

### 27th April 2019

We started at 7 AM from Siliguri; however due to some unavoidable reason, guests were picked up little late at 7:45 AM in the morning from Lemon Tree Hotel in Siliguri. On our way, we didn't stop till Kirney (Kalimpong) for a tea break. Later we drove directly till Rongli. Before entering Rongli town area, we stopped for a while and found – Sultan Tit. A Himalayan Bulbul was seen at the top of a tree. Long-tailed Broadbill was heard from a distance; though we couldn't trace it later. Spangled Drongos were hanging around. After reaching Rongli, Inner Line Permit was prepared and we had light lunch. Later behind the resort, we did little birding and tried for Necklaced Laughingthrushes (both Lesser and Greater). However, only Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush was sighted. From Rongli, we started driving uphill, nearby a degraded landscape – all on a sudden an Asian Barred Owlet was spotted by Mr. Dinnesh. Participants got nice shot of the cute Owl. Further uphill drive and we stopped at some promising location for forktails and got all three forktails – Little, Spotted and Slaty-backed. Just before forktails sighting, we saw a Small Niltava as well; flying in and out from a nearby bush. A Streaked Spiderhunter kept us busy for nearly 15 minutes, which never descended down to eye-level perch. Short-billed and Long-tailed Minivets were sighted in very low light. Apart from the above mentioned birds – White-capped and Plumbeous Redstarts were sighted in streams. Blue-throated Barbet and Blue Whistling Thrush was commonly sighted. Later in the afternoon we reached at the homestay at Nimachen (where we would stay for next four days). Grey-hooded Warbler, Russet Sparrow, Crimson Sunbird etc were sighted from the balcony of the stay. Due to interrupted power supply, generator was started in the evening. We took early dinner at 8 PM.

### 28th April 2019

Our primary target was to see Himalayan Monal in this wonderful landscape. Near the home stay, a flock of White-throated Laughingthrush arrived in the morning. We started at 6 AM today. On our way up, Himalayan Buzzard was seen in foggy weather. Satyr Tragopan was heard from a nearby hill slope, soon weather degraded and we drove further up. As more and more traffic start coming on road, monal sighting may be interrupted; thus ignoring most of the lower altitude species we drove directly to Monal point. After little try, two males were sighted. One male later paired with a female. Along with the wonderful sighting of majestic Himalayan Monal, Fire-tailed Sunbird male (in breeding plumage) was sighted. Nice video of Himalayan Monal was captured by Rathika madam and Mr Anantha. In foggy weather Fire-tailed Myzornis was sighted as well; but before photographing them, the weather became very misty; only birdwatcher Mr Dinesh could see them. We drove towards AP Salami-Gnathang valley. Red-billed Chough, Altai Accentor, Robin Accentor, Blyth's Pipit, White-collared Blackbird etc were sighted. At the last point near elephant lake Ruddy Shelducks, Brown-headed Gulls were seen in their breeding ground. We took lunch at Laxman Chowk tea house. On our way back Golden Bush Robin was sighted. In the afternnon Black-faced Laughingthrush was sighted on Rhododendron tree. Nearby bush thickets and bamboo forest area – White-browed Fulvettas were abundant. We returned back little early at 4 PM. Miscellaneous sighting of the day includes :- Golden-naped Finch (in the morning session), Eurasian Tree sparrow (of 'tibetanus' subspecies) etc.

## 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Today also we started the day as yesterday. We mostly targeted mid altitude species today, not to cover high altitude species. Commoners like- Green-backed Tit, Black-throated Tit, Buff-barred Warbler, Whistler's Warbler etc were found. Black-eared Shrike-babbler, Golden Babbler and Rufous-capped Babbler showed up nicely. Grey-winged Blackbird was seen in Phadamchen. In the bamboo-pine forest area Black-throated Parrotbill, Green-tailed Sunbird, Bar-throated Siva was seen and photographed nicely. In little higher altitude, Rufous-vented Yuhina, White-browed Bush Robin was sighted. However, Rufous-bellied Niltava could not be photographed due to its skittish behavior. It never appeared in open. As the time passed by the day became little warm; raptors were sighted soaring in thermals. Four Himalayan Griffons, One Steppe Eagle were sighted. The afternoon session fantastic, when we saw an Eurasian Hobby; perched high at the top of a tree. This bird is not commonly sighted in this part of the region commonly. Later it started raining a lot and we returned back to home stay to have lunch. After lunch we thought of doing another birding session. Just adjacent to our home stay, a beautiful Scarlet Finch was sighted. From the balcony, participants photographed Black-throated Sunbird.

## 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

In the morning, we drove uphill in search of Satyr Tragopan, but we couldn't get response of it. A Lesser Shortwing was heard in the early nearby a newly built resort. I tried for the bird in rain and it responded well; later one by one all the participants got nice frame of this elusive bird species. Though out the day, mostly common birds were sighted. Golden-breasted Fulvetta is also worth mentioning. In the bamboo forest area, this time we got this fulvetta nicely. On day 2 we missed this bird due to wrong coordination. Later we drove down and saw Rufous-winged Fulvetta, Hoary-throated Barwing so nicely. In some well wooded area, as we stopped for Himalayan Wood Owl and tried for the species; the bird showed up very nicely. The light was dimming fast, so we decided to cover this species on next day. On our way down, Golden-naped Finch female and Male was seen along with Stripe-throated Yuhina, Bar-throated Siva etc. Near Phadamchen, Grey-winged Blackbird and Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler was sighted. After having cup of tea at Phadamchen, we drove to home stay at 3 PM and had our lunch. As heavy downpour started we wrapped up birding for the day.

## 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019

This was the last birding day for us. As planned we went uphill in the morning for rare and elusive Himalayan Wood Owl. This time also we got success, previous day Mr. Anantha missed the bird; this time he got the bird nicely. By 8 AM, we came back to home stay and took breakfast. By 9:15 AM we checked out and drove downhill. Ferruginous Flycatcher, Little pied Flycatcher, Sikkim Treecreeper, Black-throated Prinia etc were sighted. As we drove downhill, the day became hotter and humid. We stopped birding on our way, due to heavy vehicle movements. Again we resumed, after crossing Rongli. Lesser-necklaced Laughingthrush and White-crested Laughingthrushes were nicely seen. After reaching Rangpo, we wrapped up and had had lunch at 2 PM. From there we directly drove to Siliguri and dropped the bird photographers at hotel Sarovar Portico (one of the best hotel in Siliguri) at 5 PM. Tour ended with some handsome bird sighting (see birdlist).