

A Birding Trip to

# Sri Lanka



9<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2024





9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>Ibis Wilpattu &amp; Wilpattu NP</b>
12 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>Maradankadawala Marshes</b>
13 <sup>th</sup> to 15 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>Pasikudah Beach area</b>
15 <sup>th</sup> to 17 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>Ella (including Mountain Heavens Hotel)</b>
<b>Lipton's Seat, Nine Arches Bridge (16<sup>th</sup>)</b>
18 <sup>th</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>Udawalawe NP, Udawalawe marshes, Centauria Wild Hotel</b>
19 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>Debarawewa Paddies (stop en route to Yala)</b>
19 <sup>th</sup> to 21 <sup>st</sup> April
<b>Yala National Park &amp; Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala</b>
22 <sup>nd</sup> April
<b>Galle</b>

**BIRDseen**

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# Sri Lanka

9<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2024



I had previously been to Sri Lanka on a birding trip in 2009, when the locations visited were towards the South-west. This was partly because the peace treaty for the war from 1983 had just been signed in that year, so much of the North and East of the island still suffered from the conflict. So it was well worth waiting some time for a return with my wife to do a non-birding holiday, which included safaris, beach and mountains, when locations such as Wilpattu National Park and Pasikudah would have been unavailable until recently. Naturally, safaris by default include a lot of birds as well as mammals, and other locations can also be rich in birds as the report will show.





THE EARTH TRIP



We booked the trip through The Earth Trip ([theearthtrip.com](http://theearthtrip.com)) who specialise in holidays to Sri Lanka and Madagascar. We worked on a tailor-made tour to our specifications, and this to include private driver/guide throughout. Earth Trip use a local team in Sri Lanka called Resfeber, who provide the transport, ground arrangements and driver, who in our case was Sam(path) - above, an excellent careful driver who was always on time and always took an interest in our needs. This wasn't a birding tour, so he wasn't an expert in birds, but did have a working knowledge, and enjoyed ID discussions on the birds new to him or which he didn't know too well. The accommodations (below) were of an excellent standard (a notch or two up on my usual birding holiday digs!) and all had potential for birds and some other wildlife in their localities.

## TIPS

Wet season is from May to July/August - it can be a very good time just after this in September for elephant gatherings but much of the vegetation is tall and lush so can impede views. Temperatures were up to 38°C when we were there. Apparently, the lowest daily temperatures through the year are around 26°C in December and January

The Sri Lankan Rupee is a closed currency, so it can't be bought before entering the country and must be changed back before leaving. There are multiple exchange desks on leaving the airport security, although the exchange rate is not as good as ATM's and hotel currency exchange once in the country

Electricity plugs are either UK or European 3 pin, with most accommodations having both. When using European adapters, it's worth having them with the third earth pin, since it is often required to open the ports for the live and neutral pins

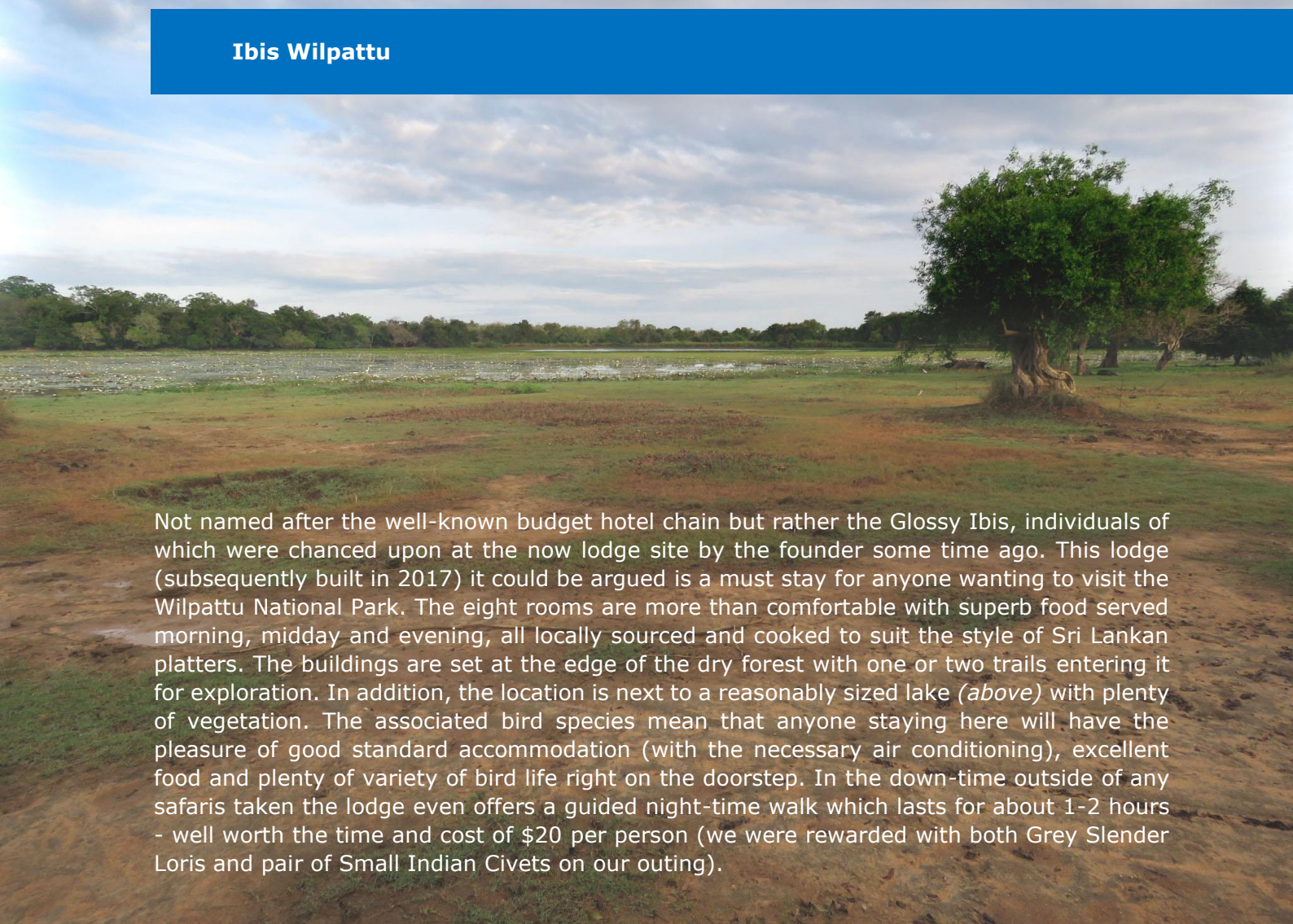
Leaches are common within Sri Lanka, but usually inhabit closed wooded environments and are a pest after rains. It did rain at times, but we had no evidence of the dreaded leach. Others we talked to did when walking through wet woodland, so a pair of leach socks and/or some 50% deet can be useful

First light was just before 6am, and dusk was around 6:30pm



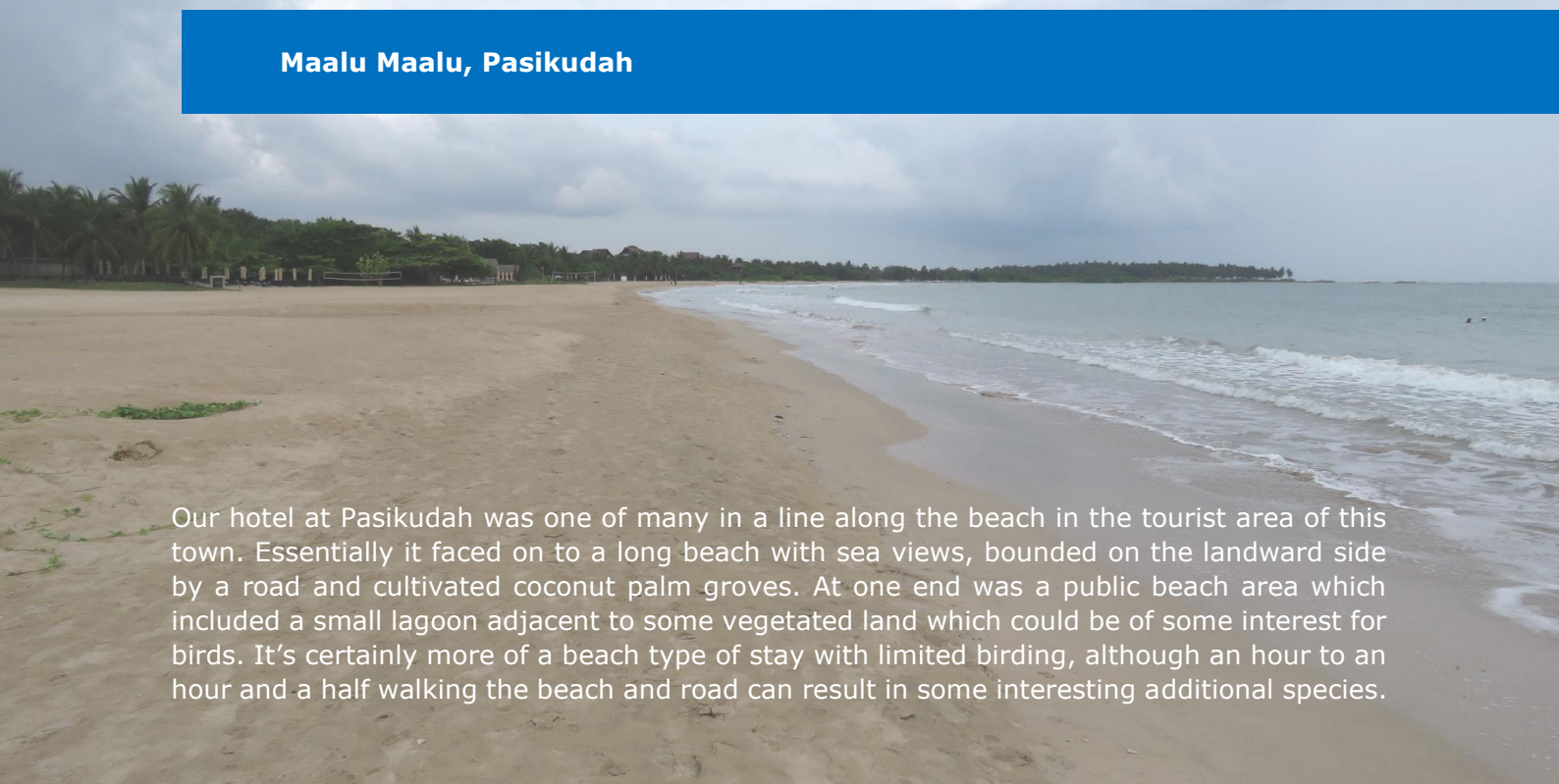
## Accommodation

### Ibis Wilpattu



Not named after the well-known budget hotel chain but rather the Glossy Ibis, individuals of which were chanced upon at the now lodge site by the founder some time ago. This lodge (subsequently built in 2017) it could be argued is a must stay for anyone wanting to visit the Wilpattu National Park. The eight rooms are more than comfortable with superb food served morning, midday and evening, all locally sourced and cooked to suit the style of Sri Lankan platters. The buildings are set at the edge of the dry forest with one or two trails entering it for exploration. In addition, the location is next to a reasonably sized lake (*above*) with plenty of vegetation. The associated bird species mean that anyone staying here will have the pleasure of good standard accommodation (with the necessary air conditioning), excellent food and plenty of variety of bird life right on the doorstep. In the down-time outside of any safaris taken the lodge even offers a guided night-time walk which lasts for about 1-2 hours - well worth the time and cost of \$20 per person (we were rewarded with both Grey Slender Loris and pair of Small Indian Civets on our outing).

### Maalu Maalu, Pasikudah

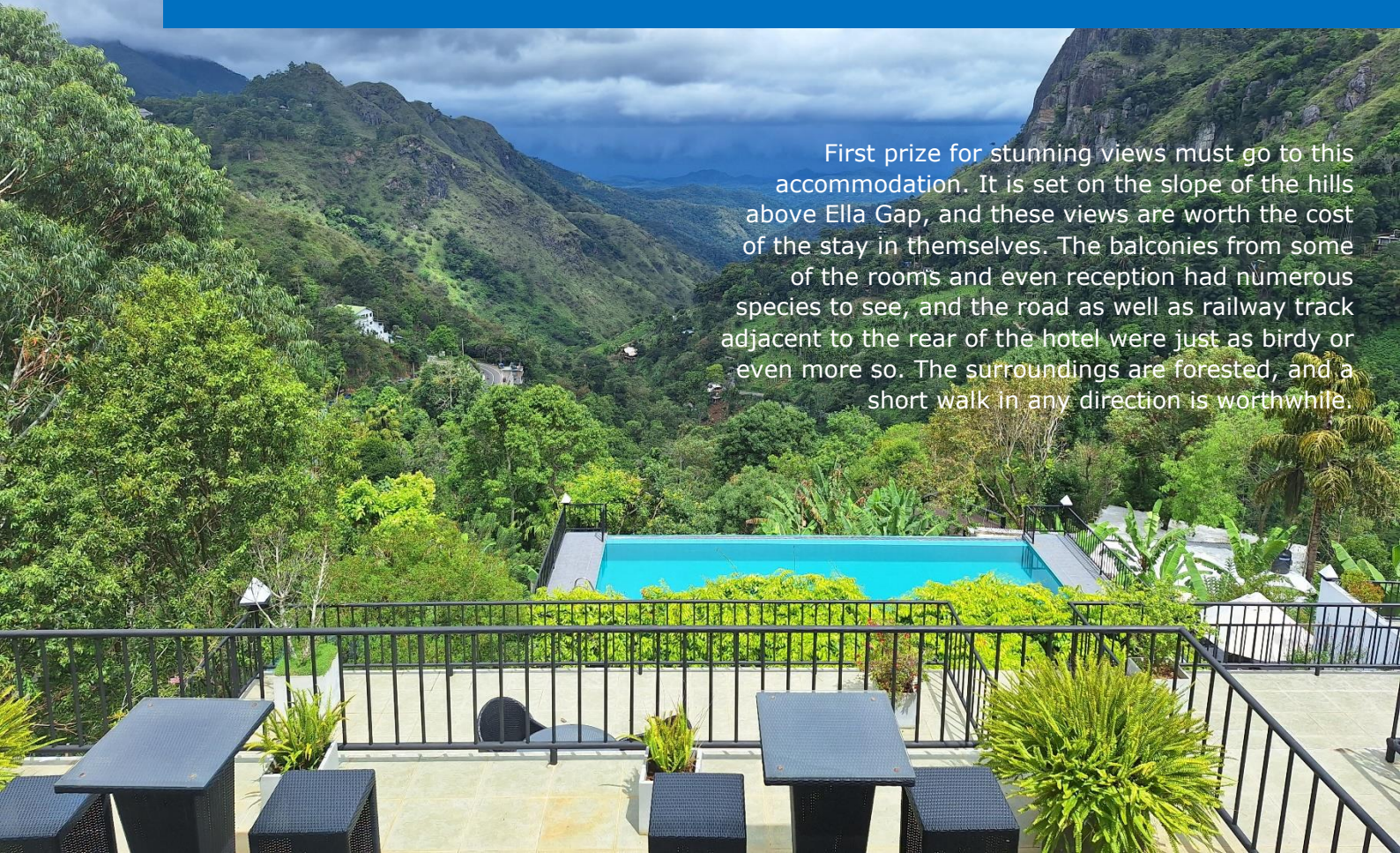


Our hotel at Pasikudah was one of many in a line along the beach in the tourist area of this town. Essentially it faced on to a long beach with sea views, bounded on the landward side by a road and cultivated coconut palm groves. At one end was a public beach area which included a small lagoon adjacent to some vegetated land which could be of some interest for birds. It's certainly more of a beach type of stay with limited birding, although an hour to an hour and a half walking the beach and road can result in some interesting additional species.



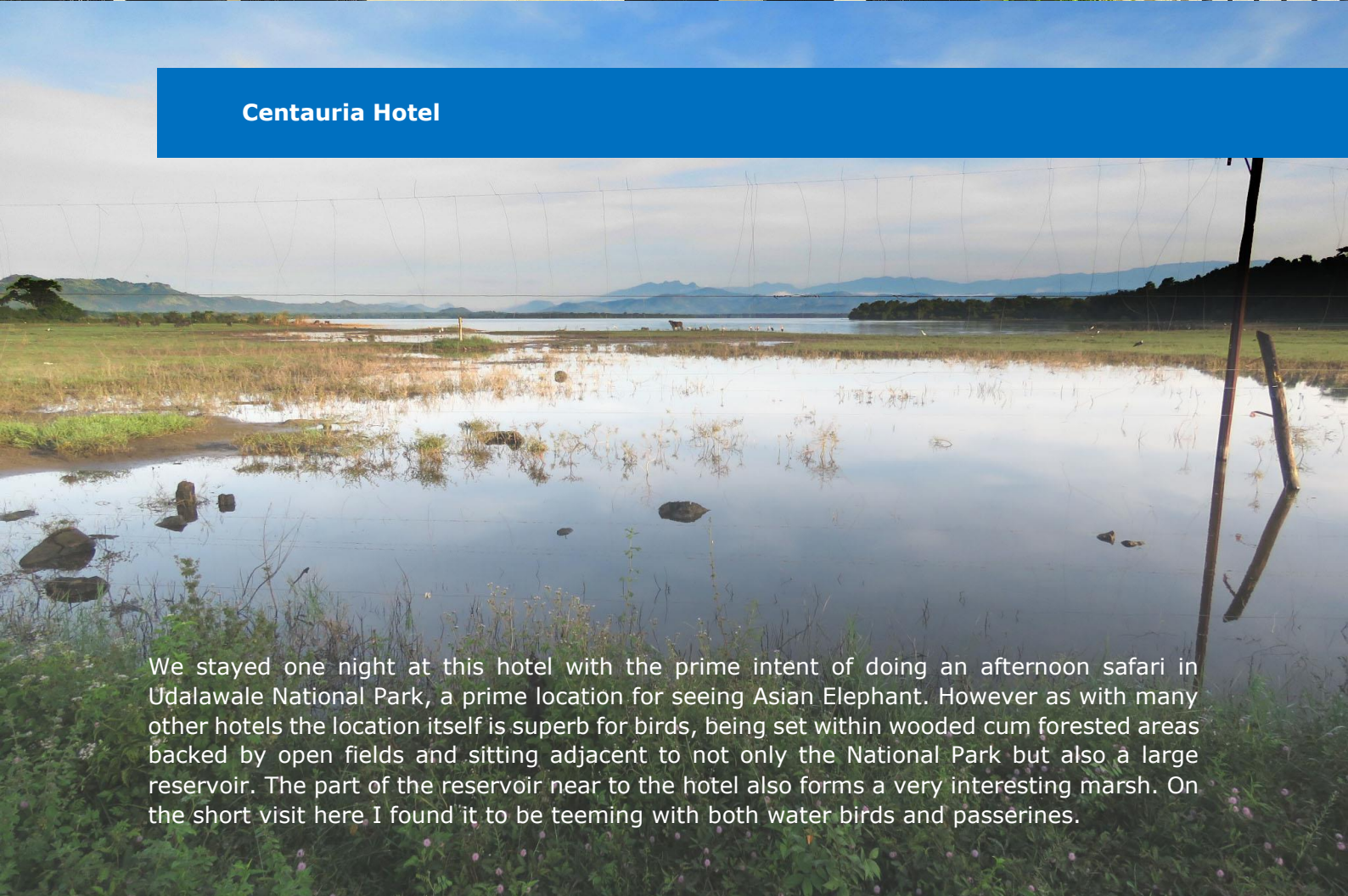
## Mountain Heavens, Ella

First prize for stunning views must go to this accommodation. It is set on the slope of the hills above Ella Gap, and these views are worth the cost of the stay in themselves. The balconies from some of the rooms and even reception had numerous species to see, and the road as well as railway track adjacent to the rear of the hotel were just as birdy or even more so. The surroundings are forested, and a short walk in any direction is worthwhile.



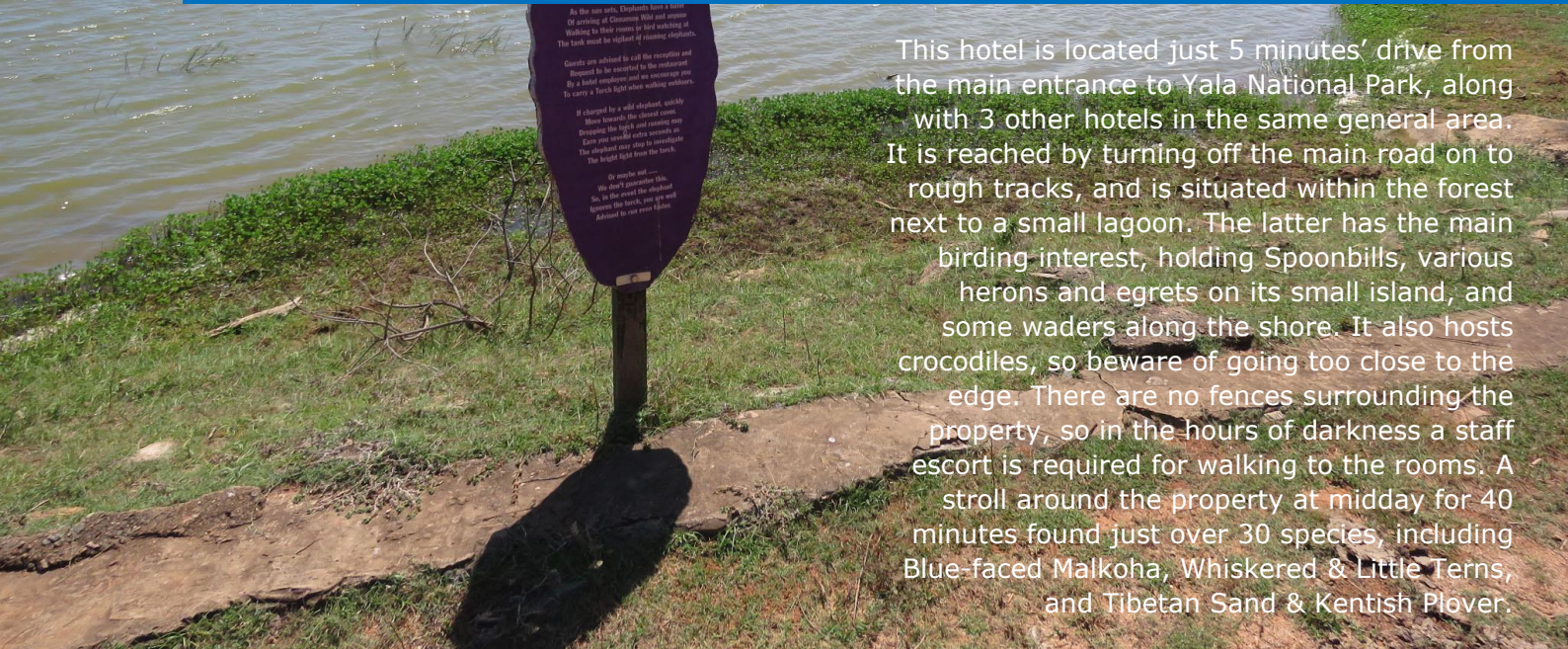
## Centauria Hotel

We stayed one night at this hotel with the prime intent of doing an afternoon safari in Udawalawe National Park, a prime location for seeing Asian Elephant. However as with many other hotels the location itself is superb for birds, being set within wooded cum forested areas backed by open fields and sitting adjacent to not only the National Park but also a large reservoir. The part of the reservoir near to the hotel also forms a very interesting marsh. On the short visit here I found it to be teeming with both water birds and passerines.





## Cinnamon Wild, Yala



This hotel is located just 5 minutes' drive from the main entrance to Yala National Park, along with 3 other hotels in the same general area. It is reached by turning off the main road on to rough tracks, and is situated within the forest next to a small lagoon. The latter has the main birding interest, holding Spoonbills, various herons and egrets on its small island, and some waders along the shore. It also hosts crocodiles, so beware of going too close to the edge. There are no fences surrounding the property, so in the hours of darkness a staff escort is required for walking to the rooms. A stroll around the property at midday for 40 minutes found just over 30 species, including Blue-faced Malkoha, Whiskered & Little Terns, and Tibetan Sand & Kentish Plover.

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April

## Wilpattu Lodge (from Colombo airport)



After a seven-hour flight from Newcastle to Dubai then four hours from Dubai to Colombo in Sri Lanka it was a nice surprise that having pre-booked a visa and also landing card online we got through security in no time. However, picking up the luggage was a slightly different case (forgive the pun) - after not having the luggage delivered at all when we were in Uganda, we began to get nervous when case after case appeared and not one even resembled ours.

Yet this just happened to fool us since they did come amongst the last tranche of deliveries from the flight. We then made the four hour or so journey from the airport to the Ibis Wilpattu, our base for a couple of days for safaris at Wilpattu National Park. The journey was mostly along well made roads in urban and suburban environments with occasional small lakes, ponds and rivers offering a few goodies. As we sped past these, prize amongst them was a single Spot-billed Pelican (*left*) on one of the smaller lakes and Black-necked Ibises on an even smaller marsh. The fields and paddies seemed to quite often spill over with Egrets (Eastern Cattle predominantly and Indian Pond Herons), while House Crows flooded the towns alongside smaller numbers of Common Mynas.





The Ibis Wilpattu is in a wonderful setting nestled amongst only lightly enclosed forest and adjacent to a rather largish shallow lake containing plenty of vegetation and obviously hosting many water-based birds. The lodge development was the brainchild of a chap who is from Sri Lanka, and the present accommodation is limited to eight comfortable rooms. There is a dining area enclosed adjacent to the rooms and various tables with chairs set amongst the trees between the lodge on the lake itself. Food is local and excellent.

On the way to the lodge after turning on to rough tracks at the end of the journey a Malabar Pied Hornbill flew from a tree and over the car. A good omen indeed! Once we had unpacked obviously it was worth having a look around at the lake shore itself and the area behind the lodge which was woodland (with what was claimed to be the first organic swimming pool or Sri Lanka - in other words an excellent bird bath!). The lake itself hosts predictable Red-wattled Lapwings and a small but decent group of Lesser Whistling-Ducks, one of which was subsequently towing a group of small ducklings in her wake. A pair of Brahminy Kites scared the residents which included a pair of superb Pheasant-tailed Jacanas and later a single purple Heron. Most evident in the area were the Red-vented Bulbuls, but a lone White-browed did appear. Indian Robins were singing and holding territory in the staff area. The pool itself attracted a vocal White-throated Kingfisher as well as a few other interesting species including Purple-rumped Sunbirds which appeared to be nesting right over the table in the restaurant area. In the woods nearby Brown-headed Barbets called and a Small Minivet (*right*) was seen overhead.



Over the trees next to the lake a pair of Crested Treeswifts (*left*) were gliding around over the canopy and a Shikra sped through, landing briefly on one of the adjoining trees.





The only Bee-eaters during this initial scouting session were one or two Asian Green (*below left*) on the opposite side of the lake amongst the goats and cattle. The more time that was spent around the lake view aspect of the lodge and the open grazing area the more birds appeared. The pair of Crested Treeswifts eventually multiplied to 5, and a fly-through Large Cuckooshrike was followed by a couple of Sri Lanka Woodshrikes and a Black-headed Cuckooshrike (*above*). On the grazing area, a pair of Paddyfield Pipits were misidentified as Jerdon's Bushlark (*below right*) by the Merlin app – 2 of the latter were subsequently found in the same spot later! A pair of Indian Stone-curlews were noisy yet tried to hide anonymously. The small plot of land to the side of the lodge proved good for Purple Sunbird and Asian Green Bee-eaters, with a small selection of White-rumped Munias in and out of the grass. Many of these species later caused a ruckus when a neat little Shikra again patrolled the area.



After the sun had set and the darkness fallen, the lodge owners organised a bit of a nighttime "safari" around the grounds. This involved a pair of local lads who seemed well experienced in the endeavour, for the fair some of \$20 per person. It was still hot, but long trousers were advised as prevention against spiky plants. Order of the day was a slow search using red-filtered torches. Early successes were a bat and roosting Indian Paradise Flycatcher, before the headline prize of a Grey Slender Loris was picked out of thick foliage at neck-breaking height. Then after wandering into more open ground, a pair of Small Indian Civets were spotted gorging on a large fruit. By all accounts this sighting topped the former due to the scarcity of these sightings!





**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April**

## **Wilpattu National Park**



During the years of the Sri Lanka civil war from 1983 to 2009 this park was within the area controlled by the northern Tamil forces so was basically closed for business. It reopened again after the peace treaty was signed in 2009 and remains the largest National Park in Sri Lanka, thus being a serious rival to the much more well known Yala National Park in the South-east (itself situated near to the borders of the troubles to its East, but which kept open for most if not all of the unrest). Our guide and apparently others feel that Wilpattu is preferred to Yala based on its size and also understated nature, resulting in receiving many fewer visitors and thus jeeps etc, leading to significantly less disturbance than its much more well-known cousin.





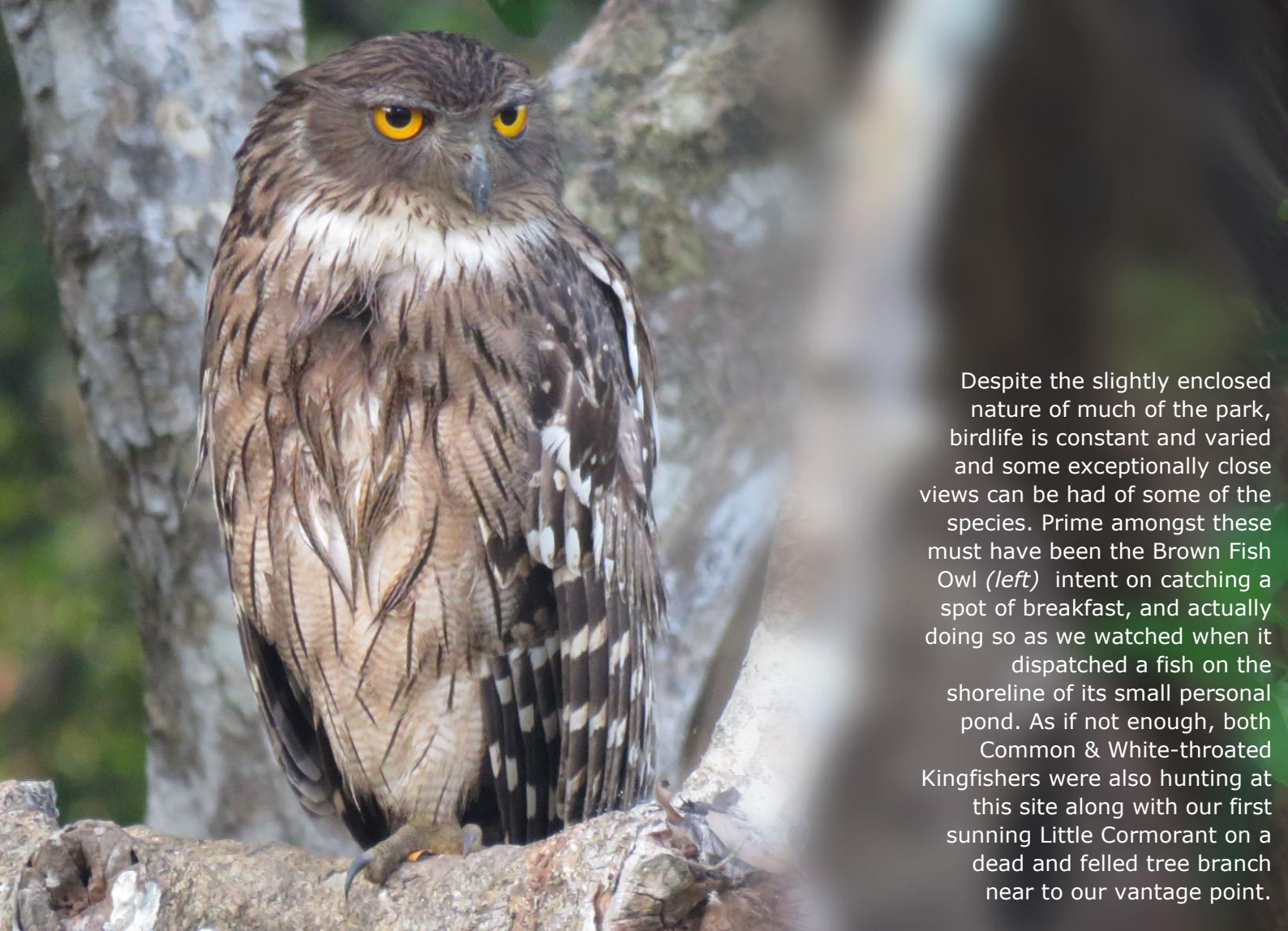
We spent the first morning driving one of the better-known tracks which ended at 10am(ish) at the breakfast stop. This was situated next to a lake and had an indoor area which could be sat in to enjoy food with doors and shuttered windows to keep out the hungry group of Toque Macaques patrolling outside. The drive through the park from the opening gates to this spot was particularly enjoyable for both birds and for mammals. Much of this was through enclosed forest which at this time is dry forest, although quite often interspersed with more open areas and even small ponds to larger lakes. As usual the eyesight and pick up skills of the locally based driver cum guide were exceptional. Apparently one of these guides is not necessary



The park is best known along with other areas of Sri Lanka for the high concentration of Leopards. This obviously doesn't mean that sightings are guaranteed as we found on our first outing, but it certainly gives a much higher percentage chance of seeing these elusive carnivores than many other places around the globe. That being said we did see a single Sloth Bear (*left*) which is perhaps even more elusive than leopards and certainly one at the top of our list of much sought after species to see. This shortly followed a single Asian Elephant wading into a large lake feeding on the water vegetation. We had by this time passed small groups of Chital (*below left*) and surprisingly only two brief Tufted Grey Langurs (*below right*).







Despite the slightly enclosed nature of much of the park, birdlife is constant and varied and some exceptionally close views can be had of some of the species. Prime amongst these must have been the Brown Fish Owl (*left*) intent on catching a spot of breakfast, and actually doing so as we watched when it dispatched a fish on the shoreline of its small personal pond. As if not enough, both Common & White-throated Kingfishers were also hunting at this site along with our first sunning Little Cormorant on a dead and felled tree branch near to our vantage point.

At another very much smaller pond, 3 types of Egret (Great, Medium & Little) surveyed the small shoreline with Indian Pond Herons, while at least 4 Crocodiles fed regularly on what must have been a hefty supply of fish without even a second glance for the birds. Raptors also joined in an attempt at close-to portraiture with both Changeable Hawk-Eagle (*below right*) and Crested Serpent Eagle pausing not far from us, with the former evening even alighting on the ground right next to our parked vehicle. Bee-eaters were fairly constant with Asian Green predominant, but we did also come across the two other expected species in Blue-tailed & Chestnut-headed. The large lake which held the Elephant also put forth a pair of Painted Storks as well as one of only two Great Stone-curlews of the morning. Grey-headed Fish Eagle (*below left*) tried to muscle in on the show-stopping intimate views but was a little further away in a tree at the centre of a lake along with what looked like a nest being made by a Woolly-necked Stork.





*Indian Peafowl*



*Crested Serpent-Eagle*



*Asian Woolly-necked Stork*



Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April

## Wilpattu National Park

Following a pick-up from the hotel at 6:00am again we had a reasonably early departure from the gates of the Park for a full day hunting around the tracks with the main quarry today. Leopard. This would involve fairly quickly reaching the picnic/lunch area which took three hours yesterday morning to then go further past this location into the park looking for the well-known spots for Leopard (again no pun intended). The morning started well even before entering the park gates with good views of Brown-headed Barbet (*above*), which had been seen or heard many times, but this was the first time showing well, and calling Indian Cuckoo. We made fairly quick headway along the well already travelled tracks, but not until after we picked up Ruddy Mongoose (*below*) and also our first Water Buffalo right next to the track.





Once we had passed through the picnic area frequented yesterday it became obvious that not only were there more vehicles here today due to the New Year bank holiday, but they were also concentrating in the Leopard area due to this being the poster boy for the park! We came across groups of jeeps a few times who thought they had heard alarm calls from other animals but to no avail. It wasn't until after the breakfast break that we returned to a short distance from where we'd eaten and found around a dozen jeeps parked along a narrow track within the forest. Apparently a leopard had been seen crossing over and was somewhere within the forest itself. We sat for some time and one or two of these jeeps departed so we'd nudged further from our outside position to the approximate place and with a great degree of luck were able to peer through gaps in the forest and see not just one but two leopards, one presumably a cub, not showing clearly but certainly demonstrating all salient features at various times.



*Breakfast/break area*

Up until this point many of the birds that we passed mirrored those seen yesterday. Grey-headed Fish Eagle was on its favoured pond that we had passed the previous session. The usual myriad of Sri Lanka Junglefowl and Indian Peafowl with Asian Green Bee-eaters patrolling the tracks for insects were also to be seen. Shortly after finishing breakfast and wandering down to the platform overlooking the lake three Common Kingfishers were seen on a single branch at one time. The usual birds were also here such as Whiskered Tern, Little Cormorants, Oriental Darter, etc. However, a Brahminy Kite was also spotted on its nest within the bay occupied by the viewing platform. Of course, each visitor to this area also produced its hopeful collection of Toque Macaques attempting to steal anything they could get their paws on. This included a rustle through all jeeps that were parked up and unattended.



*Sri Lanka Junglefowl and Toque Macaque*





Following the lunch break we again went on to the tracks and within 5 minutes found approximately 12 jeeps lined up next to the lake with all cameras pointed in one direction. The difficult searching and poor views of the morning's Leopards were quickly dismissed with the magnificent male Leopard right out in the open for what presumably lasted only minutes before he went undercover into the shade of the bushes. He could still be seen by carefully peering in from our distance of 80 metres or so but first views were the best views. At this same location we also came across our first Indian Jungle Crows being hassled by Red-wattled Lapwings.





Earlier on we had passed a small colony of Spot-billed Pelicans looking strange in their tree nesting site. Changeable Hawk-Eagles were also noticeable with the three seen consisting of two juveniles and probable adult. At a lake on return from the Leopard search a pair of Great Stone-curlews (*below right*) were a lot closer than those seen previously along with Tibetan Sandplover (*below left*). Also when we passed the lake for the last time next to the picnic area the first White-bellied Sea-Eagle was picked out. Lunch-time was also during the first rainstorm we encountered and following this mammal numbers seemed to increase greatly with many groups of Chital being passed as well as more Water Buffalo and another single Elephant on a different lake to yesterday's.



Other notable birds included a Brown-capped Babbler seen briefly as we approached the Leopard search site. Black-hooded Orioles had been heard frequently but the first was seen at the first Leopard location. White-rumped Shamans were much more obvious today, some stopping to sing right to the van rather than just flying through. Once back at the car park beyond the exit gate a very obliging Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill (*left*) was gorging on berries right next to the toilet block.



Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April

### Ibis Wilpattu to Pollonaruwa



This was the day we left Wilpattu to head for Pasikuda on the East Coast. However, before breakfast first order of the day was a little wander back down to the edge of the lake to mop up any birds which might have been missed. Even at this stage new birds were added. Wood Sandpipers (*above*) hadn't been seen here until now as well as Whiskered Terns, and I also took the opportunity to get photographs of breeding Pheasant-tailed Jacanas, the first bird I had ever painted at the age of 12. Black-hooded Oriole was not only calling this morning but also showing very well. Breakfast was taken at one of the tables overlooking the lake. Quite a surreal experience and hugely enjoyable, exemplified by fly-over Stork-billed Kingfisher and then the appearance of a Black-rumped Flameback.

The total journey took about 5 hours with a short stop for lunch. However, 5 minutes or so before we got to Pollonaruwa, we stopped at a tasty looking marsh at the roadside (Maradankadawala Marsh). In addition to the perched Grey-headed Fish-Eagle, there were also numerous Grey-headed Swampheens (*below*) which hadn't been seen on the trip so far. More Pheasant-tailed Jacanas were here as well as Purple Heron and feeding not far from where we sat. Perhaps icing on the cake before we left was the appearance of a mangy looking Golden Jackal, trotting along below the road within the marsh. We caught its attention and so it tried to make a hasty getaway, harangued all the time by attacking Red-Wattled Lapwings.







Golden Jackal

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April**

### **Pasekuda Beach area**

The 3 nights/2 full days spent here at the Maalu Maalu Resort had most definitely no focus on wildlife, since the aim was to balance the trip for all tastes, including relaxation in a beach hotel. The location in reality did offer a modicum of interest, since it included the sea front of the long beach, a small (apparently crocodile inhabited) body of water at one end, and some open vegetated areas behind some of the hotels. The latter were the main reason for being here since this part of Pasikudah is devoted to tourism. A couple of strolls were made along the beach and road behind the chain of hotels, and indeed some notable birds were found. Perhaps the more surprising (according to the lack of sightings in eBird) was a single Whimbrel on the shoreline, and 4 Great Crested Terns (*below*) on exposed bollards offshore at the south-eastern end of the beach. Fair to say that the former is described as an uncommon winter migrant in the texts, but the latter is a common breeding resident on the coasts.







From the moment we had arrived the previous afternoon, the predominant sound was that of calling Asian Koel, and that continued to be the case, even though all calling birds nearby stuck to the depths of the vegetation. House Crows were easily the most common species, predictably trying to scrounge morsels even from inside the resort buildings. A trio of Yellow-billed Babblers appeared on the road to the North-west of the hotel strip, and a Greater Coucal alighted on a track at the opposite end. On the day we visited, it was both Saturday and also Sinhalese/Tamil New Year, so the area around the small lagoon was festooned with joyous folk. This didn't put off a Stork-billed Kingfisher on a line adjacent to both water and people. A Common Sandpiper flew over the former seemingly to escape the attentions of a calling Red-wattled Lapwing.



*Stork-billed Kingfisher*

*Yellow-billed Babbler*



Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> April

Pasikudah Beach area



After a couple of strolls around the beach and road behind the hotels, a look out to the same route was made just after first light and before breakfast. There were a few people around at this time, but not nearly in the numbers later in the day. Many of the species seen were not a surprise, having been seen the previous day, but there were a few additions not only to that tally, but also the trip total as a whole. It was nice to see the 4 Great Crested Terns were again on their favoured posts in the sea just a little offshore, but that was it for birds over the water. The Stork-billed Kingfisher was also on its wire overlooking the small lagoon. However, the parking area for the public beach held a couple of Alexandrine Parakeets (*right*) today, as opposed to their more commonly seen Ring-necked congeners of previous sightings. Asian Koels were as usual noisy and elusive, but a few of these also gave up views with a bit of patience today. Just past the car park, a rough track connecting the roads was again taken, and a pair of Brahminy Kites (*above*) were perched together in a palm tree. Common Tailorbirds at last showed themselves, and on the approach back to the hotel, a Pale-billed Flowerpecker was calling before showing briefly then flying off.







Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April

## Ella



We were based at the Mountain Heavens Hotel in Ella, which is situated up a very steep and fairly rough road from the main strip, overlooking the spectacular Ella Gap and well above the town itself. We were also fortunate that we had been booked into a superior room, one of the few that had a balcony with vista views directly in front. The whole of the area looks to be very hilly and forested, so giving a high potential of birds. Even a short scan of 10 minutes or so on arrival, just before the clouds closed in and the heavens opened, a sample of what was on offer was proffered in the form of Coppersmith Barbet, Brahminy Kite, Little Swifts and Changeable Hawk-Eagle from the balcony railing. Indian Swiftlets and a single Yellow-fronted Barbet were added later following the rain and just before dinner

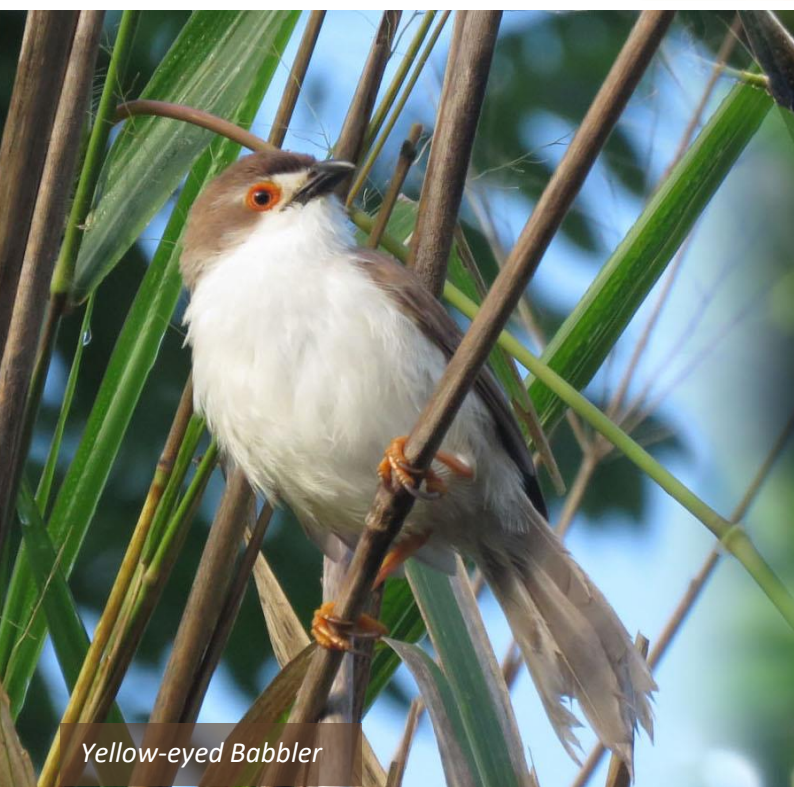




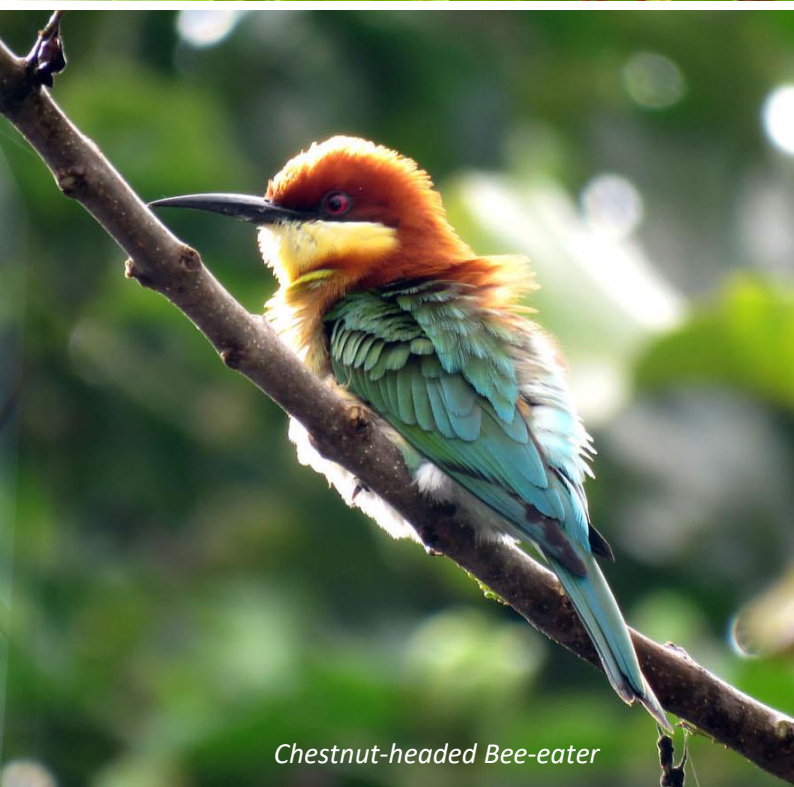
Another short session of half an hour from the balcony the following morning was carried out, this time between breakfast and departure for a trip to Lipton's Seat and added variety with various new birds for the trip. A few Swift/lets were still overhead, but they were joined this morning by much more regular Hill Swallows. A few flowering plants on the balcony below attracted a pair of Loten's Sunbirds, adding to the Purple-rumped Sunbird from earlier. Best birding was in the thick forest below the hotel (all from the balcony). A White-bellied Drongo was followed a few minutes later by busy Dull-blue Flycatcher occupied the same tree, while a Sri Lanka Scimitar-Babbler was more or less a fly-through.

On returning from the day's trip out, even alighting from the car and walking to the hotel was interrupted by a perched and somewhat damp Chestnut-headed Bee-eater on a wire directly behind the entrance. This led to a small group of passerines in a tree directly over the entrance - a trio of Cinereous Tits. More commotion to the side of the hotel in a flowering bush sprung another Cinereous Tit, possibly the same Sri Lanka Scimitar-Babbler as earlier, and a few Indian White-eyes.

Loten's Sunbird



Yellow-eyed Babbler



Chestnut-headed Bee-eater





One early morning session was completed from the hotel, along what is strictly speaking Waterfall Road, or in common terms, the short stretch of road immediately outside of hotel then 400 metres towards town, ostensibly including the forest either side of the railway track. At this time of the morning (6:15am start for 1hrs 20 mins) this short stretch is incredibly good for birds, quite a few of which were new to the trip itself. As soon as reception and the hotel was exited, the Cinereous Tits of the previous day were still present in a family group, as was one of the Chestnut-headed Bee-eaters. Ashy Prinia preceded a pair of Yellow-eyed Babblers, which came ever closer as they sang and fed around the railway line. A pair of Sri Lanka Grey Hornbills kept reappearing, and Barbets were represented by the three participants – Yellow-fronted, Coppersmith & Brown-headed were all seen. A calling “bird” turned out to be Asian Palm Squirrel, with Giant Squirrel much higher on the opposite side of the track. Species just kept coming as I slowly covered the area – Southern Hill Mynas (*above*) new to the trip on bare trees; female Streak-throated Woodpecker briefly on a tree trunk; single Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot perched calmly on another bare tree; White-bellied Drongo in a tree fork; and a pair of Pale-billed Flowerpeckers noisily feeding high up on a flower bearing bush.

A stroll was made along the train track itself on the last afternoon. A sign clearly warns against walking on the train track, which is frequently used by trains. However, even the hotel staff recommend walking along said track as a means of reaching the waterfall and Ella’s Rock. So much so that small cafes have appeared on the track side to catch a Rupee or two from passing walkers. It was a humid afternoon when we walked the track, with threatening rain which never materialised, but an early Black Eagle soaring not far from our path was a real treat (probably the same bird seen above us on the return). Towards the end of the walk a Brown Shrike (*right*) lurked in a cutting just before we exited for the hotel, and on the way we had another small collection of Yellow-billed Babblers noisily squeaking as they foraged





## Lipton's Seat

One of the major tea growing areas is above the bustling town of Bandarawela, which today was still celebrating the dregs of New Year along crowded streets. A left turn and upward drive of some miles took us through increasing concentrations of tea plantations, interspersed with copses and small woods. Intrinsically this type of habitat should offer little diversity of species, and this proved to be the case, although a first Ashy Prinia did help the cause. We eventually came to the factory and embarkation point for a tuktuk ride up the potholed and at times narrow (for two vehicles) road to the Seat itself. This is a bit of a tourist honey trap, but the views looking down at this height, even when peering through forming low cloud and mist, were sensational. To be fair, this was the aspect that was well worthwhile, since birdlife continued to be sparse, brightened up on the descent in the car again after having exited the tuktuk back at base with the sight of a pair of Indian Jungle Crows dive bombing a Changeable Hawk-Eagle.



*Ashy Prinia*





## Nine Arch Bridge



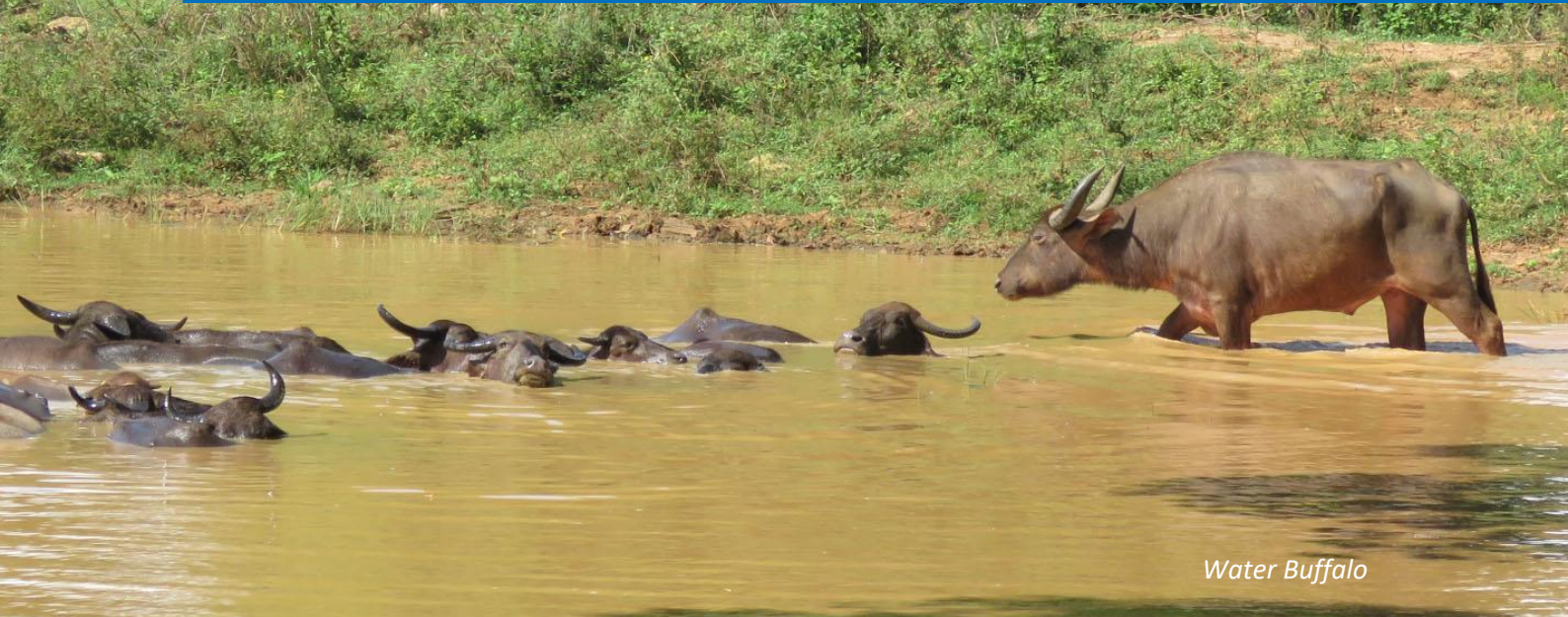
This is another tourist hot spot just on the edge of Ella town. We bypassed the multitude of parked tuktuks used by the visitors who had elected to take the longer walk through the forest and parked the car before taking our own tuktuk down a different approach. This descended down a rough track to alight next to some steps with led to the railway track, on which we walked to the bridge. This line is used – we had to be aware of a train which went past as we walked the line! The bridge and cafe area next to the bridge are teeming with tourists, but it is well worth seeing the setting and grabbing some decent ice cream. And although in small numbers, there are also one or two notable birds. Indians Swiftlets are in good (vociferous) numbers overhead, and a Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill was picked out in a tree in the valley below the bridge. On the return tramp along the railway line, both Loten's & Purple-rumped Sunbirds (*below right*) were overhead, while a bit of a flurry of activity in a bush containing Indian White-eyes (*below left*) and Red-vented Bulbuls also hosted an agitated Tawny-bellied Babbler.





Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April

## Udawalawe National Park



*Water Buffalo*

After a few excellent days in the mountains with variable weather, even though the cooler climate was very satisfying, we descended two hours back to the lowlands and specifically to Udawalawe for the National Park which was reputed to be the best location at this time of year for elephants. Only one night was to be spent at the Centauria Wild hotel, so that we could have an afternoon safari at the park, which was situated right opposite the hotel, with the entrance only five minutes' drive along the road. In size this is not nearly as large as Yala or Wilpattu national parks, and also compared to a lot of Wilpattu's closed in forests is much more open with many tracks bisecting the park giving reasonable views into the fairly open forest. We spent about 3½ hours traversing these tracks and were well rewarded, especially since the weather stayed dry until the last five to ten minutes when the heavens opened.

*Asian Elephant*







As mentioned, this is a park renowned for good sightings of Asian Elephants. We had already sampled a taste of this as we approached the hotel before entering the park, when six separate males were to be seen from the roadside not daring to approach the electrified fence which keeps them within the park. Most of the sightings that we had were of either single individuals, or one mother with a young calf, and another two youngish females together. One group of four or more well within the thick bush itself could only be peered upon with difficulty. The other two main sightings of mammals were Water Buffaloes living up to their name by wallowing in water pools and lagoons, and quite a few small groups of Chital, with a large group of 50 or so near the entrance/exit in the rains as we departed. A group of three Wild Boar were also with one of these groups within the park.



Bird life was again constant and varied as we drove through the park. The abundance of Asian Green Bee-eaters and also in this park Indian Robins were noticeable. However, the best sighting must have been Barred Buttonquail (*above*) seen just as it was completing crossing the track in front of us. A bit of patience and some half decent views were gained alongside the track when it was slowly making its way along enclosed vegetation. Changeable Hawk-Eagles were again seen a few times with one juvenile bird descending from its bush perch to the ground near to us, calling as it left for a treetop lookout. Also regularly seen as well as singing were Jerdon's Bushlarks, quite often perched on low bushes next to the track as well as on the ground. Another unusual sight was that of a male Indian Paradise Flycatcher flying backwards and forwards with three females in tow.





*Indian Paradise Flycatcher*

**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April**

**Centauria Wild Hotel and Udalawa Marsh**





For an hour and a half before breakfast the intention was to look around the grounds of the Centauria Wild hotel. However, after looking over the grounds from the rooftop and picking up Jerdon's Leafbird (*right*) and Malabar Pied Hornbill straight away, it was obvious that the reservoir adjacent to the hotel had what looked like very interesting marshy habitat.



So, without delay I proceeded out of the hotel to walk the 100 metres or so along the main road to the edge of the marsh which was actually part of the larger reservoir. Birds seemed to be everywhere at this point. I was welcomed with a long tailed male Indian Paradise Flycatcher (*left*). Jerdon's Bushlarks were numerous here and in smaller numbers Paddyfield Pipits, backed by a decent sized group of Scaly-breasted Munias (*below*). Obviously water birds were at a premium. A small collection of Yellow-billed Storks were in the company of many Eastern Cattle Egrets, a couple of Woolly-necked Storks and a few Indian Peafowl. Little Ringed Plovers showed themselves for the first time as well as a couple of Eastern or Western Yellow Wagtails, which looked like *beema* race of the latter. To the rear of the marsh Stone-curlews were represented by both Great & Indian. Two Kingfisher species were here in the form of Common & White-throated.







Naturally a little time had to be devoted to the hotel grounds. While not extensive they are full of various species of trees and again seemed to be hopping with bird species. Indian Robins were quite common here, but White-rumped Munia and Common Tailorbird were also present. A single Coppersmith Barbet was singing at the top of a high tree and at least three Brown-headed Barbets called in the area. Also vocal were two Sunbirds with Purple-rumped perhaps a little bit more numerous than Loten's. Overhead Little Swift continued to be numerous but with a little time a single Crested Treeswift was amongst them. Also flying with them a couple of Sri Lanka Swallows (*above*). Overhead a single and then later trio of Alexandrine Parakeets added to the earlier Ring-necked Parakeets.



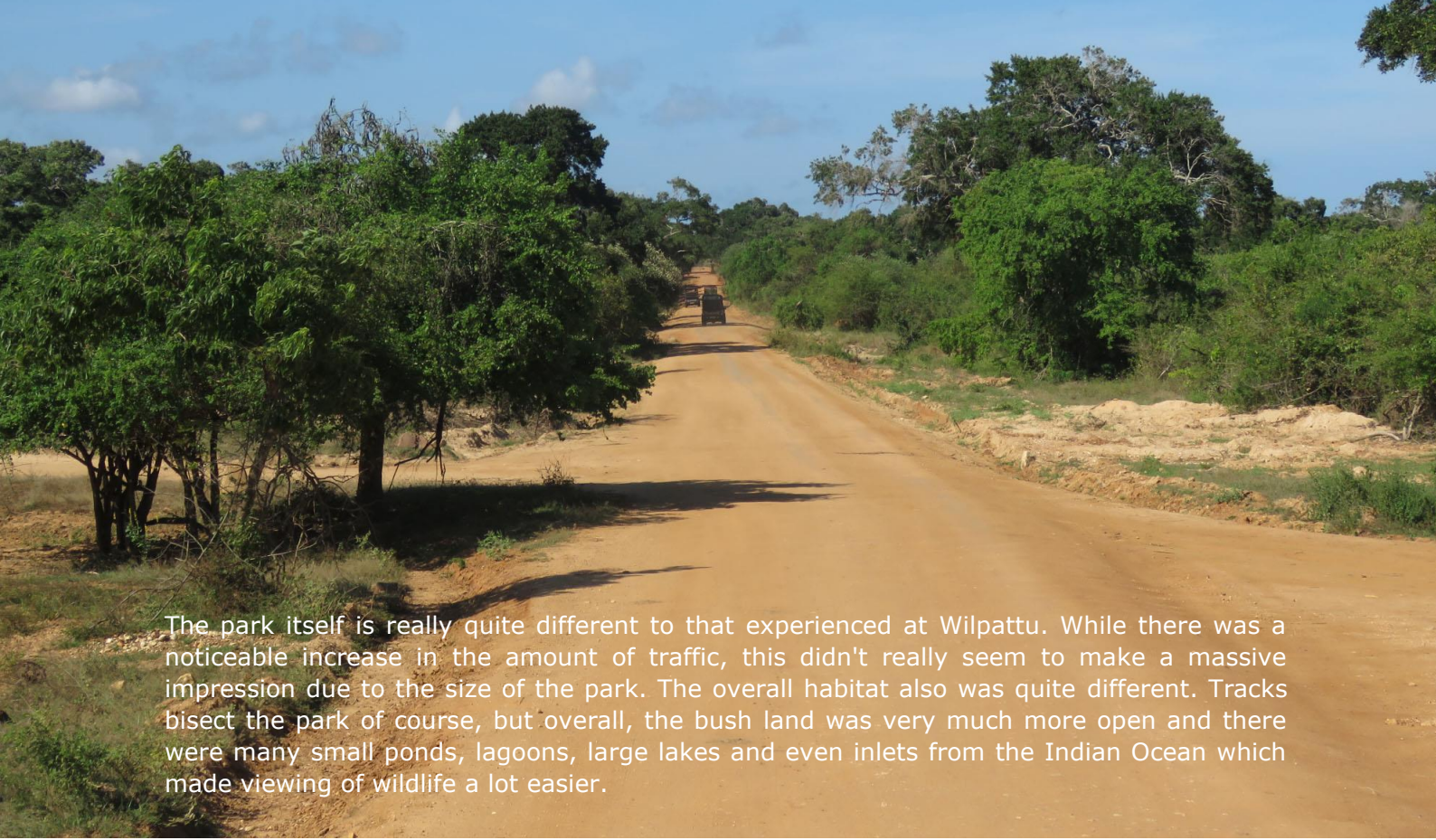
*Brown-headed Barbet*



## Yala



The journey from Udawalawe took more or less the two hours as promised and on arrival we found ourselves at a hotel set within the Yala National Park type of environment, even though the National Park proper is a 10-15 minute drive away. We were picked up from the hotel at 2:30pm, a little later than some others but this was due to the high heat of the afternoon. We passed an inquisitive group of Tufted Grey Langurs shortly after departing the hotel and after a 10-minute drive came upon the ticketing office with jeeps everywhere. 5 minutes later found us on our way to our park entrance.

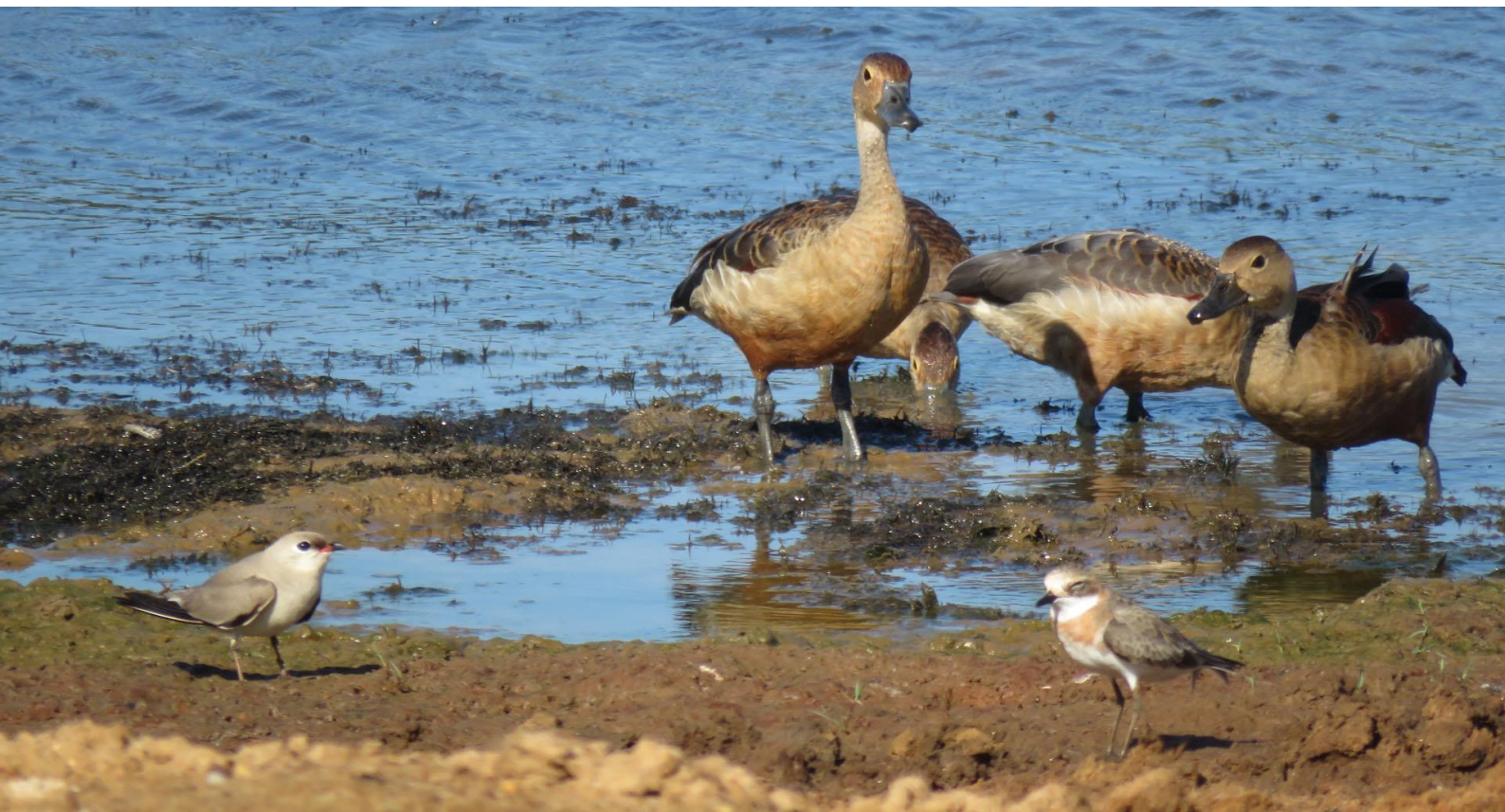


The park itself is really quite different to that experienced at Wilpattu. While there was a noticeable increase in the amount of traffic, this didn't really seem to make a massive impression due to the size of the park. The overall habitat also was quite different. Tracks bisect the park of course, but overall, the bush land was very much more open and there were many small ponds, lagoons, large lakes and even inlets from the Indian Ocean which made viewing of wildlife a lot easier.





Perhaps the biggest difference in the bird life was due to the presence of the numerous lagoons etc. Many new species were seen a lot of which were wading birds of one type or another. One lagoon in particular which we arrived at shortly after seeing a family of 4 Asian Elephants held Small Pratincole (*below left*), Tibetan Sandplover (*below right*), Little Stint and good numbers of Lesser Whistling-Duck (*below rear*). A group of six Ruddy Turnstones were a little bit of a surprise, however the proximity of the Indian Ocean perhaps explained their presence. Passerines were comparatively few and far between but did include the usual Bee-eaters - Asian & Chestnut-headed - a handful of Indian Robins (*above*) and a wonderful White-browed Fantail which was on its nest next to the track. Interesting that even on the nest this bird continued to be moving all the time, particularly the tail.







One species of mammal that we didn't expect to come across too often in this particular park was Asian elephant. What a mistake. We came across a group of 4 which included a mother and presumably differently aged calves which were alongside a couple of Water Buffalo and even a family of Wild Boar passing through. A further loose group of five elephants which was first found by seeing a youngster also coincided with the driver grounding our truck on to a stone which needed the winch from a separate truck to free us. Water Buffalo were regularly seen, many of which lived up to their names by wallowing and even more or less diving into the pools. At one or two of these, the previously seen Whiskered Terns were now replaced by White-winged Terns of various moults. Chital were regular and sometimes in quite large herds while Samba Deer were in much smaller numbers. One of the herds of Chital included a pair of stags really going at it (*below*).



Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>



Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April

Yala morning

Since the morning game drive was on a Saturday, Sam had decided we should leave the hotel earlier than usual, at 5:30am, since the park was predicted to be very busy. So, after a swift complementary cup of tea, we hit the road towards the park entrance gate. It seems we weren't the only ones to have had the same idea, since at least 3 other jeeps passed us as we turned on to the main road. It transpires that the park doesn't open until 6am, but our early start meant there were only a dozen or so others waiting for entry, so we eventually passed the gate guards at 6:17. Slightly different tracks were taken this morning, but it seemed that the mammalian wildlife hadn't been informed that mornings are a good time to appear. For some time the only ones we saw were a group of 4 Wild Boar, until some time had gone by and we chanced upon a mother and kit Ruddy Mongoose. A few Water Buffalo were wallowing, but when we came upon a large open area with 2 Elephants in the distance, a passing driver beckoned us to turn off where a Leopard had been seen. It was obvious where the location was by the group of jeeps coming together. After some time, parts of the Leopard could be made out by the swinging tail and some spotted body parts behind branches, but views weren't the best. By this time at least 3 dozen jeeps were forming a non-seeing cavalcade, so we made our exit



Amphibians seemed to be having a bit of a hard time of it, with frogs being dispatched before swallowing by both Great Egret (left) and Indian Pond Heron (right).



The birds continued to be seen throughout the drive yet again, with new ones not only for the park but also the odd one supplementing the trip list as a whole. Yellow-wattled Lapwing (*right*) was one of the latter and welcomed us by posing next to us on the trackside. Little Tern was fishing over the pond near to the exit as we left. New lagoons were visited today, many of which were man made, yet held a good variety of wildlife, including more regular crocodiles than yesterday.



The backdrop to some of these stop-offs was at times stunning, often enhanced by amazing rock formations. One of the large lagoons was covered in a major part by flowering lotus blossom, and the expanse held Little Grebe, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, hunting Brahminy Kite and Grey-headed Swamphen. A bare tree seemed to have nesting Ring-necked Parakeet and a Coppersmith Barbet landed bearing fruit in its bill. We found a shady spot next to this same lake mid-outing to nosh on breakfast (*above*), while Lesser Whistling-Ducks, Painted Stork, Jerdon's Bushlark and Asian Green Bee-eater looked on. Another side excursion was near to the beach on a sandy edged inlet. The waves themselves and the sound of the ocean were calming enough, but the pair of White-bellied Sea-Eagles perched over the saltwater channel, and Great Stone-curlew on its edge added to the charm.





*Coppersmith Barbet (left) and Oriental Darter (right)*

## Yala afternoon



Someone needs to tell the wildlife that their time to shine is in the cooler mornings, not the unpalatably hot afternoons, since the quieter morning earlier was replaced by a much more eventful afternoon, especially where the mammals were concerned. No Chital had been seen on our earlier drive but they appeared very early on later, as did regular groups of Water Buffalo. First to enter the stage was actually a mother and kit Ruddy Mongoose, and a pair were also the last of the mammals spotted before exiting the park. The driver took us further towards one of the other park entrances, and it was on one of these newer roads (to us) that our lone jeep chanced upon a bull Asian Elephant, feeding unconcerned at almost arm's length from our vantage point. Shortly after, a stationary van was at the location of a Leopard, which was visible but only with some dexterity. Luckily it arose and walked briefly through a nearby gap in the vegetation before disappearing into the leaves. A little later a large group of jeeps reported that a Leopard had crossed the track in the vicinity. It was relocated a few hundred yards away, and after a reconstruction of the Charge of the Light Brigade, a large male could be made out at some distance, taking a chance to gather strength while our road show of tens of jeeps ogled his majesty. It was likely that this was the same individual partially seen nearby during the morning.





*Leopard*

Many of the birds seen in the morning naturally reappeared in the afternoon, but there were some significant additions. Not long into the second assault of the park for the day, a Lesser Adjutant (*right*) posed in one of the open areas. At the nearby first lagoon after entering the park, a Spot-billed Pelican had joined the more regular herons and waders. One of the tracks we took led past a very vegetated lagoon, and some freestanding trees away from the track supported a breeding colony of Black-headed Ibis and Asian Woolly-necked Storks, with lesser numbers of Grey Heron and Black-crowned Night Heron. Until now, mainly Red-wattled Lapwings had been noticed, but they were added to by a few more Yellow-wattled Lapwings, with most at the site of the second Leopard, as were a trio of Sri Lanka Woodshrikes. Other worthwhile observations during this time was yet another Great Stone-curlew, White-bellied Fish-eagle perched in a tree over the main track, and a group of 6 White-winged Terns feeding together at one small lake





Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April

Yala



The old saying leave the best until last does sometimes raise its head. This was certainly so on this last game drive in Yala, just before we left for Galle late morning. All started as usual – up at 5am, leave hotel 5:30, queue to get into the park for 15 minutes, then race at top speed though the park, passing as many other jeeps as possible while just about staying on the track. During this outburst of speed, it was obvious that many more mammals were evident than on the previous morning, starting off with Sambar over the road in front of us, then continuing with good counts of Chital, Water Buffalo, Wild Boar and a single Ruddy Mongoose.

We were just about to admire a couple of Elephants at speed, when the driver slammed on the brakes, pushed in front of other bemused tourist vehicles, and after 200m or so came to rest right in front of a Leopard lying in the road. Curtis! My wife had even said that morning she'd like to see Curtis (from the hotel Leopard's gallery!). With the luck we had, we were one of only two jeeps at the front of the crush, with another already facing us from another park entrance. And he seemed to luxuriate in the attention for some time, before ambling into the bush, still showing well for some time as he padded slowly along.



My wife had also stated a desire to see a baby Elephant, not only with mother, but even taking milk be blown! This morning's wish . . . ! At the end of the 2 hours we spent in the park (seemed like a lot more due to all the wildlife activity) a small elephant jam had formed, watching a group of 6 Elephants drinking and feeding by a pool. On cue a youngster was seen, initially feeding itself, but then regularly taking milk from an adult. They even had the good grace to leave the pool to parade past us at close quarters.



Naturally, many of the birds that we found this morning were ones we had already seen within the park. The lagoon next to the location of the first (hidden) Leopard the previous day still had White-winged Terns to admire close to, but a Western Marsh Harrier also passed through causing a bit of a commotion in the ranks of the Lesser Whistling-Ducks gathered. Shortly after, a second Barred Buttonquail of the trip was picked out just before it characteristically made its way quickly into long grass. Another addition was a Eurasian Hoopoe perched at the top of a tree – only one heard up until then.



*Blue-faced Malkoha*



## LIST OF SPECIES

### BIRDS

#### Lesser Whistling Duck

*Dendrocygna javanica*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (8)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (10); Maradankadawala Marshes (3)
- 19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (~30)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (~75)
- 21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (~70)

#### Indian Peafowl

*Pavo cristatus*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (6)
- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (20)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (~40)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (3)
- 14 Apr 2024 Pasikuda Beach area, Kalkudah (1)
- 16 Apr 2024 Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (1)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1)
- 19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (5); Yala National Park (6)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (12); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)
- 21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (14)

#### Sri Lanka Junglefowl

*Gallus lafayettii*

- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (14)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (~30)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1)
- 19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3)
- 21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3)

#### Crested Treeswift

*Hemiprocne coronata*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (5)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)
- 19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (1)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2)

#### Indian Swiftlet

*Aerodramus unicolor*

- 15 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (~15)
- 16 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (3); Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (5): Nine Arch Bridge, Ella (~20)
- 22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (~30)

#### Asian Palm Swift

*Cypsiurus balasiensis*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)
- 13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (6)
- 14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (10)
- 17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (3)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (2)

#### Little Swift

*Apus affinis*

- 10 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (~15)
- 15 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (~12)
- 16 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1)
- 17 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (4)
- 18 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (~15)
- 19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (~10)



**Greater Coucal***Centropus sinensis*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 10 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)
- 14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)
- 16 Apr 2024 Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (1)
- 19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**Blue-faced Malkoha***Phaenicophaeus viridirostris*

- 20 Apr 2024 Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1 on balcony of accommodation)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**Asian Koel***Eudynamys scolopaceus*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 13 Apr 2024 Maalu Maalu Hotel, Kalkudah (2)
- 14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (9)
- 18 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (1)
- 22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (2)

**Indian Cuckoo***Cuculus micropterus*

- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1 calling only from at park entrance)

**Spotted Dove***Spilopelia chinensis*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (~15)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (~20)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (4)
- 13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (2)
- 14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (2)
- 15 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (4)
- 16 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (2); Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (3)
- 17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (4)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (~15)
- 19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (2); Yala National Park (~20)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (~20); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (6)
- 21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (~20)
- 22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (2)

**Common Emerald Dove***Chalcophaps indica*

- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2 separate birds – 1 fly through, 1 on track)

**Orange-breasted Green Pigeon***Treron bicinctus*

- 11 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (4)
- 21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (6)

**Green Imperial Pigeon***Ducula aenea*

- 10 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1); Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (3)
- 19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (5)

**Grey-headed Swamphen***Porphyrio poliocephalus*

- 12 Apr 2024 Maradankadawala Marshes (~30)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**White-breasted Waterhen***Amaurornis phoenicurus*

- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2); Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**Little Grebe***Tachybaptus ruficollis*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3)

**Barred Buttonquail***Turnix suscitator*

- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1)
- 21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)



<b>Great Stone-curlew</b>	<i>Esacus recurvirostris</i>
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)	
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (4)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3+1)	
21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)	
<b>Indian Stone-curlew</b>	<i>Burhinus indicus</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)	
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (2)	
<b>Black-winged Stilt</b>	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (4)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)	
19 Apr 2024 Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (2); Yala National Park (11)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (12)	
21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (12)	
<b>Pacific Golden Plover</b>	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (4)	
<b>Little Ringed Plover</b>	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (8)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)	
<b>Yellow-wattled Lapwing</b>	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1+6)	
21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (4)	
<b>Red-wattled Lapwing</b>	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (3)	
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (14)	
12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (6); Maradankadawala Marshes (12); Polonnaruwa Restaurant (1)	
13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (2)	
18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (5)	
19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (5); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (3)	
21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (4)	
22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (1)	
<b>Tibetan Sand Plover</b>	<i>Anarhynchus atrifrons</i>
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (5)	
19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (6)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (5); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)	
<b>Kentish Plover</b>	<i>Anarhynchus alexandrinus</i>
20 Apr 2024 Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (2)	
<b>Pheasant-tailed Jacana</b>	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)	
12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (4); Maradankadawala Marshes (3)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3+2)	
<b>Eurasian Whimbrel</b>	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)	
<b>Black-tailed Godwit</b>	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)	
<b>Pin-tailed Snipe</b>	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1 close to second Leopard sighting)	
<b>Common Sandpiper</b>	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)	
20 Apr 2024 Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)	
<b>Wood Sandpiper</b>	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)	



11 Apr 2024	Wilpattu National Park (3)	
12 Apr 2024	Ibis Wilpattu (2)	
19 Apr 2024	Debarawewa Paddies (~15); Yala National Park (3)	
20 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (3)	
	<b>Common Redshank</b>	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
19 Apr 2024	Debarawewa Paddies (5); Yala National Park (2)	
20 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (1); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (2)	
	<b>Common Greenshank</b>	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
11 Apr 2024	Wilpattu National Park (1)	
	<b>Ruddy Turnstone</b>	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
19 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (6)	
20 Apr 2024	Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (2)	
	<b>Little Stint</b>	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
19 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (7)	
20 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (1); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (3)	
	<b>Small Pratincole</b>	<i>Glareola lactea</i>
19 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (3)	
	<b>Little Tern</b>	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>
20 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (1); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)	
	<b>Whiskered Tern</b>	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>
10 Apr 2024	Wilpattu National Park (3); Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
11 Apr 2024	Wilpattu National Park (~25)	
12 Apr 2024	Ibis Wilpattu (2); Maradankadawala Marshes (2)	
19 Apr 2024	Debarawewa Paddies (4)	
20 Apr 2024	Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)	
	<b>White-winged Tern</b>	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>
19 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (3)	
20 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (6+6)	
21 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (4)	
	<b>Greater Crested Tern</b>	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>
13 Apr 2024	Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (4)	
14 Apr 2024	Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (4)	
	<b>Asian Openbill</b>	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>
12 Apr 2024	Polonnaruwa Restaurant (2)	
19 Apr 2024	Debarawewa Paddies (1) Yala National Park (3)	
20 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (2, then ~30 in mixed colony)	
	<b>Lesser Adjutant</b>	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>
11 Apr 2024	Wilpattu National Park (1)	
20 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (1)	
	<b>Painted Stork</b>	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>
10 Apr 2024	Wilpattu National Park (2)	
11 Apr 2024	Wilpattu National Park (7)	
18 Apr 2024	Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (1); Udawalawe National Park (1)	
19 Apr 2024	Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (10)	
20 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (1); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)	
	<b>Asian Woolly-necked Stork</b>	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>
10 Apr 2024	Wilpattu National Park (4); Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
11 Apr 2024	Wilpattu National Park (2)	
19 Apr 2024	Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (2)	
	<b>Oriental Darter</b>	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>
9 Apr 2024	Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
10 Apr 2024	Wilpattu National Park (6)	
11 Apr 2024	Wilpattu National Park (6)	
12 Apr 2024	Ibis Wilpattu (2); Maradankadawala Marshes (2)	
19 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (2)	
20 Apr 2024	Yala National Park (4); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)	



**Little Cormorant***Microcarbo niger*

- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (11)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (~30)
- 19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (4)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)

**Indian Cormorant***Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (5)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (~50)
- 13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (8+20)
- 19 Apr 2024 Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (8)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**Black-headed Ibis***Threskiornis melanocephalus*

- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)
- 12 Apr 2024 Polonnaruwa Restaurant (3)
- 19 Apr 2024 Debarawewa Paddies (~100); Yala National Park (1)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (4, then ~100 in mixed colony)

**Eurasian Spoonbill***Platalea leucorodia*

- 19 Apr 2024 Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (12); Yala National Park (17)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (4); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (~20)
- 21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**Black-crowned Night Heron***Nycticorax nycticorax*

- 14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2 juveniles); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1); Yala National Park (4)

**Little Egret***Egretta garzetta*

- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (4)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (3); Maradankadawala Marshes (1)
- 19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (7); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (5)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (General) (4); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (2)

**Indian Pond Heron***Ardeola grayii*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (4)
- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (15)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (18)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (10); Maradankadawala Marshes (20)
- 14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (2)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (5)
- 19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (20); Yala National Park (10)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (18); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (8)
- 21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (8)

**Eastern Cattle Egret***Bubulcus coromandus*

- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)
- 12 Apr 2024 Polonnaruwa Restaurant (12)
- 19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (~40); Debarawewa Paddies (~500); Yala National Park (~50)
- 22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (11)

**Great Egret***Ardea alba*

- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)
- 14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (2)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1)
- 19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (9); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (3)

**Medium Egret***Ardea intermedia*

- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1)



19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (3); Yala National Park (1)

20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3)

**Grey Heron**

*Ardea cinerea*

10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)

11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)

19 Apr 2024 Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (2); Yala National Park (1)

20 Apr 2024 Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (3); Yala National Park (1)

**Purple Heron**

*Ardea purpurea*

9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)

10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)

11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)

12 Apr 2024 Maradankadawala Marshes (1)

19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (1)

20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**Spot-billed Pelican**

*Pelecanus philippensis*

11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (14 in nesting trees)

19 Apr 2024 Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)

20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2+1); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (2)

21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

22 Apr 2024 At least 30 on lampposts on highway near Colombo airport

**Crested Serpent Eagle**

*Spilornis cheela*

10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)

11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)

17 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1)

**Changeable Hawk-Eagle**

*Nisaetus cirrhatus*

10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)

11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)

15 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1)

16 Apr 2024 Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (1)

18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (4)

19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**Black Eagle**

*Ictinaetus malaiensis*

17 Apr 2024 Ella Railway Line (1)

**Shikra**

*Accipiter badius*

9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)

**Western Marsh Harrier**

*Circus aeruginosus*

21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**Brahminy Kite**

*Haliastur indus*

9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)

11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)

13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)

14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (5)

15 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1)

18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (2); Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (4)

19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (9)

21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**White-bellied Sea Eagle**

*Icthyophaga leucogaster*

11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)

19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (2)

20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2+1)

**Grey-headed Fish Eagle**

*Icthyophaga ichthyaetus*

10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)

11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)

12 Apr 2024 Maradankadawala Marshes (1)

**Brown Fish Owl**

*Ketupa zeylonensis*

10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)



<b>Eurasian Hoopoe</b>	<i>Upupa epops</i>
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1 heard only)	
21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)	
<b>Malabar Pied Hornbill</b>	<i>Anthracoceros coronatus</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
10 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (3)	
19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (1)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1+1)	
21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)	
<b>Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill</b>	<i>Ocyrceros gingalensis</i>
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)	
16 Apr 2024 Nine Arch Bridge, Ella (1)	
17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (3)	
<b>Indian Roller</b>	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>
18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1)	
<b>Stork-billed Kingfisher</b>	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)	
12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)	
14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)	
<b>White-throated Kingfisher</b>	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (6)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (5)	
12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)	
14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (4)	
15 Apr 2024 Peradeniya-Badulla-Chenkaladi Highway, Tumpalancholai (3)	
17 Apr 2024 Ella Railway Line (1)	
18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (2)	
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (1); Yala National Park (2)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3)	
22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (1)	
<b>Common Kingfisher</b>	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3 on same branch)	
18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (2)	
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (1); Yala National Park (2)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)	
21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3)	
<b>Pied Kingfisher</b>	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
15 Apr 2024 Peradeniya-Badulla-Chenkaladi Highway, Tumpalancholai (3)	
19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)	
<b>Asian Green Bee-eater</b>	<i>Merops orientalis</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (3)	
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (14)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (25)	
12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (2)	
14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (5)	
18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (18)	
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (3); Yala National Park (20)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (28); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (2)	
21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (10)	
<b>Blue-tailed Bee-eater</b>	<i>Merops philippinus</i>
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)	



<b>Chestnut-headed Bee-eater</b>	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)	
16 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1)	
17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (1)	
19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2)	
<b>Brown-headed Barbet</b>	<i>Psilopogon zeylanicus</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (5)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (6)	
12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
13 Apr 2024 Maalu Maalu Hotel, Kalkudah (1); Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (2)	
14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (4)	
17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (3)	
18 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (2)	
19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (3)	
<b>Yellow-fronted Barbet</b>	<i>Psilopogon flavifrons</i>
15 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1)	
17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (1)	
<b>Coppersmith Barbet</b>	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)	
12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)	
13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)	
15 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1)	
17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (1)	
19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (1)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2)	
<b>Streak-throated Woodpecker</b>	<i>Picus xanthopygaeus</i>
17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (1 female)	
<b>Black-rumped Flameback</b>	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>
12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
<b>Red-backed Flameback</b>	<i>Dinopium psarodes</i>
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (1)	
<b>Alexandrine Parakeet</b>	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>
14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (2)	
19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (4)	
<b>Rose-ringed Parakeet</b>	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (8)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (9)	
12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)	
18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (6)	
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (1); Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (10); Yala National Park (7)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (6)	
21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)	
22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (2)	
<b>Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot</b>	<i>Loriculus beryllinus</i>
17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (1)	
<b>Sri Lanka Woodshrike</b>	<i>Tephrodornis affinis</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)	
19 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3)	
<b>Common Iora</b>	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>
11 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)	
18 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (1); Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (4)	
19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (1)	



<b>Small Minivet</b>	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (3)	
<b>Large Cuckooshrike</b>	<i>Coracina macei</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
<b>Black-headed Cuckooshrike</b>	<i>Lalage melanoptera</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
<b>Black-hooded Oriole</b>	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)	
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)	
12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)	
17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (1)	
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (1)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2)	
22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (1)	
<b>White-bellied Drongo</b>	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>
16 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1)	
17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (1)	
<b>Black Drongo</b>	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
<b>White-browed Fantail</b>	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1)	
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (1); Yala National Park (1 on nest)	
21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2)	
<b>Black-naped Monarch</b>	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1 flew over track); Ibis Wilpattu (1)	
<b>Indian Paradise Flycatcher</b>	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1 male)	
10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1); Ibis Wilpattu (1 male)	
11 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)	
18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1 male with 3 females)	
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (1 male)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2)	
<b>Brown Shrike</b>	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
17 Apr 2024 Ella Railway Line (1)	
<b>House Crow</b>	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
12 Apr 2024 Polonnaruwa Restaurant (3)	
13 Apr 2024 Maalu Maalu Hotel, Kalkudah (6); Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (~100)	
14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (~30)	
20 Apr 2024 Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)	
22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (~100)	
<b>Indian Jungle Crow</b>	<i>Corvus culminatus</i>
11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)	
13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (2)	
14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (10)	
16 Apr 2024 Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (2)	
17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (3)	
18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1); Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (1)	
19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (8)	
20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (4)	
<b>Cinereous Tit</b>	<i>Parus cinereus</i>
16 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (4)	
17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (5)	
<b>Jerdon's Bush Lark</b>	<i>Mirafra affinis</i>
9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)	
18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (10)	



19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (15)

20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (7)

21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**White-browed Bulbul**

*Pycnonotus luteolus*

9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)

12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)

20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (3)

21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**Red-vented Bulbul**

*Pycnonotus cafer*

9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (~20)

10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (5)

11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (~20)

12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (5)

13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)

14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (5)

16 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (4); Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (2); Nine Arch Bridge, Ella (6)

17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (15)

18 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (~20); Udawalawe National Park (~40)

19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (~20); Yala National Park (10)

20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (10); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (5)

21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (~25)

**Hill Swallow**

*Hirundo domicola*

16 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (3); Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (3)

17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (1)

**Sri Lanka Swallow**

*Cecropis hyperythra*

10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)

11 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)

17 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1)

19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (2); Yala National Park (2)

20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2)

**Ashy Prinia**

*Prinia socialis*

16 Apr 2024 Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (2)

17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (3)

**Plain Prinia**

*Prinia inornata*

11 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)

18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (2)

19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (6)

**Common Tailorbird**

*Orthotomus sutorius*

14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (3)

17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (1)

18 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (1)

19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (3)

20 Apr 2024 Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (4)

**Yellow-eyed Babbler**

*Chrysomma sinense*

17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (3)

**Indian White-eye**

*Zosterops palpebrosus*

10 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)

16 Apr 2024 Nine Arch Bridge, Ella (2); Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (3)

17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (1)

19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (1)

**Tawny-bellied Babbler**

*Dumetia hyperythra*

16 Apr 2024 Nine Arch Bridge, Ella (1)

**Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler**

*Pomatorhinus melanurus*

16 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (2 sightings of possibly the same bird)

**Brown-capped Babbler**

*Pellorneum fuscocapillus*

11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)



**Yellow-billed Babbler***Argya affinis*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (4)
- 13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (3)
- 17 Apr 2024 Ella Railway Line (3)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (3)
- 19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (2)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (26); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (5)
- 21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (4)
- 22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (5)

**Southern Hill Myna***Gracula indica*

- 17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (4)

**Common Myna***Acridotheres tristis*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)
- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (1)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (8)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (3); Polonnaruwa Restaurant (2)
- 13 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (10)
- 14 Apr 2024 Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (18)
- 16 Apr 2024 Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (2)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (8)
- 19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (2)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (~30)
- 22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (5)

**Oriental Magpie-Robin***Copsychus saularis*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (2)
- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (2)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (9)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 15 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (3)
- 16 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (3); Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (2)
- 17 Apr 2024 Waterfall Road, Ella (5)
- 19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (2); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (3); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (2)
- 21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (2)
- 22 Apr 2024 Galle Fort Peninsula (5)

**Indian Robin***Copsychus fulicatus*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (4)
- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (5)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (3)
- 12 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 16 Apr 2024 Lipton's Seat, Bandarawela (1)
- 17 Apr 2024 Ella Railway Line (1)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (24)
- 19 Apr 2024 Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (3); Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (5); Yala National Park (10)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (17); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (3)
- 21 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (25)

**White-rumped Shama***Copsychus malabaricus*

- 9 Apr 2024 Ibis Wilpattu (1)
- 10 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (4)
- 11 Apr 2024 Wilpattu National Park (6)
- 18 Apr 2024 Udawalawe National Park (1)
- 20 Apr 2024 Yala National Park (1)

**Dull-blue Flycatcher***Eumyias sordidus*

- 16 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1)
- 17 Apr 2024 Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (Pair, possibly including single above, inspecting tree for potential nest site)

**Jerdon's Leafbird***Chloropsis jerdoni*

- 19 Apr 2024 Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (1 female from hotel balcony)



**Pale-billed Flowerpecker***Dicaeum erythrorhynchos***14 Apr 2024** Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)**17 Apr 2024** Waterfall Road, Ella (2)**18 Apr 2024** Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (1)**Purple-rumped Sunbird***Leptocoma zeylonica***9 Apr 2024** Ibis Wilpattu (Pair building nest in dining area)**14 Apr 2024** Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)**16 Apr 2024** Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1); Nine Arch Bridge, Ella (1)**17 Apr 2024** Waterfall Road, Ella (2)**18 Apr 2024** Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (2)**19 Apr 2024** Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (4)**Purple Sunbird***Cinnyris asiaticus***9 Apr 2024** Ibis Wilpattu (2)**12 Apr 2024** Ibis Wilpattu (1)**13 Apr 2024** Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (1)**14 Apr 2024** Pasikudah Beach area, Kalkudah (2)**19 Apr 2024** Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1)**20 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (2)**Loten's Sunbird***Cinnyris lotenius***16 Apr 2024** Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (Pair); Nine Arch Bridge, Ella (2)**17 Apr 2024** Waterfall Road, Ella (1)**18 Apr 2024** Centauria Wild Hotel, Udawalawe (Pair)**19 Apr 2024** Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (1)**House Sparrow***Passer domesticus***15 Apr 2024** Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (3)**Scaly-breasted Munia***Lonchura punctulata***10 Apr 2024** Ibis Wilpattu (~100)**19 Apr 2024** Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (~40)**White-rumped Munia***Lonchura striata***9 Apr 2024** Ibis Wilpattu (4)**10 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (3)**17 Apr 2024** Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (Pair nest building on hotel balcony)**19 Apr 2024** Centauria Wild, Udawalawe (3)**Western/Eastern Yellow Wagtail***Motacilla flava/ tschutschensis***19 Apr 2024** Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (2 birds showing characteristics of either *beema* Western or nominate Eastern)**Paddyfield Pipit***Anthus rufulus***9 Apr 2024** Ibis Wilpattu (2)**10 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (2)**12 Apr 2024** Ibis Wilpattu (6)**18 Apr 2024** Udawalawe National Park (1)**19 Apr 2024** Udawalawe Reservoir (southeast end) (4)**20 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (2)**MAMMALS****Asian Elephant***Elephas maximus***10 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (1 tusker wading in large lake)**11 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (Large male in large lake - no tusks)**18 Apr 2024** Udawalawe National Park (6 single males alongside road with national park; 5 singles; herd of at least 4, then 3 pairs - one mother with calf)**19 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (Family of 1 mother and 3 calves; then loose group of 5)**20 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (2 on a large plain and 2 singles)**21 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (2 together next to the open area and group of 7 including suckling immature)



**Grey Slender Loris***Loris lydekkerianus***9 Apr 2024** Ibis Wilpattu (1 in thick vegetation of trees along forest trail)**Toque Macaque***Macaca sinica***11 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (~20 at the picnic spot)**16 Apr 2024** Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (2 in forest below hotel)**17 Apr 2024** Waterfall Road towards Ella (5 along telegraph wires)**18 Apr 2024** Ella Waterfall (~10)**Tufted Grey Langur***Semnopithecus priam***10 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (2 separate individuals); Ibis Wilpattu (2 late afternoon in forest grounds)**19 Apr 2024** Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (Troop of ~20 just outside); Yala National Park (1)**20 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (Group of 4 early afternoon, then massive collection of ~50 at the Yala ticket office)**21 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (~20 at the ticket office area)**Sri Lankan Giant Squirrel***Ratufa macroura***9 Apr 2024** Ibis Wilpattu (2 separate individuals near to accommodation buildings)**17 Apr 2024** Waterfall Road, Ella (1 next to railway track)**Indian Palm Squirrel***Funambulus palmarum***9 Apr 2024** Ibis Wilpattu (2 separate individuals near to accommodation)**14 Apr 2024** Pasekudah beach area (4 around, along road adjacent to hotels or in Pasekudah Beach car park)**16 Apr 2024** Mountain Heavens Hotel, Ella (1)**17 Apr 2024** Mountain Heavens Hotel (1 on roof); Waterfall Road from Ella (1); Ella Railway Track (2)**18 Apr 2024** Udawalawe National Park (1)**19 Apr 2024** Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (4); Yala National Park (3)**Indian Hare***Lepus nigricollis***11 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (2 separate individuals, the first ironically near an (Indian Star) Tortoise!)**19 Apr 2024** Cinnamon Wild hotel, Yala (1 outside of our room)**Leopard***Panthera pardus***11 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (Mother and cub well hidden in forest, then male in the open later)**20 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (1 partially seen in the morning, with probably the same individual seen in the open late afternoon; second male "Michael" seen briefly but well before second sighting of earlier Leopard)**21 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (1 on track early morning "Curtis")



**Small Indian Civet***Viverricula indica*

**9 Apr 2024** Ibis Wilpattu (2 feeding on large fruit during nighttime walk along trails)

**Ruddy Mongoose***Herpestes smithii*

**10 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (1 briefly amongst trees); Ibis Wilpattu (1 on road towards accommodation)

**11 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (1 next to track shortly after entering)

**20 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (Mother and kit, then a single and pair as we left)

**21 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (3 separate individuals)

**Golden Jackal***Canis aureus*

**12 Apr 2024** Maradankadawala Marsh (A singleton was seen wandering over the marsh on the journey from Wilpattu to Pasikuda)

**Sloth Bear***Melursus ursinus*

**10 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (1 old bear feeding at edge of forest next to large lake)

**Wild Boar***Sus scrofa*

**11 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (Group of 6 at small pond then single later on)

**18 Apr 2024** Udawalawe National Park (3 with Chital)

**19 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (3 then family of 5)

**20 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (3 singles and 2 groups of 4, then ~50 later); Cinnamon Wild Hotel, Yala (1 passed our chalet)

**21 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (2 singles and groups of 4,12,~20)

**Chital***Axis axis*

**10 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (Single male to small groups (- total 11)

**11 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (A total of 175 in, with maximum herd size 32)

**18 Apr 2024** Udawalawe National Park (Small herds of 3,7,2, and 9, then ~50 near exit)

**19 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (Single then groups of 5,3,24 & 14)

**20 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (Low numbers with none in the morning but groups of 3,1,6 & 4 afternoon)

**21 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (Groups of 3,12,20,10)

**Red Muntjac***Muntiacus muntjak*

**10 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (1)

**11 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (3 singles and a pair)

**Sambar***Rusa unicolor*

**11 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (First a distant single, then very close single and then mother with fawn)

**19 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (2 singles then group of 5)

**21 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (1 crossing track)

**Water Buffalo***Bubalus bubalis*

**11 Apr 2024** Wilpattu National Park (4 singles then herds of 9 and 10)

**18 Apr 2024** Udawalawe National Park (Herd of 16 then 5 and a single in water)

**19 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (Single then groups of 7,17,2,4)

**20 Apr 2024** Yala National Park (Regular groups - total 50 in groups of between 2-24)

**BIRDseen**

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