-bars. Srun also gave us a wonderful story about the origin of the native name for the species (roughly transliterated as "Shwa-taay chiau")
- **GREAT IORA** (Aegithina lafresnayei) The bigger billed wingbar-less cousin to the previous species, we ran into this species a couple of times in Seima- they seem to prefer big broadleaf evergreen forests, rather than the dry dipterocarp stuff that Common Iora is abundant in.

Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes)

- **SMALL MINIVET** (Pericrocotus cinnamomeus) Many good views of this handsome Minivet, including a bunch of slaty-gray, black, and red males. Tmatboey is the place for good views of this one.
- SCARLET MINIVET (Pericrocotus speciosus) After being seen briefly by a few folks around the lodge at Tmatboey, everyone caught up with this species at Baeng Toal and then at Seima.
- ASHY MINIVET (Pericrocotus divaricatus) Sporadically seen at almost every site, with good views around Angkor and at ATT.
- **BROWN-RUMPED MINIVET** (Pericrocotus cantonensis) We got lucky with extremely good views of a small flock of these as they foraged along the Stoeng Chhuk River near Tmatboey. Also seen at Seima, this species is often only seen in the treetops, so the below eye level views at Tmatboey of this local and sparsely distributed species were a real treat.
- LARGE CUCKOOSHRIKE (Coracina macei) Scattered throughout the dry dipterocarp forests at Tmatboey and Baeng Toal.
- **INDOCHINESE CUCKOOSHRIKE** (Lalage polioptera) We heard its distinctive song at Tmatboey, but most people didn't catch up visually with one until towards the end of our time at Seima, when we had scope views of a couple of cooperative individuals, including a very vocal bird east of Mondulkiri.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

- **BROWN SHRIKE** (Lanius cristatus) The common shrike throughout the tour route, this was seen on most days of the tour, often while driving, though we did get some excellent scope views early on. This species is oddly largely absent from the dipterocarp forests around Tmatboey and Baeng Toal.
- **BURMESE SHRIKE** (Lanius collurioides) We had a pair calling and displaying to each other, and almost caught them in the act, during our morning walk at Baeng Toal. We also had scope views at Seima, and a few had a couple perched along the road while driving towards the end of the tour.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

WHITE-BELLIED ERPORNIS (Erpornis zantholeuca) – This charismatic little Titmouse wannabe has a checkered taxonomic past, having been formerly known as "White-bellied Yuhina", and now being placed in its own monotypic genus with the vireos in the family Vireonidae. This is probably not the last change in the unsettled taxonomy of this species, with some advocating for it to be placed in its own monotypic family.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

- BLACK-NAPED ORIOLE (Oriolus chinensis) Good views at Ta Prohm, Angkor Wat, and then Seima Forest.
- **BLACK-HOODED ORIOLE** (Oriolus xanthornus) Seemingly more widespread and more adaptable to different habitats than Black-naped, we got to see these great looking birds on several days, and saw them perching up and staying view in bare trees multiple times.

Dicruridae (Drongos)

- **BLACK DRONGO** (Dicrurus macrocercus) The default Drongo in open spaces, especially agricultural areas, where they can often be seen perched on the backs of Water Buffalo and Cows in lieu of other exposed perches.
- ASHY DRONGO (Dicrurus leucophaeus) We saw several taxa of this species which is fairly widespread in various forests of the region. We saw the Chinese white-faced migrant form (three total taxa in this group, unclear which one we had) at Angkor Wat, the blackish form in a couple of places towards the end of the trip (also three total taxa in this group, and also unclear which one(s) we had), and then the typical sooty form throughout, especially when we got into forests, from Tmatboey on.
- **BRONZED DRONGO** (Dicrurus aeneus) All had views of this inconspicuous Drongo at Tmatboey and then in direct comparison to Hair-crested at the road near the Oromis dam.
- **HAIR-CRESTED DRONGO** (Dicrurus hottentottus) We mostly missed this until we got to Seima, where they are the common Drongo, and we got our fill in every patch of forest that we visited there.

GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO (Dicrurus paradiseus) – We had a few views of this Drongo and its flowy tail early on in the tour at Angkor Wat and ATT, and then encountered it again on two days at Tmatboey.

Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

- MALAYSIAN PIED-FANTAIL (Rhipidura javanica) This fantail inhabits low scrubby habitat near wet area, from rivers, to marshes, to lakes. We had our first views of this species on our first afternoon, along the road at Phnom Krom, and encountered it for the last time during our final birding stop, in Phnom Penh, in the same bushes as the Cambodian Tailorbird.
- WHITE-THROATED FANTAIL (Rhipidura albicollis) This is the fantail of broadleaf evergreen forests, and the only place it's available on the tour is in the Seima area. We heard its song frequently during our days there, and finally got good views as one foraged on stones in the river upstream of the Oromis dam.
- WHITE-BROWED FANTAIL (Rhipidura aureola) Perhaps our most readily viewed fantail this year. This species likes the dry dipterocarp forest, so we were in its preferred habitat for five days, and multiples were seen on every one of those days. Watching fantails forage is always a joy, and this species, owing to its more open habitat, is the easiest one to get prolonged views of.

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

BLACK-NAPED MONARCH (Hypothymis azurea) – We saw this in various densely wooded areas including Angkor Wat, the Stoeng Chhuk river at Tmatboey, where most people got their first really good views, and Seima.

Corvidae (Crows, Javs, and Magpies)

- **RED-BILLED BLUE-MAGPIE** (Urocissa erythroryncha) We were extremely fortunate to have a couple visiting the rice feeder at Tmatboey, which seems to be the only reliable place in the area to see these surprisingly scarce and/or furtive birds.
- **RACKET-TAILED TREEPIE** (Crypsirina temia) We had a few of these at various places, starting at ATT, and got our best views at the river at Tmatboey, where we could even see its bizarre cobalt-blue eyes!
- **LARGE-BILLED CROW (LARGE-BILLED)** (Corvus macrorhynchos macrorhynchos) This taxa is one of at least 13 currently recognized subspecies of Large-billed Crow, a species that is a potential candidate for being chopped into several species by taxonomists in the coming years. This taxa is frequently called "Southern Jungle Crow".

Alaudidae (Larks)

- **AUSTRALASIAN BUSHLARK** (Mirafra javanica horsfieldii) We got to watch these great songsters putting on a great display flight show at the Sarus Crane grasslands, and then had them again at Prolay Grasslands.
- **INDOCHINESE BUSHLARK** (Mirafra erythrocephala) We had these Bushlarks a couple of times in the dry dipterocarp forest at Tmatboey, and even got to see them perched up in trees a couple of times. A strikingly different bird from Australasian Bushlark in terms of behavior and habitat preference.
- **ORIENTAL SKYLARK** (Alauda gulgula) Giving flight displays and singing beautifully over the Bengal Florican fields at the Prolay Grasslands.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

- **GRAY-THROATED MARTIN** (Riparia chinensis) Seen very briefly by Phil and one or two others at the Thick-Knee spot on the Mekong boat trip. This habitat-specific species seems to be getting tougher and tougher to track down.
- **BANK SWALLOW** (Riparia riparia) Most of the Riparia that we saw seemed to be the typical widespread Bank Swallow/Sand Martin, though Palethroated Sand Martin is supposed to be in the region and is so similar in plumage to this species that some of these had to be let go simply as "Riparia sp." The biggest aggregation of Bank Swallows we had was at the Prolay Grasslands where we had over 200 foraging over the fields, with almost no representatives of other species of swallow.
- **BARN SWALLOW** (Hirundo rustica) The most numerous and widespread swallow, as is the case in much of the world. There are likely a couple of taxa in play on the tour, with both white-bellied and buff-bellied individuals being seen. Had numbers in the hundreds on several days, including ~500 at ATT, and hundreds more around the burned fields as we drove into the Vulture Restaurant area.
- WIRE-TAILED SWALLOW (Hirundo smithii) A brief look at a bird without long tail streamers by only Phil and a couple of others on the Mekong boat ride furnished the tour with a write-in swallow species.
- RED-RUMPED SWALLOW (Cecropis daurica) This large high-flying swallow was well represented, especially around the dry forests in the north. We had ~500 heading to roost during our evening at the river at Tmatboey, and ~1,000 around the burning fields on the way into the Vulture Restaurant.
- **COMMON HOUSE-MARTIN** (Delichon urbicum lagopodum) A bit of a surprise at Seima on the last day, we had a handful on the morning of the final full birding day, and then another one soaring above the logging road. The eastern subspecies of Common House-Martin tends to have characteristics closer to Asian House-Martin, but the extensive white rumps, and clean underparts made these fairly straightforward Common House-Martins. [b]

Stenostiridae (Fairy Flycatchers)

GRAY-HEADED CANARY-FLYCATCHER (Culicicapa ceylonensis) – A denizen of broadleaf evergreen forests, we got our first one in the riparian woodland along the Stoeng Chhuk river just outside Tmatboey. Then we went to Seima, where they were numerous, and many excellent views were had, including a cooperative bird foraging low over the compost pile at the Oromis Guest House for over an hour.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

BURMESE NUTHATCH (Sitta neglecta) – A real treat, this species was formerly part of the Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch, before being split out as "Neglected Nuthatch" and then having a name change to Burmese Nuthatch. Luckily we didn't have to go all the way to Burma to see one though, as Tmatboey sufficed to give us a great experience with one of these great little birds, which ended up as one of David B.'s birds of the trip.

Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)

- **BLACK-HEADED BULBUL** (Pycnonotus atriceps) A few were seen here and there at Seima, and eventually most or all caught up to it. This species is fairly similar to the much more common and conspicuous Black-crested Bulbul.
- **BLACK-CRESTED BULBUL** (Pycnonotus flaviventris) The Bulbul du jour in many places in the Seima area. The crest is impressive even after seeing it a few dozen times.
- **RED-WHISKERED BULBUL** (Pycnonotus jocosus) Our first ones were at the Oromis area, and then we had it a couple of more times in the region, including at our hotel in Mondulkiri. Nice to see these in their native habitat and range, rather than in various suburban neighborhoods in the USA

- where it has been introduced.
- **SOOTY-HEADED BULBUL** (Pycnonotus aurigaster) Tmatboey was the place for this species, which is one of the few bulbuls in the dry dipterocarp forests. The subspecies here has a yellow vent, unlike some groups which have bright red vents.
- STRIPE-THROATED BULBUL (Pycnonotus finlaysoni) Great views at the lunch table at Tmatboey, and then a few others later in the tour, around the bulbul capital that is Seima.
- YELLOW-VENTED BULBUL (Pycnonotus goiavier) The abundant bulbul around Siem Reap, many got their first views of this species on the hotel grounds, where they were even seen feeding fledglings. We saw it elsewhere as well, but this one really takes advantage of human habitation, where it is the dominant bulbul species (Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, especially).
- STREAK-EARED BULBUL (Pycnonotus blanfordi) Widespread and common, but not as conspicuous as some of its cousins. We got our first good looks at this species on day 1 of the tour at the Same Veasna Center garden.
- PUFF-THROATED BULBUL (Alophoixus pallidus) We ran into this bulbul at the Oromis dam road, and then along the logging road in the evening of our final full day.
- OCHRACEOUS BULBUL (Alophoixus ochraceus) We saw several of these at Seima, mostly at the Jahoo Gibbon Camp.
- **GRAY-EYED BULBUL** (Iole propinqua) We ran into our first one at the river near Tmatboey, and then got into a few more in Bulbul land (Seima).
- **BLACK BULBUL (PSAROIDES GROUP)** (Hypsipetes leucocephalus concolor) This is the typical resident all-dark subspecies that was so common at some places in Seima, especially around the Oromis area and east of Mondulkiri.
- **BLACK BULBUL (LEUCOCEPHALUS GROUP)** (Hypsipetes leucocephalus leucothorax) What a distinctive bird! We saw two of these Black Bulbuls with white heads and white down to the upper-breast on our morning birding east of Mondulkiri. These white-headed birds in the leucocephalus group are migrants from the north, and it seems like "H.l.leucothorax" is what we saw, based on the extent of the white below the head and onto the breast.

Cettiidae (Bush-Warblers and Allies)

YELLOW-BELLIED WARBLER (Abroscopus superciliaris) – We had a very close encounter with one of these on our morning walk through the jungle at the Jahoo Gibbon Camp.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers)

- **DUSKY WARBLER** (Phylloscopus fuscatus) Widespread, but often encountered only via its distinctive chip note. We got excellent views on our first afternoon at the Phnom Krom area, and then again foraging around a brush pile at the Oromis resort. [b]
- YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER (Phylloscopus inornatus) Widespread and abundant throughout the country, their habit of staying high in the canopy makes them a heard only bird much of the time. Despite this, we managed to get repeated good views of them, especially around Seima. One of the most remarkable birds of the tour was a leucistic Yellow-browed Warbler, at the Stoeng Chhuk river outside Tmatboey. None of us had heard of leucism in Phylloscopus warblers, so this was quite a surprise, and funnily enough also provided the first good looks at the species for most participants. [b]
- **TWO-BARRED WARBLER** (Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus) Widespread in low densities, we first saw it at Angkor Wat, and then ran into it on several subsequent days, with the highest concentration being in the Seima area. [b]
- PALE-LEGGED LEAF WARBLER (Phylloscopus tenellipes) Its metallic chip note was heard repeatedly at several sites, but we never laid eyes on one of these typically furtive birds. [b*]

Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

- THICK-BILLED WARBLER (Iduna aedon) Good scope views at Phnom Krom during the first morning of birding!
- **BLACK-BROWED REED-WARBLER** (Acrocephalus bistrigiceps) Oddly, we didn't procure views of this, though we heard it at a couple of sites. [*]
- MANCHURIAN REED-WARBLER (Acrocephalus tangorum) It is indeed strange when you get more and better looks at this species than at the more common Black-browed, but that's how it went this year. We got atypically good views of this cryptically plumaged skulker at the Prolay grasslands, thanks to the local guides, and were able to see all pertinent features, including more limited black above the supercilium and a narrow post-ocular eyestripe, than the similar Black-browed. We ran into another one at the Kratie marshes, where we heard it singing and a lucky few got looks at one foraging.
- ORIENTAL REED-WARBLER (Acrocephalus orientalis) This massive Reed-Warbler was seen well at Phnom Krom, ATT, and Kratie.

Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

- STRIATED GRASSBIRD (Megalurus palustris) Best views of this distinctive species were at Phnom Krom on day 1.
- **PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER-WARBLER** (Locustella certhiola) A nice surprise at the Kratie marshes where we heard one singing very close to us, and then had one fly out in front of us on the dike, though we never did get a look at this extreme skulker perched. [b]
- LANCEOLATED WARBLER (Locustella lanceolata) Amazing! Essentially the first bird of the trip, it was singing and calling as we got out of the bus, and then was more obliging than I've ever seen this species be, giving prolonged views right out in the open twice. [b]

Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

- **ZITTING CISTICOLA (ZITTING)** (Cisticola juncidis tinnabulans) Heard at ATT, and then a distant one seen in display flight at the rice paddies there.
- GOLDEN-HEADED CISTICOLA (Cisticola exilis equicaudatus) Heard on the day of the boat trip. [*]
- **COMMON TAILORBIRD** (Orthotomus sutorius) Widespread in appropriate edge habitat, much more often heard than seen, but very good views on the first morning at Phnom Krom.
- **DARK-NECKED TAILORBIRD** (Orthotomus atrogularis) Got some views of these in forested areas, but perhaps the best views were near the lodge at Tmatboey.
- CAMBODIAN TAILORBIRD (Orthotomus chaktomuk) This recently discovered (discovered in 2009, described as a species in 2013) species was the last targeted species of the tour, on the final afternoon, and we connected with an obliging bird in the company of a herd of goats in its odd floodplain scrub habitat. This species is endemic to the Four Arms Plains in the Phnom Penh area. [E]
- **BROWN PRINIA** (Prinia polychroa) Good looks around Tmatboey, where it is fairly common in the open areas of the dry dipterocarp.
- RUFESCENT PRINIA (Prinia rufescens) Our first afternoon at Tmatboey furnished us with this low density species.

YELLOW-BELLIED PRINIA (Prinia flaviventris) – Heard on the Mekong River boat trip at the Thick-Knee spot, but we never ended up laying eyes on one. [*]

PLAIN PRINIA (Prinia inornata) - Common in marshy areas, and we got some great views around Phnom Krom.

Zosteropidae (White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies)

ORIENTAL WHITE-EYE (Zosterops palpebrosus) – We ran into some of these in a couple of places at Seima, including more confiding than usual birds at the road near the Oromis dam.

Timaliidae (Tree-Babblers, Scimitar-Babblers, and Allies)

CHESTNUT-CAPPED BABBLER (Timalia pileata) - Heard chattering all over the scrub at Baeng Toal, but not seen. [*]

PIN-STRIPED TIT-BABBLER (Mixornis gularis) – Some views at the river near Tmatboey, and then very common at Seima, though heard more than seen

GRAY-FACED TIT-BABBLER (Mixornis kelleyi) – Got some views of them foraging high in their preferred habitat of vine tangles east of Mondulkiri.

Leiothrichidae (Laughingthrushes and Allies)

WHITE-CRESTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH (Garrulax leucolophus) – Great views of one bird coming in for rice at the Tmatboey feeding station, after a frustrating but typical Laughingthrush experience a couple of days prior in the forest around Tmatboey.

LESSER NECKLACED LAUGHINGTHRUSH (Garrulax monileger) – At least Doug and David H. got on one of these mixed in with the flock of shy White-crested Laughingthrushes in the Tmatboey forest.

SILVER-EARED MESIA (Leiothrix argentauris cunhaci) – Everyone eventually got on one of these good lookers on the road east of Mondulkiri.

Irenidae (Fairy-bluebirds)

ASIAN FAIRY-BLUEBIRD (Irena puella) – We ran into quite a few of these around Seima, and got good views of both males and females.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

ASIAN BROWN FLYCATCHER (Muscicapa dauurica) - The most common flycatcher throughout all habitats on the tour.

ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN (Copsychus saularis) – Widespread, but heard more than seen.

WHITE-RUMPED SHAMA (Copsychus malabaricus) – After hearing its beautiful song at the river near Tmatboey, we got a shockingly long view of one sitting still on a branch and preening near the Oromis dam.

HAINAN BLUE-FLYCATCHER (Cyornis hainanus) - The default Blue-flycatcher around Siem Reap, we got great views of a couple at Angkor Wat.

BLUE-THROATED FLYCATCHER (BLUE-THROATED) (Cyornis rubeculoides klossi) – We got real nice views of a male that we were able to study and photograph thoroughly enough to be confident that it was this subspecies.

VERDITER FLYCATCHER (Eumyias thalassinus) - Seen once at the river at Tmatboey, and then seen frequently around Seima.

BLUETHROAT (Luscinia svecica) – At least three individuals going between the dense vegetation and the muddy edges of the small pond at the Prolay Grasslands. [b]

TAIGA FLYCATCHER (Ficedula albicilla) – Very widespread, but more retiring than Asian Brown. [b]

WHITE-THROATED ROCK-THRUSH (Monticola gularis) – Great scope views of two obliging females at Angkor Wat, this is often very difficult to track down.

BLUE ROCK-THRUSH (Monticola solitarius) – A few had one perching on the temple at Bayon, and then all saw the female perched up on the Preah Vihear city hall building during our rest stop on the way to Baeng Toal. Neither could be identified to subspecies.

SIBERIAN STONECHAT (PRZEVALSKI'S) (Saxicola maurus przewalskii) – Widespread in the open areas around Siem Reap and out to the Prolay Grasslands.

PIED BUSHCHAT (Saxicola caprata) - Widespread and abundant.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

GOLDEN-CRESTED MYNA (Ampeliceps coronatus) – We pulled this one out at Seima as the tour clock wound down during the evening of the final full day of birding.

COMMON HILL MYNA (Gracula religiosa) – First good views were at Ta Prohm, and then some more in Seima. This bird is widely persecuted for the cage bird trade because of its beautiful vocal repertoire, and they are much scarcer than they used to be.

BLACK-COLLARED STARLING (Gracupica nigricollis) – Seen well a few times around Siem Reap, including at Phnom Krom and ATT.

ASIAN PIED STARLING (Gracupica contra) – A nice surprise in the small pond at the Prolay Grasslands near where the Manchurian Reed-Warbler was.

WHITE-SHOULDERED STARLING (Sturnia sinensis) – Some in flight views early on in the tour, at Phnom Krom, allowed most to at least lay eyes on this low density species.

CHESTNUT-TAILED STARLING (Sturnia malabarica) – First encounter was at the Koh Ker pavilion, near the White-rumped Falcon. Also encountered at the Vulture Restaurant and around Seima, especially feeding on fruits east of Mondulkiri.

COMMON MYNA (Acridotheres tristis) – Widespread.

VINOUS-BREASTED STARLING (Acridotheres burmannicus) – Excellent views of them feeding on the cow carcass at the Vulture Restaurant, and then a brief view of one east of Mondulkiri.

GREAT MYNA (Acridotheres grandis) - Common around Siem Reap, especially at Phnom Krom. Lower densities elsewhere.

Chloropseidae (Leafbirds)

BLUE-WINGED LEAFBIRD (Chloropsis cochinchinensis) - We got some nice views of this species at Seima.

GOLDEN-FRONTED LEAFBIRD (Chloropsis aurifrons) – The default Leafbird in the dry dipterocarp forest around Tmatboey, they seem to like open forest more than Blue-winged does.

Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

THICK-BILLED FLOWERPECKER (Dicaeum agile) – Everyone caught up to this one east of Mondulkiri.

YELLOW-VENTED FLOWERPECKER (Dicaeum chrysorrheum) – Great views of this distinctive streaky flowerpecker at the Oromis dam.

- PLAIN FLOWERPECKER (Dicaeum minullum) The most numerous flowerpecker encountered on the tour, they were quite common around Seima
- SCARLET-BACKED FLOWERPECKER (Dicaeum cruentatum) Great views of both males and females around the great flowers at the Oromis Guest House.

Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

RUBY-CHEEKED SUNBIRD (Chalcoparia singalensis) - A couple around Tmatboey, and then a female east of Mondulkiri.

PLAIN-THROATED SUNBIRD (BROWN-THROATED) (Anthreptes malacensis malacensis) – Also known as Brown-throated Sunbird, we got great looks at both males and females at the Sam Veasna Center garden.

VAN HASSELT'S SUNBIRD (Leptocoma brasiliana emmae) – After being almost comedically tricky, they finally allowed themselves to be seen by all at the Stoeng Chhuk river near Tmatboey.

PURPLE SUNBIRD (Cinnyris asiaticus) – The go-to sunbird in the dry dipterocarp. [N]

OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD (OLIVE-BACKED) (Cinnyris jugularis flammaxillaris) – Widespread, but especially numerous around Siem Reap. [N]

BLACK-THROATED SUNBIRD (Aethopyga saturata johnsi) — While the strikingly beautiful form of Black-throated Sunbird is not officially classified as to subspecies (currently considered "of unknown racial identity" according to HBW), it looks just like the very range-restricted subspecies A.s.johnsi just over the border and thought by some to be restricted to the Langbian Plateau of Vietnam. In any event, this is a good candidate for being split from other forms of Black-throated Sunbird in the future. We got some heart-stopping views of these in the Oromis area, and this distinctive taxa was one of Phil's birds of the tour.

CRIMSON SUNBIRD (Aethopyga siparaja) – Boom. What a bird those males are. Common around Seima, with some phenomenal views for all. David H. voted this as one of his best birds of the tour, and it's really easy to see why!

LITTLE SPIDERHUNTER (Arachnothera longirostra) – Eventually got views for all of this distinctively long-billed sunbird at the Oromis Guest House

STREAKED SPIDERHUNTER (Arachnothera magna) – Common around the Seima area, we even got some uncharacteristically good views of the species east of Mondulkiri and then in Seima Forest proper, near the logging road.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

FOREST WAGTAIL (Dendronanthus indicus) – Trickier this year than normal, most people got views of one of the two slippery individuals we found at Angkor Wat.

EASTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (MANCHURIAN) (Motacilla tschutschensis macronyx) – The only ones we were able to nail to subspecies were of this taxa. Somewhat common in appropriate habitat around Siem Reap, but we didn't run into them much after that.

MEKONG WAGTAIL (Motacilla samveasnae) – Another great regional specialty, we got some good views and even heard them singing and calling on our Mekong River boat ride. This species specializes in vegetated islands in the middle of the Mekong River, and was only recently described, with its specific epithet being given in honor of Sam Veasna.

PADDYFIELD PIPIT (Anthus rufulus) – Widespread in appropriate habitat.

OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT (Anthus hodgsoni) – Tricky to get a hold of this year, though we did have a nice flock of ~25 calling birds flying by on our first evening in Tmatboey. [b]

RED-THROATED PIPIT (Anthus cervinus) – We got good listens and looks at the Sarus Crane fields. [b]

<u>Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)</u>

HOUSE SPARROW (Passer domesticus) - Expanding through Southeast Asia rapidly, and we encountered them on most days.

PLAIN-BACKED SPARROW (Passer flaveolus) – A decent showing of them at several places, including Phnom Krom, ATT, Kratie Rice Fields, and the Cambodian Tailorbird spot.

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (Passer montanus) – Still the most common Passer species in the region, but we'll see if that remains the case as House Sparrow expands.

Ploceidae (Weavers and Allies)

ASIAN GOLDEN WEAVER (Ploceus hypoxanthus) – Really difficult this year. We were hurt in our quest for this by very high winds during both of our visits to the Kratie rice paddies, and we only managed to get one perched for long enough for a very few to see.

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

RED AVADAVAT (Amandava amandava) – We had several of these flying around the Prolay Grasslands, including a couple of males, and eventually got good looks at a female on the ground out in the open.

WHITE-RUMPED MUNIA (Lonchura striata) – Seen briefly a couple of times around Kratie, both at the hotel and at the rice fields.

SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA (Lonchura punctulata) – The common Lonchura throughout. High count was ~200 individuals feeding in a field at the Kratie rice paddies.

MAMMALS

LYLE'S FLYING FOX (Pteropus lylei) – We went to a colony of these at the Royal Garden in Siem Reap.

CRAB-EATING MACAQUE (Macaca fascigularis) – Also known as Long-tailed Macaque, this was the species that was common around Angkor, including Bayon, and we also saw some at Seima.

PIGTAIL MACAQUE (Macaca nemestrina) - We saw one or two mixed in with Crab-eating Macaques at Angkor.

BLACK-SHANKED DOUC LANGUR (Pygathrix nigripes) – Eastern Cambodia is the last stronghold of this species, with only around 1,000 known to exist outside the country. We ran into this handsome primate at least three times while in the Seima Forest, and some looks were so good that Kristine voted for this as one of here three "birds" of the tour!

BURMESE HARE (Lepus peguensis) – Seen by a lucky few during our first full day at Tmatboey.

FINLAYSON'S SQUIRREL (Callosciurus finlaysoni) - This unmistakeable reddish squirrel is the default species around Siem Reap.

GRAY-BELLIED SQUIRREL (Callosciurus caniceps) – We saw several of these in the Seima area, where they are the common medium/large squirrel.

- **CAMBODIAN FLYING SQUIRREL** (Tamiops rodolphii) The diminutive and acrobatic species feeding in the fruiting tree along with Chestnuttailed Starlings and Hair-crested Drongos east of Mondulkiri was apparently this species, also known as Cambodian Striped Squirrel.
- **INDOCHINESE GROUND SQUIRREL** (Menetes berdmorei) This agile small squirrel was seen frequently seen in forest settings starting at Tmatboey, and can often be initially mistaken for a bird due to its small size and lightning quick movements through the canopy.
- **IRRAWADDY DOLPHIN** (Orcaella brevirostris) We had a nice experience with at least three individuals on our Mekong River boat trip, getting a few really nice up-close views of this exceptionally rare and declining species. Only a few hundred still exist outside of Bangladesh, and the Mekong River population is estimated at only between 78 and 91 individuals.
- **HOG BADGER** (Arctonyx collaris) Maybe the biggest mammalian surprise of the trip, and a lifer for all who saw it. One of these lumbered across the road in front of us while we were birding east of Mondulkiri on the last full day of the tour.
- MUNTJAC (BARKING DEER) (Muntiacus muntjak) We got to hear one of these show why it is called "Barking Deer" during one of our pre-dawn Giant Ibis vigils at Tmatboey. [*]

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 292 bird taxa and 12 mammal taxa