

A short report on 6 days in Rajasthan and 1 day in Harike - 21st to 27th of April 2019 - Lieven De Temmerman



Acknowledgements

Thanks to Hans Matheve for bird sounds and .kml files, David Van den Schoor for recent information on Tal Chhappar, DNP and Mt. Abu and James Eaton and Ross Gallardy for some additional info about selected species. Thanks to Pawan (driver) and Deepak (bird guide) who took care of me and got me in DNP, and thanks to Asian adventures for a rock-solid-no-questions-asked package that probably no other company could deliver to birders.

Introduction

There is no good reason to bird in Rajasthan in April/May. Not one. Winter birds are either gone or not very active, parks are closed, grass is gone, grassland birds are gone and stepping out of the air-con car feels like making excursions in hell. It is seriously hot during the day (around 40-42 degrees celsius), and even at night temperatures don't drop much below 30 degrees celsius. The only good reason to go is that your sweaty shirt can be washed in the evening and will be perfectly dry in the morning, ready for more sweat.

The initial reason to go to India was a plan in the making since approx. 2008: after seeing my first Temminck's Tragopan in Sichuan, I dreamt of seeing all tragopans. Having seen (a female) Blyth's in NE India in 2009, the next on the list could be either Satyr, Cabot's, or, maybe the most fascinating of them all, Western. I had a time window of 2 weeks at the beginning of May, and decided that one week would be plenty for the Tragopan, so one week was dedicated to some range-restricted endemics in Rajasthan, centered around seeing Great Indian Bustard before that species could be sadly extinct in a not-so-far-away future.

Schedule (yellow = transport, green = birding, orange = accomodation)

	early morning	morning	noon	afternoon	night	sleep
sun 21	Delhi-Ganeri (3.30-10.00)	Birding Ganeri area (10:00-13:00)	Lunch + shoe repair (13:00-14:30)	birding Tal Chhappar area (14:30-18:00)	Drive Tal Chhappar - Bikaner (18:00-20:30)	Hotel Laxmi Residency 1200 INR for a (good) room
mon 22	Birding Carcass dump site Bikaner 6:00-8:30	Drive Bikaner-Jaisalmer with brunch (8:30-13:30)	Trying to get a permit at the Forest office (13:30-17:30)	Trying to get a permit at the Forest office (13:30-17:30)	Drive Jaisalmer - Pal Rajah 18:00-19:00)	Pal Rajah 1500 INR dinner + breakfast incl.
tue 23	Birding DNP	Birding DNP	Jaisalmer-Abu (13.00-21.30)	Jaisalmer-Abu (13.00-21.30)	Jaisalmer-Abu (13.00-21.30)	hotel Manubhai house 1200 INR full of mosquitos
wed 24	Mt Abu (Peace Park area) (6:00-10:30)	Mt Abu (Peace Park area) (6:00-10:30)	Mt. Abu - Siyana (10.30-12.30) lunch (12:30-14:30)	scouting birding sites around Siyana and birding Minivet site	nightbirding Siyana	Hotel Baghwati 1000INR / night Not clean but not many options. Other hotel: 25.120797, 72.680292
thu 25	Birding Temple area Siyana (6.00-10.00)	Birding Temple area Siyana (6.00-10.00)	Siyana-Pushkar (10.00-16.00) with birding stop at lake	Siyana-Pushkar (10.00-16.00) with birding stop at lake	Birding Pushkar (acacia forest) 17:00-19:00)	Hotel New Park 1500 INR comfortable, clean, good value
fri 26	Birding the hill South of Pushkar (6:00-9:00)	Breakfast (9:00-10:00) and transfer to Jaipur	Birding Wild Grass Farm (10:30-12:00)	Lunch and birding Water Palace area (12:00-15:00)	Drop off at airport Flight Jaipur-Amritsar and transfer to Amritsar (17:30-21:00)	hotel Robin Inn 1500 INR Warden pushy for a tip without doing anything
sat 27	Amritsar-Harike (5.00-6.15)	birding Harike East side (6:15-11:30)	birding Harike canal zone (11:30-13:00)	Lunch and chilling around the temple at Harike (13:00-15:00)	15.00-16.30 Harike-Amritsar	Nightbus to Kullu

Practicalities

I (originally should have) flew with Jet Airways to Mumbai (made the booking with KLM, Jet Airways is code-share partner for the Amsterdam-Mumbai leg). I booked another flight Mumbai-Udaipur and would have started by meeting my car+driver in Udaipur, going to Mt. Abu and so on.

Unfortunately, Jet Airways collapsed, and I luckily could rebook with KLM to Delhi. I was very lucky I booked a car with Asian adventures, as their driver and car would come from Delhi anyway, so they were flexible picking me up from Delhi Airport instead of Udaipur without having to change the schedule / losing any time.

VISA

I needed a visa and the easiest way to do this, is through e-VISA: <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>. The main difficulty is filling in what other countries you have visited in the last 10 years, remembering where your mother was born, and taking a pictures of yourself with a white background (use a blanket like I did). And cough up 75 euros... So not difficult at all but a bit expensive and now Indian government knows more about me, my parents, my cat and dog (I haven't any), than most of my friends.

Transport

I booked a car+driver with Asian adventures. They are probably not the cheapest, but for birdwatchers, they are rock-solid, no-surprises, no surcharges,... They know what a birder wants (short nights, early mornings, birding until evening and in the night, long distances, out-of-the way locations, random stops,...). I wouldn't recommend doing this with just a random company driving around cultural tourists, as those would have to have a hard time adjusting to birdwatchers. My driver was Pawan Kumar. He drove very safe, had a good sense of timing when overtaking and not overtaking when not possible, and knew the roads, distances and time to next destination very well. Deepak (see further) also took care of some driving. He drives a bit faster but nothing dangerous (more my style of driving).

I choose not to self-drive, for the following reasons:

I only had 6 days, arrived after a night flight, and didn't want to spend any time picking up a vehicle arriving 3AM at Delhi airport. I was alone, and driving + birding solo is very, very tiring. Hiring a driver allowed me to catch up a lot of sleep in the car to be fresh for birding when we arrived at the next place.

Asian Adventures offered me a birding guide (acting as back-up driver) as well. His name is Deepak Kumar. I didn't ask for it but in hindsight, having a birding guide resulted in seeing more species, and especially, 2 pair of eyes resulted in seeing the target species quicker in some cases, thus saving time. Maybe the most important contribution made by Deepak was facilitating my permit for the DNP, which was officially closed. I reckon I wouldn't have been granted access to the park without Deepak's aid. Regarding the birding: Deepak was offered as to me as 'learning' guide. I would have been happy to share some of my experience and knowledge with him, but I got the feeling he was already at a very good level and I couldn't really teach him a lot. He might not be a top guide like there are very few on this planet, but he got most of the ID's right and was, besides the birding, very reliable, approachable with all kinds of questions / changes in the schedule,... Above all, he was good company, not only for me, but also for the driver, and during the long drive from Jaisalmer to Abu, he took the driver's seat for the last 3 hours. This meant I could virtually ask Pawan / Deepak to keep driving non-stop, as I had 2 drivers for the price of one! Deepak anticipated on practicalities (suggesting to book hotels on-line, calling the DNP office in advance,...) and made sure my 6-days tour was as smooth as it could get. So to conclude: I recommended Deepak as a birding guide, especially for those that have some travelling birding experience and like to have a bird guide as a companion, rather than having a bird guide holding their hand if you know what I mean ;-)

Used information

[A Birdwatcher's guide to India](#): still very much usable for sites in Rajasthan, and for Harike.

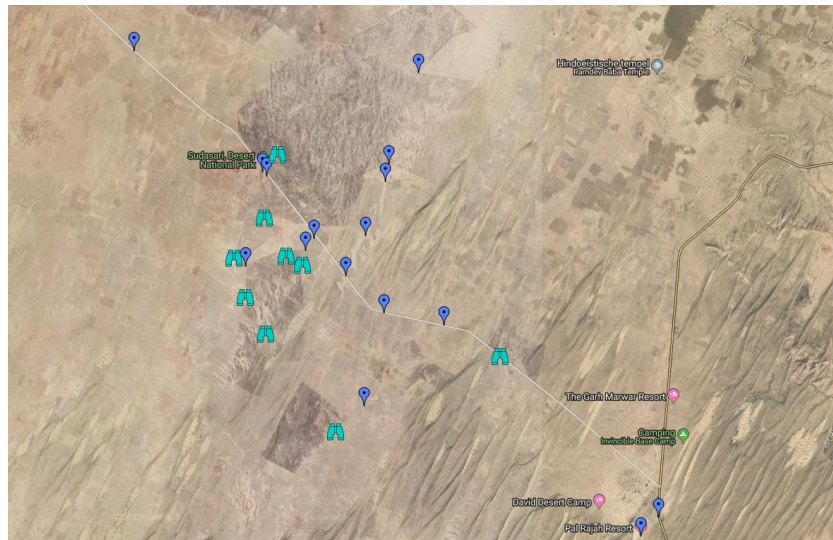
Trip reports: [Ross Gallardy et al](#): very valuable report with good site info and GPS coordinates. Reports by [Breckenridge](#), Van Den Schoor (not published), Birdquest and Bird Tour Asia were consulted to get a grip on bird distribution and make target lists per area. The report of [Pritam Baruah](#) on the DNP was very handy to track down some species, and gives in general a good impression of birding in and around the DNP with good site info.

As usual, [ebird](#) / [observation](#) was scrutinized thoroughly until departure. And as usual, ebird was most up-to-date but also most inaccurate in exact site locations (you know a certain bird has been somewhere there recently, but you don't know where 'somewhere there' is!). Observation was a bit of a gamble in terms of recent sightings as most of sightings were from at least 2 or more years ago, (so with Observation you know exactly where the bird / habitat is, or better was, as the last sighting in W-India is often from years ago!).

So I combined eBird (bird has been seen “around there” recently) with observation (exact location of the “around there”, as a starting point for the search). With that information, I found e.g. a [potential site](#) for the Creeper around Ganeri thanks to eBird, and I found birds at exact coordinates, seen years ago on observation (e.g. [Marshall's lora](#)).

I used maps.me for offline navigation, and I had .kml files based on observation (and hand-made .kml for e.g. Indian Bustard).

Self-made map for Indian Bustard. Note that most bird databases like observations and ebird shield all observations, but I don't feel this makes any difference, as people are visiting the DNP and driving around the enclosures to search the bustards, in any way.



Unfortunately, the Siyana area is still not well-reported in terms of coordinates, practicalities,... as it seems most (rightly) go with the Daksh family, and birding is on their private lands. This makes perfectly sense not to encourage independent birding in that area as the land is private, but as I was there when the lodge was closed and the family not there, I could have greatly benefitted from at least some more coordinates.

Internet

I was amazed (and surprised) how well the 4G network worked well in most of India. I didn't buy a SIM card or used my roaming (costs would be immense), but I could mostly use Deepak his mobile phone as a hub, and sometimes, I just asked someone else to use his / her internet, and most agreed without any hesitation. I felt this was really useful, and it seems many Indians use 4G the whole time (watching movies on buses etcetera).

Trip highlights:

Indian Spotted Creeper, Demoiselle Crane, Rock Bush-quail (all Tal Chhappar area) Yellow-eyed Pigeon (Bikaner), Great Indian Bustard (Jaisalmer), Green Avadavat (Abu), White-bellied Minivet, Painted Sandgrouse, Indian Thick-knee, Indian Vulture (Siyana), Indian Courser (roadside stop), White-naped Tit (Pushkar), Marshall's lora (Jaipur), Jerdon's Babbler, Rufous-vented Grass-babbler, White-crowned Penduline-tit, Sind Sparrow (Harike).

Note that from the above, most species are resident and (with a bit of work) expected to be seen at well-known stake-outs, but I was very lucky with a single Demoiselle crane still lingering around Tal Chhappar, and Yellow-eyed Pigeon, hanging around at the Bikaner dump site (but in a much smaller flock) until the beginning of May.

Secondary targets: all possible vultures (especially White-backed, Red-headed), Indian Bush-lark, Brown Rock-chat, Black-crowned Sparrow-lark, Indian Grey Hornbill, Laggar Falcon, Grey-necked Bunting, Crested Bunting, Indian Yellow-lored Tit, Desert Lark, Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, Rufous-fronted Prinia, Red-headed Bunting, Oriental Pratincole, Streaked Weaver, Alexandrine Parakeet.

I didn't bird in Gujarat, where most people try to see Sykes's Nightjar and Sykes's Lark, two species that are way harder to get in Rajasthan. Besides the nightjar and the lark, some Indian subcontinent specialties, like Painted Sandgrouse, Rock and Jungle Bush-quail, White-naped Tit, Marshall's lora,... seem to be easier or just staked out better in this area.

Still, these 'easier' range-restricted birds are not exclusive to Gujarat and can be seen in other parts of India, and all other so-called target birds of Gujarat (like Hypocolius, Crab Plover, Macqueen's Bustard, Pallid Scops-owl, Spotted Sandgrouse, Greater Hoopoe-lark,...) can be seen in other countries and are thus no 'must-see' bird. They mostly fill up the tour and as you have to go there for the Sykes's birds, Gujarat is for sure a magnificent place to look for them, but best in Winter when migrants and many more birds in general are around!

Dipped:

Rock Eagle-owl (no visit to the Fossil Park due to permit issues at Jaisalmer, no stake-out known at Siyana, not in the holes at Tal Chhappar, Sultanpur closed from the beginning of May) Indian Nightjar (tried one night around Siyana but heard nothing)

White-browed Bush-chat (no grass left anywhere even in the enclosures at DNP) White-crowned Penduline-tit (I saw some wannabees but far away, so I never really positively contacted with the bird. I honestly don't know if they should be there anyway end of April, as they normally only winter in Harike)

W-India target birds not present end of April:

larks: Bimaculated, Rufous-tailed, Greater Short-toed

buntings: White-capped, Striolated, Black-headed

warblers: Plain Leaf Warbler, Brook's Leaf warbler

Sylvia warblers: Asian desert warbler, Eastern Orpheus warbler

wheatears: Rufous-tailed wheatear, desert wheatear, Isabelline wheatear

Miscellaneous: Cream-colored courser, Macqueen's Bustard, Trumpeter Finch (?), most harriers and raptors in general

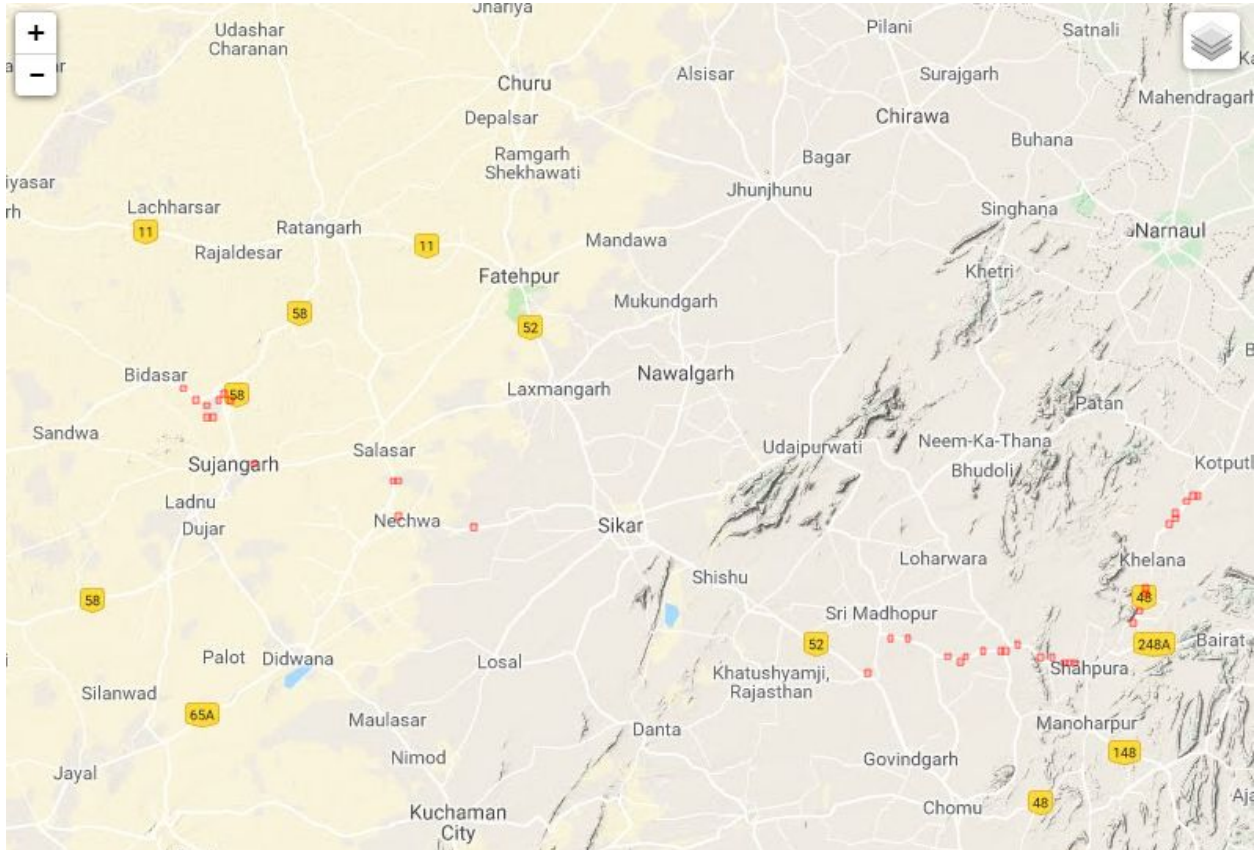
Note that, from the above, only Brook's Leafwarbler is not 'gettable' in either the WP or some countries in the ME on the regular birding circuit (e.g. Israel, Oman). It is around Delhi anyway, so always possible on a return trip in winter (as well as all of the 'dipped' species).

Mammals: Chinkara (Indian Gazelle), Gaur, Blackbuck, Desert Cat, Indian Grey Mongoose, Desert Gerbil, Northern Plains Langur, Rhesus Monkey, Wild Boar, Black-naped Hare, Indian Fox, Five-striped Palm Squirrel

Miscellaneous: Indian Soft-shelled turtle, Spiny-tailed Lizard, Monitor Lizard

Day-by-day account (more or less site-by-site account)

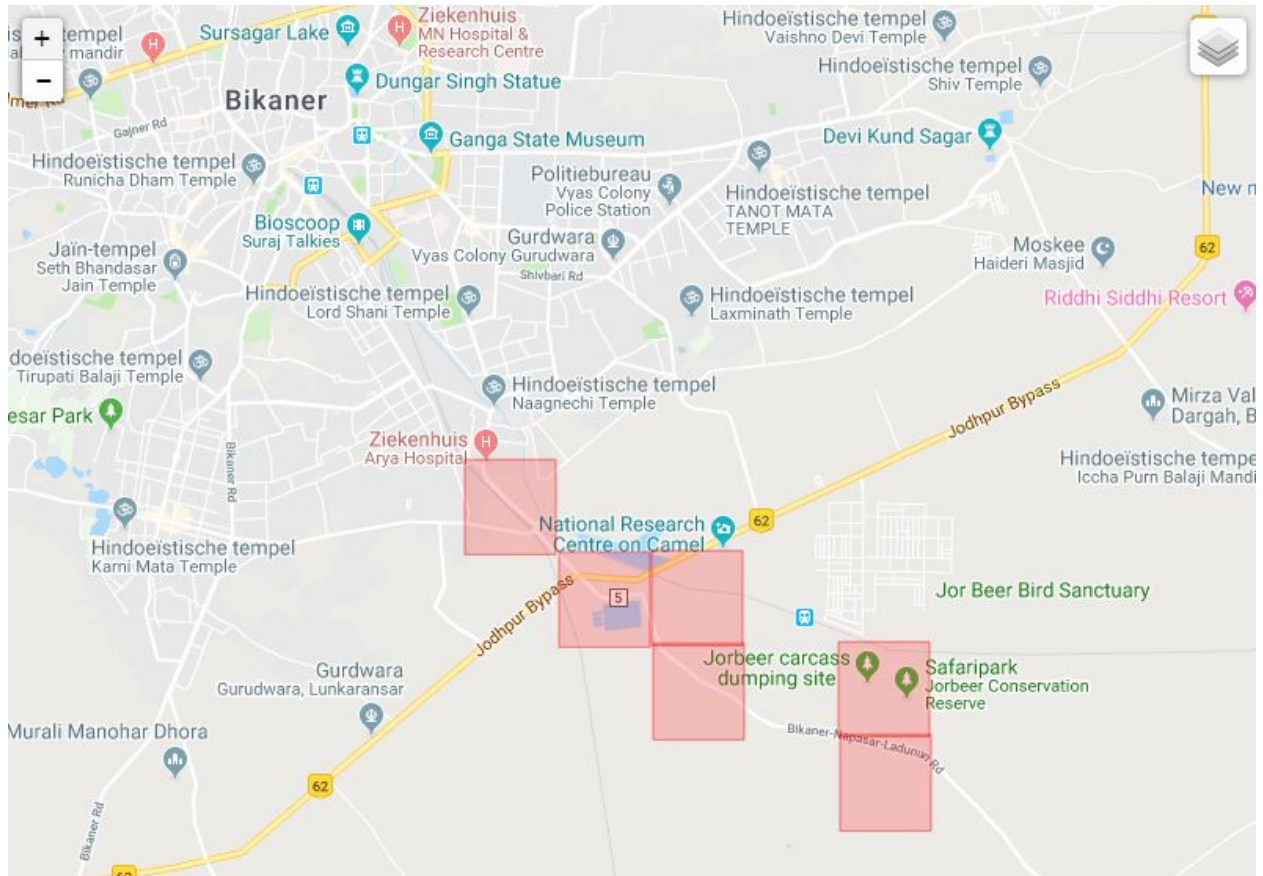
Day 1 (21/04/2019)



A very early start at Delhi airport. As the flight was delayed (Pakistani airspace closed thus a detour), I arrived around 3AM in Delhi. I met Pawan and Deepak and we hit the road, towards Ganeri. After an uneventful drive I started birding around [27.679032, 74.741895](#) (based on eBird), but no Spotted Creepers were found. Birds of notice were a couple of Rock Bush Quail ([27.679, 74.747](#)) and Indian Bush Lark. Deepak remembered another site that was my second choice, and he insisted we could have more chance over there. It took half an hour walking around, checking every Kherji tree and around noon and already very hot, a beautiful Spotted Creeper showed up at [27.626, 74.753](#). After lunch we scanned the holes around Tal Chhappar for Rock Eagle Owl (no success, e.g. here is a possible stake out: [27.778, 74.419](#)), the salt pans just North of the previous coordinates (some waders), some fruiting trees at the southern end of the grasslands (Rosy Starling and Yellow-footed Pigeon: [27.786, 74.445](#)) and the grasslands (mostly devoid of birds except for some Black and Grey Francolins at the edges and many Blackbucks). On the way out we encountered a single Demoiselle Crane: [27.806, 74.440](#).

We still had time to reach Bikaner. On the road we saw White-eyed Buzzard and Black-winged kite but nothing more.

Day 2 (22/04/2019)



A fairly early start (I overslept!), but after a short drive (with Wire-tailed Swallow et the wastewater treatment ponds) we soon entered the Bikaner Carcass dump. It didn't take too long to find Yellow-eyed Pigeon: [27.965, 73.376](#). It is important to arrive early before the pigeons spread out to surrounding fields and are much harder to find, especially this time of year because there aren't many pigeons lingering around! Not many other birds near the dump site, except Egyptian vulture (plenty) and some Steppe eagles.

We didn't stay long and soon headed off to Jaisalmer. I figured it would be a good idea to reach Jaisalmer long before dark in order to secure entrance permits enabling a head start the next day, and maybe have a try at the Bustard in the afternoon. Unfortunately, Deepak already called a park guard who told him the DNP was firmly closed from the end of March until October, and even the road between Sam dunes and Khuri was off-bounds! This meant we had to go to the forest office at Jaisalmer in order to ask for permission, with no guarantee at all we would get it! After 4 hours in the [forest office](#) explaining my plans and promising not to flush or disturb a single bustard, the very kind forest officer gave me a 2-day permit! Entry in the enclosures was strictly forbidden (but this was already so before), so I could actually do whatever other birders could normally do in the 'open' season. We soon left Jaisalmer around dusk and got to [Pal Rajah](#) resort for the night. A quick walk on the dune to the West of the resort only resulted in shining eyes of Chinkara (Indian Gazelle) and a fabulous starry sky.

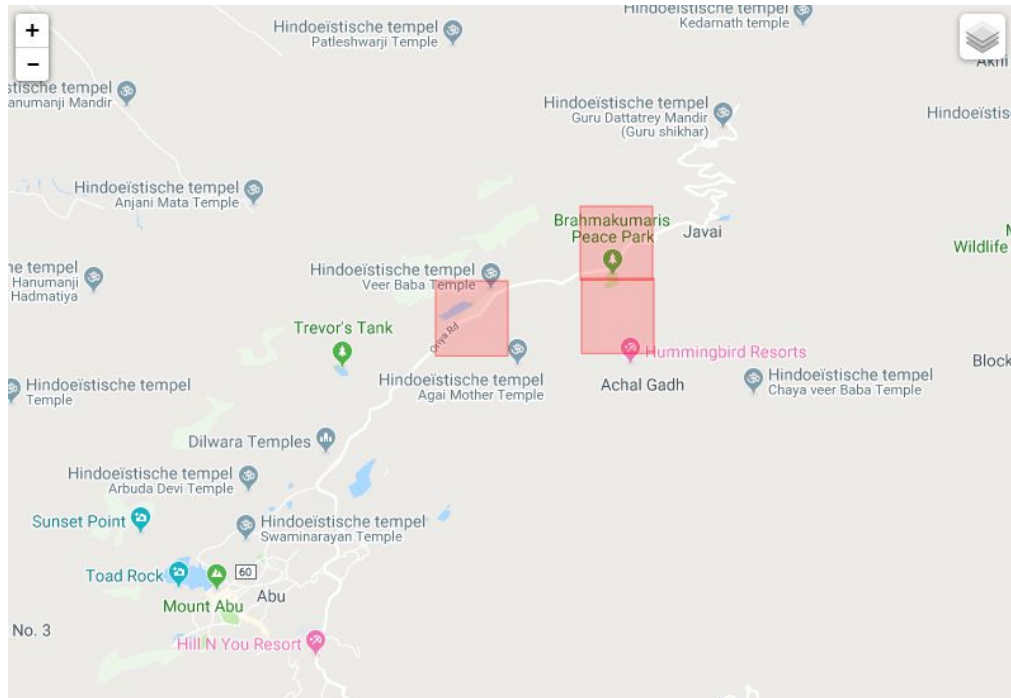
Day 3 (23/04/2019)



Early morning we entered the Sam-Khuri road, starting from Khuri. We scanned from the (rolling) road from wherever we got a good view. I insisted to drive around the Southern enclosures first, as I had seen most recent sightings were from that side. We didn't see anything though, and Deepak suggested to go to the watchtower at the northern entrance ([26.715255, 70.599119](#)), and ask for a park guard to guide us. It was already 9AM when we arrived at the watchtower and the heat began to build up. While Deepak was looking for a park guard, I finally found 2 Bustards scanning through the telescope from the watchtower. They were approx. 1 km away into the Northern enclosure, and would have been impossible to find without a scope: [26.725551, 70.614393](#). Note that the watchtower is only good for scanning towards the North (towards the South, the closeby vegetation is too degraded so not really good for Bustard). Minutes after finding the bustard, Deepak showed up with Jam, a young park guard with sharp eyes and some knowledge and experience finding bustards. I agreed to hire him for the few hours left in the morning. We then drove around the Northern enclosure and found 3 more Bustards left and right from the dirt road, all from the same point: [26.732, 70.630](#), all sheltering under some scrub for the heat, and quite hard to see well with all the heat haze. Mission accomplished nevertheless! We found some more birds driving around the enclosure, namely Laggar Falcon, White-rumped and Griffon Vulture and some Tawny Eagles. A Desert Cat was a nice surprise. The whole area was devoid of passerines bar some Yellow-throated Petronias, White-eared Bulbuls and Common Babbler.

We decided to drive out of the park and not come back the next day. On the way to Sam, some roadside puddles due to leaking water pipes ([26.799, 70.522](#)) provided excellent sightings of 5 species of Vultures (Egyptian, White-rumped, Griffon, Red-headed and Cinereous) but few other birds (note that Trumpeter finch was not on my target list). Once beyond Sam, there was a strong desert wind with a lot of sand in the air impeding birding. We only saw Desert Lark at a well known stake-out ([26.918, 70.806](#)) where usually, Striolated Bunting and Red-tailed Wheatear should be present as well (but they weren't). The rest of the day, a long drive to Mount Abu took all of the time. The plan was to be at Abu in the morning and quickly move to Siyana after having seen Green Avadavat. We crashed in a mosquito-filled [family hotel](#) (Manubai house) at Mount Abu around 10PM.

Day 4 (24/04/2019)

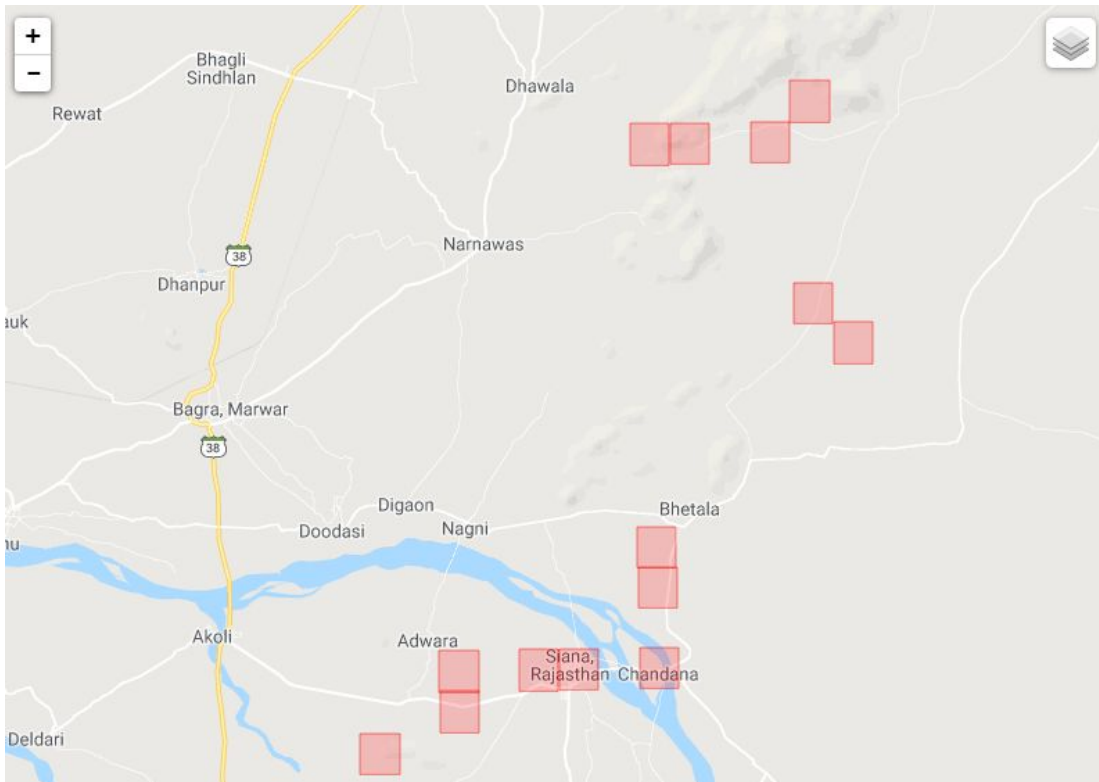


We started birding around 6.15AM just in front of the Peace park and walked some 100ths of meters uphill, where Deepak knew a stake-out for Green Avadavat where he never missed this species before. We quickly found a big flock ([24.635555, 72.764184](#)) and took it easy from that moment, birding the area a bit more for a couple of hours, before heading to Siyana. Some interesting birds were Crested Bunting, Indian Black-lored Tit, White-browed Fantail, Brown-headed Barbet and a flock of Yellow-eyed babblers in the fields near the peace park. I didn't invest any time in seeing Red Spurfowl or Indian Scimitar-babbler as I have seen those before. No White-capped Buntings were encountered at a known stake-out (same area as the Avadavats), they were maybe gone.

Once in Siyana after a couple of hours drive, we scouted some birding locations in the heat of the day. The Siyana resort was closed (it seems the Daksh family doesn't live there in the off-season). This had positives and negatives: The positives were that there actually are some other (cheap) hotels in Siyana, so the cost of birding around Siyana would be greatly reduced. Deepak said that birding at the known stake-outs for most species would not be a problem, even if those locations are private land owned by the Rajputs.

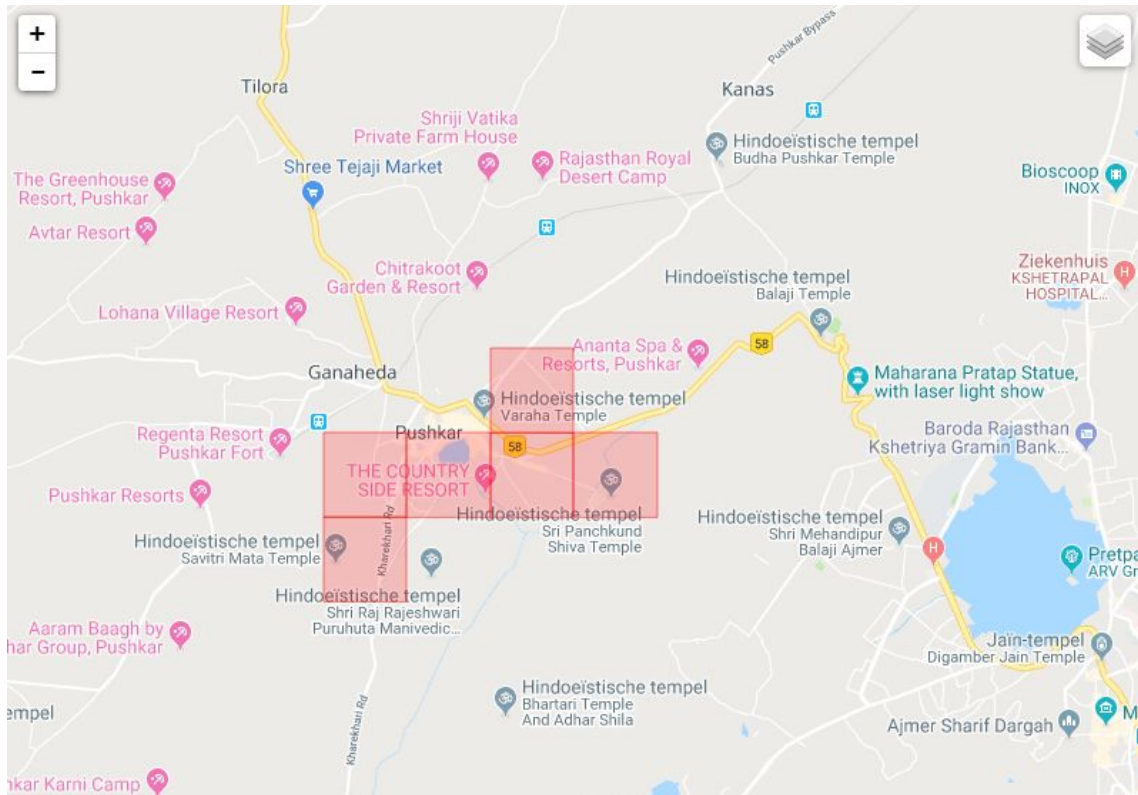
The negative was (and still is), that the waterhole for Painted Sandgrouse was dry (to reach the waterhole at [25.138, 72.651](#), follow the levee from [25.132306, 72.654270](#), and note there is a permanent water hole across the road that held some birds), and the exact area where Striped Hyena and Rock Eagle Owl are seen by most tour groups, was not known to me nor Deepak (nor a tour leader I contacted through email while in Siyana), and is not written down in any trip report. As a result, because I didn't want to overstretch my driver and wanted to give him some rest, I didn't really try for nightbirds further away from Siyana. This resulted in 0 nightbirds seen, and (regarding the lack of good waterholes) Painted Sandgrouse only seen flying. The best bird of the evening was (only one) White-bellied Minivet, a gorgeous male right at the known stake-out / roosting site: [25.122, 72.630](#). I saw only few other interesting species like many Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse (both on the ground at a waterhole where we spend a good amount of time in the evening: [25.167, 72.707](#) and flying), Indian Thick-knee and (still plenty of) Grey-necked Bunting, both in the area of the dried out waterhole. We actually found two hotels in Siyana. One is on the entry road coming from the South (somewhere here: [25.120839, 72.680401](#)), but fully booked. The other one, where we stayed, is 200 meters [in a small road just at the central roundabout](#). So conveniently close to restaurants etc. but a bit off the main road and thus quiet at night.

Day 5 (25/04/2019)



We started the morning in [the temple area](#), birding the canyon. Note that this area is approx. half an hour drive from Siyana. One has to go to the village and take left [25.263604, 72.759646](#), and take another left [25.262837, 72.756566](#) (we took a right on the first day and ended up at a sand track [\(25.263187, 72.743765\)](#) that we would have been stuck in). Indian Vultures are reliably roosting on the rocks just above the temple. I looked mainly for Striolated Buntings in the canyon but didn't find any. The best birds were a very pale ssp. of Great tit (a bit confusing initially as it can look like a White-naped tit without good views), a Short-toed Snake eagle and plenty of Small Minivets. After the morning birding, we drove to Pushkar. On the way, a bit beyond Raipur, I finally noticed a marshland that held some water (and obviously some waterbirds): [26.060, 74.032](#). Activity was great with many waders, Greater Painted Snipe, Kentish and Lesser Sand Plover in breeding plumage and, to top it off, 2 Indian coursers in the scrub nearby! Arriving in Pushkar at a convenient time (around 5PM when the heat drops a little), I went for a quick walk after checking in, trying my luck at the acacia 'forest' at the edge of Pushkar, in search of White-naped Tit. I found one confiding bird after enticing it with playback: [26.497, 74.564](#). Note that I climbed the wall to get in the acacia stand, but Deepak later told me this is government property, so I didn't feel I was doing something very wrong.

Day 6 (26/04/2019)



A slow morning in Pushkar, climbing [the hill towards the temple South-West of Pushkar](#), with excellent views of Pushkar. Not many new birds and very quickly the temperatures were rising again to very uncomfortably. With no more target birds in Pushkar / on the way to Jaipur, we headed to Jaipur. I suddenly realised Marshall's lora could be seen in Jaipur (sightings at the Wild Grass farm), so a quick walk there resulted in this unexpected target species ([26.923.75.758](#))! We spent some hours at the Water palace where Oriental Pratincole, Greater Painted Snipe ([26.959.75.845](#)) and Indian soft-shelled turtle were most appreciated. Around 4PM, I got dropped off at Jaipur airport after a crazy fast 6-day Rajasthan clean-up tour. My Jaipur-Amritsar flight was perfectly on-time, and soon I was in a taxi from the airport to Amritsar, the capital of Punjab. I paid a quick but very impressive visit to the Golden Temple, before having a short night sleep in a shady hotel in Amritsar.

Day 7 (27/04/2019)



I agreed with my airport taxi driver the day before, to take me from Amritsar to Harike for the morning, until 2-3PM, before dropping me off at the Amritsar bus station where I would get the Amritsar-Kullu night bus (agreed for 3200 INR). One full morning proved to be perfect to chase down some most-wanted marshland species. I got dropped by my taxi driver at the East side of the marsh ([31.118564, 75.011241](#)), walked North between singing Paddyfield Warblers, and turned left into one of the fields towards the reeds, quickly seeing Rufous-vented Grass-babbler ([31.126, 75.017](#)) and Jerdon's Babbler ([31.126, 75.017](#)). As the reeds was a bit high and I didn't want to walk in the (ripe) barley fields too much, I retraced my steps and walked the sandy track North towards the Sutlej river. Red-headed Buntings were surprisingly common, and a big flock of Streaked / Black-breasted Weavers with some breeding plumage males got my attention near the river: [31.134, 75.022](#). At the river I saw many beautiful ssp calcarata Citrine Wagtails, Striated Grassbird and Babbler, a baillon's crane and some more waterbirds (but besides Lesser Whistling duck, no other ducks). Warblers were very much absent walking along the tree-lined dirt road going back to the car (as much as when walking in, early morning), except a showy Mountain Chiffchaff. I moved to the Canal area and it took me quite some effort to finally track down two Sind Sparrows ([31.128, 74.951](#)), before they quickly flow across the channel. Quite a relief, as there hardly weren't any other birds around, let alone passerines (except many many Pale Martins above the canal), and my back-up site later on my journey, Sultanpur, was very firmly closed from 1st of May until somewhere in October!

I made the (small) tactical mistake not to check the area behind the temple (there was praying going on in the temple and I didn't know if I could pass), and I did not check the tamarisk / Shisham just north of the bridge (to the West) as written in the 'where to watch birds'. According to the book, Syke's nightjar roosts below the tamarisks in riverine habitat some kilometers downstream (in winter, until June), but I wonder how many people have tried to see it there and if the place is still the same / reliable / worth it in May. I decided to spent the afternoon having a siesta in the temple area, as I would have to survive a nightbus to Kullu + a heavy trekking the next day.

Trip list

My full trip list with all of my sightings, all of them with GPS coordinates, is [here](#). Note that some observations are obscured (standard)

Lieven De Temmerman - 21st of May 2019 - contact: yoemy at hotmail dot com