Hard to think of a better reason to visit SE China than the immaculate cream-and-golden polka-dot spotted Cabot’s Tragopan, a gorgeous serious non-disappointment of a bird.
The Bar-headed Goose is a spectacular waterfowl that epitomizes the Tibetan plateau. It migrates at up to 27,000 ft over the giant Asian mountains to winter on the plains of the Indian sub-continent.

Tour Leader: Keith Barnes
All photos taken on this tour

Introduction:
SE and Central China are 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 custom tour junkets like this one to some of the more seldom reached and remote parts of this vast land are becoming more popular, and this trip was planned with the following main objectives in mind: (1) see the monotypic family Pink-tailed Bunting, (2) enjoy the riches of SE China in mid-summer and see as many of the endemics of that region including its slew of incredible pheasants and the summering specialties. We achieved both of these aims, including incredible views of all the endemic phasianidae that we attempted, and we also enjoyed the stunning scenery and culture that is on offer in Qinghai’s Tibet. Other major highlights on the Tibetan plateau included stellar views of breeding Pink-tailed Bunting (of the monotypic Chinese Tibetan-endemic family Urocynchramidae), great looks at Przevalski’s and Daurian Partridges, good views of the scarce Ala Shan Redstart, breeding Black-necked Crane, and a slew of wonderful waterbirds including many great looks at the iconic Bar-headed Goose and a hoarde of
Moving onto the four provinces of SE China we started by nailing an epic male Reeve’s Pheasant next to our car, as well as the immaculate Fairy Pitta at Dongzhai, and then we had more to celebrate including Cabot’s Tragopan, Elliot’s Pheasant, Short-tailed Parrotbill, to add to the migrants like the critically endangered Cortois’ Laughingthrush and Chinese Crested Tern and the dapper Pied Falconet. So the quality of birds is simply undisputable. Although mammals were not a huge feature of this trip, we were able to celebrate when we saw the extremely local, and critically endangered, Przevalski’s Gazelle not far from Koko Nor. Tibet and SE China are 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 mountains, rolling golden-green plains, vast water-worlds of aqua-marine lakes, and scattered monastery’s 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:**

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The 10-primaried 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, and the penultimate bird family for John and Karen.

**Main Tour**

**31 May: Arrival in Xining.** After some troublesome flight issues at Pudong, Keith arrived a little later than expected today, however John and Karen had struck out on their own to the north of the city and gripped a Gansu Leaf-warbler, which was pleasing, because it meant we could head east first thing in the morning. Xining is just another Chinese city. Fuelled by rapid growth, there seems to be entire massive downtown areas being erected simultaneously. We headed straight into the city for a nice evening meal and a rest.

**1 June: Beishan – Rubber Mountains.** Xining’s surrounding landscape is dry and dusty. First thing in the morning we headed for a small hill (Beishan) north of the city, where we added our first birds like Pere David’s Laughingthrush and Meadow Bunting. However, the best find was a small covey of Daurian Partridge and an Alashan Ground-Squirrel. About 15 Common Pheasants were seen before we headed to the inner reaches of the Tibetan Plateau and much wanted specialties of this region. Leaving the drier valleys of Xining, one soon begins 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 Small Snowfinch was a lifer for the group, the first of six snowfinches to be seen in the next few days. 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 days. Red-billed Chough and Carrion Crow were also regulars. However, our main quarry was the enigmatic and scarce Pink-tailed Bunting. So right after lunch we walked up a hillside that I knew the birds were on. The birds showed almost immediately, including the distinctive pink-colored outer retrices. About 5 minutes later, when we had both a male and a female at point blank range, the real celebrations could begin. Family quest accomplished, and much relief for the participants. This was their penultimate family, having seen 227 of 228 bird families on the globe. I can gladly report that they just logged the 228th and final bird family on a trip with Sam Woods to Sulawesi, a great achievement indeed. Congratulations Karen and John! 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 immaculate Blue-fronted Redstart that was foraging nearby and singing Robin and Brown Accentors, and hoardes of Twite.
Because we had been successful with our main quest, and because of a little jetlag we took it easy this afternoon with a visit to the lakeshore. Koko Nor is an amazing place, an enormous verditer-colored waterbody in the middle of one of Asia’s great spiritual heartlands. We had a wonderful afternoon finding some scarcer things such as Ferruginous Duck, a wonderful breeding Black-necked Crane, a Saker Falcon, a ton of gulls and five species of lark. A great finish to a marvelous day.

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 altiplano lake (top). One of the globe’s best looking larks, the Mongolian Lark (bottom left) was displaying (inset) next to the lake, and the Black-necked Cranes were breeding nearby too (bottom right).
2 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 Pallas’ Sandgrouse. We must have encountered 10 or more of these impressive desert-dwellers in the morning, but we also saw Blanford’s Snowfinch, our last of six snowfinch species, and at the 11th hour, actually I think the time was 11:58, we picked up a low flying Mongolian Ground-Jay that sped across the front of the car. Despite following it and watching it land by the time we got there it was gone, a testament to how fast they move. Fortunately on our afternoon stint we caught up with the species again. The Mongolian Ground-Jay is one of the most incredible corvids on Earth, 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. We scampered over a fence and were able to track them down, where we saw a party of about five birds. Eventually they flushed and we were able to see their striking wing-pattern.
The Mongolian Ground-Jay is a great bird, both in flight and when coursing along the ground.

Obviously a custom tour differs from a regular set-departure tour in that the clients specific needs drive the way the tour runs. 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. So the trip list reflects a list of only target species that we looked for. However, while looking for the Jay we did encounter several displaying Mongolian Larks, Asian Short-toed Lark and several other goodies.

3 June: Chaka to Heimehe. The day began by heading to a valley quite a long way east of Chaka. It involved driving up a ‘tricky’ road and then hiking a good way up some hills. At 4000 m asl the going isn’t always easy and we had to break for regular ‘panting’ sessions on the way, but it wasn’t without rewards. Our first stunner was one of several Pine Buntings inhabiting the valley. Then came a lovely Beautiful Rosefinch, and a commanding Chinese Gray Shrike sentinel on the scraggy cliffs. But after climbing higher and higher, we eventually located the key target, a magical scarce Ala Shan Redstart!
A nice male Ala Shan Redstart, a much-wanted species on this tour.

The walk out revealed our only Przevalski’s Partridges of the trip, and we then made a long journey back towards Heimehe, where another afternoon by the lake revealed a flood of gulls near Niao Dao, and a lovely Red-billed Chough feeding a baby and finally the odd Ground Tit.
The strange Ground Tit (top), is a common plateau resident, and although a widespread bird, the high-pitched cawing of a Red-billed Chough (bottom) makes it a welcome find anywhere it chooses to roam.
4 June: Heimehe to Xining. Today turned out to be a very strange day. We circumnavigated Koko Nor, which gave us a great appreciation for the size and expanse of this amazing waterbody, but we added precious few new species except the Critically Endangered Przewalski’s Gazelle, which was a wonderful find that I was ecstatic about. Close to Xining we developed alternator problems, and we spluttered into the outskirts of Xining were we were grateful for a rescue crew that picked us up and got us to our hotel.

The Przevalski’s Gazelle, is both rare (about 1000 remaining) and declining. A handy find indeed, and lifer for all including the guide.

5 June: Beishan and fly to Wuhan.
We returned to Beishan, as we had left behind a few targets on our previous visit. Not long after our arrival, we had located the main one of these, the Pale (Sinai) Rosefinch (below). This vision in pink was most welcome. The area also revealed several Pied Wheatears and many Godlewski’s Bunting. Lower down we located a very welcome family of Little Owls (below) before we had to make our way towards the Xining airport for our flight to Wuhan. The flight was uneventful and shortly after arrival we were on our way to Dongzhai NNR, which we checked into at about 10 pm.
6 June: Dongzhai NNR. We awoke in humid subtropical broadleaved forest, a marked contrast to the dry upland Tibet of yesterday afternoon. One of the benefits of improved infrastructure in China is an ability to change scenes quickly and efficiently, a marked change from the situation as little as a decade ago, or even to this date in some places like Sichuan. We began the day with a slew of new and interesting birds, but our main quarry was really just the two main specialties here in the summer, the electric Fairy Pitta, and the quite simply amazing Reeve’s Pheasant. We encountered a few raptors this morning including Crested Goshawk and Chinese Sparrowhawk, We stalked and treaded carefully all morning seeking our quarry, but were sadly to come up empty-handed. Perhaps the best find being great numbers of a scarcely seen species, the
remarkable Chestnut-winged Cuckoo. We also located more common forest residents here such as Ashy and Hair-crested Drongos, Red-billed Blue Magpie, the cute Asian Barred Owlet, Black-throated Tit, Ashy Minivet and Lesser Yellownape. An Orange-headed Ground-thrush showed briefly as did some vocal Chinese Hwamei and Streak-breasted Scimitar-babblers. In the late afternoon we started another walk, and not far from the research centre, BANG! We walked slap bang into a spectacular male Reeve’s Pheasant foraging on a bank opposite us. It froze long enough for everyone to pick it up and then it moved, quickly and with purpose, up and over a small hill not to be seen again. This is simply the most incredible bird, the male is nearly 2 m in length, and it is a collection of caramel-black-and-white vermiculations. A truly amazing beast.

It was great to be seeing the more common forest residents of the eastern Chinese forests such as this dapper little Black-throated Tit.
I just can’t get enough of the sizable and magical Red-billed Blue Magpie.

7 June: Dongzhai NNR to Juijiang. We started with a walk near the research centre and heard a strange clucking call, I recorded it and on playback we noticed a wild male Reeves’ Pheasant walking along the opposite bank of the stream near the centre where they keep the ‘captive’ females. Clearly he was attracted to the facility but the lure of ladies. A little later and we lucked onto a pair of Fairy Pittas farther down the valley. A great cleanup of the major specialties. In the afternoon we made our way towards the nearest train station and boarded a 1st class sleeper train heading towards Wuyuan. The train was pin-neat, efficient and great, the only problem, we had an unfortunate arrival time of 2 am!

8 June: Shimen Village and Xiaochi to Wuyuan. Early morning records on the outskirts of Shimen included Brown Crake and Grey-headed Lapwing, but the bird of the morning was undoubtedly the incredible Blue-crowned (Cortois) Laughingthrush. The word enigma is a little overplayed in the bird tour game, but this seems appropriate given that this species remained
unrecorded for nearly a century, and then when rediscovered was found to be a species that prefers the edge habitat on the outskirts of farming areas. The habitat it occurs in is not particularly special, or restricted at all, and when it migrates south at the end of the breeding season, no-one really knows where they go. So I believe the label ‘enigma’ is suitable for this bird indeed. We must have seen 10 of the estimated 250 wild mature individuals remaining in the world, a significant proportion of the global population.

A true enigma, the Blue-crowned Laughingthrush has a global population of around 250 and is Critically Endangered.

In the afternoon we visited a great site for Pied Falconet, which visits a tree near a house, and you can climb up to their roof for eye-level views of this stunning little raptor. The afternoon brought more joy in the form of a Black-winged Cuckooshrike, our first Chestnut Bulbuls and Grey-sided Scimitar-babblers, Huet’s and Dusky Fulvettas, and a delightful little group of the improbable Short-tailed Parrotbill.
The mini-mountain of fury – the Pied Falconet - quivers above his Tree Sparrow kill (above), and one of the several recently appreciated splits that one can now find in SE China, the Huet’s Fulvetta (below).
9 June: Wuyuan to Wuyishan. Early on we went in search of one of the most difficult and spectacular of the SE Chinese endemics, the remarkable Elliot’s Pheasant. After checking a few sites we struck gold with a bird that flushed into the undergrowth; a welcome tick for all, although I was to get even luckier a few days later with some incredible looks (see photos later). We also located a wonderful Mandarin Duck and Chinese Bamboo Partridge, Swinhoe’s Minivet, Grey-headed Parrotbill, Moustached Laughingthrush, Fork-tailed Sunbird and Green Shrike-babbler in the lowlands before making our way towards the highlands of Wuyishan NNR.

The day’s highlights included Moustached Laughingthrush (top), Fork-tailed Sunbird (lower left) and Swinhoe’s Minivet (lower right).

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10-11 June: Wuyishan NNR. We had two days in this magical and magnificent Nature Reserve. The first was perfect and the second very frustrating. On day two it not only rained all day long, but the authorities decided to restrict our activities, which was exceptionally annoying. Fortunately, we had scored all the important goodies on our first day, so it proved to just be a relaxed days birding, but this is one factor that can still throw a spanner in the works of a near-perfect trip, when the Chinese government decides to intervene in unpredictable ways. On these two days we added a few absolute gems to our list, none more special than the incredible Cabot’s Tragopan. We found at least two delightful males on the road and were able to watch these at some length, providing perhaps the single absolute highlight of an incredibly good tour loaded with high quality specialties. I have included this photo below (which was not taken on the tour), simply because it is such an incredible photo of an equally amazing bird (photo credit: Laolin).

But we also enjoyed a great many other montane specialties in wonderful mountain scenery, including Asian Black Eagle, a glorious couple of Silver Pheasants, Crested Kingfisher, White-backed and Bay woodpeckers, Grey-chinned and Scarlet minivets, Mountain and Himalayan Black bulbuls, Brown Dipper, Chestnut-bellied Rock-Thrush, White-browed Shortwing, a slew of great warblers including Hartert’s, Kloss’ and Sulphur-breasted leaf-warblers, Rufous-faced, Chestnut-crowned, Bianchi’s and Plain-tailed warblers. The scarce Brown-chested Jungle-Flycatcher, and great looks at Small Niltava and Slaty-backed and White-crowned forktails all added to the aura of this wonderful place. The sounds of Pygmy and Spotted wren-babbler were
omnipresent, while the endemic Yellow-bellied, and Yellow-browed and Yellow-cheeked tits, and Indochinese and Black-chinned yuhinas littered the flocks up higher and added splashes of color to proceedings. A nice find was Blyth’s Shrike-babbler patrolling the hilltop trees, along with a White-bellied Erpornis, these newly classified vireos of the Old World. We also did a nightdrive where a few choice mammals were seen, but we added no new birds to our list.

Some of Wuyishan’s best flock birds included Black-chinned Yuhina (top left), Blyth’s Shrike-babbler (top right) and Indochinese Yuhina (below).
12 June: Wuyishan NNR – Wuyishan - Emeifong. It was time to drop off Karen and John, and we swung by the Wuyishan airport to see them off before making our way to Emeifong for a three night stay. We arrived just on dark, and so there was no time for birding today.

13 + 14 June: Emeifong. My main reason to come to this locality was to try and get photos of pheasants. It also turns out that this is now one of the best localities for the difficult, scarce and endemic Elliot’s Pheasant (below). Over the three day period we found male, female and babies, much to my delight as it is a bird that is often dipped, and even managed to photograph a few.
But this locality also delivered two other seldom seen birds in excellent conditions, the first, the scarce White-necklaced Partridge showed brilliantly one morning when it responded to playback and although it is not rare, the Koklass Pheasant (below), has never been seen better by me, and we would have 10+ daily.

We tried our hand at some flock birding, finding Mountain Bulbul and Chestnut-crowned Warbler amongst others, but we had seen most things now and were very happy to focus on trying to photograph some of them.

15 June: Wuyishan – Fuzhou. After a late breakfast we headed to Fuzhou, the coastal Fijian city just across the straits from Taiwan. It was fun to be so close to home, and yet so far. We spent the day in the Fuzhou forest park, where the only bird of significance was the magical Pale-headed Woodpecker, a seldom seen and much desired species.
The forest sprite, the Chestnut-crowned Warbler (above) is a tiny and beautiful bird indeed. While Fuzhou held the much wanted and very scarce, particularly in this part of its range, Pale-headed Woodpecker (below).
16 June: Minjiang Estuary – Departure. There was just one remaining great challenge on this trip, and that was to see the most amazing Chinese Crested Tern, a species though to be extinct until rediscovered by Taiwanese photographers in 2000. The Taiwanese government no longer permits visits to the breeding islands, so the best way to see this critically endangered species, which has a global population estimate of some 20-30 individuals, is to visit the Minjiang estuary when the birds come in to loaf on the sandbanks. We arrived as the tide was rising, and right off the bat saw some 5 individuals – some 25% of the world population in amongst some Little and Greater Crested Terns. It was thrilling to finish off the trip with this amazing species, and we headed to the airport delighted and knowing that in the last 2 weeks we had seen some of China’s greatest natural treasures and a selection very high quality scarce and stunning birds indeed.

The Chinese Crested Tern (above left) with the black-tipped deep yellow beak and paler back, along with some Greater Crested Terms, is another Critically Endangered species and was a stupendous finale to a wonderful fortnight exploring Tibet and SE China on this custom trip.

List of Bird Species recorded
Sequence and taxonomy follows Clements, J. F. (2000) Birds of the World: A Checklist. Because this was a custom tour focusing solely on the clients target birds several ‘normal’ targets were not chased because the clients had seen them before and so we
only targeted specific birds that the clients needed/wanted to see. HO = Heard Only, and LO = Leader only. Otherwise all species were seen well.

Little Grebe *Tachybatus ruficollis*
Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Chinese Pond-Heron *Ardeola bacchus*
Eastern Great Egret *Casmerodius albus modesta*
Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*
Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis coromandus*
Striated Heron *Butorides striata*
Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Black Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*
Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*
Graylag Goose *Anser anser*
Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*
Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*
Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*
Eastern Spot-billed Duck *Anas zonorhyncha*
Northern Shoveller *Anas clypeata*
Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*
Red-crested Pochard *Rhodonessa rufina*
Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*
Ferruginous Pochard *Aythya nyroca*
Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*
Common Golden-eye *Bucephala clangula*
Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Black Baza *Aviceda leuphotes*
Black Kite *Milvus migrans*
Lammergeier *Gypaetus barbatus*
Himalayan Griffon *Gyps himalayensis*
Crested Serpent-Eagle *Spilornis cheela*
Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*
Chinese Goshawk (Sparrowhawk) *Accipiter soloensis*
Besra *Accipiter virgatus*
Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius*
Asian Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malayensis*
Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*
Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*
Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*
Pied Falconet *Microhierax melanocephalus*
Rusty-necklaced (Przevalski's) Partridge *Alectoris magna*
Daurian Partridge *Perdix daurica*
White-necklaced Partridge *Arborophila gingica*
Chinese Bamboo Partridge *Bambusicola thoracicus*
Cabot's Tragopan *Tragopan caboti*
Ring-necked (Common) Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*
Elliot's Pheasant *Syrmaticus ellioti*
Reeve's Pheasant *Syrmaticus reevesii*
Silver Pheasant *Lophura nycthemera*
Koklass Pheasant *Pucrasia macrolophus*
Black-necked Crane *Grus nigricollis*
White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*
Brown Crake *Amaurornis akool*
Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*
Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*
Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*
Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus*
Common Redshank *Tringa tetanus*
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquatus*
Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*
Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus*
Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*
Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*
Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica*
Little Tern *Sterna albitrons*
Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*
White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*
Greater Crested Tern *Thalasseus bergi*
Chinese Crested Tern *Thalasseus bernsteini*
Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*
Hill Pigeon *Columba rupestris*
Oriental Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*
Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*
Red Collared-Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*
Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*
Pallas' Sandgrouse *Syrrhaptes paradoxus*
Large Hawk-Cuckoo *Cuculus sparverioides* (HO)
Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*
Himalayan Cuckoo *Cuculus saturates* (HO)
Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* (HO)
Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus* (HO)
Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus*
Lesser Coucal *Centopus benghalensis*
Asian Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea*
Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides*
Collared Owlet *Glaucidium brodei*
Little Owl *Athene noctua*
Common Swift *Apus apus*
Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*
House Swift *Apus nipalensis*
Oriental Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*
Blue-throated Bee-eater *Merops viridis*
Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*
Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata*
Crested Kingfisher *Megaceryle lugubris*
Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*
Great Barbet *Megalaima virens*
Gray-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos canicapillus*
White-backed Woodpecker *Dendrocopos leucotos*
Great-spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*
Rufous Woodpecker *Micropterus brachyurus*
Pale-headed Woodpecker *Gecinulus grantia*
Lesser Yellownape *Picus chlorolophus*
Gray-faced Woodpecker *Picus canus*
Bay Woodpecker *Blypithicus ptyropterus*
Fairy Pitta *Pitta nympha*
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*
Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* (LO)
Gray Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*
Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus*
Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*
Black-winged Cuckooshrike *Coracina melaschistos*
Swinhoe’s Minivet *Pericrocotus cantonensis*
Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus*
Gray-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*
Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus speciosus*
Collared Finchbill *Spizixos semitorques*
Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pyconotus xanthorrhous*
Light-vented Bulbul *Pyconotus sinensis*
Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pyconotus xanthorrhous*
Mountain Bulbul *Ixos mcclellandi*
Chestnut Bulbul *Hemixos castanonotus*
(Himalayan) Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*
Robin Accentor *Prunella rubeculoides*
Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophiata*
Brown Accentor *Prunella fulvescens*
Chestnut-bellied Rock-Thrush *Monticola rufiventris*
Blue Whistling-Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus*
(Chinese) Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula mandarinus*
White-backed (Kessler’s) Thrush *Turdus kessleri*
White-browed Shortwing *Brachypteryx montana*
Orange-headed Thrush *Zoothera citrina*
Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*
Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris*
White-browed Tit-Warbler *Leptopoecile sophiae*
Brownish-flanked Bush-warbler *Cettia fortipes*
Yellowish-bellied Bush-warbler *Cettia acanthizoides* (HO)
Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*
Alpine Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus oscicinensis*
Gansu Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus kansuensis*
Hume’s Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus humei*
Hartert’s Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus goodsoni*
Kloss’s Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus ogilviegranti*
Sulphur-breasted Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus ricketti*
Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus albogularis*
Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Siecercus castanineps*
White-spectacled Warbler *Siecercus affinis*
Bianchi’s Warbler *Siecercus valentini*
Plain-tailed Warbler *Siecercus soror*
Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher *Rhinomyias brunneatus*
Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica*
Korean (Yellow-rumped) Flycatcher *Ficidula zanthopygia*
Small Niltava *Niltava macgregoriae*
Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis*
Ala Shan Redstart *Phoenicurus alashanicus*
Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*
Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus auroreus*
White-winged Redstart *Phoenicurus erythropus*
Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis*
White-capped Water-Redstart *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*
Plumbeous Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*
Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maura*
Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*
Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*
Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*
White-crowned Forktail *Enicurus leschenaulti*
Little Forktail *Enicurus scouleri*
Spotted Forktail *Enicurus maculatus*
Pygmy Wren-Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla*
Spotted Wren-Babbler *Spelaeornis formosus*
Pere David’s Laughingthrush *Garrulax davidi*
Moustached Laughingthrush *Garrulax cinereous*
Masked Laughingthrush *Garrulax perspicillatus*
Buffy Laughingthrush *Garrulax poecilorhynchus*
Courtois’ (Blue-crowned) Laughingthrush *Garrulax courtoisi courtoisi*
Chinese Hwamei *Garrulax canorus*
White-browed Laughingthrush *Garrulax sannio*
Greater Necklaced-Laughingthrush *Garrulax pectoralis*
Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea*
Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*
Gray-sided Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus swinhoei*
Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps*
Grey-hooded Fulvetta *Alcippe cinericeps*
Grey-cheeked (Huet’s) Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia hueti*
Dusky Fulvetta *Schoeniparus brunnea*
Indochinese Yuhina *Yuhina torquola*
Black-chinned Yuhina *Yuhina nigrimenta*
Great Parrotbill *Conostoma oemodium* (HO)
Vineous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus*
Short-tailed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis davidianus*
Gray-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis gularis*
Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*
Coal Tit *Periparus ater*
Yellow-bellied Tit *Pardaliparus venustulus*
Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus*
Yellow-browed Tit *Sylviparus modestus*
Great Tit *Parus major*
Ground Tit (Hume’s Groundpecker) *Pseudopodoces humilis*
Fork-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga christinae*
Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*
Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonicus*
Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*
Gray-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus*
Chinese Gray Shrike *Lanius sphenocercus*
Blyth’s (Rickett’s) Shrike-babbler *Pterutherius aeralatus ricketti*
Green (Eye-ringed) Shrike-babbler *Pterutherius xanthochlorus pallidus*
White-bellied Erpornis *Erpornis zantholeuca*
Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*
Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaes*
Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*
Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*
Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae*
Black-billed Magpie *Pica pica*
Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyanus*
Red-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*
Mongolian Ground-Jay *Podoces hendersoni*
Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*
Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauricus*
Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Common Raven *Corvus corax*
Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus*
Black-collared Starling *Gracupica nigricollis*
Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus*
White-cheeked Starling *Sturnus cineraceus*
Crested Bunting *Emberiza lathami*
Godlewski’s Bunting *Emberiza godlewskii*
Meadow Bunting *Emberiza ciaoides*
Pine Bunting *Emberiza leucocephala*
Beautiful Rosefinch *Carpodacus pulcherrimus*
Pale Rosefinch *Carpodacus synoicus*
Streaked Rosefinch *Carpodacus rubicolloides*
Oriental Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica*
Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*
Brown Bullfinch *Pyrrhula nipalensis*
Przewalski’s Rosefinch *Urocynchramus pylzowi*
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
Nutmeg Munia Lonchura punctulata
White-rumped Munia Lonchura striata

Annotated List of Mammal Species recorded

Maritime Striped Squirrel Tamiops martimus
Perny’s Long-nosed Squirrel Dremomys perneyi
Pallas’ Squirrel Callosciurus erythraeus
Alashan Ground-squirrel Spermophilus alashanicus
Himalayan Marmot Marmota himalayana
Plateau Pika Ochotona curzoniae
Midday Gerbil Meriones meridianus – One seen only by Karen. Lucky.
Confucian Niviventer Niviventer confucianus. – A few seen only by Karen on the nightdrive.
Woolly Hare Lepus oiostolus
Tolai Hare Lepus tolai
Tibetan Fox Vulpes ferrilata
Przewalski’s Gazelle Procapra przewalski – Amazing looks at a few of these rapidly vanishing animals. Critically Endangered, and we were extremely lucky to encounter them.
Reeve’s Muntjac Muntiacus reevesi – seen on the nightdrives at Wuyishan low down.
Black Muntjac Muntiacus crinifrons – just one seen high up at Wuyishan.
Yellow-bellied Weasel Mustella kathiah – Great close looks at one at Wuyishan when we were looking for Cabot’s Tragopan.

Additional photographs
Below is a selection of additional images from this tour
The Brown-headed Gull is a common breeder at the edges of Lake Koko Nor in Qinghai (above) and Chestnut Bulbul is a specialty of SE China (below)
They are not always this easy, but when a Chinese Bamboo Partridge walks in the middle of the road, you don’t resist. This is the race thoracicus, which are probably a separate species form the ones in Taiwan.
The Collared Owlet (above) is a fierce little predator of Asia’s montane forests, and Green Shrike-babbler (below) is now considered a Vireo.
Grey-headed Lapwing is one of the rarer of the world large plovers (above), and Hartert’s Leaf-warbler (below) one of the newly split specialties of SE China.
Probably a young male Koklass Pheasant in full display at Emeifong (above), and a remarkable damselfly that is common throughout SE China (below)
Mountain Bulbul (above) and an interesting Orange Wasp (below)
Pallas’s Gull (above) and Pallas’ Squirrel (below)
Breeding Common Redshanks (above) are a highlight of the plateau, and the Rufous-faced Warbler (below), a bamboo-loving sprite, a joy to behold in the moister forests.
Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler (above) and Yellow-cheeked Tit (below) are certainly good-lookers in the SE Chinese forests.