

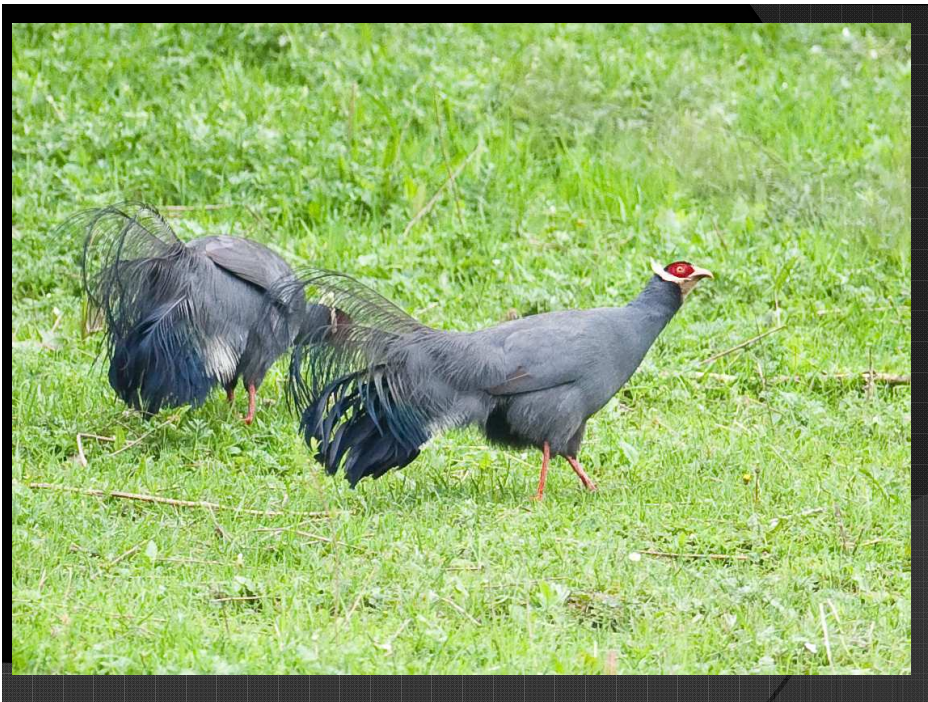
VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS

CLASSIC CHINA

SICHUAN

MAY 2010

Blue Eared-Pheasants (photo by Alison Sheets)



Leader: DION HOBSCROFT

TOUR REPORT

This was an outstandingly successful tour, as we birded some of the most spectacular and species rich forests in central China in unparalleled comfort. New hotels, highways and the ever helpful and friendly local people ensured our tour ran smoothly. We also experienced some rustic hotels and hiked up into the mountains into bamboo and rhododendron forests and explored the Tibetan plateau with its thousands of yaks and Tibetan cowboys. The modernisation taking place in China proceeds at an unbelievable pace. I was constantly remarking to the group about a new tunnel, highway, hotel, statue, cable car!! Many participants ranked it amongst their best ever birding tours.

The birds were simply phenomenal as we connected with so many of the rarest, spectacular and most elusive species China has to offer. We set a new benchmark in Classic China tours with a new trip record and a very high strike rate for all clients seeing those most special birds. The better environmental protection including a ban on rifle hunting is having an enormously beneficial impact on mammals and large birds. We observed 15 species of mammals and nine pheasants and partridges on this tour alone.

We commenced our tour in Beijing. Our first morning at the Summer Palace turned out to be quite exciting as migration was in full swing and in the quieter corners we found quite a few excellent birds. Best were Tristram's and Chestnut Bunting, Forest Wagtail, glowing Pallas's Leaf-warblers, Black-capped Kingfisher and a few Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpeckers. Continuing onto the Temple of Heaven we enjoyed Oriental Greenfinch at arms length while a lightning fast Eurasian Hobby belted past. After lunch we walked through Tiananmen Square before ending up at the Forbidden City.

Our second full day at Beijing had us up early and off to Wild Duck Lake. With the migration in full swing the number of small warblers and flycatchers was extraordinary. Every bush and tree seemed to have some small passerine flipping around in it. Most of the waterfowl had already passed through this latitude but we found a few Tundra Swans, Falcated Duck and Chinese Spotbills. A Great Bittern could be heard booming but remained elusive. We enjoyed excellent views of Amur Falcons while a Eurasian Sparrowhawk just about parted Dale and my hair as it dived after a Taiga Flycatcher. A spectacular pair of Eastern Marsh-Harriers gave super views. Some of the more interesting small passerines we observed included Radde's Warbler, Bluethroat, Chinese Thrush, Western Yellow Wagtail and Yellow-throated Bunting. After lunch it was off to The Great Wall at Badaling where we joined the throng. Amongst the crowd we spotted a few stray birds including Godlewski's Bunting and handsome Daurian Redstarts. We basically ran out of time at the Forbidden City and spent half an hour exploring around the perimeter of a reservoir. Our first Red-billed Blue Magpie caused quite a sensation while a Grey-faced Woodpecker remained firmly out of view.

Onto Cheng Du and this bustling city turned up some good sightings with our first afternoon in a bamboo city park. Although busy with people enjoying mah-jong and sunflower seeds, it came through with Vinous-throated Parrotbill, a surprise Dusky Fulvetta, super Black-throated Tits and

some very tame Chinese Grosbeaks. A visit to the Leshan Buddha, a memorable experience in itself, also provided sightings of many species with the spectacular Yellow-rumped Flycatcher and Rufous-faced Warbler being very co-operative. We finished our afternoon in some secondary forest near the base of Emei Shan. This location has always been very bird rich and it did not disappoint this year when in quick succession we enjoyed watching a pair of Hwamei bathing, superb Slaty-backed Forktails and a Brown Dipper followed by a perched pair of Black Baza.

Our Sichuan forest birding commenced at Emei Shan, the sacred Buddhist peak at the crossroads of Chinese bird distribution. The Golden Summit was shrouded in fog making for quite a difficult day but we came through with some good sightings. The leader was simply astonished when he found a Pere David's Owl sleeping on a stump close to the road. Wow! Plenty of other great birds followed with excellent views of Crimson-breasted Woodpecker, Streak-throated Fulvetta and Long-tailed Minivet. The Wannian Monastery was highlighted by a Chinese Blue Flycatcher singing its heart out right next to us plus a remarkably close Collared Owlet. The interesting blackish-bellied subspecies *ricketti* of White-browed Shrike-Babbler gave a great view.

Our next move was to Wawu Shan – simply a must-visit superb forest birding location. On the summit we found the rare Three-toed and Fulvous Parrotbills and the recently described Sichuan Treecreeper. Lower down the mountain was alive with the endemic Emei Liocichla, Golden, Grey-headed and Great Parrotbills, the scarce Emei Leaf Warbler and unforgettable Lady Amherst's Pheasants. What a bird!!! If this was not enough we had excellent views of the scarce Buffy Laughingthrush and the cosmic Red-winged Laughingthrush, a pair of the rare Sharpe's Rosefinch (a split out of Spot-winged Rosefinch), Darjeeling Woodpecker and Rufous-bellied Niltava.

The devastating earthquake of 2008 had us changing our normal itinerary and we headed to Dujianyang to get our bus through some roadworks and into the Wolong Biosphere Reserve. The damage of this massive earthquake was simply overwhelming and the leader scarcely recognised the road into Wolong where whole villages had been buried and house-sized boulders lay next to the road. What a scene of devastation.

Fortunately we had been able to get access to some new wooden rooms and found them to be delightfully comfortable and warm (although both Malcolm and Dion got an electric shock from their respective hot water systems!) We explored the steep hillside behind the hotel and with a bit of playback had a stunning male Golden Pheasant running circles around us. Thank goodness for that! The next two days were spent hiking up to the Wuyipeng panda research camp. Our slow wander up turned up some excellent birds with great views of Indian Blue Robin, Slaty Bunting, Pere David's Tit and Sooty Tit. We had great views of a female and subadult male Temminck's Tragopan, Fire-capped Tit, Bay Woodpecker, male Firethroat, Golden-breasted Fulvetta and White-browed Bush-Robin. Dion had a point blank view of a Tufted Deer whilst our spotlighting mission turned up a Pere David's Chinese Vole!

Word came through of road closures to Maerkang-no traffic allowed through at all. We persevered to spend the best part of a day at the famous Balan Shan pass and it was well worth it. We connected with a great cross-section of high altitude specialty birds here in great weather. Lammergeier, nesting Wallcreeper, Grandala, Snow Partridge, a distant scoped Tibetan Snowcock, Red-fronted Rosefinch, Yellow-billed Chough, Plain and Brandt's Mountain Finch, Alpine Accentor and Snow Pigeon were amongst the rich pickings at this 4500 metre pass.

So the next itinerary change came into play with the leader heading into uncharted territory and we spent the night in the rather ordinary town of Jiangyou. Next came the rain and it pretty much rained all day as we headed to Jiuzhaigou. Leo spotted a fabulous Crested Kingfisher and as we began to ascend some quality forest habitat Dion remarked “keep your eye on the sawn off stumps as pheasants like to perch on these in bad weather”. This was immediately followed by stop the bus Blue Eared-Pheasant! Here was the Horse-chicken (its Chinese name literally) next to the highway with a pair of Blood Pheasants all sitting on stumps. Big smiles all around.

From our five star luxury at Jiuzhaigou we took the new expressway to Rouergai in the eastern Tibetan plateau. We had a great day sighting our first Black-necked Cranes (Malcolm’s final crane species), plenty of robust Upland Buzzards, the peculiar Hume’s Ground-pecker, the huge Tibetan Lark and glowing Citrine Wagtails of the Tibetan breeding population. After peering into dense bamboo in Wolong and battling with skulkers everyone loved birding on the plateau. We spent the afternoon at Flower Lake with highlights including Red-crested Pochard, breeding plumaged Curlew Sandpipers and Spotted Redshank.

Next day we went exploring the plateau further afield, making it to the town of Hong Yuan and returning back to Rouergai. It was another excellent day with great views of nesting White-browed Tit, Rufous-necked, Tibetan and White-rumped Snowfinches, several Little Owls, several Saker Falcons, a flock of Bar-headed Geese and at least fifty Black-necked Cranes. Mammals finally came in with some excellent sightings of a Wolf hunting Himalayan Marmots, both Red and Tibetan Fox and after a lengthy chase Dion squeaked up an Altai Weasel that was being pursued by Daurian Jackdaws.

It was time to return to the luxury of Jiuzhaigou but we ran a quick errand back out on the plateau in the early morning so folks could do a bit of shopping in the town. I was not holding out high hopes when a cursory scan turned up a Demoiselle Crane-fantastic. After prayer flags and the like had been purchased we spent some time in scrubby plateau edge habitat and it was going pretty quiet. Then all of a sudden a flock of Azure-winged Magpies went ballistic so we decided to see what all the fuss was about. After a bit of effort, and a military style pincer manoeuvre, we found a superb Leopard Cat hunkered in a willow thicket. Quite a good turn up. We also enjoyed Dusky Warblers and a female Tiger Shrike.

Jiuzhaigou was simply spectacular and we made the most of this incredible reserve with its sparkling blue lakes, complex waterfalls, scaleless fish and alpine scenery. We tried to seek out some quieter corners and found a few good birds for our effort. Perhaps most unusual was the Grey-backed Shrike that killed a White-bellied Redstart almost at our feet. Collared and White-winged Grosbeak, an excellent Chinese Bush-warbler, Collared Crow, White-throated Dipper and several Grey-headed Bullfinches were amongst the highlights. At night we had the most amazing experience with a Himalayan Tawny Owl pouncing on a forest rodent only three metres from us.

Finally it was time to head back to Chengdu. We spent one night in the Wanglang Nature Reserve and it was well worth it with a pair of Blue Eared-Pheasants making a regular appearance near the headquarters. On the drive in Alison spotted a Tufted Deer swimming across the dam and everyone had a view of its head and white-rimmed ears! Cold, grey and rainy conditions hampered the birding and this was especially frustrating with a Rufous-headed Robin singing mid morning

on the other side of a raging torrent in a steady downpour. Katherine was especially delighted when a Chestnut-headed Tesia crisply focussed in her binoculars-a definite jinx laid to rest and a cracking bird to boot.

We returned to Cheng Du enjoying a night at the Sichuan Opera, a highlight for the tour especially the shadow puppet master who gave me goose bumps. Our final morning of birding was spent with the Giant Pandas at a breeding centre. This enabled us to get up close with this most charismatic vegetarian carnivore. The birding was also excellent with a great view of a male Golden Pheasant, a Chinese Bamboo-Partridge, Ashy-throated Parrotbill, Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike and Streak-breasted Scimitar-Babbler.

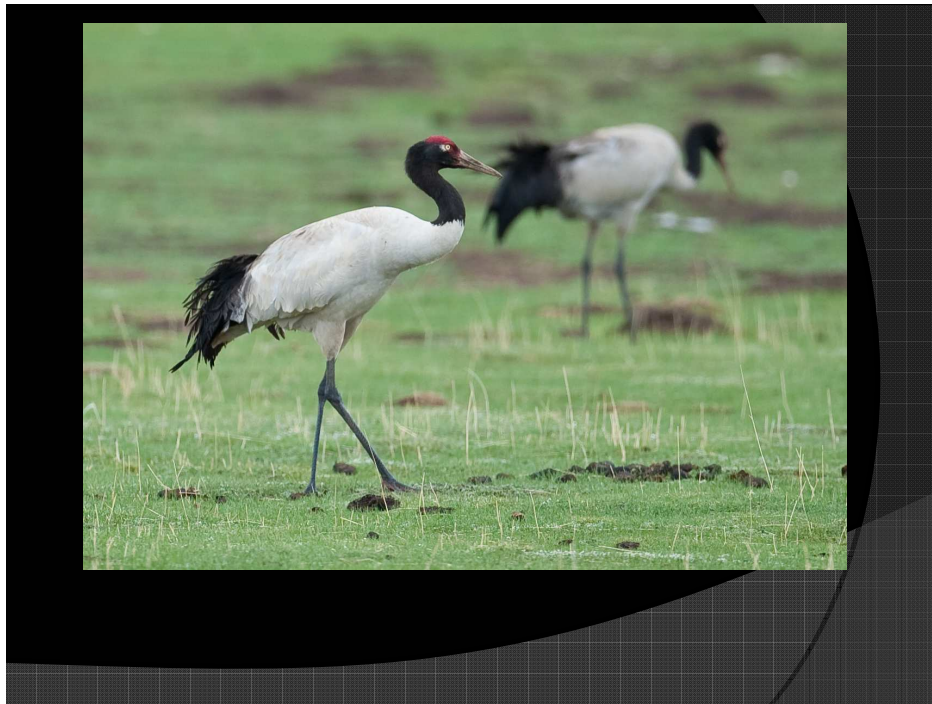
It was also fantastic to experience some of the cultural highlights including the incredible temples and monasteries plus a good bowl of tasty noodles in a roadside stall where rarely a westerner has been sighted. It was also a gastronomic journey as we ate different dishes on a daily basis - all hot, fresh and tasty.

I really appreciated the wonderful help from Mr. Jiang our truly superb driver and our interpreter-guide Leo who did a wonderful job and enjoyed a good laugh. Leo is a Chinese national treasure. They both did a wonderful job.

I really wish to thank most sincerely all the participants who came along for this adventure. While at times physically demanding I am sure you will all remember this tour as being one of the all time greats. So a special thankyou to Katherine Klein, Malcolm Silver, Alison Sheets, Dale Wang and Helen Wang for making this such a successful tour.

I look forward to travelling again with you in the future. Please enjoy the report.

Dion Hobcroft



Black-necked Cranes (photo by Alison Sheets)

ITINERARY

12 May: AM Summer Palace (SP) PM Temple of Heaven, Tiananmen Square and Forbidden City.

13 May: AM Wild Duck Lake PM Great Wall of China (Badaling) and Ming Tombs Reservoir

14 May: Fly Beijing to Chengdu PM Wanjianglu Park

15 May: Drive from Chengdu to the Leshan Buddha (**LB**). In afternoon we drive to Emei Shan (**EMS**) and settle into our very comfortable hotel before exploring some nearby forest remnants and orchards on the Chuan Zhu Road.

16 May: Morning bus ride to Golden Summit transport centre. We enjoy some roadside birding in the fog getting only to the cable car station where the mass transit cable car is not working and the huge queue puts us off attempting to make it to the Golden Summit. We return to the hotel and bird in the grounds of the hotel.

17 May: Morning bus ride to Wannian transport centre then on the Cable Car, we spend the morning exploring trails around the monastery. Afternoon birding at Wuxiangang that was very productive.

18 May: Drive from Emei to Wawu Shan (**WWS**) takes most of the day as we take the new road around the dam.

19 May: Wawu Shan: Morning birding at summit via cable car. Afternoon roadside birding below the cable car station.

20 May: Wawu Shan: Roadside birding below cable car then drive to Dujianyang.

21 May: Drive from Dujianyang to Wolong (W). Walk up the steep track behind Wolong Village called Sawan for Golden Pheasant.

22 May: Walk up to Wuyipeng Panda Research Camp. Overnight Wuyipeng.

23 May: Full morning exploring Wuyipeng Panda Research Camp hiking down to arrive in Wolong at 1400. Afternoon drive to Balan Shan Pass and onward to Rilong where we spend the night.

24 May: Drive Rilong via Balan Shan to Jiangyou.

25 May: Drive from Jiangyou to Jiuzhaigou via Cuckoo Shan.

26 May: Drive Jiuzhaigou to Rouergai and Flower Lake.

27 May: Full day birding from Rouergai (R) to Hong Yuan and return via Ninth Bend of Yellow River.

28 May: Rouergai to Jiuzhaigou

29 May: Jiuzhaigou: morning Primeval Forest and Pearl Shoal Waterfall. Afternoon Long Lake.

30 May: Jiuzhaigou to Wanglang NR

31 May: Drive Wanglang NR to Chengdu. Evening at Sichuan Opera.

1 Jun: Morning at Chengdu Panda Breeding Centre PM Fly to Beijing tour concluding after dinner.



Pere David's Owl in the fog (photo by Alison Sheets)

BIRDS

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*: (20) on 26 May at FL with (2) near HY the next day.

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*: (18) at the Ninth Bend of the Yellow River

Tundra (Bewick's) Swan *Cygnus columbianus*: (12) WDL

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*: (3) WDL (4-40) on Tibetan plateau on three days.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*: (2) WDL

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*: (2) FL

Falcat Duck *Anas falcata*: (2) WDL

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*: (2-100) recorded on seven days.

Eastern Spot-billed Duck *Anas zonorhyncha*: (3) WDL

Gadwall *Anas strepera*: (4) WDL (10) FL

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*: Singles on 26 and 27 May: both female.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*: (10) FL

Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*: (4) on 27 May at HY on river.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*: (10) SP, (10) WDL; (2) Chengdu Panda Breeding Centre; (2) Ganhaizi Lake.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*: (2) SP and (3) WDL.

Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*: Heard only at WDL.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*: (1) CDPBC

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*: (5) WDL

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*: (20) MP, (10) CDPBC; (1) Rilong; (20) HY, (2) J on lake near hotel.

Eastern Great Egret *Egretta modesta*: (1) SP

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*: (1-50) recorded on six days with high count on 15 May.

Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*: (2) WDL, (1) at W on 21 May, (4) Ganhaizi Lake on 26 May, (1) on 30 May, (10) on 21 May and (2) CDPBC.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*: (10) SP, (1) WDL and (10) Wangjiang Park-breeding; (10) CDPBC-breeding.

Black Baza *Aviceda leuphotes*: (2) EMS on 15 May gave a great perched view.

Oriental Honey-buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*: (1) W on 22 May.

Black-eared Kite *Milvus migrans lineatus*: (10) daily in Tibetan plateau from HY to R on 26-28 May. This subspecies is sometimes recognised as a separate species the **Black-eared Kite** on the basis of its larger size, shallower tail fork and prominent dark cheek patch.

Lammergeier *Gypaetus barbatus*: (2) at Balan Shan 23 May.

Himalayan Vulture *Gyps himalayensis*: (2-5) recorded on 6 days.

Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus*: (4) WDL and (2) over farmland pasture in W on 22 May.

Chinese Goshawk *Accipiter soloensis*: (5) on drive to WWS on 18 May with (1) here on 20 May.

Besra *Accipiter virgatus*: (2) on 23 May appeared to be nesting at W on 23 May.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*: (1) WDL swooped at a passerine right over our heads.

Himalayan Buzzard *Buteo burmanicus*: (1) WDL with (1-3) in Sichuan on five days. Taxonomy is complex and birds we observed are referable to this taxa that recent published DNA phylogeny show is clearly specifically distinct.

Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius*: (6-10) seen on 3 days with high count on 26-27 May. Many good scope views allowing us to see the more extensively feathered tarsus and powerful eagle like build of this interesting *Buteo*.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*: (2) on 23 May, (1) beautiful adult on 24 May at Balan Shan and (1) on 27 May between HY and R.

Mountain Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus nipalensis*: (1) gave a great view in flight at Wuyipeng on 23 May. Scarce in Sichuan.

Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*: (1) at WDL, (1) female on 25 May and (1) on 27 May.

Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis*: (4) at WDL on 13 May.

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*: (1) on both 12-13 May in greater Beijing area.

Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*: (1) at FL on 26 May and (3) between Rouergai and the Ninth Bend of Yellow River on 27 May.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*: (1) on 25 May near the turnoff to WLNR.

Snow Partridge *Lerwa lerwa*: (3) gave great views at Balan Shan.

Chestnut-throated Partridge *Tetraophasis obscurus*: Heard only at Cuckoo Shan.

Tibetan Snowcock *Tetraogallus tibetanus*: (1) at Balan Shan gave a distant but OK scope view.

Chinese Bamboo-Partridge *Bambusicola thoracica*: (1) at EMS on 16 May and (1) CPBC on 1 Jun.

Blood Pheasant *Ithaginis cruentus*: (2) on 25 May at Cuckoo Shan. Heard on 30 May.

Temminck's Tragopan *Tragopan temminckii*: (2) a female and immature male found roosting at Wuyipeng in late afternoon on 22 May.

E Blue-eared Pheasant *Crossoptilon auritum*: (1) seen well on 25 May at Cuckoo Shan with (2) seen well at WLNR on both 30-31 May.

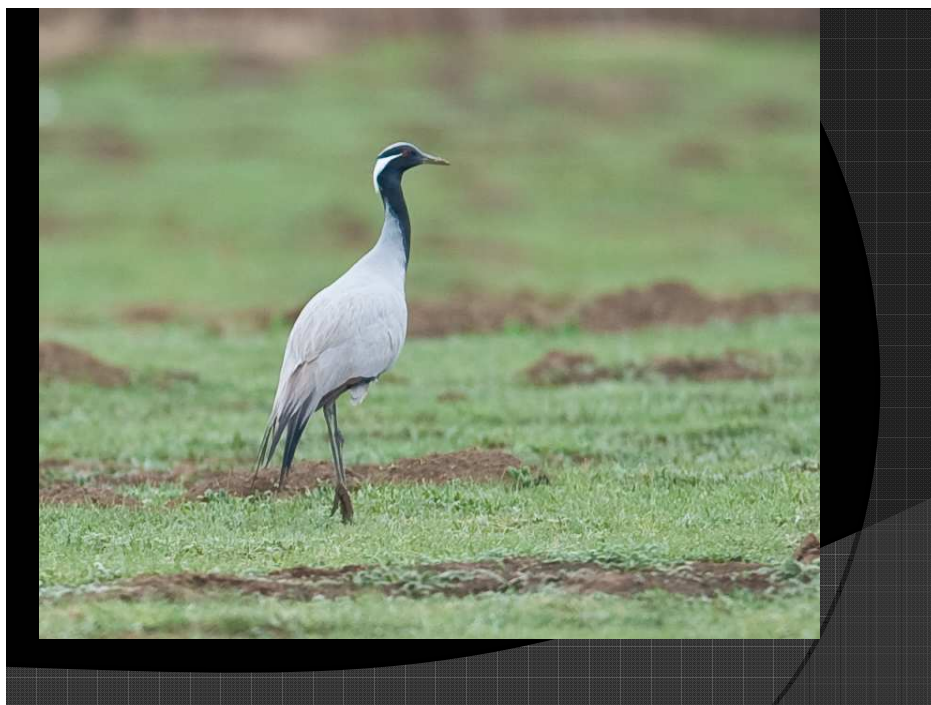
Ring-necked Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*: (6) at WDL with (1) male on 27 May and (4) on 28 May in eastern Tibetan plateau.

E Golden Pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus*: (1) adult male seen at Sawan, W. on 21 May, heard on 22 May, (1) female seen at Wuyipeng on 23 May, heard calling on 25 May and (1) adult male seen well at CPBC on 1 Jun.

Lady Amherst's Pheasant *Chrysolophus amherstiae*: (1-2) seen on 18-19 May at WWS included two great males and a sneaky female.

Black-necked Crane *Grus nigricollis*: A great year for this species with (20) on 26 May, (34) counted in one direction between Ruoergai and HY on 27 May and (1) on 28 May. Some very close individuals and a wonderful flyover at FL.

Demoiselle Crane *Grus virgo*: (1) near the FL turnoff on 28 May gave a great view.



Demoiselle Crane (photo by Alison Sheets)

Ruddy-breasted Crake *Porzana fusca*: (1) at Ganhaizhi Lake on 26 May was well received.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*: (1) on 21 May in W was a bit unusual.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*: (1) SP, (2) WDL, (5) Ganhaizi Lake and (1) HY.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*: (10) WDL and (5) FL.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*: (1) WDL

Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus*: (2) with a tiny chick at Hongya on the Qingyi River was an interesting breeding record for this scarce species.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*: (1) WDL and (1) on 31 May close to Chengdu.

Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*: (3) in breeding plumage at FL on 26 May.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*: (20) MP on 12 May and (1) DL on 26 May.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*: (1) SP on 12 May and (3) on 18 May.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*: (10) FL in breeding plumage on 26 May.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*: (1) FL on 26 May.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* (2-20) on three days on Tibetan plateau wetlands.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*: (3) MP

Eastern Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa melanuroides*: (1) FL on 26 May of the eastern subspecies; a possible split.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*: (8) FL on 26 May looked superb in breeding plumage.

Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*: (10) on 20 May at Hongya

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*: (2) FL on 26 May.

Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus*: (10-50) on three days on Tibetan plateau wetlands where they were watched trying to catch pikas.

Pallas's Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*: (1) non-breeding plumaged immature at Ninth Bend of Yellow River on 27 May.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo tibetana*: (2-50) on three days on Tibetan plateau wetlands; (3) at WDL on 13 May of subspecies *longipennis*.

Snow Pigeon *Columba leuconota*: (5) at Balan Shan on 24 May gave some good flight views.

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*: Widespread and moderately common, recorded on 7 days with max. (100) in Cheng Du.

Speckled Wood Pigeon *Columba hodgsonii*: (2) scoped at WWS on 19 May were taking grit from the ground with (1) seen poorly in flight at Wuyipeng on 23 May.

Red Collared Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*: (1) female proved to be very skittish near Jiuzhaigou on 28 May.

Spotted Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*: Moderately common in Beijing and CD.

Oriental Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*: (1) on 13 May at WDL, (5) near WWS on 18 May and (2) on 30 May near WLNR.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*: (1) on 13 May on outskirts of Beijing.

Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon *Treron sphenurus*: (1) gave a great perched scope view at WWS on 20 May.

Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus*: Heard only on 17 May.

Large Hawk Cuckoo *Cuculus sparveroides*: (1) seen well on 25 May. Heard on eight days.

Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo *Cuculus nisicolor*: Heard only on 17 AND 19 May at WWS. Birds of this population are now recognised under the taxon *nisicolor* rather than *fugax*.

Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus*: Heard only on nine days.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*: Seen on 5 days with a max. (10) on 26 May. Heard on a further 2 days.

Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus*: (1) at WWS on 20 May was responsive to playback. Heard only on 8 days.

Drongo Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris*: Heard only on 17 May at EMS.

Asian Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea*: Heard only EMS and WWS on 4 days.

Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia*: Heard only on 19 May at WWS and on 22 May at Wuyipeng. The population here belongs to the taxon *stictonotus*.

Collared Owlet *Glaucidium brodiei*: (1) seen at Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May.

Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides*: (2) at EMS on 16 May were shy but gave some good views.

Pere David's Owl *Strix davidi*: (1) found roosting in the day was a real highlight at EMS on 16 May on the road up to the Golden Summit cable car.

Himalayan Wood Owl *Strix nivicola*: (1) gave a great view on both 25 and 29 May at Jiuzhaigou where a dependent chick could be heard begging for food. On 29 May it flew down and caught a rodent beside us. Also heard at WWS and Wuyipeng.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*: (3) seen on drive from HY to R on Tibetan plateau on 27 May.

Gray Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus*: Heard only at Jiuzhaigou on 28-29 May but difficult to spot.

Himalayan Swiftlet *Aerodramus brevirostris*: (5) on 18 May and (10) on 20 May.

Fork-tailed Swift *Apus pacificus*: Seen on 4 days with max. (20) on 22 and 26 May.

Common Swift *Apus apus*: (10-50) on both days in Beijing nesting at our hotel.

House Swift *Apus affinis*: (5) on 18 May and (1) Emei City on 15 May.

White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus*: (10) on 21 May at W and (10) on 30 May at WLNR.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*: (1-10) recorded on five days with high count at WDL.

Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata*: (1) SP on 12 May, (1) near Ganhaizhi Lake on 28 May and (2) on drive into WLNR on 30 May.

Crested Kingfisher *Ceryle lugubris*: (1) on 25 May.

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*: (2) on 26 May and (4) on 27 May in eastern Tibetan plateau.

Great Barbet *Megalaima virens*: (1) scoped at WWS on 19 May.

Grey-faced Woodpecker *Picus canus*: (1) gave a poor view on 15 May at EMS. Very elusive this year!

Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos canicapillus*: (3) on 12 May at SP and (1) on 13 May.

Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker *Picoides tridactylus*: (1) male was well spotted by Dale from the bus but flew off before most people picked it up on 28 May near Jiuzhaigou.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Picoides major*: (1) at SP on 12 May and (1) WDL on 13 May.

White-backed Woodpecker *Picoides leucotos*: (1) WWS on 18 May gave a great view.

Darjeeling Woodpecker *Picoides darjellensis*: (1-2) seen on five days at WWS, Wuyipeng, Jiuzhaigou and WLNR.

Crimson-breasted Woodpecker *Picoides cathartus*: (2) EMS on 16 May gave great views.

Bay Woodpecker *Blythipicus pyrrhotis*: (1) gave a superb view at Wuyipeng on 23 May. Also heard at EMS and WWS.

Tiger Shrike *Lanius tigrinus*: (1) on 18 May on drive from EMS to WWS was shy a disappeared quickly. We enjoyed a much better view of a female on the road between Ruorgai and Jiuzhaigou on 28 May.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*: (1) on 26, 27 and 28 May of the grey-crowned subspecies *lucionensis*.

Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*: Also often called Rufous-tailed Shrike; (1) on 27 May at Ninth Bend of Yellow River showed the white basal primary patch clearly.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*: Moderately common and widespread in agricultural country, (1-5) recorded on 4 days.

Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus*: (1-10) recorded on 11 days at higher altitudes in Sichuan. We observed one bird kill a juvenile male White-bellied Redstart at Jiuzhaigou on 29 May.

Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina melaschistos*: (1) on 24 May and (1) CDPBC on 1 Jun.

Swinhoe's Minivet *Pericrocotus cantonensis*: (1) male on 21 May in Wolong made an appreciated appearance as we were waiting for some roadworks. A long way north for this species and my first Wolong sighting.

Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*: Moderately common and widespread recorded on 8 days with max. (4) on 23 and 30 May.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*: (2) LB on 15 May, (2) EMS on 17 May and (1) WWS on 20 May.

Red-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*: (1-10) recorded on 12 days.

Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyana*: (2-30) recorded on 4 days in Beijing area and eastern Tibetan plateau.

Gray Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae*: (2) on 17-18 May at EMS.

Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica*: (20) on 12-13 May in Beijing area of the subspecies *sericea*, sometimes split as Oriental Magpie. (2-6) of the Tibetan subspecies *bottae* that shows a white rump and large size on three days in eastern Tibetan plateau.

Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga caryocatactes*: (2) Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May.

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*: Recorded on three days in eastern Tibetan plateau with max. (10) on 28 May.

Yellow-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax graculus*: (5) on both 23-24 May at Balan Shan, W.

Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauricus*: (2) on 26-28 May on Tibetan plateau.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone orientalis*: (2) on 26 May and (1) on 28 May near Jiuzhaigou; a possible split as Oriental Crow.

Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*: Recorded on 7 days with max. (4) at J on 28 May.

Collared Crow *Corvus torquatus*: (1) Reed Lake, J on 27 May.

Common Raven *Corvus corax*: (10-20) in Tibetan plateau grasslands on 25-26 May.

Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula*: Common on Tibetan plateau on 26-28 May.

Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris khamensis*: Common on Tibetan plateau 26-28 May.

Tibetan Lark *Melanocorypha maxima*: (2) on both 26 and 27 May.

Pale Martin *Riparia diluta*: (100) on 18 May and (30) on 20 May in Hongya.

Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus*: (2-40) recorded on 6 days.

Eurasian Crag Martin *Hirundo rupestris*: (4) nesting in Jiuzhaigou on 29 May.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: Moderately common and widespread. (1-50) recorded on 8 days.

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*: Moderately common and widespread (2-10) recorded on 4 days.

Hume's Groundpecker *Pseudopodoces humilis*: (20) on drive between HY and R with (20) the next day east of R and north to DL. Formerly classified in with the Corvidae family (crows and allies) recent DNA assessment has placed it in the Paridae family (tits).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*: (1) at WDL and (1) at Great Wall on 13 Mar.

Sichuan (Songar) Tit *Poecile songarus weigoldi*: (1) near Jiuzhaigou on 26 May belongs to the subspecies *weigoldi*. It is considered to possibly warrant full species status from Songar/Willow Tit.

E White-browed Tit *Poecile superciliosa*: (2) at two different localities between Ruergai and HY on 22 May included a bird bringing food to a nest. This is a scarce Chinese endemic.

E Rusty-breasted (Pere David's) Tit *Poecile davidi*: (2) on 22 May at Wuyipeng, W. was our only sighting.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*: Recorded on 3 days in high altitude coniferous forest with max. (5) on 19 and 23 May at summit of WWS.

E Yellow-bellied Tit *Pardaliparus venustulus*: Recorded on 6 days with max. (6) at Wannian Monastery, EMS on 16 May.

Grey-crested Tit *Lophophanes dichrous*: Recorded on 5 days with max. (3) Pearl Shoal Waterfall, J. on 27 May.

Eastern Great (Japanese) Tit *Parus minor*: This is a split out of Great Tit *Parus major*. (1) of the nominate subspecies recorded on 13 May at WDL with (2-5) daily at EMS and WWS. (3) of the subspecies *tibetanus* on 25 May.

Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus*: Moderately common and widespread in forests at mid elevations. (2-4) recorded on 8 days.

Yellow-browed Tit *Sylviparus modestus*: (2) on 23 May in mixed flock at Wuyipeng, W.

Fire-capped Tit *Cephalopyrus flammiceps*: (3) at Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May.

Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*: Recorded on 5 days with max. (20) on 14,15 and 17 May.

E Sooty Tit *Aegithalos fuliginosus*: (10) on both 22-23 May at Wuyipeng, W.

Chestnut-vented Nuthatch *Sitta nagaensis montium*: (1) Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May.

Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria*: (2) at a nest feeding chicks at Balan Shan, W. on 24 May took quite a lot of patience to finally all get a decent scope view of at 4300 m asl.

E Sichuan Treecreeper *Certhia tianquanensis*: (1) on 19 May at summit of WWS in old growth Fir forest showed the white throat and short bill of this uncommon endemic.

Hodgson's Treecreeper *Certhia khamensis*: Singles on 24, 25 and 26 May. This taxa was formerly included in Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*.

White-throated Dipper *Cinclus cinclus przewalskii*: (2), adult and dependent juvenile on 29 May in J.

Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*: (1) on 15 May and (3) on 17 May at EMS.

Collared Finchbill *Spizixos semitorques*: (10) on 15 May, (10) on 25 May and (2) on 30 May. We enjoyed lots of good views of this unusual bulbul.

Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous*: (4) on 15 May at Chuan Zhu near EMS, (4) on 25 May with (2-4) on 30-31 May at WLNR.

Light-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis*: Moderately common and widespread in Sichuan recorded on 6 days with max. (20) in CD on 14 May.

Mountain Bulbul *Ixos mcclllandii*: (4) at Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May.

Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus leucothorax*: Recorded on 5 days with max. (10) at EMS and Wuyipeng, W. This is the striking white-headed subspecies.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus yunnanensis*: (1) on 22 May on the hike up to Wuyipeng, W. was our only sighting.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis tinnabulans*: (4) at WDL on 13 May.

Chestnut-headed Tesia *Tesia castaneocoronata*: (2) at WLNK on 30 May taped in well and gave great views. Also heard at EMS on 16 May.

Brown-flanked Bush Warbler *Cettia fortipes davidiana*: Seen or heard on 8 days.

Aberrant Bush Warbler *Cettia flavolivacea intricata*: (2) WWS on 19 May on summit.

Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler *Cettia acanthizoides*: (1) at WWS on 19 May on summit gave a superb view with its incredible song. Heard on 7 days.

Grey-sided Bush Warbler *Cettia brunnifrons*: (1) at WWS on 19 May on summit gave a good view.

Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus albogularis fulvifacies*: (2) at LB on 15 May.

Spotted Bush Warbler *Bradypterus thoracicus thoracicus*: (1) WWS on 19 May near cable car gave great views in response to playback on 19 May. Also heard on 26 and 28 May.

Brown Bush Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris*: (1) on 19 May in dwarf bamboo at WWS summit crept around us like a rodent.

Chinese Bush-Warbler *Bradypterus tacsanowskii*: (1) on 29 May at Jiuzhaigou gave great views in response to playback.

Tickell's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus affinis occisinensis*: (1-10) recorded on 7 days with high count on 21 May at Balang Shan, W.

Buff-throated Warbler *Phylloscopus subaffinis*: (1-3) recorded on three days with high count on 18 May at WWS.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*: (1) at SP on 12 May and (5) WDL on 13 May were of the nominate subspecies. (4) on 28 May in eastern Tibetan plateau near Ruogai were of the subspecies *weigoldicus*.

Yellow-streaked Warbler *Phylloscopus armandii*: Best views of (2) on 21 May in Wolong were quite responsive to playback.

Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*: (3) SP on 12 May and (2) WDL on 13 May.

Hume's Warbler *Phylloscopus humei mandelli*: Best views of (2) near J on 30 May were quite responsive to playback. Often heard.

Buff-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus pulcher*: Seen on 8 days with max. (10) on 19 May at WWS.

Lemon-rumped Warbler *Phylloscopus chloronotus forresti*: Seen on 5 days, a common leaf warbler in high altitude coniferous forests.

Pallas's Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*: (10) SP and (10) WDL on 12-13 May.

Large-billed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris*: Seen on 8 days with max. (2) on five dates. Heard on a further 4 days.

E Meiri Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus emeiensis*: (1) singing and seen well at WWS on 20 May.

Chinese Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus yunnanensis*: (1-4) on 29-31 May in Jiuzhaigou area. Note the change in scientific name from *sichuanensis*.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*: (1-2) recorded on 8 days.

Claudia's (Blyth's) Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides claudiae*: Seen on 9 days especially common at WWS, W and WLNR. This subspecies is now split as Claudia's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus claudiae*.

Kloss's (White-tailed) Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus davisoni ogilviegranti*: (1) WWS on 18 and 20 May. This subspecies is now split as Kloss's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus ogilviegranti*.

Bianchi's Warbler *Seicercus valentini*: (2-10) recorded on six days at EMS, W and J.

Grey-crowned Warbler *Seicercus tephrocephalus*: (1-2) WWS on 18-20 May.

Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Seicercus castaniceps*: (1) WWS on 20 May.

Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*: (1) on 17 May and (2) on 21 May at Swan, W. This species was heard on a further six dates.

Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica*: (4-10) at WLNR on 30-31 May.

Ferruginous Flycatcher *Muscicapa ferruginea*: (4) W. on 21 May, (1) on 23 May and (2) WLNR on 30 May.

Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassina*: (1) on both 19-20 May at WWS.

Yellow-rumped Flycatcher *Ficedula zanthopygia*: (2) males seen beautifully at LB on 15 May.

Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophiiata*: Seen on 4 days with max. (5) at Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May.

Slaty-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula hodgsoni*: (2-4) daily in high altitude forests in J. and WLNR on 28-31 May.

Slaty-blue Flycatcher *Ficedula tricolor*: (1) male at Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May and (2) females at WWS on 20 May and (1) on 22 May.

Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara*: (2) males at WWS on 20 May.

Chinese Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis glaucicomans*: (2) fabulous singing males at Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May. Heard also at WWS on 20 May- a truly beautiful song. This is split from Blue-throated Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides*.

E Firethroat *Luscinia pectardens*: (1) male at Wuyipeng, W. on both 22 and 23 May gave everyone a view of this Oriental sensation.

Rufous-headed Robin *Luscinia ruficeps*: Heard only at WLNR on 31 May.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*: (3) at WDL on 13 May gave good views.

Indian Blue Robin *Luscinia brunneus*: Sightings of single males at Wuyipeng, W. on 22 May and J on 29 May. Heard on a further 2 days.

Orange-flanked Bush Robin *Tarsiger cyanurus*: (1) female on 23 May at Wuyipeng, W. Split as Himalayan Red-flanked Bush-Robin *Tarsiger rufilatus*.

White-browed Bush Robin *Tarsiger indicus*: (1) knockout male at Wuyipeng W on 22 May.

Golden Bush-Robin *Tarsiger chrysaeus*: Heard only at summit of WWS on 19 May.

Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis*: Moderately common and widespread, (1-10) recorded on 5 days.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros rufiventris*: (10) on three days at Tibetan plateau.

Hodgson's Redstart *Phoenicurus hodgsoni*: (1) on 3 days.

Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis*: (2-4) on 23-24 May at Balan Shan, W.

Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus aureus*: (2-4) recorded on 6 days with high count at Great Wall on 13 May.

White-throated Redstart *Phoenicurus schisticeps*: (1) male on 26 May with (2) J on 29 May.

White-capped Water Redstart *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*: This striking bird was widespread and moderately common recorded on 8 days with a high count of (10) on 21 May and 30 May.

Plumbeous Water Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*: Moderately common and widespread recorded on 13 days with max. (10) on 30 May.

White-bellied Redstart *Hodgsonius phoenicuroides*: (1) juvenile male acquiring adult plumage was killed by a Grey-backed Shrike in front of us on 29 May.

White-tailed Robin *Myiomela leucura*: Heard only at WWS on 20 May but cryptic.

Grandala *Grandala coelicolor*: (4) on 23 May and (1) distant bird on 24 May at Balan Shan, W.

Little Forktail *Enicurus scouleri*: (1) WWS on 20 May was collecting moss for a nest.

Slaty-backed Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus*: (1) on 15 May along Chuan Zhu near EMS gave several excellent views with more good views of (3) on 17 May at Wuxiangang, EMS.

Stonechat *Saxicola maura*: (10) at WDL on 13 May of the subspecies *stejnegeri*. (1) of the Tibetan breeding subspecies *przewalskii* on 28 May near Ruorgai.

Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea*: (2) seen on 18 May with (1) on 25 May.

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius pandoo*: (1) on 25 May in gorge country near J.

Blue Whistling Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus*: Moderately common and widespread in Sichuan with (2-10) recorded on 6 days.

Scaly Thrush *Zoothera dauma*: (1) leader only at Wuyipeng, W. on 22 May.

Chinese Blackbird *Turdus mandarinus*: (1-4) seen on five days with high count at SP on 12 May. This is a split from Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula*.

Chestnut Thrush *Turdus rubrocanus*: Seen on 8 days with max. (10) on 30 May in WLNR. Lots of good views.

Kessler's Thrush *Turdus kessleri*: Seen on 5 days with max. (10) on 27-28 May between HY and R.

Chinese Thrush *Turdus mupinensis*: (1) on 13 May at WDL on migration was an interesting sighting with (2) at WLNR on 30 May.

Chinese Babax *Babax lanceolatus*: (4) WWS on 20 May and (2) Sawan, W on 21 May.

White-browed Laughingthrush *Pterorhinus sannio*: Recorded on 5 days with max. (20) CDPBC on 1 Jun.

E Plain (Pere David's) Laughingthrush *Pterorhinus davidi*: Heard only at Great Wall this year on 13 May.

E Barred Laughingthrush *Ianthocincla lunulatus*: (1) at Beimuping, W. on 21 May gave a good view.

E Giant Laughingthrush *Ianthocincla maximus*: (2) at Beimuping, W. on 21 May disappeared off the road quickly.

Spotted Laughingthrush *Garrulax ocellatus*: (2) at WWS on 20 May gave great views. Also heard at Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May.

Buffy Laughingthrush *Dryonastes berthemyi*: (4) on 20 May at WWS. The mainland Chinese subspecies *berthemyi* is sometimes split from the Taiwan population. The mainland species is then referred to as Buffy Laughingthrush whilst the Taiwan population is called Rusty.

Chinese Hwamei *Leucodipteron canorus*: (2) on 15 May at Chuan Zhu, EMS had a bath in the stream in full view. The name change reflects the splitting off of the Taiwan population.

E Elliot's Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron elliotii*: Moderately common and widespread in Sichuan at higher elevations, (1-6) recorded on 9 days.

Black-faced Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron affinis*: (3) WWS summit, on 19 May.

Red-winged Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron formosus*: (2) at WWS on 20 May gave a couple of brief but excellent views of this secretive species.

E Emei Shan Liocichla *Liocichla omeiensis*: (3) seen daily at WWS allowing all a good view of this skulker.

Black-streaked Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus gravivox*: (1) Chuan Zhu, EMS on 15 May and (1) Wuxiangang, EMS on 17 May gave good views. Recently split from Spot-breasted Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus erythrocnemis*.

Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*: (1) seen poorly on 17 May at Wannian Monastery, EMS with a much better view at CDPBC on 1 Jun of a single bird.

Scaly-breasted Wren-Babbler *Pnoepyga albiventer*: Heard only on 19 and 23 May.

Pygmy Wren-Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla*: Heard only on 19-20 May at WWS.

Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps*: (2) LB on 15 May, (1) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May and heard WWS on 19 May.

Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea*: (5) daily at EMS gave excellent views of this beautiful species with (5) daily at WWS on 19-20 May.

Golden-breasted Fulvetta *Lioparus chrysotis*: (1) at Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May. A beautiful bird.

Grey-hooded (Streak-throated) Fulvetta *Alcippe cinereiceps*: (1-5) seen on 4 days including EMS, WWS and W. Streak-throated is split in two species now-the other is Manipur Fulvetta *A. manipurensis* of south China, Burma and north-east India.

Dusky Fulvetta *Alcippe brunnea*: (2) on 14 May at Wangjiang Park, Chengdu. Also heard at EMS on 17 May.

Pere David's (Grey-cheeked) Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia davidi*: (10) LB and (10) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 16 May. The Grey-cheeked Fulvetta is being split and this is the taxa we observed.

Stripe-throated Yuhina *Yuhina gularis*: (2) WWS on 18-19 May.

White-collared Yuhina *Yuhina diademata*: (1-10) seen on 9 days including EMS, WWS, W and WLNR.

Black-chinned Yuhina *Yuhina nigrimenta*: (10) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May.

Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonica*: (2-5) seen on three days.

Chestnut-flanked White-eye *Zosterops erythropleura*: (1-2) seen on three days.

Great Parrotbill *Conostoma oemodium*: (2) on 18-19 May at WWS and (2) on 22-23 May at Wuyipeng, W.

E Three-toed Parrotbill *Cholornis paradoxus*: (4) on 19 May at WWS gave excellent views

Grey-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis gularis*: (2) on 20 May at WWS were in a mixed flock.

Ashy-throated Parrotbill *Sinornis alphonsianus*: (1-5) on four days at LB, EMS and CDPBC.

Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Sinornis webbiana*: (20) WDL on 13 May, (20) on 14 May in Cheng Du and (10) on 1 Jun at CDPBC.

E Grey-hooded Parrotbill *Sinornis zappeyi*: Heard only at summit of WWS on 19 May.

Fulvous Parrotbill *Sinornis fulvifrons*: (4) WWS on 19 May gave excellent views of this incredibly delightful and elusive species.

Golden Parrotbill *Sinornis verreauxi*: (2) on 18 May at WWS in roadside bamboo was a great sighting.



Three-toed Parrotbill (photo by Alison Sheets)

White-browed Shrike-Babbler *Pteruthius flaviscapis ricketti*: (1) male on 17 May at Wannian Monastery, EMS gave a great view. Genetic assessment showed this species is more closely related to vireos than Asian babblers. Its family level is not totally sorted currently.

Mrs. Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae*: (1) WWS on 19 May and (1) Wuyipeng, W. on 22 May.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*: (1) at our hotel in EMS on both 14 and 15 May.

Black Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis*: (1-10) recorded on six days.

Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentotus*: Recorded on 4 days with max. (4) on 17 May at EMS.

Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus*: (3) on 31 May on outskirts of CD whilst we were stuck in merging traffic!

White-cheeked Starling *Sturnus cineraceus*: (2) SP on 12 May.

Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus*: Recorded on 7 days with max. (10) on 24 May.

Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris*: (2-10) Balan Shan Pass, W. on 22-23 May.

Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophciata*: (6) at summit of WWS on 19 May.

Maroon-backed Accentor *Prunella immaculata*: (1) on 25 May at Cuckoo Shan.

Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indica*: (1) seen well in SP on 12 May.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis*: (2) WDL on 13 May in full breeding plumage with blue-gray head and white eyebrow.

Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*: (20) on 13 May at WDL (*macronyx*) and (1) near Jiuzhaigou at Lake Ganhaizhi on 26 May (*thunbergi*) though there is some confusion if *macronyx* is an eastern form.

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*: (1-2) on four days in eastern Tibetan plateau: all of the black-backed subspecies *calcarata* that breeds in the Tibetan plateau. A stunning bird.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*: Moderately common and widespread. (1-10) recorded on 9 days with a dependent fledgeling seen at Wolong village on 21 May.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*: Moderately common and widespread. (1-10) recorded on 13 days mostly of the Himalayan subspecies *alboides* with (1) Amur Wagtail, *leucopsis* on 25 May near J.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*: (5) at WDL on 13 May.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsonii*: (3) SP on 12 May, (1) WDL on 13 May with (2) on 26 May and (4) on 28 May in northern Sichuan.

Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus*: (5-6) at Balan Shan Pass, W. on 23-24 May in rosy breeding plumage.

Godlewski's Bunting *Emberiza godlewskii*: (2) on 13 May at Great Wall with (2) on 26 May and (4) on 28 May in northern Sichuan.

Tristram's Bunting *Emberiza tristrami*: (2) at SP on 12 May was a great sighting.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*: (10) at SP on 12 May and (50) at WDL on 13 May.

Yellow-throated Bunting *Emberiza elegans*: (3) at WDL on 13 May and (2) on drive to WWS on 18 May.

Chestnut Bunting *Emberiza rutila*: (2) males at SP on 12 May and (8) at WDL on 13 May.

Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala*: (1) female at SP on 12 May and (20) at WDL on 13 May.

Common Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*: (10) at WDL on 13 May in fresh breeding plumage.

E Slaty Bunting *Emberiza siemsseni*: (1) male gave on hike up to Wuyipeng, W. on 22 May.

Plain Mountain Finch *Leucosticte nemoricola*: (10) at Balan Shan Pass, W. on 24 May.

Black-headed Mountain Finch *Leucosticte brandti*: (4) at Balan Shan Pass, W. on 24 May.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*: (4) on 21 May in Wolong and (2) on 23 May near Rilong.

E Pink-rumped Rosefinch *Carpodacus eos*: (1) female on 26 May and (2) female on 28 May identified by the diagnostic greenfinch like “pitrit” contact calls that are the best key feature to separate from Beautiful Rosefinch.

Vinaceous Rosefinch *Carpodacus vinaceus*: (1) female at WWS on 18 May and (3) including a stunning male at WLNR on 31 May.

Sharpe’s (Spot-winged) Rosefinch *Carpodacus rhodopeplus verreauxi*: (2) at WWS on 18 May were seen well twice, the same pair, in a grassy glade, in bamboo forest. This is a rarely seen species—only my second sighting. This subspecies is now generally considered a distinct species.

Chinese White-browed Rosefinch *Carpodacus dubius*: (2) females on 25 May at Cuckoo Shan.

Red-fronted Rosefinch *Carpodacus puniceus*: (1) female on 23 May and (6) including several males gave very close views at Balan Shan on 24 May.

Tibetan Siskin *Carduelis thibetana*: (2-30) seen well on three days at Wolong, Rilong and WLNR.

Grey-capped Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica*: (1-10) seen on 4 days mostly in agricultural areas.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris miniakensis*: (10) on 27 May between HY and R.

Grey-headed Bullfinch *Pyrrhula erythaca*: Recorded on 6 days with max. (10) on 30 May in J near Pearl Shoal Waterfall. A stunning bird.

Yellow-billed Grosbeak *Eophona migratoria*: (2) Wangjiang Park, CD on 14 May and (2) on outskirts of Chengdu on 31 May.

Collared Grosbeak *Mycerobas affinis*: (1) male at Primeval Forest, J on 29 May. Great views of this stunner.

White-winged Grosbeak *Mycerobas carnipes*: (1) male at Long Lake, J on 29 May.

Long-tailed Rosefinch *Uragus sibirica henrici*: (4) females near Jiuzhaigou County on 25 May.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*: Moderately common and widespread.

Russet Sparrow *Passer rutilans*: (1-5) seen on three days in northern Sichuan.

Rock Petronia *Petronia petronia*: (10) on 27 May near Yellow River.

Tibetan Snowfinch *Montifringilla adamsi*: (4) on 27 May in two locations between HY and Ruergai.

White-rumped Snowfinch *Pyrgilauda taczanowskii*: (10) nesting in pika burrows near FL on 26 May with (2) on 27 May.

Rufous-necked Snowfinch *Pyrgilauda ruficollis*: (2) on 27 May 30 km S of Ruergai was a surprise, my first sighting this far east on the plateau.

White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata*: (2) at Wangjiang Park, CD on 14 May.

MAMMALS

Gray Wolf *Canis lupus*: (1) watched hunting marmots on 27 May between Ruorgai and HY had a damaged tail.

Tibetan Fox *Vulpes ferrilata*: (1) on 27 May between Ruorgai and HY.

Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes*: (1) on 27 May between Ruorgai and HY.

Leopard Cat *Prionailurus bengalensis*: (1) on 28 May between Ruorgai and Jiuzhaigou gave a great view.

Mountain Weasel *Mustela altaica*: (1) on 27 May gave a great view between Ruorgai and HY being harassed by Daurian Jackdaws and Red-billed Choughs. We eventually bailed it up under a rock and a few squeaks gave us great views.

Tufted Deer *Elaphodus cephalophus*: (1) gave a great view for Dion on 22 May at Wuyipeng, W and then some great spotting by Alison saw us watching (1) swimming across a reservoir as we drove into WLNR on 30 May.

Chinese Goral *Naemorhedus griseus*: (2) seen distantly in the scope at Wolong on 22 May.

Pallas's Squirrel *Callosciurus erythraeus*: (3-5) EMS on 16-17 May.

Perny's Long-nosed Squirrel *Dremomys pernyi*: (1) gave a good view at WWS on 20 May and (1) found road-killed at Wolong at Beimuping on 21 May.

Pere David's Rock Squirrel *Sciurotamias davidianus*: (1) WWS on 18 May and (1-2) 22-23 May at Wuyipeng, W. where it was attracted to kitchen scraps and (1) on 25 May.

Swinhoe's Striped Squirrel *Tamiops swinhoei*: (2) summit of WWS on 19 May and (3) Wuyipeng, W. on 22 May and (1) seen by Dale at WLNR on 30 May.

Siberian Chipmunk *Tamias sibiricus*: (4) at Primeval Forest, J on 29 May.

Himalayan Marmot *Marmota himalayana*: At least (20-100) on drive between HY and R on 26-27 May with (1) at Balan Shan, W. on 23 May.

Pere David's Vole *Eothenomys melanogaster*: (1) found at night whilst spotlighting at Wuyipeng on 22 May.

Woolly Hare *Lepus oiostolus*: (4) on 27 May in eastern Tibetan plateau between HY and R.

Black-lipped Pika *Ochotona curzionae*: (30-40) plus on 26-27 May between Ruoergai and Yellow River. The population was considerably smaller than some other years.

Red-eared Pika *Ochotona erythrotis*: (1) of these “flashy” pikas spotted by Alison near Rilong on 23 May.

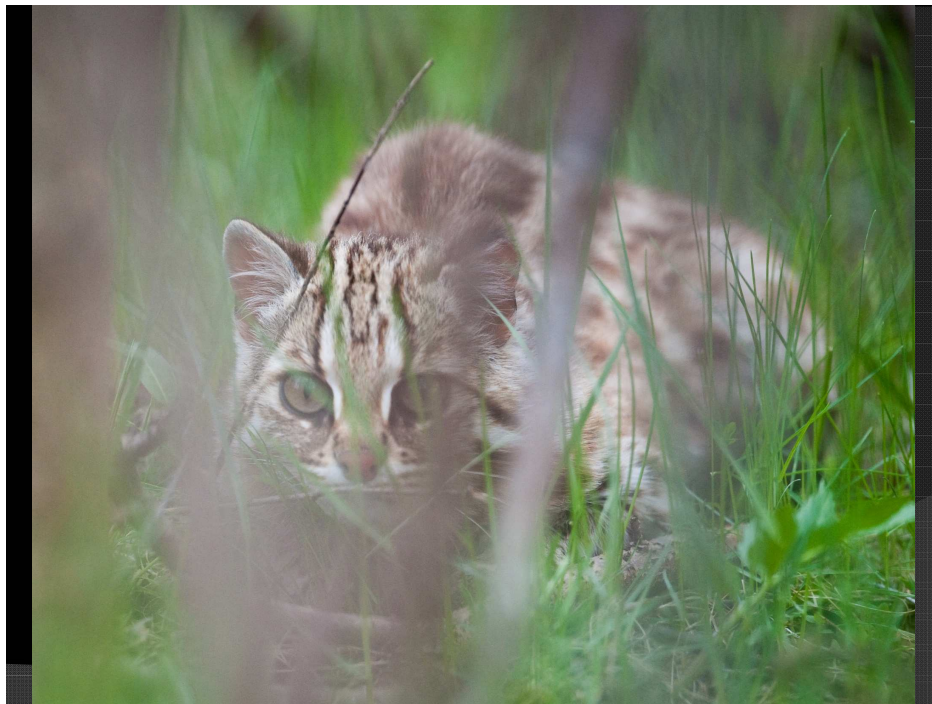
Large-eared Pika *Ochotona macrotis*: (1) on 24 May at Balan Shan, W.

Tibetan Pika *Ochotona thibetana*: (1-4) seen on 28-30 May in Jiuzhaigou and WLNR.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

Chinese Toad *Bufo melanostictus*: (3) Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May.

Leopard Cat (photo by Alison Sheets)



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