



Temminck's Tragopan (all photos by Dave Farrow unless indicated otherwise)

SICHUAN (Including Northern Yunnan)

16/19 MAY – 7 JUNE 2018

LEADER: DAVE FARROW

The Birdquest tour to Sichuan this year was a great success, with a slightly altered itinerary to usual due to the closure of Jiuzhaigou, and we enjoyed a very smooth and enjoyable trip around the spectacular and endemic-rich mountain and plateau landscapes of this striking province. Gamebirds featured strongly with 14 species seen, the highlights of them including a male Temminck's Tragopan grazing in the gloom, Chinese Monal trotting across high pastures, White Eared and Blue Eared Pheasants, Lady Amherst's and Golden Pheasants, Chinese Grouse and Tibetan Partridge. Next were the Parrotbills, with Three-toed, Great and Golden, Grey-hooded and Fulvous charming us, Laughingthrushes included Red-winged, Buffy, Barred, Snowy-cheeked and Plain, we saw more Leaf Warblers than we knew what to do with, and marvelled at the gorgeous colours of Sharpe's, Pink-rumped, Vinaceous, Three-banded and Red-fronted Rosefinches, the exciting Przevalski's Finch, the red pulse of Firethroats plus the unreal blue of Grandala. Our bird of the trip? Well, there was that Red Panda that we watched for ages!

Our tour began with a short extension in Yunnan, based in Lijiang city, with the purpose of finding some of the local specialities including the rare White-speckled Laughingthrush, which survives here in small numbers. Once our small group had arrived in the bustling city of Lijiang we began our birding in an area of hills that had clearly been totally cleared of forest in the fairly recent past, with a few trees standing above the hillsides of scrub. The sound of numerous Warblers filled the air and we saw Blyth's and Davison's Leaf Warblers, Bianchi's Warblers, Rusty-capped and Spectacled Fulvetta, Elliot's Laughingthrush, Black-streaked Scimitar babbler, Spotted Nutcracker and Black-browed Bushtit, although there was no sign of our main target here. In the afternoon we explored a pine-clad hill close to the town, and soon found the demure Yunnan Nuthatch, plus Chestnut-vented Nuthatches, Black-headed Greenfinch, Russet Sparrow, White-browed Laughingthrush, Grey-winged Blackbird, Plain Prinia, Black-throated and Black-browed Bushtits with fledged young.



Brown-winged Parrotbill



Black-browed Bushtit

Another morning, we drove to the village of Shigu that lies on the first bend of the mighty Yangtze River. Birding around the trees and fields we found a fine Black-breasted Thrush, Japanese Tit, numerous Common Rosefinches, Greenish Warbler, Plumbeous Redstarts, Himalayan Wagtails, and eventually our target of Brown-winged Parrotbill was found, with a confiding flock that entertained us until we had had our fill. Also here were Red-rumped Swallow, Japanese White-eye and Black Drongo. By a lake closer to town we found noisy Oriental Reed Warbler, Cinnamon Bittern, Common Cuckoo, Grey-backed Shrike and Black-faced Bunting. In the afternoon we headed once more to the shrubby forest, although a couple of accidents along the narrow road slowed us down to a standstill for an hour. It was raining heavily so we didn't mind too much! We reached our birding area, the rain cleared, and just as we reached our intended stop a male Lady Amherst Pheasant slowly walked off the roadside and up the slope. Wow! A bonus of the wet weather! The forest was lively with Black-headed Sibia, White-collared Yuhina, a pair of Black-bibbed Tits, Mrs Gould's Sunbird, Hume's Leaf Warbler, and on our way home we saw yet another male Lady Amherst Pheasant drop off the roadside.



Collared Crow



Crested Kingfisher

Our last day in the Lijiang area saw us ascending a windy road up a steep forested slope. In scrubby thickets we saw Black-streaked and Streak-breasted Scimitar Babblers, and a vocal Giant Laughingthrush lured us into a gully (as we thought it was going to be a White-speckled!) We also saw White-browed and Spectacled Fulvettas, White-bellied Redstart, Yellow-throated Bunting, Slaty-blue Flycatcher, Himalayan Buzzard, Spotted Nutcracker and Long-tailed Minivet, before the time came to descend, back to the valley floor. At Cao Hai Lake we saw Black-crowned Night Heron, Ferruginous Duck, Grey-headed Swamphen, Black-winged Kite, Ruddy Shelduck, Pale Martin, Red-billed Starling and Oriental Skylark. After spending a while in Lijiang airport we reached Chengdu in the late evening, ready for new thrills on the main part of the tour.



Chairman Mao, Lijiang

We met up with our full complement the following morning, and enjoyed a stroll around the neighbouring park where we saw Chinese Grosbeak, Chinese Blackbird, Black-throated Bushtits, White-browed Laughingthrush and Light-vented Bulbuls, before heading out of town and heading for the hills. We sped along expressways until we reached the north of the province where we turned off and headed towards our destination of Tangjiahe. We stopped for a spicy lunch, and in a small town we scoured the rivers, seeing our first Brown Dipper, plus Plumbeous Water Redstarts, Salim Ali's Swift, an Asian Barred Owlet and Red-rumped Swallows. Entering the park we made a few short stops on the way to our hotel and saw Brown-flanked Bush Warbler, Collared Finchbill, glimpsed a Vinous-throated Parrotbill and saw our first Claudia's Leaf Warbler.

We began our day at Tangjiahe with a Takin that wandered off from the roadside, and an al fresco breakfast was enlivened by a male Golden Pheasant, emerging from the gloom of the undergrowth and running back and forwards with its gleaming yellow head standing out like a beacon. We drove up to a trailhead where we walked alongside roaring torrents as we ascended a stepped trail. A Little Forktail gave us a good display, but a Zappey's Flycatcher that sang from thickets remained totally invisible. The rain began and as we sheltered in one leaky wooden hut, a vivid male Temminck's Tragopan appeared nearby and calmly walked uphill. The birding wasn't easy but we persevered, and pressing on we found White-throated Laughingthrushes, Ferruginous Flycatcher, and a Sichuan Bush Warbler was coaxed out into view and showed really well. After reaching the top of the Motianling Mountain pass and the border with Gansu province, we returned by the same route, where an Alström's Warbler showed well, and then we happened upon an apparition of pulsating red in the sylvan gloom, a male Temminck's Tragopan, later joined by the shyer female, he fed seemingly unconcerned by our presence for a full twenty minutes before we just

casually walked away. Another male Golden Pheasant trotted past, as we headed back down and to a welcome change into dry clothes! A night drive was successful with numerous Reeve's Muntjac seen, plus a couple of Chinese Goral.

An early walk in the vicinity of our hotel at Tangjiahe produced a couple of Kloss's Leaf Warbler, Chestnut-crowned Warbler, Ferruginous Flycatcher and another Little Forktail. We set off for our next destination, a journey that took us along gorges and valleys cloaked in green vegetation. En route we managed to see three different Collared Crows, a smart bird that has become rare these days, plus the bizarre sight of a Northern Boobook in flight across the valley after being harassed by a Magpie. When we reached the higher elevations at Huanglung and the Xuebaoding Pass we saw Golden Eagle, Northern Goshawk, Sichuan Tit, Sichuan and Alpine Leaf Warblers, Elliot's Laughingthrush, Chestnut and Kessler's Thrush, White-capped and White-throated Redstarts, Rufous-breasted Accentor, and a splendid male Chinese Rubythroat. We then crossed the pass at c.4000m and found our rather nice hotel situated at 2950m.



Elliot's Laughingthrush



Snowy-cheeked Laughingthrush

We headed out early and climbed up to the Gongangling Pass. In the calm of the early morning we found Three-banded Rosefinch, and heard the call of a Pere David's Owl, which came ever closer until he popped out in full view, hooting from a branch at the forest edge, until we went for our breakfast. From the pass itself we saw Golden Eagle, a Blue-eared Pheasant and Himalayan Marmot, and heading down into the forest we found a noisy pair of Giant Laughingthrushes, which were mobbing the same Pere David's Owl that we had seen earlier, only now it actually seemed to be following us! Also here we found a splendid pair of Siberian Jays, our only Crested Tit-warblers of the tour, Chinese Fulvetta, Grey-headed Bullfinch, Rufous-vented Tit and Chinese White-browed Rosefinch. From here we headed down to lower elevations on the edges of Jiuzhaigou, passing hillsides devastated by landslides and buildings lying derelict, hotels empty and shops deserted, following the earthquake of the previous August that put an end to mass tourism here. We found Yellow-bellied and Coal Tits, Large Hawk Cuckoo, Yellow-streaked and Hume's Warblers, White-throated Needletail and Himalayan Vultures, Mrs Gould's Sunbird, and a splendid Lady's Slipper Orchid, while surrounded by dramatic 'chocolate-box' mountain scenery. On our way home a brief stop produced Siberian Rubythroat and a Common Cuckoo.

A second visit to the Gongangling Pass in the early morning was successful in finding a pair of Chinese Grouse that were feeding in the open, our approach masked by the swirling low cloud. Also here a female Blood Pheasant walked past in the moss-carpeted forest, plus White-winged Grosbeak and Hodgson's Treecreeper, before it was time to scuttle back to our hotel where Red-billed Choughs flew around the roof as we ate breakfast and checked out. We set off northwards towards Ruogai, a journey that was interrupted by roadworks where we had to just wait it out, passing the time by scanning the adjacent bushes where we found a showy Siberian Rubythroat male, Plain Laughingthrushes along with the more numerous Elliot's, Alpine Leaf Warblers, Godlewski's Bunting, Kessler's and Chestnut Thrushes. Once we were under way again, we paused at a pass at 3800m where we saw numerous Black Redstarts, Twite, and three lovely little White-browed Tit Warblers. After the pass we found that we had ascended to the Tibetan plateau and a

very different landscape, and at roadside stops we saw a fine Tibetan Wagtail, Ruddy Shelducks, and a Common Redshank that sat down in a way that suggested it was incubating. Our first Black-necked Crane was much appreciated, plus we saw a swarm of Himalayan Vultures plus a couple of Cinereous Vultures, smart Daurian Jackdaws, Northern Raven, and a perky little Ground Tit taking food into a nest hole in a bank. Himalayan Marmot and Siberian Roe Deer were also seen, and we rolled into the plateau town of Ruorgai just as it began to rain.

We spent the next day immersed in the wide open spaces of the plateau. We began in low hills where in tiny bushes we had a great look at a male Przevalski's Finch, plus Black-winged Snowfinch, Rufous-necked Snowfinch, Horned Lark, Oriental Skylark, Twite, Upland Buzzard, Saker Falcon, a flock of Black Stork, a Eurasian Eagle Owl that flushed from rocky slopes, Rock Sparrow, Ground Tits (Ok so its a Tit, but Hume's Groundpecker is such a better name...), a friendly White-browed Tit, and Common Terns mobbing Black-necked Cranes out in the wide expanse of marshy plain. In the afternoon we visited the Ruorgai wetlands, and made use of a shuttle bus that ferried us down to the shore of a shallow lake with a convenient boardwalk where we saw Greylag Geese, Common and Red-crested Pochards, Ferruginous Ducks, Great Crested Grebe, two Eurasian Bittern in flight (a write-in), many Common and a single Whiskered Tern, Black-winged Stilt, Upland Buzzards, Oriental Skylarks, Tibetan Wagtail, many White-rumped Snowfinches keeping close company with the abundant Pikas, and eventually we found the huge Tibetan Lark near the roadside. To finish the day, our guide showed us a Saker Falcon nest with one of the adults feeding three downy chicks, on a quarry rock face.



Horned Lark



Przevalski's Finch



Eurasian Eagle Owl



Siberian Rubythroat

We also spent a day birding the forests to the east of Ruorgai, where we were beset by rain throughout much of the day. Nevertheless we enjoyed good looks at Blood Pheasants, a Snowy-cheeked Laughingthrush that sat up and sang to us, plus Plain and Giant Laughingthrushes, a sneaky Maroon-backed Accentor, a pair of Przevalski's Nuthatches at a nest hole, a pair of Chinese Grouse scoped from

above, Blue-eared Pheasants, numerous Chestnut and Kessler's Thrushes, Grey-crested Tit, Three-banded Rosefinch, and an array of different Leaf Warblers. The rain turned to sleet, and we headed back to town for an interesting Tibetan meal.

Our journey from Ruogai to Maerkang was a fantastic drive across the snow-dusted plateau. We explored roadside hills and valleys where we found four gorgeous Tibetan Partridges greeting the day with their rasping calls, plus some friendly Horned Larks, a Red Fox family and another Siberian Roe Deer that stood out on a snow-covered hillside. Moving on we paused to look at Little Owl, saw a Black-necked Crane on its nest, and a bit further on we found a pair of Chinese Grey Shrikes perched up at the roadside. At another stop we found a roosting Eurasian Eagle Owl, and had the fascinating sight of four corvids on a wire – Daurian Jackdaw, Eurasian and Azure-winged Magpies and Red-billed Chough, all in the same frame. At a lunch stop we saw smart Hill Pigeons flying around over the town, and further on we found Plain Mountain Finch, Rosy Pipits, Hodgson's Redstart, Himalayan Beautiful Rosefinches, a Siberian Weasel and a Sichuan Sika Deer. We then dropped off the plateau into forested river valleys where a final stop produced a female Rufous-bellied Woodpecker, before we rolled into Maerkang for the night.

At dawn the following day we were driving up to the high forests of Mengbisan, where we found that snow had fallen at the higher elevations around the pass, so we started our birding just below the snowfall line. Many Blue-fronted and White-throated Redstarts fed along the roadsides, plus we found Collared and White-winged Grosbeaks, a splendid male Black Woodpecker, and on the opposite slopes we counted nine White-eared Pheasants that had emerged out in the open. As the snow and mist cleared around the pass we drove to the top and then followed a small trail into the forest. Here we had great views of a Verreaux's Monal Partridge that came scuttling around us in a wide circle. Relieved and now ready to move on, we began a long drive to Wolong, site of one of the most famous Panda reserves. A few short stops on the way produced Black-bibbed Tit, Hill Pigeon and Eurasian Crag Martins, but our birding on the Balongshan pass was thwarted by thick fog and a visibility of 20m! A comfortable hotel awaited and we prayed for fine weather the next morning.



Koklass Pheasant



Tibetan Partridge

Sure enough, the birding gods were with us and the next morning was clear and bright. We sped up the mountain to reach the higher elevations, and at our first stop we saw a fine male Koklass Pheasant lurking in the bushes by the roadside, followed by a male Chinese Monal high on the hillside, stalking around on a high pasture, before eventually trotting out of sight over the shoulder of the hill. Hurrah! Lifers for all! To add to this we saw five White-eared Pheasants, and some calling Verreaux's Monal Partridge that we only heard, unlike our driver who had made a video of them with his phone from the parked bus! We headed further up towards the pass, racing the rising clouds, finding Lammergeier, Himalayan Vultures, Alpine Choughs, Snow Pigeons, Red-fronted Rosefinch, Plain Mountain Finch, Alpine Accentors, and some intensely coloured Grandala swooping and flicking about on the high slopes. Eventually after much scanning we found Snow Partridge, and had a fairly close and clear view of one of them. The afternoon was quieter, a very vocal

Sichuan Thrush was seen briefly, and we had our first contact with Firethroat although he would not play along.

The next morning we were back up at high altitude below the pass, where in foggy conditions we ate breakfast in the company of Brandt's Mountain Finches. Persevering in the cloud we eventually found two Tibetan Snowcock during a break of better visibility, and had a good view as they trotted through the rocks, despite the snow that was falling around us! The weather drove us to a lower altitude, and we were able to find a female Golden Bush Robin and three splendid Crimson-browed Finch feeding on the budding bushes. We dropped lower still but the traffic was building up to annoying and noisy levels, and among many calling birds we could only find Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler. Returning to Wolong, we spent the afternoon around a peaceful temple where we found numerous Chinese Leaf Warblers, Chinese Babax, Brown-flanked Bush Warbler, Spotted and Brown Bush Warblers, Martens and Grey-crowned Warblers, a fine male Slaty Bunting singing his high-pitched song, and finished up with a Firethroat that showed well despite being buried in a thick bush.

We returned to the pass the next morning, however the thick cloud and fog meant we saw nothing until we passed through the long tunnel to the north side where it was clear. We soon found a flock of Pink-rumped Rosefinches feeding in roadside bushes, and had a brief look at a Streaked Rosefinch before it disappeared. In some roadside forest we saw Black-browed Bushtits, plus Sichuan and Hume's Leaf Warblers, before it was time to move on. We passed through a very scenic valley with lovely village houses built in Tibetan architecture, and further towards our destination of Luding we were held at a traffic control for a couple of hours. We made the best of the delay and were able to watch Godlewski's Buntings, Russet Sparrows and Blue Rock Thrush all busy with nest duties. Eventually we reached our hotel for the night and enjoyed more good food, and beer that was atypically cold!



Pink-rumped Rosefinch



Slaty Bunting

The following day we explored the scrubby forest of Erlangshan, where we began by driving up and down forest roads until we had seen a male Lady Amherst Pheasant, which as hoped, trotted across the road in front of us. Soon after we found a very obliging Firethroat, his intense red front glowing as he sang from high in a tree, plus Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler, and a Barred Laughingthrush played hide and seek with us until it flew into a convenient tree for a viewing. Exploring further up the mountain we found a fine White-bellied Redstart male, a Blanford's Rosefinch female, a small flock of Sharpe's and Common Rosefinches, and up in the fog around the pass we found a Chinese Wren Babbler, a group of Brown Parrotbill in the bamboo, a pair of Dark-rumped Rosefinch in a busy flock that included a handful of Dark-breasted Rosefinches, Stripe-throated Yuhina, Grey-hooded and White-browed Fulvettas, and another Firethroat showed very well. Lower down on the road we heard a Rufous-tailed Babbler and saw another Lady Amherst Pheasant (a sub-adult male) before the rain put an end to the days' birding.

We returned the next morning in the rain, saw a male Lady Amherst Pheasant once again along the road, then we ate our breakfast in a small house to keep dry, squeezed into a the 'lounge' of the friendly couple

who had invited us in. The rain stopped and we walked a short way up the road where we found a pair Ashy-throated Parrotbills, and then a vocal Rufous-tailed Moupinia showed very well in roadside bushes. We were thrilled to find a nest of a Black-streaked Scimitar Babbler, in a shrub with two blue eggs inside. We then headed round to the east side of the mountain and followed a track through promising-looking deciduous forest, however it yielded little apart from an Emei Leaf Warbler that sang strongly. We paused for lunch in a village where we saw Rufous-faced Warbler, then we pressed on to Labahe, another well-forested Panda reserve of deep river valleys and high ridges. From our hotel we took a shuttle bus up to where the forest floor was thick with bamboo, where we saw Darjeeling Woodpecker, Aberrant Bush Warblers, Chestnut-vented Nuthatch and glimpsed a White-browed Shortwing.

Up at the highest point on the road, in the early morning we could hear Great Parrotbills calling deep in the forest, but construction work here meant the area was heavily disturbed. We retreated down the road, finding a perky pair of Fulvous Parrotbills and a Brown Parrotbill in the bamboo understorey, before heading up the steep steps of the a forest trail. We started with a flock of excited small birds that held three Fire-capped Tits, Yellow-browed Tits, Stripe-throated Yuhinas and Red Crossbill. The forest was harder work but we found Chinese Wren Babbler, Hodgson's Tree creeper, and a trio of Speckled Woodpigeon. Rain at midday pushed several White-throated Needletails down to lower elevations, among a large flock of Salim Ali's Swifts, a couple of Himalayan Swiftlets and many Asian House Martins. In the afternoon we had a damp walk up the valley finding Speckled Piculets, Crimson-breasted Woodpecker, Dark-sided Flycatcher, White-tailed Robin, Rufous-bellied Niltava, Large-billed Leaf Warbler and a female Temminck's Tragopan with two tiny chicks.



Grandala

Returning to the top in the early morning once more, we quickly found a pair of Great Parrotbills before the construction work commenced. We explored the roadsides and some side trails, finding Brown and Fulvous Parrotbill once more, a female Grandala that was obviously pushed down by the bad weather up top, and a Firethroat that had us convinced it was a Blackthroat until it was finally seen, offering us a fantastic range of

mimicry as it sang from its hidden perch. The icing on the cake came when our guide Robbi shouted 'Red Panda!', and had spotted the richly coloured prize sat high in a fir tree. We were able to watch it for a long period as it sat preening itself, and even showed it to some passing tourists who of course all wanted a selfie with us! Hurrah! We scuttled back and hastily checked out of our hotel, before setting off to our next destination of Longcanggou. A random stop en route was fortunate, finding a busy little bird flock with Dusky Fulvetta, Rufous-faced Warbler, White-rumped Munia, a white-headed Black Bulbul, Japanese White-eye and a number of Black-throated Bushtits. On arrival at our hotel we saw Grey-headed Woodpecker, Crested Honey Buzzard, Grey-capped Greenfinch and Light-vented Bulbuls.

An early start and a slow drive to reach the highest parts of Longcanggou, we walked along tracks through the scrappy logged forest where we found Emei Liocichla, a furtive Red-winged Laughingthrush, Yellow-bellied Tits and a Great Parrotbill. A female Slaty-blue Flycatcher was put off her nest in a bank that contained three eggs. We then attempted to get our bus past road blockages caused by the ongoing roadworks, and were eventually successful in getting to the top. Here we saw Lesser Cuckoo, and we heard a Sichuan Treecreeper singing from down in a valley which could not be enticed into view. It was hot and bright, but we discovered we were now blocked from going back down so we persisted at the higher levels. We added Fire-capped Tit, Ashy-throated Leaf Warbler and Stripe-throated Yuhina, but the Treecreeper continued to elude us. Returning along the track, we managed to get through the blockages although little stirred among the bamboo, until we got to our end point where the bus had parked up, where we found a superb little Golden Parrotbill that gave us some thrilling close views as it buzzed about in the bamboo.



White-throated Redstart



White-bellied Redstart

We began again in the early hours by heading up to the top, and a Himalayan Wood Owl was heard on the way up but slipped away from us as it went to roost. Once up high we found White-backed Woodpecker, Golden-breasted Fulvetta and Golden Parrotbill in the bamboo, and a female Temminck's Tragopan with two chicks crossed the road in front of us. The roadworks continued to block the road which meant that we had to rely on our own two feet to reach the higher levels. We managed to find a friendly pair of Three-toed Parrotbills, and higher up we saw Brown Parrotbills, though a speedy group of Grey-hooded Parrotbills didn't hang around. Also we found Darjeeling Woodpecker, a hepatic female Lesser Cuckoo, and enjoyed the many White-throated Needletails whooshing between the trees at low levels. It was hot and bright once again, and we had a long walk back down to where our bus was parked, a total of 12km! We then dropped down the mountain to a lower elevation, to walk a quiet road through mixed woodland, finding Black-chinned Yuhina Chestnut-crowned Warbler, Grey-faced Buzzard and Crested Honey Buzzards, Mountain and Black Bulbuls, and on the return leg we found a group of Red-tailed and Blue-winged Minlas, and while we watched them, a Golden-fronted Fulvetta jumped into view to join them. Hurrah! What a splendid little bird. We retired for a final evening of Sichuan food and warm beers after a long and tiring day.

We returned to the same wooded road the next day, fully expecting the early morning to be even more birdy, however it wasn't the case! With rising humidity and the threat of rain in the air, the birds were late to awaken, nevertheless we found David's Fulvetta, a pair of Brown Bullfinch, a distant Great Barbet and eventually a trio of Buffy Laughingthrush. A last look around our hotel was worthwhile, and we found Grey-

headed Woodpecker, Grey-headed Greenfinch, Black-naped Oriole, and a surprise Chinese Thrush was that was well-received, a bird that was unexpected and indeed we thought we had missed it. We then headed towards Chengdu, stopping on the way along a pretty river valley where we saw several Swinhoe's Minivet, a distant Fork-tailed Drongo Cuckoo, a splendid male Yellow-rumped Flycatcher, a flock of Ashy-throated Parrotbills, and while we had lunch on a terrace overlooking the river, a Chinese Sparrowhawk flew over our heads. This wrapped up our tour nicely, and we then headed for Chengdu airport where we all headed off in our different directions homeward. We had enjoyed a thrilling tour around the incredible scenery and mountains of western Sichuan and its endemic-rich forests, ably supported by our guide Robbi and our indefatigable driver Mr Shen, without whom it would not have been possible to accomplish so much, and all without any difficulties or mishaps. Sheh-sheh!



Birding at Gongangling (picture by Robbi Zhu Lei)



Grey-headed Bullfinch

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which only recorded on the extension are indicated by the symbol (Y)

Species which only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO)

Species which were not personally recorded by the leaders are indicated by the symbol (NL)

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

Bar-headed Goose ◊ *Anser indicus* A single bird sat on a nest near Ruoergai.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser* Good numbers around Wild Flower Lake near Ruoergai.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea* Frequently encountered on the high plateau.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera* A pair at Wild Flower Lake, also at Lijiang.

Eastern Spot-billed Duck *Anas zonorhyncha* (Y) A fair number at Cao Hai near Lijiang.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* Seen in a couple of suitable locations.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina* Quite a few seen in bright colours at Wild Flower Lake.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina* A few at Wild Flower Lake. A write-in.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca* A dozen at Wild Flower Lake, a score at Cao Hai near Lijiang.

Chinese Grouse ◊ *Tetrastes sewerzowi* Multiple sightings, from Gongangling to Baxi.

Snow Partridge ◊ *Lerwa lerwa* Two seen well on the Balongshan Pass.

Verreaux's Monal-Partridge ◊ *Tetraophasis obscurus* A great view of one at Mengbishan.



Tibetan Snowcock



White Eared Pheasant

Tibetan Snowcock ♦ *Tetraogallus tibetanus* Eventually we had great looks at two on the Balongshan Pass.

Tibetan Partridge ♦ *Perdix hodgsoniae* Four seen in a snowy side valley south of Ruoergai.

Blood Pheasant ♦ *Ithaginis cruentus* Some seen well in the Baxi Valley, also at Gongangling.

Temminck's Tragopan ♦ *Tragopan temminckii* Stunning male at Tangjiahe, three females along our way.

Koklass Pheasant ♦ *Pucrasia macrolopha* A surprise showing by a male near the roadside on the Balongshan Pass.

Chinese Monal ♦ *Lophophorus lhuysii* A good if distant look at one on a fog free morning on the Balongshan Pass.

White Eared Pheasant ♦ *Crossoptilon crossoptilon* Small groups seen on steep slopes in the early mornings.

Blue Eared Pheasant ♦ *Crossoptilon auritum* One at Gongangling, three at Baxi showed well.

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* Quite a few seen around the plateau

Golden Pheasant ♦ *Chrysolophus pictus* A great view of a male at Tangjiahe.

Lady Amherst's Pheasant ♦ *Chrysolophus amherstiae* Two seen in Yunnan, four of varying ages at Erlangshan.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* (Y) Several at Cao Hai.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* Three noted on Wild Flower Lake near Ruoergai.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* A flock of nine out on a plateau meadow near Ruoergai.

Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* Two seen flying at Wild Flower Lake, a write-in.

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis* (Y) Seen in flight at Lashi Lake near Lijiang.

Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* (Y) One seen well at Lashi Lake near Lijiang.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* (Y) Quite a few at Cao Hai, Lijiang

Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus* A few singles seen along the way.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus* Quite a few at high elevation around the Yak flocks.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Seen on three dates only.

Eastern Great Egret *Ardea [alba] modesta* (Y) A single at Cao Hai.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Few in Sichuan, lots near Lijiang airport.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* (NL) One seen near Luding.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* (Y) One or more seen at Cao Hai near Lijiang.

Bearded Vulture (Lammergeier) *Gypaetus barbatus* Seen on two dates on the Balongshan Pass.

Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus* Nice examples at Longcanggou, Erlangshan (6), and other sites.

Himalayan Vulture *Gyps himalayensis* Pleasingly common in Yak country.

Cinereous Vulture (Eurasian Black V) *Aegypius monachus* At least two seen en route to Ruoergai.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* A few at high altitude, from Xue Bao Ding to Balongshan.

Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* Singles seen at Labahe and near Jiuzhaigou.

Chinese Sparrowhawk ♦ *Accipiter soloensis* The last addition to the list, a single near Ya'an.

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis* One seen high on the Xue Bao Ding pass.

Black Kite (Black-eared K) *Milvus [migrans] lineatus* Frequently observed in Yak country.

Grey-faced Buzzard *Butastur indicus* A single seen carrying a snake at Longcanggou.

Upland Buzzard ♦ *Buteo hemilasius* Rather numerous on the plateau, a single at Mengbishan.



Upland Buzzard



Lesser Cuckoo

Himalayan Buzzard *Buteo burmanicus* Two seen at Balongshan, a single near Lijiang.

Grey-headed Swamphen *Porphyrio poliocephalus* (Y) Seen in good number at Cao Hai lake.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* Hundreds at Cao Hai, a single near Ruorgai.

Eurasian Coot (Common C) *Fulica atra* Noted at Wild Flower Lake and also in Yunnan.

Black-necked Crane ♦ *Grus nigricollis* Not uncommon on the plateau, up to 15 in a day around Ruorgai.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* One seen at Wild Flower Lake, a write-in.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* A single flew over near Ruorgai.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* Fairly common on the plateau, a nest observed en route to Ruorgai.

Brown-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus* A fair number around wet areas on the plateau.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* Quite common on the plateau, such as at Wild Flower Lake.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* One or two seen at Wild Flower Lake.

Rock Dove (feral) *Columba livia* Hmm...

Hill Pigeon ♦ *Columba rupestris* Nice to see these, at Anqu and also en route from Mengbishan.

Snow Pigeon ♦ *Columba leuconota* A couple of pairs of these delightful birds around Balongshan.

Speckled Wood Pigeon *Columba hodgsonii* Four seen at Labahe, showing well.

Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis* Only noted in a couple of places in Sichuan, a few more in Yunnan.

Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica* A surprise one near Ruorgai, and two males at Balongshan.

Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis* Present around Chengdu.

Asian Koel *Eudynamis scolopaceus* (H) Heard at Tangjiahe, Longcanggou and Lijiang.

Fork-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo *Surniculus dicruroides* A distant songster seen near Ya'an.

Large Hawk-Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparveroides* Singles seen at Erlangshan and near Jiuzhaigou.

Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus* Heard quite often, singing male and hepatic females seen at Longcanggou.

Himalayan Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus* Finally one seen at Longcanggou.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* Multiple sightings, especially on the plateau.

Eurasian Eagle-Owl *Bubo bubo* Two seen, one flew, another roosting by the roadside south of Ruorgai.

Himalayan Owl ♦ *Strix niviculum* (H) Heard on the way up Longcanggou.

Pere David's Owl ♦ *Strix davidi* A great encounter with a friendly bird at Gongangling.

Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides* A single seen in a village close to Tangjiahe.

Little Owl *Athene noctua* A good look at one on the plateau.

Northern Boobook ♦ *Ninox japonica* A bizarre sighting of one flying high across a river near Tangjiahe!

Himalayan Swiftlet *Aerodramus brevirostris* Seen in number around our Longcanggou hotel, also at Labahe.

White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus* Great views at Longcanggou, skimming through the trees.

Salim Ali's Swift ♦ *Apus salimalii* Frequently observed.

House Swift *Apus nipalensis* A few noted on journeys in the lowlands.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* Singles observed at Chengdu and at Tangjiahe.

Crested Kingfisher *Megaceryle lugubris* Four seen on the river at Tangjiahe.

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops* (Y) A couple seen near Lijiang.



Pere David's Owl

- Great Barbet *Psilopogon virens*** A poor view of one at Longcanggou.
- Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus*** Nice looks at a pair at Labahe. Also hear at Longcanggou.
- Crimson-breasted Woodpecker** ♦ *Dryobates cathpharius* Nice views at Labahe and Longcanggou.
- Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Dendrocopos hyperythrus*** A single curious female observed en route to Maerkang.
- Darjeeling Woodpecker** ♦ *Dendrocopos darjellensis* One seen well at Labahe, also encountered at Longcanggou.
- Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*** One seen at Tangjiahe.
- White-backed Woodpecker *Dendrocopos leucotos*** A male popped up at an al fresco Longcanggou breakfast.
- Black Woodpecker *Dryocopus martius*** Great views of a male at Mengbishan.
- Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*** Seen close to our Longcanggou hotel.
- Bay Woodpecker *Blythipicus pyrrhotis* (H)** Hear at Longcanggou and Erlangshan.
- Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*** A single seen en route from Balongshan.
- Saker Falcon** ♦ *Falco cherrug* Several sightings around Ruorgai, one on a nest with three chicks.
- Rosy Minivet** ♦ *Pericrocotus roseus* (Y) One seen at Shigu.
- Swinhoe's Minivet** ♦ *Pericrocotus cantonensis* Several found in riverside trees near Ya'an.
- Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*** Common throughout the higher elevation forests.
- Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*** A single seen by a gas station en route from Balongshan.
- Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*** A couple seen en route in the Chengdu basin, also in Yunnan.
- Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus*** Quite common and noted regularly.
- Chinese Grey Shrike** ♦ *Lanius sphenocercus* A nice thrill en route from Ruorgai, a pair at the roadside.



Darjeeling Woodpecker



Rufous-bellied Woodpecker

Blyth's Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius aeralatus* A single at Labahe appeared and disappeared!
Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis* One seen at our Longcanggou hotel.
Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus* Some at typical lower elevations, two seen at 3400m!
Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus* A couple at Wolong.
White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis* (Y) One at Shigu.
Sichuan Jay ♦ *Perisoreus internigrans* A pair showed nicely at Gongangling, the only ones seen on the tour.
Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* A few singles seen.
Azure-winged Magpie ♦ *Cyanopica cyanus* Only seen on one day, several seen at the roadside on the plateau.
Red-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha* Frequent sightings in the mid elevation areas.
Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica* Occasionally seen in open country, also on the plateau.
Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga caryocatactes* Multiple sightings, often with juveniles.
Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* Often seen at higher altitudes, especially on the plateau.
Alpine Chough *Pyrrhocorax graculus* Only at the highest altitudes, fairly numerous at Balongshan.
Daurian Jackdaw ♦ *Coloeus dauuricus* Some smart examples seen on the plateau.
Oriental Crow ♦ (Carrion C) *Corvus [corone] orientalis* A couple seen in open areas at Baxi.
Collared Crow ♦ *Corvus torquatus* A rare bird with special habitat requirements, we saw three.
Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos* Seen often and in most places.
Northern Raven (Common R) *Corvus corax* Seen on a couple of days on the high plateau.
Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis* Seen at Tangjiahe.
Fire-capped Tit ♦ *Cephalopyrus flammiceps* Three in a mixed flock at Labahe, another at Longcanggou.
Yellow-browed Tit *Sylviparus modestus* A few seen at Labahe.
Rufous-vented Tit *Periparus rubidiventris* A few seen in high conifer forest.
Coal Tit *Periparus ater* A couple seen near Jiuzhaigou and also at Labahe.



White-browed Tit



Sichuan Tit

Yellow-bellied Tit ♦ *Pardaliparus venustulus* A single near Jiuzhaigou, more at Longcanggou.

Grey Crested Tit *Lophophanes dichrous* Only found in a couple of high forests, at Baxi and Labahe.

White-browed Tit ♦ *Poecile superciliosus* A splendid curious fellow came around us for a look near Ruoergai.

Black-bibbed Tit ♦ *Poecile hypermelaenus* Two seen near Lijiang, another seen between Mengbishan and Wolong.

Sichuan Tit ♦ *Poecile weigoldicus* Several seen at scattered high altitude locations.

Ground Tit ♦ *Pseudopodoces humilis* Quite common in places on the plateau, entertaining as they bounced around.

Japanese Tit *Parus minor* Regular encounters along the way.

Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus* Seen often in broad-leaved forest.

Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula* Common in open grassy plateau country.

Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris* Some very nice examples seen on the high plateau.

Tibetan Lark ♦ *Melanocorypha maxima* At least four seen near Wild Flower Lake at Ruoergai.

Crested Finchbill ♦ *Spizixos canifrons* (Y) Not uncommon in Yunnan, especially in the forest near Lijiang airport.

Collared Finchbill ♦ *Spizixos semitorques* Several seen around Tangjiahe, also at Longcanggou.

Brown-breasted Bulbul ♦ *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous* Common in Yunnan, also seen at Erlangshan.

Light-vented Bulbul (Chinese B) *Pycnonotus sinensis* Seen in Chengdu, near Tangjiahe and Longcanggou.

Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus* Smart white-headed birds around Longcanggou.



Black Bulbul



Light-vented Bulbul

Pale Martin *Riparia diluta* Seen at Cao Hai in Yunnan, and also on the high plateau.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Often seen in Yunnan and lowland Sichuan.

Eurasian Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris* Seen in suitable craggy river valleys on a couple of journeys.

Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus* Frequent encounters along our route.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* Not uncommon at lower elevations.

Chinese Wren-babbler ♦ (C Cupwing) *Pnoepyga mutica* A good show by one at Labahe, also one at Erlangshan.

Pygmy Wren-babbler (P Cupwing) *Pnoepyga pusilla* (H) Heard calling from thickets at Longcanggou and Labahe.

Rufous-faced Warbler ♦ *Abroscopus albogularis* Seen at one or two lower elevation localities.

Black-faced Warbler *Abroscopus schisticeps* (Y) Two seen in woodland near to Lijiang.

Brown-flanked Bush Warbler *Horornis fortipes* One seen at Tangjiahe, more friendly at Wolong. Often heard.

Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler ♦ *Horornis acanthizoides* A couple seen at Tangjiahe, another at Balongshan.

Aberrant Bush Warbler ♦ *Horornis flavolivaceus* Notably common at Labahe, also at Longcanggou and Lijiang.

Chestnut-crowned Bush Warbler ♦ *Cettia major* (H) Heard at Balongshan.

Chestnut-headed Tesia *Cettia castaneocoronata* (H) Heard at Labahe and Erlangshan.

Black-throated Bushtit *Aegithalos concinnus* Seen well in Yunnan, at Chengdu and near Longcanggou.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* A single songster seen at Baxi.

Alpine Leaf Warbler ♦ *Phylloscopus occisinensis* Often seen in bushy habitat at or above the tree line.

Buff-throated Warbler ♦ *Phylloscopus subaffinis* Nice looks at Erlangshan, also seen in Yunnan.

Black-browed Bushtit ♦ (B-b Tit) *Aegithalos bonvaloti* Several close encounters in Yunnan, more in SW Sichuan.

White-browed Tit-Warbler ♦ *Leptopoecile sophiae* Three seen near Chuenzhusi, nest building observed.

Crested Tit-Warbler ♦ *Leptopoecile elegans* Three birds came buzzing around us at Gonganggling.

Yellow-streaked Warbler ♦ *Phylloscopus armandii* Nice showy birds near Jiuzhaigou, also in other high forests.



Aberrant Bush Warbler



Buff-throated Warbler

Buff-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus pulcher* Quite common in the higher forests.

Ashy-throated Warbler *Phylloscopus maculipennis* A couple at Longcanggou, also one in Yunnan.

Chinese Leaf Warbler ◇ *Phylloscopus yunnanensis* Many vocal showy birds at Wolong, also seen at Labahe.

Hume's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus humei* Fairly regularly seen in the higher forests.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* Common at higher elevations and on the plateau.

Large-billed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris* Notably common at Longcanggou, seen also at Labahe.

Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides* (Y) Quite common in the scrubby woodland around Lijiang.

Claudia's Leaf Warbler ◇ *Phylloscopus claudiae* Common in many of the high forests, especially in SW Sichuan.

Emei Leaf Warbler ◇ *Phylloscopus emeiensis* Only seen at Erlangshan, heard at Longcanggou.

Davison's Leaf Warbler ◇ *Phylloscopus davisoni* (Y) A few seen near Lijiang.

Kloss's Leaf Warbler ◇ *Phylloscopus ogilviegranti* Seen at Tangjiahe, heard at Longcanggou.

Sichuan Leaf Warbler ◇ *Phylloscopus forresti* Often seen and heard in the higher forests.

Sulphur-breasted Warbler ◇ *Phylloscopus ricketti* A couple at Tangjiahe were rather elusive.

Grey-crowned Warbler ◇ *Seicercus tephrocephalus* Seen in Yunnan, also at Erlangshan.

Bianchi's Warbler ◇ *Seicercus valentini* The commoner of the set at higher elevations, frequently heard.

Martens's Warbler ◇ *Seicercus omeiensis* A few songsters identified at Wolong and Erlangshan.

Alström's Warbler ◇ (Plain-tailed W) *Seicercus soror* A couple noted at Tangjiahe.

Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Seicercus castaniceps* Seen well at Tangjiahe, and especially at Longcanggou.

Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis* (Y) A good number at Cao Hai in Yunnan.

Sichuan Bush Warbler ◇ *Locustella chengi* A good view of one at Tangjiahe, emerging in a break in the rain.

Spotted Bush Warbler ◇ *Locustella thoracica* One showed at Wolong, others at Baxi were more furtive.

Brown Bush Warbler ◇ *Locustella luteoventris* Some sort of views in scrub at Wolong.

Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata* (Y) Not uncommon in Yunnan in grassy fields.

Black-streaked Scimitar Babbler ◇ *Pomatorhinus gravivox* Several good looks. See note.

Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis* Singles seen at Lijiang and Erlangshan.

Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyridopsis ruficeps* a few seen well at Labahe and Longcanggou.

Golden-fronted Fulvetta ◇ *Alcippe variegaticeps* A good look at one at Longcanggou.

Rusty-capped Fulvetta ◇ *Alcippe dubia* (Y) Two seen in the scrubby woodland near Lijiang.

Dusky Fulvetta ◇ (Brown-capped F) *Alcippe brunnea* Two seen in the scrubby woodland near Lijiang.

David's Fulvetta ◇ *Alcippe davidi* A couple of these dull fellows at Longcanggou.

Chinese Babax ◇ *Babax lanceolatus* Some good views at Wolong, a couple also at Erlangshan.

Snowy-cheeked Laughingthrush ◇ *Garrulax sukatschewi* Some nice views of this localised endemic at Baxi.

Barred Laughingthrush ◇ *Garrulax lunulatus* A vocal bird at Erlangshan eventually popped into view.

Giant Laughingthrush ◇ *Garrulax maximus* Frequently encountered in the higher forests.

Spotted Laughingthrush ◇ *Garrulax ocellatus* Heard at Longcanggou, also seen near Chuenzhusi at a roadblock.

White-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax albogularis* A small flock seen in the rain at Tangjiahe.

Plain Laughingthrush ◇ *Garrulax davidi* Not uncommon on the plateau where we enjoyed some good looks.

Buffy Laughingthrush ◇ *Garrulax berthemyi* Great looks at a trio at Longcanggou.

White-browed Laughingthrush ◇ *Garrulax sannio* Seen in Chengdu and by our Longcanggou hotel, also in Yunnan.



Dusky Fulvetta



Plain Laughingthrush

Elliot's Laughingthrush ♦ *Trochalopteron elliotii* Frequently encountered.
Red-winged Laughingthrush ♦ *Trochalopteron formosum* Very furtive, a brief look at one at Longcanggou.
Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera* Several seen well at Longcanggou.
Bar-throated Minla (Chestnut-tailed M) *Minla strigula* (Y) A brief sighting in Yunnan.
Red-tailed Minla *Minla ignotincta* A single seen well at Longcanggou.
Emei Shan Liocichla ♦ *Liocichla omeiensis* At least one seen well at Longcanggou, others glimpsed.
Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea* Seen well at Longcanggou.
Black-headed Sibia ♦ *Heterophasia desgodinsi* (Y) A few seen in Yunnan, more frequently heard singing



Three-toed Parrotbill

Golden-breasted Fulvetta ♦ *Lioparus chrysotis* A brief sighting at Tangjiahe, good views at Longcanggou.
Rufous-tailed Babbler ♦ (R-t Moupinia) *Moupinia poecilotis* One showed very well at Erlangshan.
White-browed Fulvetta ♦ *Fulvetta vinipectus* A single at Erlangshan, several seen near Lijiang.
Chinese Fulvetta ♦ *Fulvetta striaticollis* A few seen, from Gongangling to Baxi forest. See note.
Spectacled Fulvetta ♦ *Fulvetta ruficapilla* (Y) Several seen in scrubby woodland in Yunnan.
Grey-hooded Fulvetta ♦ *Fulvetta cinereiceps* Several sightings between Erlangshan and Longcanggou, also at Baxi
Great Parrotbill ♦ *Conostoma aemodium* A good view of a vocal bird at Labahe, also seen at Longcanggou.
Three-toed Parrotbill ♦ *Cholornis paradoxus* A good viewing of a pair at Longcanggou on a long trek!
Brown Parrotbill ♦ *Cholornis unicolor* First seen in the fog at Erlangshan, and more at Labahe and Longcanggou.
Vinous-throated Parrotbill ♦ *Sinosuthora webbiana* Just a couple seen, at Tangjiahe.
Ashy-throated Parrotbill ♦ *Sinosuthora alphonsiana* Seen well at Erlangshan and Longcanggou.
Brown-winged Parrotbill ♦ *Sinosuthora brunnea* (Y) A busy flock entertained us at Shigu in Yunnan.
Grey-hooded Parrotbill ♦ *Sinosuthora zappeyi* A fast moving flock of several birds seen at Longcanggou.
Fulvous Parrotbill ♦ *Suthora fulvifrons* Great looks at these cute little fellows at Labahe.
Golden Parrotbill ♦ *Suthora verreauxi* A superb view of one at close range at Longcanggou.
Stripe-throated Yuhina *Yuhina gularis* A few seen at Erlangshan, Labahe and Longcanggou.



Brown-winged Parrotbill



Przevalski's Nuthatch

White-collared Yuhina ♦ *Yuhina diademata* Rather common in SW Sichuan, also in Yunnan.
Rufous-vented Yuhina ♦ *Yuhina occipitalis* (Y) Two seen in mixed flocks near to Lijiang.
Black-chinned Yuhina *Yuhina nigrimenta* Some good views at Longcanggou where they were not uncommon.
Chestnut-flanked White-eye ♦ *Zosterops erythropleurus* A single seen briefly at Erlangshan.
Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonicus* A few seen at Longcanggou, also in number at Shigu in Yunnan.
Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* Singles at Baxi and near Balongshan.
Eurasian Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* A couple of sightings in the very highest forests.
Chestnut-vented Nuthatch *Sitta nagaensis* A couple of sightings at Labahe, also at Lijiang.
Yunnan Nuthatch ♦ (Y) *Sitta yunnanensis* (Y) A pair seen in the pine woods at Lijiang.
Przevalski's Nuthatch ♦ *Sitta przewalskii* Seen well at Baxi, a pair with a nest hole.
Hodgson's Treecreeper ♦ *Certhia hodgsoni* A couple seen at Gongangling, another at Labahe.
Sichuan Treecreeper ♦ *Certhia tianquanensis* (H) Frustratingly heard only at Labahe.
Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus* A few seen in the Chengdu park.
Red-billed Starling ♦ (Silky S) *Spodiopsar sericeus* Seen in flight only in Yunnan, better views in Chengdu.
Sichuan Thrush ♦ *Zoothera griseiceps* A sweet songster was glimpsed only in flight at Balongshan.
Long-tailed Thrush ♦ *Zoothera dixonii* A few heard, one seen very briefly at Mengbisha.
Grandala ♦ *Grandala coelicolor* A good number seen at Balongshan, a single immature at 2600m at Labahe.
Black-breasted Thrush ♦ *Turdus dissimilis* (Y) A couple of splendid males seen at Shigu in Yunnan.
Grey-winged Blackbird *Turdus boulboul* A couple of examples seen in Yunnan, heard at Longcanggou.
Chinese Blackbird ♦ *Turdus mandarinus* Several seen in the park in Chengdu.

Chestnut Thrush ♦ *Turdus rubrocanus* A common sight in the montane forests.

Kessler's Thrush ♦ *Turdus kessleri* Not uncommon at the higher altitudes.

Chinese Thrush ♦ *Turdus mupinensis* A big surprise to find one near our Longcanggou hotel just as we were leaving!

Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis* (Y) A few seen at Shigu on the extension.

Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica* A few seen at Labahe.

Ferruginous Flycatcher ♦ *Muscicapa ferruginea* A couple seen at Tangjiahe, also two at Labahe.

Chinese Blue Flycatcher ♦ *Cyornis glaucicomans* A female at Labahe.

Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara* A male seen at Labahe was presumed to be this species.

Zappey's Flycatcher ♦ *Cyanoptila cumatilis* (H) A songster at Tangjiahe stayed invisible somehow!

Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassinus* A few seen at Longcanggou, also at Erlangshan and in Yunnan.

White-browed Shortwing *Brachypteryx montana* A glimpse of one in the bamboo at Labahe, others heard.

Indian Blue Robin *Larvivora brunnea* Common by voice, seen at Wolong, Erlangshan and Labahe.

White-bellied Redstart ♦ *Luscinia phaenicuroides* Great looks at Lijiang, Erlangshan and Labahe.

Chinese Rubythroat ♦ *Calliope tschebaiewi* A singing male perched up nicely at Xuebaoding.

Siberian Rubythroat *Calliope calliope* Great views around Gongangling, another at Baxi.

Firethroat ♦ *Calliope pectardens* Our first at Wolong, great views at Erlangshan, another at Labahe.

White-tailed Robin *Myiomela leucura* One at Labahe showed fairly well.

White-browed Bush Robin ♦ *Tarsiger indicus* (H) Heard at Erlangshan in the fog.

Himalayan Bluetail *Tarsiger rufilatus* A few seen at Gongangling, Baxi and Mengbisha.

Golden Bush Robin ♦ *Tarsiger chrysaeus* A female at Balongshan was our only sighting.

Little Forktail *Enicurus scouleri* Seen well at Tangjiahe on two occasions.

White-crowned Forktail *Enicurus leschenaulti* (NL) One seen at Longcanggou.

Blue Whistling Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus* Mostly fleeting views along our route, seen best at Tangjiahe.



Firethroat

Yellow-rumped Flycatcher ♦ *Ficedula zanthopygia* A smart male seen near Ya'an.

Slaty-backed Flycatcher ♦ *Ficedula hodgsonii* Numerous at Baxi Forest, also seen at Gongangling.

Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophia* A small number seen at Labahe and Longcanggou.

Snowy-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra* One seen at Erlangshan, heard at Longcanggou.

Slaty-blue Flycatcher *Ficedula tricolor* A couple seen, many heard, a nest found at Longcanggou.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* Common on the plateau, many in song along the roadsides.

Hodgson's Redstart ♦ *Phoenicurus hodgsoni* A male en route to Maerkang, a female en route to Wolong.

White-throated Redstart ♦ *Phoenicurus schisticeps* A common sight around higher elevations.

Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus aureus* Fairly common in Yunnan, also at lower elevation localities in Sichuan.

Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis* Smart males frequently seen at high altitudes.

Plumbeous Water Redstart *Phoenicurus fuliginosus*

White-capped Redstart (River Chat) *Phoenicurus leucocephalus*



Plumbeous Water Redstart



White-capped Redstart

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* Some nice examples in 'tunnel country' en route to Luding.

Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus* A few along the route, nominate race.

Grey Bush Chat *Saxicola ferreus* A small number noted along the way.

Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii* Some seen around Tangjiahe, also at Labahe.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus* (Y) Only seen on the extension where several were noted.

Mrs. Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae* Commonly seen in some of the slightly lower forests along our route.

Russet Sparrow *Passer cinnamomeus* Seen along the route to Luding, also at Tangjiahe, and many in Yunnan.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* Urban habitats.

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia* Several birds were seen along the roadsides on the plateau.

Black-winged Snowfinch ♦ (Tibetan S) *Montifringilla adamsi* Two seen well along the roadside near Ruorgai.

White-rumped Snowfinch ♦ *Onychostruthus taczanowskii* Numerous in Pika-rich areas of the plateau.

Rufous-necked Snowfinch ♦ *Pyrgilauda ruficollis* Some smart birds seen in Pika country on the plateau.

White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata* A couple seen at a roadside stop en route to Longcanggou.

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata* (Y) Seen at Cao Hai and Shigu on the extension.

Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris* Numerous and active on Balongshan pass, with many singing.

Robin Accentor ♦ *Prunella rubeculoides* Some nice examples showed well in the Ruorgai area.

Rufous-breasted Accentor ♦ *Prunella strophia* A number of active birds seen at Xuebaoding, odd ones elsewhere.

Maroon-backed Accentor ♦ *Prunella immaculata* One or maybe two sneaky birds seen at Baxi.

Citrine Wagtail ♦ (Tibetan W) *Motacilla [citreola] calcarata* A few fine males seen in the Ruorgai area.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* Remarkably common at Longcanggou, with nests found.

White Wagtail (Himalayan W) *Motacilla [alba] alboides* Present along rivers and streams.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* A few sightings in the higher forests.

Rosy Pipit ♦ *Anthus roseatus* Frequently seen at the higher elevations.



Rufous-necked Snowfinch



Robin Accentor

Przevalski's Finch ◇ *Urocynchramus pylzowi* A splendid male appeared in front of us near Ruorgai.
Collared Grosbeak ◇ *Mycerobas affinis* A single at Gongangling, more at Mengbishan.
White-winged Grosbeak ◇ *Mycerobas carnipes* Some good sightings of these chunkers in higher forests.
Chinese Grosbeak ◇ *Eophona migratoria* Two seen in a Chengdu park.
Brown Bullfinch *Pyrrhula nipalensis* A pair showed at Longcanggou.
Grey-headed Bullfinch ◇ *Pyrrhula erythaca* Frequent sightings along our route, always in pairs.
Blanford's Rosefinch ◇ *Agrophospiza rubescens* A female seen at Erlangshan.
Dark-breasted Rosefinch *Procarduelis nipalensis* Three males in a busy flock at Erlangshan.
Plain Mountain Finch *Leucosticte nemoricola* A few seen on Balongshan, also en route to Maerkang.
Brandt's Mountain Finch ◇ *Leucosticte brandti* A small group seen very close to in the fog at Balongshan.
Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus* Frequent sightings in a range of localities.
Streaked Rosefinch ◇ *Carpodacus rubicilloides* A single made a brief appearance near Balongshan.
Himalayan Beautiful Rosefinch ◇ *Carpodacus pulcherrimus* A few seen, starting with a flock on Xuebaoding pass.
Pink-rumped Rosefinch ◇ *Carpodacus waltoni* A lovely flock in roadside bushes near Balongshan pass.
Dark-rumped Rosefinch ◇ *Carpodacus edwardsii* A pair at Erlangshan were a nice surprise, a lifer for Robbi!
Sharpe's Rosefinch ◇ *Carpodacus verreauxii* Some nice bubble-gum pink examples at Erlangshan.
Vinaceous Rosefinch ◇ *Carpodacus vinaceus* Seen at Wolong, Erlangshan and Longcanggou.



Vinaceous Rosefinch



Chinese White-browed Rosefinch

Three-banded Rosefinch ◇ *Carpodacus trifasciatus* Several seen, at Gongangling, near Mengbishan and at Baxi.
Chinese White-browed Rosefinch ◇ *Carpodacus dubius* Not uncommon in higher forests, sounds like bleating goat!
Red-fronted Rosefinch ◇ *Carpodacus puniceus* Two seen in the high country at Balongshan.

Crimson-browed Finch ♦ *Carpodacus subhimachalus* A splendid couple of males found at Balongshan.
Grey-capped Greenfinch *Chloris sinica* Only found around our hotel at Longcanggou.
Black-headed Greenfinch ♦ *Chloris ambigua* (Y) Only seen in Yunnan where they were numerous.
Twite *Linaria flavirostris* Some nice individuals seen on the plateau around Ruogergai.
Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* Not uncommon, and seen in several places.
Slaty Bunting ♦ *Emberiza siemsseni* A splendid songster appeared at Wolong.
Godlewski's Bunting ♦ *Emberiza godlewskii* Some good examples along the way notably by a tunnel near Luding!
Yellow-throated Bunting ♦ (Elegant B) *Emberiza elegans* (Y) Good views of a male near Lijiang.
Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala* (Y) One at Shigu, more at Cao Hai.



Yellow-throated Bunting

MAMMALS

Milne-edwards' Macaque *Macaca thibetana* Seen well at Tangjiahe and Labahe.
Rhesus Macaque *Macaca mulatta* At least two on a hillside near Luding.
Woolly Hare *Lepus oiostolus* Several seen in the high plateau country.
Plateau Pika (Black-lipped P) *Ochotona curzoniae* Abundant in places on the high plateau.
Moupin Pika *Ochotona thibetana* Just a few seen, one seen well at Mengbisha.
Perny's Long-nosed Squirrel *Dremomys pernyi* Seen at Erlangshan and Labahe, also in Yunnan..
Himalayan Marmot *Marmota himalayana* Many seen on the plateau and at Balongshan.
Père David's Rock Squirrel *Sciurotamias davidianus* Seen at Tangjiahe.
Swinhoe's Striped Squirrel *Tamias swinhoei* Quite a few seen in the forests.
Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes* A family seen on the plateau near Ruogergai.
Siberian Weasel *Mustela sibirica* One seen between Anqu and Maerkang.
Red Panda *Ailurus fulgens* Seen well grooming itself in a fir tree at Labahe. Bird of the trip?
Wild Boar *Sus scrofa* A single seen at Tangjiahe.
Siberian Roe Deer *Capreolus pygargus* A few seen on the high mountains..
Sika Deer *Cervus nippon* A single seen between Anqu and Maerkang.
Tufted Deer *Elaphodus cephalophus* (NL) One at Tangjiahe.
Reeves' Muntjac *Muntiacus reevesi* Many seen at Tangjiahe.
Sambar *Rusa unicolor* Some at Labahe.
Takin (Golden T) *Budorcas taxicolor* A single in the early morning seen at Tangjiahe
Chinese Goral *Naemorhedus griseus* Two at Tangjiahe, another at Labahe.



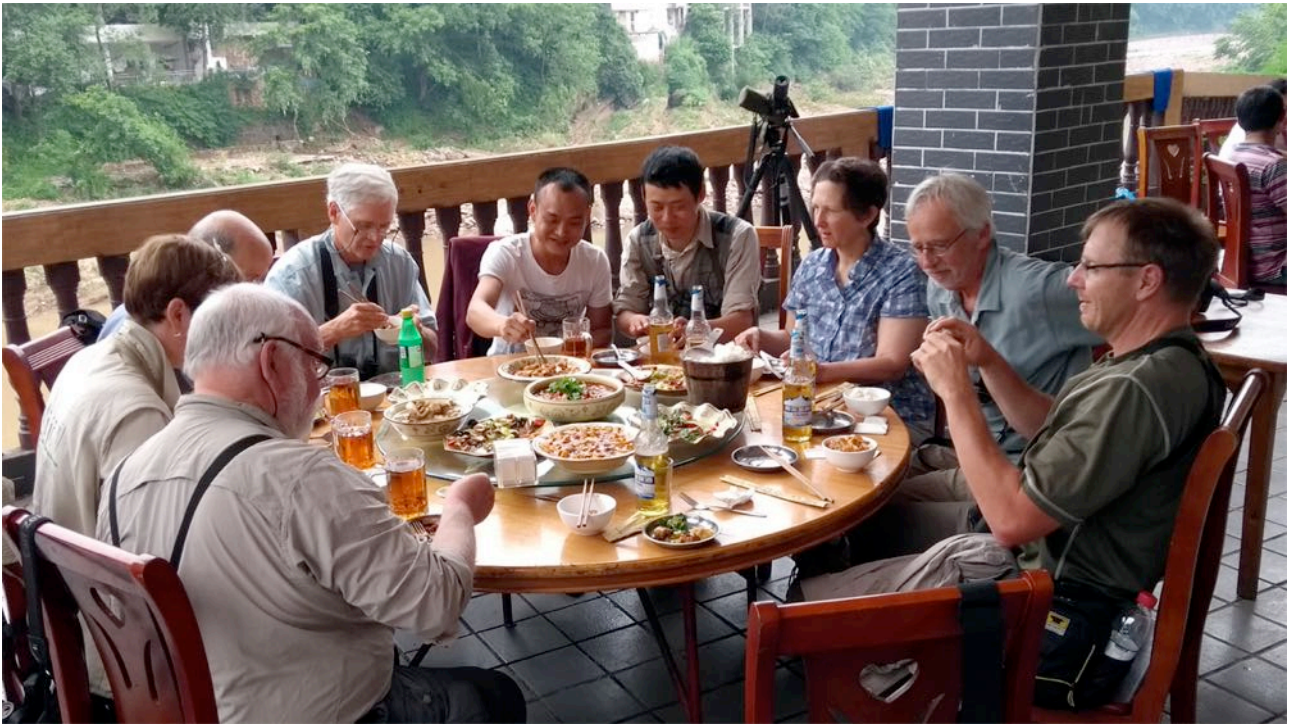
Red Panda

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

The most up to date referenced taxonomic list referred to in the Tour Report is that of the IOC World Bird Names. Gill, F and Donsker, D (Eds). 2016. IOC World Bird Names (v2.11). Available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>

Black-streaked Scimitar Babbler ♦ *Pomatorhinus gravivox* We found a nest with two blue eggs, a deep cup in a small roadside bush..

Chinese Fulvetta ♦ *Fulvetta striaticollis* At Baxi forest we found regular *striaticollis* alongside a pair of typically plumaged *cinereiceps*, plus a pair that looked a bit of a mix of the two. It would appear to be an overlap zone of the two taxa.



A final lazy susan lunch!



Black Woodpecker at Mengbisha.