



john & jemi

Birding China

Trip Report

Autumn 2005 North-western Yunnan Province China

By John and Jemi Holmes

GENERAL INFORMATION

We passed through Dali and Lijiang in April 2005 and had our appetites for the area whetted. Good scenery and colourful ethnic minorities make a good backdrop to the birding. October and November might not be the most productive time to visit these areas, but we felt that we saw some good birds overall. The first half of October was still unseasonably wet.

To try to get photographs of the birds we stayed at most places longer than the average birder would. Little English is spoken away from the main tourist areas, such as Kunming, Dali and Lijiang. Jemi speaks Putonghua which made things a lot easier everywhere we went.

It is worth paying a little extra for “Express” busses on longer routes, mainly because the vehicle (and brakes !) will be newer. Avoid, if possible, sitting at the front of the vehicle – often the most dangerous seat if there is accident.

The exchange rate in Autumn 2005 was 10 Ren Min Bi (RMB) ~ 1 Euro, about 8 RMB ~ 1 US dollar.

A growing number of domestic tourists means that a range of accommodation is available in most places we visited. In most places you can expect to pay in the range of 50-150 RMB per night for a clean, comfortable room. Value for money was less good at places where there were only one or two places to stay. A list of room rates is posted at the reception desk of most hotels. Up to 50% discount can be obtained just by politely asking. It is good practice to be sure how much you are paying for your food as you order it, so ask if they don't have an English menu. We would pay 4-8 RMB for vegetable dishes, and 8-15 RMB for meat. Bottles of (frequently room temperature) beer cost 4-6 RMB. If you are sensitive to MSG remind the waitress you don't want it; - “Bu fang wei jing !” Get used to using chopsticks, or take your own fork.

If you feel you are lacking some piece of outdoor clothing or equipment, bear in mind that a lot of it is made in China. Kunming, Dali, Lijiang and Zhongdian all have shops selling last years' gear at a fraction of European prices.

Some sites we visited have received less attention from birders than others. Some of the site accounts may be read as “We birded it, so you won’t have to!” A systematic list is at the end of this report. It would be longer if I worked harder at identifying all the phylosscs !

A NOTE OF THANKS

Prof. HAN Lian-xian met us in Kunming and shared his enthusiasm for various sites in Yunnan, - many thanks to him. As things worked out on this trip we didn’t get to all of the sites discussed.

ITINERARY

- Sept 25 Crossed HK/Shenzhen boundary at Lowu, flew Shenzhen to Kunming.
- Sept 26 Xishan (Western Hills), Kunming
- Sept 27 Coach from Kunming to Xiaguan. Local bus from Xiaguan to Dali
- Sept 28-Oct 8 “Higherland Inn” Cangshan (Azure Mountains), Dali
- Oct 9-12 Shibaoshan (Stone Treasure Mt.), Jianchuan, 120km north of Dali
- Oct 13 Overnight in Lijiang
- Oct 14-18 99 Dragon Pools, Laojunshan (3hrs from southwest of Lijiang)
- Oct 19-21 Liming Scenic Area, Yulong Naxi Autonomous Prefecture
- Oct 22 Overnight at Tacheng, Yulong Naxi Autonomous Prefecture
- Oct 23 Overnight at Weixi, Weixi Susu Autonomous Prefecture
- Oct 24 Overnight at Yanmen (Mekong River Gorge), Deqin
- Oct 25 Overnight at Cizhong (Historic Catholic Church), Deqin
- Oct 26-27 Xidang Wenquan (Xidang Hot Springs), Meilixueshan , Deqin
- Oct 28-31 Yubeng Village, Meilixueshan, Deqin
- Nov 1 Overnight at Feilaisi (Meilixueshan viewpoint), Deqin
- Nov 2 Six-hour bus ride to Zhongdian (Shangri-la)
- Nov 3 Afternoon at Napahai (Napa Sea), near Zhongdian (Shangri-la)
- Nov 4 Day trip to Shuduhu (Shudu Lake), near Zhongdian (Shangri-la)
- Nov 5 Express bus to Lijiang (4 1/2 hours)
- Nov 6 Morning: Heilongtan Gongyuan (Black Dragon Pool Park), Lijiang.
Afternoon: Lashihai (Lashi Sea)
- Nov 7 Flew Lijiang to Shenzhen, back to Hong Kong via Lowu

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SITES

Kunming

We stayed at the backpackers' favourite – the Camellia Hotel [www.kmcamelliahotel.com Tel (0871) 3163000]. A Taxi to the Western Hills was RMB 60 (got the bus back to the city centre). We birded the hilltop up and right from the chairlift upper terminal, then walked all the way down. The trees are much bigger now than when I first visited in 1990, but the western edge of the ridgeline is covered by a rash of small guesthouses. Still, it should be possible to stay out there if you wanted to.

Cangshan (Azure Mountains)

- Dali Old Town

Above the town of Dali, the “Cloudy Tourist Walk” (referred to in at least one guidebook as the “Jade Belt Walk”) contours the Cangshan Range for fifteen kilometres at an altitude of 2,500 metres. It runs roughly north/south. The southernmost 12 1/2 km was re-paved in the spring of 2005. The new kilometre marker stones go from 1 in the south to 12 in the north. The hillsides around are a mixture of secondary pine, broadleaf and bamboo. Nutcrackers are here, but no Nuthatches were seen.

Closest access from Dali Old Town is by chairlift (RMB 60 return) to Zhonghe Temple. The 10 1/2 km point on the Cloudy Tourist Walk (CTW) is about 100 metres up a flight of steps to the south of the temple. A place to stay called the “Higherland Inn” [www.higherland.com Tel: (0872) 2661599] is 150 m further on, above the CTW. We stayed for nine nights (60 RMB) in the end, partly because we were very comfortable even when the weather was wet and misty, and partly to avoid the big October Holiday crowds. The re-paved part of the CTW is broad and flattish and there are sturdy-looking handrails above the steepest drops. In early October it was a good site for Chinese Babax – often near Zhonghe Temple. Lady Amherst's Pheasants were seen daily crossing the path, but on all but two occasions they were females or juveniles. Other birds notable (to us) were Chestnut-headed Tesia (CTW 7.3 km) and Brown Parrotbill (CTW 11.5km). Over a ten-day period we saw eighty-or-so varieties of good woodland birds, although day counts were only about thirty species. If you have the time, it is worth staying at the Higherland Inn to bird after the day-trippers have gone in the evening, and/or to get a “head start” on them in the morning. Besides, pancakes and brilliant views make the Higherland Inn a memorable stop.

In Dali, the MCA Guesthouse [www.mcahotel.com Tel (0872) 2664177] is spacious and clean (Rooms RMB 80 – 160). Apart from the Cloudy Tourist Walk, another birding option is to hire a car to go up the gravel track towards the top of the mountains. The track starts at a quarry to the south of the “Three Pagodas” Tourist Complex. Various guesthouses and local travel agents offer day trips to the mountain top, usually with hikers in mind. It takes about 2 hours to drive to the end of the road at 3,200 metres from Dali town centre.

Shibaoshan (Stone Treasure Mountain)

- Jianchuan County

A site praised in Jon Hornbuckle's account of his March 2002 visit to Yunnan. Access via the old Dali to Lijiang road, Route 214. Turnoff – to the west - at the town of Diannan. The road forks after 12 km or so. Left to the Tea Horse Caravan Trail Town of Shaxi (quite interesting). Right fork to Shi Bao Shan. (We paid RMB 350 to hire a minivan from Dali to

Shibaoshan (Driver Mr YANG 139-88534759, a refreshingly cautious driving manner, but he doesn't speak English.) Zhongdian and Lanping-bound busses pass through Diannan. A minivan from the Route 214 turnoff for the last 14km should be RMB 40.

From the road fork, at the 2km mark is the entrance gate (RMB 60) with the Shibaoshan Bingguan just behind [Tel (0872) 4787068] (RMB 70). The bingguan (Guesthouse) has a restaurant. Accommodation is also available at the Temple just uphill from the Guesthouse. You may also stay at Baoxiang Temple, but the steps are very intimidating if you're carrying a lot of baggage.

At the 5 km mark the road broadens into a coach parking area for Baoxiang Temple, which is up a long flight of steps to the right, opposite some noodle stalls. On two mornings we found small parties of Chestnut-vented Nuthatches near the entrance gate to the temple and on the steps themselves.

The valley from about 3 1/2 km to 6 km has most of the broadleaf woodland, and here we saw several parties of Black-faced Warblers. Much of the rest of Shibaoshan is covered with fairly scrubby-looking pines. The upper carpark is at the 11km point, that is, nine km from the entrance. This was a really good area for Yunnan Nuthatch, with them calling loudly, even at midday.

Seven-seat Minivans ply the road and can be hired by the trip or by the hour. We paid RMB 200 to move on to Lijiang. (Driver: Mr DONG 139-88586290, no English spoken).

Ninety-nine Dragon Pools – Laojunshan (Lao Jun Mountains)

- boundary of Yulong Naxi Autonomous Prefecture and Jianchuan County

(Not to be confused with the Laojunshan in southern Sichuan, among others. Lao Jun is a bearded, balding deity who seems to have quite a few Chinese mountains named after him.)

Access is from Route 214 a few km north of Jianchuan (between km markers 2211 and 2212). A total of 52km along mainly unpaved roads to the west; comprising 30km to a bridge, a right turn and 7km up to a logging control point barrier, 5km up a track in a gully next to a stream, and then an entrance gate by some out-of-season holiday chalets. The final 10km is along a spectacular track to a large if somewhat basic complex, Longquan Mountain Lodge, set in mature spruce forest at an altitude of 3,700 metres. We paid RMB 120 per night for a room, which was cold but rather luxurious, given the location. There were toilets down the corridor, and the food was taken in another block. The electricity generator usually ran from sunset until midnight. There was no landline phone, mobile phone coverage could be obtained by walking 5 Km down the main road. The staff were very young, and preoccupied with gathering firewood for the winter. When we announced we were going to take the paved walk around the famous pools we were sold two RMB 80 admission tickets. Otherwise, we were left alone, which suited us. We saw Himalayan Weasel along the path. As well as the evergreen forest, the area is locally famous for the rhododendrons. It is most popular with visitors in May.

In mid-October the birding was very slow. Highlights included Plain-backed Thrush (seen from the restaurant!) Long-tailed Thrush, Golden Bush Robin and Chestnut-headed Tesia. Grey-crested and Rufous-vented Tits accompanied Buff-barred Warblers in small mixed flocks. This area would be worth a spring visit, if only for the flowers. The chalets down

near the entrance gate might be a good base, with the hillsides nearby being partly cleared and cultivated.

We paid RMB450 (at the Tourist Office in Lijiang's main square) for a 4WD to get from Lijiang to Laojunshan. However, while we were there a few daytrippers arrived from Jianchuan in 7-seat minivans, for which the going rate is about RMB 300 (Mr Yang Tel 13988517069). In Lijiang we had prearranged to be taken to Liming from Laojunshan for RMB 450 as well. There is no public transport yet to 99 Dragon Pools.

Liming Scenic Area

- Yulong Naxi Autonomous Prefecture

About 100 Km to the north west of Lijiang, this is a scenic area of red sandstone outcrops, many with fanciful names. It is being increasingly promoted by local tourism officials (Admission 80 RMB). We stayed in the "1,000 Tortoise Hotel" (RMB 100) near the entrance gate. One day we were driven 4 km to Liguang at the end of the paved road and walked back, on another we walked (good path, but 500m (?) ascent) to a beauty spot called "1,000 tortoise rocks". Nice scenery, but birds were shy and few. This is a place where a lot of the locals are obviously very poor, even by the standards of the area.

Cizhong, Yanmen

- Lancangjiang (Mekong River) Valley, Deqin County

We got the local bus from Weixi (144km, RMB 37 took 6 hours) along the banks of the Mekong (Lancangjiang) Gorge to a town called Yanmen, which had one decent place to stay, but otherwise little to commend it. A few km south of Yanmen there is a suspension bridge at the 79km marker. From here you can just see the top of the 1905 Catholic Church, about 2 km up a stony track and set in a mainly Tibetan village. We paid RMB 15 each for beds in a place enterprisingly signed "Tourist Reception Centre" Tel (0887) 8536096. They had a deck where you could drink the local red wine, and enjoy views of the Cizhong Church and snow-covered mountains. Nice place, but no special birds noted.

Feilaisi (Fei lai Temple)

- Deqin County

10 km beyond Deqin on the road to Tibet, you can now stay here and hope for a clear view of the mountains. We stayed at the brand-new Nan Ka Hotel (RMB 120) Tel (0887) 8414999.

Xidang Wenquan (Hot Springs)

- Meilixueshan (Meili Snow Mountain), Deqin County

From Feilaisi, hiring a minvan to Xidang or to Mingyong should cost RMB 100-130 [Driver from Xidang 13988740569]. An admission fee RMB 80 was paid before crossing the Mekong on a concrete bridge. The road *right* leads 8km to accommodation near the base of Mingyong Glacier. (Hornbuckle 2002). We went *left* (Artuso 2005), about 10km to Xidang (where there appear to be a couple of nice guesthouses). The Hot Springs are a further 8km up a gravel road, at the edge of the woodland. We paid RMB 20 each for a tatty-but-clean bed in a wooden block at the edge of the woods. There was hot water in nearby cabins due to outlets from the hot springs, but the facilities were very run down. Two women ran a kitchen

in a building across the carpark. This is the starting point for pony treks to Yubeng, so there were plenty of people coming and going.

At 2,800m, a birdy area, with Elliot's, Black-faced and Giant Laughingthrushes around in what appeared to be healthy numbers. Chestnut-vented Nuthatches foraged on the ground like steely-blue sparrows.

Another site is the valley below Mingyong Glacier (Hornbuckle 2002) which we didn't get time to visit. The local bus from Deqin to Mingyong leaves at 15:30, so you may be able to connect from the express bus from Zhongdian ("Shangri-la") to Deqin which leaves Zhongdian at 08:30, and should arrive in Deqin around 14:30.

Yubeng Village

- Meilixueshan (Meili Snow Mountain), Deqin County

A table of charges for pony hire and distances gives the impression that Xidang Hot Springs (2,800m) to Yubeng Village (3,200m) is a distance of 18km. However it is probably only half that. Whatever the distance, there is a climb up and over a pass at 3,700m, so allow five to six hours for the trek.

We stayed two nights at Yubengs' oldest hostelry, the "Mystic Waterfall Guest House" RMB 40 a room, Tel 13988760556. Stunning views in front of the Guesthouse of some of the "Princely peaks", all over 6,000m and ice-covered, but the food and hospitality were indifferent. We spent two nights at a place near the path down from Xidang with a sign outside saying "Walker Home" RMB 50 a room. The plumbing, food (Sichuanese cook), and grade of welcome were all radically better. A flock of 200+ Snow Pigeons was a pleasing sight, we also saw Grandalas circling at a distance over some cliffs. Other highlights were Crimson-browed Finch, Dark-rumped and White-browed Rosefinches and big groups of Giant Laughingthrushes.

Xianggelila or Zhongdian (Shangri-la)

- Xianggelila (or Zhongdian) County

A wide range of accommodation, but worth the effort to stay in the old town, where there are colourful bars and restaurants. We stayed at the "Shangri-la Lord Manor" RMB 160 a room. For better or worse, old Zhongdian is being touristified into another Lijiang.

Napahai (Na Pa Sea)

- Xianggelila (or Zhongdian) County

A Taxi hired for the afternoon (RMB 70) took us to the edge of the marsh (Admission RMB30). Already over one hundred Black-necked Cranes were present, many in family parties. White-tailed Eagles were also present. The only place we were sorry not to have the telescope.

Shuoduhu (Shuo du Lake)

- Xianggelila (or Zhongdian) County

An altitude of 3,700 metres meant we got pretty tired picking our way round the marshy fringes of this lake (Hornbuckle 2002). After completing two-thirds of our circuit we were stopped by two officious (and plain-clothed) “Security Guards” at an encampment set up for filming historic dramas. We declined their invitation to go back the way we had come and exchanged pleasantries in our respective languages until the police arrived. We were taken back to the jetty near the car park in a motorised rubber dinghy. This was the only unpleasant encounter of our trip. We had arrived later than ideal, about 0900hrs, but didn’t find the area on the day particularly birdy.

Heilongtan gongyuan (Black Dragon Pool Park)

- Lijiang, Yulong Naxi Autonomous Prefecture

A famous view of pagoda, ornamental bridge and Jade Dragon Snow Mountain as a backdrop, admission RMB 60. An irresistible photographic cliché. To bird the hillsides behind the park – and avoid the admission fee - you can leave Lijiang Old Town’s Main Square and follow a broad pavement with the stream on your left. Before you get to the park’s southern entrance you can cut up through the fields to the right. Yunnan Nuthatch is seen regularly here (but not by us), and a lucky few get Giant Nuthatch (again, not us).

Lashihai (La shi Sea)

- Lijiang, Yulong Naxi Autonomous Prefecture

A RMB 25 Taxi ride to the south-west of Lijiang. Most visitors go for the pony rides at the eastern edge of the lake. You can hire a punt by the hour. Apart from Ruddy Shelduck it was hard to identify a lot of the distant duck without a ‘scope. We found both Common and Black-necked Cranes on the grassland between the southern end of the lake and the ploughed fields beyond.

Some names in Chinese

Binguan 宾馆	Meilixueshan 梅里雪山
Bu fang wei jing 不放味精	Mingyong 明永
Baoxiang Temple 宝相寺	Mingyong Glacier 明永
Cangshan 苍山	Napahai 纳帕海
Cizhong 茨中	Renminbi (RMB) 人民币
Dali 大理	Shaxi 沙溪
Deqin 德钦	Shibaoshan 石宝山
Diannan 甸南	Shuduhu 属都湖
Feilaisi 飞来寺	Tacheng 塔城
Heilongtan Gongyuan 黑龙潭公园	Weixi 维西
Jianchuan 剑川	Weixi susu Autonomou
Kunming 昆明	维西傈僳族自治县
Lancangjiang 澜沧江	Xidang Wenquan 西当
Lanping 兰坪	Xishan 西山
Laojunshan 老君山	Yanmen 燕门
Lashihai 拉市海	Yubeng 雨崩
Liguang 黎光	Yulong naxi Autonomo
Lijiang 丽江	玉龙纳西族自治县
Liming 黎明	Zhongdian 中甸
Longquan Mt. Lodge 龙泉山庄	Xianggelila 香格里拉
	Zhonghe Temple 中和

SPECIES LIST

Species number according to Mackinnon, J. and Phillipps, K., (2000) *A field guide to the Birds of China*

- 0050 Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*
One male at the roadside south of Deqin.
- 0052 Lady Amherst's Pheasant *Chrysolophus amherstiae*
Almost daily at CTW, Cangshan, Dali. One male and one female at Shibaoshan, Jiangchuan.
- 0074 Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*
30+ at Napahai, Zhongdian
- 0079 Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*
800+ at Napahai, Zhongdian. 50+ at Shoudu Lake, Zhongdian. 200+ at Lashihai, Lijiang.
- 0081 Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*
Around 50 at Napahai, Zhongdian.
- 0089 Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*
One at Napahai, Zhongdian. Two at Shoudu Lake, Zhongdian.
- 0101 Ferruginous Pochard *Aythya nyroca*
12 at Shoudu Lake, Zhongdian.
- 0127 Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Dendrocopos hyperythrus*
A pair between Xidang and Yubong, Meili Xueshan.
- 0128 Crimson-breasted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos cathpharius*
Single at Upper Yubong, Meili Xueshan.
- 0129 Darjeeling Woodpecker *Dendrocopos darjellensis*
Single at the pass between Yubong and Xidang, Meili Xueshan.
- 0143 Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*
Single near Km 11 carpark, Shibaoshan, Jianchuan.
- 0163 Hoopoe *Upupa epops*
Common in cultivated areas.
- 0171 Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
Two on the aviary ponds, Kunming Zoo.
- 0214 Himalayan Swiftlet *Collocalia brevirostris*
Two seen on one day from CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0222 House Swift *Apus affinis*
15 at the Western Hills, Kunming.
- 0227 Mountain Scops Owl *Otus spilocephalus*
Single heard, CTW, Cangshan, Dali.

- 0240 Brown Wood Owl *Strix leptogrammica*
Singles heard, CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0247 Collared Owlet *Glaucidium brodiei*
Singles heard in daytime at Shibaoshan, Jiangchuan.
- 0265 Snow Pigeon *Columba leuconota*
200+ in two flocks near Upper Yubong, Meili Xueshan.
- 0274 Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*
Two near Baoxiang Temple, Shibaoshan, Jiangchuan.
- 0288 Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon *Treron sphenura*
Single female seen once coming in to roost, CTW, Cangshan, Dali
- 0302 Common Crane *Grus grus*
Six at Lashihai, Lijiang.
- 0304 Black-necked Crane *Grus nigricollis*
200+ at Napahai, Zhongdian. 20+ at Lashihai, Lijiang.
- 0324 Common Coot *Fulica atra*
800+ at Lashihai, Lijiang.
- 0400 Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
Nine at Lashihai, Lijiang.
- 0455 Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*
Single at base of Cangshan chairlift, Dali.
- 0458 Oriental Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*
Migrating (?) party of six Cangshan, Dali (on 6th Oct.)
- 0459 Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus*
Widespread over cultivated areas around Dali.
- 0460 Black Kite *Milvus migrans*
Four over the Western hills, Kunming.
- 0465 White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*
Four at Napahai, single at Shoudu Lake (near Zhongdian).
- 0470 Himalayan Griffon *Gyps himalayensis*
Four seen near roadside at Benzilan (between Deqin and Zhongdian) – a sign of “Sky burials” ?
- 0478 Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*
Single female near Napahai, Zhongdian.
- 0482 Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*

- Single near Higherland Inn, CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0485 Japanese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter gularis*
Single noted from CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0487 Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*
Single at 3,500m near Laojunshan.
- 0492 Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*
Singles from the CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0494 Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius*
Single over Shoudu Lake, Zhongdian.
- 0504 Mountain Hawk Eagle *Spizaetus nipalensis*
Single seen from road to Shaxi, near Shibaoshan.
- 0508 Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
Common near cultivated areas.
- 0516 Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*
Singles noted over Upper Mekong Valley at Cizhong and Xidang, Meili Xueshan.
- 0518 Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
Present on open water at all sites visited. Available barbequed near Zhonghe Temple, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0520 Great-crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
10 at Lashihai, Lijiang, the only ones noted.
- 0531 Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Dozens at Lashihai, Lijiang, and Napahai, Zhongdian.
- 0539 Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Just a single noted at Lashihai, Lijiang.
- 0542 Great Egret *Casmerodius albus*
Two at Napahai, Zhongdian.
- 0545 Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*
Three near the Aviary Ponds, Kunming Zoo.
- 0547 Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Seven at Kunming Zoo. Often heard after dark at Cangshan, Dali.
- 0568 Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*
Three at Napahai, Zhongdian.
- 0616 Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*
30+ seen from the road between Dali and Jianchuan.
- 0621 Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Pair seen at Xidang Hot Springs, Meili Xueshan.

- 0626 Red-billed Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*
Three near road to Shaxi, near Shibaoshan. Eight in Mekong Valley near Cizhong.
- 0630 Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyana*
Six in the open at Kunming Zoo.
- 0640 Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga caryocatactes*
Up to five daily in the pines near the CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0641 Red-billed Chough *Pyrhacorax pyrrhacorax*
30+ at Napahai, Zhongdian. 20+ at Shoudu Lake, Zhongdian. Seen also from the 99 Dragon Pools circuit at Laojunshan.
- 0644 Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus daurica*
150+ (migrants ?) in the air over Napahai, Zhongdian.
- 0647 Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Two near 99 Dragon Pools, Laojunshan.
- 0648 Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*
15 in the Mekong Valley near Cizhong.
- 0654 Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*
Two at the Western Hills, Kunming.
- 0655 Slender-billed Oriole *Oriolus tenuirostris*
Single seen from CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0664 Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*
Noted at Western Hills, Shibaoshan and Liming Scenic Area.
- 0666 Short-billed Minivet *Pericrocotus brevirostris*
Six noted from CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0667 Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus*
10 near Baoxiang Temple, Shibaoshan, 12 along Mekong Valley to Cizhong.
- 0669 Yellow-bellied Fantail *Rhipidura hypoxantha*
Up to 10 seen along CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0670 White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis*
Ones and twos seen around Shibaoshan, Jianchuan and Liming Scenic Area.
- 0672 Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*
20+ seen along roadsides on the way to Shibaoshan.
- 0673 Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*
Usually ones and twos (once, seven) seen from the CTW Cangshan, Dali.
- 0677 Hair crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*

Only two from the CTW, Cangshan, Dali.

- 0688 Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*
Three at Liming Scenic Area, two at Yubong, Meili Xueshan.
- 0691 White-throated Rock Thrush *Monticola gularis*
Single male near Baoxiang Temple, Shibaoshan.
- 0692 Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush *Monticola rufiventris*
Two from CTW, Cangshan, Dali. One at Laojunshan.
- 0693 Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*
Two at CTW, Cangshan, Dali (about km 9).
- 0694 Blue Whistling Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus*
Up to five sightings daily, gully at CTW 12.5kms. Single at Xidang Hot Springs, Meili Xueshan.
- 0698 Plain-backed Thrush *Zoothera mollissima*
Single seen from canteen window, “99 Dragon Pools”, Laojunshan.
- 0699 Long-tailed Thrush *Zoothera dixonii*
Two on “99 Dragon Pools” nature trail, Laojunshan.
- 0712 Eye-browed Thrush *Turdus obscurus*
Single at Liming Scenic Area.
- 0736 Slaty-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula hodgsonii*
Single male at CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0737 Rufous-gorgetted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophinata*
Single on CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0740 Snowy-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra*
A total of five sightings, CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0743 Slaty-blue Flycatcher *Ficedula tricolor*
Three sightings; two males and a female, CTW, Dali, Cangshan.
- 0746 Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassina*
Two at the Western Hills, Kunming, a single at Shibaoshan.
- 0750 Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara*
At total of 11 sightings at CTW, Cangshan, Dali. Heard there and at Shibaoshan daily.
- 0755 Pale Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis unicolor*
Single at CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0759 Grey-headed Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*
13 sightings at the “Cloudy Tourist Walk”, also at the Western Hills and Shibaoshan.
- 0765 Siberian Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope*

Two daily behind the kitchen at Laojunshan “99 Dragon Pools”.

0773 Orange-flanked Bush Robin *Tarsiger cyanurus*

Male and females of the blue-browed race (species) at the accommodation at Laojunshan (3,700m).

0774 Golden Bush Robin *Tarsiger chrysaeus*

At least two individuals in the spruce forest at Laojunshan.

0775 White-browed Bush Robin *Tarsiger indicus*

Everyone else seems to have seen this at Cangshan, above Dali, but not us. In autumn there are quite a few rufous-tailed brown (female/immature) robin/flycatcher creatures, but I'd need a lot more practice to confidently identify them.

0778 Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis*

At Kunming Zoo and around villages between Dali and Shibaoshan.

0785 Hodgson's Redstart *Phoenicurus hodgsoni*

Three at Black Dragon Pool Park, Lijiang, singles near Cizhong and Yubong, Meili Xueshan.

0787 Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus aureus*

A total of eight seen (various days) at CTW, Cangshan, Dali, also present at Shibaoshan and Lijiang.

0789 Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis*

Up to three daily at Xidang Hot Springs and Yubong (both Meili Xueshan) and two at Shoudu Lake, Zhongdian.

0790 White-capped Water Redstart *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*

Present at Cangshan (Dali), Meili Xueshan, Liming Scenic Area and Lijiang on any suitable-looking stream.

0791 Plumbeous Water Redstart *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*

See 0790, above.

0793 White-tailed Robin *Myiomela leucurum*

Up to three in the scrubby woodland at km11, Shibaoshan, Jianchuan.

0795 Grandala *Grandala coelicolor*

Flock of 50+ circling around the cliffs above Lower Yubong Village, Meili Xueshan.

0796 Little Forktail *Enicurus scouleri*

Single on stream at km12 CTW, Cangshan, Dali. Two at around 6km point on road up to Shibaoshan.

0799 White-crowned Forktail *Enicurus leschenaulti*

Two at 10km point of CTW, Cangshan, Dali. Up to seven between 4km to 6km points on Shibaoshan road.

0804 Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Day count of 10+ driving from Dali to Shibaoshan.

- 0807 Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea*
Up to three daily at Western hills, Kunming, and Cangshan, Dali.
- 0815 Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus*
15 in Green Lake Park, Kunming.
- 0833 Chestnut-vented Nuthatch *Sitta nagaensis*
Up to ten daily at various sites in Meili Xueshan. Also in the vicinity of Baoxiang Temple, Shibaoshan.
- 0837 Yunnan Nuthatch *Sitta yunnanensis*
Active and vocal near the carpark at km11 Shibaoshan. Highest daily count eight.
- 0843 Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria*
Two on the craggy – and crumbling -sides of the Mekong Gorge between Cizhong and Deqin.
- 0844 Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*
Up to three daily at “99 Dragon Pools” Laojunshan. Two each at Upper Yubong (Meili Xueshan) and Black Dragon Pool, Lijiang.
- 0848 Winter Wren *Certhia familiaris*
Up to six daily at the accommodation (3,700m) “99 Dragon Pools”, Laojunshan.
- 0853 Willow Tit *Parus montanus*
10+ at Shibaoshan. Also along Mekong Gorge and Meili Xueshan.
- 0858 Rufous-vented Tit *Parus rubidiventris*
Common above 2,500metres, max count 25+ at “99 Dragon Pools” (3,700m). A few at Cloudy Tourist Walk, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0861 Grey-crested Tit *Parus dichrous*
Only recorded at “99 Dragon Pools” and Meili Xueshan sites above 3,000m such as Xidang Hot Springs and Upper Yubong.
- 0862 Great Tit *Parus major*
In twos and threes here and there.
- 0864 Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus*
Common in all the hills visited. Max count eight at Liming Scenic Area.
- 0870 Yellow-browed Tit *Sylviparus modestus*
Only recorded once, at the CTW, Cangshan, Dali. Perhaps overlooked elsewhere.
- 0873 Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*
Western Hills (Max count 10), Shibaoshan, and Black Dragon Pool Park, Lijiang.
- 0875 Black-browed Tit *Aegithalos bonvaloti*
15+ at CTW, Cangshan, Dali. 20+daily at Shibaoshan.
- 0881 Dusky Crag Martin *Hirundo concolor*

Eight along the Mekong Gorge between Cizhong and Deqin.

- 0882 Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
Max 10 at Shibaoshan, Jianchuan.
- 0884 Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*
Two at Cloudy Tourist walk, Cangshan (Oct 1st).
- 0889 Goldcrest *Regulus regulus yunnanensis*
Two to three daily at “99 Dragon Pools”, Laojunshan. Similar numbers at Yubong (Meili Xueshan).
- 0891 Crested Finchbill *Spizixos canifrons*
Up to six at Liming Scenic Area.
- 0897 Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous*
20 + at the Western hills, Kunming. Present in smaller numbers at Liming Scenic Area, Black Dragon Pool Park in Lijiang, and Shibaoshan.
- 0912 Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*
Only a singleton noted at CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0925 Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonicus*
Up to 30+ at Western Hills, and “Cloudy Tourist Walk”, Cangshan.
- 0926 Chestnut-headed Tesia *Tesia castaneocoronata*
One seen two days in a row, CTW km7.5, Cangshan, Dali.
- 0937 Grey-sided Bush Warbler *Cettia brunnifrons*
Singles in the understorey at “99 Dragon Pools”, Laojunshan.
- 0975 Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*
Two at CTW, Cangshan, and two at Xidang Hot Springs, Meili Xueshan.
- 0978 Buff-throated Warbler *Phylloscopus subaffinis*
Liming Scenic Area and Xidang Hot Springs, max 6 daily.
- 0981 Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*
Up to 7 daily at Xidang Hot Springs.
- 0982 Buff-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus pulcher*
Common at Cangshan, “99 Dragon Pools” and Xidang Hot Springs.
- 0983 Ashy-throated Warbler *Phylloscopus maculipennis*
Only seen at CTW, Cangshan, Dali;- max daily count eight.
- 0984 Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*
Present at Cangshan, Dali.
- 0988 Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*
Noted at the Western Hills, Kunming

- 0997 Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*
Cangshan ,Dali and Liming Scenic area – max count six daily.
- 1002 Golden Spectacled Warbler *Seicercus burkii*
In many mixed flocks, daily max 11 at CTW, Cangshan.
Daily max 3 at “99 Dragon pools” Laojunshan.
- 1006 Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Seicercus castaniceps*
Daily max two at CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 1009 Black-faced Warbler *Abroscopus schisticeps*
Up to 12 at Shibaoshan, near Baoxiang Temple.
- 1014 White-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax albogularis*
A single flock of 30+ at “99 Dragons Pool”, Laojunshan.
- 1027 Moustached Laughingthrush *Garrulax cineraceus*
Near Baoxiang Temple and at the end of the road at Shibaoshan , max four.
- 1031 Giant Laughingthrush *Garrulax maximus*
Up to 15 at Xidang Hot Springs and Yubong , Meili Xueshan.
- 1037 White-browed Laughingthrush *Garrulax sannio*
Four at Kunming Zoo, two at Black Dragon Pool Park in Lijiang.
- 1041 Elliot's Laughingthrush *Garrulax elliotii*
Up to three at Cloudy tourist Walk, Cangshan, Dali. 30+ near Upper Yubong, Meili Xueshan.
- 1044 Black-faced Laughingthrush *Garrulax affinis*
Up to six daily at Xidang hot Springs and Yubong (Meili Xueshan).
- 1046 Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush *Garrulax erythrocephalus*
Daily max eight at CTW, Cangshan.
- 1056 Spot-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus erythrocnemis*
Up to six daily, CTW, Cangshan. Also at Xidang Hot Springs.
- 1059 Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*
Also at CTW, Cangshan. Not as common as 1056.
- 1071 Bar-winged Wren-babbler *Spelaeornis trglodytoides*
Found skulking along path edges CTW, Cangshan.
- 1076 Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps*
Seen or heard daily, CTW, Cangshan.
- 1083 Rufous-tailed Babbler *Chrysomma poecilotis*
Seen twice , two individuals each time 10.5 km CTW, Cangshan.
- 1084 Chinese Babax *Babax lanceolatus*
Family parties near Zhonghe Temple, CTW Cangshan. Seen daily.

- 1088 Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea*
Seven at Western Hills, party of five at CTW, Cangshan.
- 1092 Green Shrike Babbler *Pteruthius xanthochlorus*
Three individuals seen, CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 1102 Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouoptera*
Widespread and quite common, Western Hills, Cangshan, Liming Scenic Area and near Black Dragon Pool Park in Lijiang.
- 1103 Chestnut-tailed Minla *Minla strigula*
Up to 30 daily –family parties – CTW, Cangshan.
- 1105 Golden-breasted Fulvetta *Alcippe chrysotis*
One flock of 20 seen, CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 1109 White-browed Fulvetta *Alcippe vinipectus*
Up to 20 daily at CTW, Cangshan. Seen again at Xidang hot Springs and Yubong in Meili Xueshan.
- 1111 Spectacled Fulvetta *Alcippe ruficapilla*
Daily at CTW, Cangshan, but not as common as 1109.
- 1116 Rusty-capped Fulvetta *Alcippe dubia*
Recorded at Western Hills, CTW, Shibaoshan (max count six).
- 1118 Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia*
Four in Western hills, Kunming. (Overlooked/forgotten elsewhere ?)
- 1123 Black-headed Sibia *Heterophasia melanoleuca*
Almost daily at CTW, Cangshan and at Shibaoshan up to a total of six.
- 1130 Stripe-throated Yuhinia *Yuhina gularis*
Only seen once, party of four at km12 CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 1131 White-collared Yuhina *Yuhina diademata*
Up to 35 at CTW, Cangshan daily, also present at Yubong.
- 1132 Rufous-vented Yuhinia *Yuhina occipitalis*
Flock of 10 seen once at CTW, group of 20+ at “99 dragons Pool” at Laojunshan.
- 1140 Brown Parrotbill *Paradoxornis unicolor*
Seen three times, up to 15 at CTW km12, Cangshan.
- 1181 Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum*
Single at Shibaoshan.
- 1186 Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae*
Up to three daily at CTW, Cangshan, Dali.
- 1197 Russet Sparrow *Passer rutilans*

Up to 10 at km 11 at Shibaoshan, also up to six at Liming Scenic area.

- 1198 Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*
12 at Kunming Zoo (What a sad place...)
- 1207 White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*
Widespread in suitable habitat.
- 1212 Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
See 1207 above.
- 1218 Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*
Notable at open, grazed areas of Meili Xueshan. Max count 10 at Xidang hot Springs.
- 1222 Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus*
Single at CTW, Cangshan, 3rd Oct.
- 1226 Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris*
Two at the "Mystic Waterfall" Yubong, MeiLiXueShan .
- 1229 Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophciata*
Reasonably common at higher altitudes, Laojunshan and Meili Xueshan. Max count 30 at Upper Yubong.
- 1234 Maroon-backed Accentor *Prunella immaculata*
Daily max 11, at Upper Yubong.
- 1248 Black-headed Greenfinch *Carduelis ambigua*
A flock of 20+ at km11, Shibaoshan.
- 1254 Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*
Four at Shoudu Lake, Zhongdian.
- 1264 Long-tailed Rosefinch *Uragus sibiricus*
Single at Upper Yubong.
- 1266 Dark-breasted Rosefinch *Carpodacus nipalensis*
A total of six, Yubong, Meili Xueshan
- 1267 Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*
Single female, Xidang Hot Springs, Meili Xueshan.
- 1269 Pink-rumped Rosefinch *Carpodacus eos*
Six at Upper Yubong Village.
- 1277 White-browed Rosefinch *Carpodacus thura*
Four at Shoudu Lake, Zhongdian.
- 1284 Crimson-browed Finch *Propyrrhula subhimachala*
Single female, Upper Yubong.
- 1290 Grey-headed Bullfinch *Pyrrhula erythaca*

Three, pass between Xidang and Yubong.

1306 Godlewski's Bunting *Emberiza godlewskii*

10 at the carpark, km11 at Shibaoshan, eight at Xidang hot Springs.

1316 Yellow-throated Bunting *Emberiza elegans*

Seen daily near Zhonghe Temple, CTW, Cangshan. Max count 20.

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