

EASTERN HIMALAYA

Quarterly newsletter of the ATREE Eastern Himalaya / Northeast Regional Office

Khanchendzonga landscape from the Singalila National park, P.C- Dr. Avantika



Tonglu Group Photo. P.C-Aditya Pradhan

Birding Guide Training in Latpanchar and Maneybhanjyang, Darjeeling Himalaya

ATREE, with support from the Oriental Bird Club, UK, and Rufford Foundation, UK, organised two capacity-building workshops to promote bird tourism in Darjeeling. The first workshop was held on 28th–29th January 2025 in Latpanchar, engaging 17 local community members of which 14 participants completed the training. The second took place on 11th–12th February 2025 in Maneybhanjyang, training 15 local community members in

collaboration with Tonglu Range, Darjeeling Forest Division. Both workshops aimed to train local community members in bird identification, guiding techniques, and conservation awareness, equipping them to support bird tourism and act as ambassadors for bird conservation. The training combined theoretical and practical sessions, covering topics such as bird and butterfly identification, the biogeography of Darjeeling, endemic birds of the Eastern Himalaya, and the diversity of important bird groups. Field sessions complemented classroom learning, providing hands-on experience in bird and butterfly identification and observation. Participants recorded 32 bird species and 6 butterfly species in Latpanchar, while those in Maneybhanjyang identified 34 bird species using the Merlin Bird ID app and eBird. These observations were uploaded to citizen science platforms like eBird and iNaturalist, integrating participants into ongoing conservation efforts. The workshops promoted a greater understanding of avian biodiversity while building local capacity to create livelihood opportunities.

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