

BUCKBIRD JOURNEYS LTD – WILDTOUR Co., LTD
VIETNAM

**Endemic birds and endangered primates in the heart of
Indo-China**

Saturday 5 – Monday 28 February 2011



Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush - *Garrulax konkakhensis*

Participants

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Joined at various times by:

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Summary

Well it seemed hard going at times, especially in the damp, misty north but we stuck to our comprehensive itinerary (probably the most ambitious one ever undertaken in this marvellous country) which took us by road from the far south in the Mekong Delta to the far north at Ba Be, only 100km or so from the Chinese border. Birding has always been tough in Vietnam, the forested habitat is fragmented and distances between destinations are long, these same forests often seem lifeless for long periods of time and the specials are by nature shy and elusive. But Vietnam holds a large number of really special target birds, many of which can only be realistically searched for within its borders, and these are augmented by the richest variety of mammals, especially primates, in any country in South East Asia

There were an estimated 31 bird species endemic to Indo-China and found in Vietnam on our route. If we discount 3 species of Pheasant almost unknown in life our tally of 24 of these with another 2 heard underlines the success of our endeavours. We scored especially well on Babblers (39 species seen and several others heard), wintering and other Thrushes (11 species) and true Corvids (8 species). Add in another (Chinese Barbet) probably new for Vietnam, 3 new birds for NB to take his Vietnam tally to 735 and we can reflect on a great result. 25 species of mammal included 9 species of primate, some of them the rarest on earth (and we even missed the two commonest)

Our transport was a luxurious 10 seater Mercedes bus, our driver Hung safe, courteous and cheerful, our hotels and rest houses clean and comfortable and the quantities of Vietnamese food we consumed ranging from delicious to truly outstanding

Your writer is hugely indebted to Hoai Bao, not only for his intimate knowledge of the birds and mammals of his home country and his eyes and ears but also for undertaking, in 2010, a one month survey trip of our route. Not only did he explore areas where no tour group has ever gone before but he lined up primate experts where required and achieved his greatest feat by having his man on the spot at Ba Be, who located not only a roost but an active nest so that we could enjoy views of the almost unknown White-eared Night-Heron probably unmatched by any westerner ever.

Day by Day

Saturday 5 February

HB, EN and BP have arrived in Ho Chi Minh by different routes the previous evening and their journeys from the airport to the splendid Majestic Hotel coincide with the approaching climax of Tet, the Vietnamese New Year. The streets are crowded, noisy and colourful and the progress of our vehicle funereal.

Today 0800 sees us joined by Hung, our characterful driver who will prove a real source of strength in the days to come, and Quang, a young guide with Wildtour Vietnam, for our journey to Can Gio in the flat country of the Mekong Delta. Our target is the "White-faced" Plover, a potential and recently described split from Kentish and apparently confined to the coasts of Indochina, Thailand and the Malay Peninsula. With a few false starts involving nominate Kentish our pair, once found, are very pale and distinctive even amongst the many Kentish, Sand Plovers and other shorebirds. In a modest list our only Germain's Swiftlets of the trip are also notable.

Sunday 6 February

It is 4 hours to Nam Bai Cat Tien National Park in north Cochinchina and NB and his wife and son are there to greet us and show us to our comfortable park bungalow. The birding is soon underway as we walk a short section of the Largesstromia Trail where a fine male Bar-bellied Pitta, unconcerned on the forest trail, gets the specials off to a good start. We will hear many more in days to come. Late in the afternoon we take the park truck to the grasslands and almost immediately score a superb cock Green Peafowl with a full length tail – one of five (the rest hens) we will see this afternoon. There are plenty of other birds and a shaggy Crab-eating Mongoose darts onto the road but is gone before most people get on to it. Evening sees the first of many memorable Vietnamese meals, washed down with eminently drinkable Da Lat red wine.

Monday 7 February

The long (12 km), rocky Da Ban trail taxes us from early morning until early afternoon but there are rewards – no less than 4 (3 cocks, 1 hen) Siamese Firebacks give a variety of views to different people, the noisy Germain's Peacock-Pheasant starts a series of attempts to claim it, a pair of seemingly blasé Scaly-breasted Partridge offer walk away views as does a splendid male Banded Kingfisher. Others include the dowdy near endemic Grey-faced Tit-Babbler and the first of several female plumaged Siberian Blue Robins. Returning in the dark NB spotlights a fine Pygmy Slow Loris doing its characteristic “rush around” in a roadside tree

Tuesday 8 February

At daybreak a group of Black-shanked Douc Langurs give fine views and we spend most of the day on the Crocodile and Uncle Dong trails. Views of Peacock-Pheasants continue to improve but only in the evening does a noisy male by the roadside reveal all its body at once! Other than this the day is more notable for mammals including the common Pallas' as well as Cambodian Striped and Indochinese Ground Squirrels and, on an evening spotlighting tour, Sambar, Indian Muntjac, an Asian Palm Civet and a Burmese Hare.



Black-shanked Duoc Langur

Wednesday 9 February

Again the mammals take the early honours as we take the predawn Gibbon Walk along the Largesstromia trail. A calling male Buff-cheeked Gibbon is heard at dawn and but our stealthy approach still cannot locate him until, for a relatively brief but exciting moment, he shows himself as he swings off through the high branches. The wails of this species are a characteristic dawn sound in these forests but the beast itself is much more difficult to see. A nice pair of Black-and-buff Woodpeckers are notable near the park HQ before our departure at 0845

Next destination is NB's "secret" patch of bamboo forest at Tan Phu and the tape induces at least two Orange-necked Partridges to call, one coming so close it seems we cannot possibly miss but it melts away without even showing a feather. Endemic to southern Vietnam it is rarely seen nowadays in Cat Tien where its preferred bamboo habitat is now nearly impenetrable. We move on to De Linh and the forested roadside at the Deo Nui Pass where our first highland birds include a close pair of Pin-tailed Pigeons, a fine pair of Great Hornbills and, at the other end of the scale, the now split Grey-crowned Tit and the first of several handsome Mugimaki Flycatchers. Our hotel in Di Linh is modest but dinner as tasty as ever

Thursday 10 February

Deo Nui San this morning is more lively with our first Indochinese Barbets and Vietnamese Greenfinches being overshadowed by a huge flock (estimated at over 100 birds) of Black-headed Parrotbills, now split from Grey-headed and endemic to south and central Annam. We climb up the steep path to the top of the pass for our first glimpse of the elusive Orange-breasted Laughingthrush (another south Annam endemic now split from Spot-breasted), a male White-throated Rock-Thrush, a lovely Golden-throated Barbet drinking from a tree hollow and a troupe of Stump-tailed Macaques.

Afternoon at Ta Nung provides a frustratingly brief view of the endemic Grey-crowned Crocias (we will return) before the luxurious (and strangely empty) Hoang Gia Resort in Da Lat welcomes us for the next two nights.



Friday 11 February

We are away early morning for our [Vietnamese Cutia](#) assault on the lower forested slopes

of Mt Langbian on a fine sunny morning. Our main prize, the restricted range endemic and colourful Collared Laughingthrush, is noisy and two pairs come in for close looks. Here also is the now endemic split Black-crowned Fulvetta and the local races of Chestnut-fronted and White-browed Shrike-Babblers and Grey-cheeked Warbler also need "banked" as future splits. In contrast a soaring Mountain Hawk-Eagle graces our descent.

The afternoon is spent, productively, at Ho Tuyen Lam where the forested lake shore gives us Slender-billed Oriole, our first near endemic White-cheeked Laughingthrushes, much better views of Grey-crowned Crocias, our first of the now split endemic Vietnamese Cutia and more Vietnamese Greenfinches. As good as anything is an Orange-headed Thrush granting, out in the open, scope views as he works the forest trail.

Saturday 12 February

Ta Nung in the early morning is much more active and we score close views of Orange-breasted Laughingthrush and Grey-crowned Crocias then, in a bunch of pine trees, a nice flock containing a trio of Vietnamese Cutias, a pair of Black-headed Parrotbills and both Black-headed and a single Rufous-backed Sibia. Then it is basically a travelling day and the 9 hour trip north to Pleiku and another comfortable hotel



Grey-crowned Crocias *Crocias langbianis*

Sunday 13 February

North again, to the remote but burgeoning small town of Mang Den, and a simple but comfortable new hotel. A single, in flight, Red-vented Barbet is notable in that it is the only sighting of the trip. And now to one of the trip's many highlights and a



Yellow-billed Nuthatch

relatively quiet, new road, discovered by NB on his 2010 recce, running through the virgin sub montane forests of Mang Canh. The biggest prize here is Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush, discovered here by NB, and it is virtually the first bird we see, with a responsive pair coming right to the roadside for views ranging from adequate to outstanding. Previously only known from Mt Kon Ka Kinh in central Annam we will hear several more today and tomorrow and also get further views.

Outstanding though this is it is by no means all. Pale-capped Pigeons give evening flight views and we get great views of a large flock of Black-hooded Laughingthrush with our first, of several, Ratchet-tailed Treepies attracted into it. The Sultan Tits here are the black-capped ssp *gayeti*, the flocks of arboreal Parrotbills now nominate Grey-headed and amongst them are several of the neat little near endemic Yellow-billed Nuthatch, now elusive in its better known haunt around Da Lat. We are joined this evening by Tien, now working in BN's office and joining us for the experience for the rest of the trip. She will prove a charming and sharp eyed addition to our group.



Black-hooded Laughingthrush

Monday 14 February

Tien has just completed her treatise on the rare endemic Grey-shanked Douc Langur (she will become, unfairly but universally, known as “monkey girl” for the rest of the trip!) and this much desired primate is still seen regularly along the roads we walk all day today. No luck for us however as we score more looks at yesterday's



Sultan Tit

specials and add the near endemic White-winged Magpie and the elusive Black-chinned Yuhina to our totals. The local Black-eared Shrike-Babblers are next in line for splitting and we hear Bar-bellied, Blue-rumped and Rusty-naped Pittas in the dense forests but always inaccessible to us

Tuesday 15 February

The forests around Mang Den reveal little beyond perched Pin-tailed Pigeons early next morning and the hoped for Indochinese Green Magpie is silent and apparently absent. Then north again to the Loxo Pass and our first taste of the mountain mists which will be with us for much of the rest of the trip. With perseverance the local, endemic Black-crowned Barwing is found, to much relief as we start to worry about the weather in the morning. Down to Kham Duc to another nice hotel and dinner.



Black-crowned Barwing - *Actinodura sodangorum*

Wednesday 16 February

Bur we need not have worried. Once through the mist belt we walk the Dak Blo Road in sunshine. There are more Barwings in the scrubby stuff before we reach the forest proper where a fine Rufous-bellied Eagle glides overhead, a distant Crested Argus gives his ringing call (Tien is one of the few to have ever seen this bird, a male once in two years of field work in Mang Canh!), we hear our first Short-tailed Scimitar-Babblers, score a male Small Niltava and bank the *ocularis* form of White-spectacled Warbler. Strike of the morning however is a Red-tailed Laughingthrush, induced out of the forest edge for a rare view. Down to the bustling city of Da Nang for overnight.

Thursday 17 February

A foretaste of days to come as the forested Son Tran Peninsula is covered in mist which reduces our chances for the spectacular Red-shanked Douc Langur and only several Assamese Macaques are our gain. As we ascend to Bach Ma National Park the sun disappears (we will not see it again for the next 10 days) and in the mist birding is difficult. We try hard for several calling Blue-rumped Pittas but to no avail.

Friday 18 February

It remains dank and misty but at first light, as we ascend, we hit a remarkable series of 6 female and a final full male Siberian Thrush (and a Scaly) on the wet road. Higher up the mist relents slightly, an Annam Partridge calls once far below and a pair of near endemic Short-tailed Scimitar-Babblers respond to give us dynamite views at the

roadside. Still no luck with Pittas and we leave for 5 hours north in the gloom to Song Son, the gateway to Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park

Saturday 19 February

It remains overcast and slightly drizzly but we are at the park's west gate at dawn and almost immediately hit our main bird target in a little flock of Sooty Babblers going about their business on the limestone rocks by the roadside. Once thought endemic to Central Laos before being discovered here they seem to be thriving and we will see several more today and tomorrow. Then it is a long wait for Monkeys and, although we score both Rhesus and more Stump-tailed Macaques, it is not until nearly midday that we get scope views of a single Hatinh Leaf Monkey, one of troupe regularly seen around the park gates. A highly endangered primate confined to eastern Laos and this part of Vietnam it is realistically see-able only right here. A little further on we strike primate gold. A large male Red-shanked Douc Langur has been hanging around the forested slopes above the little restaurant a few kms inside the park and we soon have extraordinary views of this spectacular near endemic as he feed on favourite leaves. A nasty miss at SonTran nicely rectified. The rest of the day is dank and quiet but finishes spectacularly with a cock Siamese Fireback casually sauntering across the road in front of our vehicle as we leave in the early evening.

Sunday 20 February

Something of a repeat but we walk long and hard looking for the Bare-faced Bulbuls which NB had seen distantly in 2010. Only recently discovered and described from Central Laos, if confirmed it would represent a significant range extension. No chance for us however and we have to be content with a very responsive Limestone Warbler, recently confirmed as split from Sulphur-breasted. Our Langur is still on station in the afternoon but there is no sign of the rare Black Leaf Monkey which can also be seen hereabouts.



Ha Tinh Leaf Monkey



Sooty Babbler



Red-shanked Douc Langur

Monday 21 February

Still misty and dank and a long, dreary day of travel northwards to Cuc Phong and an evening arrival at our comfortable park rooms at the entrance gate.

Tuesday 22 February

Still misty, although it will clear up somewhat later, and we are again on the road, this time the park's main one, at first light. This time the Thrush show is dominated by Japanese (8 today, 10 or so tomorrow), with a single Dusky and more Scaly. A large Snipe, flushed up from the roadside has all the habitat and other characteristics of a Wood Snipe, another bird rarely encountered outside of its breeding grounds. At road's end at Bong we take the Village Trail through forest and limestone where a Pied Falconet, the annamensis form of Limestone Wren-Babbler (two flocks of about 20 birds), Rufous-throated Fulvetta and a male White-tailed Flycatcher oblige. Both Blue-rumped and Eared Pittas are calling and BN in the lead glimpses the latter as it bounds away over the limestone rocks.



Pied Falconet

Profiting by relatively clear conditions in the afternoon we drive to Van Long Lake where village sampans take us out over the placid, bird rich, waters to the far limestone cliffs where we score long views of two troupes of the endangered Delacour's Leaf Monkey in its last accessible stronghold.

Wednesday 23 February

Much the same weather but, on an early morning walk through the Botanic Gardens, we at last draw in a calling Blue-rumped Pitta for close, walk away views as it calls and preens on a nearby branch. At the gates to the Primate Research Centre are a Thick-billed Warbler and a quartet of Grey-backed Thrush, a lifer for BN no less and his 734th species in Vietnam. But that is all, Bong in the afternoon is gloomy and slow and we call it an early day.



Blue-rumped Pitta

Thursday 24 February

And so it continues, the Thrushes still on the road at dawn, Bong gloomy and quiet and we are off at 0930 north through a drab landscape to Mt Ba Vi National Park and the damp, misty park resort. If it was bad up to now this is the nadir, the fog thick and impenetrable and the rest of the day abandoned

Friday 25 February

Not much relief today either but we beat the crowds up to the road's end temple and try to make something of our day in a five hour walk down against an increasing flow of traffic. The mist only occasionally lifts but it is enough to give us a male Black-breasted Thrush at the top, a small party of Silver-breasted Broadbills and both Common Green Magpie and a small group of the much rarer Collared Treepie. Most frustrating are the just visible green underparts of what is certainly a Green Cochoa high in the branches but not all get onto it and it is scarcely what dreams are made of. The afternoon is a wash out, busy and misty and again we are forced to call it a day earlier than we would have wished.

Saturday 26 February

The same mixture, an early morning ascent produces little and we leave for the 7 hour trip to our ultima thule at Ba Be in northern Tonkin, not far from the Chinese border. It is initially drab, urbanised scenery but, beyond Hanoi and after a really memorable lunch, the sky mercifully lightens and limestone mountains hove into view. At Ba Be town we are greeted by the estimable Chan who owns the guesthouse we will sleep (a large communal room) and eat in, has been "guarding" our herons and will be our boat man and guide tomorrow. Hung and I get drawn into a "home brew" (a lethal concoction of rice liqueur spiced with forest plants) local welcome but mercifully we escape before too much damage is done. The others sensibly go for a walk!



White-eared Night-Heron - *Gorsachius magnificus*

Sunday 27 February

And so to the climax. An early morning Japanese Sparrowhawk perched by the guest house, then the early morning mist starts to lift as we take a short boat ride and miraculously Chan takes us straight to the nest of the White-eared Night-Heron he has been watching over for the last 10 days or so. One bird stands motionless by the stick nest and now, and more particularly on our return in the early afternoon, we have awkward but superb scope views and are able to take in every detail of the features of the rarely seen bird. We witness what most of the few others who have ever seen this creature usually “enjoy” when we return at dusk and count some 7 birds leaving their roost. But in this light they are only shapes and, even though one lands briefly in front of us it is gone the moment the spotlight fixes on it.

How to cap this? Well impossible of course but a perched up pair of Oriental Hobby and another Pied Falconet do their best as does a bat roost at the impressive Puong Cave. Several species seem to be involved and we make a tentative identification of three – one of them helped by a dead one picked from the cave floor. The second climax is also something of an anti. By the guesthouse a Barbet is calling up the hillside and some get to see it before it flies. NB identifies it as a “Black-browed” type and the call is indeed similar but slightly different to Indochinese. With the recent 4 way split of this bird ours is presumably, at least on range, a Chinese Barbet, formerly known only from south west China and thus presumably a new bird for Vietnam. How about that for a night cap?

Monday 28 February

Attempts to locate more calling Barbets in the morning are not successful and we are away by 0845, one more Vietnamese lunch before HB is dropped off at Hanoi Airport and the rest carry on for their Ha Long Bay extension. And now as I write this report the memories of a remarkable trip come flooding back.

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Birds Recorded

(Names follow Robson, A Field Guide to the Birds of South East Asia)

See also attachment on endemics and near endemics in Vietnam

1. Indian Spot-billed Duck (*Anas poecilorhyncha*)
2 at Van Long 22/2
2. Garganey (*Anas querquedula*)
A flock of around 40 at Van Long 22/2
3. Rufous-throated Partridge (*Arborophila rufogularis*)
Heard relatively close at Mt Langbian 11/2
4. Bar-backed Partridge (*Arborophila brunneopectus*)
Heard at Mang Den on 15/2 and at Ba Vi on 26/2
5. Orange-necked Partridge (*Arborophila davidi*)
So close but no cigar. 2 birds heard at Da Ban, one very close, on 9/2
6. Scaly-breasted Partridge (*Arborophila chloropus*)
3 by the Larges Stromia trail Cat Tien on 6/2, 2 on the Da Ban trail on 7/2
7. Annam Partridge (*Arborophila merlini*)
Heard at distance at Bach Ma 18/2
8. Chestnut-necklaced Partridge (*Arborophila charltoni*)
Heard at Phong Nha 20/2 and at Ba Vi 26/2/11
9. Red Junglefowl (*Gallus gallus*)
Seen at Cat Tien, Phong Nha and Cuc Phong
10. Siamese Fireback (*Lophura diardi*)
4 on the Da Ban trail, Cat Tien on 7/2 but overshadowed by that magnificent cock strolling across the road at Phong Nha on 19/2
11. Germain's Peacock-Pheasant (*Polyplectron germaini*)
Common by voice at Cat Tien and views ranging from a head, a bird flushed from its roost and finally, for some, a whole bird on 7 and 8/2
12. Crested Argus (*Rheinardia ocellata*)
As ever, only a (loud) voice in the forest. One calling male from the Dak Blo road, Loxo Pass on 16/2. An almost never seen species
13. Green Peafowl (*Pavo muticus*)
A splendid full tailed cock in the grasslands at Cat Tien on 6/2 was followed by 4 more hen plumaged birds
14. Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)
15. Woolly-necked Stork (*Ciconia episcopus*)
3 over the grasslands at Cat Tien on 6/2
16. Little Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax niger*)
Several at Can Gio on 5/2
17. Yellow Bittern (*Ixobrychus sinensis*)
3 at Van Long on 22/2
18. Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)
19. Great Egret (*Ardea alba modesta*)
20. Intermediate Egret (*Mesophoyx intermedia*)
Most notable was that mixed flock of this and 19 above, several hundreds strong, at Van Long on 22/2
21. Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)
22. Eastern Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus (ibis) coromandus*)

23. Striated Heron (*Butorides striata actophila*)
1 at Phong Nha on 19/2
24. Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
25. White-eared Night-Heron (*Gorsachius magnificus*)
Wow - the star of the show. Few have ever seen this bird and only a few, if any, of the few have had scope views like ours of our bird by the nest at Ba Be on 27/2. The shapes of a further 5 leaving their roost at dusk on the same day
26. Oriental Honey-Buzzard (*Pernis ptilorhynchus*)
Only one, from the bus, between Cat Tien and Da Ban on 9/2
27. Black-shouldered Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*)
28. Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*)
Seen on the Ha Long Bay extension
29. Crested Serpent Eagle (*Spilornis cheela*)
The most regularly encountered raptor
30. Shikra (*Accipiter badius*)
A juvenile in the scope at Ba Be on 28/2
31. Besra (*Accipiter virgatus*)
A male perched briefly and in flight at Cuc Phong on 23/2
32. Eurasian Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*)
A female in flight at Cuc Phong on 23/2 was probably this species
33. Japanese Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter gularis*)
A bird in female/juvenile plumage examined carefully in the scope at Ba Be on 27/2
34. Grey-faced Buzzard (*Butastur indicus*)
Singles at Deo Sui Nan on 9/2 and 10/2 and a single near Da Lat on 17/2
35. Black Eagle (*Ictinaetus malayensis*)
Several encounters in the centre and north
36. Rufous-bellied Eagle (*Lophotriorchis kienerii*)
Adults at Loxo Pass on 16/2 and at Phong Nha on 19/2
37. Mountain Hawk-Eagle (*Nisaetus nipalensis*)
A soaring bird at Mt Langbian on 11/2
38. Pied Falconet (*Microhierax melanoleucos*)
Singles at Cuc Phong on 22/2 and at Ba Be on 27/2
39. Oriental Hobby (*Fanco severus*)
A perched pair gave walk away scope views at Ba Be on 27/2
40. Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)
One by some at Van Long on 22/2
41. White-breasted Waterhen (*Amaurornis phoenicurus*)
Only from the bus by BN!
42. Ruddy-breasted Crake (*Porzana fusca*)
Heard at Van Long on 22/2
43. White-browed Crake (*Porzana cinerea*)
One flushed bird at Van Long on 22/2
44. Purple (Black-backed) Swampfen (*Porphyrio (indicus) porphyrio*)
A single bird at Van Long on 22/2
45. Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)
46. Grey-Headed Lapwing (*Vanellus cinereus*)
A flock of around a dozen was a rare highlight on the journey from Song Son to Cuc Phong on 21/2
47. Red-wattled Lapwing (*Vanellua indicus*)

48. Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)
Most of the following shorebirds were seen on our trip to Can Gio on 5/2
49. Pacific Golden Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*)
50. Lesser Sand Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*)
51. Greater Sand Plover (*Charadrius leschenaultii*)
52. Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)
53. White-faced (Kentish) Plover (*Charadrius (alexandrinus) dealbatus*)
A nice pair observed closely at Can Gio on 5/2. A likely split soon from Kentish
54. Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)
55. Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)
56. Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)
57. Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*)
58. Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*)
59. Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)
60. Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)
61. Red-necked Stint (*Calidris ruficollis*)
62. Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*)
63. Pin-tailed Snipe (*Gallinago stenura*)
Several flushed at Van Long on 22/2
64. Wood Snipe (*Gallinago nemoricola*)
The large Snipe flushed from the forested roadside at dawn in Cuc Phong on 22/2 was likely this species
65. Pheasant-tailed Jacana (*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*)
3 partially plumaged birds at Van Long on 22/2
66. White-winged Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*)
Several at Can Gio on 5/2
67. Pale-capped Pigeon (*Columba punicea*)
A total of 6 birds in flight at Mang Canh on 13 and 14/2 and another likely 2 near Song Son on 18/2. A relatively wide ranging but rarely seen species
68. Red-collared Dove (*Streptopelia tranquebarica*)
Common along the grasslands road at Cat Tien on 6/2
69. Spotted Dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*)
70. Emerald Dove (*Chalcophaps indica*)
Scattered sightings
71. Orange-breasted Green-Pigeon (*Treron bicinctus*)
Common at Cat Tien
72. Pompadour (Grey-headed) Green-Pigeon (*Treron (phayrei) pompadora*)
A single bird scoped at Cat Tien on 8/2. One of a possible 4 way split of this species
73. Thick-billed Green-Pigeon (*Treron curvirostra*)
A single bird scoped at Cat Tien on 9/2
74. Pin-tailed Green-Pigeon (*Treron apicauda*)
A close pair at Deo Nui San on 9/2 and 2 at Mang Den on 15/2
75. Wedge-tailed Green-Pigeon (*Treron sphenurus*)
A single bird scoped at Ta Nung on 12/2 and a single at Mang Den on 15/2
76. Green Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula aenea*)
Several at Cat Tien on 6/2
77. Mountain Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula badia*)
Regular sightings

78. Blossom-headed Parakeet (*Psittacula roseata*)
This and the next species only at Cat Tien 6 – 8/2
79. Red-breasted Parakeet (*Psittacula alexandri*)
80. Vernal Hanging-Parrot (*Loriculus vernalis*)
2 by HB at Cat Tien 8/2
81. Large Hawk-Cuckoo (*Hierococcyx sparveroides*)
1 at Cuc Phong 23/2
82. Indian Cuckoo (*Cuculus micropterus*)
Only heard
83. Banded Bay Cuckoo (*Cacomantis sonneratii*)
Often heard but one vocal bird seen at the Cuc Phong HQ on 24/2
84. Asian Emerald Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx maculatus*)
Nice views of male birds at Mang Canh on 13/2 and at Loxo Pass on 16/2
85. Asian Drongo-Cuckoo (*Sumiculus lugubris*)
A couple of birds visible around park HQ, Cat Tien 6 – 9/2
86. Green-billed Malkoha (*Phaenicophaeus tristis*)
Scattered sightings
87. Greater Coucal (*Centropus sinensis*)
Ditto
88. Lesser Coucal (*Centropus bengalensis*)
A juvenile bird at Loxo Pass on 15/2
89. Collared Scops-Owl (*Otus bakkamoena*)
1 on our night drive at Cat Tien 8/2
90. Collared Owlet (*Glaucidium brodei*)
Commonly heard in the centre and north
91. Asian Barred Owl (*Glaucidium cuculoides*)
Frequently heard and singles seen at Cat Tien on 9/2 and at Ba Be on 26/2
92. Brown Hawk-Owl (*Ninox scutulata*)
Around park HQ, Cat Tien
93. Great-eared Nightjar (*Eurostopodus macrotis*)
Several around park HQ, Cat Tien 8 and 9/2
94. Grey Nightjar (*Caprimulgus indicus*)
Singles around Mang Den on 13 and 14/2
95. Large-tailed Nightjar (*Caprimulgus macrurus*)
1 on our night drive at Cat Tien on 8/2
96. Silver-backed Needletail (*Hirundapus cochinchinensis*)
A flock of around 15 above park HQ, Cat Tien on 9/2
97. Germain's Swiftlet (*Aerodromas germani*)
A few over the salt pans at Can Gio on 5/2
98. House Swift (*Apus affinis*)
99. Fork-tailed Swift (*Apus pacificus*)
3 over Phong Nha on 20/2 were our only record
100. Asian Palm Swift (*Cypsiurus balasiensis*)
101. Red-headed Trogon (*Harpactes erythrocephalus*)
Individuals seen at Mang Den and Cuc Phuong. Many more heard
102. Orange-breasted Trogon (*Harpactes oreskios*)
Heard only, at Cat Tien on 7/2
103. Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)

104. Banded kingfisher (*Lacedo pulchella*)
A superb male granted walk away views along the Da Ban trail at Cat Tien on 7/2
105. White-throated Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*)
106. Collared Kingfisher (*Todiramphus chloris*)
Several at Can Gio on 5/2
107. Blue-bearded Bee-Eater (*Nyctyornis athertoni*)
Only by NB (from the bus!) on the road to Pleiku on 12/2
108. Chestnut-headed Bee-Eater (*Merops leschenaulti*)
Only around Dalat and en route to Pleiku
109. Indian Roller (*Coracias benghalensis*)
110. Dollarbird (*Eurystomus orientalis*)
I at Cat Tien 6/2
111. Oriental Pied Hornbill (*Anthracoceros albirostris*)
Cat Tien and Phong Nha
112. Great Hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*)
A fine pair at Deo Nui San on 9/2
113. Red-vented Barbet (*Megalaima lagrandieri*)
Often heard but our only sighting was one near Mang Den on 13/2
114. Lineated Barbet (*Megalaima lineate*)
2 at Cat Tien on 6/2. Frequently heard there
115. Green-eared Barbet (*Megalaima faistricta*)
Seen at Son Tran, Cuc Phuong and Ba Be
116. Golden-throated Barbet (*Megalaima frnaklini*)
Several seen with the best at Deo Nui San on 10/2
117. Indochinese Barbet (*Megalaima annamensis*)
With the four way split of Black-browed this becomes a near endemic.
Common at Deo Nui San and around Da Lat
118. Chinese Barbet (*Megalaima faber*)
Several heard and one seen around Ba Be Village 27 and 28 February.
Another split from Black-browed and possibly a new species for Vietnam.
And a lifer for all except HB who missed it!
119. Blue-eared Barbet (*Megalaima australis*)
A common voice at Cat Tien with 1 seen on 8/2
120. Coppersmith Barbet (*Megalaima haemacephala*)
Heard around park HQ at Cat Tien
121. White-browed Piculet (*Sasia ochracea*)
Singles at Mang Canh on 14/2 and Loxo Pass on 16/2
122. Grey-capped Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos canicapillus*)
Phong Nha and Cuc Phuong
123. Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos macei*)
Singles at Mang Canh on 13 and 14/2
124. White-bellied Woodpecker (*Dryocopus javensis*)
1 at Cat Tien 9/2
125. Lesser Yellownape (*Picus chklorolophus*)
1 at Phong Nha on 20/2
126. Greater Yellownape (*Picus flavinucha*)
Mt Langbian and Cuc Phuong
127. Laced Woodpecker (*Picus vittatus*)
Heard at Son Tra on 17/2. A cry in the mist

128. Greater Flameback (*Chrysocolaptes lucidus*)
Several along the grasslands road at Cat Tien 6/2
129. Bay Woodpecker (*Blythipicus pyrrhotis*)
Often heard and several times seen but never well
130. Black-and-Buff Woodpecker (*Meiglyptes jugularis*)
A nice pair at the park HQ on 9/2
131. Long-tailed Broadbill (*Psarisomus dalhousiae*)
1 at Ta Nung on 10/2 and a group of 5 on 12/2
132. Silver-breasted Broadbill (*Serilophus lunatus*)
3 in the mist at Ba Vi 25/2
133. Banded Broadbill (*Eurylaimus javanicus*)
Heard along the Dab Ban trail at Cat Tien on 7/2
134. Dusky Broadbill (*Corydon sumatranus*)
A group of 3 along the Da Ban trail at Cat Tien on 7/2
135. Eared Pitta (*Pitta phayrei*)
A couple of calling birds along the Village trail at Cuc Phuong on 22/2. One seen briefly by BN
136. Blue-rumped Pitta (*Pitta soror*)
Heard daily at Bach Ma, Phong Nha and Cuc Phuong. We worked on several birds finally getting one to come in for walk away close views in the Botanic Gardens at Cuc Phuong on 23/2
137. Rusty-naped Pitta (*Pitta oatesi*)
Heard but inaccessible at Phong Nha on 14/2
137. Bar-bellied Pitta (*Pitta elliotii*)
A superb male on the Larges Stromia trail on 6/2 and heard in several places thereafter
138. Golden-bellied Gerygone (*Gerygone suphurea*)
Its characteristic song heard several times at Can Gio on 5/2
139. Large Woodshrike (*Tephrodornis gularis*)
2 at Mang Den on 15/2 and 1 at Phong Nha on 20/2
140. Ashy Woodswallow (*Artamus fuscus*)
Regularly encountered
141. Common Iora (*Aegithina tiphia*)
Ditto
142. Great Iora (*Aegithina lafresnayei*)
A flock member at Cat Tien, Phong Nha and Cuc Phuong
143. Large Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina macei*)
1 at Mt Langbian on 11/2
144. Indochinese Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina polioptera*)
Regularly encountered in south and central Vietnam
145. Black-winged Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina melaschistos*)
Phong Nha only
146. Ashy Minivet (*Pericrocotus divaricatus*)
Several at Cat Tien 7 and 8/2
147. Long-tailed Minivet (*Pericrocotus ethologus*)
Common around Da Lat. The race *annamensis*
148. Scarlet Minivet (*Pericrocotus flammeus speciosus*)
The nominate race in the Indian sub-continent is split by some
149. Grey-chinned Minivet (*Pericrocotus solaris*)
Around Dalat and at Mang Canh. Race *deignani*

150. Bar-winged Flycatcher-Shrike (*Hemipus picatus*)
Common in the highlands
151. Brown Shrike (*Lanius cristatus*)
152. Burmese Shrike (*Lanius collurio*)
Around Da Lat only
153. Long-tailed Shrike (*Lanius schach*)
154. Grey-backed Shrike (*Lanius tephronotus*)
One individual around our accommodation at Ba Vi
155. Black-naped Oriole (*Oriolus chinensis*)
Heard only at Da Ban 9/2
156. Slender-billed Oriole (*Oriolus tenuirostris*)
A couple at Ho Tuyen Lam on 11/2
157. Black-hooded Oriole (*Oriolus xanthornus*)
Around park HQ at Cat Tien 6-9/2
158. Maroon Oriole (*Oriolus traillii*)
Several at Deo Nui San, Mt Langbian and Mang Den
159. Black Drongo (*Dicrurus macrocercus*)
160. Ashy Drongo (*Dicrurus leucocephalus*)
Both nominate *leucophaeus* and the migrant *leucogenis*
161. Bronzed Drongo (*Dicrurus aeneus*)
162. Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo (*Dicrurus remifer*)
In highland forest
163. Greater Racket-tailed Drongo (*Dicrurus paradiseus*)
Lowland forest at Cat Tien
164. Hair-crested Drongo (*Dicrurus hottentottus*)
3 at Cat Tien on 6/2
165. White-throated Fantail (*Rhipidura albicollis*)
Common in highland forest
166. Black-naped Monarch (*Hypothymis azurea*)
167. Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*)
4 at Deo Nui San on 10/2. The black capped form *leucotis*
168. Red-billed Blue Magpie (*Urocissa erythrorhyncha*)
3 at the park resort at Ba Vi on 26/2
169. White-winged Magpie (*Urocissa whiteheadi*)
This striking near endemic was encountered at Mang Canh on 14 and 15/2 and a trio at Ba Be on 27/2. Heard elsewhere
170. Common Green Magpie (*Cissa chinensis*)
4 at Ba Vi on 25/2
171. Indochinese Green Magpie (*Cissa hypoleuca*)
Strangely silent and only heard at Man Den on 13/2
172. Collared Treepie (*Dendrocitta frontalis*)
At least three noisy birds in a flock at Ba Vi on 25/2. A rarely seen Corvid
172. Racket-tailed Treepie (*Crypsirina temia*)
2 at Cat Tien on 6/2 and also seen at Phong Nha and Cuc Phong
173. Ratchet-tailed Treepie (*Temnurus temnurus*)
Singles at Mang Canh on 13 and 14/2 and also seen at Phong Nha on 20/2 and several at Cuc Phuong 23 and 24/2. Although it has an outpost in Thailand and Burma this bird is rarely seen outside of Vietnam

174. Large-billed Crow (*Corvus macrorhynchus*)
Scattered records around various towns. This species is becoming a taxonomic nightmare with some authors splitting it into several species
175. Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)
176. Pacific Swallow (*Hirundo pacifica*)
2 at Loxo Pass on 15/2
177. Striated Swallow (*Creopsis striolata*)
Several around park HQ at Cat Tien 6 and 9/2
178. Asian House Martin (*Delichon dasypus*)
2 from the Dak Blo Road on 16/2
179. Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher (*Culicapilla ceylonensis*)
180. Great Tit (*Parus major*)
At Van Long, Ba Vi and Ba Be. These grey forms are another taxonomic mess. Some consider this one to be Japanese Tit (*P. minor*) but it is difficult to see why
181. Green-backed Tit (*Parus monticolus*)
The very black below race *legendrei* was common in pine forests around Da Lat
182. Yellow-cheeked Tit (*Parus spilonotus*)
Around Da Lat and Mang Canh
183. Sultan Tit (*Melanochlora sultanea*)
A conspicuous and noisy member of bird flocks with the black crested *gayeti* at Mang Canh and the nominate yellow crested form further north
184. Grey-bellied Tesia (*Tesia cyaniventer*)
A couple on Mt Langbian on 11/2 and heard at Loxo Pass on 16/2
185. Mountain Tailorbird (*Phyllergates cucullatus*)
Commonly heard and seen in montane areas. Recent DNA research indicates this species is not a Tailorbird at all
186. Grey-crowned Tit (*Aegithalos annamensis*)
Now generally considered separate from Black-throated and thus now an Indo-Chinese endemic. Common around Da Lat and at Mang Canh
187. Chestnut-vented Nuthatch (*Sitta nagaensis*)
Only heard at Mt Langbian on 11/2
187. Velvet-fronted Nuthatch (*Sitta frontalis*)
Pairs at Mang Den on 13/2 and Cuc Phuong on 23/2
188. Yellow-billed Nuthatch (*Sitta solangiae*)
This near endemic can be tricky to find but it was a common member of mixed bird flocks at Mang Canh on 13 and 14/2 and, more unexpectedly, a trio were seen along the Dak Blo road on 16/2
189. Black-crested Bulbul (*Pycnonotus melanicterus*)
190. Red-whiskered Bulbul (*Pycnonotus jocosus*)
191. Sooty-headed Bulbul (*Pycnonotus aurigaster*)
192. Stripe-throated Bulbul (*Pycnonotus finlaysoni*)
Cat Tien only
193. Flavescent Bulbul (*Pycnonotus flavescens*)
The race *sordidus* was common around Da Lat and at Deo Sui Nan with the race *viridis* at Loxo Pass
194. Yellow-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus goiavier*)
195. Puff-throated Bulbul (*Alophoixus pallidus*)
Common and noisy throughout

196. Ochraceous Bulbul (*Alophoixus ochraceus*)
Phong Nha and Cuoc Phong
197. Grey-eyed Bulbul (*Iole propinqua*)
Cat Tien and Deo Sui Nan
198. Mountain Bulbul (*Ixos maccllelandi*)
Race *griseiventer* around Da Lat, possibly race *similis* at Mang Canh
199. Ashy Bulbul (*Hemixos flavala*)
The distinctive dull race *remonus* around Da Lat and Mang Den
200. Black Bulbul (*Hypsipetes leucocephalus*)
Frequently encountered from all black (*concolor* and probably migrant *sinensis*) to white breasted and white headed (*leucothorax*)
201. Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus inornatus*)
Frequent in the south as far as Mang Den
202. Two-barred Warbler (*Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*)
Recorded at Mang Canh and Cuc Phuong
203. Pale-legged Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus tenellipes*)
Seen, and common by voice, at Cat Tien. Also at Bach Ma and Phong Nha
204. Blyth's Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus reguloides*)
Common around Mang Den and Mang Canh
205. White-tailed Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus ogilviegranti*)
The endemic race *klossi* was seen around Da Lat and also at Bach Ma. Now sometimes recognised as split from *P. davisoni*
206. Limestone Warbler (*Phylloscopus calciatilis*)
Regularly heard at Phong Nha and one very responsive bird showed well on 20/2. Newly split from Sulphur-breasted Warbler (*P. ricketti*)
207. White-spectacled Warbler (*Seicercus affinis*)
One along the Dak Blo road on 16/2 and 2 at Ba Vi on 26/2. In good voice. The race *ocularis*, possibly again destined for a split
208. Grey-cheeked Warbler (*Seicercus affinis*)
Another potential split seen on Mt Langbian on 11/2 and Mang Canh on 14/2
209. Chestnut-crowned Warbler (*Seicercus castaniceps*)
1 in a mixed flock at Mang Canh on 14/2
210. Thick-billed Warbler (*Acrocephalus aedon*)
1 at the Primate Research Centre gate at Cuc Phuong on 23/2
211. Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola jundicis*)
1 at Van Long 22/2
212. Common Tailorbird (*Orthotomus sutorius*)
213. Dark-necked Tailorbird (*Orthotomus atrogularis*)
214. Brown Prinia (*Prinia polychroa*)
2 at Bong, Cuc Phuong on 22/2
215. Hill Prinia (*Prinia atrogularis*)
Common, especially by voice, at Deo Nui San, Ta Nung and Loxo Pass
216. Rufescent Prinia (*Prinia rufescens*)
Cat Tien and Son Tra
217. Plain Prinia (*Prinia inornata*)
218. Grey-headed Parrotbill (*Paradoxornis gularis*)
Common at Mang Canh 13 and 14/2
219. Black-headed Parrotbill (*Paradoxornis margaritae*)
An extraordinary flock of over 100 birds at Deo Nui San on 10/2 and a pair at Ta Nung on 12/2. Now an Annam endemic specific from *P. gularis*

220. Asian Fairy Bluebird (*Irena puella*)
Regularly encountered but always a crowd pleaser
221. Asian Brown Flycatcher (*Muscicapa daurica*)
Cat Tien only
222. Mugimaki Flycatcher (*Ficedula mugimaki*)
Several at Deo Nui San, Mt Langbian and Ta Nung 9 – 11/2
223. Verditer Flycatcher (*Eumyias thalassinus*)
Regularly encountered
224. Large Niltava (*Niltava grandis*)
A male by NB at Deo Nui San on 10/2
225. Small Niltava (*Niltava macgrigoriae*)
A male along the Dak Blo road on 16/2
226. White-tailed Flycatcher (*Cyornis concretus*)
A fine male flirting his white edged tail on the Village trail, Cuc Phuong on 22/2
227. Hainan Blue Flycatcher (*Cyornis hainanus*)
Several male birds at Cat Tien 7 – 8/2
228. Blue-throated Flycatcher (*Cyornis rubeculoides*)
Males at Mang Den and Bach Ma
229. Tickell's Blue Flycatcher (*Cyornis tickelliae*)
1 along the Da Ban trail, Cat Tien on 7/2
230. Taiga Flycatcher (*Ficedula albicilla*)
Singles at Mang Den on 15/2 and Phong Nha on 19/2
231. Siberian Blue Robin (*Luscinia cyane*)
A few female plumaged birds at Cat Tien 7 and 8/2
232. Orange-flanked Bush-Robin (*Tarsiger cyanurus*)
1 female plumaged bird at Ba Vi on 26/2
233. Oriental Magpie-Robin (*Copsychus saularis*)
234. White-rumped Shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*)
235. Plumbeous Redstart (*Rhyacornis fuliginosa*)
A pair at Loxo Pass on 15/2
236. Slaty-backed Forktail (*Enicurus schistaceus*)
Not much of a view at Mang Den on 15/2
237. Spotted Forktail (*Enicurus maculatus*)
Heard only at Deo Sui Nan on 10/2
238. Green Cochoa (*Cochoa viridis*)
Well the situation was right, the shape, size and jizz were right and the green underparts were just visible in the mist at Ba Vi on 25/2. It hopped about in the upper branches for a moment or two then melted away. Whatever your fantasies about your first view of this species this was definitely not them. Probable the biggest bogey bird left for HB in SE Asia and still only partially put to bed
239. Siberian Stonechat (*Saxicola maura*)
240. Pied Bushchat (*Saxicola caprata*)
A pair in the grasslands at Cat Tien on 6/2
241. Grey Bushchat (*Saxicola ferreus*)
A pair at Mt Langbian on 11/2
242. White-throated Rock-Thrush (*Monticola gularis*)
A pleasing male along the Deo Sui Nan trail on 10/2
243. Blue Rock-Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*)

244. Blue Whistling-Thrush (*Myophorus caeruleus*)
245. Orange-headed Thrush (*Zoothera citrina*)
Excellent scope views of an unconcerned bird feeding on the trail at Ho Tuyen Lam on 11/2
246. Siberian Thrush (*Zoothera sibirica*)
A fine series of 6 females then a full male on the Bach Ma road at dawn on 18/2
247. Scaly Thrush (*Zoothera dauma*)
Birds at dawn at Bach Ma, Cuc Phong and Ba Vi were probably migrant *aurea* (White's Thrush) still sometimes considered distinct from the smaller resident *dauma*
248. Japanese Thrush (*Turdus cardis*)
3 at Phong Nha on 20/2 then a series of males and females (up to 10 birds) at dawn along the Cuc Phuong road on 22 and 24/2
249. Dusky Thrush (*Turdus naumanni*)
1 of the red form amongst the Japanese at Cuc Phuong on 22 and 24/2
250. Grey-backed Thrush (*Turdus hortulorum*)
2 pairs by the Primate Centre gate at Cuc Phuong on 23/2 were a lifer for NB and his 734th species in Vietnam
251. Black-breasted Thrush (*Turdus dissimilis*)
A male bird was just discernible in the gloom at Ba Vi on 25/2
252. Eurasian (Chinese) Blackbird (*Turdus (mandarinus) merula*)
Birds seen at Phong Nha and Ba Be were of this large race, sometimes considered a distinct species
253. Lesser Shortwing (*Brachypteryx leucophrys*)
Heard at Mt Langbian and along the Dak Blo road
254. Masked Laughingthrush (*Garrulax perspicillatus*)
Heard only, at Bach Ma on 17/2
255. White-crested Laughingthrush (*Garrulax leucolophus*)
Common by voice but only fleeting glimpses at Cat Tien 8/2
256. Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush (*Garrulax monileger*)
Heard at Phong Nha on 20/2 but too far away to work on
257. Black-hooded Laughingthrush (*Garrulax milleti*)
A nice flock came in for close views at Mang Canh on 13/2
258. White-cheeked Laughingthrush (*Garrulax vassalli*)
Encountered several times but the first was best, a flock of up to 100 birds cascading over the road at Tuyen Lam on 11/2
259. Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush (*Garrulax konkakhensis*)
One of the great coups of the trip. BN had discovered this almost unknown bird at Mang Canh in 2010 and he led us straight to a responsive pair by the roadside on 13/2. Others heard and another seen on 14/2. A highly restricted range endemic seen by few westerners
260. Orange-breasted Laughingthrush (*Garrulax annamensis*)
A brief glimpse of 1 on the Deo Sui Nan trail on 10/2 was followed by excellent views of a pair at Ta Nung on 12/2. Now split from Spot-breasted and endemic to south Vietnam
261. Collared Laughingthrush (*Garrulax yersini*)
Virtually endemic to Mt Langbian and two responsive pairs there on 11/2

262. Red-tailed Laughingthrush (*Garrulax milnei*)
A bird at the very end of the forest on the Dak Blo road came in for definitive looks. Restricted to south China and Vietnam
263. Abbott's Babbler (*Malacocincla abbotti*)
A single bird in the bamboo at Da Ban on 9/2
264. Buff-breasted Babbler (*Pellorneum tickelli*)
A pair finally surrendered at Phong Nha on 19/2
265. Spot-throated Babbler (*Pellorneum albiventris*)
Common, at least by voice, in the southern highlands
266. Puff-throated Babbler (*Pellorneum ruficeps*)
Heard only, at Cuc Phuong and Ba Be
266. Scaly-crowned Babbler (*Malacopteron cinereum*)
4 birds at Cat Tien on 7/2
267. Large Scimitar-Babbler (*Pomatorhinus hypoleucos*)
Heard only, at Cat Tien and Phong Nha
268. White-browed Scimitar-Babbler (*Pomatorhinus schisticeps*)
Again mostly only heard but glimpsed by some at Bach Ma on 18/2
269. Red-billed Scimitar-Babbler (*Pomatorhinus ochraceiceps*)
Another voice in the mist, at Ba Vi on 25/2
270. Short-tailed Scimitar-Babbler (*Jabouilleia danjoui*)
This near endemic was heard along the Dak Blo road on 16/2 but a hyper responsive pair gave great looks at Bach Ma on 18/2
271. Limestone Wren-Babbler (*Gypsophila crispifrons*)
Great looks at two flocks along the Village trail at Cuc Phuong on 22/2. At least a dozen birds. The distinctive endemic race *annamensis*
272. Streaked Wren-Babbler (*Napothera brevicaudata*)
Heard several times but only seen briefly by some at Phong Nha on 20/2
273. Eyebrowed Wren-Babbler (*Napothera epilepidota*)
Only heard in the gloom at Ba Vi on 25/2
274. Pygmy Wren-Babbler (*Pnoepyga pusilla*)
Heard on Mt Langbian on 11/2
275. Rufous-capped Babbler (*Stachyris ruficeps*)
2 at Mt Langbian on 11/2 and 1 at Loxo Pass on 16/2
276. Golden Babbler (*Stachyris chrysaea*)
Common at Mang Canh
277. Sooty Babbler (*Stachyris herberti*)
The opening of new roads into Phong Nha now seems to have made finding this, once tricky, limestone inhabitant something of a formality. Great views of up to 20 birds on 19 and 20/2
278. Spot-necked Babbler (*Stachyris striolata*)
4 birds at last succumbed at Ba Vi on 25/2
279. Pin-striped Tit-Babbler (*Macronous gularis*)
280. Grey-faced Tit-Babbler (*Macronous kelleyi*)
Perhaps not the most exciting near endemic but common enough at Cat Tien on 7 and 8/2
281. Chestnut-capped Babbler (*Timalia pileata*)
2 birds in the grasslands at Cat Tien on 6/2
282. Silver-eared Mesia (*Leiothrix argentauris*)
The local form *ricketti* was encountered several times at Loxo Pass and at Ba Vi

283. Vietnamese Cutia (*Cutia legalleni*)
A pair at Tuyen Lam on 11/2 and a superb trio at Ta Nung on 12/2. Now an Annam endemic pretty well restricted to pine forests around Da Lat
284. White-browed Shrike-Babbler (*Pteruthius flaviscapis*)
Common around Da Lat and also seen at Mang Canh. Around Da Lat the endemic race *annamensis*. Watch for several splits in this group (which may be more closely related to vireos than to Babblers) in the future
285. Black-eared Shrike-Babbler (*Pteruthius melanotis*)
1 in a mixed flock at Mang Canh on 14/2. The nominate race *melanotis*
286. Chestnut-fronted Shrike-Babbler (*Pteruthius aenobarbus*)
2 at Mt Langbian on 11/2 and 1 at Mang Canh on 14/2. The endemic race *indochinensis*
287. White-bellied Yuhina (*Epornis*)
Regularly encountered with *sordida* in the south and the darker *tyrannula* in the north. Again probably not a Yuhina but nearer to an aberrant Vireo
288. Black-crowned Barwing (*Actinodura sodangorum*)
This recently described endemic was in the end easily located in its preferred scrubby habitat at Loxo Pass with 1 on 15/2 and up to 6 on 16/2
289. Blue-winged Minla (*Minla cyanouroptera*)
Seen around Da Lat, at Mang Canh (the endemic *orientalis* with no blue in the wing) and Loxo Pass (*wingatei*)
290. Black-crowned Fulvetta (*Alcippe klossi*)
Easily seen on Mt Lagbian on 11/2 with up to 20 being found. Now endemic to Annam and split from Rufous-winged
291. Rufous-winged Fulvetta (*Alcippe castaneiceps*)
A small group of the probable race *exul* along the Dak Blo road on 16/2 were a new bird for Vietnam for BN
292. Rufous-throated Fulvetta (*Alcippa rufogularis*)
Several groups encountered at Cuc Phuong 22 and 23/2
293. Mountain Fulvetta (*Alcippa paracensis*)
Common at Mang Canh and also seen at Bach Ma
293. Black-browed Fulvetta (*Alcippe grotei*)
Recently split from Mountain Fulvetta and also common at Mang Den and Mang Canh
294. Grey-crowned Crocias (*Crocias langbianis*)
As its name suggests this restricted range endemic was seen at Ta Nung on 10 and 12/2 (excellent scope views of a pair on the latter date) with a pair at Ho Tuyen Lam on 11/2
295. Black-headed Sibia (*Heterophasia desgodinsi*)
Several of the distinctive race *robinsoni* at Deo Nui San on 10/2 and Mt Langbian on 11/2
296. Rufous-backed Sibia (*Heterophasia annectens*)
Only a single bird with the Cutia / Parrotbill flock at Ta Nung on 12/2. The distinctive dark-backed endemic race *eximia*
297. Black-chinned Yuhina (*Yuhina nigrimenta*)
A common enough member of mixed bird flocks at Mang Canh on 14/2 and also seen along the Dak Blo road on 16/2
298. Oriental White-eye (*Zosterops palpebrosus*)
299. Japanese White-eye (*Zosterops japonica*)
Replacing 298 in the north

300. Golden-crested Myna (*Ampeliceps coronatus*)
Only a flock of 5 at Mang Canh on 14/2
301. Crested Myna (*Acidotheres cristatellus*)
302. Common Myna (*Acidotheres tristis*)
303. Vinous-breasted Starling (*Acidotheres burmannicus*)
4 in flight at Cat Tien on 6/2 and a couple with White-collared Starlings at Loxo Pass on 16/2. Race *leucocephalus*
304. Black-collared Starling (*Gracupica nigicollis*)
Regularly encountered
305. Blue-winged Leafbird (*Chloropsis cochinchinensis*)
306. Orange-bellied Leafbird (*Chloropsis harwickii*)
A vocal pair at Ba Vi on 25/2
307. Orange-bellied Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum trigonostigma*)
1 at Cat Tien on 9/2
308. Fire-breasted Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum ignipectus*)
Only a single at Loxo Pass on 16/2
309. Purple-naped Sunbird (*Hypogramma hypogrammicum*)
1 at Cat Tien on 8/2. Race *mariae*
310. Olive-backed Sunbird (*Cinnyris jugularis*)
A female at Can Gio on 5/2
311. Gould's Sunbird (*Aethopyga gouldiae*)
This attractive species was common around Da Lat and at Mang Canh
312. Fork-tailed Sunbird (*Aethopyga christinae*)
The common Sunbird from Mang Canh north, often in mixed bird flocks
313. Black-throated Sunbird (*Aethopyga saturata*)
Encountered several times around Da Lat (the red-throated form *johnsoni*) and at Mang Canh (*ochra*)
314. Eastern Crimson Sunbird (*Aethopyga siparaja*)
Encountered at Cat Tien and Cuc Phong
315. Little Spiderhunter (*Arachnothera longirostra*)
Commonly heard but ignored at Cat Tien
316. Streaked Spiderhunter (*Arachnothera magna*)
Encountered in highland areas throughout. Endemic *remota* around Da Lat
317. Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*)
Wintering *cinerea*
318. White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*)
The few we saw closely in the north seemed to be the white-faced *leucopsis*
319. Richard's Pipit (*Anthus richardi*)
1 at Can Gio on 5/2
320. Paddyfield Pipit (*Anthus rufulus*)
Singles at Van long and Ba Be
321. Olive-backed Pipit (*Anthus hodgsoni*)
Regularly encountered
322. Vietnamese Greenfinch (*Chloris monguilloti*)
A pair of these Annam endemics at Deo Sui Nan on 10/2 and 5 at Ho Tuyen Lam on 11/2
323. Eurasian Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*)
324. Nutmeg Mannikin (*Lonchura punctulata*)

Birds endemic or near endemic to Indo-China found in Vietnam

In **bold** seen on this tour. E = endemic to Vietnam

White-eared Night-Heron (*Gorsachius magnificus*)

Long thought endemic to south China and at one time considered as a breeding bird only on Hainan Island it is only recently that the colony at Ba Be has reached the ken of western birders

Orange-necked Partridge (*Arborophila davidi*) E

Heard only, albeit at very close range. Endemic to northeast Cochinchina and now very rarely seen in its former stronghold at Cat Tien NP

Annam Partridge (*Arborophila merlini*) E

Heard only, at long range in Bach Ma NP. Endemic to Central Annam

Imperial Pheasant (*Lophura imperialis*) E

Edward's Pheasant (*Lophura edwardsi*) E

Vietnamese Pheasant (*Lophura hatinhensis*) E

The three (there may be only two) endemic Pheasants of Vietnam are amongst the least observed species on earth and only Vietnamese has been seen with any certainty in recent years

Germain's Peacock-Pheasant (*Polyplectron germaini*)

Occurs in east Cambodia but Vietnam is its stronghold especially at Cat Tien NP

Red-vented Barbet (*Megalaima lagrandieri*)

Although it occurs in Cambodia and Laos as well as Vietnam it is usually most easy to see here

Indochinese Barbet (*Megalaima annamensis*)

Recently finally split from Black-browed and confined south Laos and south Annam

Red-collared Woodpecker (*Picus rabieri*)

Although it occurs in Laos, Vietnam is the only logical place to search for this bird. Astonishingly elusive for a Woodpecker it totally eluded us as it does most tour groups

Blue-rumped Pitta (*Pitta soror*)

Allegedly widespread in Indo-China and occurring as far west as west Thailand it is rarely seen outside Vietnam (and often missed within as well)

Bar-bellied Pitta (*Pitta elliotii*)

Again occurring as far west as Thailand and again rarely seen outside of Vietnam

White-winged Magpie (*Urocissa whiteheadi*)

Again fairly widespread but rarely seen outside of Vietnam or southwest China

Grey-crowned Tit (*Aegithalos annamensis*)

Confined to south Laos and Annam. Now generally recognised as distinct from Black-throated

Yellow-billed Nuthatch (*Sitta solangiae*)

Again, although it occurs outside of Vietnam, only really findable within its borders

Limestone Warbler (*Phylloscopus calciatilis*)

Occurring in limestone country in central Laos and central Annam, but again only realistically findable in Vietnam. A recent split from Sulphur-breasted

Black-headed Parrotbill (*Paradoxornis margaritae*)

E

Now recognised as distinct from Grey-headed and confined to south Annam

Black-hooded Laughingthrush (*Garrulax milleti*)

Again just reaching into Laos otherwise confined to Vietnam

Rufous-cheeked Laughingthrush (*Garrulax castanotis*)

Occurs on Hainan Island and central Laos but only on Mt Ba Vi in Vietnam. No trace of it in the mist for us

White-cheeked Laughingthrush (*Garrulax vassali*)

Fairly widespread in Indo-China

Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush (*Garrulax konkakinhensis*)

E

Only known from Mt Kon Ka Kinh in central Annam until BN located and photographed it at Mang Canh in 2010

Orange-breasted Laughingthrush (*Garrulax annamensis*)

E

Now split from Spot-breasted and endemic to south Annam

Golden-winged Laughingthrush (*Garrulax ngoclinhensis*)

E

So far only known from Mt Ngoc Linh in central Annam. But does it occur at Mang Kahn?! BN had a possible there on 14/2 – something to look out for

Collared Laughingthrush (*Garrulax yersini*)

E

Only found in south Annam, centred round Mt Langbian

Short-tailed Scimitar-Babbler (*Jabouilleia danjoui*)

Virtually confined to Annam and Tonkin

White-throated Wren-Babbler (*Rimotor pasquieri*)

E

A recent split from Long-billed and confined to Mt Fan Si Pan in west Tonkin. Not on our route

Sooty Babbler (*Stachyris herberti*)

Formerly considered endemic to limestone country in central Laos but now known to be thriving in central Annam

Grey-faced Tit-Babbler (*Macronous kelleyi*)

An exciting Indochinese endemic!

Vietnamese Cutia (*Cutia legalleni*)

E

Now split from Himalayan and confined to south Annam

Black-crowned Barwing (*Actinodura sodangoram*)

Only recently described and confined to southeast Laos and southern central Annam

Indochinese Fulvetta (*Alcippe danisi*)

A Lao special also found in central and south Annam. Eventually not on our route

Black-crowned Fulvetta (*Alcippe klossi*)

E

A split from Rufous-winged confined to south Annam

Grey-crowned Crocias (*Crocias langbianis*)

E

Endemic to south Annam and very localised

Vietnamese Greenfinch (*Carduelis monguilloti*)

E

Confined to pine forest in south Annam

Mammals

(Names follow Duff and Lawson, Mammals of the World, A Checklist)

1. Burmese Hare (*Lepus peguensis*)
1 on our night drive at Cat Tien on 8/2
2. Black Giant Squirrel (*Ratufa bicolor*)
1 at Deo Nui San on 10/2 and 1 at Mang Canh on 14/2
3. Asian Red-cheeked Squirrel (*Dremonys rufigenis*)
1 at Ba Vi on 25/2
4. Pallas' Squirrel (*Callosciurus erythraeus*)
Frequently encountered from Cat Tien north. Several races involved
5. Finlayson's (Variable) Squirrel (*Callosciurus fanlaysonii*)
1 along the Dak Blo road on 16/2
6. Maritime Striped Squirrel (*Tamias maritimus*)
Nothing maritime about this little feller seen around Da Lat, at Mang Canh and at Ba Vi
7. Cambodian Striped Squirrel (*Tamias rodolphi*)
A single at Cat Tien on 8/2
8. Indochinese Ground Squirrel (*Menetes berdmorei*)
Singles at Cat Tien on 8/2 and Ta Nung on 10/2
(Himalayan Field Rat (*Rattus nitidus*)
The likely identity of the dead rodent found at Tam Nuyen on 11/2)
9. Asian Palm Civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*)
1 along the main road at Cat Tien on 7/2 (arboreal) and 1 on our night drive on 8/2 (terrestrial)
10. Small Indian Mongoose (*Herpestes auropunctatus*)
1 shot across the road at Bach Ma on 18/2

11. Crab-eating Mongoose (*Herpestes urva*)
I at Cat Tien on 6/2 was only seen by HB
12. Geoffroy's Rousette (*Rousettus amplexicaudatus*)
This seemed to be the identity of the large dark bats at Puong Cave, Ba Be on 27/2 and was certainly that of the dead one picked up from the cave floor
13. Leschenault's Rousette (*Rousettus leschenaulti*)
And this the more orange bellied ones mixed in
14. Lesser Dawn Bat (*Eonycteris spelaea*)
And finally, the smaller, higher pitched ones. All three are known to roost together. Who knows what else was amongst them!
15. Pygmy Slow Loris (*Nycticebus pygmaeus*)
A great piece of spotlighting at Cat tien by BN on 7/2 gave us long looks at this elusive little primate
16. Delacour's Leaf Monkey (*Tachypithecus delacouri*)
2 groups (6 individuals) of this handsome and highly endangered endemic on the limestone cliffs above Van Long Lake on 23/2. Perhaps as few as 250 of this species still exist and this is the only logical place to see it
17. Hatinh Leaf Monkey (*Tachypithecus hatinhensis*)
Again endemic to central Vietnam and almost as endangered as 15. A troupe near the west gate of Phong Nha NP has been partially habituated but only a single for us, scoped, on 19/2 with another seen distantly by some
18. Red-shanked Douc Langur (*Pygathrix nemaeus*)
Who will ever forget that spectacular male at Phong Nha which gave walk away views on 19 and 20/2. Once more highly endangered and endemic to north and central Vietnam and adjacent east Laos
19. Black-shanked Douc Langur (*Pygathrix nigripes*)
Heard and glimpsed at Cat Tien on 7/2 but a nice troupe of 9 (including young) gave great views by the roadside at dawn on 8/2. Endemic (and endangered) to south Vietnam and east Cambodia
20. Stump-tailed Macaque (*Macaca arctoides*)
A group of 5 on the Deo Nui San trail on 10/2 and 6 at Phong Nha on 19/2
21. Assam Macaque (*Macaca assamensis*)
4 at Son Tran on 17/2
22. Rhesus Macaque (*Macaca mulatta*)
6 at Phong Nha on 19/2 and 2 on 20/2
23. Buff-cheeked Gibbon (*Hylobates gabriellae*)
We put in a special effort for this one and were rewarded with a splendid male swinging away through the high branches at Cat Tien on 9/2. Often heard but rarely seen here
24. Indian Muntjac (*Muntiacus muntjak*)
1 on our night drive at Cat Tien on 8/2
25. Sambar (*Cervus unicolor*)
20 plus from our night drive at Cat Tien on 8/2