

ORNITHOLIDAYS TOUR TO CHINA
Sichuan and the Tibetan Plateau

02 – 17 May 2017



Leaders: David Walsh & Tang Jun

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A Personal Diary

The first Ornitholidays tour to Sichuan and the Tibetan Plateau since 2006 was a resounding success. The list of quality birds was sensational, and some families were especially well represented: 13 different pheasants, eight redstarts, 13 tits, 15 *Phylloscopus* warblers, eight laughingthrushes, seven parrotbills and eight rosefinches!

We started in Chengdu before travelling south-west to the mid-elevation forests of Longcanggou, seeing Black Baza on the way. Despite mixed weather, our two days here produced an array of sought-after species including Przevalski's Nuthatch, Great Parrotbill, Spotted Laughingthrush, Golden-breasted Fulvetta and the recently described Sichuan Bush Warbler. Our day at Erlangshan, bathed in sunshine and with glorious views of the high Himalayas, started with Lady Amherst's Pheasant and the mythical Firethroat and ended with Rufous-tailed Babbler. After a long drive north we spent two days at Balangshan, on the first of which we saw Chinese Monal and White Eared Pheasant at dawn, the vividly blue Grandala and a bone-dropping Lammergeier in the high mountains and Chinese Rubythroat singing in the afternoon: could this day's birding ever be bettered? Sun was replaced by snow on our return, which provided a suitable backdrop to our Tibetan Snowcocks; some of us were also very fortunate to see Temminck's Tragopan on a trail through the forest.

Mengbishan, in north Sichuan, gave us Hog Badger, perhaps the best of our 16 mammal species, as well as Himalayan Bluetail, Crested Tit-warbler and White-winged Grosbeak. Our drive to Rouergai produced the first of over 40 Black-necked Cranes as well as Tibetan Grey Shrike, Ground Tit and Przevalski's Finch, and introduced us to the awe-inspiring Tibetan Plateau. We weren't finished. Baxi Forest was cold at dawn, but none of us will forget our encounter with Chinese Grouse, and our drive back towards Chengdu included well-chosen stops for White-browed Tit-warbler and Siberian Rubythroat.

The scenery on this tour was majestic, with both mountains and high plains giving a real feeling of space: we felt privileged to be in such amazing places. Tang Jun, our guide, knew the birding sites extremely well and ensured that we were given a wide variety of tasty Szechuan cuisine. Chinese roads and hotels improve year-on-year, and the ground arrangements went very smoothly. There is no doubt that this tour is simply a must for those who want to see some of the most special avifauna found anywhere in the world.



Tuesday 2nd May

The majority of the group met up in Amsterdam's Schipol airport in the evening, having flown in from various parts of the UK. There was time for a relaxing drink before we boarded our Boeing 787 Dreamliner and settled down for the overnight flight.

Wednesday 3rd May

I woke as we were over the Gobi Desert, somewhere for a future trip perhaps! We touched down in Chengdu at 12.45pm and, just over an hour later with the group now complete, we met up with Tang Jun, our guide and Ding, our driver. We drove for half an hour then paused for a light lunch of traditional dumplings in a side street café, our first chance to use chopsticks! A little after 3pm we arrived at our hotel; check-in and the issue of keys was extremely efficient, as it would be throughout our holiday. We had time to get sorted before meeting up at 4.15pm. The walk to a local park took just five minutes; soon we were recording our first Spotted Doves and Light-vented Bulbuls as well as Pale Martins catching insects over the river. The park was busy, and the paths were narrow, so birding was difficult at first. Nevertheless we were quickly into our stride with a showy group of Black-throated Bushtits, a Taiga Flycatcher and a Yellow-browed Warbler, the latter two species providing evidence that spring migration was continuing. Chinese Blackbirds called very differently from their relatives in the UK. In bamboo near the river we found a party of Vinous-throated Parrotbills before enjoying a number of White-browed Laughingthrushes; not all members of this family are skulking!



Returning on a different path we noted locals playing Mahjong and discussed the 'twittering of the sparrows' (the sound of tiles being shuffled between games). A mystery bird call proved to be a David's Fulvetta; our field guide was of limited use on this one! Red-billed Leothrix and Collared Finchbill were both seen well by a pond before we saw another key target species, Chinese Grosbeak, something we wouldn't see again. Pacific Swifts were seen over the river as we strolled back to the hotel.

We had an hour to freshen up before reconvening at 7pm; having walked to a nearby restaurant, we were treated to a splendid dinner with a great variety of dishes. Well before 8.30pm we retired, pleased not only with our smooth journey but also with the start to our birding.

Thursday 4th May

An early morning stroll in a small park adjacent to our hotel produced two very familiar species, Common Kingfisher and Little Grebe, and gave us the chance to revise some of the more unfamiliar birds seen the previous afternoon. Breakfast consisted of a Chinese buffet and more traditional western fare.



A slight delay gave some the opportunity to watch Tai Chi in the park before we drove a short distance to another, bigger, park. This one had a large lake, where we saw three species of heron before turning our attention to a stand of bamboo. With perseverance we had good views of Rufous-faced Warbler and point blank looks at a normally skulking Rufous-capped Babbler. We returned briefly to the lake where we scanned the treetops for starlings; no joy, but doing so gave us our first Chinese Pond Heron perched high up as well as House Swifts whizzing by. We scrutinised the striking local race of White Wagtail, a bird

with which we would become very familiar, before drifting back to the bus. We commented on how clean the park was.

We drove for two hours down the expressway heading south-west of Chengdu, making a short pit stop en route. Progress towards our lunch spot was hampered first by a landslide then a road closure, which meant we had to divert and contend with the traffic in the town of Ya'an. We eventually arrived at a spot overlooking the river where we had a super meal followed by tea.

At 2.30pm we crossed a pedestrian suspension bridge and spent a couple of hours strolling in a circular loop along the river then through a village. We enjoyed looking at the crops and vegetables being grown here before focusing on the birds, which in the first section included Ashy-throated Parrotbills, numerous here, as well as a female Plumbeous Water Redstart (very different from the male) and a Forest Wagtail which disappeared all too quickly. We were delighted to get great views of two Swinhoe's Minivets, a speciality of this area, whilst some saw a Eurasian Jay, unfortunately not well enough to see the distinctive features of this race. We were also frustrated by flighty Red-billed Blue Magpies and a 'heard-only' Chinese Hwamei before returning to form with a perched Black-naped Oriole. This was quickly trumped by one of the birds of the trip, Black Baza, two of which flew in and gave superb views to all. In the village we scoped a Grey-capped Greenfinch and admired the 'streaky-breasted' Red-rumped Swallows before locating a Tiger Shrike; I put it in the telescope which drew a suitable 'wow' from the local schoolchildren as they looked at it! Japanese Tit and Japanese White-eye were seen as we mooched back to the bus at the end of a lovely walk; as a bonus, we noted an array of butterflies and dragonflies on the way.



It took 90 minutes to drive to our hotel near Longcanggou where we arrived at 6pm. We had been allocated ground floor rooms, but many of the group soon switched to the first floor, a move which had advantages beyond the improved view! We had dinner in a busy and noisy room before heading for bed. We had seen lots of birds on our first full day and hoped for even better in the forests tomorrow.

Friday 5th May

Packed breakfast and lunch on board, we left at 5.30am and reached the entrance gate of Longcanggou Forest 15 minutes later; Tang had worked extremely hard to ensure that we could enter well before the official opening time. We passed the new education centre and continued up a bumpy track to the highest point, around 2,400 metres altitude. Here, incongruously, there was a three kilometre section of paved road, at the far end of which was a series of buildings which would, in time, become a place where Giant Pandas could be looked after before being released back into the wild. We had our breakfast and saw Brown Bush Warbler, Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher, Collared Yuhina and a perched Large Hawk-Cuckoo soon afterwards. It was very gloomy but, with only light drizzle at this stage, we stuck to our plan and walked the last section of road. A Himalayan Cuckoo

called, rather like a Eurasian Hoopoe, before sitting up for us to scope. We began to get to grips with Sichuan Leaf Warblers, the common 'Phyllosc.' at this elevation, and identified Bianchi's Warbler, although getting good views of *Seicercus* warblers was to prove tricky throughout the tour. A little further on some saw a Grey-hooded Fulvetta, others a Grey-hooded Parrotbill; we all saw Brown Parrotbills which were surprisingly obliging. Our first Claudia's Leaf Warbler sat out nicely, behaving like a nuthatch as the book said it might! We reached the panda sanctuary and saw our first Elliot's Laughingthrush before returning to the bus and driving back to the spot where we had eaten our breakfast.



We walked downhill for a while, hearing Chestnut-headed Tesias in the vegetation before, with the rain becoming persistent, we declared, drove further down and began our lunch.

Some of us persevered for a while in the early afternoon and saw a few birds including Grey Crested Tit below the bus and both Eurasian Hoopoe and our first Rufous-breasted Accentor above it, but the light was dreadful, and the rain heavy, so play was effectively abandoned for the day. The driver performed heroics to negotiate his way down the slippery road and we were all pleased to arrive safely back at base. There were clearly a range of birds to enjoy near our hotel as well as in the forest but, with the deluge continuing, they would have to wait. We met at 6.45pm and enjoyed dinner in a quiet, private room. Bamboo shoots were a lifer for many! We reminded ourselves that we had seen some quality birds near the top in the morning, but hoped that the weather would allow us to return and enjoy the middle elevation birds tomorrow.

Saturday 6th May

It was cold but dry at 6am as we set off up the hill towards the forest. We reached the education centre without any issues, but would the road thereafter be fit for purpose? There was a long discussion between driver and guide and the decision was made to carry on, so we drove around four kilometres to a spot close to where we had finished the previous day, safe in the knowledge that there was a place for the bus to turn around! I don't think any of us had thought we would make it back to this area, full to the brim with species we were unlikely to see elsewhere: would the birds realise the need to be co-operative? We had breakfast, then walked up and



down the track, with bamboo and small trees on either side. For well over two hours we hardly saw a bird, although we heard several, including Emei Shan Liocichla which sadly we never got to see subsequently (seeing the vegetation moving but not the bird itself was extremely frustrating).

At 10.30am our perseverance was finally rewarded. It was worth having lugged the scope up and down the track as we made good use of it in one spot, seeing Fire-capped Tit and, even better, Przevalski's Nuthatch in the treetops; the latter was especially noteworthy in this area. Soon afterwards we found Red-winged Laughingthrush and both Three-toed and Great Parrotbills, the latter seen well by everyone. Buoyed by our successes, we walked the same route as earlier on, getting superb views of a Spotted Laughingthrush perched and then a Red-winged Laughingthrush in flight showing its red wings: a real 'wow' moment! Pallas's Squirrel was our first mammal of the day before some of us had much better looks at Three-toed Parrotbill and Grey-hooded Fulvetta. There was time for two more real specialities to be added to our list, Golden Parrotbill and Golden-breasted Fulvetta, then we returned to the bus at 1pm for a well-earned lunch and coffee.

After a suitable pause, during which two of us had a little extra exercise up the track and others heard Darjeeling Woodpecker and saw Himalayan Swiftlets near the bus, we strolled down the track into a wooded section, walking a total of nearly three kilometres. It was very birdy here, and with a completely different range of species from higher up. We saw Yellow-browed, Yellow-bellied, Green-backed, Japanese, Coal and Père David's Tits, the latter identified retrospectively with the book once again falling short. Grey-headed Bullfinches perched up and showed well having only been seen flying in the mist earlier on, whilst Long-tailed Minivets and both Blue-winged and Red-tailed Minlas added colour and excitement to the feeding flocks. We had a number of excellent views of the distinctive Kloss's and Ashy-throated Warblers, both quite numerous now that we had descended a little. We noted Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker and Eurasian Nuthatch before walking on. From this point birds became harder to come by; a White-browed Bush Robin was 'heard only', but we all saw the point blank Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler as it gave its truly amazing song!



Lower down, we saw a Besra flash through the trees but, with time marching on, we couldn't pin down the Emei Shan Warbler which was singing in the pines. Tang was keen that we allowed time to birdwatch around the education centre, and this was another inspired decision. We saw our first Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher, but this was merely the supporting act to the Sichuan Bush Warbler which was coaxed out right in front of us. It was thrilling to have such awesome views of a species which was described as recently as 2015.



It took 45 minutes to drive back to base; we arrived at 6pm and had a full 90 minutes to unwind before a lovely dinner. We were clearly in good form tonight, asking for seconds of two dishes, egg/tomato and pork/greens. Although losing half a day the previous afternoon due to rain meant that, inevitably, some species had been missed, we were very thankful that we had been able to return to the forest and thus see so many high quality birds, both in the bamboo and in the taller trees.

Sunday 7th May

We met at 6.30am for a 90 minute pre-breakfast walk from the hotel which proved highly productive. Even before we had left our grounds we had notched up Red-billed Blue Magpie, Black-naped Oriole and Russet Sparrow and listened to the Lady Amherst's Pheasant calling across the hillside. Black Bulbuls perched up to reveal their white heads, but a Little Bunting was only seen in flight. We walked down the road and were pleased to obtain excellent views of Grey-crowned Warblers, the expected *Seicercus* at this spot, and also see both Eastern Crowned and Large-billed Leaf Warblers. Strolling back towards the hotel, a loud call alerted us to the presence of Chinese Bamboo Partridge and many of us got respectable views at the back of the field, although they disappeared too quickly for some. A Large Hawk-Cuckoo on the wires was much more obliging! Tang was on a mission to find a Brown-flanked Bush Warbler for everyone to see – we had heard several already – and he was very successful! An Asian Koel was seen by some before we returned to base. The Chinese breakfast of



steamed bread, rice porridge, cabbage and eggs took a bit of getting used to but we were pleased once again to have coffee courtesy of our ever-willing driver.

At 8.50am we adhered to various requests for photos from the friendly hotel staff before saying our goodbyes and driving back towards the forest for a short distance. We walked a little way down a path then potted along the road towards a village. A White-browed Shortwing called but wasn't interested in showing itself, and frustratingly this also applied to our target species, Alström's Warbler. Morale hardly needed restoring, with the sun having finally made an appearance, but we thoroughly enjoyed being served 'real tea' outside a hotel.

At 10.40am we finally began our journey and drove for a couple of hours before enjoying a particularly fine lunch where our presence clearly excited the locals! Most nodded off as we continued thereafter, heading west then north. We stretched our legs on the southern end of the old Erlangshan Pass road, no longer driveable; it was hard to believe that this had in former times been a major route towards Lhasa and Tibet. It was remarkably birdless but we did, eventually, locate Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher and Ashy-throated Warbler. The main road is now punctuated by a series of tunnels under the mountain, and when we exited the last of them we noted that, as Tang had predicted, it was warm and sunny on the north side of the pass! We made haste for the town of Luding and our impressive hotel, noting Crested Mynas from our rooms. The hotel provided an excellent dinner and I was very touched by the arrival of a birthday cake! We retired eagerly anticipating our full day at Erlangshan and hoped the weather would be kind to us.

Monday 8th May

A little after 5.30am we set off and headed south, back up the main road on which we had travelled the previous afternoon. After 40 minutes we turned left up the north end of the Erlangshan old road; this part was driveable, although to begin our exploration we had to wake the driver of a truck who had inconveniently decided to park across it. Even before we reached the prime habitat, we saw the first of four Lady Amherst's Pheasants by the road; the first and last were males, the other two females, one of which kindly lingered for us. A good start.

At 6.50am we stopped in an area of trees and bushes and disembarked. Not one but three male Firethroats were singing close by! We gathered expectantly. One soon appeared in the back of a bush, out of sight to some of us, and it seemed an eternity but was in fact only a matter of seconds before it moved to the front, in full view, and it sat there for ages! A truly stunning bird, fully deserving its billing as one of Sichuan's 'must-see'



specialities. Mission accomplished, Tang and Ding then prepared our breakfast while we continued birding; all of us saw Yellow-streaked Warblers, whilst Nigel also noted a group of Black-browed Bushtits. A post-breakfast stroll was productive, with the source of a Blackbird-like song tracked down to a Chinese Thrush. Spotted Nutcrackers called all around us, although good fortune was needed to obtain a reasonable view.

We carried on up the track at 8am, soon pausing for a male Yellow-throated Bunting in a bush next to us. The first of several Chestnut Thrushes was seen, as well as a Eurasian Sparrowhawk. As we drove higher up, the trees became smaller and more spaced out, and the weather rather closed in for a while, but new birds appeared thick and fast, including Vinaceous Rosefinch and both Olive-backed and Rosy Pipits; we also had a much better look at a Rufous-breasted Accentor than previously. A little further on we found a male Sharpe's Rosefinch, the only one we were to see,

as well as our first Chinese White-browed Rosefinches. We spent a while trying to coax in a calling Chinese Wren-babbler but most of us didn't even glimpse it; a Moupin Pika was a distraction nearby. Our final stop on this side of the pass gave us one of the most unexpected birds of the tour, a female Crimson-browed Finch; we had super views of it, but not of the Chinese Babax which disappeared all too quickly.

We reached the top at 10am and drove down the other side for a short distance. It was sunny for a while and then misty once again, so it became virtually impossible to scan for pheasants which had been Tang's intention here. Nevertheless our good form continued, with our first Black-faced Laughingthrush and a male Rufous-bellied Niltava near the pass and a Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush as we strolled down the track. It then became relatively birdless, but we persevered, reaching an area of rhododendrons where we found a White-capped Redstart. We were unable to persuade a singing Golden Bush Robin to perform for us, although another was seen by a lucky few as we returned towards the bus. All of us were privileged to watch a Sichuan Leaf Warbler building its nest.

We returned to the 'sunny side' and lunched at 12.45pm, a Common Cuckoo calling from an exposed perch for us. By now the weather really was stunning, and the views were magnificent, so many photos were taken! We were feeling very relaxed, and Tang offered us the chance of a rest, but in fact most decided to stroll down the hill for a while. We were clearly in the habitat of Alpine Leaf Warbler, with Asian House Martin and Japanese Sparrowhawk further additions. The bus followed us down and we descended into the forest, where we located a White-browed Fulvetta and a singing Hill Blue Flycatcher as well as a more familiar bird, Goldcrest! Further down a Himalayan Buzzard drifted over and we made three more short stops in the woodland. We had fine views of Daurian Redstart and saw an Oriental Honey Buzzard overhead but, being mid-afternoon, it was typically quiet.



At 4.30pm we arrived in an area of bushes and had a productive hour strolling down the track for a kilometre or so. Marten's Warblers were singing, but we focused on our main target, Rufous-tailed Babbler, otherwise known as Moupinia, and it wasn't long before we were enjoying close views. A Black-streaked Scimitar Babbler was, perhaps inevitably, 'heard only', and none of the Firethroats in this area were responsive either: how lucky we had been earlier on! Brown-breasted Bulbuls were spotted and seen well by many, as was a Verditer Flycatcher. The temperature and setting was lovely, and we could happily have carried on birding into the evening, but at 5.30pm we sensibly declared, arriving back at the hotel an hour later. The bird list took a while to do tonight, and over dinner we reflected on what a truly epic day we had spent on Erlangshan!

Tuesday 9th May

After the exertions of the previous day, we enjoyed a relaxed start, meeting at 7am for an extensive Chinese breakfast. We loaded the bus and left shortly before 8am. Half an hour later we discovered that the road we wanted to take was closed. The bad news was that this added another 100 kilometres to our already long journey, but the good news was that it would allow us to experience some wonderful scenery which we would not otherwise have seen. So we continued west on the main road, with the hairpins meaning that people on both sides of the bus had views of the spectacular snow-covered mountains to the south-west. We saw our first Tibetan flags and prayer wells as we got closer to the Zhe Duo Pass



at around 4,300 metres. Those looking for birds as we drove were rewarded with numerous White-capped and Plumbeous Water Redstarts on the river as well as a distant Golden Eagle.

After the pass we made faster progress, heading steadily down a grassland valley with typical Tibetan houses. Along the road there were several 'improving messages' for us to enjoy! Birdwise, we noted our first Daurian Jackdaws, both Alpine and Red-billed Choughs and one or two Carrion Crows. We lunched in a small town where we were pleased to find our first Hill Pigeons. Thereafter we turned north, driving along a shingle-sided river where we saw both male and redhead Goosanders. The high mountains ahead began to look imposing in the cloud. It really was very different here, and it wasn't long before we found our first Himalayan Marmots and Himalayan Vultures.

Mid-afternoon we made a short stop to stretch our legs at a spot with views towards the Yala holy mountain; it made a fine backdrop to the distant Salim Ali's Swifts! The next part of our journey seemed never ending as we descended through a gorge alongside a fast-flowing stream. We had to make an unscheduled stop to allow the bus's brakes to cool down; in this area we had a number of birds to look at, including Blue Whistling Thrush, Long-tailed Shrike and Oriental Turtle Dove. At 5pm we finally arrived in Danba and rejoined the main road which we were supposed to have taken. The rest of the journey along a main road was actually rather tedious, in contrast to earlier in the day, with just one stop where we found Eurasian Crag Martins. We finally arrived at our Rilong hotel at 8pm. Dinner was prepared quickly and efficiently and soon afterwards we retired. The detour had been out of our control; whilst it had inevitably meant our arrival was a couple of hours later than planned, it had also produced some truly wonderful scenery,

Wednesday 10th May

As expected, we made an early start this morning, 5am, although this was later than we had anticipated as the new tunnel under Balangshan halved the journey time to our first destination, a traditional site for Wood Snipe. Tang told us that last year this species had become virtually impossible to find, but it was still worth a quick listen/look. It was such a clear morning that it was already getting light as we arrived so we didn't stay very long, instead driving two kilometres further on to a place where we could set up the scopes and scan. The next half an hour was sensational! A pair of White Eared Pheasants was feeding out in the open on the hillside, a Koklass Pheasant was showing itself relatively clearly under some bushes, and a male Chinese Monal was found silhouetted on the ridge! The birds lingered sufficiently for us to obtain repeated scope views, and once

the sun came up the colours on the Monal became more apparent. This was truly a 'once-in-a-lifetime' experience! As a bonus, a Collared Grosbeak flew in to one of the closest pines, and we added Tufted Deer to our mammal list. Still buzzing, we enjoyed our breakfast, listening to the calling Chestnut-throated Partridge which, at least for now, wouldn't show itself.





We walked along the road, hearing and seeing our first Common Rosefinch, before taking a track around a small cliff. Here we had stunning views of Snow Pigeons and watched a Glover's Pika around its burrow. Then the raptors took centre stage: we were able to watch Lammergeier, Himalayan and Eurasian Black Vultures plus



Himalayan Buzzard in the sky at the same time, right above us! Passerines were well represented too, with a singing Olive-backed Pipit, a pair of Blue-fronted Redstarts, a male 'Eastern' Black Redstart and, for some, Asian Brown Flycatcher and Himalayan Bluetail.

Would it be possible to maintain our extraordinary start to the day? At 9.30am we headed up the pass to just before the highest point. We spent around 90 minutes in this area, and had good views of Plain Mountain Finch as well as both species of chough. Some saw Grandala, others a Mountain Weasel, but generally it was hard work and, with the weather turning overcast, it was decidedly chilly. We dropped down a little for lunch, not least for a change of scene, before returning to the same spot in the early afternoon. The birds were much more co-operative this time. We had ace views of both Brandt's Mountain Finch and Alpine Accentor, but two other species stole the show. A number of Grandalas, including several vividly blue males, showed superbly at close range for ages; we were so impressed that, at the end of the tour, this species was voted *Bird of the Trip!* As we were about to leave, with some of us already on the bus, we spotted another Lammergeier in the distance, and soon realised it was carrying a bone and then dropping it hoping it would break. This performance was repeated several times. It was something I had read about, but never previously seen; witnessing it was another real privilege and one of my abiding memories of the tour.

We drove up and over the summit, the highest altitude we would reach on the tour, around 4,500 metres. On the west side we continued to scan, and this paid off once again with a Snow Partridge located on a distant rock. It wasn't easy to see, even through the scopes, but we were pleased to have found it. Despite our best efforts, Tibetan Snowcock remained 'heard-only' much to the leaders' frustration. At 4.30pm we finally decided it was time to head down the mountain, but we weren't quite finished. We disembarked in an area of low scrub with a few scattered bushes where we quickly saw our first Buff-throated Warbler. It was clear that we would need to concentrate hard whilst Tang tried to persuade a Chinese Rubythroat to show itself. A drab female Streaked Rosefinch appeared briefly whilst we were waiting, but it was important to remain focused on our main quarry. Tang pointed frantically, but it took ages for us to find the bird, which in any case was distant, Fortunately it wasn't long before two more appeared, pristine males which were stunning in the scopes, showing their red throat patches and also the distinctive face pattern differentiating this newly split species from Himalayan Rubythroat. Magic!



We arrived back at our hotel at 5.40pm with plenty of time to unwind and reflect before dinner. A much-travelled member of the group said that it was one of his 'best ever birding days', and it was very hard to disagree!

Thursday 11th May

We left a little after 5am for technical reasons and arrived at the Wood Snipe site just before 6am. It was a totally different morning, cloudy and murky, so it was still dark, but there was still no sign of any snipe. We

headed for pastures new, past the spot where we had seen the pheasants the previous day, parked up and had breakfast. Rain had begun to set in, but we put on our waterproofs, found our umbrellas, and walked along a largely deserted road. It wasn't especially pleasant, but it was productive. Giant Laughingthrushes gave good views to most, and we found an adult male Himalayan Bluetail, so different from the females we had seen. We did really well to locate the singing Sichuan Thrush on a treetop before finding a Rufous-vented Tit, another smart bird not looking like its picture in the book! Maroon-backed Accentor and Hodgson's Treecreeper were further additions to our list before it was time to return to the bus and head further down the hill in the direction of Wolong. We arrived at the start of a trail through some stunted trees. It was quite steep in places, and slippery because of the rain, but Tang deemed it safe enough so some of us ventured out. Those right at the front of the group managed brief views of a Temminck's Tragopan, our main target here, and others saw a Perny's Long-nosed Squirrel. Frustratingly, both Golden Pheasant and Barred Laughingthrush were 'heard only' despite calling very close to us. We eventually decided to leave the trail and watch from the side of the road, and some of us had excellent views of a Chestnut-headed Tesia singing at eye level. The Firethroat which was also in fine voice flashed past us briefly.

Morale was restored for most when a pair of Blood Pheasants ran across the road in front of the bus just after we had begun our return journey up the hill! We stopped for an early, different, lunch, eating a Chinese version of 'pot noodles' at a small roadside café where we were made very welcome. At 12.15pm we reached the junction where one road leads to the tunnel and the other up the pass, and followed the latter, despite the fact that it was beginning to snow! Was this a wise move? We met others coming down who told us not to go up too far, but we didn't need to, as soon afterwards Tang heard a Tibetan Snowcock not far away. We disembarked and managed to find it, and its mate, and get scope views. Another bird was calling below us so the group crept along before, as one, looking over the roadside wall, finding the birds at point blank range! The snowcock realised they had been spotted so walked off down the hill, but the views had been superb, even if relatively brief. This species was the main 'gap' in our list for Balangshan so we were thrilled to have seen it, and the snowy backdrop made it all the more atmospheric.



A White-throated Dipper on the stream was enjoyed before we headed back down to our pheasant spot where, for some, it proved to be third time lucky for Chestnut-throated Partridge, a pair found right out in the open in a small clearing below us. We didn't stay long, as it was raining once more, so we got back in the bus and headed through the tunnel. To our delight, it was dry on the other side! We reached an area of open forest not far from the town and spent an hour walking down the road. We saw a number of Twite, and noted how different this race was from the one in the UK, with a very odd call: another split? We also found our first Himalayan Beautiful Rosefinch; White-throated Redstart was new for all, Black-browed Bushtit for most. We arrived back at base at 5pm and met 90 minutes later for an early dinner. As ever, Tang was working hard for us and we were delighted by the range of tasty meat dishes. The weather had meant our day had been rather different from the previous one, but by persevering we had all seen some excellent birds, and there was no doubt that Balangshan required at least two days' exploration.



Friday 12th May

After something of a lie-in we met at 6.30am and drove up the hill for ten minutes to the spot where we had



finished the previous day. We had a quick coffee by the bus and then strolled down through the mixed woodland for 90 minutes. A Sichuan Jay was heard and a Crested Tit-warbler glimpsed, but most birds were very co-operative. A male Pink-rumped Rosefinch gave frame-filling views and Tang talked us through the differences from Himalayan Beautiful Rosefinch. A male Siberian Blue Robin was a good find, and clearly a migrant. Common Crossbills were heard then seen overhead, and the showy Tibetan Serins were welcome as most of us had missed them earlier in the trip. We had seconds and thirds of a number of species, including Japanese Tit, Elliot's Laughingthrush, an inquisitive Przevalski's Nuthatch and a singing male Himalayan Bluetail. We were delighted not only by the fact that

there was a great deal to look at, but also by the clear, sunny conditions!

We had a leisurely breakfast which included fried eggs, a trip tick, before checking out and heading back down the road, then turning right along a valley. Just before noon we made a half hour stop in an area of dry scrubland below some cliffs. A 'Shaheen' Peregrine Falcon was seen soaring in typical fashion, whilst a Taiga Flycatcher showed itself nicely in a nearby tree. There was no sign of Long-tailed Rosefinch which Tang was hoping to find here. A little further on we paused again to enjoy a splendid pair of Godlewski's Buntings in a roadside field, and we were able to compare Daurian and Hodgson's Redstarts.



Lunch was taken in the rural town of Fubian; here they were less geared up for tourists so things took a while to arrive, but it was well worth the wait, a wonderful array of dishes including our first Yak meat! We were in holiday mode and decided on ice creams as dessert: who would have predicted that when we were freezing in the snow just 24 hours previously? Some enjoyed close views of Yellow-bellied Tit and Grey-headed Bullfinch in a tree along the road before it was time to press on. We drove up for well over an hour before arriving at the Mengbishan Pass. Birds were few and far between at



the top, but we scoped an Upland Buzzard before dropping down a short distance which took us into the forest. We would return to spend the following day here, but it was good to get a taster, and we were thrilled to find our first Crested Tit-warbler and get better looks at Rufous-vented and Grey Crested Tits. We headed down into the modern town of Maerkang and drove along the main street which was bustling before arriving at our hotel next to the river. We dined in a restaurant around the corner before heading to bed in anticipation of a full day in the high mountain forests.

Saturday 13th May

We left at 5.30am, and it took around an hour to reach Mengbishan where we had been the previous afternoon. We drove close to the highest point, around 4,000 metres altitude, and the windchill meant that it felt colder than the reading of zero Celsius given by the thermometer. We walked down towards the upper part of the forest, scoping Kessler's Thrush and Chinese White-browed Rosefinch on the way and then finding a Maroon-backed Accentor which was a first for several of the group. At 7.45am, with the sun beginning to have an effect, we had our packed breakfast, and the hotel provisions meant it was rather more upmarket than on previous days. Suitably recharged, we continued down the track, seeing Collared Grosbeak on a tree top, a



Black Woodpecker flying over at an exceptional height and, best of all, a group of very smart White-throated Needle-tails. In the pines we had excellent views of both Hume's Leaf Warbler and Buff-barred Warbler, allowing us to compare them visually as well as by their songs and calls. We also had further splendid looks at Grey Crested Tit and the stunning Crested Tit-warbler, the latter posing for photographs!

We drove a little way down in order to explore slightly different habitat. A White Eared Pheasant called like a dog to our left before we

noted a range of passerines to our right. We had dropped down into the altitudinal range of Alpine Leaf Warbler and had very good views of a couple as well as of Blue-fronted Redstart and a magnificent White-winged Grosbeak. Tang was after Chinese Fulvetta and I was delighted to hear one call in response to his playback; soon we were all having fine views at close range.

Today's lunch included some tasty flatbreads but was interrupted by ace views of a pair of Black Woodpeckers; these birds were simply too good to miss! Just after we had finished eating, a Blood Pheasant scampered across the road and was seen by a lucky few. Our remaining target here was Three-banded Rosefinch; in theory the time of day reduced our chances,





but an immature male duly obliged! We then drove back up, with Sichuan Jay now top of Tang's agenda. We had no luck, despite spending 90 minutes in prime habitat, but had several noteworthy sightings including a perched Long-tailed Thrush which had only shown distantly earlier on, a fine Hodgson's Treecreeper (which responded to playback of Eurasian) and several Himalayan Bluetails. The star of the afternoon was a superb Hog Badger feeding in a gully below us.



We were keen to do a spot of sightseeing so declared and drove down (seeing Tibetan Macaques en route) via some fine prayer wheels to a village through which we strolled. There were birds here for those keen to carry on, including White-throated Dipper and Chinese Babax, the latter showing well to all. We left at 4.40pm for our 50 minute journey back to the hotel, arriving just before it started to rain heavily. We dined once again in a restaurant round the corner. It was good to have explored Mengbishan thoroughly and our patience had been rewarded with a number of specialities. We began to look forward to the last leg of our tour.

Sunday 14th May

We checked out of our hotel at 6am; I was pleased to have had the opportunity to purchase a relatively large scale map! We drove for 80 minutes, noting the engineering for a new road which we were told would, eventually, reach Chengdu. How did they get the pillars into the river? Breakfast this morning was a splendid combo of noodle soup and fried eggs cooked by Ding!



Continuing on, we saw our first Black Kites before scanning an area of river which seemed perfect for Ibisbills. No sign, but we did scope two pairs of White Eared Pheasants in the fields. We soon arrived in totally different habitat, grassland and bushes, the start of the Tibetan plateau. A Père David's Laughingthrush was spotted from the bus so we parked up; we couldn't relocate it but instead had good views of our first Brown Shrike, and commented on how distinctive the local race was. Across the road I heard a call reminding me of Willow Tit and alerted everyone; it was, of course, a Sichuan Tit, and we

were pleased to get super views. Further scanning produced a perched Upland Buzzard. It was clearly worth being on red alert throughout the journey today as, unlike in the mountains, it was possible to stop if we saw something. Roadside views of Common Raven and Common Cuckoo soon followed as a result, and we also paused for a flock of 50 Himalayan Vultures which had been feasting on a carcass. Eventually the road climbed

up a small pass and we stopped to investigate an area of bushes. We were hoping for White-browed Tit, but a Dusky Warbler (for some) and a feisty Yak (for all) were our only rewards. A second stop, nearby, was noteworthy only for the fact that it started snowing!

We passed the new airport before being thrilled to find our first Black-necked Cranes, a pair of adults. They were well-watched before, across the road, we enjoyed seeing Ruddy Shelduck with young as well as showy Himalayan Marmots. A little further on we found nine immature Black-necked Cranes plus two Black Storks, an adult and an immature, a real surprise. We were entering the enormous 'Rouergai wetland' and noted a group of three Eurasian Teal on another roadside pool.



We had lunch in the town of Hongyuan before heading on, scanning several quarries to no avail but noting our first Azure-winged Magpies, now 'split' from the birds in Spain. A 20 minute stop at an area of water with a muddy edge was very productive. A Great Egret was 'leader-only' but we all saw two Ferruginous Ducks, our first Brown-headed Gull, Common Terns and Common Redshanks. Best of all were the two races of Citrine Wagtail, scoped side-by-side. We would have liked to spend longer here as it was very birdy, but we had a long way to go and specific targets to see; Tang was doing his best to keep us on schedule! I was delighted to find one of our targets, Saker Falcon,

perched on a pylon, before we stopped by a small farmstead with trees where Tang was even more delighted to find another target, Tibetan Grey Shrike, a very rare bird in this area. The supporting cast of Siberian Stonechat and Groundpecker was a bonus.

Just after 5pm we stopped by a roadside hill. I was rather taken aback when Tang told me that we had less than half an hour to find Przevalski's Finch, another of Sichuan's star birds. Clearly we would have to look hard, and amazingly I located a male within two minutes of our arrival! We had super views before it disappeared as quickly as it had appeared. A Black-winged Snowfinch on the other side of the road was seen by just two people despite our best efforts to relocate it. Groundpecker and Horned Lark were found to order by Tang before it really was time to make haste for the hotel. The town of Rouergai suddenly hove into view; we arrived at 6.45pm and had dinner at 8pm, noting the impressive crockery and the quality food; it was really good that, this evening, we were joined for dinner by Tang and Ding. We retired at 9pm, tired having combined a long drive with a good deal of birding, but having been well rewarded on yet another 'different' day.



Monday 15th May

Having donned full winter plumage once again, we met at 5.30am, and drove south-east on the main road before turning left towards Baxi Forest. Mammals took centre stage at first, with Woolly Hare and Wild Boar seen from the bus. It was very cold, but at least it was calm so there was no wind chill! We noted Black Kites leaving their roost before spending half an hour or so scanning the hillside across a valley. It didn't take long to find our main quarry, with two Blue Eared Pheasants duly scoped; a herd of Red Deer was present in the same area. Looking down a steep slope we found a Snowy-cheeked Laughingthrush then a singing White-bellied Redstart; unlike other species in this family, this one was a real skulker.

We left the grasslands and descended into the forest, with the sun gradually warming us up. There were some really big trees, and we wondered how they had survived. At 8am we paused for breakfast in a clearing; as things were being prepared we had cracking views of both Chinese Leaf Warbler and Père David's Laughingthrush and a very recognisable Common Pheasant. Then, for the majority of the group, it was time for a mini-expedition. We headed up a steep slope and round a short loop trail through (and in some parts under) the trees. On our first lap, the only reward was a male Snowy-browed Flycatcher. The team were debating tactics for a second attempt when, most unexpectedly, a pair of Chinese Grouse decided to walk across the path in front of us! The views were, in the circumstances, pretty sensational; I hadn't really expected to see this species at all, let alone after such minimal effort. We did a quick tally: this was the thirteenth species of pheasant we had seen, plus one heard! Coming back down to earth, we found a male Slaty-backed Flycatcher and, more mundanely, a Great Spotted Woodpecker before turning our attention to Sichuan Jay; surely the bird calling close by would show itself? No such luck. To make matters worse we were then taunted by a Giant Laughingthrush proving to be an excellent mimic. Eventually we gave up and did some 'normal' birding for a while, seeing Yellow-streaked Warbler and Chinese Fulvetta as well as a flyover Golden Eagle. Those who had stayed near the bus wondered what emergency a convoy of vehicles were responding to. As we were about to leave, a Chinese Nuthatch called but we were unable to locate this diminutive bird in the large pines.

Heading west, we stopped at a scrubby hillside where we failed to uncover any White-browed Tits but saw a number of Kessler's Thrushes giving their odd calls. A pair of Black-necked Cranes was close enough for us to photograph not only the birds but also their reflections in a pond, then we made one final stop at a memorial for the 'Long March'. There were birds here too, including a fine Daurian Jackdaw and a summer plumage Brown-headed Gull. Eventually we drove back to town for lunch and an unexpected siesta!



At 2.30pm we headed off again, driving north into the plateau with a vast wetland to our left. We enjoyed seeing a Tibetan Fox, with its distinctive face pattern, before stopping at a roadside field full of Plateau Pikas and, in turn, White-rumped Snowfinches, a bird making use of the pika burrows. Rock Sparrows and Horned Larks made a fine supporting cast. A little further on we looked towards a distant area of water; patient scanning gave us a flock of Pacific Golden Plovers, Eurasian Hobby and Greylag Geese, all in flight, and all new for the trip, but the stonking close adult Lammergeier was of much more interest to most! Our final destination was at a specific site for Tibetan Lark. Rufous-necked Snowfinches by the bus were seen by everyone as we assessed the

weather. There were snow flurries and a real squall, but the main storm fortunately bypassed us so we stuck to our guns and yomped along a stream to an area of tussocks. Our quarry was duly present and seen splendidly by those who made the most effort! Groundpeckers were photographed by others and it was simply wonderful to be out and about in the plateau, now bathed in sunshine.



We returned to the hotel at 6pm with extra time to get sorted this evening before we met up at 7.30pm for dinner, which was once again in a private room with posh crockery!

Tuesday 16th May

We loaded the bus at 6.30am and drove for a few minutes along the nearby streets looking for a restaurant open for business. We were soon in luck, finding one which served local dumplings. The standard portion, we were told, was six dumplings plus rice porridge, but most of us managed somewhat less than that! It was interesting to see young children having breakfast alone there on their way to school, something we thought wouldn't happen in the UK.



Replete, we headed off at 7.15am. Twenty minutes later we turned off the main road towards Baxi and drove for three kilometres to the hillside with scrubby bushes where we had been the previous morning. This time we were in luck straightaway with a pair of White-browed Tits giving us point blank views! A distraction, but a welcome one, was the familiar call of Eurasian Wryneck and we coaxed it in to the top of a pine tree; Tang said it was most unusual in this area. It was a gloriously clear morning so we lingered for a while despite the cold, and we saw a number of interesting birds including Godlewski's Bunting. We returned to the main road at 8.25am and continued to head south-east. The road was largely free of traffic but with the speed limit at 70 kph we had a final chance

to marvel at the Tibetan Plateau as we tootled along, with its wide open spaces and herds of Yaks. One road sign was of particular interest: "Zoology Channels" indicated the most likely crossing point for animals, but in fact it was important for drivers to be on constant alert! Out of nowhere, a Western Osprey was spotted in flight to the left, our final 'write-in'.



Having gradually ascended, we reached Gar Tai pass at 9.50am and almost immediately we stopped to explore along a track heading into a seemingly unprepossessing area. We hit our second jackpot of the day at a set of bushes by finding a pair of White-browed Tit-warblers, first a female then a stunning male. What a bird! Elated, we returned to the bus and descended for 40 minutes to some roadside bushes near a stream. This was a site for Siberian Rubythroat; it took a while for a bird to respond and sing, and even longer for it to perch up and allow at least some of our vigilant group to see it. Three out of three targets for the morning safely achieved.

We lunched in the 1,000-year-old town of Song Pan before continuing our journey through the incredible mountain scenery. We lost count of the number of hairpins, and the driving of others could certainly be described as 'interesting'! We reached Wenchuan at 5.30pm and with its new expressway and series of tunnels and bridges we made faster progress. It took a while to navigate through the city of Dujiangyan (which didn't look big on the map but had a population of over a million people) but we reached our hotel at 7pm. We had driven for eight hours and travelled 460 kilometres. It was 26 degrees Celsius: what a contrast! The hot showers were welcome and we met at 8pm in a private room for our farewell dinner on a supersized circular table. I took the chance to thank Tang and Ding for all their hard work before we tucked into copious amounts of fish and chicken.

Wednesday 17th May

Some of us met at 6.45am for a pre-breakfast stroll from the hotel to a forested hill about 300 metres away. It was cloudy and breezy, but warm, and we added two new species, a singing Fire-breasted Flowerpecker and a flyover Great Barbet, as well as a 'heard only' Slaty-backed Forktail calling from a stream under the road and a well-hidden Streak-throated Scimitar Babbler. There was also the chance to revise birds seen during the first

few days of the tour, including Black-throated Bushtit (we enjoyed a flock of over 20) and Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher.

We returned for breakfast at 8.30am, with both western and Asian food on offer. An hour later we took the obligatory team photo then boarded the bus for our drive to the airport. I announced the 'top ten birds' along the way. We had allowed plenty of time, and in the event our journey was quicker than expected, so we arrived at 10.50am. Having said our goodbyes to Tang and Ding, we proceeded to check-in, and the rest of the day went to plan to round off an awe-inspiring holiday with a range of quality birds, incredible scenery and much-enjoyed cuisine.

Birds of the Trip (voted by the group)

- 1st Grandala
- 2nd Black Baza
- 3rd White Eared Pheasant
- =4th Chinese Monal
- =4th Firethroat
- 6th Tibetan Snowcock
- =7th Black-necked Crane
- =7th Temminck's Tragopan
- =7th White-browed Tit-warbler
- 10th Przevalski's Finch

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Thanks to Tang Jun, our guide, not only for showing us so many of the special birds of Sichuan but also for the meticulous planning and organisation, and to Ding, our cheerful and ever-willing driver. Thanks to the group for being so punctual and remaining stoic when the weather was inclement! Thanks to Howard Gorringe and Nigel Jones for allowing us to use some of your photos in this report.

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August 2017

Itinerary and Weather

- 2nd May Flights from London Heathrow/Manchester/Norwich to Amsterdam, or London Heathrow to Hong Kong; onward flights to Chengdu.
- 3rd May Early afternoon arrival into Chengdu and onward transfer to our hotel in the city for a one-night stay (elevation 500m). Late afternoon birding in Baihuatan Park close to the hotel. Sunny and very warm (27°C).

- 4th May Pre-breakfast birding in Chengdu Culture Park adjacent to our hotel. Further birding in Huan Hua Xi Park, then drive to Yujia village, south of Ya'an, for lunch and afternoon birding (elevation 600m). Late afternoon drive to Longcanggou for a three-night stay (1,200m). Sunny and warm am, cloudy pm.
- 5th May Longcanggou Forest (elevation 1,300-2,400m). Drizzle then persistent rain; cool at higher elevations (8°C).
- 6th May Longcanggou Forest. Mostly cloudy, slowly brightening up; cool first thing and at higher elevations, milder later.
- 7th May Early morning birding before and after breakfast close to our hotel, then drive via Tian Quan (lunch, elevation 800m) and the Erlangshan Pass tunnels down to Luding (1,300m) for a two-night stay. Sunny spells during the morning; in the afternoon cloudy south of the pass, but sunny and warm (20°C) to the north.
- 8th May Erlangshan Pass old road (max. elevation 3,000m). Mainly sunny on the north side, cloudy on the south side; warm in the sunshine even at higher altitudes.
- 9th May Long journey via Kang Ding (elevation 2,800m), Zhe Duo Pass (4,300m), Xin Du Qiao (lunch, 3,500m), Danba (2,100m), arriving in Rilong (3,200m) for a three-night stay. Sunny morning, turning cloudy but remaining dry.
- 10th May Balangshan (max. elevation 4,500m). Sunny morning, turning cloudy; cold.
- 11th May Balangshan. Rain, heavy at times, with snow showers higher up; cold (min. 1°C).
- 12th May Pre-breakfast birding on Balangshan. Drive via Fubian (lunch, elevation 2,700m) and birding on Mengbishan (4,100m) to Maerkang (2,700m) for a two-night stay. Sunny, turning cloudy late afternoon. Cool at high altitude, otherwise mild.
- 13th May Mengbishan (elevation 3,600-4,000m), then late afternoon stroll in Nazu village. Sunny, then cloudy, rain early evening; frosty first thing (-1°C), warm lower down late afternoon.
- 14th May Leave Maerkang and drive via Hongyuan (lunch, elevation 3,500m) to Rouergai (3,400m) for a two-night stay, birding at a number of locations en route. Sunny spells with occasional wintry showers.
- 15th May Morning birding in Baxi Forest (elevation 3,100-3,500m); lunch and siesta in Rouergai, then afternoon birding on the Tibetan Plateau north of the town (3,500m). Frosty early morning (-2°C); mainly sunny later, but windy with squally showers in the afternoon.
- 16th May Full day's drive from Rouergai to Dujiangyan (elevation 700m) for a one-night stay, with birding en route at three sites including Baxi Forest and the Gar Tai pass (3,800m); lunch in Songpan (2,900m). Frosty early morning (-1°C); sunny all day, with temperatures rising to 26°C as we descended into the lowlands.
- 17th May Pre-breakfast birding near our hotel in Dujiangyan, then transfer to Chengdu airport for flights to the UK via Amsterdam or Hong Kong, arriving in the evening.

CHECKLIST OF BIRDS SEEN DURING THE TOUR

No of days recorded	Locations	Abundance scale
1 2h means seen on 1 day and heard on 2 other days	C = Chengdu/Dujiangyan + lowlands L = Longcanggou (inc Yujia) E = Erlangshan B = Balangshan M = Mengbishan R = Rouergai (inc Baxi)	Max. seen (on one day) 1 = 1-4 2 = 5-9 3 = 10-99 4 = 100-999 5 = 1,000+

Species	No of days recorded	Locations	Abundance scale	Scientific name
Snow Partridge	1	B	1	<i>Lerwa lerwa</i>
Tibetan Snowcock	1 1h	B	1	<i>Tetraogallus tibetanus</i>
Verreaux's Monal-Partridge*	2 2h	B M R	1	<i>Tetraophasis obscurus</i>
Chinese Bamboo Partridge	1	L	1	<i>Bambusicola thoracicus</i>
Blood Pheasant	2 1h	B M	1	<i>Ithaginis cruentus</i>
Temminck's Tragopan	1	B	1	<i>Tragopan temminckii</i>
Koklass Pheasant	2 1h	B M	1	<i>Pucrasia macrolopha</i>
Chinese Monal	1	B	1	<i>Lophophorus lhuysii</i>
White Eared Pheasant	2 1h	B M R	1	<i>Crossoptilon crossoptilon</i>
Blue Eared Pheasant	1		R 1	<i>Crossoptilon auritum</i>
Common Pheasant	2		R 3	<i>Phasianus colchicus suehschanensis</i>
Golden Pheasant	- 1h	B	1	<i>Chrysolophus pictus</i>
Lady Amherst's Pheasant	1 1h	L E	2	<i>Chrysolophus amherstiae</i>
Chinese Grouse	1		R 1	<i>Tetrastes sewerzowi</i>
Greylag Goose	1		R 1	<i>Anser anser</i>
Ruddy Shelduck	4	B	R 3	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>
Mallard	2		R 1	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Eurasian Teal	1		R 1	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Ferruginous Duck	1		R 3	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>
Common Merganser*	1	B	2	<i>Mergus merganser</i>
Eurasian Wryneck	1		R 1	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>
Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	1	L	1	<i>Yungipicus canicapillus</i>
Darjeeling Woodpecker	- 1h	L	1	<i>Dendrocopos darjellensis</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	1 1h	L	R 1	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Black Woodpecker	1		M 1	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>
Great Barbet	1	C	1	<i>Psilopogon virens</i>
Eurasian Hoopoe	4	L B	R 1	<i>Upupa epops</i>
Common Kingfisher	1	C	1	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Large Hawk-Cuckoo	3 3h	C L E	1	<i>Hierococcyx sparverioides</i>
Common Cuckoo	2 3h	E B M R	1	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
Himalayan Cuckoo	2 2h	L E	1	<i>Cuculus saturatus</i>
Asian Koel	1 1h	C L	1	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>
Himalayan Swiftlet	2	L M	3	<i>Aerodramus brevirostris</i>
White-throated Needletail	1		M 1	<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>
Pacific Swift	1	C	1	<i>Apus pacificus</i>
Salim Ali's Swift	5	B M R	3	<i>Apus salimalii</i>
House Swift	2	C	1	<i>Apus nipalensis</i>
Feral Pigeon	8	C E M R	3	<i>Columba livia</i>
Hill Pigeon	2	B M	2	<i>Columba rupestris</i>
Snow Pigeon	2	B	2	<i>Columba leuconota</i>
Oriental Turtle Dove	2	B M	1	<i>Streptopelia orientalis orientalis</i>
Spotted Dove	4	C	3	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>
Black-necked Crane	3		R 3	<i>Grus nigricollis</i>
Common Redshank	2		R 1	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Common Sandpiper	2	C	R 1	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Pacific Golden Plover	1		R 3	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>
Brown-headed Gull	3		R 3	<i>Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus</i>
Common Tern	2		R 1	<i>Sterna hirundo tibetana</i>
Western Osprey	1		R 1	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>

Black Baza	1		L					1	<i>Aviceda leuphotes</i>	
Crested Honey Buzzard*	2			E	B			1	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus orientalis</i>	
Black Kite	3						R	3	<i>Milvus milgrans lineatus</i>	
Bearded Vulture*	5				B	M	R	1	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>	
Himalayan Vulture	8				B	M	R	3	<i>Gyps himalayensis</i>	
Cinereous Vulture*	1				B			1	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>	
Japanese Sparrowhawk	1			E				1	<i>Accipiter gularis</i>	
Besra	1		L					1	<i>Accipiter virgatus</i>	
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	5			E	B	M	R	1	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	
Himalayan Buzzard	2			E	B			1	<i>Buteo burmanicus</i>	
Upland Buzzard	5					M	R	3	<i>Buteo hemilasius</i>	
Golden Eagle	2				B		R	1	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	
Common Kestrel	3				B		R	1	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	
Eurasian Hobby	1						R	1	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	
Saker Falcon	1						R	1	<i>Falco cherrug</i>	
Peregrine Falcon	1					M		1	<i>Falco peregrinus peregrinator</i>	
Little Grebe	1		C					1	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis poggei</i>	
Little Egret	5		C	L	E		R	3	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	
Grey Heron	1		C					3	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	
Eastern Cattle Egret	4					B	R	2	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>	
Chinese Pond Heron	2		C			B		1	<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>	
Black-crowned Night Heron	3		C			B		3	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	
Black Stork	2						R	1	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	
Tiger Shrike	1			L				1	<i>Lanius tigrinus</i>	
Brown Shrike	3						R	3	<i>Lanius cristatus lucionensis</i>	
Long-tailed Shrike	1					B		1	<i>Lanius schach schah</i>	
Grey-backed Shrike	7	1h		L	E	B	R	2	<i>Lanius tephronotus</i>	
Tibetan (Chinese) Grey Shrike**	1						R	1	<i>Lanius (sphenocercus) giganteus</i>	
Eurasian Jay	2		C	L				1	<i>Garrulus glandarius sinensis</i>	
Sichuan Jay	-	2h				B	R	1	<i>Perisoreus internigrans</i>	
Red-billed Blue Magpie	4		C	L				1	<i>Urocissa erythrorhyncha</i>	
Azure-winged Magpie	1						R	2	<i>Cyanopica cyanus</i>	
Eurasian Magpie	4				E	B	R	3	<i>Pica pica botanensis</i>	
Ground Tit*	3						R	2	<i>Pseudopodoces humilis</i>	
Spotted Nutcracker	1				E			3	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes macella</i>	
Red-billed Chough	6					B	M	R	3	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>
Alpine Chough	2					B		3	<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i>	
Daurian Jackdaw	4					B	R	1	<i>Coloeus dauuricus</i>	
Oriental (Carrion) Crow**	3					B	R	1	<i>Corvus (corone) orientalis</i>	
Large-billed Crow	10				E	B	M	R	3	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos tibetosinensis</i>
Northern Raven	4					B	R	1	<i>Corvus corax tibetanus</i>	
Black-naped Oriole	2		C	L				1	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>	
Swinhoe's Minivet	1			L				1	<i>Pericrocotus cantonensis</i>	
Long-tailed Minivet	7		C	L	E	B	M	R	3	<i>Pericrocotus ethologus</i>
Black Drongo	1					B		1	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	
Hair-crested Drongo	1		C					1	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus brevirostris</i>	
White-throated Dipper	3					B	M	R	1	<i>Cinclus cinclus przewalskii</i>
Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush	1				E			1	<i>Monticola rufiventris</i>	
Blue Rock Thrush	1					B		1	<i>Monticola solitarius pandoo</i>	
Blue Whistling Thrush	4		C	L		B	M	1	<i>Myophonus caeruleus</i>	
Sichuan Thrush	1					B		1	<i>Zoothera griseiceps</i>	
Long-tailed Thrush	1						M	1	<i>Zoothera dixonii</i>	
Chinese Blackbird	3		C					3	<i>Turdus mandarinus</i>	
Chestnut Thrush	8				E	B	M	R	3	<i>Turdus rubrocanus gouldii</i>
Kessler's Thrush	4						M	R	3	<i>Turdus kessleri</i>
Chinese Thrush	1				E			1	<i>Turdus mupinensis</i>	
White-browed Shortwing	-	1h		L				1	<i>Brachypteryx montana cruralis</i>	
Asian Brown Flycatcher	1					B		1	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>	
Slaty-backed Flycatcher	2						R	1	<i>Ficedula hodgsonii</i>	
Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher	3			L				1	<i>Ficedula strophitata</i>	
Taiga Flycatcher	2		C				M	1	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>	
Snowy-browed Flycatcher	1						R	1	<i>Ficedula hyperythra</i>	
Verditer Flycatcher	2				E	B		1	<i>Eumyias thalassinus</i>	

Rufous-bellied Niltava	1							E	1	<i>Niltava sundara</i>			
Hill Blue Flycatcher	1							E	1	<i>Cyornis banyumas whitei</i>			
Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher	2	1h	C	L					1	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>			
Siberian Rubythroat	1								R	1	<i>Calliope calliope</i>		
Chinese Rubythroat	1							B	1	<i>Calliope tschebaiewi</i>			
Firethroat	2							E	B	1	<i>Calliope pectardens</i>		
Siberian Blue Robin	1								B	M	1	<i>Larvivora cyane</i>	
Himalayan Bluetail	5	2h		L				B	M	R	3	<i>Tarsiger rufilatus</i>	
Golden Bush Robin	1	1h						E	B	1	<i>Tarsiger chrysaesus</i>		
White-browed Bush Robin	-	1h		L						1	<i>Tarsiger indicus yunnanensis</i>		
Oriental Magpie-Robin	2		C	L						1	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>		
Black Redstart	5								B	M	R	3	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros rufiventris</i>
Hodgson's Redstart	2									M	1	<i>Phoenicurus hodgsoni</i>	
White-throated Redstart	5								B	M	R	2	<i>Phoenicurus schisticeps</i>
Daurian Redstart	3							E	B	M	2	<i>Phoenicurus auroreus</i>	
Blue-fronted Redstart	3								B	M	1	<i>Phoenicurus frontalis</i>	
White-capped Redstart	8							E	B	M	R	2	<i>Phoenicurus leucocephalus</i>
Plumbeous Water Redstart	9		C	L				E	B	M	R	2	<i>Phoenicurus fuliginosus</i>
White-bellied Redstart	1										R	1	<i>Luscinia phaenicuroides</i>
Grandala	1								B	3	<i>Grandala coelicolor</i>		
Slaty-backed Forktail	-	1h	C							1	<i>Enicurus schistaceus</i>		
White-crowned Forktail	-	1h		L						1	<i>Enicurus leschenaulti sinensis</i>		
Siberian Stonechat	2									R	1	<i>Saxicola maurus przewalskii</i>	
Crested Myna	7		C					E	1	<i>Acridotheres cristatellus</i>			
Eurasian Nuthatch	1			L					1	<i>Sitta europaea</i>			
Chinese Nuthatch	-	1h								R	1	<i>Sitta villosa</i>	
Przevalski's Nuthatch	2			L				B	1	<i>Sitta przewalskii</i>			
Hodgson's Treecreeper	3							B	M	1	<i>Certhia hodgsoni</i>		
Eurasian Wren	3	2h		L				B	M	2	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes szetschuanus</i>		
Fire-capped Tit	1			L					1	<i>Cephalopyrus flammiceps</i>			
Sichuan Tit	2									R	2	<i>Poecile weigoldicus</i>	
White-browed Tit	1									R	1	<i>Poecile superciliosus</i>	
Père David's Tit	2			L				E	1	<i>Poecile davidi</i>			
Rufous-vented Tit	3								B	M	3	<i>Periparus rubidiventris</i>	
Coal Tit	4			L				E	B	2	<i>Periparus ater aemodius</i>		
Yellow-bellied Tit	2			L						M	1	<i>Pardaliparus venustulus</i>	
Grey Crested Tit	6			L				E	B	M	R	2	<i>Lophophanes dichrous</i>
Japanese Tit	2		C	L						1	<i>Parus minor minor</i>		
Japanese Tit	4							E	B	M	R	1	<i>Parus minor tibetanus</i>
Green-backed Tit	2			L				E	3	<i>Parus monticolus</i>			
Yellow-browed Tit	1			L					1	<i>Sylviparus modestus</i>			
Black-throated Bushtit	4		C	L					3	<i>Aegithalos concinnus concinnus</i>			
Black-browed Bushtit	2							E	B	1	<i>Aegithalos bonvaloti</i>		
Pale Martin	1		C						3	<i>Riparia diluta</i>			
Eurasian Crag Martin	3								B	M	R	1	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>
Barn Swallow	5		C							R	3	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	
Red-rumped Swallow	8		C	L				E	3	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>			
Asian House Martin	8							E	B	M	R	3	<i>Delichon dasypus</i>
Goldcrest	5							E	B	M	R	3	<i>Regulus regulus yunnanensis</i>
Collared Finchbill	5		C	L					1	<i>Spizixos semitorques</i>			
Brown-breasted Bulbul	1							E	1	<i>Pycnonotus xanthorrhous</i>			
Light-vented Bulbul	8		C	L					3	<i>Pycnonotus sinensis</i>			
Black Bulbul	4		C	L					2	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus leucothorax</i>			
Japanese White-eye	4		C	L					2	<i>Zosterops japonicus simplex</i>			
Chestnut-headed Tesia	1	1h		L					B	1	<i>Cettia castaneocoronata</i>		
Brown-flanked Bush Warbler	3			L					2	<i>Horornis fortipes davidianus</i>			
Aberrant Bush Warbler	1	1h		L				E	2	<i>Horornis flavolivaceus intricatus</i>			
Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler	1			L					1	<i>Horornis acanthizoides</i>			
Grey-sided Bush Warbler	-	1h						E	1	<i>Cettia brunnifrons</i>			
Brown Bush Warbler	1			L					1	<i>Locustella luteoventris</i>			
Sichuan Bush Warbler	1			L					1	<i>Locustella chengi</i>			
White-browed Tit-warbler	1									R	1	<i>Leptopoecile sophiae obscurus</i>	
Crested Tit-warbler	2								B	M	2	<i>Leptopoecile elegans</i>	

Dusky Warbler	2		C					R	1	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>
Alpine Leaf Warbler	6		C		E	B	M	R	1	<i>Phylloscopus occisinensis</i>
Buff-throated Warbler	2					B			1	<i>Phylloscopus subaffinis</i>
Yellow-streaked Warbler	3				E	B		R	3	<i>Phylloscopus armandii</i>
Buff-barred Warbler	1								3	<i>Phylloscopus pulcher</i>
Ashy-throated Warbler	2			L	E				1	<i>Phylloscopus maculipennis</i>
Sichuan Leaf Warbler	8			L	E	B		R	3	<i>Phylloscopus forresti</i>
Chinese Leaf Warbler	1							R	2	<i>Phylloscopus yunnanensis</i>
Yellow-browed Warbler	2		C						1	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>
Hume's Leaf Warbler	2						M	R	3	<i>Phylloscopus humei mandellii</i>
Greenish Warbler	2	1h		L		B			1	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>
Large-billed Leaf Warbler	1	3h		L	E	B			2	<i>Phylloscopus magnirostris</i>
Eastern Crowned Warbler	2			L	E				1	<i>Phylloscopus coronatus</i>
Emei Leaf Warbler	-	1h		L					1	<i>Phylloscopus emeiensis</i>
Claudia's Leaf Warbler	4	1h		L	E		M		2	<i>Phylloscopus claudiae</i>
Kloss's Leaf Warbler	2			L					3	<i>Phylloscopus ogilviegranti disturbans</i>
Marten's Warbler	2	2h		L	E				1	<i>Seicercus omeiensis</i>
Grey-crowned Warbler	1			L					2	<i>Seicercus tephrocephalus</i>
Alström's Warbler	-	1h		L					1	<i>Seicercus soror</i>
Bianchi's Warbler	2			L	E				1	<i>Seicercus valentini valentini</i>
Rufous-faced Warbler	1	1h	C	L					1	<i>Abroscopus albogularis fulvifacies</i>
Plain Laughingthrush*	2							R	2	<i>Garrulax davidi</i>
Snowy-cheeked Laughingthrush	1							R	1	<i>Garrulax sukatschewi</i>
Barred Laughingthrush	-	1h				B			1	<i>Garrulax lunulatus</i>
Giant Laughingthrush	5	1h				B	M	R	2	<i>Garrulax maximus</i>
Spotted Laughingthrush	2	1h		L	E				1	<i>Garrulax ocellatus</i>
Chinese Hwamei	-	1h		L					1	<i>Garrulax canorus</i>
White-browed Laughingthrush	5		C	L					3	<i>Garrulax sannio</i>
Elliot's Laughingthrush	7	2h		L	E	B	M	R	3	<i>Trochalopteron elliotii</i>
Black-faced Laughingthrush	1				E				1	<i>Trochalopteron affine</i>
Red-winged Laughingthrush	1	1h		L					1	<i>Trochalopteron formosum</i>
Emei Shan Liocichla	-	1h		L					1	<i>Liocichla omeiensis</i>
Black-streaked Scimitar Babbler	-	2h			E		M		1	<i>Pomatorhinus gravivox</i>
Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler	-	1h	C						1	<i>Pomatorhinus ruficollis</i>
Chinese Wren-babbler	1				E				1	<i>Pnoepyga mutica</i>
Pygmy Wren-babbler	-	1h		L					1	<i>Pnoepyga pusilla</i>
Rufous-capped Babbler	1	3h	C	L					1	<i>Stachyridopsis ruficeps</i>
Rufous-tailed Babbler	1				E				1	<i>Moupinia poecilotis</i>
Chinese Babax	2				E		M		1	<i>Babax lanceolatus</i>
Red-billed Leiothrix	4		C	L					3	<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>
Blue-winged Minla	1			L					1	<i>Minla cyanouroptera wingatei</i>
Red-tailed Minla	2			L					1	<i>Minla ignotincta</i>
Golden-breasted Fulvetta	1			L					1	<i>Lioparus chrysotis</i>
White-browed Fulvetta	1				E				1	<i>Fulvetta vinipectus</i>
Chinese Fulvetta	2						M	R	1	<i>Fulvetta striaticollis</i>
Grey-hooded Fulvetta	3			L	E				1	<i>Fulvetta cinereiceps</i>
David's Fulvetta	2		C						1	<i>Alcippe davidi</i>
White-collared Yuhina	3			L	E				3	<i>Yuhina diademata</i>
Great Parrotbill	1			L					1	<i>Conostoma aemodium</i>
Three-toed Parrotbill	1			L					1	<i>Cholornis paradoxus</i>
Brown Parrotbill	1			L					1	<i>Cholornis unicolor</i>
Vinous-throated Parrotbill	3		C						2	<i>Sinosuthora webbiana</i>
Ashy-throated Parrotbill	3			L					3	<i>Sinosuthora alphonsiana</i>
Grey-hooded Parrotbill	1			L					1	<i>Sinosuthora zappeyi</i>
Golden Parrotbill	1			L					1	<i>Suthora verreauxi verreauxi</i>
Tibetan Lark	1							R	1	<i>Melanocorypha maxima</i>
Oriental Skylark	3	1h			E	B		R	3	<i>Alauda gulgula</i>
Horned Lark	3							R	3	<i>Eremophila alpestris khamensis</i>
Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	1		C						1	<i>Dicaeum ignipectus</i>
Mrs. Gould's Sunbird	4			L	E				2	<i>Aethopyga gouldiae dabryii</i>
Russet Sparrow	1			L					1	<i>Passer rutilans</i>
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	10		C	L	E	B	M	R	3	<i>Passer montanus</i>
Rock Sparrow	1							R	1	<i>Petronia petronia</i>

Black-winged Snowfinch	1					R	1	<i>Montifringilla adamsi</i>	
White-rumped Snowfinch	1					R	4	<i>Onychostruthus taczanowskii</i>	
Rufous-necked Snowfinch	1					R	1	<i>Pyrgilauda ruficollis</i>	
Forest Wagtail	1		L				1	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>	
"Himalayan" White Wagtail	11	C	L		B	M	R	3	<i>Motacilla alba alboides</i>
Citrine Wagtail	1						R	1	<i>Motacilla citreola citreola</i>
"Tibetan" Citrine Wagtail	1						R	1	<i>Motacilla citreola calcarata</i>
Grey Wagtail	6	C	L				R	2	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
Olive-backed Pipit	3	1h	L	E	B			3	<i>Anthus hodgsoni hodgsoni</i>
Rosy Pipit	3			E	B			3	<i>Anthus roseatus</i>
Alpine Accentor	2			E	B			3	<i>Prunella collaris</i>
Rufous-breasted Accentor	4		L	E	B			1	<i>Prunella strophiatea</i>
Maroon-backed Accentor	2				B	M		1	<i>Prunella immaculata</i>
Grey-capped Greenfinch	5	C	L					3	<i>Chloris sinica</i>
Tibetan Serin	2			E	B			2	<i>Spinus thibetanus</i>
Twite	5				B	M	R	3	<i>Linaria flavirostris miniakensis</i>
Plain Mountain Finch	1				B			3	<i>Leucosticte nemoricola</i>
Brandt's Mountain Finch	2				B			3	<i>Leucosticte brandti</i>
Common Rosefinch	4				B	M		2	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus roseatus</i>
Himalayan Beautiful Rosefinch	2				B			1	<i>Carpodacus pulcherrimus</i>
Pink-rumped Rosefinch	3				B		R	1	<i>Carpodacus waltoni eos</i>
Vinaceous Rosefinch	1			E				1	<i>Carpodacus vinaceus</i>
Three-banded Rosefinch	1					M		1	<i>Carpodacus trifasciatus</i>
Sharpe's Rosefinch	1			E				1	<i>Carpodacus verreauxii</i>
Chinese White-browed Rosefinch	4			E	B	M	R	1	<i>Carpodacus dubius</i>
Streaked Rosefinch	1				B			1	<i>Carpodacus rubicilloides</i>
Crimson-browed Finch	1			E				1	<i>Carpodacus subhimachalus</i>
Red Crossbill	1	1h		E	B			3	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>
Grey-headed Bullfinch	4		L	E	B	M	R	3	<i>Pyrrhula erythaca erythaca</i>
Chinese Grosbeak	1	C						1	<i>Eophona migratoria sowerbyi</i>
Collared Grosbeak	2				B	M		1	<i>Mycerobas affinis</i>
White-winged Grosbeak	2					M	R	1	<i>Mycerobas carnipes</i>
Przevalski's Finch	1						R	1	<i>Urocynchramus pylzowi</i>
Godlewski's Bunting	2					M	R	2	<i>Emberiza godlewskii</i>
Little Bunting	1		L					1	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>
Yellow-throated Bunting	1			E				1	<i>Emberiza elegans</i>

MAMMALS

Tibetan Macaque	<i>Macaca thibetana</i>
Pallas's Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus erythraeus</i>
Perny's Long-nosed Squirrel	<i>Dremomys pernyi</i>
Himalayan Marmot	<i>Marmota himalayana</i>
Brown Rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>
Plateau Pika	<i>Ochotona curzoniae</i>
Glover's Pika	<i>Ochotona gloveri</i>
Moupin Pika	<i>Ochotona thibetana</i>
Woolly Hare	<i>Lepus oiostolus</i>
Tibetan Fox	<i>Vulpes ferrilata</i>
Hog Badger	<i>Arctonyx collaris</i>
Mountain Weasel	<i>Mustela altaica</i>
Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>
Red Deer	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>
Tufted Deer	<i>Elaphodus cephalophus</i>
Domestic Yak	<i>Bos grunniens</i>

Notes on the checklists

The sequence of the bird list follows *A Field Guide to the Birds of China* by John MacKinnon and Karen Phillipps, published by Oxford University Press in 2000.

The nomenclature and taxonomy follow the International Ornithological Congress (IOC):
<http://www.worldbirdnames.org/>

In the diary, alternative English names are used for seven species (marked * in the checklist) since these were the ones we used in the field during the tour:

Verreaux's Monal-Partridge	Chestnut-throated Partridge
Common Merganser	Goosander
Crested Honey Buzzard	Oriental Honey Buzzard
Bearded Vulture	Lammergeier
Cinereous Vulture	Eurasian Black Vulture
Ground Tit	Groundpecker
Plain Laughingthrush	Père David's Laughingthrush

The IOC notes that two further species may well be split in the near future (marked ** in the checklist):

Tibetan Grey Shrike *Lanius giganteus* from Chinese Grey Shrike *Lanius sphenocercus*.
Oriental Crow *Corvus orientalis* from Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*.

The mammal list follows *A Guide to the Mammals of China* by Andrew T Smith, Yan Xie and Frederico Gemma, published by Princeton University Press in 2008.

These lists represent the birds and mammals recorded by the group members on this tour.

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Kessler's Thrush



Spotted Laughingthrush



Horned Lark



White-browed Tit-Warbler

Front cover: Grandala

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