

TRIP REPORT

KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK ASSAM, INDIA

4th – 7th DECEMBER, 2006

BY PRITAM BARUAH

INTRODUCTION

Kaziranga National Park in Assam has to be one of the best places to experience wildlife in India. Located in the floodplains of the mighty Brahmaputra River, the park's ecology is unique in that it is representative of three distinct bio-geographic regions - the Eastern Himalayas, Indo-Malayan and Indo-Gangetic regions. Its location is at the junction of two global biodiversity hotspots - Eastern Himalayas and Indo-Burma. This unique situation has led to very high species diversity, which in turn implies that wildlife watching is quite rewarding here.

The National Park's importance in wildlife conservation is among the highest in the world because it is one of the last remaining refuges for a large number of faunal species. In addition, it is the largest tract of wet tropical grassland habitat left in the Brahmaputra basin. UNESCO declared it a World Heritage Site in 1985. The following sums up the park's importance:

- *About 75% of the world population of Great One Horned Rhinoceros (~1800).*
- *About 70% of the world population of Asiatic Water Buffalo (~1500).*
- *Almost the entire world population of the Eastern Swamp Deer (~500).*
- *Highest density of tigers of any protected area in the world (~17 per 100 sq km).*
- *Highest number of endangered, threatened and near-threatened bird species of any protected area in the Indian subcontinent (46).*
- *Globally significant population of Asian Elephant (~1200)*

Kaziranga has always been famous as a premier birding and large-mammal watching site. With over 520 species of birds and over 50 species of mammals, it offers remarkable opportunity to spot and observe wildlife. My main targets on this visit were its grassland birds, waterfowl and its "Big Five" mammals – Great One-Horned Rhino, Water Buffalo, Asian Elephant, Tiger and Eastern Swamp Deer. We did not do very well with grassland birds but even so, managed to see many interesting species including two species that were never recorded from the area before (Eye-Browed Wren Babbler & Long-Billed Plover).

Because foot access is not permitted within the national park boundary (which is a good idea given the presence of potentially dangerous mammals), one way to squeeze more out of a trip is to explore contiguous habitat in its surroundings area. This is why we scheduled bird walks in the adjoining tea plantations. The joy of walking through a picturesque tea estate on a foggy morning looking for little forest birds, the silence broken only by bird song, is surely an experience to cherish.

I stayed at the excellent Wild Grass Lodge - a rustic and beautiful lodge that exudes traditional charm. Its proud staff is almost entirely local and its hospitality is among the best. For food, I strongly recommend Wild Grass' local Assamese cuisine - simple, tasty and healthy. Furthermore, Wild Grass' field staffs,

consisting of nature guides and vehicle drivers are very competent and enthusiastic. Using guides to aid spotting on field trips can make a huge difference to the quality of the trip. Though they never solicit tips, it is recommended that customers show their appreciation by way of a good tip at the end of the trip.

Overall, this was a very satisfying wildlife-watching trip and I look forward to visiting Kaziranga again soon. Despite missing some key species, the final tally was a very good 215 species of birds and 22 species of mammals and reptiles. Of these, 17 species among the birds and 10 species among the mammals and reptiles had special IUCN Red List status. 2 of the bird species were new records for the park.

PARTICIPANTS

- *Pritam Baruah*
- *Polash Bora (local guide)*
- *Gokul Dang (local guide)*

ITENERARY & DIARY

December 4th 2006

- *Drive to the park.*
- *Wildlife viewing from the highway.*
- *Check into Wild Grass Lodge.*
- *PM drive through the central range.*

The aim was to start from Guwahati early enough to reach Wild Grass so that there is time to settle in, have lunch and then head out for the PM drive through Kohora range which starts at 2.00pm. We also wanted to reach the western edge of Kaziranga (Kukurakata Reserved Forest) by 11.45 am because from then on, the journey is slowed down by roadside wildlife viewing. The stretch of National Highway 37 from Kukurakata to Wild Grass Lodge took us through marshes, forest and cultivation and was as usual, quite exciting.

Two Black Kites circled above the Kukurakata forests by the side of the highway as we entered the area. The three main viewpoints - Gajraj (by the highway on a hill), Mohi Miri (side track to top of a small hillock from the highway) and the one near Kanchanjuri (on the highway overlooking a marsh and forest edge), are usually quite productive. We got lucky on the first stop at Gajraj where we saw the only Blue-Eared Barbet of the trip in forest south of the highway. Two circling Grey-Headed Fish Eagles (just over the tree-line next to the highway), Rhinos and a herd of Wild Buffalo were seen too.

The next stop was at the viewpoint near Kanchanjuri. Among the usual here, we spotted Wild Buffalo, Rhino, a small herd of Elephants and some Hog Deer. But surprisingly we also scoped two Sambars standing near the forest edge. Woolly-Necked Stork, Crested Serpent Eagle and Lesser Adjutant were some of the prominent birds.

We called Wild Grass en route and requested them to have lunch ready for us by the time we reached. We were in the lodge by 1 am and after a hearty traditional Assamese lunch we headed out to the central range. Birding was slow on the first evening but sightings were good enough such that we could not finish the entire circuit. We only got as far as the Kawoimari-Arimora fork after which we had to backtrack so that we were out of the park before nightfall. The highlight of the evening was an incredible experience with a pair of Great Hornbills at Kathpora. Other important sightings were - Swamp Francolin, Northern Lapwing,

Black-Headed Ibis, Stork-Billed Kingfisher, Pallas's Fish Eagle, Greater Spotted Eagle, Common Kestrel, Black-Necked Stork, Spot-Billed Pelican and an out-of-season Watercock at Daphlong.

December 5th 2006

- *Early AM birding in tea plantation.*
- *AM drive through the western range.*
- *PM drive through the central range.*

We headed to a tea plantation that is accessible on foot from Wild Grass. Since the sun rises early in North East India, we could start birding while it was still dark at about 5.30am. By the time the first birds started calling at the break of dawn, we were already inside the tea plantation busy deciphering the cacophony of birdcalls. Birding was good, especially of passerines. Sunbirds, Minivets, Laughingtrushes and a few vocal Abbot Babblers were the order of the morning. We encountered a singing Siberian Rubythroat, 4 species of Laughingtrushes and a Green Magpie. But the morning belonged to an Eye-Browed Wren Babbler - a species never before recorded in the area. The lowest altitude it was ever recorded previously, was at 350 meters ASL. It tamely darted around in a bush about 15 feet away for at least 5 minutes after which it disappeared.

We hurried back to the lodge for a quick breakfast after which we left for Bagori. Unfortunately we had arrived too late and the entry registration office was closed. A female Blue Rock Thrush and some cute baby goats (a few days old) kept us company while we waited for the office to be opened. Once inside we immediately scoped a Mountain Hawk-Eagle by the forest edge. With great anticipation we reached Dunga Beel (A '**Beel**' is a small water body) but to our dismay we found it completely devoid of waterfowl. Mammals did not disappoint however and the view from the watchtower teemed with Wild Boar, Swamp Deer, Hog Deer, Wild Buffalo, Rhino and Elephant. The most interesting sight was a failed attempt to catch a fish by a Pallas's Fish Eagle. A Common Kingfisher made an appearance and just as we were about to leave, a flock of 25+ Northern Lapwings flew in. Grey Headed Lapwings were notably common. As we continued on the drive, our luck changed for the better. We spotted a Striated Babbler in grassland, a Tri-colored Long-Tailed Shrike, Lesser and Greater Yellownape, Green Billed Malkoha, a single Eastern Water Rail, White-Rumped Vulture, a soaring juvenile Eurasian Griffon and a bold White-Rumped Shama. Just as we were about to exit the forested stretch in the northern part of the circuit, we spotted a Eurasian Sparrowhawk.

After lunch in the lodge, we again went to Kohora. Just like the previous evening, our driving progress was rather slow because of excellent bird sightings and opportunity to observe waterfowl. Birding highlights were three species of Snipe and a Long Billed Plover (a species not in the Park's checklist). In all, 14 species of waders were encountered. Ashy and Plain Prinia, a Yellow Browed Warbler and an assortment of raptors were seen too.

The evening however was capped off by an excellent experience with Elephants: We were observing waders at Kathpora beel when the sound of crashing grass near the track hinted that a herd was preparing to cross the track. The elephants soon became visible but they were nervous because of our presence. A young tusker emerged from the grass and walked around on the track about 30 meters in front of the jeep. A young female soon joined it. The rest of the herd continued feeding very close to the track and were barely visible even though they were very close. About 30 minutes later however, a few elephants slowly crossed the track and another few including the matriarch joined the two that were already on the track. 15 minutes later the 6 elephants on the track descended onto the other side. We took this opportunity to move our jeep right into the herd and we found ourselves surrounded by elephants. The loud sound of crashing vegetation was everywhere. It was one of the best experiences of my life. But suddenly all hell broke loose - the elephants

that had crossed the track went into a screaming frenzy and they seemed to chase something inside the dense grassland. To avoid getting caught in a stampede, we quickly drove out ahead a safe 30 meters. We soon realized there was a tiger somewhere in the grass that made the herd very agitated. A foul smell wafted out of the grass, which probably meant that the tiger was trying to recover a kill it had cached earlier. We were hoping the tiger would show up either on the track or on a nearby clearing where a small herd of hog deer were shifting nervously while witnessing all this. There was considerable excitement in the air and that peaked when the deer suddenly bolted away furiously. But the elephants seemed to chase the tiger away in the opposite direction and soon everything calmed down. The tiger, now distant in the grassland, growled out loud, the deer returned to grazing and the elephants that had crossed the track, rejoined the others who hadn't crossed. We waited in silence atop the Kathpora tower and watched the surroundings soak in the ochre hue of the setting sun. Pelicans, Storks, Egrets and thousands of Parakeets, Mynas and Pigeons flew to their roosts. We wove our way out of the park just as darkness set in, drawing the magical evening to an end.

December 6th 2006

- *Early AM birding at Panbari*
- *Whole day drive in the eastern range including Debeswari.*

We planned the day such that time spent in non-birding activity was minimized. We decided to do Panbari and Agartoli for the whole day because relative to Wild Grass both were due east on NH-37. A jeep would leave us at Panbari after which it would return to Wild Grass to bring packed breakfast and lunch. After birding at Panbari, we would have breakfast in the jeep while driving to Agartoli. Lunch would be at Debeswari. After that we would retrace our way and be out of the park by dusk. We had obtained prior permission from Park HQ to spend the entire day inside Agartoli and also visit Debeswari Chapori.

The early morning walk in the dense forests of Panbari was quite productive. We wore special socks (*Juk Muja*) to keep leeches away. Our targets here were forest birds and North Eastern primates such as Assamese Macaque, Capped Langur and the prized Hoolock Gibbon. We soon ran into several mixed feeding flocks of Minivets, Woodpeckers, Flycatchers, Drongos, Bulbuls, Warblers and Leafbirds. A rarely seen Maroon Oriole flew past in dense forest and a Black-Winged Cuckooshrike gave us lengthy views. Some other highlights were - Greater Flameback, a grooming Great Hornbill, Blue-Throated Barbet, Blue-Bearded Bee-eater, Asian Fairy Bluebird, Grey-Bellied Tesia, Little Spiderhunter, Lesser Racket-Tailed Drongo, Red Throated Flycatcher, Small Niltava and Large Niltava. All three targeted primate species were seen, of which the Hoolock Gibbon sighting was especially memorable. We also startled a full-grown male Barking Deer and heard a large troupe of Gibbons calling from distance. We left Panbari only at about 8.30am so that we did not reach Agartoli before the fog cleared over Sohola.

At the entrance to Agartoli, we discussed the day's plans and permissions with the Range Officer on duty and drove in hoping that unlike Dunga in the western range, Sohola would disappoint on waterfowl. It did not. Though the total waterfowl count was small this season because of low rainfall, species diversity was still high. The first thing we noticed at Sohola was the abundance of Water Hyacinth covering the water surface. That surely contributed to the low waterfowl numbers. The wetland had an assortment of ducks, waders, egrets, cormorants, storks and raptors. Large mammals were everywhere. Most significantly we counted a herd of about 33 critically endangered Eastern Swamp Deer.

We also had close views of a Slender-Billed Vulture and a juvenile Eurasian Griffon perched on the same tree. A few House Crows, Mynas and Black Drongos were harassing them. A stunning pair of Pied Harriers flew by very close to the jeep track and we also got prolonged views of an adult Peregrine Falcon. 11 species of ducks and 12 species of waders were seen at Sohola. Two Black-Necked Storks were seen too.

The onward drive through Agaratoli took us through some excellent mixed habitat - semi-evergreen and moist deciduous forest to the left and riparian forest, beels, marshes and grassland to the right. The only Indian Spotted Eagle and Steppe Eagle of the trip were seen here. Some other sightings were - Dusky Warbler, Blyth's Leaf Warbler, Striated Grassbird, Velvet-Fronted Nuthatch, Verditer Flycatcher, Greater Adjutant, Great White Pelican and Spot-Billed Pelican.

Kaziranga's grassland specialty birds were undoubtedly our target birds at Debeswari. Unfortunately, in the absence of tape-playback, we dipped on all of them. We did however hear the range-restricted and endangered Black-Breasted Parrotbill and that is considered a trip highlight. The only Lesser Coucal of the trip was seen here. We had lunch at the forest guard camp and chatted with the forest guards about their lives and Kaziranga. On my previous visit to Debeswari (in April 2005), I had an excellent encounter with an immense male tiger in its prime, looking to kill a Swamp Deer fawn while its mother kept trying to distract the monster. The mother deer and the tiger were in full view on a dried-up water channel. This time I did not see any here. Seeing a tiger amidst the flat tree-less grassland habitat of Debeswari has a strange primal satisfaction to it. We did see pugmarks of a female and a sub-adult male tiger in the dry sandy channel that separates the chapori (river island) from the mainland.

December 7th 2006

- *Early AM birding in tea plantation.*
- *AM drive through the central range.*
- *Check out and drive back to Guwahati with stops at viewpoints.*

We started our last morning in the tea plantations and that turned out to be a good decision because we added about 12 new species to the trip list. The morning started with the first Oriental Honey Buzzard of the trip - a common bird seen quite late on this trip. We heard a Blue-Naped Pitta call for several minutes but unfortunately it did not show. A small stream produced a Black-Backed Forktail, a Blue-Whistling Trush and some White-Vented Myna. Other highlights were Little-Pied Flycatcher, Daurian Redstart, White-Browed Piculet, Rufous Woodpecker, Red-Rumped Swallow, Puff-Throated Babbler and White-Browed Scimitter Babbler.

We decided to go to the central range for the last AM drive to maximize our chances for some remaining target species - Bengal Florican, Land Monitor and Water Monitor. We dipped on the first one but had excellent sightings of the two lizard species. The detour to Daphlong Beel produced one of the birding highlights of the trip - a small flock of the severely threatened and rarely seen Finn's Weaver. Later, we gained yet another highlight when a few Imperial Eagles surprised us. The excellent morning was capped off by two more absolute highlights - we saw a Tiger cross the jeep track in front of us and were charged at by a large male Rhino.

REFERENCES

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- [3] Birds of Kaziranga National Park. *Maan Barua, Pankaj Sharma*. Forktail 2005.
- [4] The Birds of Assam. *Anwaruddin Choudhury*. Gibbon Books & WWF India, 2000.
- [5] Ecological Status and Conservation of Tigers in India. *Ullas Karanth, J.D.Nichols*. Wildlife Conservation Society, Final Technical Report 1995 - 2000.
- [6] Eastern Himalayas Region Factsheet. WWF Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund, 2005.

KEY

Quality of selected sightings:

- * : Uncommon sighting (or) Species with special IUCN Red List status.
** : All of the above (or) Good sighting of an uncommon species (or) Very high personal satisfaction.
*** : All of the above (or) Park specialty (or) Very good sighting of a rare species (or) Stray record.
**** : All of the above (or) New park record (or) Extraordinary sighting (or) Most important refuge.

IUCN Red List Categories:

[CR] : Critically Endangered, [EN] : Endangered, [VU] : Vulnerable, [NT] : Near Threatened

Locations named in this report:

W : Western Range (Bagori) : Dunga Beel, Rowmari
C : Central Range (Kohora): Mihimukh, Kathpora, Daphlong Beel, Kawoimari, Mona Beel
E : Eastern Range (Agaratoli) : Sohola Beel, Rongamatia, Koladuar, Ahotguri, Debeswari
P : Panbari
T : Tea Plantations
M : Miscellaneous : Cultivation, orchards, paddy fields, highway, tourist viewpoints and so on.

The lists below consist of 215 birds (including 2 that were only heard), 18 mammals and 4 reptiles. 9 select photos are pasted at the end of the document.

Some common birds missed: Kalij Pheasant, Lesser Whistling-Duck, Cotton Pygmy-Goose, Common Pochard, Ferruginous Pochard, Blue-Tailed Bee-eater, Brown Fish-Owl, Pheasant-Tailed Jacana, Brahminy Kite, Hen Harrier, Black Stork, Black Bulbul, Streaked Weaver.

Some star birds hoped for but missed: Bengal Florican, Grey Peacock Pheasant, Red-Headed Trogon, Jerdon's Baza, Black Baza, Pied Falconet, Slender-Billed Babbler, Jerdon's Babbler, Marsh Babbler, Bristled Grassbird, Swamp Prinia, Hodgson's Bushchat.

BIRDS

1	Swamp Francolin	<i>Francolinus gularis</i>	***	W C	[VU] Fairly common along grassland edges and marshes. Excellent views.
2	Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>		W C E	Common throughout the park.
3	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>		E	Over 40 seen at <i>Sohola beel</i> . Wintering waterfowl numbers were rather low, possibly because of low water levels.
4	Bar-Headed Goose	<i>Anser indicus</i>		E	Over 100 seen at <i>Sohola beel</i> .
5	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>		C E	A few seen at <i>Sohola beel and central range</i> .
6	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>		E	A few seen at <i>Sohola beel</i> .
7	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		W C E	Seen in low numbers at several <i>beels</i> .
8	Indian Spot-Billed Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>		W C E	Common in <i>Beels</i> . Recently given full species status. Chinese <i>Anas zonorhyncha</i> considered straggler to NE India; probably often overlooked.
9	Common Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>		W C E	Commonly seen at many <i>beels</i> .
10	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>		E	4 at <i>Sohola beel</i> .
11	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>		C E	Seen at <i>Daphlong and Sohola beel</i> .
12	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>		C E	Seen at <i>Daphlong and Sohola beel</i> .
13	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>		E	6 at <i>Sohola beel</i> .
14	White-Browed Piculet	<i>Sasia ochracea</i>	*	T	1 seen from close range at a canebrake in TP.
15	Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Celeus brachyurus</i>	*	T	Excellent views of 2 very bold birds from very close range in TP.
16	Lesser Yellownape	<i>Picus chlorolophus</i>		W C E P T	Singles seen throughout the park.
17	Greater Yellownape	<i>Picus flavinucha</i>		W C P	Very good view of a 1 at <i>Panbari</i> .
18	Streak-Throated Woodpecker	<i>Picus xanthopygaeus</i>		W C E	Singles seen at several places.
19	Grey-Headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>		C E	1 each in central and eastern ranges.
20	Black-Rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>		E	1 seen flying and 1 perched.
21	Greater Flameback	<i>Chrysocolaptes lucidus</i>		P T	1 each at TP and <i>Panbari</i> . Another heard at <i>Panbari</i> .
22	Lineated Barbet	<i>Megalaima lineata</i>		W C E P T	Common throughout the park.
23	Blue-Throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima asiatica</i>		E P T	A few seen in several places.
24	Blue-Eared Barbet	<i>Megalaima australis</i>	*	M	1 in forest at <i>Gajraj</i> viewpoint.
25	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>		T	Surprisingly, only 1 seen.
26	Oriental Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros albirostris</i>	*	C E M	Seen flying at <i>Mihimukh</i> and <i>Rongamatia</i> . A flying pair from NH-37 and 2 perched outside Wild Grass.
27	Great Hornbill	<i>Buceros bicornis</i>	**	C P	[NT] Superb prolonged views of a pair at <i>Kathpora</i> , surprisingly amidst extensive grassland. Two of these massive birds flew close to the jeep track and landed at the lowest branches of an isolated tree very close to the track. They then hopped along to the very top of the tree and alternately called out in their impressive loud throaty bark for several minutes, lunging their heads upwards everytime they barked. They took off together, treating us to their trademark <i>whoosh whoosh</i> flight. Also at <i>Panbari</i> - one seen very well grooming and another heard barking and then flying away.
28	Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>		C	Only 1 seen at the entrance gate.
29	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>		W C E P T M	Seen on all days throughout the park and nearby areas.

30	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		W C E		1 each at <i>Dunga beel</i> watchtower, <i>Kawoimari</i> and <i>Rongamatia</i> .
31	Stork-Billed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon amauroptera</i>			C E	1 at <i>Mihimukh</i> bridge and 2 at <i>Agaratoli</i> . Heard on all days.
32	White-Throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>		W C E	M	Several seen on all days in widespread locations.
33	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>		W C E		Several seen fishing on all days.
34	Blue-Bearded Bee-Eater	<i>Nyctyornis athertoni</i>	*		P	2 of these large bee-eaters seen within dense forest in <i>Panbari</i> .
35	Green Bee-Eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>			C P	Only 2 seen.
36	Chestnut-Headed Bee-Eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>			E P T	A few seen in several places.
37	Green-Billed Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus tristis</i>		W		2 seen in mixed forest in <i>Baguri</i> range.
38	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>		W C		A few sightings in tall grassland.
39	Lesser Coucal	<i>Centropus bengalensis</i>			E	Only 1 at <i>Debeswari chapori</i> near the forest guard camp.
40	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>		W C E	T M	Seen in widespread locations. Large flocks frequently seen.
41	Rose-Ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>		W C E	P T M	Large flocks of hundreds seen just before sunset while returning to their roosts. Seen on all days.
42	Blossom-Headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula roseata</i>		W		A single flock seen flying over grassland.
43	Red-Breasted Parakeet	<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>			C E	Single flocks at two locations.
44	Asian Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasensis</i>		W C E	M	Seen daily in widespread locations.
45	House Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>			T	Only 2 flying individuals.
46	Asian Barred Owlet	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>		W C E	P T M	Seen singly and heard at widespread locations.
47	Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>			C E	A pair at <i>Kohora</i> and another pair at entrance to <i>Agaratoli</i> .
48	Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>		W		M Probably feral. 2 at entrance to <i>Bagori</i> and a few elsewhere.
49	Green Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula aenea</i>		W C E	T	Seen daily in widespread locations.
50	Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>		W C E	T M	Seen daily in widespread locations.
51	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>		W C E	P T M	Seen daily in widespread locations. Very common.
52	Red Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i>		W C E	P	A few small flocks seen at scattered sites.
53	Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>			C E	A few seen close to jungle tracks.
54	Yellow-Footed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicoptera</i>		W C E		Commonly seen in widespread locations.
55	Eastern Water Rail	<i>Rallus indicus</i>	*	W		Single individual scoped in marshy edge of the <i>beel</i> located at the intersection of <i>Gendamari</i> track and main <i>Bagori</i> track. It disappeared into dense water hyacinth. Split from European Water Rail.
56	White-Breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>		W C E	M	Seen in several locations daily.
57	Watercock	<i>Gallixrex cinerea</i>	*		C	One among water hyacinth at <i>Daphlong beel</i> , <i>Kohora</i> . This species is uncommon in the <i>Brahmaputra</i> floodplains during winter.
58	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>			C E	Several seen daily.
59	Common Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>			C E	A few swimming at <i>Sohola</i> and <i>Koladuar</i> . A few at a <i>beel</i> near the <i>Kawoimari-Arimora</i> fork.
60	Pintail Snipe	<i>Gallinago megala</i>	*		C	1 seen swimming at a remnant puddle of muddy water off the <i>Kathpora</i> bridge. This almost-dry stream produced a Jack Snipe too.

61	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	*	C	As we watched a Long-Billed Plover and other waders at a marshy section of <i>Kathpora beel</i> , two of these funny birds suddenly materialized out of a depression. We had scoped that small patch of marsh for 15 minutes without spotting them!
62	Jack Snipe	<i>Lymnocyptes minimus</i>	*	C	This was the first of 3 different species of Snipe we spotted within 20 minutes of each other. Quite delighted at finding this uncommon species. 10 meters away from it, we spotted a Pintail Snipe.
63	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>		C E	This was the first of 14 species of waders observed at or near <i>Kathpora beel</i> within a span of 30 minutes. Also seen at <i>Sohola</i> .
64	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		C	Single at <i>Kathpora beel</i> .
65	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>		C E	Singles at <i>Dunga</i> , <i>Kathpora</i> and a few at <i>Sohola</i> .
66	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>		W C E	Singles at <i>Kathpora</i> and <i>Sohola</i> .
67	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		C	1 at <i>Kathpora</i> close to the track.
68	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		W C E	M Regularly seen in scattered wetlands and marshes.
69	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>		E	1 scoped at <i>Sohola</i> .
70	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>		C	1 at <i>Kathpora</i> .
71	Bronze-Winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>		W C E	Regularly seen swimming and a couple seen flying.
72	Long-Billed Plover	<i>Charadrius placidus</i>	****	C	This was a new record for the park. One was observed at a very small patch of marsh that yielded 21 species of birds. Seen alongside two Little-Ringed Plovers.
73	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>		C E	A few seen in the central range and 1 at <i>Sohola</i> .
74	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		W C	A flock of 25+ seen at <i>Dunga beel</i> and a single bird twice at <i>Kathpora</i> (possibly the same bird)
75	Grey-Headed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus cinereus</i>		W C E	Seen daily in widespread locations.
76	Red-Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>		E	Only two seen at <i>Sohola</i> among a flock of Common Teal.
77	River Tern	<i>Sterna aurantia</i>		W C E	Occasional sightings over large <i>beels</i> . Overall numbers seemed to be low this winter.
78	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>		W C E	Daily sightings for a total of 4.
79	Black-Shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>			M This was essentially the "last" bird of the trip. This common species eluded us for 3 days. Spotted from a viewpoint off NH-37 on the way out.
80	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>			M Two seen soaring near the western edge of the park at <i>Kukurakata RF</i> .
81	Pallas's Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucoryphus</i>	**	W C E	[VU] This handsome eagle was seen on all days. Total of 8 seen. The central range possibly has the highest density. This species perched on a tall tree surveying a <i>beel</i> is surely one of the most alluring symbols of <i>Kaziranga</i> . Saw one swoop down on a fish at <i>Dunga beel</i> in a failed attempt to catch it.
82	Grey-Headed Fish Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>	*	W C E	M [NT] More common than the previous species. Nice view of one flying low over <i>Rongamatia beel</i> in <i>Agaratoli</i> and a pair soaring over woodland at <i>Gajraj viewpoint</i> , <i>Burapahar</i> . More than 10 seen.
83	White-Rumped Vulture	<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>	**	W	[CR] Two adults flew past over woodland.
84	Slender-Billed Vulture	<i>Gyps tenuirostris</i>	**	E	[CR] One adult seen perched on a leafless tree at the southern edge of <i>Sohola</i> and another seen soaring near the north-western edge.
85	Eurasian Griffon	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>		W E	1 juvenile seen soaring in <i>Bagori</i> and another juvenile seen perched on a tree alongside an adult Slender-Billed Vulture at <i>Sohola</i> .
86	Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>		W C E	M Seen in small numbers throughout the park. One seen on the ground.

87	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		C E	1 over grassland at <i>Mihimukh</i> and another flying low over <i>Sohola</i> .
88	Pied Harrier	<i>Circus melanoleucos</i>	**	E	Awesome view of a female followed by a stunning male very close to the jeep track at <i>Sohola</i> .
89	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>		W C E	1 in western, 3 in central and 1 in eastern range. All 4 provided very good views.
90	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>		W	A single adult seen in mixed forest at <i>Baguri</i> .
91	Oriental Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhyncus</i>		C T	As with the entire trip, this common bird eluded us until the last day when suddenly we were met with a profusion of. 1 over TP and about 10 seen during the final drive through the central range.
92	Indian Spotted Eagle	<i>Aquila Hastata</i>	*	E	[VU] One seen soaring until it descended and settled on a tree near the jeep track.
93	Greater Spotted Eagle	<i>Aquila clanga</i>	**	W C E	[VU] Far more common than the previous species. Seen everyday in small numbers.
94	Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>		E	Single soaring adult positively identified by scoped observation; Dark trailing edge, barred tail and under wing. Some other soaring eagles that could not be identified positively may have been of this species too.
95	Eastern Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>	***	C	[VU] We were astonished to spot this in <i>Kaziranga</i> . 3 adults were seen over grassland about a km south-east of <i>Mona beel</i> . The first one seen was perched, its white scapular spots clearly visible. Soon, 2 more adults were seen soaring in the same area. Though not uncommon in the plains of the northern subcontinent, there are very few records of this species in the Assam plains.
96	Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus limnaeetus</i>		W C E	Seen daily multiple times. All with noticeably short crest. Split from the peninsular species <i>S. cirrhatus</i> which is country endemic.
97	Mountain Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus nipalensis</i>	*	W	Scope view of a perched adult near forest/grassland edge. This species is rarely seen in <i>Kaziranga</i> .
98	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		C E	5 scoped within 10 minutes over <i>Mihimukh</i> grasslands. 2 at <i>Sohola</i> . 1 roosting at dusk on the outer ledge of the <i>Kathpora</i> tower.
99	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>		E	Excellent views of 1 as it flew close by and then settled on a nearby tree.
100	Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>		W C E	[NT] Occasional singles seen basking in marshy edges of beels.
101	Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>		W C E M	Widespread and common.
102	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>		W C E	Small numbers scattered throughout the park.
103	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		W C E M	Seen daily in widespread locations.
104	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		W C E P T M	Small numbers seen daily.
105	Great Egret	<i>Casmerodius albus</i>		W C E M	Singles and small groups seen all over the park.
106	Intermediate Egret	<i>Mesophoyx intermedia</i>		W C E M	Less common than the previous species.
107	Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>		W C E T M	Widespread in the area. Split from <i>B. ibis</i> (Western Cattle Egret). Now being treated as full species.
108	Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>		W C E T M	Widespread. Seen flying, wading, hunting.
109	Chinese Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>	*	C	One seen in non-breeding plumage. Very hard to distinguish from <i>A. grayii</i> . At a shaded marsh that harbored some Pond Herons, a single bird caught our attention because of its unusually large size. Upon extended observation, its bill was noticeably larger and its plumage looked ever so slightly different from the nearby Pond Herons. No visible dark line on lore.

110	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		C E		2 at <i>Sohola</i> and 1 at <i>Mona beel</i> . Few more in the eastern range.
111	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>		C E		2 at <i>Sohola</i> , 1 at <i>Koladuar</i> and another in the central range.
112	Black-Headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	*	C		[NT] A significant sighting. Considered very uncommon in <i>Kaziranga</i> . A tight flock of 12 seen from the <i>Kathpora</i> watchtower foraging in short grass. Another 10 seen flying past at sunset on a subsequent visit to <i>Kohora</i> .
113	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>		E		2 adults among juvenile and adult Spot-Billed Pelicans on a tree at the breeding site in <i>Koladuar</i> .
114	Spot-Billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>	*	W C E		[VU] Regularly seen swimming in scattered beels. More than 10 at <i>Koladuar</i> . Also seen flying in formation all over the park. KNP is one of the last strongholds of this species.
115	Asian Openbill	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>		W C E	M	Widespread. Singles and large flocks on all days.
116	Woolly-Necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>		W C E	M	A few were seen daily.
117	Black-Necked Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i>	*	W E		[NT] A few at <i>Dunga beel</i> and <i>Rowmari</i> grasslands under <i>Baguri</i> range. 1 circling low at <i>Debeswari</i> and 2 at <i>Sohola</i> .
118	Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>	*	W C E	M	[VU] Singles seen daily, close to water bodies foraging in short grassland and marshes.
119	Greater Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos dubius</i>	***	E		[EN] 2 at <i>Sohola</i> and 1 flying overhead at <i>Koladuar</i> .
120	Blue-Naped Pitta	<i>Pitta nipalensis</i>	*		T	1 heard from very close range. It called from within a dense canebrake for several minutes but did not come out in the open. The TPs adjacent to KNP have become a significant breeding habitat for this species.
121	Asian Fairy Bluebird	<i>Irena Puella</i>			P	Brief views of a male as it flew past, settled on a tree and flew away again.
122	Gold-Fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</i>		E P		Seen among early morning mixed feeding flocks in the top canopy at <i>Panbari</i> and <i>Agaratoli</i> .
123	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>			T	Only 1 sitting on a tree branch.
124	Long-Tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>		W C E P T M		Much scarcer than Grey-Backed but seen on all days. Black-headed tricolor variation seen twice.
125	Grey-Backed Shrike	<i>Lanius tephronotus</i>		W C E P T M		Common in grasslands and scrub.
126	Common Green Magpie	<i>Dendrochitta vagabunda</i>			T	1 seen among a very noisy Laughingthrush wave.
127	Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrochitta vagabunda</i>		C E	T M	Surprisingly, dipped at <i>Bagori</i> and <i>Panbari</i> . Seen daily.
128	House Crow	<i>Corvus monedula</i>		C E	T	A few seen in the elephant camp at Mihimukh and a few at <i>Kathpora</i> . Thankfully, numbers of this invasive species appear to be very low within the park.
129	Eastern Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>		W C E	T M	Widespread. Of recently recognized subspecies <i>C. m. levaillantii</i> .
130	Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>		W C E P T M		Mostly aerial views in widespread locations. About 20 seen at first light as they roosted tightly packed side-by-side on the topmost branch of a leafless tree in TP.
131	Black-Hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>		W C E P T M		Common throughout the area. Immature individuals seen too.
132	Maroon Oriole	<i>Oriolus traillii</i>			P	1 flew past in dense forest.
133	Large Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>		E P T		Females of Himalayan subspecies <i>C.m. nipalensis</i> common in TP. Usually conspicuous in flight.
134	Black-Winged Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina melaschistos</i>			P	1 in <i>Panbari</i> .

135	Long-Tailed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus ethologus</i>	W C E P T	Very common. Flocks of males and females seen daily. Usually seen alongwith Scarlet Minivet.
136	Short-Billed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus brevirostris</i>	C E P	Positively identified as this species only 3 times among mixed Minivet flocks.
137	Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus speciosus</i>	W C E P T	Common and seen daily.
138	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocerus</i>	W C E P T M	Widespread. Seen several times catching insects.
139	Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>	E P	1 at <i>Panbari</i> and a few at a scrubby patch near <i>Sohola</i> .
140	Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurusaeneus</i>	P	Only 2 at <i>Panbari</i> .
141	Lesser Racket-Tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus remifer</i>	W P	2 full-tailed birds seen in dense woodland at <i>Bagori</i> and <i>Panbari</i> .
142	Spangled Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>	C E P	Fairly common. Seen over grassland and woodland and in mixed feeding flocks.
143	Greater Racket-Tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>	W C E P T	Singles seen on all days. Also seen in mixed feeding parties.
144	Black-Naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azuerea</i>	P	2 seen in a mixed feeding flock of Bulbuls, Ioras and Drongos.
145	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>	W C E P	Scattered sightings.
146	Blue Rock Trush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	W M	1 within the Wild Grass premises and another at the entrance to <i>Bagori</i> .
147	Blue Whistling Trush	<i>Myophonus caeruleus</i>	T	Several seen in TP (foraging under tea-bushes and near a stream).
148	Orange-Headed Trush	<i>Zoothera citrina</i>	C	1 at woodland near alongside <i>Kawoimari beel</i> .
149	Red-Throated Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>	E P T	Very nice views of this species, which was recently given full species status (Split from <i>F. parva</i>). Seen multiple times in TP and also in a mixed feeding wave in <i>Panbari</i> .
150	Little Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula westermanni</i>	T	1 male and a female.
151	Verditer Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias thalassina</i>	E P	1 in a mixed feeding wave at <i>Panbari</i> and another in <i>Agaratoli</i> seen hunting characteristically - flying out of its conspicuous open perch for a few seconds up to a few minutes and returning to the same perch and starting over again.
152	Large Niltava	<i>Niltava grandis</i>	P	1 seen actively looking for food.
153	Small Niltava	<i>Niltava macgrigoriae</i>	P	1 in a mixed feeding wave that had other Flycatchers and Bulbuls.
154	Grey-Headed Canary Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	W C E P T	Highly vocal and seen daily. Singles and also in mixed flocks.
155	Siberian Rubythroat	<i>Luscinia calliope</i>	** T	Extraordinary views of an individual singing in full view for 2 minutes less then 10 feet away. We almost clapped at the end of this generous bird's grand opus.
156	Oriental Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	W C E P T M	Widespread.
157	White-Rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>	W C	1 each. Very close and extended views.
158	Daurian Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus schisticeps</i>	T	1 foraging on the floor of the TP trail close to a line of tea bushes.
159	Black-Backed Forktail	<i>Enicurus immaculatus</i>	T	1 at a disturbed stream.
160	Common Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	W C E	Widespread and conspicuous in grassland. There is considerable confusion on the treatment of this as a separate species <i>S. maurus</i> (or not!). <i>S. torquata</i> seems to be the safest usage.
161	Chestnut-Tailed Starling	<i>Sturnus malabaricus</i>	W C E T	Small to medium sized feeding flocks seen on all days.
162	Asian Pied Starling	<i>Sturnus contra</i>	W C E M	Common but no large flocks seen.

163	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	W C E P T M	Very common throughout the area. Fairly large flocks seen.
164	Jungle Myna	<i>Acridotheres fuscus</i>	W C E P T M	Common throughout the area.
165	White-Vented Myna	<i>Acridotheres grandis</i>	C T	5 in TP and a few near <i>Mona beel</i> . Conspecific with <i>A. cinereus</i> and <i>A. javanicus</i> .
166	Hill Myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>	C E P	Several seen on all days.
167	Chestnut-Bellied Nuthatch	<i>Sitta castanea</i>	T	1 in TP.
168	Velvet-Fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>	E	1 in dense forest at <i>Agaratoli</i> .
169	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	E T	Very vocal. 1 seen very well in TP and another in <i>Agaratoli</i> .
170	Plain Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>	C E	Fairly common over and near water bodies within the park.
171	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	W C E P T M	Widespread.
172	Red-Rumped Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>	T	4 seen flying in TP.
173	Black-Crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus flaviventris</i>	E P T	Common in TP. The pronounced crest and other significant differences in plumage has resulted in a three-way split from the Western Ghats and Sri Lankan endemics (<i>P. gularis</i> & <i>P. melanicterus</i> respectively). Seen in <i>Agaratoli</i> range too.
174	Red-Whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	W C E P T	Less common than Red-Vented. More visible in TP than elsewhere.
175	Red-Vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	W C E P T M	Abundant everywhere. Interesting variations in plumage - some with almost no crest, some with pronounced short crest and some with very dark upper parts.
176	White-Throated Bulbul	<i>Alophoixus flaveolus</i>	P	Only seen in mixed feeding flocks. About 10 seen but heard more often.
177	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	C	1 near <i>Dunga beel</i> .
178	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia Socialis</i>	C E	3 identified over the entire visit.
179	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>	W C	A few seen daily.
180	Oriental White-Eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>	C E P T	Common and seen in mixed feeding flocks too.
181	Grey-Bellied Tesia	<i>Tesia cyaniventer</i>	* P	We heard its trademark machine-gun call from within dense undergrowth but found it very hard to locate it. Good views after 5 minutes of pursuing it.
182	Striated Grassbird	<i>Megalurus palustris</i>	E	Seen at <i>Ahotguri</i> and <i>Debeswari</i> .
183	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	P T	A few seen and heard at the edge of <i>Panbari</i> and also in TP.
184	Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	E	2 seen very well.
185	Tickell's Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus affinis</i>	C	A small group of 3 seen.
186	Yellow-Browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	C E	A few at a mixed feeding party of White-Eyes, Crimson Sunbirds, Ioras, and Greenish Warblers.
187	Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>	W C E P T	The most common <i>Phylloscopus</i> warbler in the area. Seen daily.
188	Blyth's Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i>	E	Seen just once at a roadside bush along with Greenish warblers.
189	White-Crested Laughingtrush	<i>Garrulax leucolophus</i>	T	Quick glimpses of a few just before they dived into a bamboo thicket.
190	Lesser Necklaced Laughingtrush	<i>Garrulax monileger</i>	T	A few in a mixed feeding flock of Lesser and Greater Laughingtrushes and a Green Magpie.
191	Greater Necklaced Laughingtrush	<i>Garrulax pectoralis</i>	T	Same as above.
192	Rufous-Necked Laughingtrush	<i>Garrulax ruficollis</i>	T	At least 3 flocks seen whizzing from one bush/thicket to another. At least 25 counted in all.

193	Abbott's Babbler	<i>Malacocincla abbotti</i>	*	E	T	Nice views of singles and also heard multiple times.
194	Puff-Throated Babbler	<i>Pellorneum ruficeps</i>			T	Heard several times. 2 seen feeding on the ground close to tea-bushes.
195	White-Browed Scimitar Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus schisticeps</i>	*		T	Nice looks at this striking species when it appeared while we were observing a White-Browed Piculet.
196	Eye-Browed Wren Babbler	<i>Napothera epilepidota</i>	****		T	Easily the most interesting sighting of the trip. This was a totally unexpected new record for the park. Not only was this a very low altitude record for this species but it was also seen in uncharacteristic habitat - it moved around in a bamboo thicket very close to a thin line of tea bushes for more than five minutes after which it disappeared. The altitudinal range of this species is between 350-1800 meters, but the exact spot of this sighting was easily below 150 meters. The adjacent hills rise up to 400 meters and this species is probably a resident up there. The only other Wren-Babbler reported from KNP is the Pygmy Wren-Babbler whose altitudinal range is typically 275 - 2850 m.
197	Striped Tit Babbler	<i>Macronous gularis</i>		E	P T	Heard regularly in TP and <i>Panbari</i> . Singles seen in three sites.
198	Striated Babbler	<i>Turdoides earlei</i>		W		Extended visuals of a 1 in <i>Rowmari</i> grasslands. Heard in <i>Debeswari</i> .
199	Black-Breasted Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis flavirostris</i>	****	E		[VU] Having always resisted using tape-playback, visuals of this species have eluded me. Heard very well in <i>Debeswari</i> grasslands. 2 birds called from within a patch of dense tall grass dominated by <i>Phragmites karka</i> (locally called <i>Khagori</i>). We hung around for 20 minutes hoping that the skulking birds would climb up the reeds but dipped. A very good experience nevertheless, considering that in the last 20 years this species has been reported from only 4 different sites.
200	Scarlet-Backed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum cruentatum</i>		E	P M	The brightly colored males were conspicuous but females were more common.
201	Ruby-Cheeked Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes singalensis</i>			T	Single sighting of male and female in TP.
202	Crimson Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga siparaja</i>		E	T	Excellent sightings of brilliant males. Females were more common. Two eclipse male seen too.
203	Little Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera longirostra</i>		C	P M	Heard in widespread locations. 3 seen total. 1 in Wild Grass.
204	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		W	C E P T M	Abundant in the area.
205	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>		W	C E T M	Quite common but often overlooked. More than 20 at the <i>Mihimukh</i> elephant camp.
206	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		W	C E T M	Very common. Seen in many different types of habitat.
207	Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>		W	C E	Scattered sightings.
208	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>		W	C E	Scattered sightings.
209	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>		E		Only 1 at <i>Ahotguri</i> .
210	Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>		W	C E M	Common in cultivation adjacent to the southern boundary.
211	Olive-Backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>		W	C E M	Same as above.
212	Rosy Pipit	<i>Anthus roseatus</i>		E		Just 1 while entering <i>Agaratoli</i> . Possibly often overlooked.
213	Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>		W	M	A few seen in grassland near forest edge just inside the <i>Bagori</i> range. Another flock seen in scrubby vegetation, near the highway.

214	Finn's Weaver	<i>Ploceus megarhynchus</i>	****	C	[VU] One of the most important sightings of the trip. 5 in non-breeding plumage were seen amidst tall grassland in the central range between <i>Daphlong beel</i> and the main circuit. The large size and very large bill immediately told us we were onto something. Bold dark streaking on mantle and lack of distinct supercilium were other key identification points. Extended observation for over 15 minutes.
215	Scaly-Breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>			M A small group seen in cultivation, near a village between <i>Burapahar</i> and <i>Bagori</i> range.

MAMMALS, REPTILES

1	Hoolock Gibbon	<i>Bunopithecus hoolock</i>	****	P	[EN] We went looking for an old male that is known to faithfully allow good looks but dipped. However, we soon heard calls of a Gibbon very far away. We frantically tracked its call for about half a mile, earning cuts and bruises before finally spotting it on a very short tree merely 20 feet high. That was to become my most memorable Gibbon sighting ever. It was a young adult and it literally sang and danced for more than 10 minutes only a few meters away. And I did not bring my video camera along!
2	Rhesus Macaque	<i>Macaca mulatta</i>		W C E	Seen in small numbers in all ranges.
3	Assamese Macaque	<i>Macaca assamensis</i>	*	P	[VU] A single troupe in medium canopy of very dense semi-evergreen forest.
4	Capped Langur	<i>Trachypithecus pileatus</i>	*	E P	[EN] A troupe of these beautiful monkeys at <i>Ahotguri</i> and two more troupes at <i>Panbari</i> .
5	Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolor</i>	*		M Sambars are rarely seen in <i>Kaziranga</i> . We scoped two individuals from a viewpoint on the highway between <i>Burapahar</i> and <i>Bagori</i> . A stag and a female were standing at the forest edge but they soon reentered the forest and didn't return.
6	Eastern Swamp Deer	<i>Cervus duvaucelii ranjitsinhi</i>	****	W C E	[CR] Herds seen at <i>Mihimukh</i> , <i>Dunga</i> , <i>Sohola</i> and <i>Debeswari</i> . The population of the eastern subspecies is estimated to be less than 500 individuals. With the only other known population in <i>Manas NP</i> severely threatened (nobody knows if that population is still viable), the remaining few in <i>Kaziranga</i> maybe the last hope for survival of this species. Lately it has been discovered that its population in <i>Kaziranga</i> has been stagnating and the reason for that is predation owing to <i>Kaziranga's</i> high tiger density.
7	Indian Muntjac	<i>Muntiacus muntjak</i>	*	P	Only a single seen at <i>Panbari</i> . Heard elsewhere.
8	Hog Deer	<i>Axis porcinus</i>		W C E	M Hundreds seen daily.
9	Asiatic Wild Buffalo	<i>Bubalus arnee</i>	***	W C E	M [EN] This impressive beast was seen in medium sized herds everyday. Two lone bulls (reputed to be very aggressive) were seen too.
10	Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>		W C E	M Small numbers seen daily. The ones that live around <i>Mihimukh</i> are very bold and they refuse to budge even when the jeep comes very close.

11	Asian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>	***	W C E	M	[EN] Seen daily. Largest herd seen was at <i>Mona beel</i> with 32 including babies. Best sighting was at <i>Kathpora</i> when we spent 2 hours observing and videotaping a single herd of about 15 individuals led by a matriarch.
12	Great One-Horned Rhinoceros	<i>Rhinoceros unicornis</i>	****	W C E	M	Excellent views of <i>Kaziranga's</i> undisputed star throughout the park. Mothers with babies seen too. At <i>Mona beel</i> , we were watching a female that was standing very close to the track when suddenly a large irate male came lumbering out of a nearby forest. It promptly charged at us and we had to flee in reverse gear. Luckily it gave up the charge when it saw that we had retreated about 100 meters. It walked back to the female and both of them disappeared into thick grass. We took that opportunity to make our escape.
13	Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris</i>	****	C		[EN] A tiger sighting is the ultimate thrill. We got lucky on the final drive through the central range at about 11.45 am. We were looking for a Forest Wagtail that was spotted a few days ago in dense riparian forest near <i>Kawoimari beel</i> about 1 km east of <i>Mona beel</i> . Suddenly a large male tiger ambled across the jeep track about 30 meters in front of the jeep. Its coat was wet and it appeared dark. It had probably just swum across the <i>Kawoimari</i> channel from the grasslands on the other side. After crossing the track it paused under a thicket. When our jeep drew level we found it staring back at us with its head turned back. It noiselessly walked away into the dense undergrowth and disappeared. We waited for another 15 minutes hoping it would re-emerge but it did not.
14	Eurasian Otter	<i>Lutra Lutra</i>	*	C		[NT] 4 of these large otters hunting and playing at <i>Kathpora beel</i> .
15	Indian Smooth-Coated Otter	<i>Lutrogale perspicillata</i>	*	E		[VU] 3 at <i>Rongamatia beel</i> .
16	Small Indian Mongoose	<i>Herpestes javanicus</i>		W		1 seen crossing the track at <i>Rowmari</i> .
17	Hoary Bellied Himalayan Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus pygerithrus</i>		W C E P T		[VU] Common. Seen daily.
18	Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus giganteus</i>			T M	Some roosting individuals near TP and some flying about just before sunset.
19	Water Monitor	<i>Varanus salvator</i>	*	C		A single, seen swimming across the breadth of a <i>beel</i> . It circled a patch of water hyacinth on the other bank and then went out of sight.
20	Land Monitor	<i>Varanus bengalensis</i>	*	C		One seen from very close range (<10 feet) by the side of the track. It was basking under the afternoon sun and froze when the jeep came close, possibly because it didn't want to attract attention. However, a sudden movement inside the jeep made it scurry into the dense grass.
21	Assam Roof Turtle	<i>Pangshura sylhetensis</i>	*	C		[EN] Excellent visuals of more than 20 individuals basking at <i>Kawoimari beel</i> . <i>Kaziranga's</i> population of this species is very significant as it represents one of only a few remaining viable populations, all of which are fragmented.
22	Black Pond Turtle	<i>Geoclemys hamiltonii</i>	*	C		[VU] 2 at <i>Kawoimari beel</i> .



Phalanx of Asiatic Wild Water Buffalo in Rongamatia. [EN]



Eastern Swamp Deer [CR] & Hog Deer in Debeswari grasslands.



Old battle-scarred Great One Horned Rhinoceros in Bagori (near Dunga Beel). [EN]



Young Hoolock Gibbon in Panbari. [EN]



Land Monitor basking in Kohora (near Daphlong Beel).



Tusker in Ahotguri. [EN]



Rufous-Necked Laughingthrush flitting through cane thickets in tea plantation.



Pallas's Fish Eagle surveying Sohola Beel. [VU]



Assam Roof Turtles basking in Kawoimari. [EN]