

Field Guides Tour Report

CAMBODIA 2014

Feb 22, 2014 to Mar 7, 2014 Phil Gregory & Srun Sikol

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE.

This was our fourth Field Guides tour to this fascinating country, and blessed this year by cooler weather due to a high overcast. The pace was fairly relaxed, and staying for some days at both Siem Reap and Tmatboey is really nice, whilst the temples remain a world-class venue and with an enticing mix of good birds to liven thing up, such as White-throated Rock-Thrush, Forest Wagtail, and Black Baza. Another good thing about the tour is that much of the money we pay goes directly back into grass-roots level conservation, where relatively little seems to achieve a lot, and valuable employment is provided for the excellent guides and drivers.

We managed the major great rarity targets much as advertised, and I paid an extra fee to get out to Tower 2 so we could be closer to Greater Adjutant than usual -- the water levels were sufficient this year so we took advantage of it and got some lovely views. We saw Milky Stork here too, which was a help as we had a hybrid at ATT and then a pretty good one with just some pink on the back in a paddyfield on the way back, though I'd have ticked that one no problem!

Sarus Crane and Eld's Deer showed nicely, we had 6 species of owl in daylight again -- Brown Wood-Owl, Spotted Wood-Owl (at ATT for the first time), Spotted Owlet (also at ATT), Brown Fish-Owl (on nest too), and Brown Hawk-Owl, plus Asian Barred Owlet, of course. Major stars were of course the amazingly rare Giant and White-shouldered ibises, for which Cambodia is the very last remaining stronghold. The cicadas at Tmatboey were so noisy we could not tape Oriental Scops-Owl this year -- it was just impossible!

Woodpeckers featured nicely, with Black-headed (ATT too), Great Slaty, Spot-breasted, Graycapped, Yellow-crested, and Rufous-bellied all seen well. New species for me at Tmatboey were Van Hasselt's and Ruby-cheeked Sunbird and Great Iora, whilst a flyby of the very rare asiatica Black-necked Stork was a plus. Savannah Nightjar at Veal Krous was excellent at dusk, hawking over the pond as it was still quite light and by far my best ever views, whilst 3 species of Critically Endangered (CR) vulture (White-rumped, Slender-billed and Red-headed) were excellent and gave wonderful views on the carcass.

Bengal Florican at Kompong Thom was good, and we got a countable view of Manchurian Reed



Brown Fish-Owl, one of six species of owls for the tour (Photo by Srun Sikol & Phil Gregory)

Warbler, which kind of sanitized it for my own life list (newly known field characters sure helped). Yellow-breasted Bunting was very good at Kompong Thom, and Asian Golden Weaver had a colony of 8 nests at Kratie, found just before we got there. Mekong Wagtail was easy this year, as was Little Pratincole, and our way back to Phnom Penh this year avoided the chaos of the Chinese roadwork devastation AND got us fantastic looks (and me some good tape) of the newly described Cambodian Tailorbird, a neat way to end.

As to tour favorites for the group: The great rarities of the tour did not disappoint, with excellent looks at Giant and White-shouldered ibises, Greater Adjutant, Bengal Florican, the 3 vultures, and Asian Golden Weaver. The waterbird colony at Prek Toal is a fabulous experience, and the dry dipterocarp woodlands are a fascinating place, so great for owls and woodpeckers too. Mekong Wagtail and now Cambodian Tailorbird must also rate highly!

My thanks to Srun for his good, very cheerful, and entertaining company, excellent organizational and birding skills (and newly found aptitude with my camera, thanks mate!). Thanks to the Sam Veasna Center for their usual very fine job, and to the assorted drivers and local guides who did so much for us.

Also thanks to Karen at Field Guides HQ for a fine job with the tour logistics, and to the group for being good company and for assisting and bearing with me and my broken arm, (which I am pleased to report seems to have set satisfactorily and may be back to normal in a few months more; physio beckons.) I look forward to travelling with you on future adventures.

Phil over Eritrea en route to Ghana

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

LESSER WHISTLING-DUCK (Dendrocygna javanica) – 250 at ATT were the only sighting, though we heard them at night at Veal Krous.

COMB DUCK (OLD WORLD) (Sarkidiornis melanotos melanotos) – Just a single female at ATT, they were hard to get this trip.

COTTON PYGMY-GOOSE (Nettapus coromandelianus) – 2 females at the Phnom Kroan paddies, and about 10 at ATT.

INDIAN SPOT-BILLED DUCK (Anas poecilorhyncha haringtoni) – Five day records but only very small numbers, 7 at Prolay grasslands being the most.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

CHINESE FRANCOLIN (Francolinus pintadeanus) – Vocal at Tmatboey early and late, and a good view of 3 birds in the track on one day, I was surprised at the cocked tails, they looked like Stone Partridge in shape!

BLUE-BREASTED QUAIL (Coturnix chinensis) – One male was flushed at Prolay grasslands at Kompong Thom, the dark body was a good pointer.

RED JUNGLEFOWL (Gallus gallus) – Heard at Tmatboey with the odd strangled crowing sound they give here, recorded on my Van Hasselt's Sunbird cut on xenocanto by the way! [*]

<u>Podicipedidae (Grebes)</u>

LITTLE GREBE (LITTLE) (Tachybaptus ruficollis poggei) – Four day records of singles of the yellow eyed taxon poggei.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

ASIAN OPENBILL (Anastomus oscitans) – About 150 over Phnom Kroan paddies, then 100 at Prek Toal and 150 around ATT. They feed on large snails.

WOOLLY-NECKED STORK (Ciconia episcopus) - Two sightings at Tmatboey with one right overhead and 2 flushing off.

BLACK-NECKED STORK (Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus asiaticus) – A single subadult flew down the river at Tmatboey, a very rare species here and also a potential split from the Australian birds. This was just my second record on the tour.

LESSER ADJUTANT (Leptoptilos javanicus) - Very small numbers at Prek Toal where we saw around 10 birds, then a couple at Tmatboey.

- **GREATER ADJUTANT** (Leptoptilos dubius) The water levels were high this year and we were able to arrange access to platform 2 which is much closer to the nesting colony, which meant we got great views of them in flight and those who climbed the platform saw the birds at the nest. Very pleasing and one very rare species, we saw about 14 birds today.
- MILKY STORK (Mycteria cinerea) Some good flying-over views at Prek Toal platform 2 of what looked to be a nice white pure bird, probably 2 individuals, then at ATT we saw one hybrid that had dark wing coverts. Then we saw a much nicer white one with a Painted Stork flock on the way back. This one had just some pink feathers on the back and was 90% good, countable I'm sure! See the photo on the website. Joyce completed her storks with this species.
- **PAINTED STORK** (Mycteria leucocephala) A couple over at Phnom Kroan, and surprisingly few at Prek Toal, maybe around 30 birds this time, before 70+ at ATT.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

INDIAN CORMORANT (Phalacrocorax fuscicollis) - 100 at Prek Toal, 10 at ATT and 70 on the Mekong at Kratie.

GREAT CORMORANT (EURASIAN) (Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis) - 5 at Prek Toal and 20 at ATT.

LITTLE CORMORANT (Phalacrocorax niger) – 6 at Phnom Kroan, a single at Prek Toal and a couple at ATT, far less numerous than its small congener

<u>Anhingidae (Anhingas)</u>

ORIENTAL DARTER (Anhinga melanogaster) – A single at Phnom Kroan then a really good number at Prek Toal with over 300, by far the most I've seen here. A couple at ATT next day and one was seen at the temples near Angkor.

<u>Pelecanidae (Pelicans)</u>

SPOT-BILLED PELICAN (Pelecanus philippensis) – This rare bird showed beautifully at Prek Toal where we saw around 30, then had about 70 at ATT. Joyce finished the pelicans with this one too.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

YELLOW BITTERN (Ixobrychus sinensis) - One at Phnom Kroan and then 3 flushed at Prek Toal.

CINNAMON BITTERN (Ixobrychus cinnamomeus) – A good trip for them. One at Phnom Kroan, one at ATT and then a single at Kompong Thom and 2 at Kratie paddies.

BLACK BITTERN (Ixobrychus flavicollis) - One was flushed at Prek Toal, a brief view only.

GRAY HERON (Ardea cinerea) - 5 day records of very small numbers, max 5 at Prek Toal.

PURPLE HERON (Ardea purpurea) – Four day records, the most being 8 at Prek Toal.

GREAT EGRET (EURASIAN) (Ardea alba alba) – Widespread with 100 at Phnom Kroan, 120 at Prek Toal and 20 at ATT, then 20 at Kratie paddies and Kompong Thom grasslands.

INTERMEDIATE EGRET (Mesophoyx intermedia) – One at Phnom Kroan, 5 at Kompong Thom grasslands with 3 there next day.

LITTLE EGRET (LITTLE) (Egretta garzetta garzetta) - Widespread, the max.being 70 at Phnom Kroan.

CATTLE EGRET (ASIAN) (Bubulcus ibis coromandus) - Small numbers were widespread, this race is often split these days.

CHINESE POND-HERON (Ardeola bacchus) – Seen on most days with 100 at Prek Toal the most, almost all were non-breeding dress. An obliging bird was at the Tmatboey feeders.

STRIATED HERON (Butorides striata) – Just a single at Prek Toal.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (EURASIAN) (Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax) – We saw about 40 at Prek Toal.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

- **BLACK-HEADED IBIS** (Threskiornis melanocephalus) A glimpse of one at Prek Toal, then luckily one was amongst the Painted Storks as we came back from ATT. Quite a rare species, a good pick-up.
- WHITE-SHOULDERED IBIS (Pseudibis davisoni) They were tough this year as none came to a roost site. We saw the back end of one on a nest one day, then got one on another nest later, which luckily stood up for a good view. I still don't have a good photo of this bird! One wry tale here concerns a nest we were shown that had an obscured dark bird standing on the edge of it, and what proved to be 3 voracious chicks thrusting heads up and begging, with curiously wide bills. Three chicks surprised me, and the guides went back later only to find that they had taken us to a nest of Large-billed Crow, about which they were very embarrassed but we thought it was funny! Glad we didn't post that one on You-Tube.
- GIANT IBIS (Pseudibis gigantea) A fine bird was at a pre-dawn roost where we had heard it calling the day before, and we had a single later. Then we had 2 excellent birds at our new woodpecker area, and got some nice photos and video of them. This is one mega-rare bird with something like 368 left, almost all in Cambodia

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE (Elanus caeruleus) – Just 3 day records, from ATT, Prek Toal and Kompong Thom.

ORIENTAL HONEY-BUZZARD (Pernis ptilorhynchus) - One was seen by most folks by the river at Tmatboey, I managed to miss it.

BLACK BAZA (Aviceda leuphotes) - Great looks at them at Angkor where we saw 4 birds, and heard them calling, one very snazzy raptor.

- **RED-HEADED VULTURE** (Sarcogyps calvus) There were 3 adults at the cow carcass at Veal Krous, and we noted the eye colour difference with the sexes, seeing two females (dark) and one male (yellow). The pink dewlap was hanging like paddles and it is one very striking species with that great heavy bill. Sadly now very rare and listed as Critically Endangered like almost all the other Asian Vultures.
- WHITE-RUMPED VULTURE (Gyps bengalensis) 17 one the first day and 19 on the second at Veal Krous, some great looks and a few immatures present too.

SLENDER-BILLED VULTURE (Gyps tenuirostris) - Just 2 birds at the carcass at Veal Krous.

- CRESTED SERPENT-EAGLE (Spilornis cheela) Five day records, the first at Tah Promh, a very vocal species and often seen in pairs.
- **SHORT-TOED EAGLE** (Circaetus gallicus) One was in the paddyfields near the Great -spotted Eagles, it had the typical big fat rounded head and yellow eye, and quite a greyish cast to the plumage. I am not sure of the status in Cambodia where I had not seen it before.
- **GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE** (Clanga clanga) Two big dark heavy Aquila type eagles in a paddyfield as we went up to ATT looked good for this species, which seems to be regular in Cambodia these days.
- IMPERIAL EAGLE (Aquila heliaca) One was at the vulture restaurant at Veal Krous but sadly I did not have my camera or Srun handy. Anyway the white on the scapulars was a useful pointer. It had a very pale head and streaked chest typical of an immature transitioning to adult, and was a large eagle for sure. This is my first for definite from Cambodia and was a lifer for Srun too.

RUFOUS-WINGED BUZZARD (Butastur liventer) – Five day records from the Tmatboey area, max 3 birds.

EASTERN MARSH-HARRIER (Circus spilonotus) – 4 day records including a fine male at Kompong Thom.

PIED HARRIER (Circus melanoleucos) – 2 males and a female near ATT, 2 at Kompong Thom and some saw one at the KT grasslands later. Always a treat to see the striking males.

SHIKRA (Accipiter badius) - Seven day records, and some good looks starting at Angkor, it was the default Accipiter as usual.

BLACK KITE (BLACK) (Milvus migrans govinda) - Just 2 up at ATT, they seem curiously rare in Cambodia.

GRAY-HEADED FISH-EAGLE (Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus) – Great views of 3 birds at Prek Toal, a couple were unusually obliging, see the photos in the slideshow. Then a fine immature at Veal Krous, heavily streaked dark below with a white background, a very striking bird.

Otididae (Bustards)

BENGAL FLORICAN (Houbaropsis bengalensis) – Very nice looks at 4 males at Prolay, the white wings are just amazing in flight. Another very rare bird.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

WHITE-BREASTED WATERHEN (Amaurornis phoenicurus) – 2 at Veal Krous pond were the only sighting.

- WHITE-BROWED CRAKE (Porzana cinerea) 3 at Phnom Kroan, then 4 at ATT, some nice looks too, strange to see this Australian bird here!
 WATERCOCK (Gallicrex cinerea) Amazingly 3 in non-breeding dress at Phnom Kroan paddies, and one at Kratie paddies, always an elusive species.
- PURPLE SWAMPHEN (BLACK-BACKED) (Porphyrio porphyrio indicus) One at Phnom Kroan, an astonishing 150 at Prek Toal where they were everywhere, and one at Kratie paddies. This is the black-backed taxon indicus, and the whole group is up for splitting.

EURASIAN MOORHEN (Gallinula chloropus) - Two at Phnom Kroan, heard at Prek Toal and one at ATT.

EURASIAN COOT (Fulica atra) - One at ATT was a surprise and was I think a Cambodian tick for me.

Gruidae (Cranes)

SARUS CRANE (Grus antigone sharpii) – 6 in some paddies en route to ATT, and about 10 in the Eld's Deer area there. Another very rare bird in Cambodia and of an endemic race. They call rather differently to the Australian birds too

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-WINGED STILT (Himantopus himantopus) - 15 at Phnom Kroan paddies and 2 at ATT were it for the trip.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

GRAY-HEADED LAPWING (Vanellus cinereus) – One flying over at Phnom Kroan paddies was a Cambodian tick for me, though we had 2 probables briefly at Kratie last year

RED-WATTLED LAPWING (Vanellus indicus) – A few at Tmatboey, also at Veal Krous and Kompong Thom.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (SOUTHERN) (Charadrius dubius jerdoni) – 3 at Phnom Kroan paddies, 1 at Prolay grasslands and 1 at Kompong Thom.

<u>Jacanidae (Jacanas)</u>

PHEASANT-TAILED JACANA (Hydrophasianus chirurgus) - 15 at Phnom Kroan paddies, a single out at Prek Toal then 10 at ATT.

BRONZE-WINGED JACANA (Metopidius indicus) – A good trip for them, we had 1 breeding dress adult at Phnom Kroan and 2 immatures, then 4 at ATT which included another breeding dress bird.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

GREEN SANDPIPER (Tringa ochropus) – Just one at Kratie paddies.

SPOTTED REDSHANK (Tringa erythropus) – A flock of 18 with the Painted Storks in a paddyfield as we went to ATT, all in non-breeding dress.

COMMON GREENSHANK (Tringa nebularia) – Just 2 at ATT and 1 at Kompong Thom.

WOOD SANDPIPER (Tringa glareola) – Four day records of singles except for 4 at Kratie.

COMMON SNIPE (Gallinago gallinago) – One at Kompong Thom and 2 at Kratie, very sparse.

PIN-TAILED SNIPE (Gallinago stenura) – One at ATT was a nice find, I just glimpsed it drop into a paddyfield and we were able to flush it for a good flight view then see the head pattern later. One was also at Kompong Thom.

<u>Turnicidae (Buttonquail)</u>

SMALL BUTTONQUAIL (Turnix sylvaticus) - A single buttonquail sp. flushed at Prolay, Kompong Thom was either this or Barred.

YELLOW-LEGGED BUTTONQUAIL (Turnix tanki) – Joyce saw this at Tmatboey twice, and a Turnix flushed at Kompong Thom seemed a good bet for this species.

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

 ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE (Glareola maldivarum) – 20 at Phnom Kroan, then 70 at ATT and 15 at Prek Toal before 2 at Kompong Thom at the end. They seem to be back early this year, Srun said Mar 3 near Siem Reap, but I do wonder if maybe some overwinter here and don't go to Australia?
 SMALL PRATINCOLE (Glareola lactea) – Just 2 birds on a rock mid-Mekong at Kratie, very well hidden but nice views.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

WHISKERED TERN (Chlidonias hybrida) - About 70 in non-breeding dress on Lake Tonle Sap.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (Columba livia) – A few in the towns. [I]

PALE-CAPPED PIGEON (Columba punicea) – None at last year's site, but we had 2 fly right past at Tmatboey River, a very nice pick-up of a rare species.

RED COLLARED-DOVE (Streptopelia tranquebarica) - Five day records, with 15 at ATT the most.

SPOTTED DOVE (Streptopelia chinensis) – Small numbers around Tmatboey.

ZEBRA DOVE (Geopelia striata) - A few around Phnom Kroan and Siem Reap, also at Kratie and Kompong Thom.

ORANGE-BREASTED PIGEON (Treron bicinctus) - Six at the Pale-capped Pigeon site from last year, some nice views.

THICK-BILLED PIGEON (Treron curvirostra) - 3 at Tmatboey River were the only sighting.

YELLOW-FOOTED PIGEON (Treron phoenicopterus) – Two birds seen nicely at the Pale-capped Pigeon site, this was a very nice find of a scarce species.

GREEN IMPERIAL-PIGEON (Ducula aenea) - Three day records from Tmatboey, max. 3 birds.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

LARGE HAWK-CUCKOO (Hierococcyx sparverioides) – Great views of 2 of this amazingly Accipiter-like species at Tah Prom and then at Preah Khan temple.

INDIAN CUCKOO (Cuculus micropterus) - Heard at Tmatboey. [*]

BANDED BAY CUCKOO (Cacomantis sonneratii) - Nice looks at one near 2 Giant Ibis at Tmatboey, and some folks saw one at Prek Toal.

PLAINTIVE CUCKOO (Cacomantis merulinus) - 3 at Phnom Kroan, then singles at Prek Toal and Kratie.

VIOLET CUCKOO (Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus) – Quite good looks eventually at Tmatboey, we saw 2 males one day and then 3 next day, best picked up on call.

FORK-TAILED DRONGO-CUCKOO (Surniculus dicruroides dicruroides) – A nice find at Preah Khan by our temple guide, this is a scarce one and it showed very well indeed, split by most these days as Fork-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo but a little-known species. It looked to be in quite heavy moult, see the photos on the website.

ASIAN KOEL (Eudynamys scolopaceus) - Often heard, and we saw a fine male at Tmatboey which came in to my whistle.

GREEN-BILLED MALKOHA (Phaenicophaeus tristis) - 2 at Meichey gave great looks, and we had a single at Tah Prom. Uncommon.

GREATER COUCAL (Centropus sinensis) - Three day records, and a great view of one at Tmatboey River.

LESSER COUCAL (Centropus bengalensis) – Several good sightings starting at Phnom Kroan, but also a few coucal sp. where we did not see them very well.

<u>Strigidae (Owls)</u>

- **BROWN FISH-OWL** (Ketupa zeylonensis) Great looks at Tmatboey with single adult, then one at nest in a big split trunk with a big juvenile the same day. Then 2 next day in addition, the guides have really got them sorted out here. Srun got a nice photo too, see the website.
- ASIAN BARRED OWLET (Glaucidium cuculoides) We chased them down at Angkor and saw 3 on one day, and it was quite often heard in the forests in the daytime.

SPOTTED OWLET (Athene brama) - Two roosting at a site near ATT were a nice addition thanks to the local guides. Photo on the website.

SPOTTED WOOD-OWL (Strix seloputo) – One at ATT was a pleasant surprise and my first from this site, it showed well and we did not have to worry about it at Tmatboey. Photo on the website.

BROWN WOOD-OWL (Strix leptogrammica) – 2 quite shy birds at Tmatboey, but we got pretty decent flight views then left them in peace, again the guides have it down as to the site.

BROWN BOOBOOK (Ninox scutulata burmanica) – Another nice guide bonus from Tmatboey where 2 fine birds were roosting in a thicket and we were able to see them well without flushing them. Photos on the website.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

- LARGE-TAILED NIGHTJAR (Caprimulgus macrurus bimaculatus) Two fine birds at Tmatboey flushed in a gulley near the Fish Owl nest, and then a male was seen perched.
- SAVANNA NIGHTJAR (Caprimulgus affinis monticolus) We failed at a site at Tmatboey, but had an amazing bird at Veal Krous that began calling as it was still light, and then came winging in like some sort of heron over the grassland. The white outer tail feathers showed really well and this was my best ever view, I was amazed at how big it looked as well!

<u>Apodidae (Swifts)</u>

- **BROWN-BACKED NEEDLETAIL** (Hirundapus giganteus) Two single spectacular birds came in to drink at Veal Krous, dipping low across the pond late afternoon at very close range, I even got to see the tail spines. A needletail sp. at Tmatboey river was too far away to identify.
- HIMALAYAN SWIFTLET (Aerodramus brevirostris) Once again we saw what I think are Himalayan Swiftlets at Prolay grasslands, being dark with notched tail and slightly paler rumps.

GERMAIN'S SWIFTLET (Aerodramus germani) – 15 at Angkor this year was a good count and they showed very well too. 2 at Tah Prom as well. **ASIAN PALM-SWIFT** (Cypsiurus balasiensis) – Common and seen most days.

Hemiprocnidae (Treeswifts)

CRESTED TREESWIFT (Hemiprocne coronata) - Some great looks at them in the dry dipterocarp woodlands at Tmatboey and Veal Krous.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

COMMON KINGFISHER (COMMON) (Alcedo atthis taprobana) – Quite common in small numbers at many wetlands.

STORK-BILLED KINGFISHER (Pelargopsis capensis) – Just one at Veal Krous pond, but boy did it show well.

WHITE-THROATED KINGFISHER (Halcyon smyrnensis) - One at Tmatboey was the only sighting, very scarce here.

- BLACK-CAPPED KINGFISHER (Halcyon pileata) Tree at Angkor and one at Preah Khan, then unexpectedly one at Tmatboey River where we usually see Stork-billed.
- PIED KINGFISHER (Ceryle rudis leucomelanurus) Very scarce, just 2 at ATT, one at Kompong Thom and one at Kratie. Curious that they are so scarce here.

<u>Meropidae (Bee-eaters)</u>

BLUE-BEARDED BEE-EATER (Nyctyornis athertoni athertoni) – Larry saw one at Tmatboey River but it vanished before we could all get on it.

GREEN BEE-EATER (Merops orientalis ferrugeiceps) – Seen at Prek Toal, ATT and then near Tmatboey. I predict a number of splits in the complex, these don't look like the Arabian or African races.

BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER (Merops philippinus) – Widespread but only in small numbers.

CHESTNUT-HEADED BEE-EATER (Merops leschenaulti) – Just one record from Tmatboey this trip, unusually sparse.

<u>Coraciidae (Rollers)</u>

INDIAN ROLLER (Coracias benghalensis) - Four day records of this striking bird, starting at Phnom Kroan and with a max. of 4.

<u>Upupidae (Hoopoes)</u>

EURASIAN HOOPOE (Upupa epops) – Seen nicely at Tmatboey but only singles each time.

Bucerotidae (Hornbills)

ORIENTAL PIED-HORNBILL (Anthracoceros albirostris) – Four day records, with 1 at Angkor, then two sightings of 2 at Tmatboey before a single at Veal Krous.

Megalaimidae (Asian Barbets)

LINEATED BARBET (Megalaima lineata) - Noisy, and seen very well at Angkor and Tah Prom, then again at Tmatboey.

BLUE-EARED BARBET (Megalaima australis) – Heard at Tmatboey River but we ran out of time to go after it. [*]

COPPERSMITH BARBET (Megalaima haemacephala) - Seen nicely at Tah Prom and also at Angkor Arts.

<u> Picidae (Woodpeckers)</u>

GRAY-CAPPED WOODPECKER (Dendrocopos canicapillus) – Three day records of this Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker from Tmatboey, max. 4 birds.

FRECKLE-BREASTED WOODPECKER (Dendrocopos analis) – Two sightings of Stripe-breasted Woodpecker from Tmatboey, with 2 one day then a single another.

YELLOW-CROWNED WOODPECKER (Dendrocopos mahrattensis) – 3 birds at one site at Tmatboey, one of the much less common woodpeckers and nice to get it.

RUFOUS-BELLIED WOODPECKER (Dendrocopos hyperythrus) – Great looks at 2 birds at one site near Tmatboey, another tricky one that I was very pleased to get.

RUFOUS WOODPECKER (Celeus brachyurus) - This was seen by one boatload at Prek Toal, the only record this trip.

BLACK-HEADED WOODPECKER (Picus erythropygius) – 2 at ATT grasslands were unexpected, the red rump was a shock. Then we had a couple of sightings from Tmatboey, one very striking species.

GRAY-FACED WOODPECKER (Picus canus hessei) - Heard at Tmatboey but would not show, shame as it is about to be split! [*]

COMMON FLAMEBACK (Dinopium javanense) – Two nice sightings at Tmatboey, remember to look at the bill and the facial pattern guys!

GREATER FLAMEBACK (Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus guttacristatus) – Now split as Buff-spotted Flameback I believe, we heard it twice from Tmatboey and Veal Krous but it was not seen properly at all. [*]

GREAT SLATY WOODPECKER (Mulleripicus pulverulentus) - A big prize from Tmatboey, we saw three near the Giant Ibis roost

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

WHITE-RUMPED FALCON (Polihierax insignis) – A male and later a female near Tmatboey, one of the big prizes of the tour and despite the heat of the day.

COLLARED FALCONET (Microhierax caerulescens) – One near Tmatboey was a great find, then we had 2 at Veal Krous which showed really well, such a tiny thing no wonder we miss it!

Psittacidae (Parrots)

ALEXANDRINE PARAKEET (Psittacula eupatria) - Becoming rare, we saw them well at Tah Prom ("Tomb Raider") but nowhere else.

BLOSSOM-HEADED PARAKEET (Psittacula roseata) – Very nice looks at a few small flocks at Tmatboey, all these parakeets are becoming hard to find as the human pressures steadily mount.

RED-BREASTED PARAKEET (Psittacula alexandri) – Nice looks at Tmatboey and near Angkor, a noisy species and the least rare here. **VERNAL HANGING-PARROT** (Loriculus vernalis) – One shot over calling at Veal Krous, always hard to see well.

Vangidae (Vangas, Helmetshrikes, and Allies)

COMMON WOODSHRIKE (Tephrodornis pondicerianus) – These odd little things were quite common in the forest at Tmatboey.

<u>Artamidae (Woodswallows)</u>

ASHY WOODSWALLOW (Artamus fuscus) - Srun had a new site for this and we saw half a dozen birds very nicely, a Cambodian first for me.

<u>Aegithinidae (Ioras)</u>

COMMON IORA (Aegithina tiphia) – A few from Tmatboey.

GREAT IORA (Aegithina lafresnayei) - Two down by the river at Tmatboey were unexpected and another Cambodian tick for me.

Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes)

SMALL MINIVET (Pericrocotus cinnamomeus) – Lovely looks in the dipterocarp forest at Tmatboey.

SCARLET MINIVET (Pericrocotus speciosus) – Just a couple of sightings from Tmatboey, a real eye knocker with that vivid scarlet male plumage. **ASHY MINIVET** (Pericrocotus divaricatus) – Some quite good views at Angkor with 12 on Feb 25 and 8 on Feb 26.

INDOCHINESE CUCKOOSHRIKE (Lalage polioptera) - One was seen at Tmatboey.

<u>Laniidae (Shrikes)</u>

BROWN SHRIKE (Lanius cristatus) - Four day records, with 2 at Phnom Kroan the most.

BURMESE SHRIKE (Lanius collurioides) – A good trip for this scarce species with four day records from Tmatboey, all singles bar 3 on Mar 4. Quite a striking bird, reminiscent of a colourful Red-backed Shrike with a thin tail.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

BLACK-NAPED ORIOLE (Oriolus chinensis) – Nice views of them around Angkor.

BLACK-HOODED ORIOLE (Oriolus xanthornus) - This was the oriole of the dry dipterocarp forest, and a striking bird it is too.

<u>Dicruridae (Drongos)</u>

BLACK DRONGO (Dicrurus macrocercus) - Widespread, seen almost every day in small numbers and it looked as if many were migrants.

ASHY DRONGO (Dicrurus leucophaeus) - A few around Angkor and the temples, all of the ashy type.

BRONZED DRONGO (Dicrurus aeneus) - A couple at Tmatboey were unexpected and may be new for me here.

HAIR-CRESTED DRONGO (Dicrurus hottentottus) - A few at Tmatboey and some of the temples.

GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO (Dicrurus paradiseus) - Seen a couple of times around the temples.

Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

MALAYSIAN PIED-FANTAIL (Rhipidura javanica) – Seen at ATT and Kratie.

WHITE-BROWED FANTAIL (Rhipidura aureola) – Nice looks at Tmatboey but very low numbers only.

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

BLACK-NAPED MONARCH (Hypothymis azurea) – A single at Tah Prom and 2 at Veal Krous.

ASIAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER (Terpsiphone paradisi) - Just one bird from Angkor, overshadowed by Forest Wagtail at that point!

Corvidae (Crows. Jays. and Magpies)

RED-BILLED BLUE-MAGPIE (Urocissa erythrorhyncha) – Amazing at Tmatboey this year, where a couple of these usually shy birds now come in to the feeders and allow great looks- see the photos by Srun.

RUFOUS TREEPIE (Dendrocitta vagabunda) – Just 2 at Tmatboey at the Pale-capped Pigeon site from 2013.

- **RACKET-TAILED TREEPIE** (Crypsirina temia) Five day records, seen at Phnom Kroan then a surprise flock of 15 moving through and seen from the boats at Prek Toal, followed by just singles from the dry dipterocarp forests.
- LARGE-BILLED CROW (LARGE-BILLED) (Corvus macrorhynchos macrorhynchos) Widespread in small numbers, and sounding totally unlike their Japanese counterparts!

<u>Alaudidae (Larks)</u>

- AUSTRALASIAN BUSHLARK (Mirafra javanica horsfieldii) Great looks in some paddies en route to ATT, the rufous in the wing is a useful character.
- **INDOCHINESE BUSHLARK** (Mirafra erythrocephala) We did well for this at Tmatboey this year seeing it most days there and at Veal Krous, it has an odd quiet whispery song.

ORIENTAL SKYLARK (Alauda gulgula) - Nice looks at Prolay grasslands, see all 3 lark species photos on the website.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

GRAY-THROATED MARTIN (Riparia chinensis) - 3 from Veal Krous pond was the only record, a tiny rather dusky hirundine.

BANK SWALLOW (Riparia riparia) – Only small numbers, max 50 at Veal Krous, and from what I could see they do look like Bank Swallows and not Pale Martins, a newly split species which is worryingly similar!

BARN SWALLOW (Hirundo rustica) – Quite widespread, but no big numbers beyond 150 at Veal Krous.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW (Cecropis daurica) – A few from the ATT area and the nearby paddies, also at Prolay and a group of 40 at Veal Krous that looked to be migrants as they moved off quickly.

Stenostiridae (Fairy Flycatchers)

GRAY-HEADED CANARY-FLYCATCHER (Culicicapa ceylonensis) - Just one at Angkor, this species seems amazingly sparse.

<u>Sittidae (Nuthatches)</u>

BURMESE NUTHATCH (Sitta neglecta) – Ah yes, well the nuthatch with the chestnut on the underparts from Tmatboey is seemingly this newly split one (Neglected Nuthatch of the SE Asian FG) and not the tonkinensis taxon of Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch. I'd like to really get a good look at the head one of these days as it should have some fine black barring on the supercilium which I have yet to pick up.

VELVET-FRONTED NUTHATCH (Sitta frontalis) – Nice looks at a few from Tmatboey on 3 days.

Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)

BLACK-HEADED BULBUL (Pycnonotus atriceps) - Just 3 of this rather nice looking bird from Tah Prom.

BLACK-CRESTED BULBUL (Pycnonotus flaviventris) - Two at Preah Khan were a good trip addition, they seem very hard to find!

SOOTY-HEADED BULBUL (Pycnonotus aurigaster) - Small numbers from the dry dipterocarp woodlands.

STRIPE-THROATED BULBUL (Pycnonotus finlaysoni) – Only seen by Tmatboey river, quite a nice looking yellowy faced species.

YELLOW-VENTED BULBUL (Pycnonotus goiavier) - Small numbers starting at Siem Reap, odd that bulbuls are so thinly distributed in Cambodia.

STREAK-EARED BULBUL (Pycnonotus blanfordi) - One of the commoner bulbuls but again only very small numbers, first at Siem Reap.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)

DUSKY WARBLER (Phylloscopus fuscatus) – Seen quite well at Phnom Kroan paddies, takking away in the shrubbery, and a few from the ditches at Kompong Thom where they were very vocal.

RADDE'S WARBLER (Phylloscopus schwarzi) - A nice look at one at Veal Krous.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER (Phylloscopus inornatus) – Quite often heard in the forests, we saw it fairly well at Angkor and better at Tah Prom, then one or two at Tmatboey.

PALE-LEGGED LEAF-WARBLER (Phylloscopus tenellipes) – The high-pitched metallic call is diagnostic and we heard it very well at one of the small temples near Tah Prom, but could not get it to show. [*]

Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

THICK-BILLED WARBLER (Iduna aedon) – A single from Phnom Kroan paddies was a good pick-up, we don't see it every trip. Formerly an Acrocephalus.

BLACK-BROWED REED-WARBLER (Acrocephalus bistrigiceps) – Seen quite well at Prolay.

MANCHURIAN REED-WARBLER (Acrocephalus tangorum) – The subject of much effort in one area at Prolay, where we had Black-browed Reed but also a moderate look at one Acro with a broad pale supercilium that was much narrower behind the eye and narrowly edged blackish above. This is a recently learned field character for this rare and elusive species Manchurian Reed Warbler, (and sanitizes what I thought was it from 2009 before all this was known!)

ORIENTAL REED-WARBLER (Acrocephalus orientalis) – Good looks at this large Acro with the pale eyebrow at several wetlands, notably Phnom Kroan and Kompong Thom.

Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

STRIATED GRASSBIRD (Megalurus palustris) – Big and very vocal, we saw them well at Phnom Kroan and Kompong Thom and I have published the call on xenocanto (XC).

PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER-WARBLER (Locustella certhiola) – I think maybe I was the only one to see this at Kompong Thom,? There is hope as Clements has reverted to the original name and dropped the abominable PC Rusty-rumped Warbler of the Oriental Bird Club and their purge on historic surnames used for birds.

Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

- ZITTING CISTICOLA (Cisticola juncidis tinnabulans) Singing well at Kompong Thom, and I taped and have published on XC the song given in the cloudscraping aerial display. This group is way overdue for a break up, compare this song of tinnabulans with that from Europe.....
- **COMMON TAILORBIRD** (Orthotomus sutorius) We always struggle with this! One was singing really well at Siem Reap but we failed to see it, then we did not get to see any anywhere else....! [*]

DARK-NECKED TAILORBIRD (Orthotomus atrogularis) - Good looks at Bayon and then at Tmatboey River.

CAMBODIAN TAILORBIRD (Orthotomus chaktomuk) – The finale of the tour, we quickly got onto a pair at a site in Phnom Penh, so quickly in fact I had not even got there before everyone had seen it! Srun was apologetic, but he was rushing as another guide was playing tape nearby and he didn't want the birds to go quiet! We persevered and I was able to make a decent tape of it, published on xenocanto and much better than my first from last year when it was newly described and I published the first recording! Last year we got sworn to secrecy about this new discovery but now it's formally named and remains a distinctive smart looking thing, like a cross between Ashy and Dark-necked Tailorbird. [E]

BROWN PRINIA (Prinia polychroa) – Good looks at Tmatboey but only small numbers, and I think we saw it at Phnom Kroan as well.

GRAY-BREASTED PRINIA (Prinia hodgsonii) - A couple of sightings of this odd rather Sylvia-like species at Tmatboey.

YELLOW-BELLIED PRINIA (Prinia flaviventris) – Good views at Prolay, a distinctive Prinia and one which is about to be split into 4 species, with this remaining as the Yellow-bellied.

PLAIN PRINIA (Prinia inornata) - The commonest of the prinias but still relatively few, from Phnom Kroan, Kompong Thom etc.

Timaliidae (Tree-Babblers, Scimitar-Babblers, and Allies)

CHESTNUT-CAPPED BABBLER (Timalia pileata) – This was a surprise for me at Phnom Kroan where most folks got it quite well and it was singing nicely, and I got much better looks myself at Veal Krous.

Leiothrichidae (Laughingthrushes and Allies)

WHITE-CRESTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH (Garrulax leucolophus) – Great at Tmatboey feeders where they have become much easier to see, refer to Srun's photos on the website.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

ASIAN BROWN FLYCATCHER (Muscicapa latirostris) - A very few from the woodlands around Angkor and at Tmatboey.

ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN (Copsychus saularis) - Very scarce and skulking, maybe only seen at Phnom Kroan?

WHITE-RUMPED SHAMA (Copsychus malabaricus) – This is one startlingly gorgeous species, we lured a fine male in at the small temple near Tah Prom and it showed very nicely.

HAINAN BLUE-FLYCATCHER (Cyornis hainanus) – We saw 4+ in the forests around the temple complexes at Angkor, with great looks at both males and females.

BLUETHROAT (Luscinia svecica) – Nice looks at Prolay grasslands where a couple of males showed well, one a nearly full plumage red-spotted bird. See Srun's photos on the website. Also one seen at Kratie paddies and a few of us saw one en route to ATT.

TAIGA FLYCATCHER (Ficedula albicilla) – A couple from the temple complexes and at SVC, they often flick the tail upwards.

WHITE-THROATED ROCK-THRUSH (Monticola gularis) – A great prize, we had a fine female in the forest at Angkor that sat quite obligingly, then a beautiful male from Tah Prom.

BLUE ROCK-THRUSH (Monticola solitarius philippensis) – A couple of males from Angkor.

SIBERIAN STONECHAT (SIBERIAN) (Saxicola maurus przewalskii) – Small numbers starting at Phnom Kroan, with 10 at Kratie paddies the most. Expect more splits in the Stonechat-complex in due course.

PIED BUSHCHAT (Saxicola caprata) - Five day records of ones and twos only, starting at Phnom Kroan and ending at Kratie.

<u>Sturnidae (Starlings)</u>

COMMON HILL MYNA (Gracula religiosa) – 3 at Angor Feb 25 and 2 at Tah Prom, it has become very uncommon due to trapping.

GREAT MYNA (Acridotheres grandis) – Four day records of what is usually called White-vented Myna, the most being 25 in the paddies en route to ATT.

COMMON MYNA (Acridotheres tristis) - Small numbers were widespread, we sure see far more in Queensland unfortunately!

VINOUS-BREASTED STARLING (Acridotheres burmannicus) - Great looks at 4 at Veal Krous pond.

BLACK-COLLARED STARLING (Gracupica nigricollis) - 3 at Meichey, and singles from Tmatboey and Veal Krous.

WHITE-SHOULDERED STARLING (Sturnia sinensis) – One flew over at Meichey, an awful view, then there were a couple seen at Kratie paddies. CHESTNUT-TAILED STARLING (Sturnia malabarica) – 10 at Veal Krous Pond, with 2 there next day.

Chloropseidae (Leafbirds)

BLUE-WINGED LEAFBIRD (Chloropsis cochinchinensis) - A brief view of one at Tmatboey.

GOLDEN-FRONTED LEAFBIRD (Chloropsis aurifrons) - Also seen briefly at Tmatboey.

Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

SCARLET-BACKED FLOWERPECKER (Dicaeum cruentatum) – 2, 2, heard and 1, we had quite good looks at males at Angkor Arts and Angkor as well as Tah Prom, but why are they so few in number?

Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

RUBY-CHEEKED SUNBIRD (Chalcoparia singalensis) - One at Tmatboey river was a new Cambodian species for me.

PLAIN-THROATED SUNBIRD (Anthreptes malacensis) – 3 Brown-throated Sunbird were seen at the SVC in Siem Reap as last year, the only ones we saw!

VAN HASSELT'S SUNBIRD (Leptocoma brasiliana emmae) – A beautiful male showed very well eventually at Tmatboey River, where it sang very well from the flowering tree above us, and I made a decent tape of it which is now on XC. This is a split from Purple-throated Sunbird L. sperata, and this was my first from Cambodia.

PURPLE SUNBIRD (Cinnyris asiaticus) - Small numbers from the dry dipterocarp forests.

OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD (OLIVE-BACKED) (Cinnyris jugularis flammaxillaris) – One from Angkor and a male at Veal Krous, this does not sound anything like the birds in Queensland, and the group is badly in need of splitting out as it's obviously several species.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

- EASTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (EASTERN) (Motacilla tschutschensis tschutschensis) 4 at Phnom Kroan, and 3 at Kompong Thom, this taxon used to be called simillima but that got axed unfortunately for this horribly hard to spell new name!
- MEKONG WAGTAIL (Motacilla samveasnae) Great looks at 2 or 3 on the bushy islands in the Mekong, the boatman know just where to go and we scored quickly this year! Photos on the website and sound cut on XC. This species was described as recently as 2001, being previously overlooked, and commemorates Cambodian ornithologist Sam Veasna of SVC fame.
- **ORIENTAL PIPIT** (Anthus rufulus) One at Phnom Kroan, and a very obliging nesting pair at Kompong Thom, tape of their calls now on XC and photo on the website.

OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT (Anthus hodgsoni) - 3 at Tmatboey and one a couple of days later.

- **RED-THROATED PIPIT** (Anthus cervinus) Good looks at ATT, then from Prolay and 10 at Kompong Thom, some of which were coming in to summer dress.
- FOREST WAGTAIL (Dendronanthus indicus) 2 at Angkor gave good views on Feb 25, then one was at Tah Prom on Feb 26, this is only the second trip I have seen this in Cambodia. Odd to see a wagtail in quite thick forest.....

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING (Emberiza aureola) – Seen very well at Kompong Thom, with 4 on one afternoon and 12 the next morning, including several males in pretty good plumage. A declining migrant.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (Passer domesticus) – 4 at the Meichey Ashy Woodswallow site where they were nesting in rooftop aerials, and one at Kratie.

PLAIN-BACKED SPARROW (Passer flaveolus) – We picked this up on day one at Phnom Kroan with a nice pair, then saw it again at ATT HQ, quite a scarce species.

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (Passer montanus) - Widespread in the suburban areas.

Ploceidae (Weavers and Allies)

BAYA WEAVER (Ploceus philippinus) – Nesting at the ATT HQ, and some quite big flocks of mostly non-breeding birds at Kompong Thom, though again this year we dipped on Streaked Weaver.

ASIAN GOLDEN WEAVER (Ploceus hypoxanthus) – Another rare bird that is a victim of trapping, but luckily this site near Kratie with 8 nests was found just a couple of days ago and we had brilliant looks at both sexes- see Srun's photos.

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

RED AVADAVAT (Amandava amandava) – A single male was at Kratie paddies, they seem to be heavily trapped and are becoming hard to find. WHITE-RUMPED MUNIA (Lonchura striata) – Just a single bird was seen nicely at Tmatboey.

NUTMEG MANNIKIN (Lonchura punctulata) - Just 4 at Phnom Kroan paddies was it.

MAMMALS

LYLE'S FLYING FOX (Pteropus lylei) – The camp in the centre of Siem Reap is always worth a look, we saw about 80 of them here.

LARGE FLYING FOX (Pteropus vampyrus) - The camp of flying foxes in the bamboo clumps at ATT is this larger species.

CRAB-EATING MACAQUE (Macaca fascigularis) – Long-tailed Macaques were common at Bayon, and we watched a baby climb up mum's tail at Angkor too.

PIGTAIL MACAQUE (Macaca nemestrina) - A female was with the other macaques at Bayon.

- FINLAYSON'S SQUIRREL (Callosciurus finlaysoni) This is the striking rich chestnut squirrel with the white band at the base of the tail, we saw them around Angkor.
- **INDOCHINESE GROUND SQUIRREL** (Menetes berdmorei) This is the striped ground squirrel we saw near Angkor, now identified by using my Khmer language mammal guide which has decent photos.
- **IRRAWADDY DOLPHIN** (Orcaella brevirostris) Quite good looks at 2 or 3 animals swimming at Kratie, less than usual but the river was very high this year. Another rare species, threatened by dams on the Mekong, and an important source of tourist revenue here.

COMMON JACKAL (Canis aureus) - We were lucky and got one come in to the carcass at Veal Krous as we were watching.

ELD'S DEER (Rucervus eldii) – About a dozen up near ATT, including a couple of fine stags; one of the brow-antlered deer group and a very rare species.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

HERPS

A gorgeous sky-blue forest dragon type with 3 dark flank spots near Tmatboey is Calote mystaceus, the Blue Crested Lizard, something I had not seen here previously.

A very striking yellow snake zigzagged with fine black lines high in a tree at Angkor looked like it was going to launch itself at us, which it turns it may well have done as it was a Flying Tree Snake Chrysopelea ornata!

Tokay Geckoes were heard at many sites, they have a loud oddly human sounding "Gek-ko" (or to-kay) call.

TREES

Many species were in flower, including the lovely pink and white star-flowered Dipterocarpus at Tmatboey which is one of just 5 species used for nesting by Giant Ibis.

Totals for the tour: 240 bird taxa and 9 mammal taxa