

# Taiwan

A report on the birds seen during a trip to Taiwan from  
5 till 14 November 2004  
by David Van den Schoor



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## **INTRODUCTION**

This trip covers a 8-day trip to Taiwan taken by Mark Van Beirs and David Van den Schoor. Our main aim was to see all the endemics and all possible future-splits. Because of the few days we had available, and because both of us already had experience with most species, we focused mainly on the highland localities. The total number of species on the trip was 156, but could easily have been higher if this had been a priority. Disappointments were failure to see Mikado Pheasant, Taiwan Partridge (only heard), Taiwan Bush-Warbler (much more easy in spring) and even Taiwan Blue Magpie. Luckily for me, I do have a second chance for the latter species in the beginning of December during a 23 hour stop-over on my way to the Philippines. For the other species I will give it a try in spring once with Fairy Pitta as a bonus bird or in summer with a visit to the Matsu Islands for Chinese Crested Tern. Last July, Taiwan was hit by several serious typhoons and Amnashan, surely the best place to see both Pheasants and the Taiwan Partridge was not accessible due to landslides. The same happened with the Pipeline trail (full length c10 km) which was blocked after only 1.5 km, so our chances to see these species were reduced by more than 70%! I'm not going to write a true "trip report", as good descriptions of sites have been made in several reports (see references).

## **FLIGHT AND VISA**

We flew from Brussels to Taipei via Amsterdam and Bangkok with KLM for 870,00 EUR return, taxes included. No departure tax was required. We also took a domestic flight Taitung – Lanyu Island and paid 78,00 EUR for a return-ticket operated by Mandarin Airlines. Citizens from some western European countries, Australasia and the USA can stay in Taiwan for 30 days without a visa. Everyone else needs a visa. Single entry visas are easy to get, but if you want a multiple entry visa, get it before you leave home. Because the Republic of China (Taiwan) is not recognised by most countries, you'll have to get your visa from a Taiwanese 'pseudo embassy'. Many countries do not even allow the word 'Taiwan' in the name of Taiwan's overseas legations - try searching under 'Taipei' instead.

## **MONEY**

The unit of currency in Taiwan is the New Taiwan Dollar. The exchange rate at the airport in November 2004 was 32,720 to the US Dollar. Travellers' cheques and cash can be changed at international airports and large banks, but you'll have trouble with travellers' cheques in rural areas. Stick to US Dollars for cash and cheques if you can - other currencies will cause you problems. When changing cheques, shop around, as commission costs can vary widely. For the most part, only larger banks such as the International Bank of China (CBC) and Bank of Taiwan can change money. There are no legal private money changers in Taiwan, but if you're stuck some jewellery shops will change cash. Major international credit cards can be used at big hotels and flash restaurants or to get cash advances at your card's offices. Take note that no one on Lanyu Island accepts credit cards. Therefore, it is important to bring enough NT\$ cash as there are also no money exchange facilities. Tipping is not the done thing in Taiwan. The only people who really expect you to shell out are hotel bellhops and airport porters, who will expect about US\$1 a bag. Big hotels and restaurants will stick 10 per cent service charge and 5 per cent value added tax on your bill. Taiwan is not a developing country, so don't expect to haggle yourself a bargain - you may be able to get a slight discount (around 10 percent) in street markets and small shops.

## **FOOD AND DRINK**

In almost all towns you will find a good variety of restaurants, supermarkets (Seven-Eleven) and food-stalls. Meals are good, generally fine and inexpensive. It is best to avoid drinking water unless you know it is boiled. Drink bottled drinks.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

All towns and cities have a few hotels but they are not always well signposted. Prices fluctuated between 1000 and 1500 NT\$ for a double room. Accommodation on Lanyu Island was expensive. There are only two hotels and we had to pay 2400 NT\$ for a double room.

## **LANGUAGE**

Most people in Taiwan speak only Mandarin, but the younger generation in the bigger cities speak some English and genuinely tried to help when we had language difficulties.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

There appeared to be no problems, although some major cities may be more dangerous at night. People were in general very friendly. In terms of health we had no problems at all, the food is normally of a very high quality. There is no malaria and there are no tropical diseases. Biting insects are not numerous but can occur locally. Mosquitoes can be locally common, especially in the plains and on Lanyu Island.

## **WEATHER**

We had excellent weather during our stay, with temperatures up to 30°C in the lowlands and on Lanyu Island and 24°C in the mountains. Even the nights were warm, we had temperatures of c13°C at Tsuifeng (c2200 metres). Our second day at Lanyu was very windy and we were lucky that our return flight was not cancelled (only 2 out of the 5 daily flights went).

## **TIME ZONE**

CET Time + 7 hours during our winter time and + 6 hours during our summer time.

## **ELECTRICITY**

110 Volts AC 60 cycles. American-styled two-pin plugs are most common.

## **ITINERARY**

5/11: Flight by KLM from Brussels to Amsterdam (14:20 – 15:20) and from Amsterdam via Bangkok to Taipei (departure at 19:40).

6/11: Arrival in Bangkok at 14:10 with a connecting flight to Taipei (15:45 - 17:50). By bus to Central Railway Station for 120 NT\$ pp (18:30 - 19:30). Overnight train to Taitung for 616 NT\$ pp, second-class (dep: 22:56).

7/11: Arrival in Taitung at 6:30. By taxi to Taitung airport where we spent an hour or so birding in the neighbourhood. Flight to Lanyu (8:45 – 9:10). Transfer to our hotel where we rented a Ford Festina from a store next door (2400 NT\$ incl. fuel for 24 hours). Rest of the day birding all over the island. Owling till 18:30. Night in Lanyu Island Hotel (2400 NT\$ for a double room).

8/11: Birding on Lanyu Island till noon. Flight to Taitung (15:10 -15:35). Upon arrival we were met by Yao Cheng-te who was to guide us for the rest of our stay on Taiwan. Drive to Li Tao (16:20 -18:00) where we spent the night (1000 NT\$ for a double room).

9/11: Drive from Li Tao to Yu Shan National Park (many short birding stops) and onwards to Cishan and Tainan to the Tsengwen estuary. Early evening drive to Chichi (1400 NT\$ for a double room).

10/11: Birding in the Linnei forest (6:00 – 10:00). Drive to Chin-Tau, where we spent most of the afternoon (waste of time). Late pm we had a quick look in the gardens of the Endemic Bird Species Research Center in Chichi and then drove to Tsuifeng for a 4-night stay (1000 NT\$ for a double room at mid-week and 1200N NT\$ in the weekend).

11/11: Morning along the Blue Gate trail and Pipeline trail (5:30 -12:30), which we found blocked after c1.5km. Afternoon in the Huisun Forest Recreation Park, south of Wushe (15:00 – 17:00). Owling along the Blue Gate trail.

12/11: Blue Gate trail and Pipeline trail (5:30 – 9:30). Birding along road 14 to Kunyang and the Taroko National Park (Hohuanshan Pass), reaching an altitude of 2950m (km post 20 till km post 38).

13/11: Blue Gate trail and Pipeline trail (5:30 - 12:00 & 15:45 - 16:45, followed by nocturnal walk).

14/11: Early morning in the Huisun Forest Recreation Park. Mid morning return drive to Taipei International Airport. Flight Taipei (19:20) via Bangkok

15/11: and Amsterdam to Brussels (arrived 7:30).

## **REFERENCES**

### **Trip Reports**

- Barry Wright : A Birding Trip to Taiwan (April 15<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> 1999) – Private Publication available from the World Twitch web site. A good supplement to Sargeant with more up to date information.
- Dave Sargeant : A Birders Guide to Taiwan (1998) – Private publication available from NHBS bookshop. An excellent report with good maps and general information.
- Gary and Marlene Babic : Taiwan, December 2 – 7, 2003.
- Gary and Marlene Babic : Lanyu (Orchid Island), Taiwan: July 4 – 6, 2004.
- Garry George : Taiwan, Feb.19 – March 1, 2001.
- Graham Talbot : Birding Taiwan 1 (5<sup>th</sup> October – 8<sup>th</sup> October 2000) – Private publication available on Urs Geiser web site. Updates to Sargeant and Wright reports.
- Graham Talbot : Birding Taiwan 2 (9<sup>th</sup> March – 12<sup>th</sup> March 2001) – Private publication available from the author. An update of his previous trip.
- Graham Talbot : Birding Taiwan 3 (27<sup>th</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> July 2001) – Private publication available from the author.
- Jon Hornbuckle : Birding in Taiwan : Jan.15<sup>th</sup> and Jan.30<sup>th</sup> to Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> 2003.
- Jon Hornbuckle : Birding in Taiwan : May 19<sup>th</sup> till May 25<sup>th</sup> 2004.
- Peter Collaerts : Trip Report Taiwan – 26 October – 5 November 2001.
- Rasmussen P.C. *et. al.* : A new Bush-Warbler from Taiwan (The Auk : Vol.117 No.2 April 2000).

### **General web sites**

- “Bird Links to the World” : [www.bsc-eoc.org/links/links.jsp?page=l\\_as\\_i\\_tw](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/links/links.jsp?page=l_as_i_tw) (trip reports and checklists)
- “BirdLife International Partner in Taiwan” : [www.birdlife.net/worldwide/national/taiwan/index.html](http://www.birdlife.net/worldwide/national/taiwan/index.html)
- “Bird Photo Gallery” : [www.geocities.com/RainForest/9003/fotolist.htm](http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/9003/fotolist.htm)
- “Birds in Taiwan” : [www.geocities.com/Yosemite/Trails/2881/bird.html](http://www.geocities.com/Yosemite/Trails/2881/bird.html)
- “Birdtours” : [www.birdtours.co.uk/tripreports/taiwan/index.htm](http://www.birdtours.co.uk/tripreports/taiwan/index.htm) (trip reports)
- “Birdingpal Taiwan” : [www.birdingpal.org/Taiwan.htm](http://www.birdingpal.org/Taiwan.htm)
- “A Checklist of the Birds of Taiwan” : [www.genglab.ucdavis.edu/ding/aves/chcklst\\_readme.htm](http://www.genglab.ucdavis.edu/ding/aves/chcklst_readme.htm)
- “Birds in Taiwan” : <http://taiwan.wcn.com.tw/en/special/bird/>
- “Endemic Species Research Institute” : [www.tesri.gov.tw/content/animal/ani\\_bird.asp](http://www.tesri.gov.tw/content/animal/ani_bird.asp)
- “Euro Birding” : [www.eurobirding.com](http://www.eurobirding.com)
- “Kenting National Park” : [www.gio.gov.tw/info/ecology/specific/kndn\\_e.html](http://www.gio.gov.tw/info/ecology/specific/kndn_e.html)
- “Large number of spoonbills counted in Taiwan” : [www.taiwanheadlines.gov.tw/19991224/19991224s2.html](http://www.taiwanheadlines.gov.tw/19991224/19991224s2.html)
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- “Taiwan Ecological Conservation (Birds)” : [www.gio.gov.tw/info/ecology/English/bow\\_e/birds\\_e/birds\\_e.htm](http://www.gio.gov.tw/info/ecology/English/bow_e/birds_e/birds_e.htm)
- “Taiwan’s National Parks” : [www.cpami.gov.tw/taroko/english/englis~1.htm](http://www.cpami.gov.tw/taroko/english/englis~1.htm)
- “Taiwan’s Protected Natural Landscapes” : [http://park.org/Taiwan/Government/Theme/Environmental\\_Ecological/env48.htm](http://park.org/Taiwan/Government/Theme/Environmental_Ecological/env48.htm)
- “The Beauty of Wild Birds in Taiwan” : [www.asiannet.com/birds\\_e](http://www.asiannet.com/birds_e)
- “The Ten Best Bird Watching Sites in Taiwan” : <http://taiwan.wcn.com.tw/en/special/bird/bird23.shtml>
- “Wayne Hsu” : [www.geocities.com/RainForest/9003](http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/9003)
- “Wetlands and Water Birds in Taiwan” : [www.sinica.edu.tw/tit/environment/0896\\_Birds.html](http://www.sinica.edu.tw/tit/environment/0896_Birds.html)
- “Wild Bird Federation Taiwan” : <http://bird.org.tw/>
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- “Wildlife Refuges in Taiwan” : [http://park.org/Taiwan/Government/Theme/Environmental\\_Ecological/env56.htm](http://park.org/Taiwan/Government/Theme/Environmental_Ecological/env56.htm)

### **Books**

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- Cheng Tso-hsin – A Synopsis of the Avifauna of China.
- Craig Robson – A Field Guide to the Birds of South East Asia. Although it does not cover Taiwan it is excellent for species which occur in other parts of SE Asia.
- Inskipp, Lindsey & Duckworth (1996) – An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the Oriental Region.
- James F. Clements - Birds of the World. A check list, (Fifth Edition 2000).
- John MacKinnon and Karen Phillipps – A Field Guide to the Birds of China –The only guide in English that illustrates all the endemics with the exception of the newly discovered Taiwan Bush Warbler.
- Robert S. Kennedy – A Guide to the Birds of the Philippines.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Many thanks to Peter Collaerts for providing some good information and to Mark Van Beirs for his excellent company during this trip.

## **SYSTEMATIC LIST OF BIRDS**

This list follows the taxonomy, names and sequence of James F. Clements (Birds of the World, A Checklist, Fifth Edition 2000) with a few exceptions of recent taxonomic decisions and name changes (see also [www.ibispub.com/updates.html](http://www.ibispub.com/updates.html) ), updated till 15 July 2004. Some alternative names, interesting subspecies and potential taxonomic splits are also mentioned. Notes of threatened species on the IUCN Red List were taken from "Threatened Birds of the World" – BirdLife International (2000), see also [www.birdlife.net/species/species\\_search\\_results.cfm](http://www.birdlife.net/species/species_search_results.cfm) .

For some species no details are given about their abundance; this automatically indicates that the species was seen regularly, but it does however not necessarily mean that it is common.

### **Gray Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

A single bird at Taitung and c10 birds at Tsengwen Estuary.

### **Great (White) Egret** *Casmerodius albus*

c25 birds at Tsengwen Estuary and c15 birds on the journey to Taipei on our last day.

### **Intermediate (Yellow-billed) Egret** *Egretta intermedia*

Singles at Taitung and Lanyu Island. Small numbers en route and c10 birds at Tsengwen Estuary.

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

Singles at Taitung and near Taipei. c15 at Tsengwen Estuary and 4 birds at Chin-Tau.

### **Pacific (Eastern) Reef-Heron** *Egretta sacra*

3 white morphs at Tsengwen Estuary.

### **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*

A common species in the lowlands.

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

Singles at Lanyu Island and en route to Taipei. c10 birds were seen at Tsengwen Estuary at dusk.

### **Malayan Night Heron** *Gorsachius melanolophus*

2 birds at Linnei.

### **Black-faced Spoonbill** *Platalea minor*

We counted at least 360 birds. There were no less than 566 birds present at the moment.

Note : this species is qualified as Endangered by BirdLife International.

### **Crested Serpent Eagle** *Spilornis cheela*

A single was heard near Tsuifeng and at least 2 were seen near Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the resident subspecies *hoya* is endemic to Taiwan.

### **Crested Goshawk** *Accipiter trivirgatus*

Seen twice en route at Yu Shan NP, another was seen at the Taiwan Endemic Species Research Institute.

Note : the resident race *formosae* is endemic to Taiwan.

### **Japanese Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter gularis*

Only seen at Lanyu Island with respectively 7 and 2 birds on migration on consecutive days.

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

A family of 4 birds at Linnei, a female at the Hohuanshan Pass and another single at Tsuifeng.

Note : the resident subspecies *fuscipectus* is endemic to Taiwan.

### **Gray-faced Buzzard** *Butastur indicus*

2 birds on both days at Lanyu Island.

### **Black Eagle** *Ictinaetus malayensis*

Singles at Yu Shan NP and Chin-Tau.

**Eurasian Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

A total of 4 birds at Lanyu Island. 2 more were seen at Yu Shan NP.

**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*

A single on migration at Lanyu Island.

**Taiwan Partridge** *Arborophila crudigularis*

They were very quiet during our stay. So, we only heard 2 birds at Yu Shan NP, 3 or 4 birds in total along the Blue Gate trail and a single at Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : endemic to Taiwan and qualified as Near-Threatened by BirdLife International.

**Chinese Bamboo-Partridge** *Bambusicola thoracica*

3 seen and c5 more heard at Yu Shan NP. Heard at Linnei and the Tsuifeng area with respectively c5 and c3 birds there. Most common at Huisun Forest Recreation Area where we saw small families of 4, 3 and 2 birds and heard at least 3 more birds.

Note : the form *sonorivox* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Swinhoe's Pheasant** *Lophura swinhoii*

We worked very hard on the Pheasants but only saw a single male at the Blue Gate trail on our last day there. Two females were flushed along the trail but the views were too brief for conclusive id.

Note : endemic to the montane forests of central Taiwan and qualified as Near-Threatened by BirdLife International.

**Ring-necked Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

A single male near Taitung Airport.

Note : the subspecies *formosanus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**White-breasted Waterhen** *Amauornis phoenicurus*

A single at Taitung Airport.

**Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Singles at the Tsengwen Estuary and at the Taiwan Endemic Species Research Institute.

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

2 birds at Tsengwen Estuary.

**Pacific Golden-Plover** *Pluvialis fulva*

3 birds at the airstrip of Taitung and 3 birds at the airstrip of Lanyu Island.

**Black-bellied (Grey) Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

c15 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Snowy (Kentish) Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*

c25 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Mongolian (Lesser Sand) Plover** *Charadrius mongolus*

A single at Taitung airstrip and c10 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Greater Sandplover** *Charadrius leschenaultii*

A single at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Eurasian Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

A single at dusk on Lanyu Island.

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

A single flew over Taitung.

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

c8 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

c5 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

c15 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*  
2 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*  
c15 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*  
c100 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limicola falcinellus*  
A single at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Saunders's Gull** *Larus saundersi*  
4 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.  
Note : qualified as Endangered by BirdLife International.

**Gull-billed Tern** *Sterna nilotica*  
12 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Caspian Tern** *Sterna caspia*  
c20 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybridus*  
5 birds at the Tsengwen Estuary.

**Rock Pigeon (Dove)** *Columba livia*  
A common species near towns and cities.

**Ashy Wood-Pigeon** *Columba pulchricollis*  
Daily seen along the Blue Gate trail and the Pipeline trail with respectively c15, c45 and c15 birds there. At the Huisun Forest Recreation Area 8 birds were counted.

**Oriental (Rufous) Turtle-Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis*  
c15 birds at Linnei, c5 at Chin-Tau and c10 at the Tsuifeng area.  
Note : the resident subspecies *orii* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Red Collared-Dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica*  
Regularly seen in small numbers.

**Spotted (Spotted-necked) Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis*  
A common lowland species.  
Note : not Clements, but some authors elevated the resident form of Taiwan to a separate subspecies *formosona*.

**Philippine Cuckoo-Dove** *Macropygia tenuirostris*  
At least 5 birds were seen on both days, a few more were only heard.  
Note : this species is restricted to southeast Taiwan (only on Lanyu Island) and the Philippines. This form and other forms were previously lumped in *M. phasianella*, with the name Reddish Cuckoo-Dove being used for the enlarged species. Philippine Cuckoo-Dove gets monotypic status by Clements but others have considered two more races (*phaea* and *septentrionalis*) synonymous with monotypic *tenuirostris*. In that case, the form on Lanyu Island is the very limited ranged *septentrionalis*, only occurring here and on the Batan Islands of the northern Philippines.

**Emerald (Green-winged) Dove** *Chalcophaps indica*  
A pair flushed in a gully on Lanyu Island.

**White-bellied (Japanese Green) Pigeon** *Treron sieboldii*  
A few were heard at Linnei and at the Blue Gate trail. Finally c13 birds were seen in small groups along the Blue Gate trail.  
Note : not Clements, but some authors have elevated the resident form of Taiwan to a separate subspecies *soronius*.

**Whistling (Formosan) Green Pigeon** *Treron formosae*  
Rather poor views of 3 birds in a gully at Lanyu Island, a few more were heard too.  
Note : qualified as Near-Threatened by BirdLife International, the form *formosae* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Lesser Coucal** *Centropus bengalensis*

A single seen and heard on Lanyu Island.

**Mountain Scops-Owl** *Otus splilicephalus*

A single heard at the end of the Blue Gate trail.

Note : the form *hambroeckii* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Collared Scops-Owl** *Otus lettia*

Heard at Li Tao and seen at a day-time roost at the Taiwan Endemic Species Research Institute.

Note : the form *glabripes* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Ryukyu (Elegant) Scops-Owl** *Otus elegans*

Seen at the old school grounds of Hungtou village, two more were heard by day in a creek bed a few kilometres further south.

Note : this species is qualified as Near-Threatened by BirdLife International and restricted to small islands off Taiwan (Lanyu Island only), South Japan and North Philippines. The form *botelensis* is endemic to Lanyu Island.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Heard twice at the Blue Gate trail.

Note : the form *yamadae* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Collared Owlet** *Glaucidium brodiei*

Heard at Li Tao and Tsuifeng, seen twice at Yu Shan NP and the Hohuanshan Pass.

Note : the race *paradalotum* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Savanna Nightjar** *Caprimulgus affinis*

A single at Lanyu Island.

Note : the form *stictomus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Silver-backed Needletail** *Hirundapus cochinchinensis*

c7 birds were seen from the roadside near the start of the Blue Gate trail.

Note : the race *formosanus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Fork-tailed (Pacific) Swift** *Apus pacificus*

c5 birds at Lanyu Island.

**House Swift** *Apus nipalensis*

Almost daily seen in small numbers.

Note : the form *stictomus* is a Taiwanese endemic subspecies.

**Black-browed Barbet** *Megalaima oorti*

Small numbers at Yu Shan NP, Linnei and Huisun Forest Recreation Area. More common along the Blue Gate trail where we once observed a group of 20+ in a fruiting tree.

Note : the form *nuchalis* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Gray-capped Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos canicapillus*

A single at Yu Shan NP, 2 at Linnei and heard at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the race *kaleensis* is endemic to Taiwan.

**White-backed Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos leucotos*

A male was seen along the Blue Gate trail, the female was only heard.

Note : the form *insularis* is another Taiwanese endemic subspecies.

**Gray-faced (Grey-headed) Woodpecker** *Picus canus*

Heard along the Blue Gate trail.

Note : the form *tancolo* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Oriental (Small) Skylark** *Alauda gulgula*

At least 2 birds over Taitung Airport.

Note : the form *wattersi* is restricted to Taiwan and the Pescadores Islands.

**Plain Martin** *Riparia paludicola*

Small numbers.

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

c5 birds at Taitung.

**Pacific (Hill) Swallow** *Hirundo tahitica*

A common species throughout.

Note : the subspecies *namiyei* is restricted to Taiwan and the Ryukyu Islands.

**Striated Swallow** *Hirundo striolata*

A single observation along the Tatu His River.

Note : the race *stanfordi* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Asian (Asian House) Martin** *Delichon dasypus*

Small numbers in the mountains.

Note : the form *nigrimentalis* is a Taiwanese endemic subspecies.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

c7 birds at Taitung, singles at Lanyu Island and the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

**Black-backed Wagtail** *Motacilla lugens*

A single en route at Yu Shan NP.

Note : Clements gives three subspecies for Taiwan. One, the nominate race is a winter visitor to Taiwan. Some other authors treat the grey-backed race *ocularis* of the White Wagtail *M. alba* as part of this species which is also a winter visitor in Taiwan.

**Gray Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

A total of 3 birds on Lanyu Island and Yu Shan NP, singles at Huisun Forest Recreation Area on both visits.

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

2 birds at the airstrip of Taitung.

**Olive-backed (Indian Tree) Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*

c5 birds at Yu Shan NP and at the Tsuifeng area, c10 birds along the Hohuanshan Pass and c20 birds at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

**Gray-chinned (Mountain) Minivet** *Pericrocotus solaris*

Small numbers at Yu Shan NP, Linnei and the Huisun Forest Recreation Area; more common along the Blue Gate trail and the Pipeline trail.

**Collared Finchbill** *Spizixos semitorques*

8 birds at Yu Shan NP and c4 birds at Linnei.

Note : the subspecies *cineireicapillus* is a Taiwanese endemic.

**Styan's (Formosan) Bulbul** *Pycnonotus taivanus*

No less than 50+ birds around Taitung Airport and c10 birds in the lower parts of Yu Shan NP.

Note : endemic to coastal lowland forests of eastern and southern Taiwan.

**Light-vented (Chinese) Bulbul** *Pycnonotus sinensis*

c5 birds at Yu Shan NP, c20 birds at Linnei and 4 birds at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the race *formosae* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Brown-eared Bulbul** *Ixos amaurotis*

Common on Lanyu Island with c30 and c20 birds there on respective days.

Note : the form *nagamichii* is endemic to Taiwan and restricted to the south and to Lanyu Island.

**Black Bulbul** *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*

A common species; highest count at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area with 80+ birds there.

Note : the race *nigerrimus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Flamecrest (Taiwan Firecrest)** *Regulus goodfellowi*

10 birds along the Hohuanshan Pass (between km posts 21-24).

Note : endemic to the mountains of central Taiwan.

**Winter Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A single at the top of the Hohuanshan Pass.

Note : the race *taivanus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Alpine Accentor** *Prunella collaris*

A single at Yu Shan NP and 5 birds at the Hohuanshan Pass.

Note : the form *fennelli* is a Taiwanese endemic.

**Blue Rock-Thrush** *Monticola solitarius*

A single at Taitung Airport, respectively 8 and 1 bird on Lanyu Island and another 2 birds were seen at Yu Shan NP.

**Formosan Whistling-Thrush** *Myophonus insularis*

First heard and later briefly seen at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : endemic to Taiwan.

**Scaly (White's) Thrush** *Zoothera dauma*

A single at the Tsuifeng area and 4 along the Blue Gate trail, all late afternoon.

**Island Thrush** *Turdus poliocephalus*

2 males and a female at Yu Shan NP. Seen twice at the Blue Gate trail, with at least 4 males and 2 females.

Note : the distinctive endemic Taiwan race *niveiceps*, called Formosan Thrush, is sometimes considered as a separate species because the male has a milky white head which is seen in no other SE Asia forms. Some subspecies of the Fiji and Vanuatu Islands also show males with a greyish-white head, maybe one of the reasons why they still lump all the forms in one species.

**Eyebrowed Thrush** *Turdus obscurus*

Seen twice at the Blue Gate trail with respectively c7 and a single bird there.

**Pale Thrush** *Turdus pallidus*

A male and female at Lanyu Island.

**White-browed Shortwing** *Brachypteryx montana*

Frequently heard at Yu Shan NP, Chin-Tau, Blue Gate trail and Pipeline trail. Fairly easily seen at Chin-tau and along the Blue Gate trail.

Note : this endemic race *goodfellowi*, called "Blue Shortwing" is a potential split based on vocalizations and plumage differences. The same intriguing problem exists with some forms in the Philippines. These taxonomic problems are currently under study.

**Striated Prinia** *Prinia criniger*

A pair at Yu Shan NP.

Note : the race *striata* is a Taiwan endemic.

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

2 birds in the scrub near Taitung Airport.

**Plain (White-browed) Prinia** *Prinia inornata*

At least 2 birds around Taitung Airport.

Note : the form *flavirostris* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Brownish-flanked (Strong-footed) Bush-Warbler** *Cettia fortipes*

A single seen at Yu Shan NP and another single heard at the Blue Gate trail.

Note : the race *robustipes* is a Taiwan endemic.

**Yellowish-bellied (Verreaux's) Bush-Warbler** *Cettia acanthizoides*

Regularly heard and quite easy to see; c6 birds at Yu Shan NP, c10 birds in total along the Blue Gate trail and the Pipeline trail and c5 birds at the Hohuanshan Pass. Also one bird trapped at Tsuifeng Ringing station.

Note : the form *concolor* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Yellow-browed (Inornate) Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*

c5 birds at Linnei and a single at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

**Rufous-faced (White-throated) Warbler** *Abroscopus albogularis*

A single at Yu Shan NP, 2 at Linnei and 4 were counted on two days along the Blue Gate trail and the Pipeline trail.

**Snowy-browed Flycatcher** *Ficedula hyperythra*

Single males were seen at Chin-Tau and the Blue Gate trail. 4 more birds were heard at the latter place.

Note : the race *innexa* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Vivid Niltava** *Niltava vivida*

Daily a few along the Blue Gate trail and the Pipeline trail. A single male was seen at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the resident form *vivida* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Siberian Rubythroat** *Luscinia calliope*

A male was trapped at the Tsuifeng Ringing station.

**Red-flanked (Orange-flanked) Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus*

A female-type at the Blue Gate trail.

**White-browed Bush-Robin** *Tarsiger indicus*

Heard at Yu Shan NP and poor views at the Hohuanshan Pass near km post 23.

Note : the endemic form *formosanus* is a potential split from the mainland forms, based on vocalizations and plumage differences. They look very similar to the female of next species.

**Collared Bush-Robin** *Tarsiger johnstoniae*

Seen twice at Yu Shan NP. Good numbers along the Blue Gate trail and Pipeline trail. C3 birds at the Hohuanshan Pass and a female trapped at Tsuifeng Ringing station.

Note : this species is endemic to Taiwan.

**Daurian Redstart** *Phoenicurus aureus*

A male and 2 females at Yu Shan NP.

**Plumbeous Redstart** *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*

Regularly seen in suitable habitat.

Note : the race *affinus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**White-tailed Robin** *Cinclidium leucurum*

Seen twice at Chin-Tau and the Blue Gate trail, a few more where heard here too.

Note : the form *montium* is another endemic subspecies.

**Little Forktail** *Enicurus scouleri*

A single at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the form *fortis* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Siberian Stonechat** *Saxicola maura*

A female of this scarce migrant was seen at Lanyu Airport.

**Black-naped Monarch** *Hypothymis azurea*

c10 birds at Linnei.

Note : the race *oberholseri* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Rusty (Scaly-headed) Laughingthrush** *Garrulax poecilorhynchus*

c5 birds at Yu Shan NP.

Note : the race *poecilorhynchus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Hwamei** *Garrulax canorus*

2 seen and 2 more heard a few kilometres before the entrance of the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the form *taewanus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**White-whiskered Laughingthrush** *Garrulax morrisonianus*

c10 birds at Yu Shan NP and 4 birds at the Hohuanshan Pass.

Note : endemic to Taiwan.

**Steere's Liocichla** *Liocichla steerii*

A common mountain species, daily seen here.

Note : another Taiwan endemic.

**Spot-breasted (Chinese Rusty-cheeked) Scimitar-Babbler** *Pomatorhinus erythrocnemis*

Heard at Yu Shan NP and Linnei. 2 birds crossed the road a few kilometres before the entrance of the Huisun Forest Recreation Area but disappeared too quickly for good views.

Note : the race *erythrocnemis* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Streak-breasted (Rufous-necked) Scimitar-Babbler** *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*

3 seen and more heard at Yu Shan NP, c5 birds at Linnei and a single heard at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : this form *musicus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Pygmy Wren-Babbler** *Phoenopygia pusilla*

C5 heard at Chin-Tau and along the Blue Gate and Pipeline trail. 3 singles were seen along the Blue Gate trail.

Note : next to the Island Thrush, White-browed Shortwing and the White-browed Bush-Robin, this is surely one of the best potential splits for the near future. The race *formosana* (also called Formosan Wren-Babbler) has a distinctive song different from all other forms.

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

Fairly common in mixed-species flocks.

Note : the race *praecognita* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Taiwan Barwing** *Actinodura morrisoniana*

A single was seen and heard at Yu Shan NP, 6 birds at Chin-Tau and respectively 2, 3 and 8 birds along the Blue Gate trail.

Note : a Taiwan endemic.

**Streak-throated Fulvetta** *Alcippe cinereiceps*

2 birds at Yu Shan NP, 3 seen and c7 more heard along the Blue Gate trail and the Pipeline trail.

Note : the form *formosana* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Dusky Fulvetta** *Alcippe brunnea*

c5 birds at Linnei.

Note : the race *brunnea* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Gray-cheeked Fulvetta** *Alcippe morrisonia*

Small numbers at Linnei, Blue Gate trail, Pipeline trail and the Huisun Forest Recreation Area. More common at Yu Shan NP with 40+ birds there.

Note : the form *morrisonia* is another Taiwanese endemic subspecies.

**White-eared Sibia** *Heterophasia auricularis*

Fairly common. Seen at Yu Shan NP, Chin-Tau, Blue Gate trail, Pipeline trail and Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : a Taiwanese endemic.

**Taiwan Yuhina** *Yuhina brunneiceps*

Like the previous species, commonly seen at the same places.

Note : endemic to Taiwan.

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

A single at Yu Shan NP, 3 birds at Linnei and c5 birds at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

**Vinous-throated Parrotbill** *Paradoxornis webbianus*

C5 birds were seen around Tsuifeng Ringing station, 7 birds were trapped too.

Note : the race *bulomachus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Black-throated (Red-headed) Tit** *Aegithalos concinnus*

Commonly seen at Yu Shan NP, Blue Gate trail, Pipeline trail and the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

c10 birds at Yu Shan NP and c8 birds at the Hohuanshan Pass.

Note : the race *ptisolus* is a Taiwanese endemic subspecies.

**Green-backed Tit** *Parus monticolus*

c15 birds at Yu Shan NP, a total of c21 birds along the Blue Gate trail + Pipeline trail, c8 birds at the Huhuanshan Pass and c5 birds at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the form *insperatus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Yellow (Formasan) Tit** *Macholophus holsti*

2 heard at Yu Shan NP, 4 seen at the Pipeline trail, a single at the Blue Gate trail and another single at the Huisun Forest recreation Area.

Note : this species is endemic to Taiwan.

**Eurasian Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

C7 birds of the siberian race *sinensis* were seen at Yu Shan NP. Singles were seen on three dates along the Blue Gate trail.

**Plain Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum concolor*

Only a single observation at Linnei.

Note : the race *uchidai* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Fire-breasted (Buff-bellied) Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum ignipectus*

C5 birds at Yu Shan NP, c17 birds in total along the Blue Gate trail + Pipeline trail and c5 birds at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : this form *formasum* is also endemic to Taiwan.

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

Common throughout.

Note : the race *simplex* is endemic to the Taiwan mainland.

**Lowland White-eye** *Zosterops meyeri*

Good numbers at Lanyu Island, c20 birds on both days.

Note : there is some confusion concerning this form. Other authors lump the two forms into the previous species. The subspecies *meyeri* is restricted to the northern Philippines (Luzon and satellite Islands) and *batanis* to Lanyu Island and the five Batan Islands of the Philippines.

**Maroon Oriole** *Oriolus traillii*

Mark saw a single male at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the form *ardens* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus*

Small numbers in the southern part of the country. c5 birds at Taitung, 3 at Lanyu Island, 3 en route and 2 at Yu Shan NP.

**Long-tailed (Black-headed) Shrike** *Lanius schach*

A single observation at the Taitung Railway Station.

Note : some authors (not Clements!) elevate the resident form of Taiwan to a separate subspecies *formosae*.

**Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus*

c40 around Taitung, c10 en route, c4 at Yu Shan NP, c10 at Linnei and 2 at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the form *harterti* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Bronzed Drongo** *Dicrurus aeneus*

c7 birds at Yu Shan NP, c7 birds along the Pipeline trail and c14 birds at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the race *brounianus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Eurasian Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

c10 birds at Yu Shan NP, c4 birds at the Blue Gate trail + Pipeline trail and c7 birds at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the form *taivanus* is another Taiwanese endemic subspecies.

**Gray (Himalayan) Treepie** *Dendrocitta formosae*

C5 birds at Linnei and a single at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area.

Note : the form *formosae* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Eurasian (Spotted) Nutcracker** *Nucifraga caryocatactes*  
c6 birds at Yu Shan NP and a single at the Hohuanshan Pass.  
Note : the race *owstoni* is a Taiwanese endemic.

**Large-billed (Jungle) Crow** *Corvus macrorhynchos*  
5 birds at Yu Shan NP and Hohuanshan Pass, a single heard at the Blue Gate trail. More common at the Huisun Forest Recreation Area with 20+ birds there on both visits.

**Crested (Chinese Crested) Myna** *Acridotheres cristatellus*  
c10 at Taitung, c20 en journey, c5 at Yu Shan NP and the Tengwen Estuary.  
Note : the form *formosanus* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Jungle Myna** *Acridotheres fuscus*  
2 birds near Tainan. This species was introduced to this area c20 years ago.

**White-cheeked (Grey) Starling** *Sturnus cineraceus*  
3 birds flew over Taitung Airport.

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*  
A common lowland species.

**Nutmeg Mannikin (Scaly-breasted Munia)** *Lonchura punctulata*  
c15 birds in the scrub around the Taitung airstrip.

**Vinaceous Rosefinch** *Carpodacus vinaceus*  
A female at Yu Shan NP, an immature male trapped at the Tsuifeng Ringing station and an adult male + 3 females at the Hohuanshan Pass.  
Note : the race *formosanus* is a Taiwanese endemic subspecies.

**Brown Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula nipalensis*  
Seen on two days along the Blue Gate trail and Pipeline trail with a total of respectively c33 and c20 birds.  
Note : the form *uchidai* is endemic to Taiwan.

**Gray-headed (Beavan's) Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula erythaca*  
A single male near the top of the Hohuanshan Pass.  
Note : the race *owstoni* is another Taiwanese endemic subspecies.

**Japanese Grosbeak** *Eophona personata*  
A flock of 24 birds on Lanyu Island was a real surprise.

**Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla*  
3 birds at Yu Shan NP.

**Black-faced Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala*  
c15 birds in the Tsuifeng area and c6 birds at the Hohuanshan Pass. A male and a female were also trapped at the Tsuifeng Ringing station.