

A culture, wildlife, scenery and Scandinavian women tour of -

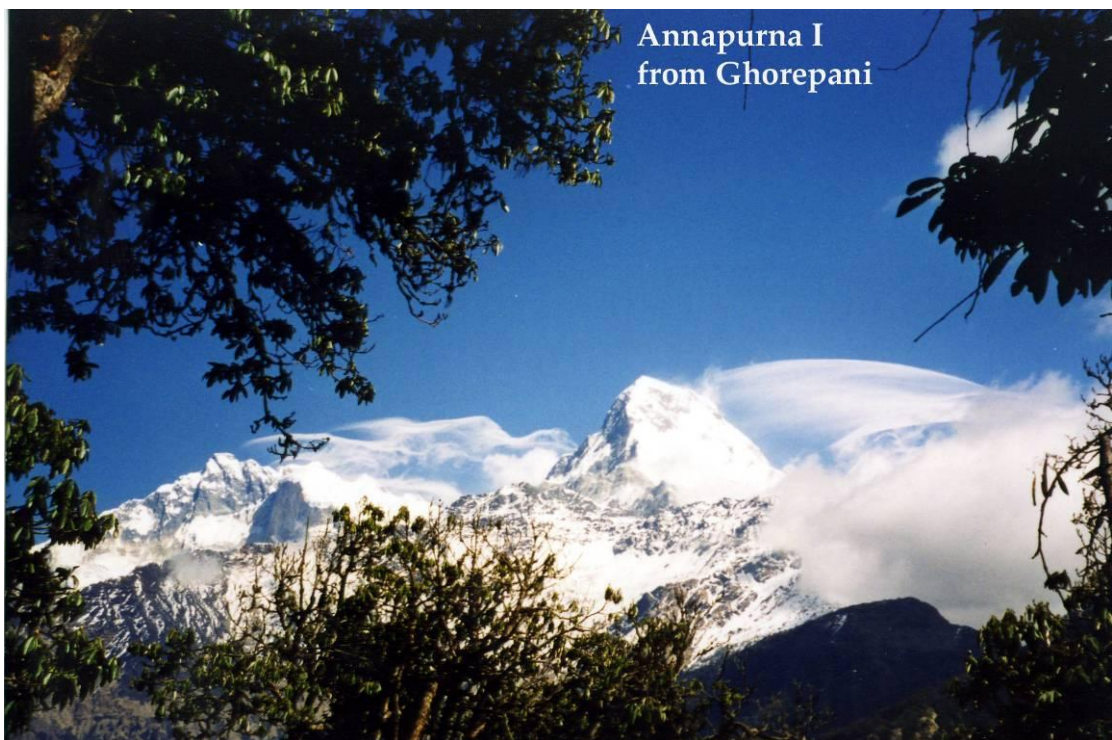
Nepal

25th February to 4th April 1995

Steve Anyon-Smith

Background

Allan Richards and Dave Siems, two good friends and fellow Sydney birdwatchers, had been plotting to go birding in Nepal for some time. They asked if I was interested. We planned our itinerary, booked our flights and then, inconveniently, Allan found out that he had cancer. “Don’t worry about the fleshy lump on your melon, Allan”, the doctor said, “it will just be fatty tissue but we’ll have a look at it anyway”. Sure. Needless to say Allan didn’t make it and Dave didn’t feel as if he could enjoy his holiday without his mate. *(Since then Allan has made a full recovery).*



Annapurna I
from Ghorepani

I was resigned to staying at home until Mayette asked me why I didn’t just go by myself. I asked Allan about it and he said he felt a bit bad about bugging up our holiday in the first place, the inconsiderate bastard. So my first big adventure and all by myself...

Outline of Trip

The plan was to see as many birds and mammals as could reasonably be expected during a five week stay. This would allow visits to sites in the Kathmandu Valley – which is a very good place to see birds - a trek along the western half of the Annapurna Circuit, and a visit to Chitwan National Park in the lowland terai.

Sites visited

Kathmandu Valley – 12 days

Annapurna Circuit (western side – Pokhara to Muktinath) – 13 days

Pokhara – 4 days

Chitwan National Park – 7 days



Nepalese people

My first impressions on this, my first of three holidays in Nepal, have not changed after two subsequent visits – the overwhelming majority of Nepalese know more about you than you will ever learn about them. They know that you are rich – you must be to be able to afford the airfares – but they will embrace you as a member of their family if you treat them with the respect they justly deserve. Sure there are some idiots and shysters and the occasional person might do you harm although I have no experience of this. I would suggest that the average Nepalese is more honest, helpful and plain in their actions and deeds than the average Westerner. Here is a complicated country with some confronting religions and customs but through it all the people are brilliant.

It is difficult at times not to be condescending, but don't be fooled, the people of Nepal have more to live for than you might imagine.

Accommodation

My accommodation was in hotels or lodges while in Kathmandu, Pokhara and Chitwan and in teahouses on the trek. Teahouses are basically small family-run rural hotels. The costs were inconsequential and the standards didn't vary very much. Teahouses lack colour television, air-con, car-parks, surly receptionists, any form of administrative paperwork, nor a service directory showing the location of the nearest RSL club and Chinese restaurant. They are just wonderful. Not much else to say.

Weather

This trip coincided with the end of winter and start of spring. There was a little rain and snow here and there, but this is still the best time of year to be in Nepal if you're interested in birds, as all the migrants are present and some of the mammals are at lower altitudes.

Food

Nepal is a beautiful country with wonderful people, both local and tourist alike, and lots to see and do. Just don't remind me about the food. Fear meal times if you have a weak stomach. Some folk never recover. Not only is it likely to make you sick, there isn't much variety. This is no fault of the Nepalese; they make the best of the raw materials they have.

Beer

Beer is a much better alternative than conventional food. The beer is delicious, is always cold (even when not refrigerated), inexpensive and freely available. Recommended. Although it is fun to experiment, I found it difficult to live entirely on beer for extended periods.

Diary

Day 1 – Saturday 25th February 1995

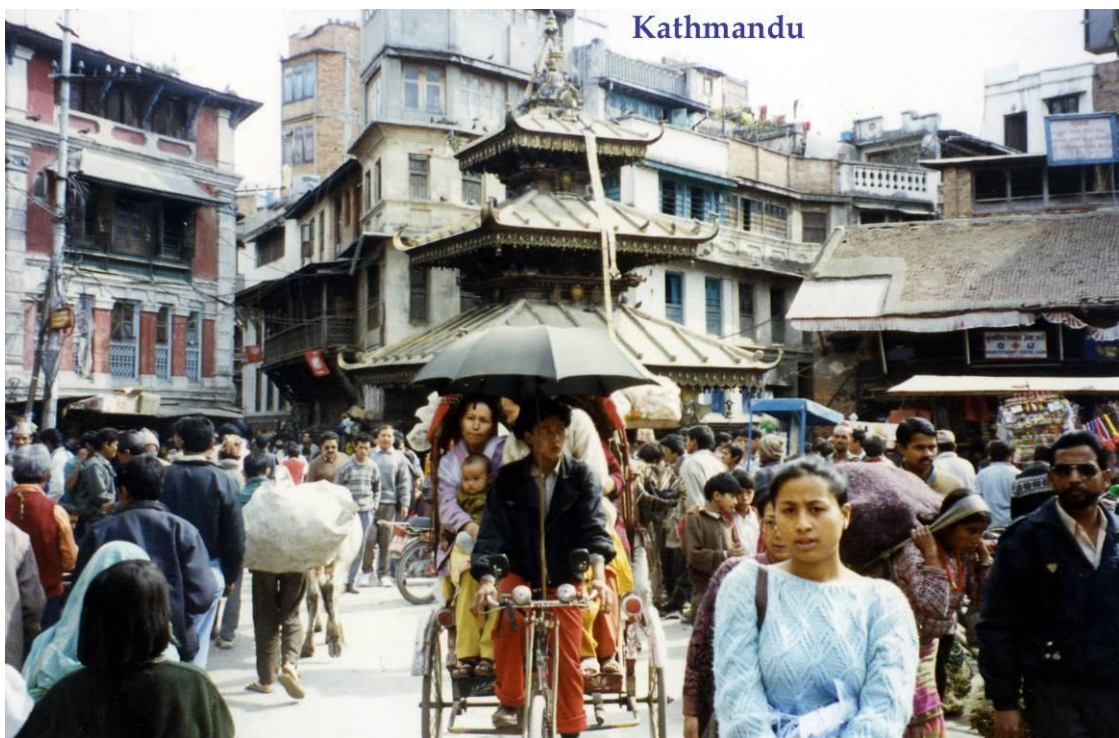
Morgs came down to have breakfast with us and took me to the airport. Caught a Thai Airways DC10 flight to Bangkok where I stayed for a number of hours in the Amari Hotel at the airport. This cost me \$A142! This worked out at \$100 per hour's sleep. For days I'd had butterflies in my stomach so I swallowed a couple of spiders.

Day 2 – Sunday 26th February 1995

I was desperately waiting for the sun to come up so I didn't feel so bad about not being able to sleep. I went for a very interesting walk around the streets near the airport. Crashed into a Thai wedding party and saw a few birds of both kinds.

After breakfast we flew to Kathmandu. The gods must have been smiling on me as Ganesh Rimal, the owner of the hotel I was recommended, was in the airport terminal. His driver took me to the Ganesh Himal Hotel.

My first minutes in Nepal gave me a simultaneous assault on all the senses. It was impossible to know where to look. Everything was utterly alien. It is something that is difficult to explain. To watch a TV documentary on Kathmandu at home in Australia would be to learn nothing at all about Kathmandu.



It was the end of winter in Nepal and quite cool in Kathmandu. Many would be surprised to learn that Kathmandu is not high in the Himalaya, in fact scarcely higher than Katoomba. I went for a walk around the streets - Kathmandu is very safe for wandering about, providing you are happy to regularly get lost, as I did.

As a first time visitor I must have looked conspicuously ripe for the picking for the throngs that sell trekking packages, recreational drugs, tiger balm and trinkets. This turned out to be true. I was quickly signed up with a porter, Sanu Gurung, and guide, Niseth Thapa, for my trek from Pokhara to Muktinath on the western half of the Annapurna circuit. So, all sorted, and after a lovely vegetarian meal I was looking forward to bed.

Day 3 – Monday 27th February 1995

Getting my trekking permit was the day's priority. This is something you never do yourself unless you like standing around in queues all day. You pay someone from the trekking agent to do it for you, even though it means handing over your passport. So while that was happening I hired a mountain bike and rode to Nagarjun "hill". Nagarjun was a royal hunting reserve and has a brick wall around it. It is quite large, sits right at the edge of the city, and is amazingly full of wildlife including a healthy population of forest leopards that prey on substantial numbers of deer. The bird life is prolific.

The ride to Nagarjun was not what I expected with children blocking my path on the roads at every turn. They wanted money to let me pass. I thought - what is this? How does anyone ever get around this place with little kids blocking roads with bits of rope everywhere? It turned out that it was the day of the Shiva Festival and kids are allowed on this one day to extort money from passers-by to buy drugs and alcohol (or something, I don't know).

The birds on Nagarjun were both abundant and beautiful. There is virtually no hunting of anything so the wildlife is spread right up to the edges of the sprawling city next to the brick fence. Leopards regularly patrol the dirt track that runs inside the dividing wall (which is full of holes now). I saw many laughing-thrush, blue magpies, treepies and minivets. I had never seen any of these bird families so it was very exciting!

What was just as exciting was a chance encounter with a group of Buddhist monks on the trail leading up the mountain. They were walking to the Buddhist temple that sits, where else, but on top. These guys were in no particular hurry and when they saw what I was up to, they all sat on the ground and discussed the birds that occur on the mountain. They were so happy and positive about all around them that it was hard not to feel as though they really might be on to something, belief system-wise. It was a pity I didn't understand a word they said....anyway.

I peddled my increasingly bike-sore arse to the monkey temple or Swayambunath. This is a significant Buddhist temple apparently. The mix of the faithful and tourists was a curious one, but one got the feeling that each group was largely oblivious of the other. Coming from Australia, places like this are incredible for their age, function and architecture, and not least of all, for the effect on one's nose. Nowhere are there rules that say that temple surrounds can't be default sewers. Flush toilets have much to sing their praises.

As this was a festival day (as are most days in Nepal), there was a nationwide party, but not just any party. On this particular day marijuana consumption was legal. Let's get one thing clear – Nepal is awash with dope. Why? It grows there – acres of it. Not because anyone planted it, au contraire, no-one can get rid of it!

So the Ganesh Himal Hotel has put on a beer and dope party for its houseguests. A young male Japanese tourist with that ratty appearance the Japanese do so well had his head in a large bag of prime weed. He grinned like he had just been granted an audience with the emperor. He was soon the happiest man on the sub-continent. As for me, the beer was free and of a drinkable quality.

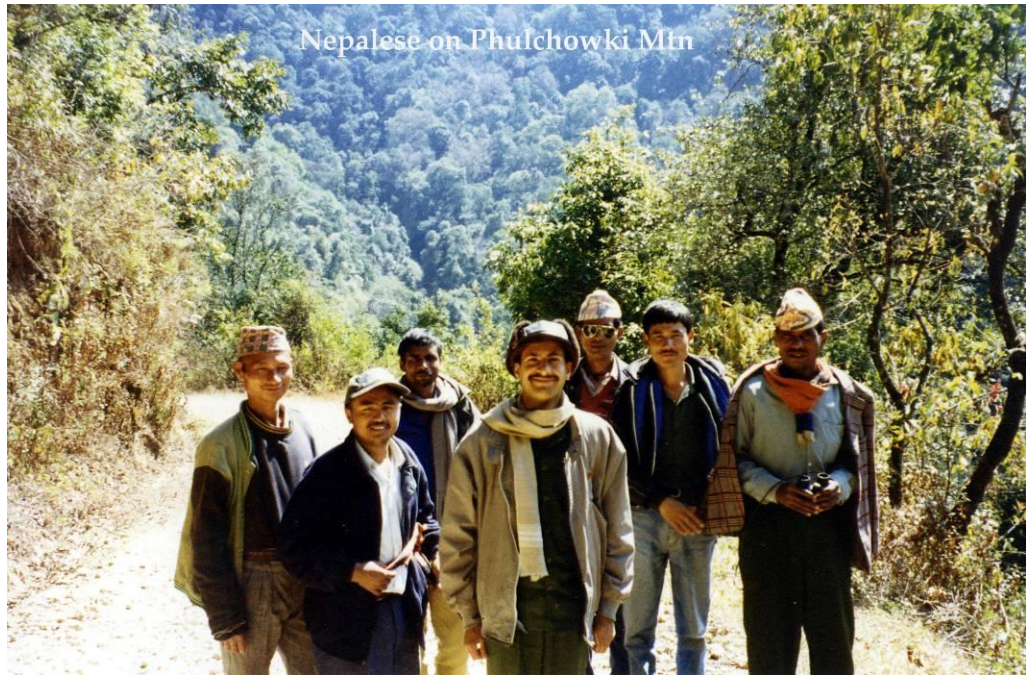


Sidaram, our venerable hotel doorman was also pretty happy.

Life is tough in Nepal unless you are fortunate enough to have been born of high caste and with a bit of money to go with it. The caste system is very much alive. It is one of the poorest countries you can find so many high caste families are almost as destitute as the lower caste or casteless. I watched some labourers on a building site. A bricklayer worked from dawn to dusk for 100 rupees (\$US2). He had shoes made from hessian and plastic bag wrapped around his ankles with a couple of bits of string. He seemed happy enough – at least he had a job.

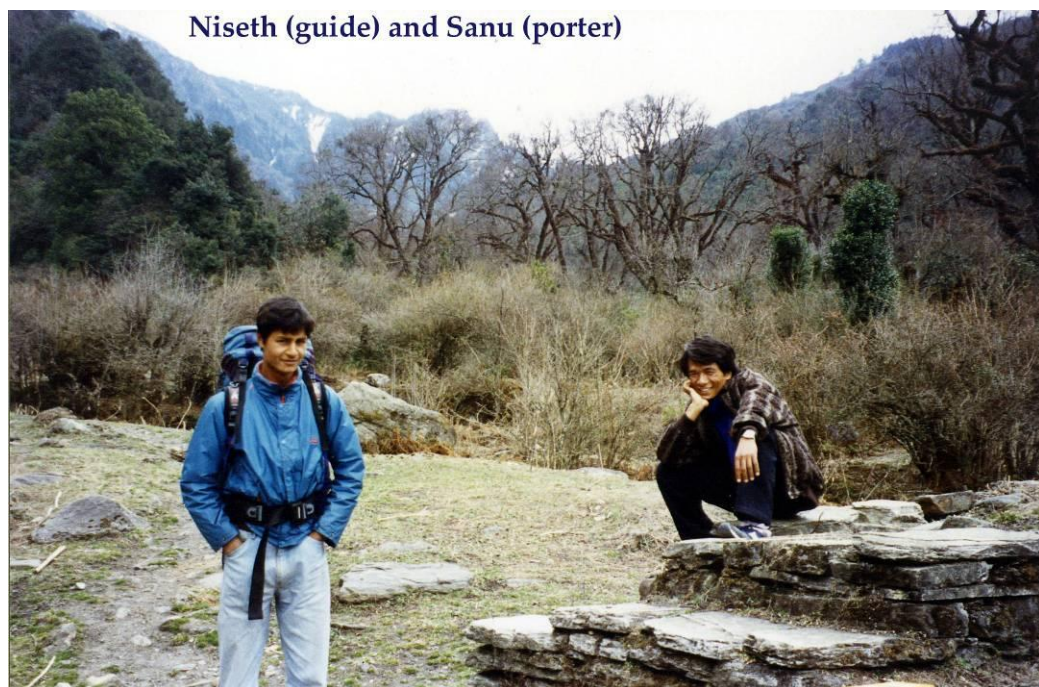
Day 4 – Tuesday 28th February 1995

I took a sore throat to Phulchowki in a taxi. I spent seven hours bird watching at this famous location in the Kathmandu Valley. This particular mountain has a number of quite distinct vegetation zones and hence a lot of birds. I wasn't disappointed as I saw my first ever woodpeckers along with a host of little things. I also made my first acquaintance with *Phylloscopus* warblers. These things should be exterminated. They are worse than cisticolas. On a more positive note I cleared most of the local bulbuls off my list in one day. Good.



Adjacent to the base of Phulchowki is the Godaveri Botanical Gardens. Although it is a little sad as a garden, there are good birds here, many of which, curiously, are difficult to find elsewhere.

In the evening I met my trekking guide and porter. They seemed very pleasant young chaps.



Day 5 – Wednesday 1st March 1995

We snaked our way through the traffic to the rather rustic domestic air terminal at Kathmandu. There is a sign in the terminal with words I don't exactly remember but along the lines of – "We don't have radar so we don't fly in bad weather – the clouds have rocks in

them”. Being a trusting sort of chap, I always imagined that all countries took airline safety seriously. This position was tested when our 18-seat Everest Airlines Dornier was taking off. I pointed out to the “hostess” that the cable that usually supported the door in the open position was locked outside the aircraft. No worries, the young lady opened the door while I pulled the cable inside just as we became airborne.

We didn’t descend and land at Pokhara, rather the rocks that constituted the runway slammed into us. It was frightening enough for me to involuntarily laugh out loud.



Sanu and Niseth had caught the bus from Kathmandu to meet me at Pokhara Airport. There we squeezed into an ancient Toyota Corolla for the short drive to the track head at Birethante. A dead beast had donated good views of a large scrum of various vultures including the Egyptian. The trek then started.

For weeks before leaving home I had walked up and down every rocky gully or steep track I could find in The Royal National Park in Sydney, to try to get some sort of fitness. Funny, but I don’t think it made a lot of difference. Physical fitness played second fiddle to mental preparedness.

NOTE:

1. Trekking permit should keep along with the trekker while trekking.
2. Trekking permit should show to Immigration authorities or police on demand.
3. Trekkers are not allowed to trek in notified areas previously known as restricted.
4. Please kindly surrender this card at Immigration Department or at any port of exit, after the completion of trekking.
5. Deviation from the prescribed routes in the trekking permit will be treated as a violation of law.
6. Let Himalayas change you-do not change them. So remember, while you are on trekking -
 - (a) Protect the natural environment.
 - Leave the campsite cleaner than you found it.
 - Limit deforestation - make no open fires.
 - Burn dry papers and packets in a safe place.
 - Keep local water clean and avoid using pollutants.
 - Plants should be left to flourish in their natural environment.
 - Help your guides and porters to follow conservation measures.
7. Respect local traditions, protect local cultures, maintain local pride:
 - When taking photographs, respect privacy.
 - Respect holy places.
 - Refrain from giving money to children since it will encourage begging.
 - Respect for local etiquette earns you respect.
8. Filming in restricted or notified areas without permission is strictly prohibited.

Thanks. - Department of Immigration

**His Majesty's Government
Ministry of Home
Department of Immigration**
Tridevimag, Thamel,
Kathmandu, Nepal.


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TREKKING PERMIT
029/99/96

**Appendix - 11
(Related to rule 33)
His Majesty's Government
Ministry of Home
Department of Immigration**
TREKKING PERMIT

In accordance with the rule 33 of the Immigration rules 1994, the permission is hereby granted for trekking in the area of ~~Kathmandu~~ of the ~~Kathmandu~~ district (except the restricted area) from ~~2nd March~~ to ~~15 March~~ (.....18..... days) to:



1st 2nd 3rd

1. Name: STEVEN ANYON-SMITH
2. Nationality: AUSTRALIAN
3. Permanent Address: SKIDNEY A. AUS.
4. Temporary address in Nepal: HOTEL GIANESHAN
5. Passport No.: K 2663589
6. Date of Nepalese visa validity: 18 JULY 1995
7. Place of Trekking:

8. Point of starting of Trekking: POKHARA to 30

9. Point of ending of Trekking: "

10. Name of the agency, if trekking is organised by trekking agency:

11. Trekking permit No.: 9454

Date:

Route of Trekking:-
Pokhara, Naudada, Ghorepani, Birethanti, Ghandrag, Annapurna, Base, Camp, Tatopani, Jomsom, Muktinath, Manang, Village, Chame.

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NEPAL IMMIGRATION
204270
T.P. NO. DP0434/95
Valid until 15-03-95
Passport No. K 2663589
Trekking Permit No. 9454
Date 17-02-95
Immigration Officer

Immigration Officer
Code No

TRAVELLING IN
RESTRICTED AREAS
PROHIBITED

We walked to Tirkedhunga. I felt like my body was in complete meltdown from having the flu but it was hard to ignore birds like the wallcreeper and mountain thrush, and with beautiful flowering *Coelogyne* orchids in every second tree. We stayed at a teahouse managed by an ex-Gurkha.

I was fascinated by a pair of jungle owlets that were perched above the lodge owner's chickens. I pointed these out to him. He laughed at me. By the morning there was no sign of the owlets but there were two less chickens. A lesson for me here? If so, I missed it.



Day 6 – Thursday 2nd March 1995

I slept well (this was almost always the case on treks) and woke early. Breakfasts could be a fairly languid affair. The Nepalese don't eat them, preferring a large meal at around 1000. So I wandered about for a while just as the village wasn't. Saw a few birds including honey buzzard and crimson finch (wow!).

We then climbed a small matter of 1200 metres. Along the way we started to get quality postcard mountain views and as we walked through ancient rhododendron forests in full flower I wondered what other delights were possibly in store? My trek was less than 24 hours old and already I was suffering from sensory overload.



We stayed in the Green View Guest House in Nangethanti. This was a lesson for me. Nangethanti is a very short stroll from the far more spectacular Ghorepani, so why didn't we continue this short distance? Because the managers of the Green View were young women. The Nepalese guide and porter were young men. I could see that I would have to take a little more interest in my accommodation options.

Day 7 – Friday 3rd March 1995

My flu had given way to my first “out of stomach” experience. Maybe my staff had poisoned me to increase their chances of success with the women? They needn't have bothered.

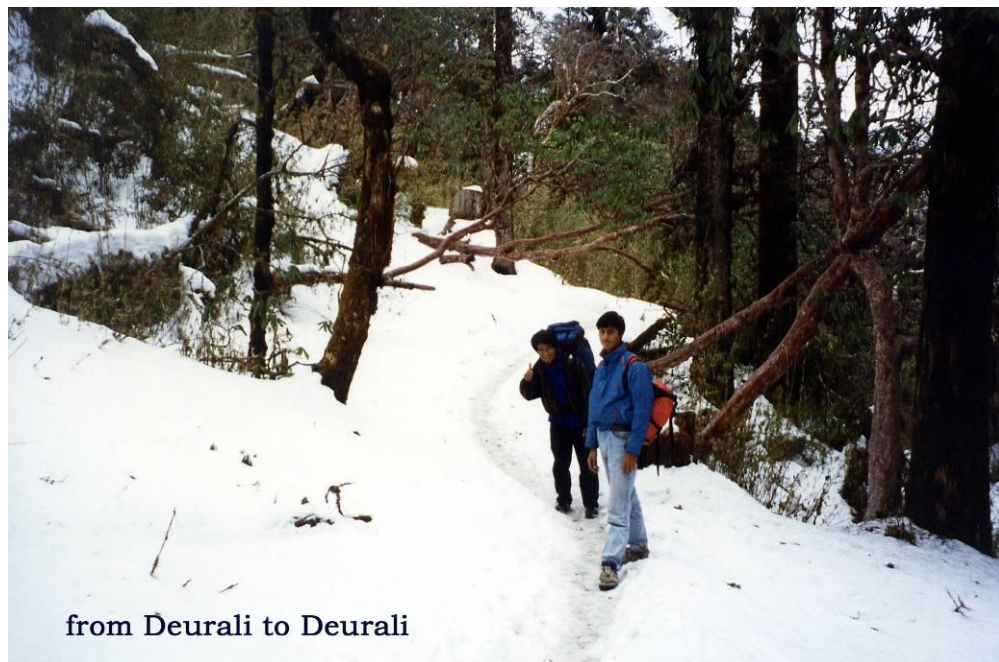
The short walk to Ghorepani at 3091m was something of a surprise. I was ready for a long day.

Although the Annapurna Circuit is by far the most popular trek in the Himalaya, the views from Ghorepani are sensational. I forget the exact number, but you can see something like half a dozen peaks over 8000m in a single broad sweep of the eye. It's funny but it seemed as though you could wander over to the nearest one and walk up it in a day or so – the air was so clear.

It was cold and windy and there was a bit of snow lying about so I went for a walk on the lee side of the mountain, Ghorepani being situated in a saddle. It was exciting to get my first views of grey langur monkeys and a muntjac deer. On the other side of the account I gave a couple of locals a good laugh with a rather tuneful evacuation of the last of the food in my system. I staggered back to the teahouse and crawled into my sleeping bag, sans dinner, and appealed to whatever mountain deity might help my cause, or perhaps I just swore a bit.

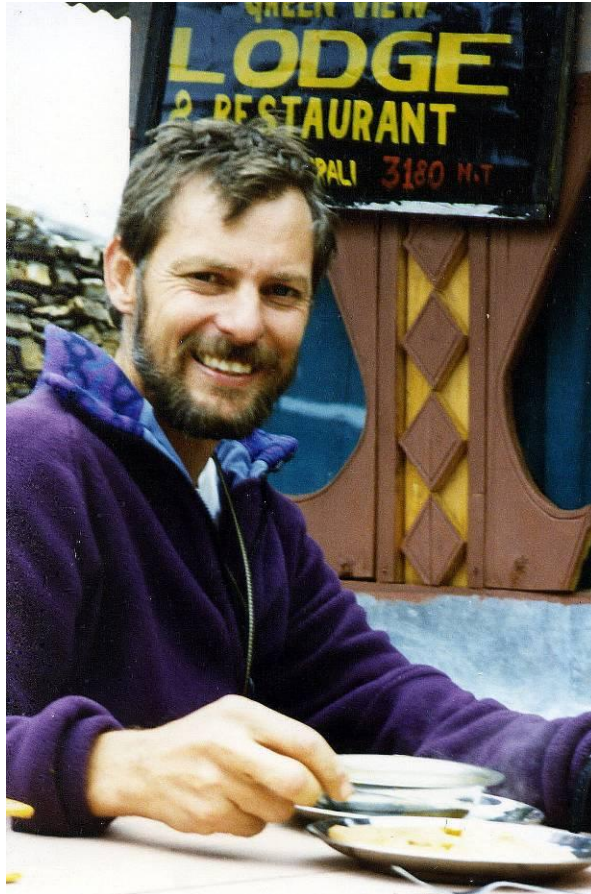
Day 8 – Saturday 4th March 1995

I felt much better, so we walked along the ridge to Deurali. This was fun as “Deurali” means “pass” in the local lingo. So there are lots of villages named Deurali. It became a standing joke on the trek that we were walking from Deurali to Deurali. It certainly felt like we were walking randomly about the place. *As I write this ten years later I am almost in tears wishing I was back in Nepal trekking Deurali to Deurali!*



from Deurali to Deurali

We had lunch at Deurali at 3300m. The food was just what you would expect – a big plate of chips! After this welcome feed, and a chat to all the tourists about the place, we descended to Chitre. There was much snow at first and then a magical forested valley with no people and lots of birds. It must have been magical because my nose had stopped running. Our lodge thus had the honour of selling me my first alcohol on the trek.



Day 9 – Sunday 5th March 1995

I learnt something important. Although counter-intuitive, if given the choice, a long trek uphill doesn't hurt near as much as the reverse. We dropped 1200 metres without an upward step until we arrived at Tatopani. The trek was through agricultural land for the most part but we picked up some birds that love that sort of stuff.

Tatopani translates as “hot springs” so many a tourist could be seen lounging around the pools of questionable water quality, showing off their bodies, also of questionable quality. I was not among them. *A couple of years after my visit this charming village went downstream along with a few people, lots of rocks and the odd hot spring. That's what happens when you cut down lots of trees from mountainsides.*

Niseth, Sanu and I got on the piss a bit. I re-learnt not to buy foreign tourists a beer if you expected them to buy in return. There was much dancing and singing in the evening. I have no recollection of my part in the proceedings, but I was apparently not arrested so I couldn't have performed to my full potential.

Day 10 – Monday 6th March 1995

I was a very tired boy as I walked up the Kali Kandaki Valley (the world's deepest) to our digs at Ghasa. Ghasa was too full of rascally tourists for my liking but on the plus side I found the notable young bird guide, Amidas, and arranged for an excursion with him for the morrow to search for pheasants. I didn't appreciate where he would take me.

Day 11 – Tuesday 7th March 1995

It took me two years before my right knee fully recovered from this day's little outing.

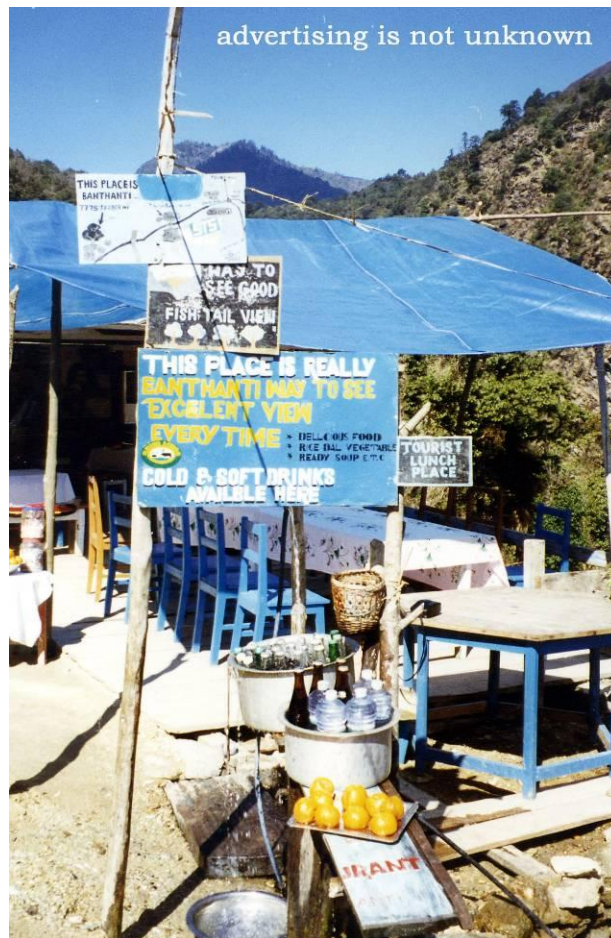
Amidas was sixteen years old and could sleepwalk to the top of Everest and back without realising it. I couldn't.

The climb started reasonably enough - such is the shape of most valleys. Eventually it was hands and knees and grasping tufts of grass where one missed foothold meant a short, but hardly relaxing return to Ghasa. The wind rose, the snow wasn't far behind, and we spent quite some time sitting in a cave. I would have paid a hundred dollars for a packet of matches, but no match vendors could be found. If it were only twenty degrees below zero it would have been quite pleasant. Getting drowned when we left the cave took all the fun out of the day. My knees were constantly five steps behind the rest of my body.

We saw Himalayan monal and kalij pheasant but dipped on the target chir and blood pheasants.



On return to the teahouse I had a wash, starting drinking, and spent the rest of the day watching the locals make food from first principles. The room was spinning when I went to bed. It wasn't the beer – it was from something called Mustang coffee. This liquid has no coffee in it. I thought it best not to offend the hosts by asking to read the label.



Day 12 – Wednesday 8th March 1995

The walk to Tukche along the Kali Gandaki was quite tedious as it followed the riverbed, which had become very wide, much less steep, and treeless.

At precisely 1100 every day a strong dry wind blew up the valley. It was a good idea not to be in it. It must be a real bastard walking into it, as some people did. The slowly changing scenery let me reflect on which parts of my body hurt the most. Some bits would hurt for an hour or so then get replaced by other bits, nothing serious, but a tad different to sitting in an office.



We stayed at the Yak Hotel, so named because a large dead yak sits on it. They have a little electricity at the Yak so we got warm in front of an electric heater of sorts. It was of a type that I had never seen. I think the heater was two or three thousand years old.

I sat and reflected on the people I'd seen and met. The Kali Gandaki Valley has very high ethnic diversity. It is part of an ancient trade route linking Tibet with India. It was possible to see Indians, Tibetans and everyone in between in each village. Only the mix was different. The people were poor but this area is relatively wealthy compared to parts of the west of the country (*see diary for 2000 trip*). Every young woman seemed to have a baby or two. It was not clear to me how they grew enough food for their needs.

The mountains were spectacular beyond easy description but I started to get blasé after a while. Rarely did a mountain pop up after rounding a corner on the trail; they generally just slowly emerged. And they all had Nepalese walking all over them, even those that appeared inaccessible.

The old architectural styles in the valley were being eroded by practicality. Finely decorated woodwork was not being replaced or replicated in new buildings. Many of the newer buildings served the burgeoning tourism industry. The satellite dishes didn't quite look right.

Day 13 – Thursday 9th March 1995

I went for a wander about the Tukche and its adjacent fields before breakfast. It was quite pretty. Saw a number of different birds and took quite a few photos.



The trek took us to Marpha, which was no great distance away. The hotel was a dump, the service non-existent and there was a blackout so no hot water. You are better off without electricity if it isn't going to work because people rely on it so much that when there is none there is no backup. The people of Marpha were spectacularly grotty - all of them. The 1100 typhoon was on time so I wrote the day off at half-time.

Day 14 – Friday 10th March 1995

A much more interesting day. We were now well above the tree line and following the riverbed. One of the "must do" activities along the river is to look for fossils. The whole area was once under the sea and there were some great trilobites and saligrams to be found.



Kali Ghandaki River above Jomson

We stopped for lunch at the Holiday Inn at Eklabani. There was absolutely nothing to attract anyone to the single building set amongst a valley full of nothing much. A holiday at Eklabani might be marginally more enjoyable than being staked onto a red ants' nest but I'm not entirely sure. One thing I was sure about was that a young girl with an arm she had just broken wasn't having a very good day at all. She had been gathering brush for a cooking fire when she had fallen and broken her arm below the elbow. She had two small children. The owner of the inn generously let her live in some cardboard boxes behind the hotel.

The fathers of her children were pony train owners who had clearly "slipped one in" at different times on the way through "town". Of course, there was no responsibility thereafter. She was crying and pointing at her arm and sought some white man magic. All I had was some painkillers of doubtful efficacy given the scale of the pain. Through two layers of interpreters I fought valiantly to get her not to take them all at once. There was no doctor anywhere close, plus you needed money to visit one. Scary stuff and very upsetting for the girl and for me. I made her a sling. She was quite frightened to let me touch her but her condition overcame her fear.

We pushed on to Kagbeni, which is a truly amazing place. Medieval to the max. A US Peace Corps schoolteacher told me he had researched the village as best he could during his two years of residence and couldn't determine how old it was. Our accommodation was at The Red House, which was something of a local institution. It snowed, which was apparently significant because we were told it never snowed at Kagbeni. It is an extremely dry place. The water flowing down from Tibet keeps the place going.

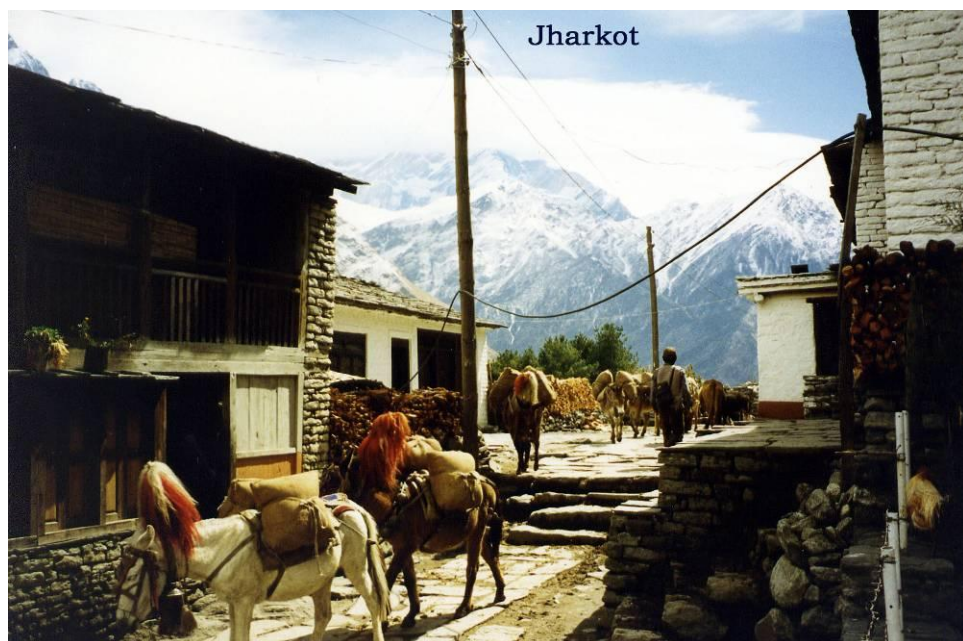


There were lots of trekkers and nice people all, except for a contingent of arrogant French folk. I marginalised them by buying beer for everyone in the lodge except them.

I had been travelling the same path with Rikke, a stunning and pleasant Danish lass for the last few days.....

Day 15 – Saturday 11th March 1995

We climbed the 1000m to Muktinath via Jharkot, allowing views of the most spectacular scenery I have ever seen. This was the day that my trekking really got easy – I had finally achieved some level of fitness. Although we gained quite a bit of altitude, up to a height of 4000m, I didn't feel tired at all.



Muktinath is a significant place for both Hindus and Buddhists with important temples for each. It is an ancient village and not very large as these things go – the local environment does not support large permanent populations.

I met some English birders who gave me some good advice on where to see a few of the local specialities including the (*then named*) Stolicza's tit-warbler. I could just imagine some Polish naturalist enraptured at finding a charming high altitude gem such as this little bird. It has since been renamed the white-browed warbler which says something for those that name these things. Something not very good.

We stayed at the aptly named North Pole Hotel. It was snowing and very cold so I spent much of the afternoon chatting with Rikke. She was trekking alone in the famous and fearless Nordic fashion. We ordered dinner at 1630 – it arrived just in time at 1930. We were a tad hungry and had been eyeing up the youngest in the hotel for a sacrifice.

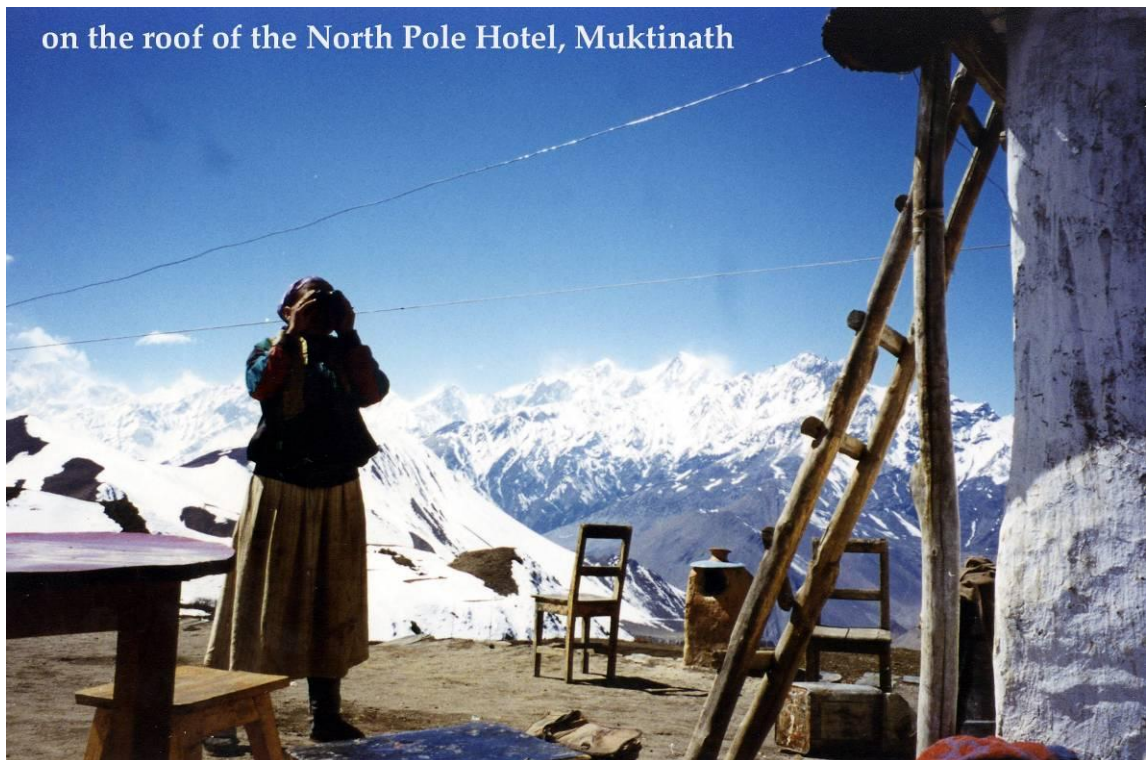
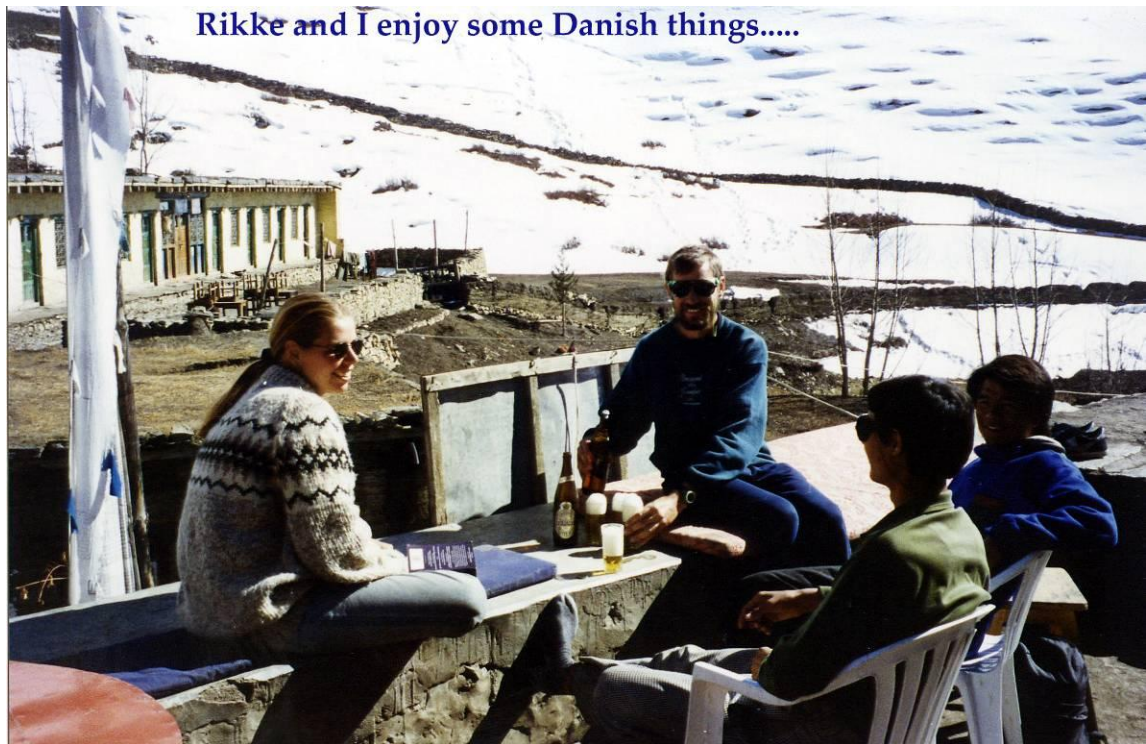
Day 16 – Sunday 12th March 1995

A day of pure magic. Niseth, Rikke and I made an attempt at Thurong-La Pass. This involved walking uphill in a lot in snow. It was bitterly cold after heavy snow the previous night but the sky had cleared. In one of those uniquely Himalayan perspectives the pass appeared to be just in front of us but it never got any closer. It looked for all the world like a pre-breakfast stroll but numerous things conspired against us to prove otherwise - the snow deepened, we couldn't see the path, and it was cold. I may have mentioned that. This is what I was wearing – two sets of thermal underwear, fleecy shirt, sloppy joe, polartec jacket, goretex jacket, gloves, balaclava, hat, two pairs of socks, leather boots. We were walking uphill and I was still very cold. Niseth and Rikke returned.



I went sideways away from the snow and up the side of a mountain. Saw some great wildlife in Himalayan tahr, Royle's pikka, Himalayan snowcocks, two red foxes and a Himalayan marmot.

Almost the entire afternoon was given over to drinking beer, eating popcorn and sitting in the sun on the roof of the North Pole with my friends. No amount of money could buy back these memories.

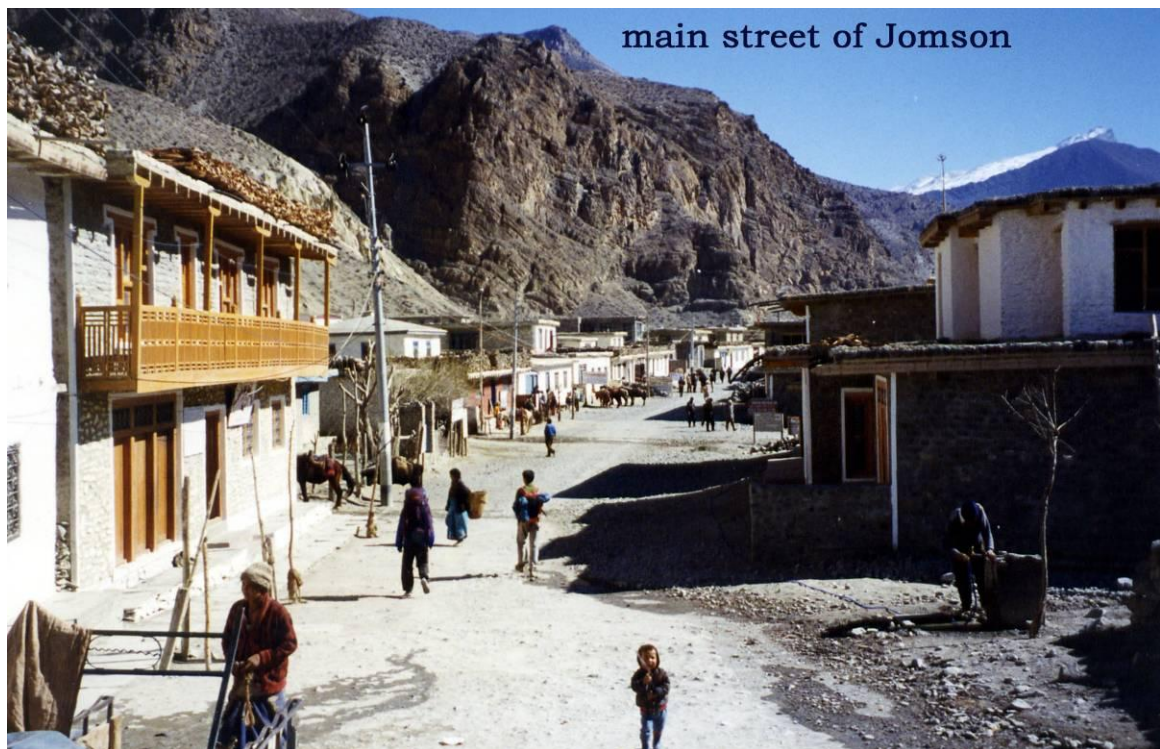


Day 17 – Monday 13th March 1995

All downhill. We made our way back to Jomson after stopping at the Holiday Inn to check on my patient. Her arm was less swollen but she was still in a lot of pain. I gave her some more painkillers; she was very grateful. As we left this puzzling resort we hit strong cold and dusty headwinds all the way to Jomson.

If it were possible to have an awful village in the Himalaya, Jomson would be it. It is not a traditional village in any sense; merely a town that grew to serve a recently constructed airstrip that catered mainly for tourists. Boring, boring, boring, says the tourist. According to my diary I had much worse to say when I was there but it couldn't have been that bad.

We reflected, out of the wind, on a stomach of San Miguel beer, “six grain trekkers bread” and yak's cheese. Our trek ended here with a flight the next day to Pokhara, so I gave Sanu and Niseth \$US17 + 500 rupees by way of a tip. They were happy. We finished the trek a day early so they would have made a tidy profit out of the expenses they were given by the trekking company.



Just a few observations:

Even though the trek could easily have been navigated without a guide, I was happy to have one, especially when I was sick. Also, it allowed me into teahouse kitchens away from the independent trekker hordes, so the cultural experience was much richer.

Some people had no porter. Sanu was worth his weight in gold. Of course it meant that I didn't have to carry very much. This gave me more energy for side trips from the trail and this is where I saw much of the wildlife, not surprisingly. Nepalese people respect you more for having a guide and / or porter because it gives them income. Independent trekkers are always welcome but there is a difference in the level of service. A bucket of hot water was always possible for me but there was a sudden hot water shortage for others.

Mountains – wow!!

Altitude – I got stronger and drank more alcohol as I got higher – this shouldn't have been so!

Food – yeah, it was food alright, but its pedigree was uncertain. This was not a surprise. You got what they had. It's so funny when your hosts would rush at you with a menu. After you made a selection they sadly said that they had none of that. Next selection – same problem, and so on. It usually got down to the one thing they did have and after ordering it they smiled very sincerely, happy that they could provide your choice! Then wait a minimum of two hours. One day I ordered apple pie. I asked if they had some already made. They nodded vigorously. Two and a half hours later it arrived. Every part of it was made from first principles, including finding the apples elsewhere in the village.

I was looking forward to getting to Pokhara to get out of the cold.

Day 18 – Tuesday 14th March 1995

It was very windy during the night. This is not normally important but in Nepal it kinda stuffs up the way planes fly, or don't. The prospect of having to spend another introspective day in Jomson did not appeal. Never mind, our Dornier 228 flopped out of the sky and onto the rocks that served as the runway. I then learnt that the pilots didn't have much spare power to climb over the pass at Ghorepani. They wrestled with various bits of old equipment peculiar to aircraft, while sweating and then smiling at each other as we cleared the big rocks.

The views of the rhododendron forests in flower were pretty nice, as were the awesome snow-covered mountains. So all the toil up and down the ravines and ridges was reversed by a very short but spectacular flight.

I thanked Sanu and Niseth and left them at the Gauri Shanker Hotel in Pokhara. I then went wandering in the forest on the opposite side of Phewa Taal (lake). Saw some great birds but by far the nicest were a flock of long-tailed broadbills that surrounded me. With these were many barbets, thrushes and woodpeckers as well as the Nepalese endemic - the spiny babbler.

Everyone in Pokhara was friendly in that "give me your money" sort of way. Even the Indian post office sub-agent was friendly when confronted by some tight-arsed pommies that refused to pay a one rupee (2 cents) commission on the cost of stamps. I laughed at these idiots who were dripping with expensive cameras and jewellery. You travel to places like Nepal to get away from worrying about petty things, not increase their range.

Dinner was fun. I went to the Lhasa Tibetan Restaurant where I ordered roast chicken. The pleasant waiter refused to serve me this on the basis that I had eaten such fare at home. That was that. So I got whatever they deigned to serve me which was delicious chicken tikka, rice and nan bread. I went to bed early and a tad drunk.

Day 19 – Wednesday 15th March 1995

I hired a mountain bike and spent much of the day looking for birds along the roads. This was interspersed with bouts of queuing at the immigration office to extend my visa.

My day brightened considerably when the late afternoon introduced some interesting Norwegian lesbians, Una and Merete.

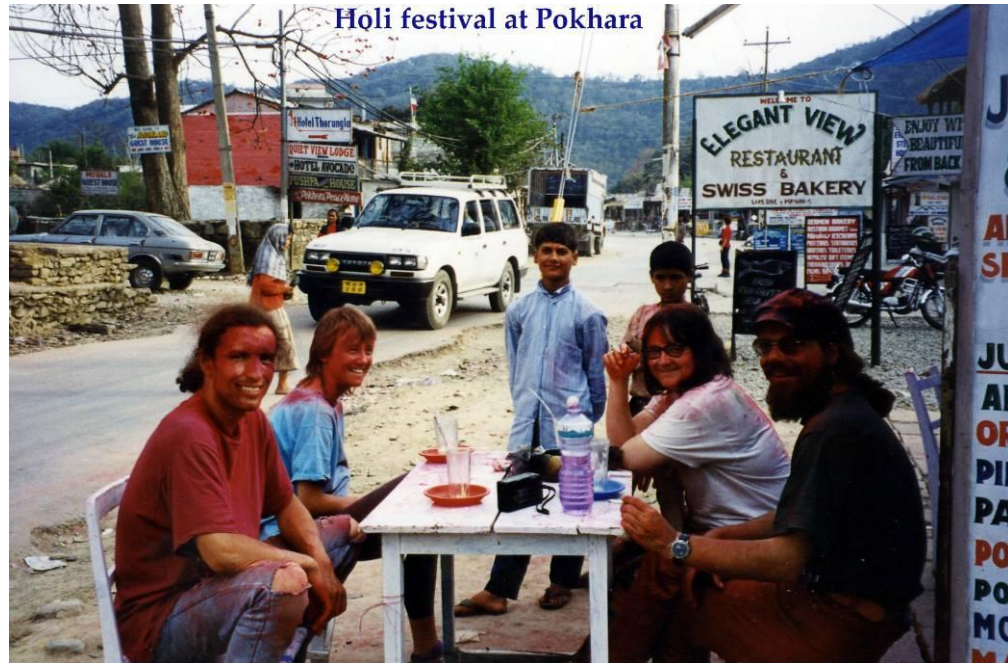
Day 20 – Thursday 16th March 1995

For the grand price of 200 rupees, I hired a canoe for a paddle up the lake - the second largest in the country - but this doesn't mean very much. I saw about twenty "lifer birds" along the edges of the lake and flying overhead. At the far end there are large swampy areas that harboured a number of waterfowl. There was one chappy with a very old and heavy muzzle-loading rifle (guns are illegal in Nepal) trying to shoot at some shelduck. I kept paddling in between them and him, which didn't help matters. In hindsight it may not have been wise but wisdom comes very slowly for me, I find.



I learnt that there might have been a graveyard of dead tourists at the duck end of the lake, not from disgruntled hunters, but the ever-reliable wind. When I started my return the wind was in my face. The craft I was rowing was about as responsive to row as a shipping container. Now I have paddled my fair share over the years but on this occasion I could not rest or else I'd be chasing duck myself.

This was Holi Festival day. It was a celebration of I don't know what, but it gives food dye manufacturers their moment in the sun. Everyone got covered in food dye so it wasn't a good idea to wear nice clothes. For me this was never going to be a problem, as I don't own any! Needless to say the young European tourists seemed to enjoy the event far more than the locals.



I was pleased to get to “Beam Beams Bar” to enjoy their ale and “cool western music”. I had decided to get very drunk to celebrate the half way mark for the holiday, and then try to find my way back to the hotel in the dark.

The hotel saw an increase in the number of Norwegian women. Now I had an equal number of straight and gay. Helena and Terez being the latest in a long line of charming Scandinavian tourists. Not so welcome were a couple of Israeli gentlemen. It seems that Israelis go to Nepal because it's cheap and they could treat the locals like shit. These guys had all the skills – arrogance, cultural insensitivity, poor manners and bad breath. They were also bad losers at cards. I managed to get them to go away while my harem and I slipped quietly out to dinner elsewhere.



Day 21 – Friday 17th March 1995

I spent a languid day in Pokhara. Pokhara is one of the most atmospheric places in the world – according to others, and I can't argue. There are stunning views of the sacred Fishtail Mountain (Machapuchare) as well as several others, all from the balmy elevation of about 1000m. In Pokhara, there were bananas and mangos in profusion – this is not a cold place! If ever there was a perfect location for slothing after a long walk in the mountains, Pokhara is it.

I wandered about the forest behind the Fish Tail Lodge before spending much of the afternoon and evening with my Norwegian lovelies. The silly Israelis I mentioned earlier took a shine to the two lesbians, blissfully unaware of their orientation, and wine, dined and otherwise entertained them for days. Each time I passed them they indicated how much sex they were getting. Each time I passed Una or Merete they laughed at how stupid were their benefactors for all the gifts and alcohol that were being lavished upon them.

Helena, Terez and I enjoyed a lovely dinner at the Llasa Tibetan.

Day 22 – Saturday 18th March 1995

The perfect foil for the highest mountains in the world is the terai, or some of the lowest lowlands. It is uncommon knowledge that the southern border area of Nepal is only a few hundred feet above sea level. And from here on a clear day you can easily see the Himalaya!

So off I went in the bus to the famous Chitwan National Park. The journey was not unpleasant in a third world sort of way. The recommended River View Jungle Camp in Sauraha, the village at the edge of the park, was my accommodation base for a week of exploration. The manager was a chap named Bharat Regmi, a talented bird guide who was to become a good friend and trekking companion on subsequent trips to Nepal.

We had time to wander along the banks of the Rapti River ticking off so many birds and mammals it was ridiculous. About thirty new birds were identified along with chital deer and grey langhur monkeys. My first views of wild peafowl were pretty neat too.

Quite out of character though it is, I enjoyed a few cool ales, the company of the camp staff, dinner and bed. Really looking forward to going into the park proper.....

Day 23 – Sunday 19th March 1995

Chitwan is a large reserve on the Indian border. It protects a diminishing number of tigers, several hundred one-horned rhino, an astonishing variety of other mammals (many in large numbers) and over 400 different birds. The vegetation is mainly savannah grassland and sal forest. There are also small strips of riverine rainforest.

We started in grassland, which was chock-a-block full of birds. Then we hit the forest. The numbers of birds here made the grassland look empty! I managed 38 new birds including pied hornbills (*seemed good at the time*). At one point I climbed a tree to get a good view of a rhino. For some curious reason the guides seemed a bit shy when near these battle tanks. Maybe it's because of the number of people that get killed by them. Apparently the locals are allowed into the park to cut elephant grass at the start of the dry season. This is a mixed blessing for the ones that don't get to do the same the following year courtesy of the rhinos. They are hard to spot in grass that is fifteen feet high.

After drinking my daily water allocation of twelve buckets – it was very hot in the terai - I went searching for my Danish friend Rikke at the Jungle Skyline Camp. After a number of ales and a lovely vegetarian dinner, we watched the sun set as the camp staff got shit-faced on dope. This is the native home of this particular plant and there were acres of it everywhere. A memorable day.

Day 24 – Monday 20th March 1995

The morning program started with an elephant ride chasing big animals through the forest. Now you might think that the chances of seeing anything with four legs when perched atop a big noisy elephant are remote but you would be wrong. Firstly, elephants can be remarkably quiet. If they get it into their mind to sneak up on you in the forest this is not so hard for them. Trust me here – later one did this while I was sitting quietly with my back to a large tree. The other aspect of wildlife spotting from an elephant is that the wildlife does not seem threatened by them. Why they don't regard an elephant covered in silly tourists threatening is odd and just shows how dull they are and why it was possible to shoot them in large numbers.



I perched on the elephant's head with my bare feet behind its ears. This protected them as we crashed through vines etc. An Indian one-horned rhino was studied from a distance of four metres, along with chital and sambar deer, wild boar, rhesus macaques and some kind of mongoose. All this in one hour.

There is a significant downside to riding elephants. It is called a sore arse. They are not designed to be ridden. This view was reinforced when a fatness of loud Yanks described to all in earshot (which meant most of the Terai) how their delicate bottoms were shaping up after their brief experience.

I hired a crotch-of-shit bicycle and rode to Bis Hazaar Taal or The 20,000 Lakes. It was a bit of a disappointment in terms of birds but quite a pretty spot. If it were in Australia they would have drained it or turned it into a fish farm or something. It is remarkable that in such a populated country there are still natural areas that do not appear to be exploited to their potential. Good on them.

I attempted to soothe my bum by pouring an amber-coloured liquid into my mouth. This met with eventual success.

Day 25 – Tuesday 21st March 1995

The fatness of Yanks still held some fascination for me. Their petty complaints about everything made me wonder whether they started their holiday from the wrong airline terminal. Just why did they go to Nepal?

This was something of a lay day. Some sort of stomach alien had taken up residence.

Day 26 – Wednesday 22nd March 1995

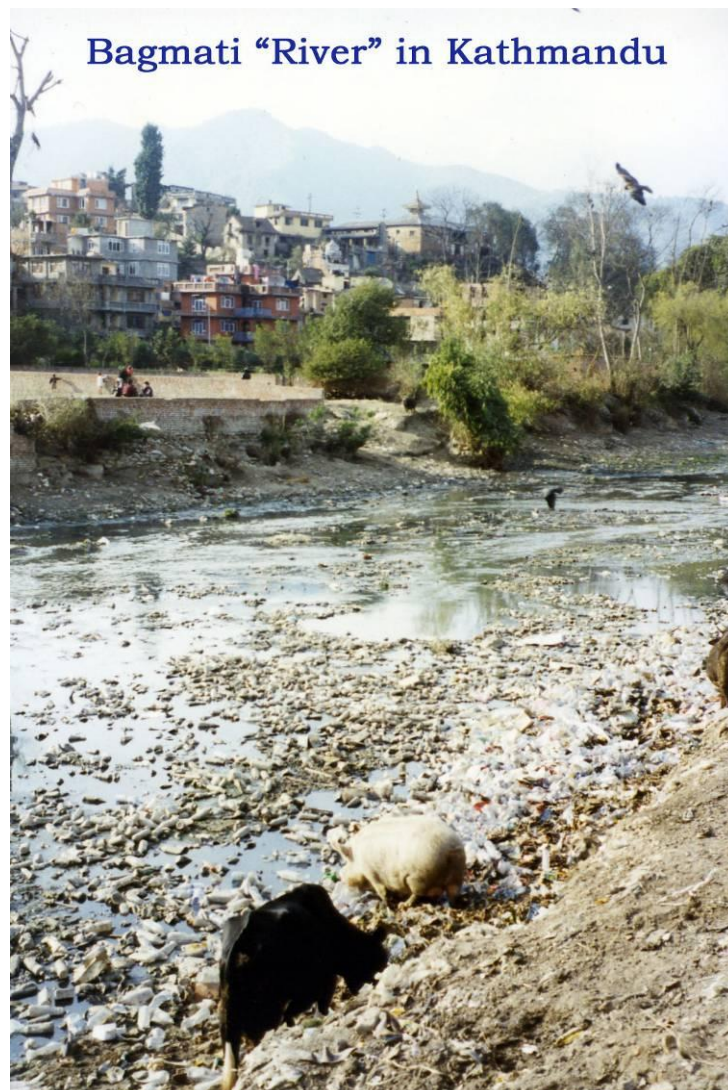
I saw 14 new birds as Madhan, one of the guides at our camp, took me on a short walk into the Churia Hills at Chitwan. The local Tharu people are very good at walking along flat surfaces. There are plenty to pick from. Whilst the Himalaya is in view on a clear day most have never been anywhere near it. Anyway the upshot of all this is that a 30 kilometre walk in the sun was like walking down to the corner store for these guys. It wasn't for me.

My body was starting to fall over from too much holiday. I just want to sit down for about ten days and drink beer. It was some sort of a plan I guess.

Slept for 12 hours.

Day 27 – Thursday 23rd March 1995

The water in the river looked clean enough. This was surprising when you consider the number of people upstream of it. Firstly they shit everywhere, including the river. This presents a constant pedestrian hazard for those who tend to walk off the middle of the road. They wash their clothes in the river next to where they bathe their cattle, which is slightly upstream of the point where the “vegetables of the day” are being rinsed. Then they drink it.



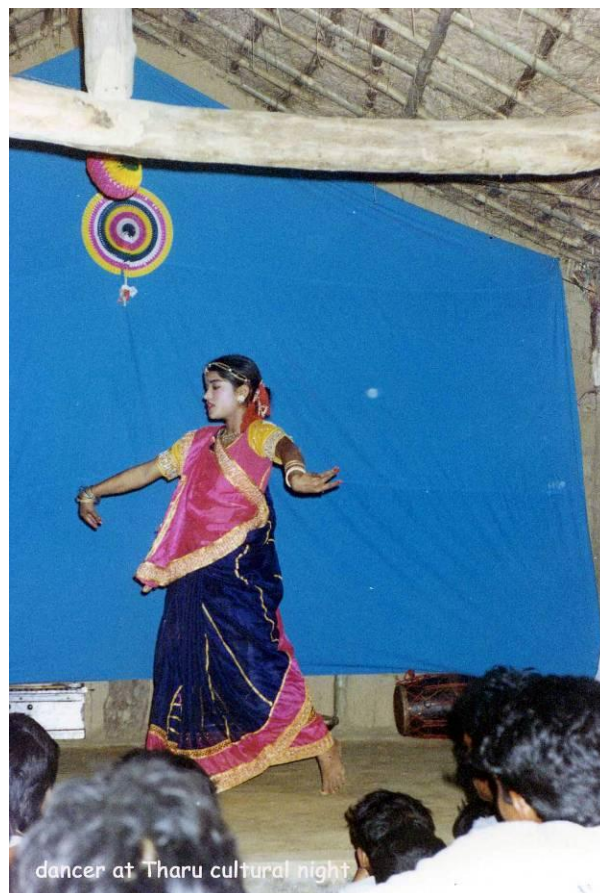
I went on a jeep safari but it was somewhat disappointing. That is not to say that we didn't see a lot of birds and mammals but just not the ones that I had been losing sleep over. I decided that seeing big cats is for other people. I just saw the things they eat.

Sloth bears also took on a mythical status. Doubt over their existence was dispelled by meeting a chap with body bits missing, courtesy of a less than slothful bear. He had finished in last place with much body piercing, which was scary considering he was an armed soldier at the time.

Chicken was ordered for dinner. This was a mistake – mostly for the chicken – but partly because it had had a pretty rough life, so no wealth of chicken body parts were available for me. It ended its life in the kitchen, and came out looking like it had been killed via a large wooden mallet.

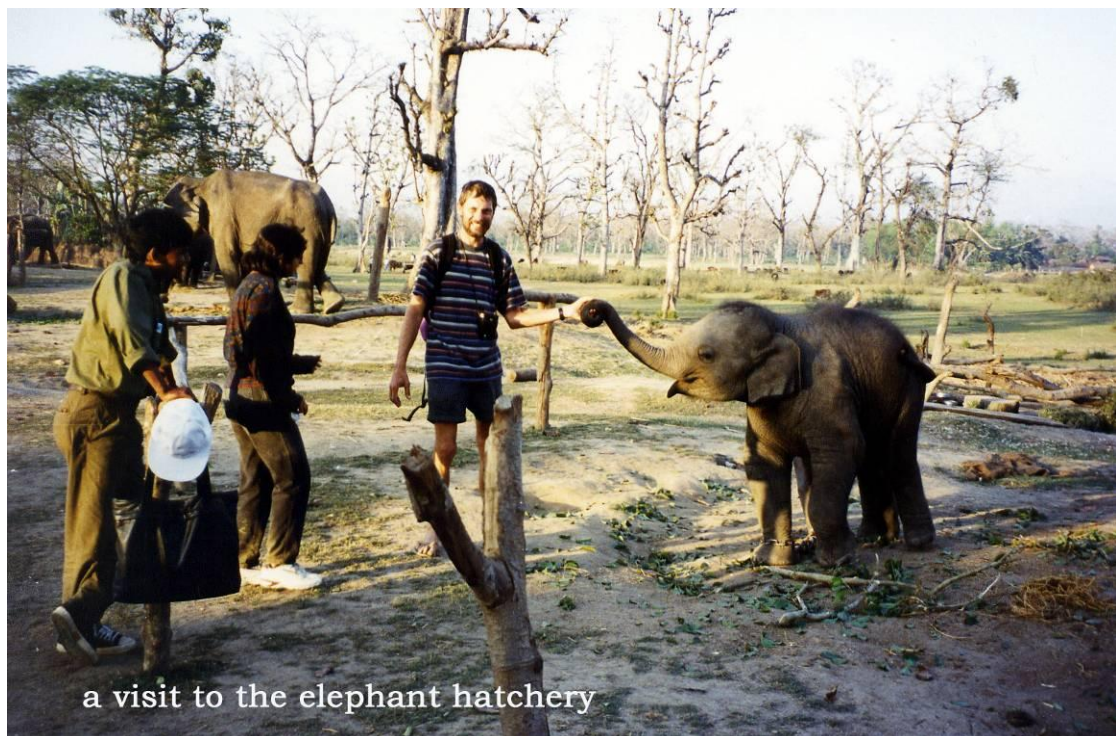
Having dined I went to the “cultural night” at a small venue just down the road from the camp. The idea was to highlight the local performing artists. The people who had organised this were doing it for the very first time. All the locals who were not artists performed anyway by turning up and heckling. I would like to think that this wouldn't have happened at home in the land of the “fair go”.

After the sound system fatally shit itself after two previous attempts to fix it, the heckling reached an intolerable level for one of the two foreigners in attendance – me. I told a few of them to shut up so forcefully that the emcee shut up as well thinking that I was addressing him! I suppose the abysmal evening did have its funny side.



Day 28 – Friday 24th March 1995

I managed a lift to the elephant hatchery after breakfast and wandered about the forest. I found a great spot along a creek where I saw a pair of brown fish owls and lots of parakeets and kingfishers. Although the forest was outside the national park the wildlife didn't realise this. So my strategy was to sit behind a very large tree so that I could see anything that approached. I hadn't planned what I would do if anything did. Ultimately an animal did sneak up to me. Now the forest floor of a sal forest is very noisy when all the leaves are dry and on the ground, so of course you would expect to hear the approach of anything scary. And so it was that I was eyeball to kneecap with a very large elephant. I think the said critter was very happy with its little trick and just wandered away. I learnt something new.



This was my last day at Sauraha and Bharat Regmi, the manager, *and good friend to this day*, delivered a written invitation to dinner. I felt quite honoured. Apparently nobody stayed for a whole week, as I had.

I reflected on my first Nepal experience whilst waiting half an eternity for my gala dinner. Travelling alone had been great. It allowed so much more contact with the local people and other tourists. The latter had not impressed me greatly except for those from Scandinavia, who had been very impressive indeed.

Dinner was very good. The odd thing was that ALL the staff sat about and watched me eat it. They didn't join me - they could not exist without their dal baht.

Day 29 – Saturday 25th March 1995

The seven nights I spent at Chitwan cost me US\$20 per day. The manager was sad to see me go but the thrill of a lifetime bus trip to Kathmandu beckoned. The bus overtook things

anywhere anytime and with a big smile on the driver's face. I must admit that after a while I thought it was funny too – because nobody else in the bus seemed to notice.

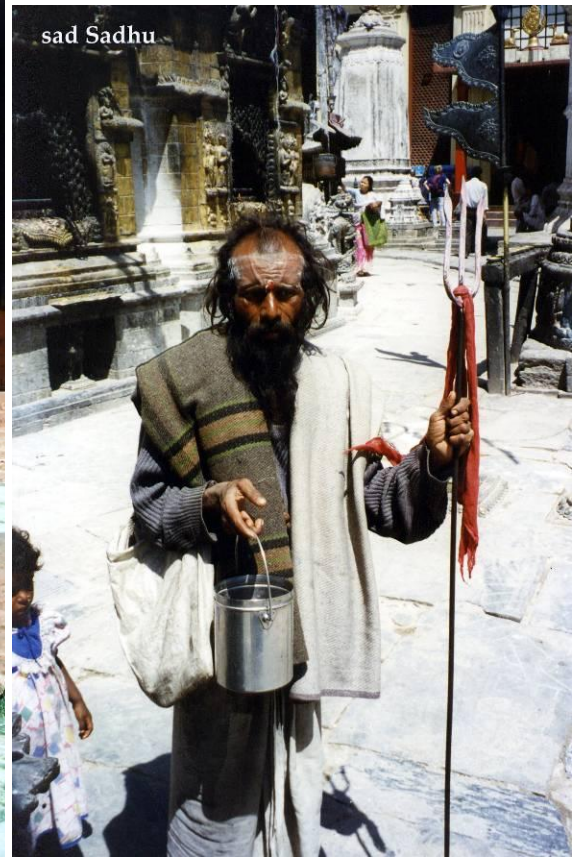
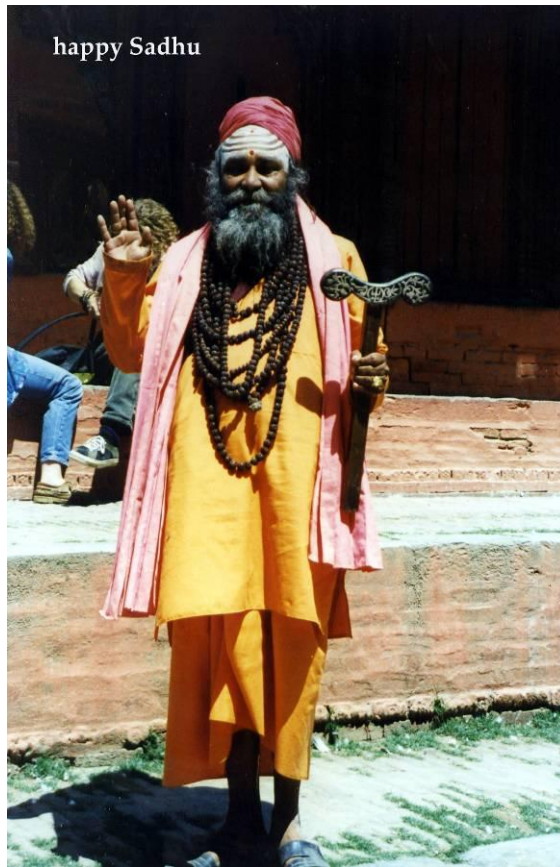
Upon arrival in Kathmandu I caught a rickshaw to Freak Street – so named because the first Westerners to visit were rock stars seeking enlightenment. The locals thought they were freaks – and nothing has changed. A rickshaw was hired to take me back to the hotel on account of I had absolutely no idea where I was. Most of the streets in Kathmandu are not named or signposted in any way.



I stayed at the Century Hotel. The place was full of hippies. It cost very little to stay at this bizarre lodge, locked in behind the street by a walkway notable for its lack of headroom. There was an atmospheric courtyard with an aviary and lots of plants. The hippies (all ages) played or rather tuned a variety of musical instruments, including a didgeridoo. It turned out that instrument tuning was the day's theme. These people had a serious amount of time on their hands but very little money. The latter is probably sent to them by relatives concerned that otherwise they might come back home. So they spent each day (this starts at noon when they get out of bed) on a theme. Theme's explored during my residence aside from playing with one's instrument, were: haircut day and making coffee from first principles day.

Day 30 – Sunday 26th March 1995

I saw what it was like to be a budget tourist. The beds were woeful and there was an extraordinary amount of noise from the largely nocturnal hippies.



I left the hotel early in search of something to eat. Things unravelled after that. Firstly, nobody gets up early in Kathmandu; secondly, I got lost again. Then it started raining and got very cold. After finding my way back to the hotel I found that one of the outer doors was locked. The next 45 minutes was rather dull. Then a local turned up who also wanted to get into the hotel. He had a simple strategy – make as much noise as humanly possible until someone investigated where it was coming from. Eventually an aged, second-hand looking hippie opened the door. The rain got so heavy the sun went back down.

I spent the day people-watching and reading Tom Sharpe books. The highlight was catching up with Rikke and her Danish girlfriends for dinner and drinks.

I was planning to return to the Ganesh Himal Hotel the next day as I ran into the owner who felt sorry for me staying in the Century and offered me a free room. I felt a bit sad about this because I started at the Ganesh Himal and in a sense it meant the “wheel of life” had got me back to the beginning again.

I was very sad to say goodbye to Rikke, who was flying home.

Day 31 – Monday 27th March 1995

I hired a bicycle to go to the Gorkana Safari Park. It was closed. I then got trapped in a one-way street system that was set up to prevent traffic getting anywhere at all. This was to give a free run for an American president's wife who was visiting. Eventually bicycle rage took hold and I demonstrably disobeyed a police direction and shot across an intersection. Nobody started shooting. I then got lost again but by some sort of miracle found myself outside the hotel, or, more importantly, the hotel toilet.

My trekking guide Niseth turned up and gave me a pat on the back saying that I was the friendliest and most generous client he had had. He probably said that to everyone, I thought.

I adjourned to Helena's Restaurant for a very satisfactory dinner of flattened bird. I chatted with a pleasant Norwegian lass before returning to the hotel. This represented a milestone of sorts because I didn't get lost on the way.

I started to fear the infection starting to bloom in my right foot.



Day 32 – Tuesday 28th March 1995

Very tired now. Time to go home. Felt a bit cranky with all that surrounded me. It's great to visit a poor country but how could you live there? My leg was getting quite sore. Went and bought some antibiotic ointment for 25 cents (*the same was \$11 back home*).

The day improved slightly as I got into some shopping for T-shirts, a few shawls for Mayette, and the like. I went looking at thangkas, the delightful Buddhist paintings. One salesman thought I was Kerry Packer. At least he thought I had as much money anyway. The price dropped from \$275 for one and ended up at \$60 for three and I think I got stung. Never mind.

I had the strangest request from a pot-head tourist today. He asked me if **I** had some hash. This was strange because every second local person in Kathmandu was trying to sell tiger balm, money or hash!

Dinner at Tibet's Canteena, a bit of book reading, and bed.

Day 33 – Wednesday 29th March 1995

As usual I was the only person in the country awake at 0630.

I caught a taxi to Nagarjun Hill and walked to the top, a climb of 800 metres or so. Added a few birds to my list then back to town and drinking beer. I adjourned to a lovely restaurant where the most arrogant French family to ever exist entertained me. The child among them was just the right size for placement in a large crab trap back home. I am not naturally given to spontaneous outbursts of violence. Eastern mysticism pervaded my being via more beer or else the world would have been a slightly less populous place and there would have been a spare seat on a plane going to Europe. I mused on what could possibly lower my opinion of French people. Blank.

I returned to the hotel to be grief stricken. One of the tourists had stolen my pen. The pen that had survived for over a month had gone. I was surprised I could sleep.

Day 34 – Thursday 30th March 1995

I hired a bicycle and rode to the Bagmati "River" at Chobar. A note about rivers is in order. These are not rivers that primarily consist of water. They consist of, in roughly equal parts, sewage (prime quality stuff too), plastic bags / bottles, dead animal parts, a binder (resembles water but isn't) and people. The people are doing anything from throwing the other river parts into the river or taking them out. It only gets worse downstream = India.

Despite all this, there were quite a lot of birds along the riverbanks. This only goes to show that birds have a better digestive system than we do, or a worse one, depending on how you want to look at it.

I adjourned to the Swayambunath or the "Monkey temple". Rule #1, don't get bitten by the monkeys. They "live" on stuff that is so bad that if you had any in your street it would be quarantined for a month. The temple was very interesting in a Buddhist sort of way. Too many tourists though, including me.

After lunch I went to Pashputinath, the Hindu temple equivalent of Swayambunath. It's full of monkeys too, but much more interesting, in a shocking and scary sort of way. It is impossible to put into words the feelings you have at Hindu temples like this. People getting burned (for the last time) on the riverbank, ancient architecture, people fishing out half burned wood from the last funeral pyre for recycling (what's the best job you've ever had, eh?), Sadhus (Hindu holy men) lifting bloody great rocks with their dicks (don't believe me?), lots of monkeys, the smell, etc.



I paid a young kid 30rps to guide me, although the real reason I paid him was to stop other potential guides annoying me. I spent two hours at the temple complex but a whole day could be spent, if only to reinforce wonderful feeling that you don't have to live in such a place.

On the way back to the hotel I elevated my cycling skills to new levels. I determined to ride the whole length of Kathmandu City without stopping and succeeded!! Traffic never really stops anyway – it creeps and jumps but to stop means traffic death.

All things considered, a very useful day indeed. Lots of cultural stuff that I hope never to see again (*footnote here: I have subsequently been back to all these places for another look*).

Day 35 – Friday 31st March 1995

Woke with a few passengers inside what used to be my digestive tract. Hired a “taxi” and went to Phulchowki Mountain. The walk was pleasant, I saw seven new birds and I worked on my sunburn.

I have decided to do nothing tomorrow – see how that works.

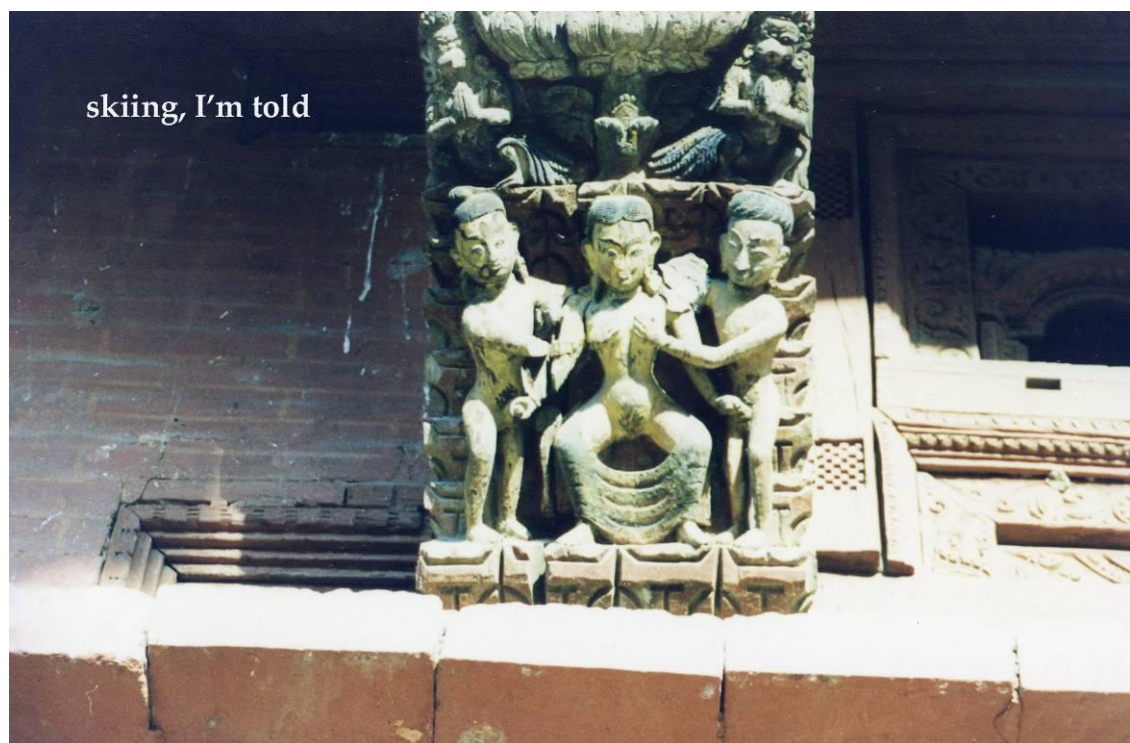
Day 36 – Saturday 1st April 1995

The morning went according to plan. I spent almost all of it chatting to a Swede, Per Carlson, who was going to stay with us for a while in Sydney. After lunch I met up with my Norwegian friends Helena and Terez. We were invited to a birthday party for Neleema, a Nepalese girl. It was great fun, lots of food and dancing etc.

Day 37 – Sunday 2nd April 1995

After picking up my thangkas I went for a tour of the old royal palace, which was well worth a look. Just across the square is Kumari Chowk, an ancient building in which lives the Kumari, or “living goddess”. Living goddesses are young girls quaintly plucked from the population when very small and are interned in Kumari Chowk until they bleed, which they all do eventually, then they are less quaintly returned to obscurity. So while I was staring at this other than new structure wondering how long it would take to send me insane if I had to reside there, the Kumari stuck her head through the window and stared very blankly at me. I am told I was very fortunate to have seen her. Those that would tell me this should reassess their priorities methinks.

Maybe the Kumari was concerned about a great celestial event. There was so much shit in the air you could safely stare at the sun. I wondered if the airport had closed. One day this stuff will get so thick it will spontaneously combust and that will be the end of Kathmandu. There will be a memorial crater that will eventually fill with “water”, as earlier defined. I felt happy that the trapped air in the hotel room would be of marginally better quality.



Day 38 – Monday 3rd April 1995

The air got worse. The hanging soup had all yesterday's ingredients plus a brand the new collection forming. My life was in danger. I no longer had a digestive system and an

interesting infection had taken up in a minor scratch on my leg. It was causing me to hallucinate. At one stage I found myself talking with a German girl with much plastic garbage stuck in her matted hair. This, according to my vision, included a dick and balls two and a half inches long. Others shared my dream.

I said goodbye to Sidaram, the saluting doorman at the Ganesh Himal, and popped over to the airport and flew to Bangkok. My leg was very painful now and was causing me much concern.

All the fun of the fair at Bangkok Airport as we loaded into our DC 10 then unloaded as they said the electrics had died and they had to find another plane. Then they said they had fixed them, which caused an exodus of passengers who weren't going to take the risk. I was not among them as I could hardly walk.

Day 39 – Tuesday 4th April 1995

Got to Sydney and went straight from the airport to the doctor. He asked me whether I was allergic to any drugs.

“Yes, penicillin”, I offered.

“Okay, we are going to find out just how allergic you are.”

“Oh, it's not serious then?”

“Yeah, just a staph infection.”

Having never had any penicillin since early childhood helped clear it up. I lost my right leg below the knee but that's okay. It grew back.

Everyone should go to Nepal at least once. Preventing yourself from returning is another matter.

Steve Anyon-Smith

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Australia

7th December 2005

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Birds seen

Himalayan Snowcock	<i>Tetraogallus himalayensis</i>
Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>
Himalayan Monal	<i>Lophophorus impejanus</i>
Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>
Kalij Pheasant	<i>Lophura leucomelanos</i>
Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
Lesser Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>
Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Common Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>
Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
Speckled Piculet	<i>Picumnus innominatus</i>
Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Celeus brachyurus</i>
Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos canicapillus</i>
Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos macei</i>
Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos mahrattensis</i>
Crimson-breasted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos cathpharius</i>
Darjeeling Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos darjellensis</i>
Lesser Yellownape	<i>Picus chlorolophus</i>
Greater Yellownape	<i>Picus flavinucha</i>
Streak-throated Woodpecker	<i>Picus xanthopygaeus</i>
Scaly-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Picus squamatus</i>
Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>
Himalayan Flameback	<i>Dinopium shorii</i>
Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>
Great Barbet	<i>Megalaima virens</i>
Lineated Barbet	<i>Megalaima lineata</i>
Golden-throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima franklinii</i>
Blue-throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima asiatica</i>
Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>
Oriental Pied-Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros albirostris</i>
Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>
Dollarbird	<i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>
White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
Crested Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle lugubris</i>
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>
Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>
Common Hawk-Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus varius</i>
Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>

Eurasian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
Green-billed Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus tristis</i>
Lesser Coucal	<i>Centropus bengalensis</i>
Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
Slaty-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula himalayana</i>
Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>
Red-breasted Parakeet	<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>
White-rumped Needletail	<i>Zoonavena sylvatica</i>
House Swift	<i>Apus nipalensis</i>
Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>
Brown Fish-Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>
Asian Barred Owlet	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>
Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>
Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>
Hill Pigeon	<i>Columba rupestris</i>
Snow Pigeon	<i>Columba leuconota</i>
European Turtle-Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>
Red Collared-Dove	<i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i>
Eurasian Collared-Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>
Orange-breasted Pigeon	<i>Treron bicincta</i>
Yellow-footed Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicoptera</i>
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Common Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Solitary Snipe	<i>Gallinago solitaria</i>
Pintail Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Common Sandpiper	<i>Tringa hypoleucos</i>
Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>
Bronze-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>
Small Pratincole	<i>Glareola lactea</i>
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
River Lapwing	<i>Vanellus duvaucelii</i>
Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans migrans</i>
Lammergeier	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>
Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>
White-rumped Vulture	<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>
Himalayan Griffon	<i>Gyps himalayensis</i>
Eurasian Griffon	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>
Crested Serpent-Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>
Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malayensis</i>
Eurasian Marsh-Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>

Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Besra	<i>Accipiter virgatus</i>
Oriental Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
White-eyed Buzzard	<i>Butastur teesa</i>
Upland Buzzard	<i>Buteo hemilasius</i>
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>
Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus fasciatus</i>
Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus cirrhatus</i>
Mountain Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus nipalensis</i>
Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
Laggar Falcon	<i>Falco jugger</i>
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>
Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Intermediate Egret	<i>Mesophoyx intermedia</i>
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
Indian Pond-Heron	<i>Ardeola greyii</i>
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Little Heron	<i>Butorides striatus</i>
Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
Malayan Night-Heron	<i>Gorsachius melanolophus</i>
Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>
Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>
Long-tailed Broadbill	<i>Psarisomus dalhousiae</i>
Golden-fronted Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>
Orange-bellied Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis hardwickii</i>
Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>
Yellow-billed Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa flavirostris</i>
Red-billed Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa erythrorhyncha</i>
Common Green Magpie	<i>Cissa chinensis</i>
Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>
Grey Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta formosae</i>
Spotted Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>
Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>
House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>
Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>
Eurasian Golden-Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>
Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>
Maroon Oriole	<i>Oriolus traillii</i>
Large Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>
Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina melaschistos</i>
Black-headed Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina melanoptera</i>
Grey-chinned Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus solaris</i>
Long-tailed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus ethologus</i>

Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>
Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>
Yellow-bellied Fantail	<i>Rhipidura hypoxantha</i>
White-throated Fantail	<i>Rhipidura albicollis</i>
White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>
Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>
Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>
Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>
Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus remifer</i>
Spangled Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>
Asian Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>
Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>
Large Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis gularis</i>
Common Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus</i>
Blue Whistling-Thrush	<i>Myiophonus caeruleus</i>
Plain-backed Thrush	<i>Zoothera mollissima</i>
Long-tailed Thrush	<i>Zoothera dixonii</i>
Scaly Thrush	<i>Zoothera dauma</i>
White-collared Blackbird	<i>Turdus albocinctus</i>
Grey-winged Blackbird	<i>Turdus boulboul</i>
Dark-throated Thrush	<i>Turdus ruficollis</i>
Rusty-tailed Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa ruficauda</i>
Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula strophilata</i>
Red-throated Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>
Snowy-browed Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hyperythra</i>
Little Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula westermanni</i>
Ultramarine Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula superciliosa</i>
Slaty-blue Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula tricolor</i>
Sapphire Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula sapphira</i>
Small Niltava	<i>Niltava macgrigoriae</i>
Rufous-bellied Niltava	<i>Niltava sundara</i>
Pale-chinned Blue-Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis poliogenys</i>
Pygmy Blue-Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapella hodgsoni</i>
Siberian Rubythroat	<i>Luscinia calliope</i>
Orange-flanked Bush-Robin	<i>Tarsiger cyanurus</i>
Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>
Blue-capped Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus caeruleocephalus</i>
Hodgson's Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus hodgsoni</i>
White-winged Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus erythrogaster</i>
White-capped Redstart	<i>Chaimarrornis leucocephalus</i>
Plumbeous Redstart	<i>Rhyacornis fuliginosus</i>
Grandala	<i>Grandala coelicolor</i>
Little Forktail	<i>Enicurus scouleri</i>
Black-backed Forktail	<i>Enicurus immaculatus</i>
Spotted Forktail	<i>Enicurus maculatus</i>
Common Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>
Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>
Grey Bushchat	<i>Saxicola ferrea</i>
Chestnut-tailed Starling	<i>Sturnus malabaricus</i>

Asian Pied Starling	<i>Sturnus contra</i>
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
Jungle Myna	<i>Acridotheres fuscus</i>
Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch	<i>Sitta castanea</i>
White-tailed Nuthatch	<i>Sitta himalayensis</i>
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>
Wallcreeper	<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>
Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Rusty-flanked Treecreeper	<i>Certhia nipalensis</i>
Rufous-naped Tit	<i>Periparus rufonuchalis</i>
Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Green-backed Tit	<i>Parus monticolus</i>
Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Black-lored Tit	<i>Parus xanthogenys</i>
Black-throated Tit	<i>Aegithalos concinnus</i>
Plain Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>
Striated Swallow	<i>Hirundo striolata</i>
Nepal House Martin	<i>Delichon nipalensis</i>
Black-crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus melanicterus</i>
Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>
Himalayan Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus leucogenys</i>
Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>
Ashy Bulbul	<i>Hemixos flava</i>
Mountain Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes mcclllandii</i>
Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>
Jungle Prinia	<i>Prinia sylvatica</i>
Yellow-bellied Prinia	<i>Prinia flaviventris</i>
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>
Chestnut-headed Tesia	<i>Tesia castaneocoronata</i>
Lanceolated Warbler	<i>Locustella lanceolata</i>
Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
White-browed Tit-Warbler	<i>Leptopoecile sophiae</i>
Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>
Lemon-rumped Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus chloronotus</i>
Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>
Blyth's Leaf-Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i>
Golden-spectacled Warbler	<i>Seicercus burkii</i>
Chestnut-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus castaniceps</i>
Black-faced Warbler	<i>Abroscopus schisticeps</i>
White-crested Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax leucolophus</i>
Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax pectoralis</i>
Striated Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax striatus</i>
Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax rufogularis</i>
Spotted Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax ocellatus</i>
Scaly Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax subunicolor</i>
Variiegated Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax variegatus</i>
Black-faced Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax affinis</i>

Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax erythrocephalus</i>
Puff-throated Babbler	<i>Pellorneum ruficeps</i>
Rusty-cheeked Scimitar-Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus erythrogenys</i>
White-browed Scimitar-Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus schisticeps</i>
Streak-breasted Scimitar-Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus ruficollis</i>
Pygmy Wren-Babbler	<i>Pnoepyga pusilla</i>
Black-chinned Babbler	<i>Stachyris pyrrhops</i>
Grey-throated Babbler	<i>Stachyris nigriceps</i>
Striped Tit-Babbler	<i>Macronous gularis</i>
Chestnut-capped Babbler	<i>Timalia pileata</i>
Spiny Babbler	<i>Turdoides nipalensis</i>
Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striatus</i>
Red-billed Leiothrix	<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>
White-browed Shrike-Babbler	<i>Pteruthius flaviscapis</i>
Hoary-throated Barwing	<i>Actinodura nipalensis</i>
Blue-winged Minla	<i>Minla cyanouroptera</i>
Rufous-winged Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe castaneiceps</i>
Nepal Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe nipalensis</i>
Whiskered Yuhina	<i>Yuhina flavicollis</i>
Stripe-throated Yuhina	<i>Yuhina gularis</i>
Rufous-vented Yuhina	<i>Yuhina occipitalis</i>
White-bellied Yuhina	<i>Yuhina zantholeuca</i>
Rufous Sibia	<i>Heterophasia capistrata</i>
Rufous-winged Bushlark	<i>Mirafrassina assamica</i>
Sand Lark	<i>Calandrella raytal</i>
Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>
Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum ignipectus</i>
Purple Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia asiatica</i>
Green-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga nipalensis</i>
Black-throated Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga saturata</i>
Crimson Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga siparaja</i>
Fire-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga ignicauda</i>
Streaked Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera magna</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Russet Sparrow	<i>Passer rutilans</i>
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
Chestnut-shouldered Petronia	<i>Petronia xanthocollis</i>
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>
Upland Pipit	<i>Anthus sylvanus</i>
Red-throated Pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>
Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>
Alpine Accentor	<i>Prunella collaris</i>
Robin Accentor	<i>Prunella rubeculoides</i>
Rufous-breasted Accentor	<i>Prunella strophiata</i>
Brown Accentor	<i>Prunella fulvescens</i>
Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>
White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>
Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>

Beautiful Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus pulcherrimus</i>
Dark-rumped Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus edwardsii</i>
Spot-winged Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus rhodopeplus</i>
Red-fronted Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus puniceus</i>
Crimson-browed Finch	<i>Pinicola subhimachalus</i>
Scarlet Finch	<i>Haematospiza sipahi</i>
Black-and-yellow Grosbeak	<i>Mycerobas icteroides</i>
Crested Bunting	<i>Melophus lathamii</i>
Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>
Chestnut-eared Bunting	<i>Emberiza fucata</i>
Yellow-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza aureola</i>



50rps = \$1US