

Can you find me a Tiger if we go to India?

Not a particularly snappy title but it was the question I was asked when discussing “where to go next year” at the end of our 2014 Christmas visit to Kenya. I don't think it was just the Waragi that made me reply “Of course! Guaranteed!” So like the Pig and the Bacon in the Sandwich, I was committed.

First up. Who are we? Well just some close friends who like birds and beasts mixed with travel. The group's unifying factor is that we have all been arrested at some time or other for minor transgressions in pursuit of our wildlife hobby. “Looking at things without a permit” in Tanzania, “Being in the wrong area of the reserve” in India. So whilst anyone is welcome to come along on our trips we do wish to see the Police Report first.

The Nitty Gritty.

We selected the locations to be visited and sent the itinerary to our very capable Ground Agent Vinod Goswami who had done such sterling service for previous trips. In short order he had booked the lodges of our choice or made suggestions of his own which we readily accepted. He made re-location transfers by plane train or car for us and provided guides as required. Money changed hands and we bought the international flights ourselves direct through the airlines own websites.

We were good to go and all that remained was a patient wait until the time to apply for the new and useful eTourist Visa arrived. Such a boon after the farcical effort of previous trips.

The Kit. We travel light. Binoculars and Cameras. By coincidence two of us have exactly the same make and model of Fuji EXR30 Bridge. This has led to some “moments” when in error one of us has grabbed the 'wrong' camera and then wondered why the settings were wrong. Or even funnier, on replay, wondering when the heck we had taken that shot of which we had no recall. We never carry a scope and rarely miss one. If we cannot get close enough with Binoculars we just try harder. Reference book was both editions of Grimmet & the Inskipp's “Birds of India”. My 2nd edition preferred for the location maps. No book on mammals was carried. We all figured that we could figure out an elephant from a rhino and could remember tigers had stripes and leopards were smaller with spots.

Medical matters. Being winter and heading mainly north we made a decision to dispense with Malaria Prophylactics. Our personal decision and we do not advocate that others emulate us. A few Immodium pills were in stock just in case of need on any long transit, they weren't and came home with us. A few sticking plasters and Zambuk and we were good to go.

So enough of this foreplay. Let's get on with the report.

Trying to avoid the blow by blow, day by day, bird by bird format we shall go stage by stage from location to location. It may work, it may not but it is a start:-

Arrival in Delhi. Days 1-3.

We all met up in Manchester, England, the evening before our Qatar flights would transport us, via Doha, to Delhi where despite an anti social arrival time of 3 a.m. we cleared Immigration and were re-united with our luggage, phew, and met by the ever helpful Vinod and taken to our choice of Hotel. This was “The Uppal” where we had stayed previously and one of the few locations where we had over ridden Vinod's choice. Very convenient for the airport and with nice grounds to explore once our eyelids no longer needed matchsticks to be kept open. Birds seen in the grounds included



various Bulbuls, Rufous Treepie, Jungle Babbler, Bank Mynahs, the ubiquitous Rose-ringed Parakeet and Common Tailorbird.

As we had two nights booked here we also decided to visit the Okla Barrage to get our respective eyes in with some birds. We had reckoned without the chaotic Delhi traffic and changes at the barrage since we had last been there. Ho hum! (pic.)

Birds seen at Okla included several Bluethroats, Greylag and Bar-headed Geese, Swamphens, Ibis and Egrets. (pic)

Perhaps time to re-assure non birders that this tale will not include

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long lists of all birds. Anyone really keen to know each and every species will be given an opportunity to read the species list at the end of the report. (If I can figure out by then how to do it.) I think that is enough for now. Don't you?

To follow is our visit to Bharatpur and two days in Keoladeo Ghana National Park.

Part two.

Days 4-7. Early next morning we had breakfasted and driven off through Delhi's crazy traffic. We took the Agra Highway which was choked but we persevered south. Lots of roadworks and unofficial "Indian style" detours made progress slow. Our driver, Powan, evidently knew the dimensions of his car down to the thickness of the paint. We never hit anything but the miles passed by so very slowly. Eventually we turned off the Agra highway towards Bharatpur and whilst the road improved the driving did not although happily there was less of it. We stopped for a break by some flooded paddies and scanned for a few water birds. (This location we estimate is about 20km short of Bharatpur just by the State boundary. Probably worth a look over if in the area.) We added both Pheasant-Tailed and Bronze-winged Jacanas as well as the only Goliath heron of our trip at this location.

Then after a poorly marked 'diversion' we entered Bharatpur city and made our way to our lodgings at "The Bagh" where we have stayed before. Quietly situated in its own grounds in the style of an old palace. <http://www.thebagh.com/> After being shown to our rooms we were taking lunch prior to a restful afternoon when a waiter advised us that our Guide was waiting. What? Is there no peace for the wicked birders? No not when your bird guide is the redoubtable Sohan Lal. On our last trip we had the pleasure of his son Jakdish but this time his father had decided to test us. Prior to his retirement Mr Lal was the Head Ranger at Keoladeo and his vast knowledge and experience has made him an excellent guide and companion. For this afternoon's impromptu excursion he took us into some remote agricultural area where the local river had created lagoons which were rich in bird and mammal life.

Pied Starling, Redshank, Ruff, Common Snipe and Stilts being there in good numbers. We also saw our first Indian Silverbills, Ashy Prinias, Citrine Wagtails and Hoopoes. On the way home we found a family of Spotted Owlets in a tree by the local bar that posed nicely for us.(pic) An immature Nilgai also put in an appearance. (pic)

Next morning early we entered Keoladeo under Sohan's expert guidance. After a dry area where we saw Purple Sunbirds, Rosy Starlings and Brahminy Starlings (pic) we were taken 'off piste' to an area where our guide knew he could find Orange-headed Thrushes, Red-breasted Flycatchers, Yellow-footed Green Pigeons and Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher. This is starting to read like a litany of birds so I will move on.

Keoladeo is a large area of natural and man made lakes which acts like a magnet for wintering waterfowl. Many thousands come here and many Eagles and other raptors are there to prey on them which makes it a mecca for birdwatchers. Until recently the rare and endangered Siberian Crane overwintered but none have been seen for a few years now. The lovely Sarus Crane still comes however.

It was originally a shooting preserve for local dignitaries both before and during the Raj era. On one (now infamous) day a total of 4,273 birds were shot. Strange how attitudes have changed. Such a feat would now rightly be considered repugnant.

But the birds are still to be found in huge numbers as are the Raptors that feed upon them. And it is not just about Waterfowl. There are Nilgai and Blackbuck present in some numbers whilst the bushes and reeds are home to several species of birds not usually encountered easily. (pic) A male tiger is rumoured to lurk in the remoter areas but sightings are very rare.

We visited the park on two consecutive days and such is the large area and net work of paths that apart from the initial entry road of around a mile we scarcely covered the same ground twice. Access is on foot or by Trishaw either by the hour or by the day. (Pic.)

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Mr Lal certainly kept up the pace and even as we left the park on our final afternoon he was calling out new birds for us including a lovely White-bellied Minivet. (pic)

We left Bharatpur for a two hour drive to Agra in order to catch our overnight train to Jabalpur some 800km south but as we had time we felt we should visit the famous Taj Mahal once again. This is something even us paid up Philistines can never tire of. (pic) Entry is swift and secure these days and a pleasant couple of hours was spent immersed in the splendour of this famous shrine to one's man's love for his wife. (And of course we could not resist a bit of impromptu birding by adding in an Osprey and the nesting activity of Egyptian Vultures on the Taj itself. Well....!) (pic)

After a splendid late afternoon's lunch at The SaiKhandelaa Restaurant we went to the railway station and having bid our driver Powan a fond farewell we waited for our train. And waited, and waited some more. It eventually arrived 90 minutes late but we quickly found our compartment and settled in for the overnight trip. (pic)

Instead of catching up on time the train lost a further 90 minutes overnight making us 3 hours late into Jabalpur where we were met by our next driver for the 4-5 hour drive to Kanha Tiger Reserve. He enquired part way if we required a comfort stop and tea and was unanimously told "No! We have a game drive booked for 14.00 so please keep the right foot firmly on the pedal." He got us to our next bed in Chitvan Lodge in under 4 hours.

What we saw there will be told another day.

Part three.

Days 8 – 12. Kanha Tiger Reserve.

Of course we were hoping to enjoy a similar sighting to the one we had enjoyed on a previous visit when a lovely Tigress trotted with us for over 2km licking her lips. Here she is. **Pic.** It would be nice if we could see her or a relative again?

We were based at the lovely Chitvan Jungle Camp for our time in Kanha. A lovely camp that is well run and managed. <http://www.chitvan.com/> On arrival we were introduced to our driver/guide, and soon to be friend, Sanjay Thakre and taken on our first outing into Kanha. We did not really expect to find a tiger on our first entry but tis always better to travel with hope than just to travel. We did see a pug mark which was a start.

Pics.

Next morning a pre-dawn departure after a warming cup of tea had us at the Mukki gate once more. We saw more animals and birds including excellent views of the Dry land sub species of Barasingha that is restricted to Kanha. **(pic)** Nothing much to show for our efforts at first so we took our "Bush Breakfast" and comfort stop as the sun rose. We then resumed our search and after a while Sanjay mentioned he could hear alarm calls and he pulled up near where we saw a couple of other Gypsies. The calls were getting louder and whilst other cars moved further on Sanjay remained confident we were in the right place. Even I could detect the direction the Sambar alarms, and what was causing them, were taking. We got it right and out stepped a lovely male Tiger at first heading towards us but when disturbed by other cars arriving, he veered off and re-entered the bush. We tracked his passage by the amount of cars that were now pressing in as he progressed to another track but left him to the others. We had got Cliff his Tiger for Christmas and it was only the morning of 16th.

1000 Pics.

Was this to be all?

At the start of this tale I promised to avoid a 'day by day journal'. I may have to relax that in order to describe our stay in Kanha.

Each day's routine was much the same and we noted and photographed other wildlife. We also spent time in the grounds of Chitvan Lodge where a fruiting fig tree was drawing in lots of birds. **Pics** Anyone who knows Chitvan will know the friendly "Guard Dogs" of Mr.Argaval. An amusing anecdote from one morning. There were tiger pug marks outside the fence from a night visitor. Why

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had the dogs not barked? Would you give away your position to a 500lb Cat that stood over a metre at the shoulder? Dogs are intelligent too.

Another morning, another bush breakfast. Only this time it was interrupted by a Tiger. A glimpse of a sleeping cat was not that interesting but any sighting is a good one. As we left her to turn the car round we noticed two Barasingha Stags walking in the direction of the sleeping beauty. This could get interesting and so the following sequence of photos showed. **Pics.**

Tiger number two. This was a female with a radio collar but we were never introduced to I don't have her name. She was in Oestrus and there was a male close by but he never put in an appearance so we won't count him. Back to the lodge for lunch and a couple more birds enjoying the fig tree.

Pics.

The afternoon drive was to provide some interest too.

Sufficient to leave for another instalment. Too much excitement in one episode would not be good for us.

Part Four. Days 11b – Day 15.

Kanha-Pench and the only hiatus of the trip.

At the Lodge everyone was keyed up with this morning's second Tiger and more or less happy that we had achieved our prime objective. It would be nice to see more but then again we could hold up our heads for what we had. There was always more birds to find and we had not seen Gaur or Dhole. The afternoon drive set off in high spirits but low expectations as both our tigers had been sighted on morning drives so far:-

On entering the gate Sanjay made an immediate turn to a track we had not used before. As we chugged along in lovely sunshine I noticed a Cheetal ahead looking at us intently. Now Cheetal are plentiful and pay scant regard to cars so I was very surprised when this one gave a warning call and leapt into the bush. What followed is fixed in my mind forever.

As the Cheetal vanished I became aware of movement in my peripheral vision to my right and a large Orange shape materialising alongside me somewhat like the Cheshire Cat or Star Trek's. Transporter room. Only this was for real and the shape firmed up into a huge Tiger right alongside my seat. Sanjay had by now seen it and slowed the car so the cat got slightly ahead of us and took up position on the track. **Pics.** OK. I will settle for a "bum shot!". Very obviously a big male as he marked his territory several times along our route. Do only Bears actually do it IN the woods?

Then he turned left and marked a tree just off on our left. Sanjay took advantage of this and quietly moved passed him so that when His Majesty returned to the track we were now ahead of him which bothered him not at all. Indeed he took quite an interest in us but in a relaxed attitude although as he closed in Sanjay took care to ensure he came "close but not too close"! **Pics.**

By now we could see who was gracing us with his presence. **H.M "The Kingfisher!"** So named because of the marking on his right eye patch which to some eyes resembles a Kingfisher in flight.

Pics.

Well Kingfisher happily dogged our trail for over 20 minutes and probably two kilometres and we had him all to ourselves. Is this selfish of us? Maybe but it made up for the circus we had endured only this morning. Indeed as another car zoomed up Kingfisher showed his disdain by again marking the trail before turning and entering the bush with one last glance in our direction. Was he seeking our thanks for his performance? If so he can have them many times over. That has to be a top sighting to rival the one we had enjoyed on our earlier visit some years back.

We moved on to a small lake/dam that Sanjay felt Kingfisher was heading for as part of his routine in the territory. Sadly he did not show up but it was a nice lake with birds to watch as we waited. Sanjay told us he knew Kingfisher was in the area and felt he could show up this afternoon as this was his regular patrol route. A great guide who knows his wildlife and their habits. And it was still only 15.30. with more to see before dark. **Pics**

Our final morning was much the same and we were due to leave Kanha for Pench after lunch. No

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tigers (well that would be asking a bit much) several birds and more butterflies. Our only kill was a small snake taking one of the Lily pond Frogs by the Lodge restaurant at Chitvan.

Our drive to Pench took around four hours with time to see more of the Indian countryside and as we turned off the main road I could see the changes that had taken place since our last visit. More buildings, a long tar approach road and many more 'improvements' as we came to our lodge. Some parts I remembered well and others I scarcely recognised.

Even our Lodge of fond memory had been 'upgraded' and had increased capacity. Our tent was very nice inside and out but the isolated atmosphere had gone. **Pics.** Even a walk outside for birds took us to other properties that had not existed before.

Our drives into the park were excellent and brought back many memories such as "this was where we saw that lovely tiger sleeping in the road" and "this was where we saw the Leopard." Sadly history did not repeat itself and no cats showed during our drives. Our drives were strange with some familiar sights but perhaps too much chasing other cars. Pench is a lovely park with its Kipling associations and we love it but we did not enjoy Pench as much this time as we had on our earlier visit. We are not sure if this was our memory playing tricks or a guide who seemed bent on doing his own thing. We did not visit some of our favourite birding places like the grassy riverside having been told it was not allowed. Well it was last time! We did see our first Gaur, some roosting Fruit Bats as well as a family of Jackals and several new birds but missed a Mongoose as the driver did not stop when asked (or yelled at by our Wildlife guide.) Our car was a bit more upmarket than our friendly Gypsy, quite comfortable but lacking something. A "Stop now" button would be nice!! Or a Lathi to persuade him. **Pic** Matters came to a head when, as we returned to the Lodge, our driver suggested that the booked Night drive would be a waste of time as the most we could hope for would be as spotted deer. He asked for our thoughts as we would have to leave now! Our printable thoughts were "Heck the sun has not set, How can this be a night drive? Some mistake surely?" Not according to him. Night drives start at 5pm. (We enquired later and were told this was incorrect but by then we had decided not to bother.) We have done lots of real 'Night drives' in Africa and love them and were very disappointed not to try one in India.

The hiatus. We had been booked to fly from Nagpur to our next venue, Guwahati (for Kaziranga) via Kolkata but "Go Air" decided not to live up to their name and changed their schedule. So it was to be back by Delhi with an original margin to connect of two hours and between booking and arriving in India that margin had eroded to exactly one hour. We considered this too tight and suggested that we skip our last night in Pench and take an overnight in Delhi instead before catching the planned flight to Guwahati the next day. A couple of calls to our very capable man in Delhi, Vinod, and it was done. So we exchanged an afternoon game drive and early morning start for a more leisurely afternoon ride to Nagpur and a night's sleep and lie in. And so it came to pass.

Part 5. Days 15 -19 We go to Kaziranga.

Those still awake and counting the days will realise that instead of a very early morning start to Day 15 to drive to Nagpur to catch a plane to Delhi with an impossible connection we left the last report on the afternoon of Day 14 and flew to Delhi for a nights rest before rising at a more reasonable hour to leisurely bird the Hotel grounds.

So Day 15 now starts here. After breakfast we were picked up promptly and driven to Delhi airport at the more sociable hour of 11.00 for the flight to Gowahati scheduled for 12.25.

The flight was full but we had good seats and as we proceeded we got good views of the snow covered Himalayas off our port wing. No ideas which peaks were which but we could see most of them. **Pics.**

We landed at some other place en route and to pass the time I took a couple of photos of a Russian built Antonov 32 Light transport plane with my 'aviation' hat on. **Pic.**

We landed at Gowarhati and thus faced the long drive to our next lodge. This was mainly in the

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dark and not pleasant at all. However we made good time, 4 hours or so, and were checked in at "Wild Grass" and fed and watered by 9pm. "Wild Grass" is a lovely place built in a quite rustic mode although really not that old. We coined the description "Designer dilapidated" as an apt description with no sense of being derogatory.

Pics. 4967, 4575 & 4576.

In the grounds there were many birds, the ubiquitous Long-tailed Shrike, many Mynahs whilst Crimson Sunbirds and Little Spider Hunters fed on the Bouganvillia. 4884, 5159 5162.

We met our guide Torun and made plans for our stay. It was good to learn he was an excellent birder as whilst large mammals were our prime target we looked forward to seeing some of the avifauna of Assam too. We were not to be disappointed.

The routine was, as usual, up early for a warming cuppa and head out to one of the ranges. We tried a few and each had its special areas. We were now in the run up to Christmas so park traffic was very busy and the lack of loop roads meant those in a hurry who raced past us were met again as they raced back again. Birding was obviously not part of their mission statement.

Pics.4964. 4581

We first headed east which was good for water birds and we were kept busy with waders including our very own "PeeWit" from home. We also met our first wild elephant of the trip and wild Water Buffalo were much in evidence.

Pics. 4583-4612, 5171, 5053. 5208.

Deer were well represented by 'wet ground' Barasingha and Hog Deer.

Hog Deer.4622, 4763

Of course the sought after and iconic Greater One-horned Rhino is what Kaziranga was created to protect and these were remarkably visible which we found surprising after all we had read.

4991, 5002 & 5198

We made our way north to the park boundary which is the famous Brahmaputra river so were able to tick off another famous waterway of the world on our list.

4641

Not that many left to go now. Swan, Murray-Darling, Mekong, Indus and Orinoco should wrap that up.

We stopped at a nearby picnic site for breakfast and whilst other visitors were staring out at the river I looked the other way and spotted a lone Rhino grazing towards me.

So I got in some nice photos before the multitudes got wise and scared it off.

4722,-4753.

Some birds methinks. 4676, 4708, 4843, 4874,

One morning we took the scheduled Elephant safari but saw little other than sleepy rhino and swamp deer in the fog. However as my real passion is for Ellies I could not resist the opportunity to get in some ellie time with the babies.

4785.

I have never liked a Mahout's ready use of that awful *Ankus* hook and I warned my 'driver' that if he used it I would set my fearsome wife upon him. The threat seemed to work as he mainly used his feet and if the Ankus was used it was flat side down and just a tap as I hummed "Love will find a way!" to myself.

As the sun came up I managed to get some atmospheric shots of the procession.

4804, 4813, 4815 4834.

After our ride we all had numb legs from the seat although Rosy recovered enough to be interviewed by "e.TV" but I don't know what the viewers would make of her replies.

4835

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The daily routine was much the same with different locations yielding different sightings.

Birds of course figured prominently:-

4887, 4898, 4899, 4902,, 4923, 4962.

but Christmas morning brought a special sighting.

Not a tiger but a family of Smooth-coated Otters. Six were seen on a small island gambolling around before taking to the water. They did not make off but actually came towards us and continued to fish with some success. We worked out this was a female with five almost grown cubs. We enjoyed their antics for quite some time before they made their way down stream.

5062 - 5112

More Notable birds followed including both Blue-eared and Blue-cheeked Barbets, a Verditer Flycatcher as well as a lovely White-rumped Shama that refused to come into the open.

5036, 4928, 4946, 5135, 4915.

Other birds included Emerald Doves, Red-collared Dove, Green Imperial Pigeon, Red Jungle Fowl and Red-breasted Parakeet.

4954, 5050, 5124, 5009, 4983.

Oriental Darter, Great Hornbill and Oriental Pied Hornbill were also seen.

5056, 5041.

Back along the lake I had no sooner asked if other geese visited when we found a small party of White-fronted Geese as well as a Common Snipe

5051 & 5180.

It is getting a bit bird intensive so I will move on quickly to a nice sunset some turtles

4772.4948

Our last evening was spent at a tower overlooking a large reed bed and lake waiting for a tiger to show. We could hear the growling but despite waiting almost until dark it lay still in the reeds. However we did see the only Greater Adjutant of the trip and lots of Pintail ducks and another lovely sunset with a Spot-billed Pelican cruising by.

5219, 5211,

Our three full days in Kaziranga made a good impression on us with its variety and of course any serious birder visiting should try and ensure Torun as their guide.

26th December involved a drive back to Guwahati and a return flight to Delhi and our rooms at Uppal prior to a drive up to Ramnagar and Jim Corbett Reserve..

For that you will have to wait.

Days 20 – 24. Delhi to Ramnagar and Jim Corbett.

The final curtain. (Almost literally)

After a comfortable night we met our driver and headed out for the gruelling drive to Ramnagar. This should be so easy on India's modern highways but of course this does not allow for the Indian drivers and their selfish thrusting style. If it was possible to make a mess of a junction and hold up a smooth flow they would find a way to do it. Dual lanes are for both directions, "Hard shoulders" are for creating extra lanes. Central 'reservations' if not occupied by cows and pigs are for doing your repairs on or just to assist in changing lanes. I won't mention what they do at Toll booths and Level Crossings.

But eventually we got to the bustling town of Ramnagar and found our home for one night at the lovely Karan's Corbett Motel or as it says in the literature "The Birding Lodge". 5231 & 5232.

After a wash and brush up on the lawn outside our cabin Mr Karan took us to the Barrage for some

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birding where we saw Wallcreepers, Brown Chats, Black Redstarts, River Lapwings, the first of many Crested Kingfishers and more Ruddy Sheldducks that you would think existed. 5269, 5281. On our way home we went down to the river and passed the striking Garjiya Devi Temple and found the sought after IbisBill. 5290. 5339 .

A nice meal and a good nights rest followed in this lovely lodge. www.karanscorbettmotel.com

Then it was pack the car and head into Jim Corbett Tiger Reserve which I had long had on my list to visit. We had 50km to drive to get to Dhikala Camp and as it was early morning we took in some birds of course. 5393, 5437 & 5447. 5468.

However we were totally unprepared for what followed.

Our gentle drive came to an abrupt halt when our guide Davinder called “Tiger” and there by the side of the track was a large and apparently very angry male. He was certainly not pleased to be interrupted in his morning pleasures. We got a couple of photos of him through the screen of bushes but as we positioned for a clear view he went down into a meaningful crouch with his ears flat back and his tail thrashing from side to side. Our driver took the hint and we left. This one was not to be trifled with. 5487. As we drove off we heard a low call and wondered if in fact he had a lady with him. If so I think I can understand his attitude.

As we progressed Davinder called “Leopard” but try as we might we completely failed to get a good look.

We checked into Dhikala and were shown to our rooms which looked fine although a wary eye had to be kept on the Rhesus Macaques and doors and windows kept firmly closed.

5495, 5499, 5695.

Our drives got off to a good start with many birds and mammals of which a surprising number were new to our growing check list despite being in India for over two weeks now.

5500. 5503, 5507, 5514, 5515,

Morning drives were quite atmospheric with the mist hanging low over the river so I turned my hand at capturing some landscapes as this Park must certainly rank as one of the most attractive in India. One I shall certainly try to return to.

5536, 5630 & 5631.

But we were here for the birds and many more were added to our growing list. Indeed it must be said that we probably got more new birds in 48 hours than at many other locations.

5559, 5599, 5651 & 5664

More scenes to break the monotony. If you are looking for more mammals I have added an elephant. I love elephants, even domestic ones.

5636, 5645 5736.

So to press on with birds to bring this tale to an end:-

5668, 5679, 5681, 5745, 5762. 5767. 5774.

Our last drive out of the park still kept producing some good sightings and added to the list which was both surprising and very welcome as we had considered that if we came home with a list of over two hundred species we would be happy and now it looked like the final figure would be closer to 300.

5786, 5789, 5797, 5805, 5822, 5852

Birds even got in on the act when we found some sunbasking Gharial as we could not get the Peafowl to move out of the picture. 5855.

But the trip was coming to an end and there are only three more photos to go.

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5854, 5871 and 5875. I had to end with a bird.

And so it was back to Delhi and the hellish traffic, we were over 90 minutes late for dinner with our host and capable ground agent. Even the extremely talented Vinod Goswami with his impeccable organisational skills for flights and lodges as well as ensuring 4 Tigers and 296 species of birds was soundly beaten by the awful Delhi Traffic.

The flight home was almost an anti-climax. The planes were quite full but we had arranged good seats and arrived home on schedule.

The arrangements all worked well and it is time to plan the next one.