

Harmonizing avitourism and conservation: An exploration of winter migratory birds from Tergola to Gakiling, Haa district, Bhutan



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FOREWORD

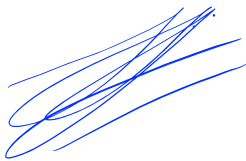
I feel proud to introduce this amazing pictorial guidebook titled ‘Harmonizing Avitourism and Conservation: An Exploration of Winter Migratory Birds from Tergola to Gakiling, Haa District, Bhutan.’ The collaborative effort of the Department of Tourism, Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve, Department of Forests and Park Services (DoFPS), and the Bhutan Birdlife Society represents a significant milestone in our collective commitment to both environmental conservation and sustainable tourism development.

Bhutan, renowned for its pristine natural beauty and commitment to environmental conservation, stands as a beacon of responsible tourism practices. The winter migratory birds that grace our skies each year serve as a testament to the interconnectedness of ecosystems and the importance of preserving biodiversity. This guidebook not only celebrates the rich avian diversity found along the route from Tergola to Gakiling in the Haa District but also highlights the delicate balance between avitourism and conservation.

Through stunning imagery and insightful narratives, this guidebook offers readers a glimpse into the enchanting world of winter migratory birds while emphasizing the need for responsible tourism practices that minimize environmental impact and promote local community engagement. It also serves as a valuable resource for bird enthusiasts, conservationists, and tourists alike, inviting them to explore and appreciate Bhutan's natural heritage while ensuring its protection for future generations.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the individuals and agencies involved in producing this beautiful and very informative guidebook. Your dedication and commitment to preserving Bhutan's natural heritage are truly commendable. May this guidebook inspire us to become stewards of our environment and advocates for sustainable tourism practices.

Kadrinche La!



(Damcho Rinzin)
Officiating Director

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Introduction

Nestled between the pristine landscapes of Tergola and Gakiling lies a region of ecological richness and biodiversity, offering a haven for winter migratory birds. The Department of Tourism (DoT) has commissioned a comprehensive study in this picturesque locale, driven by the overarching objective of understanding the potential for avitourism, a burgeoning niche within the broader tourism industry. This initiative aligns with DoT's broader vision of promoting sustainable tourism and exploring the untapped potential of Haa district as a compelling tourist destination.

Tourism, as a catalyst for economic growth and cultural exchange, has long been recognized for its transformative impact on local communities. However, the paradigm is shifting towards more responsible and nature-centric forms of tourism, with avitourism emerging as a captivating avenue. Avitourism, the pursuit of birdwatching in natural habitats, offers enthusiasts the opportunity to connect with nature while contributing to conservation efforts. In this context, the study on winter migratory birds from Tergola to Gakiling becomes not just a scientific exploration but a gateway to fostering sustainable tourism practices.

The allure of nature, with its diverse ecosystems and vibrant birdlife, plays a pivotal role in attracting travelers seeking authentic and immersive experiences. The study area, marked by a mosaic of warm broadleaved forests, mixed conifer forests, and rhododendron forests, provides a compelling backdrop for avitourism enthusiasts. Beyond the avian wonders, the study area is also home to the charismatic Red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*), adding an extra layer of intrigue to the region's biodiversity.

As tourism increasingly intertwines with conservation efforts, understanding and preserving the ecological balance of such diverse landscapes become imperative. The survey conducted in the study area recorded a remarkable total of 120 bird species during the winter migratory season, underscoring the region's significance as a crucial stopover for avian travelers. This wealth of biodiversity not only contributes to the scientific understanding of the region but also sets the stage for promoting avitourism as a sustainable and economically viable venture.

This book is a treasure trove for birdwatchers, offering insights into the 100 bird species recorded during the winter migratory season in Tergola to Gakiling. Designed as a handy guide, it provides vivid descriptions and illustrations of each species, making it an indispensable companion for birdwatching enthusiasts exploring the diverse landscapes, from warm broadleaved forests to rhododendron-rich areas. Whether you're a seasoned birder or a novice explorer, this book transforms every birdwatching excursion into a captivating journey, fostering a deeper connection with the remarkable world of winter migratory birds in the study area.

Materials and Method

Study area

The study was carried out along the road and old trekking trails, spanning a distance of approximately 46 kilometers from Tergola to Gakiling. The study area spans altitudinal gradients ranging from 850 masl to 3600 masl, presenting a heterogenous landscape characterised by an array of distinct forest types such as fir forest, Rhododendron forests, and warm broad-leaved forests. The area is also home to charismatic animal, Red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*).

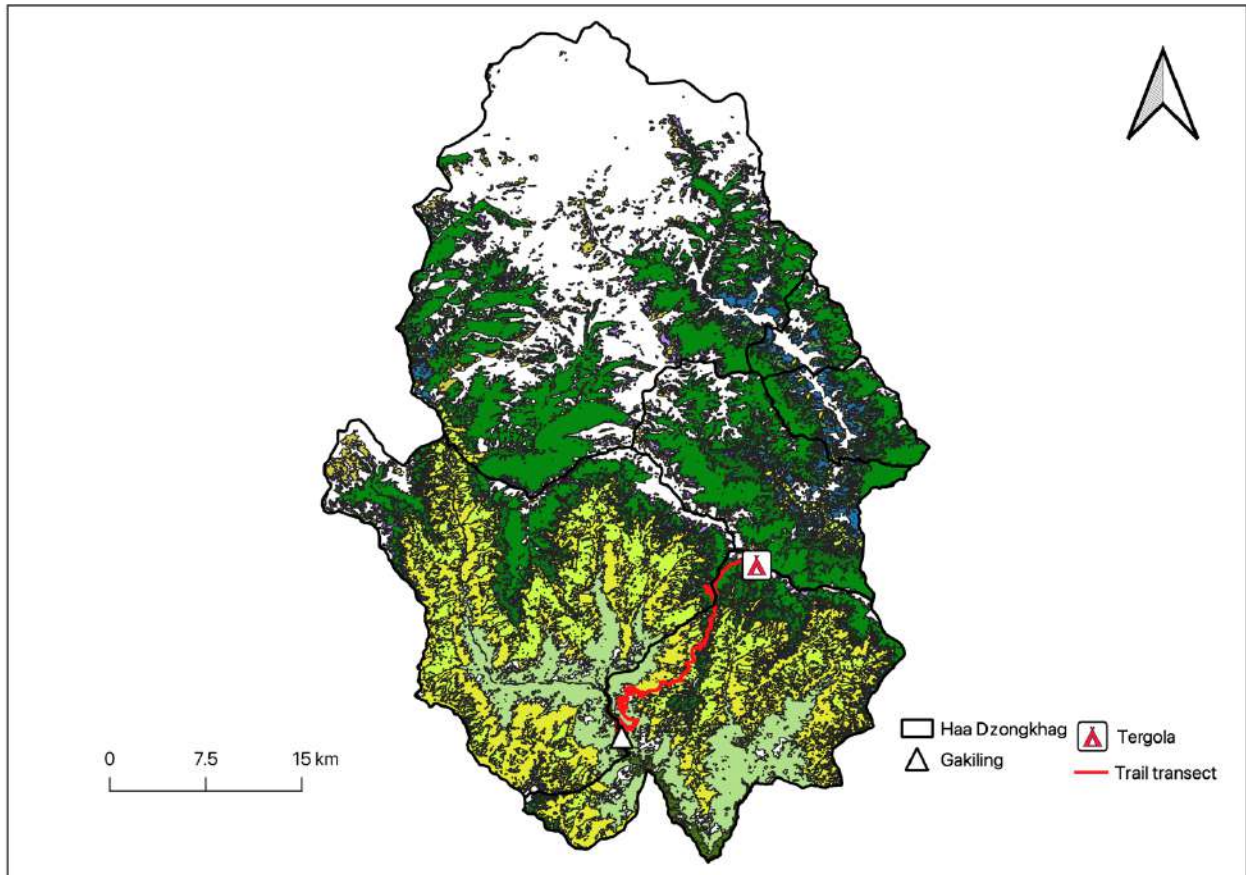


Figure 1: Map of study area showing forest types and trail transect

Survey method

The listing of birds was conducted along whole stretch of road and trail. Since the objective of the survey was purely to list the bird species observed in the area, no standard method or scientific method was adopted. The names of birds sighted and calls of bird heard were all listed in the format developed in the Epicollect5 app.

Results

A total of 119 bird species belonging to 42 families were recorded during the survey. The highest bird counts were observed within the Muscicapidae and Leiothrichidae families, with 12 and 10 individuals, respectively. The least was recorded in Bucerotidae, Chloropseidae, Columbidae, Dicaeidae, Indicatoridae, Laniidae, Meropidae, Oriolidae, Passeridae, Phalacrocoracidae,

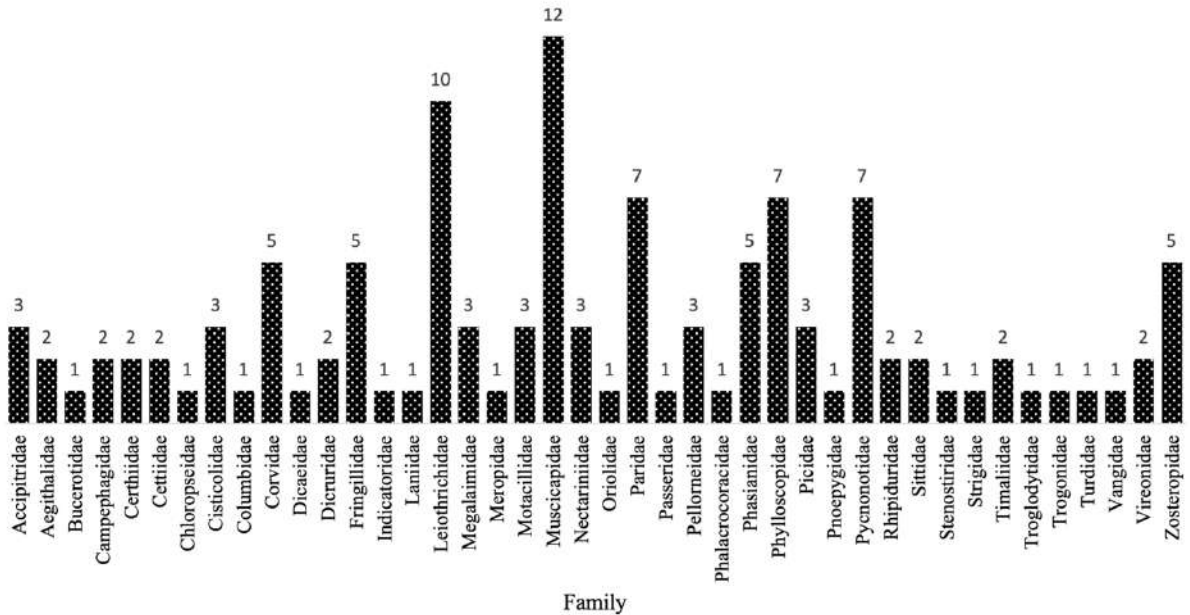


Figure 2: Total number of birds sighted in each family

Pnoepygidae, Stenostiridae, Strigidae, Troglodytidae, Trogonidae, Turdidae and Vangidae families with a single individual in each. The study area recorded a Shannon diversity index (H') of 3.42, representing 15.62% of the total birds (762) recorded in the country (Bhutan) until today.

An illustrated Guide to the birds of Tergola to Gakiling

Hill Partridge

(*Arborophila torqueola*)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Males of the Hill Partridge have a rufous crown and ear-coverts, black eye-patch and eye-stripe, white neck sides streaked with black, and a white collar.

Females lack the distinctive head markings and have a grey chest and upper belly. Their flanks are colored with white-



streaked ginger-brown feathers that extend further up and across the belly. The legs and feet are dark. These partridges are mostly seen in pairs or small groups of up to 10 individuals, which may be made up of family groups.

This species shows altitudinal movement, occurring at elevations between 1,600m-3,600m in the summer and retreating below 3,000m and as low as 700m in the winter. The calling birds can be heard mostly from mid-March to June and occasionally until September. They are found in cool broadleaved forests, and more occasionally in fir, blue pine, hemlock, and mixed forests.



Kalij Pheasant

(*Lophura leucomelanos*)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Kalij Pheasant is a pheasant with distinctive red facial skin, a backward-pointed crest, and a vertically compressed tail. The male is glossy bluish-black with variable amounts of white on the rump and underparts, while the female is dull grayish-brown

to reddish-brown with grayish-buff fringes.

During summer, it can be found at altitudes from 1,000-2,800 m, with occasional records up to 3,000 m. In winter, it retreats to below 2,400 m and can be found as low as 800 m, occasionally reaching 400 m. The Kalij Pheasant is mostly encountered singly or in small flocks, but single- sex flocks may be seen occasionally from September to mid-February.

Satyr Tragopan

(*Tragopan satyra*)

IUCN Status: Near Threatened

Description

The male Satyr Tragopan has a distinctive black face with dark blue cheeks and chin, and a grayish-brown back and upper tail with white speckles all over. It is the only tragopan with white dots on its red breast.



The female is similar in shape, but all brown with thin white streaks on the back, reddish-brown wings, and white spots and freckles. During mating season, male satyr tragopans grow blue horns and a gular wattle. During courtship display, the male inflates its horns and performs an attractive display, stretching to its full height and showing off its vibrant colors.



Blood Pheasant

(*Ithaginis cruentus*)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Males of this species are silvery gray with extensive pale streaking all over their body, a crimson-tinged face, tail, breast, and tail, which gives the species its name "blood."

Females are more uniformly colored with a warm dull brown overall coloration, an orange face, and often some gray to the nape. Both sexes have a small head with a weak crest that may occasionally be raised, red feet, and a distinct ring of crimson-colored bare skin around their eyes.

Himalayan Monal

(*Lophophorus impejanus*)

IUCN Status: Least concern

Description

The adult male Himalayan Monal is a colorful bird with a long metallic green crested head, coppery feathers on the back and neck, blue back, orange tail, black underparts and



a prominent white rump that is most visible in flight. The female has a pale blue eye patch and a prominent white patch on the throat and a white strip on lower tail coverts, barred with black and red. The first-year male and the juvenile resemble the female, but the first-year male is larger and the juvenile is less distinctly marked.

The species is common in the temperate mixed conifer forest and alpine zones found between 2,500m-4,575m.



Black Eagle

(*Ictinaetus malaiensis*)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The black eagle is a large, distinctive dark eagle found in forested mountains and hills. From a distance, adults appear completely dark, but upon closer inspection, they have pale barring on the primaries, secondaries, and undertail, as well as a bright yellow bill

and feet.

It is easily distinguishable from other large birds of prey in its range due to its unique structure and coloration. Black eagles have broad wings with distinct fingers in the tips and a long tail that is fan.....

White-Browed shrike babbler
(*Pteruthius flaviscapis*)
IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The White-browed Shrike Babbler has a distinctive black mask across its eyes, contrasting with a white eyebrow and a pale-yellow crown. Its upperparts are generally olive-brown, and the underparts are yellow, creating a vibrant and eye-catching combination of colours. The tail is long and graduated, adding to its overall elegant appearance.



This species primarily inhabits montane forests, where it forages for insects and small invertebrates. It is often observed in small groups, and its melodious calls contribute to the forest's natural soundscape. White-browed Shrike Babblers are known for their acrobatic movements as they move through the dense vegetation in search of prey.



Rufous-necked Hornbill
(*Aceros nipalensis*)
IUCN Status: Vulnerable

Description

It is a species of hornbill in Bhutan, northeastern India, especially in Arunachal Pradesh, Indian Subcontinent and Southeast Asia. It is locally extinct in Nepal due to hunting and significant loss of habitat. There are less than 10,000 adults left in the wild.

With a length of about 117 cm (46 inches), it is among the largest Bucerotine hornbills. The underparts, neck and head are pigmented as a rich rufous in the male, but black in the female.

Mountain Imperial Pigeon

(Ducula badia)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

It is a large pigeon native to Southeast Asia, including the Himalayas, India, Bhutan, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Recognizable by its predominantly pale bluish-gray plumage, it inhabits subtropical and tropical montane forests. Known for its direct flight, the pigeon primarily feeds on fruits and occasionally seeds. While not currently considered globally threatened, it's crucial to refer to the latest resources for the most up-to-date conservation status.



Rufous-breasted Bush Robin

(Tarsiger hyperythrus)

IUCN Status: Least concern

The male Rufous-breasted Bush Robin has a dark blue upper body with a darker face, while the female is brown above with a white eye-ring. Both sexes have an orange underbelly. It is bulkier

than blue flycatchers and has more orange below than Himalayan Bluetail. Its natural habitat is temperate forests, where it breeds in coniferous-dominated scrub above the tree line and winters in scrubby and lightly wooded edge habitats.

Eurasian Wren

(Troglodytes troglodytes)

IUNCN Status: Least Concern



Description

A bird with a short tail, characterized by its plain-brown plumage. Despite its small size, it possesses a remarkably powerful voice. The bird exhibits subtle patterns, with an

indistinct pale eyebrow and diffuse dark barring on the flanks and wings. It is often seen with its tail cocked at an angle. The Eurasian Wren can be found in various forested habitats but tends to prefer wetter areas with thick tangles, particularly around fallen trees and moss-covered areas. It is renowned for its beautiful song, which consists of a long series of musical whistles and trills. During the summer season, they are commonly found within a regular range spanning from 2800 to 4600 meters in altitude.



Black-faced Warbler

(Abroscopus schisticeps)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Black-faced Warbler has a black mask, yellow supercilium and throat, and a grey crown and nape. It has uniform olive-green upperparts without any wing bar, a whitish belly, and a pale-yellow vent. These flocks are often single-species but they also associate with other birds of small size in mixed flocks.

This species is a common resident throughout the temperate zone and in the eastern foothills and western foothills of Bhutan, found at elevations.....

**Green Shrike
Babbler**

*(Pteruthius
xanthochlorus)*

IUCN Status:
Least Concern

Description

The male showcases an olive-green back and a grey head, with a bluish-black crown. Its belly



is yellow, while the throat and breast exhibit a pale ashy grey coloration. The female, slightly duller in appearance, features a gray head. This species has a diverse diet that includes insects such as ants and beetles, as well as berries and seeds.



White-browed Piculet
(Sasia ochracea)

IUCN Status: Least
Concern

Description

The White-browed Piculet is a bird species in the family Picidae, with olive-green upper parts tinged with chestnut. The underparts are cinnamon or rufous, sometimes yellowish on the flanks. Males have a

small golden-yellow patch on the forehead which females lack.

Speckled Piculet

(Picumnus innominatus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Speckled Piculet has a whitish face broken by a blackish ear-covert patch and a malar stripe, and white to yellowish-white underparts that are heavily spotted with black. It also has a grayish crown, yellowish-green upperparts, and a short, square-ended blackish tail with white on the central



and outer feathers. The male has a dull orange forehead and forecrown, barred with black, while the female has a uniform forehead and crown. It is found in temperate zones and the eastern, central and southern foothills, and is resident at altitudes of 400-2000 m, with occasional records to 200 m and 2700 m. It can be found in bushes and bamboo in forests and secondary growth, and feeds on a variety of small insects, with insect larvae and caterpillars as its primary food. The breeding season of the Speckled Piculet is from January to May.



Darjeeling Woodpecker

(Dendrocopos darjellensis)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This species is densely-streaked with a yellowish belly and pale yellow-orange on the neck and throat, and a red vent. Male Darjeeling Woodpeckers have a bright red patch on the back of the crown which is lacking in females.

In Bhutan, this species is frequent throughout the temperate belt,

with a few records from the eastern foothills. It is resident at 1600-3200m, with occasional records to 900m and 3800m at the treeline and can be found in a range of forest types, from warm broadleaf and cool broadleaf forests to hemlock and fir forests at higher elevations.

Rufous-bellied Woodpecker

(Dendrocopos hyperythrus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Rufous-Bellied Woodpecker is a species of bird in the family Picidae. It is recognizable by its white-barred mantle and wings, whitish face, and uniform rufous underparts. Males have a red crown and nape, while females have a white-



spotted black crown and nape. This species can be found mainly in temperate zones, ranging from broadleaf forests to coniferous forests. It has declined in part of its former range due to the clearing of deciduous forests necessary for its survival. Its diet consists mainly of insects, such as beetles, grasshoppers, locusts, and some plant material.



Grey-headed Woodpecker

(Picus canus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Grey-headed Woodpecker has uniformly olive upperparts that transition across the neck to a light grey, with the head being that latter color. It has a grey head with a black moustache, and the males are even more noticeable due to their red crowns. T

his species prefers not too densely populated deciduous and mixed forests and is often seen in floodplain forests and orchards. It is a common resident throughout the subtropical and part of the temperate zone, and in the latter, it is absent from the western valleys but gradually becomes more common in the east.

Besra

(Accipiter virgatus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This species is well adapted for fast maneuvering through dense vegetation and is known for its characteristic "flap-flap-glide" flight. It is darker in appearance than the widespread Shikra, with darker upperparts, strongly barred under wings, broader gular stripes, thin long legs, and toes. It is an altitudinal migrant, seen at altitudes ranging from 3000 meters to lowlands.



Mountain Hawk Eagle

(Nisaetus nipalensis)

IUCN Status: Near Threatened

Description

This bird is a large, bulky eagle that is found in the forested hills. Its small head, immense broad wings, and large, often fanned-out tail give it the appearance of a hawk on steroids when in flight. When perched, its thin upright crest sets it apart from any hawk.

Speckled Wood Pigeon

Columba hodgsonii

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

During the summer, they are found in the range of 2200-3400m (May-Nov), while in winter and early spring, they descend slightly to 1400-2800m, with occasional records down to approximately 600m. They are usually seen in pairs or small flocks and feed on fruiting trees.



Ward's Trogon

Harpactes wardi

IUCN Status: Near Threatened



(Male)



(Female)

Description

Ward's trogons feed on insects, including moths, stick insects, grasshoppers, and bugs, as well as large seeds. The breeding season of these trogon species is assumed to be from March to April, as birds in breeding conditions were spotted during this period. They inhabit the lower story of the montane evergreen, seasonal rainforests, subtropical hill forests, bamboo forests, and semi-evergreen forests.



Wedge-Tailed Green Pigeon

(Treron sphenurus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This bird species is typically found at elevations of 1,000m – 2,200m, occupying higher elevations than other Treron species. Their vocalizations can be heard year-round, but peak territorial activities appear to be in May-July.

Green-tailed Sunbird

(Aethopyga nipalensis)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Green-tailed Sunbird is a small bird with a unique appearance. The male boasts a metallic blue-green crown, a red upper back, and bright yellow underparts. The female is olive-yellow with paler underparts and a grayish head, and lacks a prominent yellow rump. The female also has a long, graduated tail with white



tips. This sunbird is one of the most abundant members of the sunbird family and can be found at elevations between 1600-3400 m in the summer and 1200-2600 m in the winter, occasionally to 800 m.



Fire-breasted Flowerpecker

(Dicaeum nigropictus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

It is a common altitudinal migrant in Bhutan but relatively scarce in western valleys where conifer forests dominate the upper part of its altitudinal range. It shows altitudinal movement, with its summer range spanning 1000-2600 m, occasionally reaching 2900 m,

and its winter range spanning 600-2400 m. Singing birds can be heard from February to early August, with peak vocal activity in early April to mid-May.



Fire-tailed Sunbird

(Aethopyga nicauda)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The male Fire-tailed Sunbird has red upper-tail coverts and red on its tail. The female has a yellowish belly, yellowish wash to the rump, and brownish-orange tail sides without white.

Juvenile and non-breeding males are similar to the female, but with varying amounts of bright red on the rump and tail. It is a frequently recorded altitudinal migrant throughout the alpine and temperate zones.

**Yellow-bellied
Flowerpecker**

*(Dicaeum
melanozanthum)*

IUCN Status: Least
Concern

Description

The male Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker is black with a white throat and yellow belly, with two black patches on either side of the chest giving a "vested" appearance. The female is soft brown above with a darker tail and wingtips, and a pale-yellow belly that blends gradually into the breast. The female also has a vest, but it is fainter and less eye-catching than the male.



Crimson Sunbird

(Aethopyga siparaja)

IUCN Status:Least
Concern

Description

The adult male Crimson Sunbird has a crimson breast and maroon back, with a yellow rump and an olive belly. The female has an olive-green back, yellowish breast, and white tips on the outer tail

feathers. It is a fairly common resident in the western and eastern foothills. The species' altitudinal range is from 200 to 1600 m, occasionally reaching 2000 m. It inhabits bushes in forest and groves.

Black-chinned Yuhina

(Yuhina nigrimenta)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Black-chinned Yuhina forages in the upper levels of vegetation, emitting a buzzing chatter and a ringing, repeated song consisting of high whistles. This species is found in temperate zones and foothills, although it is scarcer in the western regions where records are relatively fewer. It prefers habitats with



broadleaf trees and overgrown vegetation, and it has been recorded at altitudes ranging from 400 to 2000 meters.



Bar-throated Siva

(Siva Strigula)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

They inhabit elevations ranging from 2800 to 3400 meters during their breeding season and migrate to lower elevations of 1800 to 2800 meters in winter.

Bar-throated Sivas are

found in various forest types, including broadleaf forests, pine forests, rhododendron forests, and bamboo stands.

Striated Yuhina

(Staphida castaniceps)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This species is commonly observed in mixed-species foraging flocks. While foraging, it frequently engages in chattering, twittering, and whistling, especially when moving between trees. The Striated



Yuhina is primarily found in subtropical or tropical moist lowland forests, as well as subtropical or tropical forests.



Whiskered Yuhina

(Yuhina flavicollis)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Whiskered Yuhina is most commonly found in broadleaf forests in the temperate zone, occurring throughout this habitat as well as in the foothills. It is typically found at altitudes ranging from 3200 to 3450m. Its preferred vegetation

includes oak and open deciduous forest, as well as bushes.

Red-Tailed Minla
(*Minla Ignotincta*)
IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This species is typically found in broadleaf and coniferous forests at elevations ranging from 1800 to 2800 meters. It is often observed in mixed-species flocks alongside other minivets, yuhinas, and tits.



Nepal fulvetta
(*Alcippe nipalensis*)
IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Nepal Fulvetta is characterized by a pale eye-ring, a black-brown stripe, and warm sepia tones on its wings, along with a white chin.

It primarily prefers foothill and

highland forests as well as forest margins. Within these habitats, it forages in the middle and lower levels of the vegetation in flocks. Buzzy chatters are typical call notes produced by this species. It is typically found at elevations ranging from 600 to 2000m and does not display any significant altitudinal movements.

White-browed Fulvetta

(Alcippe Vinipectus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

It is a bird species in the family Paradoxornithidae. It is striking and unmistakable, with orange-suffused wings, a dark crown, and a bright white throat and brow. It moves through low vegetation in large flocks, sometimes with other species. Its song consists of an ear-piercingly high pair of notes followed by a brief sputter. Its calls include trills, chatters, and whistles.

Ranging across the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia, it is endemic to Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Vietnam. Its natural habitat is temperate forests.



Golden-breasted Fulvetta

(Alcippe Chrysotis)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

It is a species of songbird found in Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Vietnam. Its natural habitats are temperate forests and subtropical or tropical moist montane forests.

It is a stunning little bird, extremely brightly-colored. Its body is lit up by yellow undersides and sunny orange patches on the wings and has coal-black head with a white ear.

Himalayan Bulbul

(Pycnonotus leucogenys)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

It is about 18 cm in length, with a wingspan of 25.5–28 cm and an average weight of 30 g. Its head, throat, and crest are black and white. The back, side, and lengthy tail are brown, the underside is pale yellow. Sexes have similar plumage. The song is a beautiful 4-piece whistle, which resembles an accelerated oriole whistle.

The species occurs in the northern regions of the Indian subcontinent and some adjoining areas. It is found in and near the Himalayas. It frequents forests and shrubland and also comes into gardens and parks.



Ashy Bulbul

(Hemixos flavala)

IUCN Status: Least concern

It is a species of songbird in the bulbul family, Pycnonotidae. It is found on the Indian subcontinent and in Southeast Asia. Its natural habitats are subtropical or tropical moist lowland forest and subtropical or tropical moist montane forest.

It is gray overall with bright yellow-green wing panels, round brown ear patches, and a white throat. Its dark bushy crest is often raised, giving the bird a

messy-haired appearance. Its song consists of short, jumbled phrases of metallic warbled notes. Calls are variable, including both harsh chattering and tuneful piping notes.

Black Bulbul

(Hypsipetes leucocephalus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Medium-sized songbird with predominantly dark plumage, a very short crest, and crimson bill and legs. Long tail and bill impart an elongated appearance. Head color varies considerably across distribution, ranging from



white to dark gray to black. Often travels in large flocks, which move noisily between fruiting trees. Most commonly found in broadleaf evergreen and mixed deciduous forests but also regularly visits gardens and lowland forests. Extremely noisy, with a huge repertoire, emitting various squeaks, meows, chatters, whistles, and more.



Striated Bulbul

(Pycnonotus striatus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

A well-marked bulbul with a bushy crest. Olive-green above with a pale-yellow throat and extensive white streaks on a dark breast and pale belly. A foothill and submontane specialist found in broadleaf forests, both evergreen and deciduous. Forages

in the forest canopy, often in the company of other bulbuls. Somewhat similar to Mountain Bulbul, but has a bushier, more erect crest, darker upperparts, and obvious streaking on the underparts. Generally, not very vocal; gives various chirps, warbles, and chips, often strung together into a loose “song” with short, distinct phrases.

Black-crested Bulbul
(*Rubigula milanicterus*)
IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Greenish-yellow bulbul with a dark head and crest. Pale eyes give it a perpetually angry or surprised appearance. Found in forests from lowlands up into foothills and submontane areas; generally favors more open forests instead of dense cover. Often in pairs or small groups, seldom in large flocks. Song brief, fluid, and melodic, the highest note usually at or near the end.



Red-vented Bulbul
(*Pycnonotus cafer*)
IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

A dark, sleek, medium-sized bird with a black crest and a white rump. The red color under the tail is often difficult to see. Eats fruit, flower buds, and insects. Conspicuous and sometimes gregarious, often seen high in trees or perched on wires in urban and rural areas; generally prefers scrubby edge habitat instead of dense forest. Calls

include a variety of chirps and whistles. Native to South and Southeast Asia. Introduced to Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, and some Polynesian islands, including Hawaii.

**Grey-Sided
Laughingthrush**

(Garrulax Caerulatus)

IUCN Status: Least
Concern

Description

Similar to Buffy and
Rusty

Laughingthrushes, but
much darker and less
colorful. Dark rufous
above and grayish-
white below, with a
silver ear patch, bright

white throat, and a black patch around the eye. Generally not abundant in Himalayan foothill forests, where it forages in flocks of up to a dozen or so in thick undergrowth. Introduced to Hawaii, where it may be found in shrubby areas, often close to human habitation.



Spotted Laughingthrush
(Garrulax Ocellatus)

IUCN Status: Least
Concern

Description

Handsome large
laughingthrush with a dark
cap and throat. Wings and
tail are coffee-colored
with blue-gray highlights
along the edges. Black-
and-white spotting on the

upper body is densest on the back and breast. Combination of dark throat and cap is unique. Moves in pairs and small flocks through the undergrowth in open forest and scrubby areas at high altitude. Listen for its often piercingly loud, somewhat disjointed-sounding whistles coming from dense bamboo or rhododendron groves.

Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush

(Garrulax Rufogularis)

IUCN Status:
Least Concern



Description

The bird has a rufous chin and tail tips and irregular black spotting and barring on both the upperparts and underparts. It has a

blackish cap, a diffuse black moustachial stripe, buff lores, irregular black and grey banding across wings, and a black subterminal band and rufous tip to its tail.



Bhutan Laughingthrush
(Garrulax Imbricatus)

IUCN Status: Least
Concern

Description

It has a uniformly brown in coloration, with a more uniform brown and nape (with only indistinct darker shaft streaking), grey-brown (rather than rufous) ear-coverts with white streaking, brown underparts finely streaked

with white, more olive-brown coloration to wings, and much narrower white tail tips. Its habitat is found in scrub in open forest, edges, and secondary growth. It is frequently recorded in all regions, especially in the eastern and central regions. Most reside in 915-3800m. Its song is similar to that of the Streaked Laughingthrush.

**Rufous-Necked
Laughingthrush**

(Garrulax Ruficollis)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This laughingthrush's color palette is simple but smooth and unique: dark gray overall with a black face and pumpkin-orange neck and vent. Favors forest edge and scrubby habitat more than most other laughingthrushes

in its range; also often found along rivers and in reedbeds. Forages on or near the ground; flocks in the non-breeding season. Gives loud whistles and burbling phrases, as well as harsh chattering and rasping notes.



Great Barbet

(Psilopogon Virens)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This largest of the barbets is colorful, but often appears all-dark from a distance. No other barbet in its range combines the features of a massive pale bill, black head, and dark olive back. Sluggish and shy; tends to stick to dense forest canopy, where it is difficult to see. Its loud hooting song (typically a series of two repetitive notes) is often the only indication of this species's

presence. Also gives a harsh, screaming “karrrrr” that has a gull-like quality.

Blue-Throated Barbet

(Megalaima Asiatica)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

A common inhabitant of lowland and foothill tropical forests, where it sings brightly but often unseen from the canopy; listen for its repeated 3-4-syllabled ‘took-o-rrook!’ Tends to be more common in edge areas degraded forests than other barbets. Bright green with a blue throat, a red and yellow crown, and a heavy, pale-based bill. Birds at the northern and western parts of this species’ range have a black brow, while southern birds don’t.



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and

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Golden-Throated Barbet

(Megalaima Franklinii)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

It has an overall green plumage with a yellow crown and upper throat, a whitish lower throat, and a reddish forehead. There is a broad blackish eye stripe, and the sides of the face are silvery gray. The upperparts are dark green and the lower parts are pale green. The bill is dark and heavy, with bristles around the base. They are found in eastern, central, and southern

foothills of Bhutan, with ranges from 400-2800 m. They inhabit montane forests, tropical and sub-tropical moist lowland forests, evergreen forests, moist montane shrublands, moist deciduous forests, steep ravines, and riverine habitats.

Blue-winged Siva

(Siva cyanouroptera)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

A vibrant bird that inhabits lowland and foothill woodlands. It is commonly observed traveling in large groups and is often a part of mixed-species feeding flocks. The face and sides exhibit a delicate gray brown tint. Both males and females share similar appearances. Known for its acrobatic behavior, the Blue-winged Siva frequently hangs upside down on branches, skillfully searching for insects and



fruits hidden by foliage. This species is occasionally recorded as a resident throughout the temperate zone, at altitudes ranging from 1800 to 3200 meters, particularly in oak and conifer forests.



White-naped Yuhina

(Yuhina bakeri)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The White-naped Yuhina is characterized by its stout bill, rufous crest, white nape, blackish lore, white streaking on rufous ear-coverts, white shaft streaking on the mantle, and fine brown streaking on the pinkish-buff breast. This species can be found foraging in

broadleaf forests, ranging from the lower foothills to montane levels. It is social in nature and often observed in large flocks that include other. They are occasionally recorded, particularly in the foothills and central and eastern valleys, with fewer records from the western valleys. It is typically found at elevations between 1400 and 2000m, in areas with mature broadleaf vegetation.

Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler

Pomatorhinus erythrogeus

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler is widespread, particularly encountered in scrubby edges, second growth, and scrub around villages. During the non-breeding season, this bird is seen in groups of up to a dozen, but pairs off in the spring and summer. Like other scimitar-babblers, it frequently duets, giving clear, gulping phrases, often with a liquid quality. It also gives harsh, aggressive chattering typical of the genus.



Slender-Billed Scimitar Babbler

Xiphirphynchus Superciliaris

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

It is characterized by its long, slender, down-curved black bill, adorned with a fine and feathery white supercilium that contrasts with its slate-grey crown and ear-coverts. Its throat is streaked with grey and white, while its underparts exhibit a deep rufous coloration. The predominantly orange-brown body is accompanied by a gray head and a distinct jagged white eyebrow.

Himalayan Cutia

(Cutia nipalensis)

IUCN Status:
Least Concern

Description

Males of this species exhibit distinctive features, including a black mask, a blue-gray head, a white throat, barred flanks, and a rufous back.



Females, on the other hand, have a paler appearance, with a brown face and a yellowish back adorned with black streaks. They are frequently encountered in temperate zones characterized by mossy broadleaved vegetation.



Rusty-fronted Barwing

(Actinodura egertoni)

IUCN Status: Least
Concern

Description

It has striking features, including a pristine white belly and an orangish wash over the front of the face. They are typically found at elevations ranging from 1000 to 2000 meters, with

occasional sightings as low as 600 meters and as high as 2400 meters.

Rufous Sibia

(Heterophasa capistrata)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

It is characterized by its black cap, rufous or cinnamon-buff nape and underparts, and a rufous tail with a gray tip and black subterminal band. It also displays gray paneling on its mainly black wings.



This species is abundant throughout the temperate zone of Bhutan and is likely one of the most common forest birds in the region.



Collared Owlet

(Glaucidium brodiei)

IUCN Status: Least concern

Description

Females are generally larger than males, with a grey-brown color, barred back and flanks, white eyebrows, a white throat patch, and prominent lemon-yellow-colored eyes.

Preferred habitat varies from evergreen forests, forest edges, mixed deciduous-evergreen forests with oak, rhododendron, and fir and open woodlands with scrub. It can be found in

submontane and montane habitats varying between 1350–2750 m.



Sultan Tit

(Melanochlora sultanea)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Sultan Tit is a large bird that resembles a bulbul. The male has a glossy blue-black plumage, with a bright yellow crest and yellow underparts. The female is similar, but with a duller blackish-olive

plumage. The species is recorded mostly in the central, western, and southern foothills with an altitude range of 200-2000 m and occasional sightings up to 2100 m. They are found in evergreen forests and feed on caterpillars and small berries.

Yellow-cheeked Tit

(Parus spilonotus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This dashing medium-sized tit can be found in broadleaf and mixed hill forests, as well as adjacent parks and gardens. Utterly unmistakable, with a bright yellow face and nape, which contrast smartly with a black crest, throat, and



breast. Wings are gray and black with white spots and bars. Gregarious; often in small flocks of its own species or with large mixed feeding flocks. Song is a bright, repetitive “chew-wee-ee, chew-wee-ee, chew-wee-ee.” Calls vary, but usually incorporate several sharp notes and one or two lower, buzzier notes.



Streaked Spiderhunter

(Arachnothera magna)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Streaked Spiderhunter is an olive yellow bird with darker streaks and a long, curved black beak. Its legs are yellow, and its underbelly is pale yellow with black streaks. It is a common altitudinal migrant, with its summer range spanning from 400 to 2000 m and being most common below 1600 m, occasionally reaching 2400 m. In winter, it retreats to

altitudes between 200 and 1600 m, but reaches the upper part of its range again in April and gradually descends from August. The Streaked Spiderhunter inhabits moist, broad-leaved forests with dense undergrowth and often moves in mixed flocks.

Rufous-vented Yuhina

(Yuhina occipitalis)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This species is commonly found in the temperate and alpine zones of the eastern foothills, occasionally ranging up to 3600 meters in altitude. It prefers habitats with oak stands and a rich rhododendron understory, typically occurring in broadleaf woods at intermediate to high elevations.



Red-headed Bullfinch

(*Pyrrhula erythrocephala*)

IUCN Status: Least Concern



(Female)



(Male)

Description

The Red-headed Bullfinch is found in the Himalayas from Himachal Pradesh to western Arunachal, and extends east to southeast Tibet. Males have an orange crown, nape, and breast and a grey mantle, while females have a yellow crown and nape. They breed in deciduous forests at higher elevations, particularly in birch, and winter in rhododendron scrub in various forest types.

In Bhutan, the Red-headed Bullfinch is a common altitudinal migrant throughout the alpine and temperate zones, with isolated records from the central and eastern foothills. They feed on seeds of various trees and plants, including birch, willows, docks, nettles, and buds.

Rufous-vented Tit

(*Periparus rubidiventris*)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

With a thin and vertical crest, the Rufous-vented Tit is gray with a black head marked by bright white cheek patches. It may be confused with the Coal Tit, but has a less wispy crest, lacks wing bars, and averages darker and more contrasting overall. This bird is a common altitudinal migrant throughout the alpine and temperate zones, but less common in the eastern valley. During the summer, it can be found at 3000-3800m, with occasional sightings at 2600m



and in alpine shrubs at 4200m.



Striated Laughingthrush

(Garrulax Striatus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Striated Laughingthrush is a large bird with a stout black bill and floppy crest. It has a chestnut crown, russet upperparts, and brownish underparts profusely covered with white buffish-white streaking. This species is abundant and widespread in Bhutan, found throughout the temperate zone and

foothills, and resident at elevations between 1200-2600m. It is distinguished from the barwings by its lack of dark barring on wings and tail.

Red-Faced Liocichla

(Liocichla phoenicea)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The Red-faced Liocichla is primarily found at altitudes ranging from 1200m to 2000m, although it occasionally descends to 700m, especially during the



winter months. Some of the best locations to observe this species include Yongkola in Mongar and Gedu in Chukha.



Grey-sided Bush Warbler

(Cettia Brunnifrons)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

The bird is generally fairly skulking, foraging in or on the ground in dense vegetation, but occasionally emerges out into the open, particularly to sing. It can be distinguished from the Chestnut-

crowned Bush Warbler by its paler gray upperparts, cleaner-looking white eyebrow, and smaller size.

Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher

(Culicicapa ceylonensis)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

An unmistakable, dainty woodland flycatcher with a slightly peaked head shape. It has a gray head and upper breast with a narrow white eyering. Upperparts are olive-green; breast and belly are bright yellow. An active member of mixed-species foraging flocks, but also



seen singly or in pairs. Quite vocal, with a loud, squeaky whistled song delivered throughout the

year: “wi-tu-wi-tu-wee!” or “wi-wuh-wuh-wee!!”. Frequently gives a rapid-fire series of high bouncy notes that rises quickly, then trails off. Other calls include sharp “chilup,” “kitwik,” or “chit” notes repeated a few times.



Green-backed Tit

(Parus monticolus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Colorful small songbird of foothill and montane forests (up to 2800 m). Similar to Japanese Tit in appearance but with a bright yellow belly, greenish back, and two narrow white wingbars rather than one broad one. Forages at middle and upper levels in forests, often in pairs or as

part of mixed-species flocks. Song a series of 3-4 whistles.

Grey-hooded Warbler

(Phylloscopus xanthoschistos)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

It is a resident species in Bhutan and the first singing birds are typically heard in mid-February, with most territories established in early April. This warbler is abundant throughout Bhutan’s



temperate zone and foothills, and can be found at elevations between 600 meters and 2200 meters, with occasional records at lower and higher elevations.

Small Niltava

(*Niltava macgrigoriae*)

IUCN Status: Least Concern



(Male)



(Female)

Description

This species is a fairly common altitudinal migrant throughout the temperate zone and foothills. Its summer range spans between 800-2,000m and somewhat moves to lower altitudes in winter. Size distinguishes this species from other niltavas; coloration is quite similar to Large Niltava, which is double the size. Male Small Niltava is bright blue with the brightest patches on the shoulder and forehead. Female is brown with a white eyering and a rufous tail and wingtips. Forages in the lower and middle levels of hilly and montane forests, usually singly.

Grey Bushchat

(*Saxicola ferreus*)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This species habitat consists of scrub-covered hillsides and cultivated areas with scattered bushes. In Bhutan, the Grey Bushchat is an abundant altitudinal migrant throughout the temperate zone and foothills, regularly found at elevations of 800-3200 m. It can be found in all districts in Bhutan.





Yellow-rumped Honeyguide

(Indicator Xanthonotus)

IUCN Status: Near Threatened

Description

A short-billed bird that looks rather like a large, stretched-out finch. Dark brown overall with pale streaking on the back and flashes of bright yellow on the head and rump. Almost always seen in close proximity to the nests of Giant Asian Honeybees, from which it takes beeswax, and which often hang from ledges, trees, and cave openings. Dull color and bright head may recall some female rose-finches, but note the honeyguide's comparatively small-headed appearance and unique behavior.

Asian Barred Owlet

(Glaucidium cuculoides)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

A medium-sized, rotund owl often found during the day on exposed perches such as telephone wires. Brown overall with brown-banded underparts. Similar to Collared Owlet, but



Asian Barred lacks false eye spots on the back of the head, has darker brown barring on the sides, and is larger. Calls (a long series of mellow toots) mostly at night, but can often be located during the day by the presence of mobbing songbirds. Found in a wide range of wooded habitats, including large parks and gardens.



Black-faced Laughingthrush

(Trochalopteron affine)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Shy, beautifully patterned laughingthrush of mid to high elevations. Note bold black-and-white head pattern, golden wing and tail panels, and mostly unmarked brown on the rest of the body. Typically found as pairs during the breeding season and small groups in the winter, in the dense undergrowth of hill and

mountain forests. Song like many other laughingthrushes, one to three inflected or quavering whistles. Calls include churring, rattling, and slurred squeaking.

Black-throated Sunbird

(Aethopyga saturata)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Long-tailed male is dark above with a paler belly; in good lighting, note his wine-red back and breast and a purplish-blue crown. Midnight-black throat distinguishes him from otherwise similarly-colored sunbird males. Female is much duller, being predominantly greenish-brown with paler underparts, a gray wash over the head, and a pale rump patch; this last feature distinguishes her from most other sunbirds in range, except



Fork-tailed and Mrs. Gould's Sunbirds, both of which have yellower underparts. Black-throated's

song is composed of shrill phrases of very high twittering trills, often slurred. Calls include high-pitched buzzy squeaks and chip notes.



Black-throated Tit

(Aegithalos concinnus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Boldly patterned, tiny bird, usually found in groups. Adult gray above, pale below, with yellow eye and black throat and mask separated by white, chestnut-washed flanks. Juvenile has gray rather than orange and

lacks black on throat. Significant regional variation in exact facial patterning: Indochinese population birds have a gray crown (bright rufous in other populations) and Himalayan birds have an white oval brow patch. Forages acrobatically in small branches, sometimes hovering at the tips to extract invertebrates. Often difficult to see in dense trees; presence given away by high-pitched contact calls (“tsip”) and thin, rolling trills. Predominantly found in broadleaf and mixed forests in foothills and submontane areas, but can also range into lowlands.

Blue-bearded Bee-eater

(Nyctyornis athertoni)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

A large bee-eater which appears greenish overall. Note the bluish-green forehead, the long blue streak down the throat to the breast, and the dull yellow belly with green streaks. It has a dark, heavy bill and a long tail. Its flight is undulating, short, and rapid. Unlike other bee-eaters, it does not soar often,



nor does it appear graceful in flight. It can be inconspicuous as it sticks to the mid-canopy of the wooded groves and forests it inhabits. Calls include deep throaty clucks, low growls, and dry

croaks.



Blyth's Leaf Warbler

(Phylloscopus reguloides)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Fairly bright mid-sized leaf-warbler, yellowish-green above and white below with two wingbars, a broad yellow-suffused eyebrow, and a pale stripe across a gray crown. Amount of white in the tail is intermediate between White-tailed Leaf-Warbler

and Emei Leaf-Warbler. Breeds in broadleaf (often oak), coniferous, or mixed forests at middle to high elevations, and descends into lower foothill regions in the winter.

White-browed Shrike-Babbler

(Pteruthius aeralatus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern



(Female)



(Male)

Description

A small, stout bird with a large head, usually found at mid-level in forests. Male is smartly attired: clean white below and black above with a gray back, a white eyebrow, and two bright, flame-like

orange stripes towards the wingtips. Females have the same general patterning, but are much more faded, replacing black with gray and orange with yellow-green. Often joins mixed flocks in foothill and montane forests, where it can be fairly common. Song is a forceful series with slight breaks every second or third note: “dyudyu-dyu-dyudyu!”



Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch

(Sitta cinnamoventris)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This small active bird is usually found in the middle levels of the forest, though it will descend down toward the ground on occasion. Gray above and warmly-colored below throughout its range; eastern birds are paler below than western birds,

the males of which have dark rusty bellies. Western birds also sport a bright contrasting white moustache. Lack of bright white patch on the tail distinguishes this species from White-tailed Nuthatch. A species of hill and submontane forests, where it favors lightly wooded areas of both broadleaf deciduous and pine forests. Often detected by its quick, echoing trill.

Chestnut-crowned Warbler

(Phylloscopus castaniceps)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Small, distinctive warbler; combination of orange crown, white throat, green wings, and yellow belly are unique among the region’s warblers. Found in mountainous regions with dense cover. More often heard than seen; song is a thin, high-pitched series of “see” notes.



Occasionally moves with mixed flocks but often forages individually or in pairs.



Coal Tit

(Periparus ater)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Small, active Tit. Combination of large black bib, white wingbars, and broad white stripe on nape distinctive. Inhabits coniferous and mixed woodland, forest, parks, and gardens; visits bird feeders. Associated with foothills and montane

areas throughout much of its eastern range. Often joins mixed-species flocks in autumn and winter, moving quickly through the foliage and giving high-pitched calls. Up-and-down song varies across range. Compare with slightly larger and chunkier Marsh Tit and Willow Tit, which have bigger white cheek patches, drabber overall plumage, and different voices.

Common Green Magpie

(Cissa chinensis)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

A neon-colored, noisy, highly social bird of lowland and mid-altitude subtropical forests. Surprisingly difficult to spot as it glides from tree to tree in the middle and upper levels of the forest. Memorable if seen well: bright green with chestnut-tipped wings, a black mask, and a coral-red bill. Similar Indochinese



Green-Magpie is yellower-toned and paler-eyed, and lacks the black-and-white “lattice” of feathers on the rear tip of the wings. Gives a series of piercing shrieks followed by a hollow and decisive-sounding “chup” note.



Common Tailorbird

(Orthotomus sutorius)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

A common warblerlike bird with a green back, a reddish crown, and a long bill. It gets its name from the way in which it builds its nest by stitching leaves together. A ubiquitous inhabitant of parks,

gardens, and wooded areas across South and Southeast Asia. Its loud “tuui-tuui...” and “whee-whee...” calls are often part of the sound of daily life in human habitation.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk

(Accipiter nisus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Fairly small, long-tailed hawk with broad, rounded wings (not pointed like kestrels). Soars occasionally, but more often seen in quick hunting flight chasing small birds, or perched quietly in shade. Note golden-yellow eyes, barred underparts



(barring grayish on female, rusty on male). Juvenile brownish above through first year. Smaller and much less bulky than Northern Goshawk, and with horizontally barred instead of vertically striped underparts. Occurs in woodland, forest, farmland, and urban areas with hedges and wooded patches; sometimes hunts in gardens.



Eurasian Tree Sparrow
(Passer montanus)
IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

This common Eurasian species is a close relative of the House Sparrow. Slightly smaller than House Sparrow with entirely rufous cap, black and white cheek, and limited black in the throat. Males and

females are similar. Typically found in noisy small flocks, often in more natural areas than concrete-loving House Sparrow; calls are often higher-pitched than those of House Sparrow, and has a slightly slower chatter. Feeds on seeds. Introduced to a small region in the central U.S. and southeast Australia.

Grey Treepie

(Dendrocitta formosae)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

A long-tailed corvid found in lowland to submontane forests, parks, and gardens. Adults have black face, gray nape, brown back, pale belly, dark wings (with white patch visible in flight), orange undertail coverts, and long, black-tipped gray tail. Raucous, with a diverse repertoire; squawks and chatters loudly, but also whistles tunefully. Social, often in pairs or flocks, sometimes with other species.



Forages primarily in trees, but also descends to the ground occasionally.



Grey-backed Shrike

(Lanius tephronotus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Found in forest edge, farmland, and plains, this adaptable and elegant small shrike is a common sight across much of its range. Gray crown and back contrast sharply with white throat, black mask and wings, and bright orange sides. Noticeably smaller than Long-tailed Shrike, with

which it shares its range; unlike that species, lacks orange on the back. Regularly perches on exposed perches such as telephone lines, posts, and snags. Song musical and variable, a series of buzzy, whistled, and warbled notes; incorporates mimicry of other species. Calls include repeated harsh chattering notes, as well as high barking and piping notes.

Grey-cheeked Warbler

(Phylloscopus poliogenys)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Striking small warbler with bright white spectacles around each large dark eye; a refreshingly distinctive bird in a particularly frustrating group, thanks to its uniquely dark gray head. Active primarily in



the lower levels of broadleaf forests in hilly and montane areas with dense undergrowth. Listen for its high-pitched song, typically 1-2 single note or pairs of notes, followed by a rapid musical series of 4-5 notes; averages higher-pitched than White-spectacled and Golden-spectacled Warblers, with less trilling than the former.



Streak-throated Barwing
(Actinodura waldeni)
 IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

A short-tailed barwing with an oft-raised triangular crest. Body is bright cinnamon-brown with fine black barring on the wings. Head is gray overall with a brown wash towards the face. Fine brown speckling extends from the throat down to the breast. Hoary-throated Barwing is similar, but has a dark

mustache stripe and no prominent markings on the throat. Usually seen in pairs or small flocks in mid- to high-elevation forests.

Hodgson's Redstart

(Phoenicurus hodgsoni)
 IUCN Status: Least Concern



(Female)



(Male)

Description

Male very similar in appearance to Daurian Redstart; note more restricted silver on the forehead and less distinct wing panel. Female's lack of a white wing patch distinguishes her from female Daurian, and she averages paler than female Black Redstart, with a brighter eye-ring. Blue-fronted Redstart female can be similar; Hodgson's female is colder-toned with a single dark stripe down the tail instead of Blue-fronted's inverted "T." Hodgson's breeds in hilly and montane open forests and forest edge; descends in the winter, favoring scrubby edge.

Maroon Oriole

(*Oriolus traillii*)

IUCN Status: Least Concern



(Male)



(Female)

Description

Large, pale-eyed songbird of lower and middle elevations of montane forests. Male blood red with inky black head and wings and dark bill; female similar but less richly colored. Juvenile brown above, pale with dark stippling below, paler bill, and tawny undertail coverts. Birds in Taiwan and central Vietnam are much brighter red overall. Usually seen in pairs or small flocks, sometimes with mixed-species flocks. Pairs often engage in an ethereal duet: male gives a series of melodic notes, to which the female responds with a long, airy whistle. Also gives harsh, rasping calls.

Lesser Yellownape

(*Picus chlorolophus*)

IUCN Status: Least Concern



(Female)



(Male)

Description

Medium-sized woodpecker with a colorful crest. Coloration varies considerably based on range, but always look for a bright yellow hindcrest, overall greenish coloration, and white-barred chest. Forages along trunks, branches, and on the ground in forested lowlands and foothills; sometimes accompanies mixed-species foraging flocks. Listen for its oddly raptor-like “pyeeeah.”

Red-headed Trogon

(Harpactes erythrocephalus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern



(Male)



(Female)

Description

A brightly-colored bird of dense evergreen forests, usually seen perched quietly on a mid-story perch. Varies in coloration throughout its range but always follows the same general color scheme: male has a dark red head and belly, a brown back, and barred black-and-white wings. Female has a more faded-red belly and a brown head. Both sexes, when seen from below, have a sharply contrasting and graduated black-and-white tail pattern. Sluggish and typically stationary and difficult to see; listen for its high-pitched gulping hoots.

Scarlet Finch

(*Carpodacus sipahi*)

IUCN Status: Least Concern



(Female)



(Male)

Description

The brilliantly red male is fittingly named and unmistakable. The female and juvenile are duller, but still recognizable with overall greenish-yellow tones, a yellow rump, and a thick pinkish bill. Rosefinches are similarly colored overall, but they have a smaller bill, a longer tail, and are more extensively streaked. Inhabits montane and hilly forests, where it usually moves around in small flocks, frequently perching on exposed branches and snags. Can be very sluggish and inactive. Gives rich slurred notes.

Scarlet Minivet

(*Pericrocotus speciosus*)

IUCN Status: Unknown



(Male)



(Female)

Description

Brilliantly-colored forest bird, typically encountered in flocks. Coloration varies significantly throughout wide distribution, with males ranging from black-and-crimson (most of mainland Asia) to black-and-yellow (southern Philippines) and black-and-orange (Java and Bali). Females are predominantly gray-and-yellow, but southern Philippine and western Indonesian birds are black-and-yellow. In all subspecies, note colored “blotches” on the wings (other minivets have cleaner wing patterns) and female’s yellow forehead. Gives high whistled “wheep” notes, often when flying over the treetops.

Spotted Forktail

(Enicurus maculatus)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Stunning galaxy-like white spotting on the back separates this species from all other forktails. Picks its way through well-shaded forest streams and creeks, particularly in rocky areas; breeds in foothills



and mountains, but sometimes descends in the winter. Frequently gives a loud buzzy “brzeeee!” as well as high thin whistles.



White Wagtail

(Motacilla alba)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Distinctive but variable: all plumages are some bold combination of black, white, and gray. Shows considerable variation in plumage across the world, but never has a clear, thin and contrasting eye-brow

like White-browed or Japanese Wagtail. Occurs in varied open habitats, from wild grassy areas and wetlands to paved car parks and grassy lawns. Usually seen as singles, pairs, or small groups walking and running around, pumping the long, white-sided tail up and down. Identified easily in flight by its loud, thick and distinctive “tsee-tsee’ call.

White-throated Fantail

(Rhipidura albicollis)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

A distinctive fantail, all dark except for a white throat and a short white eyebrow. The tail, often fanned, is a shade darker with white tips to all tail feathers except the central pair. Juvenile is like adult, but with reduced white on face and brownish edges to



the dark body feathers. Gives very harsh contact calls. Song is a musical phrase of 6-7 notes that ascends first and then descends. Found in a wide range of wooded habitats, from dense forest to forest edge and gardens, from lowlands up into the mountains.

White-tailed Nuthatch

(Sitta himalayensis)

IUCN Status: Least Concern

Description

Simply-colored nuthatch with gray upperparts and pale orange underparts. Difficult to distinguish from similarly-colored nuthatches, but averages smaller than Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch, and has



a bright white spot on the tail base and a clean tan vent instead of a white-and-orange-striped one. Resides in Himalayan foothills, where it often forages in the middle and upper levels with mixed-species flocks.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the comprehensive study on winter migratory birds conducted from Tergola to Gakiling has provided valuable insights into the rich avian biodiversity of the region. As a crucial component of the broader tourism initiative, this study aimed to assess the potential of Haa as a tourist destination, highlighting the significance of its diverse bird population.

The recorded data revealing 119 bird species spanning 42 families underscores the remarkable variety of avifauna present in the area. The Shannon diversity index, calculated at 3.42, further emphasizes the ecological richness of the area, reflecting a balanced distribution of species. This diversity is not only an ecological asset but also holds immense potential to attract bird enthusiasts and nature lovers, contributing to the promotion of sustainable tourism.

One noteworthy finding is the observation that 15.63% of Bhutan's total bird species were documented within the study area. This statistic underscores the importance of the area as a critical habitat for a substantial portion of the country's avian population during the winter months. Such a concentration of birdlife not only enhances the ecological value of the region but also serves as a unique selling point for tourism development.

As Haa emerges as a potential tourist destination, the information gathered from this study becomes integral for conservation efforts, tourism planning, and community engagement. By recognizing the significance of the winter migratory birds in the area, stakeholders can work collaboratively to implement sustainable practices that preserve the delicate balance of the ecosystem while providing enriching experiences for visitors.

The findings underscore the need for a holistic approach that prioritizes conservation, education, and community involvement. As Haa Valley moves forward in its journey as a potential tourist destination, the knowledge gained from this study will play a pivotal role in fostering a harmonious coexistence between tourism development and the preservation of its natural heritage.

Table 1: Checklists of birds recorded from Tergola to Gakiling

Common Name	Scientific Name	Family
Ashy Bulbul	<i>Hemixos flavala</i>	Pycnonotidae
Ashy-throated Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus maculipennis</i>	Phylloscopidae
Asian Barred Owlet	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>	Strigidae
Bar-throated Siva	<i>Siva Strigula</i>	Leiothrichidae
Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>	Vangidae
Bay Woodpecker	<i>Blythipicus pyrrhotis</i>	Picidae
Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>	Pycnonotidae
Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malayensis</i>	Accipitridae
Black-chinned Yuhina	<i>Yuhina nigrimenta</i>	Zosteropidae
Black-crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus malanicterus</i>	Pycnonotidae
Black-faced Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax affinis</i>	Leiothrichidae
Black-throated Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga saturata</i>	Nectariniidae
Black-throated Tit	<i>Aegithalos concinnus</i>	Aegithalidae
Blood Pheasant	<i>Ithaginis cruentus</i>	Phasianidae
Blue-bearded Bee-eater	<i>Nyctyornis athertoni</i>	Meropidae
Blue-fronted Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus frontalis</i>	Muscicapidae
Blue-throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima asiatica</i>	Megalaimidae
Blue-winged Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax squamatus</i>	Leiothrichidae
Blyth's Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i>	Phylloscopidae
Blyth's Shrike Babbler	<i>Pteruthius flaviscapis</i>	Vireonidae
Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>	Dicruridae
Brown-flanked Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia fortipes</i>	Cettiidae
Brown-throated Treecreeper	<i>Certhia discolor</i>	Certhiidae
Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch	<i>Sitta castanea</i>	Sittidae
Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola rufiventris</i>	Muscicapidae
Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax erythrocephalus</i>	Leiothrichidae
Chestnut-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus castaniceps</i>	Phylloscopidae
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	Paridae
Common Green Magpie	<i>Cissa chinensis</i>	Corvidae
Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	Cisticolidae
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Accipitridae
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Passeridae
Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum ignipectus</i>	Dicaeidae
Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos macei</i>	Picidae
Golden Bush Robin	<i>Tarsiger chrysaeus</i>	Muscicapidae
Golden-naped Finch	<i>Pyrrhoplectes epauletta</i>	Fringillidae
Golden-throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima franklinii</i>	Megalaimidae

Great Barbet	<i>Megalaima virens</i>	Megalaimidae
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Phalacrocoracidae
Green Shrike Babbler	<i>Pteruthius xanthochlorus</i>	Vireonidae
Green-backed Tit	<i>Parus monticolus</i>	Paridae
Green-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga nipalensis</i>	Nectariniidae
Grey Bushchat	<i>Saxicola ferrea</i>	Muscicapidae
Grey Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta formosae</i>	Corvidae
Grey-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius tephronotus</i>	Laniidae
Grey-bellied Tesia	<i>Tesia cyaniventer</i>	Cettiidae
Grey-cheeked Warbler	<i>Seicercus poliogenys</i>	Phylloscopidae
Grey-crested Tit	<i>Parus dichrous</i>	Paridae
Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	Stenostiridae
Grey-hooded Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus xanthoschistos</i>	Phylloscopidae
Hill Partridge	<i>Arborophila torqueola</i>	Phasianidae
Himalayan Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus leucogenys</i>	Pycnonotidae
Himalayan Buzzard	<i>Buteo burmanicus</i>	Accipitridae
Himalayan Monal	<i>Lophophorus impejanus</i>	Phasianidae
Himalayan Prinia	<i>Prinia crinigera</i>	Cisticolidae
Hoary-throated Barwing	<i>Actinodura nipalensis</i>	Leiothrichidae
Hodgson's Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus hodgsoni</i>	Muscicapidae
Kalij Pheasant	<i>Lophura leucomelanos</i>	Phasianidae
Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	Corvidae
Lemon-rumped Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus chloronotus</i>	Phylloscopidae
Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus remifer</i>	Dicruridae
Lesser Yellownape	<i>Picus chlorolophus</i>	Picidae
Long-tailed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus ethologus</i>	Campephagidae
Maroon Oriole	<i>Oriolus traillii</i>	Oriolidae
Mountain Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes mcclllandii</i>	Pycnonotidae
Mountain Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus cuculatus</i>	Cisticolidae
Nepal Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe nipalensis</i>	Pellorneidae
Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	Motacillidae
Orange-bellied Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis hardwickii</i>	Chloropseidae
Plain Mountain Finch	<i>Leucosticte nemoricola</i>	Fringillidae
Red-headed Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula erythrocephala</i>	Fringillidae
Red-headed Trogon	<i>Harpactes erythrocephalus</i>	Trogonidae
Red-tailed Minla	<i>Minla ignotincta</i>	Leiothrichidae
Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotes cafer</i>	Pycnonotidae
Rufous Sibia	<i>Heterophasa capistrata</i>	Leiothrichidae
Rufous-bellied Niltava	<i>Niltava sundara</i>	Muscicapidae
Rufous-breasted Bush Robin	<i>Tarsiger hyperythrus</i>	Muscicapidae

Rufous-fronted Tit	<i>Aegithalos iouschistos</i>	Aegithalidae
Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula strophciata</i>	Muscicapidae
Rufous-necked Hornbill	<i>Aceros nipalensis</i>	Bucerotidae
Rufous-throated Partridge	<i>Arborophila rufogularis</i>	Phasianidae
Rufous-vented Tit	<i>Parus rubidiventris</i>	Paridae
Rufous-vented Yuhina	<i>Yuhina occipitalis</i>	Zosteropidae
Rufous-winged Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe castaneiceps</i>	Pellorneidae
Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus erythrogeus</i>	Timaliidae
Rusty-flanked Treecreeper	<i>Certhia nipalensis</i>	Certhiidae
Rusty-fronted Barwing	<i>Actinodura egertoni</i>	Leiothrichidae
Scaly Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax subunicolor</i>	Leiothrichidae
Scaly-breasted Wren Babbler	<i>Pnoepyga albiventer</i>	Pnoepygidae
Scarlet Finch	<i>Haematospiza sipahi</i>	Fringillidae
Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>	Campephagidae
Slender-billed Scimitar Babbler	<i>Xiphirhynchus superciliaris</i>	Timaliidae
Small Niltava	<i>Niltava macgrigoriae</i>	Muscicapidae
Spotted Forktail	<i>Enicurus maculatus</i>	Muscicapidae
Spotted Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>	Corvidae
Striated Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotes straitus</i>	Pycnonotidae
Striated Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax striatus</i>	Leiothrichidae
Streaked Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera magna</i>	Nectariniidae
Stripe-throated Yuhina	<i>Yuhina gularis</i>	Zosteropidae
Sultan Tit	<i>Melanochloa sultanea</i>	Paridae
Taiga Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>	Muscicapidae
Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron sphenura</i>	Columbidae
Whiskered Yuhina	<i>Yuhina flavicollis</i>	Zosteropidae
Whistler's Warbler	<i>Seicercus whistleri</i>	Phylloscopidae
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Motacillidae
White-browed Bush Robin	<i>Tarsiger indicus</i>	Muscicapidae
White-browed Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe vinipectus</i>	Pellorneidae
White-browed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla maderaspatensis</i>	Motacillidae
White-collared Blackbird	<i>Turdus albocinctus</i>	Turdidae
White-naped Yuhina	<i>Yuhina bakeri</i>	Zosteropidae
White-tailed Nuthatch	<i>Sitta himalayensis</i>	Sittidae
White-throated Fantail	<i>Rhipidura albicollis</i>	Rhipiduridae
White-winged Grosbeak	<i>Mycerobas carnipes</i>	Fringillidae
Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes hiemalis</i>	Troglodytidae
Yellow-bellied Fantail	<i>Rhipidura hypoxantha</i>	Rhipiduridae
Yellow-billed Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa flavirostris</i>	Corvidae
Yellow-browed Tit	<i>Sylviparus modestus</i>	Paridae

Yellow-cheeked Tit

Parus spilonotus

Paridae

Yellow-rumped Honeyguide

Indicator xanthonotus

Indicatoridae
