

Ethnic minorities, logistic nightmares and “first contact” in -

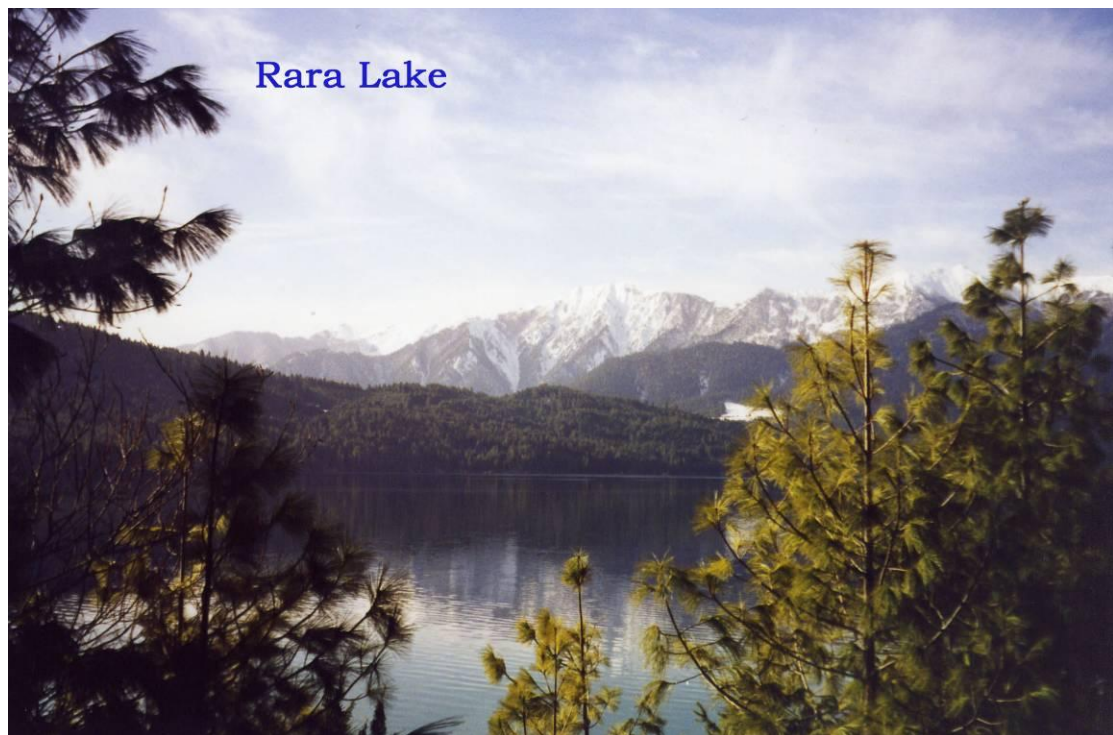
Nepal and Thailand

13th February to 1st April 2000

Barry-Sean Virtue, Dave Sheils, Steve Anyon-Smith and half of Nepal

Outline of Trip

Acting on some “intelligence” that claimed that Rara Lake in Nepal as the country’s wild mammal nirvana, we three strong lads determined to visit. (*The person who spread this rumour now has to eat through a tube*). Rara Lake is Nepal’s largest body of water, although it can easily be circled by foot in one day. It is in the remote northwest of the country in an area that was (and still is) the stronghold of the Maoist insurgency. A small national park surrounds the lake. We later wondered why.



The trek was the focus for the holiday but we also found time to visit Chitwan National Park along with a number of forested sites in the Kathmandu Valley. We also spent a couple of weeks in Thailand on the way over. Here we visited Thung Yai Naresuan NP, Sangklaburi and an old favourite – Kaeng Krachan NP.

Like our previous trips to Nepal, we opted for travel at the end of winter, as this is generally a time of clear skies and much activity for wildlife. Most of the migratory birds are present and many of the higher altitude animals are more easily seen as they drop towards the snow

line. Once more, Bharat Regmi, our friend from Explore Alpine Adventure in Kathmandu was responsible for all the logistics. For the trek we chose, the Olympic Games would have been far simpler to organise. We were to travel to areas with no roads and few visitors. See “Explore Alpine Adventure” below.

Sites visited

Thailand:

Bangkok – 1 night

Sangklaburi – 3 nights

Thung Yai Naresuan National Park – 5 nights

Kaeng Krachan National Park – 6 nights



Nepal:

Kathmandu Valley including the mountains of Phulchowki and Nagarjun – 11 nights

Nepalgunj – 1 night only (thank God)

Rara National Park trek – 11 nights

Chitwan National Park - 6 nights

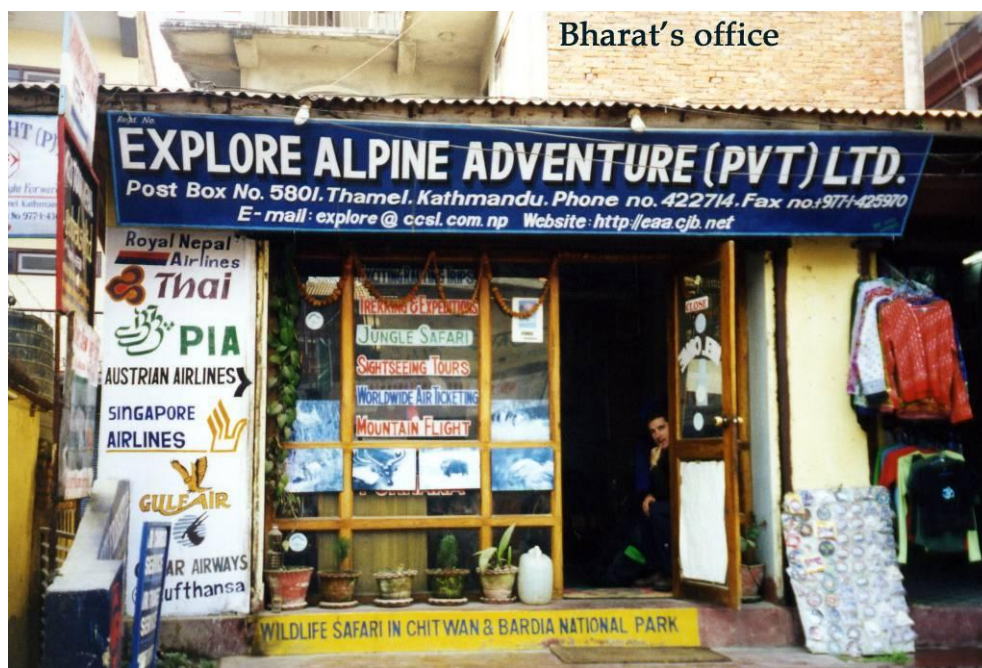


Explore Alpine Adventure Pvt Ltd

I read that when Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hilary climbed Everest they had three porters just to carry the coins to pay the wages for the other porters. In other words there is a law of diminishing returns that says that the more porters you have the more porters you need. The normal load for our porters was 30kgs. A number of them carried twice this and were paid double. Otherwise 20 or more porters would have been needed, mostly to carry the extra food for the other porters!

The area we trekked through had no shops and no produce for sale of any kind, so everything had to come from Kathmandu or Nepalgunj. Bharat had to provide a cook and cooking gear, variously ranked porters that would get along with each other, tents and sleeping gear, medical supplies, and all the necessary permits and public transport fares. Bharat, Ajambar (the cook), Barry-Sean, Dave and I flew from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj while the rest of the porters walked for several days from Surkhet to Jumla carrying all our camping and cooking equipment. Bharat had chartered a Yeti Airlines Twin Otter to fly five of us, plus rice and other heavy stuff from Nepalgunj to Jumla. Local guides were hired in Jumla.

Explore Alpine Adventure achieved all of this without a single hitch. I doubt that many other small trekking companies could have achieved this. There are just too many things that can go wrong.



Porters, Maoists, and Karin and Hmong refugees

My views of Thai and Nepalese people from previous visits have not changed. This holiday allowed closer contact with particular groups from within the two countries, allowing more informed observations.

Porters

Our trek required 10 porters and three guides (and we only got lost a few times!) for the three of us. While a couple of “local” guides were paid off during the trek as our food was consumed, the others stayed with us for our 12 day walk.

Our porters:

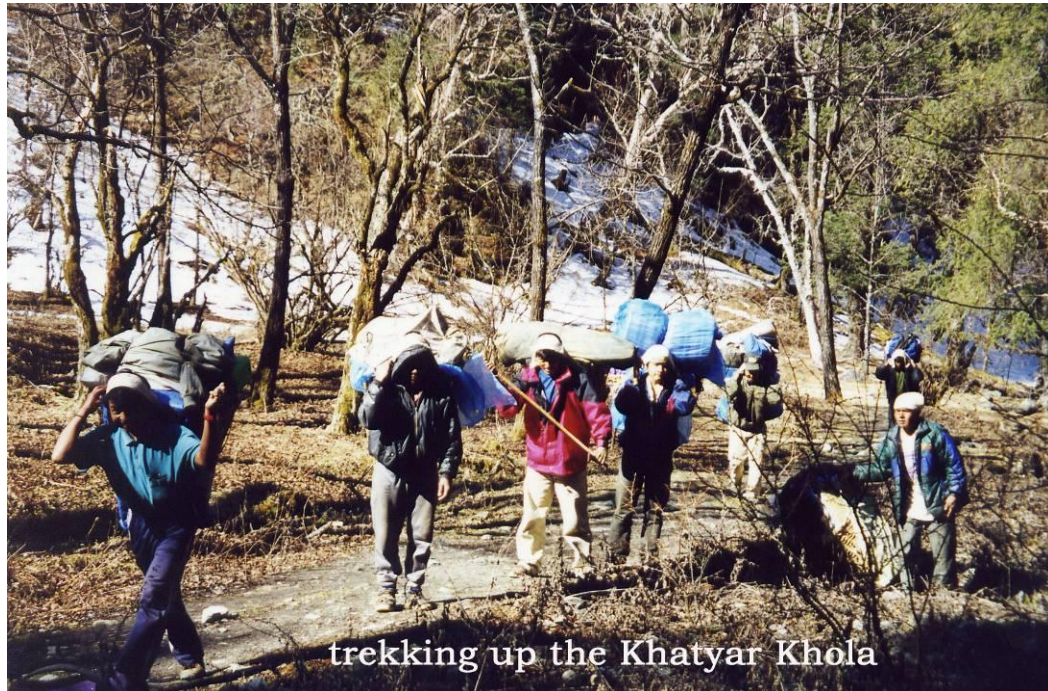
From Dhading came Anil Pokharel, from Okhaldunga near Everest came Rudra Rai, Surya Rai, Ajamabar Rai, Nar Bahadur Rai, Junga Rai and Ashok Rai, from Gorkha came Bikash Magar, from Dolkha came Rana Sherpa and from Ramechhap came Janga Tamang.

Our guides were:

Bharat Regmi and Naina Rai from Explore Alpine Adventure, and Karna and Bal Bahadur from Jumla.

Amazing folk, your porters. They do impossible things with their bodies. Sadly many don't do it for very long before their joints grind to a halt, or worse, and they drop out of view. Some become guides, which is less stressful on the body, but it still means walking up and down mountains for a living.

Porters often lack formal education and are almost always from poor families. They love getting work so that they can help their family subsistence farm or whatever. The over-riding impression I get is that porters, despite their heavy loads, are people who enjoy going to new places, who love to have fun at the end of the day, and who seem to revel in each other's company. We wondered whether two of them, at least, might not have revelled a little too much in the porters' communal sleeping tent, given the opportunity, but that's another story.



Maoists and / or other locals on the trek in Nepal

We met a number of Maoists, with some coming to our camps at night distributing leaflets to our porters. Suffice to say that our staff were scared of them. We agreed to fly all our staff out of the mountains at the end of the trek as they would probably have been robbed of their pay if they had tried to walk back to Surkhet from Jumla.

The people from which the Maoists draw their support never had a chance. They get very little from the government because their part of the country is so remote that in some parts we were the first outsiders ever to visit, including government officials or other people from the Kathmandu Valley!! So no money from tourism, and given the corruption from local officials there would be no money from any other source. And all this in the least fertile area of one of the poorest countries on earth. They are unable to grow a surplus of anything so there are virtually no "exports" from the region. We read that these people set the unenviable global record for infant mortality. Yet the world at large regards Nepal as a quaint place with some big mountains and interesting architecture. Sadly for the people we met, they have nothing of value to the West.



Karin and Hmong refugees during our stay at the Thai / Burma border

We found ourselves camping deep in the largest remaining South East Asian rainforest with Kung the Karin and A-lar the Hmong. These extraordinary guys were living in a refugee camp inside the Thai border with Burma. Across and along the border these same ethnic minorities were locked in a guerrilla war that was going nowhere in a hurry.

We had asked to get access to the forest to see some wildlife. Mr P, owner of the P Guest House in Sangklaburi had arranged for a few days trekking with a guide from each of the warring parties to accompany us. That seemed politic given the state of play between the opposing sides. We learnt that when it came to bush skills we knew nothing at all, and the hunting abilities of these folk meant that we saw little wildlife. Nonetheless we couldn't help marvelling at the resourcefulness and good cheer from our hosts. They had never before taken tourists into the forest but they didn't have to wait long for their next opportunity.....

Upon our emergence from the trees we were treated like kings at their village thus creating one of the most enduring of my travel images. Pretty raw stuff.



Hmong family

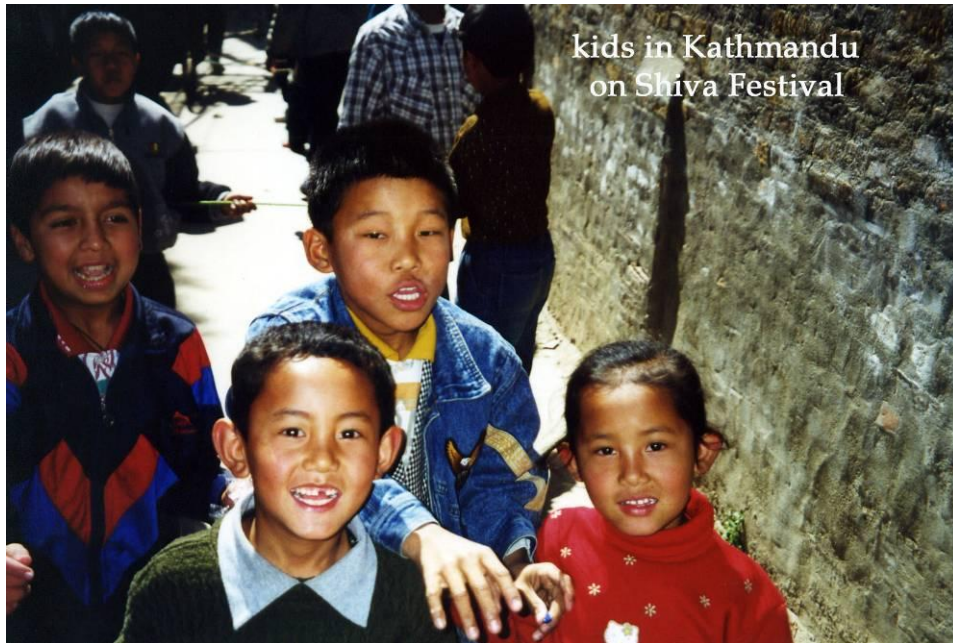
Accommodation

Ours was mostly a camping holiday. We also stayed in good clean but cheap hotels in Bangkok and Sangklaburi in Thailand and in Kathmandu and Nepalgunj in Nepal. The rest of the time we had our tents. Where they were erected was often another matter – see diary.



Weather

Don't ever go to Nepal if you are afraid of bad weather. On this short holiday we had every type of weather imaginable, from being in hot steamy rainforest to shivering in icy Himalayan snowdrifts. There is not much more to say.



Wildlife (see full list in table at end of report)





SEA PIRATES

Premium Blended Rare Whisky

Sea Pirates is a fine blended whisky produced in the memory of the bravery of these unconventional villains. It is a fine blend with neutral spirits & aged malt scotch imported from Scotland with

No Added Flavouring.



DISTILLED BLENDED & BOTTLED BY
TRIVENI DISTILLERY, NEPAL
IN CONSULTATION WITH
IAN MACLEOD & CO.
EDINBURGH
SCOTLAND

A Fine Blend Of Aged Scotch Malt Imported From Scotland



Diary

Day 1 – Thursday 17th February 2000

THAILAND

Barry-Sean and I caught the train and bus to Sydney Airport for our British Airways 747 to Bangkok leaving Sydney at 1700. We hid from Dave until we were on the plane.

The flight was full, the service was very ordinary and the food was garbage. The only positive aspect was the absence of screaming kids. Maybe they had heard of us and managed to book on another flight. The plane arrived on time. We changed some money (\$A1 = 23.08 baht) and caught the airport bus to the Muongphol Mansion Hotel at Siam Square. It was okay as far as cheap hotels go - the almost adjacent Pranee Building is better.

Day 2 – Friday 18th February 2000

We were up at 0400 with plans to get to Sangklaburi near the Burmese border northwest of Bangkok by public transport. We feasting on an American breakfast before jumping into a taxi that was sanely driven as far as the Southern Bus Terminal. Fortune followed us straight onto an air-con express bus bound for Kanchanaburi. The boring scenery stared back until we arrived in time for the 0730 minibus for Sangklaburi. We couldn't all fit so we grabbed tickets for the 0930 air-con service.

The scenery is certainly not breathtaking and displayed an almost total absence of any wildlife. We arrived at Sangklaburi at 1330 and spent the next half hour walking to the P Guest House, which sits above a huge water storage dam. The guesthouse is large, well presented and popular.

We wandered back to town to buy food for our planned trek into some nearby forest, arriving there half-drowned from what the locals told us was an early start to the monsoon. The villagers were really lovely and helpful. They offered us fruit to taste, prepared us some food while we waited for the rain to stop, and generally behaved so much better than the clowns back home. One shop owner told us not to buy some noodles we had selected because they weren't fresh. She then discounted the ones we bought because we had purchased ten packets. I couldn't imagine that sort of thing happening in Oz.

Day 3 – Saturday 19th February 2000

Mr P assured us that we were about to go to Thung Yai Naresuan National Park. He herded us into his boat and off we went up one of the arms of the dam to a refugee camp set up inside Thailand for Karin and Hmong refugees from the ongoing guerrilla war along the border. We had no idea what would happen next. Mr P had arranged safe passage for us into the forest with Kung (a Karin) and A-Lar (a Hmong). These guys were to guide us and refrain from killing anything. Kung and A-Lar knew collectively not one word of English, which was by a not too remarkable co-incidence the sum total of our Karin or Hmong.



Mr P, of P Guest House

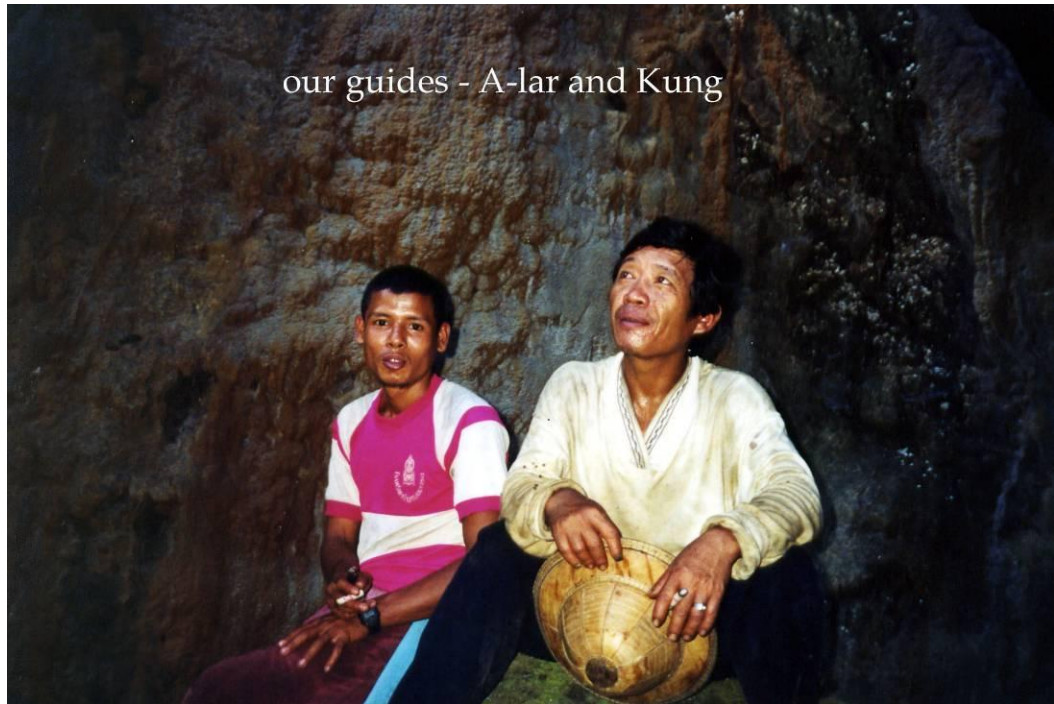


A-lar and his 80 year old grandfather!
(can't spot any resemblance)

Anything the size of a bee is safe from the local people as long as it doesn't congregate with others of its kind. Everything any bigger has been snared, trapped, shot, speared or poisoned. My mind boggled that as hunters we could be so efficient. As we walked through the forest the local boys would stop every so often to examine an old sign that an animal that might have been the size of rat had passed by in the last month or so. They would smile – there was one left!

Foolishly I expected regular water en route but it soon became obvious that in a region of limestone pinnacles and subterranean rivers such was not the case. I soon ran out of water and experienced all the things that happen to your body as you dehydrate. Whilst physiologically interesting, I wouldn't recommend it.

The terrain made no sense at all in that a downhill gully could stop, having been blocked by a wall of rock, with the underground water simply by-passing the obstruction and popping out the other side. It became apparent that without our guides we would never find our way back out of the maze. We saw very few birds in the forest – they were all hanging around back at the village!



Our first campsite was along a beautiful clear stream. Close by was the nest of a pair of the rare (for Thailand) rufous-necked hornbills. We failed to mention this to our guides.

During an afternoon rain shower A-Lar and I sat in my one-person tent and tried to come to grips with his language for important words like “uphill”, “downhill”, “hours” and all the single digit numbers. Good fun!!

We had no dinner. This was rather odd. The boys manufactured a couple of spears to impale some Malay giant frogs. These are said to be endangered. We diplomatically explained that they could eat them but we would pass. That caused some sort of problem for them apparently – so no dinner for anyone. After a short spotlight from camp that revealed a greater mouse-deer and a “cat”, we all went to bed.



Day 4 – Sunday 20th February 2000

We walked for three hours before we saw our first bird. Nobody ever claimed birding in tropical forests was easy. At the end of the day's confusing marathon we managed to see a Burmese striped tree squirrel, grey-bellied squirrel and some very wary white-handed gibbons. The boys were salivating at the prospect of returning to the site without us.

I questioned how on earth I came to be in an isolated forest with people I didn't know. If they ran away during the night we would have been keenly searching for Malay giant frogs to eat. When they ran out we would have been jungle ornaments.

Jack Daniels saved the day, and not for the first time. Not only do the contents have renowned medicinal properties, the labels a source of fascination for those that can't read English (and even for some who can), but on this occasion there was no way that we would have got the evening fire started without a nip of Universal Currency. Jack ensured our survival.

We had not the faintest idea where we were.

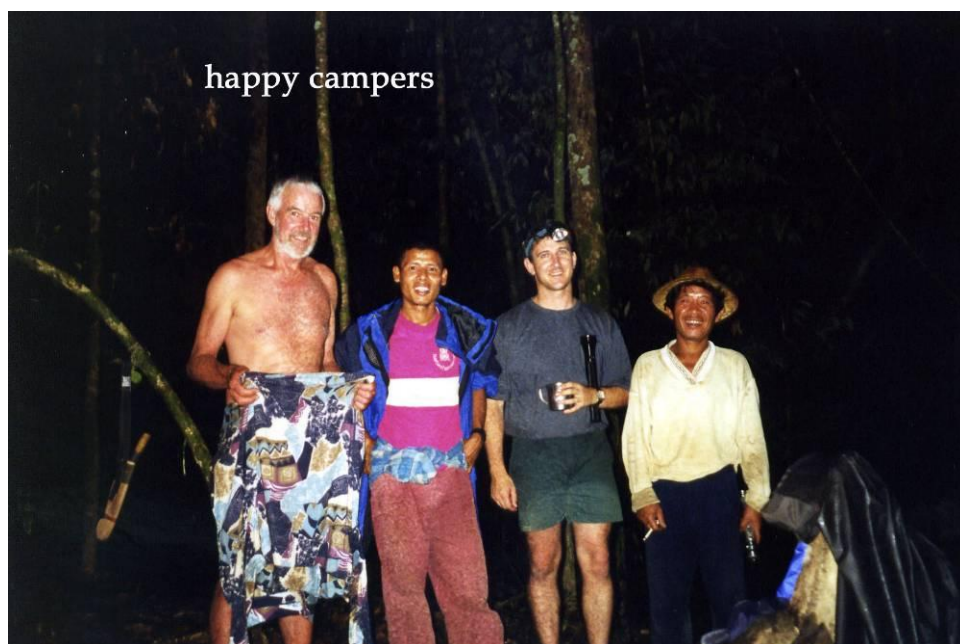
Day 5 – Monday 21st February 2000

My body was sore but the joy of getting fed some breakfast helped. We never knew when we would get to eat. It must have had something to do with our guides' army training.



A long trudge down a thumping big mountain took us past a few abandoned gold mines and then, the river! We immersed ourselves gleefully and soon discovered that we had been expected. The villagers had towed some bamboo rafts upriver courtesy of their elephants. We had the choice of riding the elephants or the rafts. We chose the latter. Our packs went by elephant.

I was given to think that the pitifully small amount of money we paid for this experience was more than amply rewarded through these happy people. If this were all a tourist attraction it would have cost us a fortune.



saprophytic orchid

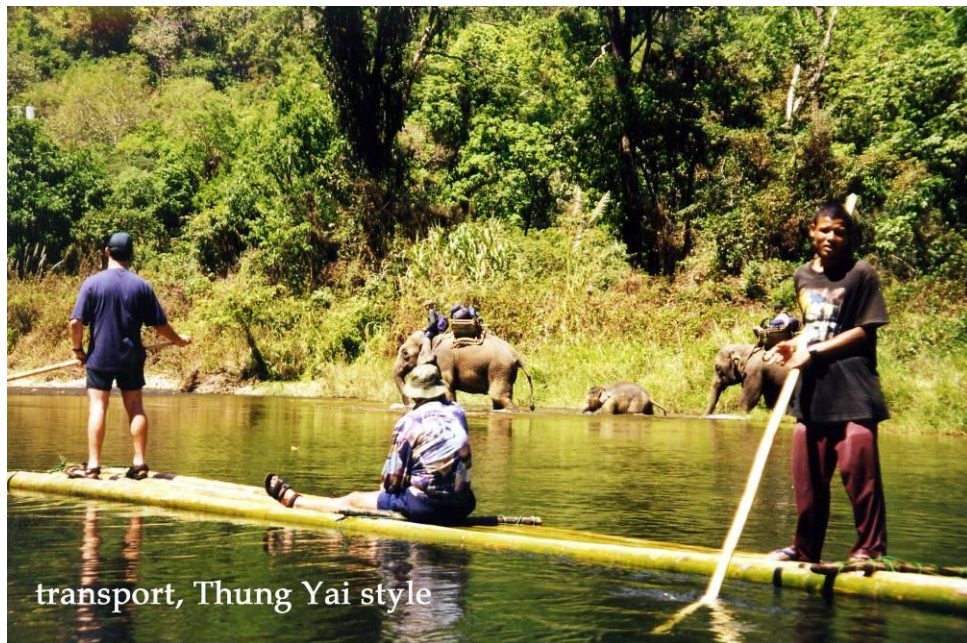


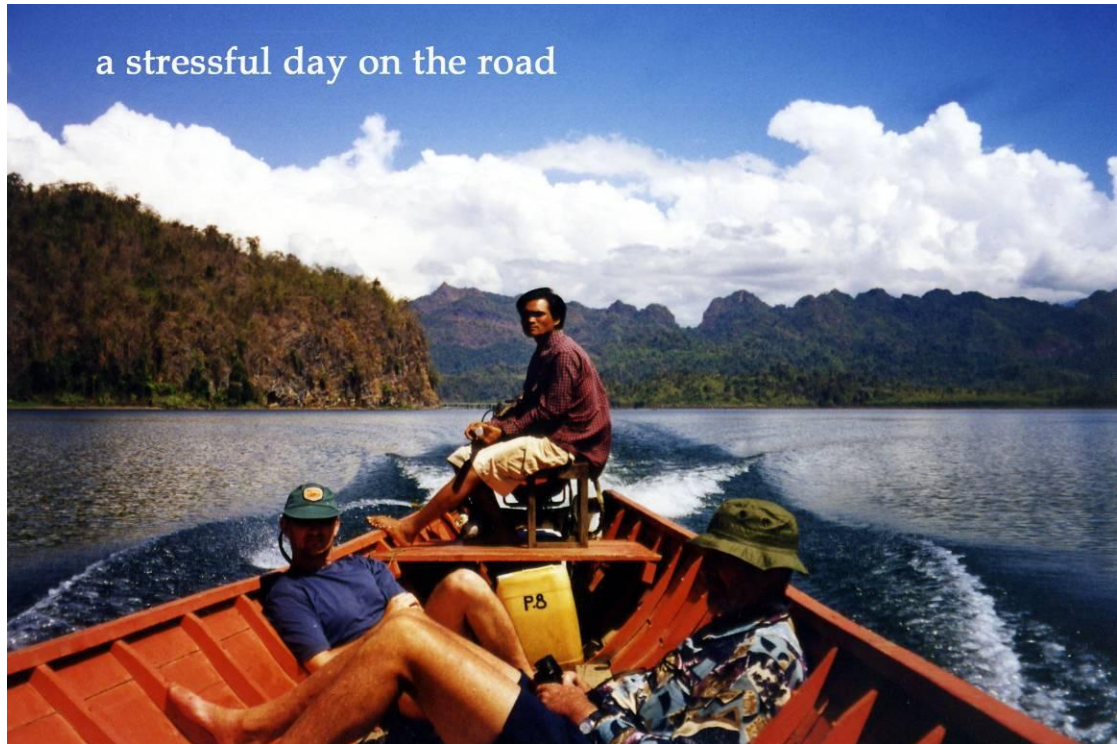
consideration of the Jack



The journey downriver was pure magic. It was cool, the scenery interesting, and although our rafts were not too buoyant we survived the trip to be re-united with the refugee camp. Here we toured our guides' family homes and met some charming folk in the process. A-Lar's home's Buddhist shrine is now adorned with an empty Jack bottle and a stuffed koala.

We returned to P Guest House where we drank sufficient Chang beer to give us a useful headache the next morning. During our alcoholic fog we convinced some young French tourists to give the jungle trek we had just finished a run. And so the guys from the refugee camp got to entertain their second tour group, and the white-handed gibbons were spared to spend a few more days on the planet. As for me I felt really good about the experience. The refugees had a little money to spend at the shops and I am sure they will never forget the Australian tourists. I'll never forget them.





Day 6 – Tuesday 22nd February 2000

“Oh, you want to go to Thung Yai Naresuan National Park”, says Mr P. “Why didn’t you say so”. I had thought we had, just a few times. So now we hire a songtheaw to check out this mythical park via a few cultural sights along the way. First stop was Three Pagodas Pass, which marks the Thai – Burma border. The park was next and it was great – we decided to come back the next day and stay for a day or so. Then came a Hmong Buddhist temple and back to the local village to buy food for our much anticipated camping in the national park.



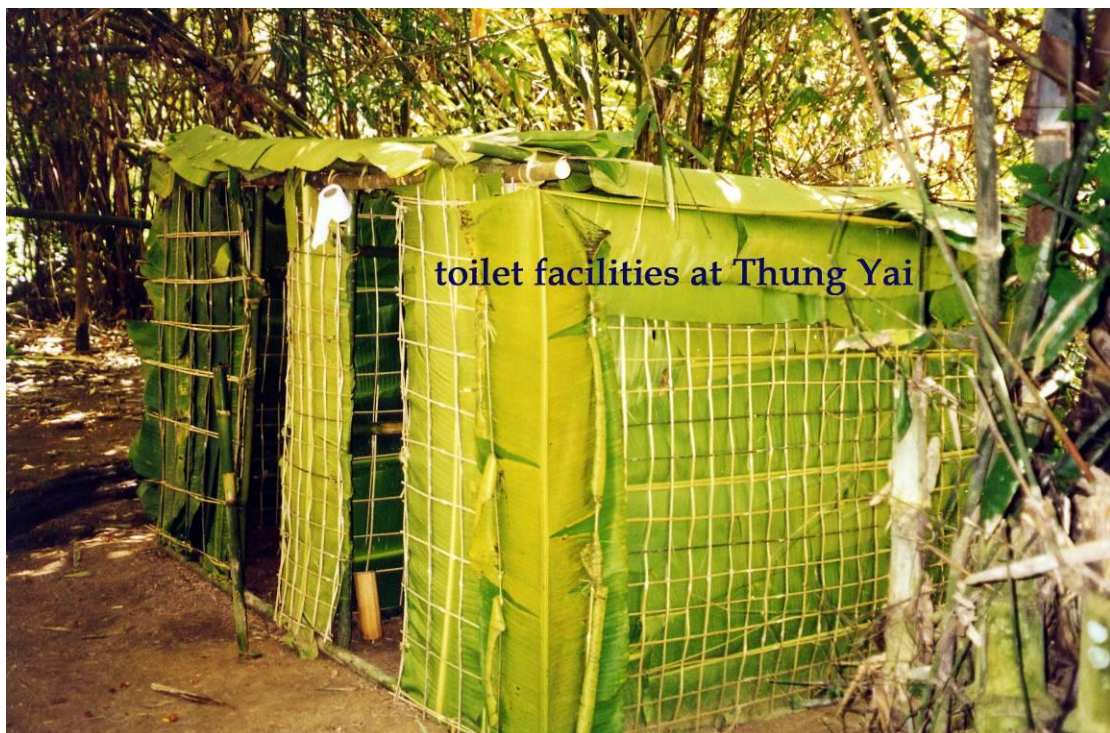
We negotiated our transport fee for the park with Mr P et al, before settling into some steady drinking.

Day 7 – Wednesday 23rd February 2000

We had high hopes for seeing mammals in Thung Yai Naresuanbut by the end of the first day had managed only grey-bellied squirrel, muntjac deer and a few small “run away” things we didn’t get to see.

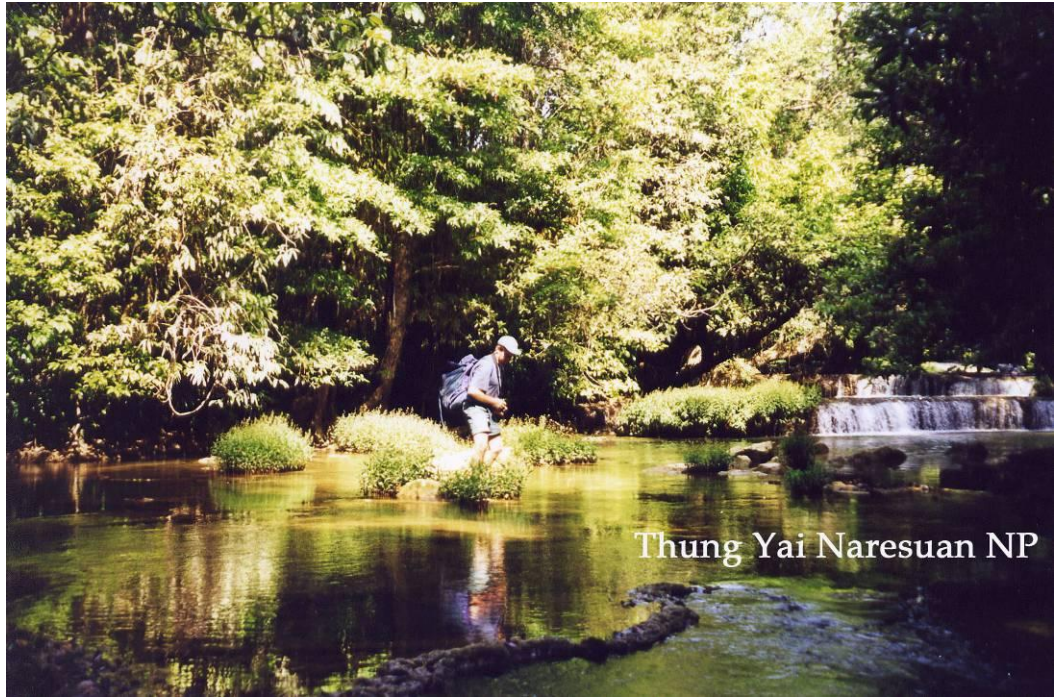
The campground at the park appeared to be shiny new. We may have been the first tourists ever to stay in it. It is quite well located near a small creek with various other habitats nearby and with quite a lot of birds about, particularly woodpeckers. A spectacularly beautiful river nearby didn’t have so many birds, although it looked to be very birdy indeed.

A spotlight in the evening produced various bats and nightjars. The smallest mammal on the planet was seen in abundance – Kitt’s hog-nosed bat. These tiny but very welcome animals fluttered about our faces plucking mosquitoes. They sometimes flicked past our noses and cheeks as they hunted. Other much larger bats were common and these probably ate the Kitt’s.



Day 8 – Thursday 24th February 2000

We split up and walked in different directions. Best birds were white-capped pigeon and banded broadbill, with large treeshrew and common palm civets being the only mammals seen. I enjoyed a lovely walk up along the river.



orchid flower



planning session



I didn't care too much for my tent's new tenants. Several thousand red ants had to be made homeless before I could go to bed. The management may have to tame them before any resort is built.

Day 9 – Friday 25th February 2000

We went back to Mr P's and enjoyed an afternoon drinking and chatting with locals, tourists, the staff and each other. Mrs P was pissed and very friendly, whilst Mr P was just pissed.



Day 10 – Saturday 26th February 2000

The day of the bus. We left Sangklaburi at 0630 in a minibus bound for Kanchanaburi. There we transferred to "ordinary bus 361" to take us to Ratchaburi. It was on this conveyance that we determined that the average Thai monk is a bit of a dickhead. We fine folk were settled in the back of the bus when a number of these robed chappies boarded. Their first mission was to push us off our seats. Having achieved at least partial success using the tactic of bum creep, they then debated whether they would bother to pay the bus fare. They settled upon what they considered a fair fare, which they then refused to pay on account of the conductor being a female. For some reason best known to them they could no more deal directly with a female than fly to the moon. They chose an intermediary at random.

From Ratchaburi we caught an air-con bus to Phetchaburi, and finally a taxi to the Kaeng Krachan National Park HQ, which is nowhere near the park proper, but at least its name doesn't end with "buri". We discovered our favourite park worker, Pi-anne, had gone, Nancy the tame but somewhat insane hornbill had died and the talented baby elephant we looked forward to interrogating had been relocated. I was a tad disappointed to hear of so many changes.

We celebrated our successful travel day by eating at the lakeside restaurant and consuming a curry that was so hot we had to chew on some chillies to cool our mouths down.

Day 11 – Sunday 27th February 2000

Sumkit, our driver, took us to Bangkrang Camp in the heart of the park. There were birds and mammals everywhere. We spied some fresh tiger spoor, but alas, not the animal responsible for it, although it did keep us on our guard. A very obliging young Thai couple gave us lunch. Young relatively affluent Thais are typically very generous and keen to meet visitors to their country. Nature watching has become a fashionable past-time for the new rich. Often they know little about what they are watching but they do it anyway, which is really good. Dave and I sold ourselves as wildlife experts so that we could steal their vehicle to do some spotlighting.



Our nocturnal soiree yielded common and masked palm civets, two slow lorises, a banded linsang and a number of nightjars.



muntjac deer at Kaeng Krachan NP

Day 12 – Monday 28th February 2000

A full day was happily spent wandering about the low altitude section of Kaeng Krachan. Most of the wildlife was becoming a bit recycled and aside from a couple of Malay porcupines there was little seen of any great note.



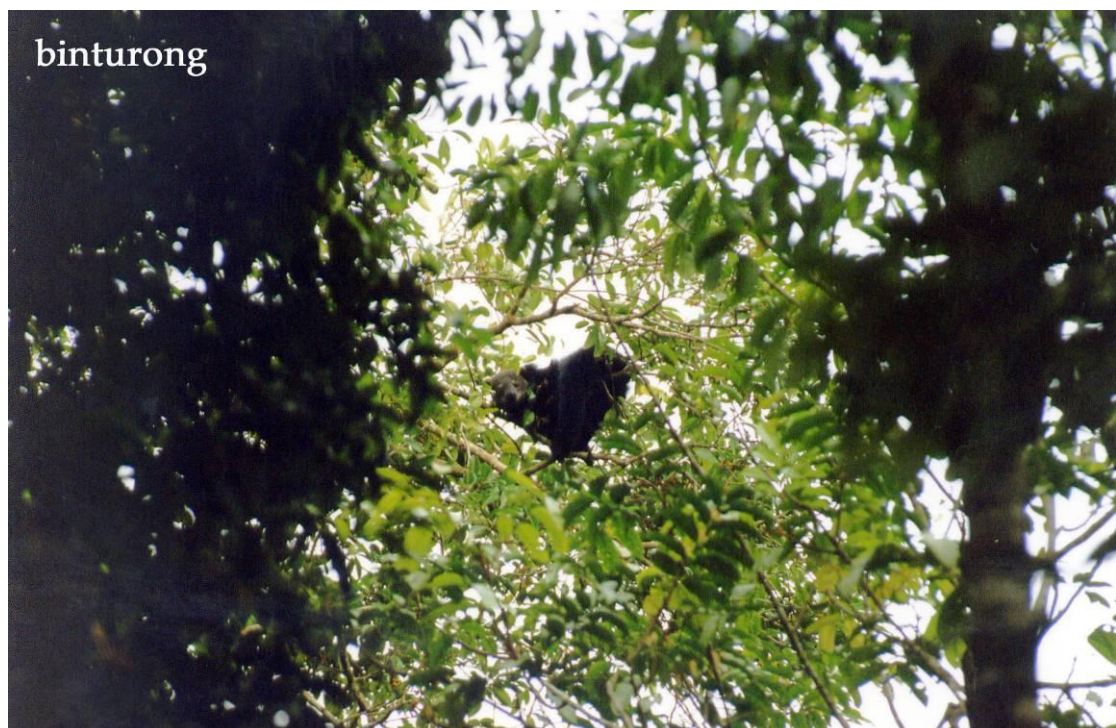
Sum-Dave and pet elephant tooth



Day 13 – Tuesday 29th February 2000

We left for the higher altitude camp in mid-afternoon. We were reacquainted with Samrong, a ranger and friend from our previous trip. He was really happy to see us, and we him. I think much of this had to do with the amount of alcohol we brought with us.

We took a short walk to the viewpoint shelter, one of my all-time favourite wildlife watching sites, which yielded excellent views of a binturong eating figs in one of a number of fruiting trees.



Dinner at the ranger's cookhouse was followed by some Jack and a short drunken spotlight walk that turned up a masked palm civet and a porcupine.

Barry-Sean had returned to the lake so that he could phone his beloved. Wow, he must have been in love.

Day 14 – Wednesday 1st March 2000

A contingent of very noisy Thais conspired to try to ruin my day. They were up at 0300 for reasons unknown, but perhaps just to make noise as an end in itself. Just as I arrived pre-dawn at the viewpoint they surrounded me. It didn't seem to bother a yellow-throated marten, nor the other three martens walking along the road as I returned for breakfast. Also seen was a lesser tree shrew happily munching on some banana flowers.

After one of the great breakfasts of the Common Era, Sum-Dave, as he became known, and I returned to the viewpoint only to re-engage with the gaggle of rabble making the noise.



Rain intervened in proceedings precipitating an early start to our drinks. The noise-makers had gone away with their legacy being much left over food. It seems that the local rule is that whenever anyone visits the park they leave all their uneaten food with the underpaid rangers. So we dined on fish, flowers – of all things, and other bits and pieces that were hard to identify, but tasty. We learned that Thai whisky is best left alone or used for starting fires. We had a fun night with the locals.



Day 15 – Thursday 2nd March 2000

Heavy fog blanketed the mountain during an early morning walk to the viewpoint. It nonetheless revealed wreathed and great hornbills. The numbers of white-handed gibbons at KK are amazing. We spotted four groups before we had lunch. Also seen were yellow-throated martens and dozens of leaf monkeys. Birds were harder to see in the fog.

We lunched in the cook's kitchen and then packed up and started walking down the mountain along the "main" road. It was quiet and very pleasant with large numbers of hornbills and other birds seen. Sumkit found us and took us back to the top camp to pick up our packs and then return us to Kaeng Krachan Lake, where we arrived fairly late. The restaurant had stayed open on our account.



Malay giant frog

Day 16 – Friday 3rd March 2000

After breakfast Sumkit took us to Phetchaburi where we hopped straight onto a bus bound for Bangkok. From there we paid some guy to drive us to the airport.

Now I have never been a great fan of KFC. I would have thought that what it lacked in nutrition it made up in terms of calories, and surely the food at the airport outlet would have been safe to eat. Not so, Grasshopper. Within ten minutes (yes!) Dave and I set the airport sprint record as we attacked the toilets.

We left Thailand for Nepal on a Royal Nepal 757.

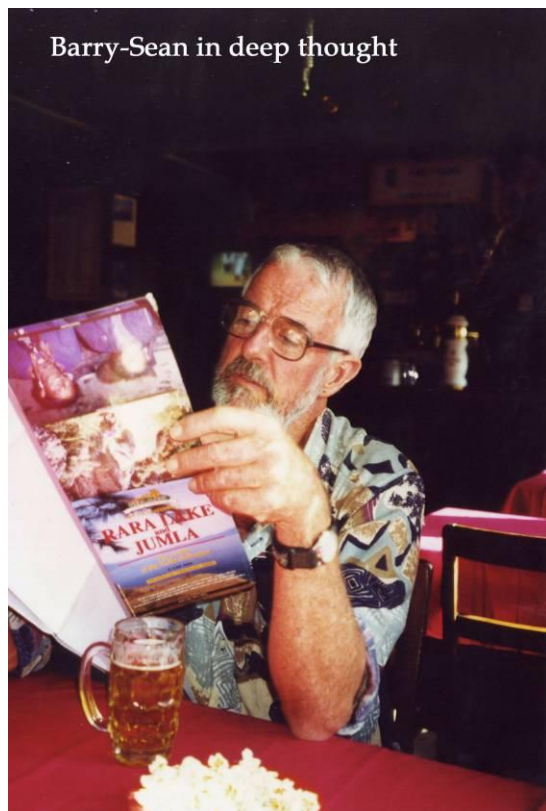
NEPAL

The passage through Kathmandu Airport was glacially slow. Dave's bag had been slightly lightened by persons unknown. Mine fared better. The smiling and chatty Nepalese visa fee collector tried to scam \$US10 from me by using a distraction technique that must work for some – in this case by failing to give me change and then looking toward the next person in the queue. I stood there impassively until he noticed my lack of smile and chat and with my arm extended. He handed me the change without any comment.

Ganesh Rimal, a friend from my first visit to Nepal was in the terminal and we had a short chin-wag before Bharat and Bhim from our trekking agency met us and gave us the full Nepalese welcome, flowers and all. A potted history of the country and anything else we needed to know was given as we were taken to our favourite digs, the Hotel 7 Corner. I found out that my Langtang Valley National Park poaching report from 1998 had seen various people jailed, sacked or removed from the valley. Nice work.

Day 17 – Saturday 4th March 2000

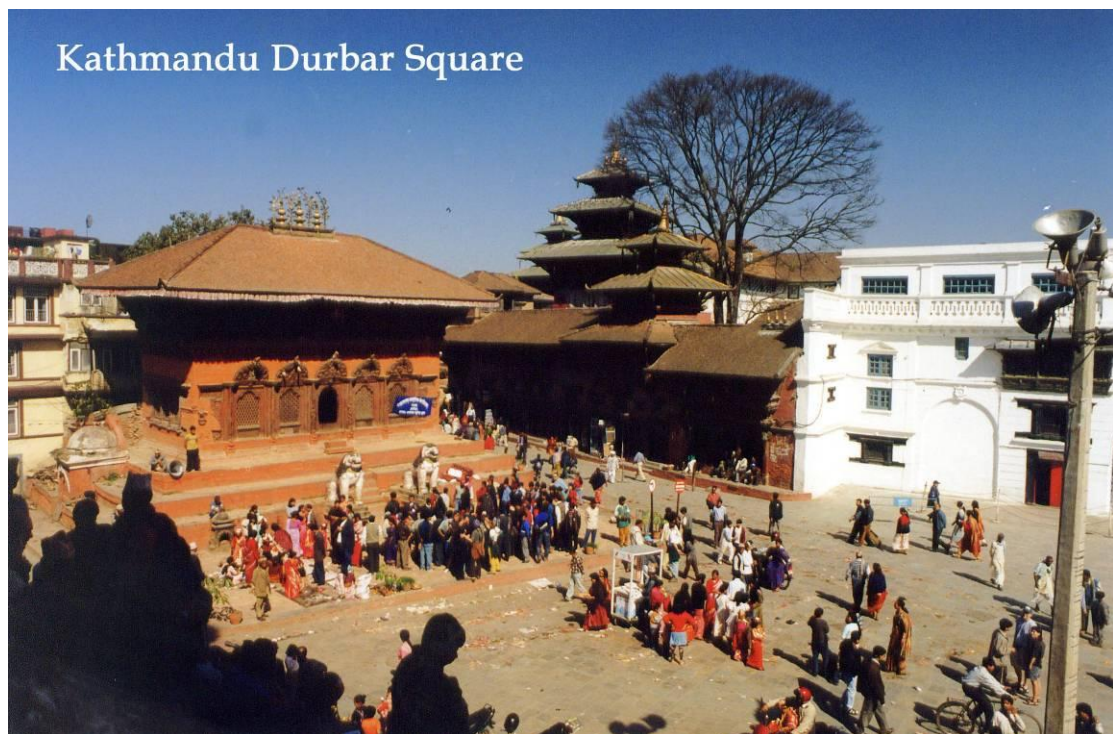
Bharat's office was the post-breakfast venue for our trek briefing. All was on track. We walked to Bharat's house to catch up with Nirmala, his wife, and for a great lunch and a few longnecks. Barry-Sean was a bit stunned by the country and the speed at which his understanding of the world was changing.



We left Bharat and Nirmala and wandered about the city. After a short poke around Kathmandu Durbar Square Barry-Sean and I took a rickshaw back to Thamel, as we were lost.

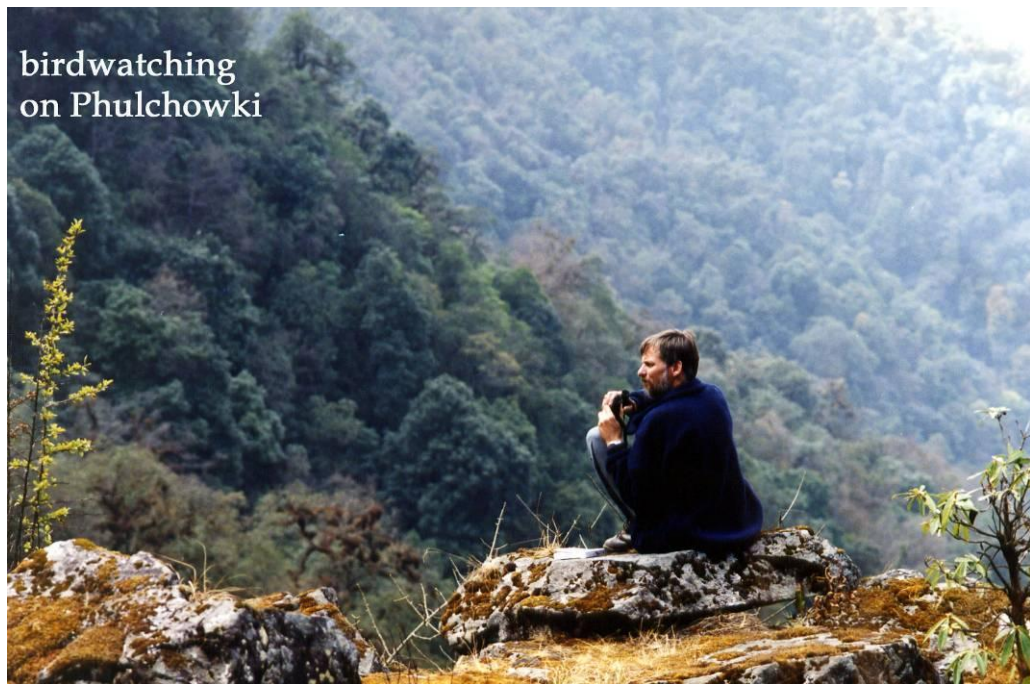
The highlight of the day by far was our pilgrimage to the Tom and Jerry Bar. This was the venue for many a responsible beer or three for Dave and I on a previous trip. Significantly we had charmed a couple of young ladies the last time we drank here. We left them “hungry for love” in the company of the bar staff. The same bar staff remembered us and gave us a discount on our drinks and some vigorous thanks for what must have been the night of their lives.

It was the Shiva Festival day but we failed to get too involved as we might have on previous visits. Instead we moved from the Tom and Jerry to “Scores Bar” to experience what was promoted as a reggae festival. Staff outnumbered tourists but that was fine. A waiter who had previously worked at Helena’s Restaurant remembered us and desperately tried to get us to hire him as a guide, or anything else. He didn’t look all that happy with his lot in life.



Day 18 – Sunday 5th March 2000

We spent the day at Phulchowki, a mountain in the Kathmandu Valley renowned for its bird life. Nothing too stunning was seen but we enjoyed ourselves and marvelled at the fine views of Barry-Sean’s back as he kept walking miles ahead of us. In Africa you should never get between a hippo and water, and with Barry-Sean, never get between him and the bottom of a hill.



Day 19 – Monday 6th March 2000

Because our flight from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj in the southwest of Nepal was in the middle of the day it left two fairly useless “day ends” on either side. We flew in a Necon Air Avro that was very old. It looked like most of its mass consisted of rivets. I had never seen anything like it, even in a museum. The flight was fun - they had a lucky door prize and some food. A Nepalese police superintendent flew with us, increasing the likelihood of us becoming a terrorist target.

The policeman and I were chatting as we walked to the terminal at ‘Gunj. All the police and army guys on duty were looking very upright and saluting me so I saluted them back. Strange.

Necon Air Avro



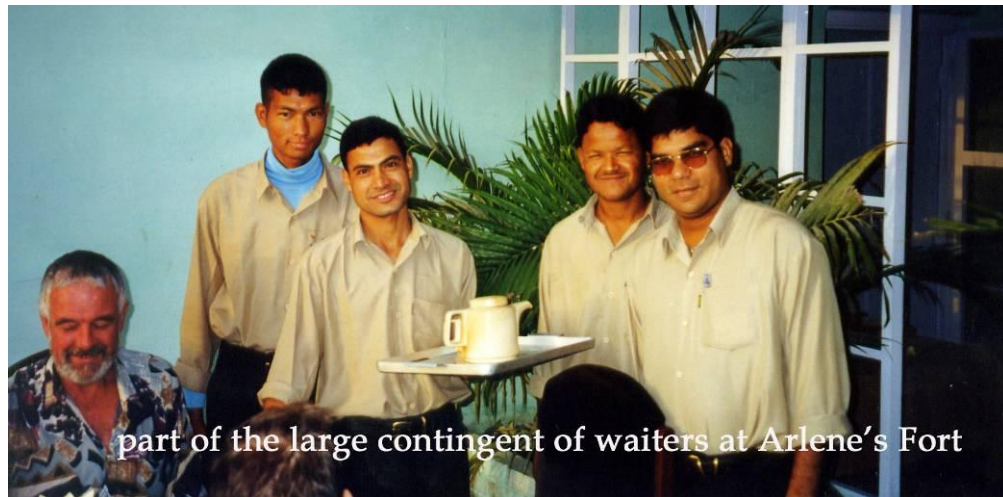
Our hotel in 'Gunj charged in \$US but we wondered why. It was called the Batika Hotel, but all the signs at the facility said "Arlene's Fort". If this was the best hotel in town we did not want to see the others. Nobody ever goes to Nepalgunj. It is the most decidedly awful place I have ever been. Our slothful afternoon produced two mammals – three-striped palm squirrel and Indian flying fox. We ticked off a dozen birds in the hotel grounds whilst a continuous stream of humanity, bullocks, donkeys, horses and other traffic shuffled past the hotel gate.



Late in the afternoon, Ajamabar, our cook for the trek, plus one of our porters, arrived from Kathmandu in the public bus with some of our trek food.

If the decor at Arlene's was lacking the service certainly was not. We were treated like the last representatives of the Raj. We had personal beer glass fillers and chair movers in addition to 1.5 food waiters each. Dinner was a massive banquet and of very good quality.

This may not have been the most exciting day of the trip but it didn't lack in the development of lasting images of another world.



Day 20 – Tuesday 7th March 2000

Breakfast was also a banquet. It was just as well, as we waited an age at the airport for our chartered flight to Jumla. We were advised that a charter was more reliable than a commercial service as the latter were notorious for being cancelled if a more profitable sector could be found “on the day”. So we hired a twin otter from Yeti Airlines (I am not joking). The problem with our flight path was that it crossed one of the main ranges of the Himalaya. Flights were very likely not to operate after about mid-morning on account of the strong winds that develop every day at this time of year.





The plane was over an hour late in arriving and then it sat on the tarmac for an eternity making me think that we would go nowhere. It was stacked to the gunwales with all manner of shit. This included police riot gear and various freight items, that were tacked onto our charter rather opportunistically. Of course it also housed a large quantity of our food and a number of our Nepalese trek colleagues.

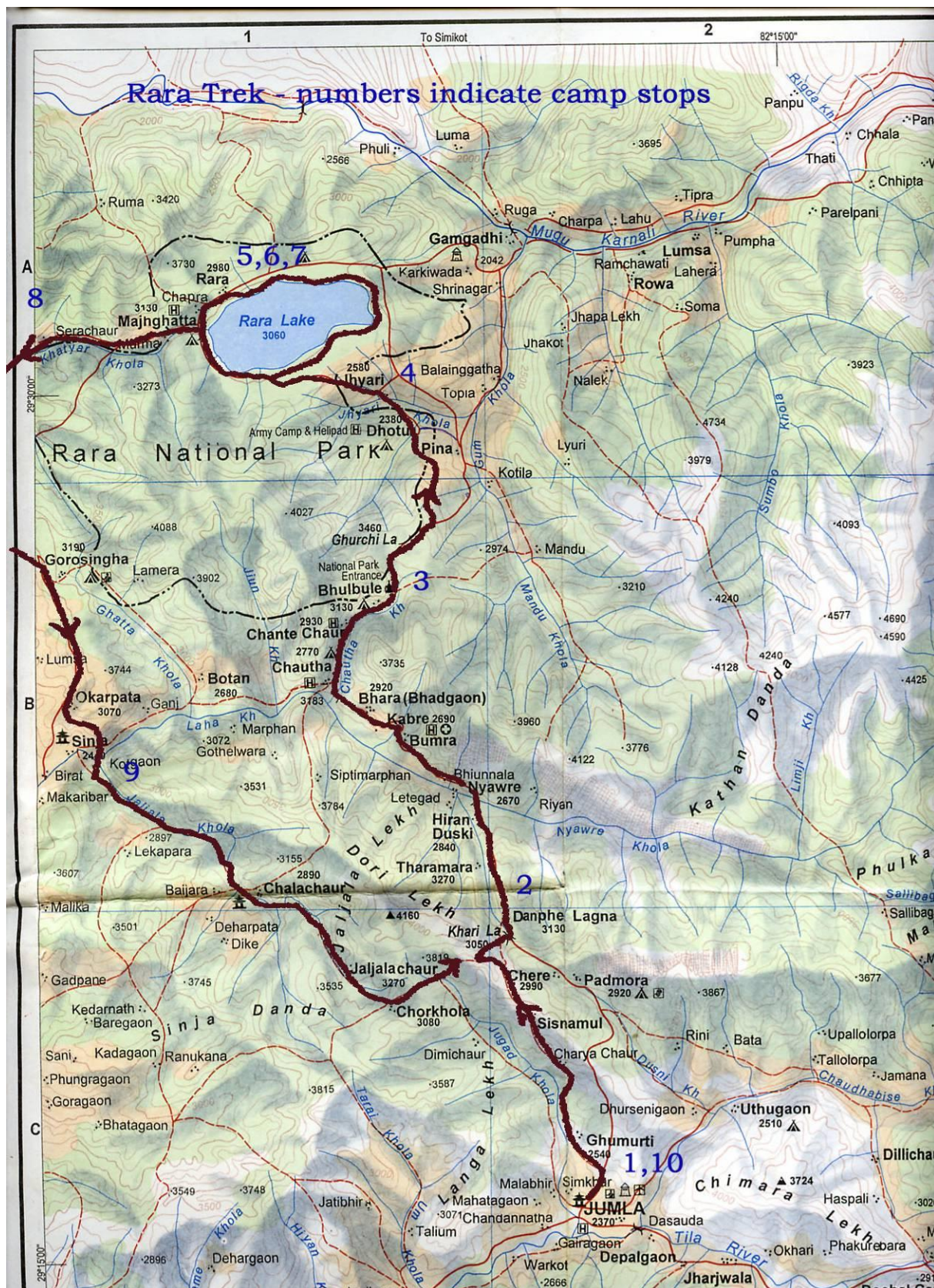
The flight to Jumla was simply unbelievable as we scraped across mountain passes, scared birds from the tree tops and seemingly blew snow from the ground as we weaved our way from near sea level to a rustic airstrip in the sky.

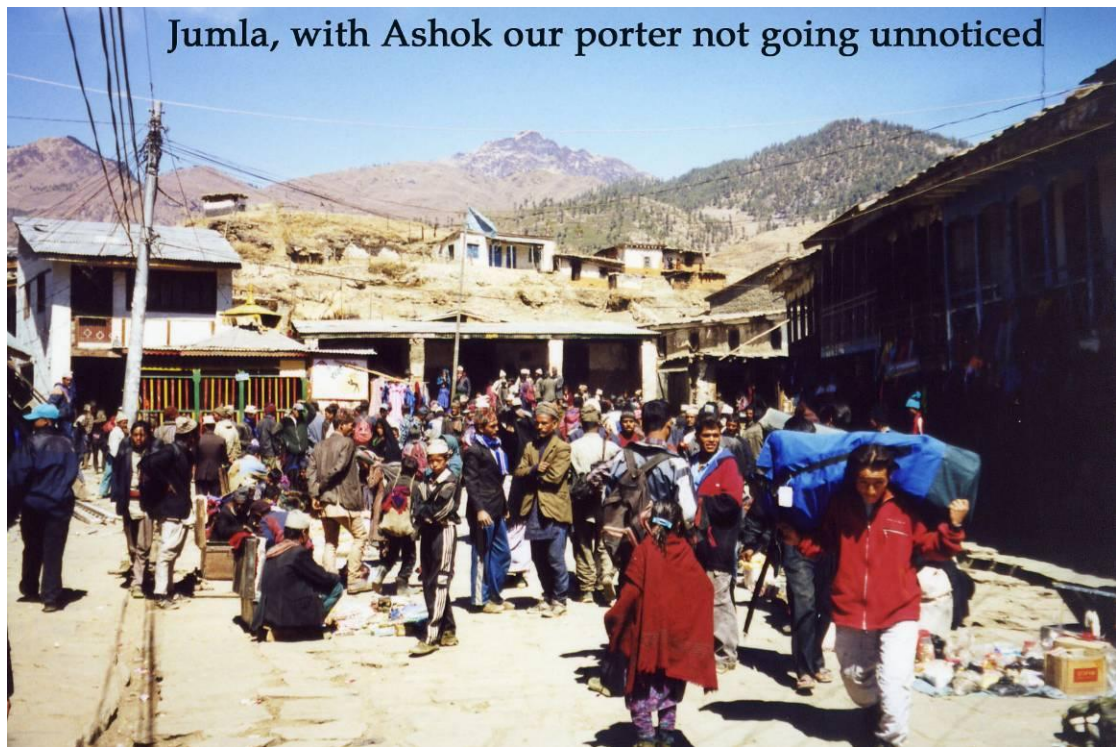
A surreal scene awaited us at Jumla with masses of poor, and to my eyes, very grotty Jumla locals stretched out along the airport fence wondering why there was a plane landing in their village and who and what might be contained therein.

our charter lands at Jumla



a vision of hell as the Jumla folk watch us





Jumla was the centre of the old Malla Empire. The folk are quite dark-skinned and noticeably different to those from the Kathmandu Valley. They are not at all friendly. They stared at us and failed to make any acknowledgement when we spoke or gestured to them. They took a bit more interest when we had a couple of their youngsters shot.

We met up with our porters who had walked for several days from Surkhet after catching a bus from Kathmandu. We then tried to find a couple of extra porters from the town. We located two and gave them some money, which prompted them to escape, not being seen again.

Lunch lasted for hours as we tried to find anyone who wanted work, but as poor as these folk are, nobody wanted any portering work. Two guys, Bal and Karna Bahadur agreed to come with us as local guides. The trek now had a:

Trek manager:- Bharat Regmi

Head porter:- Naina Rai

Cook:- Ajambar Rai

White men:- Dave, Barry-Sean and Steve

Local guides:- Bal and Karna Bahadur

Porters:- Anil Pokharel, Rudra Rai, Surya Rai, Nar Bahadur Rai, Junga Rai, Ashok Rai, Bikash Magar, Rana Sherpa and Janga Tamang.

Ajambar, Naina and the local guides helped with some of the portering. Some of the porters were carrying double loads of 60kgs.

We didn't have time to trek very far on the first afternoon but at least we got out of Jumla. We stopped well short of Ghumurti (2540m) and set about lighting a small campfire, but being so close to Jumla there was little burnable wood. If the campsite was unspectacular, then our food was brilliant. Ajambar manages a restaurant in Kathmandu and soon displayed his talents with preparing food.

As a "life experience" day it was right up there.

Day 21 – Wednesday 8th March 2000

The temperature dropped to about -10° during the night, giving some indication of colder things to come. A cooked breakfast was very welcome.

The trail took us past quite a few birds, including some big groups of chukar. We managed our first wrong turn but the local guides could hardly be blamed as we had walked off well ahead of them. It didn't matter as we lunched at a scenic spot at the foot of a mountain along with a large number of friendly Nepalese police. These guys were nuts. They were fresh-faced, armed to the teeth, looking for trouble but having little idea what to do if they found it, and quite prepared to ham about while we took pictures of them.



a happy unit of the Nepalese police

the boys ham it up



The police cameo preceded our attempt at getting “back on track”. This involved walking straight up a mountain on which there was no trail. Those at our lunch site were tracking our progress. The locals screamed instructions from the valley as we took the inevitable wrong turns. Dave saved one of the porters from certain death as he overbalanced walking around an overhanging rock. That we all survived this almost vertical climb was miraculous. The porters were scattered over a broad area.

we walked up here



We arrived back on the main trail (“main” in this context does not mean very much) where we re-grouped and passed through the locality of Danphe Lagna at 3130m, scaring a fox in the process. With fading daylight we could not be too choosy about a campsite. It was certainly nowhere near being on level ground. This part of Nepal struggles for flat bits.

By the time our modest tents were erected amongst a small forest it had become very cold. We soon had a roaring fire. Dinner was sensational. I couldn’t wait to get into bed with two sets of thermals, track pants and various other bits of clothing to keep me company. An owl called above the tent during the night but I could not be tempted to go outside as the mercury dropped to about -15° .



Day 22 – Thursday 9th March 2000

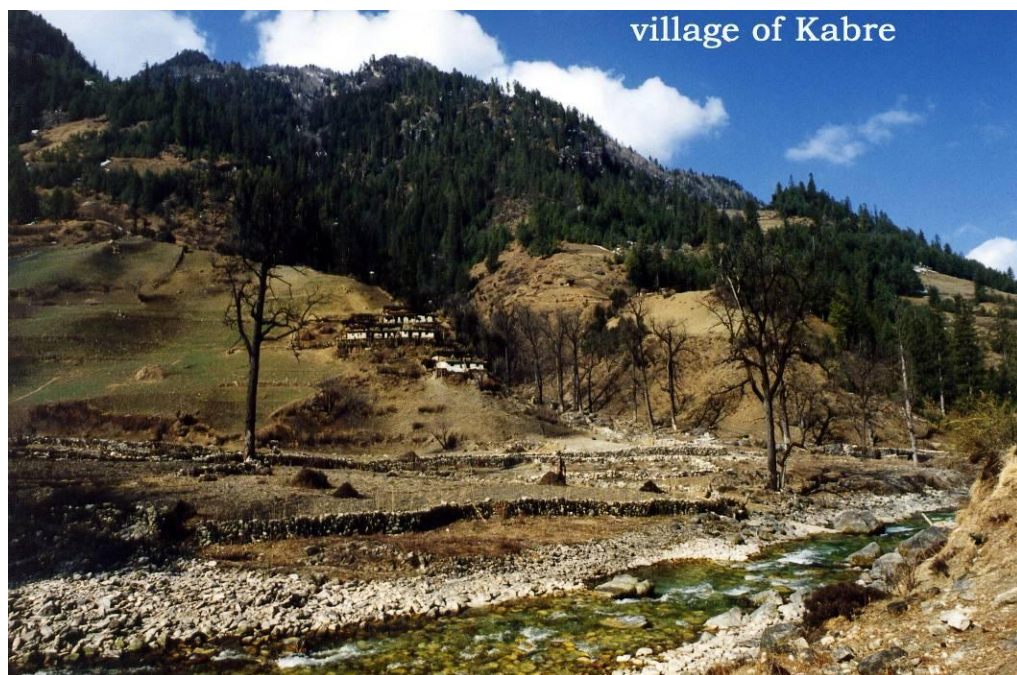
The day was marred when Ashok, one of the porters fell, badly gashing his knee. We had no suture needles but they would have been called into service if we had. He was in considerable pain but soldiered on with a reduced load, with the rest redistributed among the other porters. By the end of the trek his knee had eventually healed but it didn't look pretty.

We dropped 750m from our campsite, soon missing the trail's turnoff. After arriving at a small river we turned upstream where we climbed 750m passing through the villages of Nyawre, Bumra, Kabre, Bhara and Chautha until we reached the Rara Lake National Park boundary at Bhulbule (3130m).

We lunched at Bumra with the near frozen river being the site for my wash. I hadn't had one for a few days and decided that no matter how life-threateningly cold the water, I was jumping in. Later it felt really good to count all my extremities, although this was between gritted teeth.



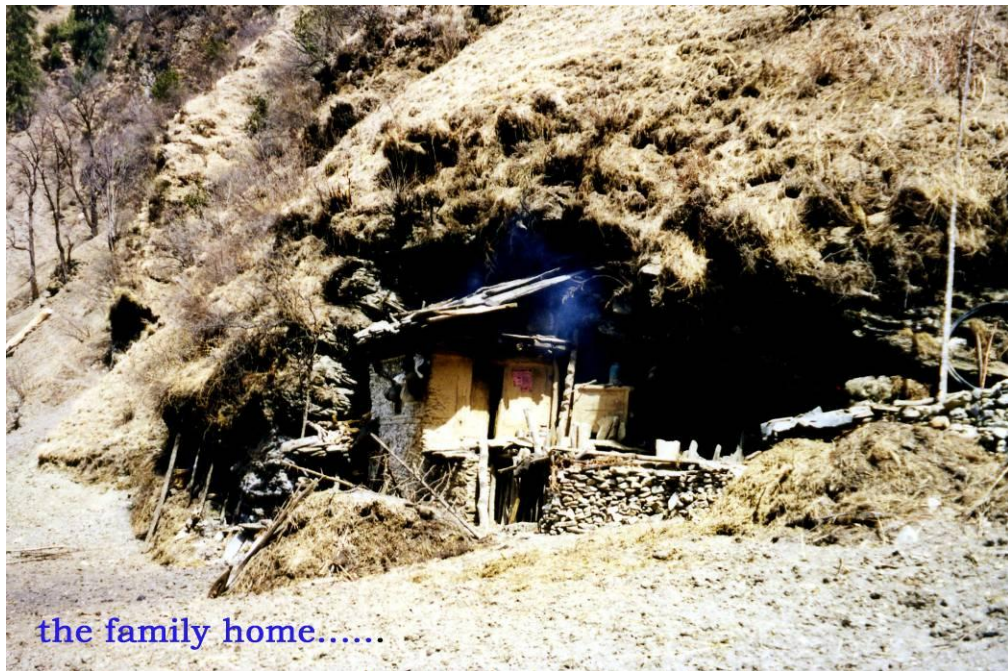
a good place for a swim

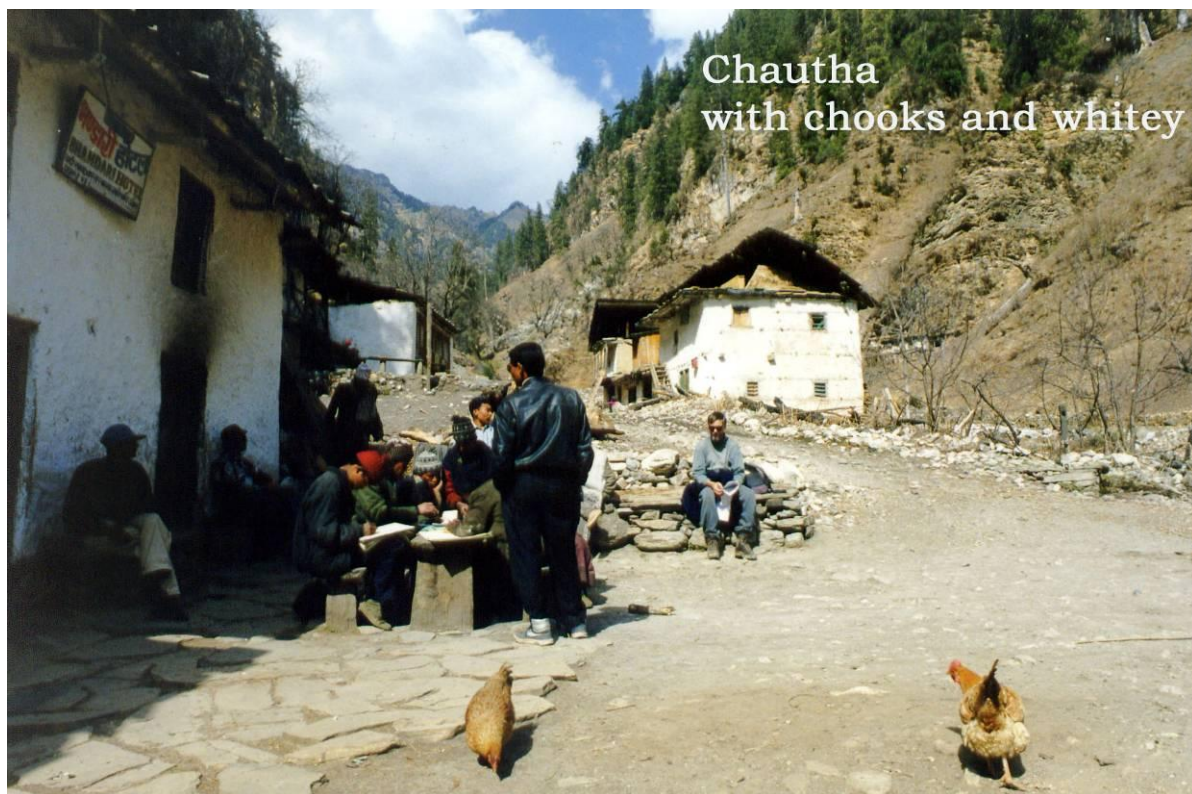


At Bhulbule we signed the visitor book, as do about 50 others each year. Barry-Sean created a record in becoming the oldest foreign visitor to the park, at 63 years. The park officials told us that we would be unlikely to see any large mammals. Unfortunately they were largely correct, but our immediate concerns related to staying unfrozen. Dave spotted a couple of Himalayan tahr high above our campsite. They were to be the only ones we would see despite many hours searching suitable mountainsides over the following week or so.

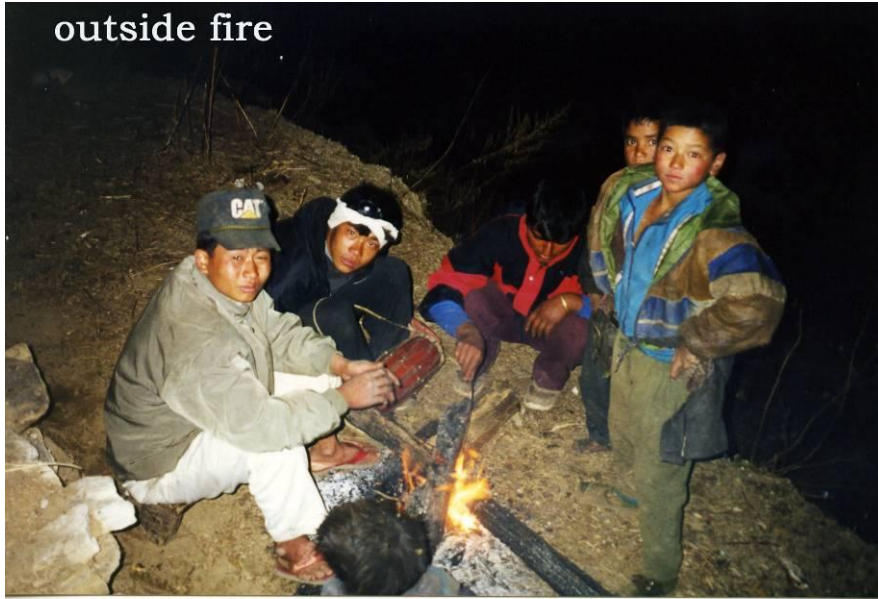
A depressing aspect of this very poor region is the rate of deforestation, not for timber or firewood, but just to increase forage for goats. The bases of ancient trees were burnt repeatedly before they eventually toppled, where they were left to rot. Whatever laws Nepal

has regarding the cutting of timber, they do not apply where there are no government officers and thus no enforcement.





outside fire



inside fire

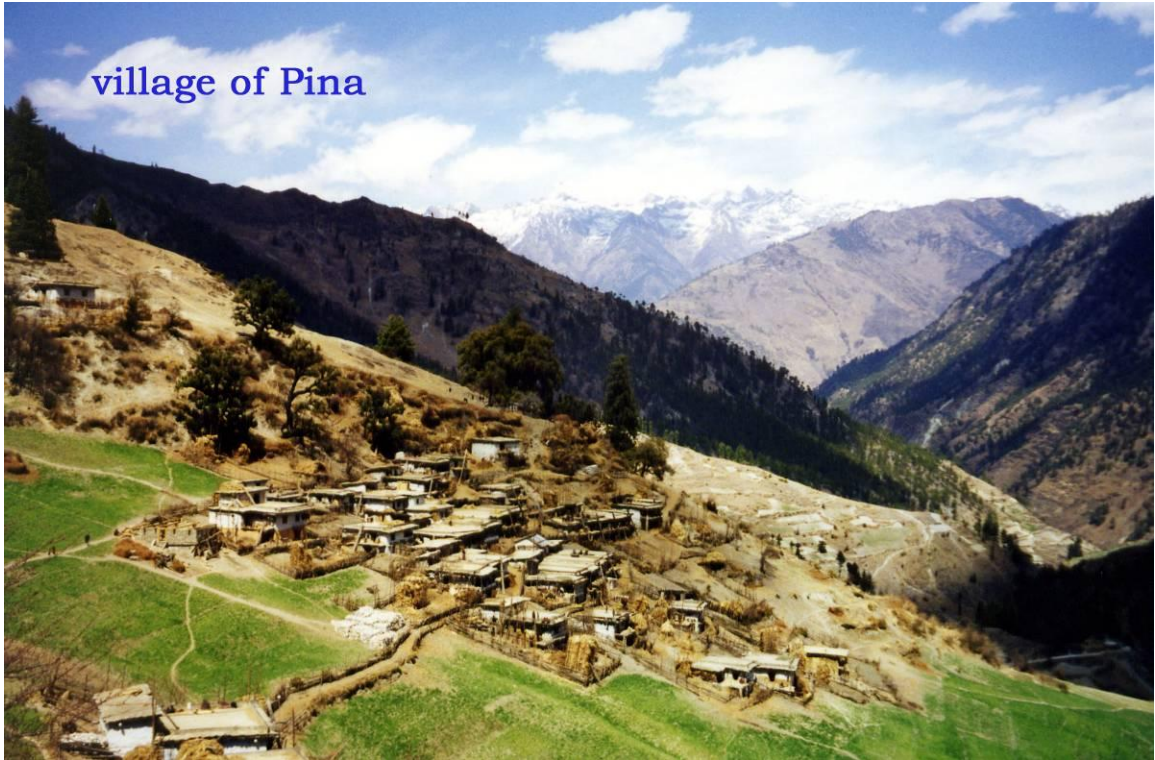


Day 23 – Friday 10th March 2000

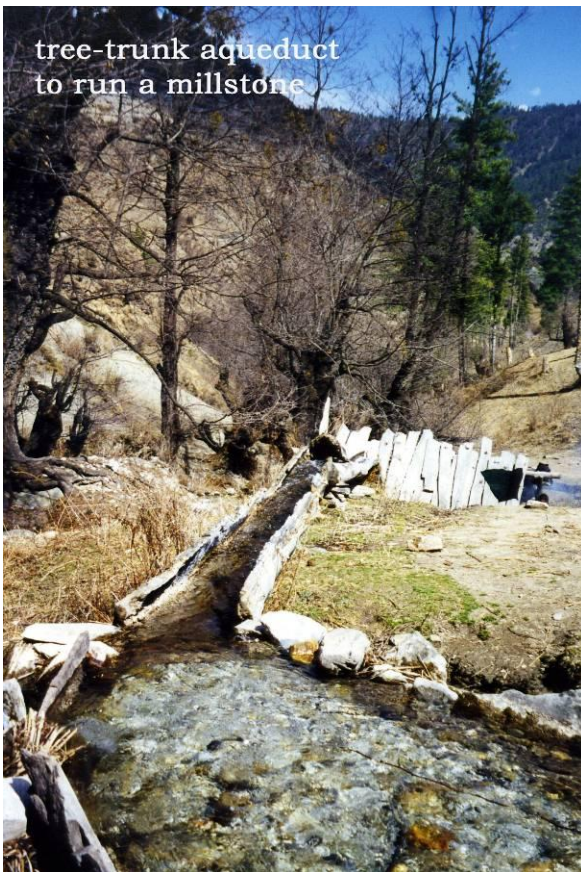
We broke camp and soon after setting off passed back out of this part of the park and up over Gumurchi Pass (3460m). We walked along the park boundary for a while trekking through the villages of Pina and Dhotu before getting lost again. We took a long detour, and in the process saw poverty at its extreme. Even the porters were talking about how poor the local people were. It was the major topic of conversation for everyone.



village of Pina



tree-trunk aqueduct
to run a millstone



ancient cedars at Jhyari
(and Himalayan griffon vulture)



Most of the local people from this part of the trek onwards had had few if any contacts with outsiders so we were a real curiosity for them, as they were for us.

After lunch we got lost again but as all trails led to Jhyari (2580m), our target campsite, we met there Brown's cows style. My body was holding up to the challenge. Minor joint or muscle pains would come and go seemingly at random, or dependent on whether we were going uphill or down.

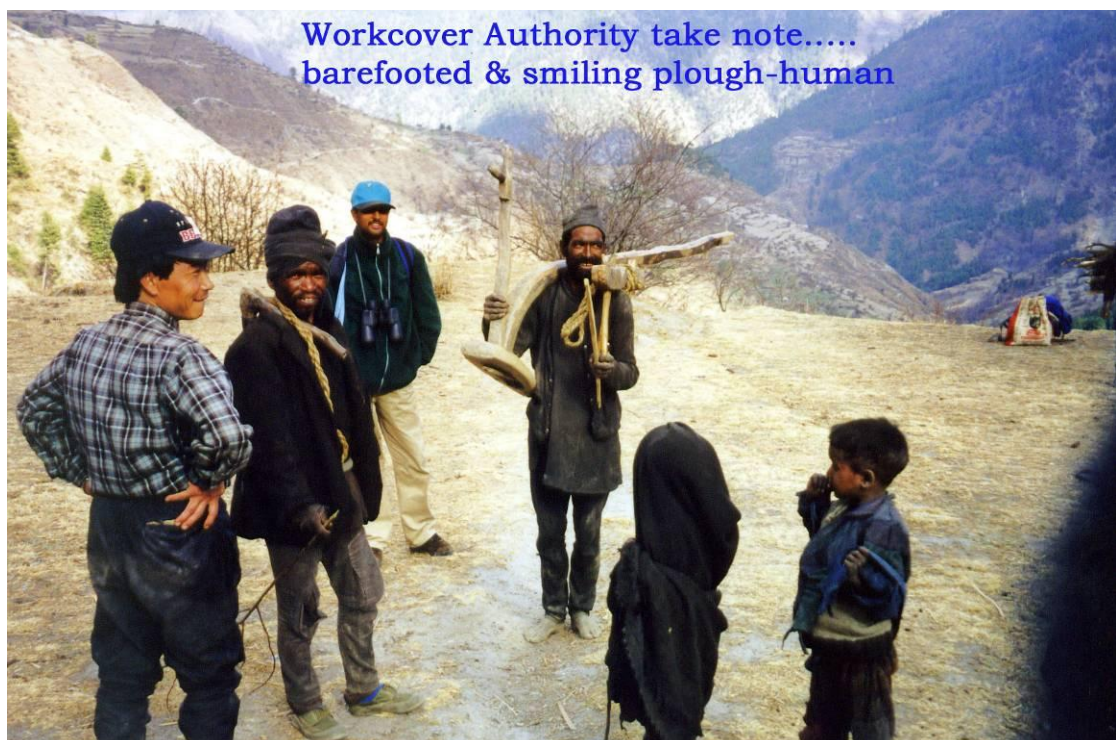
The experiences gained at Jhyari are now a part of me. Jhyari is the poorest place I have ever seen, perhaps the poorest place anywhere. I think of it just about every time I flick a light switch, turn on a tap or eat anything. They have no government services whatsoever, no electricity, no shops, no cattle, no rice, few clothes or shoes, no medicine and little hope for any improvement to their situation. The land is infertile with any rainfall being unreliable. They have the highest infant mortality in the world.

The Jhyarians gathered around our porters and just started at them. They had little in the way of a common language as far as I can recall. The locals were seemingly fascinated more with meeting other Nepalis than with us. I think we were "out of range" in terms of their ability for comprehension of new things.

When one resident approached me – successfully - for a painkilling drug, an avalanche of the sick started. It concluded with a very old lady, peering through coke bottle glasses whilst baring her desiccated breasts at me and grimacing. Two Panadol, and try to keep your top on, darling.

One smiling chap returned from his work of ploughing his modest field. He provided the effort for the wooden plough. He wore no shoes.

The temperature dropped to somewhere near -20° during the night.



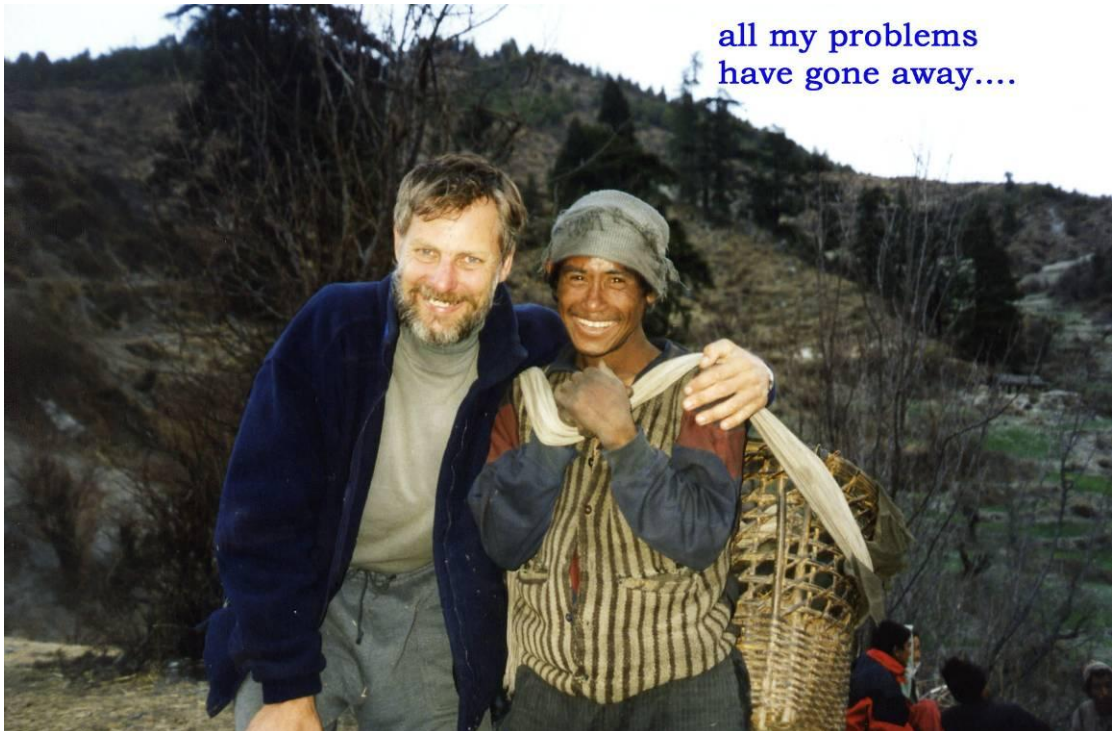
the Jhyari kids stare at our porters

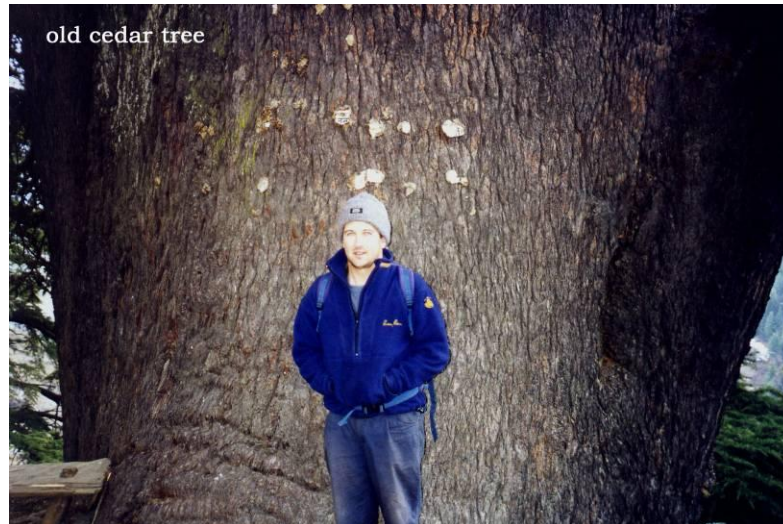


striking lady



all my problems
have gone away....





Day 24 – Saturday 11th March 2000

Intermittent snowfalls made for an interesting walk to the edge of Rara Lake (3060m), where we arrived at 0930. We walked around to the northern side of what is Nepal's largest body of water before making camp. We had seen no mammals and there was little to suggest that this would change given that the park was full of goats and horses. The national park boss-man said he had seen two mammals in total in the year he had been in residence. We were also told we could not go spotlighting, could light no fires and were not entitled to complain about the local villagers and their unsympathetic environmental activities. As a national park it was an absolute joke of the highest order.

Despite all the negatives, the lake is very beautiful and had thousands of waterbirds floating on it and other birds flitting around it. The ranger told us we were the first birdwatchers ever to visit in late winter, while all the birds are present. We found a number of birds for which there were only a few records in Nepal and one, horned grebe, for which there were no previous records at all. I added eight new birds to my life list, such as it is.

It was so cold in the evening that we went to bed just to get warm.





Day 25 – Sunday 12th March 2000

We spent most of the day walking around the lake. It took about seven hours with regular stops to look at birds and plants. We managed quite a number of Nepalese rarities that included chaffinch and brambling. One good thing about walking around lakes is that the trails are generally fairly flat. We frightened no large mammals that we were aware of. At one point we watched as a Pallas's gull repeatedly attacked a common pochard until it eventually killed it. Then the gull flew away. I wondered what the pochard did to so offend a gull?

Our lunch was supposed to follow us and catch up on the far side of the lake but it just didn't happen. We arrived back at camp starving and had to wait while lunch completed its "circumnavigation". Near to the camp a yellow-throated marten was seen being hunted (quite unsuccessfully) by a fox.

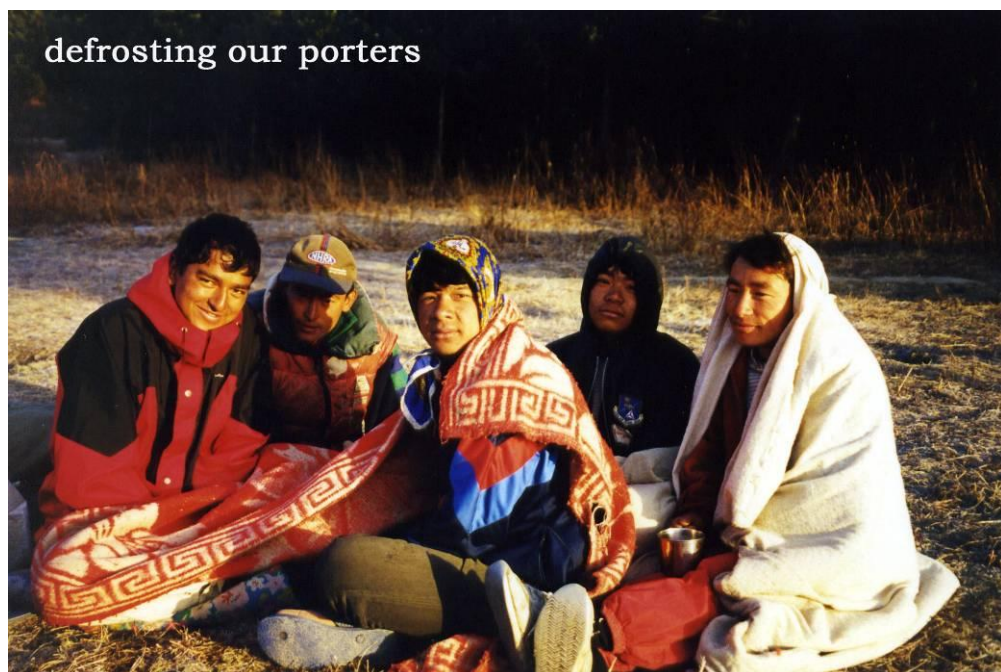
Heavy snowfalls had commenced by late afternoon and the cold became extreme. We were in bed by 1830 to get warm. To this point we had failed to freeze all the porters but it must have been a near run thing. They slept in the kitchen tent loosely piled on top of one another. All sorts of horrible images flooded my mind.

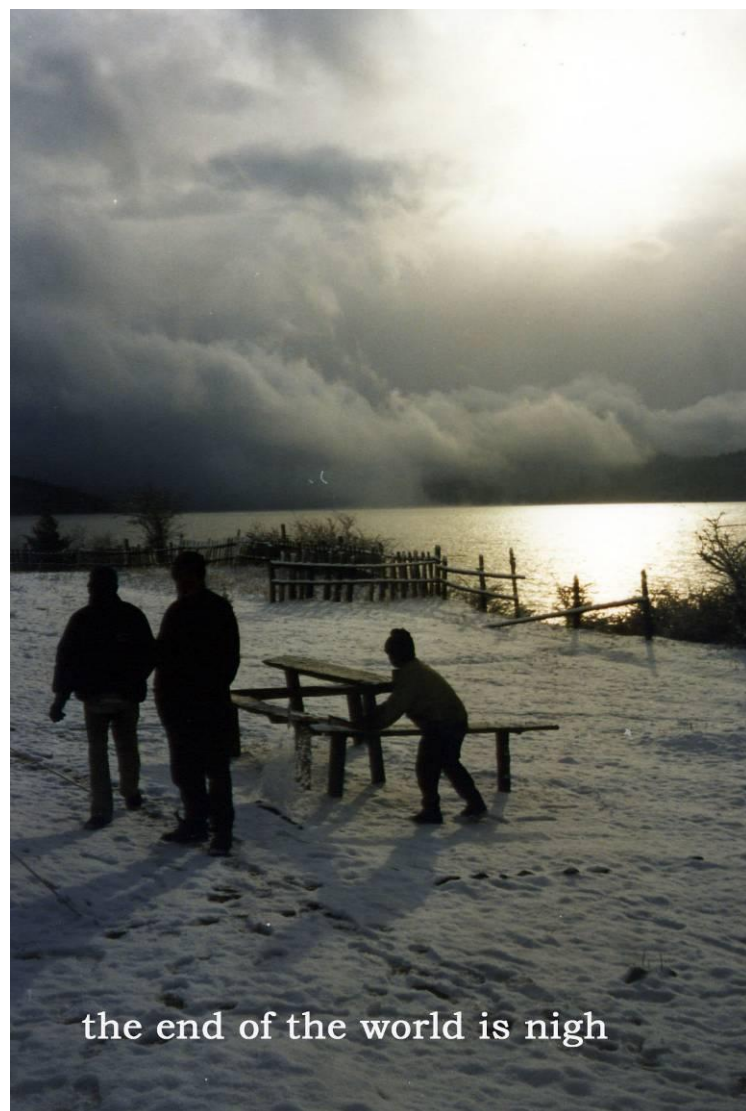


Day 26 – Monday 13th March 2000

We woke to be greeted by heavy snowfalls. We were concerned that we may be trapped by snow and stuck at Rara Lake.

During the day the temperature struggled to get above freezing point, even during the brief sunny periods. We poked about but had lost interest in exploring too much on account of the weather. We hit upon a cunning plan to drink all our remaining Jack Daniels. We then discretely asked around and acquired some raksi and Mustang coffee from some army guys.





Day 27 – Tuesday 14th March 2000

No snow fell during the night so we managed to pack up and head down the Khatyar Khola valley draining westwards from Rara. It was a magnificent walk through ancient forests and along a pristine path, given the snowfalls. The valley was beautiful but strangely devoid of much wildlife. We found fresh evidence of forest leopard and a few monkeys or squirrels but didn't manage to see any.

We discovered from talking to a few wandering locals that the trail we were supposed to take had been buried in two metres of snow. We had to take a detour that the other walkers insisted would eventually get us to our destination. We weren't sure that this was so, but had no option. We had fallen off the edge of our map. As near as we could tell there are no maps for this part of the country.

We had descended about 800m to a grand site beneath old walnut trees where we had lunch. A local family the likes of which I had never seen, joined us. They looked more like Afghans than Nepalese, reminding me of just how arbitrary international borders can be.



travellers.....



Ajambar prepares lunch



The afternoon was memorable. We climbed a narrow trail that had seen very little use. False horizons were our constant companions as we snaked up 1000m or so through a range of habitats and changing scenery. As usual we were strung out over several kilometres by the time Dave and I topped a forested ridge. We poked our way along it until we emerged into farmland at a locality apparently known as Chauk Pahdi (*the spelling is probably wildly inaccurate*), which literally translates into English as “broken arsehole”. A surreal image greeted us – a small child had his pants around his ankles with dirty bum pointed skywards toward the sun. Welcome to Broken Arsehole. To say that this dot on the planet is remote rather understates the situation. We were the first people from outside the local region to

visit. Not only had the locals never seen a whitey, they hadn't even seen anyone from the Kathmandu Valley!



The biggest disappointment was that after being in forest all day we camped at the first place that wasn't. Ajamabar and I disagreed on the preferred campsite. He chose a windblown exposed bastard of a site that had grass under it. I chose a protected site behind a ridge that housed the "school" building. He didn't like it because it lacked grass and someone would have to clean the dirt off the tent floors the next morning. Before we came to blows I explained that we were going to camp behind the school and that was the end of the discussion.

Whilst all this was going on, there was some stirring of the locals as they marshalled a plan to visit the aliens. Meanwhile we were busy trying to find anything that might burn so we didn't freeze to death. This area is in the heart of the Maoist aligned region and the looks we were getting from the local ratepayers (I jest) weren't difficult to interpret. I suggested to Barry-Sean and Dave that we might make some small cash contribution to the school. We agreed that this was a good plan. So for the grand sum of about seven dollars the school doors were thrown open, firewood was produced, the porters got to sleep indoors and we dined by candlelight in a stone fortress a.k.a. the school office. The office lacked, well, just about everything. It had some rustic furniture, a view of the Himalaya and four walls. We

also had a supply of Khukuri rum. The world was looking good. It's not every day when you are the first Caucasians to visit a place.

We soon had a roaring fire that included a large log that refused to burn, and plenty of local company. The village boys were trying to convert the porters to Maoism in whatever way they could, given that I am uncertain whether they spoke a common language.

A cold night followed – so what else was new.

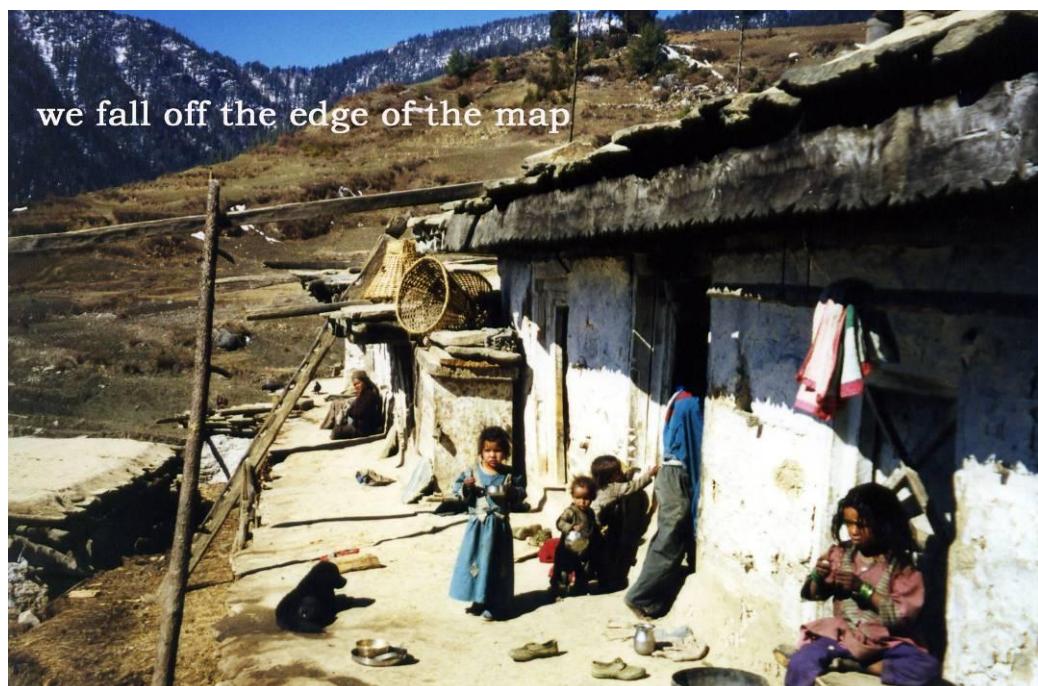




Day 28 – Wednesday 15th March 2000

We broke camp and meandered along a wide high altitude valley before dropping down over the edge of the earth. Along the way we slowed in a number of “no white man been here” villages. We had somehow been expected. The local folk stood outside their dwellings and stared at us, making no gestures, even when we took the first photographs of their unusual housing. Very few returned our “namaste”.

The trail through their villages was muddy and full of human and other refuse. No plastics though! A wonderful experience although it seemed perfectly normal at the time.







We continued to descend along the edge of a spur that allowed long valley views and the opportunity to yell at kids in the bottom of it as they spotted us and screamed out. We had a great game of “Aussie, Aussie, Aussie, Oi, Oi, Oi!” and so destroyed any delusions that the next group of foreigners might have, in terms of having visited a remote place. We were disgusted with ourselves but laughed at the same time.



We rejoined the main trail near Sinja (2440m), which made me a little sad. It seemed like we were no longer adventurers when we found ourselves in an area where up to 50 tourists a year might visit. A roaring fire made our campsite comfortable.

Day 29 – Thursday 16th March 2000

I guess the day could be described as character building. We started walking up the long Jaljala Khola valley, which got progressively steeper as the morning wore on. Whilst the valley was mostly forested we had started to lose interest in looking for wildlife, so a pair of yellow-throated martens foraging in a tree came as a surprise. The trail became icy as we ascended. At one point, and travelling the other way, was a very old lady who was poorly dressed and wearing a pair of socks, and no shoes. She carried quite a load and considering how far we were from any habitation, she had a long day ahead of her. As I continued along the trail I became haunted by her sock imprints in the ice. Mile after mile they stared up at me. My minor aches and pains became meaningless. I often think of this lady and what she might ever do for fun, if anything.

Naina was fond of saying “a little bit up” whenever we asked how far it was to the top of anything. The Nepalese don’t measure distances in the mountains, they only measure time. And nobody really knows how much time, because it makes no real difference anyway. You just keep walking until you get there.

Eventually we reached the pass at Chorkhola (3080m), which provided a flat and grassy lunch site. The food and the containers that housed it were getting a bit tatty. We had reached the last high point in our trek. It was now downhill all the way to Jumla. Someone should have lashed Barry-Sean to a tree to stop his inexorable drive to move downwards.

After our sunny lunch we started down the mountains. We spied a lovely cleared area to make camp, with fresh mammal tracks going in all directions in the snow, so Dave and I tried to aggregate our party as best we could. But someone forgot to nuzzle Barry-Sean. He had managed to slip past and was gaining momentum as the path got steeper. Like an old horse, no amount of yelling or threatening was going to turn his head. He just kept walking. We stared at each other, shrugged and followed him down the mountain until we reached the campsite we had made on the first day of the trek. We had descended 700m after a morning climb of around 1000m.

Our campsite lacked any of the excitement and anticipation it held just a few days earlier. It seemed incredible that we could have crammed so much life into such a short space of time. All those weeks at home that wash past and leave no lasting memory rated as nothing to this “short walk in the hills”. Our porters surprised us by commenting that this was the hardest trek they had ever done. There were virtually no level bits – it was all up and down, and whilst we gained unexceptional altitudes, it was often cold and the trekking challenging, considering the loads they were carrying. It was always in the back of my mind that if I thought I was doing it tough with five kilograms on my back, how did they feel?

Bharat and Naina walked from our campsite to Jumla to try to arrange earlier flights than the ones we had chartered, and to try to buy some alcohol. The second part was not easy around Jumla as alcohol was said to have been locally banned. I wondered whether they would return, given that it was almost dark when they left.

I reflected on the trek. This was my first camping trek and it was great. There was so much more flexibility in terms of where you can stop. The food was exceptional. The trekking path was mad, with no gentle grades and punctuated by exhausting passes. The villages we visited were different to any I have seen and often fundamentally different from each other. I now wish I had taken more photos of them.

The people we met were certainly not characters in a theme park. I suspect they were the poorest people on earth. They were generally neutral in terms of friendliness. Some were curious, others wanted medicine. Many were outrageously dirty. All were destroying their environment but in their struggle for survival I could hardly moralise on this point.

The forests were prone to be a bit monotonous with the number of different crown trees countable on one's fingers. Having noted that, there were some specimens that boggled the mind in terms of age and size. The fauna was very disappointing. I saw no "new" mammals and few in total. The birds were better although the area we visited is the least rich in terms of bird fauna in the whole country. So few birdwatchers visit. However there are a number of regional endemics that are interesting and we found most of these. They included Himalayan woodpecker, Kashmir nuthatch and brown bullfinch. All up I think I spotted exactly 100 birds for the trek.

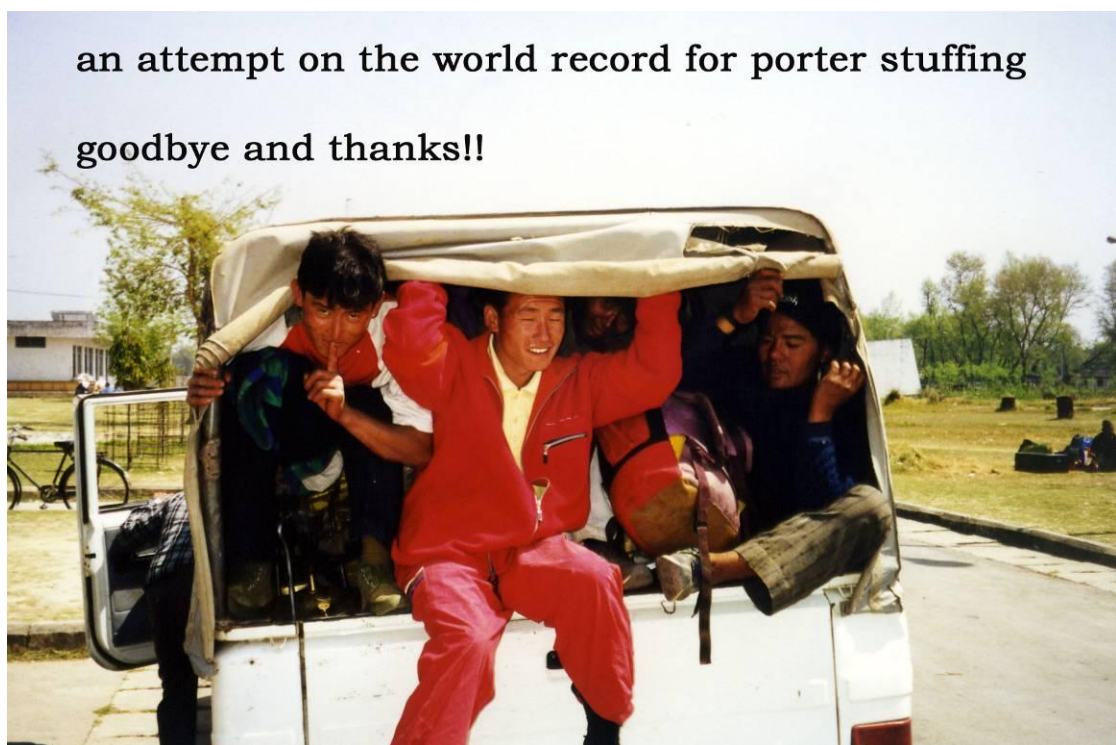
And my trekking companions? Dave and Barry-Sean were exemplary company, as expected. Our Nepalese company were always polite, accommodating, cheerful, positive, resourceful and had a wicked sense of humour! They were okay.

Bharat and Naina returned from Jumla with a bottle of whisky that didn't survive very long and some good news about our flight – they thought.

Day 30 – Friday 17th March 2000

We trudged down the hill to the "airport". Bharat convinced the Yeti Airlines folk to reschedule their flights to pick us up. I don't know what he told the owner of the airline but I suspect he relied heavily on outright lying, as the owner turned up at Nepalgunj to meet me and shake hands effusively and plead that I was happy with all the arrangements. I tried my best "head-of-state" look and nodded sagely where I thought it appropriate. But this would come later. Back at Jumla we were madly trying to track down our wayward porters who had scattered themselves around the town like fugitives. They had never been in a plane before, so they had no idea that it wouldn't just wait around while they meandered back in their own time.

Sirens blared, announcing the possible arrival of a plane. We flew the porters to Nepalgunj because they were scared of walking out with their pay packets and the real prospect of hungry Maoists behind every bush. We crammed ourselves in and sped off toward Nepalgunj. There we said goodbye to our hardworking and worthy porters.



We had to cancel our flights on Buddha Air for two days hence and fly with Necon Air back to Kathmandu. Uselessly, I won the plane lucky door prize. The prize was a free flight to anywhere in Nepal. Luckily it was transferable so Bharat used it.

So the post-mortem began. We checked into Hotel 7 Corner then set a land speed record in getting to the Tom and Jerry Bar, before a lovely dinner at Alice's Restaurant, where we got anything we wanted.

Day 31 – Saturday 18th March 2000

Barry-Sean and I took an early taxi to Nagarjun to look for leopards. We were given the locations of caves that they might hole up in during the day. Extreme wildlife spotting at its silliest. Despite fresh spoor everywhere we spotted the predictable number of leopards.

The day got worse. We had to pay \$320 extra for the trek as there were cost over-runs. So we determined to go to the Tom and Jerry Bar to get over the pain. Here I made a head cold worse and smashed up a tooth on a kernel of un-popped popcorn. Getting a tad cranky.

Day 32 – Sunday 19th March 2000

A comfortable tourist bus took us to Chitwan National Park without any problems. A long lunch was followed by a walk along the riverbank. We saw a few birds, a gharial crocodile and a small Indian mongoose in the camp.

An early night.

Day 33 – Monday 20th March 2000

Chitwan - the last hurrah. An early morning jungle walk turned up chital, barking, sambar and hog deer, rhesus macaques and numerous Indian one-horned rhinoceros.

The afternoon jeep ride was much more exciting as we found the same mammals as we saw in the morning as well as two sloth bear! Much excitement as I had managed to avoid sloth bear on two previous trips to suitable habitat in Chitwan and Bardia NPs. We had a lovely celebratory Jack on the riverbank, a great dinner and a marvellous sleep.



sloth bear in Chitwan NP

Day 34 – Tuesday 21st March 2000

We spent all day in the jeep looking for tigers and gaur. We had sensational views of rhinos before eventually finding about 30 gaur whilst on foot in a sal forest. The gaur did not seem pleased to see us and stampeded off as I watched from some distance up a tree. We staked out some tiger and leopard sites without success.

It was quite an exhausting day bouncing around standing in the back of the 4WD. Needless to say, drinks followed.



Day 35 – Wednesday 22nd March 2000

Something of a lay day. Bharat and Nharan (from our lodge) and I walked upstream for a few kilometres chatting about life in Nepal, and the country's future. We returned for lunch, then spent the best part of the afternoon getting drunk. We ran into Scott and Allison from the US, folk we had previously crashed into at Bangkok Airport and somewhere else that Allison remembers, but I do not. They joined us for a beer on the riverbank

the sign says it all



Day 36 – Thursday 23rd March 2000

A long walk in the forest. Joining us were about 20 rhinos, many deer and various other critters that may or may not eat or crush people. It was all starting to become rather boring, although it pains me to write this now, five years later. I just wanted to go home, read the paper, watch movies, fish, sit in the garden or pull out weeds in the local bushland reserve.

Rain, wind and a lack of jeeps conspired to ensure that the afternoon became a lost cause. We adjourned to the Jungle Bar.



Day 37 – Friday 24th March 2000

We walked back into the park. We failed to find anything we hadn't previously seen despite spending time in watchtowers, on foot and from jeeps. Dave and Barry-Sean were also losing interest.

Day 38 – Saturday 25th March 2000

It was determined that we would spend the better part of the day sitting in a watchtower staring along a road that is said to be regularly crossed by tigers. Magic was at work for us. After spending some hours fixedly staring we climbed down the tower for less than a minute to get our lunch. This was the time that the tiger chose to cross the road. We went numb. I was convinced that it did not matter which minute during the day I stopped looking - that was always going to be the time that the tiger crossed.

I found a new bird – northern shoveller, and some buffy fish owls but the day was well and truly bugged.

We were informed that the Maoists had called a “general strike” to be held two days hence. This effectively meant that there would be no transport or shops open or else they would be targetted by the kind and loving Maoists, who we were given to believe were everywhere. We decided to go back to Kathmandu a day early rather than a day late. So off we went.

The Tom and Jerry Bar was the predictable venue for well-earned ales. We later had dinner in a garden restaurant across the road. This came with a garnish of rocks. The latter were thrown at us from parts unknown. As we sat in the grounds of the open-air bar listening to Desmond Dekker sing “The Israelites”, brickbats starting raining down on us. Bloody Maoists.

Day 39 – Sunday 26th March 2000

After a leisurely breakfast we wandered about town reconfirming air tickets. The Maoist strike saw an eerie lack of activity in the streets with virtually no traffic and 95% of the shops closed.

It rained in the afternoon so we had a few drinks and a lovely meal in the Tashi Deleg Tibetan Restaurant.

Day 40 – Monday 27th March 2000

Nothing whatsoever happened.

Day 41 – Tuesday 28th March 2000

We went to Nagarjun Hill for the day. We walked up to the temple at its summit, returning along a very long and winding road. The road had bits missing from it thus making it untrafficable. Some parts of this hill, which sits adjacent to the city, include some of the best forest in the whole country. The walk down the slowly descending road went for 20km or so but we didn't know that when we started walking on it. I thought I was going to die. I had

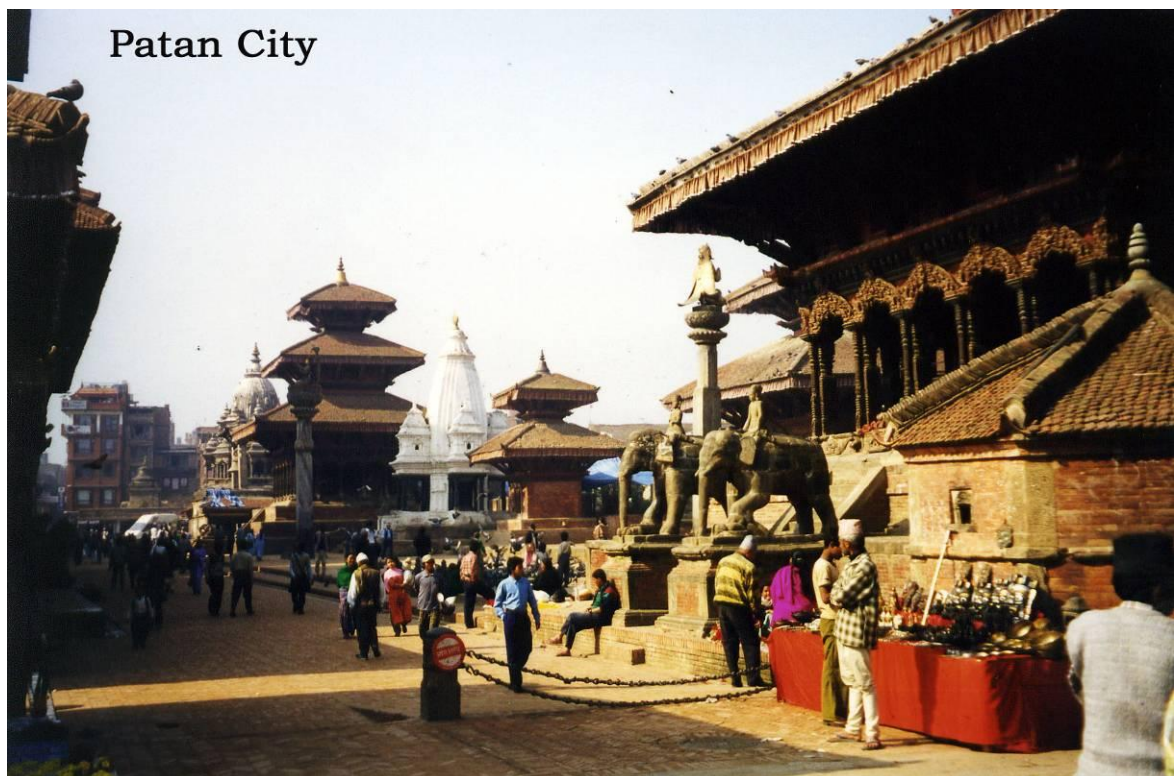
never felt so exhausted. Every part of my body hurt. By the time we emerged from the forest I had started getting the shakes.



I had a long hot shower and went to bed sans dinner.

Day 42 – Wednesday 29th March 2000

We caught a taxi to the very interesting and nearby Patan Durbar Square. This city centre is better than the Kathmandu variety and comes complete without any tourists. A visit was made to the Buddhist Golden Temple, an aged building (circa 1048 according to the brochure) inhabited by friendly folk.

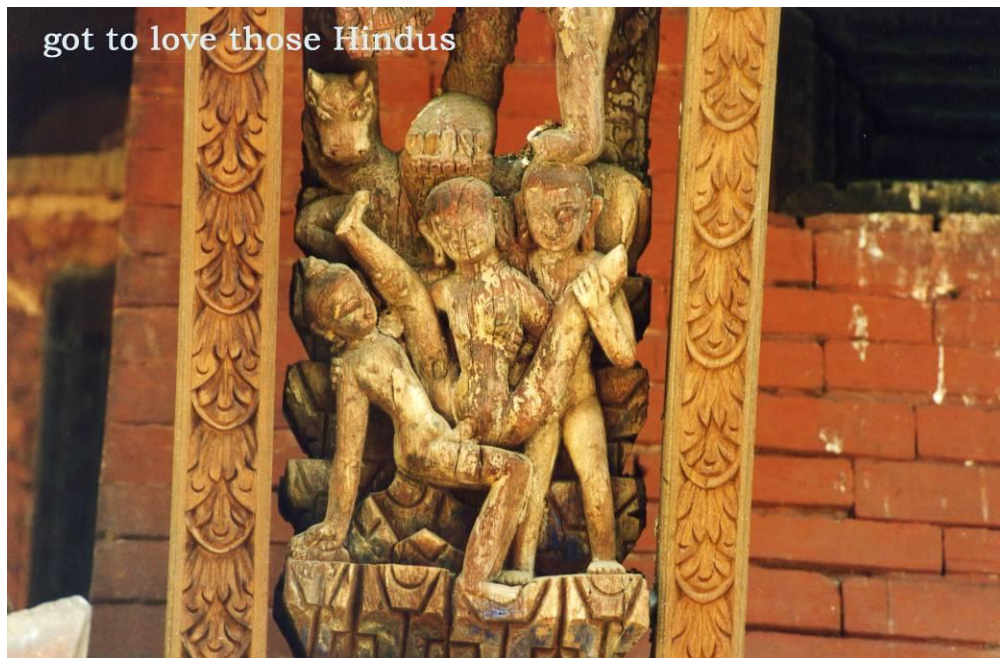


The afternoon drifted by. I visited Bharat, did some minor shopping and watched movies on TV. Dinner was again in the Tashi Deleg, which had consistently good and tasty vegetarian meals.

Day 43 – Thursday 30th March 2000

In almost a repeat of yesterday we jumped into a taxi and went to Bhaktapur Durbar Square, a UNESCO World Heritage cultural site located a short distance from Kathmandu. This was a great decision. This amazingly intact ancient city was clean and uncrowded, and well interpreted through a guide we hired for 300 rupees. We bought a few souvenirs and returned to Bharat's place for lunch.





I bought a few t-shirts and used the rest of my rupees during a final visit to the Tom and Jerry Bar and the Tashi Deleg Restaurant.

Day 44 – Friday 31st March 2000

We said our goodbyes to Bharat and the boys and traipsed off to the airport where we queued to get into the place. We then queued to get our bags security checked, to pay airport tax, at the check-in, immigration, inspection of our hand carry, at the departure gate, another hand carry check, body search, and finally to identify our luggage as it sat on the tarmac. While all this was happening I was ready to go the thump with some white boy who accused me of pushing his bag over. He took my advice in the end.

The plane was two hours late but we were beyond caring. We just wanted to go home.

Day 45 – Saturday, April Fools' Day 2000

Home with a head fogged by the strangeness of it all.

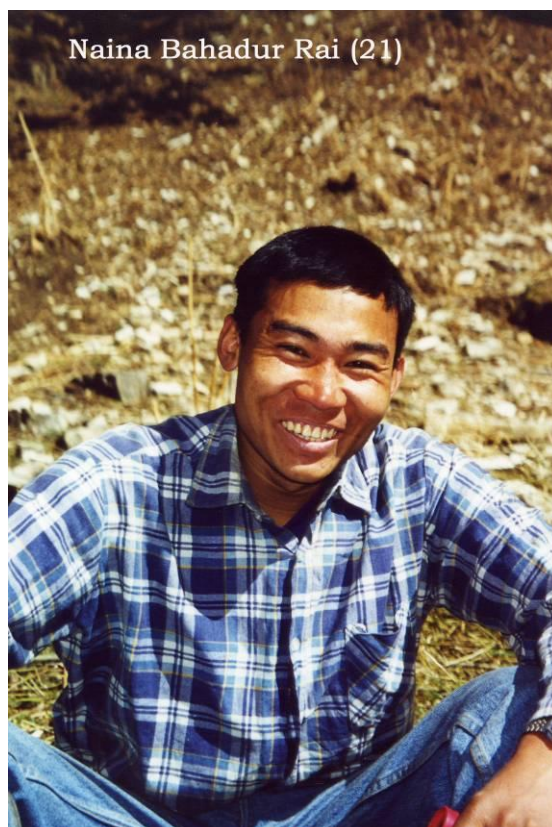
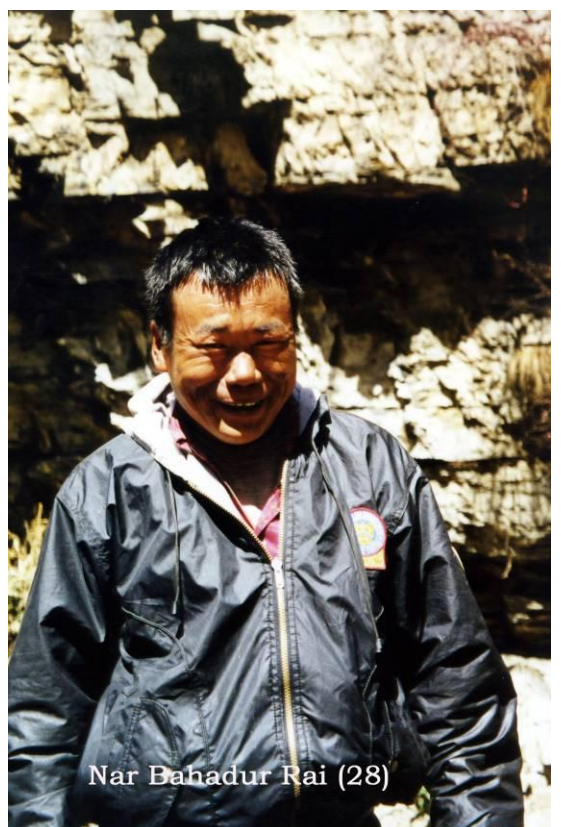
Steve Anyon-Smith

3rd August 2005

steveas@tpg.com.au

enquiries welcomed

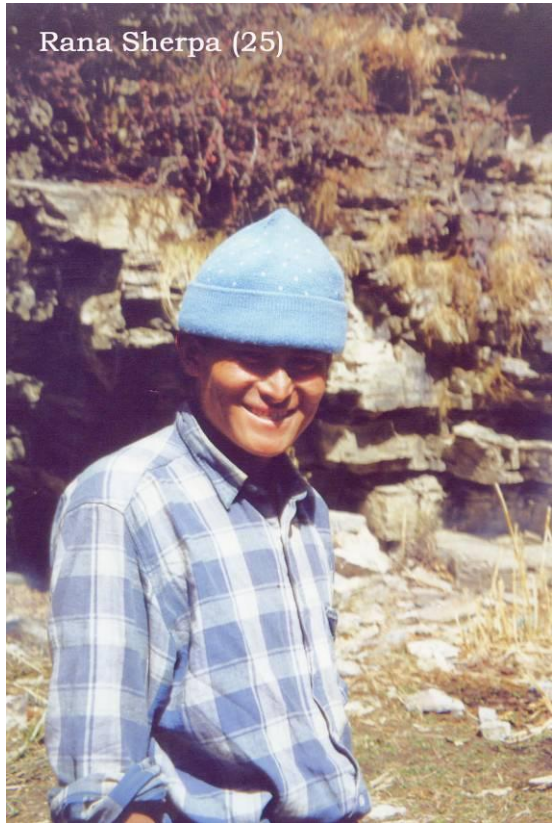
Our Porters



Ajambar Rai (35)



Rana Sherpa (25)



Bikash Magar



Anil "60kgs of rice" Pokharel (20)





Mammals seen in Thailand

(TYN – Thung Yai Naresuan NP, KK – Kaeng Krachan NP)

Greater mouse deer TYN, KK
Long-tailed macaque in Phetchaburi
Banded leaf monkey KK
Dusky leaf monkey KK
White-handed gibbon TYN, KK
Burmese striped tree squirrel TYN, KK
Grey-bellied squirrel TYN, KK
Masked palm civet KK
Common palm civet TYN, KK
Muntjac deer TYN, KK
Malaysian porcupine KK
Kitti's hog-nosed bat TYN
Binturong KK
Greater treeshrew TYN
Malay giant squirrel KK
Banded linsang KK
Slow loris KK
Yellow-throated marten KK
Lesser treeshrew KK

Birds seen in Thailand

(TYN – Thung Yai Naresuan NP, KK – Kaeng Krachan NP)

Little Grebe
Little Egret
Intermediate Egret
Gray Heron
Great Egret
Cattle Egret
Chinese Pond-Heron
Striated Heron
Black Baza
Black Kite
Crested Serpent-Eagle
Mountain Hawk-Eagle
Collared Falconet
Scaly-breasted Partridge
Red Junglefowl
Kalij Pheasant
Common Moorhen
Red-wattled Lapwing
Pale-capped Pigeon
Spotted Dove
Little Cuckoo-Dove
Thick-billed Pigeon
Mountain Imperial-Pigeon
Vernal Hanging-Parrot
Red-breasted Parakeet
Asian Koel
Green-billed Malkoha
Chestnut-breasted Malkoha
Greater Coucal
Mountain Scops-Owl
Asian Barred Owllet
Large-tailed Nightjar
Indian Nightjar
Crested Treeswift
Gray-rumped Treeswift
Brown-backed Needletail
Asian Palm-Swift
Orange-breasted Trogon
Common Kingfisher
Stork-billed Kingfisher
White-throated Kingfisher
Black-capped Kingfisher
Collared Kingfisher
Blue-throated Bee-eater
Indian Roller
Dollarbird
Eurasian Hoopoe
Oriental Pied-Hornbill
Great Hornbill
Rufous-necked Hornbill
Wreathed Hornbill
Great Barbet
Lineated Barbet
Blue-throated Barbet
Coppersmith Barbet
White-browed Piculet

Tachybaptus ruficollis TYN
Egretta garzetta TYN KK
Mesophoyx intermedia TYN KK
Ardea cinerea TYN
Ardea alba KK
Bubulcus ibis KK
Ardeola bacchus TYN KK
Butorides striatus TYN
Aviceda leuphotes KK
Milvus migrans KK
Spilornis cheela TYN
Spizaetus nipalensis TYN
Microhierax caerulescens KK
Arborophila chloropus KK
Gallus gallus TYN KK
Lophura leucomelanos KK
Gallinula chloropus TYN KK
Vanellus indicus KK
Columba punicea TYN
Streptopelia chinensis TYN
Macropygia ruficeps KK
Treron curvirostra TYN KK
Ducula badia KK
Loriculus vernalis TYN KK
Psittacula alexandri TYN
Eudynamys scolopacea KK
Phaenicophaeus tristis TYN KK
Phaenicophaeus curvirostris TYN KK
Centropus sinensis TYN KK
Otus spilocephalus KK
Glaucidium cuculoides KK
Caprimulgus macrurus TYN KK
Caprimulgus asiaticus TYN
Hemiprocne coronata TYN KK
Hemiprocne longipennis KK
Hirundapus giganteus KK
Cypsiurus balasiensis TYN KK
Harpactes oreskios TYN KK
Alcedo atthis TYN
Pelargopsis capensis TYN
Halcyon smyrnensis TYN KK
Halcyon pileata KK
Todirhamphus chloris KK
Merops viridis TYN
Coracias benghalensis TYN KK
Eurystomus orientalis TYN KK
Upupa epops TYN
Anthracoceros albirostris KK
Buceros bicornis TYN KK
Aceros nipalensis TYN
Aceros Ondulates KK
Megalaima virens TYN KK
Megalaima lineata KK
Megalaima asiatica TYN KK
Megalaima haemacephala TYN KK
Sasia ochracea TYN KK

Rufous Woodpecker
 Greater Yellownape
 Streak-breasted Woodpecker
 Laced Woodpecker
 Common Flameback
 Greater Flameback
 Black-and-buff Woodpecker
 Heart-spotted Woodpecker
 Black-and-red Broadbill
 Banded Broadbill
 Silver-breasted Broadbill
 Black-naped Monarch
 Asian Paradise-Flycatcher
 Black Drongo
 Bronzed Drongo
 Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo
 Hair-crested Drongo
 Greater Racket-tailed Drongo
 Eurasian Jay
 Blue Magpie
 Green Magpie
 Large-billed Crow
 Common Iora
 Great Iora
 Black-naped Oriole
 Black-hooded Oriole
 Indochinese Cuckoo-shrike
 Ashy Minivet
 Scarlet Minivet
 Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike
 Asian Fairy-bluebird
 Blue-winged Leafbird
 Golden-fronted Leafbird
 Large Woodshrike
 Blue Rock-Thrush
 Eyebrowed Thrush
 Black-collared Starling
 Common Myna
 Golden-crested Myna
 Hill Myna
 Red-throated Flycatcher
 Rufous-browed Flycatcher
 Verditer Flycatcher
 White-tailed Flycatcher
 Hill Blue-Flycatcher
 Gray-headed Canary-flycatcher
 Oriental Magpie-Robin
 White-rumped Shama
 Slaty-backed Forktail
 Common Stonechat
 Barn Swallow
 Red-rumped Swallow
 Asian Martin
 Black-headed Bulbul
 Black-crested Bulbul
 Sooty-headed Bulbul
 Stripe-throated Bulbul
 Flavescent Bulbul
 White-throated Bulbul
 Ochraceous Bulbul
 Olive Bulbul

Celeus brachyurus TYN
Picus flavinucha KK
Picus viridanus TYN
Picus vittatus TYN KK
Dinopium javanense TYN KK
Chrysocolaptes lucidus KK
Meiglyptes jugularis TYN
Hemicircus canente TYN
Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchos KK
Eurylaimus javanicus TYN
Serilophus lunatus KK
Hypothymis azurea TYN KK
Terpsiphone paradisi TYN KK
Dicrurus macrocercus TYN
Dicrurus aeneus KK
Dicrurus remifer KK
Dicrurus hottentottus KK
Dicrurus paradiseus TYN KK
Garrulus glandarius KK
Urocissa erythrorhyncha TYN
Cissa chinensis KK
Corvus macrorhynchos TYN
Aegithina tiphia TYN
Aegithina lafresnaye TYN KK
Oriolus chinensis TYN KK
Oriolus xanthornus TYN
Coracina polioptera TYN
Pericrocotus divaricatus KK
Pericrocotus flammeus TYN KK
Hemipus picatus TYN
Irena puella TYN KK
Chloropsis cochinchinensis KK
Chloropsis aurifrons TYN
Tephrodornis gularis TYN
Monticola solitarius KK
Turdus obscurus KK
Sturnus nigricollis KK
Acridotheres tristis TYN KK
Ampeliceps coronatus TYN KK
Gracula religiosa TYN KK
Ficedula parva TYN KK
Ficedula solitaris KK
Eumyias thalassina KK
Cyornis concretus TYN
Cyornis banyumas KK
Culicicapa ceylonensis TYN KK
Copsychus saularis TYN
Copsychus malabaricus TYN KK
Enicurus schistaceus TYN
Saxicola torquata TYN
Hirundo rustica KK
Hirundo daurica TYN
Delichon dasypus TYN
Pycnonotus atriceps TYN KK
Pycnonotus melanicterus TYN KK
Pycnonotus aurigaster TYN
Pycnonotus finlaysoni TYN KK
Pycnonotus flavescent KK
Alophoixus flaveolus TYN
Alophoixus ochraceus KK
Iole virescens TYN

Buff-vented Bulbul
 Common Tailorbird
 Dark-necked Tailorbird
 Arctic Warbler
 Golden-spectacled Warbler
 Yellow-bellied Warbler
 White-crested Laughingthrush
 Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush
 Abbott's Babbler
 Puff-throated Babbler
 White-browed Scimitar-Babbler
 Rufous-fronted Babbler
 Gray-throated Babbler
 Spot-necked Babbler
 White-hooded Babbler
 White-bellied Yuhina
 Sultan Tit
 White-rumped Munia
 Yellow Wagtail
 Gray Wagtail
 Fire-breasted Flowerpecker
 Ruby-cheeked Sunbird
 Olive-backed Sunbird
 Black-throated Sunbird
 Crimson Sunbird
 Little Spiderhunter
 Streaked Spiderhunter

Iole olivacea TYN
Orthotomus sutorius KK
Orthotomus atrogularis TYN KK
Phylloscopus borealis KK
Seicercus burkii TYN
Abroscopus superciliaris KK
Garrulax leucolophus KK
Garrulax pectoralis KK
Malacocincla abbotti TYN
Pellorneum ruficeps TYN
Pomatorhinus schisticeps TYN KK
Stachyris rufifrons TYN KK
Stachyris nigriceps TYN
Stachyris striolata TYN KK
Gampsorhynchus rufulus TYN KK
Yuhina zantholeuca TYN
Baeolophus sultanea TYN KK
Lonchura striata TYN
Motacilla flava TYN
Motacilla cinerea KK
Dicaeum ignipectus KK
Anthreptes singalensis KK
Nectarinia jugularis TYN
Aethopyga saturata KK
Aethopyga siparaja TYN KK
Arachnothera longirostra TYN
Arachnothera magna KK

Mammals seen in Nepal, first sighting recorded only

Rhesus macaque	Kathmandu
Small Indian mongoose	Chitwan NP
Hoary-bellied Himalayan squirrel	Nagarjun (Kathmandu)
Sloth bear	Chitwan NP
Gaur	Chitwan NP
Himalayan tahr	Above Bhulbule, Rara trek
Common jackal	Rara Lake
Common langur	Rara NP
Indian hare	Chitwan NP
Royle's pika	Rara NP
Orange-bellied Himalayan squirrel	Phulchowki
White-bodied form of yellow-throated marten	Rara Lake and trek
Muntjac deer	Nagarjun (Kathmandu)
Sambar deer	Nagarjun (Kathmandu)
Spotted (chital) deer	Nagarjun (Kathmandu)
Hog deer	Chitwan NP
Grey musk shrew	Kathmandu bookstore!
Wild boar	Chitwan NP
Three-striped palm squirrel	Nepalgunj
Red fox	Rara Lake
Indian one-horned rhinoceros	Chitwan NP
Indian red flying fox	Nepalgunj

Birds seen in Nepal

Chukar	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>
Black Francolin	<i>Francolinus francolinus</i>
Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</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>
Bar-headed Goose	<i>Anser indicus</i>
Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>
Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>
Ferruginous Pochard	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>
Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>
Speckled Piculet	<i>Picumnus innominatus</i>
Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos macei</i>
Rufous-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos hyperythrus</i>
Darjeeling Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos darjellensis</i>
Himalayan Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos himalayensis</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>
Common Flameback	<i>Dinopium javanense</i>
Greater Flameback	<i>Chrysocolaptes lucidus</i>
Great Barbet	<i>Megalaima virens</i>
Lineated Barbet	<i>Megalaima lineata</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>
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>
White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>
Common Hawk-Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus varius</i>
Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>

Green-billed Malkoha	Phaenicophaeus tristis
Greater Coucal	Centropus sinensis
Lesser Coucal	Centropus bengalensis
Alexandrine Parakeet	Psittacula eupatria
Rose-ringed Parakeet	Psittacula krameri
Slaty-headed Parakeet	Psittacula himalayana
Plum-headed Parakeet	Psittacula cyanocephala
Asian Palm-Swift	Cypsiurus balasiensis
House Swift	Apus nipalensis
Brown Fish-Owl	Ketupa zeylonensis
Asian Barred Owlet	Glaucidium cuculoides
Jungle Owlet	Glaucidium radiatum
Brown Hawk-Owl	Ninox scutulata
Rock Dove	Columba livia
Snow Pigeon	Columba leuconota
European Turtle-Dove	Streptopelia turtur
Oriental Turtle-Dove	Streptopelia orientalis
Spotted Dove	Streptopelia chinensis
Red Collared-Dove	Streptopelia tranquebarica
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Streptopelia decaocto
Emerald Dove	Chalcophaps indica
Orange-breasted Pigeon	Treron bicincta
Yellow-footed Pigeon	Treron phoenicoptera
Common Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus
Common Coot	Fulica atra
Pintail Snipe	Gallinago stenura
Common Greenshank	Tringa nebularia
Wood Sandpiper	Tringa glareola
Common Sandpiper	Tringa hypoleucos
Small Pratincole	Glareola lactea
Little Ringed Plover	Charadrius dubius
River Lapwing	Vanellus duvaucelii
Red-wattled Lapwing	Vanellus indicus
Pallas's Gull	Larus ichthyaetus
Osprey	Pandion haliaetus
Black Kite	Milvus migrans migrans
Grey-headed Fish-Eagle	Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus
Lammergeier	Gypaetus barbatus
Egyptian Vulture	Neophron percnopterus
White-rumped Vulture	Gyps bengalensis
Himalayan Griffon	Gyps himalayensis
Crested Serpent-Eagle	Spilornis cheela
Pallid Harrier	Circus macrourus
Shikra	Accipiter badius
Oriental Honey-buzzard	Pernis ptilorhynchus
Common Buzzard	Buteo buteo
Long-legged Buzzard	Buteo rufinus
Golden Eagle	Aquila chrysaetos
Bonelli's Eagle	Hieraaetus fasciatus

Common Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus
Little Grebe	Tachybaptus ruficollis
Great Crested Grebe	Podiceps cristatus
Black-necked Grebe	Podiceps nigricollis
Oriental Darter	Anhinga melanogaster
Great Cormorant	Phalacrocorax carbo
Little Egret	Egretta garzetta
Intermediate Egret	Mesophoyx intermedia
Cattle Egret	Bubulcus ibis
Indian Pond-Heron	Ardeola greyii
Grey Heron	Ardea cinerea
Purple Heron	Ardea purpurea
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Nycticorax nycticorax
Black Ibis	Pseudibis papillosa
Asian Openbill	Anastomus oscitans
Woolly-necked Stork	Ciconia episcopus
Lesser Adjutant	Leptoptilos javanicus
Long-tailed Shrike	Lanius schach
Grey-backed Shrike	Lanius tephronotus
Yellow-billed Blue Magpie	Urocissa flavirostris
Red-billed Blue Magpie	Urocissa erythrorhyncha
Common Green Magpie	Cissa chinensis
Rufous Treepie	Dendrocitta vagabunda
Grey Treepie	Dendrocitta formosae
Spotted Nutcracker	Nucifraga caryocatactes
Red-billed Chough	Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax
House Crow	Corvus splendens
Large-billed Crow	Corvus macrorhynchos
Ashy Woodswallow	Artamus fuscus
Black-hooded Oriole	Oriolus xanthornus
Maroon Oriole	Oriolus traillii
Large Cuckoo-shrike	Coracina macei
Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike	Coracina melaschistos
Small Minivet	Pericrocotus cinnamomeus
Long-tailed Minivet	Pericrocotus ethologus
Scarlet Minivet	Pericrocotus flammeus
Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	Hemipus picatus
Yellow-bellied Fantail	Rhipidura hypoxantha
White-throated Fantail	Rhipidura albicollis
White-browed Fantail	Rhipidura aureola
Black Drongo	Dicrurus macrocercus
Bronzed Drongo	Dicrurus aeneus
Spangled Drongo	Dicrurus hottentottus
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	Dicrurus paradiseus
Black-naped Monarch	Hypothymis azurea
Asian Paradise-Flycatcher	Terpsiphone paradisi
Common Iora	Aegithina tiphia
Large Woodshrike	Tephrodornis gularis

Common Woodshrike	Tephrodornis pondicerianus
Brown Dipper	Cinclus pallasii
Blue Whistling-Thrush	Myiophonus caeruleus
Scaly Thrush	Zoothera dauma
White-collared Blackbird	Turdus albocinctus
Eurasian Blackbird	Turdus merula
Dark-throated Thrush	Turdus ruficollis
Mistle Thrush	Turdus viscivorus
Asian Brown Flycatcher	Muscicapa dauurica
Ultramarine Flycatcher	Ficedula supercilialis
Sapphire Flycatcher	Ficedula sapphira
Small Niltava	Niltava macgrigoriae
Rufous-bellied Niltava	Niltava sundara
Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher	Culicicapa ceylonensis
Siberian Rubythroat	Luscinia calliope
Orange-flanked Bush-Robin	Tarsiger cyanurus
Oriental Magpie-Robin	Copsychus saularis
White-rumped Shama	Copsychus malabaricus
Blue-capped Redstart	Phoenicurus caeruleocephalus
Black Redstart	Phoenicurus ochruros
White-throated Redstart	Phoenicurus schisticeps
Blue-fronted Redstart	Phoenicurus frontalis
White-capped Redstart	Chaimarrornis leucocephalus
Plumbeous Redstart	Rhyacornis fuliginosus
Little Forktail	Enicurus scouleri
Spotted Forktail	Enicurus maculatus
Hodgson's Bushchat	Saxicola insignis
Common Stonechat	Saxicola torquata
Pied Bushchat	Saxicola caprata
Chestnut-tailed Starling	Sturnus malabaricus
Asian Pied Starling	Sturnus contra
Common Myna	Acridotheres tristis
Jungle Myna	Acridotheres fuscus
Kashmir Nuthatch	Sitta cashmirensis
Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch	Sitta castanea
White-tailed Nuthatch	Sitta himalayensis
White-cheeked Nuthatch	Sitta leucopsis
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	Sitta frontalis
Wallcreeper	Tichodroma muraria
Eurasian Treecreeper	Certhia familiaris
Bar-tailed Treecreeper	Certhia himalayana
Rufous-vented Tit	Periparus rubidiventris
Coal Tit	Periparus ater
Grey-crested Tit	Lophophanes dichrous
Great Tit	Parus major
Green-backed Tit	Parus monticolus
Winter Wren	Troglodytes troglodytes
Black-lored Tit	Parus xanthogenys
Black-throated Tit	Aegithalos concinnus

White-throated Tit	<i>Aegithalos niveogularis</i>
Plain Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>
Eurasian Crag-Martin	<i>Hirundo rupestris</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica</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>
Mountain Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes maclellandii</i>
Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>
Jungle Prinia	<i>Prinia sylvatica</i>
Yellow-bellied Prinia	<i>Prinia flaviventris</i>
Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>
Grey-bellied Tesia	<i>Tesia cyaniventer</i>
Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
Buff-barred Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus pulcher</i>
Lemon-rumped Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus chloronotus</i>
Blyth's Leaf-Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i>
Golden-spectacled Warbler	<i>Seicercus burkii</i>
Grey-hooded Warbler	<i>Seicercus xanthoschistus</i>
Chestnut-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus castaniceps</i>
Black-faced Warbler	<i>Abroscopus schisticeps</i>
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
White-throated Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax albogularis</i>
White-crested Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax leucolophus</i>
Striated Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax striatus</i>
Variegated Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax variegatus</i>
Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax erythrocephalus</i>
Puff-throated Babbler	<i>Pellorneum ruficeps</i>
Streak-breasted Scimitar-Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus ruficollis</i>
Striped Tit-Babbler	<i>Macronous gularis</i>
Chestnut-capped Babbler	<i>Timalia pileata</i>
Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striatus</i>
White-browed Shrike-Babbler	<i>Pteruthius flaviscapis</i>
Blue-winged Minla	<i>Minla cyanouroptera</i>
Chestnut-tailed Minla	<i>Minla strigula</i>
Rufous-winged Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe castaneiceps</i>
White-browed Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe vinipectus</i>
Nepal Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe nipalensis</i>
Whiskered Yuhina	<i>Yuhina flavicollis</i>
Rufous Sibia	<i>Heterophasia capistrata</i>
Sand Lark	<i>Calandrella raytal</i>
Oriental Skylark	<i>Alauda gulgula</i>
Pale-billed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>
Plain Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum concolor</i>
Purple Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia asiatica</i>
Mrs Gould's Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga gouldiae</i>

Green-tailed Sunbird	Aethopyga nipalensis
Black-throated Sunbird	Aethopyga saturata
Fire-tailed Sunbird	Aethopyga ignicauda
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	Passer montanus
White Wagtail	Motacilla alba
White-browed Wagtail	Motacilla madaraspatensis
Citrine Wagtail	Motacilla citreola
Grey Wagtail	Motacilla cinerea
Richard's Pipit	Anthus richardi
Tree Pipit	Anthus trivialis
Rosy Pipit	Anthus roseatus
Alpine Accentor	Prunella collaris
Rufous-breasted Accentor	Prunella strophiatea
Indian Silverbill	Lonchura malabarica
White-rumped Munia	Lonchura striata
Scaly-breasted Munia	Lonchura punctulata
Chaffinch	Fringilla coelebs
Brambling	Fringilla montifringilla
Common Rosefinch	Carpodacus erythrinus
Beautiful Rosefinch	Carpodacus pulcherrimus
Pink-browed Rosefinch	Carpodacus rhodochrous
Spot-winged Rosefinch	Carpodacus rhodopeplus
Brown Bullfinch	Pyrrhula nipalensis
Red-headed Bullfinch	Pyrrhula erythrocephala
Black-and-yellow Grosbeak	Mycerobas icterioides
White-winged Grosbeak	Mycerobas carnipes
Rock Bunting	Emberiza cia

SALES PERSON: MP

ITINERARY

VQKKBL

DATE: 12 JAN 00

PAGE: 01

TO: BUSY TRAVEL
SUITE 401 127 YORK ST
SYDNEY NSW 2000

FOR: ANYON SMITH/S MR
SHEILS/D MR

17 FEB 00 - THURSDAY

AIR QANTAS AIRWAYS FLT:QF1 ECONOMY
LV SYDNEY 1815
DEPART: INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL
AR BANGKOK 2320
ARRIVE: TERMINAL 2
ANYON SMITH/S M QF-1668726

EQP: BOEING 747 400
09HR 05MIN
NON-STOP
REF: QR43M5

03 MAR 00 - FRIDAY

AIR ROYAL NEPAL AIRLINES FLT:RA408 COACH
LV BANGKOK 2055
DEPART: TERMINAL 1
AR KATHMANDU 2240

EQP: BOEING 757
03HR 15MIN
NON-STOP
REF: J3E5T

31 MAR 00 - FRIDAY

AIR ROYAL NEPAL AIRLINES FLT:RA407 COACH
LV KATHMANDU 0810

EQP: BOEING 757
02HR 55MIN
NON-STOP
REF: J3E5T

AR BANGKOK 1235
ARRIVE: TERMINAL 1
AIR QANTAS AIRWAYS FLT:QF302 ECONOMY
BANGKOK-SYDNEY OPERATED BY BRITISH AIRWAYS
LV BANGKOK 1730
DEPART: TERMINAL 2

EQP: BOEING 747 400
08HR 50MIN

01 APR 00 - SATURDAY

AR SYDNEY 0520
ARRIVE: INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL
ANYON SMITH/S M QF-1668726

NON-STOP
REF: QR43M5

THANK YOU FOR BOOKING WITH BUSY TRAVEL
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YOUR PASSPORT MUST BE VALID 6 MONTHS AFTER TRAVEL