

# MALAYSIA

The Malay Peninsula

Tue 19 February-Sun 03 March 2019

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Trip photos (clockwise from top left): Little Pied Flycatcher • Silver-breasted Broadbill • White-tailed Robin • Crested Fireback • Mountain Peacock-pheasant • Orange-headed Thrush. © Tour participant Jo Latham

**Report compiled by tour leader:  
Richard Thaxton**

## MALAYSIA | The Malay Peninsula

Tour Leaders: **Lee Kok Chung & Richard Thaxton**

*with Andy & Jane Baxter, Ian Bennion, Jo Latham, Pam Phillipson, Karen Sawyer & Paul Beech, Richard Swinbank and Mick Webber*

In the tropics you never quite know what the weather will do. A tremendous storm on the night we arrived didn't bode well but in fact that was it, virtually the only rain we had all tour. It was very hot and humid in the lowlands and on the coast, but with some refreshing respite at the higher relatively cooler elevations at Frasers Hill. From Kuala Lumpur we went to the Botanic Gardens at Shah Alam, *en route* west to the coast at Kuala Selangor then northeast to the more temperate forests at Fraser's Hill. From there we went on to the tropical rainforest of Taman Negara National Park. I hope that you enjoy read this report and that it helps conjure up in your mind's eye our time together and that this report serves as a memento of the tour and experiences that will live long in the memory.

We recorded 304 species of birds, with so many highlights, and many such outrageously colourful birds. For example the 14 woodpeckers species, the eight barbets, eight kingfishers, six broadbills, five trogons, four pittas, three bee-eaters, three minivets, two treeswifts... to name but a few! Candidate species for *Bird Of The Trip* (BOTT-birds), changed more or less on a daily basis, as we encountered new wonderful birds, though broadbills and pittas held the monopoly. On our first day it was jointly held by those superb Hooded and Blue-winged Pittas, but only until we saw Black-and-red Broadbill, then it was Long-tailed Broadbill, it then surpassed by that glowing Green Broadbill, which was itself then left in the wake of the gem that is the enigmatic Garnet Pitta. Could it hold out at top spot, in surely an unassailable position? But then, right at the death, on our last morning in Malaysia, it was knocked off its perch and pipped as top BOTT-bird by the stunningly beautiful Malayan Banded Pitta. Well, that's my take on things. You'll have your own favourites for sure, but I bet the above are amongst them.

I would like to thank you all for your full participation in the tour. We saw some wonderful birds and had good *craic* doing it. My thanks too, to Lee for all his endeavours on our behalf, from working so hard to find birds for us, to choosing our delicious food. Fantastic field skills, a thoroughly good and reliable Mr Fixer and an all-round good egg. So, eyes down, look in and relive Malaysia!

### Trip Diary

#### Tuesday 19 February

The inevitable travel day. London Heathrow to Kuala Lumpur. Not much more to say really. All good, away on time.

#### Wednesday 20 February

We arrived at Kuala Lumpur in the late afternoon, met with Karen and Paul who were already in Malaysia and were greeted by our guide, the beaming, smiling Lee Kok Chung and our drivers William and Cheah. They whisked us deftly through the KL evening traffic to our overnight hotel. Once ensconced, we then promptly headed to a local restaurant for dinner. There was a terrific cloudburst with torrential rain absolutely *stotting* down, so we were driven to the restaurant, but walked back. Asian Koel and Oriental Magpie-Robin struggled to be heard above the bustling traffic and Germain's Swiftlets zipped about. From many of our rooms we had spectacular views of the illuminated Blue Mosque from which the wonderfully evocative sound of the Muezzin calling the faithful to prayer could be clearly heard. No need to set the alarm clock either!

#### Thursday 21 February

Fully rested after yesterday's arrival from Blighty, we were keen to get started, so headed directly to the Botanical gardens at Shah Alam. The moment we stepped out of the vehicles we were in amongst it, with birds coming thick and fast. First among them were Pink-necked Green Pigeon, White-throated Kingfisher, Asian Glossy Starling, Yellow-vented Bulbul, Javan Myna, Spotted Dove, Brahminy Kite and Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker. It was already hot and humid so to acclimatise, we slowly ambled along the garden's paths, seeing birds at every turn. The next suite of species included Brown Shrike, both Grey-breasted and Spectacled Spiderhunters, Blue-winged Leafbird, some fly-by Long-tailed Parakeets, Asian Red-eyed Buleuls and Orange-bellied Flowerpecker. But oh, little did we know what was in store next. Lee is a master of suspense, knowing what will happen, but not letting on to us, for maximum impact. We had been curious as to

why he was carrying a plastic box around with him, and now we found out. No sooner had he scattered a few of the mealworms contained therein, when out of the understory popped a Blue-winged Pitta, almost at our feet!! There were gasps, sharp intakes of breath and much clicking of camera shutters. And then it got even better, as a Hooded Pitta popped out and joined in the show. Crikey, two of the most stunning of birds, together, at point-blank range, how marvellous was that? And we were in fact quite lucky, they are migrants and would be heading back north very soon, Lee said. So we were fortunate to see them. What a complete *Wow* of a start.

Nearby, playing second-fiddle to the show-stealing pittas were two Black-and-yellow Broadbills, stunners themselves, on any other pitta-less day! Other also-rans were Common Tailorbird, Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot, both Barn and Pacific Swallows, both Blue-tailed and Blue-throated Bee-eaters, Common Hill Myna, Oriental Dollarbird, Brown Barbet, Large Woodshrike, Baya Weaver and Paddyfield Pipit. Of course, all great birds nonetheless, but pittas are a hard act to follow. As the heat got up and with it the thermals, so too come raptors. We saw three Changeable Hawk-Eagles, several Crested Honey Buzzards, a Grey-headed Fish Eagle and a White-bellied Sea Eagle. Coppersmith Barbet and the humble Eurasian Tree Sparrow rounded off a great first morning. We lunched at a restaurant in Lee's home town then headed for Kuala Selangor. We made a brief stop at an urban wetland, little more than a muddy pool really, but nevertheless saw some good birds here, best among them being three Yellow Bitterns. Others included Asian Koel, Chinese Pond Heron, Great and Little Egrets, White-breasted Waterhen, Common Kingfisher and Common Moorhen.

Nearing Kuala Selangor we stopped on the coast to check out some mudflats. Both the tide and the bright sunlight were against us making 'scoping distant wader rather difficult, but we managed to pick out a few things which included; Lesser and Greater Sand Plovers, Common Redshank, Common Greenshank, Curlew Sandpiper and Red-necked Stint. Gull-billed Terns flew back and forth and a Lesser Adjutant stalked the distant ebb tide. Arriving at our hotel we checked-in, had an hour of downtime then set off to an area of rice fields. Here we found Grey and Purple Herons, Great, Intermediate and Little Egrets, Striated Heron, White-throated Kingfisher, six Black-winged Kites, White-breasted Woodswallow, Large-billed Crow, Pintail Snipe, Spotted and Zebra Doves, Coppersmith Barbet, Asian Koel, three Cinnamon Bitterns and a Yellow Bittern and then finishing off with a trio of Munia species – White-headed, Scaly-breasted and White-rumped. We had dinner at a local riverside restaurant where several Black-crowned Night Herons flew past in the failing light. After dinner we ventured out to look for nightjars and owls, only hearing Large-tailed Nightjar, but seeing Buffy Fish Owl. Rapture for some!

### Friday 22 February

To begin with today, after breakfast we spent half an hour or so mooching around the hotel grounds and it proved to be very fruitful with many new birds in such a short time, including Laced Woodpecker, Oriental Magpie-Robin, Golden-bellied Gerygone, Yellow-vented Bulbul, Pied Triller, Olive-backed Sunbird, Lesser Flameback, Malaysian Pied Fantail and Common Iora. As we were getting ready to head out we found a Crested Serpent Eagle, perched quite close and nicely 'scope-able. We arrive at Kuala Selangor Nature Park and were immediately among some great birds. First up were Ashy Minivet, Olive-backed Sunbird, Black Drongo, Asian Brown Flycatcher, Ashy Tailorbird and Indian Cuckoo. Walking on through the forest towards the mangroves we found another Laced Woodpecker, both Brahminy and Black-shouldered Kites, both Black-capped and Stork-billed Kingfishers, a pair of Common Ioras, White-throated Fantail and Yellow-bellied Prinia. Further along, a skulking Abbott's Babbler was glimpsed by some but gave others the slip, then Oriental White-eye, Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker and a Collared Kingfisher. On reaching the mangroves we lucked-upon Chestnut-bellied Malkoha, Rusty-bellied and Indian Cuckoos, two Sunda Pygmy Woodpeckers, Olive-winged Bulbul, two more Stork-billed Kingfishers, Mangrove Whistler plus Brown-throated Sunbird, and it was fun 'scoping the mud skippers at minimal focus.

After lunch we set off for a fair drive to Fraser's Hill, stopping for fuel and Magnums along the way. We paused briefly at the Selangor Dam where some swifts were belting about but our main target, Rufous-breasted Swallows, were absent so we pressed on. On reaching the lower forested slopes of Fraser's Hill we made a couple of roadside stops which were busy with some fabulous birds. 'Scope-able Whiskered Treeswifts – need I say more? What a gorgeous bird they are! Here too were Dark-sided Flycatcher, Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot, Everett's White-eye, Brown Fulvetta, Plain Flowerpecker, Great Iora, Black-naped Oriole, Red-throated and Ruby-cheeked Sunbirds, Raffles's Malkoha, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Lesser Cuckooshrike, Spectacled Bulbul and that simply awesome Red-bearded Bee-eater. We continued to climb and at our next stop there were Scarlet Minivets, a magnificent Scaly-breasted Bulbul, Black-crested Bulbul and Ashy Bulbul, while Silver-rumped Spinetails zipped overhead and three Wreathed Hornbills flew over too. At the entrance to Fraser's Hill we saw several fly-by Little Cuckoo-Doves and a Black-thighed Falconet. To maximise our chances of seeing Malaysian Partridge, we wasted no time, but hot-footed up to a known stake-out. We put in

the time for sure, but to no avail, this time, but in doing so enjoyed great views of the first of many Chestnut-capped Laughingthrushes, those delightful Rufous-browed and Little Pied Flycatchers, Little Spiderhunter, Black-and-crimson Oriole, Fire-tufted Barbet, Mugimaki Flycatcher, Orange-bellied Leafbird and Mountain Bulbul. All in all a brilliant session, even if we didn't see the partridge.

### **Saturday 23 February**

After yesterday's bird-rich drive up the lower slopes to Fraser's Hill, with so much more in prospect at this higher elevation, we breakfasted promptly and were soon out in front of the hotel and among some great birds. First up were species with great names to conjure with, namely Blue-winged Minla, Silver-eared Mesia and Long-tailed Sibia plus Chestnut-capped Laughingthrush, Black-throated Sunbird and a magnificent lime-green Common Green Magpie. Wow, what a bird! Amongst all this exotica, an all-too-familiar-from-home, Grey Wagtail flew past. At the entrance to the Bishop's Trail we found Red-headed Trogon, several Fire-tufted Barbets, White-throated Fantail, Lesser racket-tailed Drongo and a Puff-breasted Babbler was heard. We set off down the trail and were stopped abruptly in our tracks by not one, not two, but amazingly three Long-tailed Broadbills!! Phwoar! Another absolutely cracking bird, one that so many of us had wanted to see for ever, since childhood.

Back up on the road we stood and looked for birds with a group of bird photographers including one very friendly chap, a bit of a garrulous babbler himself, who regaled us with his war-time stories, bless him. Eventually we managed to ease ourselves away and crack on with our birding. Wandering down the road we found a Collared Owllet high up above us in a conifer, pretending to be a pine cone, and requiring some vertical 'scoping. Other birds seen at this spot included Blue Nuthatches and Grey-chinned Minivet. A little further along we came across a photographer's stake-out, with a carefully positioned moss-covered log baited (euphemistically!) with mealworms in order to tempt in a Pygmy Wren-Babbler and, sure enough, it worked giving us great views. Also drawn by the mealworms was Rufous-browed Flycatcher with its lovely white gorget, plus a Red-headed Trogon nearby. Further on still we had ourselves a bit of a pecker-fest with both Greater and Lesser Yellownapes and Banded Woodpecker in quick succession. Here too were Black-browed Barbet, Black-and-crimson Oriole, Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike, Asian Brown Flycatcher, Ochraceous Bulbul, Green-billed Malkoha plus our only Rufous-bellied Swallow and with calling, displaying Crested Serpent Eagles high overhead. Phew! A busy morning.

After lunch and a bit of downtime at the hotel we ventured back out in the late afternoon, up to Richmond Cottage to try again for the Malaysian Partridge. This time we saw three of them... well, seen by some at least. A Blyth's Shrike-babbler was seen here too, again just by some. We then moved on to the Waterfall Trail where we had ravishingly fabulous views of a pair of Red-headed Trogons, plus a chance to look, for once, at an actually perched Little Cuckoo-Dove, that are otherwise always dashing about. Here also were Scarlet Minivet, Everett's White-eye, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Yellow-bellied Warbler, Golden Babbler and Blue-winged Leafbird. The best bird by far though was surely that exquisite Slaty-backed Forktail that got us all very excited. However, to keep us grounded, Silver-breasted Broadbills who had started to build a nest along this trail, alas were absent. We'd have to wait.

### **Sunday 24 February**

First birds of the day after breakfast were Malayan Laughingthrushes pottering about under outside tables and chairs. Above which, way up in tall conifers, were two Blue Nuthatches, a shame though that they were so high up. Not great views. Meanwhile several Little Cuckoo-Doves flashed past as did several Mountain Imperial Pigeons, henceforth, MIMPS for short. We drove to the start of the Bishop's Trail and birded the road. Here we saw several Fire-tufted and Black-browed Barbets, struggled at first but then saw Marbled Wren Babbler. Further along the road we found a superb male White-tailed Robin, a Silver-eared Mesia, Lesser Shortwing, Streaked Wren Babbler, Rufous-browed Flycatcher but only heard Silver-breasted Broadbill, not seen, bah! We then briefly entered the forest along the first part of the Hammant Trail where we found the deep navy blue Large Niltava, Mountain Fulvetta and Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo and more Fire-tufted Barbets. We then returned to the Waterfall Trail where we saw migrating Oriental Honey Buzzards and a very distant but distinctive Black Eagle, Rufescent Prinia, several Everett's White-eyes, Scarlet-backed Sunbird, both Little and Streaked Spiderhunter, two Sultan Tits, Lesser Cuckooshrike and Orange-bellied Leafbird.

After lunch we returned to Richmond Cottage, for another shot at the Malaysian Partridges for those that missed them yesterday. We had to wait, it was tense, but eventually the birds showed, seen by all this time, phew! And in the meantime we also enjoyed the Chestnut-capped Laughing Thrushes, Blue-winged Minlas, a Mugimaki Flycatcher and that delightful Rufous-browed Flycatcher. We then drove up to the Telekom loop road, were dropped off and began to walk the loop. Two Large Scimitar Babbler were our first bird, though the views weren't great, followed by Grey-chinned Minivet, Asian Brown Flycatcher, Chestnut-crowned

Warbler, Black-and-crimson Oriole, Mountain Fulvetta, Mountain Bulbul, Fire-breasted Flowerpecker and a 'scoped Black-browed Barbet. After dinner some of us ventured out on a night walk in search of owls and nightjars. No owls but we did find a Grey Nightjar on a post on the football pitch plus some very impressive huge moths and an absolutely whopping cicada, the size of a Greenfinch!

### **Monday 25 February**

On the move today. After breakfast we departed Fraser's Hill and set off for some stop-start birding of the downhill roads. Our drivers William and Cheah dropping us off, we'd then walk ahead for a while then the vans would arrive to move us on to the next spot etc. At our first stop, we enjoyed Sultan Tit, Green-billed Malkoha and Banded Bay Cuckoo, while three Bushy-crested Hornbills were distant fly-bys. These were followed by Asian Brown Flycatcher, Red-billed Malkoha and Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike. Walking further on we stumbled across a loose mixed flock of birds which included three flycatchers – Hill Blue, Pale Blue and Verditer, White-bellied Erpornis, Golden and Grey-throated Babblers, Blue-eared and Golden-whiskered Barbets, Dark-necked Tailorbird, Bronze Drongo and a superb Orange-breasted Trogon. A little further on, Silver-breasted Broadbill taunted us, continuing to give us the slip and still remaining a frustrating heard-only bird, but by way of compensation this time we had fabulous views of a superb male Banded Kingfisher. A Black Eagle flew over the road and was seen to crash-land into a tree canopy – a specialist feeder on the contents of birds' nests in tree tops by means of this surprise smash and grab tactic. As we drove on we flushed a Blyth's Hawk-Eagle from roadside trees, but it was away before we could get a good look at it. At our next stop we saw Large Woodshrike, Yellow-bellied Warbler and wonderful, prolonged views of two gorgeous Red-bearded Bee-eaters.

After a very full morning's birding we pressed on for lunch in the town of Bentong, after which we continued to Krau Forest. We spent a few hours here and saw some magnificent birds. First, at the roadside before entering the forest we saw Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Raffles's Malkoha and Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike, shortly followed by Black-naped Monarch and Black-thighed Falconet. In the forest itself we spent time at a feeding station screen, originally set up for viewing the much sought after Garnet Pitta, though the bird hadn't been seen in recent times, presumably moved on, bah! No matter, GP could wait (we hoped!) and we nevertheless saw some other great birds here. Chief amongst them was surely that huge Large Frogmouth, sat atop a relatively tiny nest containing a small chick, its wobbly head appearing at intervals from beneath the adult's breast feathers. The telescope gave us eyepiece-filling views of it and we could study the intricate cryptic plumage of this bird, complete with feathers that look like flakes of lichen. At the screen, we saw both Ferruginous and Black-throated Babblers, Yellow-bellied and Hairy-backed Bulbuls and a superb Siberian Blue Robin. Emerging from the forest, back on the road and thinking we were heading off, Lee had other ideas. We then had an amazing further hour or so with a bevy of great birds. Quite how Lee found us that Blue-eared Kingfisher perched in the deep-dark understory of roadside tangles, who knows, but what a fabulous bird. Little Spiderhunter zipped past us, Buff-rumped Woodpecker bounded over us but perched just long enough to view. Then two Black-and-red Broadbills hove into view, posing nicely for photos. Also during this birding purple patch, we found a Scarlet-rumped Trogon, Stripe-throated and Spectacled Bulbuls, Green-backed Flycatcher, Square-tailed Drongo Cuckoo and both Red-throated and Sooty Barbets. And then how amazing was it to watch that Crimson-winged Woodpecker in a tree, chipping away at an ant's nest, only about 10 metres away and watched for 15 minutes or more, in the 'scope!! Whilst perhaps a second-tier BOTT-bird (?), it was surely the best and most fascinating experience to witness and enjoy.

By now time was horsing-on, so we set off, but we didn't get far. Some roadside photographers alerted us to a White-bellied Woodpecker, our only one of the tour. Then not much further, we stopped abruptly when an Oriental Pied Hornbill flushed from roadside trees. On searching for it, we found not one but three, plus Yellow-bellied Prinia, Large Green Pigeon and Brown-backed Needletail. We had dinner at a restaurant in town before then pressing on for a further 45 minutes to our hotel at Bukit Tinggi, and what a place! A mock French-style chateau, a rambling complex complete with cobbled plaza. All rather strange but intriguing nevertheless.

### **Tuesday 26 February**

We breakfasted promptly and were soon on our way out, a short five minute drive to a forested garden area above the Bukit Tinggi Resort. Walking up the paved footpath we saw Ashy Bulbul, but the target bird we were aiming for was Mountain Peacock-Pheasant, endemic to the Malay Peninsula. And we didn't have to wait long, as almost at the very moment that we arrived at the site, a male and two females wandered into the forest glade. They weren't bothered by our close presence at all as they appeared to have other things on their minds with some courtship chasing and posturing antics going on. We were treated to fabulous views, of the male in particular, showing off his green ocelli, as you do! As if the peacock-pheasants were not fantastic enough, there was a supporting cast to this show, of Orange-headed Thrush, White-rumped Shama, Siberian

Blue Robin, Black Laughingthrush and the glowing, rusty rufescence of a Ferruginous Partridge. Even with such fabulous birds to watch, we soon turned our backs on this show, spinning on our heels as a Rail-babbler suddenly began to call behind us - and close. We waited and waited as it appeared to skirt around us but alas it didn't show and eventually went quiet, bah! *Och well*, can't win 'em all. We wandered around the paved path network looking for birds and listening to the sound of Siamangs. Lee wandered off, then came dashing back to fetch us. He'd located us a Silver-breasted Broadbill, at last, hoorah!! In fact not one but six in total, making up for so many heard-only contacts thus far. We'd heard several on our previous days back at Frasers Hill, all to no avail, so to finally see this beautiful bird was just wonderful. Well worth the wait. All good things...an' all that. We slowly began to make our way back down the hill, picking up lots of birds as we went, many of which were new for us. These included Yellow-crowned, Golden-whiskered, Red-throated and Sooty Barbets, Pin-striped and Fluffy-backed Tit-Babblers and Black-crested Bulbul, then further down the road we saw two whopping Rhinoceros Hornbills.

After a quick shower, pack and departure we headed off to Taman Negara, but not before returning to last night's restaurant for lunch. Then we had a ways to go this afternoon so we cracked on, but made one side-road stop as we neared Kuala Tahan. And it proved very fruitful. Wandering along an old, little-used road, dodging the elephant poo, we found a Crested Jay, Puff-backed Bulbul, Chestnut-breasted, Red-billed and Black-bellied Malkohas, Buff-necked Woodpecker and best of all.....Green Broadbill!! Oh my goodness, what a magnificent thing, such a vivid, vibrant, yet almost unnatural luminous green. An absolute stunner. Certainly a mega *Bird of the Moment* and crashing in straight at top slot as *Bird of the Trip*.....for now at least! Hmmm, could it be bettered? We eventually arrived at Kuala Tahan, where we unloaded the vehicles, said farewell for now to William and Cheah then made the short two-minute river crossing to Taman Negara, our base for the next four nights.

### Wednesday 27 February

On our first full day at Taman Negara we were up with the lark. Well, the bulbul in this case. After breakfast we started by slowly strolling through the resort grounds and gardens. Birds came thick & fast. First up were a bevy of bulbuls; Buff-vented, Black-headed, Spectacled, Asian Red-eyed and Streaked Bulbuls, plus Asian Fairy Bluebird, Raffles's Malkoha, Asian Brown Flycatcher, Blue-throated Bee-eater, Lesser Green Leafbird, a nicely perched and 'scope-able Thick-billed Green Pigeon, Oriental Magpie Robin and Ashy Minivet. Further along we then found Tiger Shrike, Eye-browed Thrush, Rufescent Prinia, Rufous-tailed Tailorbird, Crimson-breasted Flowerpecker and Plain Sunbird. Then through the forest along the Swamp Trail, Great Argus was heard in the distance and Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker and White-rumped Shama were seen. Near the Tahan Hide there were two pairs of very confiding and approachable (them to us!), stunning Crested Firebacks. From the hide itself Oriental Dollarbirds flew over and we spied soaring Rufous-bellied Hawk-Eagle, Crested Honey Buzzard and Grey-headed Fish Eagle. In the clearing a Barking Deer grazed and beneath us was a Three-striped Ground Squirrel looking like "*it had been run over by a Reliant Robin!*"

After lunch and when the heat had eased a little (but did it actually ever?!), we ventured back out, this time along the Forest Trail for a very productive afternoon. First up were Purple-naped Sunbird, Green Iora, Blue-winged Leafbird and Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike. Further along we stopped as Lee deftly found us a Rufous-collared Kingfisher whilst an Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher (Rufous-backed) zipped back and forth across the trail. Just before we descended into, then climbed back out of, that steep stepped gully we found a Red-naped Trogon and an Oriental (Blyth's) Paradise Flycatcher. On reaching the beach on the Tahan River, we birded here a while, waiting and watching for birds going over. We were rewarded with both Large and Little Green Pigeons and three Black Magpies, while a Greater Coucal was seen on the bank upstream. On our way to dinner we stopped in the hope of seeing a Bat Hawk, which last year showed well here, hunting bats and swifts. Not for us though, but nonetheless we enjoyed the Brown-backed Needletails zipping about and whilst watching these in the grey-dark, we picked up other huge swift-like bird which turned out to be Oriental Pratincoles, six of them in fact. Unexpected, but very nice. After dinner some of us went with Lee on a night walk back along the Forest Trail. We didn't see much but what we did see was a very fine Blyth's Frogmouth! Reward enough for our efforts.

### Thursday 28 February

Another hot and sunny day dawned and by way of a break from walking trails, today we took a boat ride up the Tahan River, a clear water tributary to the Tembeline River. Our route took us through some simply wonderful old forest and lush vegetation with towering bankside trees. With folk spread between three boats in a line, group birding was a bit tricky, but we did quite well and most saw most of what was on offer. To begin with we had great views of Stork-billed Kingfisher, followed by Rufous Piculet, but a pair of Tickell's Blue Flycatchers flying back and forth across the river proved a little more tricky. We stopped at a bankside clearing, got out of the boat and spent a very productive spell just stood around in the clearing watching birds come and go.

These included Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher, White-bellied Erpornis, Buff-vented Bulbul and Black-naped Monarch. A pair of Wreathed Hornbills passed over us high up and a dozen Large Green, and a few Little Green Pigeons flew past. Other species seen were Chestnut-breasted Malkoha, Yellow-browed Warbler, Ruby-cheeked Sunbird, Plain Flowerpecker, Olive-winged Bulbul, Asian Fairy Bluebird, Green Iora and Banded Woodpecker. There was a constant flow of birds through or over the clearing, with the next suite of species including Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike, Dark-throated Oriole and Long-billed Spiderhunter plus a distant, soaring Rufous-bellied Hawk-Eagle.

Back in the boats and further upstream, when at times our boatmen had to gun the engines to get us up through fast running riffles, we saw a Lesser Fish Eagle with fish, taken back to its nest in a tree towering above us. At the distal point of the boat trip we moored for a while at the confluence of two rivers, a site for Chestnut-naped Forktail which alas didn't show for us, hey-ho, but we did have further great views of a Stork-billed Kingfisher with fish. Shortly after we turned to head back downstream, we found a White-chested Babbler, while Whiskered Treeswift was seen overhead. Heading downstream meant we could now go with the flow, literally, so cutting the engine we could drift along some stretches of the slower reaches and soak up the atmosphere and natural sounds of the surrounding forest. Straw-headed Bulbul was a very fine last bird of the morning session before getting back for lunch and *Tigers* at noon.

After lunch and a spot of downtime during the hottest part of the day, we headed back out onto the Canopy Trail. Malayan Banded Pitta was heard but remained unseen. We did though have good views of Raffles's Malkoha and eventually tracked down Diard's Trogon, Grey-cheeked and Scaly-breasted Bulbuls, Chestnut-rumped Babbler and a Black-thighed Falconet. Great Slaty Woodpecker was a heard-only. On our way to dinner at dusk, we stopped again in hope of the Bat Hawk showing, but it didn't. However the swifts zipping about were fun to watch and this time we counted 13 Oriental Pratincoles.

### Friday 01 March

Our last full day at Taman Negara was again hot and sunny. The morning was taken with a short boat trip up stream on the Tembeline River to the start of The Blau Trail. The dry weather meant the climb up the bank to the trailhead wasn't too difficult. We had the trail to ourselves and we were immediately in amongst birds. First up were Sooty-capped Babbler, Raffles's Malkoha and Checker-throated Woodpecker. There was an abrupt quickening of our collective pulses when a Garnet Pitta began to call from the trail-edge forest depths. This, the most desirous species had been *the* topic of conversation all week – "*will we.... when will we.....*". Everyone was desperate to see it. Well this was now our chance, had our time come? Oh yes! Big time! There were tantalising glimpses at first, causing near-panic, but then it popped up onto a branch just above eye-level in full and prolonged view, ostentatiously posing for us. And what an utter gem of a bird, so aptly named, and rocketing straight to the top as BOTT-bird leaving all others awash in its wake. And rest. Phew! Metaphorical cigars were smoked in celebration and a sense of calm descended upon us. And yet we still had more great birds to come. Malayan Peacock-Pheasant, Great Argus and Helmeted Hornbill were all heard, but a ways off, and remained that way. However, Banded Broadbill, Black-and-yellow Broadbill and Crimson-winged Woodpecker gave us great views, followed by Greater Racket-tailed Drongo Greater Green Leafbird and Arctic Warbler. There then followed a flurry of babblers, with Scaly-crowned, Chestnut-winged and Horsfield's Babblers seen in quick succession and Golden-whiskered Barbet called above us somewhere in the canopy. At this point Lee disappeared off into the forest. He was gone for quite some time and we could hear him crunching about on the dry leaf litter as he searched, for what, we weren't quite sure. But then he re-emerged and beckoned us from the trail into the forest and lo, he'd located a Brown Hawk Owl and aligned his 'scope in readiness for us. All we had to do was sidle up and look in, and there was this eyepiece-filling, unblinking, yellow-eyed, astonished-looking owl peering back at us, so completely motionless that it appeared to be stuffed! At which point we retraced our steps back to the boat and headed for lunch and *Tigers* at noon.

In the afternoon, following a wee siesta, we ventured out along the Canopy Trail. We saw both Black-headed and Cream-vented Bulbuls, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Chestnut-winged Babbler, Little Bronze Cuckoo, Chestnut-breasted Malkohas and a lovely Grey-and-buff Woodpecker. We stopped at the Tahan Hide on our way back where we saw Raffles's Malkoha ("*Satisfyingly.....etc*") and a White-throated Kingfisher. That evening, on our way to dinner we watched and waited one more time for the Bat Hawk to show, but no. Then after dinner we ventured out for a night-walk but saw little, but to enjoy the darkness and sounds of the forest was nice.

### Saturday 02 March

Our last day in Malaysia, and yet another hot one, the weather and the birds! With just a few hours of birding time ahead of packing, lunch and departing, we had one last shot at finding Malayan Banded Pitta, previously heard only, but tantalisingly close. Proceeding through the resort grounds and gardens we saw many of the by

now, usual suspects – assorted bulbuls, including a fine Black-headed Bulbul, plus Oriental Magpie Robin. At the beginning of the Canopy Trail, a Rufous Woodpecker flew over, landed briefly, but long enough for most of us to see it 'scoped. That Violet Cuckoo mind, was lovely too. But our quest though, with the clock ticking, was the pitta. We were in luck; well, at least it was calling from way back in the dark depths of the forest understorey. With so little time left, we waited with baited breath. There was no point in going any further up the trail, it was calling here so we just had to be patient and hope it would show. We waited and we waited and for a while the bird went silent. Then all of a sudden, it just popped up from no-where onto a low arching branch. There it was, about 10m into the dark depths, a momentary glowing incandescent ingot of burnished gold. Wow! What a bird! There were sharp intakes of breath at the sheer beauty of it. *Bird of The Trip* for sure, right at the last, well at least for those that saw it, because alas the view was all too fleeting and it was gone in a trice and some of you missed it, I know. But that's birding. If you did miss it, at least that means that for you, yesterday's supreme views of Garnet Pitta, would surely be your undoubted BOTT-bird. Hardly an also-ran!

All packed and luggage collected, we had a final lunch, before crossing the river to meet up with drivers William and Cheah, to take us back to Kuala Lumpur. We said farewell to Karen and Paul at their hotel in downtown KL, near the Petronas Towers, with time enough for the rest of us to spend 15 minutes or so wandering about the tower-base, marvelling at these awesome structures. Then it was off to a restaurant for a final meal before then heading to the airport, for our late-night flight home.

### Sunday 03 March

We arrived at London Heathrow more or less on time, despite a slightly longer flight-time. With bags all collected, we said our goodbyes and went our separate ways home. Thanks again folks, for your full participation in the tour, making for a great trip. And we sure saw some cracking birds, didn't we?

## ANNOTATED LIST OF THE BIRD SPECIES RECORDED

### Site abbreviations used:

BG at SA	Botanic Gardens at Shah Alam
KS	Kuala Selangor
KSNP	Kuala Selangor Nature Park (incl. mangroves)
FH	Fraser Hill
KF	Krau Forest
BT	Bukit Tinggi
TN	Taman Negara

### Malaysian Partridge *Arborophila campbelli*

Three at Richmond Cottage, Fraser Hill (FH) 23/2 and three, probably the same three, there on 24/2.

### Ferruginous Partridge *Caloperdix oculus* - H

Superb views of one at Bukit Tinggi (BT) on 26/2.

### Crested Fireback *Lophura ignita*

Two males and two females at the Tahan Hide at Taman Negara (TN) on 27/2, a male there on 28/2, then one male and two females 01/3.

### Mountain Peacock-Pheasant *Polyplectron inopinatum*

One male and two females at BT on 26/2.

### Malayan Peacock-Pheasant *Polyplectron malacense* - H

Heard only, on Blau Trail at TN on 01/3.

### Great Argus *Argusianus argus* - H

Heard only, from the Swamp Trail at TN on 27/2.

### Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilos javanicus*

One on the mudflats near Kuala Selangor (KS), 21/2.

### Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*

Three at a muddy pool at Shah Alam (SA) then later one at rice fields near Kuala Selangor (KS) on 21/2.

### Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*

Three at the KS rice fields, 21/2.

### Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Three fly-by birds at dusk as we dined at a riverside restaurant at KS 21/2.

### Striated Heron *Butorides striata javanica*

Three at Botanical Gardens (BG) at SA on 21/2, 1-2 along the Tahan River on 28/2.

### Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*



Three at muddy pool at Shah Alam and then 1-2 later at the KS rice fields, 21/2.

**Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus***

Common near the coast and in lowland areas, often as drive-by birds in fields.

**Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea***

Noted on first three days only, 20-22/2; eastern birds are very white necked

**Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea***

Several birds at the rice fields at KS, 21/2.

**Great Egret *Ardea alba***

Seen at SA and KS and several other drive-by birds seen *en route* from site to site.

**Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia***

One or two seen in the rice fields at KS, 21/2.

**Little Egret *Egretta garzetta***

Seen at SA 21/2, KS 22/2 and many other drive-by birds seen *en route* from site to site.

**Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus vociferus***

Eastern birds differ, with a black secondary bar; 6 seen at KS rice fields on 21/2 and 3 at KS Nature Park (KSNP), 22/2.

**Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus***

May well be split into at least three species. Seen at BG at SA on 21/2, at KSNP on 22/2, 11 in total at FH on 24/2.

**Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela***

One outside our hotel at KS on 22/2 and three at FH on 23/2.

**Changeable Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus limnaetus***

Three differently-plumaged birds at BG at SA on 21/2, one at TN on 27/2.

**Blyth's Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus alboniger***

One at BG at SA on 21/2 and one at FH on 25/2.

**Rufous-bellied Hawk-Eagle *Lophotriorchis kienerii***

One seen at the Tahan Hide at TN on 27/2 and then one at the clearing we stopped at on boat trip up Tahan River, 28/2.

**Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malaiensis***

Just two sightings, at FH on 24/2 and 25/2.

**Brahminy Kite *Haliastur Indus***

A few seen on our first three days 20-22/2, at BG at SA and on the coast at KS.

**White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster***

One at BG at SA on 21/2 and one at KS on 22/2.

**Lesser Fish Eagle *Ichthyophaga humilis***

One, taking a fish to a nest, along the Tahan River on 28/2.

**Grey-headed Fish Eagle *Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus***

One at BG at SA on 21/2 and then one from Tahan Hide at TN on 27/2.

**Grey-faced Buzzard *Buteo indicus***

A fleeting fly-over bird at FH on 24/2.

**White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus***

Two at the muddy pool at SA on 21/2, plus several other drive-by birds *en route* from site to site.

**Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus***

One at the muddy pool at SA on 21/2.

**Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus***

A few seen as drive-by birds *en route* from site to site.

**Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus***

Many at the KS mudflats, 21/2.

**Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii***

Many at the KS mudflats, 21/2.

**Pin-tailed Snipe *Gallinago stenura***

One at KS rice fields on 21/2.

**Common Redshank *Tringa tetanus***

Only seen on the mudflats at KS, 21/2.

**Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia***

As above, 21/2.

**Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis***

As above, 21/2.

**Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea***

As above, 21/2.

**Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum***

Six on 27/2 then 13 on 28/2 as we waited for a Bat Hawk to show over the Tembeline River at TN.

**Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica***

Several patrolling the mudflats at KS, 21/2.

**Feral Rock Dove *Columba livia***

Many feral birds seen near large towns and cities

**Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis***

A few noted on seven dates.

**Little Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia ruficeps***

Many seen, over five dates, nearly always zipping passed, but one seen perched along the Waterfall Trail at FH on 23/2.

**Common Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica***

One or two at BG at SA on 21/2, 4-5 seen at TN on 26/2.

**Zebra Dove *Geopelia striata***

Low numbers on four dates.

**Little Green Pigeon *Treron olax***

Only seen at TN, two or three on 27/2 and a further two on 28/2.

**Pink-necked Green Pigeon *Treron vernans***

Two seen in the BG at SA on 21/2 and two at KSNP on 22/2.

**Thick-billed Green Pigeon *Treron curvirostra***

One in the resort grounds at TN on 27/2, one or two fly-by birds from the clearing on the Tahan River trip.

**Large Green Pigeon *Treron capellei***

Only seen at TN, one on 27/2 and three on 28/2.

**Mountain Imperial Pigeon *Ducula badia***

Fly-by MIMPs only, seen on four dates at FH.

**Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis***

One on the banks of the Tahan River, on 27/2, one on the Canopy Trail on 28/2, one from the boat to Blau Trail on 01/3.

**Raffles's Malkoha *Rhinortha chlorophaea***

Seen on five days. Two in the mangroves at KSNP on 22/2, singles at TN on 25/2, 27/2 and 28/2 and four seen on 01/3. Always, "Satisfyingly.....etc....!"

**Red-billed Malkoha *Zanclostomus javanicus***

One on the road down from FH on 25/2, one on the side-road (Green Broadbill) stop *en route* to TN on 26/2.

**Chestnut-breasted Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus curvirostris***

Singles seen on four dates at TN.

**Chestnut-bellied Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus sumatranus***

Just one in the mangroves at KSNP on 22/2.

**Black-bellied Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus diardi***

One, on the side-road stop *en route* to TN on 26/2, one in the clearing stop along the Tahan River on 28/2.

**Green-billed Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus tristis***

One seen at FH on 23/2 and on FH on 25/2.

**Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus***

One in the resort grounds at TN on 02/3.

**Asian Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea***

Heard over the traffic noise in Kuala Lumpur on arrival on 20/2 and at the airport when we left on 02/3. In between times, often heard but two seen at the muddy pool SA on 21/2 and at KSNP on 22/2.

**Violet Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus***

One along the Canopy Trail at TN on 02/3.

**Little Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx minutillus peninsularis***

One at TN on 28/2 and another on 01/3.

**Banded Bay Cuckoo *Cacomantis sonneratii***

Only one, on the road down from FH on 25/2.

**Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus* - H**

Heard only, in the BG at SA on 21/2.

**Ruddy-breasted Cuckoo *sepulcralis***

One in the mangroves at KSNP on 22/2.

**Square-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris***

One at Krau Forest (KF) on 25/2.

**Dark Hawk-Cuckoo *Hierococcyx bocki***

One on Waterfall Trail at FH on 24/2.

**Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus***

One in BG at SA on 21/2 and one in KSNP on 22/2.

**Buffy Fish Owl *Ketupa ketupu***

One seen near our hotel at KS hotel, 21/2.

**Collared Owlet *Glaucidium brodiei***

Heard on several dates but one seen, looking like a pine cone at FH on 23/2.

**Brown Hawk-Owl *Ninox scutulata***

One calling bird expertly tracked down by Lee on Blau Trail, TN on 01/3.

**Large Frogmouth *Batrachostomus auritus***

One sat on a nest with a chick at KF on 25/2.

**Blyth's Frogmouth *Batrachomotomus affinis***

One seen on a night-walk along Forest Trail at TN on 27/2.

**Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus jotaka***

One seen, same one, on two night-walks at FH 23-24/2.

**Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus***

Heard from our hotel at KS on 22/2 then one seen perched in daytime at TN, 27/2.

**Grey-rumped Treeswift *Hemiprocne longipennis***

A few seen above the BG at SA on 21/2 and then on three dates at TN.

**Whiskered Treeswift *Hemiprocne comate***

Two seen on the road up to FH on 22/2 and one from the boat along the Tahan River 28/2.

**Plume-toed Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta***

'Glossy Swiftlet' in old money, this species has had a four-way split. Seen on six dates.

**Germain's Swiftlet *Aerodramus germaini***

Very similar to Edible-nest Swiftlet, we saw these on most days.

**Silver-rumped Spinetail *Rhaphidura leucopygialis***

A few seen at KSNP on 22/2.

**Silver-backed Needletail *Hirundapus cochinchinensis***

A few seen over the forest clearing, Tahan River boat trip on 28/2.

**Brown-backed Needletail *Hirundapus giganteus***

Seen on four dates at TN resort while we waited for Bat Hawk to show, which it never did, bah!

**Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus***

Seen on six dates.

**House Swift *Apus nipalensis***

Seen on eight dates.

**Red-naped Trogon *Harpactes kasumba***

Just the one, on the Forest Trail at TN on 27/2.

**Diard's Trogon *Harpactes diardii***

One eventually seen and another heard, on the Canopy Trail at TN on 28/2.

**Scarlet-rumped Trogon *Harpactes duvaucelii***

One, KF 25/2.

**Orange-breasted Trogon *Harpactes oreskios***

One on the road down from FH on 25/2.

**Red-headed Trogon *Harpactes erythrocephalus***

One at entrance to Bishop's Trail at FH on 23/2 and one at KF on 25/2.

**Oriental Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis***

A few at BG at SA on 21/2, at KSNP on 22/2, five from the beach on Tahan River, 27/2 and two from the boats on 28/2.

**Rufous-collared Kingfisher *Actenoides concretus* – H**

One seen on the Forest Trail at TN on 27/2.

**Banded Kingfisher *Lacedo pulchella***

A male, on thro ad down from FH on 25/2.

**Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis***

Two at KSNP on 22/2 and then two on our boat trip along the Tahan River on 28/2.

**White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis***

Seen on six dates, often as a drive-by bird *en route* from place to place.

**Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata***

One only, at KSNP mangroves on 22/2.

**Collared Kingfisher *Todirhamphus chloris***

One only, at KSNP mangroves on 22/2.

**Blue-eared Kingfisher *Alcedo meninting***

One only, by the road at KF, 25/2.

**Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis***

One, muddy pool, at SA on 21/2.

**Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher *Ceyx [erithaca] rufidorsa***

One, zipped across the Forest Trail at TN on 27/2.

**Red-bearded Bee-eater *Nyctyornis amictus***

One, on the road up to FH, 22/2, two on the road down from FH on 25/2. What a stotter! Yet it calls like a Greylag Goose!

**Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus***

A few seen on two dates; BG at SA on 21/2 and at KSNP on 22/2.

**Blue-throated Bee-eater *Merops viridis***

Several at the BG at SA, on 21/2 then 3-4 at the resort at TN on 27/2.

**Rhinoceros Hornbill *Buceros rhinoceros***

Two on the hill road down at Bukit Tinggi (BT), 26/2 and two seen briefly from the Canopy Trail at TN, 28/2.

**Helmeted Hornbill *Rhinoplax vigil* - H**

Alas, a heard only, at TN on 27/2 and 01/3. But what a comically sounding bird.

**Oriental Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros albirostris***

Three at a roadside stop between KF and BT, 25/2.

**Bushy-crested Hornbill *Anorrhinus galeritus***

One fly-by bird at FH on 23/2 and then three on the road down from FH on 25/2.

**Wreathed Hornbill *Rhyticeros undulates***

Three fly-by birds on the road up to FH on 22/2.

**Fire-tufted Barbet *Psilopogon pyrolophus***

Three dates at FH.

**Golden-whiskered Barbet *Psilopogon chrysopogon***

Seen at FH on four dates.

**Red-throated Barbet *Psilopogon mystacophanos***

Three dates at FH and at BT, 26/2.

**Black-browed Barbet *Psilopogon oorti***

Seen and heard on four dates at FH.

**Yellow-crowned Barbet *Psilopogon henricii***

Heard on the road up to FH on 22/2 and then one seen at BT on 26/2.

**Blue-eared Barbet *Psilopogon australis***

Heard on the road up to FH on 22/2, one seen at BT on 25/2.

**Coppersmith Barbet *Psilopogon haemacephala***

Just the one, in the BG at SA on 21/2.

**Sooty Barbet *Caloramphus hayii***

One, in the BG at SA on 21/2, one at BT on 25/2 and one at the side-road stop *en route* to TN on 25/2.

Previously known as 'Brown Barbet' now split from those on Borneo.

**Rufous Piculet *Sasia abnormis***

Just one seen, at TN, along the Tahan River, from the boats, 28/2.

**Grey-and-buff Woodpecker *Hemicircus concretus***

Two, on the Canopy Trail at TN on 01/3.

**Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos moluccensis***

Two, in the mangroves at KSNP on 22/2.

**White-bellied Woodpecker *Dryocopus javensis***

One, at a roadside stop, between KF and BT, 25/2.

**Banded Woodpecker *Chrysophlegma miniaceus***

One seen at FH on 23/2 and one along the Canopy Trail at TN on 28/2.

**Chequer-throated Woodpecker *Chrysophlegma mentalis***

One, on the Blau Trail at TN on 01/3.

**Greater Yellownape *Chrysophlegma flavinucha***

Two dates at FH, 23-24/2.

**Lesser Yellownape *Picus chlorolophus***

Just one at FH on 23/2.

**Crimson-winged Woodpecker *Picus puniceus***

Unbelievably close (10m!) and prolonged views (15mins!) of that one chipping out an ant nest at KF on 25/2.

One at BT on 26/2 and one along Blau Trail at TN on 01/3.

**Laced Woodpecker *Picus vittatus***

Two in the hotel grounds at KS on 22/2.

**Common Flameback *Dinopium javanense***

Two in the hotel grounds at KS on 22/2.

**Rufous Woodpecker *Macropternus brachyurus***

One, along Canopy Trail at TN on 01/3.

**Buff-rumped Woodpecker *Meiglyptes tristis***

One at BT on 26/2, one on Forest Trail at TN on 27/2, and one on Canopy Trail at TN on 28/7.

**Buff-necked Woodpecker *Meiglyptes tukki***

One at BT on 26/2.

**Great Slaty Woodpecker *Mulleripicus pulverulentus* - H**

Alas, heard only, twice, at TN, from the clearing stop along the Tahan River, 28/2 and along the Canopy Trail on 01/3.

**Black-thighed Falconet *Microhierax fringillarius***

Two, BG at SA on 21/2, one in KSNP on 23/2, one at KF on 25/2 and one along the Canopy Trail at TN on 28/2.

**Blue-rumped Parrot *Psittinus cyanurus***

Three along the Forest Trail at TN on 27/2, two along the Canopy Trail on 28/2. Never seen very well.

**Long-tailed Parakeet *Psittacula longicauda***

A couple of fly-by birds in the BG at SA, 21/2.

**Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot *Loriculus galgulus***

Four dates; BG at SA on 21/2, at KSNP on 22/2, then at TN, above Forest Trail at TN on 27/2 and Canopy Trail on 28/2.

**Green Broadbill *Calyptomena viridis***

Oh my goodness! What a bird! Fabulous views of one on the side-road stop *en route* to TN on 26/2. It held the title as BOTT-bird, for a while at least.....

**Black-and-red Broadbill *Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchus***

Another real "looker". Two at KF on 25/2, one at BT on 26/2, one at the clearing stop along the Tahan River at TN on 28/7.

**Long-tailed Broadbill *Psarisomus dalhousiae***

Fabulous views of three along the Bishop's Trail at FH, 23/2. Another BOTT-bird contender, for sure.

**Silver-breasted Broadbill *Serilophus lunatus* - H**

Heard only on three days at FH 23-25/2 which was frustrating, but then we saw six (!) at BT on 26/2.

**Banded Broadbill *Eurylaimus javanicus***

One, Blau Trail at TN on 01/3.

**Black-and-yellow Broadbill *Eurylaimus ochromalus***

Two in the BG at SA on 21/2, heard along the Canopy Trail at TN on 28/2 and one seen there on 01/3.

All the above "*Broad-ies*" were BOTT-birds at some point during the tour until, that is, you consider the following pitta quartet, after which they became also-rans, but absolutely fabulous birds nonetheless.

**Malayan Banded Pitta *Hydrornis irena***

Heard tantalizingly close on the Canopy Trail at TN on 01/3 to no avail, so we went back to try again next day, our last morning, for one more shot. For some at least, an all too fleeting glimpse of an ingot of burnished gold glowing incandescently in the gloom of the forest understory. **The** BOTT for sure? Discuss.

**Garnet Pitta *Erythropitta granatina***

Absolutely stunning views of a perched bird posing for us, along the Blau Trail, 01/3. For those that missed The Banded, The Garnet will surely be their BOTT. A veritable jewel of a bird.

**Hooded Pitta *Pitta sordida***

....but then there's The Hooded, another absolute *stotter*. Again fabulous close views of one in the BG at SA on 21/2.

**Blue-winged Pitta *Pitta moluccensis***

....but not forgetting this one, side by side with Hooded, BG at SA on 21/2. Podium pittas, one and all.

**Golden-bellied Gerygone *Gerygone sulphurea***

Two, in the mangroves at KSNP, 22/2.

**Bar-winged Flycatchershrike *Hemipus picatus***

At least six seen at FH on 23/2 and one on the road down from FH on 25/2.

**Black-winged Flycatchershrike *Hemipus hirundinaceus***

Two at TN on 27/2 and a further two on 28/2.

**Large Woodshrike *Tephrodornis virgatus***

One at BG at SA on 21/2 and another at the KS rice fields later in the day. One at FH on 25/2.

**White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus***

Two at the KS rice fields on 21/2.

**Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia***

One in the BG at SA on 21/2 and one at KSNP on 22/2.

**Green Iora *Aegithina viridissima***

Seen on three dates at TN.

**Great Iora *Aegithina lafresnayei***

Two, KSNP on 22/2.

**Large Cuckooshrike *Coracina macei***

Seen on four dates at FH. A very likely 'split', those in Malaysia likely to be called (amazingly enough) 'Malaysian Cuckooshrike' *C. larutensis*.

**Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike *Coracina striata***

Two, KF on 25/2.

**Lesser Cuckooshrike *Coracina fimbriata***

Two at KSNP on 22/2, one at FH on 24/2 and one at KF on 25/2.

**Pied Triller *Lalage nigra***

Two in the grounds of the hotel at KS, 22/2.

**Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus***

Two at KSNP on 22/2, two at TN on 27/2.

**Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris***

Seen on three dates at FH, 23-25/2.

**Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus speciosus***

A pair in the hotel grounds at KS, 22/2 then a pair on the road up to FH on 23/2.

**Mangrove Whistler *Pachycephala cinerea***

Two in the mangroves at KSNP, 22/2.

**Tiger Shrike *Lanius tigrinus***

Just one, along Forest Trail at TN, on 27/2

**Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus***

One in BG at SA on 21/2, and another two drive-by birds on 22/2.

**White-bellied Erpornis *Erpos zantholeuca***

One on the road down from FH on 25/2, one later at KF on 25/2 and one in the clearing along the Tahan River, 28/2.

**Blyth's Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius aeralatus***

One seen by some, at the Malaysian Partridge site at Richmond Cottage, FH on 23/2.

**Dark-throated Oriole *Oriolus xanthonotus***

One seen on road up to FH on 22/2, two seen at TN on 28/2.

**Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis***

One at BG at SA on 21/2, two in hotel grounds at KS on 22/2, one at FH on 25/2 and one at TN on 27/2.

**Black-and-crimson Oriole *Oriolus cruentus***

Seen on three dates at FH 22-24/2.

**Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus***

One at KSNP on 22/2.

**Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus***

One on the road down from FH and one later at KF, 25/2.

**Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus remifer***

Only seen at FH on three dates.

**Greater Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradiseus***

One at FH on 25/2, seen at TN on 27/2 and 28/2.

**White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis***

Seen at FH on five dates.

**Malaysian Pied Fantail *Rhipidura javanica***

Six in total seen on 22/2 at KSNP.

**Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea***

One at KF on 25/2 and one at TN on 28/2.

**Blyth's Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone affinis***

Now split into three species, 'Asian Paradise Flycatcher', is now treated as Blyth's in Malaysia. Much shorter crested and grey-breasted compared with Indian birds, seen by some just before the stepped ravine on the Forest Trail at TN on 27/2.

**Crested Jay *Platylophus galericulatus***

Just one, along that (Green Broadbill) side-road *en route* to TN on 26/2.

**Black Magpie *Platysmurus leucopterus***

Three flew over us on the beach along the Tahan River, TN on 27/2.

**Common Green Magpie *Cissa chinensis***

Two outside our hotel at FH, 23/2.

**House Crow *Corvus splendens***

Seen in fair numbers near the coast and lowlands

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

Seen on three dates; 21/2 at BG at SA, at FH on 23/2 and on 24/2.

**Rail-babbler *Eupetes macrocerus* - H**

Heard only; close by at BT on 26/2.

**Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis***

One along Waterfall Trail at FH on 23/2 and one along Canopy Trail at TN on 28/2.

**Sultan Tit *Melanochlora sultanea***

Two along Waterfall Trail at FH on 24/2, two on the road down from FH on 25/2 and one at BT on 26/2.

**Straw-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus zeylanicus***

One on the boat trip along the Tahan River on 28/2. The IUCN state that due to 'relentless trapping...it is believed to number fewer than 2,500 mature individuals', and is evaluated as Endangered.

**Black-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus atriceps***

Noted on two dates at FH, 27/2 and 01/3.

**Black-crested Bulbul *Pycnonotus flaviventris***

Noted on four dates at FH.

**Scaly-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus squamatus***

One on the road up to FH on 22/2, one on Canopy Trail at TN on 28/2.

**Puff-backed Bulbul *Pycnonotus eutilotus* - H**

Heard only, along the Canopy Trail, TN on 01/3.

**Stripe-throated Bulbul *Pycnonotus finlaysoni***

Two in the BG at SA on 21/2, one on the road down from FH on 25/2 and then on three days in resort ground trees at TN, 26-28/2.

**Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus goiavier***

Seen commonly on six dates

**Olive-winged Bulbul *Pycnonotus plumosus***

First noted at KSNP on 21/2, then on the Canopy Trail at TN on 28/2.

**Cream-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus simplex***

Several seen at TN on 28/2.

**Asian Red-eyed Bulbul *Pycnonotus brunneus***

Seen on six dates. BG at SA on 21/2, KSNP on 22/2 and at TN 26/2 to 02/3.

**Spectacled Bulbul *Pycnonotus erythrothalmos***

One at KSNP on 22/2, at FH on 25/2 and then on three days at TN, 26-28/2.

**Ochraceous Bulbul *Alophoixus ochraceus***

Two seen at FH on 23/2.

**Grey-cheeked Bulbul *Alophoixus bres***

One along the Canopy Trail at TN, 28/2.

**Yellow-bellied Bulbul *Alophoixus phaeocephalus***

Two seen at the KF feeding station/blind on 25/2 then one at BT on 26/2.

**Hairy-backed Bulbul *Tricholestes criniger***

One at KF, 25/2.

**Buff-vented Bulbul *Iole olivacea***

Two or three seen at TN, on Forest Trail on 27/2 and along Canopy Trail on 28/2.

**Mountain Bulbul *Ixos mccllellandii***

One on the road up to FH on 22/2, and one along Waterfall Trail on 24/2.

**Streaked Bulbul *Ixos malaccensis***

Replaces Mountain Bulbul in the forest of TN; seen along Forest Trail on 27/2.

**Cinereous Bulbul *Hemixos cinereus***

Two on the road up to FH on 22/2 then two at BT on 26/2.

**Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica***

Seen daily

**Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica***

Seen daily

**Rufous-bellied Swallow *Cecropis badia***

Two, FH on 23/2.

**Pygmy Wren-babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla***

One seen at FH, at a photographer's stake-out, baited with mealworms, 23/2.

**Yellow-bellied Warbler *Abroscopus superciliaris***

Not really a 'warbler' as such so perhaps best called 'Bamboo Bush Warbler'. One along Waterfall Trail at FH on 23/2 and one on the road down from FH on 25/2.

**Mountain Tailorbird *Phyllergates cucullatus***

Not really a tailorbird and called a "Leaftoiler" in a recent book. Heard only at FH on 23/2.

**Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus***

Two at TN on 28/2, at the clearing stop on our boat trip along the Tahan River.

**Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis***

Two on the Blau Trail at TN, 01/3.

**Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Seicercus castaniceps***

One on the Telekom loop road at FH, 24/2.

**Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis***

Just one in the BG at SA on 21/02.

**Rufescent Prinia *Prinia rufescens***

One along the Waterfall Trail at FH, 24/02.

**Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris***

One at KSNP on 22/2 and one at that Oriental Pied Hornbill roadside stop between KF and BT, 25/2.

**Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius***

Not common for us, just one at BG at SA on 21/2.

**Dark-necked Tailorbird *Orthotomus atrogularis***

One seen on the road down from FH and then also one later at KF, 25/2.

**Rufous-tailed Tailorbird *Orthotomus sericeus***

Two seen on Forest Trail at TN on 27/2.

**Ashy Tailorbird *Orthotomus ruficeps***

One in the KSNP mangroves 21/2, then one on the boat trip along the Tahan River on 28/7.

**Large Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus hypoleucos***

Two at FH on the Telekom loop road, on 24/2.

**Grey-throated Babbler *Stachyris nigriceps***

Two seen on the road down from FH on 25/2.

**Chestnut-rumped Babbler *Stachyris maculata***

Two seen on the Canopy Trail, TN on 28/2.

**Black-throated Babbler *Stachyris nigricollis***

Two seen at the KF feeding station/blind on 25/2.

**Chestnut-winged Babbler *Stachyris erythroptera***

Three on the Canopy Trail at TN, 01/3.

**Golden Babbler *Stachyridopsis chrysaea***

One or two seen along roads at FH on 23/2.

**Pin-striped Tit-Babbler *Macronous gularis***

One at BT on 26/2.

**Fluffy-backed Tit-babbler *Macronus ptilosus***

One, at BT on 26/2 too.

**Brown Fulvetta *Alcippe brunneicauda***

One at KSNP on 22/2.

**Mountain Fulvetta *Alcippe peracensis***

Two or three on three dates at FH 23-25/2.

**Marbled Wren-Babbler *Napothera marmorata***

One near the Hammant Trail entrance at FH, 24/2.

**Streaked Wren-Babbler *Napothera brevicaudata***

One, near Bishop's Trail at FH, 24/2.

**Abbott's Babbler *Malacocincla abbotti***

One seen at KSNP on 22/2 and one along the Hammant's Trail at FH on 24/2.

**Horsfield's Babbler *Malacocincla sepiarium***

One on the Blau Trail at TN on 01/3.

**Short-tailed Babbler *Malacocincla malaccensis***

One at the feeding station/blind at KF, 25/2.

**Sooty-capped Babbler *Malacopteron affine***

Two on the Blau Trail at TN, 01/3.

**Scaly-crowned Babbler *Malacopteron cinereum***

Seen along Canopy Trail at TN on 28/2 and again 01/3.

**White-chested Babbler *Trichostoma rostratum***

One seen from the boats feeding along the edge of the Tahan River on 28/2.

**Ferruginous Babbler *Trichostoma bicolor***

Several seen at the feeding station/blind at KF on 25/2.

**Buff-breasted Babbler *Pellorneum tickelli* - H**

Heard only, along the Waterfall Trail at FH on 23/2.

**Black-capped Babbler *Pellorneum capistratum* - H**

Heard only along the Blau Trail at TN on 01/3.



**Chestnut-capped Laughingthrush *Garrulax mitratus***

Common at FH, 22-25/2. Best views were as we waited for Malaysian Partridge at Richmond Cottage.

**Black Laughingthrush *Garrulax lugubris***

Just one, at BT on 26/2 whilst listening to Rail-Babbler and turning our backs on Ferruginous Partridge.

**Malayan Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron peninsulae***

Seen twice just outside our hotel at FH on 23/2 and 24/2.

**Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera***

Seen at FH on three dates, 22-25/2, mostly high up, but seen well at Malaysian Partridge site at Richmond Cottage.

**Silver-eared Mesia *Leiothrix argentauris***

Seen at FH on three dates, best views were outside our hotel on the first morning at FH, 23/2.

**Long-tailed Sibia *Heterophasia picaoides***

Seen daily at FH, but only really outside the hotel.

**Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus***

Seen at BG at SA on 21/2, at KSNP on 22/2 and at TN on 28/2.

**Everett's White-eye *Zosterops everetti***

Noted on four dates at FH.

**Asian Fairy-bluebird *Irena puella***

One in BG at SA on 21/2 then on three dates at TN.

**Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis***

Seen on two dates at FH; on the road up on 22/2 and then outside the hotel on 23/2.

**Blue Nuthatch *Sitta azurea***

A BOTT-bird on last year's tour, but we didn't see it well enough to qualify this year. Two, high up outside the hotel on 23/2 and then along Waterfall Trail on 24/2.

**Asian Glossy Starling *Aplonis panayensis***

Seen on four dates; in the lowlands BG at SA and KSNP on 21-22/2, at FH on 25/2 and at BT on 26/2.

**Common Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa***

One at BG at SA on 21/2, one at FH on 25/2, and one at TN on 01/3.

**Javan Myna *Acridotheres javanicus***

Six dates, mostly as drive-by roadside birds.

**Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis***

Five dates, mostly as drive-by roadside birds.

**Orange-headed Thrush *Geokichla citrina***

A stunning bird, at the Mountain Peacock-Pheasant site at BT, alongside Siberian Blue Robin and White-tailed Shama – not a bad combo.

**Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus***

One in the resort grounds at TN, 27/2.

**Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis***

Common, seen daily.

**White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus***

Seen on three dates; at the feeding station/blind at KF on 25/2, at the Mountain Peacock-Pheasant site at BT on 26/2 and at the Tahan Hide at TN on 27/2.

**Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica***

The default flycatcher in winter and seen in low numbers on nine dates

**Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica***

One seen at KSNP on 22/2.

**Rufous-browed Flycatcher *Anthipes solitarius***

Seen on three dates at FH, 22-24/2. Fabulous views at the Malaysian Partridge site at Richmond Cottage.

**Pale-blue Flycatcher *Cyornis unicolor***

One on the road down from FH on 25/2.

**Hill Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis banyumas***

One on the road down from FH on 25/2.

**Tickell's Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis tickelliae***

A pair seen from the boat on the Tahan River at TN on 28/2. One along Canopy Trail at TN on 01/3.

**Large Niltava *Niltava grandis***

Just the one, along the Hammant Trail at FH on 24/2.

**Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassinus***

One on the road down from FH on 25/2. Verditer, Hill Blue and Pale-Blue all at the one stop.

**Lesser Shortwing *Brachypteryx leucophrys***

One on 24/2, near the Hammant Trail entrance.

**Siberian Blue Robin *Larvivora cyane***

A stunning full-breeding plumage bird at the feeding station/blind at KF 25/2 and then another cracker at the Mountain Peacock-Pheasant site at BT on 26/2.

**White-tailed Robin *Myiomela leucura***

A nice male opposite the Hammant Trail entrance at FH on 24/2, where we also encountered that very friendly "Malaysian Garrulous Babbler" chappy, with his tales of his time in *The Burma Rifles*, or some such.

**Slaty-backed Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus***

Great views of one along the Waterfall Trail at FH on 23/2 and one flushed at the roadside (at FH somewhere?) as we drove, 24/2.

**Green-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula elisae***

One, at KF on 25/2.

**Yellow-rumped Flycatcher *Ficedula zanthopygia* - H**

One, heard only at KSNP on 22/2.

**Mugimaki Flycatcher *Ficedula mugimaki***

A female at KSNP on 22/2 then another at the Malaysian Partridge site at Richmond Cottage on 24/2.

**Little Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula westermanni***

At FH, a pair at the Malaysian Partridge site at Richmond Cottage on 23/2 and a/the female there on 24/2.

**Greater Green Leafbird *Chloropsis sonnerati***

One on the Blau Trail at TN on 01/3.

**Lesser Green Leafbird *Chloropsis cyanopogon***

Only one in the resort grounds at TN on 27/2.

**Blue-winged Leafbird *Chloropsis cochinchinensis***

Noted on seven dates/various sites.

**Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii***

Only seen on two dates; KSNP on 22/2 and one at FH on 24/2.

**Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker *Prionochilus maculatus***

One from the Tahan Hide at TN on 27/2.

**Crimson-breasted Flowerpecker *Prionochilus percussus***

One, in the resort grounds at TN, 27/2.

**Orange-bellied Flowerpecker *Dicaeum trigonostigma***

One, BG at SA on 21/2.

**Plain Flowerpecker *Dicaeum minullum***

One, from the boat on the Tahan River, TN on 28/2.

**Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus***

The common flowerpecker at FH, seen on four days

**Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum***

Seen at BG at SA on 21/2, at KSNP on 22/2 and at FH on 24/2.

**Ruby-cheeked Sunbird *Chalcoparia singalensis***

Seen at KSNP on 22/2 and one at TN on 28/2 along the Canopy Trail.

**Plain Sunbird *Anthreptes simplex***

One at KSNP on 22/2 and on 27-28/2 at TN.

**Brown-throated Sunbird *Anthreptes malacensis***

Seen at KSNP on 22/2, on the road down from FH on 25/2.

**Red-throated Sunbird *Anthreptes rhodolaemus***

One seen at KSNP on 22/2.

**Purple-naped Sunbird *Hypogramma hypogrammicum***

One at TN on the Forest Trail, 27/2. The Purple-naped Sunbird is in a taxonomic state of flux, its scientific name is likely to be called *Kurochkinogramma hypogrammicum* in future – a name longer than the bird itself!

**Olive-backed Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis***

One, at KSNP on 22/2.

**Black-throated Sunbird *Aethopyga saturata***

Seen outside the hotel at FH on 23/2 and 24/2.

**Little Spiderhunter *Arachnothera longirostra***

Seen at BG at SA on 21/2, at KSNP on 22/2 and at FH 24-25/2.

**Long-billed Spiderhunter *Arachnothera robusta***

Seen at TN, from the boat on Tahan River on 28/2.

**Spectacled Spiderhunter *Arachnothera flavigaster***

Two at the BG at SA on 21/2.

**Grey-breasted Spiderhunter *Arachnothera modesta***

One at BG at SA on 21/2 as we watched both Hooded and Blue-winged Pittas.

**Streaked Spiderhunter *Arachnothera magna***

Seen on five dates at FH and then at BT.

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus***

Common away from FH

**Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus***

Only seen in the BG at SA on 21/2.

**White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata***

A few seen at the rice fields at KS on 21/2.

**Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchuria punctulata***

As above.

**White-headed Munia *Lonchuria maja***

As above too, three munias in the same spot.

**Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea***

One outside the hotel at FH on 23/2, one on the road down from FH on 25/2 and seen twice at TN on 28/2 and 01/3.

**Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus***

Just the one, BG at SA on 21/2.

**MAMMALS**

Siamang *Symphalangus syndactylus*

Southern Pig-tailed Macaque *Macaca nemestrina*

Long-tailed Macaque *Macaca fascicularis*

Pale-thighed Langur *Presbytis siamensis*

Lar (White-handed) Gibbon *Hylobates lar*

Silvered Langur *Trachypithecus cristatus*

Dusky Langur *Trachypithecus obscurus*

White-thighed Leaf-Monkey *Presbytis siamensis*

Spectacled (Dusky) Leaf Monkey *Trachypithecus obscurus*

Prevost's Squirrel *Callosciurus prevostii*

Pallas's Squirrel *Callosciurus erythraeus*

Himalayan Striped Squirrel *Tamiops macclellandii*

Three-striped Ground Squirrel *Lariscus insignis*

Low's Squirrel *Sundasciurus lowii*

Slender Squirrel *Sundasciurus tenuis*

Asian Red-cheeked Squirrel *Dremomys rufigenis*

Plantain Squirrel *Callosciurus notatus*

Banded Squirrel *Callosciurus orestes*

Wild Boar *Sus scrofa*

Barking Deer *Muntiacus muntjaki*

**BUTTERFLIES**

We didn't see that many butterflies and didn't spend much time looking, but we saw a few:

Rajah Brooke's Birdwing *Trogonoptera brookiana*

Common Birdwing *Troides helena*

White-headed Batwing *Atrophaneura sycorax*

Common Rose *Pachliopta aristolochiae*

Common Mormon *Papilio polytes*

Common Mime *Papilio clytia*

Malayan Zebra *Graphium delessertii*

Orange Emigrant *Catopsilla scylla*

Plain Tiger *Danaus chrysippus*

Striped Blue Crow *Euploea mulciber*

Plain Nawab *Polyura hebe*

Popinjay *Stibochiona nicea?*

Common Yeoman *Cirrochroa tyche*