



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

China Winter Birding

Siberian Crane & Remote Asian Specialties

26th November to 7th December 2012 (12 days)

Trip Report



Reed Parrotbill by Rich Lindie

Trip report compiled by tour leader: Rich Lindie



Leaving behind the skyline and bright city lights of Shanghai, we headed straight for the shores of Fujian Province in SE China. Indeed, a short hop on a plane, a skip into a boat, and a step onto the sand, and we were looking at Saunders's Gulls and Black-faced Spoonbills within no time at all! Spending a few moments discussing the taxonomical nightmare that is *Larus* gulls, we waited for the tide to recede, and for our quarry to come in. I'm not sure everyone believed me when I said it was there, but it certainly didn't take long before that unique profile of a Spoon-billed Sandpiper had everyone in cheers! Making sure to get a look at all three individuals of this very enigmatic bird, and stopping to check all the other waders present, we made our way to our first of many fantastic banquet lunches! Knowing that Spoon-billed Sandpiper had been a major draw card for many of the participants, we couldn't have started the first morning with more style!

Other highlights of the morning included Eastern Spot-billed Duck, an Eastern Osprey, Whooper Swan and Eurasian Oystercatcher.

Our late afternoon in Fuzhou Forest Park might not have produced quite the same excitement as the morning, but it was a great introduction to the forests of Fujian, which we were to become very accustomed to over the next few days. A singing male Orange-bellied Leafbird greeted us as we stepped out of the vehicle, while Slaty-backed Forktail, Daurian Redstarts and our first of many Plumbeous Water Redstarts were to be found on a nearby stream. While in the forest itself, Great Barbets were seen and heard calling from exposed treetops, and Grey Treepies and Chestnut Bulbuls fed actively in the canopy. Before long, the winter sun had plummeted, along with the temperature, and it was time to retire to our hotel.

Day two saw us back in Fuzhou Forest Park for a brisk morning's walk. After brief views of a Greater Coucal, numerous Fork-tailed Sunbirds and both species of munia, we heard the distinctive calls of a White-necklaced Partridge nearby. Dashing across a small bridge, we found ourselves crouched quietly on the forest floor, hoping to draw one into view. Sadly, it wasn't meant to be, and despite hearing a number of individuals, we never got to see this elusive species. Reluctantly tearing ourselves away and then making our way along the well-paved forest trails, we did however pick up numerous species including Barred Cuckoo-Dove, Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler, Siberian Blue Robin, Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush, Mountain Hawk-Eagle, Bay and Rufous Woodpeckers, Grey-chinned and Scarlet Minivets, Yellow-bellied Tit, White-bellied Erpornis, Red-billed Blue Magpie, Collared Finchbill and Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush. The remainder of the day was spent making the journey to Long Xi Shan, in the misty Wuyi Mountains.





Transferring up a narrow forest road nearby, some of us were lucky enough to get our first views of the truly striking Silver Pheasant, while others managed to connect with Sultan Tit and White's Thrush, among other goodies; Yellow-bellied Weasel being the undoubted mammal highlight of the morning – hey, this isn't Africa! Leaving the Long Xi Shan area, we had added a number of birds by the time we hit the main road. These included Black-chinned Yuhina, Tristram's Bunting and Blyth's Shrike-babbler. Evening found us in yet mistier surroundings but warmer accommodations, in Emei Feng.

For a while, it seemed like the thick mist would prevent us from seeing any pheasants, let alone smaller birds of the forest. Then, once the first Silver and Koklass Pheasants had been sighted, it was with high hopes that we drove the only road in the area, back and forth, for the prize bird of the day – even the trip for some! It wasn't until afternoon though when we finally found the Elliot's Pheasant; but with fantastic views of two males by the roadside, it had suddenly become worth all the cold hours of staring into the white abyss. Added to this sighting, we did in fact manage to add a number of other birds to the trip list, albeit through many stops to scour through roving flocks of Huet's Fulvettas! New birds and highlights included Yellow-cheeked Tit, Speckled Piculet, Chinese Hwamei (Melodious Laughingthrush) and Yellow-throated Bunting.

Our final morning's drive in Emei Feng gave us further looks at all three pheasant species previously seen, as well as Little and Spotted Forktails to complete our set of four. Otherwise, the day was spent making only a few stops while *en route* to the lower elevations of Wuyuan.

Our first stop the next morning took us a little time to get to, but for all the right reasons. Stopping to admire some Masked and White-browed Laughingthrushes, a flock of Red-billed Starlings and a Brown Crake, we were already in full birding mode by the time we reached the bridge. Within minutes of our arrival, we were admiring small groups of the much-desired Scaly-sided Merganser - here, quite accustomed to human movement. Thereafter, and from the same standing spot, we found another target high on most of our wanted-lists, Long-billed Plover. What a morning! But it wasn't yet over: with more great targets still beckoning us, we entered the bamboo and woodlands adjacent to the river for a very productive morning's walk. Highlights included the often elusive and very cute Short-tailed Parrotbill, Grey-headed Parrotbill, Chinese Grosbeak, Rufous-faced Warbler, Green Shrike-babbler and Grey-sided Scimitar Babbler! Returning to the bus, we moved on to another site for a spot of birding in some forest and farmland, finding a very cooperative Collared Owlet, Grey-headed Pygmy and Great-spotted Woodpeckers, Brown-flanked Bush Warbler and another nervous Ring-necked Pheasant, before returning to our hotel.





Our first scheduled stop the following morning was for yet another highly sought-after duck. Seeing splendid male Mandarin Ducks was not only rewarding for the opportunity to admire their beauty, but also satisfying for some to be able to 'tick' the species in its natural range. With that, however, it was time to move to less natural surroundings for a birding tower of a different sort. Standing on top of a building in one of Jianxi's small, rural towns, it was hard to believe that this was the 'secret site' that our local guides had been talking about. Granted, Pied Falconet is quite localized in parts of its range, but it really seemed quite public in a sense. Nonetheless, with cups of coffee barely poured, a gorgeous little adult came flying in from a communication tower in the distance, only to perch meters away from us. Everyone admired the cute little "Panda Bird" as it is referred to locally, before heading out for more birding in the surrounding hills.

Not proving productive, we left the area soon after our arrival, and headed back to the Short-tailed Parrotbill site to catch up with remaining species that none or only some of us had seen on the previous trip. Managing to relocate the large mixed flock in the same valley, we had many of the same species as the previous day, but also managed to add a few more, including a shy Dusky Fulvetta. Returning from the site to the hotel, we had one final chance to flush a Chinese Bamboo Partridge, which we (or rather Chris) managed to do with great success. Views and cheers all round!

Given the ground we had to cover for our transfer to Nanchang, it was great to get at least some birding done before leaving the Wuyuan area. Two short morning walks provided us with a flock of Red-billed Leiothrix, Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush, a lone Russet Sparrow, Dusky Thrush and Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler. Our lunchtime stop proved productive for some as they found Little Bunting nearby.

Naturally, however, the majority of the day's trip birds came from the shores of Poyang Lake. We had not only reached new habitat, but an abundance of birds as well, and it was with great fervour that we scanned through the hoards of waterfowl and other species on the shores of the lake. Swan Goose and both species of Bean Goose rapidly made their way on to the list, as did Tundra Swan, Spotted Redshank, Eurasian Skylark and a fantastic Chinese Grey Shrike! It was unlikely anyone would ever have identified the duck served at dinner, but the warm confines of our lavish hotel certainly were a welcome sight, soon after nightfall.

Breakfast the following morning at our soon-to-become favourite breakfast spot was a wonderful precursor to the birding day ahead – although, variety aside, it might have just been the sunny weather that had us in such high spirits!





Criss-crossing a myriad of roads in the greater Poyang Lake area, we were always on the heels of yet another great target bird. Worthy of special mention, however, were the impressive numbers of Siberian Crane and Oriental Storks that we saw on the day. Both these species are in decline and it was great to see so much suitable habitat, at least as a haven for them to winter in. Fantastic birds in their own right, and a highlight for all, we never really grew tired of seeing them!

In addition to these, the supporting cast included Greater White-fronted Goose, Eurasian Bittern, impressive numbers of Eurasian Spoonbill, Common Crane and even a group of Snow Geese! Focusing our attention on the marshy areas from time to time, we also managed to lure out the very little-known Marsh Grassbird and a host of buntings, cisticolas and some Chinese Penduline Tits. We ended the day with a walk through some drier marshland, flushing no less than seven Japanese Quails.

Due to unfavourable water levels and some local disturbance, we hadn't found two of our quarry crane species on the previous day, and now it was necessary to drive to another section of the lake. A wise move indeed, as it wasn't long after our arrival that we were admiring a group of Hooded Cranes by the shore. Shortly thereafter, we finally found a group of Lesser White-fronted Geese, attempting to hide in a large flock of 'Greater's'. Taking time to compare both species and to study the subtle identification differences, we made our way to the final major stop of the morning. It certainly felt like the ideal send-off to see small groups of our final crane, the elegant White-naped. Much elation and a sense of relief for some, our return journey to town gave us a few more species for the list including Terek Sandpiper and Little Ringed Plover. Upon arrival, we then set off for the airport for our evening flight to Shanghai.

Our well-appointed hotel for the night was only a few hundred meters from the next day's birding site, so we took a short stroll to get there before breakfast. Standing in the cold morning chill, it seemed the reed beds might take a great deal of time to search. Then, again within moments of our arrival, we heard the unfamiliar calls of another new parrotbill. Who'd have expected that they would cross the reed bed so rapidly to investigate our calls?! Admiring these great birds at our leisure, we went on to pick up Japanese Reed Bunting and a number of Pale Thrushes, before heading back to the hotel for breakfast with a view. Not, however, before taking a good look at our final bird of the tour: a small group of Falcated Teal seen from the parking lot - what a way to finish the tour!

Photo credits: In order of appearance - Red-billed Blue Magpie, Long-billed Plover, Pied Falconet, White-naped Crane, Greater White-fronted Geese, Finless Porpoise – All taken by Rich Lindie.





Annotated List of Bird Species seen

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows the IOC 3.1 List of: Gill, F. and M. Wright. 2012. Birds of the World: Recommended English Names. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.

Pheasant, Fowl & Allies Phasianidae

Japanese Quail

Coturnix japonica

We flushed around seven individuals while walking along the edge of Poyang Lake.

Chinese Bamboo Partridge

Bambusicola thoracicus

After hearing this species on a few occasions, we were very pleased to flush one for great views, near Wuyuan.

Koklass Pheasant

Pucrasia macrolopha

A number of males and females were seen by the roadside, in Wuyishan.

Silver Pheasant

Lophura nycthemera

We had multiple encounters with this species, in Wuyishan.

Elliot's Pheasant

Symaticus ellioti

We were duly rewarded for our efforts, with great views of this species, in the Emei Feng area. What a highlight!

Ring-necked Pheasant

Phasianus colchicus

Following our first encounter in the Wuyuan area, we went on to see this species on a handful of other occasions.

Ducks, Geese & Swans Anatidae

Swan Goose

Anser cygnoides

This species was common along the shores of Poyang Lake.

Taiga Bean Goose

Anser fabalis

Scattered individuals, pairs and small groups were seen, mixed with the following species, at Poyang Lake.

Tundra Bean Goose

Anser serrirostris

Very good numbers of this species were seen at Poyang Lake.

Greylag Goose

Anser anser

This species was seen daily, in low numbers, in the Poyang Lake area.

Greater White-fronted Goose

Anser albifrons

A very numerous species at Poyang Lake.



Lesser White-fronted Goose*Anser erythropus*

It took a bit of searching but we managed to find a small group of this species, mixed in a larger flock of the previous one.

Snow Goose*Chen caerulescens*

Certainly a surprise to find this species at our first morning stop at Poyang Lake!

Tundra Swan*Cygnus columbianus*

A common sight in the Poyang Lake area.

Whooper Swan*Cygnus cygnus*

Seen on the first day of the tour, at the Minjiang Estuary.

Mandarin Duck*Aix galericulata*

We saw this stunning little duck in the Wuyuan area.

Gadwall*Anas strepera*

A large paddling of this species was seen on the final day of the tour, near Shanghai.

Falcated Duck*Anas falcata*

A few individuals of this species were seen together with the previous species.

Eurasian Wigeon*Anas penelope*

Seen in the Minjiang Estuary area, and at Poyang Lake.

Mallard*Anas platyrhynchos*

As with the previous species, seen at the Minjian Estuary and at Poyang Lake.

Eastern Spot-billed Duck*Anas zonorhyncha*

Seen well at a number of sites, including the Minjiang Estuary and Poyang Lake.

Northern Shoveler*Anas clypeata*

Seen only at the Minjiang Estuary

Northern Pintail*Anas acuta*

Small numbers seen at the Minjiang Estuary and at Poyang Lake.

Eurasian Teal*Anas crecca*

Seen along the small channels in the Minjiang Estuary and at Poyang Lake.

Common Pochard*Aythya ferina*

Seen only at Poyang Lake.

Scaly-sided Merganser*Mergus squamatus*

We had great views of this highly sought-after species, in the Wuyuan area.

Grebes Podicipedidae**Little Grebe***Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*

Seen in the Wuyuan and Poyang Lake areas.

Great Crested Grebe*Podiceps cristatus*

Seen in small numbers, in the Poyang Lake area.

Black-necked Grebe*Podiceps nigricollis*

Seen in the Poyang Lake area.

Storks Ciconidae**Oriental Stork***Ciconia boyciana*

Another sought-after species that makes a visit to Poyang Lake so special, where this species is quite common indeed.

Ibises, Spoonbills Threskiornithidae

Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*
 Very good numbers of this species were seen in the Poyang Lake area.
Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*
 One small group were scoped and admired at the Minjiang Estuary.

Hérons, Bitterns Ardeidae

Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*
 Seen well in flight and perched in the reeds at Poyang Lake.
Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*
 One individual was seen briefly, during our final day in the Poyang Lake area.
Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*
 Seen on most days of the tour, while in suitable habitat.
Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*
 Seen on just two days of the tour.
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
 We saw this species at most wetland sites, including the Poyang Lake system.
Great Egret *Ardea alba*
 Seen in small numbers at the Minjiang Estuary and in the Poyang Lake complex.
Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*
 We saw this species on the first day of the tour, at Minjiang, and again on the last day, near Shanghai.
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*
 Seen almost daily.

Cormorants Phalacrocoracidae

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
 Commonly seen at large waterbodies, including Poyang Lake.

Ospreys Pandionidae

Eastern Osprey *Pandion cristatus*
 One of the first species we saw, upon arriving at the Minjiang Estuary, though not seen again during the remainder of the tour.

Kites, Hawks & Eagles Accipitridae

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*
 Seen in open country on the drive between Long Xi Shan and Emei Feng.
Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus*
 A handful of individuals were seen in the Poyang Lake area.
Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*
 Seen on our first day in the Poyang Lake area.
Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*
 We saw this distinctive raptor on two days of the tour, with our best views being of an adult scoped near Long Xi Shan.
Besra *Accipiter virgatus*
 Seen on several occasions during our time in the Wuyuan area.
Eastern Buzzard *Buteo japonicus*



Seen on a handful of occasions, including a few in the open areas around Poyang Lake.

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malayensis*

We had fantastic views of this very distinctive raptor, with most of our sightings coming from the Wuyuan area.

Mountain Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus nipalensis*

At least one adult of this species was seen flying over Fuzhou Forest Park.

Falcons Falconidae

Pied Falconet *Microhierax melanoleucos*

Who can forget our encounter with this little gem, the “Panda Bird”. In the most unexpected of places, we found ourselves enjoying this great little bird with coffee in hand and a great view of rural China. Definitely a highlight!

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Unexpectedly scarce during our visit, but we did catch up with this species in open land near Poyang Lake.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

One of these little guys was seen cruising by the vehicle, on our first day in the Poyang Lake area.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

A rather unusual individual of this species was seen, perched atop a pole, in the Poyang Lake area.

Rails, Crakes & Coots Rallidae

Brown Crake *Amaurornis akool*

Another confiding species, seen well on a handful of occasions, and at scattered sites, including Wuyuan.

White-breasted Moorhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*

One was seen in flooded rice fields, during the drive between Long Xi Shan and Emei Feng.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa*

First seen swimming, out in the river at Wuyuan, and subsequently seen on numerous occasions in the Poyang Lake area.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Seen only at Poyang Lake.

Cranes Gruidae

Siberian crane *Grus leucogeranus*

It's heartening to see a place where this species can still be found in relatively good numbers. And while we were under no illusions as to the future of the species, we all thoroughly enjoyed seeing so many flocks and family groups. A great bird in its own right, and a great addition to any world list.

White-naped Crane *Grus vipio*

For some of us at least, this species was more important than the previous and indeed caused some anxiety for not just myself as the leader. Eventually connecting with this very handsome bird, it felt like a mere bonus that we got to see them so well by the end of the day.

Common Crane *Grus grus*

Perhaps due to its relative abundance, this species isn't always given enough credit for its elegance, but we certainly appreciated having another crane species added to the mix.

Hooded Crane *Grus monacha*

Our final day in the Poyang Lake area pretty much began with this species – much to the delight



of many!

Oystercatchers Haematopodidae

Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematops ostralegus*
One of these handsome birds was seen at the Minjiang Estuary on day one.

Stilts & Avocets Recurvirostridae

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*
Seen on only one day of the tour, during the drive from Fuzhou to Long Xi Shan.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*
Another species that we appreciated seeing in such large flocks. As expected, our encounters were confined to the Minjiang Estuary and the Poyang Lake area.

Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
A regular sight along the shores of Poyang Lake, but always a nice bird to admire.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*
We first saw this species on the mudflats at the Minjiang Estuary, while Steve found another at Poyang Lake.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*
Just a few individuals were seen at the Minjiang Estuary.

Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus*
We had great, long looks at this species while in the Wuyan area. Having found it so easily on our first day in the area, it wasn't until the next day when we realized that it was by no means a guaranteed species!

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*
One or two birds were seen briefly at Poyang Lake.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*
Another species that we encountered at both the Minjiang estuary and Poyang Lake.

Sandpipers, Snipes Scolopacidae

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
We flushed a handful of these birds while in the Poyang Lake area.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*
Had it not been for the large group of Siberian Cranes in front of us, we might have paid more attention to the fly-over flock of this species!

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*
We had encounters with this species on the first and final day of the tour - at the Minjiang Estuary and near Shanghai.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*
By far the most conspicuous and commonly encountered wader in the Poyang Lake area.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*
Apart from one or two individuals in rather uncharacteristic habitat in Wuyuan, we only saw this species on one day, in the Poyang Lake area.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*



Seen at most coastal and inland waterbodies, including Poyang Lake and the Minjiang Estuary.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

We had one encounter with a very lightly-colored individual at Fuzhou Forest Park, and further sightings at Wuyuan and Poyang Lake.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

We saw this species on our first day in the Poyang Lake area.

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*

Steve managed to find this species at Poyang Lake, just before it took flight. Unfortunately, we weren't able to relocate it again

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

We saw this species at the Minjiang Estuary and again at Poyang Lake.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

As expected, this species was only seen at the Minjiang Estuary.

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*

Another species only encountered on the coastal mudflats at the Minjiang Estuary.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Seen in fairly good numbers at Poyang Lake and Minjinag Estuary.

Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*

Within just a few short hours of landing in Fuzhou, we were watching three of these highly sought-after birds! Indeed, this amazing bird was one of the very first to make its way on to our tour list. A highlight for all, and the main reason to come!

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers Laridae

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

This species was a common sight in the Poyang Lake area,

Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris*

Seen briefly at the Minjiang Estuary.

Mew Gull *Larus canus*

At least one individual was seen very well at Poyang Lake.

Vega Gull *Larus vegae*

Both dark and light-backed individuals were seen at the Minjiang Estuary.

Saunders's Gull *Saundersilaurus saundersi*

Just as we had begun discussion over the possibility of finding this species, a small flock was spotted along the shores of the Minjiang Estuary!

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

This large, widespread tern was seen well at the Minjiang Estuary.

Pigeons, Doves Columbidae

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*

Seen on most days of the tour.

Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

Seen on almost every day of the tour.

Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*

Just one brief sighting of this species, outside Long Xi Shan.

Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*

This delicate little dove was seen on numerous occasions, throughout the tour.

Barred Cuckoo-dove *Macropygia unchall*



A few, fast-flying pairs of this species were seen over the forests of Fuzhou and Long Xi Shan.

Cuckoos Cuculidae

Greater Coucal

Centropus sinensis

Shortly after beginning our morning walk at Fuzhou Forest Park, this species was seen in a small wetland by the roadside.

Owls Strigidae

Collared Owlet

Glaucidium brodiei

After imitating the call of this species on so many occasions, it is always nice to catch up with the 'real thing'. Our one and only encounter was with a very obliging individual in the farmlands of Wuyuan.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae

White-throated Kingfisher

Halcyon smyrnensis

After admiring one of these handsome kingfishers on a power cable in Wuyuan, we went on to see a couple more in the Poyang Lake area.

Common Kingfisher

Alcedo atthis

We regularly encountered this species on the tour.

Crested Kingfisher

Megaceryle lugubris

Some of us were lucky enough to see this species during our final morning walk in the Wuyuan area.

Pied Kingfisher

Ceryle rudis

Another widespread species that we encountered on almost every day while in suitable habitat.

Asian Barbets Megalaimidae

Great Barbet

Megalaima virens

We had great views of this species in Fuzhou Forest Park.

Woodpeckers Picidae

Speckled Piculet

Picumnus innominatus

A few of these great little birds were seen in mixed flocks, in the forests of Wuyishan.

Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker

Dendrocopus canicapillus

At least three of these neat little woodpeckers were seen at forest edge in Wuyuan.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Dendrocopus major

This widespread species was seen together with the previous one, and on one other occasion in Wuyuan.

Greater Yellownape

Chrysophlegma flavinucha

One of us was lucky enough to see this species in the Long Xi Shan area.

Bay Woodpecker

Blythipicus pyrrhotis

Seen briefly in Fuzhou Forest Park, and again in Long Xi Shan, where one excited individual just wouldn't sit still for good views.

Rufous Woodpecker

Micropternus brachyurus

A pair of these birds was seen in Fuzhou Forest Park.

Cuckooshrikes Campephagidae

Grey-chinned Minivet

Pericrocotus solaris

Seen on a number of occasions, and often in association with the following species.



Scarlet Minivet*Pericrocotus speciosus*

As with the above species, though apparently more numerous.

Shrikes Laniidae**Brown Shrike***Lanius cristatus*

Seen on the drive between Fuzhou and Long Xi Shan.

Long-tailed Shrike*Lanius schach*

Ubiquitous in open country, throughout the tour.

Chinese Grey Shrike*Lanius sphenocercus*

This species was high on just about everyone's target list, and so it was with great relief and excitement that we managed to find one, in the Poyang lake area.

Vireos & Allies Vireonidae**White-bellied Erpornis***Erpornis zantholeuca*

A distinctive little bird, seen on numerous occasions in the forests of Fuzhou and Long Xi Shan.

Blyth's Shrike-babbler*Pteruthius aeralatus*

We saw this species in the forests around Long Xi Shan and Emei Feng.

Green Shrike-babbler*Pteruthius xanthochlorus*

Attempting to pose as just another fulvetta, this species eventually gave us great views, in the Wuyuan area.

Crows, Jays & Allies Corvidae**Eurasian Jay***Garrulus glandarius*

This striking species was seen well in the Wuyuan area.

Red-billed Blue Magpie*Urocissa erythroryncha*

Seen at a number of well wooded sites, including Wuyishan and Fuzhou Forest Park.

Grey Treepie*Dendrocitta formosae*

Also commonly encountered at many of the forest sites visited.

Eurasian Magpie*Pica pica*

Not particularly common, though seen well by all in the Wuyuan area.

Tits, Chickadees Paridae**Yellow-bellied Tit***Periparus venustulus*

This great little endemic was first seen in Fuzhou Forest Park, followed by many other sightings in the Wuyuan area.

Cinereous Tit*Parus cinereus*

Individuals and flocks, apparently belonging to this species, were seen on almost every day of the tour.

Yellow-cheeked Tit*Parus spilonotus*

A fantastic little bird that was pleasantly common in the forests of Wuyishan.

Sultan Tit*Melanochlora sultanea*

Part of the group saw this striking species while waiting for the rest of us to descend from Long Xi Shan.

Penduline Tits Remizidae**Chinese Penduline Tit***Remiz consobrinus*

The first flock we encountered was at the Minjiang Estuary. Thereafter, we had multiple encounters in



the Poyang Lake area and at the Reed Parrotbill site, near Shanghai.

Larks Alaudidae

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis*
This species was common in the Poyang Lake area.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

Collared Finchbill *Spizixos semitorques*
A charismatic bulbul that we encountered in Fuzhou, Wuyishan and Wuyuan forests.

Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*
We saw this species on a few occasions, in Fuzhou Forest Park.

Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*
Seen by part of the group, during our exploration of the Wuyuan area.

Light-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*
Common and conspicuous in wooded areas throughout the tour.

Mountain Bulbul *Ixos mccllellandii*
Following our first encounter at Fuzhou Forest Park, we went on to see this species on a handful of other occasions in Wuyisan.

Chestnut Bulbul *Hemixos castanonotus*
This handsome bulbul was seen well on numerous occasions while we were in Fuzhou Forest Park and the Long Xi Shan section of Wuyishan National Park.

Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*
Both the regular form and the white-headed form of this species were seen in the Long Xi Shan area.

Swallows, Martins Hirundinidae

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*
Seen on just one occasion, during our first day in the Poyang Lake area.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
This species was seen during the drive between Fuzhou and Long Xi Shan.

Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus*
Small high-flying flocks of this species were seen over Fuzhou Forest Park.

Cettia Bush Warblers & Allies Cettidae

Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus poliocephalus*
A gorgeous little bird, and one that we were fortunate to see more than once. All sightings were in the Wuyuan area.

Brown-flanked Bush Warbler *Horornis fortipes*
Heard on a handful of occasions, this skulker eventually revealed itself to all, in the Wuyuan area.

Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler *Horornis acanthizoides*
Two of these shy warblers were heard and seen during our final morning in the Wuyuan area.

Bushtits Aegithalidae

Black-throated Bushtit *Aegithalos concinns*
One of the favourite birds of the trip, this little gem was seen in active flocks at numerous sites, including Wuyuan.



Leaf Warblers & Allies Phylloscopidae

Pallass's Leaf Warbler

Phylloscopus proregulus

Flighty and restless, the ornate little warbler was seen on many occasions throughout the duration of the tour, until we reached the Poyang area.

Yellow-browed Warbler

Phylloscopus inornatus

Commonly encountered in wooded areas, throughout the tour.

Hartert's Leaf Warbler

Phylloscopus goodsoni

A small group of us saw this species while birding with Laolin, in the Emei Feng area.

Grassbirds & Allies Locustellidae

Marsh Grassbird

Locustella pryeri

A little patience was all that was required to get views of this skulker. A little-known bird and an important target to get while in the area.

Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae

Zitting Cisticola

Cisticola juncidis

Common throughout our time in the Poyang Lake area.

Golden-headed Cisticola

Cisticola exilis

At least one of these tiny birds was seen in tall grass in the Poyang Lake area.

Plain Prinia

Prinia inornata

Our initial encounter was with a pair by the roadside in Wuyuan. Thereafter, we saw this species on a number of occasions in suitable habitat.

Common Tailorbird

Orthotomus sutorius

This species was seen well in the undergrowth, during the final part of our morning in Fuzhou Forest Park.

Babblers Timalidae

Grey-sided Scimitar Babbler

Pomatorhinus swinhoei

Heard on numerous occasions, though seen on very few. The best sightings for most of us were those in the Wuyuan area.

Streak-breasted Babbler

Pomatorhinus ruficollis

This vocal species showed on a number of occasions in all forested sites, including Wuyuan and Fuzhou.

Spotted Wren-Babbler

Spelaeornis formosus

Two of us managed to get views of this skulker while birding the riverside at Wuyuan.

Rufous-capped Babbler

Stachyridopsis ruficeps

Despite being present in a number of flocks in the Wuyi Mountains, not everyone saw this species until more confiding individuals were seen in Wuyuan.

Fulvetta, Ground Babblers & Allies Pellomeidae

Dusky Fulvetta

Alcippe brunnea

It took patience and a little work, but this little bird showed well to all during our final afternoon in the Wuyuan area.

Huet's Fulvetta

Alcippe hueti

After our first encounter in Fuzhou Forest Park, we were to become very familiar with this species, being by far the most numerous and vocal constituent of most moving flocks.



Laughingthrushes Leiothrichidae

Chinese Hwamei

Garrulax canorus

Heard calling on numerous occasions, this shy songster was eventually seen by all, with most sightings coming from the Wuyi Mountains.

Moustached Laughingthrush

Garrulax cineraceus

One noisy flock of these birds was frustratingly only seen by one participant, in the Wuyuan area.

Masked Laughingthrush

Garrulax perspicillatus

We had great looks at this species in the Wuyuan area, most notably on the drive in to the merganser site.

Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush

Garrulax monileger

We caught up with this species during a light rain shower in Fuzhou Forest Park, on our only morning there.

Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush

Garrulax pectoralis

A rather fast-moving flock of these handsome birds were seen on our final morning walk through forest outside Wuyuan.

White-browed Laughingthrush

Garrulax sannio

During our first drive in the Wuyuan area, we stepped out of the vehicle to admire some Masked Laughingthrushes in some roadside vegetation, only to find that this species was the only one willing to put in an appearance.

Red-billed Leiothrix

Leiothrix lutea

A noisy, but somewhat shy, group of these ornate little birds were seen on our final morning walk in the Wuyuan area.

Sylviid Babblers Sylviidae

Vinous-throated Parrotbill

Sinosuthora webbiana

This widespread species was encountered at several sites in the Wuyuan area, and in the reeds close to our accommodation near Shanghai on the final day.

Short-tailed Parrotbill

Neosuthora davidiana

A species that can prove very elusive at times, we were very lucky to encounter this species on more than one occasion in Wuyuan, for fantastic views.

Grey-headed Parrotbill

Psittiparus gularis

A frustratingly elusive bird on our tour, though most of us managed good views at one point. Had it not been for the roving mixed flock at Wuyuan, almost none of us would have connected with this species – a lucky encounter indeed!

Reed Parrotbill

Paradoxornis heudei

This cracking endemic was admired by all at our site near Shanghai, on the final day. Despite the cold wintery conditions, a busy little flock of these birds gave themselves up before it was even time for breakfast. Some enjoyed return visits to views these little beauties throughout the course of the day.

White-eyes Zosteropidae

Indochinese Yuhina

Yuhina torqueola

Large, tight flocks were seen busily feeding on a number of occasions in Fuzhou Forest Park.

Black-chinned Yuhina

Yuhina nigrimenta

A small group of us saw this species during our final morning in the Long Xi Shan area.

Japanese White-eye

Zosterops japonicus

Numerous flocks were seen at lower elevation forest sites, including Fuzhou and Wuyuan.



Goldcrests, Kinglets & Allies Regulidae

Goldcrest

Regulus regulus

Sighted on only one day of the tour, in forest near Long Xi Shan.

Starlings Sturnidae

Crested Myna

Acridotheres cristatellus

Despite it taking a few days before everyone had come to grips with this species, it was seen on almost everyday of the tour, sometimes in fairly large numbers.

Red-billed Starling

Spodiopsar sericeus

Seen on almost every day, following our first sighting of a flock near Wuyuan.

White-cheeked Starling

Spodiopsar cineraceus

Only encountered during the Poyang Lake leg of our tour, though reasonably common there.

Black-collared Starling

Gracupica nigricollis

This large and striking starling was fairly common in suitable habitat, particularly around Wuyuan and Poyang Lake.

Common Starling

Sturnus vulgaris

A bit of a surprise to encounter this species in the Poyang Lake area.

Thrushes Turdidae

White's Thrush

Zoothera aurea

A few lucky participants saw this species in the Long Xi Shan area.

Common Blackbird

Turdus merula

First seen during our stopover in Taining, this species was common thereafter.

Eyebrowed Thrush

Turdus obscurus

Unfortunately, only one of us managed to see this species.

Pale Thrush

Turdus pallidus

Seen regularly throughout the final day of the tour, where small flocks were seen feeding and flying over.

Dusky Thrush

Turdus eunomus

We found this species during our final walk in the Wuyuan area, and later in the same day.

Chats, Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae

Siberian Blue Robin

Luscinia cyane

One shy elusive individual was seen in the undergrowth at Fuzhou Forest Park.

Red-flanked Bluetail

Tarsiger cyanurus

Often quite confiding, this unobtrusive little species was seen in a variety of wooded sites, throughout the tour.

Oriental Magpie-Robin

Copsychus saularis

Though not numerous, pairs and individuals of this species were encountered on almost every day of the tour.

Daurian Redstart

Phoenicurus auroreus

Seen on every day of the tour, in a variety of habitats.

Plumbeous Water Redstart

Rhyacornis fuliginosa

We encountered this species along most suitable rivers and streams throughout the tour.

Little Forktail

Ericurus scouleri

One of the little gems showed very well during our final drive in the Emei Feng area.

Slaty-backed Forktail

Ericurus schistaceus



This, the first forktail we encountered, was seen over five consecutive days during our time in Fuzhou and Wuyishan.

White-crowned Forktail

Ericurus leschenaulti

Seen well at various sites within the Wuyishan Reserve and in the Wuyuan area.

Spotted Forktail

Ericurus maculatus

A stunning little forktail that showed very well by the roadside in the Long Xi Shan area.

Siberian Stonechat

Saxicola maurus

Surprisingly few sightings of this species during our tour. Those few that were had come from the Poyang lake area and farmland outside Wuyuan.

Blue Rock Thrush

Monticola solitarius

Seen in Fuzhou Forest Park and at Long Xi Shan.

Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush

Monticola rufiventris

A pair of these lovely birds was seen in forest near to the parking lot in Fuzhou Forest Park.

Asian Brown Flycatcher

Muscicapa dauurica

A very unexpected find indeed. One individual was seen very well in Fuzhou Forest Park.

Dippers Cinclidae

Brown Dipper

Cinclus pallasii

Part of the group saw this distinctive species while birding the river in the Wuyuan area.

Leafbirds Chloropseidae

Orange-bellied Leafbird

Chloropsis hardwickii

This great-looking bird was common and conspicuous in Fuzhou Forest Park, and seen on several other occasions during our time in forested areas.

Flowerpeckers Dicaeidae

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker

Dicaeum ignipectus

A female-type of this species was seen in Fuzhou Forest Park. Unfortunately, not by all members of the group.

Sunbirds Nectariniidae

Fork-tailed Sunbird

Aethopyga christinae

Pleasantly common in Fuzhou Forest Park, but also encountered in the Wuyuan area.

Old World Sparrows Passeridae

Russet Sparrow

Passer rutilans

We eventually managed to track down one individual of this species in the Wuyuan area. Much to the delight of some!

Eurasian Tree Sparrow

Passer montanus

Seen on almost every day of the tour.

Waxbills, Munias & Allies Estrildidae

White-rumped Munia

Lonchura striata

Beginning with our first sighting in Fuzhou Forest Park, we went on to see this species on numerous occasions, throughout the remainder of the tour.

Scaly-breasted Munia

Lonchura punctulata



As with the above species, encountered on many occasions throughout the tour.

Wagtails, Pipits Motacillidae

- Eastern Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla tschutschensis*
Encountered on only one day, during our time in the Poyang Lake area.
- Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*
This elegant species was seen well in Fuzhou Forest Park and in the Wuyuan area.
- White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*
Commonly encountered throughout the tour.
- Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*
This often arboreal species was seen at a number of wooded sites, including Wuyuan and Fuzhou.
- Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus*
A small number of these birds were seen over two days, in the Poyang Lake area.
- Buff-bellied Pipit** *Anthus rubescens*
This species was numerous in the Poyang Lake area.

Finches Fringillidae

- Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*
We sighted several flocks of this species, at scattered localities.
- Grey-capped Greenfinch** *Chloris sinica*
Good numbers of these flocking starlings were seen thro
- Eurasian Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*
We had just one fly-over view of this species, in the Wuyuan area.
- Chinese Grosbeak** *Eophona migratoria*
This cracking little bird was seen on a handful of occasions in the Wuyuan area.

Buntings, New World Sparrows & Allies Emberizidae

- Tristram's Bunting** *Emberiza tristrami*
Our first sighting came from the accommodation area at Long Xi Shan, with further encounters elsewhere in Wuyishan and at Wuyuan.
- Chestnut-eared Bunting** *Emberiza fucata*
A few individuals were seen well, just outside Wuyuan, and at Poyang Lake.
- Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla*
Seen during our lunch time stop, during the transfer from Wuyuan to Poyang Lake.
- Yellow-browed Bunting** *Emberiza chrysophrys*
Good numbers of this species were seen in the Wuyuan area.
- Yellow-throated Bunting** *Emberiza elegans*
Initially proving quite elusive, this species eventually showed quite well on a number of occasions, particularly in the Wuyuan area.
- Black-faced Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala*
Commonly encountered throughout the tour.
- Pallas's Reed Bunting** *Emberiza pallasi*
See well at Poyang Lake and at the Reed Parrotbill site, near Shanghai.
- Japanese Reed Bunting** *Emberiza yessoensis*
Just a few individuals of this species were found in reed beds near Shanghai.





Annotated Checklist of Mammals Recorded

Pallas's Squirrel

Callosciurus erythraeus

This attractive little squirrel was seen in Fuzhou Forest Park.

Yellow-bellied Weasel

Mustela kathiah

One of these great little mammals was seen by the roadside during our walk at Long Xi Shan.

Maritime Striped Squirrel

Tamiops maritimus

We saw this species on a handful of occasions, during our time in the Wuyi Mountains and around Wuyuan.

Siberian Weasel

Mustela sibirica

We had great views of this large weasel at Lake Poyang.

Finless Porpoise

Neophocaena phocaenoides

We were delighted to find a group of these unusual cetaceans while birding the shores of Lake Poyang.

Rockjumper Birding Tours
Worldwide Birding Adventures
PO Box 13972, Cascades, 3202, South Africa
Tel: +27 33 394 0225
Fax: +27 88 033 394 0225
Email: info@rockjumperbirding.com
Alternative Email: rockjumperbirding@yahoo.com
Website: www.rockjumperbirding.com

