

# HAPPY ISLAND, Hebei, China, 9-12 Oct 2006

***An at-a-glance list of 119 species of birds.***

*By Jesper Hornskov \* ALL RIGHTS RESERVED*

*[this draft 19 Oct 2006]*

Please note that the following list is best considered a work in progress. It should not be quoted without consulting the author.

Based mostly on my own field notes, this brief write-up covers the birds noted by F Stermitz & myself during a visit to Happy Island. While the island has not remained immune to change since discovered by birders in 1990, developments can scarcely be said to have significantly diminished the island's attractiveness to birds. Situated right on the flyway, its patches of woodland, areas of scrub, 'grassy-reedy flats', shrimp ponds & extensive mudflats (with an easily accessible high tide roost) continue to attract large numbers of migrants in both autumn & spring. If anything, most birdwatchers will now find the island a more attractive holiday destination: accommodation and toilet/shower facilities are much better nowadays, and the infrastructure (access roads & mainland-to-island boat service) is much improved.

Records made on the mainland (at the Great Wall at Shanhaiguan & en route to/from Happy Island from Beidaihe) will be dealt with elsewhere – highlights included Grass Owl *Tyto longimembris*, Chinese Hill Warbler *Rhopophilus pekinensis*, Japanese Marsh Warbler *Locustella (?) pryeri*, Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbiana*, Pere David's Laughingthrush *Garrulax davidi*, Bull-headed & Chinese Grey Shrikes *Lanius bucephalus* & *L. sphenocercus* & Red-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*.

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**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

One heard on 9<sup>th</sup> & no less than 32 present in Central Pool on 11<sup>th</sup>.

## Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

One in Central Pool on 11<sup>th</sup>

**Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

650 on 9<sup>th</sup>, 150 on 10<sup>th</sup>, 250 on 11<sup>th</sup>, and 1,520 flying N from roost on 12<sup>th</sup>.

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

One on 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

40 heading off on migration at dusk on 11<sup>th</sup>, and two on 12<sup>th</sup>. In addition, another flock of 20 unidentified egrets headed off on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Great Egret** *E. alba*

Six heading off on migration at dusk on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Four on 9<sup>th</sup>, two on 10<sup>th</sup>, 30+ (of which 17 headed off on migration at dusk) on 11<sup>th</sup> & 2+ on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Purple Heron** *A. purpurea*

Two seen arriving on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

A flock of 19<sup>th</sup> landing in the shrimp ponds on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

Three showing well on the mudflats on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Shelduck** *T. tadorna*

300+ on 9<sup>th</sup>, 75+ on 10<sup>th</sup>, 430 on 11<sup>th</sup> & 40 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

12+ on 9<sup>th</sup>, six on 11<sup>th</sup> & one on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Falcated Duck** *A. falcate*

10+ on 0<sup>th</sup>, 12 on 10<sup>th</sup>, ten on 11<sup>th</sup> & eight on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Gadwall** *A. strepera*

Seven on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Baikal Teal** *A. formosa*

Three on 9<sup>th</sup>, 120+ on 11<sup>th</sup> & 20 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Teal** *A. crecca*

100+ on 9<sup>th</sup>, ten on 10<sup>th</sup>, 30 on 11<sup>th</sup> & 100 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Mallard** *A. platyrhynchos*

100 on 9<sup>th</sup>, 315 on 10<sup>th</sup>, 800+ on 11 & 400+ on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Yellow-nibbed Duck** *A. zonorhyncha*

300+ on 9<sup>th</sup>, 150+ on 10<sup>th</sup>, 40 on 11<sup>th</sup> & 150+ on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Northern Pintail** *A. acuta*

41 on 9<sup>th</sup>, 22 on 10<sup>th</sup>, 50 on 11<sup>th</sup> & 80 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Garganey** *A. querquedula*

One on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Northern Shoveler** *A. clypeata*

Four on 11<sup>th</sup> & one on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Two on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Tufted Duck** *A. fuligula*

One on 11+12<sup>th</sup>.

**Eastern Marsh Harrier** *Circus (aeruginosus) spilonotus*

Three on 10+11<sup>th</sup> & seven on 12<sup>th</sup>. Some long-stayers were involved, and all but two were definite 1<sup>st</sup> c-y birds.

**Hen Harrier** *C. cyaneus*

Three on 9<sup>th</sup>, two on 10+11+12<sup>th</sup>. Except for an adult female on 9+10<sup>th</sup> all were 1<sup>st</sup> c-y, including one arriving in off the sea over the jetty as we were leaving...

**Northern Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Singles on 9+10<sup>th</sup> & two on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Japanese Sparrowhawk** *A. gularis*

Singles on 9+11<sup>th</sup> & two on 10+12<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *A. nisus*

Two on 9+12<sup>th</sup> & three on 10+11<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo japonicus*

Singles on 9+10<sup>th</sup>, two on 11<sup>th</sup> & six on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

One 1<sup>st</sup> c-y on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Two daily over 9-12<sup>th</sup>.

**Amur Falcon** *F. amurensis*

Three on 10<sup>th</sup>, four on 11<sup>th</sup> & 14 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Peregrine** *F. peregrinus*

One on 9<sup>th</sup> & two on 10+11+12<sup>th</sup>. A minimum of three individuals were involved, with just one clearly passing through: an adult at 07h56 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Japanese Quail** *Coturnix japonica*

One on 9<sup>th</sup>, 3+ on 10<sup>th</sup> & three on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Crane** *Grus grus*

Most likely the same individual with Red-crowneds on 10+11<sup>th</sup>.

**Red-crowned Crane** *G. japonensis*

Six (of which two were adults and two juveniles) on 10<sup>th</sup> & seven on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Two on 10<sup>th</sup> & 16 on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*

200+ on 10<sup>th</sup>, 500+ on 11<sup>th</sup> & one on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Lesser Sand Plover** *C. mongolus*

One on 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva*

One heard on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Grey Plover** *P. squatarola*

One on 10<sup>th</sup>, 150+ on 11<sup>th</sup> & 1+ on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Northern Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Eight migr on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

15 on 10<sup>th</sup> & 500+ on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Three on 10<sup>th</sup> & one on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

One in Temple Wood on 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Two on 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

75 on 10<sup>th</sup>, 550 on 11<sup>th</sup> & ten on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Far Eastern Curlew** *N. madagascariensis*

One on 10<sup>th</sup>, eight on 11<sup>th</sup> & three on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

Singles on 9+11<sup>th</sup>.

**Marsh Sandpiper** *T. stagnatilis*

One on 9<sup>th</sup> & 25 on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Greenshank** *T. nebularia*

Two on 9<sup>th</sup>, ten on 10<sup>th</sup>, 240 on 11<sup>th</sup> & six on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus*

Two obliging individuals on 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Relict Gull** *Larus relictus*

One 1<sup>st</sup> c-y on 11<sup>th</sup> – “dropped in on flats in front of us rather briefly”, but was seen well & video’d.

**Saunders's Gull** *L. saundersi*

Three (two adults & one 1<sup>st</sup> c-y) on 10<sup>th</sup> & one adult on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Black-headed Gull** *L. ridibundus*

10+ on 9<sup>th</sup>, c200 flying to roost on 11<sup>th</sup> & five on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Black-tailed Gull** *L. crassirostris*

One on 9<sup>th</sup>, two on 10+12<sup>th</sup> & ten on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Yellow-legged Gull** *L. cachinnans mongolicus*

Two 1<sup>st</sup> c-y birds on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Heuglin's Gull** *L. heuglini taimyrensis*

Single 1<sup>st</sup> c-y birds on 10+11<sup>th</sup>.

**Gull-billed Tern** *Sterna nilotica*

Four showing well, dropping on the mudflats in front of us to pick up prey items, on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Caspian Tern** *S. caspia*

Three on 9<sup>th</sup> & four on 11+12<sup>th</sup>.

**Oriental Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis*

Six on 9<sup>th</sup>, five on 10<sup>th</sup>, 15 on 11<sup>th</sup> & 11 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*

One on 9<sup>th</sup>, five on 10<sup>th</sup> & three on 11+12<sup>th</sup>.

**Asian Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella (rufescens) cheleensis*

Five – of which four migr – on 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

c40-50 daily over 10-12<sup>th</sup>.

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

c50 daily over 9-12<sup>th</sup>.

**Red-rumped Swallow** *H. daurica*

Two on 10<sup>th</sup> & one on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi*

One on 9<sup>th</sup>, six on 10<sup>th</sup>, seven on 11<sup>th</sup> & nine on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Olive-backed Pipit** *A. hodgsoni*

One on 9<sup>th</sup>, 14 on 10<sup>th</sup>, ten on 11<sup>th</sup> & 17 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Red-throated Pipit** *A. cervinus*

Two on 10<sup>th</sup>, three (of which one was flying to roost late in the afternoon) on 11<sup>th</sup> & four on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Water Pipit** *A. spinoletta*

One on 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Buff-bellied Pipit** *A. rubescens*

44 on 9<sup>th</sup>, 39 on 10<sup>th</sup>, 73 (of which 51 were flying to roost late in the afternoon) & 23 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

Four on 9<sup>th</sup>, eight on 10<sup>th</sup> & three on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Citrine Wagtail** *M. citreola*

One fly-by male on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Grey Wagtail** *M. cinerea*

One on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**White Wagtail** *M. alba*

Four on 9<sup>th</sup>, seven on 10<sup>th</sup>, six on 11<sup>th</sup> & 19 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Ashy Minivet** *Pericrocotus divaricatus*

Singles on 9+10<sup>th</sup> & two on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Chinese Bulbul** *Pycnonotus sinensis*

Five on 9<sup>th</sup>, 32 on 10<sup>th</sup>, 10+ on 11<sup>th</sup> & 28 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Siberian Accentor** *Prunella montanella*

Two on 11+12<sup>th</sup>.

**Rufous-tailed Robin** *Luscinia sibilans*

One on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Siberian Rubythroat** *L. calliope*

Singles on 11+12<sup>th</sup>.

**Siberian Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus*

14 on 9<sup>th</sup>, five on 10<sup>th</sup>, 20 on 11<sup>th</sup> & 11 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Daurian Redstart** *Phoenicurus aureus*

Three on 9+11<sup>th</sup> & eight on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata stejnegeri*

Two on 10<sup>th</sup> & singles on 11+12<sup>th</sup>.

**White's Thrush** *Zoothera dauma*

Probably the same individual on 11+12<sup>th</sup>.

**Grey-backed Thrush** *Turdus hortulorum*

Three on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Naumann's Thrush** *T. naumanni*

One on 9<sup>th</sup>, nine on 10<sup>th</sup>, eight on 11<sup>th</sup> & eight (including the only ssp *naumanni* identified) on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**"Dark"-throated Thrush** *T. ruficollis ruficollis*

Two on 9<sup>th</sup>, ten on 11<sup>th</sup> & three on 12<sup>th</sup>. In addition, a possible *atroregularis* was seen in flight on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Fan-tailed Warbler** *Cisticola juncidis*

One on 10<sup>th</sup> & two on 11+12<sup>th</sup>.

**Black-browed Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*

Two on 9+10+12<sup>th</sup> & one on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Oriental Great Reed Warbler** *A. orientalis*

One heard on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Claudia's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus (reguloides) claudiae*

One on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Greenish Warbler** *P. trochiloides plumbeitarsus*

One heard briefly on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Pallas's Leaf Warbler** *P. proregulus*

Nine on 9<sup>th</sup>, three on 10<sup>th</sup>, 65+ on 11<sup>th</sup> & 28 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Chinese Leaf Warbler** *P. yunnanensis*

Probably the same individual heard on 10+11<sup>th</sup>.

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *P. inornatus*

Two on 9<sup>th</sup>, one on 10<sup>th</sup>, three on 11<sup>th</sup> & eight on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Radde's Warbler** *P. schwarzi*

Three on 9<sup>th</sup> & two on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Dusky Warbler** *P. fuscatus*

Two on 9<sup>th</sup>, four on 10<sup>th</sup> & six on 11+12<sup>th</sup>.

**Yellow-bellied Tit** *Parus venustulus*

One heard on 9<sup>th</sup> & 15 (incl 11 flying SE over the huts before sunrise; the other four were in West Wood later in the morning, yielding excellent views) on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Penduline Tit** *Remiz pendulinus consobrinus*

40 on 9<sup>th</sup>, 175 on 10<sup>th</sup>, 65 on 11<sup>th</sup> & 925+ on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Chestnut-flanked White-eye** *Zosterops erythropleurus*

Six on 10<sup>th</sup>, 20 on 11<sup>th</sup> & 12 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Magpie** *Pica pica*

Three on 9<sup>th</sup>, 21 heading off at 07h45 (at least a couple returned later!) & eight heading off on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Four migr on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**White-cheeked Starling** *Sturnus cineraceus*

Nine on 9<sup>th</sup>, 15 on 10<sup>th</sup>, 23 on 11<sup>th</sup> & 260+ on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

20-50+ daily. No obvious influx or departure noted.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

Two on 11<sup>th</sup> & 18 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus*

One on 10<sup>th</sup>, four on 11<sup>th</sup> & five on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Black-faced Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala*

15 on 9<sup>th</sup>, 40 on 10<sup>th</sup> & ten on 11+12<sup>th</sup>.

**Yellowhammer** *E. citrinella*

A female/juvenile-type bird seen briefly on 10<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*\*Perhaps only the 2<sup>nd</sup> record for the Hebei coast.

**Pine Bunting** *E. leucocephalos*

Two on 11<sup>th</sup> & one on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Chestnut-eared Bunting** *E. fucata*

Three on 10<sup>th</sup> & one (an adult perching obligingly on the Onion Patch fence) on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Yellow-throated Bunting** *E. elegans*

Two on 11<sup>th</sup> & four on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Yellow-browed Bunting** *E. chrysophrys*

One on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Tristram's Bunting** *E. tristrami*

One (coming down to drink) on 9<sup>th</sup> & two on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Rustic Bunting** *E. rustica*

49 on 11<sup>th</sup> & ten on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Little Bunting** *E. pusilla*

Four on 10<sup>th</sup>, 11 on 11<sup>th</sup> & ten on 12<sup>th</sup>.



**Chestnut Bunting** *E. rutila*

Two on 11<sup>th</sup> & six on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Reed Bunting** *E. schoeniclus minor*

One on 10<sup>th</sup> & two on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Pallas's Reed Bunting** *E. pallasi*

Ten on 9<sup>th</sup>, six on 10<sup>th</sup>, 26 on 11<sup>th</sup> & 38 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Japanese Reed Bunting** *E. yessoensis*

One on 10<sup>th</sup>, three on 11<sup>th</sup> & two on 12<sup>th</sup>.

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