

### Thailand 2019

This year marks our 10th annual Zoothera birding tour to northern and central Thailand. Once again this tour was fully booked well in advance, all six of the participants existing clients. Each no doubt drawn by the lure of this fascinating country. For Josh and John from Canada this would be their first venture in Asia, while for Sue and Martin they had some degree of Asian birding experience and to complete the tour party both John R and Graham had an even greater accumilation of experience including two prior visits to Thailand, the last five years ago.

This years 17 day tour would follow the same successful itinerery we've adopted over previous years. A split programme, whereby we'd first explore the northern regions, birding hillside hotspots around Chiang Mai. Visiting Doi Lang, Doi Ang Khang and Doi Inthanon over a 9 day period. Followed by an internal flight back to Bangkok. Initially birding Khao Yai to the east before heading west, a days wader extravaganza at Pak Thale and concluding with a few days at Kraeng Krachan.

The tour in the sense of birding wouldn't being until the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup> February, although both Josh and John and Sue and Martin independantly would arrive in Thailand a few days prior. Their aim to use the extra day or so to sightsee around Bangkok. John R and Graham would arrive on the 7<sup>th</sup>, an internal flight to Chiang Mai would see them arrive mid-morning allowing for some time to generally relax and recoup after such a long journey. We'd say our hello's to Josh and John at our base, the Maninarakorn Hotel that afternoon. Their baggage delay not an ideal introduction to Asia, although I must say their positivity under such circumstances was to be applauded. Thankfully they'd be reunited with them in the early hours of the 8<sup>th</sup>, crisis overted. Sue and Martin's flight to Chiang Mai would see them not arrive at our hotel until mid-evening on the 7<sup>th</sup> and with formailities completed and friendships re-acquainted, for Sue/ Martin and Josh/ John had toured on our 2018 visit to Bolivia the tour party was now complete.

### Muang Sam Ma and Doi Lang (west)

Nick our local guide would meet us at 6:30 and with bags quickly stowed we'd make the short journey to the outskirts of Chiang Mai to being birding at Muang Sam Ma. This an area of large ponds and scrub in which we'd familiarise ourselves with many of the commoner species during the tour. Myna and Starling species occupied our initial attention upon disembarking the vehicle. A towering fruiting tree beside us held both Common and Great Myna's, Chestnut-tailed, Black-collared and Asian Pied Starling, while also present smaller numbers of Red-whiskered and Sooty-headed Bulbul and dour winter plumaged Baya Weavers vied for our attention. With these all nailed we'd move on by foot, large fragmented parties of Lesser Whistling Duck filled the air although under Nick's expert tutelage and guidance we'd negate looking skywards in favour of tracking down a host of calling birds within the scrub.

A vocal **Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler** was almost immediately heard, a species commonly associated with this area yet a bird reknown for being somewhat introvert and skulking. Despite our best efforts this individual remained true to form and fleetingly brief glimpses scant reward. Surely other opportunities would lay ahead so rather than being crest fallen we'd move on.

Over the next hour or so we'd not go far, we'd not need to. **Dusky Warblers** were common here and would be seen well while lush damp waterside margins scoured for singing **Black-browed** and **Oriental Reed Warblers**. Given time both would be seen well although a second Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler would rather frustratingly be equally as elusive as the first. We'd linger til mid-morning, the time seemed to fly by and in the process would add a collection of additional species, these would include- **Wryneck, Common Tailorbird, Brown Shrike, Stegneger's Stonechat, Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker, Streak-eared Bulbul, Germain's Swiftlet, Asian Palm Swift, Cook's Swift, Plain Prinia** along with a host of common waterbased birds.



Wryneck

It was altogether a useful introduction to what we could encounter over the next few weeks yet it was time to move on. Bigger and better certainly lay ahead. Next stop Doi Lang, a place where a vast array of mouth-watering species awaited us. The drive including a stop for lunch would not see us arrive until mid-afternoon. Ascending this quiet birding hotspot we'd start well. A reliable **Ultramarine Flycatcher** site was just that, reliable. It seen at close quarters within minutes, our first real encounter with a major species and what a bird.



Ultramarine Flycatcher

The single tarmaced road here meanders approximately another nine kms, every yard in truth is excellent. Nick's undoubted experience of Doi Lang would ensure that to maximise our limited time here would be crucial. We'd allocated a day and a half here, maybe a further morning, ample time one would think. Think again. To give those unaccustomed to the west slope of Doi Lang a vast array of birds call this place home. Many are tricky, some inhabit differing habitats along the way and even time management is crucial in seeking out certain key species.

Over the remainder of the afternoon we'd explore some of the hotspots. In doing so gorging on an array of great birds, that in no particular order would include- a few Slaty-blue Flycatchers, Slaty-backed Flycatcher, both Rufous-gorgeted and White-gorgeted Flycatcher, Siberian Rubythroat, White-bellied Redstart, female Large Niltava, Spot-breasted Parrotbill, Silver-eared Laughingthrush, Golden Babbler, Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler, Bianci's, Chinese Leaf, Buff-throated and Pallas's Leaf Warblers, Black-throated Bushtit, Flavescent Bulbul, Blyth's Shrike Babbler, Bronzed Drongo, Scarlet and numerous Short-billed Minivets, Indochinese Cuckooshrike, Stripe-breasted Woodpecker and Golden-throated Barbet. An hugely successful if not enviable collection of species for a first afternoon's visit for sure. But we'd be back, we'd need too for indeed many key species still needed finding. We'd further plans for the following two days but in three days time we'd return hopefully to see many more new and exciting species.



Spot-breasted Parrotbill



Siberian Rubythroat

Our evening and base for the next three nights would be at Thaton.

### Doi Lang (east) and Thaton Rice fields

Our morning would begin at 6:30. A quick stop at the local 7/11 for breakfast then short drive to the base of Doi Land east. Scaling the slopes to the eastern side is not a viable option using our vehicle. The road so rutted that an alternate mode of transport is necessary. Our chariot of choice for today would be a long-wheel based van in which all would be required to sit on bench sets at the rear and just hold tight. Saying it was torturous is perhaps over playing it somewhat, but it's a dusty journey and indeed far from pleasant but likewise to reach the summit essential.

Stops en route do offer a degree of restbite. The first after maybe a 20 minute journey is at a bridge, the clearing a great vantage point affording magnificent views and treetop outlooks beyond. With the onset of a new day and the warming rays of sunshine meant a hive of activity. From here we'd just stop and scan, never taking long before bird after bird was being called out. A huge, pale Mountain Imperial Pigeon got us off to a good start although attentions were invariably drawn away by a host of other species being found and called out. Our first Greater Racket-tailed Drongo of the tour fully racketed was savoured, while scans of distance bare tree's seemed favourable to picking out many other species including Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Barred Cuckoo Dove, Maroon Oriole, Ashy Drongo, Black Bulbul, Orange-bellied Leafbird and both Golden –throated and Blue-throated Barbet. Closer tree's yielded White-bellied Erpornis, Clicking Shrike Babbler, a bashful Rufous Pecker which Nick stated was his first ever sighting at Doi Lang, Striated Yuhina and two Streaked Spiderhunters. The latter a species common around the northern parts of Thailand but bizarrely our only sighting of the tour.

Moving on, gaining more dust we'd take a second stop, this at a large clearing. We'd be initially greeted by our only **Grey-backed Shrike** of the tour and although the stop was an altogether briefer affair would note **Oriental Turtle Dove**, brief **Shikra** and an obliging **Grey-faced Buzzard**.

We'd move on, not stopping until reaching the army checkpoint near the summit. Many if not all glad to acknowledge we'd be free from the ardours of the van for at least several more hours. The army outpost lays just a few miles away from the Myanmar border, it little more than a collaboration of scrawny huts occupied by handful of young men. Nestled well away from the general public via this most challenging of road it's guardians showed little concern to our presense.

We'd begin at the most innocuous of places. For behind the last outbuilding is what Nick stated is a feeding station although not in the conventional sense with blinds so prevelent in other regions of Asia. Laying down some mealworms drew an immediate response. We'd stand or sit just a matter of yards away in full view as first **Dark-backed Sibia** came noisily crashing in, quickly followed by a whole host of other species. Stunning **Scarlet-faced Liocichla's** and **Spectacled Barwings** also joining the fray enmass accompanied by a more wary female **Large Niltava**, a few arborael **Rufous-winged Fulvetta's** passed through although for sheer audacity a **White-tailed Robin** stole the show, it at times feeding a mere foot away.



Scarlet-faced Liocichla



White-tailed Robin

It was an amazing experience watching wild birds feed at such close quarters, those with a vested interest in photography lapping up the opportunity to acquire image after image. We'd then try our hand at some more conventional birding although the outcome was often similar when

confronted by another or possibly the same **White-tailed Robin** 100 yards from where we'd initially just left it along with a female **Himalayan Bluetail**, male **Large Niltava** and **Striated Bulbul**.

A stop for lunch which comprised of delicous spicy pork sandwiches was convened back at the van and once norished and sun block liberally applied it was back out. Initially walking the road beyond the feeding station for a few hundred yards. The heat from the midday sun ensured a more sluggish return than earlier although our time was taken to watching lots of **Davison's**Warblers and the rather curious wing flicking behaviour of a **Claudia's Warbler** and some **Yellow-cheeked Tit's**.

Walking back it seemed churlish not to revisit the feeding station, albeit not making any offerings this time. The outcome was markedly different but likewise positive. Gone were the throng of birds noted earlier but replaced by a pair of busy Yellow-bellied Fantails. Most then moved on only to be called back by news that the stragglers had located a **Chestnut-crowned Warbler**. This wonderfully bright adorned warbler in complete contrast to the head scratchingly difficult phylloscopos warblers we'd been wrestling with over the last few days.

Before we'd say our goodbyes to Doi Lang east with a quick foray in the opposite direction, in doing so encountering a pair of Little Pied Flycatchers, Black-eared Shrike Babbler, another Golden-throated Barbet, Whiskered Yuhina and Mountain Bulbul before it was back into the van. The journey down made without stopping and I could swear it took an iternity to navigate. All to a man and woman in Sue's case liberally covered in dust.

From here we made our way back to Thaton, yet not to our abodes. With several hours birding still at our disposal we'd chosen to investigate the outlying rice fields. The now critically endangered **Yellow-breasted Bunting** still frequent the vicinity and with Nick's pantheon of experience of the area we'd be taken directly to one particularly reliable spot. A dense stand of tall vegitation held many, just how many was difficult to ascertain, maybe 100. Small parties constantly coming and going, often hidden from view, a few occasionally scopeable.

This raised vantage point overlooking here afforded us 360 degree panoramic views, therefore with time to spare before the onset of dusk other species were tracked down. In the drier rice paddies a single Rosy Pipit was found amongst the Paddyfield Pipits. Martin would also find a Bluethroat and John R a Grey-headed Lapwing, while even the humble House Sparrow was looked at. Its cleaner appearance noted upon and reflected as being an Indian House Sparrow. A calling Chestnut-capped Babbler was tracked down although sadly few were able to get a clear view. The same couldn't be said upon leaving, when fantastic views of Black-winged Kite finished our second day. I fitting finale to a wonderful day.

Day three- 10<sup>th</sup> February 2019

## **Chiang Saen area**

Certainly a day for the alarm clock, with a pre-arranged 5am start. But everybody was willing and ready. A prompt getaway ensued and with a 7/11 breakfast of toasted Sandwiches consumed we made our way in darkness heading northeast towards Chiang Saen. We'd pull up at Chiang Saen

ponds not alone, another party of Americans would join us. Our two hour stay an altogther rather uneventful venture, Racket-tailed and Grey Treepie, Taiga Flycatcher, Thick-billed and Dusky Warbler, Common Iora, a brief Freckle-breasted Woodpecker, Lineated Barbet, Hoopoe and Stegneger's Stonechat for show. But had we dipped on our opportunity to see Rufous-winged Buzzard? John the American guide would in hindsight turn a slow morning into one of complete contrast. He'd relay news of a reliable stakeout for Rusty-naped Pitta that they'd seen yesterday at nearby Doi Tung arboretum. With this now in mind our planned itinerary for the day could be in question!

Our next port of call was the nearby Mekong river. Where as expected **Small Pratincole** were found, 21 to be precise along with a pair of **Yellow-bellied Prinia's** and it was from here that Nick would mention the Pitta stakeout. Highlighting the potential pitfalls and impact of changing plans yet a resounding thumbs up by all gave us the green light to at least give it a try. Nothing ventured, nothing gained would seem an apt interpretation and with the arboretum an hour away we were quickly onsite and met by a local guide who took us directly to the unlikeliest spot imaginable and informed us to sit down and be quiet then left us! A **Blue Whistling Thrush** would quickly appear, phhf! Expectations momentarily dashed before there from nowhere came not one but two **Rusty-naped Pitta's**!! One would quickly disappear leaving one to linger to a truly appreciative if not mesmerized audience. The big call had paid off ten fold.



Rusty-naped Pitta

Once it had disappeared we'd not linger. A calling Long-tailed Broadbill sadly would not show itself but certainly not mulled over. A **Blyth's Shrike Babbler** and calling **Hartert's Warbler**, the latter species who's actual status in Thailand is poorly known added further value to our visit here. The rumble of tummies signified a well deserved timeout. Lunch taken late at 2pm on the banks over-looking the Mekong.

No desserts for us as it would be out once again, this time scouring Chiang Saen Lake. Two Burmese Shrikes were quickly nailed, Martin also finding a Striated Grassbird before time taken to view the lake. Indian Spot-billed Duck were easy pickings although larger rafts of Northern Pintail and Lesser Whistling Duck accompanied by the odd Northern Shoveler, Garganey, plus single drake Eurasian Wigeon and Tufted Duck were seen distantly. Nearby Pied Bushchat was found, another common species poorly recorded this year while the area of marsh directly behind this found to contain large numbers of both Lesser Whistling Duck, Garganey, Asian Openbills and Black-winged Stilts. For true Thai rarity value came in the form of a Great Crested Grebe. This arguably our rarest bird of the entire tour but one to likewise hardly set the pulses racing for us Brits!



Burmese Shrike

Our day would conclude with a spot of raptor watching. Chiang Saen being 'the' place in the whole of Asia to watch Harriers come into roost. We'd arrive early, too early in fact for raptors but find **Yellow Bittern** and frustratingly hear but not see again Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler. But as the day drew to a close Harriers would being to appear. Mostly **Eastern Marsh Harriers** from the onset but numbers would qwell and **Pied Harriers** soon out numbered Marsh Harriers. Just how many we'd see is unknown, at times maybe 60 filled the skies at any one time, whilst numerous others had already gone to ground. Whatever the count, we'd estimate maybe 200 it was an amazing spectacle. No that has to be seen to be believed.

Leaving here at 18:30 meant dinner at Thaton would be late. So to save time our order was ringed through and with some turn of speed had Nick getting us back at Thaton at 20:00. It had been a long day, 15 hours in fact but boy did that meal taste nice after another cracking day.

## **Doi Lang (west)**

After a two day sabbatical we'd once again be back at Doi Lang west. Despite yesterdays long day and perhaps with spirits high nobody raised any concerns about another 5am start. With bags stowed we were once again on our way ontime.

We'd make perfect timing, arriving as daylight broke but to rather murky, somewhat chilly conditions. Our rational for such an early start was Pheasant based. A traditionally reliable site for Mrs Hume's Pheasant is without doubt best covered during the first hour of daylight and therefore our prime objective ensured we arrive in good time and with fingers and legs both crossed nobody else had the same plan.

Using our vehicle doors as cover we stood and waited in hushed silence. A pair of Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babblers, a White-browed Laughingthrush, Chestnut-vented Nuthatch, Olive-backed Pipit, Japanese Tit, female Siberian Rubythroat, Buff-throated Warbler and male Ultramarine Flycatcher all encountered first while awaiting our primary objective. Then as if by magic there it was. A majestic male Mrs Hume's Pheasant. It would remain in full view for maybe 5 minutes before disappearing, what a bird!



Mrs Hume's Pheasant



another Ultramarine Flycatcher

A calling **Collared Owlet** would later fly in, doing its very best to avoid detection although given time would be seen well. Meanwhile a flyover calling Slender-billed Oriole wouldn't!

With the Pheasant done we'd change tact, working more open area's but this idea was short lived. Cook's Swifts would stream by in their hundreds and yet the the tree's were eerily quiet. Apart from encountering several Hume's Warblers, the odd Short-billed Minivet, Rufescent Prinia and Grey capped Pygmy Woodpecker nowt. We'd relocate to further along the road, working more mature parts of the roadside forest a large and mobile party of about 45 Long-tailed Broadbills the undoubted highlight. Chasing after a calling Himalayan Cutia and failing to connect was sadly a bit of a dash although as minor compensation found a few Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo's.

Once again Nick alluded to the fact that this years daytime temperatures were noticeably hotter than customary for the time of year. With the remainder of the morning starting to slow birdwise, Little Pied Flycatcher, Slaty-backed Flycatcher and Marten's Warbler the best we could muster. Even Blue-winged Minla a common species here were in very short supply so we'd leave although just for a few hours. Nobody would disagree. An earlier than anticiapted lunch at Fang and delayed return would see us reinvigorated for later. Just staying would have had the opposite effect and seen us running out of steam when things would undoubtedly livened up later that day.

It proved a fine call. Returning mid-afternoon was a bit slow initially but would pick up as the heat abated. Our second stint noting Hill Prinia, Pale-blue Flycatcher, 3 Mountain Hawk Eagles, several Crested Finchbills, Bay Woodpecker, Great Barbet, male Chestnut Bunting, Verditer and three Mountain Bamboo Partridge all additional trip species.

Our night was spent at the Tangerine Hotel in Fang.

## **Doi Ang Khang**

We'd once again be faced with a 5am start. Know road closures to Doi Ang Khang would necessite a more convoluted 90 minute journey as opposided to the more conventional 30. Fortunately being forewarned wouldn't compromise any birding time, alas just sleep time.

Our arrival at the camp site for 7am meant we hit the ground running from first light. Here we'd spend a very productive two hours, never wandering more than 200 yards from the car. We'd begin by working the pine forest. This a dependable site for a species that had somehow escaped our attention at Doi Lang, **Giant Nuthatch**. Within a matter of minutes one was heard to call and quickly tracked down and wow did it perform. After securing this much wanted species we'd continue but frequently either hear or indeed see it several more times while in the process add additional new trip species in the form of **Blue Rock Thrush** (race *phillippensis*), **Eye-browed Thrush**, **Spot-winged Grosbeak** and **Common Rosefinch** along with a whole host of commoner species.



Giant Nuthatch



Spot-breasted Grosbeak

The remainder of the morning was taken to exploring the nearby Kings Project. The gardens which are beautifully tended too are much birdier than expected. A fine male **Daurian Redstart** seemed perfectly at ease feeding here, while **Black-breasted Thrushes** were remarkably common too. In this rather genteel of surroundings we'd also pick up several groups of **Spot-winged Grosbeaks** along with **Maroon Oriole** and **Banded Bay Cuckoo**, while a flower tree held a gathering of **Oriental White-eye** plus a single **Chestnut-flanked White-eye**.

Changing tact we'd investigate the feeding station. This being tucked well away from the perfectly manicured gardens. Our visit would be somewhat brisk but certainly rewarding. I can't think for a moment when a bird wasn't indeed present, both a **White-tailed Robin** and male **Hill Blue**Flycatcher our almost constant companions, while for variety many other species would either occasionally show or merely pass through, these being- Silver-eared Mesia, female Rufous-bellied Niltava, Yunnan Fulvetta, a few Chinese Leaf Warblers, Yellow-bellied Warbler and Golden Babbler.



Silver-eared Mesia



Hill Blue Flycatcher

Heading back, the gardens or more accurately the flowering Bottle brush bushes as expected yielded another target species. A few **Mrs Gould's Sunbirds** were found, including many males

near to full breeding plumage, while in a second stand of bushes a male **Black-throated Sunbird** was also seen.

By now it was late morning, and with temperatures rising we'd take a break. Sittiing in the coffee shop venanda drinking smoothies or coffee liberally birding as we did so. A distant tree regularly scoped and noting a **Blue-throated Barbet** and **Orange-fronted Leafbird**.

This afternoon our first stop was to visit another Myanmar military outpost. A rather unkempt allotment saw us find several **Brown-breasted Bulbuls**, while also present a **White-browed Scimitar Babbler** but it remained coy and therefore not seen by all. In the same area, which was generally bereft of birdlife we'd target a species suspected to be present. **Yellow-streaked Warblers** can be elusive, easy to miss and therefore our chances were little more than 50/50. We got lucky. Nick upon hearing one quickly tracked it down to a solitary bush and this Radde's Warbler doppelganger would by habit remain elusive although occasionally would show well.

Mid-day and even early afternoon temperatures of about 33 degrees often led to the birding being relatively unproductive. This afternoon we'd toil away, visiting a few sites noting in effect very little. To finish our day we'd revisit the camp site that had been so productive this morning. Birdwise our second stint would be a more subdued affair but none the less worthwhile.

Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush, Yellow-cheeked Tit, Little Pied Flycatcher, Burmese Shrike and the grey form of Brown Shrike (ssp. lucionensis) all species that we had not recorded hear this morning.

Day six- 13th February 2019

## Doi Lang (west) and Doi Inthanon

Does a 6am start constitute a lie-in? Today we had an extra hour in bed, although were birding once again by 7am.

We'd be back at Doi Lang west for our third visit yet would limit our time here for we'd a long midday drive to Doi Inthanon. Many of the commoner species were seen, those worthy of a mention would include 3 Mountain Bamboo Partridge, Spectacled Barwing, Siberian Rubythroat, White-bellied Redstart, both Rufous and White Gorgeted Flycatchers, Slaty Blue Flycatcher, Spot-breasted Parrotbill, party of approximately 20 Long-tailed Broadbills. Meanwhile newbies would come in the form of a Large Cuckooshrike although the standout bird of the morning would clearly be reserved for Himalayan Cutia. Sue picking out two birds, refering to them as Nuthatch-like with barred flanks. Many would owe her a debt of gratitude in calling this out for they were quickly refound and based on her accurate description proven to be a bird many had coveted.



Himalayan Cutia

We'd finally say 'Au revoir' to Doi Land at 10:30 and commit to the long drive to Doi Inthanon which with stops for lunch would take the best part of six hours. We'd sort out our accommodation at the tranqile settings of the Inthanon Highland resort before making the short journey to continue a few hours birding til dusk.

First off was a quick stop at a flowering tree, targeting and finding 3 **Purple Sunbirds**. Close by we'd stop again. The site a rather non-descript area of cultivated scrub. Upon our arrival our intended quarry was already there to greet us. A flock of 12 **Blossom-headed Parakeets** gave little concern to our presense. **Plain-backed Sparrows** also frequent the area and took a little more effort to track down. At least 15 were to be seen, the males in sparrow terms a particularly attractive bird. With both target species secured we'd head back to the magnificent, sprawling gardens of our lodge.

By now the light was begining to fade and our strategy unreservedly consumed to Owling. Indian Rollers and Coppersmith Barbets would be conspicuous during our first 20 minute Owl-less quest although matters would soon change. A calling Brown Hawk Owl, would at first lead us a merry dance, yet frustrating flight views were cast aside when one would land above us in a towering tree affording prolonged scope views. Many would have been satisfied with this outcome alone but more was to follow when we'd find a tiny Spotted Owlet. It sat on the roof of a building adjacent to where many would be lodging for the night.

### Day seven- 14<sup>th</sup> February 2019

#### Doi Inthanon

At 2565 metres tall Doi Inthanon lays claim to being the highest peak in Thailand. Its well tarmaced road means the site is now very popular with tourists, although not withstanding this is still a place with lots to offer any visiting birder.

We'd being our morning with a short drive from our resort to the base of Doi Inthanon. Once again timing our arrival to coincide with the dawn of a new day. It would take us to bridge spanning a small stream, our quest a Forktail! They can be notoriously skitish and good fieldcraft especially in a group of eight people was paramount if we stood any chance of seeing one. We were in luck. A **Black-backed Forktail** would give distince although prolonged views. Starts such as this are always a fantastic way to being a day.

Next we'd drive several miles up into the reserve. Stopping, then by foot exploring a trail. We'd only cover a distance of maybe half a mile at best, our pace slow for no other reason than to bird as efficiently as possible. The highlight would be a close encounter with a **Slaty-bellied Tesia**, it certainly a crowd pleaser, although this would surely have been usurped had we managed to locate a day calling Hodgson's Frogmouth. **Asian Emerald Cuckoo**, **Rufous-backed Sibia** and **Hume's Treecreeper** sightings would all new trip additions and yet a supporting cast of **White-bellied Erpornis**, both **Blyth's** and **Clicking Shrike Babblers**, **Large Niltava** and **Little Pied Flycatcher** would equate to a good mornings haul.

Hot conditions would see Nick wrestle with midday plans. Either side of lunch (and by now our daily fix of ice cream) we'd first visit Wachirathan Waterfall, this as would be expected busy with tourists. With both **Plumbeous Water Redstart** and **White-capped Redstart** seen we'd abrubtly make our escape. While to keep the trip list ticking over would visit a site lower down the park, quickly locating our intended quarry, that being the rather smart **Ashy Bulbul** and also adding **Grey-eyed Bulbul**, which by contrast was somewhat uninspiring to the eye.

Based on some credible information made available to Nick we'd make an exploratory detour, calling into some grounds that held a feeding station. Nick had never been here before but on sound intellience rattled off a host of mouth watering species. Unfortunately our unscheduled visit today wouldn't be able to accommodate us, yet far from downcast it appeared tomorrow would be the green light to go. We just awaited a phone call later to confirm, we'd willing take that!

Our final quick hit and run midday venture in search of Small Niltava was in fact neither particularly quick and certainly involved no hitting or running. At checkpoint 2 we'd stop, walking down an overgrown trail, admittedly not far and struggle, certainly not seeing the Niltava. Returning back to the road what would you know, there it was, a fine male **Small Niltava**.

So far we'd eluded the summit. Timing a visit here is crutial and with mid-afternoon upon us the plan was that in effect we stay at the summit for the rest of what was left of the day. Upon our arrival, rather than initially gravitate towards the cloud forest Angkha boardwalk we'd instead bird an area that to the inexperienced seemed questionable. Amid the small shops and rather bizarre

latrine facility tree's, more importantly one particular fruiting tree. Our first encounter with **Greysided Thrush** was instantanious, it gorging itself on this bountiful larder the tree was to provide. While higher within the canopy a less obliging chap was found but would prove more reticent to show itself, it being a **Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker**. This a beast of a flowerpecker, one of the largest. This tree held our attention for quite some time although somebody, I'm not sure whom must have averted their gaze and looked behind as at point blank range a **Bar-throated Minla** oblivious to our presense just idly did its own thing.



Grey-sided Thrush

Leaving here with the intention of doing the boardwalk, Nick perhaps displaying some zen like capability stuck his head around an outbuilding, the most innocuous of places and discovered a **Rufous-throated Partridge**. Viewing it was limited to three, maybe four at a push but thankfully it would linger and be seen well by all. Next a few **Green-tailed Sunbirds**, these localised individuals with blue rather than green tails are currently assigned the race *angkanensis* (Doi Inthanon Sunbird) would follow before reaching the nearby Ang Ka nature trail (borderwalk).

Upon decending the steps into the trail proper a flurry of activity ensued. Most of the party would latch onto the **Snowy-browed Flycatcher**, but likewise miss out on the **Ashy-throated Warbler** although any grievances upon missing it were allayed by an almost cast-iron guarantee we'd see more. So without dwelling upon this too much our attention was immediately taken to watching two more **Rufous-throated Partridges** foraging away, deep in cover just yards away. Moving on, albeit just a few yards a fruiting bush held an untold amount of thrushes, a mixed gathering of both **Grey-sided** yet mostly **Eye-browed Thrushes** and it was whilst all were no doubt engaged on watching these that Nick in the front and Lee lagging at the rear independently latched onto a Scaly Thrush. A hallmark of this icon Zoothera thrush is in its notoriety as being shy and elusive,

testament given the fact its only been recorded on two of the previous seven recent tours. It would do an impromtu vanishing act much to our chargrin despite a thorough search for it.

Walking the remainder of the boardwalk would be disconcertingly quiet, no Shortwings or Wren Babblers to show for our efforts, just a **Rufous-winged Fulvetta**. But undeterred we'd be back another day. Our day would conclude with the long 40 km drive back down Doi Inthanon, stopping just once to scope a pre-roost gathering of **Speckled Pigeons**.

Evening plans over dinner that night would see us re-evaluate revisiting the Frogmouth site at first light tomorrow. Finding it would be a very challenging affair, our chances of seeing it slim but by not going would almost certainly rule out any chance we'd have of seeing one. Game on!

Day eight- 15<sup>th</sup> February 2019

#### **Doi Inthanon**

We'd leave the resort at 5:30, walking the same track as yesterday but now in utter darkness, guided only by torchlight. Once at the prescribed destination, it still being dark we stood and waited. Bouyed by hearing what must have been the same Frogmouth as yesterday. Daylight would come although the bird went quiet on us but we knew it must be close by. Scanning likely perches where it may roost proved futile, Nick and Lee undeterred venturing sufficently far enough into the forest in search of it. Alas the outcome was the same. We'd given it our best shot but would concede defeat and move on.

Next, it still early a quick drive to the summit. Initially we'd target and find two **Ashy Wood Pigeons** without incident and from here it was then back onto the Angkha trail. Thrushes occupied the same fruiting tree as yesterday although not given too much notice, our focus given to watching an **Ashy-throated Warbler**, often just yards in front of us. From practically the very same spot Nick upon hearing a **White-browed Shortwing** quickly picked it up. A female, which proceeded to feed along the soggy forest floor immediately under the boardwalk we were standing on. The views stupendiously close. Deeper within the trail it becomes darker and even danker, an arboreal **Bar-throated Minla** would show well, although our overall focus remained primarily on working the forest floor and for good reason. Another **White-browed Shortwing** was seen, this time a grey male which although remained secretive would be seen well by all and a **Pygmy Wren-babbler** although the views weren't quite so accommodating.

Halfway along the trail Nick received news that the hide we'd hoped to visit yesterday was now free and upon hearing this we'd abandone the trail. Foregoing any hope of finding either a White-crowned Forktail or a Dark-sided Thrush, the latter having evidently not been noted for several weeks here. Apparently both of these along with host of other interesting species were coming to this feeding station forementioned.

We'd arrive and settle in by 10am. A solitarty Grey Wagtail from the outset didn't get things off to the liveliest of starts but we just sat and waited. Given time things would pick up. Our two hour allocation saw us gain incredibly close views of the normally shy **Dark-sided Thrush**, this alone made the visit worthwhile plus would encounter a female **Plumbeous Water Redstart**, **Taiga Flycatcher**, immature male **Hill Blue Flycatcher** and the briefest of views of a **Lesser Shortwing**.



Dark-sided Thrush

After lunch at Mr Deung's we'd visit a site in search of a Wood Owl. Given time one would be heard to call, not too frequently it must be said but was certainly present. Finding it would be another matter. It wasn't close and despite our attempts to address this the forest fauna proved a bit too challenging to get close enough to find it. Scant consolation would come in the form of **Eurasian Jay** and some getting their first tickable views of **Golden Babbler**.

Nick still had other target species in mind for this afternoon. A **Collared Falconet** being one and picked up much further down the park. A **White-bellied Woodpecker** a bonus find and truly wonderful bird.

We'd finish our day expecting to see a Black-headed Woodpecker. The site for them over the last twelve months having undergone a radical transformation with an upgrade of a road surface. **Collared Falconets** use to frequent the area as well, Nick pointing out they had long gone so image our surprise finding one.



Collared Falconet

Things weren't looking too rosy for the peckers, the falconet aside a **Rufous-winged Buzzard** would prove an ample standin but just as we'd allocated 10 more minutes before calling it a day the unmistakeable call of what we were after. There on the hillside above us flew 2 **Black-headed Woodpeckers.** They'd taken their time but nobody was complaining.

# Day nine- 16<sup>th</sup> February 2019

## **Doi Inthanon and Bangkok**

With just a few hours allocation this morning before our scheduled flight back to Bangkok via Chiang Mai our options were limited. Therefore we'd revisit yesterdays hide. What a good decision that turned out to be.

The **Dark-sided Thrush** gave us more incredible views, whilst the **Lesser Shortwing** was far more obliging today and yet both would pale almost into significance, at best vying for the third best bird of the day. Topping these and quantifying which was better would be a matter of personal opinion.



Slaty-backed Forktail

This **Slaty-backed Forktail** would make a few brief visits, certainly a crowd pleaser for sure. Ordinarily, given due context this bird, especially given the views would be a highlight of any days birding and yet we were treated to even more 'eyecandy' in the form of this!!



White-crowned Forktail

This **White-crowned Forktail** for me stole the show. It was a marginal call as both were fantastic. As for variety little else would visit. Too be honest we could have watched forktails all morning quite contentedly but would note a **Blue Whistling Thrush** and female **Rufous-bellied Niltava**.

Martin also getting on the skulking **Radde's Warbler** found by Lee deeper within cover. What a great way to conclude our northern section of the tour.

From here Nick would drive us back to Chiang Mai. We'd say our good-bye's to him. We'd a short flight back to Bangkok whilst he'd a long, arduous drive back, a gruelling 8 hour journey. Upon our mid-afternoon arrival in Bangkok all were taken aback by the heat, it was hot! We'd book ourselves into a rather plush hotel literally just a stones throw away from the Don Muang airport. Some choosing to take the time to chill out and relax whilst others would join Lee with a walk around the rear of the hotel. We'd see Java Sparrow, Yellow-vented Bulbul, Malaysian Pied Fantail, Coppersmith Barbet, Asian Koel, Olive-backed Sunbird, Asian Openbill and Germain's Swiftlet in this truly urban environment, although most found this 9 foot long Water Monitor the most captivating.





Day ten- 17<sup>th</sup> February 2019

### Wat Pra Phuttabaht Noi and Khao Yai

Nick would greet us outside our hotel at 5:30, from here the day would see us head north-east, destination Khao Yai NP, although with a planned stop first at Wat Pra Phuttabaht Noi. From here towering limestone escarpments dominate the skyline and home to one particular species we'd come to see. **Rufous Limestone Babbler**, formally known as Limestone Wren-babbler yet now split with Grey Limestone Babbler our quest. Easy pickings indeed, several being seen and seen well and although the gorge held little else we'd not see elsewhere we'd spend a pleasant hour or so birding the gorge in doing so note **Asian Brown Flycatcher**, **Lineated Barbet**, **Spotted Owlet**, **White-rumped Shama**, a pair of **Shrika** and a fine displaying **Crested Goshawk**.



Rufous Limestone Babbler

From here it was onto Khao Yai NP, a site now no longer visited by many of the leading tour companies yet home to a vast array of species that we at Zoothera deem worthy of including within the tour package.

Before entering the National Park proper we'd first stop a few miles short of this. **Red-breasted Parakeets** remain loyal to the more mature tree's that line the now heavily developed town of Khao Yai. Finding them wouldn't take long and supplemented with nice views of a **Two-barred Warbler**.

Unfortunately this afternoon's visit would coincide with it being a Sunday. The few hours spent here today would reflect poorly on what we could and should expect from this National Park. People, literally hundreds of people had chosen to visit, the campsites, recreational area's and entrance heaving with people. We'd visit several areas experiencing mixed results. Roadside birding, something paramount and a key ingredient to our time here would likewise prove challenging. Cars and bikes passing along the area's we'd chosen to visit meant we'd have to keep a constant vigil not only on the birds but also on incoming traffic. Khao Yai really has a lot to offer and testament by the fact that despite these most challenging of conditions would add a decent haul that would include- a male Siberian Blue Robin, Hainan Blue Flycatcher, White-crested Laughingthrush, Puff-throated Babbler, both Hair-crested and the pale form of Ashy Drongo, Swinhoe's Minivet, Moustached Barbet, Laced Woodpecker, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Puff-throated Bulbul and Square-tailed Drongo-cuckoo. A Blue Pitta was also heard but tantalisingly would never get seen, a position we'd hope to rectify in the next few days.



Square-tailed Drongo-cuckoo

A bout of rain late afternoon was certainly unwelcomed but rather than call it a day we stoically ventured on and with it passing would delight in watching a procession of swifts and swiftlets pass through that would also include at least 26 **Brown-backed Needletails** and our only **House Swift** of the tour. Later with the onset of darkness a **Great-eared Nightjar** would put on a great show for us and conclude another long day in the field.

## Day eleven- 18<sup>th</sup> February 2019

#### **Khao Yai National Park**

Being based just 5 minutes from the northern entrance gate is of course a huge bonus. To fully maximise our time and thus potential we'd arrive as the park opened at 6am, it still dark. Making a direct bee-line to the higher reaches of the reserve with the prospect of utilising the first hours daylight to our advantage. Hungry birds, quiet roads and pleasant temperatures all equate to optimal birding opportunity.

From the outset our birding was by vehicle only, this generally not ideal of course but for what we had in mind today essential. This of course allows better coverage and it was hoped by slowly covering as much distance as possible a few target species may fall. **Silver Pheasant** was one such target and seen well. The other Siamese Fireback, was until recently easy to see here given the same set of circumstances, yet although remaining a relatively common forest dwelling species here at Khao Yai rarely is encountered along the roadsides anymore.

Upon reaching the Pha Diew Dai viewpoint we'd stop, quickly encountering a **Black-throated Laughingthrush** our intended target and follow this with some point blank views of both **Bar-**

winged Flycatcher-shrike and party of Swinhoe's Minivets. But we'd not stop long, the slow drive back once again fireback-less.

We'd not give up on the Fireback just yet, other opportunities lay ahead but would for now concentrate on working the Khao Khiao section. Once again the Blue Pitta was heard, at times quite vocal but wouldn't show from the roadside. Rounds one and two firmly to the Pitta then but we were still in their fighting! The mood was far from downcast, other opportunities would present themselves and the over-all haul this morning was more than respectable. Several new trip species had been added, including both Heart-spotted and Black & Buff Woodpeckers, in fact side by side, Black-winged Cuckooshrike, both Green-eared and Blue-eared (a flyover only) Barbets, Austen's Brown Hornbill, both Orange-breasted and Red-headed Trogon, Asian Fairy Bluebird and for many Radde's Warbler, although one individual not only stole bird of the morning, many stating it bird of the tour so far. That accolade went to Banded Broadbill, a species guaranteed to bring a smile to anyone's face. Need I say more! Countless other species would also recorded, too many to mention yet would single out Long-tailed Broadbill, Scarlet Minivet and Moustached Barbet. Not bad for a 200 metre section of roadside birding.



Banded Broadbill

The time in essence had flown by. Please excuse the unintended pun. The morning now practically over and yet before we'd thoughts of stopping for lunch Nick suggested otherwise. He'd drive us several miles back towards the northern entrance, past the recreation area and stopping opposite a trail. Birding around mid-day so far had proven challenging at best and our walk into the trail wasn't if honest littered with birds. But after about 600 metres in we'd stop. The unmistakeable call of Coral-billed Ground Cuckoo and it seemed close. In utter silence we stood as motionless as possible, scanning into the heavy cover to which the bird could be heard over a long period of time. Then, silence! We'd come so close too seeing one, would we later rue this as a missed

opportunity? For there was certainly no guarantee we'd get another chance. A **Great lora** proved scant recompense yet on the walk back finding two male **Banded Kingfishers** eased the pain. Both were clearly very agitated. It appeared we'd stumbled across a territorial dispute, the two tumbling from great height, beaks entwined making for a dramatic spectacle.



Banded Kingfisher

After a late break for lunch back at the recreation area we'd visit a part of the park 30 minutes away along the road that leads to the southern entrance. Habitat wise it is discernably no different to other parts of the reserve and yet it holds several species that are difficult or even restricted to this park of the area. Van Hasselt's Sunbird certainly falls within this category and found with ease along with the impressive looking Crimson Sunbird, our first and maybe only potential encounter with Little Spiderhunter plus several Stripe-throated Bulbuls and male Hainan Blue Flycatcher.

We'd conclude our day once again working the Khao Khiao road. An hour spent invariably picking out several of the species encountered this morning. The highlight, well for a lucky few the briefest glimpse of a female **Blue Pitta**. Those having missed it made little fuss given the circumstances and with time on our side it was hoped that this would be remedied in the next day or two.

### Day twelve- 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019

#### **Khao Yai National Park**

Déjà vu, our second morning here to all intense purposes following a same pattern as yesterdays. A similar start time and drive along the Khao Khiao road. Our modus operandi that of seeing Siamese Fireback but once again luck was not on our side.

Overall the day would see us stay from dawn right through to dusk. Re-visiting many haunts as well as visiting a few new ones. Stops would often be brief and an overall summary of the days results were as follows- Khao Khiao road (two visits)- Hill Myna, Alstrom's Warbler, Hair-crested Drongo, Black-winged Cuckooshrike, Blue-winged Leafbird, Pin-stripe Tit Babbler, White-crested Laughingthrush, Swinhoe's Minivet, White-browed Scimitar Babbler, Greater Flameback and both Orange-breasted and Red-headed Trogon. Fruiting Fig Tree- a magnificent Great Hornbill took star billing and also seen: Sulphur-breasted Warbler, several Thick-billed Green Pigeon and Everett's White-eye although many if not all would rue missing a pair of Siamese Flameback and Green Magpie, both glimpsed fleetingly.



**Great Hornbill** 

Around the <u>recreation area and camp site</u>- Orange-headed Thrush, Black-naped Oriole, Crested Honey Buzzard, Pin-striped Tit Babbler, Puff-throated Babbler: <u>yesterdays trail</u>- 2 Wreathed Hornbills. While other areas accounting for Dollarbird, Golden-headed Cisticola, several Brownbacked and a single Silver-backed Needletail, Crested Serpant Eagle and Crested Goshawk.

Our day would conclude rather nicely on leaving by watching a single Bull Elephant.

### Day thirteen- 20th February 2019

#### Khao Yai National Park & Phetchaburi rice fields

This morning we'd be once again be onsite for 6am, although time restraints would dictate we'd need to leave by mid-morning for we'd a long drive west later in the day to Phetchaburi.

Our third consecutive early morning pursuit in the search for a Siamese Fireback once again proved unproductive. Was this purely down to bad luck or potentially a more telling trait a direct consequence of a higher degree of traffic disturbance nowadays?

Next off was the Pitta stakeout, although our stay cut rather abruptly short upon hearing a vocal Ground Cuckoo calling not far away from the roadside. We'd experienced so much misfortune over the last few days, surely we were due a break? As we waited, nigh on on tenterhooks, the bird continued to call away to our right an unbelievably cruel twist of fate had us also hearing the unmistakeable sound of the wingflapping noises of a displaying male Siamese Fireback closer to our left! Prioritising our predicament, the judgement was that we clearly focus all of our attention on the Coral-billed Ground Cuckoo, it by far the better of the two although if it weren't to then show the thought just didn't bear contemplating. Fortunately this quandary would never materialise for although the Fireback would not get seen the appearance of the **Coral-billed Ground Cuckoo** crossing the road would justifiably be a very tangible reward indeed.

With time now ebbing away rather than work the roadside we'd try our hand once again at the Pitta stakeout. With no mealworms to tempt one in our stay of an hour or so would lead to only hearing one, albeit distantly and we therefore had to be content with watching a noisy roving flock of White-crested Laughingthrushes, a pair of Puff-throated Babblers, a Black-throated Laughingthrush, a non-breeding male Siberian Blue Robin and Hainan Blue Flycatcher.

In essence time now dictated we'd have to think about departing Khao Yai. Many great birds had been seen yet naggingly both Blue Pitta and Siamese Fireback had eluded most of the tour party. Nick still had another card to play with the Pitta but unfortunately the Fireback for the second consecutive tour had eluded us.

We'd leave via the southern exit, stopping briefly to accommodate a cursory stop at the sunbird site and bridge just proceeding this. It proved to be a telling call. Little was picked up over this 20 minute interlude, a **Black-capped Kingfisher** arguably a bird we'd see later noted from the bridge a nice find although our last abiding memory from Khao Yai was very special indeed. A **Jerdon's Baza** drifted by, the views brief yet seen well. A species that on reflection was very unexpected, testament by the fact it had never been recorded on any of the previous seven Thailand tours.

The next five hours would see us vehicle bound, stopping an hour or so at a large mall in Bangkok for lunch. The time had seen us head predominantly west and for the next day and a half we'd put aside forest birding. It was now pushing 4pm, our arrival at Phetchaburi a bit later than planned would necessitate a rather hectic two hour bout of birding. With lots to cram in we'd first explore a few lakes, in doing so bolstering the triplist with a variety of waders, terns, ducks, **Painted**Storks, Black-headed Ibis, Indian Cormorant and Spot-billed Pelican. Moving swiftly on, several more stops were made, scanning a variety of rice-fields, some wetter than others. Given the

limited time at our disposal we fared well. Asian Golden Weaver, Eastern Yellow Wagtail, Collared and Stork-billed Kingfisher, several Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, numerous Pink-necked Green Pigeons, a few Oriental Pratincoles, Brahminy Kite, White-browed Crake, Oriental Darter, Javan Pond Heron and White-shouldered Starling all seen well. Both Black and Cinnamon Bittern were less accomodating, each fleeting glimpses. Both Black Baza and Japanese Sparrowhawk would also be noted, both assumedly early migrants give both the time of year and habitat noted, the former a stunning bird seen extraordinarily well.



Black Baza



Oriental Pratincole

### Day fourteen- 21st February 2019

#### Pak Thale & Liem Pak Bia

Today was unreservedly given over to wader-watching. We'd leave the Sun Hotel in Phetchaburi at 6:30 positively bristling at the anticipated wader-fested jamboree. Some may dispute that everyday's birding on tour lives long in the memory, although days such as today have that special uniqueness about them that forever remained ingrained in the memory. High praise indeed, welcome to Pak Thale.

The salt pans of Pak Thale and Liem Pak Bia are truly enormous and home to literally hundreds of thousands of wintering waders. For any wader enthusiast, indeed any birder for that matter this is one of the top wader watching sites in the whole world. Seeing large numbers of waders here is easy, seeing the specialities based on the vast area they frequent is any entirely different proposition altogether. We had just one days allocation, a tall order for sure but had an ace up our sleeve. With Nick at our disposal we have one of the best. Given he knows the area so intimately we'd have the best possible chance of mopping up.

We'd pull up at Pak Thale at around 7am. Tripods drawn and scopes ready for action. A cursory scan would see us tick off species after species. Red-necked Stints, Kentish Plovers, Lesser Sandplovers, Curlew Sandpipers, Long-toed Stints, Broad-billed Sandpipers and Marsh Sandpipers all themselves good birds. But we'd a busy schedule, too much time spent watching them could lead time restrictions later. We'd walk on, following Nick's lead. A large gathering of several hundred roosting Eurasian Curlew quickly drew our attention, Nick's eye for detail quickly locating a Far Eastern Curlew within them. Thoughts now turned too finding a very special bird indeed, that being Spoon-billed Sandpiper.

This morning a large proportion of the smaller waders seemed somewhat skitish and flighty, this was a little un-nerving and potentially a headache. What could we do about, absolutely nothing. With lots of birds to look through it was now just a case of looking at as many roosting or feeding individuals as possible and given the time at our disposal find one. It all sounded very simple. Whilst scanning **Red-necked Phalarope**, **Greater Sandplover**, **Terek Sandpiper**, **Ruff** and better still **Chinese Egret** were all found before Nick rather calmly exclaimed he'd found one. Soon everybody had scopes on the bird, it feeding amongst a gathering of Lesser Sandplovers and Rednecked Stints. The key feature of **Spoon-billed Sandpiper** is of course its bill, this seen by all but the easiest means of getting people initially onto the bird the white flagged marker on its right tarsus. This bird, marked 'P7' is a known wintering individual, ringed as a fledging in Meinypilgyno, Russia in 2015.

Contented we'd move on, taking the vehicle several kilometres and all the while eye's peeled, looking for another of our intended tier one species. Nick pulling over when noticing a roosting flock of medium-sized waders several hundred in number. Without even leaving the vehicle it was obvious **Nordmann's Greenshank** were present within the gathering. Disembarking all would train their scopes for better views, a count would suggest at least 82 being present with the gathering of mostly **Great Knot**.



Nordmann's Greenshanks

The morning so far had gone exactly to plan, key birds searched for and found. Our next target species we knew would take a bit more work. With just one wintering Asian Dowitcher known to be present in this vast area we undoubtedly had our work cut out finding it.

Most of our legwork figuratively speaking was by vehicle. We'd cover vast swaythes of saltpans, criss-crossing our way and stopping at several venues. The usual haunts in which the Dowitcher was known to frequent checked out plus others too. A single **Temminck's Stint**, lots of **Pacific Golden Plovers** and a flock **Pied Avocets** would be seen in the process and intermittently we'd focus our attention on the gulls and terns. A **Slender-billed Gull** within a gathering of Brownheaded Gulls noteworthy, while **Caspian**, **Gull-billed**, **Whiskered**, **Common** and **Little Terns** all seen in good numbers.

Site after site, as good as each was drew a blank on the Dowitcher. We'd one final place to check out, it certainly well off the beaten track but a site Nick knew well. Upon pulling up here a large gathering of roosting Black-tailed Godwits was a very encouraging sign. Nick made a cursory scan from the vehicle and unbelievably said the bird was there! Disembarking the vehicle here would have caused the whole flock to get flushed so we backed up far enough away then did so. What happened next was borderline farcical. Scanning the entire flock, bird by bird was Black-tailed Godwit after Black-tailed Godwit but no Dowitcher! Nobody had any reservations about Nick's initial claim yet John R threw some light on proceedings claiming he'd seen just a single bird depart. It appeared to land on a nearby saltpan, which of course was obscurred from view. Ouch!! This is what happened next, I kid you not!



Vantage point and relocating the Dowitcher

Seriously! Nick to gain a view of the neighbouring saltpan in question got on the roof of our van! He'd indeed confirm it was the **Asian Dowitcher**, yet he alone was the only person so far to have actually seen it, bar John's untickable flight view. I could show you a picture of us all on top the van watching it but this of course this never happened. Instead we calmly made our way by foot to a corner of the saltpan in question and there it was. A tale that will live long in the memory.

After lunch we'd a 1pm appointment and short boat trip out to an offshore spit. Our stay of less than an hour producing reasonable views of both White-faced and Malaysian Plover, plus White-winged and Greater Crested Tern and Pacific Reef Heron.



White-faced Plover

On our return and with the waders cleaned up we'd could theoritically relax. Instead we'd bird some of the drier areas that catered to a few passerines that were know to be present. Two sites were visited, **Oriental Skylark, Indochinese Bushlark** and **Indian Nightjar** all anticipated and duly found with **Indian Stone Curlew** a genuine bonus.



**Indian Stone Curlew** 

Our final port of call today was at the Kings Project. We'd not stay long but long enough to enjoy watching a few **Ruddy-breasted Crakes** secretly doing their thing along a line of gullies, also noting several **Malaysian Pied Fantails** and **Black-browed Reed Warbler** in the process. With the time now nearing 6pm we'd knock it on the head and travel back to Phetchaburi. Everybody more than a little contented at such a wonderful day.

### Day fifteen- 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2019

### **Kaeng Krachan**

This morning we'd travel to Kaeng Krachen National Park. A roadside stop for fuel a promising start with **Black-winged Kite**.

The previous evening Nick had forewarned the tour party that most of the site regrettably was currently inaccessible. Any access or indeed birding beyond the headquarter office strictly off-limits. This was of course a blow but something that ultimately was out of our hands. We'd lost any chance of finding many higher elevation species but rather than focus on a negative we instead made darn sure we'd make best use of the areas available to us.

Before entering the park we'd stop to watch a few roadside feeding **Vinous-breasted Starlings**, our only ones of the tour. But the real birding would begin once within the grounds themselves. An area or more accurately a forest clearing would be our intended starting point. It's a reliable site for many species, **Black-thighed Falconet** and **Golden-crested Myna** particularly so and thus found with ease. **Dollarbird**, both **Greater** and **Common Flameback**, **Black-capped Kingfisher** and

Blue-winged Leafbird offered a bit of variety but we'd quickly move on, albeit a few hundred yards. This second stop was birdier, not initially but given time and effort ostensibly so. A flowering tree offered rich pickings for feeding birds and likewise worked to our advantage. A pair of tiny Vernal Hanging Parrots, a species often hard to see well gave sustained views and well as attracting in several species of Sunbird, Ruby-cheeked Sunbird amongst them. A stand of bamboo played host to both Dark-necked Tailorbird and White-browed Piculet, while a pair of Greyrumped Treeswift quartered the hillside. Our only reservation would concern the absense of any calling Broadbills, or one inparticular. This we knew to frequent the area but other opportunities would surely present themselves in due course.

Moving on, instead of going further into the park we headed in the opposite direction. Noting a fruiting roadside Fig tree upon our initially drove through earlier proved to tempting to just ignore. This amply validated by an earlier conversation with a local guide who stated he'd seen Tickell's Brown Hornbill there this very morning. No Hornbills for us, they'd obviously had their early morning fill and moved on but our short stay not in complete vain as **Green-eared Barbet** and **Streak-breasted Woodpecker** seen.

It was barely 9:30am but with temperatures starting to already become an issue a downsurge in the bird activity was clearly evident. Around the headquarters and campsite we'd stand, linger and just pull out whatever was on offer. A Large Woodshrike nestbound was well received along with our first decent views of Blue-eared Barbet, while the controversial although somewhat demure *cinnamomeoventris* Bulbul was seen and lamented on. Its taxonomic status amongst higher circles still hotly debated, some now calling it Baker's Bulbul. Overhead Crested Honey Buzzard, Crested Serpent Eagle and Crested Goshawk would drift by, while we wishing to seek some degree of restbite from the sun crossed a small stream and worked the beginning of a trial. Amidst the shady confines Abbott's Babbler and Black-naped Monarch kept the trip list ticking over, Great Iora and Pin-striped Tit Babbler a supporting cast although by 11am the lack of birds given the heat of the day saw us adjourn proceedings. We'd hunker down, cold drinks in hand and rest for an early and prolonged lunch break.

Once nourished, the rest having recharged weiry limbs we'd leave the park. Nick had made prior arrangements for us to visit a nearby stakeout. One he'd not visited before but likewise was hearing some interesting reports from. The stakeout held two screens, one able to accommodate six of the group (and a Great Woolly Horseshoe Bat) while Lee along with Josh occupied the other, this already held two local amateur photographers. We'd stay several hours, over four in fact until the onset of dusk. Nick would later confess he'd found it a somewhat disappointing outcome, although others contented. The standout highlight would be a regularly seen Ferruginous Partridge, what a bird that was, while other species recorded would include- Siberian Blue Robin, several Tickell's Blue Flycatchers, both Greater and Lesser-necklaced Laughingthrushes, White-crested Laughingthrushes, White-browed Scimitar Babbler, numerous Brown-cheeked Fulvetta, another Abbott's Babbler, Black-naped Monarch, an all to brief Blyth's Paradise Flycatcher, a Bar-backed Partridge and Emerald Doves.



Ferruginous Partridge (Wow!)



Tickell's Blue Flycatcher

On our return back to vehicle a hawking **Great Eared** and **Large-tailed Nightjar** were there to greet us, while the short drive back to our accommodation saw several of the latter sat on the road. Our stay for the next two nights the fabulous Baanmaka Nature Lodge run by lan and Games, both exceedingly good naturalists in their own right (<a href="https://www.baanmaka.com">www.baanmaka.com</a>).



Large-tailed Nightjar

# Day sixteen- 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2019

# **Kaeng Krachan**

Today marks our final full day in Thailand, lets hope it's a good one, no change that a great one.

We'd arrive just prior to dawn, the drive in once accounting for at least 6 Large-tailed Nightjars flushed from the road. Once onsite we'd head directly for the open area we'd visited yesterday morning. The dawn of a new day ushered in with more views of the Black-thighed Falconet, Haircrested Drongo, both Common and Greater Flameback, a pair of Greater Yellownape which were new, Golden-fronted Leafbird, both Hill and Golden-crested Myna and Bar-winged Flycatcher Shrike the best on offer.

Overall Broadbills to date had fared poorly. Kaeng Krachan is synonymous for them and it was to this means that we hoped to rectify this current situation. Just a few hundred metres away at yesterdays second stop we'd stop once again. It was whilst watching an **Asian Barred Owlet** that Nick rather animatedly exclaimed he could hear the raucous call of a **Black and Red Broadbill** and promptly headed off in search of it. We'd obviously follow suit, hot on his heels and there it was. Initial views weren't terrible, in fact quite good if slightly obscurred most of the time but it would occasionally move and we in turn jockeying for position would be granted to some crippling views. Now let me tell you that was a real crowd pleaser.



Black and Red Broadbill

Next stop was the campsite. Our earlier arrival compared to yesterday bore fruit. A **Blue-bearded Bee-eater** would fly in and momentarily perch high within a towering tree, followed by a **Sultan Tit** and photogenic **Blue-eared Barbet**, alas a pair of **Thick-billed** and single **Yellow-vented Flowerpecker** would not provide quite so accommodating.



Blue-eared Barbet

The forest trail that we'd only practically entered yesterday followed suite. Three **Silver-breasted Broadbills** got us off to a fabulous start, invariably remaining high and obscurred but seen well boded well. Not too far beyond this a **Black and Yellow Broadbill** was heard, Martin picking it up.

Tiny by comparison to other Broadbills its both a bizarre looking bird but enchanting too and although remaining high within the under canopy see very well. This morning could theoretically have been labelled a 'Broadbill-morning'!



Black and Yellow Broadbill

Shortly after this tracking down a calling **Great Slaty Woodpecker** would prove much more challenging. Picking up where it was coming from was a straight-forward enough task but finding it based on the heavy degree of cover surrounding the trail would prove taxing. It would take us trying several different vantage points, each with rather limited views before it would be found. Due reward given the time and effort.

Much of the trial hereon in was quieter, spells of little being seen resulted and although a few of the commoner based forest birds were sometimes encountered stops were infrequent. A low foraging **Sakhalin Leaf Warbler** would give many the run around, it constantly on the move and thus difficult to track down or see well. While the final bird of real note would be an **Olive-backed Pipit**, it seen feeding along the trail.

We'd be back at the Baanmaka Nature Lodge for about 11:30, heat driven. Many scurrying to grab a cold drink or ice lolly before ordering a meal with plans to regather for a 1pm departure. Many would take the time to rest or relax although it's worth pointing out the extensive gardens here certainly hold great potental and given more time would have been done.

This afternoon we'd have another go at a stakeout, although a different one to yesterday. Upon arriving it was quiet, given the time of day too quiet. Just why was at first a quandary then all became apparent with the arrival an an Accipiter. It would linger for the best part of two hours, often perched high over-looking the waterhole, just once coming down for a drink.



Besra

Although a great bird to see its prolonged duration of stay wasn't welcomed at all. Its rather pale upperpart colouration had us calling it a Shikra, although in hindsight Nick would later ascertain its true identity as a **Besra**, based on the heavier markings to the breast and belly, albeit a very pale one.

From mid-afternoon onwards the bird activity would begin to increase. The departure of the Besra no doubt a factor behind this. By now with many fully conversant and confident in their own ability to identify many of the incoming species Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Lesser Neck-laced Laughingthrush, Black-naped Monarch, Racket-tailed Treepie, Olive-backed Sunbird and Barbacked Partridge would be seen well, some also noting another Blyth's Paradise Flycatcher further within forest. Although it wouldn't be until 5pm that we had our first real mega. Two Large Scimitar Babblers, made the briefest of appearances, never to be seen again. While later still as darkness began to descend, most having just left the hides would dash back to look at an immature Slaty-legged Crake.

Reconvening back at the vehicle beeming faces alround, although a minor drama ensued. Trapping ones foot underneath the front of a wheel is not something that Lee would recommend, fortunately for him no harm was done!



Slaty-legged Crake (record shot)

# Day seventeen- 24<sup>th</sup> February 2019

# **Kaeng Krachan**

This was it, our last mornings birding. What to do? Well lets go find a Blue Pitta seemed to meet with everybodies approval. We weren't blessed with a great deal of time although armed with news that a third stakeout purporting to claim a 100% guarantee of seeing one surely boded well.

Based on such news surely we couldn't fail, could we? Well after about 20 minutes shoe-horned into a tiny hide things weren't looking at all rosy! A pair of Shama's aside nothing! Nick, after perhaps confering with the local had stated it should have been in straight away and staying seemed therefore pointless. So much for this 100% malarkey.

But all was not lost just yet. He'd another stakeout much deeper within the forest so off we marched. This hide was barely any bigger than the first and another rather snug fit to get all in but we managed it. Birdwise it was active right from the outset, **Puff-throated Babbler** and **Siberian Blue Robin** two noted from memory but no Pitta. Hearing one soon after got everybodies attention, it calling away to our right. Warily the bird would come, not directly in but circling the hide at distance. Cautiously it would begin to approach before there it was in full view. Redemption and with photo's to boot. Without wishing to sound overtly melodramatic but it had taken many attempts over the last seven days or so but finally everybody had now seen one.



Blue Pitta

We'd head back to the lodge, where before leaving and saying our goodbyes to lan would record a **Black-hooded Oriole** in the gardens. It was now that time to start heading back towards Bangkok, although rather than take the direct route back would have enough time to briefly call into Phetchaburi. In doing so adding two new trip species **Greater Spotted Eagle** and **Black-eared Kite**.

And so that concluded our very enjoyable and successful Thailand tour of 2019. We'd say our goodbyes to Nick at the hotel in Bangkok, thanking him for all his efforts and great company and wishing him well. We in turn could relax and enjoy a beer or two that evening fore our various departures weren't until tomorrow.

My special thanks to Sue, Martin, Graham, John R, Josh and John. All were great company and willing participants. I wish you all well and thank you (Kob Khun Krup)

# **Species list- (IOC order)**

**Anseriformes: Anatidae** 

Lesser Whistling Duck Dendrocygna javanica

Ruddy Shelduck Tadorna ferruginea

Eurasian Wigeon Anas penelope

Indian Spot-billed Duck

Anas poecilorhyncha

Northern Shoveler Anas clypeata

Northern Pintail Anas acuta

Garganey Anas querquedula

Tufted Duck Aythya fuligula

Ferruginous Duck Aythya nyroca

#### **Galliformes: Phasianidae**

Rufous-throated Partridge Arborophila rufogularis

Bar-backed Partridge Arborophila brunneoppectus

Ferruginous Partridge Caloperdix oculeus

Mountain Bamboo Partridge Bambusicola fytchii

Red Junglefowl Gallus gallus- both spadiceus & gallus ssp.

Silver Pheasant Lophura nycthemera

Mrs Hume's Pheasant Syrmaticus humiae

## Podicipediformes: Podicipedidae

Little Grebe Tachybaptus ruficollis poggei

Great Crested Grebe Podiceps cristatus

Ciconiiformes: Ciconiidae

Painted Stork Mycteria leucocephala

Asian Openbill Anastomus oscitans

Pelecaniformes: Threskiornithidae

Black-headed Ibis Threskiornis melanocephalus

Pelecaniformes: Ardeidae

Yellow Bittern Ixobrychus sinensis

Cinnamon Bittern Ixobrychus cinnamomeus

Striated Heron Butorides striata

Chinese Pond Heron Ardeola bacchus

Javan Pond Heron Ardeola speciosa

Eastern Cattle Egret Bubulcus coromandus

Grey Heron Ardea cinerea

Purple Heron Ardea purpurea

Great Egret Ardea alba

Intermediate Egret Ardea intermedia

Little Egret Egretta garzetta

Pacific Reef Heron Egretta sacra

Chinese Egret Egretta eulophotes

Pelecaniformes: Pelecanidae

Spot-billed Pelican Pelecanus philippensis

## **Suliformes: Phalacrocoracidae**

Little Cormorant Microcarbo niger

Indian Cormorant Phalacrocorax fuscicollis

Great Cormorant Phalacrocorax carbo

**Suliformes: Anhingidae** 

Oriental Darter Anhinga melanogaster

## **ACCIPITRIFORMES: Pandionidae**

Western Osprey Pandion haliaetus

## **Accipitriformes: Pandionidae**

Black-winged Kite Elanus caeruleus

Crested Honey Buzzard Pernis ptilorhynchus

Black Baza Aviceda leuphotes

Jerdon's Baza Aviceda jerdoni

Crested Serpent Eagle Spilornis cheela

Mountain Hawk-Eagle Nisaetus nipalensis

Greater Spotted Eagle Clanga clanga

Crested Goshawk Accipiter trivirgatus

Shikra Accipiter badius

Besra Accipiter virgatus

Eurasian Sparrowhawk Accipiter nisus

Japanese Sparrowhawk Accipiter gularis

Western Marsh Harrier Circus aeruginosus

Eastern Marsh Harrier Circus spilonotus

Pied Harrier Circus melanoleucos

Black-eared Kite Milvus migrans lineatus

Brahminy Kite Haliastur indus

Rufous-winged Buzzard Butastur liventer

Grey-faced Buzzard Butastur indicus

## **Gruiformes: Rallidae**

Slaty-legged Crake Rallina eurizonoides

White-breasted Waterhen Amaurornis phoenicurus

Ruddy-breasted Crake Porzana fusca

White-browed Crake Porzana cinerea

Grey-headed Swamphen Porphyrio poliocephalus

Common Moorhen Gallinula chloropus

Eurasian Coot Fulica atra

#### Charadriiformes: Recurvirostridae

Indian Stone Curlew Burhinus indicus

## **Charadriiformes: Recurvirostridae**

Black-winged Stilt Himantopus himantopus

Pied Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta

#### Charadriiformes: Charadriidae

Grey-headed Lapwing Vanellus cinereus

Red-wattled Lapwing Vanellus indicus

Pacific Golden Plover Pluvialis fulva

Grey Plover Pluvialis squatarola

Little Ringed Plover Charadrius dubius & jerdoni race

Kentish Plover Charadrius alexandrinus

White-faced Plover Charadrius dealbatus

Malaysian Plover Charadrius peronii

Lesser Sand Plover Charadrius mongolus

Greater Sand Plover Charadrius leschenaultii

#### **Charadriiformes: Jacanidae**

Pheasant-tailed Jacana Hydrophasianus chirurgus

Bronze-winged Jacana Metopidius indicus

# Charadriiformes: Scolopacidae

Common Snipe Gallinago gallinago

Asian Dowitcher Limnodromus semipalmatus

Black-tailed Godwit Limosa limosa melanuroides

Bar-tailed Godwit Limosa lapponica

Whimbrel Numenius phaeopus

Eurasian Curlew Numenius arquata

Far Eastern Curlew Numenius madagascariensis

Spotted Redshank Tringa erythropus

Common Redshank Tringa totanus

Marsh Sandpiper Tringa stagnatilis

Common Greenshank Tringa nebularia

Nordmann's Greenshank Tringa guttifer

Green Sandpiper Tringa ochropus

Wood Sandpiper Tringa glareola

Terek Sandpiper Xenus cinereus

Common Sandpiper Actitis hypoleucos

Great Knot Calidris tenuirostris

Red Knot Calidris canutus

Sanderling Calidris alba

Red-necked Stint Calidris ruficollis

Temminck's Stint Calidris temminckii

Long-toed Stint Calidris subminuta

Curlew Sandpiper Calidris ferruginea

Spoon-billed Sandpiper Eurynorhynchus pygmeus

Broad-billed Sandpiper Limicola falcinellus

Ruff Philomachus pugnax

Red-necked Phalarope Phalaropus lobatus

#### **CHARADRIIFORMES: Glareolidae**

Oriental Pratincole Glareola maldivarum

Small Pratincole Glareola lactea

### **CHARADRIIFORMES: Laridae**

Slender-billed Gull Chroicocephalus genei

Brown-headed Gull Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus

Gull-billed Tern Gelochelidon nilotica

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* 

Greater Crested Tern Thalasseus bergii

Little Tern Sternula albifrons

Common Tern Sterna hirundo tibetana

Whiskered Tern Chlidonias hybrida javanicus

White-winged Tern Chlidonias leucopterus

#### **COLUMBIFORMES: Columbidae**

Rock Dove Columba livia

Speckled Wood Pigeon Columba hodgsonii

Ashy Wood Pigeon Columba pulchricollis

Oriental Turtle Dove Streptopelia orientalis

Red Turtle Dove Streptopelia tranquebarica

Spotted Dove Spilopelia chinensis

Barred Cuckoo-Dove Macropygia unchall

Common Emerald Dove Chalcophaps indica

Zebra Dove Geopelia striata

Pink-necked Green Pigeon Treron vernans

Thick-billed Green Pigeon Treron curvirostra

Mountain Imperial Pigeon Ducula badia

### **CUCULIFORMES: Cuculidae**

Greater Coucal Centropus sinensis

Coral-billed Ground Cuckoo Carpococcyx renauldi

Green-billed Malkoha Phaenicophaeus tristis

Asian Koel Eudynamys scolopaceus

Asian Emerald Cuckoo Chrysococcyx maculatus

Banded Bay Cuckoo Cacomantis sonneratii

Drongo Cuckoo Surniculus dicruroides

# STRIGIFORMES: Strigidae

Collared Owlet Glaucidium brodiei

Asian Barred Owlet Glaucidium cuculoides

Spotted Owlet Athene brama

Brown Boobook Ninox scutulata

# **CAPRIMULGIFORMES: Caprimulgidae**

Great Eared Nightjar Lyncornis macrotis

Large-tailed Nightjar Caprimulgus macrurus

Indian Nightjar Caprimulgus asiaticus

# **APODIFORMES: Hemiprocnidae**

Grey-rumped Treeswift Hemiprocne longipennis

# **APODIFORMES: Apodidae**

Himalayan Swiftlet Aerodramus brevirostris

Germain's Swiftlet Aerodramus germani

Silver-backed Needletail Hirundapus cochinchinensis

Brown-backed Needletail Hirundapus giganteus

Asian Palm Swift Cypsiurus balasiensis

Cook's Swift Apus cooki

House Swift Apus nipalensis

# **TROGONIFORMES: Trogonidae**

Orange-breasted Trogon Harpactes oreskios

## **CORACIIFORMES:** Coraciidae

Indian Roller Coracias benghalensis affinis

Oriental Dollarbird Eurystomus orientalis

## **CORACIIFORMES: Alcedinidae**

Banded Kingfisher Lacedo pulchella

Stork-billed Kingfisher Pelargopsis capensis

White-throated Kingfisher Halcyon smyrnensis

Black-capped Kingfisher Halcyon pileata

Collared Kingfisher Todiramphus chloris

Common Kingfisher Alcedo atthis

# **CORACIIFORMES: Meropidae**

Blue-bearded Bee-eater Nyctyornis athertoni

Green Bee-eater Merops orientalis

Blue-tailed Bee-eater Merops philippinus

Chestnut-headed Bee-eater Merops leschenaulti

## **BUCEROTIFORMES: Upupidae**

Eurasian Hoopoe Upupa epops

# **BUCEROTIFORMES: Bucerotidae**

Great Hornbill Buceros bicornis

Oriental Pied Hornbill Anthracoceros albirostris

Austen's Brown Hornbill Anorrhinus austeni

Wreathed Hornbill Rhyticeros undulatus

## **PICIFORMES: Megalaimidae**

Great Barbet Psilopogon virens

Lineated Barbet Psilopogon lineatus

Green-eared Barbet Psilopogon faiostrictus

Golden-throated Barbet Psilopogon franklinii

Blue-throated Barbet Psilopogon asiaticus

Moustached Barbet Psilopogon incognitus

Blue-eared Barbet Psilopogon duvaucelii

Coppersmith Barbet Psilopogon haemacephalus

#### **PICIFORMES: Picidae**

Eurasian Wryneck Jynx torquilla

White-browed Piculet Picumnus innominatus

Heart-spotted Woodpecker Hemicircus canente

Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker Yungipicus canicapillus

Freckle-breasted Woodpecker Dendrocopos analis

Stripe-breasted Woodpecker Dendrocopos atratus

Streak-breasted Woodpecker Picus viridanus

Greater Yellownape Chrysophlegma flavinucha

Laced Woodpecker Picus vittatus

Black-headed Woodpecker Picus erythropygius

Common Flameback Dinopium javanense

Greater Flameback Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus

Bay Woodpecker Blythipicus pyrrhotis

Rufous Woodpecker Micropternus brachyurus

Black & Buff Woodpecker Meiglyptes jugularis

Great Slaty Woodpecker Mulleripicus pulverulentus

## **FALCONIFORMES: Falconidae**

Collared Falconet Microhierax caerulescens

Black-thighed Falconet Microhierax fringillarius

Peregrine Falcon Falco peregrinus

#### **PSITTACIFORMES: Psittacullidae**

Blossom-headed Parakeet Psittacula roseata

Red-breasted Parakeet Psittacula alexandri

Vernal Hanging Parrot Loriculus vernalis

## **PASSERIFORMES:** Eurylaimidae

Black and Red Broadbill Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchos

Long-tailed Broadbill Psarisomus dalhousiae

Silver-breasted Broadbill Serilophus lunatus

Banded Broadbill Eurylaimus javanicus

Black and Yellow Broadbill Eurylaimus ochromalus

## **PASSERIFORMES: Pittidae**

Blue Pitta Hydrornis cyaneus

Rusty-naped Pitta Hydrornis oatesi

# **PASSERIFORMES: Tephrodornithidae**

Bar-winged Flycaycher-Shrike Hemipus picatus

Large Woodshrike Tephrodornis virgatus

**PASSERIFORMES: Artamidae** 

Ashy Woodswallow Artamus fuscus

**PASSERIFORMES: Aegithinidae** 

Common Iora Aegithina tiphia

Great Iora Aegithina lafresnayei

**PASSERIFORMES: Campephagidae** 

Large Cuckooshrike Coracina macei

Indochinese Cuckooshrike Coracina polioptera

Black-winged Cuckooshrike Coracina melaschistos

Swinhoe's Minivet Pericrocotus cantonensis

Grey-chinned Minivet Pericrocotus solaris

Short-billed Minivet Pericrocotus brevirostris

Scarlet Minivet Pericrocotus speciosus

**PASSERIFORMES: Laniidae** 

Brown Shrike Lanius cristatus, both confusus & lucionensis ssp.

Burmese Shrike Lanius collurioides

Long-tailed Shrike Lanius schach

Grey-backed Shrike Lanius tephronotus

## **PASSERIFORMES: Vireonidae**

White-bellied Erpornis Erpornis zantholeuca

Blyth's Shrike-babbler Pteruthius aeralatus

Black-eared Shrike-babbler Pteruthius melanotis

Clicking Shrike-babbler Pteruthius intermedius

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Oriolidae**

Slender-billed Oriole Oriolus tenuirostris

Black-naped Oriole Oriolus chinensis

Black-hooded Oriole Oriolus xanthornus

Maroon Oriole Oriolus traillii

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Dicruridae**

Black Drongo Dicrurus macrocercus

Ashy Drongo Dicrurus leucophaeus, ssp. mouhoti, hopwoodi & leucogensis

Bronze Drongo Dicrurus aeneus

Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo Dicrurus remifer

Hair-crested Drongo Dicrurus hottentottus

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo Dicrurus paradiseus

# **PASSERIFORMES: Rhipiduridae**

Malaysian Pied Fantail Rhipidura javanica

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Monarchidae**

Black-naped Monarch Hypothymis azurea

Oriental Paradise Flycatcher

Terpsiphone affinis

## **PASSERIFORMES: Corvidae**

Eurasian Jay Garrulus glandarius leucotis

Common Green Magpie Cissa chinensis

Grey Treepie Dendrocitta formosae

Racket-tailed Treepie Crypsirina temia

Eastern Jungle Crow Corvus levaillantii

### **PASSERIFORMES: Stenostiridae**

Yellow-bellied Fantail Chelidorhynx hypoxanthus

Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher Culicicapa ceylonensis

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Paridae**

Sultan Tit Melanochlora sultanea

Japanese Tit Parus minor nubicolus

Yellow-cheeked Tit Machlolophus spilonotus

## **PASSERIFORMES: Alaudidae**

Indochinese Bush Lark Mirafra erythrocephala

Oriental Skylark Alauda gulgula

# **PASSERIFORMES: Pycnonotidae**

Crested Finchbill Spizixos canifrons

Striated Bulbul Pycnonotus striatus

Black-headed Bulbul Pycnonotus atriceps

Black-crested Bulbul Pycnonotus flaviventris, both caecilii & johnsoni ssp.

Red-whiskered Bulbul Pycnonotus jocosus

Brown-breasted Bulbul Pycnonotus xanthorrhous

Sooty-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster klossi* 

Stripe-throated Bulbul Pycnonotus finlaysoni

Flavescent Bulbul Pycnonotus flavescens vividus

Yellow-vented Bulbul Pycnonotus goiavier personatus

Streak-eared Bulbul Pycnonotus conradi

Puff-throated Bulbul Alophoixus pallidus henrici

Grey-eyed Bulbul Iole propingua

Baker's Bulbul *Iole viridescens cinnamomeoventris* 

Mountain Bulbul Ixos mcclellandii tickelli

Ashy Bulbul Hemixos flavala hildebrandi

Black Bulbul Hypsipetes leucocephalus concolor

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Hirundinidae**

Barn Swallow Hirundo rustica gutturalis

Asian House Martin Delichon dasypus

Red-rumped Swallow Cecropis daurica

Striated Swallow Cecropis striolata

# **PASSERIFORMES: Pnoepygidae**

Pygmy Wren-babbler Pnoepyga pusilla

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Cettiidae**

Yellow-bellied Warbler Abroscopus superciliaris

Mountain Tailorbird Phyllergates cuculatus

Slaty-bellied Tesia Tesia olivea

Chestnut-headed Tesia Cettia castaneocoronata

# **PASSERIFORMES: Aegithalidae**

Black-throated Bushtit Aegithalos concinnus

## **PASSERIFORMES: Phylloscopidae**

Dusky Warbler Phylloscopus fuscatus

Buff-throated Warbler Phylloscopus subaffinis

Yellow-streaked Warbler Phylloscopus armandii

Radde's Warbler Phylloscopus schwarzi

Buff-barred Warbler Phylloscopus pulcher

Ashy-throated Warbler Phylloscopus maculipennis

Chinese Leaf Warbler Phylloscopus yunnanensis

Yellow-browed Warbler Phylloscopus inornatus

Pallas's Leaf Warbler Phylloscopus proregulus

Hume's Leaf Warbler Phylloscopus humei

Greenish Warbler Phylloscopus trochiloides

Two-barred Warbler Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus

Sakhalin Leaf Warbler Phylloscopus borealoides

Blyth's Leaf Warbler Phylloscopus reguloides

Claudia's Leaf Warbler Phylloscopus claudiae

Hartert's Leaf Warbler Phylloscopus goodsoni

Davison's Leaf Warbler Phylloscopus davisoni

Sulphur-breasted Warbler Phylloscopus ricketti

Bianchi's Warbler Seicercus valentini

Marten's Warbler Seicercus omeiensis

Alstom's Warbler Seicercus soror

Chestnut-crowned Warbler Seicercus castaniceps

# **PASSERIFORMES: Acrocephalidae**

Oriental Reed Warbler Acrocephalus orientalis

Black-browed Reed Warbler Acrocephalus bistrigiceps

Thick-billed Warbler Iduna aedon

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Locustellidae**

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler Locustella certhiola

Striated Grassbird Megalurus palustris

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Cisticolidae**

Zitting Cisticola Cisticola juncidis

Golden-headed Cisticola Cisticola exilis

Hill Prinia Prinia superciliaris

Rufescent Prinia Prinia rufescens

Grey-breasted Prinia Prinia hodgsonii

Yellow-bellied Prinia Prinia flaviventris

Plain Prinia Prinia inornata

Common Tailorbird Orthotomus sutorius

Dark-necked Tailorbird Orthotomus atrogularis

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Timaliidae**

Large Scimitar Babbler Pomatorhinus hypoleucos tickelli

Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler Pomatorhinus erythrogenys celatus

White-browed Scimitar Babbler Pomatorhinus schisticeps, both olivaceus & ripponi ssp.

Golden Babbler Stachyridopsis chrysaea

Pin-striped Tit-Babbler Macronus gularis

Chestnut-capped Babbler Timalia pileata

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Pellorneidae**

Brown-cheeked Fulvetta Alcippe poioicephala

Yunnan Fulvetta Alcippe morrisonia

Rufous Limestone Babbler Napothera crispifrons calcicola

Abbott's Babbler Malacocincla abbotti

Puff-throated Babbler Pellorneum ruficeps

### **PASSERIFORMES: Leiothrichidae**

White-crested Laughingthrush Garrulax leucolophus

Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush Garrulax monileger

Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush Garrulax pectoralis

Black-throated Laughingthrush Garrulax chinensis

White-browed Laughingthrush Garrulax sannio

Silver-eared Laughingthrush Trochalopteron melanostigma

Himalayan Cutia Cutia nipalensis

Blue-winged Minla Minla cyanouroptera

Bar-throated Minla Minla strigula

Scarlet-faced Liocichla Liocichla ripponi

Spectacled Barwing Actinodura ramsayi

Silver-eared Mesia Leiothrix argentauris

Rufous-backed Sibia Heterophasia annectans

Dark-backed Sibia Heterophasia melanoleuca

# **PASSERIFORMES: Sylviidae**

Spot-breasted Parrotbill Paradoxornis guttaticollis

## **PASSERIFORMES: Zosteropidae**

Striated Yuhina Yuhina castaniceps

Whiskered Yuhina Yuhina flavicollis

Chestnut-flanked White-eye Zosterops erythropleurus

Oriental White-eye Zosterops palpebrosus

Everett's White-eye Zosterops everetti

## **PASSERIFORMES: Irenidae**

Asian Fairy-bluebird Irena puella

### **PASSERIFORMES: Sittidae**

Chestnut-vented Nuthatch Sitta nagaensis

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch Sitta frontalis

Giant Nuthatch Sitta magna

### **PASSERIFORMES: Certhiidae**

Hume's Treecreeper Certhia manipurensis

## **PASSERIFORMES: Sturnidae**

Golden-crested Myna Ampeliceps coronatus

Common Hill Myna Gracula religiosa

Great (White-vented) Myna Acridotheres grandis

Common Myna Acridotheres tristis

Vinous-breasted Starling Acridotheres burmannicus

Black-collared Starling Gracupica nigricollis

Asian Pied Starling Gracupica contra

White-shouldered Starling Sturnia sinensis

Chestnut-tailed Starling Sturnia malabarica

Common Starling Sturnus vulgaris

## **PASSERIFORMES: Turdidae**

Orange-headed Thrush Geokichla citrina

Dark-sided Thrush Zoothera marginata

Black-breasted Thrush Turdus dissimilis

Eye-browed Thrush Turdus obscurus

Grey-sided Thrush Turdus feae

## **PASSERIFORMES: Muscicapidae**

Oriental Magpie Robin Copsychus saularis

White-rumped Shama Copsychus malabaricus

Asian Brown Flycatcher Muscicapa dauurica

White-gorgeted Flycatcher Anthipes monileger

Hainan Blue Flycatcher Cyornis hainanus

Pale Blue Flycatcher Cyornis unicolor

Hill Blue Flycatcher Cyonnis banyumas

Tickell's Blue Flycatcher Cyornis tickelliae indochina

Rufous-bellied Niltava Niltava sundara

Large Niltava grandis Niltava grandis

Small Niltava macgrigoriae

Verditer Flycatcher Eumyias thalassinus

Lesser Shortwing Brachypteryx leucophris

White-browed Shortwing Brachypteryx montana

Siberian Blue Robin Larvivora cyane

Bluethroat Luscinia svecica

White-bellied Redstart Luscinia phaenicuroides

Siberian Rubythroat Calliope calliope

White-tailed Robin Myiomela leucura

Himalayan Bluetail Tarsiger rufilatus

Black-backed Forktail Enicurus immaculatus

Slaty-backed Forktail Enicurus schistaceus

Northern White-crowned Forktail Enicurus leschenaulti

Blue Whistling Thrush

Myophonus caeruleus, both eugenei (pale billed) & caeruleus

(dark billed) seen

Slaty-backed Flycatcher Ficedula hodgsonii

Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher Ficedula strophiata

Taiga Flycatcher Ficedula albicilla

Snowy-browed Flycatcher Ficedula hyperythra

Little Pied Flycatcher Ficedula westermanni

Ultramarine Flycatcher Ficedula superciliaris

Slaty-blue Flycatcher Ficedula tricolor

Daurian Redstart Phoenicurus auroreus

Plumbeous Water Redstart Phoenicurus fuliginosus

White-capped Redstart Phoenicurus leucocephalus

Blue Rock Thrush Monticola solitarius- pandoo & phillippensis

Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush Monticola rufiventris

Stejneger's Stonechat Saxicola stejnegeri

Pied Bush Chat Saxicola caprata

Grey Bush Chat Saxicola ferreus

# **PASSERIFORMES: Chloropseidae**

Blue-winged Leafbird Chloropsis cochinchinensis

Golden-fronted Leafbird Chloropsis aurifrons

Orange-bellied Leafbird Chloropsis hardwickii

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Dicaeidae**

Thick-billed Flowerpecker Dicaeum agile

Yellow-vented Flowerpecker Dicaeum chrysorrheum

Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker Dicaeum melanoxanthum

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker Dicaeum cruentatum

## **PASSERIFORMES: Nectariniidae**

Ruby-cheeked Sunbird Chalcoparia singalensis

Van Hasselt's Sunbird Leptocoma brasiliana

Purple Sunbird Cinnyris asiaticus

Olive-backed Sunbird Cinnyris jugularis

Mrs Gould's Sunbird Aethopyga gouldiae

Green-tailed Sunbird Aethopyga nipalensis angkanensis

Black-throated Sunbird Aethopyga saturata

Crimson Sunbird Aethopyga siparaja

Little Spiderhunter Arachnothera longirostra

Streaked Spiderhunter Arachnothera magna

### **PASSERIFORMES: Passeridae**

House Sparrow Passer domesticus

Plain-backed Sparrow Passer flaveolus

Tree Sparrow Passer montanus

### **PASSERIFORMES: Ploceidae**

Asian Golden Weaver Ploceus hypoxanthus

Baya Weaver Ploceus philippinus

#### **PASSERIFORMES: Estrildidae**

Scaly-breasted Munia Lonchura punctulata

Java Sparrow Lonchura oryzivora

# **PASSERIFORMES: Motacillidae**

Eastern Yellow Wagtail Motacilla tschutschensis macronyx

Citrine Wagtail Motacilla citreola

Grey Wagtail Motacilla cinerea

Amur White Wagtail Motacilla alba leucopsis

Rosy Pipit Anthus roseatus

Paddyfield Pipit Anthus rufulus

Olive-backed Pipit Anthus hodgsoni

# **PASSERIFORMES: Fringillidae**

Spot-winged Grosbeak Mycerobas melanozanthos

Common Rosefinch Carpodacus erythrinus

### **PASSERIFORMES: Emberizidae**

Chestnut Bunting Emberiza rutila

Yellow-breasted Bunting Emberiza aureola

# **Species heard**

Grey-headed Woodpecker Picus canus

# Mammals/ Reptiles recorded

Malayan Porcupine Hystrix brachyura

White-handed Gibbon Hylobates lar

Long-tailed Macaque Macaca fascicularis

Pig-tailed Macaque Macaca nemestrina

Dusky Langur Trachypithecus obscurus

Variable Squirrel Callosciurus finlaysonii

Black Giant Squirrel Ratufa bicolor

Grey-bellied Squirrel Callosciurus caniceps

Burmese Striped Squirrel Tamiops mcclellandii

Northern Treeshrew Tupaia belangeri

Sambar Rusa unicolor

Red Muntjac Muntiacus muntjak

Lesser Mouse Deer Tragulus kanchil

Lyle's Flying Fox Pteropus lylei

Great Woolly Horseshoe Bat Rhinolophus luctus

Asian Elephant Elephas maximus

Asian Water Monitor Varanus salvator



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