

ZOOTHERA GLOBAL BIRDING

CHINA – BEIDAIHE & HAPPY ISLAND 2010

FRIDAY 8th MAY to THURSDAY 20TH MAY



HIGHLIGHTS: Either for rarity value, exceptional views or simply a group favourite:

- Ibisbill
- Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
- Asiatic Dowitcher
- Little Whimbrel
- Amur Falcon
- Rufous-bellied Woodpecker
- Mugimaki Flycatcher
- Yellow-rumped Flycatcher
- Fujian Niltava
- Siberian Thrush
- Dusky Thrush
- Naumann's Thrush
- White's Thrush
- Blyth's Pipit
- Forest Wagtail
- Siberian Rubythroat
- Siberian Blue Robin
- Vinous-throated Parrotbill
- Thick-billed Warbler
- Lanceolated Warbler
- Grey-crowned Warbler
- Daurian Starling
- Yellow-browed Bunting
- Godlewski's Bunting

The first **ZOOTHERA** tour to China visited the migration hotspots of Beidaihe and Happy Island at the northern end of the Gulf of Bohai. It turned out to be an absolutely fantastic trip with the main aim of seeing as many of the 'siberian' vagrants that reach the UK as possible fully realised. In fact, this must be the most amazing migration spectacle in the world, far exceeding anything High Island, Point Pelee or Eilat has to offer. Imagine your very best day on the Isles of Scilly or Fair Isle, and it's hundreds of times better every hour here!

The group arrived ready for action at Beijing on the morning of the 8th May and headed east to Beidaihe notching up our first **White-cheeked Starlings** along the way. Upon arrival we quickly checked into the Jinshan Hotel before heading over the road to Suzi Wongs where we experienced our first proper taste of what fantastic birding is on offer here. A pair of **Brown Shrikes**, numerous **Dusky** and a single **Radde's Warbler**, **Eurasian Wryneck**, **Grey-headed Woodpecker** and an **Olive-backed Pipit** got the ball rolling nicely. Next door is the Jinshan Field, an area of rough ground about the size of a football field. The main players here were a pair of superb **Chestnut-eared Buntings**, although the sight of 12+ **Brown Shrikes** and 23 **Siberian Stonechats** were newly arrived. Our bunting list also took off with **Little** and **Black-faced** both showing well. So with Lighthouse Point beckoning just down the road we set off in high spirits only to find it exceedingly quiet. Yet a large flock of 50 **Japanese** and 10 **Chestnut-flanked White-eyes** and some **Yellow-bellied Tits** was pretty good. At least 15 **Dusky**, 8



Bird of the tour for most of us, this **Siberian Thrush** gave prolonged views in the Friendship Hotel gardens towards the end of the tour.



Ibisbill was bird of the trip for others in the group. A pair gave outstanding views along the Bai He River just north of Beijing.

Pallas's Leaf and a single **Yellow-browed Warbler** were noted. But just as we were leaving a rather dingy looking *phyllosc* got our pulses racing and turned out to be a **Chinese Leaf-warbler**, an exceedingly good bird here. So we walked back the couple hundred metres to the hotel and were already in our rooms when news broke of a **Little Whimbrel** on the Jinshan Field. All hell broke loose as we rushed over to observe a much-wanted species most of us had never seen before. With the light beginning to fade we had crippling views and Alan even caught sight of a fine **Siberian Rubythroat** briefly as well before we had to tear ourselves away and head a little late to dinner, unshaven and in need of a shower!

The next morning dawned overcast and cool and we began with a single **Chinese Penduline-Tit** on Lighthouse Point, which was followed later in the day by a couple large flocks totalling 66 birds in all. There had obviously been a mass departure overnight as numbers of warblers were minimal, so we called into the nearby Jinshan Field. The **Little Whimbrel** was still present for its 4th day, but our attention was focussed on a cracking **Blyth's Pipit** striding around the weedy field. A **Little Bunting** also gave amazingly close views as it fed on a small mound just a couple of metres away, a pair of **Eurasian Wrynecks** perched in a small sapling for several minutes were also very obliging, but we only managed flight views of a few **Japanese Quail** as they exploded from under our feet! We were certainly ready for a full English-style breakfast, complimented by a generous helping of fried chicken and chips! The rest of the morning was spent at the Reservoir where we managed to seek shelter from the heavy showers in the handily-placed shelters dotted around the forest walk here. One drained channel proved to be a goldmine with a **Sharp-tailed** and 2 **Broad-billed Sandpipers** found amongst a bunch of commoner waders. Several breeding plumaged **Chinese Pond-Herons** graced the area, and a wonderful selection of **White** and **Yellow Wagtail** races were at the same spot, but pride of place went to an exceptionally bright **Citrine Wagtail** that glowed like a light bulb against the dark mud. A flock of 9 **Pacific Golden Plovers** completed our fine wader haul here before we embarked on a tour of the wood which turned up trumps with a perched **Chinese Song Thrush** and a couple of **Claudia's Warblers** that appeared out of nowhere amidst a mass arrival of **Yellow-browed Warblers** that totalled several hundred at this one site alone! We finished off here with a fine **Taiga**



This Little Whimbrel was present on the Jinshan field for just a couple of days at the start of the tour.



The Jinshan Field again proved the best place to get crippling views of Blyth's Pipit.



Little Bunting was the commonest bunting species throughout the tour. This one fed nearby and was totally unconcerned by our presence in the Jinshan Field.

Flycatcher and a **Japanese Reed Bunting** before retiring to the coach for our picnic lunch. With the lure of more new birds we walked across the road to the Sandflats and scoured the gull flock finding **Black-tailed, Common Gull** of the race *heinei*, and both **Heuglin's** and **Vega Gulls**. More new waders followed with 3 **Terek Sandpipers** being the best find. So with the rain finally easing we drove the short distance to the hotel for a much needed cup of coffee during which time an **Osprey** and **Eurasian Hoopoe** flew past the window. And then it was on to our final destination of the day at Yang He. The wood was quiet so we checked the wader pools and Mick counted 44 **Marsh Sandpipers**, but the only stints we could find were 4 **Temminck's** to add to the same number seen at the reservoir earlier in the day.

With clear skies overnight a lot of passerines had departed, so our pre-breakfast walk around Suzi Wongs and the Friendship Hotel was a little quiet apart from our first **Pacific Swift** and stunning male **Yellow-rumped Flycatcher**. With clear blue skies we decided to spend the rest of the morning raptor watching from atop the Lotus Hills. On the walk up a **Dollarbird** showed well, as did a **Rufous-bellied Woodpecker** and a confiding **Radde's Warbler**. The view from our vantage point above the treeline was fantastic and over the course of the next couple of hours had 6 **Oriental Honey Buzzards**, 3 **Grey-faced Buzzards**, 5 **Japanese Sparrowhawks**, male **Eastern Marsh Harrier**, 2 **Amur Falcons**, an **Eastern Buzzard** and 6 **Pacific Swifts**. Following a tipoff we descended to the reservoir again and scored with a couple of **Long-toed Stints** and a fine breeding plumaged **Curlew Sandpiper** on the wader pools. Interestingly there were more **Pallas's** and **Yellow-browed Warblers** here than anywhere along the coast. So as we'd been away from Beidaihe's main coastal sites we returned mid-afternoon and birded the Dongshan and Lighthouse Point which produced nice views of a **Tristram's Bunting**.

The next morning dawned bright and clear and none of us could ever have anticipated just what a fantastic day lay in wait for us. There was very little around early morning but it was apparent birds were on the move and visible migration could be observed from the Jinshan Field with flocks of **Chinese Penduline Tits**, a steady stream of **Little Buntings** and 50+ **Pacific Swifts** flying over. An immature male **Common Rosefinch** was newly arrived but that was all before breakfast. Afterwards we drove for an



Chestnut-eared Bunting passes through Beidaihe in small numbers. This one was on the Jinshan Field.



White-throated Rock-thrush was seen in small numbers and gave great views many times.



It really doesn't get much better than watching a Siberian Blue Robin feeding in the open just a few metres away!

hour and a half to Jiao Mountain where we could view the Great Wall of China. An awe inspiring construction beneath which we found the first of 14 **Pere David's Laughingthrushes** to be seen today, along with **Eastern Crowned Warbler** and a singing **Siberian Meadow Bunting**. A chairlift ride took us up the mountain and we walked up through the scrub and pine covered hillside to a vantage point from where we eventually saw a pair of **Godlewski's Buntings** after a couple hours of searching. And it wasn't until we descended that a **Chinese Hill Warbler** finally began singing and gave us some pretty decent views. So with all the target species seen we returned to the coast and parked up in the grounds of the Dongshan, which seemed to be the one place at the moment that was turning up some decent birds. Sure enough we found the birds and it was like being hit by a steam train as the quality was totally unexpected and out of the blue! A small garden beside the path was pulling in some superb birds with 3 **Eye-browed**, 2 **Dusky**, 1 **Naumann's**, 1 **Grey-backed** and a very brief **Siberian Thrush**. As if that wasn't enough, the bird-of-the-day male **Siberian Blue Robin** was in constant view and even spent time feeding on the lawn right out in the open. A day-roosting **Oriental Scops-owl** also provided a pleasant distraction as well. So that was it and we celebrated our success back at the hotel and discussed tactics for our imminent departure to the Mecca of Happy Island the following morning.

But before we headed south there was still time before breakfast to visit the grounds of the Friendship Hotel which came up trumps with a **Yellow-legged Buttonquail** first seen scuttling across the lawn before it skulked against a wall. Everyone had the most unbelievable views of this seldom seen species and we managed to round up a number of other birders to share this crippler with. A flock of 20+ **Eye-browed** and a couple of **White's Thrushes**, **Asian Brown** and **Yellow-rumped Flycatchers** completed the picture. A male **Siberian Rubythroat** at Suzi Wongs was also seen prior to our drive to Happy Island. Along the way we stopped at 7 Mile Sea which was a little quiet, although our first **Far Eastern Curlews** were much appreciated. And then we found the gold at the end of the rainbow at Big Wood with 2 female **Siberian Thrushes** feeding along the path in company with 4 **Dusky**, several **Eye-browed** and a fine **Naumann's Thrush**, with a male **Siberian Blue Robin** joining them as well. Another 4 **White's Thrushes** were seen a little later, several **Two-barred Greenish Warblers** showed well, and finally our first **Mugimaki Flycatcher** and a cracking **Yellow-browed Bunting** were seen.



Dusky Thrush was seen several times on our tour, often at close quarters as they fed up before migrating north.



Yellow-rumped flycatcher is a truly spectacular species and seen incredibly well at Beidaihe and on Happy Island.



Eye-browed Thrush is the commonest thrush species seen on the tour, often in flocks of 20+.

The nearby Magic Wood held many of the same species, as well as a **Rufous-tailed Robin**. And then we reached the ferry, where we loaded our luggage onto a boat and sped across the sea for a few minutes to Happy Island. A couple of electric buggies took us to our cabins and after settling in we were soon scanning the nearby mudflats where a **Grey-tailed Tattler**, 20+ **Great Knot**, 8 **Terek Sandpipers** and 5 **Red-necked Stints** were the stars.

Our stay on Happy Island produced a number of good migrants as well as decent numbers of species such as 100+ **Siberian Stonechats** and 50+ **Asian Brown Flycatchers** on our first full day. Birding here involves a lot of walking but proved worthwhile with **Dark-sided Flycatcher**, **Daurian Starling**, **Chestnut Bunting**, **White-throated Rock-thrush** and a whole host of other previously seen goodies. It's hard not to mention the 3 **White's**, female **Siberian**, **Dusky** and **Naumann's Thrushes**, **Siberian Blue Robin** and **Rufous-tailed Robin** seen as well! Our second full day proved to be quieter with many species departing in the clear starlit conditions that prevailed the previous night. Yet we took our time and patience was rewarded with fine views of **Black-browed Reed Warbler**, **Pale-legged Leaf-warbler**, **Saunders's Gull** and 4 **Asiatic Dowitchers**.

The morning of our departure from Happy Island turned into something very special when a spectacular male **Blue-and-White Flycatcher** graced the trees near our cabins as we made our early morning walk. Even better was to follow a little later as the biggest rarity of the tour (so far) appeared in the shape of a very fine and confiding **Grey-crowned Warbler**. So after all the exultation of seeing these two class birds had died down we departed after breakfast and returned to the mainland where we were soon enjoying a breeding-plumaged **Grey-tailed Tattler** feeding beside the harbour road. More roadside waders followed with 5 **Sharp-tailed Sandpipers** giving outstanding views being the best of all. Just along the road a few minutes and the migrant Mecca of Big Wood beckoned us and we were not to be disappointed. In fact this was one of the best birding sessions of the entire tour with the wood literally crawling with birds. Our first **Thick-billed Warbler** gave us the run around for a while until it decided to loiter next to a cracking **Japanese Waxwing!** But the best was yet to come as we came across one of the moments in birding that will never be forgotten when a **Lanceolated Warbler** hopped onto a narrow pathway between a stand of recently planted trees and remained motionless in front



This pair of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers was part of a flock of 5 present in a roadside drainage channel.



This Grey-crowned Warbler is a scarce passage migrant in Hebei Province. We found this one on Happy Island. Photo © Alan Oliver.



This Lanceolated Warbler was found skulking in a pile of dead twigs during a major fall at Big Wood.

of us. A small brush pile couldn't hide it so it ran in typical mouse-fashion to hide behind a few blades of grass! On top of this we encountered hundreds of *phylloscopus* warblers, **Grey-backed** and **Siberian Thrushes**, numerous **Radde's** and **Dusky Warblers**, and at least 3 **Siberian Blue Robins**. Best of all was a female **Fujian Niltava** which is apparently only the 3rd record for the whole Hebei Province! And then we were set for an early bath and some well deserved time to relax before a superb evening meal and cold beer back at the Jinshan Hotel.



Only the 3rd record of Fujian Niltava for Hebei Province and we found this rarity at Big Wood during a huge fall.

We began our second stint at Beidaihe in rather quiet fashion due to the continuing high pressure. However, **Chinese Blackbird**, **Blyth's Pipit**, multiple **Siberian Blue Robins**, **Siberian Rubythroats** and **White-throated Rock-thrush** sightings, as well as **Forest Wagtail**, more **White's Thrushes**, **Radde's**, **Arctic** and **Pale-legged Leaf-warbler** kept us on our toes. And then the rain we had longed for arrived, although it didn't result in the hoped for fall-out. We found ourselves scanning a huge lake in the hills in driving rain but a flock of 100+ **White-winged** and a few **Whiskered Terns**, 6 **Red-necked Stints**, only our second **Long-toed Stint** and a flock of 35+ **Sharp-tailed Sandpipers** was very nice and made the effort worthwhile. We ended our time at Beidaihe with crippling views of several male **Siberian Thrushes** feeding in the grounds of the Friendship Hotel just a couple of metres away from us, a great pair of **Yellow-browed Buntings**, and tons of previously seen migrants.



Yellow-browed Bunting at the Friendship Hotel. A pair was feeding with a large flock of Chestnut Buntings beside the road.

Our last day in China was spent in the mountains just a couple of hours drive north of Beijing where we spent quite a while watching a pair of stunning **Ibisbills** feeding in the shallow river, with a **Long-billed Plover** doing a strange distraction display nearby. Raptors were on the move here with 3+ **Japanese Sparrowhawks**, 1 **Eurasian Sparrowhawk**, 9 **Grey-faced Buzzards**, 3 **Oriental Honey Buzzards** and 2 **Eastern Buzzards** all moving north. Also caught up in the movement were several **White-throated Needletails** and flocks of **Pacific Swifts**. Other key species found in the hills were a fine drake **Mandarin Duck**, **Crested Kingfisher**, **Yellow-streaked Warbler**, **Vinous-throated Parrotbill**, **Siberian Meadow** and **Godlewski's Buntings**.



Ibisbill along the Bai He River. This species is present along fast-flowing mountain streams from northern India through to China.

So it turned out to be a successful and smoothly organised tour, packed full of quality birds, excellent company, and good beer! My wholehearted thanks go to Jean, Carol and our excellent driver Mr Lee for making this a tour to remember.

Nick Bray

BIRDLIST FOR BEIDAIHE & HAPPY ISLAND

	SPECIES NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMENTS
1	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Seen on 6 dates with a highest count of 20+ at Heavenly Steed Lake.
2	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	Seen at Yang He and Reservoir in small numbers.
3	Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	Seen on 8 dates at various sites. The breeding colony at Magic Wood is getting bigger and we saw approx 50 birds there.
4	Chinese Pond-Heron	<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>	Common but nevertheless stunning in breeding plumage.
5	Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>	Quite a few present at Big Wood & Magic Wood.
6	Chinese Egret	<i>Egretta eulophotes</i>	Singles present at Laoting Harbour and from Happy Island.
7	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Common and seen at most sites visited.
8	Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>	Several pairs breeding at Big Wood.
9	Eastern Great Egret	<i>Egretta alba modestus</i>	Relatively common.
10	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Seen in small numbers at various sites.
11	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	Highest count of 3 on our first visit to the Reservoir.
12	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	Pair present along the Bai He River.
13	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	Single present on the Sandflats on 18 th May.
14	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Single present on the Sandflats and pair on Happy Island.
15	Mandarin Duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>	Having driven past at least 2 pairs in our haste to find the Ibisbill along the Bai He River, it took a while before we connected with a fine male later in the morning.
16	Common Teal	<i>Anas crecca crecca</i>	Just a few seen at the Reservoir.
17	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>	At least 6 seen at Heavenly Steed Lake.
18	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	A few seen at various sites.
19	Chinese Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas zonorhyncha</i>	Common and seen on 8 dates, with the highest count of 6+ at the Reservoir.
20	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	Single observed at Heavenly Steed Lake.
21	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaeetus</i>	Single observed flying past the Jin Shan Hotel whilst we were sipping coffee!
22	Oriental Honey-Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus orientalis</i>	6 flying north over the Lotus Hills and 3 over the Bai He River.
23	Eastern Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus spilonotus</i>	Our first sighting was a passage bird flying over the watchpoint in the Lotus Hills. Seen daily on Happy Island.
24	Chinese Goshawk	<i>Accipiter soloensis</i>	One confirmed sighting over the Bai He River on our last day was the only one.
25	Japanese Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter gularis</i>	At least 6 moving north over the Lotus Hills on 10 th May, single at the Reservoir the following day and then 3 flew over the Bai He River at the end of the tour.
26	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Single observed along the Bai He River.

27	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo japonicus</i>	Split by some authorities as Eastern Buzzard. Single over Lotus Hills and 2 over Bai He River were the only ones seen.
28	Grey-faced Buzzard	<i>Butastur indicus</i>	3 moving north over the Lotus Hills on 10 th May and 9 moving north over the Bai He River at the end of the tour.
29	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Just a few seen.
30	Amur Falcon	<i>Falco amurensis</i>	Single flew over the Lotus Hills. Breeding activity noted at the Reservoir with a pair in a spectacular assault as they tried to displace a nesting Oriental Crow. A few seen on telegraph wires on the way to Heavenly Steed Lake.
31	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	Common and seen most days.
32	Japanese Quail	<i>Coturnix japonica</i>	Small numbers seen on passage and usually only seen when bursting into flight from your feet! But a single showed well on the beach near Lighthouse Point.
33	Yellow-legged Buttonquail	<i>Turnix tanki</i>	Amazing views of an individual in the Friendship Hotel gardens one morning. First seen walking across the lawn before it flew across the path and landed in the corner of a building, where it in effect trapped itself.
34	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Quite common and seen most days. These are real wild birds!
35	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	A few seen at the Reservoir & Happy Island.
36	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Seen on 3 dates. Firstly on the Sandflats and then along the tideline from Happy Island.
37	Ibisbill	<i>Ibidorhyncha struthersii</i>	Amazing views of a pair feeding mid-stream below our vantage point. Undoubtedly one of the star birds of the tour.
38	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Quite common & seen on 8 dates.
39	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	Singles observed at 7-Mile Sea and Laoting.
40	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	Seen on 5 dates with the highest count of 30+ at Heavenly Steed Lake.
41	Long-billed Plover	<i>Charadrius placidus</i>	Single observed at the Bai He River doing a distraction display to a nearby Ibisbill.
42	Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	Seen on 7 dates with flocks of 20+ at the Sandflats and 40+ off Happy Island.
43	Lesser Sand-Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>	Seen on 5 dates with highest count of 20+ off Happy Island.
44	Greater Sand-Plover	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>	Single showed well during our first visit to the Sandflats.
45	Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	9 flew over the Sandflats on our first visit there, a further 3 flew over there on 16 th May, and 30+ present in recently ploughed fields beside Heavenly Steed Lake on 17 th May.
46	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Seen on 6 dates in small numbers, but highest count of 50+ on Happy Island.
47	Great Knot	<i>Calidris tenuirostris</i>	Great views on the mudflats around Happy Island, with flocks of 30 constantly present.
48	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	Only seen on our first visit to the Sandflats.

49	Red-necked Stint	<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	We had some very nice views of several small feeding parties around Happy Island, as well as at Heavenly Steed Lake and the Sandflats.
50	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>	We counted 8 birds at the Reservoir and Yang He Pools on 9 th May.
51	Long-toed Stint	<i>Calidris subminuta</i>	Following a tip-off we raced from the Lotus Hills to the Reservoir for this species. We also found one at Heavenly Steed Lake.
52	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>	Breeding plumaged bird at the Reservoir on 9 th May was followed by 5 very close birds feeding in a roadside ditch! But the flock of 35+ at Heavenly Steed Lake mainly consisted of non-breeding birds.
53	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Seen daily around Happy Island, with highest count of 10 breeding plumaged birds.
54	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	Some nice views of breeding plumaged birds, with at least 6 seen at Laoting and Heavenly Steed Lake. Smaller numbers elsewhere.
55	Broad-billed Sandpiper	<i>Limicola falcinellus</i>	A pair present at the Reservoir on 9 th May were the only ones.
56	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Small numbers noted at the Reservoir and Heavenly Steed Lake.
57	Pintail Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>	Seen on 3 dates at the Sandflats and Heavenly Steed Lake.
58	Asiatic Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus semipalmatus</i>	We counted 4 at the high tide roost on Happy Island.
59	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	Noted daily around Happy island.
60	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	Noted daily around Happy Island.
61	Little Whimbrel	<i>Numenius minutus</i>	A single was present on the Jin Shan Field for the first two days of the tour.
62	Common Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Seen in relatively small numbers at the Sandflats and around Happy Island.
63	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	Present at most sites visited along the coast.
64	Far Eastern Curlew	<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>	First seen at 7-Mile Sea and ever present around the coast of Happy Island in small numbers.
65	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	Nice views of a breeding plumaged bird beside the road at Laoting. A few were also present at Heavenly Steed Lake.
66	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Present in relatively small numbers along the coast.
67	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	Seen on 6 dates, with highest count of 44 at Yang He Pools.
68	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Common and seen on 8 dates.
69	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	Singles observed at the reservoir and on Happy Island.

70	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	Seen on 7 dates with a highest count of 50+ at Heavenly Steed Lake.
71	Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>	At least 3 were present on the Sandflats during our first visit. We counted 8+ on our first evening on happy Island, with smaller numbers there during the rest of our stay.
72	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Common and seen on 8 dates.
73	Grey-tailed Tattler	<i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i>	Singles seen well at Laoting & Happy Island.
74	Saunders's Gull	<i>Larus saundersi</i>	Finally found one flying past us at the wader roost on Happy Island.
75	Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Common and seen on 10 dates.
76	Black-tailed Gull	<i>Larus crassirostris</i>	Seen on 7 dates at various sites.
77	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus heini</i>	A couple of these little beauties were present on the Sandflats on 9 th May.
78	Mongolian Gull	<i>Larus mongolicus</i>	Just a few seen. Considered a subspecies of Caspian Gull by some authorities.
79	Heuglin's Gull	<i>Larus heuglini</i>	Small numbers seen on the Sandflats and Happy Island.
80	Vega Gull	<i>Larus vegae</i>	A couple was present on the Sandflats in company with other large gulls on 9 th May.
81	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	Seen a few times with the highest count of 15+ on Happy Island.
82	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	A flock of 5 were roosting on the Sandflats on 9 th May.
83	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo longipennis</i>	Reasonably common along the coast.
84	Little Tern	<i>Sterna albifrons sinensis</i>	Seen on 5 dates with the highest count of 25+ on Happy Island.
85	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>	5 at Heavenly Steed Lake in company with the next species.
86	White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	A flock of 50+ at Heavenly Steed Lake made for an impressive spectacle.
87	Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon	<i>Columbia livia</i>	Common
88	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Common
89	Oriental Turtle-Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>	Common and seen most days.
90	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	A daily sighting around Beidaihe.
91	Large Hawk-cuckoo	<i>Cuculus sparverioides</i>	Heard and seen briefly on Happy Island.
92	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	A few seen and heard at the Friendship Hotel and on Happy Island.
93	Oriental Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus saturatus</i>	Seen briefly but heard several times on Happy Island.
94	Lesser Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus poliocephalus</i>	Seen by some of the group in the Friendship Hotel gardens on 17 th May
95	Oriental Scops-owl	<i>Otus sunia</i>	Very close views at the Dongshan of a day roosting bird whilst we were watching Eye-browed, Naumann's & Dusky Thrushes and a Siberian Blue Robin. One of many 'purple patches' from this tour.
96	White-throated Needletail	<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	Mick picked up a flock moving north over the Bai He River on our last day.
97	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus pekinensis</i>	Seen on 7 dates in small numbers.
98	Pacific Swift	<i>Apus pacificus</i>	We enjoyed some very nice views on 4 dates, with 50+ over the Jin Shan Field being the highest count.

99	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Singles seen at various sites.
100	Crested Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle lugubris</i>	Great views as one flew below us along the Bai He River as we were watching Ibisbill.
101	Dollarbird	<i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>	Just a single bird found as we walked up to the raptor viewing area in the Lotus Hills.
102	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	A daily sighting with a peak count of 8 around Beidaihe on 10 th May. A pair was observed taking food into a nest-hole in the Friendship Hotel gardens as well.
103	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	A sprinkling of sightings around Beidaihe & Happy Island. But a pair posed for ages on a small stick beside the Jin Shan Hotel.
104	Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>	Almost a daily sighting and we enjoyed many close views.
105	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Picoides major</i>	Seen on 7 dates.
106	Rufous-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Picoides hyperythrus</i>	The resident pair in the Friendship Hotel gardens were seen a couple of times. But the bird on Happy Island gave outstandingly close views as it fed beside the main path.
107	Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides canicapillus</i>	We had to work for this one but eventually had crippling views at Lighthouse Point.
108	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Small numbers on passage during the first week of the tour.
109	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Common and seen daily.
110	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>	Common and seen daily.
111	Richard's Pipit	<i>Anthus richardi</i>	There were 7 on the Jinshan Field at the start of the holiday, and also seen there is smaller numbers on a few other days. Highest count was 10+ on Happy Island.
112	Blyth's Pipit	<i>Anthus godlewskii</i>	Singles gave great views on the Jinshan Field on two dates, with another single at Heavenly Steed Lake.
113	Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	A common passage bird throughout the tour.
114	Forest Wagtail	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>	Great spot by Mick at the reservoir of a single bird perched in a tree. On view for over half an hour and very much appreciated.
115	Eastern Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava tschutschensis</i>	There was a good collection of <i>flava's</i> at the reservoir, with all 3 races usually present. Many Yellow Wagtails heard flying over
	<i>Grey-headed Wagtail</i>	<i>Motacilla flava macronyx</i>	A few present at the Reservoir.
	<i>Green-headed Wagtail</i>	<i>Motacilla flava taivana</i>	A few present at the Reservoir.
116	Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>	A stunningly bright bird was present at the Reservoir on our first couple of visits.
117	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Singles seen on 3 dates at various sites.
118	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	A few female-types were not assigned to race.
	<i>Amur (Black-backed) Wagtail</i>	<i>Motacilla alba leucopsis</i>	Seen at the Reservoir and along the coast.
	<i>Swinhoe's Wagtail</i>	<i>Motacilla alba ocularis</i>	Several seen at the Reservoir during the first week of the tour.
119	Chinese Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus sinensis</i>	Common and seen daily.

120	Japanese Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla japonica</i>	A single was present for a few minutes at Big Wood, in the same tree as a Thick-billed Warbler!
121	Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Heard a few times.
122	Rufous-tailed Robin	<i>Erithacus sibilans</i>	Singles seen at Magic Wood, great views on Happy Island and an obliging bird feeding out in the open in the rain at the Friendship Hotel towards the end of the tour.
123	Siberian Rubythroat	<i>Erithacus calliope</i>	Seen on 5 dates at various sites, with several performing really well.
124	Bluethroat	<i>Erithacus svecicus</i>	Seen in small numbers during the first week
125	Siberian Blue Robin	<i>Erithacus cyane</i>	Our first feeding on a lawn in the Dongshan was a major highlight of the tour. It became increasingly common with a highest count of 5 one day on Happy Island. Bird of the tour for some!
126	Daurian Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus auroreus</i>	Seen on 5 dates, including some fine breeding plumaged males.
127	Siberian Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata maura</i>	A common passage migrant, with a highest count of 100+ on Happy Island.
128	White-throated Rock-thrush	<i>Monticola gularis</i>	Seen on 4 dates around Beidaihe with a peak count of 5 on 16 th May.
129	Blue Rock-thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius philippensis</i>	First seen at the Great Wall, with further sightings on Happy Island of the Rufous-bellied <i>Philippensis</i> race.
130	White's Thrush	<i>Zoothera dauma</i>	Several very good sightings spread over 4 dates. On the day we left for happy Island at least 3 were seen in the friendship Hotel gardens and another at Suzi Wongs. Later the same day we found another 5 around Big and Magic Woods to give us a grand total of 9 for the day. There were 3 seen the next day on Happy Island, with further counts of 4 and 1 at Beidaihe later in the tour.
131	Siberian Thrush	<i>Zoothera sibirica</i>	It was the 5 th day of the tour before we all finally caught up with this species, albeit a couple of females at Big Wood. However, during bad weather on 17 th May there was at least 7 present in the Friendship Hotel gardens including several very cooperative males. This species was seen on 5 dates.
132	Chinese Blackbird	<i>Turdus (merula) mandarinus</i>	Just a single bird present in a garden as we walked to Lighthouse Point one morning.
133	Grey-sided Thrush	<i>Turdus feae</i>	Just a single present on 17 th May in the Friendship Hotel gardens – in the rain!
134	Grey-backed Thrush	<i>Turdus hortulorum</i>	Singles seen at the Dongshan and Big Wood.
135	Eye-browed Thrush	<i>Turdus obscurus</i>	The commonest thrush by far, and over the 9 dates this species was seen our highest counts were of 33+ and 50+, with many very close views.

136	Dusky Thrush	<i>Turdus eunomus</i>	Seen on 4 dates in small numbers. Our first was present with Naumann's, Eye-browed and grey-backed Thrushes in one tiny garden in the Dongshan.
137	Naumann's Thrush	<i>Turdus naumanni</i>	Singles present at Dongshan, Happy Island, Big Wood and Friendship Hotel.
138	Chinese Song Thrush	<i>Turdus mupinensis</i>	Singles seen on 5 dates at Friendship Hotel, Reservoir and Big Wood.
139	Chinese Hill Warbler	<i>Rhopophilus pekinensis</i>	This one took a lot of finding during our visit to the Great Wall at Jiao Mountain, but we eventually located a pair beside the path that showed really well. Also heard along the Bai He River during our last day.
140	Lanceolated Warbler	<i>Locustella lanceolata</i>	The late Spring and bad weather holding migration up in southern China resulted in very few locustella's being seen this year. One showed at Big Wood on 15 th May and performed admirably in typical mouse-like fashion scurrying between tiny pieces of vegetation just a few metres away from us.
141	Black-browed Reed-warbler	<i>Acrocephalus bistrigiceps</i>	First seen on Happy Island on 14 th May, from which date it became increasingly common.
142	Oriental Reed-warbler	<i>Acrocephalus orientalis</i>	Just a couple of singles found on Happy Island and at the Reservoir.
143	Thick-billed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus aedon</i>	Just a couple found at Big Wood on our return from Happy Island. One was in the same tree as a Japanese Waxwing.
144	Grey-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus tephrocephalus</i>	A very good find on Happy Island of a single bird near the Temple Wood.
145	Claudia's Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus claudiae</i>	A recent split from Blyth's Leaf-warbler. A couple seen at the Reservoir and single at the Great Wall.
146	Eastern Crowned Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus coronatus</i>	A good sprinkling of sightings with good views at Happy Island and Big Wood.
147	Pale-legged Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus tenellipes</i>	Singles seen well on Happy Island and the Reservoir.
148	Two-barred Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus</i>	Became increasingly common during the second week.
149	Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>	Seen on 4 dates with a highest count of 4 on Happy Island on 14 th May.
150	Pallas's Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i>	Common and seen daily.
151	Chinese Leaf-warbler	<i>Phylloscopus yunnanensis</i>	We found a single bird during the evening of our first day at Lighthouse Point feeding in a lone tree.
152	Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	The commonest <i>Phylloscopus</i> warbler and seen daily. Highest count of 150+ on 9 th may around Beidaihe.
153	Radde's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus schwarzi</i>	Seen on 7 dates with a highest count of 10+ at Big Wood on 15 th May.
154	Yellow-streaked Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus armandii</i>	Pair seen at the Ibisbill site along the Bai He River on our last day.
155	Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	Common and seen most days. Highest count of 50+ on 15 th May.

156	Fujian Niltava	<i>Niltava davidi</i>	Found by our group during the big fall at Big Wood - the 3 rd record for Hebei Province.
157	Blue-and-white Flycatcher	<i>Cyanoptila cyanomelana</i>	A superb male was present near our bungalows on Happy Island.
158	Dark-sided Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa sibirica</i>	Scarce this year and we only had a couple on Happy Island this year. Also called Siberian Flycatcher.
159	Grey-streaked Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa griseisticta</i>	Seen on 5 dates at various sites.
160	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>	Very common from 12 th may onwards with a highest count of 50+ on Happy Island.
161	Yellow-rumped Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula zanthopygia</i>	A good run of sightings and seen on 8 dates with at least 8 seen at Big and Magic Woods
162	Mugimaki Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula mugimaki</i>	Sightings were condensed around our Happy Island visit, during which time it was frequently seen in small numbers.
163	Taiga Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>	Common and seen most days.
164	Vinous-throated Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis webbianus</i>	Great views of at least 3 pairs along the Bai He River.
165	Pere David's Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax davidi</i>	Surprisingly common at the Great Wall on Jiao Mountain with 11+ seen. A few more were present on the hillsides above the Bai He River as well.
166	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus vinaceus</i>	Pair present at the Lotus Hills.
167	Chinese Penduline-tit	<i>Remiz consobrinus</i>	Quite common around Beidaihe in small numbers, although a heavy passage of 66 was noted on 9 th May.
168	Marsh Tit	<i>Parus palustris</i>	A few were seen in the Lotus hills.
169	Willow Tit	<i>Parus montanus</i>	A pair was seen along the Bai He River.
170	Yellow-bellied Tit	<i>Parus venustulus</i>	Surprisingly seen on 5 dates around Beidaihe with a highest count of 20+. Another indication of a late Spring.
171	Eastern Great Tit	<i>Parus major minor</i>	A recent split from Great Tit. Common and seen most days in small numbers.
172	Chestnut-flanked White-eye	<i>Zosterops erythropleurus</i>	The main passage happened during the first week at Beidaihe and usually in mixed flocks with the next species.
173	Japanese White-eye	<i>Zosterops japonicus</i>	Common in large flocks around Beidaihe with the previous species.
174	Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>	After a couple of brief sightings we finally nailed this species during our last two days with good views at the Dongshan and best of all, along the Bai He River.
175	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>	A common passage migrant and seen most days. Highest count of 50+ on the day we left Happy Island.
176	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	A few present on Jiao Mountain.
177	Red-billed Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa erythrorhyncha</i>	A common bird around Beidaihe.
178	Azure-winged Magpie	<i>Cyanopica cyana</i>	Several seen in Beijing.
179	Black-billed Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	Very common and seen daily.
180	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	At least 3 seen in the hills above the Bai He River on our last day.
181	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone orientalis</i>	Seen on 3 dates. Split by some authorities as Oriental Crow.

182	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	A few present on Jiao Mountain.
183	Daurian Starling	<i>Sturnus sturnina</i>	Pair seen well on Happy Island.
184	White-cheeked Starling	<i>Sturnus cineraceus</i>	Quite common along the motorway and seen on 6 dates.
185	Crested Myna	<i>Acridotheres cristatellus</i>	A few pairs were seen around Beidaihe.
186	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	A daily sighting.
187	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	Singles seen around Beidaihe and Happy Island.
188	Oriental Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis sinica</i>	Just a few seen around Beidaihe and Jiao Mountain. Also called Grey-capped Greenfinch.
189	Eurasian Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>	Seen in the Lotus Hills.
190	Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	1 st year male singing in Jin Shan Field and a couple along the Bai He River.
191	Black-faced Bunting	<i>Emberiza spodocephala</i>	Common and seen most days with a highest count of 15+ on Happy Island.
192	Godlewski's Bunting	<i>Emberiza godlewskii</i>	A few present at jiao Mountain and along the Bai He River.
193	Siberian Meadow Bunting	<i>Emberiza cioides</i>	Relatively easy to see at Jiao Mountain and along the Bai He River.
194	Chestnut-eared Bunting	<i>Emberiza fucata</i>	This little cracker was seen on 6 dates at scattered sites.
195	Yellow-throated Bunting	<i>Emberiza elegans</i>	Singles seen well on Happy Island and Big Wood. Also called Elegant Bunting.
196	Yellow-browed Bunting	<i>Emberiza chrysophrys</i>	After brief but close views along a ditch in Big Wood we finally had prolonged views in the friendship Hotel of a pair feeding with a flock of Chestnut Buntings.
197	Tristram's Bunting	<i>Emberiza tristrami</i>	Several great views at a few sites, particularly in Big Wood and on Happy Island.
198	Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	A very good passage throughout the tour and seen daily.
199	Chestnut Bunting	<i>Emberiza rutila</i>	Became commoner during the second week a flock of 18+ in the Dongshan showed particularly well.
200	Yellow-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza aureola</i>	Singles seen on two visits to the Sandflats, one of which was a very bright breeding plumaged male.
201	Japanese Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza yessoensis</i>	Seen briefly at the Reservoir during our first visit.

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