

# TROPICAL BIRDING

## *Japan in Winter: Birding on Ice*

*Set departure tour I*

11<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2019 Extension: 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

**Tour leader:** Charley Hesse **Report & photos:** Charley Hesse (all photos were taken on this tour).



With the ever growing popularity of this classic tour, this year we laid on an extra departure to keep our group sizes small. In fact, we tend to have smaller group sizes than most other companies, which is a decided advantage. January was a good deal milder than most February tours, and driving conditions better. We hit all the main targets with headliners like the Snow Monkeys of the Japanese Alps, displaying Red-crowned Cranes on the snow (pictured), dozens of White-tailed & Steller's Sea-Eagles at feeding time on the frozen Lake Furen, and the behemoth Blakiston's Fish-Owl coming in to feed on fish at a floodlit pond. Other lesser known but equally impressive spectacles included thousands of cranes of 4 species descending at dawn on a feeding site at Izumi, and hundreds of ducks, geese and swans in the Western Honshu wetlands with the stunning backdrop of the Japanese Alps behind. Other tour highlights included a close encounter with Japanese Murrelets on a boat ride off coastal Miyazaki, exploring the snow-dusted slopes of Asamayama Volcano at Karuizawa, descending into the forested volcanic crater lake of Miike on the southern island of Kyushu and finally a tremendously successful extension exploring the volcanic island of Miyakejima with its endemic species, then a killer pelagic ferry ride back to Tokyo through the famous Oshima Triangle with dozens of albatrosses including the rare Short-tailed Albatross. However, this is way more than just a birding tour, and we were immersed into Japanese culture with some nights spent in traditional Japanese lodges, a huge array of beautifully prepared traditional food and dips in hot springs; the perfect way to finish a day of winter birding in Japan.

## **MAIN TOUR**

### **11<sup>th</sup> January, 2018 – Narita to Karuizawa**

After meeting in the lobby, this year's first Japan tour was under way. Every year, some interesting rarities turn up, and this year we went in search of the rare Pallas's Rosefinch that had turned up in the Saitama Prefectural Forest Park. Saitama is the neighbouring prefecture to Tokyo but it still took a long time to get there. After 2-3 hours on the excellent highways, we turned off and started winding our way up into the mountains, past small rural villages and afterwards into nice forest. Up and up we went, and the road became narrower but finally we arrived at the parking lot to find several Japanese bird photographers also here to look for the rare rosefinch. After a cold walk through the forest we arrived at some buildings where a couple of photographers had put some bird food out. Here we saw our first birds in the shape of **Japanese Willow** and the pretty **Varied Tit**. Nothing else appeared to be coming in to this feeder so we made our way along to another feeding station with a bigger crowd of photographers. After inquiring, it appeared that the Pallas' Rosefinches had come in the previous day but not yet today.



**We enjoyed some close Bramblings at a feeding station in a forest park.**

We waited patiently and after a while several **Bramblings** came down to feed. We got a few photos of these pretty birds and also had brief views of a female **Red-flanked Bluetail** before giving up and heading back to the car. This is a regular site for the rosefinch, but due to relatively mild conditions so far this year, they were still not that regular at the feeder. We drove down a different road and made our way back to the highway. We found a nice highway restaurant where we ordered our first Japanese meal. It was another 2-hour drive from here and on the way saw our first **White-cheeked Starling** and **Eurasian Kestrel**. Time was short before sunset, so we went straight to the forest road alongside the Wild Bird Forest. We had a few stops along here and picked up our first **Eastern Buzzard**, **Meadow Bunting**, **Daurian Redstart** and **Japanese Accentor**. After the sun dropped below the hillside, the temperature quickly dropped below zero and we beat a hasty retreat to our hotel, where some of us enjoyed a dip in the hot spring before our 10-course traditional meal. After dinner we took a short night drive along the forest road but all was still.

## 12<sup>th</sup> January – Karuizawa

We had a full day to explore the Karuizawa area, on the lower slopes of the impressive Asamayama volcano. We lost no time and started at the Wild Bird Forest with a pre-breakfast walk. Here we flushed our first **Gray Heron** from the river whilst looking for dippers, and in the woods, saw a hat-trick of **Pygmy, Great Spotted** and the endemic **Japanese Woodpecker**. We also had **Brown-eared Bulbul** feeding on mistletoe, **Red-flanked Bluetail** and the near-endemic **Japanese Accentor**. After breakfast, we spent some time at the hotel feeders and added **Eurasian Jay, Varied, Willow & Japanese Tits, Eurasian Nuthatch, Dusky Thrush** and the chunky **Hawfinch**, the latter which seemed to be common this winter. We set off for the day, and first visited an area of fields and forest edge, just 10 minutes away. Here we found a spectacular male **Green Pheasant** (Japan's national bird), plus our first **Long-tailed Tits**, the introduced **Chinese Hwamei, Daurian Redstart**, plus numerous **Oriental Greenfinches, Meadow & Rustic Buntings**.



After many years of searching, we now have a reliable stake out for Ural Owl.

After lunch in the neighbouring city of Saku, we visited a local reservoir where we had an impressive array of waterfowl, including 2 **Bewick's Swans, Northern Shoveler, Eurasian Wigeon, Eastern Spot-billed Duck, Northern Pintail, Common Pochard, Tufted Duck**, a very dapper male **Smew**, and several equally attractive **Common Mergansers**. We walked along the river to a spot for a localised rarity, the **Long-billed Plover**, and also added **Common Sandpiper, Great Cormorant, Eastern Buzzard, Bull-headed Shrike, Dusky Thrush** and **Japanese Wagtail**. We checked the reservoir again before leaving and found a **Baikal Teal** and **Falcated Duck** which had previously had their heads tucked away. Back in Karuizawa, we had just enough time to revisit the **Wild Bird Forest** and succeeded in finding our target **Brown Dipper** in the rushing stream. We also took a short walk along a forest trail looking for the elusive Copper Pheasant without luck. After a dip in the hot spring and another traditional Japanese 10-course dinner, we took a night drive, and after some effort got good views of **Ural Owl** plus bonus **Sika Deer** and **Red Fox**. What a day it had been!

### 13<sup>th</sup> January – Jigokudani to Komatsu

We decided to watch some birds at the feeders at our hotel rather than a frigid walk in woods in search of the elusive Copper Pheasant, and we enjoyed more **Varied, Marsh, Japanese & Coal Tits** and **Chinese Hwamei** from the relative warmth of the Hotel Lobby. After another interesting Japanese take on a Western breakfast, we packed up the van and set off for the Snow Monkey park at Jigokudani, about 90-minutes drive away. It was a mile walk in to the park from the beginning of the trail and some parts were a little icy. But along with many other international tourists, we made it safely. We spent about an hour with the monkeys, who kept us very entertained by rolling around in the snow, jumping in and out of the hot spring and just being, well, **Snow Monkeys**. Despite the crowds of tourists, it was still a very enjoyable visit and we got some good photos. We walked back down and after lunch at a local Japanese Diner, we were on our way to the City of Komatsu on the west coast of Honshu. We had a brief bit of birding when we arrived and found a few birds in the nearby fields, including **Eastern Buzzard, Bull-headed Shrike** and **Bewick's Swans**. We would pick up where we left off tomorrow morning.



**A Japanese Macaque in the snow.**



**Scenes from the Snow Monkey Park at Jigokudani.**

## 14<sup>th</sup> January – Western Honshu Wetlands

We had a full day to explore the Western Honshu Wetlands and we started heading south of Komatsu to the neighbouring prefecture of Fukui. We explored some rice fields looking for White-fronted Geese but couldn't find any. We stopped at a small lake that was full of ducks and we saw large numbers of **Mallard** interspersed with **Northern Shoveler**, **Eurasian Wigeon**, **Northern Pintail**, **Green-winged Teal**, **Common Pochard** and the beautiful **Falcated Duck**. Another highlight was an **Osprey** flying around carrying a fish and being pursued by **Large-billed Crows**. From here we headed to the coast where we found a **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, several **Arctic Loons**, **Pelagic & Japanese Cormorants**, a **Pacific Reef-Heron** flying by and a beautiful male **Blue Rock-Thrush** perched on a sea wall. We drove back north to the Katano Kamoike bird reserve, an important sanctuary for waterfowl where over 1000 **Baikal Teal** winter annually. Other waterfowl seen included **Greater White-fronted**, **Taiga & Tundra Bean-Geese**, a very distant **Mandarin Duck**, **Gadwall**, **Tufted Duck** and **Smew**. We had a fly over of **Eastern Marsh-Harrier** and I was lucky enough to see a **Mountain Hawk-Eagle** shoot out of the forest, swoop at a duck and fly quickly back in.



**Bewick Swans show much more yellow on their bill than North American Tundra Swans.**

After lunch at a local diner, we drove back to Komatsu and explored the extensive rice fields. This area is an important feeding ground for hundreds of **Bewick Swans**, and we saw several other birder's vehicles parked close to the birds. In the hope that there might be some rarities mixed in, I stopped to chat to a local guide I knew, and he pointed out a juvenile **Red-crowned Crane** which was out of range. After enjoying the crane and a few other birds like **Bull-headed Shrike** and **White Wagtail**, he was nice enough to take us to see some other rarities he had staked out. Firstly, he showed us a large flock of **Bewick Swans** with a single North American **Tundra Swan** mixed in. Next, he took us to see a young **Black-faced Spoonbill**, although the road was narrow, and we almost got stuck in some mud. After successfully extracting ourselves, he took us to see the star bird this year, the endangered **Oriental Stork**, a lifer for everyone including me. A couple more stops added more **Great Crested** & our first **Eared Grebe**, **Eastern Buzzard** and a **Japanese Bush Warbler**. After a very successful day, we enjoyed some more delicious ramen noodles.



**Black-faced Spoonbill & the MEGA Oriental Stork.**

### 15<sup>th</sup> January – Komatsu to Lake Furen

Today was a travel day. Our flight to Haneda airport in Tokyo was of course on time, and we had time to kill in the airport. Our flight to Kushiro on the northern island of Hokkaido also went smoothly, and after picking up our hire car we set off to Nemuro, 2 and a half hours away. We didn't have much time to stop on the way, but we did have our first **White-tailed Eagle** perched by the road. We settled in to our hotel and enjoyed a delicious Japanese meal.



**White-tailed Eagles, although dwarfed by Steller's, are majestic birds in their own right.**

### 16<sup>th</sup> January – Nemuro Peninsular

We started the day at the Meiji park in Nemuro and saw **Marsh Tit** and **Dusky Thrush**. We headed for the coast and a cliff top with a good view over the ocean below. Although it wasn't even below freezing, it felt much colder with the brisk wind. Scanning below, we saw our first sea ducks with **Harlequin Duck**, many **Black Scoters** and **Red-breasted Merganser**. We also had our first **Steller's Sea-Eagle** which was perched on a cliff top in the distance. Then we found a real local rarity, the **Yellow-billed Loon**. Unfortunately, with the strong winds, our boat ride had been cancelled, but there were plenty of other places in the area to explore. We drove down into the Hanamisaki port and had some excellent photo opportunities of **Long-tailed Ducks**. We also had some **White-tailed Eagles** soaring nearby. From here, we went on to the Shunkunitai Nature Center and found **Pygmy & Great Spotted Woodpeckers**, the distinctive Brandt's race of **Eurasian Jay**, plus **Coal Tit** and **Eurasian Nuthatch**. From a nearby coastal viewpoint, we saw dozens of **Whooper Swans**, plus **Common Goldeneye** and **Common Merganser**. After our first convenience store lunch, we drove to the Onnemoto Bird Hide, a famous spot for **Rock Sandpiper** of which we counted 45 on a rocky island off the coast. We also picked up our first **White-winged Scoter**, **Pigeon Guillemot** and **Black-legged Kittiwakes**. At Cape Nosappu, we picked out a **Red-faced Cormorant** in a roosting colony of **Pelagic Cormorants**, and then found **Spectacled Guillemot** and **Glaucous Gull**, sea-watching from the lighthouse. We dropped in at Habomai Harbor on the way back where we picked up **Red-necked Grebe**, then Okineppu harbour where we found a vagrant **American Wigeon** mixed in with some **Eurasian Wigeon** plus numerous gulls, including **Kamchatka & Glaucous-winged Gulls**. It had been a very productive day.

### 17<sup>th</sup> January – Lake Furen to Rausu

After a relatively leisurely breakfast, we packed up and set off towards Rausu. Our first birding stop was at a rest area with a viewpoint over the frozen Lake Furen. An ice fisherman had put out some spare fish on the frozen surface of the lake. There was a throng of **Large-billed Crows** pecking at them and many **Black Kites** swirling around and swooping at them. A dozen or so **White-tailed Eagles** came in and finally a handful of **Steller's Sea-Eagles** including a couple of handsome adults. It was all very entertaining to watch. We even managed to pick out the larger **Common Raven** in the trees with its distinctive wedge-shaped tail. Our next stop was Notsuke Peninsular, a thin spit of land that juts out into the Sea of Okhotsk. There were some Japanese bird photographers at the start of the road waiting for a Short-eared Owl that had been frequenting the area recently. We didn't have all day to stand around, so we bid them good luck and continued birding along the road. We had a good selection of sea ducks with **Black Scoter**, **Long-tailed Duck**, **Common Goldeneye**, **Common & Red-breasted Mergansers**, **Spectacled Guillemot** and our first **White-winged Scoter**. We checked out the Todowara Nature Centre and then went back out into the cold to do a bit more sea-watching which produced **Red-throated Loon**. We drove back along the peninsular and after a quick convenience store lunch, we drove on northwards.



**Harlequin Ducks face stiff competition on this tour for best-looking duck. .**

We had one last birding stop in the harbour at Shibetsu where we had a nice array of ducks close up, including **Tufted Duck**, **Greater Scaup**, **Harlequin Duck**, **Black Scoter**, **Common Goldeneye** and **Red-breasted Merganser**. There was also a full array of gulls, with **Black-headed**, **Vega**, **Slaty-backed**, **Glaucous-winged** and **Glaucous Gulls**. It had started snowing on the already icy road, and we finished the drive off very cautiously. As we arrived, we were greeted by a very confident **Brown Dipper** that was swimming around in the stream right in front of us. The lodge where we were staying, has a very famous resident staked out. **Blakiston's Fish-Owl** is one of the biggest owls in the world and a resident pair visit a small pond stocked with live fish, every night. After settling into our (somewhat compact) rooms which overlooked the pond, we went into the main building for a delicious traditional Japanese meal. Then we began our vigil for the owl. We had been told that the owl had been more regular in the mornings recently. We retired to our rooms about 9pm and at about 10:15 one finally showed up. It caught a fish very quickly and flew off before everybody got to look out of their windows.

## 18<sup>th</sup> January – Rausu

As instructed I woke at 4am and looking out of my window, saw the huge hulking shape of a **Blakiston's Fish-Owl** by the pond. I bolted up from my futon and bounded down the stairs to wake the clients. Luckily it stayed put for a few minutes before catching its fish and flying off up the valley. This time everybody had seen it well but we still needed photos. We had been told that it may come in several times from now, and sure enough, about 15 minutes later it was back. There was no hesitation and we all managed to photograph the huge bird, and this time, it posed well. After shooting our fill, we went back to bed for a couple of hours before our 7am breakfast. The day had got off to a good start, but that's about as far as our luck went. It was blizzard conditions, and although we tried to go out for a drive during a lull, the wind came back with a vengeance, and we quickly returned to our rooms. By the end of the day, we had managed 3 square meals but no other birding apart from our glorious owl this morning, which was all that really counted.



The set up to see Blakiston's Fish-Owl is beyond impressive.

## 19<sup>th</sup> January – Rausu to Akan

It had been snowing overnight, but the front-loaders had been busy and the roads were clear. We had our last breakfast at the fish-owl lodge before hitting the road. With our sea-eagle boat ride cancelled yesterday, our back up was a feeding station at Lake Furen. On the way we found a spot along the road where the trees were filled with eagles. We stopped briefly here and got a few photos before continuing on our way. We made it just as the eagles were coming in to start feeding. There were dozens of **White-tailed Eagles** and a handful of **Steller's Sea-Eagles** and they were joined with large numbers of **Large-billed Crows** and **Black-eared Kites**. Many eagles were flying around, and we had good opportunities for flight shots. Occasionally there was a skirmish over a fish which gave quite a spectacle. There was a stiff, cold wind coming straight off the frozen lake, and after we had taken our photos, we retreated to the warmth of our heated vehicle. We had a busy schedule today and we set off for our next birding location, called Kiritappu. This is a peninsular jutting out into the sea on the way back to Kushiro. It is a famous spot for **Asian Rosy-Finch** and on the way to the cape, we scanned the fields for them. We took a walk out to the lighthouse and all the way along to the end of the peninsular.



**Steller's Sea-Eagle in its natural, clifftop habitat.**

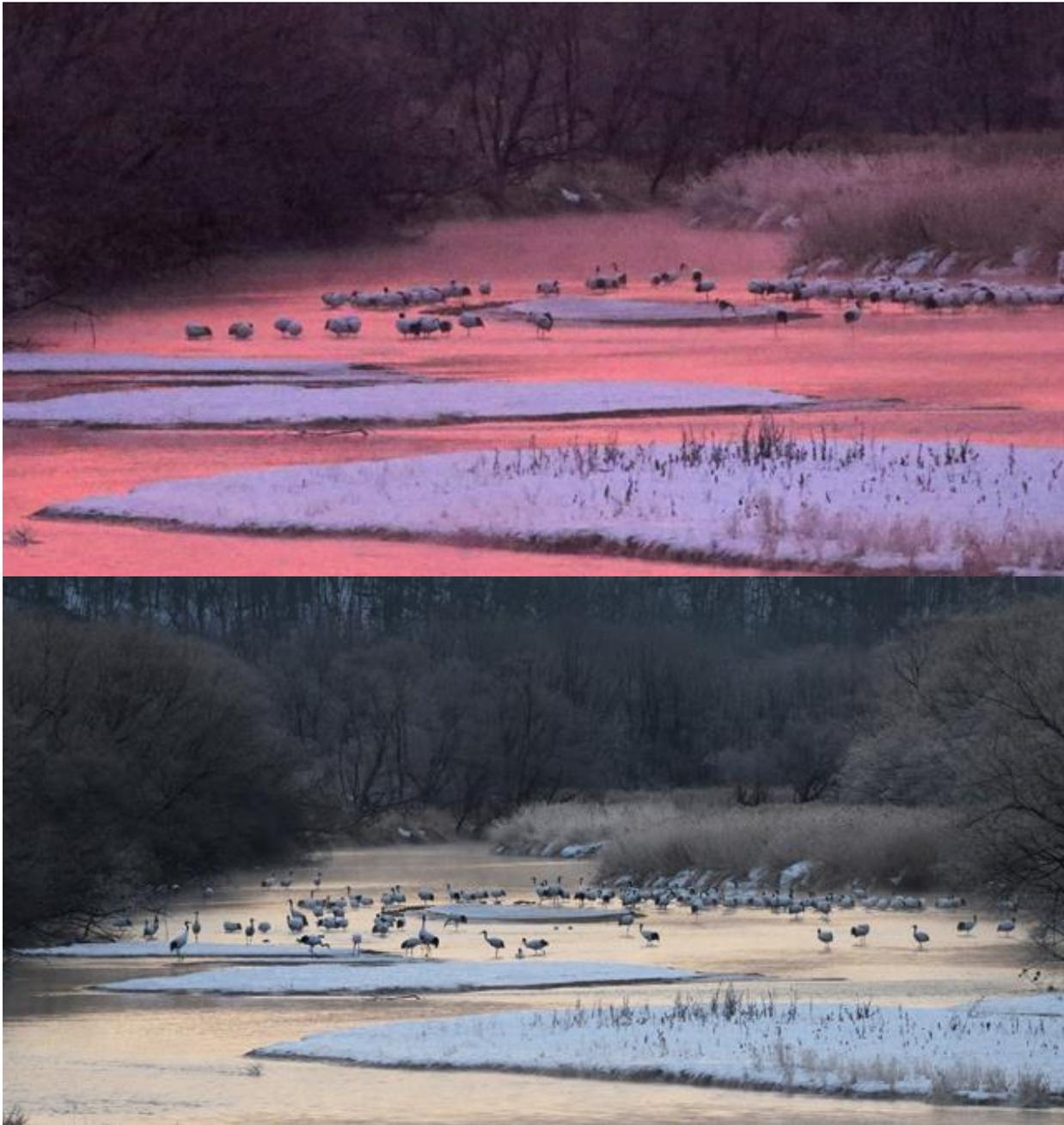
We did a spot of sea-watching and found **Red-necked Grebe**, **Red-throated Loon** and several **Harlequin Ducks**. We also found an adult **Steller's Sea-Eagle** perched on top of a pinnacle. We got very close for photos and even got some nice flight shots when it flew. I heard some faint chipping notes from the thick grass by the path. I walked closer and a single **Asian Rosy-Finch** flushed up and we had fairly decent flight views. We drove back along the road and checked again a spot where they are often seen. We spotted a flock of about 50, but by the time we had got out of the car, they had vanished. We had a date with some cranes this afternoon, so after a quick convenience store lunch, we drove the 2 hours back to Kushiro. There are several winter feeding sites for **Red-crowned Cranes**, my favourite of which is the Akan Crane Centre. We arrived by mid-afternoon and the light on the gathered birds was breath-taking. There were about 100 cranes, and we spent an hour getting photos of them feeding and strutting around on the snow. Every once in a while, bird would fly in or out giving us great flight shots. Just a few times, they did their courtship dance. It had been a great day and we finished in a comfortable lodge with gourmet food and large hot baths.



**Red-crowned Cranes at Akan.**

## 20<sup>th</sup> January – Tsurui-mura to Izumi, Kyushu

We left our lodge early and drove to the Setsuri River, a famous spot for photographing **Red-crowned Cranes** at dawn. If you have ever seen a picture of cranes in a river, shrouded in mist swirling into the cold air, it was taken here. The secret was out and there were about 100 other people here to take pictures. The sky was bright pink just before sunrise and the distant cranes were starting to move about. It was a very atmospheric scene and well worth waking up for despite the sub-zero temperatures. Our flight from Kushiro airport left on time and we had a very brief lunch at Haneda airport before boarding our connecting flight to Kagoshima on the southern island of Kyushu. The drive to our hotel was about an hour and a half but we had time for a quick stop at the Sendai River in Satsuma town. Some years, you get some interesting birds here but today we just had **Eurasian Wigeon, Tufted Duck & Common Sandpiper**. We made it to the city of Izumi, and on the outskirts of town witnessed about a thousand **Rooks** going to roost in the surrounding powerlines and trees. It was very impressive and somewhat reminiscent of Hitchcock's movie, 'The Birds'. We arrived at our hotel where we were to spend the next 2 nights.



Dawn scenes of Red-crowned Cranes at the Setsuri River.

## 21<sup>st</sup> January – Izumi & Yatsushiro

First thing this morning we visited Arasaki, where over 14,000 cranes were gathering at feeding sites. It was just getting light when we arrived and the cacophony of cranes flying in was very impressive. **White-naped & Hooded Cranes** formed the majority, but after some searching, we also found **Sandhill** and **Common Crane**. As we observed the cranes, huge flocks of **Northern Pintail** passed us, and we also found several **Tundra Bean-Goose**, **Common Shelduck**, **Northern Lapwing** and **Black-faced Spoonbill**. There were large numbers of **Carrion Crows** and **Rooks** in the fields and we also picked out a couple of the rare **Daurian Jackdaws**. We checked a reed-filled ditch where we heard a **Ruddy-breasted Crake**, then drove by more fields to find **Eurasian Skylark**, large numbers of **Oriental Greenfinches** and some **Buff-bellied Pipits**. Next, we went to a more extensive reedbed where we found **Japanese White-eye** and **Reed Buntings** but no sign of our target Chinese Penduline-Tits.



The feeding frenzy of Hooded & White-naped Cranes at Arasaki is a sight to behold.

We needed to get up to the mud flats at Yatsushiro in neighbouring Kumamoto prefecture, which was about an hour and a half's drive north. After the drive, we first had lunch and then began our search for the globally threatened **Saunders's Gull**. The tide was already out when we arrived, and **Saunders's Gull** was the first bird we saw. We had several of these rare gulls as they flew over the mudflats looking for crabs. The tide was way out, and most of the shorebirds were feeding in the distance although we did see closer **Common Greenshank**, **Kentish & Black-bellied Plovers**. We saw several other interesting species, including **Common Shelduck**, **Red-breasted Merganser**, **Great Crested Grebe** and our first **Black-tailed Gull**. We continued driving along the sea wall and found a little park, where we found our first **Russet Sparrows** plus several **Oriental Greenfinches** and on the wall itself, we saw a female **Blue Rock-Thrush**. We drove back to Arasaki and had some last birding at the end of the day, adding a **Peregrine Falcon**, which was pulling feathers out of its prey on the ground, plus our first **Eurasian Spoonbill** and **Black-winged Stilt**. We also had a chance to get some more photos of cranes in the last light of the day.



**There were over 10,000 Hooded Cranes but only 10 Common Cranes at Arasaki.**

## 22<sup>nd</sup> January – Izumi to Miike

We went back to the reed-filled ditch in Arasaki to try for rallids, and finally heard a **Ruddy-breasted Crake** calling, but unfortunately the bird didn't come in. Instead, we had good views of both **Eurasian & Black-faced Spoonbills**. We drove to a local river where we saw many **Meadow & Reed Buntings** but no Chinese Penduline-Tits. We did however have a surprise fly over of a **Hen Harrier** and **Eurasian Sparrowhawk**. We drove up into the mountains to Kogawa Dam, where there were a few common ducks on the water. We still needed **Mandarin Duck**, and after a while searching, we nailed down a small group for scope views. Nearby, we checked a spot for Crested Kingfisher, but had to make do with a pair of **Brown Dippers** collecting nesting material. We drove on up to Kirishima, and after a nice lunch, visited the shrine. As well as a cultural diversion, there are always some good birds around there, and we saw **Red-flanked Bluetail**, **Red-billed Leiothrix**, **Japanese & Long-tailed Tits** and **Japanese White-eye**.



**Eurasian Spoonbill is often found together with Black-faced Spoonbill in Winter.**

The afternoon we spent exploring Miike, a small volcanic crater lake surrounded by lush forest. We first went to check out the shrine which commanded a fine view over the lake. A major target here was **Ryukyu Minivet** and I heard one along the entrance road which we all had good looks at. We drove up to a shrike overlooking the lake and found **Eurasian Nuthatch** plus a tree full of cumquots. The latter, very popular with the participants. Down at the campsite, we had **Pygmy Woodpecker** plus **Varied & Long-tailed Tits**. We took a brief look from the lake edge to find an assortment of ducks and we also added **Olive-backed Pipit**. We went looking for White-backed Woodpecker inside the forest but only heard one distantly. We called it a day and drove back to Kirishima where we checked in to our cosy if somewhat quirky guesthouse. The outdoor hot springs and what most people in the group agreed was one of the best meals they had ever eaten, made for a memorable stay.

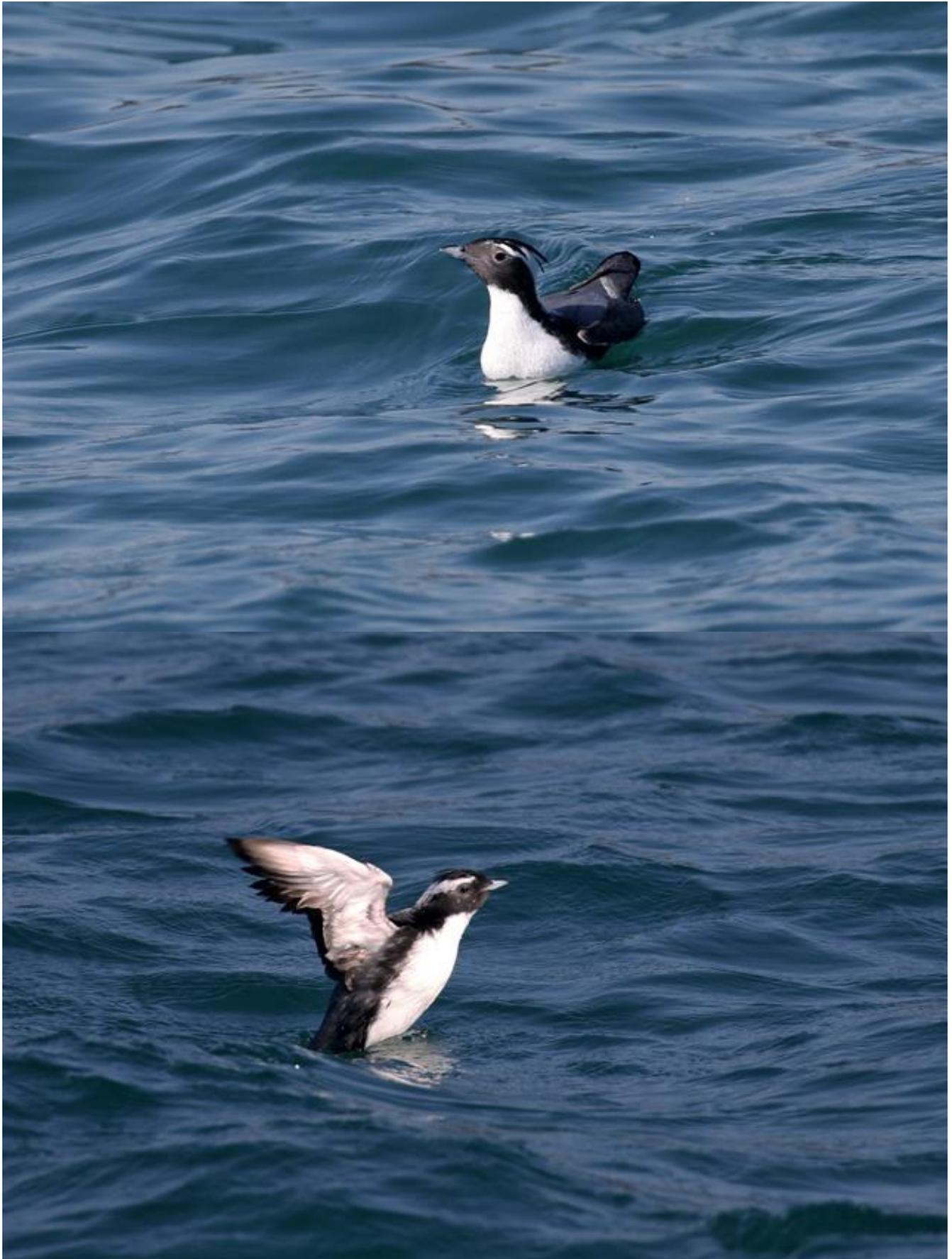
### 23<sup>rd</sup> February – Miike to Kadogawa & Hitotsusegawa

After a delicious early morning breakfast, we drove back up towards Miike but turned down a quiet mountain road to look for buntings. We had a couple of **Black-faced Buntings** flying off the side of the road but still needed better views. Even though it was almost fully light, we heard a **Ural Owl** calling from inside the forest. I tried calling it in, and it flew right over our heads. It flew over again and perched long enough for us to all get good views. Our second **Ural Owls** of the tour! We drove back to the temple at Miike, and whilst enjoying the beautiful view and first warmth of sun on our faces, we also picked up **White-bellied Pigeon**, **Yellow-throated Bunting** and **Eurasian Jay**. We also took one last walk around the camp site below where we got looks at a nice male **Daurian Redstart**, **Japanese Grosbeak**, our first **Pale Thrush** and a small group of **Red-billed Leiothrix**, which although an introduced species in Japan, are still a delight to see. It was time to move on, and we decided to go in search of the **Crested Kingfisher**. We reached a GPS point on a bridge over a large river and had a **Crested Kingfisher** perched on a powerline just across from us. We also had a **Eurasian Kestrel** and our first **Barn Swallows** of the trip. It was now time to head down to the coast.



Japanese Cormorants taking flight.

We went to the small fishing village of Kadogawa, where a boat takes people out in search of **Japanese Murrelets**. The boat captain told us that they were easy this year, and sure enough, just outside the harbour wall, we located a group of 7 birds which we got nice and close to for photos. Our captain took the scenic route back, past some beautiful rock formations and sea caves and we also saw **Great Crested Grebe**, **Black-tailed & Vega Gulls**, **Japanese Cormorant**, **Pacific Reef-Heron** and a nice male **Blue Rock-Thrush**. Next, we went on to a coastal site a bit further south where sometimes the rare **Japanese Wood-Pigeon**, normally a bird of small offshore islands, comes to the coastal forest. Inside the forest we found **Pygmy Woodpecker**, **Varied Tit & Japanese White-eye**. We enjoyed the scenery along the coast at the end of the rocky peninsular. Finally, we spotted the wood-pigeons and we all had rare scope views of this seldom seen bird. We had just enough time to check out one last birding site, called the Hitotsuse River. The tide was high now which meant that the muddy banks of the estuary were not exposed. We finished off the day at a pond with 16 endangered **Black-faced Spoonbills**, a single **Eurasian Spoonbill**, plus **Common Shelduck**, **Northern Shoveler**, **Common Pochard** and many **Northern Lapwings**. We also found a **Greater Spotted Eagle** flying to roost. This is an annual bird here but seen almost nowhere else in Japan.



Japanese Murrelets put on a good show for us this year.

## 24<sup>th</sup> February – Hitotsusegawa to Tokyo

We picked up this morning where we had left off yesterday, back at the Hitotsuse River. It was high tide again, so no shorebirds in the estuary, but on the pond we had **Common Shelduck** and **Northern Shoveler**, **Black-faced Spoonbills**, **Osprey**, and a surprise **Hooded Crane**. We also saw a **Common Kingfisher**, **Pale Thrush**, **Olive-backed Pipit**, **Hawfinch** and a beautiful male **Daurian Redstart**. We started to drive upstream along the river and came across a **Eurasian Sparrowhawk** which put on a show by swooping at some birds with incredible speed. We drove to Kota Oike; a beautiful lake by an apparently disused shrine. We parked and walked along a short track through some forest where we saw **Japanese White-eye**. We came to the edge of the duck-filled pond where we found hundreds of **Mallard**, with smaller numbers of **Northern Shoveler** and **Common Pochard**. Our main goals here were **Mandarin Duck** and **Baikal Teal**, but the ducks were so skittish, that as soon as they saw us they all took off to the back of the lake. We got good scope views of **Mandarin Duck** and **Baikal Teal**, and also added **Green Sandpiper**, **Barn Swallow** and **Daurian Redstart**. We returned to Hitotsuse River where we added a few species, including **Kentish Plovers**, **Vega Gulls**, **Blue Rock Thrush** and **Buff-bellied Pipit**. The mud in the estuary became exposed but no shorebirds came in and we ran out of time. We drove back to Miyazaki where we had a last sushi lunch before flying back to Tokyo where we finished the main tour.



The Japanese endemic Izu Thrush.

## EXTENSION

### 24<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> January – Tokyo to Miyakejima

We made our way from Haneda Airport to Takeshiba Ferry Terminal and boarded our ferry late at night. After a few precious hours sleep we were awoken by the tannoy at 4:30. We were happy to have arrived on Miyakejima as sometimes in rough seas, they just bypass the island. We waited in the ferry terminal until 6am when our driver came to pick us up and drive us to the biding site called Taro-ike Taro-ike is a small volcanic crater lake surrounded by lush forest and it also has a visitor's centre called Akakokkan, named after the Japanese endemic **Izu Thrush**. It was still a bit dark and we waited in the parking lot for a short while until there was enough light to begin our birding. Looking along the entrance road to the visitor's centre, I spotted our main target, the **Izu Thrush**, hopping along the curb. It got a bit lighter and we managed decent scope views before it flew off. I heard a **Grey Bunting** calling on the forest floor but all we managed was a glimpse. Akakokkan wasn't open yet, but we walked around the buildings and came across another **Izu Thrush** which perched close and posed for pictures.

We found the trail heading down towards the lake and enjoyed a pleasant morning's birding. We saw our other endemic target, **Owston's Tit**, plus **Japanese Robin** and endemic subspecies of **Eastern Buzzard**, **Eurasian Wren** and **Japanese White-eye**. It was a very successful walk and we made our way back up to the visitors centre where they had some feeders. **Owston's**, and **Japanese Tits** were coming in constantly and we even had **Japanese Bush-Warbler** and **Japanese White-eye** coming in to bathe. We had already seen **Japanese Woodpigeon** on the main tour, but we added another one from the blind that flew in to a nearby tree. Our time was up here, and our driver took us back to the ferry terminal for our ride back to Tokyo. After boarding the ferry, we went straight down to the restaurant for lunch, and then up to the deck to start our seawatch. **Laysan Albatrosses** started to come thick and fast, but it was a while before our next species showed up. In the end we counted 53 **Laysan**, 5 **Short-tailed** and 2 **Black-footed Albatrosses**, plus 1 **Streaked Shearwater**, 1 **Pomarine Skua** and several **Black-legged Kittiwakes**. It was a busy couple of hours, but as we started to get close to Tokyo, it quietened down and the sun dropped lower in the sky. At the Takeshiba Port in Tokyo, we were transferred to our hotels where we all said goodbye after an unforgettable tour.



We saw over 50 Laysan Albatrosses on our way back from the volcanic island of Miyakejima.

## BIRD LIST

Avian taxonomy follows ebird/Clements v2018

Note: Only endemic races and potential splits are given to subspecies level.

### ANSERIFORMES: Anatidae

#### **Greater White-fronted Goose**

Seen at Katano Kamoike.

*Anser albifrons*

#### **Taiga Bean-Goose**

Seen at Katano Kamoike.

*Anser fabalis*

#### **Tundra Bean-Goose**

Seen at Katano Kamoike & Arasaki.

*Anser serrirostris*

#### **Tundra Swan**

*C.c.bewickii* seen at Saku, Katano Kamoike & Komatsu. One vagrant *C.c.columbianus* seen at Kaga.

*Cygnus columbianus*

#### **Whooper Swan**

Seen at Nemuro & Akan.

*Cygnus cygnus*

#### **Common Shelduck**

Seen at Arasaki, Yatsushiro & Hitotsuse River.

*Tadorna tadorna*

#### **Mandarin Duck**

Seen at Katano Kamoike & Kota Oike

*Aix galericulata*

East Asian Endemic

#### **Baikal Teal**

Seen at Katano Kamoike and several at Kota Oike.

*Sibirionetta formosa*

#### **Northern Shoveler**

Seen at Toden Lake, Katano Kamoike, Kota Shrine & Hitotsuse River.

*Spatula clypeata*

#### **Gadwall**

Seen at Katano Kamoike.

*Mareca strepera*

#### **Falcated Duck**

Near-threatened. Seen in the Awara & Komatsu areas.

*Mareca falcata*

#### **Eurasian Wigeon**

Seen at many sites.

*Mareca penelope*

#### **American Wigeon**

A single male seen in Nemuro area.

*Mareca americana*

#### **Eastern Spot-billed Duck**

Commonly seen on Honshu & Kyushu.

*Anas zonorhyncha*

#### **Mallard**

Commonly seen throughout.

*Anas platyrhynchos*

#### **Northern Pintail**

Widely seen on Honshu & Kyushu.

*Anas acuta*

#### **Green-winged (Eurasian) Teal**

Widely seen on Honshu & Kyushu.

*Anas c. crecca*

#### **Common Pochard**

Vulnerable. Widely seen on Honshu & Kyushu.

*Aythya ferina*

#### **Tufted Duck**

Seen at many sites.

*Aythya fuligula*

#### **Greater Scaup**

Seen in Nemuro area & Shibetsu.

*Aythya marila*

#### **Harlequin Duck**

Seen at Nemuro, Shibetsu & Kiritappu.

*Histrionicus histrionicus*

#### **White-winged (Siberian) Scoter**

Seen at Notsuke & Onnemoto.

*Melanitta fusca stejnegeri*

#### **Black Scoter**

Near-threatened. Seen at Nemuro, Shibetsu & Notsuke Peninsular.

*Melanitta americana*

#### **Long-tailed Duck**

Vulnerable. Seen at Nemuro & Notsuke Peninsular.

*Clangula hyemalis*

**Common Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*  
 Seen at Nemuro, Shibetsu, Notsuke Peninsular & Kiritappu.  
**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*  
 Seen at Toden Lake & Katano Kamoike.  
**Common Merganser** *Mergus m. merganser*  
 Seen at Toden Lake, Nemuro & Notsuke.  
**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*  
 Seen at Nemuro, Shibetsu, Notsuke & Yatsushiro.

**GALLIFORMES: Phasianidae**

**Chinese Bamboo-Partridge** *Bambusicola thoracicus*  
 Introduced. Heard at Umagase.  
**Ring-necked (Green) Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus tanensis*  
 Split by IOC. Japan's national bird. Seen at Karuizawa.

**Endemic subspecies**

**PODICIPEDIFORMES: Podicipedidae**

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*  
 Seen at Awara, Arasaki, Kota Shrine, Hitotsusegawa & Miyakejima.  
**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*  
 Seen in the Nemuro area & Kiritappu.  
**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*  
 Seen at Kaga, Yatsushiro, Kadogawa & Kota Shrine.  
**Eared Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis*  
 Seen at Kaga & Hitotsusegawa.

**COLUMBIFORMES: Columbidae**

**Rock Pigeon** *Columba livia*  
 Introduced. Commonly seen throughout Honshu & Kyushu.  
**Japanese Wood-Pigeon** *Columba j. janthina*  
 Near-threatened. Seen at Umagase & on Miyakejima.  
**Oriental Turtle-Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis*  
 Commonly seen on Honshu & Kyushu.  
**White-bellied Pigeon** *Treron sieboldii*  
 Seen at Miike.

**North-east Asian Endemic**

**GRUIFORMES: Rallidae**

**Eurasian Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*  
 Seen at Arasaki & Yatsushiro.  
**Eurasian Coot** *Fulica atra*  
 Commonly seen at wetland sites on Honshu & Kyushu.  
**Ruddy-breasted Crake** *Zapornia fusca*  
 Herd at Arasaki.

**GRUIFORMES: Gruidae**

**Sandhill Crane** *Antigone canadensis*  
 Seen at Arasaki.  
**White-naped Crane** *Antigone vipio*  
 Vulnerable. Seen at Arasaki.  
**Common Crane** *Grus grus*  
 Seen at Arasaki.  
**Hooded Crane** *Grus monacha*  
 Vulnerable. Seen at Arasaki & Hitotsuse River.  
**Red-crowned Crane** *Grus japonensis*  
 Endangered. Seen at Komatsu & Akan.

**East Asian Endemic**

**CHARADRIIFORMES: Recurvirostridae**

**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*  
Seen at Arasaki.

**CHARADRIIFORMES: Charadriidae**

**Black-bellied Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*  
Seen at Yatsushiro.

**Northern Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*  
Near-threatened. Seen at Arasaki & Hitotsusegawa.

**Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*  
Seen at Yatsushiro & Hitotsusegawa.

**Long-billed Plover** *Charadrius placidus*  
Seen at Toden Lake.

**CHARADRIIFORMES: Scolopacidae**

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*  
Seen at Arasaki.

**Rock Sandpiper** *Calidris ptilocnemis*  
Seen at Onnemoto hide on the Nemuro Peninsular.

**Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*  
Seen near Arasaki.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*  
Seen at Lake Toden, Satsuma Sendai, Arasaki & Hitotsuse River.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*  
Seen at Yasushiro & Kota Oike.

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*  
Seen at Yatsushiro.

**CHARADRIIFORMES: Stercorariidae**

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*  
Seen on the Miyakejima ferry.

**CHARADRIIFORMES: Alcidae**

**Pigeon Guillemot** *Cephus columba*  
Seen at Cape Nosappu.

**Spectacled Guillemot** *Cephus carbo*  
Seen at Cape Nosappu.

**Japanese Murrelet** *Synthliboramphus wumizusume*  
Vulnerable. Seen on a boat ride out of Kadogawa.

**CHARADRIIFORMES: Laridae**

**Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*  
Vulnerable. Seen on the Nemuro Peninsular & on the Miyakejima ferry.

**Saunders's Gull** *Saundersilarus saundersi*  
Vulnerable. Seen at Yatsushiro.

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*  
Seen at Nemuro & Shibetsu.

**Black-tailed Gull** *Larus crassirostris*  
Seen at Yatsushiro & Kadogawa.

**Mew (Kamchatka) Gull** *Larus canus kamtschatschensis*  
Seen at Nemuro & Shibetsu.

**Herring (Vega) Gull** *Larus argentatus vegae*  
Commonly seen at coastal sites throughout.

**Lesser Black-backed (Heuglin's) Gull** *Larus fuscus heuglini*

Seen in coastal Fukui prefecture near Oshima island.

**Slaty-backed Gull** *Larus schistisagus*

**East Asian Endemic**

Commonly seen around the coasts of Hokkaido. Also seen at Yatsushiro & Kadogawa.

**Glaucous-winged Gull** *Larus glaucescens*

Several seen around the coasts of Hokkaido.

**Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*

Commonly seen around the coasts of Hokkaido.

**GAVIIFORMES: Gaviidae**

**Yellow-billed Loon** *Gavia adamsii*

Near-threatened. Seen at Kurumaishi on the Nemuro Peninsular.

**Red-throated Loon** *Gavia stellata*

Seen at Notsuke Peninsular & Kiritappu.

**Arctic Loon** *Gavia arctica*

Seen on the coast at Fukui.

**PROCELLARIIFORMES: Diomedeidae**

**Laysan Albatross** *Phoebastria immutabilis*

Near-threatened. 53 seen on the Miyakejima ferry.

**Black-footed Albatross** *Phoebastria nigripes*

Near-threatened. 2 seen on the Miyakejima ferry.

**Short-tailed Albatross** *Phoebastria albatrus*

Vulnerable. 5 seen on the Miyakejima ferry.

**PROCELLARIIFORMES: Procellariidae**

**Streaked Shearwater** *Calonectris leucomelas*

**Breeding endemic**

One seen by the guide on the Miyakejima ferry.

**CICONIIFORMES: ciconiidae**

**Oriental Stork** *Ciconia boyciana*

**East Asian Endemic**

Endangered A single bird seen at Awara.

**SULIFORMES: Sulidae**

**Brown Booby** *Sula leucogaster*

A single bird seen at Miyakejima.

**SULIFORMES: Phalacrocoracidae**

**Red-faced Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax urile*

A single bird seen at Cape Nosappu.

**Pelagic Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax pelagicus*

Seen near Awara, & Nemuro.

**Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo hanedae*

**Endemic subspecies**

Widely seen throughout Honshu & Kyushu.

**Japanese Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax capillatus*

Seen near Awara & Kadogawa.

**PELECANIFORMES: Ardeidae**

**Gray Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Commonly seen on Honshu & Kyushu.

**Great Egret** *Ardea alba*

Several seen on Kyushu.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Seen in the Komatsu area.

**Pacific Reef-Heron** *Egretta sacra*

Seen at coastal Fukui & Kadogawa.

**PELECANIFORMES: Threskiornithidae**

**Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

Seen at Arasaki & Hitotsusegawa.

**Black-faced Spoonbill** *Platalea minor*

Endangered. Seen at Awara, Arasaki, Yatsushiro & Hitotsusegawa.

**East Asian Breeding Endemic**

**ACCIPITRIFORMES: Pandionidae**

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

Seen at Awaran & Hitotsuse River.

**ACCIPITRIFORMES: Accipitridae**

**Mountain Hawk-Eagle** *Nisaetus nipalensis*

Seen by the guide at Katano Kamoike.

**Greater Spotted Eagle** *Clanga clanga*

Seen at Hitotsuse River.

**Eastern Marsh-Harrier** *Circus spilonotus*

Seen at Katano Kamoike.

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

Seen at Arasaki.

**Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Seen at Arasaki & Hitotsusegawa.

**Black(-eared) Kite** *Milvus migrans lineatus*

Commonly seen throughout.

**White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Seen in the Nemuro area.

**Steller's Sea-Eagle** *Haliaeetus pelagicus*

Vulnerable. Seen in the Nemuro area & Kiritappu.

**Eastern Buzzard** *Buteo japonicus*

*B.j.japonicus* was seen at Karuizawa, Toden Lake, plus several sites on Kyushu. The endemic

*B.j.toyoshimai* was seen on Miyakejima.

**East Asian Endemic**

**Endemic subspecies**

**STRIGIFORMES: Strigidae**

**Blakiston's Fish-Owl** *Ketupa b. blakistoni*

Endangered. Seen at Rausu.

**Ural Owl** *Strix uralensis*

*S.u.hondoensis* seen near Karuizawa. *S.u.fuscesens* seen near Miike.

**Endemic subspecies**

**Endemic subspecies**

**CORACIIFORMES: Alcedinidae**

**Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Seen at Hitotsusegawa

**Crested Kingfisher** *Megaceryle lugubris*

Seen at Iwasegawa on Kyushu.

**Endemic subspecies**

**PICIFORMES: Picidae**

**Pygmy Woodpecker** *Yungipicus kizuki*

*Y.k.ijimae* seen at Shunkunitai. *Y.k.seebohmi* seen at Lake Toden & Karuizawa. *Y.k.kizuki* seen at Miike & Umagase & Miyakejima.

**White-backed Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos leucotos namiyei*

Heard at Miike.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Seen at Karuizawa & Lake Furen.

**Japanese Woodpecker** *Picus awokera* **Endemic**  
Seen at Karuizawa & Miike.

**FALCONIFORMES: Falconidae**

**Eurasian Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Seen at en route to Karuizawa, Arasaki & Kota Shrine.

**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*

Seen at Arasaki.

**PASSERIFORMES: Campephagidae**

**Ryukyu Minivet** *Pericrocotus tegimae* **Endemic**  
Seen at Miike.

**PASSERIFORMES: Laniidae**

**Bull-headed Shrike** *Lanius bucephalus*

Seen at Toden Lake, Komatsu, Arasaki & Hitotsusegawa.

**PASSERIFORMES: Corvidae**

**Eurasian Jay** *Garrulus glandarius* **Endemic subspecies**

The endemic *G.g.japonicus* seen at Karuizawa & Jigokudani. *G.g.bambergi* seen at Lake Furen. The endemic *G.g.hiugaensis* seen at Miike.

**Daurian Jackdaw** *Corvus dauuricus*

Seen at Arasaki.

**(Oriental) Rook** *Corvus frugilegus pastinator*

Seen at Arasaki & Hitotsusegawa.

**Carrion (Oriental) Crow** *Corvus corone orientalis*

Commonly seen throughout.

**Large-billed Crow** *Corvus macrorhynchos japonensis*

Commonly seen throughout.

**Common Raven** *Corvus corax kamschaticus*

Seen at Lake Furen.

**PASSERIFORMES: Alaudidae**

**(Japanese) Eurasian Skylark** *Alauda arvensis japonica* **Endemic subspecies**

Seen at Arasaki & heard at Hitotsuse River.

**PASSERIFORMES: Hirundidae**

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Commonly seen in coastal Miyazaki.

**PASSERIFORMES: Paridae**

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater insularis*

Seen at Karuizawa, Shunkunitai & Miike.

**Varied Tit** *Sittiparus varius*

Seen at Saitama Prefectural Forest, Karuizawa, Kirishima Shrine, Umagase, Miike & Kota Oike.

**Owston's Tit** *Sittiparus owstoni* **Endemic**

Endangered. Seen on Miyakejima.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris hensoni* **Endemic subspecies**

Seen at Meiji Park in Nemuro & Lake Furen.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus restrictus* **Endemic subspecies**

Seen at Saitama Prefectural Forest & Karuizawa.

**Japanese Tit** *Parus minor*

Seen throughout.

**PASSERIFORMES: Aegithalidae**

**Long-tailed Tit**

*Aegithalos caudatus*

**Endemic subspecies**

*A.c.trivirgatus* seen at Karuizawa & Lake Toden. The endemic *A.c.kiusiuensis* seen at Kirishima & Miike.

**PASSERIFORMES: Sittidae**

**Eurasian Nuthatch**

*Sitta europaea*

**Endemic subspecies**

*S.e.amurensis* seen at Karuizawa, *S.e.asiatica* seen at Lake Furen, The endemic *S.e.roseillia* seen at Miike.

**PASSERIFORMES: Troglodytidae**

**Eurasian Wren**

*Troglodytes troglodytes*

**Endemic subspecies**

*T.t.fumigatus* seen at Karuizawa. *T.t.mosukei* seen on Miyakejima.

**PASSERIFORMES: Cinclidae**

**Brown Dipper**

*Cinclus pallasii*

Seen at Karuizawa, Rausu & near Kogawa Dam.

**PASSERIFORMES: Pycnonotidae**

**Brown-eared Bulbul**

*Hypsipetes amaurotis*

Commonly seen throughout.

**PASSERIFORMES: Cettiidae**

**Japanese Bush-Warbler**

*Horornis diphone*

**Endemic subspecies**

*H.d.cantans* seen at Komatsu, Arasaki & Kota Shrine. *H.c.diphone* seen on Miyakejima.

**PASSERIFORMES: Zosteropidae**

**Japanese White-eye**

*Zosterops j. japonicus*

**Endemic subspecies**

*Z.j.japonicus* seen at Arasaki, Miike, Umagase, Hitotsuse River & Kota Oike. *Z.j.stejegeri* seen on Miyakejima.

**PASSERIFORMES: Leiothrichidae**

**Chinese Hwamei**

*Garrulax canorus*

Introduced. Seen at Karuizawa.

**Red-billed Leiothrix**

*Leiothrix lutea*

Introduced. Seen at Kirishima & Miike.

**PASSERIFORMES: Muscicapidae**

**Japanese (Izu) Robin**

*Larvivora akahige tanensis*

**Endemic subspecies**

Vulnerable ssp. Potential split. Seen on Miyakejima.

**Red-flanked Bluetail**

*Tarsiger cyanurus*

Seen at Saitama Prefectural Forest, Karuizawa, Kirishima & Miike.

**Daurian Redstart**

*Phoenicurus aureus*

Seen at Karuizawa & several sites on Kyushu.

**Blue Rock-Thrush**

*Monticola solitarius*

Seen at coastal Fukui, Kadogawa & Hitotsusegawa.

**PASSERIFORMES: Turdidae**

**Izu Thrush**

*Turdus celaenops*

**Endemic**

Seen on Miyakejima.

**Pale Thrush**

*Turdus pallidus*

Seen at Arasaki, Oyodo & Hitotsusegawa.

**Dusky Thrush**

*Turdus eunomus*

Commonly seen throughout.

**PASSERIFORMES: Sturnidae**

**White-cheeked Starling** *Spodiopsar cineraceus*  
Commonly seen on Honshu & Kyushu.

**PASSERIFORMES: Prunellidae**

**Japanese Accentor** *Prunella rubida fervida* **Near endemic**  
Seen at Karuizawa.

**PASSERIFORMES: Motacillidae**

**Gray Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*  
Seen at Arasaki.

**Japanese Wagtail** *Motacilla grandis* **Breeding Endemic**  
Seen at Toden Lake & Karuizawa.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*  
*M.a.lugens* & *M.a.ocularis* were both seen at several sites.

**Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*

Seen at Miike & Hitotsusegawa

**American (Buff-bellied) Pipit** *Anthus rubescens japonicus*

Seen at Arasaki & Hitotsusegawa.

**PASSERIFORMES: Fringillidae**

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

Seen at Saitama prefectural forest & Karuizawa.

**Hawfinch** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes japonicus*

Seen at Karuizawa, Lake Toden & Hitotsusegawa.

**Japanese Grosbeak** *Eophona p. personata* **Endemic subspecies**  
Seen at Kirishima & Hitotsusegawa.

**Asian Rosy-Finch** *Leucosticte arctoa*

Seen at Kiritappu.

**Oriental Greenfinch** *Chloris sinica*

Seen at Karuizawa, Lake Toden, Arasaki, Yatsushiro & Hitotsusegawa.

**PASSERIFORMES: Emberizidae**

**Meadow Bunting** *Emberiza cioides ciopsis* **Endemic subspecies**  
Seen at Karuizawa, Lake Toden, Satsuma Sendai, Arasaki, Miike, Hitotsusegawa & Kota Shrine.

**Yellow-throated Bunting** *Emberiza elegans*

Seen at Miike.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Seen at Arasaki.

**Rustic Bunting** *Emberiza rustica*

Vulnerable. Seen at Karuizawa & Toden Lake.

**Black-faced Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala*

Seen at Arasaki, Miike, Hitotsuse-gawa & Kota Oike. Heard at Komatsu.

**Grey Bunting** *Emberiza variabilis*

Heard & seen in flight on Miyakejima.

**PASSERIFORMES: Passeridae**

**Russet Sparrow** *Passer rutilans*

Seen at Yatsushiro.

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

Commonly seen throughout.

## MAMMAL LIST

Taxonomy follows <http://www.wikipedia.org>

### CERCOPITHECIDAE: Old World Monkeys

**Japanese Macaque** *Macaca fuscata*  
Seen at Jigokudani.

**Endemic**

### SCIURIDAE: Squirrels

**Japanese Squirrel**  
Seen at Karuizawa.

**Endemic**

### CANIDAE: Canids

**Red Fox** *Vulpes vulpes*  
The endemic *V.v.japonica* was seen at Karuizawa. The endemic *V.v.schrenki* was seen at Notsuke Peninsular & Tsurui-mura.

**Endemic subspecies**

### MUSTELIDAE: Mustelids

**Sea Otter** *Enhydra lutris*  
Endangered. Seen at Kiritappu.

### PHOCIDAE: Seals

**Harbour Seal** *Phoca vitulina*  
Seen at Kiritappu & Cape Nosappu.  
**Largha Seal** *Phoca largha*  
Seen at Cape Nosappu.

### CERVIDAE: Deer

**Sika Deer** *Cervus nippon*  
The endemic *C.n.nippon* was seen at Karuizawa. The endemic *C.n.yesoensis* was seen several times in Hokkaido.

**Endemic subspecies**