

VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS

CLASSIC CHINA

SICHUAN

MAY 2006



Leaders: DION HOBSCROFT AND SUSAN MYERS

TOUR REPORT

This was an outstandingly successful tour. 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 a smooth tour. We also experienced some rustic hotels, hiked up into the mountains into bamboo and rhododendron forests, and explored the Tibetan Plateau with its thousands of yaks and Tibetan cowboys. The modernization taking place in China is proceeding at an unbelievable pace. I was constantly remarking to the group about a new tunnel, highway, hotel, statue, or cable car! All of these differences in just 12 months. Many of the participants ranked this trip amongst their best ever birding tours.

The birds were simply phenomenal; we connected with so many of the rarest, most spectacular, and most elusive species China has to offer. We set a new benchmark for Classic China tours with a new trip record and a very high “strike” rate for all clients with the most special birds. 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.

In Hong Kong our day produced 75 species. At Tai Po Kau in the morning it was hard to beat the Pygmy Wren-Babbler that almost perched on our boots. Superb studies of Hainan Blue-Flycatcher, Chestnut Bulbul, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, and the stunning Yellow-cheeked Tit kicked off the tour well. Although we had a low tide at Mai Po, we enjoyed a great Chinese Egret in breeding plumage and flocks of striking White-winged Black Terns. It is a shame it has become so difficult to get flexible group access to this location.

The bustling city of Chengdu turned up some good sightings during our first afternoon in a bamboo city park. Although busy with people enjoying Mah-Jong and sunflower seeds, it came through with Rufous-faced Warbler, Hoopoe, Vinous-throated Parrotbill, 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 Tiger Shrike and Fire-breasted Flowerpecker—two good ones.

Our Sichuan forest birding commenced at Emei Shan, the sacred Buddhist peak at the crossroads of Chinese bird distribution. The Golden Summit was in clear weather and the Vinaceous Rosefinches were superb. The Wannian Monastery was highlighted by an incredible Speckled Piculet with a Chinese Blue-Flycatcher singing its heart out right next to us. Our next move was to Wawu Shan—a must-visit, superb forest birding location. On the summit we found Gray-hooded and Fulvous (amongst my top 10 birds in the world) parrotbills, and the recently described Sichuan Treecreeper. Lower down, the mountain was alive with the endemic Emei Liocichla; Great, Golden, and Gray-headed parrotbills; the rare Emei Leaf-Warbler; and unforgettable Lady Amherst’s Pheasants—what a bird!

Returning to Chengdu, an afternoon with the giant pandas at a breeding center enabled us to get up-close with this most charismatic vegetarian carnivore. There was also a superb Asian Paradise-Flycatcher, always a glamour bird. Then we had a night at the Sichuan Opera, a highlight for the tour, especially the shadow puppet master who gave me goose bumps.

Our next destination was the famous Wolong Biosphere Reserve. We all made the trek up to the Wuyipeng Research Camp where, although the set-up was pretty basic, we were warm, well fed,

and woke up in superb bamboo forests. The exciting news was that they had released their first ever captive bred giant panda in the forest here. It was startling to see photographs (taken by the professional research staff) of it strolling along the same paths we were birding along. Plenty of good birds here included scarce endemics like the elusive Barred Laughingthrush, Pere David's Tit, and Fire-capped Tit, but it was the male Temminck's Tragopan we found roosting that stole the show.

We had been conditioning ourselves for our day at highest altitude—the Balan Shan Pass (4,523 meters or 15,000 feet). This is a great birding day, if you get the weather, and we struck it just perfectly. Due to our conditioning acclimation no one experienced problems. It was a mega-day with crunching views of three Chinese Monal, a family of Verreaux's Monal-Partridge, Blood Pheasant, Snow Partridge, and our second encounter with a stunning male Golden Pheasant right out in the middle of the road (check out Susan's photos). Plenty of other great sightings ranged from Long-tailed Rosefinch to the hoped for Grandala (check this bird out on the web), Giant Laughingthrush, and Snow Pigeon. Towards the end of the day a Lammergeier turned up, as did a large herd of bharal (blue sheep).

All of this was hard to top, but we made our way to the Tibetan Plateau for our appointment with the much anticipated Black-necked Cranes. It was a long and very pretty drive to Hong Yuan and, just before we reached the hotel, “stop the bus—CRANES!” There they were, feeding close to the road and giving excellent scope views. The next day, exploring the plateau, we stopped constantly for new birds from the huge Upland Buzzard to the huge Tibetan Lark, glowing Citrine Wagtails, Little Owl, Tibetan Snowfinch, and the odd Hume's Groundpecker. The sighting of the day was a remarkable encounter with the rarely seen Chinese desert cat, a lynx-like ginger felid we scoped hunting pika and marmots. This was an outstanding experience for me.

Could it get better than this? Well, we watched a pair of Lammergeiers dropping bones onto a rock face, and the next morning Susan found a pack of wolves! Then there was a Northern Goshawk on the road with a Koklass Pheasant in its talons. Unbelievable—it was better than the *Discovery Channel*.

Jiuzhaigou is a simply stunning World Heritage Reserve with mirror lakes, Himalayan peaks, and vast boreal forests. Although the birding here was slower (and the park full of tourists), it still provided many special sightings including scarce endemics like Sukatshev's Laughingthrush and the remarkable Three-banded Rosefinch. On our last morning we found a pair of Prezwalsky's Nuthatches, and, while following one bird, it produced a large furry mammal head protruding from a hollow: a Chinese giant flying squirrel—yet another sensational mammal sighting for our group.

It was time to wend our way back to Chengdu with one last stop at Mount Qing Cheng. Our morning produced some good birds with highlights including Red-billed Starling, Drongo Cuckoo, and a remarkably cooperative White-crowned Forktail.

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

I especially thank Susan Myers for her great efforts in the field, and spotting and scoping so many good birds and mammals. I also really appreciated the wonderful help from Mr. Han, our truly superb driver, and our interpreter-guide, Helen, who learned as she went along and enjoyed a good laugh. They both did a wonderful job, as did our luggage truck driver behind the scenes.

I 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 thank you to John Allan, Tom Andrews, Romney Bathurst, Dan Bridges, Bill Bruni, Anne Kahle, Mary Mira, Paul Rodewald, Bob Simansky, and Ethel Williams for making this such a successful tour.

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

Dion Hobcroft

ITINERARY

13 May: Hong Kong. Morning birding Tai Po Kau (**TPK**) Forest Reserve (0630-1130). Afternoon Mai Po Marshes (**MP**) (1330-1700).

14 May: Fly Hong Kong to Chengdu. Afternoon birding in Wangjiang Park (1530-1800).

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 before going up on the cable car to the Golden Summit.

17 May: Morning bus ride to Wannian transport centre then on the Cable Car, we spend the morning exploring trails around the monastery (0630-1330). Afternoon birding near Hongzhushan Guesthouse (noisy with construction and too hot for birds) so we again explore Chuan Zhu Road.

18 May: Drive from Emei to Wawu Shan (**WWS**). We have lunch at Wawu Shan then take Cable car to summit (1530-1830).

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.

21 May: Drive Wawu Shan to Chengdu via Hongya. Afternoon at Chengdu Panda Breeding Centre. Evening at Sichuan Opera.

22 May: Drive from Chengdu. to Wolong (**W**). 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 1530. Afternoon drive to Beimuping below Balan Shan Pass. We sight some great birds as a reward for our efforts.

24 May: Balan Shan Pass and 40 KM West to turnaround at town of Jilong and then retrace our journey to Wolong. A sensational day of birding.

25 May: Morning walk behind Wolong Village. Drive Wolong to Hong Yuan (**HY**) (421 km.) via Zhegu Pass. Lunch at Wenchuan.

26 May: Full day birding from Hong Yuan to Rouergai (**R**) via Seventh Bend of Yellow River.

27 May: Rouergai to Jiuzhaigou (**J**) via Lama Pass, Baxizhen and Qiujixiang.

28 May: Jiuzhaigou: morning Primeval Forest. Afternoon Pearl Shoal Waterfall.

29 May: Jiuzhaigou: morning Long Lake. Afternoon Primeval Forest and Ganhaizi Lake.

30 May: Jiuzhaigou via Gong Gan Lin to Dujianyang.

31 May: Morning at Mount Qing Cheng (**MQC**). We take the mid-afternoon flight from Cheng Du to Hong Kong. Tour concludes.



BIRDS

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*: (10) MP

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*: (1) MP: in flight only.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*: (10) MP, (0) MQC

Little Heron *Butorides striatus*: (2) MP

Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*: (20) MP-nesting with many in colourful breeding plumage, (1) CDPBC, (1) J at Long Lake.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*: (20) MP, (2) HY, (1) J on lake near hotel both days, (10) in agricultural country approaching CD. Sometimes now split as the **Eastern Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus coromandus* on consistent differences in breeding plumage, proportions and vocalisations.

Great Egret *Egretta alba*: (50) MP

Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*: (2) MP on 14 May.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*: (50) MP, (20) CDPBC

Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes*: (1) MP in breeding plumage gave excellent views fishing actively on the large scrape.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*: (5) MP, (1) CDPBC

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*: (1) on 26 May on lake near HY.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*: (1-20) on Tibetan plateau on three days.

Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha*: (2) MP on 13 May.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*: (10-30) on J lakes on three days.

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*: (2) MP

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*: (5) on 26 May HY on plateau lakes.

Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*: (1) on 26 May at HY on river.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*: (1) MP

Black Baza *Aviceda leuphotes*: (4) on 15 May in flight over secondary forest on Chuan Zhu Rd. at base of EMS. (2) on 18 May perched on powerlines as we approached WWS, gave good scope views of this striking raptor.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans lineatus*: (15) HK, (3-20) daily in Tibetan plateau from HY to R with (1) on 30 May on drive from J. 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 but there are many intermediate individuals possibly hybrids..

Lammergeier *Gypaetus barbatus*: (1) adult, Balan Shan Pass W on 24 May; (2) adults dropping bones on a rock face to crack them gave great views between R and HY on 26 May.

Himalayan Griffon *Gyps himalayensis*: (6-10) on plateau between HY and R from 26-27 May with (2) soaring over Gong Gang Lin, J on 30 May. Some great studies of this giant raptor.

Cinereous Vulture *Aegypius monachus*: (1) on 26 May, an adult associating with Lammergeiers on drive between HY and R. was a good sighting of this declining species.

Chinese Goshawk *Accipiter soloensis*: (2) at nest on drive between WWS and EMS on 18 May gave a great perched view.

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*: (1) on 16 May at Golden Summit, EMS and an incredible view of a female with a freshly killed Koklass Pheasant it could not lift off with on 27 May on drive between R and J.

Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*: (2) TPK in HK and (1) MQC on 31 May.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*: (1-2) seen on 4 days mostly in W and J. Taxonomy is complex and birds we are observing referable to **Himalayan Buzzard *Buteo burmanicus*** that recent published DNA phylogeny show is clearly specifically distinct.

Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius*: (15) between HY and R gave good scope views allowing us to see the more extensively feathered tarsus and powerful eagle like build of this interesting *Buteo*.

Grey-faced Buzzard *Butastur indicus*: (1) adult was well spotted by Mary on drive from EMS to WWS on 18 May and we enjoyed excellent scope views of this migrant raptor-my first Sichuan sighting.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*: (1) seen by SM on walk downhill from Wuyipeng, W on 23 May; (1) on 27 May at Lama Pass with a great scope view of a thermalling adult at Gong Gan Lin, J. on 29 May.

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*: (1) Golden Summit, EMS

Snow Partridge *Lerwa lerwa*: (2) scoped at Balan Shan, W gave a good view for all. A further (4) birds seen distantly or in flight. A good result for this often elusive species.

E Chestnut-throated (Verreaux's Monal-) Partridge *Tetraophasis obscurus*: (2) at Balan Shan seen from the road and relocated by Bob gave all a good to brief view of this notoriously elusive endemic. Heard on 29 May at Long Lake, J.

Tibetan Snowcock *Tetraogallus tibetanus*: (2) at Lama Pass on drive from R to J on 27 May gave good scope views.

Chinese Bamboo-Partridge *Bambusicola thoracica*: Heard only at EMS and in secondary scrub driving to WWS.

Blood Pheasant *Ithaginis cruentus*: (4) as separate pairs on west side of Balan Shan, W with a pair above Baxizhen on 27 May and a single male near Long Lake J on 29 May. Everyone had a good view.

Temminck's Tragopan *Tragopan temminckii*: (1) stunning male found roosting at Wuyipeng in late afternoon on 22 May and seen briefly again the following dawn gave everyone a great view. Mary also saw a bird from the cable car at WWS on 19 May.

Koklass Pheasant *Pucrasia macrolopha*: Heard only at Wuyipeng and Balan Shan, W. with one recently deceased found with a northern Goshawk perched on top of it as we drove to J on 27 May!

E Chinese Monal *Lophophorus lhuysii*: (3) two males and a female gave stunning views at Balan Shan on 24 May, a great sighting of this threatened species.

E White-eared Pheasant *Crossoptilon crossoptilon*: Heard only around Balan Shan, W, and although we saw five species of pheasant this day we could not crack this one.

E Blue-eared Pheasant *Crossoptilon auritum*: Not surprisingly heard only though reasonably close in thick scrub near Long Lake, J on 29 May.

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*: several great views of this spectacular bird mostly between HY, R and J with (4) each on both 26-27 May with single male and female seen inside J on 29-30 May.

E Golden Pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus*: (2) stunning males on 23 May (good spotting Susan) with another possibly one of the same individuals on 24 May. All walked out on the road and were observed at length below Beimuping, W. For many, one of the highlights of the tour and one of the great birds of the world.

Lady Amherst's Pheasant *Chrysolophus amherstiae*: (1) female from bus as we descended from EMS on 16 May; heard only Wannian Monastery on 17 May and at least (8) seen in WWS 19-21 May with a mega crowd-pleaser slightly soggy male on the road on the last morning here. Another of the world's unbelievable birds.

Black-necked Crane *Grus nigricollis*: (2) on 25 May as we approached HY gave a great roadside view with (5) seen on 26 May mostly more distantly between HY and R with (2) on 27 May at R. Excellent scope views especially of the first pair.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*: heard only at MP; Bob found one at Jilong on far side of Balan Shan, W. on 24 May and Susan found another as we ascended the Tibetan plateau on 25 May both slightly out of range and rather unexpected.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*: (5) MP and (1) J on 30 May.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*: (2) MP on 13 May

Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megala*: (1) MP on 13 May gave a great view allowing us to study key plumage details like tail length, primary extension and barring well but as always a provisional identification in this most difficult complex.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*: (1) MP on 13 May.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*: (20) MP on 13 May

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostris himantopus*: (100) MP on 13 May

Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*: (4) at bridge at Hongya was a great tip off from the Dutch birder Remco and his friends on the 21 May. Excellent views watching them sail around with the swallows.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*: (2) MP on 13 May

Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus*: (6) HY-Yellow River on 26 May and (3) near R on 27 May.

White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*: (30) MP all in stunning breeding plumage was one of the highlights of our visit here.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*: (5) MP

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*: (4) at lake near HY on 26 May and (2) near R on 27 May.

Snow Pigeon *Columba leuconota*: (20) at Balan Shan Pass, W on 24 May gave great views.

Hill Pigeon *Columba rupestris*: (2) at town of Jilong 30 km W of Balan Shan Pass, W was a surprise sighting on 24 May.

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*: Widespread and moderately common, recorded on 10 days with max. (20) in Cheng Du. (1) at Beimuping, W on 24 May.

Speckled Wood Pigeon *Columba hodgsonii*: (1) on drive to WWS from EMS on 18 May seen fleetingly with (1) on 23 May as we walked downhill from Wuyipeng, W also seen in flight only.

Red Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*: (1) on 23, 24 May at W included some good views with (1) on 26 May as we ascended Tibetan plateau.

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

Oriental Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*: Heard only at Baxizhen on 27 May.

Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon *Treron sphenurus*: Heard only at Wannian Monastery, EMS ON 17 May.

White-bellied Green Pigeon *Treron sieboldii*: (2) perched and scoped, studied at length at WWS on 20 May where initially you could make out the white vent and more restricted maroon chestnut on the upperwing coverts that is diagnostic for this species.

Large Hawk Cuckoo *Cuculus sparverioides*: Seen on five days all singles with (2) on 21 May; often in flight but some good views of this notorious skulker. Heard on a further 8 days.

Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo *Cuculus fugax*: Heard at TPK very closely on 13 May and heard daily 19-21 May at WWS where despite considerable effort we could not locate this ultra-elusive bird.

Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus*: Heard only at MQC on 31 May.

Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus*: (1) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May gave great scope views watched calling and (1) Wuyipeng, W on 22 May. Heard on a further 7 days.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*: Seen on 5 days with a max. (10) between J and Dujianyang on 30 May. Heard on a further 3 days.

Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus*: (1) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May, (1) on drive from EMS to WWS on 18, watched calling. Heard on a further 9 days.

Drongo Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris*: (1) MQC on 31 May gave a great scope view perched on wires. Heard also near Wannian Monastery, EMS.

Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus*: (1) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May gave several flight views but was difficult to pin down!

Asian Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea*: (5) MP, heard only EMS, (1) female on drive to WWS on 18 May where heard daily with (1) on 21 May near Hongya.

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*: (2) MP

Collared Owlet *Glaucidium brodiei*: Heard only on drive from EMS to WWS on 18 May and at WWS on 20 May. Neither responded to playback.

Brown Hawk Owl *Ninox scutulata*: Heard only at WWS on 20 May. Thought to be the migratory form sometimes split.

Himalayan Wood Owl *Strix nivicola*: Heard only at WWS on 19-20 May.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*: (3) seen on drive from HY to R on Tibetan plateau on 26 May.

Himalayan Swiftlet *Aerodramus brevirostris*: (5) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May, (20) WWS on 18 May.

Fork-tailed Swift *Apus pacificus*: Seen on 6 days with max. (20) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May.

House Swift *Apus affinis*: (1-10) Emei town on 15 and 17 May, (5) on 22 May with (10) nesting around entrance arch MQC on 31 May.

White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus*: (4) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May and (10) summit of WWS ON 19 May gave good views.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*: (1) MP

Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata*: (1) 25 May as we ascended plateau between Wenchuan and HY allowed excellent views.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*: (1) MP

Common Hoopoe *Upupa epops*: (2) Wangjiang Park, CD on 14 May with (2) on 26 and (1) on 27 May on plateau near HY and R.

Great Barbet *Megalaima virens*: Heard only, TPK 13 May Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May.

Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus*: (1) fleetingly at LB on 15 May and (1) gave great views at Wannian Monastery on 17 May.

Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*: (2) LB on 15 May; heard at MQC and WWS.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Picoides major*: (1) WWS on 20 May

White-backed Woodpecker *Picoides leucotos*: (1) WWS on 20 May gave a great view.

Darjeeling Woodpecker *Picoides darjellensis*: (2) Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May gave great views.

Crimson-breasted Woodpecker *Picoides cathparius*: (1-2) on both 19-20 May at WWS gave great views with (1) on 22 May at Wuyipeng, W.

Bay Woodpecker *Blythipicus pyrrhotis*: (1) fleetingly at WWS on 20 May with (1-2) on both 22-23 May at Wuyipeng, W. giving better views of this typically very skulking woodpecker.

Black Woodpecker *Dryocopus martius*: Heard only at Long Lake, J on 29 May.

Hume's Short-toed Lark *Calandrella acutirostris*: (1) near HY on 26 May gave great scope views.

Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula*: Common on Tibetan plateau on 26-27 May.

Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris*: (20) on 26 May between HY and R.

Tibetan Lark *Melanocorypha maxima*: (4) on lake near HY on 26 May.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*: (2) MP on 13 May.

Pale Martin *Riparia diluta*: (10) at the bridge at Hongya on 21 May and (20) on 26 May at the Seventh Bend of the Yellow River.

Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus*: (10-50) nesting on rock cliffs in W. on 22-24 May with (10) J on 28 May and (5) MQC on 31 May.

Eurasian Crag Martin *Hirundo rupestris*: Recorded on 5 days with best views at park office in J.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: Moderately common and widespread. (5-20) recorded on 8 days.

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*: Moderately common and widespread in CD, EMS and WWS. (5-30) recorded on 8 days.

Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indica*: (1) seen well in small town on drive EMS to WWS on 18 May; heard on two other days.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis*: (20) MP on 13 May all in full breeding plumage with blue-gray head and white eyebrow.

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*: (2) near HY on 25 May and (5) on 26 May between HY and R all of the black-backed subspecies *calcarata* that breeds in the Tibetan plateau. A stunning bird.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*: Moderately common and widespread. (1-6) recorded on 8 days.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*: Moderately common and widespread. (1-10) recorded on 14 days.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsonii*: (1) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May.

Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus*: (2-20) at Balan Shan Pass and Beimuping W. on 23-24 May in rosy breeding plumage.

Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*: Moderately common and widespread recorded on 9 days with max. (6) WWS on 20 May.

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus*: (5) TPK on 13 May.

Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*: (2) TPK on 13 May.

Collared Finchbill *Spizixos semitorques*: (10) LB (10) Chuan Zhu near EMS on 15 and 17 May, (1) WWS on 21 May, (4) Wolong Village, W, 24 May and (2) MQC on 31 May. Lots of good views of this unusual bulbul.

Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*: Common in HK

Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous*: (2) on 15 May at Chuan Zhu near EMS was the only sighting of this typically scarce species.

Light-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis*: Common in HK, Moderately common and widespread in Sichuan recorded on 8 days with max. (20) in CD.

Chestnut Bulbul *Hypsipetes castanonotus*: (5) TPK, excellent views of this uncommon species.

Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*: Recorded on 7 days with max. (10) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May and (10) at MQC on 31 May. All of the striking white-headed nominate subspecies

Tiger Shrike *Lanius tigrinus*: (1) at LB on 15 May and a great view of a pair near HY on 26 May gave everyone a really good view of this typically uncommon and shy species.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*: (1) HK on 13 May and (1) in CD on 14 May; (1) WWS on 19 May with (1-2) near HY and between HY and R on 26 May.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*: Moderately common and widespread in agricultural country, (1-5) recorded on 7 days.

Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus*: (1-20) recorded on 8 days at higher altitudes in Sichuan.

White-throated Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*: (2) on 27 May between R and J and (2) on 28 May in J.

Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*: (2) on 29 May at J.

Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*: Singles on 3 days including (1) singing from the top of a Spruce tree in J on 30 May in the scope.

Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris*: (10) Balan Shan Pass, 24 May.

Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophiiata*: (5) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May and (3) Beimuping, W on 24 May with (3) on 27 May and (2) watched mating near Gong Gan Lin J. on 30 May. Typically skulking.

Maroon-backed Accentor *Prunella immaculata*: (1) in Primeval Forest in J on 28 May.

White-tailed Rubythroat *Luscinia pectoralis*: heard only at Balan Shan Pass on 24 May.

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

Indian Blue Robin *Luscinia brunneus*: (1) at Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May gave a good view. Others heard singing in J were not so co-operative.

Orange-flanked Bush Robin *Tarsiger cyanurus*: Seen on 5 days with max. (4) at Primeval Forest, J including some stunning males on 28-29 July.

Golden Bush Robin *Tarsiger chrysaeus*: (1) knockout male at WWS on 19 May seen beautifully by all.

Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis*: Moderately common and widespread, (1-10) recorded on 7 days.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*: (10-20) on both days at Tibetan plateau.

Hodgson's Redstart *Phoenicurus hodgsoni*: (1-4) on 3 days on Tibetan plateau.

Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis*: (20) recorded at higher altitudes at W. 24 May with (1-2) on three days on plateau and J.

Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus aureus*: (1) nice male in Wolong village on 25 May with singles near HY on both 25-26 May.

White-throated Redstart *Phoenicurus schisticeps*: (3) Baxizhen on 27 May with (10) J on 29 May and (4) Gong Gan Lin, J. on 30 May included several stunning males.

White-capped Water Redstart *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*: This striking bird was widespread and moderately common recorded on 8 days with a high count of (30) on 27 May on drive from R to J.

Plumbeous Water Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*: Moderately common and widespread recorded on 11 days with max. (20) on 25 and 27 May.

White-bellied Redstart *Hodgsonius phoenicuroides*: (2) taped out on 19 May at WWS where common but cryptic. Second bird gave repeat mega views. Also common in J where heard daily and (1) in Primeval Forest on 29 May.

White-tailed Robin *Myiomela leucura*: (1) taped out at WWS on 18 May but very cryptic and not seen by all.

Grandala *Grandala coelicolor*: (2) a male and female feeding on the ground at Balan Shan Pass, W. on 24 May. A beautiful bird that gave lengthy scope views.

Little Forktail *Enicurus scouleri*: (2) WWS on 20 May gave good views.

White-crowned Forktail *Enicurus leschenaulti*: (1) MQC on 31 May gave a good view.

Slaty-backed Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus*: (3) on 15 May along Chuan Zhu near EMS gave several excellent views.

Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*: (1-2) recorded on 3 days.

Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea*: (2) on 18 May on drive between EMS and WWS and (4) on 22 May near Wolong village.

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*: (3) on 25 May near Wenchuan and (3) on drive from J to Dujianyang on 30 May all in rocky gorge country from main road in difficult places to stop!

Blue Whistling Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus*: Moderately common and widespread in Sichuan with (1-10) recorded on 11 days.

Long-tailed Thrush *Zoothera dixonii*: (1) Primeval Forest, J. on 29 May.

Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*: (10) Wangjiang Park, CD on 14 May with (5) CDPBC on 21 May. Subspecies *mandarinus*, which is probably better treated as a full species.

Chestnut Thrush *Turdus rubrocanus*: Seen on 7 days with max. (10) on 29 May in J. Lots of good views.

Kessler's Thrush *Turdus kessleri*: Seen on 4 days with max. (10) on 26 May between HY and R.

Chinese Thrush *Turdus mupinensis*: (1) 29 May feeding on roadside in J seen from the bus on a bend by a lucky few.

Spot-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus erythrocnemis*: (1) near HY on 26 May well spotted by Mary was a good record with (2) MQC on 31 May also giving a good view.

Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*: (2) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May and (1) MQC on 31 May; heard daily at WWS.

Scaly-breasted Wren-Babbler *Pnoepyga albiventer*: Heard only EMS and Wuyipeng, W.

Pygmy Wren-Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla*: (1) TPK on 13 May responded to playback well and gave great views. Heard only on a further 6 days.

Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps*: (5) TPK on 13 May; seen on 6 days in Sichuan with max. (5) WWS on 21 May.

Chinese Babax *Babax lanceolatus*: (2-4) WWS on 20-21 May gave occasional great views responding to playback but were typically cryptic and gave several people difficulty in obtaining a view. (1) seen by Susan on 24 May in W. on west side of Balan Shan Pass.

Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea*: (2-10) daily at EMS gave excellent views of this beautiful species with (1-6) at WWS on 20-21 May.

Silver-eared Mesia *Leiothrix argenteauris*: (5) at TPK gave great views of this stunning species with (1) at Victoria Peak, HK island seen by the city tourers on 12 May.

Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanuroptera*: (6) in TPK on 12 May.

Golden-breasted Fulvetta *Alcippe chrysotis*: (1-5) daily in dense bamboo at WWS with (1) at Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May. A beautiful bird.

Streak-throated Fulvetta *Alcippe cinereiceps*: Seen on 6 days including EMS, WWS, W and J.

Dusky Fulvetta *Alcippe brunnea*: (1) taped in at the Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May gave a great view. (2) in a mixed flock at MQC on 31 May also gave a good view of this typically skulking species.

Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia*: (4) Chuan Zhu Road, EMS on 15 May, (2) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May, (3) WWS on 21 May and (10) MQC on 31 May.

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

White-collared Yuhina *Yuhina diademata*: Seen on 6 days including (10) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May, (2-10) WWS on 18-20 May and (2) Wuyipeng, W. on both 22-23 May.

Masked Laughingthrush *Garrulax perspicillatus*: (4) in HK seen by some people on 12 May.

Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax pectoralis*: (2) at Victoria Peak, HK on 12 May.

E Plain (Pere David's) Laughingthrush *Garrulax davidi*: (4-10) seen on 26-27 May on plateau between HY and R.

E Barred Laughingthrush *Garrulax lunulatus*: (2) feeding on the trailside on the hike up to Wuyipeng on 22 May for the slow-walkers; then (2) at the camp itself on the morning of the 23 May with one that afternoon while roadside birding near Beimuping in the afternoon. A really good result for this scarce and elusive endemic.

E Giant Laughingthrush *Garrulax maximus*: (1-6) recorded daily at higher altitudes in W. 23-24 May included some great views of this spectacular bird.

Hwamei *Garrulax canorus*: (1) Chuan Zhu Road near EMS on 15 May with (1) in roadside scrub between EMS and WWS on 17 May and (1) at WWS on 18 May.

White-browed Laughingthrush *Garrulax sannio*: Recorded on 5 days with max. (20) CDPBC on 21 May.

E Elliot's Laughingthrush *Garrulax elliotii*: Moderately common and widespread in Sichuan at higher elevations, (4-40) recorded on 8 days.

Black-faced Laughingthrush *Garrulax affinis*: (1) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May.

Red-winged Laughingthrush *Garrulax formosus*: (1) seen by Susan and heard by all in dense bamboo at WWS on 20 May.

E Sukatshev's (Snowy-cheeked) Laughingthrush *Garrulax sukatschewi*: (2) whilst roadside birding between Baxizhen and J. on 27 May and (2) near Long Lake, J. on 29 May gave everyone a view of this scarce and elusive endemic.

E Emei Shan Liocichla *Liocichla omeiensis*: (1-6) seen daily at WWS allowing all a good view of this skulker.

Great Parrotbill *Conostoma oemodium*: (2) WWS on 20 May and (3) Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May gave sensational views.

Ashy-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis alphonsianus*: (3-5) on three days EMS and on drive to WWS.

Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus*: (3) Wangjiang Park, CD on 14 May, (10) CDPBC on 21 May and (5) MQC on 31 May.

E Grey-hooded Parrotbill *Paradoxornis zappeyi*: (4) at summit of WWS. Great views of this local and scarce Chinese endemic.

Fulvous Parrotbill *Paradoxornis fulvifrons*: (2-4) WWS on 18-19 May gave excellent views of this incredibly delightful and elusive species including nest building.

Golden Parrotbill *Paradoxornis verreauxi*: (2) on 20 May at WWS in roadside bamboo was a great bird.

Grey-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis gularis*: (1) WWS summit on 19 May and (8) below cable car station on 20 May gave great views.

Brown-flanked Bush Warbler *Cettia fortipes*: (1) taped in at WWS gave great views on both 18 and 20 May. Heard on a further 5 days.

Aberrant Bush Warbler *Cettia flavolivacea*: (1-2) WWS on both 18-19 May on summit with (1) on both 22-23 May at Wuyipeng, W..

Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler *Cettia acanthizoides*: (1) at WWS on 19 May sang with such gusto we all became bush warbler enthusiasts with (2) on 23 May at Wuyipeng..

Grey-sided Bush Warbler *Cettia brunnifrons*: (2) at Golden Summit, EMS ON 16 May gave great views.

Spotted Bush Warbler *Bradypterus thoracicus*: (2) WWS gave great views in response to playback on 19 May. Subspecies *davidi*. Also heard in J on two days.

Brown Bush Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris*: (1) WWS summit gave great views on 19 May in response to playback.

Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus seebohmi*: (1) in secondary bamboo-garden scrub on drive from EMS to WWS eventually popped up and gave all a good view in response to playback.

Chinese Bush Warbler *Bradypterus tascanowskii*: (2) at Baxizhen on 27 May gave a good but brief view.

Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis*: (1) Mai Po on 13 May gave a brief good view for many.

Tickell's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus affinis*: Seen on four days in high altitude shrubbery often looking brilliant canary yellow in fresh plumage with max. (10) around Balan Shan Pass on 24 May.

Buff-throated Warbler *Phylloscopus subaffinis*: (2) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May and (2) Beimuping, W. on 23 May gave good views to compare with closely related Tickell's.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*: (1) near Long Lake, J on 29 May was only sighting this year.

Yellow-streaked Warbler *Phylloscopus armandii*: (1) Pearl Shoals Waterfall, J was taped in gave a good view.

Hume's Warbler *Phylloscopus humei*: Seen on 9 days with max. (10) in J on 29 May.

Buff-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus pulcher*: Seen on 5 days with max. (10) J on 29 May.

Lemon-rumped Warbler *Phylloscopus chloronotus*: Seen on 9 days, a common leaf warbler in high altitude coniferous forests. This subspecies is sometimes split as **Sichuan Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus forresti***.

Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*: (1) between Baxizhen and J. on 27 May was strikingly bright.

Large-billed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris*: Seen on 8 days with max. (6) WWS on 20 May.

E Emei Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus emeiensis*: (1) singing and seen well at WWS on 19-21 May taped in by playing its distinctive trill song. A rare leaf warbler.

Chinese Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus yunnanensis*: (1) taped in at Wuyipeng on both 22-23 May but proved highly skittish and difficult for the group to see. This was remedied at Pearl Shoal Waterfall, J. where (1-2) were very responsive and showed well. Also heard at our J. hotel. Note the change in scientific name from *sichuanensis*.

Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*: (1) CDPBC on 21 May was our only sighting.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*: (10) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May, (2-4) on both days at summit of WWS, (1-5) daily in higher altitude forests at W.

Two-barred Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*: (1-4) daily in high altitude forests in J.

Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*: Seen on 8 days especially common at WWS. This subspecies is now split as **Claudia's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus claudiae***.

White-tailed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus davisoni*: (2) WWS on 19 May. This subspecies is now split as **Kloss's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus ogilvigranti*.**

Sulphur-breasted Warbler *Phylloscopus ricketti*: (1) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May and (5) on 31 May at MQC. Excellent views of this scarce species.

Bianchi's Warbler *Seicercus valentini*: (3) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May, (2-3) WWS summit 18-19 May, (1-5) in higher altitude forests at J 27-29 May.

Grey-faced Warbler *Seicercus tephrocephalus*: (1-5) WWS on 19-20 May typically secretive, with (2-5) Wuyipeng, W. on 22-23 May. The birds we observed have been split as **Marten's Warbler *Seicercus omeiensis*.**

Plain-tailed Warbler *Seicercus soror*: (1) Chuan Zhu Road near EMS on 15 May and (1) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May.

Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Seicercus castaniceps*: (2) WWS on 20 May.

Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus albogularis*: (1) Wangjiang Park, CD on 14 May, (4) LB on 16 May.

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*: (3) TPK on 13 May.

Mountain Tailorbird *Orthotomus cucullatus*: (2) TPK on 13 May gave a great view of this secretive species.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*: (1-4) in high altitude coniferous forests in J.

Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris*: (10) MP on 13 May.

Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata*: (4) MP on 13 May.

Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica*: (1-4) WWS on 20-21 May, (1) on 25 May at Wolong Village and (1) Gong Gan Lin on 30 May.

Ferruginous Flycatcher *Muscicapa ferruginea*: Singles seen on 4 days at LB, Golden Summit and WWS.

Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassina*: (2-10) daily WWS on 18-21 May.

Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophiate*: Seen on 5 days with max. (10) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May.

Slaty-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula hodgsoni*: (5-30) daily in high altitude forests in J.

Slaty-blue Flycatcher *Ficedula tricolor*: (2) at Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May; heard also at WWS.

Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara*: (1) Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May.

Hainan Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis hainana*: (2) males at TPK on 13 May showed very well.

Chinese Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis glaucicomans*: (1-2) 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*.**

Asian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi*: (1) stunning rufous morph male at CDPBC on 23 May.

Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*: Recorded on 7 days with max. (4) Chuan Zhu near EMS on 15 May and WWS on 20 May.

Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*: Recorded on 4 days with max. (20) in CD on 14 May.

E Sooty Tit *Aegithalos fuliginosus*: (4-10) Wuyipeng, W. on both 22-23 May and (10) Pearl Shoal Waterfall, J. on 28 May.

Fire-capped Tit *Cephalopyrus flammiceps*: (1-2) males at Wuyipeng on 22-23 May.

Hume's Groundpecker *Pseudopodoces humilis*: (40) on drive between HY and R with (4) the next day east of R. Formerly classified in with the Corvidae family (crows and allies) recent DNA assessment has placed it in the Paridae family (tits).

Songar Tit *Parus songarus*: (2) Balan Shan Pass, W. on 24 May and (2) between Baxizhen and J on 27 May. Subspecies *affinis*.

E Rusty-breasted (Pere David's) Tit *Parus davidi*: (1) Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May and (4) Pearl Shoal Waterfall, J. on 28 May.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*: Recorded on 6 days in high altitude coniferous forest with max. (10) on 28 May in J..

E Yellow-bellied Tit *Parus venustus*: Recorded on 8 days with max. (10) at MQC on 31 May.

Grey-crested Tit *Parus dichrous*: Recorded on 4 days with max. (4) Pearl Shoal Waterfall, J. on 28 May.

Great Tit *Parus major*: Recorded on 7 days with max. (10) at both Wangjiang Park, CD and MQC on 31 May.

Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus*: Moderately common and widespread in forests at mid elevations. (2-10) recorded on 10 days.

Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus sibilans*: (4) TPK on 13 May.

Yellow-browed Tit *Sylviparus modestus*: (4) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May, (2) WWS summit on 19 May and (1) in mixed flock at Wuyipeng on 23 May..

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis*: (2) at TPK on 13 May gave a great view.

Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*: (1) WWS on 21 May, (2) Baxizhen on 25 May and (6) Pearl Shoal Waterfall, J. on 28 May.

White-cheeked Nuthatch *Sitta leucopsis*: (2) Gong Gan Lin, J. on 30 May was a good view of this scarce high altitude species. Birds we saw belong to subspecies *przewalskii* often split on basis of major morphological and vocal differences as **E Przewalsky's Nuthatch**.

E Sichuan Treecreeper *Certhia tianquanensis*: (2) on 18 May and (1) on 19 May at summit of WWS in old growth Fir forest. Enjoyed excellent views of this recently discovered and described species.

Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*: (1) Primeval Forest, J on 28 May and (2) Gong Gan Lin, J. on 30 May.

Bar-tailed Treecreeper *Certhia himalayana*: (2) Primeval Forest J on 28 May.

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum*: (4) TPK on 13 May.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*: (2) LB on 15 May and (2) MQC on 31 May.

Mrs. Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae*: (5) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May, (2-6) WWS on 19-20 May, (2) Wuyipeng, W. on 23-24 May with (1) also at Wolong Village on 25 May included many stunning males.

Fork-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga christinae*: (4) TPK on 13 May with a superb male at Chuan Zhu Rd, EMS on 15 May with a female here on 17 May.

Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonica*: Abundant at TPK on 13 May with smaller numbers at EMS, WWS and MQC.

Chestnut-flanked White-eye *Zosterops erythropleura*: Recorded on 6 days with several good views including Golden Summit, EMS and WWS.

Godlewski's Bunting *Emberiza godlewskii*: (4) on 26 May between HY and R, (10) near Baxizhen on 27 May with (1) Gong Gan Lin on 30 May. Good views of this handsome species.

Tibetan Siskin *Carduelis thibetana*: (5) seen briefly at Wuyipeng, W. on 23 May and (6) seen poorly near our hotel in J on 29 May.

Grey-capped Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica*: ((4) seen very well whilst driving between EMS and WWS on 18 May with (1) on 21 May..

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*: (20) on 26 May near HY with (2) on 27 May near R.

Plain Mountain Finch *Leucosticte nemoricola*: (4) at Balan Shan Pass, W. on 24 was a small number for this site and reflected the excellent weather.

Dark-breasted Rosefinch *Carpodacus nipalensis*: (4) below Balan Shan Pass and above Beimuping, W. on 24 May gave a great view of the males feeding by the roadside.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*: (10) Balan Shan on 24 May with (2) the following day as we approached Tibetan Plateau and (10) near our lunch stop 30 May.

Beautiful Rosefinch *Carpodacus pulcherrimus*: (10) on 24 May in alpine shrubbery on west side of the Balan Shan Pass, W. This subspecies is sometimes split as **Chinese Beautiful Rosefinch *Carpodacus davidianus*.**

E Pink-rumped Rosefinch *Carpodacus eos*: (2) between R and Baxi Zhen on 27 May gave a good scope view and the diagnostic greenfinch like “pitrit” contact calls that are the best key feature to separate from Beautiful Rosefinch.

Vinaceous Rosefinch *Carpodacus vinaceus*: (4) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May gave incredible views with (1) male at Long Lake J. on 29 May.

Dark-rumped Rosefinch *Carpodacus edwardsii*: (1) female at Wuyipeng on 23 May and (1) male on 24 May near Beimuping.

White-browed Rosefinch *Carpodacus thura*: (2-10) recorded daily 23-24 May mostly around Beimuping and Balan Shan with (5-10) daily from 27-30 May around J. Marked plumage, structural and vocal differences suggest that that the birds we saw are best split from the Himalayan subspecies as **Chinese White-browed Rosefinch *Carpodacus dubius*.**

Spot-winged Rosefinch *Carpodacus rhodopeplus*: (3) on 23 May near Beimuping gave good scope views whilst feeding on roadside grasses. A scarce species these individuals belonged to subspecies *verreauxi* that is better treated as a separate species **Sharpe’s Rosefinch *Carpodacus verreauxi*** on basis of numerous marked and constant differences in plumage, structure and calls.

E Three-banded Rosefinch *Carpodacus trifasciatus*: (1) near Baxi Zhen on 27 May and (2) in Primeval Forest J. on 28 May gave great views of this scarce Chinese endemic.

Long-tailed Rosefinch *Uragus sibirica*: (2) gave excellent views at the petrol station at Jilong 40 km W Balan Shan showing white outer tail feathers, stubby bill and wing bars. Subspecies *henrici*.

Tibetan Snowfinch *Montifringilla adamsi*: (2) at the nest near the seventh bend of the Yellow River on 26 May took a bit of tracking down before we could scope them going in and out of the nest burrow. A good record.

Grey-headed Bullfinch *Pyrrhula erythaca*: Recorded on 6 days with max. (10) on 29 May in J. A stunning bird.

Yellow-billed Grosbeak *Eophona migratoria*: (5) Wangjiang Park, CD on 14 May.

Collared Grosbeak *Mycerobas affinis*: (10) on 28 May in J. at Primeval Forest and Pearl Shoals Waterfall. Great views of this stunner.

White-winged Grosbeak *Mycerobas carnipes*: (20) on 27 May on drive between R and J. with (2) in Primeval Forest J. on 28 May.

White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata*: Recorded on 5 days with max. (20) at Wangjiang Park, CD on 14 May.

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*: (10) MP on 13 May.

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

Russet Sparrow *Passer rutilans*: (2) near Wenchuan on 25 May.

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia*: (20) on 26 May near Yellow River.

Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus*: (5) in tall trees between entrance to MQC and park itself on 31 May.

Black-collared Starling *Sturnus nigricollis*: (10) in HK mostly near our hotel in Shatin on 13 May.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*: (2) at MP where they are scarce in HK currently.

Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus*: Recorded on 5 days with max. (10) in Cheng Du suburbs on 21 May.

Black Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis*: (1) on 4 days including MP, Balan Shan, W. and Tibetan plateau near HY and R.

Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentotus*: Recorded on 5 days with max. (8) at LB on 15 May.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*: (5) LB on 15 May, (2) Wannian Monastery, EMS on 17 May and (1) WWS on 18 May.

E Sichuan Jay *Perisoreus infaustus*: (1) Gong Gan Lin gave a brief view before evaporating as is typical for this scarce and shy species.

Red-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*: (1-6) recorded on 6 days with the max. at WWS on 19 May.

Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyana*: (5) MP on 13 May 2-10 near HY on 25-26 May.

Black-billed Magpie *Pica pica*: (5) MP on 13 May with (1) on 15 May near LB. Tibetan subspecies *bottae* near HY and R on both 26-27 May.

Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga caryocatactes*: (1) Wuyipeng, W. on 24 May.

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhonorax pyrrhonorax*: Recorded on 5 days with max. (10) at Balan Shan Pass W. on 24 May.

Yellow-billed Chough *Pyrrhonorax graculus*: (10) at Balan Shan Pass on 24 May gave great views.

Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauricus*: (1-10) on 25-27 May on Tibetan plateau was a good result for this species.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*: Recorded on 4 days with max. (10) on 27 May on eastern edge of Tibetan plateau.

Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*: Recorded on 9 days with max. (10) at Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May.

Collared Crow *Corvus torquatus*: (1) near Baxi Zhen surprised me but gave a great view on 27 May. My first non-coastal sighting.

Common Raven *Corvus corax*: (1-10) in Tibetan plateau grasslands on 26-27 May.

MAMMALS

Chinese Stump-tailed Macaque *Macaca thibetana*: (5) Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May and (20) from the cable car at WWS on 19 May approaching summit.

Wolf *Canis lupus*: Susan did a great spot when we located (3) in the scope east of R. on 27 May. Unconcerned by our presence we enjoyed a lengthy great view.

Chinese Desert Cat *Felis bieti*: (1) midway between HY and the Seven Bend in Yellow River was hunting pika. Initially spotted by Dan, Susan twigged this was no domestic cat and after a patient wait we all had a great scope view of this lynx like ginger felid. A great rarity and a major bonus sighting.

Javan Mongoose *Herpestes javanicus*: (1) MP on 13 May seen by Mary.

Bharal *Pseudois nayaur*: A herd of at least (30) possibly more was a great sighting at Balan Shan on 24 May. At least 4 decent rams.

Ghoral *Nemorhaedus goral*: (1) found dead near Long Lake, J ON 30 May possibly road-killed.

Pallas's Squirrel *Callosciurus erythraeus*: (4) on 17 at Wannian Monastery, EMS, (1) MQC on 31 May.

Pere David's Rock Squirrel *Sciurotamias davidianus*: (1) WWS on 19 May and (1) 27 May between R and J.

Swinhoe's Striped Squirrel *Tamiops swinhoei*: (1) below Golden Summit, EMS on 16 May

Siberian Chipmunk *Tamias sibiricus*: (4-6) at Primeval Forest, J on 27-28 May.

Himalayan Marmot *Marmota himalayana*: (3) at Balan Shan Pass on 24 May with at least (200) on drive between HY and R on 26 May with (20) east of R. on 27 May.

Chinese Giant Flying Squirrel *Petaurista xanthotis*: (1) Gong Gan Lin was disturbed at its tree hollow roost by White-cheeked Nuthatch and peered outside giving those on the spot a great view on 30 May.

Wawu Shan Wood Rat *Leopoldamys edwardsi*: (1) WWS on 20 May-a striking native rodent.

Big-eared Field Mouse *Apodemus latronum*: (1) found road-killed near Baxi Zhen on 27 May,

Woolly Hare *Lepus oiostolus*: (3) on 27 May in eastern Tibetan plateau.

Black-lipped Pika *Ochotona curzoniae*: (50) plus on 26 May between HY and Yellow River.

Large-eared Pika *Ochotona macrotis*: (1) possibly this species in rock wall at Jilong, west of Balan Shan Pass on both 24 May.

Dion Hobcroft

dionhobcroft@bigpond.com

Susan Myers

myers_susan@yahoo.com.au

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours

2525 Wallingwood Drive, Suite 1003

Austin, TX 78746

Tel: 800/328-VENT(8368) or 512/328-5221

FAX: 512/328-2919

E-mail: info@ventbird.com



the end...