

NE Tibet, Qinghai



Roborovski's Rosefinch. Foto Tomas Carlberg.

31 maj – 19 Juni 2013

Stig Holmstedt och
Jesper Hornskov (list of birds and mammals)

Deltagare



Det var inte sol alla dagar men nästan. Foto Tomas Carlberg.

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Bai, Bi, Feng, Zhang, chaufförer

Chaufförerna. Foto Sven Karlsson.



Layout: Mart Marend

Program

- 31/5** Flyg från Stockholm via Helsingfors med Finnair.
- 1/6** Ankomst till Beijing kl. 06.55. Kort mellanlandning på hotellet och därefter heldags sightseeing/skådning i staden.
- 2/6** Morgonflyg till Xining i provinsen Qinghai (Nö Tibet). Kort mellanlandning på hotellet, därefter skådning i Xining Beishan, ett bergsområde utanför staden.
- 3/6** Hela dagen i skogsreservatet Huzhu Mtns, 3 000–3 200 m ö.h., norr om Xining.
- 4/6** Färd via sjön Koko Nor och South Koko Nor Range för övernattnig i staden Chaka. 3 200 m ö.h.
- 5/6** Vandring upp i Dulan Mtns, 3 900 m ö.h., därefter besök i ökenområde v. Chaka. Kort kvällstur till område med popplar i utkanten av Chaka.
- 6/6** Vandringar i ett annat ökenområde och annat poppelområde nära Chaka samt i Chaka Wadi.
- 7/6** Lång bilresa via Gonghe och Er La Pass till övernattnig i Wenquan, 3 900 m ö.h.
- 8/6** Fortsatt bilresa till Yushu, 3 700 m ö.h.
- 9/6** Fortsatt färd till Nangqian, 3 700 m ö.h.
- 10/6** Färd till pass s. Nangqian. Heldagsvandring, för somliga uppstigning till 5 060 m ö.h.
- 11/6** Heldagstur till skogsreservatet Baizha (Nangqian Forest Reserve).
- 12/6** Heldagstur till Kanda Shan Valley, vandring från 3 700 till 4 200 m ö.h.
- 13/6** Heldagstur till skogsområde s. Nangqian.
- 14/6** Heldagstur till toppen av Kanda Shan Valley.
- 15/6** Återfärd Nangqian–Yushu.
- 16/6** Fortsatt återfärd Yushu–Wengquan. Stopp vid bl.a. Bayankala Pass.
- 17/6** Vandring för de flesta upp till topp-platån vid Er La Pass, 4 860 m ö.h. Sedan vidare bilfärd till Xining.
- 18/6** Förmiddagsutflykt till Huzhu Mtns. Därefter flyg till Beijing. Avskedsmiddag med Peking Duck.
- 19/6** Hemflygning via Helsingfors till Stockholm. Ankomst dit kl. 15.55.



Tre veckors ätande med pinnar ger rutin. Här vid ett av alla runda middagsbord, Chaka. Foto Mart Marend.

Dagbok



Himmelska fridens torg vid ingången till den Förbjudna staden. Foto Mart Marend.

1/6. Efter en lång utcheckningsprocedur och ett kort besök på det mycket fina hotellet begav vi oss under Jespers fasta ledning ut i Beijing. Vi började med att gå igenom det stora Buddha-templet, snarare en serie av tempel där buddhorna blev allt större och större för varje byggnad. Här fanns flera orädda *Eastern Azure-winged Magpies*, numera splittade från fåglarna i Spanien-Portugal.



Eastern Azure-winged Magpie. Foto Mart Marend.



Large-billed Crow. Foto Mart Marend.

Vi fortsatte sedan med en lång rundvandring på Himmelska Fridens Torg och i den Förbjudna Staden. Över ingången till den senare hängde det enda Mao-porträttet vi skulle få se på hela resan och köerna till mausoléet där Mao vilar var måttliga. Likaså var militärerna och poliserna få. Och knappast en enda cykel syntes i hela staden, däremot mängder av bilar. Kina är sannerligen under stark förändring.

På eftermiddagen begav vi oss ut till kejsarens sommarpalats. Det ligger i ett omfattande grönområde med en stor och flera mindre sjöar och här blev det även tillfälle till en del skådning. För oss mest intressanta arter var *Yellow Bittern*, *Black-*



Red-billed starling. Foto Mart Marend.

crowned Night Heron, Chinese Pond Heron, Great Egret, Oriental Turtle Dove, Spotted Dove, Indian Cuckoo, Crested Kingfisher, Hoopoe, Black Drongo, Eastern Azure-winged Magpie, Large-billed Crow, Yellow-bellied Tit, Chinese Bulbul, Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler, Oriental Great och Black-browed Reed Warbler, Crested Myna, Red-billed Starling samt en sen *Bohemian Waxwing*.

Under dagen dök Jespers mycket trevliga kinesiska hustru Aiqin Sun upp på flera platser för att få allt att flyta smidigt.

2/6. Vi for med ett morgonflyg till Xining, huvudstad i provinsen Qinghai som omfattar nordöstra delen av den tibetanska högplatån. Efter att ha checkat in på hotellet gjorde vi en eftermiddagstur till ett kargt bergsområde strax utanför staden, Xining Beishan. Våra fordon, som vi skulle behålla resten av tiden i Qinghai, var fyra välskötta Toyota Landcruisers med de utmärkta chaufförerna Bai, Bi, Feng och Zhang.



Eastern Rock Bunting. Foto: Krister Carlsson.

Efter några kilometers färd steg vi ur bilarna och fortsatte med att vandra uppåt vägen under ivrigt spanande. Målartern nummer ett var *Sinai Rosefinch* som vi också så småningom fann och kunde se fint. Andra målarter, som vi också hittade, var *Przevalski's Partridge* (stöttes och sågs bara av några i gruppen), *Daurian Partridge*, *Pied Wheatear*, *Eastern Rock Bunting* och *Meadow Bunting*. *Common Pheasants* och *Red-billed Choughs* var vanliga.

Från bergen hade vi en fin utsikt över miljonstaden Xining som dominerades av hundratals



Med staden Xining i bakgrunden. Foto Mart Marend.

nybyggda bostadsskyskrapor. De föreföll dock i huvudsak obebodda och byggkranarna stod stilla. Detta är ett fenomen som många kineser uppmärksammat på senare år och som kan tyda på en omfattande bostadsbubbla som väntar på att spricka.



Huzhu Mtns. Foto Mart Marend.

3/6. Denna dag företog vi en heldagstur till ett bergigt skogsreservat, Huzhu Mtns, ca en och en halv timme norr om Xining. Vi började med en kortare vandring i en ängs/busmark med huvudsyftet att få se Blue Eared Pheasant. Trots ivrigt spanande fick vi dock bara höra denna art och fick trösta oss med *Grey-backed Skrike*, *Spotted Bush Warbler*, talrika *Elliot's Laughingthrushes*,



Kessler's Thrush. Foto Sven Karlsson.

den märkligt tecknade *Kessler's Thrush*, *Hodgson's*, *White-throated* och *Blue-fronted Redstart* samt *Common* och *Chinese Beautiful Rosefinch*.



White-throated Redstart. Foto Krister Carlsson.



Blue-fronted Redstart. Foto Mart Marend.

Vi for sedan nedåt vägen ett stycke för att komma till en dal som sträckte sig uppåt mot söder. I en torraka satt en *Grey-headed Woodpecker* och under vandringen upp i dalen noterades en rad intressanta arter, bl.a hela fem arter *Phylloscopus* – *Buff-barred*, *Gansu*, *Hume's* och *Large-billed Leaf Warbler* samt *Greenish Warbler*. Vidare *Songar Tit*, *Przevalski's Nuthatch*, *Northern Wren*, *Eurasian Treecreeper*, *Northern Red-flanked Bluetail*, *Slaty-backed Flycatcher*, *Olive-backed Pipit*, *Chinese*

White-browed Rosefinch och *Grey-headed Bullfinch*. De flesta fick också åtminstone en glimt av ett par av *Severtzov's Hazel Grouses* med kycklingar. Över bergkammarna syntes flera *Himalayan Vultures* och *Golden Eagles*. Åter vid bilarna noterades en *Himalayan Buzzard*, en sentida split från *Common Buzzard*. Här såg vi också en bonde som hade spänt två kvinnor för plogen – ingenting för Gudrun Schyman, men kanske för *Fredrika Bremerförbundet*...



Rosy Pipit. Foto Mart Marend.

På tillbakavägen stannade vi vid en sluttning för att studera *Rosy Pipits*. Över flög resans första *Lammergeier*.

4/6. Nu lämnade vi Xining för att fara västerut söder om den stora sjön Koko Nor. Längs vägen såg vi bl.a. två *Upland Buzzards*, en *Little Owl*, några *Rock Sparrows* samt en *White-cheeked Starling*. Framme vid sjöns sydvästra hörn gjorde vi ett längre stopp och inhöstade en rad livs- och/eller resnya arter. Den främsta av dessa, åtminstone enligt mitt förmenande, var *Black-necked Crane*, en Tibetendem. Denna stora och vackra trana såg vi i 12 ex. Här fanns också *Greylag* och *Bar-headed Goose*, *Ruddy Shelduck*, *Red-crested Pochard*,



Black-necked Crane. Foto Mart Marend.



På spaning vid Koko Nor. Foto Mart Marend.



Great Black-headed Gull with two Brown-headed Gulls. Foto Mart Marend.

Black-winged Stilt, Spot-fronted och Kentish Plover, Great Black-headed och Brown-headed Gull, Whiskered Tern, Hume's Groundpecker, Pale Sand Martin, Mongolian, Long-billed Calandra, och Hume's Short-toed Lark, Oriental Skylark, Horned Lark, Isabelline Wheatear, Pére David's och Rufous-necked Snowfinch samt Twite.

Vi följde sedan ett ganska långt stycke stranden av en stor våtmark som sträckte sig inåt landet från sjön. Här var det också mycket gott om fågel – 13 arter änder, bl.a *Chinese Spotbill* och *Ferruginous Duck*, tre arter dopplingar, bl.a. en tät koloni om minst 35 par *Black-necked Grebes*, en *Black Stork* (kretsande på håll), en *Eastern Cattle Egret*, en jagande *Barbary Falcon*, *Western Black-tailed Godwit*, *Common Black-headed Gull* samt *Eastern Yellow* och *Citrine Wagtail*.

Längs vägen vid den fortsatta färden mot vår övernattning i staden Chaca hittade vi tre *Tibetan Grey Shrikes* i ett buskage nära vägen. En stund



Hume's Groundpecker. Foto Mart Marend.



Rufous-necked Snowfinch. Foto Sven Karlsson.



Tibetan Grey Shrike. Foto Mart Marend.



Przevalski's Rosefinch. Foto Krister Carlsson.

senare gjorde vi ett längre stopp för att leta efter den legendariska *Przevalski's Rosefinch*, en sällsynt Tibetendem om vilken man tidigare inte visste om den var en rosenfink eller en fältsparv. Nu är man tydligen inne på att den är en relik av en forntida separat familj, lika gammal eller äldre än andra finkfamiljer. Vi gick upp för en busklädd sluttning och det dröjde inte länge förrän vi fick korn på inte färre än tre hannar och en hona av den vackra och rara arten. I området fanns också bl.a. *Dusky* och *Chinese Tickell's Warbler*, *Blue-fronted Redstart*, *Siberian Stonechat* samt *Robin* och *Brown Accentor*.



Brown Accentor. Foto Mart Marend.

5/6. Denna dag började vi med att titta på ca 30 *Goitred* och sex *Przevalski's Gazelles* utefter vägen varefter vi fortsatte för att klättra upp ett gott stycke i Dulan Mtns, upp till ca 3 900 meters höjd. Där vi parkerade kunde vi studera *Tibetan Magpies*, en potentiell split från vår vanliga skata, samt sjungande *Pine Bunting*. Vi gav oss sedan upp i en ravin där det satt minst tre *Glover's Pikas* och kom strax därefter på vår första *Przevalski's Redstart*, en av de vackraste i sin familj och med sitt lilla utbredningsområde kanske den svåraste att finna. Under färden vidare uppåt i en underbar dal-ängsmark och tujaskog – hittade vi



Dulan Mtns. Foto Mart Marend.



Glover's Pika. Foto Krister Carlsson.



Przevalski's Redstart. Foto Krister Carlsson.

också *White-browed Tit*, *White-browed Tit-Warbler*, *Chinese Tickell's Warbler*, *Black*, *White-throated* och *Blue-fronted Redstart* (alltså totalt fyra arter rödsjättar!), *Rock Sparrow*, *Brown Accentor* (allmän!), *Chinese Beautiful* och *Chinese White-browed Rosefinch* samt *White-winged Grosbeak*. På en bergstopp syntes ganska oväntat ca 10 *Red Deer*. Där omkring räknade vi också en *Lammergeier*, 18 *Himalayan Griffons* samt två *Golden Eagles*. På nedvägen stötes två *Daurian Partridges*.

På eftermiddagen stannade vi i ett ökenartat område invid en flod för att söka efter främst



Henderson's Ground Jay. Foto Tomas Carlberg.

Henderson's Ground Jay. Av denna fann vi ganska lätt ett bo (Nåja – det visade sig efteråt att Jesper kände till detta sedan tidigare..) vilket gav tillfälle till utomordentliga obsar av de matande föräldrafågarna. Andra fina fåglar i omgivningarna var *Isabelline Shrike*, *Asian Short-toed Lark* (mkt talrik), samt *Desert Wheatear*.

På kvällen gjorde några frivilliga ett besök vid en liten poppeldunge med angränsande fält i Chakas utkant. Några rastande tättingar syntes tyvärr inte, däremot resans enda *Richard's Pipits*.

6/6. Morgonskådningen inleddes med en vandring i ett ökenområde nära den stora saltsjön vid Chaka med främsta syftet att få se *Pallas's Sandgrouse*. Så småningom fann vi sammanlagt uppemot ett tiotal flygande fåglar, men det var lögn att få se dem på marken – samtliga vi sökte närma oss lyfte på långt håll. I området fanns också *Spot-fronted Sand Plovers*, *Long-billed Calandra Larks*, *Hume's* och *Asian Short-toed Larks*, *Isabelline*

Vid Chaka Salt Lake. Foto Mart Marend.



Wheatears, *Blanford's Snowfinches* (enda stället på resan) och *Citrine Wagtails*.

Vi körde vidare ett stycke till en poppeldunge med närliggande buskmark invid ett övergivet Gulag-läger. Här upptäckte vi en rastade utomordentligt läcker *Pallas's Leaf Warbler* som näringssökte i buskarna, faktiskt relativt saktmodigt i jämförelse med de fåglar man kan få se på Öland om höstarna. Här fanns också fyra *Eurasian Siskins*, f.ö. resans enda.

På eftermiddagen vandrade vi upp i en wadi med, som vanligt, mycket givande resultat. Vi hade inte hunnit många meter förrän vi hittade både *Mongolian Trumpeter Finch* och *Desert Wheatear* och sedan följde ett bo av *Upland Buzzard*, en överflygande *Spotted Great Rosefinch*, två dito *Wallcreepers* samt *Chinese Tickell's Warblers*, *Common Rock Thrushes*, *Rock Sparrows*, *Brown Accentors* och *Eastern Rock Buntings*. Och längst upp fick alla så småningom se den kanske främsta målarten – *Przevalski's Partridge* i flera ex. varav några mycket nära och minst en spelande från en hög klippa.



Przevalski's Partridge. Foto Tomas Carlberg.



Mot högre höjder ovan Er La Pass. Foto Mart Marend.

7/6. Denna dag lämnade vi norra Qinghai och for söderut. Vi stoppade först nära Gonghe för att leta efter "Margelanic Lesser Whitethroat", men någon sådan behagade tyvärr inte visa sig, däremot bl.a en *Little Egret*, en *Black Drongo*, två *Oriental Greenfinches* samt en *Black-faced Bunting*.

Vid Er La Pass klättrade vi upp från ca 4 500 till 4 660 m ö.h. med ett mycket givande utbyte. Höjdpunkten var flera ex av den utomordentligt vackra och mycket lokala *Roborovski's Rosefinch* samt ett ex. av *Brandt's Mountain Finch* på närhåll. Vi såg också resans första *Güldenstadt's Redstarts*, *Henri's* och *White-rumped Snowfinches* och *Plain Mountain Finches*. På ett bergskrön stod 14 *Tibetan Gazelles* mycket effektivt mot himlen.



Horned Lark. Foto Sven Karlsson.



Lammergeier. Foto Sven Karlsson.



Tibetan Gazelles. Foto Sven Karlsson.

Dagens rovfågelskörd blev också god – fyra *Lammergeiers*, åtta *Himalayan Griffons*, resans enda *Black Vulture*, två *Upland Buzzards* och två *Golden Eagles*. En *Tibetan Fox* – lång nos och korta öron – sågs också utefter vägen. Vi övernattade på ett enkelt hotell i den lilla orten Wenquan.

8/6. Denna dag fortsatte vi mot Yushu, en större stad som nästan fullständigt förstörts i en stor jordbävning för tre år sedan och nu var under återuppbyggnad.

På vägen skådade vi här och var, bl.a. vid en sjö med rätt mycket vattenfågel – gott om *Bar-headed* och *Greylag Geese*, *Ruddy Shelducks* och *Great Crested Grebes* samt bl.a. också tre *Black-necked Cranes* och tre *Spot-fronted Sand Plovers*.

Vi stannade i ett område med särskilt stora mängder av *Plateau Pika* med åtföljande dito av *White-rumped* och *Rufous-necked Snowfinches* som häckar i hålor som pikorna grävt. Kamerorna smattrade – de näpna pikorna var tama och allmänt fotogeniska.

Denna dag såg vi ca 35 *Kiangs* (en art av vild-åsna) samt ytterligare ett 50-tal *Tibetan Gazelles*. Nu var det gott om *Upland Buzzards* – vi såg åtminstone 25 ex, varav flera häckade på särskilt uppsatta boplattformar.

Kiangernas betesmarker. Foto Mart Marend.



Plateau Pika. Foto Sven Karlsson.



Kiang. Foto Tomas Carlberg.

Hotellet i Yushu var lite lustigt med tunna plåtväggar (antagligen p.g.a jordbävningsrisken) samt en stor kollektiv duschanläggning. Men rummen var o.k och maten – som överallt under vår färd – väldigt bra.

9/6. Återigen en transportdag, nu på vägar som var dåliga och upprivna p.g.a. det stora vägbygge som följt oss i stort sett hela resan från Gonghe.



800 km motorväg över världens mest vidsträcka höglättå, byggs för hand. Här möter vi några nyfikna vägbyggare. Foto Mart Marend.

Som vanligt gjorde vi en del givande stopp med flera nya arter – *Tibetan Partridge*, *White Eared Pheasant*, *Glossy Ibis* (andra fyndet i Tibet!), *Saker*, *Ibisbill*, *Snow Pigeon*, *Salim Ali's Swift*, *Alpine Chough*, *Daurian Jackdaw*, *Red-rumped Swallow* samt *Pink-rumped* och *Red-fronted Rosefinch*.

Alldeles i vägkanten blev vi på en plats vittne till ett gigantiskt gamkalas – uppemot 45 *Himalayan Vultures* som slet i och slogs om en sannolikt trafikdödad stor lurvig rödbrun hund. Kamerorna klickade hela tiden under den timme vi stod på platsen.



Våra chaufförer passade på att fotografera *Himalayan Vultures* med sina mobiler. Foto Mart Marend.



Himalayan Vultures. Foto Sven Karlsson.



Blue Sheep. Foto Krister Carlsson.

Vi såg också, på hög höjd, våra första *Blue Sheep* – hela 72 ex.

I staden Nangqian tog vi in på ett ganska nytt och lyxigt hotell som dock låg i ett område som verkade helt raserat.

10/6. Vi åkte upp till ett högt beläget pass (strax över 4 500 m ö.h.) nära Nangqian. På ditvägen gjorde vi ett stopp som gav resans första *Himalayan Rubythroats* och *Eastern Great Rosefinchs* samt en *Prezvalskis Rosefinch*, denna senare långt söder om där den normalt finns. Här upptäckte vi också tre vargar som drog uppför en äng på en hög sluttning.

Från passet hängde de flesta med Jesper på en



Kozlov's Bunting. Foto Krister Carlsson.

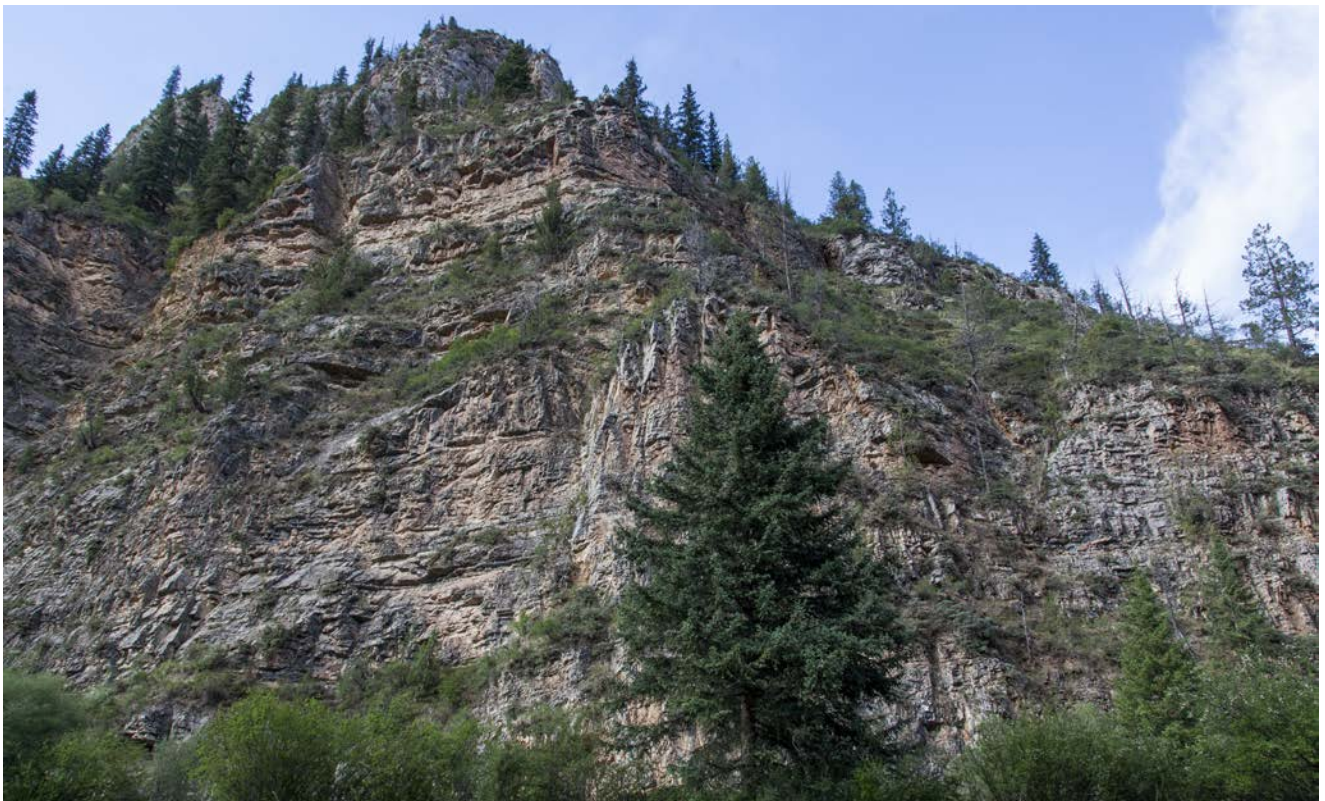


På över 5000 mters höjd. Foto Mart Marend.

heldags bestigning av en topp på ca 5060 m ö.h. På de nedre delarna fanns ett flertal par av den läckra Tibetendemen *Kozlov's Bunting* (jo, i Tibet verkar alla endemer vara väldigt snygga) som var en av dagens målarter. Bergsbestigarna såg också en annan målart, *Tibetan Snowcock*, men gick bet på den tredje, Grandalan. I övrigt noterades under dagen *Northern Goshawk* och *Alpine Accentor* som resnya arter.

11/6. Denna dag ägnades helt åt det fågelrika skogsreservatet Baizha en och en halv timme från Nangqian. Det blev ett mycket givande besök med den största aktiviteten sent på eftermiddagen. Reservatet följer en ravin kring en strid mindre flod och är bevuxet med en gles gran – och tujaskog omväxlande med täta lövsånar. Tättingar

Apberget. Foto Mart Marend.





Grey-headed Bullfinch. Foto Tomas Carlberg.

spelade en huvudroll och nya arter blev *Long-tailed Minivet*, *Eastern Great*, *Rufous-vented* och *Grey Crested Tit*, *Crested Tit-Warbler* (och därmed hade vi sett båda arterna i denna familj), *Yellow-streaked* och *Eastern Lemon-rumped Warbler*, *Giant Laughingthrush* (hörd av alla, sedd av en), *White-bellied Redstart* (bara hörd, tyvärr), *Tibetan Siskin*, *Three-banded Rosefinch* (endast sedd överflygande) och *Red Crossbill*. Nya var även ett par *Blood Pheasants*, samt *Black Woodpecker* och en hona av den besynnerliga, nästan sotsvarta rasen *funnebris* av *Three-toed Woodpecker* – en möjlig split i framtiden.



Threetoed Woodpecker. Foto Krister Carlsson.

Nya däggdjur var ett femtiohövdat band av *Rhesus Macaques* som förflyttade sig utmed en lång klippvägg samt 13 *White-lipped Deer* på en ängsmark strax utanför reservatet.

Trots det goda utbytet kände vi oss inte riktigt klara med området, men vi hade tyvärr bara tillstånd för en dags besök.



Rhesus Macaques. Foto Mart Marend.

12/6. Nu gjorde vi en lång vandring upp i Kanda Shan-dalen, bara ca en halvtimme från Nangqian. Vi startade på 3 700 m ö.h. och gick upp ca 500 m. Först var vi tvungna att vada över en bäck med iskallt vatten, vilket dock förlöpte väl. Nya arter blev *Brown Shrike* och *Kozlov's Babax* (inte färre än minst nio ex av denna svårседda art) och



Dagens vandring började med ett uppfriskande vad.

Foto Mart Marend.



Snow Pigeon. Foto Krister Carlsson.



Vandring bland betande jakar. Foto Mart Marend.

andra fina fåglar var *Tibetan Partridge*, *Blood Pheasant*, *White Eared Pheasant* (minst 13 ex), *Snow Pigeon*, *White-bellied Redstart* (nu äntligen sedd, men tyvärr var det en juvenil hanne), *White-browed Tit* och *White-browed Tit-Warbler*.



White Eared Pheasant. Foto Krister Carlsson.



Salim Ali's Swift. Foto Mart Marend.

13/6. Denna dag hade Jesper valt att först leta *Szechenyi's Monal Partridges* i ett område i söder. Eftersom några försov sig på morgonen körde tre av bilarna i förväg och de hade precis hittat ett exemplar av arten, ganska nära vägen, när den sista bilen anlände. Det visade sig att det var minst 15



Szechenyi's Monal Partridge. Foto Tomas Carlberg.

ex i området samt ungefär lika många *White Eared Pheasants* så här kunde man tala om ett riktigt kycklingkalas...

Nästa projekt var en, ställvis ganska brant, vandring ner till de övre regionerna av en barrskog inte långt från det fina skogsreservat vi besökt två dagar tidigare. Vi tog en längre rast i en fin glänta, varefter en liten majoritet fortsatte vidare nedåt. Gläntan var mycket givande och innan järngänget gick vidare hann vi hänga in bl.a *Severtzov's Hazel Grouse* (det var dock bara några som såg dem och det var fråga om korta glimtar av flygande fåglar), *Rufous-vented Tit*, *Hi-*



White-winged Grosbeak. Foto Tomas Carlberg.



Tibetan Magpie. Foto Mart Marend.

malayan Red-flanked Bluetail (fin obs i närbelägen grantopp!) och *Slaty-backed Flycatcher*. De som satt kvar en stund till i gläntan fick se de båda *Severtzov's Hazel Grouses* fint på marken samt ett par av de sotiga *Three-toed Woodpeckers*, också väldigt fint. Hannen trummade och trumningen var ganska lik vittryggens med en ökad frekvens/minskad ljudstyrka på slutet. Det sjöng också minst två *Giant Laughingthrushes* i närheten, men det var som vanligt lögn att få se dem.

Långvandrarerna fick bl.a. se resans tredje *Crested Tit-Warbler*.

14/6. Sista dagen kring Nangqian ägnades åt en färd upp till ett pass på 4 700 m ö.h. ovanför den tidigare besökta Kanda Shan-dalen. Målarterna här var i första hand *Grandala* samt *Tibetan Snowcock*, den senare arten mest för dem som inte sett den tidigare.

Morgonen började lite dystert med låga moln som hindrade sikten mot de höga bergsidorna, men i en tillfällig öppning upptäckte Tomas plötsligt en blå traststor fågel som hoppade på ett stenigt fält i en sluttning på inte alltför långt av-



Spaning efter Grandala bland låga moln. Foto Mart Marend.

stånd. Jesper bekräftade att det var en *Grandala*! Stort jubel i församlingen, förstås – och Tomas blev dagens hjälte!

Så småningom klarnade det upp och de flesta drog i Jespers kölvatten upp på ännu en tuff vandrings. Vi stannade en lång stund vid några orädda *Kozlov's Buntings* samt såg också, för första gången bra, tre *Rufous-browed Accentors*. I närheten hittade



Rufous-browed Accentor. Foto Mart Marend.

vi också en *White-winged Grosbeak*, förvånansvärt nog uppe på kalfjället.

Vandringen fortsatte till krönet av ett pass på 4 860 m ö.h. varifrån vi mycket noggrant skannade av alla toppar efter framför allt *Tibetan Snowcocks*. Dock utan resultat, märkligt nog eftersom biotopen var mycket lämplig. Däremot såg vi troligen ännu en *Grandala*, men på lite för långt avstånd för helt säker artbetämning. På nedvägen upptäcktes dock fyra *Himalayans Snowcocks*, som ofta i siluett mot himlen högt uppe på en plåtå.

Ganska möra återvände vi till bilarna, men detta hindrade inte att Jesper lurade ut oss på ännu

en vandring, nu i en sido-dal med faktiskt för en gångs skull måttlig stigning. Det blev åter en lyckad tur med flera *Himalyan Snowcocks*, *Kozlov's Buntings* samt tre fina *Himalayan Rubythroats*.

15/6. Så var det dags att åter fara norrut, i en första etapp till Yushu. Vi gjorde naturligtvis ett antal skådarstopp. Vid det första såg vi två *Little Owls*, mycket mer rostbruna än våra i Europa,



Little Owl. Foto Tomas Carlberg.

invid vägen. Sedan hade vi en mycket givande vandring där vägen på ett långt stycke gick genom en djup ravin – här hittades bl.a. två par *Wallcreepers*, det ena med bo, samt sex *Red-fronted Rosefinches*. Över 100 *Blue Sheep* vandrade över en högt belägen sluttning.

Vid ett annat stopp satt en kraft- och praktfull *Saker* på en telefontråd vid vägen. På en annan plats sprang plötsligt en *varg* in i Anders tubki-karfält och den kunde följas under en lång stund. Bl.a. sökte den närma sig en hjord jakar, men blev resolut bortjagad därifrån för att sedan elegant defilera förbi oss. Bara en liten stund senare upptäcktes en annan *varg*, nu precis i vägkanten.



Dagens andra varg. Foto Sven Karlsson.



Ibisbill. Foto Sven Karlsson.

Sista stoppet var vid en liten flod med närliggande kargt bergsstup. Vid floden fanns en *Ibisbill* och i stupet minst två hanner och en hona av *Spotted Great Rosefinch*, "flygande jordgubbar" och



Spotted Great Rosefinch. Foto Krister Carlsson.

nyligen splittade från de fåglar som finns i Kaukasus. Här upptäcktes också resans enda *Russet Sparrow*, en hanne.



Upland Buzzard. Foto Sven Karlsson.



I alla bergspass som här i Qingshuihe Pass på 4 458 m ö.h. finns buddistiska böneflaggor i mängd. Foto Mart Marend.

16/6. Resan fortsatte mot övernattning i Wenguan. En vandring vid Bayankala Pass blev mycket givande med 17 *Eastern Great Rosefinches*, ett par + fyra juv *Roborovski's Rosefinches*, fyra *Brandt's Mountain Finches*, 15 *Güldenstadt's Redstarts* samt sex *Himalayan Rubythroats*.

Ett stopp vid en sjö gav bl.a. en *Black-necked Crane* samt 15 *Spot-fronted Sand Plovers*.



Robin Accentor. Foto Sven Karlsson.



Saker. Foto Mart Marend.

I övrigt sågs fyra *Sakers*, fyra *Lammergeiers*, 30 *Kiangs* och 50 *Tibetan Gazelles* längs vägen.



I detta vidstäckta karga landskap trivs Tibetan Sandgrouse. I fjärran, omkring sju mil bort, såg vi resans högsta berg Anye Machin, 6 282 m ö.h. Foto Mart Marend.

17/6. Förmiddagen ägnades åt det som blev en av resans absoluta höjdpunkter, i dubbel bemärkelse, en bestigning av topp-platån öster om Er La Pass. Nästan alla ställde upp på detta företag som startade på ca 4 500 m ö.h. och tog oss upp ytterligare trehundra meter. Målarten var *Tibetan Sandgrouse*, antagligen jämte Emperor Penguin den svåraste av världens arter att nå. Efter samling av det ganska utdragna fältet uppe på platån gick vi sakta något nedför. Mart blev den som upptäckte arten



Tibetan Sandgrouse. Foto Tomas Carlberg.

först – en fågel stod blickstill på marken ca 30 meter från oss. Här stod och rörde den sig lokalt ganska länge, vederbörigen betittad och fotograferad, innan den lyfte och tillsammans med en annan fågel drog iväg över platån.

I övrigt sågs en del annat spännande, dock inget nytt, häruppe – fyra *Lammergeiers*, två *Tibetan Snowcocks*, sex *Güldenstadt's Redstarts*, fyra *Roborovski's Rosefinches* och sex *Brandt's Mountain Finches*.



Güldenstadt's Redstart. Foto Mart Marend.

På kvällen kom vi tillbaka till Xining där vi tog in på samma fina hotell som tidigare.



Dimmig morgon med Blue Eared Pheasants. (Jämför med bilden från drygt två veckor tidigare på s. 5) Foto Mart Marend.

18/6. Den sista förmiddagen ägnades ett återbeök i Huzhu Mtns norr om Xining med huvudsyftet att få se *Blue Eared Pheasants*. Det lyckades vi ock-



Blue Eared Pheasants. Foto Tomas Carlberg.

så ganska omgående med på den ängsmark där vi förut förgäves letat efter fåglarna. Fem ex. gick nu här, fint och öppet.

I detta område samt längs två lite högre belägna stigar såg vi också de för resan nya arterna *Chestnut Thrush* och *Siberian Rubythroat* samt dessutom bl.a. *Spotted Bush Warbler* och *Buff-barred Leaf Warbler*.



Buff-barred Leaf Warbler. Foto Krister Carlsson.



Siberian Rubythroat. Foto Sven Karlsson.



Sammanfattningsvis blev det en riktig höjdarresa. Herman i Bayankala Pass, 4 824 m ö.h. Foto Mart Marend.

På eftermiddagen flög vi tillbaka till Beijing där det på kvällen bjöds på bl.a. Pekinganka på en mycket bra restaurang. Stämningen var hög och avtackningen av Jesper synnerligen hjärtlig. Han hade på denna väl organiserade resa otvetydigt

gett järnet och levererat i stort sett allt som var tänkbart – förutom 220 arter fåglar, en ovanligt stor andel av dem synnerligen karismatiska, också 20 arter däggdjur samt fantastiska naturscenerier.



Målartern för resans sista vandring var Peking Duck. Foto Mart Marend.

List of birds

Severtzov's Hazel Grouse *Tetrastes sewerzowi*

Nine bird-days. Seen on two dates – knowing where to look isn't always enough ...

Szechenyi's Monal Partridge *Tetraophasis szechenyi*

14+ bird-days. Noted on three dates S of Yushu – we really have no idea how this species has gained its reputation for being tricky: WOW! views were had by all.

Tibetan Snowcock *Tetraogallus tibetanus*

22+ bird-days. Noted on four dates – a somewhat unpredictable species but everyone, even those not too keen on long pursuits, got unforgettable views. Main event four seen up on ridge on 14th – 'quite good on x60 magnification': determined scanning paid off when SH finally caught movement ...

Przevalski's Partridge *Alectoris magna*

Seven bird-days. Noted on two dates.

Daurian Partridge *Perdix dauurica*

Six bird-days. Noted on two dates – main event four 'across the valley: cock-fighting & rolling down the hillside' on 2nd.

Tibetan Partridge *Perdix hodgsoniae*

13 bird-days. Noted on five dates.

Blood Pheasant *Ithaginis cruentus*

Six bird-days. Noted on two dates S of Yushu.

White Eared Pheasant *Crossoptilon crossoptilon*

37+ bird-days. Noted on five dates S of Yushu.

Blue Eared Pheasant *Crossoptilon auritum*

10+ bird-days. Noted N of Xining on two dates – heard only on the first attempt, but our decision to try again was vindicated within a few minutes of arrival when a male & two females were found feeding unobtrusively amongst small junipers.

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

41 bird-days. Noted on five dates.

***Cheng (1987) listed no fewer than 18 races for mainland China. Of these he listed just three

for Qinghai: *vlangalii*, *strauchi* (for 'NE part') & *suehschanensis* as an accidental to Zekog in SE.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

20 at Koko Nor on 4th.

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

411+ bird-days. Noted on five dates.



Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Two adults w/ a small 'ugly duckling' on 4th.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Five on 4th.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

195+ bird-days. Noted on nine dates.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Nine at Koko Nor on 4th.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Five bird-days. Noted on two dates.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

23 bird-days. Noted on two dates, incl at Summer Palace on 1st.

Chinese Spotbill *Anas zonorhyncha*

Two on 4th.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

One drake on 4th.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

Two drakes on 4th.

Common Teal *Anas crecca*

One [LI *et al.*] at Koko Nor on 4th.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

32 bird-days. Noted on two dates – memorable views at Koko Nor on 4th!

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Ten at Koko Nor on 4th.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*

Ten at Koko Nor on 4th.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

One drake seen well on 4th.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Three bird-days. Noted on just two dates ...

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

3+ on 1st.

***It was good to get views that allowed us to confirm that these birds had the white iris of ssp *poggei*, which also differs from the nominate in vocalizations...

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

c300 bird-days. Noted on four dates, incl at Summer Palace on 1st.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

70 at Koko Nor on 4th.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

One circling in the distance at Koko Nor on 4th.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

One showing well S of Yushu on 9th.

***Possibly only the 2nd record for Tibet (one was at Koko Nor on 27 Sep 2004: P R Kennerley, JH *et al.*) – Zheng *et al.* (2005) listed the species only for Jiangsu, Shanghai, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong & Hong Kong.

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*

One at Summer Palace on 1st.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

6+ at Summer Palace on 1st.

Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*

Five bird-days. Noted on four dates – all were 2nd c-y birds, incl the two seen at Summer Palace on 1st.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*

68+ bird-days. Noted on no fewer than seven dates.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Ten bird-days. Noted on three dates, incl at Summer Palace on 1st.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

One at Summer Palace on 1st.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Singles on two dates.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

15 at Koko Nor on 4th.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Five bird-days. Noted on four dates, incl at Summer Palace on 1st.

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Three bird-days. Noted on two dates.

Saker *Falco cherrug*

Nine bird-days. Noted on four dates.

Barbary Falcon *Falco peregrinoides*

One adult hunting at Koko Nor on 4th.

***Cheng (1987) recorded the species only for western-most Xinjiang, and the only Tibetan record listed by Vaurie (1975) is a specimen taken at 36°17'N 78°15'E on 27 August 1875.

However, King (1984) saw a nest containing four nearly fully fledged young at c4,740 m in the Anyemaqen range (c35°N 99°E) over 11-13 June 1981, and there are now >50 additional sight records from E & C Qinghai (JH pers. obs.).

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Nine bird-days. Noted on five dates.

Lammergeier *Gypaetus barbatus*

25+ bird-days. Noted on nine dates.



The Himalayan Griffons fighting for access to the meal at the dog remains. Note! The feather on the ground.

Photo Mart Marend.

Himalayan Griffon *Gyps himalayensis*

192+ bird-days. Noted on 13 dates.

***A trip highlight was a gathering of c45 @ a dog carcass <30m from road on 9th – so close we could intermittently smell them! MM & TC walked in to collect a primary and got as close as c 6m from the four birds that remained once the carcass had been worked over ...



Tomas Carlberg with the “trophy” for DNA analysis. Note! The Griffons still eating at the carcass in the background. Photo Mart Marend.

Some of our team photographers may have missed some of the best shots: the canine grin of the increasingly limp and flabby victim as it was pulled hither and thither; the vulture going for the tongue but finding the mouth cavity still too well guarded by teeth; the pecking order clashes, some of which were ferocious (one being especially memorable with two birds running full tilt at each other & clashing a meter above the ground, rolling over, down flying!), and at least two which were chiefly about pecking order / score-settling rather than about access to the carcass (before we got out of the cars we saw one glide in, talons extended, and hit another which was perched on the road verge >25m from the carcass; similarly, one left the carcass to run off and confront another some distance away).

Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus*

One ragged individual on 7th.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Four bird-days. Singles were noted on four dates.

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

One [LI] on 10th.

Himalayan Buzzard *Buteo burmanicus*

One N of Xining on 3rd.

***Formerly considered a race of Common Buzzard *B. buteo* but genetically closer to Upland Buzzard *B. hemilasius* (Rasmussen & Anderton 2005) from which it is ecologically separated & easily – well, fairly easily! – distinguished ...

Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius*
72 bird-days. Noted on eight dates.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*
16 bird-days. Noted on nine dates – several memorable encounters included one adult on 15th which stooped at a Himalayan Griffon but disappeared behind a crag, preventing us from seeing just how close an encounter they had ...

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
One at Summer Palace on 1st.

Common Coot *Fulica atra*
35+ at Koko Nor on 4th.

Black-necked Crane *Grus nigricollis*
16 bird-days. Noted on three dates.
***This hardy yet Vulnerable (<http://www.iucnredlist.org/apps/redlist/details/143783/o>) Tibetan Plateau endemic breeder was one of the most hoped-for species!

Ibisbill *Ibidorhyncha struthersii*
Six bird-days. Noted on four dates.
***With only almost-completed road improvement work going on over long stretches the customary stop-and-scan breaks were less feasible than on trips as recently as a year or two ago. Nonetheless we continue to subscribe to the view that ‘somehow, Ibisbills seen in Tibet feeding on a flowered-over meadow or ‘frozen’ against a rushing, icy stream – with Red-billed Choughs cawing, Blue Hill Pigeons cooing & domestic yaks snorting in the background - are more *real* than the sad one or two which still attempt to cling on along the last stretches of barely acceptable water close to Beijing in competition with sickly-looking domestic ducks!’

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*
Six on 4th.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
One on 4th.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*
Three bird-days. Noted W of Koko Nor on two dates.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*
Four on 4th.

‘Spot-fronted’ Sand Plover *Charadrius atrifrons*[^]
28 bird-days. Noted on four dates.
***[^]formerly consider conspecific with Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*.

***ssp *atrifrons* has ‘forehead and band through and below eye to ear coverts black, occasionally with some white mottling in front of eye; rufous-cinnamon of chest extends to flanks and breast, not bordered by black bar against white chin’ while *mongolus* has forehead white, often divided by narrow black line in middle, bordered from cinnamon forecrown by narrow black line; black line runs from lores to ear coverts and white line from above eye to above ear-coverts; narrow black bar between white chin and clear-cut cinnamon-rufous chest-band’. *schaeferi* ‘often has some white on forehead; intermediate between *atrifrons* and nominate *mongolus*’, ‘often closest to *mongolus*’: BWP vol III, p169.

Western Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*
One on 4th.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*
69+ bird-days. Noted on ten dates.

Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*
Five on 4th.

Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus*
93 bird-days. Noted on three dates.

Common Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*
Seven 2nd c-y birds at Koko Nor on 4th.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*
c74 bird-days. Noted on nine dates – as far as we could determine all were the distinctive *thibetana*.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*
Six adults in full summer plumage at Koko Nor on 4th: TINGALING!

Tibetan Sandgrouse *Syrrhaptes tibetana*

Three on 17th – ‘a male seen & photographed before taking off to fly around calling, raising another bird’ ... a little later a 3rd bird was heard but not seen.

***A very satisfying encounter with an endemic which is ‘on the Hardest Bird in the World shortlist along with Emperor Penguin’.



Photo Mart Marend.

Pallas's Sandgrouse *Syrrhaptes paradoxus*

11 bird-days. Noted on two dates – on 6th, the ‘1st one flew right by but couldn't be refound/flushed; none seen on the ground except distantly but several very close fly-bys’ ...



Photo Sven Karlsson.

Blue Hill Pigeon *Columba rupestris*

360+ bird-days. Noted on 14 dates.

Snow Pigeon *Columba leuconota*

14+ bird-days. Noted on four dates – ‘two at nest just 20m above stream’ on 15th ...

Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

One at Summer Palace on 1st.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

45 bird-days. Noted on four dates.

Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*

One en route on 6th.

Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*

One at Summer Palace on 1st.

Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus*

6+ bird-days. Noted @ Beijing on 1+2+18th.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

70 bird-days. Noted on 17 dates, incl at Summer Palace on 1st.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Five bird-days. Noted on four dates – main event extended, close range views of an adult & a juvenile at on 15th.

Common Swift *Apus apus pekinensis*

c140 bird-days. Noted on seven dates – most were @ Beijing on 1st ...

Salim Ali's Swift *Apus salimali*

50+ bird-days. Noted on nine dates.

***Leader (2011) concluded that the *Apus pacificus* complex should be treated as four species, at least three of which occur in China/Tibet.

***Salim Ali's Swift *Apus salimali* is ‘restricted to E Tibetan Plateau and adjacent high-altitude W Sichuan’ breeding at ‘very high altitudes (above 3,400m)’ – ‘Fork-tailed Swifts’ breeding near Xining, Qinghai, at c2,500m are also this form: JH *et al.* pers obs. ‘Its winter distribution is apparently unknown but, at the very least, it must be an altitudinal migrant’.

The species is longer-tailed with a proportionately shallower tail fork, has different throat pattern (‘narrow pale strip on the center of the throat and is narrowest at the base of the bill, where it tapers to a neat point’, ‘less than half the width of the other taxa’), ‘the rump patch is consistently narrow’, ‘the crown and nape are mid-brown, contrasting conspicuously’ with the glossy black mantle, and the pale tips to the underparts are much reduced compared to *pacificus* (more comparable to *leuconyx* in this character).

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

One at Summer Palace on 1st.

Crested Kingfisher *Megaceryle lugubris*

One [SH *et al.*] through the fence at Summer Palace on 1st.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

28 bird-days. Noted on 12 dates - one disappeared into the stone base of a stupa at Koko Nor on 4th...

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Singles at Summer Palace on 1st & N of Xining on 3rd.

Three-toed Woodpecker *Picoides tridactylus funebris*

Three bird-days. Noted on two dates S of Yushu - often you either see this secretive species very well... or not at all!

***"Taxonomy: needs re-evaluation. Nearctic and Palearctic races recently split into two species, *P. dorsalis* and *P. tridactylus*, without discussion of status of the very distinct *funebris*": Rasmussen & Anderton (2005). The latter is listed by Zheng (ed., 2005) for Gansu, NE Qinghai, E Xizang, NW Yunnan & Sichuan. The 'N Palearctic' species is represented in China by *tianshanicus* (Tian Shan & Altai: Cheng 1987), *tridactylus* (NE Inner Mongolia & N Manchuria: Cheng 1987) & *kurodai* (SE Manchuria: Dickinson 2003 - Cheng (1987) did not list *kurodai*, including birds in this area with *tridactylus*).

Black Woodpecker *Dryocopus martius*

Two on 11th.

Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*

Singles on three dates.

Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*

Two males on 11th.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*

A stray ssp *lucionensis* bird S of Yushu on 12th.

***Apparently a 1st for this part of the province (JH pers. obs.)...

Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*

Six bird-days. Noted on two dates W of Koko Nor - finding a pair @ their nest on 6th was a bonus...

Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus*

31 bird-days. Noted on 15 dates.

Tibetan Grey Shrike *Lanius giganteus*

An adult with two fledged juveniles seen at close range on 4th - a low-density species, wide-ranging and often inconspicuous even when present (and thus easily missed)...

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*

19 bird-days. Noted on three dates - main event 17 migr at Summer Palace on 1st.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

One N of Xining [SH, LI] on 3rd.

****vide* Zheng *et al.* (2005) ssp *kansuensis* is restricted to NW & SW Gansu and 'Qinghai', though the only Qinghai locality for which it was listed by Cheng (1987) was Zekog. Dickinson (2003) listed it also for NW Sichuan.

Eastern Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyanus*

5+ bird-days. Noted on at least four dates.

***Apparently the Iberian taxon, *C. (c.) cooki*, has been shown to be sufficiently differentiated genetically to merit elevation to full species status. In addition to the ones we saw, *kansuensis* in NE Tibet & *interposita* at Beijing, the eastern species includes a further five taxa (Dickinson 2003)...

Common Magpie *Pica pica*

45 bird-days in Qinghai; no attempt to estimate numbers seen @ Beijing.

Tibetan Magpie *Pica (pica) bottanensis*

64+ bird-days. Noted on nine dates.

***The two *Pica* taxa occupy mutually exclusive ranges and display a number of vocal, morphological & habitat differences.

Henderson's Ground Jay *Podoces hendersoni*

This species frequently gives birdwatchers the dodge-and-run treatment but this time we had the advantage from a May visit of knowing where its nest was, so it was only a matter of setting up the 'scopes at a safe distance and waiting...

Hume's Groundpecker *Pseudopodoces humilis*

56+ bird-days. Noted on ten dates.

***Apparently most closely related to *Paridae* (Dickinson 2003; B King pers com.) but please let us do our bit to avoid a newly concocted English name - which the risk of keyboard distress prevents me typing here _____ - from slipping into common usage!

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*
135 bird-days. Noted on 15 dates.

Alpine Chough *Pyrrhocorax graculus*
10+ bird-days. Noted S of Yushu on five dates.

Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauuricus*
c50 bird-days. Noted on seven dates.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus pastinator*[^]
13 bird-days. Noted @ Xining on two dates.
***[^]the familiar nominate ssp occurs in China only in W & N Xinjiang (Zheng *et al.* 2005).
***ssp *pastinator* differs from the nominate in lacking ‘bare chalky white facial skin [...] and has a more sharply pointed bill’: Brazil (2009).

Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*
15 bird-days. Noted on six dates.
***According to Zheng *et al.* (2005) ssp *tibetensis* is restricted to E Qinghai, SW Xizang, NW & W Yunnan, and N & W Sichuan.

Common Raven *Corvus corax*
47 bird-days. Noted on four dates.

Bohemian Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulous*
One at Summer Palace on 1st had a heavily abraded tail...

Eastern Great Tit *Parus minor*
Three bird-days. Noted on two dates.

Yellow-bellied Tit *Parus venustulus*
12 @ Beijing on 1st – a family party of six seen well at Summer Palace.

Rufous-vented Tit *Parus rubidiventris*
11 bird-days. Noted S of Yushu on two dates.

Songar Tit *Parus songarus*
18 bird-days. Noted on six dates N of Xining (ssp *affinis*) & S of Yushu (ssp *weigoldicus*).
***Note that of the several Songar Tit ssp maybe only *weigoldicus* merits full species status (the rest are now lumped back in with Willow Tit *Parus montanus* by e g IOC).
***Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) noted that “the case for treating *weigoldicus* as a full species appears particularly strong on the basis of its unusually high genetic distances from other taxa, despite weak morphological differentiation”. Ac-

tually – as we couldn’t help noticing (& see Colar & Pilgrim 2007) – *weigoldicus* does differ ‘conspicuously’ in many respects, incl vocalizations, from even *affinis*.

White-browed Tit *Parus superciliosus*
Four bird-days. This charismatic, thin-on-the-ground endemic was noted on three dates.

Grey Crested Tit *Parus dichrous*
12 bird-days. Noted S of Yushu on three dates.

Pale Sand Martin *Riparia diluta*
32 bird-days. Noted on three dates.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
8+ bird-days. Noted on five dates, incl at Summer Palace on 1st.
***At least one of the three seen W of Koko Nor on 5th was ‘quite reddish below’ suggesting ssp *tyleri*; Cheng (1987), however, listed only *gutturalis* for Qinghai, and colour of underparts are variable in all populations (BWP)...

Eurasian Crag Martin *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*
22 bird-days. Noted on seven dates.

Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus*
25 bird-days. Noted on six dates.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*
21 bird-days. Noted on three dates.

White-browed Tit-Warbler *Leptopoecile sophiae*
Five bird-days. Noted on two dates.

Crested Tit-Warbler *Leptopoecile elegans*
Five bird-days. Noted on two dates.
***Typically not a species that draws attention to itself – however, patience and persistence can be amply rewarded... I’ve leafed through no less than three dictionaries in search of a superlative which fully does justice to this jewel, but in vain...

Mongolian Lark *Melanocorypha mongolica*
14 bird-days. This attractive species was noted on three dates.

Long-billed Calandra (= Tibetan) Lark
Melanocorypha maxima
24 bird-days. Noted on six dates.



Mongolian Lark. Photo Mart Marend.

Hume's Short-toed Lark *Calandrella acutirostris*
28 bird-days. Noted on five dates – memorable views & photo ops at Koko Nor...

Asian Short-toed Lark *Calandrella cheleensis*
53+ bird-days. Noted on three dates – several of the 50+ birds noted on 5th sat up in small bushes, inviting 'scope viewing.

Oriental Skylark *Aldaia fulgula*
Widespread – not systematically recorded.

Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris*
Widespread – not systematically recorded.

Chinese Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis*
Three at Summer Palace on 1st.

Spotted Bush Warbler *Bradypterus thoracicus*
Nine bird-days. Noted N of Xining on two dates, incl one 'scoped singing in top of willow >5m above the ground!

***Kennerley & Pearson (2010) accepts the Pere David's (or 'Baikal') Bush Warbler, comprising the taxa *davidi* (breeding in 'E Siberia from the NW Amur region south to NE China, with an isolated population in C China') & *suschkini* (breeding in 'Siberia from the Russian Altai east through Sayan Mountains to the region of Lake Baikal'), as a species, *B. davidi*, distinct from Spotted Bush Warbler, comprising the taxa *thoracicus* (breeding 'C and E Himalayas to W & S China'), *przevalskii* (breeding 'Sichuan to N Qinghai, SW Gansu and S Shaanxi') & *kashmirensis* (breeding in 'W Himalayas').

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola*
Four at Summer Palace late in the afternoon of 1st.

Oriental Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis*
Nine at Summer Palace late in the afternoon of 1st.

Black-browed Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps* BJ
Three at Summer Palace late in the afternoon of 1st.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus weigoldicus*
One 'scoped & heard singing on 4th.

***Martens (2008) unconvincingly aligns this reasonably distinctive taxon with Smoky Warbler *P. fuliginiventer*
http://globiz.sachsen.de/snsd/publikationen/vertebrate-zoology/vz58-2/06_Martens.pdf

'Chinese' Tickell's Warbler *Phylloscopus occisinensis*
77 bird-days. Noted on 11 dates.

***Martens (2008) elevates part of Tickell's Warbler to full species status as *P. occisinensis*
http://globiz.sachsen.de/snsd/publikationen/vertebrate-zoology/vz58-2/06_Martens.pdf

Yellow-streaked Warbler *Phylloscopus armandii*
20 bird-days. Noted on seven dates.

Buff-barred Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus pulcher*
15 bird-days. Noted on four dates.

***One N of Xining on 18th was seen especially well – and even 'scoped as we lingered with it, not really having anything more urgent to do while waiting for the clouds to lift! – as it gave Greenish Warbler-type song as intro to usual song, sometimes several times so that what with the bird moving from one song post to another it would not have been difficult to in error record one of each species!

Another bird a little ways up along another track in the opposite direction seemed to be doing much the same thing, but by then more stuff was happening and we could not immerse ourselves in the situation to the same degree...

Gansu Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus kansuensis*
17 bird-days. Noted N of Xining on two dates.

***This attractive warbler was only recently re-accepted as a valid species, and its winter quarters remain undiscovered...

Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

One – ‘at <5m at eye level in buckthorn, in and out of bright sun, was an utterly unsurpassable riot of bars, bands & patches, sitting out and making a point of showing itself from every conceivable angle’ - on 6th: WOW!

Eastern Lemon-rumped Warbler *Phylloscopus forresti*
23 bird-days. Noted S of Yushu on three dates.

***Martens *et al.* 2004 (*vide* Rheindt 2006) elevated *forresti*, considered a synonym of *chloronotus* by Cheng (1987), to full species status, splitting it from *chloronotus* (of Nepal) which, with *simlaensis*, becomes Western Lemon-rumped Warbler. The two differ “dramatically in song and mitochondrial DNA (4.2% cytochrome-b divergence)”: Rheindt (2006). Given that the type locality for *forresti* is Lijiang, in Yunnan (Cheng 1987) it is not obvious that “Sichuan Leaf Warbler’ is preferable to ‘Eastern Lemon-rumped Warbler’. “Presumably the hitherto unknown border between both species lies somewhere in Yunnan, Burma or north-eastern India.”: Rheindt (2006). *Ahem?*

Hume's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus humei mandellii*
89 bird-days. Noted on six dates.

***Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) treats both ssp as full species, noting that “although the call of *mandellii* is markedly different from [nominate] *humei*, the whistled songs of both taxa are variable and often inseparable. While *mandellii* is genetically closer to *humei* than to *inornatus*, it is long-separated from either according to mtDNA (Irwin *et al.* 2001); its status as a full species thus remains equivocal.”

***Nominate *humei* occurs in Qinghai on passage in autumn (JH pers obs).

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides ssp*
95 bird-days. Noted on nine dates.

Large-billed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris*
Three N of Xinig on 3rd.

Kozlov's Babax *Babax koslowi*

11+ bird-days. Noted on two dates.

***One of our main ‘pretexts’ for visiting an unbeatably pretty area on the remote Xizang border, this restricted-range species proved comparatively obliging.

Giant Laughingthrush *Garrulax maximus*

22+ bird-days. Noted on two dates.

***This superb-looking but all-too-frequently hard to see species has an impressive range of calls, some subdued, some anything but, yet others direct or derived mimicry – duetting birds are often a striking component in the dawn chorus, and throughout the day groups moving about will mark their progress with occasional sessions of loud calling.

Elliot's Laughingthrush *Garrulax elliotii*
68+ bird-days. Noted on eight dates.

Chinese Fulvetta *Alcippe striaticollis*
Three heard on 12th.

***Knowing the call AND where to listen out for it is – even more so than in the case of the skulking Kozlov's Babax – the key to locating this subtly attractive but, alas, skulky endemic.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*
Nine bird-days. Noted on two dates.

Northern Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
Eight bird-days. Noted on four dates.

Przevalski's Nuthatch *Sitta przewalskii*
Five bird-days. Noted on two dates – main event one ‘scoped N of Xining on 3rd.

Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria*
5+ bird-days. Noted on two dates – not a new bird for any of our well travelled group members but nonetheless not one anyone was inclined to ignore on that account: ‘scope views for everyone! WHAT A BIRD!

***One of the most spectacular birds in the world, this species is aptly named ‘rock flower’ in Chinese’: Harrap & Quinn (1996) – I’m not sure which Chinese dialect Harrap and/or Quinn is familiar with but both Cheng (1987) and Zheng (2005) refer to *Tichodroma muraria* as ‘Hongchi xuanbi que’, ‘red-winged cliff-hanging bird’.

Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*
Five N of Xining on 3rd.

Hodgson's Treecreeper *Certhia hodgsoni*
Two heard singing at c4,100m S of Yushu on 11th.
***This newly elevated species “embraces the Sino-Himalayan [taxa] *hodgsoni* Brooks, 1874 (W

Himalayas), *mandellii* Brooks, 1874 (E Himalayas) and *khamensis* Bianchi 1903 (SW & W China [N as far as the road between Jiuzhaigou & Sungpan in N Sichuan]): D T Tietze *et al* 2006. Birds in SE Qinghai & E Xizang are this taxon: Cheng (1987).

*****Crested Myna** *Acridotheres cristellatus*

At least one at Summer Palace on 1st.

***Birds @ Beijing (& Beidaihe!) are presumed feral...

Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus*

Superb views of five on 1st!

***Zheng *et al.* (2005) listed the species for nowhere closer than S Henan, but the species is now a scarce breeder as far N as Beijing.

White-cheeked Starling *Sturnus cineraceus*

Eight bird-days. Noted in NE Tibet on three dates.

Chestnut Thrush *Turdus rubrocanus*

Eight bird-days. Noted N of Xining on two dates – a singing bird ‘scoped on 18th!

Kessler’s Thrush *Turdus kessleri*

110+ bird-days. Noted on at least 12 dates.

Siberian Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope*

Ten bird-days. Noted N of Xining on two dates – main event a long session with two males on 18th as they started singing in response to the tape: photos in the mist...

Himalayan Rubythroat *Luscinia pectoralis*

16 bird-days. Noted on four dates.

Himalayan Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger rufilatus*

Four on 13th, incl an adult male seen well...

Northern Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

21 bird-days. Noted N of Xining on two dates.

***Apparently (L Svensson pers com) birds breeding in NE Qinghai – with a white brow in adult males – are *albocoeruleus*, a long neglected taxon hitherto considered of doubtful validity, but with a song distinct from both *cyanurus*’ & *rufilatus*’. It is genetically closer to *cyanurus*, but has legs as long as *rufilatus*’.

Przevalski’s Redstart *Phoenicurus alaschanicus*

Six males & two females on 5th – ‘arguably the prettiest in the genus’? Oh yes!!

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochrurus*

107+ bird-days. Noted on 13 dates.

***ssp *phoenicuroides*, which Zheng *et al.* (2005) lists for Xinjiang & W Xizang, was, ‘pending further research’, included with *rufiventris* by Svensson (1992) although in the latter the adult male is ‘on average blacker above and larger in size, but much overlap’. Ssp *xerophilus* was listed by Zheng *et al.* (2005) for Qinghai & S Xinjiang, and by BWP (Vol V, p683) for ‘Astin Tagh (Sinking) to Western Kansu and Tsinghai’ but this ssp not recognized by e.g. Dickinson (2003), and BWP (Vol V, p694–695) notes that its position requires confirmation, it having been described ‘as being pale like *phoenicuroides* and large like *rufiventris*’.

Hodgson’s Redstart *Phoenicurus hodgsoni*

43 bird-days. Noted on 11 dates.

White-throated Redstart *Phoenicurus schisticeps*

27 bird-days. Noted on seven dates.



Photo Tomas Carlberg.

Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus aureoreus*

One on 2nd.

Guldenstadt’s Redstart *Phoenicurus erythrogastrus*

23 bird-days. Noted on no fewer four dates.

Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis*

27 bird-days. Noted on ten dates – there was even one at >5,000m on 10th!

White-bellied Redstart *Hodgsonius phoenicuroides*

Seven bird-days. Noted on four dates – main

event four (three heard singing; one 2nd c-y male – apparently entirely without blue in the plumage – taped into view) on 12th.

River Chat *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*
25 bird-days. Noted on eight dates.

Grandala *Grandala coelicolor* P
TC spotted a male feeding on a grassy slope at c4700m on 14th – just what we’d been hoping for!

‘Siberian’ Stonechat *Saxicola ‘torquatus’*
Three bird-days. Noted on just two dates.
***Spp *maurus*, *przewalskii* & *stejnegeri* occur in China / Tibet. Dickinson (2003): “proposed splits of this complex species seem unsatisfactory if only in how the forms are ascribed to species”, and (still) NOT elevated to full species status by e.g. Svensson *et al.* (2009), who treated ‘Eastern Stonechat’ as a subspecies group under ‘Common Stonechat’ and dealt with it in a separate account only ‘for practical reasons’.

Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*
45 bird-days. Noted on three dates.

Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*
A pair carrying food & alarming in the hills above Xining on 2nd: no doubt their nest was not far away, and we duly moved on to avoid adding to their stress ...

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*
Eight bird-days. Noted on three dates.

Common Rock Thrush *Monticola saxatilis*
One male seen well W of Koko Nor on 6th.

Slaty-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula hodgsonii*
26 bird-days. Noted on four dates – on 3rd two of the four seen were males but the one we all got a good look at was a female doing the rounds low, flycatching...

White-throated Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*
Eight bird-days. Noted on five dates – main event was an all-brown adult ‘scoped as it busily attended two begging juveniles.

Russet Sparrow *Passer rutilans*
One male [SH] near Yushu on 15th.
***There are probably no more than a handful

of previous records for Qinghai.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*
Widespread – not systematically recorded.

Rock Sparrow *Petronia petronia*
18 bird-days. Noted on five dates.

Henri’s Snowfinch *Montifringilla henrici*
41 bird-days. Noted on five dates – outstanding views on several occasions, incl of two displaying at a pass at c 4,500m on 9th.

***DNA work has shown this taxon to be more closely related to Tibetan Snowfinch than to Eurasian (with which it was lumped in the past).

Tibetan (= Himalayan) Snowfinch *Montifringilla adamsi*

15 bird-days. Noted on four dates – spectacular hanging-in-the-wind display flight seen several times!

***Rather unspectacular on the ground but truly striking in flight, this species is blessed with no less than four English names ...

White-rumped Snowfinch *Onychostruthus taczanowskii*

51 bird-days. Seen on no fewer than eight dates this was the most charismatic of the six spp of snowfinch encountered – it ‘dive-bombs’ rivals, engages in strutting stand-offs, and lumbers along, all hunched up and true intentions hidden behind its highwayman’s mask ...

Pere David’s Snowfinch *Pyrgilauda davidiana*
Four bird-days. Noted on two dates.

***It is doubly misleading to call this ‘one of the most localized snowfinch species’ (as done by H Jannes in a 2011 Birdquest trip report) as

a) its range is vast, covering SE Russian Altai, Mongolia & SE Transbaikalia S to E Qinghai and W & C Inner Mongolia (Dickinson, 2003)!

b) the only Snowfinch that could be reasonably said to be ‘localized’ is Afghan Snowfinch *Pyrgilauda theresae*, ‘endemic to the N & C ranges of the Hindu Kush, Afghanistan (Shibar, Sabz & Unai Passes, Bamian [Prov]), between approximately 67°E and 69°E’, descending from its summer range between 2575–3000m to lower levels, and ‘occasionally moves N into Badkhyz and Karabil, SE Turkmenistan’: Clement *et al.* (1993)!

Rufous-necked Snowfinch *Pyrgilauda ruficollis*
102+ bird-days. Noted on eight dates.

Blanford's Snowfinch *Pyrgilauda blanfordi*
Four in desert W of Koko Nor on 6th – ‘tiny birds in a vast landscape, but with a distinctive call which in the pure Tibetan air carries a surprising distance.’

Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris*
Eight bird-days. Noted on two days S of Yushu.

Robin Accentor *Prunella rubeculoides*
15 bird-days. Noted on four dates.



Photo Krister Carlsson.

Rufous-browed Accentor *Prunella strophhiata*
12 bird-days. Noted on five dates.

Brown Accentor *Prunella fulvescens*
32 bird-days. Noted on five dates. This subtly attractive species seemed particularly at home on the edge of the desert W of Koko Nor ...

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis*
One male *macronyx*^ at Koko Nor on 4th
***^‘crown light grey; black ear coverts; *margelanica* notch behind eye; two large wing bars white; chin yellow’.

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*
27 bird-days. Noted on seven dates – eight were striking *calcarata* males: WOW!

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
One en route N of Xining on 3rd.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*
46 bird-days. Noted on 14 dates – sspp involved were *leucopsis* (none identified S of @ Er La pass) & *alboides* (in the Yushu/Nangqian area).



White Wagtail (leucopsis). Photo Mart Marend.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*
Four bird-days. Noted on three dates – two on 5th were ‘scoped at close range: long hind claw visible!

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*
28 bird-days. Noted on seven dates.

Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseus*
26 bird-days. Noted on four dates.

Tibetan Siskin *Serinus thibetanus*
Three on 11th – most of us got long ‘scope views of a female-type ...

Oriental Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica*
Five bird-days. Noted on three dates, incl at Summer Palace on 1st.

Eurasian Siskin *Carduelis spinus*
Three in buckthorn W of Koko Nor on 6th – fantastic views: an adult male, a 2nd c-y male & a female-type ...

***If not exactly wasted on us Scandinavians there is little doubt that birders from the Americas, S/SE Asia or Australia would have got greater kicks out of these fine birds.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*
136+ bird-days. Noted on 11 dates.

Plain Mountain Finch *Leucosticte nemoricola*
c27 bird-days. Noted on five dates.

Brandt's Mountain Finch *Leucosticte brandti*
11 bird-days. Noted on five dates.

Mongolian Trumpeter Finch *Bucanetes mongolicus*
6+ on 6th. One was a song-fighting male ...

Przevalski's Rosefinch *Urocynchramus pylzowi*

Males of this enigmatic species were seen at two different sites, of which one – beyond the Mekong – was new! Superb views: TINGA-LING!

***The taxonomically challenged Przevalski's Rosefinch is nowadays considered to represent a monotypic family - is it a "Rosefinch"? or is it a "Bunting"?... good question, seeing that in the field it does not appear obviously close to either, with its graduated, blindingly pink tail, absurdly thin lower mandible, and a summertime habit of doing 'parachute' type songflights.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

38 bird-days. Noted on eight dates.

***Local breeders are ssp *roseatus* (Dickinson 2003) which is markedly different from at least the nominate ...

Chinese Beautiful Rosefinch *Carpodacus davidianus*

42 bird-days. Noted on eight dates.

Pink-rumped Rosefinch *Carpodacus eos*

44 bird-days. Noted S of Yushu on five dates.

Sinai Rosefinch *Carpodacus synoicus*

Five – two males & three females – near Xining on 2nd!

***Harder to find than in the past due to a tree planting scheme but persistence paid off!

Three-banded Rosefinch *Carpodacus trifasciatus*

Three on 11th – 'a pair heard from across the river near The Breakfast Spot flew across to our side but to our great dismay then vanished completely'.

Chinese White-browed Rosefinch *Carpodacus dubius*

33 bird-days. Noted on seven dates.

Eastern Great Rosefinch *Carpodacus rubicilloides*

24 bird-days. Noted on five dates – main event 17 on 16th, incl eight adult males!

Spotted Great Rosefinch *Carpodacus severtzovi*

Six bird-days. Noted on three dates – main event three on 15th, incl two adult males seen & photographed at close range feeding among flowers.

Red-fronted Rosefinch *Pyrrhospiza punicea*

13 bird-days. Noted on three dates – 'scope

views of an adult male on 15th was exactly what we'd hoped for ...

Roborovski's Rosefinch *Kozlowia roborowskii*

16 bird-days. This scarce endemic was noted on three dates.

***Interestingly, independent juveniles were recorded as early as 7th.

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra himalayana*

Ten bird-days. Noted on two dates.

Grey-headed Bullfinch *Pyrrhula erythaca*

13 bird-days. Noted on two dates.

White-winged Grosbeak *Mycerobas carniceps*

31+ bird-days. Noted on seven dates – on 14th three were seen as high as c4,800m...

Pine Bunting *Emberiza leucocephalos*

Six on 5th.

Eastern Rock Bunting *Emberiza godlewskii*

41 bird-days. Noted on 12 dates.

Meadow Bunting *Emberiza cioides*

Two on 2nd – incl a male 'scoped singing!

Kozlov's Bunting *Emberiza koslowi*

19 bird-days. Noted on two dates.

***Only when this highly localized and hard-to-get-to Restricted Range endemic species is in the bag does anyone allow themselves a sigh of relief and a pleasant first taste of 'we've done it!'. And did we do it!? Superb views and ditto photo opportunities of several adult males – well worth the efforts, and arguably the Most Special Bird of the Trip.

Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala*

Nine bird-days. Noted on three dates – most were heard-onlies but we did get brief views of a singing male on 7th.

List of Mammals

Rhesus Macaque *Macaca mulatta*

50+ near Nangqian on 11th – we were able to get prolonged ‘scope views of a number of individuals: females doing impressive feats of rock climbing with a baby clinging on literally for dear life, one male on guard duty intermittently shaking his perch to warn us off ...

***Yellowy-olive tinge to upper hindlegs, in some individuals connecting above base of tail, and reddish face eliminates Assam Macaque *Macaca assamensis*: Francis (2008). Very large troop size supports ID as Assam Macaque occurs in single-male troops of 10-15 individuals: Smith & Xie (2008).

Himalayan Marmot *Marmota himalayana*

30+ animal-days. Noted on 11 dates, ensuring that we all came away with a fair idea of how these fascinating sleepy-head herbivores pass their lives – it was, for example, amazing that all it took to get one animal to keep up alarm-calling for >30min was one vocalization from a neighbour, and equally interesting to watch another keenly eye a passing wolf, alarm-calling incessantly.

Tibetan Dwarf Hamster *Cricetullus tibetanus*

One [JH] at c4,650m on 7th.

Black-lipped (= Plateau) Pika *Ochotona curzoniae*

Widespread – not systematically recorded.

Glover's Pika *Ochotona gloveri*

Seven animal-days. This cute-looking species was noted on five dates.

*****Moupin Pika** *Ochotona thibetana*

One near Nangqian [TC] was undoubtedly this species ...

Woolly Hare *Lepus oiostolus*

23+ animal-days. Noted on seven dates.

Tolai Hare *Lepus tolai*

Four singles near Xining on 2nd.

*****Pallas' Cat** *Felis manul*

Frustratingly, only our drivers saw (*and* photographed!) one ...

Wolf *Canis lupus*

Five animal-days: a group of three up high on 10th & two singles on 15th.

***Though not the closest, a female which came down off a hill made the greatest impression: ‘a herd of yaks bunched up to protect a not-that-small calf, one bold individual out in front, the wolf testing the defender’s resolve ... when the wolf reappeared after having been out of view behind a rise we thought it was chasing the yaks but it was the other way around! The wolf eventually realized it stood little chance of getting near the calf & continued, taking its time, passing us in good light at c 400 m all the while allowing satisfying ‘scope views. Three of our photographers at my suggestion ran closer when the animal was again out of view. It was a slender, light-footed animal – looking back it stumbled over a yak turd ...’

Tibetan Fox *Vulpes ferrilata*

Seven animal-days. Noted on five dates.

Mountain Weasel *Mustela altaica*

One [SK] seen ...

Kiang *Equus kiang*

89 animal-days. Noted only on two dates as we traversed the Roof of the World ...

***It was a real pleasure to watch these dignified ‘donkeys’ – in the absence of hunters they (and other large mammals on the Plateau) are fairly confiding: not much field craft was needed to get frame-filling photos!

Siberian Roe *Capreolus pygargus*

Two heard barking N of Xining on 3rd.

Gansu Red Deer *Cervus kansuensis*

13 animal-days. Noted on just two dates.

****vide* Groves (2005), *kansuensis* is ‘quite distinct, the winter pelage being especially different:

macneilli stags are very light, creamy grey, while *kansuensis* stags are deep steely grey. The black on the croup [...] is much more conspicuous in *kansuensis*.

***Subsequently (Groves & Grubb: *Ungulate Taxonomy* (2011)) it was felt that *kansuensis* is probably NOT a valid taxon. There are specimens from S Koko Nor Range 37°N 100°E (where sightings by birders have resulted in claims of White-lipped Deer!) & from Tatung Shan 37°15'N 100°E, and there are sight records from Qilian Shan.

***If *kansuensis* ends up being considered invalid the animals we saw were still not 'Red' Deer *Cervus 'elaphus'* but *Cervus canadensis alashanicus*.

White-lipped Deer *Przewalskium albirostris*

13 animals were 'scoped at c200m in evening sun as they grazed up on a hillside near Nangqian on 11th.

Goitred Gazelle *Gazella subgutturosa*

29 W of Koko Nor on 5th.

Tibetan Gazelle *Procapra picticaudata*

172+ animal-days. Seen on six dates – frequently at very close range.

Przevalski's Gazelle *Procapra przewalskii*

Six seen rather distantly on 5th.

***The species has recently been 'downgraded' to 'merely' Endangered (following the discovery of additional herds in 2003) although the world population may be no more than 350–400 mature individuals. See <http://www.iucnredlist.org/apps/redlist/details/18230/0>

***Our animals appear to represent an additional, 'undiscovered' population.

Blue Sheep *Pseudois nayaur*

200+ animal-days. Noted on six dates – several memorable encounters included 13 mostly males on the Mekong side at Nangqian, doing quite a bit of earnest head-butting.



We also saw two species of lizards (*Eremias multiocellata*, *Phrynocephalus vlangalii*) and many Evertebrata and flowers and plants. Here Tomas document a *Papilio machaon*. Photo Mart Marend.