

Taiwan

The Beautiful Isle

Thu 16th-Wed 29th November 2017



Trip photos (clockwise from top left): Black-necklaced Scimitar-babbler • Taiwan Rosefinch • Swinhoe's Pheasant • Taiwan Bamboo Partridge. © tour leader Colin Bushell/Limosa Holidays

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Colin Bushell

Taiwan | The Beautiful Isle

Leaders: Colin Bushell & Kuan-Chieh Hung ("KC")

The draw of island endemic species ensures Taiwan's popularity with birders, but this beautiful island has much more to offer. Admittedly our tour is focused on making every effort to see the species and subspecies only occurring on Taiwan, but we also include many scarce and threatened wintering birds throughout our itinerary. We started the tour near the capital and hit the ground running with Taiwan Blue Magpie, before heading into the hill forests of Guguan (a good site for Chestnut-bellied Tit) and Dasyueshan where the initial "rush" of endemic birds species starts. The coastal wetlands are an absolute joy with a tactical shift in birding skills, as we scan the salt pans, marshes and estuaries for sought-after Chinese Egret, Far Eastern Curlew and, of course, the globally threatened Black-faced Spoonbill. Last year's rare Baikal Teal was replaced with a wader this time round and we spent some time in the company of a Nordmann's Greenshank before heading to the far south of the island.

Our fine-tuned 2017 itinerary took us to Kenting where Styan's Bulbul was easily found with the bonus of good open country birding before heading back north. The journey back into the hills was punctuated with birding stops for Maroon Oriole, Greater Painted-snipe and Pheasant-tailed Jacana and after a stopover at a very nice hotel in Tainan we ascended into the hills once again at Alishan. With the "Alpine Zone" of Dasyueshan closed due to road maintenance this year we had important birds to find in the upper reaches of Yushan NP. This alternative plan worked very well indeed, securing great views of Mikado Pheasant, Flamecrest, Grey-headed Bullfinch and even the White-browed Shortwing showed briefly. Our last highland birding at Cingjing finally produced good views of that pesky Black-necklaced Scimitar Babbler in the hotel gardens, singing male Siberian Rubythroat (!) but where were all the thrushes? Poor weather didn't help our efforts at Hehuanshan (the highest point of our tour at 3275m) but our best views of Taiwan Rosefinch were here.

We ended the tour on the north-east coast in search of migrants and the last endemic birds. The grounds of the Jinshan Youth Centre, so near the coast, attract a nice variety of East Asian migrants and once again we enjoyed Dusky Thrush feeding on the lawns, this time in the company of Naumann's and Eyebrowed! Anyone who has visited the coastal Chinese resort of Beidehai for spring migrants will know how exciting this form of birding can be; searching for migrants with the chance of just about anything popping up before your eyes. Our final endemic of the tour was, just like last year, the Taiwan Bamboo Partridge. Unbeatable views once again and we didn't have to walk to the trail this time; three birds feeding on the road in full view!

Another great tour finished with the majority of endemics seen, loads of endemic subspecies noted and we even had time to enjoy some Taiwanese culture and cuisine.

16 - 17 November

Our early evening flight from London went well and we arrived in Hong Kong the following afternoon with plenty of time to make the connection to Taipei. After the short flight to Taiwan we were met by Yen, our ground agent, who escorted us for the forty-five minute journey in our bus to the hotel in Taipei where we met with KC, our guide for the tour. Arriving a little late to eat at the hotel restaurant we dined at a restaurant a few blocks away, after which we were all ready for bed after a long journey.

18 November

A rather overcast start to the day didn't do justice to the view across the city from the hotel restaurant this morning. Indeed heavy rain had set in by the time we were ready to depart and we drove through the streets of Taipei with many cyclists fumbling for their waterproofs by the roadside in the torrential downpour. Arriving at Quianshan Park in drizzle we soon found a Malayan Night Heron but it was nice to find some Taiwan Blue Magpies with such ease this year and we enjoyed splendid views of this endemic here. Taiwan Whistling Thrush, Grey Treepie, Taiwan Barbet (albeit briefly) and Oriental Turtle Doves were all appreciated here with the rain giving way by the time we headed for the Botanical Gardens. Still overcast and even a little humid, we used our time in the gardens to familiarise ourselves with the more common and widespread birds of Taiwan including Light-vented Bulbul, Japanese White-eyes, Spotted Doves, Pacific Swallows as well as a few introduced exotics like Indian Magpie-Robin and Asian Glossy Starling.

By late morning the rain had started again as we arrived at Huajiang Nature Park. We saw a nice variety of wetland birds here including a few common waders and wildfowl and the 'scopes came in useful to study the perched Black Kite and Black-shouldered Kites in trees on the far bank of the river. A calling Siberian Rubythroat could not be tempted into view. Little did we know what a good tour this was going to be for seeing this gem!

Closer, there were Oriental Reed Warblers, Vinous-throated Parrotbills, Yellow-bellied Prinias and Eastern Yellow Wagtails in and around the reed-fringed borders of the river with Crested Mynas and Black-collared Starlings perched alongside Black Drongos nearby. We took lunch in a restaurant, experiencing our first local cuisine with KC ordering us a selection of dishes to try.

The afternoon took us towards Taichung where we birded the lower road that leads to Dasyueshan in the late afternoon. In overcast but dry conditions we lured a Taiwan Hwamei into view, but only briefly and this would need more work later in the tour! Collared Finchbills were thankfully much easier to see as were our first of many Rufous-capped Babblers of the trip and Plumbeous Water Redstarts on the river. Silver-backed Needletails zoomed overhead, dwarfing the House Swifts with Crested Honey Buzzard soaring across the distant hillside. With light fading we decided to call it a day and drove the short distance to our comfortable hotel in Taichung with another chance to sample the menu of local restaurants.

19 November

We awoke early, strolling across the local convenience store for breakfast this morning, which was surprisingly good, setting off for Guguan around 06.30. We arrived less than an hour later, having driven into the mountains, with a light drizzle falling as we left the bus. Our target bird here was the endemic Chestnut-bellied Tit and we located some after crossing the gorge, only momentarily distracted by Black-naped Monarchs, White-bellied Erpornis and Rufous-capped Babblers. Grey-chinned Minivets flew over the treetops as we made our way down a track to search for Taiwan Hwamei, bumping into Daurian Redstarts, Plain Prinias and Plumbeous Water Redstarts too. The Hwamei refused to co-operate (probably due to the presence of a Crested Goshawk perched nearby) but it was no surprise to see another couple of Taiwan Blue Magpies after yesterday's success with this species - if only we had been this lucky last year!

After this "mini twitch" for Chesnut-bellied Tit we made our way into Dasyueshan, our home for the next two nights. We concentrated on the lower mountain slopes before lunch with the fine, sunny conditions encouraging Black Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Crested Honey Buzzard and Crested Goshawks to soar in the blue sky. The roadside borders held Grey-cheeked Fulvettas and Taiwan Scimitar Babblers and we could hear Black-necklaced Scimitar Babblers in the valley. The song of this species was to become very familiar to us over the rest of the tour, but seeing it became more of a challenge! After a very tasty lunch in a local roadside restaurant we concentrated on the forests, inevitably bumping into our first Swinhoe's Pheasants of the tour. We also saw Taiwan Partridge here too - saving us a visit to the hide at Alishan later on in the tour and freeing up time to search for more "Alpine species". Dasyueshan is a great place for endemic birds of Taiwan where Taiwan Yuhina, Steere's Liocichla and White-eared Sibia are easy to see. We enjoyed our first burst of these special birds before the low cloud and mist made birding difficult later in the afternoon. Arriving at the Dasyueshan Recreation Centre we checked in around sunset ready for dinner (served rather early here). Unfortunately night birding or mammal searching was off the agenda this evening due to the rather damp conditions.

20 November

Our pre-breakfast walk was a bit of a washout this morning; the heavy rain forcing an early retreat before we made our way to the restaurant to eat around 07.00. The weather improved a little as we set off along a wide trail into the forests, but the thick mist, drizzle and low cloud suppressed bird activity. As usual the Taiwan Yuhinas were easy enough to see, but even the distinctive White-eared Sibias were hard to discern in the reduced visibility. A Collared Owlet remained virtually invisible, despite calling for long periods and hearing Rusty Laughingthrush in the forest below was frustrating as we could hardly see the trees! Back at the Recreation Centre we enjoyed a nice lunch in the cafeteria, even getting some great views of Spotted Nutcrackers in the trees opposite the balcony as the blue sky peeked through the cloud. Filled with optimism (and a hearty lunch!) we birded the road from KM36 down in the afternoon. And what a difference the clearer weather made! On our first stop we encountered a noisy mixed flock of Grey-cheeked Fulvettas, delightful Rufous-faced Warblers and, best of all, some scolding Taiwan Barwings. Lower along the road while watching some Taiwan Macaques foraging in the trees another flock distracted us from the monkeys. This time the stunning endemic Yellow Tit made an appearance alongside Green-backed Tit and beautiful male Vivid Niltavas. Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpeckers could be seen on dead tree stumps only to be replaced by a female Vivid Niltava and then a handsome male Fire-breasted Flowerpecker that stayed long enough for 'scope views.

The very busy afternoon became almost frantic when the diminutive Taiwan Wren Babbler hopped around at virtually point blank range on logs and trunks by the roadside until our attention was drawn to noisy Eurasian Jays (looking very different to "our" birds) and then the calls of Rufous-crowned Laughingthrushes. This endemic laughingthrush can be tricky to see and with Dasyueshan our only realistic chance of this species we concentrated on the canopy of the forest at our eye-level from the road. Sure enough a nice flock appeared, more than fifteen birds possibly, making their way through the upper strata of the trees. Fantastic! Encouraged by our good fortune in the improved weather we ventured out, on foot, after dinner. We soon located Rufous-and-White

Giant Flying Squirrels leaping between trees in the car park near the Recreation Centre, with Serrow located in the borders soon after. On the way back to the rooms we found a Chinese Ferret Badger too. Three interesting mammals to end our day.

21 November

A rather overcast but dry start to the day meant better results from our pre-breakfast walk around forest borders surrounding the Dasyueshan Recreation Area today. The endemic Collared Bush Robin was perhaps the star bird this morning until we returned to our rooms after breakfast when a small flock of Taiwan Barwings were feeding in trees near the car park. Road closures above the Recreation Centre meant we couldn't access the Alpine zone of Dasyueshan this year and with alternative highland site visits planned we concentrated on lower Dasyueshan as we left for the coast today. The waterfall a short distance below the accommodation is a reliable site for Little Forktail providing enough visits are made, and we were lucky this morning as the pied performer scurried across the almost vertical walls of the falls. We enjoyed lengthy 'scope views of the forktail before it disappeared over a ledge allowing us to move lower along the road. Small flocks kept us entertained and the ornate Black-throated Bush Tit made its first and somewhat overdue appearance of the tour. Taiwan Barbet gave us our best views of the tour to date here too and as always in Dasyueshan, there were sibilias, yuhinas liocichlas and fulvettas to sift through.

A rushing river produced the hoped-for Brown Dipper and, of course, the Plumbeous Water Redstart can be expected here with Striated Heron lurking in quieter pools. The "tsoo-eet" of our first Yellow-browed Warbler of the tour was heard here as we watched Taiwan Scimitar Babblers and Striated Prinias. After another nice lunch in Dongshi we settled in for the longish journey (but still less than three hours) to the coast, arriving at Aogu Wetlands for some late afternoon birding. It didn't take long to pick out some of the rare Black-faced Spoonbills this area is renowned for, among the many white birds dotted all over the lagoons here. Taiwan is an important wintering site for this threatened species and the Aogu Wetlands are a reliable site to see this rare bird.

Our first Intermediate Egret and Purple Heron made an appearance this afternoon and searching through the ducks revealed good numbers of Garganey (in eclipse plumage) with Northern Shovelers and Eurasian Teal and small numbers of Common Pochards in the huge rafts of Tufted Ducks. Water levels on these lagoons were not ideal for waders but we did find some Pied Avocets, Common Greenshank and Black-winged Stilts. Shorebirds would have to wait another day. As the light faded we saw a few more Black-necked Grebes, Yellow Bitterns and Caspian Terns called as they flew overhead. With the focus on wetland birds the Long-tailed Shrike and Common Kingfisher made a nice break from long-range telescope birding and as dusk approached we reluctantly packed the optics away and headed for the hotel in Putai.

22 November

After an early breakfast we drove a short way to the Putai wetlands. The scene was strangely familiar for the leader with Cinnamon Bittern, Long-tailed Shrike and even a Siberian Rubythroat in virtually the same places as last year's tour! The rubythroat showed on-and-off, only perching in full view on a couple of occasions and a "tacking" Dusky Warbler decided it would stay under cover for the duration of our stay here. Stopping by various pools and salt pans we watched a variety of waders including Red-necked Stints, Long-toed Stints, Lesser Sand Plovers, Pacific Golden Plovers, Curlew Sandpipers and many Marsh Sandpipers. The wind was strengthening as we left the salt pans for the estuary of Ba Zhang and we needed to catch the tide before it covered the mudflats here.

Sheltering from the gusts behind our bus, we scanned the river and mudflats and in rather tricky conditions we picked out three Chinese Egrets strutting around in the shallows of the far bank. Saunders' Gull was the other target bird here and we saw several, albeit it at some distance. Careful scrutiny of the waders revealed a small flock of Great Knot, a Greater Sand Plover with Lessers and Kentish Plovers and better still, a Far Eastern Curlew with its extraordinary lengthy bill! Lunch was taken in the surreal settings of a convenience store within a temple (!) before a quick stop at a roadside lagoon where we located the Nordmann's Greenshank that had been the interest of so many photographers around the area of late. We picked this rare wader out even as it slept, by virtue of its rather stockier structure (compared to Common Greenshank), relatively short, more yellowish legs and thicker set, more upturned bill. Thankfully once the bird woke up its rather Terek Sandpiper-like jizz became evident too. The tight flock of Great Knot was great to watch and we found a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper with them it was hard to leave this area as every stop held different birds.

The remainder of the day was spent travelling south towards the tip of Taiwan where Styan's Bulbul was our quest. A brief comfort stop en route to Kenting was a nice opportunity to stretch our legs but also to study some bulbuls. Indeed some of the Light-vented Bulbuls here showed "Styan's influence" with some obvious hybrid mixed pairs on display.

23 November

After a very nice night in another very comfortable hotel we set out after breakfast, a little delayed by the Striated Swallows outside as we loaded the bus. Birding the Longluan area we soon picked up our first Styan's Bulbuls. Although this endemic was the reason for our journey to the far south of Taiwan, we found there was much more to occupy us here as well. The open fields were alive with birds - quartering Eastern Marsh Harriers, hovering Black-shouldered Kites and calling Oriental Skylarks. Our first White-shouldered Starlings of the tour perched nearby with Brown Shrikes in the bushes bordering the fields. The next stop was at a small lake where Spot-billed Ducks were seen as well as two Bramblings on the entrance track. We also had our best views of Taiwan Hwamei here before stopping at the huge Longluan Lake with distant rafts of Tufted Ducks, more Eastern Marsh Harriers and a last chance to look at Styan's Bulbul before starting our journey back north.

Tainan was our destination today but we punctuated the journey with some very interesting birding sites along the way. Pre-lunch was perhaps the best with a walk around Inda Farm. Maroon Oriole was our main interest here in the secondary woodlands of the lowlands but we soon realised Inda Farm had much more to offer. A Large Cuckooshrike was a good find here but it was the posing Siberian Rubythroat that stole the show as it peeked out from the depths of a poolside tangle with its crimson throat patch gleaming. Once we had finished watching this gorgeous bird, the oriole appeared and with its almost crimson plumage it was easy to find in the trees alongside another good bird - Ashy Drongo! The fruiting trees were loaded with birds here; mostly Black Bulbuls but there were a few thrushes "that got away", probably Eyebrowed Thrushes, but only silhouettes as they disappeared over the canopy. Returning to the bus we had time to watch some Taiwan Barbets in another fruiting tree and we flushed a few Olive-backed Pipits that flew up onto branches for better views. Lunch was calling now so we had to drag ourselves away from an excellent site for birding once again.

After a brief stop at Cieding wetlands (some distant Black-faced Spoonbills, but little else of note), we arrived at Guantian where we spent the remainder of the afternoon. The Pheasant-tailed Jacana reserve was interesting here and we managed to see a few of their star attractions. However there were more jacanas on the open rice paddies as well as some splendid Greater Painted-snipe. Unfortunately we only saw them in flight so we vowed to return the following morning for better views. Other species seen at the paddies included Chinese Pond Heron, Long-toed Stints, many Wood Sandpipers and Eastern Yellow Wagtails.

24 November

The night in Tainan was a new addition to this year's tour, breaking up the long journey from Kenting in the south, to our next destination of Alishan. Having enjoyed the meal at a Japanese restaurant and free ice-cream and coffee in the hotel the previous evening we needed to work all this off (and the breakfast!). Returning to the paddies we walked the bunds, getting better views of Greater Painted-snipe and of course some large flocks of Pheasant-tailed Jacanas. Leaving the sunny lowlands we drove for an hour and a half into the hills, the last section on steep and windy roads. Stopping at the Longmei trail we walked uphill a little and away from the busy car park where Collared Finchbills, Steere's Liocichlas, White-eared Sibias and Taiwan Scimitar Babblers were easy to see around a small stream. Incredibly we also had four species of Bush Warbler around us too - Brownish-flanked, Taiwan, Yellowish-bellied and Manchurian all calling but refusing to show properly!

After a latish lunch we drove to Tataka for our first try for Mikado Pheasant. Walking the road we encountered a nice party of Black-throated Bush Tits and our first White-whiskered Laughingthrushes but no sign of any pheasants. With the light fading in the low cloud we drove a little on one of the best stretches of road for the pheasant. We soon found a male by the roadside but he quickly scrambled up the bank before we could get acceptable views, leaving us with work to do early the next morning.

25 November

We left Firefly Lodge early this morning in order to see Mikado Pheasant, taking a breakfast at the local convenience store. The windy roads up to Yushan NP became misty again as we climbed into the low cloud and it wasn't too long before we found our first Mikado Pheasants - a young male and two females feeding by the roadside. This time they were more accommodating, allowing us to watch at leisure. After "walk away views" of yet another endemic we moved on higher still, encountering a beautiful adult male Mikado, running along a wall, even jumping over the bulbous lights on the wall as it went! This delightful bird settled soon after, allowing us to photograph him before slowly walking into the undergrowth. A great start!

Yellowish-bellied Bush Warblers seem a little easier to see up here for some reason. I've no idea why, but for the second consecutive year we saw one relatively easy and at close range this morning. We also bumped into a White-backed Woodpecker before boarding the bus and driving the short distance to the parking area to start our search for "Alpine" species. KC planned to take us higher this morning and thankfully hired a shuttle to take us to the top of the trail where "normal" buses are prohibited. Passing many hikers on the paved trail, the short journey was soon over and the view from the lodge was wonderful on this crisp, sunny morning. After a few scenic photo

shots we were ready to bird our way down as Spotted Nutcrackers called and in the first patch of bamboo we got lucky with White-browed Shortwing responding briefly to KC's recordings. This bonus bird (KC tells me he rarely sees it in November) was quickly followed by another in the form of Golden Parrotbill as a noisy flock appeared and soon disappeared again! Thinking our luck just couldn't continue, we descended a little again, stopping at a fruiting tree. The familiar piping calls here belong to the Grey-headed Bullfinch and it was great to watch two or three feeding in the trees above the trail this morning. Flamecrest was the next endemic to show, in the nearby pines and a real delight in the morning sunshine.

The rest of the walk was relatively quiet for birds, with more frustratingly brief views of thrushes overhead, the thin "tseep" call teasing us with a few options up here, and all still missing from our list! White-browed Bush Robin was the next special bird after lunch with Taiwan Rosefinch only showing briefly on our final walk of the day. This evening we would dine at Firefly and enjoyed the film about the conservation work undertaken by the owner, helping preserve habitat for Red-and-White Giant Flying Squirrels and, of course, birds.

26 November

An early pre-breakfast birding session around Firefly Lodge looking for Black-necklaced Scimitar Babbler and Rusty Laughingthrush proved a frustrating affair with the former singing but not revealing itself. After breakfast we packed our things ready for the journey to Cingjing, trying for the scimitar babblers and laughingthrushes once more on the slopes just above the lodge as we left. Only the briefest of appearances by the Black-necklaced Scimitar Babblers and no sign at all of the laughingthrush but the area did produce our only Bull-headed Shrike of the tour and we had glimpsed the tiny Asian Stubtail while trying to entice bush warblers into view. Better still, a cracking male Snowy-browed Flycatcher was seen and the area was certainly alive with other species already seen on the tour such as Collared Finchbill, Taiwan Scimitar Babblers, Steere's Liocichla, Rufous-faced Warblers and Black-throated Bushtits.

After a few more random attempts for the Black-necklaced Scimitar Babbler, we arrived at the Longmei trail. The hot and sunny weather meant birds were quiet in the bushes and trees but the raptors were soaring. We watched two Black Eagles over the hillside before a Mountain Hawk Eagle appeared - a species new for the tour. After another nice convenience store lunch we stopped at the beautiful Keming Temple where a Collared Scops Owl was roosting underneath one of the ornately decorated ceilings. The scene was quite surreal with telescopes set on the owl on the stairway to the temple! The rest of the afternoon passed quickly as we drove to the mountain resort of Cingjing along the very busy road to the highest driveable pass on the island.

27 November

Early morning in Cingjing can be cold and wet, but we awoke to very pleasant conditions and the pre-breakfast birding near the hotel was, just like the previous year's tour, very good indeed. For some bizarre reason the Black-necklaced Scimitar Babbler appears to be much easier to see here than other sites and we watched three or four birds, singing in the open. Yes, in the open! The song of Taiwan Partridge rang out from the distant hills but we were soon diverted to a stunning male Siberian Rubythroat singing in the undergrowth. Once again two thrushes "got away", calling as they left a fruiting tree just as we noticed them, but Brown-flanked Bush Warbler showed reasonably well as some compensation. With liocichlas and hwamei in song it was a shame to leave the gardens, but with the weather still favourable and breakfast still waiting we needed to make tracks to the high pass.

Bags packed and moving on once again we ascended to the Hehuanshan Pass but unfortunately the weather had closed in. Dense cloud and showers made birding difficult and rather uncomfortable at times here. Although we failed to find any Alpine Accentors we had exceptional views of the Taiwan Rosefinch here, making up for our rather brief looks at Yushan. We soon retreated to shelter where hot coffee was very welcome indeed! Descending back to the Cingjing and the hotel gardens we saw Black-necklaced Scimitar Babbler easily once again, even in the hot and sunny weather! After another very acceptable convenience store lunch we started the four hour journey to Wanli and our final hotel of the tour.

28 November

This morning we drove the very short journey to the Jinshan Youth Centre grounds that are a migrant trap in the autumn. This year's selection was even better than last year, although today we had a fair few mosquitoes to contend with in the rather muggy conditions. Walking the grounds we saw a nice selection of migrants including those thrushes we had to wait so long for this year: Eyebrowed, Pale, Dusky and Naumann's all feeding or perching on exposed branches in the morning sunlight. KC also explained it had been a good year for migrant buntings in Taiwan and we were treated to good views of several Yellow-throated Buntings and a Black-faced Bunting. Bramblings and Siskins were more familiar to us British birders but what a fantastic experience watching Olive-backed Pipits, Siberian Rubythroat and Daurian Redstarts all before breakfast.

After breakfast we drove the short journey to the Yeliu Geo Park - the Filey Brigg of Taiwan was one comment I remember as we viewed the map of the site. The first few hundred yards of the park was crowded with "selfie hunters" near the rock formations, but in the forested areas the only crowds were bird photographers! The gulleys provided good views of Pale Thrush, Red-flanked Bluetail, Daurian Redstart and yet another Siberian Rubythroat. Away from the forest - as we fought a way through the crowds - we watched Black Kite and Pacific Reef Heron over the turquoise blue sea. As with last year's tour one of our last sites to visit was the Yanmishan NP where we enjoyed exceptional views of Taiwan Bamboo Partridge on the trails. This year we didn't even reach the trails before three birds ambled out on the road - our final Taiwan endemic of the tour. This immediate success left us extra time before our departure to the airport and we made a brief visit to Guandu, where we improved on our recent views of Vinous-throated Parrotbill. With a trouble-free journey through the Taipei traffic to the airport and a smooth check-in we were ready for our early evening flight to Hong Kong and connections to London.

29 November

After a relaxing overnight flight we all arrived in London in the early hours of the morning. Thankfully we enjoyed much better weather during this year's tour, seeing the best Taiwan has to offer at this time of year. Of course the expert guidance of KC, careful driving from William and the organisation from Yen from "Limosa's team on the ground" were an integral part of the success of this trip, but as always a keen, enthusiastic and good-humoured group is as important. I hope you enjoyed Taiwan and its birds as much as I did and I look forward to seeing you all again with Limosa very soon.

Annotated list of birds recorded in Taiwan November 2017 (E = endemic species to Taiwan).

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Recorded on three dates with largest numbers at the Aogu Forest Wetland Park.

Eastern Spot-billed Duck *Anas zonorhyncha*

Recorded on 23rd only in the Kenting area.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Seen at Aogu and Putai wetlands, Cieding Wetland Park and at the Pheasant-tailed Jacana Reserve.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

Small flocks at Aogu and Putai and a few at Cieding.

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*

Seen on four dates. Nowhere numerous but most were seen at Aogu wetlands.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Small numbers at Aogu, Cieding and the Pheasant-tailed Jacana Reserve.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Small numbers with the Tufted Ducks at Aogu.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Recorded at the major wetlands visited with largest numbers at Aogu and Longluan Lake near Kenting.

Taiwan Partridge *Arborophila crudigularis* E

Three seen at KM23 Dasyueshan and also heard at Cingjing.

Taiwan Bamboo Partridge *Bambusicola thoracicus* E

Three seen very well indeed at Yangmishan National Park on our final day in the field.

Swinhoe's Pheasant *Lophura swinhoii* E

Ten birds, mostly stunning males, in Dasyueshan on 19th. Seen by the roadside and seemingly accustomed to their human admirers, we were able to watch and photograph one of Taiwan's most beautiful birds at leisure.

Two were seen a couple of days later as we left Dasyueshan on the way to the coast.

Mikado Pheasant *Symaticus mikado* E

A male, immature male and two females seen in the higher section of road at Yushan on 25th after a brief view of a male the previous night.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Seen on three dates with most recorded at Aogu and Putai wetlands.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Several at the Aogu wetlands.

African Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus* I

This introduced species was seen at many wetland sites and most numerous at Aogu and Putai.

Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*

This endangered species was observed on the wetlands near Aogu and Putai (at least 100 birds) as well as a flock of 40 or so at Cieding Wetland Park. The Tainan wetlands of the west coast of Taiwan are one of three major wintering sites for Black-faced Spoonbills and habitat destruction through industrial development is the main threat to this species.

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*

A few seen at Aogu and Putai.

Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*

One at Putai on 22nd.

Malayan Night Heron *Gorsachius melanolophus*

Three in Quianshan Park, Taipei on 18th.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Seen at most wetland sites visited during the tour with records from four dates.

Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*

Recorded in small numbers in the Guantian area on 23rd only.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*

Widespread but not particularly numerous at any one site. Recorded on five dates.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Small numbers from five dates. seen at all wetlands plus a few from the bus between sites.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Three at Aogu Wetlands and at least one at Kenting on Longluan Lake.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

Widespread with many seen in roadside paddies and also at major wetland sites. Recorded on seven dates.

Intermediate Egret *Ardea intermedia*

Seen on just two dates (at Aogu and Kenting) but probably under recorded as reasonable views are needed to identify this species.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Common and widespread in all damp areas. Seen on eight dates.

Pacific Reef Heron *Egretta sacra*

A single dark phase bird seen in flight at the Yeliu Geo Park on 28th.

Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes*

At least three at Ba Zhang river mouth on 22nd. This species is characterised as "vulnerable" in BirdLife International's threat level with the small population declining due to reclamation of tidal mudflats and offshore islands for development.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Seen on four dates, mainly on large wetlands near Aogu and Putai.

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Two on 22nd as we toured the Putai wetlands.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

Small numbers on five dates with five on 22nd in the Putai area the daily maximum.

Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

Seen on four dates with most sightings coming from the Guguan/Dasyueshan section of the tour.

Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela*

Seen on four dates including three on 24th as we travelled to Alishan and Tataka.

Mountain Hawk-eagle *Nisaetus nipalensis*

Single over the hillside near the Longmei Trail on 26th was the only record this year.

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malayensis*

Seen on three dates in Dasyueshan and Alishan.

Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*

Only recorded in Dasyueshan.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

One over Guantian on 24th.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Two on our first day in the field near Taipei were the only birds seen until the final day when a bird was seen at Yeliu Geo Park.

Eastern Buzzard *Buteo japonicus*

One over the forested hillsides of the lower Dasyueshan slopes on 21st.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*

One at the Huajiang Nature Park and two at Guantian.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Recorded on six dates.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Seen on three dates on large wetlands but nowhere particularly numerous.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Quite common in the Aogu, Putai and Guantian areas over the two day period we spent there.

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Some large flocks at Aogu, Putai and Cieding wetlands.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*

Large numbers around Aogu and Putai.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Ones and twos at Putai.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Seen at Putai but most numerous on the paddies near Guantian.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Some nice flocks at Putai and Ba Zhang with a few at Guantian.

Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*

Easily found in the Putai and Ba Zhang area.

Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii*

Single birds at Putai and Ba Zhang on 22nd.

Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*

Guantian proved to be a great site for seeing this species this year. We saw several one afternoon in flight so returned the following morning for better views. Always elusive, even when found on the deck they had a habit of disappearing into vegetation quickly.

Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*

A few were seen at the reserve named after this species near Guantian but they were far more numerous at the nearby paddies. Some flocks of forty or so birds seen here.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Numerous in the Guantian paddies. This species definitely seen, as well as a few Pin-tailed/Swinhoe's Snipe possibilities.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

One at Ba Zhang on 22nd.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

One at Ba Zhang on 22nd.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

At least ten at the Ba Zhang river mouth on 22nd.

Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*

One in the company of Eurasian Curlews at Ba Zhang. The eastern *orientalis* Eurasian Curlews may have very long bills, but this species has an inordinately lengthy bill!

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Small groups seen at Putai.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

Numerous in the Putai wetlands.

Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer*

We were very pleased to see a first winter bird at Jiangjun on 22nd.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Seen at Aogu, Putai and Huajiang Wetlands Park.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa chloropus*

One near Taichung on 18th.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Present at Aogu, Cieding and very common at Guantian.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Seen on three dates in ones and twos.

Ruddy Turnstone *Aenaria interpres*

A few at Ba Zhang on 22nd.

Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*

More numerous this year with some small flocks seen at Putai and Ba Zhang.

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*

Common at Putai on 22nd.

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta*

Fairly numerous at Putai and Guantian.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*

Two at Jiangjun on 22nd were a good find.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

At least two among the stints and Dunlins at Putai.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

We saw these at the prime wetland sites at Aogu, Putai and on the Ba Zhang.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Fairly numerous at Aogu and Putai.

Saunders' Gull *Chroicocephalus saundersi*

At least ten birds seen at Ba Zhang and Jiangjun on 22nd. Another good find as this species is listed as 'Vulnerable' by BirdLife International.

Vega Gull *Larus vegae*

About twenty (mostly adults) on Ba Zhang mudflats on 22nd.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Quite numerous in the Aogu and Putai wetlands.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Some small flocks at Putai.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

The most numerous tern in the Aogu and Putai wetlands.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

Five adults at Aogu.

Feral Rock Dove *Colomba livia*

Seen on nine dates.

Ashy Wood Pigeon *Columba pulchricollis*

Small flocks overhead in Dasyueshan on 19th and a few at Inda Farm on 23rd.

Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

Recorded on seven dates in Taipei, Dasyueshan, Alishan, Cingjing and Jinshan.

Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*

Seen on seven dates. Some large roadside flocks noted on wires.

Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis*

Small numbers seen on five dates.

Whistling Green Pigeon *Treron formosae*

Four in the fruiting trees at Inda Farm.

Collared Scops Owl *Otus lettia glabripes*

One at a roost in the Keming Temple on 26th. Endemic subspecies.

Collared Owlet *Glaucidium brodiei*

One heard and seen only briefly in flight along the misty KM38 trail in Dasyueshan on 20th.

Northern Boobook *Ninox japonica*

Heard at Firefly Lodge 24th.

Silver-backed Needletail *Hirundapus cochinchinensis*

Sightings on two days of high flying birds in Dasyueshan.

Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*

One over the hills of lower Dasyueshan on 19th.

House Swift *Apus nipalensis*

Seen on four dates in small numbers over Dasyueshan, Inda Farm and Alishan.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Seen on four dates with great views at Aogu, Putai, and Guantian. One at Quingshui wetland on the last day.

Taiwan Barbet *Megalaima nuchalis* E

Seen on five dates with the first disappearing before most of the group could see it in Quianshan Park on our first morning. Fortunately the next birds in Dasyueshan and Inda Farm showed very well indeed. Endemic to Taiwan and formerly placed within Black-browed Barbet *M. oorti*.

Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Yungipicus canicapillus*

Recorded on four dates with four seen on 19th in Dasyueshan.

White-backed Woodpecker *Dendrocopos leucotos insularis*

One in Yushan on 25th. This is the endemic subspecies on Taiwan.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Just one at Kenting on 23rd.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Seen on three dates in Alishan, Chang Pu (a pair, one carrying Feral Pigeon prey) and Yeliu Geo Park.

Large Cuckooshrike *Coracina macei*

One at Inda Farm on 23rd.

Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*

Encountered in Guguan and Alishan. Fewer seen than last year.

Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus*

One near Firefly Lodge on 26th. "Accidental Taiwan" according to Brazil's "Birds of East Asia".

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*

Seen on seven dates at forest edge and in open areas.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*

This handsome bird was seen on two dates at Aogu and Putai.

White-bellied Erpornis *Erpornis zantholeuca*

Once again this species remained elusive throughout the tour. Seen briefly at Guguan on 19th and Alishan on 24th. Another heard near Firefly Lodge as we left Alishan on 26th.

Maroon Oriole *Oriolus trailii*

Our stop at Inda Farm on the way back north from Kenting was extremely beneficial with this bird one of our targets here. We saw three of the subspecies *ardens* that "may well be specifically distinct (with Indochinese populations)" according to Brazil's "Birds of East Asia".

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*

Regularly seen on roadside wires in the lowlands. Recorded on seven dates.

Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus*

Seen well in the hills at Guguan, Dasyueshan and Alishan.

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*

At least one at Inda Farm.

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea oberholseri*

Seen at Guguan, Dasyueshan, Kenting, Inda Farm, Alishan and Yeliu Geo Park. Endemic subspecies.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius taivanus*

Examples of the distinctive *taivanus* endemic subspecies were seen in Dasyueshan on two dates.

Taiwan Blue Magpie *Urocissa caerulea* E

Magnificent views on 18th in the Quianshan Park area with at least six birds seen. A relief to secure good looks at this endemic on our first morning in the field to say the least! Two seen at Guguan the following day.

Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae formosae*

Seen on six dates and often in large numbers. Endemic nominate subspecies.

Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica*

Seen on five dates.

Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyanus* I

Introduced birds seen in Anping, Tainan on 24th.

Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga caryocatactes owstoni*

Some nice views of this endemic subspecies (treated at part of Southern Nutcracker N. *hemispila* by some) in Dasyueshan and Yushan.

Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*

Seen on six dates around Guguan, Dasyueshan, Alishan and Yushan.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater ptilosus*

Heard on 21st in Dasyueshan. Endemic subspecies.

Chestnut-bellied Tit *Sittiparus castaneoventris* E

Guguan was a good site for this species once again with some great views of at least three there on 19th. Recently split from Varied Tit S. *varius*.

Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus insperatus*

Regularly encountered around Guguan, Dasyueshan, Yushan and Alishan.

Yellow Tit *Macholophus holsti* E

We saw this stunning Taiwan endemic at Dasyueshan on three dates.

Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula*

At least one in flight over the fields near Kenting on 23rd. Two seen in flight near Guantian later the same day.

Collared Finchbill *Spizixos semitorques cinereicapillus*

Easily seen this year in many secondary growth forest areas around lower Dasyueshan and Alishan in particular. This endemic subspecies was recorded on six dates.

Light-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis formosae*

Common and widespread and seemingly only absent in the highest altitudes visited. Endemic subspecies.

Styan's Bulbul *Pycnonotus taivanus* E

Seen in the south of the island at Kenting on 23rd. We also noted a few hybrid Light-vented x Styan's examples further north the previous day.

Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus nigerrimus*

Widespread with sightings of this endemic subspecies on seven dates.

Grey-throated Martin *Riparia chinensis*

Seen on four dates; usually near water in lowland sites.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Seen on four dates and mainly in the lowland wetlands.

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica namiyei*

Widespread and seen on ten dates.

Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus*

Seen on four dates. Most were seen in mountainous regions like Dasyueshan (where we had good views of perched birds) and Alishan.

Striated Swallow *Cecropis striolata*

Seen at Kenting and Guantian.

Taiwan Wren-babbler *Pnoepyga formosana* E

After hearing a few in the morning we had great views of one in forest edge along the road at Dasyueshan on 20th. Also heard the following day.

Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus albogularis*

Some nice flocks seen in Dasyueshan, Yushan and Alishan.

Manchurian Bush Warbler *Cettia canturians*

Heard at the start of the Longmei Trail on 24th and seen on 28th in Yeliu Geo Park.

Brown-flanked Bush Warbler *Horornis fortipes*

Heard along the Longmei Trail on 24th and seen well in the hotel gardens at Cingjing on 27th.

Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler *Horornis acanthozoides concolor*

Yet another of those pesky bush warblers heard, but not seen along Longmei Trail. So we were very pleased to see one extremely well in Yushan National Park on 25th. Also seen near Hehuanshan on 27th. Mark Brazil's guide (Birds of East Asia) mentions the endemic subspecies *concolor* "split by some as Taiwan Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler".

Asian Stubtail *Urosphena squameiceps*

One in roadside undergrowth above Firefly Lodge on 26th.

Black-throated Bush Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*

It took us longer to find these this year so when a small flock appeared as we left Dasyueshan it was a bit of a relief. Also seen at Yushan and Alishan.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

One calling at Putai on 22nd but could not be seen.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Heard at KM13 in lower Dasyueshan and near Firefly Lodge..

Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*

Recorded on four dates, mostly by voice but seen in Alishan and at the Jinshan Youth Centre.

Taiwan Bush Warbler *Lucustella alishanensis* E

One heard in Alishan on 24th.

Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis*

One at the Huajiang Nature Park on 18th.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*

Two at Guantian on 24th.

Striated Prinia *Prinia crinigera*

Three in the late afternoon of 21st in the Aogu Wetlands.

Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris*

One at the Huajiang Nature Park on 18th and then recorded at the Aogu and Putai wetlands.

Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata flavirostris*

Noted in the scrubby grassland and river edge habitat of lower Dasyueshan and Guguan. Endemic subspecies.

Black-necked Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus erythrocnemis* E

Heard at Dasyueshan and Alishan but we were unable to entice one into view. However, two performed very well on the slopes at Cingjing on 27th when a pair were observed duetting in full view. In the end we saw five quite easily at the hotel gardens here.

Taiwan Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus musicus* E

Quite easily seen (compared to the above species) with observations from Dasyueshan, Alishan and Cingjing.

An endemic species to Taiwan formally placed within Streak-breasted Scimitar-babbler *P. ruficollis*.

Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyridopsis ruficeps praecognita*

Seen on seven dates and quite common in the hill forests of Dasyueshan, Alishan, Yushan and Cingjing.

Endemic subspecies.

Dusky Fulvetta *Alcippe brunnea brunnea*

Sightings from just two dates with birds seen at Dasyueshan and Alishan. Endemic subspecies.

Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia* E

One of the more widespread and numerous forest flock components with sightings on five dates. Particularly numerous in Dasyueshan and easily seen in Alishan and Yushan.

Taiwan Hwamei *Garrulax taewanus* E

Finding and identifying this endemic is somewhat complicated by the presence of feral populations of Chinese Hwamei *G. canorus*. After just brief views around KM5 in Dasyueshan on 18th we had to wait until we reached Kenting on 23rd to see this species reasonably well, although we had heard several previously.

Rufous-crowned Laughingthrush *Garrulax ruficeps* E

It was a real treat when a flock of at least 15 noisy birds made their way through the subcanopy and canopy at Dasyueshan on the afternoon of 20th. A Taiwan endemic formally placed within White-throated Laughingthrush *G. albogularis*.

Rusty Laughingthrush *Garrulax poecilorhynchus* E

We heard this endemic species twice in Dasyueshan but our efforts to see it were thwarted by bad visibility in low cloud or the extreme distance between us and the calling birds.

White-whiskered Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron morrisonianum* E

Easily seen in the highlands of Alishan and Cingjing.

Steere's Liocichla *Liocichla steerii* E

Another easy endemic to see in the montane forests of Dasyueshan, Alishan, Yu Shan and near Cingjing. Seen on seven dates.

Taiwan Barwing *Actinodura morrisoniana* E

A noisy flock in Dasyueshan on 20th during one of our road birding sessions was our first introduction to this endemic. A small flock of eight birds fed outside our accommodation in Dasyueshan the next day to the delight of many photographers.

White-eared Sibia *Heterophasia auricularis* E

Another endemic species that's very easy to see on this tour. Recorded on seven dates in Dasyueshan, Alishan, Yushan and Cingjing with some nice feeding flocks seen.

Taiwan Fulvetta *Fulvetta formosana* E

Seen in Yushan on 25th only.

Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Sinosuthora webbiana bulomacha*

We saw just one or two birds very briefly on the first day in the field at Huajiang Nature Park. So on the last day KC took us to Guandu specifically to see this species on the way to the airport and, hey presto! A small flock at "the eleventh hour" on 28th. Endemic subspecies.

Golden Parrotbill *Suthora verreauxi*

A small but noisy flock in the bamboo at the top of one of the trails in Yushan on 25th.

Taiwan Yuhina *Yuhina brunneiceps* E

Common in the montane forests with nice flocks seen at Dasyueshan and Alishan and seen on five dates.

Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonicus*

Widespread and seen in good numbers at some sites. Seen on seven dates.

Flamecrest *Regulus goodfellowi* E

We had great views in the upper reaches of Yushan this year after hearing them in Dasyueshan.

Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta europaea formosana*

Heard on two dates in Dasyueshan. Endemic subspecies.

Eurasian Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes taivanus*

Heard in Yushan and seen near the pass at Hehuanshan.

Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus formosanus*

Only positively identified on 18th at Huajiang Nature Park but probably overlooked during the rest of the tour. Endemic subspecies.

Javan Myna *Acridotheres javanicus* I

An introduced species to Taiwan and well established. Seen on eight dates.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* I

Another introduced species that we saw regularly and recorded on five dates.

White-cheeked Starling *Spodiopsar cineraceus*

A couple on wires at Quingshui Wetlands on 28th.

White-shouldered Starling *Sturnia sinensis*

Several in the open country around Kenting on 23rd.

Asian Glossy Starling *Aplonis panayensis* I

Introduced to Taiwan and we saw a pair at the Taipei Botanical Gardens on 18th.

Black-collared Starling *Gracupica nigricollis* I

Introduced in Taiwan seen on 18th at Huajiang Nature Park and in the grounds of Jinshan Youth Centre.

Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus*

Towards the end of the tour we encountered this species and other thrushes more frequently. This species was first definitely recorded at Jinshan Youth Centre on 28th but had probably slipped by on a number of occasions as many "seeping" small thrushes had flown over in the mountains of Dasyueshan and Alishan.

Pale Thrush *Turdus pallidus*

Singles with the above species at Jinshan and one showing really well at Yeliu Geo Park.

Naumann's Thrush *Turdus chrysolaus*

Wonderful to see one or two of this Asian thrush with "Eyebrowds" and the next species at Jinshan Youth Centre. A UK rarity finder's dream bird (as are the other thrushes!).

Dusky Thrush *Turdus eunomus*

Two at Jinshan on 28th provided a nice opportunity to study this rare vagrant to the UK as it fed in the leaf litter.

Vivid Niltava *Niltava vivida vivida*

Good views of two males and a female in forest canopy in Dasyueshan on 20th. Later we watched a female perched in the open on a stump. The subspecies *vivida* is endemic to Taiwan.

White-browed Shortwing *Brachypteryx montana*

A male showed briefly in the bamboo at the side of the trail in Yushan on 25th.

Siberian Rubythroat *Calliope calliope*

We did really well for this stunning species this year, recording it on seven dates. The views of males singing at Inda Farm and in the hotel gardens at Cingjing were especially good.

White-tailed Robin *Myiomela leucura montium*

Recorded on four dates in Dasyueshan, Alishan and Yushan. Endemic subspecies.

White-browed Bush Robin *Tarsiger indicus formosanus*

This bird was seen well in Yushan on 25th. Endemic subspecies.

Collared Bush Robin *Tarsiger johnstoniae* E

This handsome endemic was seen in Dasyueshan, Alishan and Yushan.

Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

A female at Yeliu on 28th.

Little Forktail *Enicurus scouleri*

A traditional site at a Dasyueshan waterfall finally produced the goods on 21st and we were able to watch this ornate bird clambering up the wet rock face and dancing across pools.

Taiwan Whistling Thrush *Myophonus insularis* E

This noisy endemic is quite easy to find around Taipei, Guguan and Dasyueshan.

Snowy-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra innexa*

A male in the forest above Firefly Lodge was our only sighting this year. *F. h. innexa* is endemic to Taiwan.

White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus* I

An introduced species in Taiwan and we saw one at Guguan where they are apparently quite scarce.

Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis* I

This established exotic in Taiwan was seen in the Taipei Botanical Gardens.

Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus aureus*

This migrant was frequently encountered throughout in small numbers, including a few handsome males.

Plumbeous Water Redstart *Phoenicurus fuliginosus*

Seen on just four dates and always near water.

Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasi*

Singles at Guguan and lower Dasyueshan were our only records.

Plain Flowerpecker *Dicaeum minullum uchidai*

Singles in Guguan, Dasyueshan and Alishan. Endemic subspecies.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum igneipectus formosum*

Great views this year of males perched in Dasyueshan. Endemic subspecies.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Seen on six dates.

White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata*

A few at 13K (Dasyueshan Manor).

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*

A few small flocks at Aogu and Putai.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis*

The distinctive *taivana* (from Siberia, Sakhalin and Hokkaido) that winters from Taiwan, SE China and Philippines, was seen at Huajiang Nature Park, Putai and Guantian.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

This familiar bird to all UK birders was seen on five dates.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

The handsome *leucopsis* was seen on six dates.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*

At least two at Inda Farm and Jinshan Youth Centre.

Eurasian Siskin *Spinus spinus*

Some small groups of birds at Jinshan Youth Centre.

Grey-headed Bullfinch *Pyrrhula erythaca owstoni*

Great views of up to six birds in Yushan this year, feeding on fruiting trees above the trail. Endemic subspecies.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Two at Kenting on 23rd and some small flocks at Jinshan Youth Centre on 28th.

Taiwan Rosefinch *Carpodacus formosanus* E

A male briefly seen in Yushan on 25th was followed up nicely with much better views two days later at Hehuanshan where several males and females were seen.

Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala*

A female at Jinshan Youth centre was our only record this year.

MAMMALS

Formosan Serow *Capricornis swinhoei*
Taiwan Muntjac *Muntiacus reevesi micrurus*
Taiwan Striped Squirrel *Tamiops maritimus*
Owston's Long-nosed Tree Squirrel *Dremomys pernyi owstoni*
Red-bellied Tree Squirrel *Callosciurus erythraenus*
Red & White Giant Flying Squirrel *Petaurista alborufus*
Taiwan Macaque *Macaca cyclopis*
Chinese ferret-badger *Melogale moschata*

Taiwan Vole *Mirotus kikuchii* and Hoslet's Shrew *Crocidura shantugensis hostetti* were found dead on the trails too.

BUTTERFLIES

Comma *Polygonia c-album*
Monarch *Danaus plexippus*
Common Eggfly *Hypolimnas bolina*
Paper Kite *Idea leuconoe*
Common Bluebottle *Graphium sarpedon*
Common Sailor *Neptis hylas*

Many thanks to Anna and Allan for identifying the butterflies on this tour.

ODONATA

Formosan Jewelwing *Matrona cyanoptera*
Asian Amberwing *Brachythemis contaminata*