Mammals of N Tibet, 11-29 May 2012:

An at-a-glance list of 17 species of mammals (& birdwatching highlights).

By Jesper Hornskov ***this draft 3 July 2012*** ALL RIGHTS RESERVED®

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

Based mostly on my own field notes, this brief write-up covers mammals noted by L Baunstrup, C Enevoldsen, E Heberg, E J Kruse, P Lafrenz (DOF), J Larsen & myself during the 2012 DOF Travel (Danish Ornithological Society) visit to China's Qinghai province.

The mammals, the birds (232 species in total), the butterflies, the plants, the unbeatable scenery, a stimulating mix of local cultures, wonderful food, comfortable accommodations & (not least) the companionship all came together to produce a trip the more memorable for the region being so under-visited by naturalists.

Anyone considering China as a destination for mammal watching is welcome to contact the author at:

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Enquiries concerning future trips to Tibet (<u>several are currently planned</u>) or Yunnan - our trips to China's biologically most diverse province have been very popular - can be made directly to this author.

In the species list the concept "animal-days" is used - it is the equivalent of man-hours, the day totals added up – it indicates relative abundance but does not consider the "problem" of lingering individuals or, important in a non-scientific context such as a natural history holiday abroad, how satisfying the encounters were. 25 animal-days for e.g. Goitered Gazelle could be one distant herd vanishing in a cloud of dust before you'd had a good look at them, or one individual lingering for 25 days, offering the observers point-blank views anytime in that period...

The sequence of the mammal list follows "A Guide to the Mammals of China", Smith & Xie (ed.) 2008, while in the list of bird highlights I have followed The Howard and Moore Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World – 3^{rd} Edition (Dickinson 2003), in my opinion by far the most useful one-volume checklist to date.

Initials in brackets after a few single-observer sightings does not imply that I have doubts as to the correctness of the ID!

Mammals:

Himalayan Marmot Marmota himalayana

Fairly common & often confiding, engaging in wrestling contests close to the road or sitting back watching the world go by – encountered on at least six dates.

Gansu Pika Ochotona cansus Four seen well at c4200m on 17th.

Plateau Pika Ochotona curzoniae Widespread – not systematically recorded.

Glover's Pika Ochotona gloveri Singles noted on at least three dates.

Woolly Hare *Lepus oiostolus* 17+ animal-days. Noted on seven dates.

Tolai Hare *Lepus tolai* Two near Xining on 11th.

Wolf Canis lupus

No less than 13 individuals were seen: two packs of three on different kills, a pack of four, two together, and a single female no more than 100m from the road allowing us to get some pretty decent photos! Noted on four dates...

Tibetan Fox *Vulpes ferrilata* 36 animal-days. Noted on six dates.

Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes* Four animal-days. Noted on two dates.

Kiang Equus kiang

558 animal-days. Noted on three dates.

MacNeill's (Red) Deer Cervus macneilli. 28 animal-days. Noted S of Yushu on two dates.

Gansu Red Deer Cervus kansuensis

Three fully antlered stags W of Koko Nor on 27th - 'greyer [than animals seen S of Yushu on 19+23 May]... but they swiveled 'round too soon', not allowing scrutiny.

White-lipped Deer *Przewalskium albirostris* A herd of 28 seen well S of Yushu on 23rd...

Goitred Gazelle *Gazella subgutturosa* 63 individuals on 27th – excellent views in early morning sun...

Tibetan Gazelle Procapra picticaudata

1,333 animal-days. Noted on seven dates.

Tibetan Antelope Panthalops hodgsonii

Seeing 402 individuals along the remotest Roof of the World stretch of road was truly something to remember...

***See http://www.iucnredlist.org/apps/redlist/details/15967/0

Blue Sheep Pseudois nayaur

224 animal-days. Noted on five dates.

Birds – among the highlights (a detailed list is being prepared):

Szechenyi's Monal Partridge Tetraophasis szechenyi **Tibetan Snowcock** Tetraogallus tibetanus **Blood Pheasant** Ithaginis cruentus White Eared Pheasant Crossoptilon crossoptilon Bar-headed Goose Anser indicus Saker Falco cherrug Lammergeier Gypaetus barbatus Himalayan Griffon Gyps himalayensis Himalayan Buzzard Buteo burmanicus Upland Buzzard Buteo hemilasius Golden Eagle Aquila chrysaetos **Demoiselle Crane** Anthropoides virgo Black-necked Crane Grus nigricollis **Ibisbill** Ibidorhyncha struthersii Pallas' Sandgrouse Syrrhaptes paradoxus Snow Pigeon Columba leuconota Hoopoe Upupa epops Black Woodpecker Dryocopus martius Henderson's Ground Jay Podoces hendersoni Hume's Groundpecker Pseudopodoces humilis White-browed Tit-Warbler Leptopoecile sophiae **Crested Tit-Warbler** Leptopoecile elegans Kozlov's Babax Babax koslowi Giant Laughingthrush Garrulax maximus Przevalski's Nuthatch Sitta przwalskii Wallcreeper Tichodroma muraria Siberian Rubythroat Luscinia calliope Przevalski's Redstart Phoenicurus alaschanicus Grandala Grandala coelicolor White-rumped Snowfinch Onychostruthus taczanowskii **Przevalski's Rosefinch** Urocynchramus pylzowi Chinese White-browed Rosefinch Carpodacus dubius Roborovski's Rosefinch Kozlowia roborowskii Kozlov's Bunting Emberiza koslowi