

TROPICAL BIRDING



Central China: Qinghai, Shanxi & Sichuan

Custom Tour: 2 – 17 June 2012



We were in Giant Panda country throughout this trip, and although we found fresh scat, it was never our intention to track this near mythical mammal. However we did get lucky with a troop of argumentative and scarce Golden Snub-nosed Monkeys in Shanxi.

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Tour Leader: **Keith Barnes**



Male Temminck's Tragopan on the road! How about that...this was one of 6 pheasant species seen well from the roadside on this tour.

Introduction:

Central China is spectacular. Both visually stunning and spiritually rich, and it is home to many scarce, seldom-seen and spectacular looking birds. With our new base in Taiwan, little junkets like this one to some of the more seldom reached and remote parts of this vast land are becoming more popular, and this custom trip was planned with the following main objectives in mind: (1) see the Pink-tailed Bunting, (2) see the Crested Ibis which was once in the mid 70's nearly extinct and (3) see as many pheasants as possible without subjecting the clients to trail walking, which they do not enjoy. We achieved all three of these aims, including 10 species of phasianids, and added for good measure the very first bird tour sightings of the enigmatic Blackthroat (a bird that's breeding range was unknown until last year), a great selection of phasianids, including the endemic Rusty-necklaced Partridge and a series of great road-side chickens including magical views of Temminck's Tragopan. But there were a lot of other star attractions, including the immaculate Henderson's Ground-Jay, and a party of four Tibetan Snowcocks that stood on a

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high ridge. Robin and Brown Accentors were surprisingly common on the trip. That strange lineage in the warbler family, the pastel-painted White-browed Tit-warbler was seen well. Amongst the several species of leaf-warbler we scored the highly localised Gansu Leaf-warbler, it's wintering quarters still yet to be discovered. Another sought-after Tibetan specialty is the rare Black-necked Crane, and we had several of these on the shores of the aqua-colored Koko Nor and a migrant Demoiselle Crane in attendance for good measure. A sweep of all six Snowfinches that the plateau is famous for, and six Rosefinches including Chinese White-browed and Streaked, ensured that we scored almost all of the seed-eaters in the region. In addition, we had a wonderful collection of waterfowl, waders and shorebirds at the stunningly beautiful Koko Nor (aka Qinghai Hu). For the Alaudidae-lovers (i.e. me), there was a fascinating collection of larks including the strikingly-patterned Mongolian, immense Tibetan, and local Hume's Short-toed and Asian Short-toed Larks, a host of redstarts, and the always delectable Wallcreeper. Although a big trip list was never a goal, and we deliberately did not look for several common species that the clients had seen before, we still managed over 250 species in a little over 2 weeks. In addition to this selection of highly-desirable birds, we scored a decent collection of Tibetan and other central Chinese mammals. Finding a fresh Giant Panda scat was thrilling, but this was never a likely target given that some of the group had limited mobility and we had to satisfy ourselves just knowing that they were nearby. However, an incredible encounter with Golden Snub-nosed Monkeys was the clear mammalian highlight, but we had a collection of 16 mammals including Wild Boar, Mainland Serow, cute Tibetan Fox, and doubly-cute Mountain Weasel.

Tibet and Shangxi is of interest not just from the standpoint of the wildlife, which is impressive in its own right. Tibet encompasses a spiritual journey, one through immense ice-clad mountain, rolling golden-green plains, vast water-worlds of aqua-marine lakes, and scattered monasteries where monks chant, wave prayer-wheels, and still conduct sky-burials. This essential essence of the place is something that is hard to describe, and can only really be experienced for ones-self. But it is an important character of this tour, and participants often enjoy the magical atmosphere that is distinctly and uniquely Tibetan, as much as they do the birds and the mammals.

Itinerary:

June 2	Arrival in Xining, Qinghai. Birding Beishan.
June 3	Xining to Rubber Mountains to Niao Dao
June 4	Rubber Mountains and Niao Dao
June 5	Chaka Area
June 6	Chaka to Xining
June 7	Huzhu Bei Shan
June 8	Huzhu Bei Shan to Xining
June 9	Xining – Chengdu – Tanjaihe NNR
June 10	Tanjaihe NNR
June 11	Tanjaihe to Yangxian
June 12	Yangxian to Chanqing NNR
June 13 – 15	Full days Chanqing NNR
June 16	Chanqing NNR – Xi'an. Visit Terracotta Warriors in the PM
June 17	Departure





The 10-primaryed Pink-tailed Bunting is something of a taxonomic enigma. Clearly neither a finch nor a bunting, most authorities these days classify it in its own family, the Urocynchramidae, and it was a key target on this trip.

Main Tour

2 June: Arrival in Xining. Xining is just another Chinese city. Fuelled by rapid growth, there seems to be entire massive downtown areas being erected simultaneously. The surrounding landscape is dry and dusty. In the afternoon we visited Beishan where we added our first birds

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like Pere David's Laughingthrush and Meadow Bunting before heading to the inner reaches of the Tibetan Plateau and much wanted specialties of this region.

3 + 4 June: Rubber Mountains + Naio Dao areas. After an early breakfast, we made for the Rubber Mountain's area. Leaving the drier valleys of Xining, you soon begin to enter the rolling valleys and open grasslands of the higher plateau. At 3200 meters we soon encountered the southeastern shore of China's largest lake, Koko Nor, and we began seeing our first waterbirds. We were able to scope our first Great Crested and Black-necked Grebes, many hundreds of Great Cormorants, and handfuls of Great and Cattle Egrets and loads of ducks as well as Graylag and Bar-headed Geese. Our first lone Black-necked Crane was also very welcome. The lake edge held Common Redshanks displaying, several Hume's Short-toed Larks, and a bunch of gulls including the gargantuan Greater Black-headed Gull. Soon thereafter Hill Pigeon and a Small Snowfinch were lifers for the folks and a nearby fencepost held a rather out of place Asian Brown Flycatcher on passage. One of the most common, but still very welcome, passerines of these parts is the cocky Hume's Groundpecker. We would find many of this strange and weird-looking beastie over the course of the next few weeks. Red-billed Chough and Carrion Crow were regulars.





A collage of images from Koko Nor (Qinghai Hu), the largest lake in China. Bar-headed Geese, the highest altitudinal migrant breed in large numbers on this altiplateau lake (top). The nomadic culture of the plateau is evidenced by the tossing of prayers into the air (above) and temporary stockades and homes (bottom).



However, our main quarry was the enigmatic and scarce Pink-tailed Bunting. We walked up a hillside that I knew the birds were on. The birds showed almost immediately, but it took a little while to see the bird well, including the distinctive pink-colored outer retrices. About 5 minutes later when we had both a male and a female at point blank range that the real celebrations could begin. Family quest accomplished, and much relief for the participants that had gambled quite a bit on this one bird. Now, what were we going to do with the four days we had “budgeted” for this area? We were also rewarded with the appearance of an endemic White-browed Tit that was foraging nearby and singing Robin and Brown Accentors, and hoardes of Twite.



The Robin (left) and Brown (right) Accentors were very vocal for the entire period of our visit to Tibet, and we had many encounters with these lively songsters (above) and Greater Black-headed Gulls were omnipresent at the lakes edge (below).



In the late afternoon we headed towards Niao Dao, where we quickly enjoyed stellar looks at the charismatic and good looking gulls that are breeders along the edge of this lake, such as the gargantuan Greater Black-headed (Pallas') Gull.

The following day we pretty much visited the same main areas, hoping to pick up on a few additional specialty species, and we certainly did add a few good ones. Kessler's Thrush, Goldenstat's and Blue-fronted Redstart, Plain Mountain Finch, Streaked Rosefinch, Wallcreeper. We stopped at a valley where we found a Lammergeier nest with a downy chick inside while Himalayan Griffon's streamed overhead in a slow but regular procession and we located a few large Upland Buzzards. A moister patch held the bulky Tibetan Lark and the open crags held a collection of interesting birds including a collection of great snowfinches. Henri's, Tibetan, White-rumped and Rufous-necked Snowfinches were all located amongst the dowdy Rock Petronias. Our return to the hotel was greeted with more Black-necked Cranes and a lone late migrant Demoiselle Crane. A spectacular bird indeed.



Snowfinches were a big feature of today, and we scored this delightful Henri's pictured here along with several other species of snowfinch.

5 + 6 June: Chaka Region. Up early, we had a typical Chinese field breakfast of bread, peanut butter, jelly and boiled eggs, with a strong coffee and some snacks to go before we hit the road towards Chaka. We sped over the Rubber Mountains and to the town of Chaka on the other side of the hills. Arriving in the mid-morning, we scoured the plains for this area's famous specialties.



The scenery around Chaka, including the Chaka Salt Lake beneath the ice-dusted peaks of the Tibetan Plateau.

The birding here is not overly diverse, and apart from a few Tree Sparrows and White Wagtails not much happened until we connected with one of the main target species for this region, and what a special one it was, the outlandish Mongolian Ground-Jay! This is one of the most incredible corvids in the world, and in habits it resembles an African courser more than a crow. Long-legged and strong running, these birds crossed the road and kept running. I scampered over a fence to try and cut them off, and at least I was able to drive them into the open where good looks were had for all participants. Eventually they flushed and we were able to see their striking wing-pattern.



The Mongolian Ground-Jay is a great bird, both in flight (upper left) and when coursing along the ground (bottom). The scenery between Koko Nor and Chaka was not exactly bad either (upper right).

Obviously a custom tour differs from a regular Set-departure tour in that the clients specific needs drive the way the tour runs. Because these particular clients had already visited Mongolia and Kazakhstan on previous trips, there were a lot of specialty bird species that they had already seen, and therefore we did not need to target them. Also, quite frequently I would see something, but they would request not to spend much time trying to relocate it, because they had previously seen these species well before. As a result, this tour did not spend time looking for some of the great specialties that are on offer in this region, including species like Pallas' Sandgrouse. So the trip list reflects a list of only target species that we looked for, and therefore, many good birds do not appear on it, not because we did not find them, but because we did not even look for them. However, while looking for the Jay we did encounter the last of our six snowfinch species, the immaculate Blanford's, and we also located several displaying Mongolian Larks, Asian Short-toed Lark and several other goodies.



Our sixth and final snowfinch, Blanford's. Nowhere in the world can you see more snowfinches (above) and Prezwalski's Partridge, another tricky Chinese endemic (below).



The following morning we made for some valleys west of Chaka. The target species were getting fewer and fewer and we located a handful of Godlewski's Buntings, and many, many Black Redstart, but as soon as we started to get into the gully areas we started to hear some tell-tale calls of the scarce Prezwalski's Partridge. Eventually we caught up with good views of this species before we heard the chuck-kurring of a Tibetan Snowcock. Diligent scanning revealed a party of 4 individuals of this mega which is seldom seen in this area. We walked into a closed valley and long and arduous climb ensued as we tried to get into the juniper stands to find one of the trickiest endemics of this region. After a significant effort we eventually succeeded with good looks at the impressive Prezwalski's Redstart. Because we had at this stage pretty much cleaned up on the possibilities, we decided to return to Xining, which would give us an early start at Huzhu Bei shan the next day.

7 June: Xining to Huzhu Beishan. One of the main reasons to visit this area is for the chance at the spectacular Blue Eared-Pheasants. We struck out on our first day despite much scanning. However, with proper forest abounding, it was not surprising to encounter a bunch of new birds including Siberian Rubythroats. We saw several throughout the day and also managed to add the extremely local Gansu Leaf-warbler (recently re-split) amongst the more common Hume's, and Greenish Leaf-Warblers. Other firsts for our trip included Elliot's Laughingthrush, Chinese White-browed Rosefinch (pictured), Coal Tit, Gray-headed Bullfinch, White-winged Grosbeak, and Asian House Martin.



8 June: Huzhu Beishan to Xining. Our early morning start paid off when we located three Blue Eared Pheasants strutting around in a field near Huzhu Beishan. Everyone was very excited as it was a distant find and the day was starting to wear on and we were expecting that maybe we had dipped this one. After a great lunch we all headed for Xining, where we would have an early start tomorrow as we flew to Sichuan.

9 June: Xining – Chengdu – Tanjaihe. We departed Xining early, and were met by our new crew in Chengdu and then took off straight for Tanjaihe. It was pretty much a long driving day, with the only reprieve being a delicious dumpling lunch en-route.

10 June Tanjaihe NNR. With a full day at this amazing reserve we got off to an early start, and after not too long came up with what was our trump bird for the time in the park, an immaculate male Golden Pheasant that was foraging calmly by the roadside.



With the amazing pheasant under our belts we birded slightly more leisurely picking up the more common species of the mountain and eventually finding two more key species in the noisy Pygmy Wren-Babbler and endemic Slaty Bunting. We also found a nesting Tawny Fish-Owl, a very scarce bird for these parts, and one that was not actually a target species, but a very fine specimen nonetheless. A bold and late Blue-and-white Flycatcher was a welcome surprise. Mammals included Goral and Serow. We also enjoyed the remarkable small nearly town that has a history going back to the times of the Silk Road, and the majestic architecture and vibe of a traditional Chinese village.



The endemic Slaty Bunting (above) and Pygmy Wren-Babbler (below) were two highlights today.



The small village near Tanjaihe was very quaint indeed.

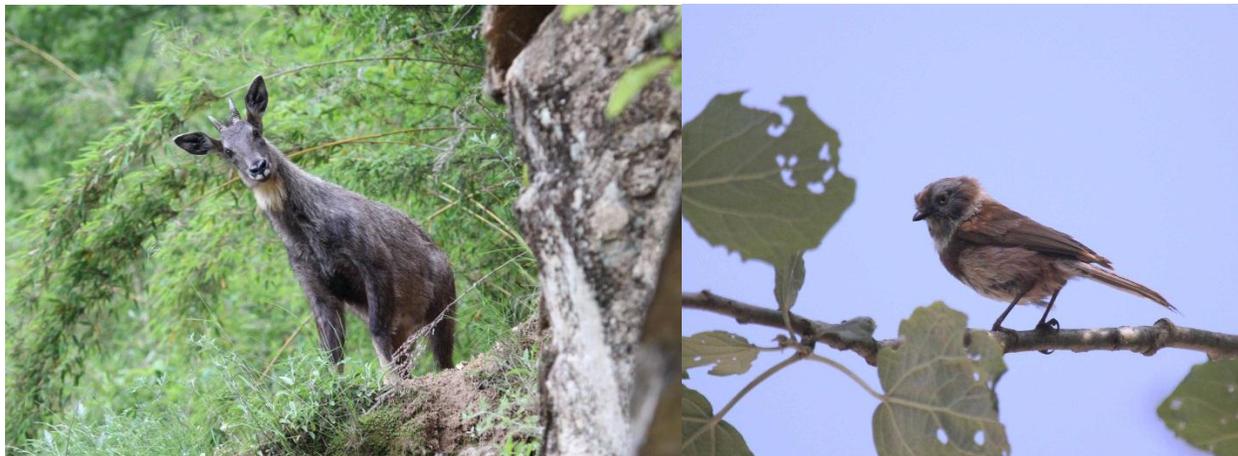
11 June: Tanjaihe to Nangxian. After another morning at Tanjaihe, we headed north with a stopover at Namgxi'an. We had White-browed Laughingthrush, Gray-faced Buzzard, an immaculate male breeding Korean (Yellow-rumped) Flycatcher and Red-billed Starings en-route. The afternoon was spent looking for a bird that was on the brink of extinction in 1974. The Crested Ibis has waned to a miraculous 7 birds, and was extinct in Japan (where it is the national bird). Fortunately some far-sighted conservation work saved this species from certain extinction and the breeding centres established for it have now returned many hundreds to the wild. It is a spectacular bird species too. This was one of the main goals of this trip, and we were glad to have accomplished it.



The immaculate Crested Ibis is a top drawer bird species anywhere in the world, and we were very excited to get great look sat this mega bird.

12 June: Yangxian to Changqing NNR. Again, mostly a driving day with a few stops for lowland forest en-route. Before we headed off however we tried a nearby river area with great looks at the magical Black-capped and Crested Kingfishers, a small flock of very welcome Swinhoe's Minivets flew over and then we connected with two very scarce shorebirds, Long-billed Plover and Grey-headed Lapwing. We found some interesting species in the nearby woodlands, including breeding Orange-headed Thrush and Asian Barred Owlet, Hwamei, Brown-breasted Bulbul, Collared Finchbill and a riverside stop gave us two scarce shorebirds in the forms of Long-billed Plover and Gray-headed Lapwing.

13 – 15 June. Changqing NNR. We had three full days to explore the magical Changqing NNR. A wild place replete with Giant Pandas, Golden Snub-nosed Monkeys, and an very recent and exciting ornithological discovery of the breeding grounds of the Blackthroat. While this was never a bird that this itinerary was designed around, the sudden opportunity to try for it was quite exciting. Our first full day in the area was certainly one to remember, with multiple Golden Pheasants (including 2 splendid males), male Koklass, male Blood, Common and a brief Temminck's Tragopan all seen en route to our main birding area. After a considerable effort, we reached an area where Per Alstrom had discovered Blackthroats breeding in 2011. Soon a bird was responding, and after a concerted effort to climb down into the valley where it was calling, we had a tape responsive bird hop out onto the track to investigate us. As far as I am aware, this is the very very first bird tour sighting of this bird. It was my very last *Luscinia* Robin, a fabulous group of near-mythical birds, and I was very excited indeed. Indian Blue Robins, and Greater Necklaced Laughingthrushes were also in the area, and lower down Streak-breasted Scimitar-babblers, Gould's Sunbird and White-collared Yuhina were in full voice. The general birding was also excellent with a score of leaf-warblers including the more local Chinese, Oriental Greenfinch, Russet Sparrow, and quite a few central Chinese endemics including Slaty Bunting, Yellow-bellied and Sooty Tit, Spectacled Parrotbill and Spactacled Fulvetta and loads of redstarts. Mammals were also pretty good, with a spectacular encounter with a large troop of Golden Snub-nosed Monkeys and the amazing Chinese Serow.





Mainland Serow (top left), Sooty Tit (top right) and Spectacled Fulvetta (below) are all sought-after Chinese endemics.





Yellow-bellied Tit (top) and Spectacled Parrotbill (below) are also sought-after Chinese endemics.

16 June: Changqing – Terracotta Warrior Museum – Xi'an. Today was a travel day with some culture thrown in for good measure. Everyone knows about the now famous Terracotta Warriors that were discovered in 1974 when some farmers were excavating a well. It turns out to be a mammoth collection of soldiers, horses and infantry men, life-size that were buried with the 1st emperor of China. The leader of the Qing dynasty. We enjoyed several hours wondering through the complex, viewing the several pits of amazing relics before the day drew to a close with a wonderful final meal in Xi'an.



17 June. Xi'an- departure. We all headed for our respective airports as this whirlwind custom tour of a variety of different regions in central China drew to a close.

List of Bird Species recorded

Sequence and taxonomy follows Clements, J. F. (2000) Birds of the World: A Checklist.
Several species that were not seen by the clients but were by the guide are included

because we often did not make stops to look for species these clients had seen before, as was their wish.

Little Grebe *Tachybatus ruficollis*
Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Chinese Pond-Heron *Ardeola bacchus*
Great Egret *Casmerodius albus*
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*
Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*
Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*
Graylag Goose *Anser anser*
Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*
Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*
Northern Shoveller *Anas clypeata*
Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*
Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*
Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*
Common Golden-eye *Bucephala clangula*
Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*
Crested Ibis *Nipponia nippon*
Black Kite *Milvus migrans*
Lammergeier *Gypaetus barbatus*
Himalayan Griffon *Gyps himalayensis*
Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*
Grey-faced Buzzard *Batastur indicus*
Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius*
Mountain Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus nipalensis*
Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*
Tibetan Snowcock *Tetraogallus tibetanus*
Przevalski's Partridge *Alectoris magna*
Daurian Partridge *Perdix dauurica* (LO)
Chinese Bamboo Partridge *Bambusicola thoracicus*
Blood Pheasant *Ithaginis cruentus*
Koklass Pheasant *Pucrasia macrolophus*
Blue Eared-Pheasant *Crossoptilon auritum*
Ring-necked (Common) Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*
Golden Pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus*
Temminck's Tragopan *Tragopan temminckii*



Black-necked Crane *Grus nigricollis*
Demoiselle Crane *Anthropoides virgo*
Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*
Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus*
Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus*
Little Ringer Plover *Charadrius dubius*
Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*
Greater Sandplover *Charadrius leschenaultii*
Lesser Sandplover *Charadrius mongolus*
Common Redshank *Tringa tetanus*
Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*
Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus*
Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*
Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*
Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*
White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*
Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*
Hill Pigeon *Columba rupestris*
Speckled Wood-Pigeon *Columba hodgsoni*
Oriental Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*
Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*
Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*
Large Hawk-Cuckoo *Cuculus sparverioides* (HO)
Hodgson's Hawk-Cuckoo *Cuculus fugax* (HO)
Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* (HO)
Himalayan Cuckoo *Cuculus saturates* (HO)
Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* (HO)
Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus* (HO)
Common Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea*
Tawny Fish-Owl *Ketupa flavipes*
Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides*
Collared Owlet *Glaucidium brodei* (HO)
Little Owl *Athene noctua*
Common Swift *Apus apus*
White-throated Needletail *Hirundinapus cautacuadus*
Fork-tailed Swift *Apus pacificus*
Salim Ali's Swift *Apus salimali*
House Swift *Apus nipalensis*
Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata*
Crested Kingfisher *Megacaryle lugubris*
Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*
Gray-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos canicapillus*
Great-spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*



Gray-faced Woodpecker *Picus canus*
Tibetan Lark *Melanocorypha maxima*
Mongolian Lark *Melanocorypha mogolica*
Hume's Short-toed Lark *Calandrella acutirostris*
Lesser (Asian) Short-toed Lark *Calandrella rufescens cheleensis*
Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula*
Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris*
Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia*
Eurasian Crag-Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*
Asian Martin *Delichon dasypus*
White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*
Gray Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*
Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*
Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus*
Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*
White-throated Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*
Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*
Swinhoe's Minivet *Pericrocotus cantonensis*
Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*
Collared Finchbill *Spizixos semitorques*
Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pyconotus xanthorrhous*
Light-vented Bulbul *Pyconotus sinensis*
Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
Robin Accentor *Prunella rubeculoides*
Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophciata*
Brown Accentor *Prunella fulvescens*
Blue Rock-Thrush *Monticola solitarius*
Blue Whistling-Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus*
Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula*
White-backed (Kessler's) Thrush *Turdus kessleri*
Orange-headed Thrush *Zoothera citrina*
Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*
Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata*
White-browed Tit-Warbler *Leptopoecile sophiae*
Brownish-flanked Bush-warbler *Cettia fortipes*
Aberrant Bush Warbler *Cettia flavolivacea*
Yellowish-bellied Bush-warbler *Cettia acanthizoides*
Spotted Bush Warbler *Bradypterus thoracicus* (HO)
Russet Bush-Warbler *Bradypterus mandelli*
Brown Bush-Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris*
Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*



Alpine Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus osciciniensis*
Gansu Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus kansuensis*
Hume's Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus humei*
Greenish Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*
Buff-barred Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus pulcher*
Chinese Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus yunnanensis*
Large-billed Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris*
Claudia's (Blyth's) Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus claudiae*
Sulphur-breasted Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus ricketti*
Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Siecercus castaniceps*
Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus albogularis*
Bianchi's Warbler *Siecercus valentini*
Plain-tailed Warbler *Siecercus soror*
Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica*
Korean (Yellow-rumped) Flycatcher *Ficedula zanthopygia*
Slaty-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula hodgsonii*
Blue-and-White Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana*
Blue-throated (Chinese Blue) Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides*
Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*
Asian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi*
Himalayan Bush-Robin *Tarsiger cyanurus*
Siberian Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope*
Blackthroat *Luscinia obscura*
Indian Blue Robin *Luscinia brunnea*
Ala Shan Redstart *Phoenicurus alashanicus*
Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*
Hodgson's Redstart *Phoenicurus hodgsoni*
White-throated Redstart *Phoenicurus schisticeps*
Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus aureus*
White-bellied Redstart *Hodgsonius phaenicuroides*
White-winged Redstart *Phoenicurus erythrogaster*
Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis*
White-capped Redstart *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*
Plumbeous Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*
Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maura*
Gray Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea*
Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*
Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*
White-crowned Forktail *Enicurus leschenaulti*
White-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax albogularis*
Pere David's Laughingthrush *Garrulax davidi*
Elliot's Laughingthrush *Garrulax elliotii*
Barred Laughingthrush *Garrulax lunulatus* (HO)
Hwamei *Garrulax canorus*
White-browed Laughingthrush *Garrulax sannio*



Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax pectoralis*
Black-streaked Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus gravivox*
Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*
Pygmy Cupwing *Pneopyga pusilla*
Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps*
Spectacled Fulvetta *Alcippe ruficapilla*
White-collared Yuhina *Yuhina diademata*
Great Parrotbill *Conostoma oemodium* (HO)
Spectacled Parrotbill *Paradoxornis conspicillatus*
Vineous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus*
Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*
Sooty Tit *Aegithalos fuliginosus*
Songar Tit *Poecile songara*
White-browed Tit *Poecile superciliosa*
Gray-crested Tit *Lophophanes dichrous*
Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus*
Coal Tit *Parus ater*
Great Tit *Parus major*
Rufous-vented Tit *Periparus rubdiventris*
Yellow-bellied Tit *Pardaliparus venustulus*
Hume's Groundpecker (Ground Tit) *Pseudopodoces humilis*
Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta sitta*
Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria*
Hodgson's Treecreeper *Certhia hodgsoni*
Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae*
Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus*
Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*
Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*
Gray-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus*
Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*
Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaes*
Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*
Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*
Black-billed Magpie *Pica pica*
Red-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*
Mongolian Ground-Jay *Podoces hendersoni*
Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*
Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauuricus*
Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*
Common Raven *Corvus corax*
Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus*
Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*
Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus*
Slaty Bunting *Latoucheornis siemsseni*



Russet Sparrow *Passer rutilans*
Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*
Rock Petronia *Petronia petronia*
Henri's Snowfinch *Montifringilla henrici*
Black-winged Snowfinch *Montifringilla adamsi*
White-rumped Snowfinch *Montifringilla taczanowskii*
Pere David's Snowfinch *Montifringilla davidiana*
Rufous-necked Snowfinch *Montifringilla ruficollis*
Blanford's Snowfinch *Montifringilla blanfordi*
Plain Mountain-Finch *Leucosticte nemoricola*
Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*
Beautiful Rosefinch *Carpodacus pulcherrimus*
White-browed Rosefinch *Carpodacus thura*
Streaked Rosefinch *Carpodacus rubicollis*
Oriental Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica*
Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*
Gray-headed Bullfinch *Pyrrhula erythaca*
Przewalski's Rosefinch *Urocynchramus pylzowi*
Yellow-throated Bunting *Emberiza elegans*
Godlewski's Bunting *Emberiza godlewskii*
Meadow Bunting *Emberiza cioides*

Annotated List of Mammal Species recorded

Sequence and taxonomy follows "A Guide to the Mammals of China", Smith & Xie (ed.) 2008.

Chinese Snub-nosed Monkey *Pygathrix roxellana*
Wild Boar *Sus scofra*
Swinhoe's Striped Squirrel *Tamiops swinhoei*
Perny's Long-nosed Squirrel *Dremomys perneyi*
Pere David's Rock Squirrel *Sciurotamias davidianus*
Himalayan Marmot *Marmota himalayana*
Plateau Pika *Ochotona curzoniae*
Woolly Hare *Lepus oiostolus*
Tolai Hare *Lepus tolai*
Tibetan Fox *Vulpes ferrilata*
Mountain (=Alpine) Weasel *Mustela altaica*
Mainland Chinese Serow *Capricornis sumatraensis*
Common Goral *Nemorhaedus goral*
Red Deer *Cervus elaphus*

Mystery Cat *Felis spp.* This cat below was seen on a high plateau area south of Koko Nor. It seemed larger than a domestic cat and was found hunting Pikas. It has many features of the very scarcely seen Biet's Cat, but I have not yet been able to get

conclusive evidence that this is what it was. The authorities I have sent it to have all been non-committal as to the exact identity of the animal, with *Felis sylvestris* and hybrids being possible. If you have any idea or know someone who can help me identify this animal, please write to keith@tropicalbirding.com

