

Ceylon Bird Club Notes – January 2014

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TALANGAMA WETLANDS 5.1

During a morning visit, the highlights were seeing about 40 **Asiatic Golden Plover**, a male **Black Bittern**, two **Blyth's Reed Warbler** and a few **Indian Shag** in breeding plumage.

An **Indian Pond Heron** caught a large freshwater prawn near the spill.

UDAWALAWA 19.1

On hearing news of Daurian Starlings seen near the causeway we did a day trip but did not see the Starlings.

A flock of **Rosy Starlings** and a male **Marshall's Iora** however kept us interested.

PUTTALAM SALTERNS 24.1

A short evening visit yielded six **Temminck's Stint** feeding at the same location we saw them on 15.12.2013.

WILPATTU 25,26.1

With members Nanda Senanayake and Niran Caldera.

The premises of the resort where we stayed, situated just outside the park entrance, were very good for birding.

The highlight was the visit by a pair of **Black-backed Yellow Woodpeckers**.

A pair of **Golden-backed Woodpeckers** was also present. Both birds had golden mantles. It was interesting to note that while the female had an almost entirely white face, the male bird's white facial markings were very much like that of a Red-backed Woodpecker's in extent.

Other birds seen included **Pompadour Green**, **Orange-breasted Green** and **Green Imperial Pigeons**, **Blue-faced Malkoha**, **Indian Plaintive Cuckoo**, **Black-headed Cuckoo-Shrike**, **Crimson-breasted** and **Brown-headed Barbets**, **Common Kingfisher**, **Ceylon Junglefowl** and **Common Iora**.

Within the Park

Malabar Pied Hornbill, **Crested Serpent Eagle**, **Crested Hawk-Eagle**, **Crested Honey Buzzard**, **Grey-headed Fishing Eagle**, **Brown Fish**

Owl, Great Stone Plover, Asiatic Golden Plover and Black-tailed Godwit were some of the species seen.

MANNAR 26-29.1

A single **Spot-billed Duck**, large numbers of **Wigeon, Garganey, Pintail**, a few **Shoveller** and **Black-tailed Godwit** at **Vankalai**.

About 50 **Wigeon** and a **Common Coot** at **Tiruketiswaram** and a single **Crab Plover** at the causeway. A single **Greater Flamingo** remained in the salterns while the main flock was seen at the causeway at a great distance. A single **Red-necked Phalarope** was also present at the salterns.

At the shallow end of **Erukkulampiddi** lagoon, a lovely specimen of a **Large Sand Plover** with a prominently large beak and at least 35 **Terek Sandpipers** were seen. The latter were present at the causeway as well as the salterns.

Kora Kulam was full of ducks as well as **Great Black-headed** and **Heuglin's Gulls** in good numbers. Many of the former were in bp.

TALAIMANNAR, URUMALAI BEACH 29.1

Heuglin's Gulls in good numbers on the shore by the fishing boats. 1st winter, 2nd winter and adult birds were all present.

PESALAI

A pair of **Golden-backed Woodpeckers** on a stump. Both had golden mantles. I managed to photograph the female which again showed facial markings similar to that of a Red-backed Woodpecker.

ARIPPU

A pale morph **Booted Eagle** on the ground with a bird in its talons. It was too far away to identify the victim. A pair of **Rufous-rumped Shrike**. This bird appears to be quite scarce now in Mannar: we saw only two pairs in Mannar; one at Tiruketiswaram and the other at Erukkulampiddi. In addition to the pair at Arippe, we saw one other pair only at Silavaturai.

Pathmanath Samaraweera

SINHARAJA 12.1

A male **Ceylon Frogmouth** on nest brooding a newly born chick, in the daytime.

UDAWALAWE NP 14.1

A **Booted Eagle** (pale morph),

BUNDALA 17.1

Near the Saltern turn off, a female **Amur Falcon** in flight over the road. Four **Collared Doves** near Weligatte junction.

HORTON PLAINS N.P. 19.1

A **White-breasted Waterhen** at the 'Arrenga Pool', a pair of **Red-wattled Lapwing** on the lawn opposite the dormitory on the Pattipola road.

Near WELLAWAYA 18.1

A **Ceylon Lorikeet** flew over a wooded area.

BOMURUELLA FOREST, NUWARA ELIYA 19.1

A male **Besra Sparrowhawk** perched in a tall turpentine (*Eucalyptus*) tree. Four **Yellow-fronted Barbets** heard. A few **Black Bulbuls** heard.

UDAWALAWA 21.1

A **Daurian Starling** (Purple-backed Starling) was seen feeding in the trees (mainly along the branches) at the causeway on the main road after the tank bund. Non-member Dulan Vidanapathirana had first found eight Daurian Starlings at the same place on 9th January. This is the second record of this species in Sri Lanka. Thereafter, he and a few other birdwatchers had seen the starlings in varying numbers visiting this site in the morning and evening in the following days. In the evening of the 21st when I was at the site only one bird appeared. The bird I saw and the others (seen from Dulan's photos) appeared to be immature birds. They did not have glossy purple-patch on nape as in the adult

birds, but other markings on the upperparts resembled very much as in the adult.

Yala National Park 22.1

A **Great Knot** and two **Broad-billed Sandpipers** were seen amongst other common waders at Buttawa Kalapuwa.

Deepal Warakagoda

BANDARAWELA 11-13.1

A tea estate with a forest patch 10 km from Bandarawela on the Welimada road.

A pair of **Ceylon Wood Pigeon** observed mating and flying with nesting material, but the actual nesting site was not seen as the birds disappeared into the canopy of the forest patch. A pair of **Scaly-bellied Woodpecker** was seen all three days and afforded close views.

Chestnut-headed Bee-eaters seen close to 4000 feet elevation at a view point close by. Usual lower hill country birds seen included the **Dusky-blue Flycatcher**, **Ceylon Hill White-eye** and **Orange Minivet**. A **Black Eagle** flew over quite low, **Crested Hawk** and **Serpent Eagles** also seen. Except for **Brown Flycatcher**, **Common Swallow** and **Brown Shrike**, no other migrants were observed.

Kiran Kumaranayagam

SITHULPAWWA 15.1

An unusual bird was seen on a piece of dry wood on a rock, west of Sithulpawwa Chaithyaya at 7.30 am. It was observed for about 10 minutes and identified as a female **Blue Rock Thrush**. The bird was in perfect light which permitted some photographs.

EMBILIKALA 15.1

Two **Rufous Turtle Doves** were among many **Spotted Doves** and one **Collared Dove**.

SITHTHARAKALA LEWAYA 15.1

500 + **Pintails** and two **Shovellers** were seen.

Hemantha Seneviratne

WILPATTU NATIONAL PARK 11–16.1 & 18.1

7.41 a.m. A pair of **Little Ringed Plover** of the local race *jerdoni* and one **Lesser Adjutant** at Kokkare Villu Pitiya.

7.43 a.m. A pair of **Rufous Woodpecker** flew across the road and settled on a '*Ma-dan*' *Syzygium cumini* tree.

7.57 a.m. A small group of waders including **Black-tailed Godwit**, **Lesser Sand Plover** and **Asiatic Golden Plover** at Kuruttupandi Villu.

8.08 a.m. **Black-tailed Godwit**, **Curlew Sandpiper**, **Wood Sandpiper**, **Lesser Sand Plover**, **Common Sandpiper**, **Black-winged Stilts**, **Greenshank**, **Pintail Snipe**, **Common Redshank** and **Asiatic Golden Plover** at Mahapatessa.

2.04 p.m. A **Red-winged Crested Cuckoo** flew across the road between Nelum Wila and Panikkar Villu.

3.07 p.m. One **Orange-headed Ground Thrush** between Panikkar Villu and Nelum Wila.

4.21 p.m. One **White-necked Stork** at Maradanmaduwa.

6.22 p.m. Five **Black Drongos** on the electricity cables between the park entrance and the 7th km post.

12.1

6.13 a.m. A **Brown Fish Owl** flew ahead of the vehicle close to Weli Ela

6.16 a.m. Two **White-necked Storks** at Percy Bendi Wewa.

9.35 a.m. Two **Lesser Adjutants** at Kumutu Villu.

10.32 a.m. Four **Little Grebe** at Aya Mottai

12.43 p.m. A **Black-winged Kite** at Mollikulam. It was hovering over a patch of grass close to Modara Gam Aru. This is my first sighting of this species in the park.

12.52 p.m. Two **Collared Dove** on the road to Pukkulam. This is my first sighting of this species in the park.

2.32 p.m. An **Indian Stone Curlew** on Palugahathurai Road.

4.36 p.m. A **White-bellied Sea Eagle** flew low over the canopy with a large snake dangling from its talons, pursued by another sea eagle.

5.23 p.m. One **Lesser Adjutant** and two **White-necked Storks** at one of the culverts between Pomparippu and Eluwankulam.

5.25 p.m. One **Bustard-Quail** crossed the road at Pomparippu. This species is not commonly seen in the park.

6.06 p.m. Two **Pied Kingfishers** at Eluwankulama.

13.1

10.48 a.m. One **Bustard-Quail** at Pallekandalpitiya.

10.57 a.m. One **Lesser Adjutant** at Pallekandalpitiya.

11.08 a.m. Seven **White-necked Storks**, many **Openbills**, **White Ibis**, four **Painted Storks** and two **Lesser Adjutants** at Pallekandalpitiya.

11.10 a.m. One **Lesser Adjutant** and one **White-necked Stork** at Pomparippu pitiya.

11.18 a.m. **Black-capped Bulbul** at Pallekandalpitiya.

11.35 a.m. One **Green Sandpiper** at the water body between Pallekandalpitiya and Tala Wila.

14.1

2.45 p.m. One **Lesser Adjutant** at Kombansanchi Pooval.

15.1

7.02 a.m. A **Brown Fish Owl** at Boradiya Wala.

7.13 a.m. Two **Cotton Teal** at Borupan Wila.

10.49 a.m. One **Stork-billed Kingfisher** at Kumbuk Wila.

18.1

10.29 a.m. Two **Lesser Adjutants** at Demata Wila

11.01 a.m. While photographing a **Racket-tailed Drongo**, a **Red-winged Crested Cuckoo** flew across the road at Kuruttupandi Villu.

Kithsiri Gunawardena

UDAWALAWE CAUSEWAY 20.1

Time: 16.45

I spotted a group of Starlings coming from Udawalawe Park towards the WNPS bungalow. I realized that these birds were smaller than the Rosy Starlings that usually come to this area. They had a faster wing beat. It was a group of nine birds. They struggled to land on the trees closer to the road and eventually landed on a tree in a banana plantation. This tree was 150 -200 m away from the road. They were not visible from where I was standing so I ran towards that tree.

I found the birds amongst the foliage. It was very windy and they were perched 5-7 metres from me when I stood under the tree. There were three **Grey-headed Starlings**. They were identified by their rufous belly, grey-brown head and upper parts. I clearly saw their yellow bill tip. I am very familiar with this species since I have seen them at close quarters in India on many occasions.

One of the individuals had white under parts with a black back, white wing bar and black tail with white under tail coverts. The colour of the beak was not clearly visible but it had a black tip. When it flew, this and another individual displayed a white rump and wing bar with a black back. They were **Daurian Starlings**. I have seen several of these species on Andaman Island.

Uditha Hettige

PITTUGALA, KAHANTHOTA ROAD 1.5 Km South East From Malabe Town 15.1

Heard two **Common Hawk Cuckoos** call simultaneously approximately within a 200 metre radius starting from 0100 a.m. on 15th January until 07.30 p.m. the same day.

Himal Warakagoda

MODEL FARM ROAD COLOMBO 8

11.1

7.30 p.m. A **Black-winged Stilt** was heard calling as it flew past.

12.1

6.00 a.m. **White-breasted Kingfisher** called briefly whilst it was still dark.

7.20 a.m. **Indian Paradise Flycatcher** calling.

I visited **Mannar** with a non member during the period 7-9th January. I have also mentioned below the places where brief visits were made en route.

CHILAW SAND SPITS 7.1

Drove in and out briefly and did not alight from the vehicle. I only saw **Gull-billed Terns** as a result. One flock in the air had about 40 birds. They were patrolling along the shoreline.

TANTIRIMALE 7.1

Good forest in and around the archaeological site. Did not stay to bird. Heard **Indian Peafowl**, a flock of **Edible-nest Swifts**.

GIANT'S TANK 7.1

A flock of eight and another two **Cotton Teal**, making ten in total. A raft of 22 **Little Grebe** plus another raft of ten. Two **Caspian Terns**. Also **Gull-billed** and **Whiskered Terns**. **Indian Shag** and **Little Cormorants**.

MANNAR MAINLAND 7.1

Near the 79 km A14, two **Spot-bill Duck** flew off as we stopped to look at them.

VANKALAI TRIANGLE 7.1

One male Common Teal was by itself, close to a few **Garganey** and **Black-tailed Godwits** in the water.

One juvenile **Little Ringed Plover** is noteworthy of comment because the brown shaded area under the eye did not have a sharp downward point and was more rounded like in the scarcer Common Ringed Plover. However the images show traces of the yellow orbital ring. Another juvenile photographed a day later showed the yellow orbital ring more distinct and the 'sharp edge' just beginning to show.

Two **Little Green Herons**, seemed habituated to vehicles.

One **Eurasian Curlew**, used to vehicles was feeding beside the turn off from the main road. The freshwater swampy areas near the road had **Wood Sandpiper**.

Caspian and Gull-billed Terns, Brown-headed Gulls in non breeding,

In the scrub, **Black Drongo, Grey Partridge** and **Rufous-rumped Shrike**.

MANNAR CAUSEWAY

7.1

One **Indian Reef Heron**.

8.1

Four **Caspian Plover**, one **Bar-tailed Godwit**, **Grey Plover**, **Indian Reef Heron**, small flock of **Greater Flamingo** (less than ten).

Asiatic Golden Plover hunted in the leaf litter of the salt tolerant plants near the road. This bird must be used to vehicles.

9.1

3.45pm A flock of **Greater Flamingo** was present in the distance. Did not count properly but loosely estimated over 50 birds.

MANNAR SALTERNS

7.1

220 **Greater Flamingo**.

One **Black-winged Stilt** with a deep black hind neck marking.

Waders included **Turnstone**, **Little Stint**, **Curlew Sandpiper** and **Marsh Sandpiper**.

9.1

40 + **Caspian Terns** resting together. One **Caspian Tern** took a fish from another- probably a courting pair. One **Richard's Pipit**. A number of waders present including **Turnstone**, **Common Redshank**, **Common Greenshank**, **Marsh Sandpiper** and **Little Stint**. One **Little Tern** in non breeding plumage repeatedly hunted over one section of a channel lining one of the salterns.

ADAM'S BRIDGE POINT 7.1

By this I refer to the North-west corner of the island which is directly in line with Adam's Bridge and where the first of the islands is only a few hundred meters away. This was accessed through privately owned land.

25 **Caspian Tern**, 200 + **Lesser Crested Tern**, five **Sanderling**, one **Terek Sandpiper** and other waders. **Large Crested Tern**.

A male **Indian Peafowl** was dancing to a female on scrub land which is privately owned.

URUMALAI 8.1

Heuglin's and **Great Black-headed Gulls**. Small numbers- less than 60 of each.

Large Sand Plover.

About 10 plus **Little** and **Large Egrets** were on the beach wading into the sea and fishing.

KORA KULAM 8.1

3.55 p.m.

150 plus **Great Black-headed Gulls**. Also **Brown--headed Gulls** 200+ and 300 **Wigeon**. Smaller numbers of **Pintail**.

MANNAR- POONERYN ROAD 8.1

At a freshwater tank near a Kovil. At dusk (around 6.15 p.m.) five **Black Drongos** and one **Blue-tailed Bee-eater** alighted on the overhead wires spaced no more than 100 feet apart and hawked for insects. One **Indian Roller** also joined them.

In the premises of a lodge on the Talaimannar Road where I stayed 9.1

The grounds are good for a number of birds including **Collared Dove**, **Black Drongo**, **Rufous-rumped Shrike**, **Grey Partridge** with fly overs by **Black Kites**. Some areas of the grassland were wet and waders present included **Asiatic Golden Plover**. **Ashy-crowned Finch- Larks**, **Indian Pipits** and **Indian Skylarks** were common. The skylarks were ascending and singing in courtship displays.

The forested patch at the back has sunbirds, **Black-headed Oriole**, etc.

Spotted Munias nesting.

In the evening I saw two **Rufous-rumped Shrikes** hunting along the driveway using the fence and small trees as a vantage point.

9.1

Two **Spot-billed Duck** beside Mannar- Pooneryn road, a few km past the freshwater tanks beside the first kovil (Thiruketiswaram Kovil) on this road.

A **Crested Serpent Eagle** on a telegraph post.

Six **Indian Coursers** past the iron bridge at the regular site. The birds were initially very far away and we waited patiently for over an hour for them to approach us so that we could at least have a proper look through binoculars. Habitat was dry soil with short grass. At times the birds were in the grassland where the grass was to the head height of the birds. They seemed wary and kept well away from the parked vehicle. They walked towards us a few times and retreated each time. One bird came closer to the road but was ahead of where we were parked. We made a slow approach along the road in the vehicle. But it flew off and the rest of the flock joined it and they flew away. I am not sure if the reaction was because we had moved the vehicle along the road from where it had been parked for almost an hour. **I was told that some irresponsible photographers had gone off road and pursued them to take pictures. I am not sure if they are now generally wary of vehicles.**

The site poses a conservation dilemma. It may be that the bird has a narrowly defined habitat requirement, in which case the current location may need conservation protection. There is a risk that the site may eventually be lost to agricultural uses.

At the same location on the other side of the road, it seemed like the birds had sensed the emergence of insects, possibly termites. Two **Brahminy Kite** adults hunted for insects on the ground for over an hour. They were about 20 feet away. A juvenile kite was present but did not stay with the adults and flew away. The kites were joined by **Black Drongos** and **Common Mynas**. A **Yellow-wattled Lapwing** harried one of the kites by flying at it and also seemed to be feeding on the emerging insects.

A flock of 4 + **Ashy-crowned Finch-Larks** flew in and out repeatedly to feed.

THIRUKETISWARAM KOVIL 9.1

A male **Indian Peafowl** was dancing to a female.

Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne

I went to **Mannar** 11th-14th January with Associate Members Graham Marshall, Shalinka de Silva and Keith Wijesuriya and Affiliates Renuka Marshall and Rosaine Wijesuriya. En route, we stopped at Kudawewa, Madampe and Navadankulama Tank and other places which afforded birding opportunities.

The weather was clear and sunny except for a few light showers in Mannar which did not hinder our birding.

KUDA WEVA and fields opposite the tank 11.1

Time- around 9 a.m.

In the tank and on the surrounding trees, **Little Cormorant, Purple Heron, Yellow Bittern, Lesser Whistling Teal, Cotton Teal, Purple Coot, Common Moorhen, Pheasant-tailed Jacana. Whiskered Terns** flew over while a pair of **Stork-billed Kingfishers** afforded good sightings as they perched on a leafless tree across the tank. **White-breasted Kingfisher** and **Blue-tailed Bee-eater**.

In the fields opposite the tank, **Median** and **Cattle Egrets, Openbill** and **Black-winged Stilt**.

NAVADANKULAMA 11.1

Time-mid morning

A total of 34 species seen among which the following were interesting- A few **Openbill, White Ibis** and **Lesser Whistling Teal**. A pair of **Cotton Teal** was chasing each other and then settled in the water. **Garganey**. The only raptor seen was a **Brahminy Kite**. **Common Moorhens** were swimming in the main tank, while **Whiskered Terns** flew over. **Palm Swift, Common** and **White-breasted Kingfishers,**

Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Indian Roller, Common Swallow- plentiful, **Indian Pipit, Purple-rumped** and **Purple Sunbirds**. Many **Ashy Swallow-Shrike** were perched on stumps in the dried up marsh and afforded fine photographic opportunities.

We were disappointed that no Common Coot or Collared Doves were seen but we did not spend much time here and had we stayed longer, perhaps we would have spotted them.

Heard- **Ceylon Junglefowl**.

TABBOWE TANK 11.1

We did not stop here as there was not much bird life. A **Black Drongo** darted onto the road to pick up some insect and flew back to a tree nearby.

TANK IN TANTIRIMALE area and its environs 11.1

Time- early afternoon

We stopped for lunch by a water body which was on one side of the road and some fields were lying fallow on the other.

Soaring above was a solitary **White-necked Stork**. A **Black-winged Kite** flew fairly close to the fields. A **White-bellied Sea Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle** and a **Shikra** were also seen here. A beautiful male **Small Minivet** resplendent in grey and shades of yellow and orange was an attractive sight. **Streaked Fantail Warblers** were flying high over the fields uttering their zitting calls in a mating display.

GIANT'S TANK and its environs including MURUNKAN paddy fields 11.1

Time- - around 3 p.m.

Some **Spotted-billed Pelicans** were swimming in the Tank while **Little Egret, Grey** and **Purple Herons, Cattle Egret, Indian Pond Heron, Yellow Bittern** and **Openbill** were among the reeds, rushes and other water plants.

In the paddy fields at Murunkan were **Glossy Ibis** feeding among **White Ibis**. In the Tank and above were **Lesser Whistling Teal** and **Brahminy Kite**. A splendid specimen of a **White-bellied Sea Eagle** made a spectacular flight display above the tank bund while **Purple Coot**, **Common Moorhen**, **Common Coot** and **Pheasant-tailed Jacana** were foraging and swimming among the marsh plants.

Yellow-wattled Lapwing were in the flat arid areas near Murunkan. **Whiskered** and **Little Terns** flew over the Tank while a pair of **Blue-faced Malkoha** flew across the road. **Pied Crested Cuckoo**, **Common Swallow**, **Indian Pipit**, **Black Robin**, **House Sparrow** and **Black Drongo** were the other birds seen in the vicinity.

VANKALAI SANCTUARY 11-14 .1

Weather- slight drizzle on the 13th evening. Rest of the time clear.

A total of 60 species was seen among which the following were noteworthy / interesting due to their composition, numbers, etc:

Little Grebe, **Spotted-billed Pelican**, all four **Egrets**, **Painted Stork** with a few juveniles, **Openbill**, **White Ibis**, **Spoonbill**, **Lesser Whistling Teal**. A fair number of **Wigeon**, **Shoveller**, **Pintail**, **Garganey** and **Common Teal** were relatively close to the road and offered good photographic opportunities. **Crested Honey Buzzard**. A **Western Marsh Harrier** flew over some shrubs and settled on an open area. **Indian Grey Partridge** were most obliging and one evening provided us with an endearing sighting of a pair enjoying a dust bath which lasted about five minutes, in a shallow depression. Strangely enough, **White-breasted Waterhen** were few in numbers. **Asiatic Golden Plover** were seen in groups of 20 -25 in the marshy areas. About four to five **Common Ringed Plover** among **Little Ringed**, **Kentish** and **Lesser Sand Plovers**. Among some **Black-tailed Godwits** were two **Bar-tailed Godwits**- the latter with their backs obligingly turned towards us showing their barred tails. **Whimbrel**, **Eurasian Curlew**, **Common Redshank**, **Common Greenshank**, **Marsh** and **Wood Sandpipers**. About three to four **Terek Sandpipers**, a few **Common Sandpiper**. Many **Little Stint**, **Curlew Sandpiper** and **Black-winged Stilts**. In the evenings a long strand of gulls and terns comprising **Heuglin's**, **Great Black-headed** and **Brown-headed Gulls**, **Caspian**, **Common**, **Whiskered** and

White-winged Black Terns came to rest on a shallow sand spit in one of the water bodies. **Spotted** and **Collared Doves**, **Common Kingfisher**, **Blue-tailed Bee-eater**, **Hoopoe**, **Jerdon's Bushlark**, **Indian Pipit**, **Rufous-rumped Shrike**, **White-browed Prinia** and many **Black Drongo** were the other birds spotted in this haven for birds which is sadly becoming a garbage dump in certain areas.

MANNAR SALTERNS 12.1

6.45 a.m.- 8.30 a.m.

A few **Large Egret**, **Grey Heron** and **Painted Stork**. A flock of 130 **Greater Flamingo**-some of which were juveniles. Some female **Garganey** swimming. Three **Common Ringed Plover** among a group of **Little Ringed** and **Lesser Sand Plovers**. One **Large Sand Plover**. **Black-tailed Godwit**, **Whimbrel**, **Common Redshank**, **Common Sandpiper**, a few **Turnstones** many **Little Stints** and **Curlew Sandpipers**, **Black-winged Stilt**. A solitary **Avocet** was in the water along with the flamingos. **Brown-headed Gull**, **Gull-billed Tern**, many **Caspian Terns**, **Whiskered Tern**. **Indian Skylarks** shooting up in the sky singing away.

TODDAVELI- In and around the premises of the lodge where we stayed 11 -13.1

Brahminy Kite, **Orange-breasted Green Pigeon**, **Spotted** and **Collared Doves**, **Rose-ringed Parakeet**, **Common Coucal**, **Pied Crested Cuckoo**, **Indian Koel**, **Palm Swift**, **White-breasted Kingfisher**, **Little Green Bee-eater**, **Indian Roller**, **Hoopoe**.

A pair of **Golden-backed Woodpecker** *Dinopium benghalense jaffnensis* with the entire back a beautiful evenly coloured golden hue was foraging one morning and gave us a long sighting. **Ceylon Wood-Shrike** were on a Horse Radish *Moringa oleifera* tree while a beautiful male **Indian Paradise Flycatcher**, its long white tail streamers rippling like ribbons in the wind was on a nearby Mango *Mangifera indica* tree. It was accompanied by its mate most of the time. **Red-vented** and **White-browed Bulbuls**, **Brown Shrike**, **Brown Flycatcher**, **Magpie-Robin**, **Black Robin**, **Southern Common Babbler**, **Common Tailorbird**, **Purple-rumped** and **Purple Sunbirds**, **House Sparrow**, **Common**

Myna, Black-headed Oriole, House and Jungle Crows were the other birds seen here.

TALLADI PONDS 12-14 .1

There was hardly any water here and one of the ponds had mainly clods of mud. We searched in vain for the Spot-billed Duck but failed to see it here. A few **Painted Stork, Lesser Whistling Teal, Garganey, Wood Sandpiper** and **Pheasant-tailed Jacana** were the only avian inhabitants.

MANNAR CAUSEWAY 11 – 14 .1

Weather- Mainly clear with slight drizzle on and off

Spotted-billed Pelican. A **Little Cormorant** and **Indian Shag** together affording a good opportunity for comparison of the two species. An **Indian Reef Heron**- grey morph among **Little, Large and Median Egrets. Grey Heron, Indian Pond Heron, Painted Stork, White Ibis.** A rectangular block of pink far away in the horizon indicated a large flock of **Greater Flamingo.** They were too far to estimate numbers. **Garganey, Lesser Sand Plover, Black-tailed Godwits** with two **Bar-tailed Godwits** close by, providing a good opportunity for comparison. **Common Redshank, Turnstone, Little Stint, Black-winged Stilt.** About six **Crab Plover**, one in the action of catching and consuming a crab captured on camera by Keith. **Great Stone Plover, Whiskered Tern,** many **Common Swallow.**

ALONG THE POONERYN ROAD 13.1

At one of the marshes, **Yellow** and **Black Bitterns.** On a lamp-post a female **Common Kestrel. Indian Grey Partridge, Indian Peafowl, White-breasted Waterhen, Asiatic Golden Plover.**

About eight to ten **Yellow-wattled Lapwing** on the bund of a tank. **Red-wattled Lapwing, Marsh and Terek Sandpipers** in a small water body.

We drove along scouting for the **Indian Courser** when suddenly I spotted two brown blobs on a grey mound very close to the road. A quick look revealed a pair of coursers. We stayed quietly and soon they were more relaxed although from time to time they raised their heads and

looked around in between foraging. Finally they started to preen, stretching their wings and seemed as about relaxed as they would ever be. We watched them for about half an hour from 12.08 p.m. till 12.34 p.m. and considered ourselves fortunate to see these rare and shy birds at such close quarters. Keith and Shalinka were able to get some good photographs.

Collared Dove, Pied Crested Cuckoo in the shrubs. **Ashy-crowned Finch-Lark** on the gravel road. **Indian Pipit, Brown Shrike. Clamorous Reed Warblers** were living up to their name making quite a din in the reeds in the marshes. **Spotted** and **Black-headed Munias** and **Striated Weavers** with a half built nest were among the other birds seen in the reeds. **Ashy Swallow-Shrike** on the wires along the road.

KORA KULAM and small waterbody at TARAPURAM 12-13.1

At a small picturesque water body along the road by the side of the armed post, **Little Grebe, White-breasted Waterhen, Common Moorhen** and **Common Coot**.

At Kora Kulam, a large mixed flock of **Spoonbill, Wigeon, Shoveller** and **Pintail**. A **Peregrine Falcon** was seated on the shore facing us. Approximately 200 **Great Black-headed Gulls** among some **Brown-headed Gulls. Common Kestrel** perched on lamp posts while **Black** and **Brahminy Kites** were flying around. **Little Green Bee-eater, Indian Skylark**, juvenile **White-rumped Munias** and **Spotted Munia** in the scrub.

TIRUKETISWARAM TEMPLE ROAD 12 & 13 .1

We drove along this road on both days in the hope of seeing the Spot-billed Duck and were fortunate to see a pair only on the second day. En route we saw **Cattle Egret**, a juvenile **Brahminy Kite** perched on a tree far away, **Purple Coot** and **Ashy-crowned Finch-Lark**. On the 13th evening, a pair of **Spot-billed Duck** circled around and rested briefly on a small patch of water permitting Shalinka to take a quick photograph before a honking vehicle spooked them away. **Indian Peafowl** in the trees getting ready to roost.

Tara Wikramanayake

HIYARE 1.1

Handed over the Collared Scops Owl, which was found injured on 28.12.2013 at Depanama, to the medical facility of Hiyare Conservation Center.

Black Capped Bulbul, Crested Serpent Eagle. A White Bellied Sea-Eagle catching a **Yellow Bittern** was seen.

HOME GARDEN – PAYAGALA 5.1

An **Indian Pitta** was observed at eye level.

9.1

A **Brown Flycatcher** came to the birdbath. A **White Bellied Sea-eagle** was seen in flight.

25.1

A **Small White-eye, White Browed Bulbul, Southern Common Babblers** and a **Brown Flycatcher** were seen in the birdbath.

GELANIGAMA 16.1

An unidentified Harrier was observed flying over the Gelanigama Interchange at the southern highway.

AGALAWATTA 18.1

A **Black Bittern** was seen.

GONADUWA – BANDARAGAMA 20.1

Two **Painted Storks** were seen.

Senaka Abeyratne

UDAWALAWA NATIONAL PARK 11.1

One **Daurian Starling** was located in the causeway upon information received by non-member Dulan Ranga. It was a male and was feeding on trees for several minutes and flew away.

A pair of **Marsh Iora**, several **Rosy Starlings** and **Jerdon's Bushlark** were some of the other species seen.

EMBILIKALA, BUNDALA 11-13.01

Eight to nine **Watercock** seen in the Embilikala wetland. Overcast conditions continued throughout the day and unusually most of the watercocks fed in the open areas and were very easy to observe. One individual had some black on its upper parts.

A **Rufous Turtle Dove** was seen perched on a decayed bush in the same area.

One **Glossy Ibis**, several **Common Redshank**, a grey morph **Little Egret** and some other waterbirds were seen.

BUNDALA SALTERNS 11-13.01

Highlights were six **Common Ringed Plovers** and two **Red-necked Phalaropes**. 40-50 **Small Pratincoles** rested on a bund with a few **Lesser Sand Plovers**.

Kentish Plover, Marsh Sandpiper, Indian Darter, Great Stone Plover, Black-winged Stilt, Ruddy Turnstone, Little, Caspian and Whiskered Terns were the other species observed.

A **Blyth's Pipit** was observed beside the road to the saltern.

Several **Common Swallows** (*Hirundo rustica gutturalis*) and two *Hirundo rustica rustica* and one **Tytler's Swallow** (*Hirundo rustica tytleri*) were observed on the telegraph wires towards the village.

Brahminy Kite, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Oriental Honey Buzzard, Ceylon Junglefowl and Orange-breasted Green Pigeon were some of the other species seen.

SINHARAJA FOREST RESERVE, KUDAWA 21-23.1

A pair of adult **Red-faced Malkoha** with a young bird were seen flying here and there for several minutes.

Several **Ceylon Blue Magpies**, **Ashy-headed Laughing-Thrush**, a few **Rufous Babblers**, three Ceylon **White-headed Starlings**, two female **Ceylon Spurfowl**, a few **Layard's Flycatchers**, **Black Bulbuls**, **Ceylon Trogon**, **Ceylon Crested Drongo**, **Brown-throated Spinetail Swift**, a pair of **Spot-winged Thrush** and a **Ceylon Frogmouth** male with a young bird on a nest were some of the other species seen.

Sudheera Bandara

SINHARAJA FOREST RESERVE 11- 13.1

With member Sampath Seneviratne and two other non-member friends.

Favourable sunny weather conditions remained during the morning and afternoon but heavy showers were experienced in the evening. The following birds were observed during the three days spent inside the forest reserve, along the path from the entrance to the research centre.

Endemic Birds:

Ceylon Crested Drongo, **Ceylon Junglefowl**, **Rufous Babbler**, **Ceylon Scimitar Babbler**, **Ashy-headed Laughing-Thrush**, **Ceylon Blue Magpie**, **Red-faced Malkoha**, **Black-capped Bulbul**, **Legge's Flowerpecker**, **Ceylon Lorikeet**, **Spotted-winged Thrush**, **Yellow-fronted Barbet**, **Ceylon Grey Hornbill**, **Serendib Scops Owl** (heard), **Chestnut-backed Owlet** (heard).

A nest of a **Ceylon Frogmouth** was observed outside the forest reserve, near Martin's Lodge. The male was present in the nest with the chick. The face of the chick was visible through the feathers of the parent bird and it was adjusting its position from time to time by pushing the adult bird.

Since we stayed in the research station for 2 nights, we had the opportunity of walking along the trail during the night. During our walk on the 11th night we were able to observe three night roosting **Yellow-browed Bulbuls**. The sight was like a bright yellow ball on a small branch of a tree. We concluded that there were three birds, since three tails were visible. Further, we were able to observe a **Ceylon Trogon** (male) roosting on a very low branch of a tree (about 7 feet from the ground). At the same time Sampath observed the female bird also roosting about 15 feet away, on a branch of the same height. We were

wondering whether these birds come down for night roosting from the canopy.

Other Birds:

Brown Hawk-Owl (heard), **Forest Eagle-Owl** (heard), **Common Hawk-Cuckoo** (heard both days at dusk). **Black-fronted Babbler**, **Yellow-browed**, and **Black Bulbuls**, **Tickell's Flowerpecker**, **Ceylon Trogon** (female), **Layard's Flycatcher**, **Green Leaf Warbler**, **Emerald Dove**, **Crested Hawk-Eagle**, **Orange Minivet**, **Gold-fronted Chloropsis**, **Black-naped Monarch**, **Grey Wagtail**, **Pompadour Green Pigeon**, **Small White-eye** and other common birds.

WERALUPE, RATNAPURA 19.01

On information received with photographs about a sighting of a Grey-headed Lapwing, I went to the site around 6.30 a.m. to see this vagrant. Although I was at the site till 11.30 a.m., I was not lucky enough to see the bird. Non-members Mr. Athula Edirisinghe and Mr. Thilanka Edirisinghe had spotted the bird at this site on 18.01.2014 and captured some clear images of the bird.

Other birds seen in the area were **Black-headed**, **Spotted** and **White-rumped Munias**, **Brown Shrike**, **Ashy Prinia**, **White-browed Prinia**, **Streaked Fantail Warbler**, **Crested Hawk-Eagle**, **Indian Pipit**, **Red-wattled Lapwing**, **Cattle Egret**, **White-breasted Waterhen**, **Common Kingfisher**, **White-throated Kingfisher**, **Common Swallow**, **Ceylon Swallow**, **Blue-tailed Bee-eater** and **Baya Weaver**.

TALANGAMA WETLANDS 26.01

With member Sampath Seneviratne.

Pintail Snipe, **Yellow Wagtail**, **Blue-tailed Bee-eater**, **Common Swallow**, **Wood Sandpiper**, **Yellow Bittern**, **Black Bittern**, **Common Kingfisher**, **Stork-billed Kingfisher**, six **White Ibis**, **Ceylon Swallow**, **Common Moorhen**, **Jungle Crow**, **Spotted-billed Pelican**, **White-browed Bulbul**, and other common birds were seen.

The highlight of the day was a sighting of a pale morph **Booted Eagle**. It was flying low over the lake and was being mobbed by two **Red-vented Bulbuls**.

Hasitha Perera

Home Garden, ARUGGODA, ALUBOMULLA 12.1

Indian Paradise Flycatcher (white morph) along with a female.

HORANA 16-31.1

A few **Blue-tailed Bee-eaters** were observed inside the premises of the Base Hospital, Horana and a paddy field nearby.

INGIRIYA 29.1

A **Brown Shrike** was noted in a paddy field by A8 main road.

PATHAKADA, PELMADULLA 29.01

A flock comprising about 50-60 **Common Swallow** (*H. r. gutturalis*) seen on and around telegraph wires close to the A4 main road.

Sankha Randenikumara**SINHARAJA FOREST RESERVE 1.4**

Saw a **Serendib Scops Owl** just outside the Reserve. **Ceylon Frogmouth** nest close to Martin's Lodge.

14-15.1

Heard the call of the **Forest Eagle-Owl** in the morning at 5.30 on the 14th of January.

Other species worth mentioning are **Indian Blue Chat, Chestnut-backed Owlet, Green-billed Coucal, Crested Goshawk, Rufous-bellied Hawk Eagle, Ceylon Hill Myna, Ceylon White-headed Starling, Ceylon Spurfowl**. A **Ceylon Frogmouth** male was seen with a chick.

KALAWANA 13.1

Heard the call of **Indian Peafowl** around 5.30 p.m. - 6.00 p.m. on our way to Sinharaja.

Senehas Karunarathne