

Cambodia & Singapore
Trip Report
11th December to 31st December 2022
Wilton Farrelly



1 Painted Storks



2 White-shouldered Ibis

Introduction

Our eldest daughter Kate was travelling around South East Asia so when my wife suggested we meet her somewhere for Christmas, I took it as an opportunity to try and build in some birding. We chose Cambodia as our meeting point but living in Ireland, some of the flight routes are costly and take a considerable amount of time. In the end, we chose to fly firstly to Singapore (via Frankfurt) and stay there for 3 days, before going on to Cambodia.

In terms of birding, Cambodia is not somewhere you can bird easily without a guide / driver. I decided on Sam Veasna Conservation Tours (<https://samveasna.com/>) due to their reputation and conservation work. I chose their 'Essential Cambodia' itinerary but added on the Bokor Hills. In addition there was going to be some non-birding time in Kep (a coastal town) and Phnom Penh.

Itinerary

The itinerary we followed was as below:

Day 1: Arrive in Singapore early in the morning and spend day exploring

Day 2: Butik Batok (for the Babbler) and Singapore Botanic Gardens followed by Gardens by the Bay

Day 3: MacRitchie Reservoir and the Botanic Gardens in the late afternoon

Day 4: Fly to Siem Reap, Cambodia. Afternoon around Siem Reap

Day 5: Angkor Wat \ Siem Reap

Day 6: Prek Toal Bird Sanctuary

Day 7: Ang Trapaeng Thmor Sarus Crane Reserve (ATT)

Day 8: Bengal Florican Conservation Area and on to Tmat Boey

Day 9: Tmat Boey

Day 10: Tmat Boey to Kampong Thom

Day 11: Kampong Thom to Kratie

Day 12: Kratie to Kampot

Day 13: Kampot- Bokor National Park

Day 14: Kampot - Bokor National Park

Day 15: Kampot Saltpans, then on to Kep.

Day 16: Kep - Rabbit Island

Day 17: Kep to Phnom Penh

Day 18: Phnom Penh (Inc Killing Fields)

Day 19: Phnom Penh (Sightseeing)

Day 20: Flew Phnom Penh to Singapore

Day 21: Singapore. Evening departure.



1 Angkor Wat

Climate Singapore was hot and very humid. However we also experienced quite a lot of heavy rain which restricted birding.

Cambodia was hot and thankfully not humid. However late in the evening and early morning it could be surprisingly cool. Bokor in particular was cool and a fleece was needed.

Accommodation

Singapore

Shangri-La Orchard Gateway: A very nice hotel with a superb roof top pool and fantastic breakfasts.

An MRT station and bus stop were right outside. Highly recommended.

Hotel Katong Village - Ok and located in the east side of Singapore.

Cambodia

Aviary Hotel, Siem Reap - A very nice hotel in a great central location. Has a roof top pool.

Tmat Boey Lodge- Basic accommodation and fine for two nights.

Kampong - One night in a nice hotel.

Kratie – Mom Brocheabrey for one night. Fine.

Kampot - Twin Hotel. Pleasant hotel.

Kep - The Veranda Resort. A superb hotel which was our best accommodation on the trip.

Phnom Penn - Chung Dong Hotel. A nice hotel in central Phnom Penh.

General Advice

In Singapore I decided not to use a guide and did some birding in the parks and the Botanic Gardens. This is straightforward.

The public transport system in Singapore is excellent and easy to use. You can just swipe your Mastercard / Visa card on or off the MRT or Buses. My daughter got me on to Grab for taxis \ tuk-tuks etc. This worked well and avoided us been ripped off and having to negotiate.

In Cambodia I wish that I had an extra pair of trousers with me. I underestimated how cool it would be in the mornings at some sites and how much walking through long grass / vegetation / burnt areas that there would be. December is at the start of the dry season so it is very dusty and clothes became dirty very quickly.

Currency - in Cambodia you need to use US dollars. However the challenge is having enough in small denominations. Even handing over a \$20 bill and getting change can be a problem.

WiFi was available free of charge in all hotels - except at Tmat Boey where there was no WiFi as to be expected. The connection speed was always good and stable. In Cambodia my daughter purchased a 5GB SIM card for \$2 which allowed us to get connected when away from our hotels.

Mosquitos were a real problem in Singapore and I ended up with a lot of bites.

Birding

Singapore is very easy to bird. Even the Gardens by the Bay had some decent species. However the main targets in Singapore would be Straw-headed Bulbul and Red-legged Crake.

For Cambodia, the key targets are mainly birds that are Endangered or are very range restricted. They included eg Greater Adjutant, Giant Ibis, Milky Stork, Sarus Crane, Bengal Florican, Cambodia Tailorbird, White-shouldered Ibis and Mekong Wagtail. Our guide from Sam Veasna was Ladong who was a good guide.

I did not bring a scope. In Cambodia I used Ladong's scope.

I used ebird and the Merlin ID (South East Asia bird pack). I am a recent convert to eBird.

Bird Trip Reports: For previous bird trip reports I used Cloudbirders: www.cloudbirders.com



3 Irrawaddy River Dolphin

In terms of other wildlife, mammals are extremely scarce in Cambodia with only Long-tailed Macaques and Northern Pig-tail Macaques the main notable sighting.

Irrawaddy River Dolphins at Kratie were great to see (we had circa 7 individuals) but when you realise how low their global numbers are (less than 100), seeing them brings to reality that you are viewing a species going extinct in front of you....

I have not in this trip report, included any species that were heard only or which I did not get clear identifiable views off. Also, thanks to our Cambodian Guide, Ladong for many of the pictures.

The Environment

It is impossible to visit anywhere in south east Asia and not be affected by the ongoing destruction of the environment. This includes deforestation, population encroachment on reserves, plastic pollution, rubbish and visible water pollution. There is also a clear lack of protection for many of the remaining areas. We were particularly disappointed to see the widespread environmental destruction at Bokor, Cambodia.

Thankfully Singapore seems to have protected its remaining reserves and parks and the environment is clearly respected.

Detailed Itinerary and birds seen

Day 1 - Arrived in Singapore without our luggage which had been left behind in Frankfurt Airport by Singapore Airlines. It was also raining very heavily and it was clear that there would be no birding today. We met up with Kate and had an expensive brunch. We then walked between the showers in the centre. Only a few common species seen such as:

House Crow

Brown-throated Sunbird

Tree Sparrow

Common Myna

Day 2 - I got up early and thankfully it was dry so I went to Bukit Batok Park on a bus. This is a nice easy to do site but for a Monday morning I could not believe how busy it was. My key target was Straw-headed Bulbul which I heard and seen around the lake, relatively quickly. At least two birds were present. After that I walked around various paths. Birding highlights here were:

Straw-headed Bulbul

White-crested Laughing Thrush (l)

Javan Myna

Asian Glossy Starling

Lineated Barbet (I)
Pin-striped Tit Babbler

Greater-racket tailed Drongo
Olive-winged Bulbul



1 Straw-headed Bulbul



2 Red-junglefowl



3 White-crested Laughing Thrush



4 Little Spiderhunter

I then caught up with Louise and Kate at the Botanic Gardens in the late morning, before we all headed to Gardens by the Bay. Highlights in the Botanic Gardens included:

Crow-billed Drongo
Amur Flycatcher
White-breasted Waterhen
Asian Glossy Starling
Black-crowned Night-Heron

Blue-tailed Bee-eater
Asian Brown Flycatcher
Oriental Magpie-Robin
Stork-billed Kingfisher
Spotted & Zebra Dove

The best birds at the Gardens by the Bay were a Black-winged Kite, Red-whiskered Bulbul, Ashy Tailorbird, Malaysian Pied-Fantail, Black-naped Oriole and Pink-necked Green Pigeon.

Day 3 - MacRitchie Reservoir

We decided that today we would do a long walk at Macritchie Reservoir. In hindsight this was not the best use of our time. We walked circa 15km to the treetop walk and back, from the south east corner of the Reservoir. With the humidity and the odd mosquito, along with the lack of visible birds, this made for a challenging walk. It was a hard slog for little reward! Highlights were:

Little Spiderhunter	Brahminy Kite
Blue-throated Bee-eater	Yellow-browed Warbler
Chestnut-bellied Malkhoa	Cloud Monitor.
White-bellied Sea Eagle	

Later that afternoon I spent 2 hours in the rain at the Botanic Gardens. Eventually when it eased, birding was better than I expected with a few new birds and a Water Monitor. Highlights were:

Pink-necked Green Pigeon	Long-tailed Parakeet
Pied Imperial Pigeon	Ring-necked Parakeet

However there was no sign of any crakes.

Day 4 – Singapore to Siem Reap

Today we flew at 08:40 from Singapore to Siem Reap, Cambodia on Singapore Airlines. When we were leaving Singapore it was again raining heavily.

We arrived in Siem Reap around 10am (we gained an hour) to sunshine. We were quickly through the airport and went to check in at the Hotel Aviary. The remainder of today was for sightseeing around the city. We had an excellent outside lunch at a great vegetarian restaurant- Banlle at Street No 26 - highly recommended! That afternoon we decided to walk around Siem Reap and lounge at the Hotel Aviary pool. It really was nice to relax and the weather was hot but thankfully nowhere near as humid as Singapore.

Day 5 – Angkor Wat and Siem Reap

Collected at 04:45 by our birding guide Mr Hang from Sam Veasna and brought to Angkor Wat for sunrise. We birded areas of forest around the main temple site and some of the other temples. Birding was relaxed although photo opportunities were limited. Highlights included:

White-throated Rock Thrush	Alexandrine Parakeet
Hainan Blue Flycatcher	Red-breasted Parakeet
Taiga Flycatchers	Paddyfield Pipit
Forest Wagtail	Lesser Adjutant
Verditer Flycatcher	Streak-eared Bulbul
Black-crested Bulbul	Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher
Black-naped Monarch	Coppersmith Barbet
Oriental Pied-Hornbill	Black-headed Ibis
Bronze-winged Jacana	Oriental Darter
Chinese Pond-Heron	Green-billed Malkoha
Germain's Swiftlet	Asian Palm Swift
Cotton Pygmy-Goose	

Yellow-browed Warblers were calling everywhere.

We were back to our hotel by 3pm and spent the rest of the afternoon at the pool.



1 Lyles Flying Fox, Royal Independence Gardens, Siem Reap



2 Ashy Woodswallows



3 Plain-backed Sparrow



4 Taiga Flycatcher



5 *White-throated Rock-thrush, Angkor Wat*



6 *Red-breasted Parakeet*

Day 6 - Tonle Sap

We were collected at 05:30 by our guide Ladong and headed to meet our boat. After an hour on the boat, we went to Prek Toal and changed to a smaller boat. After a further half hour we reached a viewing platform in a protected area of the lake where thousands of storks were breeding. From this platform we seen our targets including Milky Stork, Spot-billed Pelican and Greater Adjutant. Milky Stork is definitely easier to pick up in flight with the upper wing lacking spotting and the belly is all white - unlike the numerous Painted Stork.

We returned to Prek Toal for our lunch in a floating restaurant.

On the boat trip there and back, I was surprised at large the number of passerines which we encountered. Birding highlights that day included:

Indochinese Roller	Eastern Yellow Wagtail
Black Drongo	Red Avadavat
Arctic Warbler	Scaly-breasted Munia
Common Iora	Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker
Amur Stonechat	Dusky Warbler
Great Myna	Oriental Reed Warbler
Plain Prinia	Dark-necked Tailorbird
Yellow-bellied Prinia	Large-billed Crow
Racket-tailed Treepie	Brown Shrike
White-throated Kingfisher	White-browed Fantail
Purple Heron	Great, Intermediate, Little & Cattle Egrets
Spot-billed Pelican	Indian & Little Cormorants
Asian Openbill	Whiskered Tern
Plaintive Cuckoo	Lesser Coucal



7 Lesser Adjutants



8 Greater Adjutant (bottom right), Lesser Adjutant and Painted Storks



9 Blue-tailed Bee-eater

Day 7 - ATT

I left Siem Reap at 5am with our guide Ladong as Louise and Kate decided to go sightseeing in Siem Reap instead. After just over an hour and in first light, we stopped by the roadside to watch thousands of Egrets fly to their daytime feeding grounds. This was a highly impressive sight. I have no idea on the exact numbers but a minimum would be ten thousand birds!

After that we drove on to the reservoir birding the area until 3 pm. One impressive sight there was over three thousand Garganey been harassed by a Peregrine and four Eastern Marsh Harriers. Other highlights included:

Black-browed Warbler

Plain-backed Sparrow

Grey-necked Swamphen
Yellow Bittern
Little Cormorant
Cotton-pygmey Goose
Dusky Warblers
Black-collared Starling
Green & Wood Sandpipers
Red-collared Dove
Lesser Whistling-Duck

Ashy Woodswallow
Collared Falconet
Freckle-breasted Woodpecker
Rufous-winged Buzzard
Greater Spotted Eagle
Black-winged Kite
Yellow Bittern
Indian Spot-billed Duck
Greater Coucal



10 Amur Stonechat (*Stejneger's*)



11 Yellow-breasted Bunting



12 Sarus Cranes

(That day Louse and Kate visited the APOPO experience with the mine clearing rats in Siem Reap and they highly recommend it).

Day 8 - Bengal Florican Grasslands

Another early start and we left Siem Reap with Ladong, and headed to the Florican Grasslands. It was nice to be out in rural Cambodia and we had a couple of local guides. Birds seen here included:

Bengal Florican (2 males)
Chestnut Munia
Siamese Pied Starling
Striated Grassbird

Yellow-breasted Buntings
Pied Harrier
Asian Woolly-necked Stork
Pin-tailed Snipe

We then moved on to a nearby site where we had another target thanks to our local guides – a superb party of Sarus Cranes.

We then drove on to get to Tmat Boey, where we arrived at 4pm. On the way we stopped at a site at Kulean, Preah Vihear a site where a new temple was been built. Highlights in this area included:

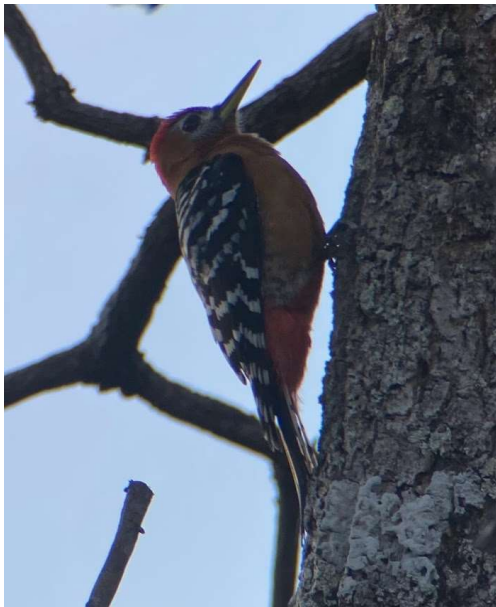
Brown-backed Needletail
Sooty-headed Bulbul
Large Cuckooshrike

Crested Honey-buzzard
Crested Treeswift

At Tmat Boey we headed out at 4:30pm to White-shouldered Ibis roost trees. We had circa 20 of these iconic birds in total. Owling was unsuccessful with only Spotted Wood Owl heard. Other species picked up included:

Burmese Shrike
Rufous-winged Buzzard

Yellow-browed Warbler
Gray-capped Pygmy Woodpecker



13 Rufous-bellied Woodpecker



14 White-shouldered Ibis

Day 9 Tmat Boey

I was up and out for 4:30 am with Ladong and our local guide to look for Giant Ibis. On the way, a stop at some water produced a superb Brown Fish Owl. We arrived at the Giant Ibis hide in darkness at 05:30 and could begin to make out a shape on a nest. It was a female Giant Ibis. When light broke the male came in and both birds were calling. Over the next hour we enjoyed good views and realised that there were two chicks in the nest.

After viewing the Giant Ibis we explored various parts of the forest. Highlights included:

Black-hooded Oriole

Rufous Treepie

Lanceolated Warbler

Oriental Scops Owl

Velvet-fronted and Burmese Nuthatches

Red-rumped Swallow

Rufescent & Brown Prinia

Small Minivet

Chestnut-tailed Starling

Black-headed Woodpecker

Chinese Francolin

Brown Wood Owl

Rufous-bellied Woodpecker

Blossom-headed Parakeet

Indochinese Bushlark

Blue-winged Leafbird

Red-billed Blue-Magpie

Hair-crested Drongo

Large Woodshrike

Raddes Warbler

Savanna Nightjar

We went back to the lodge for lunch and headed out again to a different part of the forest at 2:30pm. Some of the habitat had been burnt. Key species seen that afternoon were:

Black headed Woodpecker

Burmese Nuthatch

Greater Flameback

Savannah Nightjar

We also had a Cambodia Striped Squirrel. A Collared Scops Owl was seen at the lodge that evening.



15 Giant Ibis



16 Brown Fish Owl



17 Oriental Scops Owl



18 Blossom-headed Parakeet



19 Common Flameback

Day 10 Tmat Boey

This morning was spent again in the forests around Tmat Boey, trying to catch up on missed birds
Highlights were:

Great Slaty Woodpecker (4)
Yellow-footed Green Pigeon.
Lesser Yellownape

Lanceolated Warbler
Woodpeckers - Black-headed, Yellow-crowned.
White-rumped Falcon

Overall the birding at Tmat Boey was superb. White-bellied Woodpecker was the only major species that I missed.

At 12 we left for Kampong. On the way we stopped at the ancient city / temple of Sambor Prek Kuk. I birded the forest with Langdon whilst Louise and Kate went around the ruins. I added Asian Barred Owlet and Streak-throated Bulbul. We also had White-throated Rock Thrush and Hainan Blue Flycatcher.

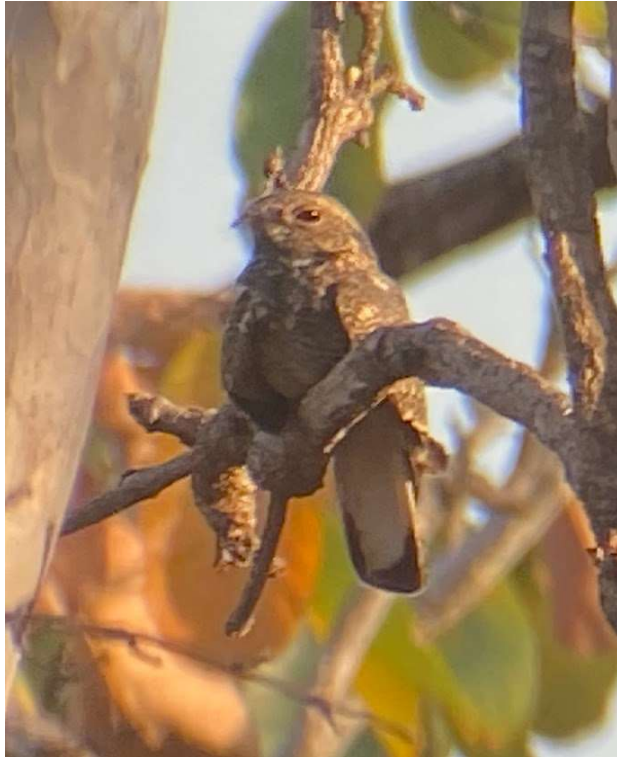
We stayed that night in Kampong.



20 Burmese Nuthatch



21 Black-headed Woodpecker



22 Savanna Nightjar



23 White-rumped Falcon



24 Lanceolated Warbler



25 Great Slaty Woodpeckers



26 Asian Barred Owlet



27 Ashy Drongo

Day 11 - Kratie

We left at 5am to travel direct to Kratie, a reasonably long drive. At Kratie we firstly visited some rice fields and had:

Asian Golden Weaver

Watercock (unfortunately trapped inside a fishing net which we could not access)

Scaly-breasted Munia

Malay Fantail

Paddyfield Pipit

Zitting Cisticola

Asian Golden Gecko

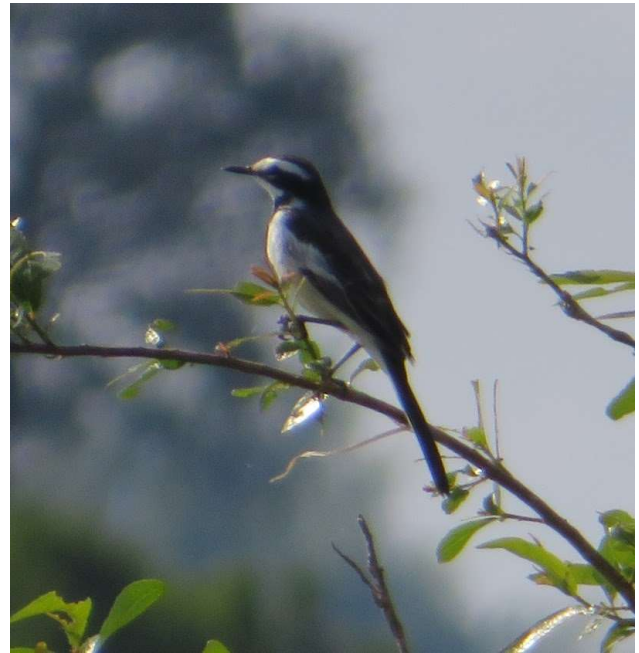
In the afternoon we took a boat onto the Mekong River. This was a really nice experience. We had an Irawaddy River Dolphin from the shore before we even boarded our boat. In all we estimate that we had at least 7 Dolphins out of a world population of circa 100. It was however extremely sad to subsequently learn that three Dolphins had died (mainly entangled in fishing lines \ nets) in the few weeks prior to our arrival.

Bird wise the target was Mekong Wagtail off which we had two birds. We also added Small Pratincole, Osprey and Little Ringed Plover for the trip. Overall this was a great boat trip on one of the worlds mightiest rivers.

Late afternoon we went to the Jasmine Boat Bar overlooking the Mekong and had a superb sunset and a cold beer or two. Indeed Kratie had the best and most outstanding sunset of our trip.



28 Small Pratincole



30 Mekong Wagtail



29 Pied Kingfisher



31 Asian Golden Gecko

Day 12 – Kratie to Kampot

Another early start but this time for our longest day of driving - circa 8 hours as we were travelling from Kratie to Kampot. On the way we would stop for Cambodian Tailorbird. The site was not far from Phnom Penh and the bird showed immediately. This was to be the only new bird today.

We then continued on to Kampot where we arrived at 4pm. We enjoyed the sunset and a cold beer at The Fish Market, overlooking the river.



32 Cambodian Tailorbird, the only endemic of the trip.

Day 13 – Bokor National Park

A bit of a lie in as we left our hotel at 05:40 to head up to Bokor National Park. We got up in low cloud and on the way up we stopped at a couple of roadside vantage points. We then birded a dense forest trail past the Popokvil Waterfall. It was still low cloud. However the noise of quarrying and chainsaws in the background was a bit disconcerting. When the cloud lifted and we were back outside the forest, all was clear.....the extent of environmental destruction and deforestation was huge. It was sad to see.

However we had many new bids for the Cambodian part of the trip including:

Asian Fairy-bluebird	Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush
Crimson Sunbird	Pin-striped Tit Babbler
Brown-throated Sunbird	Grey-eyed Bulbul
Sulphur-breasted Warbler	Black-headed Bulbul
Easter-crowned Warbler	Amur Paradise Flycatcher
White-bellied Erpornis	Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo
Black-winged Cuckooshrike	Moustached Barbet
Great Hornbill	Mountain Hawk-eagle

Louise and Kate stayed around the waterfall and café in the afternoon when Ladong and I birded further wooded areas. We went back to Kampot for 5pm.



33 Asian Fairy-bluebird



34 Red-headed Trogon



35 Olive-backed Pipit



36 Hainan Blue Flycatcher, female

Day 14 – Bokor and the coast

Myself and Ladong went back up to Bokor and the girls went to visit a Pepper Plantation and then get a massage.... This morning the mountain had no cloud at all and we went on a different path into the forest. The primary objective was Chestnut-headed Partridge. After 2 hours we had not seen nor heard one. However after a quick toilet break, I had one on the forest path which was hidden from Ladong. This bird was inquisitive to the call been played but never called once.

Other birding highlights included:

Alstroms Warbler
Richards Pipit
Streaked Wren-babbler

Red-headed Trogon
White-browed Scimitar Babbler

In the early afternoon we visited a mangroves and beach area beyond the saltpans where we added:

Humes White-eye
Striated Heron
Barred Buttonquail
Common Sandpiper

Golden-bellied Gerrygone
Caspian Tern
Greenshank



1 Plain Prinia



2 Golden-bellied Gerrygone

Day 15 – Kampot Saltpans and Kep

This was Christmas Day and we all went to the salt pans for first light. Our driver took the girls to the 'beach area' whilst Ladong and I birded the salt pans. The salt pans were light on birds and waders were often distant. Stints in particular were very challenging at a distance. Highlights were:

Red-necked Stint
Long-toed Stint
Curlew

Lesser Sand Plover
Greater Sand Plover
Grey Plover

We then drove on to Kep where we were staying at the Veranda Natural Resort, a really nice hotel. As it was Christmas Day, we took it easy. The hotel adjoined Kep National Park and I took a walk up the hill on the road past the Led Zep Café. This was a really nice walk with birds seen including:

Blue Whistling-Thrush
Dark-sided Flycatcher

Ashy-headed Green Pigeon

Day 16 – Koh Ronsay (Rabbit Island)

Today was the first lie in of the trip for me. After a delicious breakfast, we took a Tuk-Tuk from our hotel at 8am and were on Rabbit Island for 9am. I took a walk for a couple of hours along a gravel road on the north of the island. Highlights of the boat trip and walk included:

Crested Goshawk

Black-naped Tern

White-bellied Sea Eagle
Indian White-eye
Common Hill Myna

Pink-necked Green Pigeon
Indochinese Blue-flycatcher
Great Iora

I returned to the beach for some time in a hammock and took another walk early afternoon but in the heat of the day, things were quiet. We left the island in the mid afternoon and returned to the hotel for a swim and an evening meal in Kep Sur Mer which was an excellent restaurant.



3 Dark-sided Flycatcher (juvenile)



4 Rabbit Island with the mainland in the distance

Day 17 – Kep to Phnom Penh

I had another lie in this morning and I went for breakfast at seven. After breakfast I took a walk up the road in Kep National park. At the top of the hill there was a tower from which I had views of Crested Serpent Eagle and Shikra. Overall Kep National Park is nice with relaxed birding. I would also highly recommend the Veranda Resort where we stayed. It was within walking distance of Kep town (15 mins), had superb facilities and ready access to Kep National Park.

In the afternoon, we set out on the drive to Phnom Penh. It was about 3.5 hours drive. On reaching our hotel, the Duong Chan Hotel, we took it easy for the rest of the day.

Day 18 - Phnom Penh sightseeing

This was a day of sightseeing in Phnom Penh. We went to Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, the former school that became a torture and death centre under the Khmer Rouge and Pol Pot. We took a guide (\$10) and it is obviously a harrowing experience - although nothing compared to anyone who endured it during the Khmer Rouge.

Later we then went to the Choeung Ek Genocidal Center (the 'Killing Fields') about 30 minutes away. An equally harrowing experience but bringing the realities of how a nation can be led by one manipulative leader and be so brutal. I did not bring my binoculars and it felt more appropriate at the site to be focussed on learning about the history rather than the birds. Those birds that I did see included Watercock and Malaysian Pied-Fantail along with the ever present Yellow-browed's that were calling away.

The afternoon was spent at the Russian Market and the hotel pool.



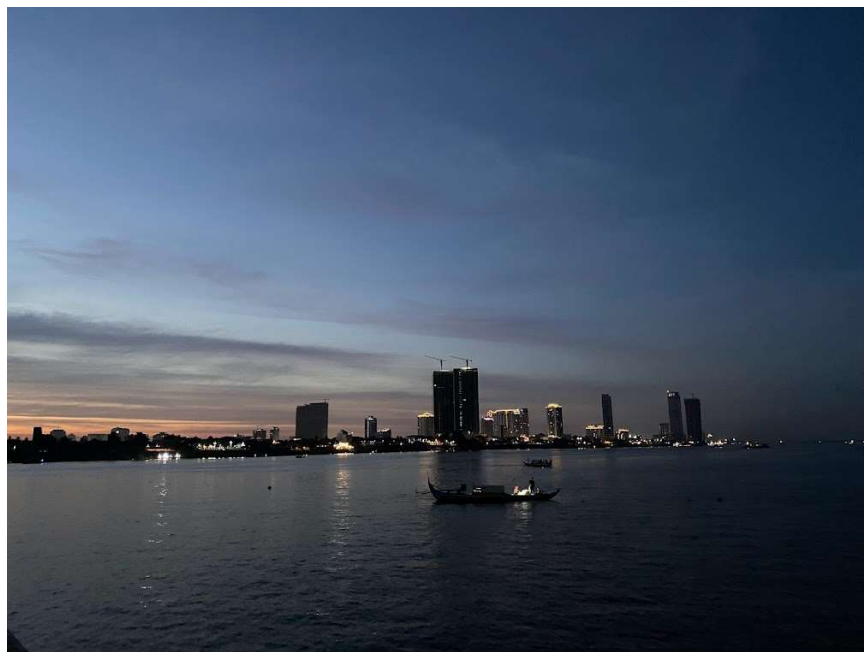
5 S21 Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, School \ Torture Site



6 Stupa, Choeung Ek, 'The Killing Fields'

Day 19 - Phnom Penh

This was our last day in Phnom Penh and was more sightseeing. In the morning we went to the Royal Palace and then the Central Market before heading to the hotel pool in the early afternoon. That evening we took a Sunset Cruise on the river. Again no birding nor birds today.



7 Phnom Penn from our sunset cruise

Day 20 - Phnom Penh to Singapore

Today we flew early morning to Singapore. We reached our hotel at 2pm after departing Phnom Penh at 9:30am. This time we were staying in the east of Singapore in the Katong area for one night. After a quick walk around the neighbourhood, I headed down to the beach area (East Coast Park) for some birding amongst the many joggers, walkers, cyclists, construction and workers and everyone else. Despite the number of people I still picked up a few nice birds including:

Collared Kingfishers (my first of the trip)
Black-napped Orioles that showed really well.
More Yellow-browed Warblers

Day 21 – Singapore and travel home

This was to be the last day which coincidentally was New Years Eve. I had a choice to go back to the Botanic Gardens and look for the crane or head somewhere new. I decided to go somewhere new and set off for Pasir Ris, not far from the airport. I used the efficient bus and MRT system. My main target at Pasir Ris was to see a Buffy Fish Owl that had been there recently. However it eluded me although I did turn up 26 species that morning with highlights including:

Black Baza (4)
Spotted Wood Owl
White-bellied Sea Eagles (3+)
Oriental Honey Buzzard
Swinhoes White-eye

Common Tailorbird
Barn Swallow
Oriental Pied-Hornbill
Crested Honey-buzzard
Little Egret



8 Pasir Ris Park, when encountering a photographic twitch.



9 Spotted Wood Owl

I headed back to the hotel for 2pm and we set off for the airport that evening to spend some time before our flight at 'The Jewel'. The 'Jewel' is no doubt a stunning facility at the airport with the worlds largest indoor waterfall although it is in essence a large shopping centre! It is landside so is also a popular visitor attraction for locals.

Our Singapore Airlines flight left just after midnight about 30 minutes late and we arrived back in Ireland (with our bags this time) on New Years day.

Possible Itinerary Changes

I was fortunate to be doing this trip over Christmas where I could manage three weeks away. However if an itinerary needed to be shortened, changes that could be made without significantly compromising the birding are eg:

- Dropping a day to ATT - there are no major species that you cannot see elsewhere this time of year.
- At Bokor, the salt pans could have been done in an afternoon after having visited Bokor in the morning.

Conclusion

So that was it. Overall a great trip with 260 species.

Singapore was modern, green and humid with birds relatively easy to see. I managed to see 60 species there (which included a few exotics...).

Cambodia is still developing but the birds are in many cases endangered and the country is developing so rapidly, you would have to fear for wildlife and the environment. However the people were extremely friendly despite the traumas that they have been through. In all I seen 226 species in Cambodia.

Both countries were great to visit with many highlights beyond the birding.

Many thanks go to Sam Veasna Tours for their guiding and help in organising our arrangements in Cambodia.

Wilton Farrelly

(Feel free to contact me for any advice on this trip report at: wilton 'dot' farrelly 'at' live.co.uk)

Species List

Note – all these species were seen. I have not included any species that were heard only or where I got poor or brief views of the species.

Singapore:

No.	Common Name	Scientific Name
1	Swinhoe's White-eye	Zosterops simplex
2	Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica
3	Common Tailorbird	Orthotomus sutorius
4	Oriental Pied-Hornbill	Anthracoceros albirostris
5	Spotted Wood-Owl	Strix seloputo
6	Black Baza	Aviceda leuphotes
7	Oriental Honey-buzzard	Pernis ptilorhynchus
8	Little Egret	Egretta garzetta
9	Yellow-browed Warbler	Phylloscopus inornatus
10	Collared Kingfisher	Todiramphus chloris
11	Little Spiderhunter	Arachnothera longirostra
12	Blue-throated Bee-eater	Merops viridis
13	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Haliaeetus leucogaster
14	Brahminy Kite	Haliastur indus
15	Chestnut-bellied Malkoha	Phaenicophaeus sumatranus
16	Dark-necked Tailorbird	Orthotomus atrogularis
17	Long-tailed Parakeet	Psittacula longicauda
18	Rose-ringed Parakeet	Psittacula krameri
19	Pied Imperial-Pigeon	Ducula bicolor

21	Olive-backed Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris jugularis</i>
22	Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>
23	Pacific Swallow	<i>Hirundo tahitica</i>
24	Ashy Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus ruficeps</i>
25	Malaysian Pied-Fantail	<i>Rhipidura javanica</i>
26	Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>
27	Common Flameback	<i>Dinopium javanense</i>
28	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
29	Pink-necked Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron vernans</i>
30	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
31	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>
32	Common Hill Myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>
33	Asian Glossy Starling	<i>Aplonis panayensis</i>
34	Yellow-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus goiavier</i>
35	Amur Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone incei</i>
36	Crow-billed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus annectens</i>
37	Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>
38	Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>
39	Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
40	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>
41	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>
42	Zebra Dove	<i>Geopelia striata</i>
43	Lesser Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>
44	Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>
46	Javan Myna	<i>Acridotheres javanicus</i>
47	White-crested Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax leucolophus</i>
48	Pin-striped Tit-Babbler	<i>Mixornis gularis</i>
49	Olive-winged Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus plumosus</i>
50	Straw-headed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus zeylanicus</i>
51	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>
52	Lineated Barbet	<i>Psilopogon lineatus</i>
53	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopaceus</i>
54	Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>
55	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
56	Brown-throated Sunbird	<i>Antheptes malacensis</i>
57	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
58	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
59	Intermediate Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>
60	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>

Cambodia:

No.	Common Name	Scientific Name
1	Indochinese Blue Flycatcher	Cyornis sumatrensis
2	Common Hill Myna	Gracula religiosa
3	Great Iora	Aegithina lafresnayei
4	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Haliaeetus leucogaster
5	Crested Goshawk	Accipiter trivirgatus
6	Black-naped Tern	Sterna sumatrana
7	Pink-necked Green-Pigeon	Treron vernans
8	Blue Whistling-Thrush	Myophonus caeruleus
9	Dark-sided Flycatcher	Muscicapa sibirica
10	Ashy-headed Green-Pigeon	Treron phayrei
11	Red-necked Stint	Calidris ruficollis
12	Long-toed Stint	Calidris subminuta
13	Eurasian Curlew	Numenius arquata
14	Greater Sand-Plover	Charadrius leschenaultii
15	Lesser Sand-Plover	Charadrius mongolus
16	Black-bellied Plover	Pluvialis squatarola
17	Hume's White-eye	Zosterops auriventer
18	Golden-bellied Gerygone	Gerygone sulphurea
19	Striated Heron	Butorides striata
20	Caspian Tern	Hydroprogne caspia
21	Barred Buttonquail	Turnix suscitator
22	Common Greenshank	Tringa nebularia
23	Common Sandpiper	Actitis hypoleucos
24	Richard's Pipit	Anthus richardi
25	Streaked Wren-Babbler	Gypsophila brevicaudata
26	White-browed Scimitar-Babbler	Pomatorhinus schisticeps
27	Alström's Warbler	Phylloscopus soror
28	Red-headed Trogon	Harpactes erythrocephalus
29	Chestnut-headed Partridge	Arborophila cambodiana
30	Olive-backed Pipit	Anthus hodgsoni
31	Gray Wagtail	Motacilla cinerea
32	Asian Fairy-bluebird	Irena puella
33	Crimson Sunbird	Aethopyga siparaja
34	Brown-throated Sunbird	Anthreptes malacensis
35	Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush	Garrulax monileger
36	Pin-striped Tit-Babbler	Mixornis gularis
37	Sulphur-breasted Warbler	Phylloscopus ricketti
38	Eastern Crowned Warbler	Phylloscopus coronatus
39	Gray-eyed Bulbul	Iole propinqua
40	Black-headed Bulbul	Brachypodius melanocephalus
41	Amur Paradise-Flycatcher	Terpsiphone incei
42	Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo	Dicrurus remifer
43	White-bellied Erpornis	Erpornis zantholeuca

44	Black-winged Cuckooshrike	<i>Lalage melaschistos</i>
45	Moustached Barbet	<i>Psilopogon incognitus</i>
46	Great Hornbill	<i>Buceros bicornis</i>
47	Mountain Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus nipalensis</i>
48	Cambodian Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus chaktomuk</i>
49	Mekong Wagtail	<i>Motacilla samveasnae</i>
50	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
51	Small Pratincole	<i>Glareola lactea</i>
52	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
53	Asian Golden Weaver	<i>Ploceus hypoxanthus</i>
54	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
55	Watercock	<i>Gallicrex cinerea</i>
56	Stripe-throated Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus finlaysoni</i>
57	Asian Barred Owlet	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>
58	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>
59	White-rumped Falcon	<i>Neohierax insignis</i>
60	Great Slaty Woodpecker	<i>Mulleripicus pulverulentus</i>
61	Lesser Yellownappe	<i>Picus chlorolophus</i>
62	Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Leiopicus mahrattensis</i>
63	Yellow-footed Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicopterus</i>
64	Collared Scops-Owl	<i>Otus lettia</i>
65	Chestnut-tailed Starling	<i>Sturnia malabarica</i>
66	Burmese Nuthatch	<i>Sitta neglecta</i>
67	White-crested Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax leucolophus</i>
68	Radde's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus schwarzi</i>
69	Black-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus erythropygius</i>
70	Greater Flameback	<i>Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus</i>
71	Savanna Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>
72	Chinese Francolin	<i>Francolinus pintadeanus</i>
73	Blue-winged Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</i>
74	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>
75	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>
76	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>
77	Lanceolated Warbler	<i>Locustella lanceolata</i>
78	Rufescent Prinia	<i>Prinia rufescens</i>
79	Brown Prinia	<i>Prinia polychroa</i>
80	Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>
81	Red-billed Blue-Magpie	<i>Urocissa erythroryncha</i>
82	Hair-crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>
83	Common Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus</i>
84	Large Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis virgatus</i>
85	Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>
86	Blossom-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula roseata</i>
87	Rufous-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos hyperythrus</i>
88	Brown Wood-Owl	<i>Strix leptogrammica</i>
89	Brown Fish-Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>

90	Oriental Scops-Owl	Otus sunia
91	Changeable Hawk-Eagle	Nisaetus cirrhatus
92	Giant Ibis	Pseudibis gigantea
93	Indochinese Bushlark	Mirafra erythrocephala
94	Burmese Shrike	Lanius collurioides
95	Gray-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	Yungipicus canicapillus
96	Eurasian Hoopoe	Upupa epops
97	White-shouldered Ibis	Pseudibis davisoni
98	Sooty-headed Bulbul	Pycnonotus aurigaster
99	Large Cuckooshrike	Coracina macei
100	Common Flameback	Dinopium javanense
101	Oriental Honey-buzzard	Pernis ptilorhynchus
102	Crested Treeswift	Hemiprocne coronata
103	Brown-backed Needletail	Hirundapus giganteus
104	Yellow-breasted Bunting	Emberiza aureola
105	Chestnut Munia	Lonchura atricapilla
106	Siamese Pied Starling	Gracupica floweri
107	Striated Grassbird	Cincloramphus palustris
108	Oriental Skylark	Alauda gulgula
109	Pied Harrier	Circus melanoleucos
110	Asian Woolly-necked Stork	Ciconia episcopus
111	Pin-tailed Snipe	Gallinago stenura
112	Sarus Crane	Antigone antigone
113	Bengal Florican	Houbaropsis bengalensis
114	Plain-backed Sparrow	Passer flaveolus
115	Black-collared Starling	Gracupica nigricollis
116	Bank Swallow	Riparia riparia
117	Black-browed Reed Warbler	Acrocephalus bistrigiceps
118	Malaysian Pied-Fantail	Rhipidura javanica
119	Ashy Woodswallow	Artamus fuscus
120	Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus
121	Collared Falconet	Microhierax caerulescens
122	Freckle-breasted Woodpecker	Dendrocopos analis
123	Asian Green Bee-eater	Merops orientalis
124	Eastern Marsh-Harrier	Circus spilonotus
125	Rufous-winged Buzzard	Butastur liventer
126	Greater Spotted Eagle	Clanga clanga
127	Black-winged Kite	Elanus caeruleus
128	Glossy Ibis	Plegadis falcinellus
129	Yellow Bittern	Ixobrychus sinensis
130	Wood Sandpiper	Tringa glareola
131	Green Sandpiper	Tringa ochropus
132	Pheasant-tailed Jacana	Hydrophasianus chirurgus
133	Gray-headed Swamphen	Porphyrio poliocephalus
134	Eurasian Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus
135	Greater Coucal	Centropus sinensis

136	Red Collared-Dove	<i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i>
137	Indian Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>
138	Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>
139	Lesser Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>
140	Eastern Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla tschutschensis</i>
141	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
142	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
143	Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>
144	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>
145	Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum cruentatum</i>
146	Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>
147	Amur Stonechat	<i>Saxicola stejnegeri</i>
148	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
149	Great Myna	<i>Acridotheres grandis</i>
150	Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>
151	Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>
152	Yellow-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus goiavier</i>
153	Oriental Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus orientalis</i>
154	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>
155	Yellow-bellied Prinia	<i>Prinia flaviventris</i>
156	Dark-necked Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus atrogularis</i>
157	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
158	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>
159	Racket-tailed Treepie	<i>Cypseloides niger</i>
160	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
161	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>
162	White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>
163	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tithys</i>
164	Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>
165	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
166	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
167	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
168	Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
169	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
170	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
171	Intermediate Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>
172	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
173	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
174	Gray Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
175	Spot-billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>
176	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>
177	Little Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo niger</i>
178	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>
179	Milky Stork	<i>Mycteria cinerea</i>
180	Greater Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos dubius</i>
181	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>

182	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>
183	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>
184	Plaintive Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>
185	Lesser Coucal	<i>Centropus bengalensis</i>
186	Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>
187	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>
188	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
189	Forest Wagtail	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>
190	Olive-backed Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris jugularis</i>
191	Blue Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>
192	White-throated Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola gularis</i>
193	Taiga Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>
194	Verditer Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias thalassinus</i>
195	Hainan Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis hainanus</i>
196	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>
197	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
198	Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>
199	Streak-eared Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus conradi</i>
200	Black-crested Bulbul	<i>Rubigula flaviventris</i>
201	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
202	Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>
203	Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>
204	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>
205	Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>
206	Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>
207	Red-breasted Parakeet	<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>
208	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>
209	Lineated Barbet	<i>Psilopogon lineatus</i>
210	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i>
211	Indochinese Roller	<i>Coracias affinis</i>
212	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
213	Oriental Pied-Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros albirostris</i>
214	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>
215	Crested Serpent-Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>
216	Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>
217	Chinese Pond-Heron	<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>
218	Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>
219	Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>
220	Bronze-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>
221	Asian Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>
222	Germain's Swiftlet	<i>Aerodramus germani</i>
223	Green-billed Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus tristis</i>
224	Zebra Dove	<i>Geopelia striata</i>
225	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
226	Cotton Pygmy-Goose	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>



2 The magnificent 'Tomb Raider' Ta Prohm Temple near Siem Reap, Cambodia