

Guangxi, China, 12-28 Jan 2011: a relaxed family holiday (with a few birds!).

An at-a-glance list of 124 species of birds & six species of mammals recorded.

*By Jesper Hornskov ® *** [this draft 23 June 2011] *** ALL RIGHTS RESERVED*

By January the novelty value of N China's largely agreeable winter – with blue skies the norm and temperatures in Beijing, even with a windchill factored in, never below the 'bearable' range - had worn off. Though there was really little cause for complaint except that the continued lack of snow made the Chinese capital increasingly bleak we found it prudent to plan a turn in the south: bring on leafy trees and soft, moist air!

Its outstanding birdwatching opportunities made Yunnan - China's SW-most and biologically richest province - seem a tricky place to pull off that longed-for 'relaxed family holiday' so my wife and I settled for neighbouring Guangxi – nice and green, but without the birding potential that finds one falling into the habit of being on distant hilltops before sunrise!

We reached Nanning, the provincial capital, by plane PM on January 12th, 2011 and caught a taxi to the hotel in town which friends had recommended (and indeed booked for us at a favourable rate!).

Day-to-day (in brief):

13 January: Took a taxi to Qingxiu Shan, a large, ridgetop park/scenic area on the edge of the city. It was a pleasant place for a walk (all the while breathing the hoped-for 'soft, moist air'): not hard to get away from people, and not crowded; in particular the section over towards Longxiang Pagoda had some decent forest, and a couple of bird photographers whom we later ran into at Shiwan Dashan told us that Qingxiu Shan indeed is the provincial capital's prime site. Yellow-browed Warblers were calling everywhere, Japanese Whiteeyes were flying back and forth giving their rather Siskiney calls, and in one particularly away-from-people gully we even found a group of Hwameis, a species of Laughingthrush sometimes refer'd to as 'Melodious Laughingthrush'. This name is well deserved – but its varied, powerful song has made it probably the most popular cagebird in China, much sought by illegal (but widely tolerated) bird trappers as an especially able songster is worth serious money once it has made its way to one of China's affluent cities.

14 January: We visited 'Guangxi Botanical Garden of Medicinal Plants' (there's apparently another botanical garden as well) in the morning, finding the grounds dense with greenery and with considerable birdwatching potential – we did not do it full justice (but did find several smart Black-breasted Thrushes) as not only were we being picked up by friends at noon but we took time to seek out the clinic's herbal specialist and purchased various remedies (the miraculous effects of which we are still waiting for at the time of writing!).

In the afternoon we walked along the Yong River on a newly constructed promenade – pleasant enough, but not especially rewarding bird-wise, though we did get close encounters with the ubiquitous Japanese Whiteeyes.

15 January: We caught the 11:30 Longzhou bus from Langdong bus station (busses are @ hourly and we would undoubtedly have got seats even if we hadn't bought tickets the previous day). The bus was ten minutes late getting underway and then we had half an hour's drive W across the city before turning S onto the highway – exit for Longzhou, 30-odd kilometers from the town, at 14:20. The further S we travelled the nicer the surroundings – planted bamboos swaying in the breeze; water buffaloes grazing by a river; karst hills in wintry sunshine.

Upon arrival we were met by our host, catching motor tricycles (one for each – what with our bulky luggage we couldn't both fit into one of the tiny contraptions) to the nearby Longjia hotel while our host followed on his own motorcycle. After a very late lunch we walked over to Zhongshan Park, which turned out to be attractively diverse if somewhat lacking in dense tangles: 'some tall trees, very few flowers' – among the highlights were wintering Black Bulbuls (white-headed morph birds are very attractive!), an obliging Red-flanked Bluetail, a close-up Brown Shrike still in immature plumage, and a smart female Japanese Thrush.

16 January: Our host picked us up in a microbus. Stopping briefly at a market to purchase provisions it took barely an hour to reach the Nonggang reserve, where we'd planned to spend three to four days getting acquainted with an area that would perhaps – despite its longstanding status as a National Nature Reserve – have remained of minor importance to birdwatchers had it not been for the recent discovery there of a species new to science, Nonggang Babbler.

After a brief hotpot breakfast ('To warm up; brrrrrr...' explained our host: to us, coming from N China, it was at most chilly but to the locals it was *cold*!) we started on foot into the reserve, admiring the karst hills which looked very lovely, their beauty enhanced under the continuing, not-to-be-taken-for-granted winter sunshine. Finding our bird took a little longer than our host had expected (and the hunt – along obscure tracks – unfortunately cost my wife a twisted leg); indeed, finding any birds at all was comparatively hard work despite the pristine state of the forest away from the valley-bottom maize fields. Nonetheless we managed good looks at a number of more or less widespread species, including Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler, Streaked Wren Babbler, the recently split (thanks to the advancing techniques of DNA untangling) Schaeffer's Fulvetta, and a vocal Lesser Racquet-tailed Drongo.

17 January: Even with a good novel to read, even re-read, the welcoming but chilly reserve hostel wasn't the place to hole up for several days and nurse a leg injury, so we adjusted our plans – 'another day of seeing what we can, then back to Longzhou'.

As on the previous morning, things were slow initially but little by little our host and I wrung some birds from the quiet forest – and some mammals: a trip highlight was a roving band of Crab-eating Mongoose. Half a dozen Red-flanked Bluetails, a superb male Japanese Thrush, several Bianchi's Warblers (another split shored up by DNA analysis – how long will we have to wait before a device is marketed that beeps when we get to within a hundred meters of an unusual combination of amino acids? I'd like mine *blue*, product designers kindly take note!), and a diurnal Barred Owlet.

18 January: Back in town since the night before, we returned to the park after breakfast at the hotel (adding Puff-throated Babbler to our list for our adopted Local Patch), and in the afternoon visited nearby Xiaoliancheng, six kilometers out of town on Bus 2 (leaving across the square from the

hotel). Jaded travelers might consider the price charged for access the most remarkable thing about this temple/hilltop fortification (over which several House Swift hung on the breeze), but we'd both seen less interesting places – the uneven steps up to the top were, however, not exactly what the doctor recommended to ease the pain of a leg injury, and so we returned to town to fit in a final stroll in the park before the farewell dinner with our host and his family.

19 January: We departed for Shangsi, gateway to the Shiwan Dashan reserve, on the 8:10 bus – there was just the one direct bus a day, but it would have been possible to catch any of several other busses and change at Chongzuo...

The recommended hotel, the Changcheng, was full so we found ourselves in the not-quite-so-recommended (but entirely adequate) Nanyuan hotel. The desk staff proved friendly and helpful, but the town itself was 'dreadfully messy' (the sort of place where you should think twice about visiting the local market if you're not wearing wellies) as well as chilly.

20 January: Before breakfast I visited the park spotted as we were coming into town yesterday. At the top end of Zhonghua Road it was a ten minute walk from our hotel, straight up the road; the park, covering a minor ridge of topsoil-less, hard earth, has a nine-tier pagoda, some waste grass in erosion gullies, and planted eucalyptus trees (whose flowers attracted hordes of Japanese Whiteeyes and one lovely male Crimson Sunbird), pines, and a tangle of bamboo (home to at least one Hwamei) at the bottom. To find the last walk left along the wall behind the basketball courts when past the pagoda... however, the park is – diplomatically speaking - of limited interest: the sort of place one would not visit except on a morning when one's companion insists on a lie-in!

As in Nanning we took the time to search for miracle cures: this time we picked up some medicinal plasters – newly developed and locally produced, they were the subject of an intense advertising campaign on the local TV channel – before heading off for Shiwan Dashan at 11:30. The desk staff had helpfully organized a car for us.

Upon arrival we checked-in at the all but deserted hotel. We felt it was prudent to keep the TV switched off rather than risk coming across a channel that was showing 'The Shining': it was quite enough that the carpeted corridor looked oddly familiar, and that clicks echoing round the cavernous reception area (really only the sound of the receptionist's chattering teeth) sounded very much like someone hard at work on a typewriter...

According to the locals it was, following a couple of days of grey, drizzly weather, the coldest day of the winter – fortunately, as elsewhere we stayed, the room had a heater/aircon device so once inside we warmed up quite nicely.

'Misty mountains w/ intermittent drizzle PM. Walked easy-to-walk trail upstream along river from hotel [where a trail map was obtained free of charge] – we went as far as the spot quite reasonably designated Fairyland on Earth'. Before dark I did the open area around the hotel/park entrance while my wife returned to our room to make sure that the heater hadn't given up the ghost; then we had dinner across the river (the hotel's dining room being shut there was little choice!). Several Eurasian Siskins were perhaps of greatest interest in a local context, but we felt it justified to spend more time on a pair of showy Slaty-backed Forktails!

21 January: The weather improved considerably – the clouds were higher at dawn, and by early afternoon the sun ‘kind of almost came out’. Before breakfast I again worked the open area near the hotel and was rewarded with unbeatable views of a male Grey-backed Thrush, a single Chinese Blackbird (one really doesn’t need the DNA kit to realize there was never any justification for considering this conspecific with Eurasian Blackbird – as still done by Handbook of the Birds of the World!), several Puff-throated Bulbuls, and a fast-flitting Besra. Later we walked beyond where we’d been the night before, my wife’s leg having by now so benefited from miracle cures that we could do most of the climb up towards ‘Nine Dragons Pine’, adding Silver-eared Mesia and a cooperative orange-and-glowing-blue Fukien Niltava.

22 January: The weather remained vastly improved compared with the day we arrived. Before breakfast I again worked the open area and forest edge around hotel/reserve entrance, adding a slightly out-of-range Orange-bellied Leafbird to what I’d seen previously. Then I tried a different track up towards ‘Nine Dragons Pine’ through lovely forest, getting a tempting view of the summits – one would want an early start to get there: maybe on our next ‘relaxed family holiday’, if my wife’s leg has recovered by then! – and good looks at both Grey-headed Parrotbill and several hard-to-beat Long-tailed Broadbills that were feeding quietly in the canopy of trail-side trees.

Back in Shangsi by 6 PM – we’d hoped to continue on to Dongxing without returning to what we’d considered a charmless town, but the first bit of road was reported to be dodgy.

23 January: Taking the direct bus would have allowed us to see some reportedly superior scenery. Unfortunately, today’s bus might or might not, on account of another dodgy road made dodgier by overnight rain, arrive from Shangsi in time for the scheduled 13:30 departure, and the grumpy lady at the ticket counter would not sell any tickets until she’d personally seen the bus. Hmmm! Well, if the road was that bad it’d be a tough, uncomfortable ride, and it could even get dark before we reached the last, most scenic section (which even if it weren’t dark wouldn’t look its best on a gloomy, drizzly afternoon).

Thus we caught the 12:00 bus to Fangcheng (en route ‘hardly any trace of worthwhile habitat’), from where busses on to Dongxing, on the border with Vietnam, run every quarter of an hour.

At Dongxing we checked into the Wangchao hotel, c100m from the bus terminal. We had made a reservation over the Internet but discovered we needed to pay a small surcharge for an essential upgrade to a room with an aircon heater.

Having grabbed a quick bowl of rice noodles we started our explorations by travelling by taxi to Waitan Park... first thing we discovered was that inside the town ‘proper’ taxis are best avoided as they don’t run by meter and the drivers really don’t want any runs except lucrative longer-distance ones. One should thus either go by public bus (and for this our hotel proved ideally situated), ‘golf cart’ (electric buggies serve as city shuttles), or motor tricycle.

The park proved a waste of time – a few lost-looking trees on a tidal creek: the sort of place the natives may visit to eat seafood and drink beer in the tented restaurants (now all closed!), with no chance of anything more exciting than Japanese Whiteeye. Accordingly, we wandered upstream along the promenade past unloading fishing boats, eyeing the overgrown ground across the creek, and stopping locals to learn more about the possibilities. The far side of the creek turned out to be Vietnam, and sure enough the border bridge soon heaved into view – to get there we had to detour through an alley, passing a café (speciality: dog stew – unfortunately, on account of the rice noodles

it was still too early for dinner), and numerous shops selling figurines carved out of hardwood, bulky furniture carved out of hardwood, and even gift boxes of chopsticks made of hardwood. Along the way we were accosted by pointy-hatted Vietnamese women trading in cigarettes and perfume, and by the border bridge we found the indoor 'Vietnam market' – we gave the various kinds of dried fish a miss (if only because how badly they'd stink up our suitcase!), likewise the instant coffee (like 3-in-1 Nescafe only much cheaper – and undrinkable!), but the mooncakes filled with durian paste proved irresistible. It was an excellent place to pick up a few presents, and we did not forget to engage in a bit of friendly haggling. Several of my wife's friends are now proudly wearing bracelets made from polished water buffalo horn – a real bargain at two for the price of three!

24 January: After brunch we caught a tricycle to Guomao Market, a bus from there to Jiangping (on the road back towards Fangcheng; on the way out of town the bus passed in front of our hotel but by then it was full... a state of affairs which did not prevent the driver from stopping and picking up a few additional passengers!), and from there a #12 bus to Jiaodong village. A quicker way of doing this – apart from taking a taxi – would have been to get on any bus towards Fangcheng and get off on the main road at junction after the one for Ban Ai (sign posted in English).

We walked the embankment E from the parking area at Jiaodong, taking in the mangrove & checking the ponds (temporary home to a scattering of commoner shorebirds such as Kentish Plover, Stilt, and Greenshank); then back past the village and W along another embankment to the main road. A newly burnt-over patch had attracted a band of Masked Laughingthrushes which – in the tradition of Laughingthrushes everywhere – vanished as soon as we'd come upon them.

Back on the main road we flagged down a passing bus back towards Dongxing and got off at the junction for Zhushan, catching a taxi motorcycle down to the village where we had a bowl of rice noodles before setting off towards the famously ancient, huge Banyan Tree. We found here a peaceful area of scattered hamlets, dense groves of bamboo, swaying casuarinas, paddyfields, vegetable plots – quite birdy with lots of Black Bulbuls, a Short-tailed Bush Warbler, a wintering Grey-headed Flycatcher plus the odd Richard's Pipit, and, encouragingly, the area clearly had good migration season potential. We'd meant to get on the next bus (the #6 bus from Dongxing runs directly to the Banyan Tree area – another one to catch in front of Wangchao Hotel if you have no objections to standing!) but a friendly local insisted on taking us the last couple of kilometers on his motorcycle.

The mangrove here is also part of Beilun Estuary NNR. On this somewhat windy, misty afternoon there didn't seem to be many waders about but the tideline was adorned with Little Egrets (and of course dense with fishnets), and the place 'felt good'. It would have been possible – and undoubtedly worth the trouble – to carry on along a dam E from the Banyan Tree area.

Another place to explore would be the river just E of Jiangping: the road R for Shanxing is just before the bridge over the river – one could walk either embankment out towards the sea.

25 January: We caught the bus for Hongshigu ('Red Rock Valley') in front of our hotel on a clammy morning of low cloud. The bus soon climbed into the hills along the road we would have come along if we'd caught the direct bus from Shangsi – even this close to town it was quite pretty, and the bus pulled in at a small town (where market day was in progress) before reaching the terminus. We were informed that busses back run every half an hour until 19:00.

We walked into the valley on a narrow concrete road, past farm houses and paddyfields, taking the 1st R turn up the hill on a newly concreted-over track, finding Shek Mun valley on the left. We followed the not-quite-finished trail (a sign warned that if we were bitten by snakes or hit by falling rocks it would be our own fault!) along the pretty stream, rejoining the track where a parking lot was being constructed. The track continued uphill as a narrower dirt track but we headed down – quite a satisfying outing: reasonable weather, pretty scenery, a fair scattering of mostly widespread birds such as Red-billed Blue Magpie, a couple of Eastern Cattle Egret mixing in with water buffaloes, Olive-backed Pipits, and Ashy Drongo.

Back in town we returned to the Vietnam market by the border bridge before dinner.

26 January: Drizzle throughout the morning – ‘abandoned idea of returning to the Zhushan area for some walking/birdwatching along quiet stretch of coast (and maybe E beyond where we’d been the other day)’. We caught the 12:45 bus for Beihai, and from the bus station there a car to Zelin hotel, which we’d found and booked on the Internet. The hotel proved pleasant, with a reasonably priced, newly refurbished room and the best-yet aircon heater...

We chanced upon the nearby Zhongshan Park and went round that – nowhere near as rewarding as its Longzhou namesake but ‘quite delightful, with some huge trees’ – before strolling on to Beibu Wan Square, and finally locating a good restaurant.

27 January: Caught the bus out to Yin Tan (‘Silver Beach’) where we strolled beyond the tourist hotels and round the point. We found some casuarinas, a bit of mangrove, and behind a white wall an already largely knocked-down, largely depopulated village, the latest victim of the property development rampage... If developed as a nature reserve instead of being built over this area would be of immense value, attracting incoming spring migrants. Spring being far away (and the nature reserve just a dream soon to evaporate under the fevered gaze of speculators) we were happy – had to be! – to see several Grey-backed Thrushes, an active Dusky Warbler, and a couple of Siberian Stonechats.

Returning to town we visited the old commercial street. Dating back to around 1850 this was definitely worth seeing even if the commercial activities are now directed mainly at visiting tourists, with yet more wood carvings, assorted trinkets, scarves, plastic toys, and even Vietnamese coffee beans on offer. We also walked the chaotic, narrow residential lanes by the tidal creek.

28 January: After breakfast – again at a ‘zao cha’ place: while nothing like a Western breakfast, ‘zao cha’ has a lot more to recommend it than N China Chinese hotel breakfasts (which, it is universally agreed, have *very little indeed* to recommend them!), with trolleys of assorted fresh dumplings (fried or steamed; large or small), cakes, salted duck eggs, and quail eggs being wheeled around between the tables, a variety of nourishing rice gruels, and pots of freshly made tea (black, green, or flower-scented) – we again went round Zhongshan Park. This was now quite noisy with competing big-sound-system groups of dancers but nonetheless yielded another Grey-backed Thrush; this time we exited through the back into a narrow street given over to a busy, colourful Spring Festival market, and made our way the short distance over to Changqing Park, which we knew of from a map bought at the commercial street yesterday.

This park had a boating lake (with carp feeding as an alternative, land-based activity – you purchase your fish food pellets from the designated stall, and throw the empty plastic bag into the water once you’re done), a roller-skating rink, a merry-go-round, and a tall, pointy monument. Despite the lack of dense tangles we saw a couple of smart Magpie Robins in addition to yet more Japanese Whiteeyes.

Before checking out we returned to the old street for a last stroll there, as well as for some final gift-buying – with a front coming through today never really warmed up (in the morning a whistling at the aluminium window frames had informed us that it was too windy for the loo roll stuffed into the most obvious gaps to be effective), and we were glad to get a pre-departure cup of coffee.

What with a one-hour delay, we didn't get back to our flat in Beijing until after midnight, but given that blizzards sweeping across the country were causing widespread disruption to pre-Spring Festival traffic (trips to the Yangtze basin's famous crane and wildfowl wintering grounds are totally at the mercy of blizzards and dense banks of settled fog!) we were not complaining.

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Inquiries concerning **Oriental Bird Club Fundraisers** - to Yunnan or NE Tibet (our near-annual comprehensive & affordable trips have been very popular) - can be made directly to this author or to Michael Edgecombe, OBC's Promotion Officer, at mail(at)orientalbirdclub.org

In the species list the concept "bird-days" is used - it is the avian equivalent of man-hours: for example, separate flocks of ten and 15 Fire-tailed Sunbirds moving through score 25 bird-days, as would the same single individual seen daily for 25 days. The sum of day totals - a handy measure of relative abundance, nothing more.

The sequence of the bird list follows *The Howard and Moore Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World – 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* (Dickinson 2003), in my opinion by far the most useful one-volume checklist to date.

[illegible]

## **Species list:**

### **\*\*\*Bar-backed Hill Partridge** *Arborophila brunneopectus*

A hill partridge flushed by a roving mongoose at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup> was presumably this species.

### **Silver Pheasant** *Lophura nychtemera*

Two groups totalling 7-8+ birds were noted at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **Chinese Pond Heron** *Ardeola bacchus*

At least three singletons were noted, incl at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Eastern Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus coromandus*

Two at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Three on the tideline near Banyan Tree, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Great Egret** *Ardea alba*

Ten on the tideline near Banyan Tree, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

170 on the tideline near Banyan Tree, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

One at Yin Tan, Beihai, on 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

One soaring over Beihai town on 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **Black-shouldered Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*

One at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Black Kite** *Milvus migrans*

One at Zhushan fields, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Besra** *Accipiter virgatus*

A 2<sup>nd</sup> c-y bird at Shiwan Dashan on 21<sup>st</sup>.

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

Singles both at Jiaodong & near Banyan Tree, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*

One at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

Four at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.



**Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Five at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

One flushed at Shangsi Park on 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Pintail Snipe** *Gallinago stenura*

One at Zhushan fields, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

Three at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

One at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*

15 at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Two at Jiaodong & four near Banyan Tree, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>, and one heard at Yin Tan, Beihai on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

One on the river at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, on 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*

One at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Oriental Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis*

A singleton at Shiwan Dashan on 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 46+ at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis*

Two at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>, and five en route between Moshigu and Nadang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Lesser Coucal** *Centropus bengalensis*

One heard at Shiwan Dashan on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Collared Owlet** *Glaucidium brodiei*

At Shiwan Dashan two heard on 21<sup>st</sup> & 2-3 heard on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Asian Barred Owlet** *Glaucidium cuculoides*

One seen at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup>, at Shiwan Dashan 1-2 heard daily over 20-22<sup>nd</sup>, and one heard at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**House Swift** *Apus nipalensis*

15+ at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>, and eight at Xiaoliancheng, Longzhou, on 18<sup>th</sup>.

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

One heard at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup>.

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

Singles at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, on 15<sup>th</sup> & at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Singles at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou on both 15+18<sup>th</sup>, at Shiwan Dashan on 21<sup>st</sup>, and at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Great Barbet** *Megalaima virens*

A singleton flying across at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup> was all – none heard!

**Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos canicapillus*

At Shiwan Dashan one on 20<sup>th</sup> & two on both 21+22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Two at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Rufous Woodpecker** *Celeus brachyurus*

4+ bird-days at Nonggang over 16+17<sup>th</sup>.

**Bay Woodpecker** *Blythipicus pyrrhotis*

At Nonggang one heard on 16<sup>th</sup> & two heard on 17<sup>th</sup>.

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

One heard repeatedly at Nonggang on both 16+17<sup>th</sup>, and superb views of a flock of 13 feeding quietly at Shiwan Dashan on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Large Cuckoo-shrike** *Coracina macei*

One heard at Nonggang on 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Short-billed Minivet** *Pericrocotus brevirostris*

Three at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike** *Hemipus picatus*

Three at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus*

Seven bird-days.

\*\*\*Zheng (2005) listed sspp *cristatus*, *lucionensis* & *superciliosus* for Guangxi.

**Long-tailed Shrike** *Lanius schach*

27+ bird-days.

\*\*\*All were ssp *schach*.

**Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus*

Singles en route between Moshigu and Nadang on 20<sup>th</sup>, and at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

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

One vocal individual was seen at Nonggang on 16<sup>th</sup>.

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

11 bird-days - 3-5 daily at Nonggang over 16-17<sup>th</sup>, one at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, on 18<sup>th</sup>, and two at Shiwan Dashan on 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Jay** *Garrulus glandarius sinensis*

Two at Shiwan Dashan on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Red-billed Blue Magpie** *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*

Eight at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**White-winged Magpie** *Urocissa whiteheadi*

At Nonggang two on 16<sup>th</sup> & heard in the same place the next day, and two at Shiwan Dashan on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Common Magpie** *Pica pica*

One at Shiwan Dashan on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

\*\*\*Ssp *sericea* according to Zheng (2005).

**‘Great’ Tit** *Parus minor*

37+ bird-days. Noted on at least six dates.

\*\*\*ssp *commixtus* according to Zheng (2005); Robson (2008) does not include adjacent E Tonkin in the range of ‘Grey Tit *Parus cinereus*’.

**Rufescent Prinia** *Prinia rufescens*

At Nonggang two on 16<sup>th</sup> & 3+ on 17<sup>th</sup>.

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

Seven bird-days: at Nanning one at Qingxiu Shan on 13<sup>th</sup> & three at Yongjiang on 14<sup>th</sup>, and at Jiaodong, Dongxing, three on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Plain Prinia** *Prinia inornata*

Four at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Tailorbird** *Orthomus sutorius*

68+ bird-days. Noted on 12 dates.

**Red-whiskered Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus*

c290 bird-days. Noted on ten dates – main event 70 at Shangsi Park on 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Chinese Bulbul** *Pycnonotus sinensis*

109 bird-days. Noted on ten dates – most were *hainanus* (which ‘sounds a bit different’) but ssp *sinensis* birds were identified at Shiwan Dashan on 20<sup>th</sup> (two birds feeding on their own, not associating with the more numerous ssp *hainanus* birds), and at Ying Tan, Beihai (five birds, against just one ssp *hainanus* bird) on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Sooty-headed Bulbul** *Pycnonotus aurigaster*

Eight en route between Shangsi and Shiwan Dashan on 20<sup>th</sup>, and seven (feeding on burned-over ground in association with Masked Laughingthrushes) at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Puff-throated Bulbul** *Criniger pallidus*

At Nonggang five on 16<sup>th</sup> & 18 on 17<sup>th</sup>, and at Shiwan Dashan two on 20<sup>th</sup>, 13 on 21<sup>st</sup> & five on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Mountain Bulbul** *Ixos mcclellandii*

One at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>, and two at Shiwan Dashan on 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Chestnut Bulbul** *Hemixos castanonotus*

Four at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>, heard at Xiaoliancheng, Longzhou, on 18<sup>th</sup>, and at Shiwan Dashan two heard on 21<sup>st</sup> & nine on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Black Bulbul** *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*

860+ bird-days. Noted on nine dates – main event 450 at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, on 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Short-tailed Bush Warbler** *Urosphena squamiceps*

One seen well and heard calling in weeds at ‘camp ground’ at Banyan Tree, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.  
\*\*\*Zheng (2005) did not list the species for Guangxi, though Robson (2008) mentions it has been recorded as a passage migrant in adjacent E Tonkin – there are about six previous records from Guangxi, the 1<sup>st</sup> in 1998 (R Lewthwaite pers com (2011)).

**Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler** *Cettia fortipes*

At Nonggang four on 16<sup>th</sup> & five on 17<sup>th</sup>, and at Shangsi Park one on 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

15 bird-days. Noted on five dates at Yongjiang, Nanning on 14<sup>th</sup>, at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou (two birds on both 15+18<sup>th</sup>), at Dongxing on 24<sup>th</sup> (two both at Jiaodong & at Zhushan fields, and five at Banyan Tree), and one at Yin Tan, Beihai, on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Pallas’s Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus*

11 bird-days. Noted on five dates – at Nanning three at Qingxiu Shan on 13<sup>th</sup> & one at Botanical Gardens on 14<sup>th</sup>, at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, three on 15<sup>th</sup> & one on 18<sup>th</sup>, and at Shiwan Dashan three on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Eastern Lemon-rumped Warbler** *Phylloscopus forresti*

One 'seen well' at Shiwan Dashan on 20<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*\*In addition, three warblers there on 21<sup>st</sup> may also have been this species.

\*\*\*The species was not listed for Guangxi by Zheng (2005) – 'the wintering range of *P. forresti* is poorly known and [this] record [could genuinely] be the first for Guangxi': R Lewthwaite pers com (2011).

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

51 bird-days. Noted on ten dates – main event 16 at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Ogilvie-Grant's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus ogilviegranti*

Singles heard at Nonggang on both 16+17<sup>th</sup>, and one seen at Shiwan Dashan on 20<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*\*The last was seen well and seemed to show the characters of ssp *klossi*, a taxon which was not included for China by Zheng (2005) – ssp *disturbans* was listed for adjacent N Indochina by Robson (2008) but not for Guangxi by Zheng (2005).

**Bianchi's Warbler** *Seicercus valentini*

At Nonggang one on 16<sup>th</sup> & three on 17<sup>th</sup>, and at Shiwan Dashan one on 20<sup>th</sup>.

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

At Nonggang one on 16<sup>th</sup> & two on 17<sup>th</sup>, and at Shiwan Dashan one on 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Puff-throated Babbler** *Pellorneum ruficeps*

One seen well at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, on 18<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*\*The species was not listed for Guangxi by Zheng (2005); ssp *vividum* was listed for adjacent E Tonkin by Robson (2008) & for SE Yunnan by Zheng (2005), but neither Lewthwaite (2006) nor Anderson (2008) recorded the species at nearby Nonggang Reserve.

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

11+ noted at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*\*Zheng (2005) did not list the species for Guangxi; however, both Lewthwaite (2006) and Anderson (2008) found the species to be reasonably common at nearby Nonggang Reserve.

\*\*\*The latter commented "[...] Interestingly none was heard delivering the calls I have heard from it in Viet Nam, nor did Jiang Aiwu [who discovered Nonggang Babbler] recognize some of the calls I have recordings from elsewhere in SE Asia. Additionally, the only bird that we saw (which also delivered a song besides the calls, indicating it being a territorial adult), had a strange mottled breast that I have not seen on the few birds I have seen in Viet Nam. The legs were not as bright pink either. According to Jiang Aiwu, Nonggang is the only place in Guangxi where Buff-breasted Babbler occurs. As it seems to be connected to limestone forest, the same habitat as Nonggang Babbler, it would clearly be of interest to study this taxon in depth."

\*\*\*J Eaton (pers com 2011), on the other hand, thought: "to my ears [the Buff-breasted Babblers at Nonggang] sounded like a regular BBB, and looked similar to the species elsewhere in its range'.

**Large Scimitar Babbler** *Pomatorhinus hypoleucos*

At Nonggang one heard singing on 16<sup>th</sup> & four heard on 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler** *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*

83 bird-days. Noted on six dates - at Nonggang (main event 28 on 17<sup>th</sup>), 8-11 daily at Shiwan Dashan over 20-22<sup>nd</sup>, and five at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*\*Strangely, Zheng (2005) did not list any of the ten Chinese ssp for S Guangxi – the nearest was *hunanensis* of N Guangxi & *reconditus* for E Yunnan. Robson (2008) listed the latter for adjacent E Tonkin.

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

At Nonggang six on 16<sup>th</sup> & 20 on 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Nonggang Babbler** *Stachyris nonggangensis*

At Nonggang two (incl one seen well) on 16<sup>th</sup> & a group of 3+ heard on 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Rufous-capped Babbler** *Stachyris ruficeps*

31 bird-days. Noted on eight dates.

**Striped Tit-Babbler** *Macronous gularis*

One at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, on 15<sup>th</sup>, and nine at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Hwamei** *Garrulax canorus*

Four at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>, three (incl one seen!) at Shangsi Park on 20<sup>th</sup>, and at Shiwan Dashan three on 20<sup>th</sup> & one on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Masked Laughingthrush** *Garrulax perspicillatus*

8+ at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*\***Laughingthrush sp**

A group was heard at Shiwan Dashan on 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Silver-eared Mesia** *Leiothrix argenteauris*

Eight at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup>, 2+ at Shangsi Park on 20<sup>th</sup>, and at Shiwan Dashan 3+ on 20<sup>th</sup>, 35 on 21<sup>st</sup> & 25 on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

\*\*\*Zheng (2005) listed ssp *rubrogularis* for SW Guangxi.

**‘David’s’ Grey-cheeked Fulvetta** *Alcippe davidi*

168+ bird-days. Noted on six dates – common both at Nonggang & at Shiwan Dashan.

\*\*\*This species is refer’d to as ‘Schaeffer’s Fulvetta *Alcippe schaefferi*’ by Robson (2008) but this will be corrected in the next edition (Robson pers com 2011).

**Indochinese Yuhina** *Yuhina (castaniceps) torqueola*

At Shiwan Dashan 30-45 daily over 20-22<sup>nd</sup>.

**White-bellied Yuhina** *Erpornis zantholeuca*

19+ at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup>, at Shiwan Dashan three on 20<sup>th</sup> & two on 22<sup>nd</sup>, and heard at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Grey-headed Parrotbill** *Paradoxornis gularis*

A flock of 20+ feeding in pines at Shiwan Dashan on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

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

Three fly-over White-eyes at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup> were probably this species.

**Japanese White-eye** *Zosterops japonicus*

230+ bird-days. Noted on at least eight dates – main event 95 feeding on Eucalyptus flowers at Shangsi Park on 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Myna sp.**

Seven mynas on a wire en route between Fangcheng and Dongxing on 23<sup>rd</sup> was probably **Crested Myna** *Acridotheres cristellatus*.

**Red-billed Starling** *Sturnus sericeus*

One at Jiadong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

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

At Shiwan Dashan one on 20<sup>th</sup>, seven on 21<sup>st</sup> & four on 22<sup>nd</sup>, and at Beihai four at Yin Tan on 27<sup>th</sup>, and singles both at Zhongshan Park & Changqing Park on 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Black-breasted Thrush** *Turdus dissimilis*

Three at Botanical Gardens, Nanning, on 14<sup>th</sup>, and one male at Shiwan Dashan on 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Japanese Thrush** *Turdus cardis*

14 bird-days. Noted on no less than nine dates – main event 4+ at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Chinese Blackbird** *Turdus mandarinus*

22+ bird-days. Noted on five dates – main event a flock of ten heading to roost at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Naumann's Thrush** *Turdus naumanni*

Three heard at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>.

**\*\*\*Thrush sp**

9+ unidentified *Turdus* thrushes were recorded...

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

One seen well at Nonggang on 16<sup>th</sup>.

**\*\*\*Himalayan Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger rufilatus*

An immature male seen rather briefly at Shiwan Dashan on 20<sup>th</sup> appeared to be this species.

**Northern Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus*

Five (incl a fine adult male) at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*\*An additional 13 **unidentified Bluetails** were noted at Qingxiu Shan, Longzhou's Zhongshan Park, Nonggang, Shiwan Dashan, and Hongshigu, Dongxing.

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

39+ bird-days. Noted on 11 dates.

**Plumbeous Redstart** *Rhyacornis fuliginosa*

A 2<sup>nd</sup> c-y female was noted at Shiwan Dashan on both 20+22<sup>nd</sup>.

**River Chat** *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*

One was noted at Shiwan Dashan on both 20+21<sup>st</sup>.

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

3-7 daily at Shiwan Dashan, and one at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus*

13 bird-days. Noted on six dates.

**Grey Bushchat** *Saxicola ferreus*

Ten bird-days. Noted on seven dates – incl a female near the coast at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitarius*

Nine bird-days. Noted on six dates.

**Rufous-gorgetted Flycatcher** *Ficedula strophilata*

One seen well at Shiwan Dashan on 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Fujian Niltava** *Niltava davidi*

An adult male put on a good show at Shiwan Dashan on 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Grey-headed Flycatcher** *Culicicapa ceylonensis*

At Nonggang four on 16<sup>th</sup> & five on 17<sup>th</sup>, one at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, on 18<sup>th</sup>, and one at Banyan Tree, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

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

One male at Shiwan Dashan on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

\*\*\*Zheng (2005) listed ssp *melliana* only for C Guangxi.

**Buff-bellied Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum ignipectum*

At Nanning two at Qingxiu Shan on 13<sup>th</sup> & three at Botanical Gardens on 14<sup>th</sup>.



**Fork-tailed Sunbird** *Aethopyga christinae*

A male showed very well at Shiwan Dashan on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

\*\*\*an additional three **sunbird sp** heard up in the forest at Shiwan Dashan on 21<sup>st</sup> were possibly also this species.

**Crimson Sunbird** *Aethopyga siparaja*

One male at Shangsi Park on 20<sup>th</sup>, and two males at Shiwan Dashan on both 21+22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

Not systematically recorded.

**Scaly-breasted Munia** *Lonchura punctulata*

Six at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>, and around Dongxing 13 at Banyan Tree on 24<sup>th</sup> & 14 at Hongshigu on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Eastern Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla tschutschensis*

Three at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

13 bird-days: at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, two on 15<sup>th</sup> & three on 18<sup>th</sup>, at Shiwan Dashan 1-2 daily over 20-22<sup>nd</sup>, and at Hongshigu, Dongxing, four on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

61+ bird-days. Noted on 12 dates – main event 25 (incl a flock of 23 flying to roost) at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, on 15<sup>th</sup>... most were spp *alboides* & *leucopsis*; just one *ocularis* was seen, at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, on 18<sup>th</sup>.

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

Near Dongxing two at Jiaodong & one at Zhushan fields on 24<sup>th</sup>, and one at Hongshigu on 25<sup>th</sup>, and at Beihai two at Yin Tan on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*

118+ bird-days. Noted on ten dates – main events 50 along the coast near Dongxing on 24<sup>th</sup>, and alos c20 at nearby Hongshigu on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus*

One at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Oriental Greenfinch** *Carduelis sinica*

Two at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Eurasian Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

At Shiwan Dashan 12 on 20<sup>th</sup> & 11 (probably same flock) on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla*

c30 at Hongshigu, Dongxing, on 25<sup>th</sup>.

Two at Jiaodong, Dongxing, on 24<sup>th</sup>.

[illegible]

## MAMMALS:

## Assam Macaque *Macaca assamensis*

One heard (gruff noise identified by our host) at Nonggang on 16<sup>th</sup>.

## Rhesus Macaque *Macaca mulatta*

18+ at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup>.

## Crab-eating Mongoose *Herpestes urva*

A band of four seen well at Nonggang on 17<sup>th</sup>.

## Pallas' Squirrel *Calloscurius erythraeus*

Three at Qingxiu Shan, Nanning, on 13<sup>th</sup>, and three at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, on 18<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*\*In addition, most or all of the heard-only squirrels at Nonggang are likely to have been this species.

## Eastern Striped Squirrel *Tamias maritimus*

One at Zhongshan Park, Longzhou, on 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Red Muntjac** *Muntiacus muntjak*

One heard (identified by our host) at Nonggang on 16<sup>th</sup>.

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