

TAIWAN TOUR REPORT 2024

21 April - 3 May 2024

by Dave Farrow

The first Birdquest tour to Taiwan since 2019 was a great success where we found all 32 of the 32 recognised endemic birds, a Birdquest first in itself! There are so many great birds on this rich island, with Swinhoe's and Mikado Pheasants topping the bill along with Taiwan Partridge, Taiwan Barwing, Yellow Tit, White-whiskered, Rusty and Rufous-crowned Laughingthrushes, Fairy Pitta, Golden Parrotbill, Taiwan Rosefinch, Red Oriole, many Malayan Night Herons, breeding plumaged Asian Dowitchers and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, Black-faced Spoonbills, Chinese Egrets, and for the first time for the leader, the striking white-headed Taiwan Thrush, with a pair found feeding on a very wet track in the mountains. This all despite biblical rain that lost us three days of birding time, numerous earthquakes that shook us from our beds, and the leader being fortunate to arrive at all, following the ghastly situation at Dubai airport after the catastrophic floods there (luckily only delaying my bag by a day)!

We came together in Taipei in the lobby of the hotel, met our guide Yen-hui, and set off for the Taipei Botanical Gardens, a humid and tropical environment that we could easily believe was not in the middle of a large city! Our first bird came quickly in the form of a Black-necked Scimitar Babbler, we saw the nest of a Black-naped Monarch with attendant pair, and numerous Swinhoe's White-eyes. Our main target of Malayan Night Heron was soon acquired, with a pair stood on a nest with one of the pair busying itself with decor. So great to see these skulking birds habituated to the constant traffic of people; walking, jogging, or doing Tai Chi on this steamy Sunday morning. We also found two migrant Arctic Warblers, some colourful Taiwan Barbets, plus Light-vented Bulbuls. Moving across town we headed for Yangmingshan, the wooded mountains that stand over the city. In a small park area, we found several Taiwan Blue Magpies, one of which was devouring a lizard. Also here were Grey Treepies, Taiwan Scimitar Babbler, a confident Taiwan Whistling Thrush and more Malayan Night Herons. We then returned to the lowlands and headed along the highways southwards, arriving at the lower elevations of Dasyueshan in the mid-afternoon. Along a track in secondary forest, we found Grey-cheeked Fulvetta, Taiwan Yuhina, Rufous-capped Babbler, Bronzed Drongo, Grey-chinned Minivet, Black-throated Bushtits, and a most welcome Chestnut-bellied Tit. A Dusky Fulvetta played hard to get until he popped out in full view for a good long look at us. Our last bird of the day was a noisy Savanna Nightjar, sat on the roof of our hotel in Dongshi!

The next day we started at the lower elevations of the Dasyueshan road, where we watched Taiwan Hwamei as two Taiwan Bamboo Partridges trotted across the road just metres away from us! Also, here we saw Oriental Cuckoo, Collared Finchbill, and more Taiwan Scimitar Babblers. Higher up the mountain we found a stunning male Swinhoe's Pheasant, calmly walking past us in the dim forest, plus a White-tailed Robin showed well. Further up the road we met our first Rufous-

faced Warbler, White-eared Sibia and Steere's Liocichla. Strange calls in the forest led us to a friendly flock of Rufous-crowned Laughingthrushes that criss-crossed the road over our heads. A trio of Rusty Laughingthrushes required a bit more patience, before we also had great looks at this beautiful songster. Along a forest track we could hear a Taiwan Thrush singing in the thick forest below us, but he faded away without showing. The rain came in and truncated the birding for the day, and we booked into our guesthouse situated in the forest at 2200m. Later on, some were lucky enough to see a Red-and-White Giant Flying Squirrel near our cabins.

An interesting night followed – we were woken several times by earthquakes, the biggest one at 0240hrs that shook the building, accompanied by loud Taiwan government alerts on our mobiles. If that didn't keep us awake, then the heavy rain hammering on the roof certainly did!

We had a pre-breakfast stroll near our lodgings that produced an Ashy Woodpigeon, a pair of White-backed Woodpeckers and a Formosan Serow. Later we headed uphill into the low cloud, to the top of the road at 2600m. We quickly saw a male Mikado Pheasant, a rather friendly fellow that showed no fear of humans! Here were numerous Yellow-bellied Bush Warblers, singing in high-pitched cadence, and we found a Taiwan Bush Warbler uttering his insect-like song. It took a while before he could be coaxed into view, but he emerged on the edge of a near grassy clump and then flew between our legs! We found Taiwan Fulvetta with nest material and had our first encounter with the fearless White-whiskered Laughingthrush. Unfortunately, the rain returned, so we scuttled for cover, wet and bedraggled. We returned to the high forest in the afternoon, and we succeeded in our quest for Flamecrest, but a furtive Taiwan Cupwing was barely glimpsed among the dense bamboo. After dinner a calling Mountain Scops Owl lured us close, before going completely silent!

The next day we woke to thunder and torrential rain. We tried our luck by going lower on the mountain, and despite the continuing torrential downpours we managed to find a Taiwan Partridge trotting back and forwards on a slope below the road. In the afternoon we tried again, hopeful of a break in the weather, and walking along a forest track we stumbled upon a pair of Taiwan Thrush, feeding on the track for a while before they fled back into the forest as the heavens opened again. Hurrah! Lifer for the leader! We had no option but to give up after that, yet somewhat surprised that we had managed to pull out two good birds today when the total number of birds actually seen remained in single figures!

It stayed dry all night, only to start raining again at dawn! An early stroll produced a flock of Rufous-crowned Laughingthrush and some Taiwan Yuhinas, and Taiwan Whistling Thrushes hopped around the cabins. After breakfast we headed back uphill, finding a smart Taiwan (or Sombre) Bush Robin once the rain abated, and a superb pair of Taiwan Barwing hopping around in a roadside maple. The delightful White-whiskered Laughingthrushes bounced around us, their curiosity bringing them to within one metre! As the fog rolled in again, we headed down for the last time, and a stop for a colony of smart Asian House Martins also produced a vocal Grey-headed Woodpecker high above us in a massive tree, plus a Black Eagle. Further downhill we returned to where we had seen the Taiwan Partridge, and loud calls led us to where one sat just at the roadside, and we enjoyed some prolonged close views of this beautiful bird. A female Swinhoe's Pheasant also showed at very close range on the forest slope, and to top it all, it wasn't raining anymore!

We headed down to the foothills, had a splendid lunch, and then headed towards our next night stop at Wushe. As the winding mountain road took us back uphill, the rain returned, and on arriving we took a walk around the lanes under umbrellas, with almost no birds seen save Steere's Liocichla and White-eared Sibia.

Returning to the lanes around our hotel in the morning, the rain held off enough, and we managed to glimpse a couple of Taiwan Bamboo Partridges, Brown-flanked Bush Warbler showed very well, a Black-faced Bunting popped into view momentarily, and White-tailed Robins, White-eared Sibias and Steere's Liocichla are always nice to see. We headed up into the cloud base, where at 2700m a hidden Taiwan Shortwing led us on a merry dance. Going higher into the cloud with visibility almost at zero, at the 3270m pass we were met by a female Taiwan Rosefinch hopping around us, and a White-whiskered Laughingthrush seemed to enjoy being hand-fed some banana! Just over the pass at Hehuanshan, we had a short period of better conditions when some gorgeous male Taiwan Rosefinches appeared nearby, and a cute Taiwan Fulvetta showed well. The rain drove us back into the bus, and we returned over the pass – the recent earthquake meaning we were unable to continue our planned onward journey through the Taroko gorge to the east coast. The rain came down with a vengeance so we headed down to the foothills. Around a peaceful temple nestled in secondary woodland we saw Taiwan Blue Magpies and Grey Treepies, Striated Swallows, and our target of Red Oriole with several seen here. A sure split from Maroon, we saw some stunningly red males. We saw a Malayan Night Heron with a chick on a nest, a flock of Silver-backed Needletails soaring above the local House Swifts was a welcome sight, plus we found Amur Wagtail, White-rumped Shama, Black-naped Monarch and another pair of Taiwan Bamboo Partridges. We travelled a short way into Puli town for an overnight at a very smart hotel, part of our revised schedule following the big earthquake of three weeks previous. Another earthquake visited us in the small hours, but we were getting used to them by now!

We headed south along the highway, where a comfort stop provided some Asian Glossy Starlings and Scaly-breasted Munia, then a little further on we spent a pleasant hour or two at the Guantian Jacana Reserve, watching the breeding plumage Pheasant-tailed Jacanas, although the lilies had not yet grown up enough for them to trot upon. Also, here we saw Cinnamon Bittern, Oriental Pratincoles, Brown Shrike, Common Pheasants, Chestnut-tailed Starlings, Plain and Yellow-bellied Prinias, plus Common Kingfisher, Northern Shoveler, Little Grebes and Black-winged Stilts. At a lunch stop we saw Chinese Sparrowhawks and a Pacific Swallow nest with chicks, and then near Kaoishiong we stopped at the Kaoping river mouth. Here we found Black-faced Spoonbills, many Greater Crested Terns along with Whiskered, White-winged, Little and Gull-billed Terns, and it was great to find three Chinese Egrets hunting in the shallows. The mud was teeming with shorebirds, despite being distant for the most part we saw Grey, Pacific Golden, Kentish, Greater Sand Plovers, Red-necked Stints, Curlew Sandpipers, Great and Red Knot, Marsh and Terek Sandpipers, Grey-tailed Tattler, Whimbrel, Black-tailed Godwits and ten summer-plumaged Asian Dowitcher. Also here were good numbers of Pied Avocet, a single Ruddy Turnstone and a Black-naped Oriole. Quite a haul! We continued on to our night stop in Kenting, and in the last light of the day we saw our first Styan's Bulbuls.

At first light we headed down to the harbour to catch the early ferry to Lanyu Island. A fast boat, it was difficult to see any birds well, but several flocks of Red-necked Phalarope were nice, plus we had a brief view of Bulwer's Petrel and Long-tailed Skua, and hundreds of Eastern Cattle Egrets in northbound flocks flying over the sea. Several flocks of (Eastern) Common Terns came sailing by, and we had several pods of Dolphins as we neared Lanyu Island, but unfortunately could not identify any of them! Once ashore on this hot humid island, we transferred into some elderly cars and drove to where there was a bridge over a deep gully. Here we found a stunning pair of Black Paradise Flycatchers, plus Lowland White-eye, Taiwan Green Pigeon, and a migrant Grey-streaked Flycatcher. We then found more Black Paradise Flycatchers around another gully, compete with dependant chicks, plus a Philippine Cuckoo-Dove. On the beach were a Pacific Golden Plover and a

Ruddy Turnstone, and White-breasted Waterhen was flushed from the roadside. We visited an area of taller woodland where we found three roosting Lanyu Scops Owl sat in a high tree, and a single Northern Boobook that took a little more effort. Also, here we saw Chinese Sparrowhawk, Pacific Swifts, and a Pacific Reef Heron on the rocks.

Having seen all the birds, we spent a little time visiting a traditional underground (and typhoon-proof) local house, then completed a circumference of the island seeing numerous Brown Shrikes and a few Blue Rock Thrushes before reaching our lodgings for the night. We enjoyed a fine meal of fried Flying Fish, an island speciality, to round off a splendid day.

We had a few hours before catching the return ferry, so we went in search of migrants, finding a quartet of Chestnut-cheeked Starlings, Black-eared Kite and Osprey, and on the top of the mountain we watched a migration of Chinese Sparrowhawks battling against the wind on their northward journey. The ferry journey itself was a bit rough and few birds were seen, and once back in Kenting we were reunited with our driver Mr Wong and headed northwards to our next stop on the west coast. Arriving near our night stop of Budai in time to do some birding on the wetlands, we found Black-faced Spoonbills, Siberian Sandpipers, Sharp-tailed, Curlew and Marsh Sandpipers, Red-necked and Long-toed Stints, Pacific Golden Plovers in good number, Whiskered, Little and Caspian Terns, Black-winged Kite, and hordes of Great Egrets and Black-crowned Night Herons.

We revisited the shorebird spectacle the next morning, and in the crisp early morning light we had close views of smart Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, a small group of russet coloured Asian Dowitcher, numerous Broad-billed Sandpipers in boldly patterned breeding dress, deep-red Curlew Sandpipers, and many Black-faced Spoonbills mixed in with the abundant Great Egrets. Also here were Dunlin, Marsh Sandpipers, Spotted Redshanks and Grey-tailed Tattler, and around some of the river mouths we saw Terek Sandpipers, Great Knot, Greater Sand Plover and Greater Crested Terns. As the temperature soared, we headed for the cool hills, and at a roadside stop we found a Striped Prinia singing boldly. We were then met by vehicles from our guesthouse (our bus not allowed to travel down the winding mountain road) that took us to our lodgings, a peaceful spot at 1000m above sea level. Then the heavens opened once again! We tried to have a short walk but we had to give up and returned for a fine dinner. Our host tried to lure in Mountain Scops Owl and Collared Scops Owl for us from the garden of the hotel, but they stayed far away.

Heavy rain continued into the morning, and we were entertained by a pair of Black Bullbuls with a nest just by the front door, picking up beetles from the front porch. After some breakfast the dark clouds cleared, and a pair of Crested Honey Buzzards circling the guesthouse heralded the start of a fine day. We headed up the hill to Alishan stopping at various altitudes, finding Ferruginous Flycatchers, Fire-breasted Flowerpeckers and White-bellied Green Pigeons, and a most welcome Yellow Tit showed well. We managed to finally get some reasonable views of Taiwan Shortwing (abundant here yet always invisible!), and a skulking Taiwan Wren Babbler (or Cupwing, if you prefer...) We reached the top section of road at Yushan, just as the rain and cloud descended on us. We stuck it out for the afternoon, finding a delightful flock of Golden Parrotbills, a Spotted (or Southern) Nutcracker, and several Collared Bush Robins. The weather deteriorated further so we headed for our night stop, the quaint Alishan Youth Activity Centre, set amid the forest.

We explored the surrounding area in the early morning, finding some confiding Eurasian Jays, pairs of Brown Bullfinch and Taiwan Rosefinches, Rufous-faced Warblers and Ashy Woodpigeons. After breakfast we headed up the mountain in search of our last Taiwan endemic, the Taiwan Bullfinch. We searched up and down the road, seeing Mikado Pheasants, Flamecrest, Collared

Bush Robin prancing around in the sunshine (yes, it wasn't raining!), two groups of Golden Parrotbill, Taiwan Fulvetta, but still no Bullfinch. The time we had set ourselves for departure came and went, and just before we were about to step on to the bus to depart, a quiet call was heard from the forest above. It became more insistent, until first one pair of Taiwan Bullfinch flew high overhead, and then another pair of vocal birds flew over, and headed off into the distance. We had done it! 32 of 32 endemics birds seen. Ok, so it wasn't a good view, but seen it we had! The first Birdquest tour to have seen all the endemics.

We snoozed our way downhill, to our next stop in the warm foothills of Douliou. Behind an ornate temple we walked up a track into the forest, where soon we heard a Fairy Pitta calling. Seeing another foreign birding group here, we decided to turn back and try elsewhere, but didn't get far before a Pitta started calling nearby. With a little encouragement it flew into a nearby tree, and we spent the next half hour playing hide and seek with the bird until it was spotted on the ground, shining in the gloom as it fed on the forest floor. Wow! What a great bird. There was still time for more, and along a grassy river we found a delightful pair of Vinous-throated Parrotbills zipping about. We headed into Douliou town and our hotel for the night, where many Savanna Nightjars called loudly from the rooftops. We enjoyed a final dinner in a noisy restaurant, with cool refreshments to toast our remarkable success.

Our last morning saw us return to the foothill woodlands, where we had another view of Fairy Pitta that was frequenting a dry riverbed. With a flash of blue and green to announce his appearance, he then melted away once again. The trees were busy with Black-naped Monarchs, with a recently fledged chick observed, plus some one-metre views of Dusky Fulvetta around our feet, some stunning Taiwan Scimitar Babblers, and a trio of Chinese Sparrowhawks on their northward journey. As the heat grew it was time to move on, with a final lunch in a lively local restaurant, and a long drive to Taipei airport.

There was just enough time to make one last stop, in the busy maze of the National Taiwan University where we found a delightful Collared Scops Owl at roost, peering down at the people below. The last bird of the tour, and a very welcome one too. We whizzed our way to the airport, where we said our goodbyes, relishing our success on this trip. A special thanks goes out to our excellent local staff, led by our great guide Yen-hui. Shehsheh!

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

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).

The species names and taxonomy used in the bird list follows Gill, F., Donsker, D., & Rasmussen, P. (Eds). **2024. IOC World Bird List (v14.1)**.

Where the subspecies seen is/are known, these are often given in parentheses at the end of the species comment.

BIRDS

Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata* A couple of drakes at Guantian.

Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope* Two on a lake near Kenting.

Eastern Spot-billed Duck (Chinese S-b D) *Anas zonorhyncha*

Taiwan Partridge ♦ (T Hill Partridge) ***Arborophila crudigularis*** Endemic. Superb close views of one at Dasyueshan.

Mikado Pheasant ♦ ***Syrmaticus mikado*** Endemic. Two confiding birds seen at the top of Dasyueshan, then at least four others along the way in rather more furtive mode.

Common Pheasant (Ring-necked P) *Phasianus colchicus* Three at Guantian.

Swinhoe's Pheasant ♦ ***Lophura swinhoii*** Endemic. Some great looks at this gorgeous Pheasant at Dasyueshan, also found at Alishan.

Taiwan Bamboo Partridge ♦ ***Bambusicola sonorivox*** Endemic. A sneaky fellow, we encountered pairs in several places.

Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis* A vocal bird on our hotel in Dongshi, many calling around our Douliou hotel and visible as they flew around the rooftops.

Silver-backed Needletail ♦ ***Hirundapus cochinchinensis*** At least six seen near Puli.

Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus* Several seen on Lanyu, a couple at Alishan.

House Swift *Apus nipalensis*

Large Hawk-Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparverioides* Heard only, always distant in the mountains.

Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus optatus* Two seen near Dongshi, also heard at Alishan.

Rock Dove (introduced) *Columba livia*

Ashy Wood Pigeon *Columba pulchricollis* Seen well at Alishan, also four at Dasyueshan.

Oriental Turtle Dove (Rufous T D) *Streptopelia orientalis*

Red Collared Dove (Red Turtle D) *Streptopelia tranquebarica*

Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis*

Philippine Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia tenuirostris* A few seen on Lanyu island.

Common Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica* Singles seen on Lanyu, at Linnei and near Guanhwa.

White-bellied Green Pigeon ♦ ***Treron sieboldii*** A pair near Guanhwa, better looks at Alishan as they came to a fruiting cherry.

Taiwan Green Pigeon ♦ ***Treron formosae*** Great views of several birds on Lanyu Island.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Eurasian Coot (Common C) *Fulica atra*

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* Seen at Budai, also 120+ on the Kaoping estuary.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* A couple on the estuary at Kaoping.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* A flock of 800+ in breeding plumage at Budai were quite a sight.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* A single flyby at Dongshi.

Siberian Sand Plover (Mongolian S P) *Anarhynchus mongolus* Some striking birds in breeding dress at Budai.

Greater Sand Plover *Anarhynchus leschenaultii* A few noted on the Kaoping estuary, a single on the coast near Budai.

Kentish Plover *Anarhynchus alexandrinus* Quite a few seen at Budai and Kaoping, with some delightful penny-sized chicks.

Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* Nice to see breeding plumage birds at Guantian, unfortunately without lilies to trot on!

Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* A good number on the Kaoping estuary, and a flock of 70 seen flying north from the Lanyu ferry.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* A few examples of the long-billed *orientalis* race at Kaoping.

Black-tailed Godwit (Eastern B-t G) *Limosa [limosa] melanuroides* A sizeable flock at Kaoping.

Asian Dowitcher ♦ *Limnodromus semipalmatus* Great to see these in breeding plumage, with ten at Kaoping and six at Budai.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* Some small flocks seen from the Kenting to Lanyu ferry, with one group of 25+.

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* Some fine examples at Kaoping and Budai.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Grey-tailed Tattler *Tringa brevipes* A couple of singles at both Kaoping and Budai.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* In good numbers at Budai, in speckled breeding dress.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* Two seen at Guantian.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* Some lovely examples at Budai.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* A single on Lanyu, and quite a few at Budai.

Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris* A distant one at Kaoping and three on the coast near Budai.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus* Two red ones at Kaoping.

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Calidris falcinellus* A good few dozen at Budai, many in strikingly patterned plumage.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata* A personal favourite, we saw many at Budai.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* Numerous at Budai, with some at Kaoping, all in good colour.

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* A handful seen at Budai on our first evening there.

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* Numerous at both Kaoping and Budai.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* Just two, at Budai.

Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum* Some at Guantian, and a couple of small flocks migrating over Lanyu.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons* Fairly numerous on coastal wetlands.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* A fair number roosting at Kaoping, and a couple at Budai.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* A good number at Budai.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* Hundreds seen at Kaoping and Budai.

White-winged Tern (W-w Black T) *Chlidonias leucopterus* Three on the Kaoping estuary, another at Budai.

Common Tern (Eastern C T) *Sterna [hirundo] longipennis* Several small flocks seen from the ferry to Lanyu.

Greater Crested Tern *Thalasseus bergii* A large number at Kaoping, with a few also seen on the coast near Budai.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* A single at Budai.

Long-tailed Jaeger (L-t Skua) *Stercorarius longicaudus* Brief views of a couple from the Lanyu ferry.

Bulwer's Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii* One seen on the way out to Lanyu, but all rather brief due to the boat moving at 40kph! Another seen from inside the cabin on the return journey.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* One flew past at Dongshi.

African Sacred Ibis (introduced) *Threskiornis aethiopicus*

Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor* Good numbers at Budai with about 90 with the hordes of Egrets, also 12+ at Kaoping estuary.

Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* A single seen at Guantian.

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis* A single seen at Budai.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* Abundant around Budai.

Malayan Night Heron *Gorsachius melanolophus* Its almost comical how these are so easy to see in Taipei and in other human-inhabited locations. We saw a nest with chick (plus several others) at the temple near Puli.

Pacific Reef Heron *Egretta sacra* A single on the rocks on Lanyu island.

Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes* Three feeding on the mudflats at the Kaoping estuary were exciting to see.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus* Hundreds migrating over the sea seen from the ferry to Lanyu.

Great Egret *Ardea alba* Hundreds at Budai, many with the black bills and blue faces of breeding plumage.

Medium Egret *Ardea intermedia*

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* A single on Lanyu.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* Odd singles seen in the lowlands.

Crested Honey Buzzard (Oriental H B) *Pernis [ptilorhynchus] orientalis* One at Dasyueshan, two at Firefly Homestay.

Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela* Several seen along our route.

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malaiensis* At least three seen in various locations.

Chinese Sparrowhawk *(C Goshawk) Accipiter soloensis* A notable migration watched from the top of Lanyu island, with 120+ seen in an hour or so. Also, a couple of small flocks seen over the foothills.

Black Kite (Black-eared K) *Milvus [migrans] lineatus* A single migrant on Lanyu.

Northern Boobook *Ninox japonica* A single lurking in the big trees on Lanyu.

Collared Owlet *Taenioptynx brodiei* Heard only, in the distance at Alishan.

Mountain Scops Owl *Otus spilocephalus* Heard only, at Dasyueshan and at the Firefly Homestay.

Ryukyu Scops Owl ◊ (**Lanyu Scops O**) *Otus [elegans] botelensis* Great views in the daytime on Lanyu. An endemic subspecies.

Collared Scops Owl *Otus lettia* A splendid finale to the trip, with a roosting bird seen at National Taiwan University.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Taiwan Barbet ◊ *Psilopogon nuchalis* Endemic. Common in the lowlands and foothills.

Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Yungipicus canicapillus* One at Linnei.

White-backed Woodpecker *Dendrocopos leucotos* A good look at a pair at Dasyueshan.

Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus* A vocal bird at Dasyueshan was seen briefly.

Fairy Pitta ◊ *Pitta nympha* One at Linnei showed quite well eventually, first calling from the trees and then feeding on the ground, and a second bird at Huben flew up into the trees in front of us for a brief view.

Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris* Frequently encountered in the hill forests.

White-bellied Erpornis *Erpornis zantholeuca* Singles at Dasyueshan and Linnei.

Maroon Oriole ◊ (**Red O, Claret O**) *Oriolus [traillii] ardens* Nice views of several of these stunners around the temple near Puli. Still not officially split as a Taiwan endemic...

Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis* A single at the Kaoping estuary.

Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus*

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea*

Black Paradise Flycatcher ◊ (**Japanese P F**) *Terpsiphone atrocaudata* Some good views of these smart birds in three different localities on Lanyu, with females feeding fledged young. And males in different states of maturity and tail length.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* Numerous migrants on Lanyu.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* Great views of these at Alishan, with some confiding birds feeding on food scraps.

Taiwan Blue Magpie ◊ *Urocissa caerulea* Endemic. Confiding at Yangmingshan, numerous at Puli.

Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae*

Oriental Magpie *Pica serica*

Spotted Nutcracker ◊ (**Owston's N**) *Nucifraga [caryocatactes] owstoni* At least four seen at Alishan. Split by HBW as Southern Nutcracker, *N. hemispila*.

Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Chestnut-bellied Tit ♦ (Taiwan Varied T) *Sittiparus castaneiventris* Endemic. A nice surprise to find this often difficult to find bird on our first afternoon.

Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus*

Yellow Tit ♦ (Taiwan Y T) *Machlolophus holsti* Endemic. Clearly thin on the ground, after the deluge at Dasyueshan it was looking like we might miss this, but we found a splendid example at Alishan.

Brown-eared Bulbul ♦ *Hypsipetes amaurotis* Only found on Lanyu where they were common.

Black Bulbul (Himalayan B B) *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*

Collared Finchbill ♦ *Spizixos semitorques*

Light-vented Bulbul ♦ (Chinese B) *Pycnonotus sinensis*

Styan's Bulbul ♦ (Taiwan B) *Pycnonotus taivanus* Endemic. Once we were within their range in the far south of the island, they proved to be abundant!

Grey-throated Martin (G-t Sand M) *Riparia chinensis* Seen at Guantian Jacana reserve.

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus* Some endearing colonies at Dasyueshan, also seen in the hills around Alishan.

Striated Swallow *Cecropis striolata*

Taiwan Cupwing ♦ (T Wren-Babbler) *Pnoepyga formosana* Endemic. After a frustratingly furtive bird at Dasyueshan we eventually got views of a songster at Alishan.

Rufous-faced Warbler ♦ *Abroscopus albogularis* Present in the forest at Dasyueshan, with more seen in better conditions at Alishan.

Brown-flanked Bush Warbler ♦ *Horornis fortipes* A good look at one at Wushe.

Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler ♦ *Horornis acanthizoides* Very common at higher elevations, their high-pitched songs frequently audible.

Black-throated Bushtit (Red-headed Tit) *Aegithalos concinnus*

Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* A couple of migrants seen in the Taipei botanical gardens.

Taiwan Bush Warbler ♦ (Alishan B W) *Locustella alishanensis* Endemic. A close look at one at Dasyueshan that flew between our legs, another at Alishan showed nicely in the open.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* Heard only, near Kenting.

Striped Prinia ♦ (Swinhoe's P) *Prinia striata* One showed very well on the way up the Firefly Homestay. Split from Striated Prinia (now known as Himalayan Prinia *P. crinigera*) as part of a wider taxonomic review (Alstrom 2019)

Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris*

Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata*

Taiwan Fulvetta ♦ *Fulvetta formosana* Endemic. Some nice close views at Hehuanshan, also at Dasyueshan and Alishan.

Golden Parrotbill ♦ *Suthora verreauxi* After a quick flight view near Wushe, we had multiple close encounters with these lovely sprites in the bamboo at Alishan.

Vinous-throated Parrotbill ♦ *Suthora webbiana* A perky couple of birds in the grass at Huben.

Taiwan Yuhina ♦ *Yuhina brunneiceps* Endemic. Commonly found in the hills.

Swinhoe's White-eye *Zosterops simplex* Not uncommon. Previously included in *Z. japonicus*.

Lowland White-eye ♦ *Zosterops meyeri* Only on Lanyu island where we found a few.

Rufous-capped Babbler ♦ *Cyanoderma ruficeps*

Taiwan Scimitar Babbler ♦ *Pomatorhinus musicus* Endemic. Some memorable birds on our last morning at Huben. Also seen at Dasyueshan and Wushe.

Black-necklaced Scimitar Babbler ♦ *Erythrogenys erythrocnemis* Endemic. Seen well in the Taipei botanical gardens, heard at Alishan and Huben.

Dusky Fulvetta ♦ *Schoeniparus brunneus* Great views at Dasyueshan on our first afternoon, and even better on our last morning at Huben where we had a pair around our feet.

Grey-cheeked Fulvetta ♦ *Alcippe morrisonia* Endemic. Plenty seen, especially in lower elevation woodland.

White-whiskered Laughingthrush ♦ *Trochalopteron morrisonianum* Endemic. Not uncommon at high elevations, perhaps one of the friendliest of the endemics!

White-eared Sibia ♦ *Heterophasia auricularis* Endemic. Common in the hill forests.

Taiwan Barwing ♦ *Actinodura morrisoniana* Endemic. We had nice close looks at these handsome birds at Dasyueshan and Alishan.

Steere's Liocichla ♦ *Liocichla steerii* Endemic. Not uncommon in the hill forests.

Taiwan Hwamei ♦ *Garrulax taewanus* Endemic. Good looks at three or more on our first morning near Dongshi.

Rufous-crowned Laughingthrush ♦ *Pterorhinus ruficeps* Endemic. Often hard to find, we found a nice confiding flock on our first morning at Dasyueshan, with a couple of other groups seen around our accommodation there.

Rusty Laughingthrush ◊ *Pterorhinus poecilorhynchus* Endemic. Quite skulking, we managed some great views of this rich songster at the roadside at Dasyueshan.

Flamecrest ◊ *Regulus goodfellowi* Endemic. Despite some of us being deaf to its high-pitched song, we found three in the conifers at Dasyueshan, and another at Alishan.

Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta europaea* Heard only, at Dasyueshan.

Asian Glossy Starling (introduced) *Aplonis panayensis* Plenty around a highway rest area near Guantian.

Javan Myna ◊ (introduced) *Acridotheres javanicus*

Common Myna (introduced) *Acridotheres tristis*

Black-collared Starling (introduced) *Gracupica nigricollis*

Chestnut-cheeked Starling ◊ *Agropsar philippensis* A migrant flock of two pairs on Lanyu were a nice find.

Chestnut-tailed Starling (introduced) *Sturnia malabarica*

Taiwan Thrush ◊ *Turdus niveiceps* Endemic. Despite the horrendous conditions, we managed to find a pair feeding along a wet and muddy track at Dasyueshan, the males head (briefly) shining like a beacon in the gloom! The leader's only lifer.

Oriental Magpie-Robin (introduced) *Copsychus saularis*

White-rumped Shama (introduced) *Copsychus malabaricus*

Grey-streaked Flycatcher *Muscicapa griseisticta* Two northbound migrants seen well on Lanyu.

Ferruginous Flycatcher ◊ *Muscicapa ferruginea* Fairly common at Alishan where we had some great close views.

Taiwan Vivid Niltava ◊ *Niltava vivida* Endemic. Common in the mountain forests, its song often audible.

White-tailed Robin ◊ *Myiomela leucura*

Taiwan Whistling Thrush ◊ *Myophonus insularis* Endemic. Our first at Yangmingshan showed very well, other birds around Dasyueshan and Firefly Homestay were a little more furtive in the incessant rain!

Taiwan Shortwing ◊ *Brachypteryx goodfellowi* Endemic. After an unco-operative bird near Wushe, we found them to be abundant at Alishan if only by voice! We managed to get views of them eventually, as they lurked in roadside grass clumps.

White-browed Bush Robin ◊ (Taiwan B R, Sombre B R) *Tarsiger [indicus] formosanus* Seen well at Dasyueshan, others heard at Alishan. A proposed split.

Collared Bush Robin ◊ *Tarsiger johnstoniae* Endemic. A few in the gloom and fog of higher elevation Dasyueshan, at Alishan they were much showier and more colourful in the sunshine.

Blue Rock Thrush (Eastern B R T) *Monticola [solitarius] philippensis* Quite a few red-bellied birds seen on Lanyu.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus* Good views of several at Alishan, with a female feeding a fledged chick.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*

White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata* A few seen in the foothills at Dasyueshan and at the Firefly Homestay.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail (Alaska W) *Motacilla [tschutschensis] tschutschensis* The default migrant Yellow Wagtail, seen in many places.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail ♠ (Green-headed W) *Motacilla [tschutschensis] taivana* A couple at Guantian.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* A common migrant on Lanyu.

White Wagtail (Amur W) *Motacilla [alba] leucopsis* A few seen at lowland sites.

Brown Bullfinch *Pyrrhula nipalensis* A handsome pair near our Alishan accommodation.

Taiwan Bullfinch ♠ *Pyrrhula owstoni* Endemic. A lot of effort went into finding these, as it became the last endemic we hadn't seen! Two pairs flew over calling at Alishan.

Taiwan Rosefinch ♠ *Carpodacus formosanus* Endemic. A favourite, the wine-red male is truly a stunning individual. We found them at Hehuanshan and Alishan.

Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala* A brief single bird at Wushe.

MAMMALS

Yellow-throated Marten *Martes flavigula* A couple skipped across the road at Dasyueshan.

Reeves's Muntjac *Muntiacus reevesi* A couple of sightings in the hill forest.

Formosan Serow *Capricornis swinhoei* A couple seen at Dasyueshan.

Taiwanese Macaque *Macaca cyclopis* Lots at Alishan, lurking along the roadsides.

Pallas's Squirrel (Red-bellied S) *Callosciurus erythraeus* Not uncommon in the lowlands. It is possible that we overlooked the presence of Perny's Long-nosed Squirrels in the mountain forests!

Red-and-white Giant Flying Squirrel (White-faced F S) *Petaurista alborufus* Great views of this big chap by our accommodation at Dasyueshan.

Maritime Striped Squirrel (Formosan S S) *Tamiops maritimus* Seen at Dasyueshan.

Dolphin sp All from the Lanyu ferry, possibly three types: Large ones that were likely to be a Bottlenose Dolphin species, tall-finned ones that could have been Risso's Dolphin, and a group of 50+ that were probably Spinner Dolphin sp.

FISH

Flying Fish – *Cheilopogon cyanopterus* Plenty around Lanyu!