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## South-east China; Shanghai, Jiangxi and Guangxi

9<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> May 2010

Leader: James Eaton

The south-eastern provinces of China – Shanghai, Jiangxi and Guangxi – have long been neglected by birders despite hosting an exciting array of range-restricted, rare and spectacular species which are endemic to this region of China. The tour covers a vast area but we will concentrate our efforts on just a handful of key sites. Arriving in Shanghai we quickly move across to Jiangxi province where we start in Wuyuan County where amidst beautiful countryside we will find the critically endangered Courtois's Laughingthrush. This species was only recently rediscovered and the known population numbers only 200 birds. We will visit their main breeding colony, concentrated in the trees surrounding a small, traditional village. Pied Falconet, Mandarin Duck, Swinhoe's Minivet and Masked Laughingthrush add to the excitement before we continue to Wuyishan on the Jiangxi / Fujian border.

Concentrating our efforts on the single track road that winds its way up Mount Huangang we will be keeping our eyes peeled for Cabot's Tragopan which is best located in the early morning when they frequently feed by the roadside. Once our tragopan quest is complete we spend the remainder of the two days seeking out the other specialities of this beautiful mountain which is still cloaked in thick forest with a lush bamboo understorey. Rickett's Hill Partridge, Fujian Fulvetta, Grey-sided Scimitar Babbler and if we are very fortunate, Elliot's Pheasant, are all possible. Typically of Chinese mountains the warblers here are of interest; Alstrom's, *intermedius* White-spectacled and *latouchei* Bianchi's Warblers making up the *Seicercus* genus, Hartet's Leaf Warbler (split from Blyth's and endemic to this region) and Kloss's Leaf Warbler (from the White-tailed complex) making up the *Phylloscopus* warblers.

Departing Wuyishan we head to the city of Nanchang taking a short flight to Nanning in Guangxi province for our next exciting leg. Venturing towards the Vietnamese border we explore Nonggang NNR in search of Nonggang Babbler, a species only described in 2008! Other species here include White-winged Magpie and White-headed Langur, one of the rarest primates in the world.

Flying into Guangzhou we hit the expressway once more and re-enter Jiangxi to visit Jiulianshan, home to the little-known and highly-sought White-eared Night Heron. Blyth's Kingfisher, Chinese Barbet and Grey-sided Scimitar Babbler are all possible here. Finally, flying back to Shanghai will see us cruise across the Yangtze River mouth to Chongming Island and heading for Dongtan NNR, home to our final two targets, Reed Parrotbill and Japanese Swamp Warbler.

### Day 1:

Arrival into Shanghai Pudong International Airport and settle into our comfortable hotel on the outskirts of Shanghai.

### Day 2:

Departing Shanghai after breakfast we head west into Jiangxi Province reaching Wuyuan town in the early afternoon to start our search for some of the areas specialities which might include Pied Falconet, Swinhoe's Minivet and Mandarin Duck. Night in Wuyuan.

### Day 3:

This morning we will visit one of the small colonies of Courtois's Laughingthrush in the beautiful Wuyuan countryside. This critically endangered species is known from only 5-6 colonies, all within the Wuyuan county borders with the current known population numbering no more than 200 individuals. Driving around the local villages, seemingly trapped in a time warp while the rest of the country develops at neck-breaking speed, we will search for several scarce species including Pied Falconet, Masked Laughingthrush, Chinese Bamboo Partridge, Swinhoe's Minivet, Rufous-faced Warbler, Red-billed Starling and even the spectacular Mandarin Duck which has a healthy population along the riversides.

Following our mornings birding we head south stopping just before the border with Fujian as we enter Wuyishan NNR in the early evening. Night in a basic hotel inside Wuyishan NNR.

### Days 4-5:

We will spend two full days inside Wuyishan NNR to locate the main prizes of this beautiful, isolated mountain range. The jewel in the crown is the Cabot's Tragopan which regularly feeds by the roadside in the early mornings and by patiently driving slowly along the road that winds its way up Huanggang Shan we hope to get close views of this spectacular forest galliform.

For the remainder of our time we bird at a variety of altitudes along the single forest road in search of the other species endemic to south-east China's mountain ranges; Hartet's Leaf Warbler (a split from Blyth's), Grey-sided Scimitar Babbler, Rickett's Hill Partridge, Pere David's Fulvetta (part of the 'Grey-cheeked' complex), Fujian Fulvetta (split from Streak-throated) and we even have a slim chance of Elliot's Pheasant, the most difficult of the endemics. Many other scarce but widespread species are possible; Moustached and Buffy Laughingthrushes, Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler, Kloss's Leaf Warbler, White-spectacled, Alstrom's and Buff-throated Warblers, Golden and Grey-headed Parrotbills, Green Shrike Babbler, Brown Bullfinch, Spotted Wren Babbler and Chestnut Bulbul. Nights in a basic hotel at Wuyishan NNR.

### Day 6:

After a final morning of birding we take the new, fast highway north towards Nanchang. For the past few years 1-2 pairs of Oriental Stork have bred in this area and we can hope to watch them nesting on top of a huge pylon. Night in Nanchang.

### Day 7:

We then take a short flight from Nanchang airport south-west to Nanning in Guangxi province before continuing south-west towards the Vietnamese border until we reach Nonggang NNR where we will spend the afternoon birding in the stunning limestone karst forest in search of the Nonggang Babbler. This species was described as recently as 2008 and we will hope to be the first ever tour group to see this fascinating species which is currently known only from this area. During our stay here we also hope to find White-winged Magpie, Buff-breasted Babbler, Red-headed Trogon, Hainan Blue Flycatcher and Streaked Wren Babbler. Night in Longzhou.

### Day 8:

We have a full days birding in and around Nonggang National Nature Reserve in search of the elusive Nonggang Babbler. Should we have early success with the babbler then we visit a nearby reserve to see White-headed Langur, one of the rarest primates in the world and in real danger of extinction. Towards evening we drive back to Nanning in preparation our flight the following morning. Night in Nanning.

### Day 9:

We take the first morning flight to Guangzhou in Guangdong province and take the expressway north until we reach Jiulianshan, situated just inside Jiangxi province by mid-afternoon. Settling down quietly by the riverside at dusk we will be hoping for a fly-past of the secretive and endangered White-eared Night Heron, here at one of its few known breeding localities. If our luck is really in we might even locate one feeding quietly along the river. Night at Jiulianshan NNR.

### Day 10:

With a full day at our disposal we will once again be concentrating at dawn and dusk for the White-eared Night Heron. The river and streams inside the reserve are also a well-known site for the seldom-seen Blyth's Kingfisher and hopefully we will come across these zipping along the river or even obtain perched views of this bulky kingfisher. Other species possible during the daytime include Chinese Barbet, Pere David's Fulvetta (a south-east China endemic split from Grey-cheeked) and Grey-sided Scimitar Babbler. Night at Jiulianshan NNR.

**Day 11:**

Following a final dawn vigil at the Jiulianshan riverside we depart back to Guangzhou to connect with our afternoon flight back to Shanghai and drive through the city to connect with a ferry across the Yangtze River to Chongming Island. Night on Chongming Island.

**Day 12:**

Situated on the east side of Chongming Island is a vast expanse of coastal marsh and reed-bed that form Dongtan National Nature Reserve, one of the best preserved nature reserves in south-east China and home to two of the main prizes of the tour – Reed Parrotbill and Japanese Swamp Warbler. The parrotbills often give themselves away as they skim low across the reed-beds and the Swamp Warblers betray their presence by their distinctive song-flight, rising high above the reeds before parachuting down.

As we drive along the bund that skirts the marsh edge we will watch for passage migrants since a whole host of possibilities await us; buntings, starlings, warblers and flycatchers of various species, some notable species include Manchurian Bush Warbler, Chestnut-cheeked Starling, Black-faced Bunting and Black-browed Reed Warbler.

Returning back across to Shanghai we settle in to our hotel for our final dinner and a chance to reflect on an extraordinary two-weeks visiting some of the remotest, most beautiful areas in China with some wonderfully rare and little-known birds. Night in Shanghai.

**Day 13:**

International departures from Shanghai Pudong International Airport.

Please note this itinerary is open to change at any time due to flight schedules and access restrictions.

This tour can be combined with our Sichuan tour, please click [here](#) for our Sichuan tour itinerary and contact us for further details.

<b>Total tour cost:</b>	<b>£ 3250</b>	<b>\$ 4780</b>
<b>Single room supplement:</b>	<b>£ 260</b>	<b>\$ 385</b>
<b>Deposit:</b>	<b>£ 300</b>	<b>\$ 600</b>

**Max Group Size: 7**

**The cost includes:**

All accommodation, all main meals, internal flights, overland transport, entrance fees, permits & guide fees

**The cost excludes:**

International flights & departure taxes, insurance, alcoholic drinks & other items of a personal nature

For further information please [e-mail](#) us or phone on **+44 1332 516254**