

Taiwan – Endemics & Winter Birds

Naturetrek Tour Report

3rd – 12th March 2023



Formosan Rock Macaque by Stephen Lowe



Taiwan Whistling Thrush by Stephen Lowe



Taiwan Yuhina



White-whiskered Laughingthrush

Tour report and images kindly collated by client Stephen Lowe



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Tour participants: Richard Foster (leader) with six Naturetrek clients

Summary

The Naturetrek bird tour to Taiwan was a great success, blessed by fine weather and smooth logistics. Whilst the dry conditions and timing of the tour meant that some birds were hard to find and passage migrants were lacking, the well-planned itinerary and local knowledge and language skills of the leader nevertheless resulted in a full bird list and a good smattering of butterflies, mammals and amphibians - greatly assisted by the wide expertise of the group's participants. It was also a highly enjoyable tour on which trip participants worked closely and co-operatively with great good humour. Along the way we witnessed the immensely impressive infrastructure of modern Taiwan, whose successful economic development has been accompanied by an enlightened and hugely encouraging attitude to nature conservation and habitat restoration. Thanks to Richard we also learned a fair amount about Taiwan's culture and society and were greatly impressed by the cheerfulness of its inhabitants.

Day 1

Wednesday 3rd March

Outbound to Taiwan via Hong Kong

All participants travelled from London, departing from Heathrow on a mid-day Cathay Pacific flight to Hong Kong with a convenient onward transfer to Taiwan.

Day 2

Saturday 4th March

Airport/Coastal Taoyuan to Central Taiwan

Weather: Fine and sunny

Our flight from Hong Kong arrived on time at 12.15 at Taoyuan Airport and within 100 minutes of landing Richard was driving our Staria van along the narrow backroads a few miles north of the airport through cultivated farmland and rice paddies. This brought some widespread species which were not so easily found during the rest of the itinerary, which concentrated on the montane endemics. Expected species such as Black Drongo, Oriental Magpie, Grey Treepie, Brown Shrike, Red Collared and Spotted Doves were complemented by our only sightings of Oriental Skylark and Red-throated and Richard's Pipits, together with a very large number of Eastern Yellow Wagtails. A Golden-headed Cisticola showed very nicely, alongside the dowdier Plain Prinia and we found our first Black-faced Buntings. In the more watery parts, Wood Sandpiper, Little Ringed Plover, Eastern Spot-billed Duck, Intermediate, Great and Little Cattle Egrets, White Wagtail and Black-crowned Night-Heron were found and a couple of Black-winged Kites were seen.

Whilst the introduced Sacred Ibis appears to have been exterminated, the introduced Javan and Common Mynas continue to thrive alongside Black-collared Starlings. Crested Mynas were not found here and much the same story of competition from the highly successful Chinese (or Light-vented) exotic species has forced the endemic Styan's Bulbul into a small portion of the island's south. We could not hope for "pure" examples of the endemic bulbul, as our itinerary was not planned with Styan's in mind (requiring more time than was at our disposal. We had a decent chance of seeing almost all the other endemic species and subspecies however).

In mid-afternoon we drove south along the main eastern highway to visit the lovely woodland above Shimen Reservoir. Our principal target here, the gorgeous Taiwan Blue Magpie, was quickly found. Other endemics first seen here included Taiwan Scimitar-Babbler and Grey-cheeked Fulvetta. Other birds of interest included our first Swinhoe's White-eye.

We then made our way to our little hotel 13 km up the road to the Dasueyshan National Forest in central Taiwan for a well-earned sleep after a pleasant supper in Dongshi.

Day 3

Sunday 5th March

Mid to high elevation Dasueyshan road

Weather: Cool, fine and sunny

We covered the length of the road from km 13 to km 50 birding mainly from 2000m to 2600m during the course of a full and rewarding day on this excellent birding road, which is very well engineered and maintained yet passes through almost constant forest.

The morning started - as did the following two - at our modest but well-situated guesthouse with an early breakfast combining egg dishes from the kitchen with Richard's ample selection of muesli and other more typically Western breakfast delights. As the light began to improve up the road, we encountered a male of the incredibly gorgeous Swinhoe's Pheasant, followed by two females (likewise very smart by comparison with others in the genus) and a bonus pair of Taiwan Partridge, rooting around the leaf litter at the side of the road. A male Swinhoe's treated us to a jumping display with erect head wattles, which seemed to impress us more than the females.

A calling White-bellied Green Pigeon went unseen, but a flock of finches high in a tree turned out to be Brown Bullfinches for our only view of this endemic subspecies. These "sky island" taxa needed to be seen on Taiwan, because there is growing molecular evidence that they have been isolated for so long that they are divergent from mainland siblings to a sufficient extent to warrant specific status: Pleistocene glaciations joined Taiwan to the mainland but at least some of these montane birds don't appear to have experienced renewed gene flow with their mainland ancestors.

Yellow Tits showed nicely in one mid-elevation mixed flock, whereas flocks of Taiwan Yuhinas were everywhere. Besides the Yellow Tits, another endemic which showed especially well on this trip was White-eared Sibia, groups of which showed a predilection for the nectar of flowering cherry blossom, for which our trip was nicely timed. A Taiwan Cupwing also co-operated nicely, viewed by all of us from the road, which carried only a modest amount of carefully driven traffic.

A little higher up, a small group of Taiwan Barwing was enjoyed, and we had the first of several encounters with the hulking White's Thrush, foraging on the ground quite unconcerned by our presence and remarkably easy to approach. Presumably these birds don't encounter humans on their breeding grounds in the remote taiga. Taiwan Whistling Thrushes flitted off the roadside: deceptively dark in the early morning shade of the forested road, but brilliantly spangled cobalt in the leader's torch beam. At the higher levels we encountered several Collared Bush Robins - a female to start, then several lovely males. The endemics were giving themselves up remarkably quickly!

Non-endemic species completing the rich tapestry included cute and characterful flocks of Black-throated Bushtits, the handsome Green-backed Tit, White-tailed Robins, bamboo-loving Rufous-faced Warblers and Fire-breasted Flowerpeckers and a responsive Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler provided additional variety (the last four all taxa endemic to Taiwan).

At the top of the road a nice open area with surprisingly good park facilities provided many opportunities to see birds well, including the highly distinctive Taiwan form of Spotted Nutcracker, doing its thing at a nut cache; and a party of the beautiful White-whiskered Laughingthrush, one of those rather confiding representatives of its family and easily viewed. The extremely smart, tall-crested endemic form of Coal Tit were admired in the conifers up here, along with several Flamecrest, a less common endemic species. A couple of sightings of Mountain Hawk Eagle along a side trail leading from the upper park were enjoyed, along with some good views for all of a pair Taiwan Fulvetta.

It had also been a good day for mammals, with good views of Formosan Striped and Owston's Long-nosed Squirrels in addition to the more widespread Pallas's Squirrel and a small group of the endemic Formosan Macaques.

Coming back down the main road, a large pre-roost flock of Asian House-Martin circled the valley around a scenic bridge. As night fell on our way down to the accommodation, we made a relatively successful attempt to see Mountain Scops Owl, a common and widespread SE Asian owl which almost always remains invisible, despite being freely vocal. On this occasion we had more luck than most, with views for some of us of a responsive bird flying over the road in the beam of Richard's torch. Well satisfied with our day but looking forward to a repeat trip up the mountain, we enjoyed a nice dinner at the guesthouse.

Day 4

Monday 6th March

Lower-mid to high elevation Dasueyshan road

Weather: Cool, fine and sunny

Our second and last full day on Dasueyshan began at a slightly lower elevation in a cultivated valley where we had some frustrating encounters with Taiwan Bamboo Partridge, seen by some but not all, with Taiwan Partridge confusing us by also appearing in the same patch of open woodland scrub. One of a pair of Dusky Fulvetta eventually showed quite well above one of the many shrines which dot Taiwan. A Malayan Night Heron was a much easier photographic subject, as was a Plumbeous Water Redstart, a perched Crested Goshawk and a pair of Bronzed Drongo.

Continuing up the mountain on this lovely sunny morning, we needed to concentrate on finding three of the trickier endemics. Two laughingthrushes - Rusty and Rufous-crowned would we knew require time and patience and we walked a long and beautiful stretch of the road fringed by particularly tall forest. First, we located a Snowy-browed Flycatcher - another endemic form. A stake-out waterfall was however too dry to tempt the resident Little Forktails to show for us.

Just when it seemed we might not encounter any Rufous-crowned Laughingthrushes (a mature forest species requiring a large home range), a flock began to respond distantly and at length came through the understorey to be visible from the roadside and we all enjoyed multiple views of a large flock of what seemed to be 40-60 of this characterful species.

Rusty Laughingthrush goes around in smaller groups and one such provided us with excellent studies rooting through the leaf litter above a parking area where we enjoyed a picnic lunch. During the course of our quest for Rufous-crowned Laughingthrushes we also came across a beautiful male Taiwan Vivid Niltava, which had been mysteriously absent from our list the previous day. To cap the day, a young male Mikado Pheasant appeared in late afternoon foraging along a track below the top ranger station: quite a relief, as we knew that this would be our best chance of seeing this high-elevation species.

Day 5

Tuesday 7th March

Lower elevation Dasyueshan Forest to SW Coast

Weather: Sunny and warm

With all expected higher-elevation birds under the belt, we spent the morning on a side road off the 14km marker, birding a pleasantly quiet valley at lower elevation with a rich tree flora as the authorities have instigated a programme of replanting formerly cultivated areas with endemic trees. Taiwan Bamboo Partridge again gave us the run-around but a small group was seen by all in the end as they ran off along the woodland floor down a slope. They are clearly common and widespread in scrubby edge habitat, but hard to see.

More co-operative were quite a number of Taiwan Barbets at a fruiting tree; a pair of Collared Finchbill; a Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker and a photogenically perched Crested Serpent Eagle - one of five seen during the morning in this lovely valley. Richard was encouraged by our sighting of Taiwan Blue Magpies for the first time at this location. The main reason for visiting this location however was to find Chestnut-bellied Tit at one of its few accessible sites for this oddly local endemic. It was indeed almost the first bird we saw, though by no means common even here, it seemed. Later in the morning a gorgeous male Maroon Oriole popped up, saving us a further detour later on in the trip. Also chalked up for the only time on the trip were a pair of Taiwan Hwamei, eventually settling to provide some decent views.

We then moved to the lowlands following a pleasant lunch in Dongshi, passing south across the Tropic of Cancer to spend the afternoon in wetlands and coastal areas around Budai, where we stayed overnight. This is a very extensive area of abandoned salt pans now managed as a bird reserve. At this time of year wader diversity is not great, but we enjoyed the good late afternoon light conditions as we drove around in order to access various vantage points.

Ruddy-breasted Crakes were viewed nicely from the van and a Sand Plover was adjudged to be a Greater. A single snipe - Common- was seen. Waders were scattered around in small numbers and consisted mainly of Dunlins, presumed Red-necked Stints and a few Black-tailed Godwit, Common Redshank and Greenshank. But there were clearly lots of fish to eat judging by the large numbers of Great Cormorant, Common Kingfisher, egrets and

herons. One of the Great Egrets looked very different and was identified as the *modesta* subspecies. A single Purple Heron was seen, in addition to a Cinnamon Bittern and several Yellow Bittern.

Budai is famed for its Black-faced Spoonbills and over 250 were visible but mainly rather distant; closer birds included a few Eurasian Spoonbill. Duck variety was not great but included a few Northern Pintail and lots of Eurasian Wigeon, the commonest being Northern Shoveler. After dinner in Budai, we were able to watch one of the many Savanna Nightjars in the torch beam above us, as it repeatedly uttered its surprisingly loud call above our heads. The call must annoy local residents nearby, as these nightjars nest on the flat roof of urban buildings.

Day 6

Wednesday 8th March

SW Coast to mid-elevation Alishan

Weather: Warm & sunny

We visited Jiangjun - a slightly different area of the extensive wetlands near Budai - in hopes of finding a Nordmann's Greenshank, but it was not to be. We saw many more shorebirds loafing on the tidal flats this morning - a large flock of Pacific Golden Plovers, a few Grey Plovers and some Kentish Plovers, looking remarkably colourful. A Brown Shrike posed nicely. There were a few more larids in evidence this morning. Whiskered Terns predominated and a good number of Caspian Terns loafed on the banks of the erstwhile salt pans. We drew a blank with the rare Nordmann's, but added Spotted Redshank and Common Sandpiper to the wader list although we were unable to find any Broad-billed Sandpipers. Some of the Little Egrets looked distinctly like Pacific Reef Herons and another ID conundrum was an adult gull, which seemed more likely to be "Mongolian" *mongolicus* than Lesser Black-backed *fuscus* (though *mongolicus* is currently - and rather oddly-assigned to Vega Gull).

The morning here in glorious weather was a delight despite missing those targets and it became even better when Dave H spotted a distant rail moving across a relatively open area of mud which proved to be a write-in and a life bird for many of us: a Slaty-breasted Rail.

After driving past the entrance to the Pheasant-tailed Jacana Reserve - which certainly lived up to its name - we headed back north up the main motorway system before leaving east on the road up to Alishan, our destination for the next two nights. We took a couple of quiet side-road detours off the Alishan road and enjoyed a picnic and some nice butterflies. The main achievement of a very warm afternoon's birding was finally to set eyes on a pair of Black-necklaced Scimitar-Babbler, a species which had played a typical game of hide-and-seek on previous occasions when we had heard them calling. It had seemed that we would be out of luck but we carried on just that bit further along a side-trail through bamboo and persistence paid off.

We arrived in Alishan itself in time to enjoy some late-afternoon birding in the company of Taiwanese tourists who had come to enjoy the cherry-flowering season. Amongst the sibilas and white-eyes feeding on the nectar, we found our first Taiwan Rosefinch - albeit in female-type plumage. We also visited a temple during which we were treated to an explanation of Taoism by Richard. A Brown-headed Thrush showed nicely here and with some nice scrubby margins to the carefully manicured and scenic Oolong tea plantations, the area clearly merited a return visit.

Day 7

Thursday 9th March

Upper Alishan – Takajia Saddle at 2300-2600m, all day

Weather: Fine and pleasant

As we were keen to see all the remaining endemic high-elevation species of the tour, we left at 6am and stopped for a field breakfast halfway up to the saddle, already attracting the attentions of the attractive but thieving Formosan Macaques. Moving a little higher, a flock of Taiwan Bullfinch called from atop a roadside tree: this split from Grey-headed Bullfinch is surprisingly dowdy and not so very different from its congener the Brown Bullfinch which we had seen on the Dasyueshan road. In both cases these were the only encounters for the group. Taiwan Vivid Niltavas showed nicely as we strode along the road, which afforded lovely vistas and was surprisingly quiet, at least at this time in the morning.

Our targets obliged, after presenting various levels of difficulty. White-browed Bush Robins of the endemic form (which is a very strong candidate for a species split) were found with no difficulty, overlapping with Collared Bush Robins but seeming to prefer the higher altitude native bamboo. Taiwan Shortwing were not singing, making them very hard to locate, but some of us did get a fleeting view of one crossing the steps of a path through bamboo above the saddle after another had shown very furtively to some of us hopping quietly from the base of one bamboo to another. A male Taiwan Rosefinch was found here in the bamboo zone too, as well as a couple more females. A connoisseur's bird up here was a *taivanus* Eurasian Wren which showed particularly well. Star bird of the day was undoubtedly the very gaudy Taiwan form of Golden Parrotbill: another reward for persistence and the dictum, "let's just go another 50 yards further". A switch of tape player and recording elicited an immediate response and the group leader perched out in the open for what seemed like an eternity, but sadly not time enough for us to focus our lenses on it! There were lots of Steere's Liocichlas and White-whiskered Laughingthrushes...but we still could not detect any sign of Taiwan Bush Warblers.

The native bamboo may be an acquired taste, but we could all admire the magnificent ancient hemlock pines here at the Takajia Saddle, alongside hundreds of delightfully joyful Taiwanese. Richard was on hand to assist with group selfies and smartphone photography, surprising the locals with his linguistic skills (Taiwanese as well as Mandarin, we gathered.) Taiwanese people really seem to appreciate the natural beauty of their island and love to be outdoors: we were amazed by the number of hiking trails, all clearly signposted and provided with parking areas and spotlessly clean toilet facilities. On our way down the mountain road, we stopped to watch a flock of Taiwan Barwings. We then had supper in the very pleasant communal area of the accommodation, to which Richard brought some delicious takeaway food. (Alishan has few dining options and our spacious accommodation was situated well away from the "downtown" area a few kilometres down the road).

Day 8

Friday 10th March

Mid-elevation Alishan and long drive north to Taoyuan County

Weather: Fine, becoming very warm

We had a nice relaxing start birding on foot from the hotel, walking through the tea plantations to view the very gaudy temple below us, followed by a very interesting session watching the many birds in the weedy scrub below bamboo trellis at the margins of the tea. This produced an unexpected Taiwan Bush Warbler, vigorously responding to a speculative tape, as well as a couple of Japanese Bush Warblers, all showing nicely in good light when viewed from the road above. Olive-backed Pipits were common in this habitat and three more female-type Taiwan Rosefinches were found. Little Buntings foraged on the bare ground between the rows of tea bushes, alongside many Black-faced Buntings. A Siberian Rubythroat improved the views we had had here on the evening of the 8th.

After packing up and breakfasting back at our hotel, we set off down the mountain road, stopping at a convenient parking area by a celebrated rock. Open grassy areas fringed by shaded trees provided perfect forage for thrushes here and we enjoyed an Eye-browed Thrush, in the company of three Brown-headed Thrushes. We also saw the island form of Eurasian Nuthatch - our only one of the trip. A little further down the road we alighted hurriedly to view a Besra soaring above the vehicle. After lunch in the same restaurant in the main town of Alishan where had dined the previous evening, we drove the minor road via Guanghai down to the west coast highway, stopping at a dry riverbed when one of us saw a Brown Dipper flying into a dark crevice. We stopped at a colourful gathering to offer a stage performance for the delight of one of the gods at the temple of Bantianyen, before a final stop at a large and very pleasant motorway services on the highway north to our hotel for the night in Longtan in Taoyuan County.

Day 9

Saturday 11th March

Jinshan on the North Coast, evening departure from Taipei airport, Taoyuan

Weather: Sunny and very warm

We left at 0530 to round the south side of Taipei on our route north to the coast and the rather forbidding building which is the Educational Centre at Jinshan. The reason for coming here was to see Temminck's Cormorant scoped on one of the "Twin Candlesticks" and to see what we could find in the extensive scrubby area between the Educational Centre building and the coast itself, as well as to look for anything of interest in the rice paddies and wetland areas here. Passing through the town of Jingshan, we spotted a pair of Crested Myna from the van.

The weather had been fine for a while and it was much too early in the year to catch the northbound migration, so hopes were not high, but Richard said that he always found something of interest here. Sure enough, Manchurian Bush Warblers were present, and we all had multiple views of this hulking warbler. In addition, there was a good smattering of thrushes on the grassy lawns, with Naumann's being added for the trip (a couple of individuals showing signs of hybridisation with Red-throated and Dusky types...). A juvenile Night Heron raised hopes that it might be Japanese but proved to be a Malayan when it showed itself in better light.

Best of all were two Oriental Storks, which we eventually tracked down for good scope views (one displaying a ring). There wasn't much else of interest in the wetlands, so we took a lovely trail to the headland promontory to admire the scenic Twin Candlesticks. The cormorants were not really diagnosable at such a distance but could safely be inferred to be Temminck's on the grounds that they appeared to be juveniles expecting to be fed; in classic breeding habitat; and that only that species is ever observed at this spot from boats.

After a sylvan picnic in the shade, it was time to board the vehicle for the drive around the north of Taipei - a good opportunity to see the lie of the land around the metropolis and its impressive road system - to stop off at our makeshift shower-and-changing hotel in the vicinity of the airport, which we reached in good time to check in for our trouble-free return flight to London via Hong Kong.

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Species lists

Birds (E=Endemic, N=Near-endemic I=Introduced)

Bold italics denote endemic subspecies		
All seen except where noted		
Common name	Scientific name	Notes
Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	many at Budai
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	common at Budai
Eastern Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas zonorhyncha</i>	scattering, small nos
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	a few
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	pr at Budai
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	40 + Jinshan
Taiwan Partridge - E	<i>Arborophila crudigularis</i>	Dasueyshan- 2 prs
Mikado Pheasant - E	<i>Syrnaticus mikado</i>	Dasueyshan- 1 male
Swinhoe's Pheasant - E	<i>Lophura swinhoii</i>	Dasueyshan & Alishan a few
Taiwan Bamboo Partridge - E	<i>Bambusicola sonorivox</i>	various locations, poorly
Savanna Nightjar <i>stictomus</i>	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>	Budai- common in town
House Swift	<i>Apus nipalensis</i>	a few sightings
Feral Rock Dove - I	<i>Columba livia</i>	
Ashy Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba pulchricollis</i>	1 for some
Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>	common
Red Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i>	common wetlands
Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>	common
Common Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>	for some
White-bellied Green Pig <i>sororius</i>	<i>Treron sieboldii</i>	heard 1 Dasyueshan lower
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	a few
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	a few
Slaty-breasted Rail	<i>Lewinia striata taiwana</i>	1 at Jiangjun (Budai)
Ruddy-breasted Crake	<i>Zapornia fusca</i>	5 at Budai
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	for some
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	50+
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	a few scattered
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	a few scattered wetlands
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	100+ Budai
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	10 Budai
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	10 Budai & Jinshan
Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	8 at Budai
Greater Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>	1 at Budai
Pheasant-tailed Jacana	<i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>	30 Budai reserve fields
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	for some
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	2 Budai
Red-necked Stint	<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	20 or so Budai
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	300 + at Budai
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1 at Budai
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	2 Budai
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	6 Budai
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	10 at Budai
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	7
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	3 at Budai

Bold italics denote endemic subspecies		
All seen except where noted		
Common name	Scientific name	Notes
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	30 on trip
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	20 Budai
Vega Gull	<i>Larus vegae mongolicus</i>	1 adult at Jiangjun
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	? See above
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	a couple, not seen by all
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	30 Budai reserve fields
Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	a couple, not seen by all
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	numerous
Oriental Stork	<i>Ciconia boyciana</i>	2 at Jinshan
Japanese Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax capillatus</i>	Jinshan (presumed)
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	numerous at Budai
Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	a few at Budai
Black-faced Spoonbill	<i>Platalea minor</i>	Budai and a few at Jinshan
Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>	6 at Budai
Cinnamon Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>	1 nicely at Budai
Malayan Night Heron	<i>Gorsachius melanolophus</i>	2
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	many at Budai
Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>	not common
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	hundreds
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	1
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	common ; 1 <i>modesta</i> in breeding plumage
Intermediate Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>	a few
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	many at Budai
Pacific Reef Heron	<i>Egretta sacra</i>	? Quite likely some at Budai
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Jinshan
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	a few
Crested Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	1 in flight
Crested Serpent Eagle <i>hoya</i>	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>	several
Mountain Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus nipalensis</i>	2 high at Dasyueshan
Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malaiensis</i>	3- Dasyueshan & lower Alishan
Crested Goshawk <i>formosae</i>	<i>Accipiter trivirgatus</i>	several sightings
Besra <i>fuscipectus</i>	<i>Accipiter virgatus</i>	1
Eurasian Sparrowhawk (migrant)	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	female at Jinshan
Eastern Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus spilonotus</i>	Budai
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	Shimen & Jinshan- a few
Collared Owlet	<i>Taeniopteryx brodiei</i>	Heard only
Mountain Scops Owl	<i>Otus spilocephalus</i>	1 seen in flight by some plus 4 heard
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	2 at jinshan
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	several at Budai
Taiwan Barbet - E	<i>Psilopogon nuchalis</i>	10 seen Dasyueshan; heard most days
Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker <i>kaleensis</i>	<i>Yungipicus canicapillus</i>	1 at Dasyueshan lower
White-backed Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos leucotos</i>	?Heard
Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>	Heard
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1
Grey-chinned Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus solaris</i>	common lower montane
Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>	3
White-bellied Erpornis	<i>Erpornis zantholeuca</i>	a few lower Dasyueshan

Bold italics denote endemic subspecies		
All seen except where noted		
Common name	Scientific name	Notes
Maroon Oriole	Oriolus traillii	1 male lower Dasyueshan
Bronzed Drongo	Dicrurus aeneus	a few prs
Black Drongo	Dicrurus macrocercus	fairly common
Black-naped Monarch	Hypothymis azurea	scattered prs lower els
Taiwan Blue Magpie - E	Urocissa caerulea	two sites, small groups
Grey Treepie formosae	Dendrocitta formosae	common lower els
(Oriental) Magpie	Pica p. serica	not esp common
Spotted Nutcracker owstoni	Nucifraga caryocatactes	1 seen at top Dasyueshan
Large-billed Crow	Corvus macrorhynchos	not many seen
Coal Tit ptilosus	Periparus ater	common high montane
Chestnut-bellied Tit - E	Sittiparus castaneoventris	1 lower Dasyueshan
Green-backed Tit insperatus	Parus monticolus	common
Yellow Tit - E	Macholophus holsti	uncommon middle montane
Oriental Skylark wattersi	Alauda gulgula	2 Taoyuan fields
Black Bulbul nigerrimus	Hypsipetes leucocephalus	common at lower elevations
Collared Finchbill	Spizixos semitorques	a few
Light-vented Bulbul	Pycnonotus sinensis	abundant lower els
Grey-throated Martin	Riparia chinensis	a few
Pacific Swallow	Hirundo tahitica	common
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica	quite a few sightings
Asian House Martin	Delichon dasypus	200 Dasyueshan road bridge
Red-rumped Swallow	Cecropis daurica	a few sightings
Striated Swallow	Cecropis striolata	? Possibly but difficult ID
Taiwan Cupwing - E	Pnoepyga formosana	1 at Dasyueshan upper el
Rufous-faced Warbler	Abroscopus albogularis	common by voice
Japanese Bush Warbler	Horornis diphone	Alishan
Manchurian Bush Warbler	Horornis canturians	Jinshan- presumed borealis here but species limits still unclear
Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler concolor	Horornis acanthizoides	abundant montane edge
Black-throated Bushtit	Aegithalos concinnus	a few seen in mountains
Yellow-browed Warbler	Phylloscopus inornatus	Jinshan
Taiwan Bush Warbler - E	Locustella alishanensis	Alishan
Golden-headed Cisticola volitans	Cisticola exilis	Taoyuan
Striped Prinia striata	Prinia striata	3- lower montane shrubs
Yellow-bellied Prinia	Prinia flaviventris	Budai
Plain Prinia	Prinia inornata	common in wetlands
Taiwan Fulvetta - E	Fulvetta formosana	both mountains- small nos
Golden Parrotbill morrisoniana	Suthora verreauxi	Takajia Saddle
Taiwan Yuhina - E	Yuhina brunneiceps	abundant at higher elevations
Swinhoe's White-eye Z.s. simplex	Zosterops simplex	small parties only
Rufous-capped Babbler praecognita	Cyanoderma ruficeps	common by voice
Taiwan Scimitar Babbler - E	Pomatorhinus musicus	fairly common
Black-necklaced Scimitar Babbler - E	Erythrogonys erythrocnemis	6 prs by voice, 2 seen
Dusky Fulvetta brunneus	Schoeniparus brunneus	both mountains in small nos
Grey-cheeked Fulvetta - E	Alcippe morrisonia	very common

Bold italics denote endemic subspecies		
All seen except where noted		
Common name	Scientific name	Notes
White-whiskered Laughingthrush - E	Trochalopteron morrisonianum	easy to see upper elevations
White-eared Sibia - E	Heterophasia auricularis	common in flocks at flowering cherries mid montane
Taiwan Barwing - E	Actinodura morrisoniana	a couple of parties each mountain
Steere's Liocichla - E	Liocichla steerii	very common
Taiwan Hwamei - E	Garrulax taewanus	Dasueyshan lower- a pr
Rufous-crowned Laughingthrush - E	Pterorhinus ruficeps	Dasueyshan- large flock at mid-el
Rusty Laughingthrush - E	Pterorhinus poecilorhynchus	Dasueyshan- uncommon by voice, 8 in flock
Flamecrest - E	Regulus goodfellowi	fairly common upper elevations
Eurasian Wren <i>taivanus</i>	Troglodytes troglodytes	Takajia Saddle- 1
Eurasian Nuthatch <i>formosana</i>	Sitta europaea	Alishan- 1
Crested Myna <i>formosanus</i>	Acridotheres cristatellus	Jinshan-2
Javan Myna - I	Acridotheres javanicus	abundant lowlands
Common Myna - I	Acridotheres tristis	common in lowlands
Black-collared Starling - I	Gracupica nigricollis	a few in lowlands
White's Thrush (HO)	Zoothera aurea	both mountain upper elevations- several seen
Eyebrowed Thrush	Turdus obscurus	1 at jinshan
Pale Thrush	Turdus pallidus	several sightings lower elvations
Brown-headed Thrush	Turdus chrysolaus	several sightings
Naumann's Thrush	Turdus naumanni	3 at Jinshan
Oriental Magpie-Robin	Copsychus saularis	3
White-rumped Shama - I	Copsychus malabaricus	for some
Taiwan Vivid Niltava - E	Niltava vivida	a few both mountains
Taiwan Shortwing - E	Brachypteryx goodfellowi	Takajia saddle- 2, poorly
Siberian Rubythroat	Calliope calliope	Alishan- 2
White-tailed Robin <i>montium</i>	Myiomela leucura	several both mountains
White-browed Bush Robin <i>formosanus</i>	Tarsiger indicus	Takajia saddle- 10
Collared Bush Robin - E	Tarsiger johnstoniae	17: both mountains
Taiwan Whistling Thrush - E	Myiophonus insularis	seen daily on mountains
Snowy-browed Flycatcher <i>innexa</i>	Ficedula hyperythra	Dasueyshan- male
Daurian Redstart	Phoenicurus aureus	fairly common
Plumbeous Water Redstart	Phoenicurus fuliginosus	a few
Brown Dipper	Cinclus pallasii	1 for Steve at Guanhua
Fire-breasted Flowerpecker <i>formosum</i>	Dicaeum ignipectus	Dasueyshan 4 one day
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	Passer montanus	abundant
Scaly-breasted Munia	Lonchura punctulata	common
White-rumped Munia	Lonchura striata	15 Dasueyshan lower
Eastern Yellow Wagtail <i>taivana</i>	Motacilla tschutschensis	40 at Taoyuan
Grey Wagtail	Motacilla cinerea	common
White Wagtail <i>lugens</i> & <i>leucopsis</i>	Motacilla alba	a few of each
Richard's Pipit	Anthus richardi	Taoyuan- 2
Olive-backed Pipit	Anthus hodgsoni	Alishan- common
Red-throated Pipit	Anthus cervinus	Taoyuan- 4
Brown Bullfinch <i>uchidai</i>	Pyrrhula nipalensis	Dasueyshan- flock of 20+
Taiwan Bullfinch - E	Pyrrhula owstoni	Alishan- flock of 7+

Bold italics denote endemic subspecies		
All seen except where noted		
Common name	Scientific name	Notes
Taiwan Rosefinch - E	<i>Carpodacus formosanus</i>	8- Takaija Saddle & Alishan
Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	Alishan- 5
Black-faced Bunting	<i>Emberiza spodocephala</i>	common
Endemic birds not encountered		
<i>Common Pheasant formosanus</i>	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	
Taiwan Green Pigeon	<i>Treron f. formosae</i>	
<i>Barred Buttonquail rostratus</i>	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>	
<i>Himalayan Owl yamadae</i>	<i>Strix niviculum</i>	
<i>Eurasian Jay taivanus</i>	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	
Styan's Bulbul- E	<i>Pycnonotus taivanus</i>	
Taiwan Thrush - E	<i>Turdus niveiceps</i>	
<i>Plain Flowerpecker uchidae</i>	<i>Dicaeum minullum</i>	
<i>Alpine Accentor fennelli</i>	<i>Prunella collaris</i>	
Mammals		
Maritime Striped Squirrel	<i>Tamiops maritimus maritimus</i>	3
Perny's Long-nosed Squirrel	<i>Dremomys pernyi owstoni</i>	Dasueyshan- 2
Pallas's Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus erythraeus taiwanensis</i>	5
Red-and-white Giant Flying Squirrel	<i>Petaurista alborufus lena</i>	Heard
Formosan Rock Macaque	<i>Macaca cyclopis</i>	common higher els
Reeves's (Formosan) Muntjac	<i>Muntiacus reevesi micrurus</i>	common
Formosan Serow	<i>Capricornis swinhoei</i>	Dasueyshan- 1 at dusk
Siberian Weasel	<i>Mustela sibirica taivana</i>	for some
<i>Rattus</i> sp.		
? Noctule Bat species		1 at Alishan

Others

Reptiles & Amphibians		
Common name	Scientific name	notes
Broad-folded Frog	<i>Hylarana latouchii</i>	Alishan
Central Formosa (Bankor) Toad	<i>Bufo bankorensis</i>	Jinshan
Formosan Grass Lizard	<i>Takydromus formosanus</i>	Budai
Skink sp. (Chinese Bue-tailed Skink)	<i>Plestiodon [chinensis] formosensis</i>	Jinshan
Chinese Stripe-necked Turtle	<i>Mauremys sinensis</i>	Alishan

Butterflies (* = S Lowe only)	
Ceylon Blue Glassy Tiger	<i>Ideopsis similis</i>
Yellow Orange-tip	<i>Ixias pyrene</i>
Indian Cabbage White	<i>Pieris canidia</i>

Common Mapwing	Cyrestis thyodamas formosana
Peacock Pansy *	Junonia almana
Himalyan Jester	Symbrenthia hypselis scatina
Restricted Purple Sapphire	Heliophorus ila)
Broad-banded Sailor	Neptis sankara
Himalayan Sergeant	Athyma opalina
(Formosan) Common Jester	Symbrenthia lilaea formosanus
Spotted Sawtooth	Prioneris thestylis formosana
Three-spot Grass Yellow	Eurema blanda arsakia
Chestnut Tiger	Parantica sita nipponica
Pink-spotted Windmill- E	Byasa impediens
Chocolate Pansy	Junonia iphita
Angled Red Forester	Lethe chandica ratnacri
<i>Neope sp.</i>	
<i>Japanese Oak-Blue</i>	Arhopala sp
<i>Powdered Oak-Blue</i>	Arhopala sp