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Notary Public

NO.

DATE

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Dear Carol,

I've just returned from a 3 month trip to N. India + Nepal (13/1-10/4/93) and have some records for Nepal which may be of interest. I was travelling with Richard Rowland - our route included 5 visits to Phulchowki, Hetauda, 2 visits to Kosi, 2 1/2 weeks on the Jomson Trek but no 'exploration' of new areas, Chitwan :- Spot-bellied Pelican - 1 at Kosi Barrage/Tapu 3-4/4 fed at KB but roosted with lesser Adjutants at KT.

Yellow Bittern - 1 ♂ KB on 12/1, 1 ♂ Tiger Tops on 31/1. (LS4)

Painted Stork - 1 flew N. along Kosi river on 3/4 (SS)

Glossy Ibis - 2 at KT on 3/4

White-tailed Eagle - 1 BD at KT on 19/1

Pallid Harrier - 1 ♀ at Megauli on 29/1

Beera - 1 ♂ Phulchowki on 13/1

Changeable Hawk-eagle - 1 nr Tiger Tops on 1/2

Red-necked Merlin - 1 pair seen daily at Kosi in Jan, roosting in tall tree in the village + seen copulating, nesting in same tree in early April with ♀ on nest ♂ mobbed Black Kite nearby

Himalayan Snowcock - 3+ (probably c10) above 'tea shop' at Muktabath - 1 m <sup>15/3</sup> sure this is the commoner Snowcock here. Confusion is probably arising because the illustration in Dick is not good (chestnut on neck/head much too bright) and the birds can be very shy (I had a scope!)

Tibetain Partridge - 1 pair high above 'tea shop' on 15/3

Dabur Rail - 1 ad. at Kosi Barrage on 20/1.

Slate-breasted Rail - 1 ad (very tame) at Tiger Tops on 31/1

Common Crane - a flock of 60+ seen twice circling over Megauli area

Bengal Florican - 1 ♀ at Megauli on 28/1

Grey-bellied Plain-tail Cuckoo - 1 (first year?) at Kosi Tappan on 3/4

Blyth's Pipit - 3+ at KB in early April

White-browed Bush-robin - 1 ♀ Phulchowki (nr summit) on 24/1.

Hodgson's Bushchat - 6 at KB on 29/4, 4 on 5/4. ROCK seen in winter.

Blue-capped Rock Thrush - 2 at KT on 4/4, 1 on 5/4. Migrants.



Long-billed Thrush - 1 daily Ghosa

Orange-headed Thrush - singles in winter at Tiger Tops and Dharan, 1 migrant at KT on 5/4.

Tickell's Thrush - total of 4+ at Phulchowki | Godavari station, 1 near Tiger Tops station, 1 migrant at KT on 4/4.

\* Stub-tailed Bush-warbler - 1 at Dharan forest near Itahari on 21/1.

Close visio. First for Indian Subcontinent?

Chestnut-crowned Bush-warbler - 1 in the regular ditch at Megauli on 29-30/1. Best located by call (excited 'fit fit fit' very different to high grey vanga-like 'peet' of *C. brunneifrons*)

Yellow-bellied Bush-warbler - singles taped out of Rungali bamboo at Ghosa (top of 'big wood') and Ghorepani (ridge to Deurali). Probably much overlooked.

Large Grass Warbler - Megauli (no batted im afraid Phil!)

Sulphur-bellied leaf-warbler - *P. griseolus* - 2 at Kosi Tappu on

4/4. Located by distinctive 'quip' call. Seen a month previously in

India. Large *Phylloscopus* passage(?) vic lots greenish. Blyth's crowned,

Dusky, Tickell's with 4+ smoky all along wooded embankment

Blue-throated Blue Flycatcher - 1 ♀ on 3/4, 1 ♂ on 4/4 at Kosi Tappu.

Blue-winged Laughing-thrush - 1+ at Phulchowki (low slopes) on 5/2.

Red-browed Finch - sev. flocks possibly totalling c.10 birds in

Ghorepani area at end March

Red-breasted Rosefinch - c.10 feeding in snowmelt areas high above

'Teashop' at Muktiath on 15/3. Also 1 ♂ singing nearby.

\* Black and Yellow Grosbeak - close visio of 1 ♀ feeding on the ground under pines with 100+ collared grosbeaks (and a few

Red-browed Finch) below Deurali tea shop (across ridge from

Upper Ghorepani). Elevation c.3000m. 22/3. First for Nepal?

Spot-winged Grosbeak - 20+ on lower slopes of Phulchowki on 13/1

Plain Mountain-finch - 20+ at Phulchowki summit on 24/1. Also seen here in same year by Paul Holt et al. Rare in KV?





All in all, we had an enjoyable and successful trip. No sign of Greater Adjutant though which surely can't rate as 'S3' any more. As a matter of interest do you have any recent information on any wild Greater Adjutants still in existence? I'd like to try and see one before its (inevitable) extinction.

Conservation-wise I found Nepal most depressing. The 'Annapurna Conservation Area' is a sick joke - the only thing conserved is the human population. Habitat at Ghaza and Ghorepani in particular was looking very sorry: lots of logging for new lodges (I found <sup>recent</sup> many logging platforms along stream beds and woodcutters paths). It's not just firewood these days.

Lots of illegal grazing at Kosi Tappu - most of the wild Buffalo are now sitting around in the sand while farmers drive cows + domestic buffalo over the cut reedbeds. Not a bull road remains after Jan. Small gangs of children cut large grass bundles and run back over the embankment before they can be caught.

Enough of my depressing observations - there are still birds to be seen!

If you need any more details or other records please let me know.

Do you require notes for the 'firsts'? I could do a short note for Forktail or the Bunting if you want.

One last question.... Could you give me any advice with regard to approaching ~~Berk~~ publishers, with a view to writing a Birding site guide to Indonesia? Any addresses or hints welcome!

Looking forward to hearing from you

Yours faithfully

Alan Lewis