



Thailand Custom Tour

15 – 30 January 2024

Birds in the photos within this report are denoted in RED, all photos by Ayuwat Jearwattanakanok

TOUR SUMMARY:

Day 1: 15th January – Laem Phak Bia & Pak Thale Nature Reserve

After an early pick up at Suvarnabhumi Airport, we then headed straight to birding at Khok Kham, one of the few sites where the globally threatened **Spoon-billed Sandpiper** can be found regularly. We quickly secured some incredibly good views of a lone bird that was feeding by itself within the first half an hour after we arrived. We continued our journey further south and explored the vast salt pans of Laem Phak Bia and Pak Thale Nature Reserve where we had amazing views of the globally endangered **Nordmann's Greenshanks** and more than 300 **Asian Dowitchers** feeding and roosting in the same area. Other notable species seen within the first day included Black-tailed Godwit, Curlew Sandpiper, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Great Knot, Eurasian Curlew, Red-necked Phalarope, Painted Stork, and Black-headed Ibis.

Day 2: 16th January – Phetchaburi & Kaeng Krachan Hide

We started our day by visiting a quiet stretch of sandy beach near Ban Bang Kao where we had a flock of 11 **Malaysian Plovers** roosting during high tide. Other interesting species seen within the same area included Black-capped Kingfisher, Golden-bellied Gerygone, and Indochinese Bushlark. We later visited a known roosting site for **Yellow-breasted Buntings** and saw several hundreds of them flying in and out of the roost. The same site turned out to be quite good for raptors too. We had great views of several Booted Eagles and at least 2 Greater Spotted Eagles. Other notable species included Bluethroat, Siamese Pied Starling, and Plain-backed Sparrow. After lunch, we visited a hide near Kaeng Krachan National Park where we spent the whole afternoon watching many birds coming to feed and bathe at the water hole. Highlights were a pair of **Ferruginous Partridges**, and flocks of **Bar-backed** and **Scaly-breasted Partridges** and **Kalij Pheasants**. We also had great views of many common species such as the Red Junglefowl, Lesser and Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush, Racket-tailed Treepie, Greater Yellowname, Indochinese, Chinese, and Hill Blue Flycatcher.

Day 3: 17th January – Kaeng Krachan National Park

Our morning started off successfully with a flock of **Rusty-cheeked Hornbills** visiting a fruiting fig tree along with some other significant species such as Great Hornbill, Golden-crested Myna, Asian Fairy-bluebird and a Black-thighed Falconet that was found nearby. Along the road towards Ban Krang Campsite, we also had some brilliant views of the extremely vocal **White-handed Gibbons** and Dusky Leaf Monkeys. We spent most of the day birding around the campsite and the stream crossings where we had some great views of the roosting **White-fronted Scops Owl**, Asian Emerald Cuckoo and Orange-breasted Trogon.



Ferruginous Partridge



White-fronted Scops-Owl

Day 4: 18th January – Kaeng Krachan, Tha Laeng & Wat Phra Phuttabat Noi

Our plan was to spend the morning at a different hide to try for the Blue Pitta. We started early even before sunrise near the check point into the national park where we had a calling Indian Thick-knee, Indian Nightjar, and a fly by Great Eared Nightjar. After sunrise, we then proceeded to the hide and immediately heard a calling Eared Pitta in the distance. After a while, not one but two(!) **Eared Pittas** eventually showed up in front of the hide. One of them appeared to be extremely territorial and gave us some surprisingly brilliant views. On top of that, a female **Blue Pitta** also showed up perfectly making it hard for us to contain the excitement. We then left the hide earlier than planned and stopped

briefly at the roosting site for **Indian Thick-knees** where we saw at least 5 birds roosting in the shades. After approximately 5 hour-drive, we then arrived at Wat Phra Phuttabat Noi in Saraburi where we looked for and successfully found the Thailand's endemic **Rufous Limestone Babbler** within the first few minutes. We concluded our day by making a quick stop near the hotel and watched many **Red-breasted Parakeets** visiting a big flowering Bombax tree.



Eared Pitta

Day 5: 19th January 2024 – Khao Yai National Park & Wat Muang

We started off early and drove up to Khao Yai National Park. Our morning kicked off by seeing Thailand's first **Green Warbler** that had been found by me since December. We also had some great views of **Pileated Gibbons** and a huge **Asian Elephant** that was blocking on the road. Other notable birds that we found included the beautiful **Common Green Magpie**, **Red-headed Trogon**, **Silver Pheasant**, Great Hornbill, Wreathed Hornbill, and the nationally rare **Yellow-vented Green Pigeon**. Around noon, we visited the famous **Buffy Fish Owl** nest and found that the chick had already fledged. Luckily, both the fledgling and its parent were roosting nearby, and we had some tremendously good views of them. We then departed from the park in the afternoon and made another stop at Wat Muang temple in Sing Buri where we enjoyed watching the uncommon **Blossom-headed Parakeets**. We stayed over in Nakhon Sawan and prepared for another long drive to the north.



Asian Elephant



Buffy Fish-Owl

Day 6: 20th January – Mae Ping National Park, Ban Hong Non-Hunting Area & Chom Thong

We started our journey very early in the morning from Nakhon Sawan and made our first birding stop at Mae Ping National Park in Lamphun. Despite the excellent weather, birds were much less active than expected. We still had some notable species during our brief visit including **Burmese Nuthatch**, **Grey-headed Parakeet**, Red-billed Blue Magpie, Rufous Treepie, and a first-winter male **Ultramarine Flycatcher**. Our next stop for the afternoon was at Ban Hong Non-Hunting Area where we looked for the globally endangered **Green Peafowl** and we were not disappointed. We had excellent views of many birds including displaying males at close range. Our last stop for the day was at Nong Khang Reservoir in Chom Thong where we had surprisingly good views (through a scope!) of the shy **Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler**, as well as some other common farmland species including Oriental Reed Warbler, Striated Swallow, Asian Golden Weaver, and Chestnut-tailed Starling.



Green Peafowl

Day 7: 21st January – Doi Inthanon National Park

We started the morning by visiting the summit area of Doi Inthanon. Along the way, we briefly stopped to see the nationally rare **Speckled Wood Pigeons** at their morning roost. Our morning on the summit was very productive and we got to see most of the target species including the local subspecies of Green-tailed Sunbird, Ashy Wood Pigeon, **Rufous-throated Partridge**, **Himalayan Shortwing**, **Pygmy Cupwing**, **Slaty-bellied Tesia**, Snowy-browed Flycatcher, and **Grey-sided Thrush**. We had lunch near Siriphum Waterfall where we also enjoyed excellent views of the **White-capped** and **Plumbeous Redstart**. Our afternoon was then spent in the Km. 34.5 trail and we made a brief owling trip after dinner where we had a close-up view of an **Oriental Scops Owl** and several **Indian Nightjars**.



Pygmy Cupwing

Day 8: 22nd January – Doi Inthanon National Park & Doi Lo paddies

We decided to explore the lower elevations of Doi Inthanon. Our first stop was near Km. 13 where we had a clear view of a male **White-rumped Falcon** and a flock of **Collared Falconets**. Then we drove up to spend the rest of the morning along Doi Pha Tang trail. It was a productive morning and we had some notable species including **Eyebrowed Wren-Babbler**, **Clicking Shrike-Babbler**, Eyebrowed Thrush, Small Niltava, Hume's Treecreeper, Silver-eared Mesia, and Oriental Turtle Dove. In the afternoon, we came down to see the **Savanna Nightjar** at a known roosting site then visited Doi Lo paddies where we had a nationally rare **Common Starling** as well as **Siberian Rubythroat**, **Yellow-eyed Babbler**, **Chestnut-capped Babbler**, and two different subspecies (*schach* and *tricolor*) of **Long-tailed Shrike**.

Day 9: 23rd January – Chiang Dao & Doi Ang Khang

We made a very early morning drive to Chiang Dao where we spent the morning at Wat Thum Pha Plong temple. Highlights of the morning included a flock of **Pin-tailed Green Pigeons**, Blue-throated Barbet, Black-hooded Oriole, **Sultan Tit**, **Streaked Wren-Babbler**, and a big flock of **Striated Yuhinas**. We then proceeded to drive up to Doi Ang Khang and spent much of the afternoon around the Royal Project where we had excellent views of the **Scaly Thrush**, **Black-breasted Thrush**, **Daurian Redstart**, Large Niltava, and **White-tailed Robin**. Other significant species that were seen elsewhere in the afternoon included a **Black Eagle**, Great Barbet, Cook's Swift, Striated Bulbul, and the localized Brown-breasted Bulbul.



Scaly Thrush

Day 10: 24th January – Doi Lang (west)

Our whole day was spent on the high mountain of Doi Lang (west) AKA Doi San Ju. Our first target was the beautiful and elusive **Mrs. Hume's Pheasant** which we had some great views of a stunning male and as many as five females. We also saw some great birds at the same spot including the globally endangered **Giant Nuthatch** and the adorable **Ultramarine Flycatcher**. Birds were generally active throughout the day and we had great views of the beautiful **Scarlet-faced Liocichla**, **Spot-winged Grosbeak**, Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher, and Rufous-bellied Niltava. We concluded our afternoon by

seeing the nationally rare **White-spectacled Warbler** that had been coming to the same area for the third consecutive winter.



Mrs. Hume's Pheasant



Scarlet-faced Liocichla

Day 11: 25th January – Doi Lang (west)

Our second morning at Doi Lang (west) started off slightly slower than our first day due to the misty and overcast weather. However, we were treated with brief but multiple views of the elusive **White-necked Laughingthrushes** and a singing **Spot-breasted Laughingthrush** that refused to show itself. We then came across a singing pair of **Spectacled Barwings** and a relatively confiding pair of **Spot-throated Babblers** that were singing loudly from the roadside. Our final highlight was finding a flock of three vocal **Spot-breasted Parrotbills** that eventually put on a great show for all of us. We then left the mountain around noon and drove towards the Mae Taeng Irrigation Project where we watched a pair

of long-staying **Long-billed Plovers** and many **Small Pratincoles**. We stayed overnight in Chiang Mai city where we would fly over to Phuket on the following morning.



Spot-breasted Parrotbill

Day 12: 26th January – Thai Mueang Health Garden

Our plan was disrupted by several hours of flight delay. As soon as we arrived in Phuket, we headed straight to Thai Mueang Health Garden in Phang Nga to look for the **Spotted Wood-Owl**. We spent nearly half an hour trying to locate the owl and were eventually rewarded with some great views of a bird that was roosting high up on one of the big trees in the garden. We stayed overnight near Ao Phang Nga where we would bird in the following morning.



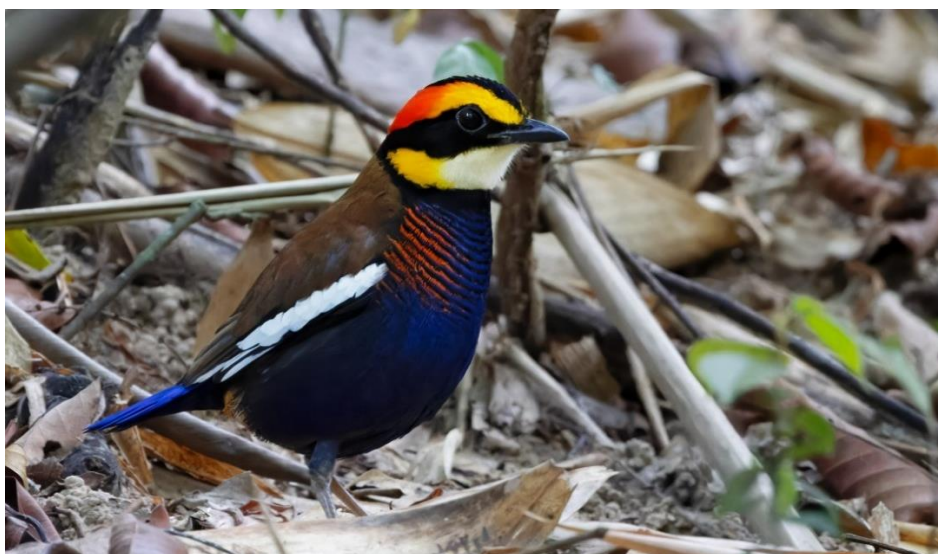
Spotted Wood-Owl

Day 13: 27th January – Ao Phang Nga, Phang Nga Provincial Town Mangrove Boardwalk & Sri Phang Nga National Park

We started our morning by visiting the famous mangrove of Ao Phang Nga. A vocal pair of **White-chested Babblers** and **Streak-breasted Woodpeckers** were among the first birds that greeted us. We spent some time looking for the range-restricted **Brown-winged Kingfisher** and eventually got some good views of a bird that was calling loudly next to the road. We also visited a mangrove boardwalk in Phang Nga Provincial Town where we had several brief views of the shy **Mangrove Pitta**, **Sakhalin Leaf Warbler** and an extremely confiding and vocal **Ashy Tailorbird**. After lunch we drove towards Sri Phang Nga National Park where we spent the whole afternoon birding near the waterfall trails. There was a **Lesser Fish-Eagle** nest with one chick that kept calling loudly near the car park. We also had great views of a male **Large Blue Flycatcher**, a little-known species that breeds in tiny area in eastern Himalayas and winters locally in the Thai-Malay Peninsula. We then concluded our evening by watching a stunning male **Malayan Banded-Pitta** that came out right in front of us for several minutes.



Large Blue Flycatcher



Malayan Banded-Pitta

Day 14: 28th January – Sri Phang Nga National Park & Krung Ching Waterfall

We started our day early as usual and stopped along the way to Sri Phang Nga National Park to look for the **Brown Wood-Owl** that had been reported recently. As soon as we arrived at the spot, we heard the deep hooting call of the owl and finally spotted it hiding in the tall dark tree. Our morning at Sri Phang Nga National Park was also quite productive with several good views of the typically shy **Bamboo Woodpecker**, an obliging female **Banded Kingfisher**, and several species of swifts including Pacific Swift, Silver-rumped Spinetail and Brown-backed Needletail. We then drove towards Krung Ching Waterfall around noon and arrived in the evening. We spent the evening birding around the open viewpoint where we heard White-crowned Hornbills in the distance and had great views of the displaying **Banded Broadbill**, and **Red-bearded Bee-eater**.



Rufous-collared Kingfisher

Day 15: 29th January – Krung Ching Waterfall

We spent the whole day birding around the entrance to Krung Ching Waterfall where we also sat for several hours in two different hides. Highlights of the morning included a stunning male **Rufous-collared Kingfisher**, a pair of **Chestnut-naped Forktails**, a male **Scarlet-rumped Trogon**, and a drab but generally scarce **Fulvous-chested Jungle-Flycatcher**. We also had great views of a male **Blyth's Paradise-flycatcher** that came to bathe in the afternoon. Other significant species seen throughout the day included a female **Green-backed Flycatcher**, Mugimaki Flycatcher, Rufous-tailed Tailorbird, Orange-headed Thrush, and Rufous-bellied Eagle.

Day 16: 30th January – Krung Ching Waterfall

Our final morning was spent near the entrance to the waterfall trail where we searched for some of the species that we were still missing, especially the babblers. We successfully found a pair of **Moustached Babblers** as well as **Short-tailed** and **Grey-headed Babbler**. Before we concluded our trip and drove to Nakhon Si Thammarat Airport where we would be flying back to Bangkok, we also had some good views of two vocal male **Violet Cuckoos**, a male **Mugimaki Flycatcher**, **Lesser Fish-Eagle**, and a pair **Raffles's Malkohas**.

Summary

In total, we managed to see (and hear) as many as 461 species throughout the trip including nearly all our main targets both in the north and the south. The complete species list and eBird checklists can be viewed at <https://ebird.org/tripreport/195217>.

We also kept our list of mammals that were seen during the trip as shown in the Table below.

Name	Scientific Name	Location
Asian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>	Khao Yai National Park
Pileated Gibbon	<i>Hylobates pileatus</i>	Khao Yai National Park
White-handed Gibbon	<i>Hylobates lar</i>	Khao Yai National Park
Dusky Leaf Monkey	<i>Trachypithecus obscurus</i>	Kaeng Krachan National Park
Long-tailed Macaque	<i>Macaca fascicularis</i>	Wat Phra Phuttabat Noi Temple
Northern Pig-tailed Macaque	<i>Macaca leonine</i>	Khao Yai National Park
Sambar Deer	<i>Rusa unicolor</i>	Khao Yai National Park
Barking Deer	<i>Muntiacus muntjak</i>	Khao Yai National Park
Lesser Mouse-Deer	<i>Tragulus kanchil</i>	Kaeng Krachan National Park
Red Giant Flying Squirrel	<i>Petaurista petaurista</i>	Krung Ching Waterfall
Black Giant Squirrel	<i>Ratufa bicolor</i>	Kaeng Krachan National Park
Finlayson's Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus finlaysonii</i>	Khao Yai National Park
Pallas's Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus erythraeus</i>	Doi Lang (west)
Grey-bellied Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus caniceps</i>	Kaeng Krachan National Park
Indochinese Ground Squirrel	<i>Menetes berdmorei</i>	Kaeng Krachan National Park
Burmese Striped Squirrel	<i>Tamiops macclellandii</i>	Kaeng Krachan National Park
Shrew-faced Squirrel	<i>Rhinosciurus laticaudatus</i>	Krung Ching Waterfall
Northern Treeshrew	<i>Tupaia belangeri</i>	Kaeng Krachan National Park
Common Treeshrew	<i>Tupaia glis</i>	Sri Phang Nga National Park