This four-day trip was to explore one of peninsular Malaysia’s most accessible highland sites, Fraser’s Hill. As this was Fred and Maryanne’s first time in Asia it was a great introduction to some of Asia’s exciting birds and new families. The birds didn’t disappoint with great looks at some common but no less stunning birds like Silver-eared Mesia, Spectacled Laughingthrush, Black-and-Crimson Oriole, Orange-breasted Trogon and Orange-bellied Leafbird, along with a few range-restricted megas such as Malaysian Partridge and Malayan Laughingthrush. We began on the lower slopes of the road up to the gap. The forest along here is quite good and we were soon into the birds with Raffles’s Malkoha, Blue-eared Barbet, Greater Green Leafbird, Golden-bellied Gerygone, Orange-bellied Flowerpecker and some noisy Erpornis. We also found a small fruiting tree which was inundated with
bulbuls and for the next half hour we watched as nine species of bulbul came in and out including Grey-bellied, Finsch’s, Cinereous, Red-eyed, Buff-vented, Spectacled and Hairy-backed among the best showers. Also visiting was a gorgeous Crimson-breasted Flowerpecker that showed particularly well.

A pair of Bamboo Woodpeckers showed reluctantly in a large patch of bamboo, flying back and forth but we finally nailed down some good looks at a female. This was shortly followed by a group of Pin-striped Tit-Babblers that noisily hopped through the understory and across the road into another patch of bamboo.

We spent the afternoon walking Girdle Road, starting off with the first of many showy Spectacled Laughingthrushes followed by a whining Malaysian Cuckooshrike that landed in the top of a tree near us for some great looks. This was followed by another common inhabitant of the hill station in the form of a male Black-and-crimson Oriole. Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo were common and the flowing trains of Long-tailed Sibia were often seen as they would fly from one tree to another in a noisy group.

An afternoon flock of Silver-eared Mesia, with their riot of colours, was enjoyed next to the road soon followed by a mixed flock of Mountain Fulvetta, Golden Babblers, Spectacled Laughingthrushes, Yellow-bellied Warblers and a White-throated Fantail. Another mixed flock contained Blue Nuthatch and both Black-eared and Blyth’s Shrike-Babblers to add to the growing list.

The next day we began early with a drive down the twisting road to the gap spooking several Large-tailed Nightjar along the way. At the gap we parked up and listened to the cacophony of bird sounds that was the dawn chorus. We had close looks at Verditer Flycatcher, a cute Rufous Piculet, several Grey-chinned Minivets and Lesser Racket-tailed Drongos. In a flowering bottlebrush tree we found several Everett’s White-eyes and Fire-breasted Flowerpeckers before moving down the road a bit to find Hill Blue Flycatcher which showed really well in some close bamboo.

At an abandoned hotel Rufous-bellied Swallows were perched on a window frame and farther down we picked up the fluty notes of Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler that eventually showed in the canopy above us. We also had a large flock of noisy Sultan Tits jumping around in a tree above us.

We took the entrance road back up and found a beautiful male Orange-breasted Trogon, which showed really well right above us. With the morning chorus of Siamang echoing around us we moved up checking gullies along the way eventually finding our next target - a pair of Marbled Wren-Babblers that moved through the understory quite close to the road. We followed them in as they foraged through the understory and had them singing up slope from us – a very rare sight of this highly desired species. On our way back for lunch we found Slaty-backed Forktail and a singing Long-tailed Broadbill.

In the afternoon we birded along the road finding a nice pair of Orange-bellied Leafbird and a cooperative flock of Grey-chinned Minivets. We found the Slaty-backed Forktail again and picked up a nice pair of Greater Yellownape outside the lodge.

The next day we hiked along some of the many great trails with great looks at Lesser Shortwing, Red-headed Trogon, Bronzed Drongo, a close Streaked Wren-Babbler singing away, Black Laughingthrush flying noisily around
the canopy above us, Malayan Laughingthrush at eye-level foraging in the leaf litter on the bank above the trail. We also had a little expedition into the forest to find a singing Collared Owlet that finally showed above us through a gap in the canopy. Several Buff-breasted Babblers foraged nosily along the side of the trail giving us snippets of views as they hopped around actively. A pair of very raucous Common Green Magpie circled us at one point, showed well. As we walked along one of the trails a loud burst of sound and alarm calls erupted as the large form of a Chestnut-winged Cuckoo emerged from the brush next to the trail and flew right past us at eye-level. It disappeared into the canopy and was not seen again but its appearance was appreciated.

In the afternoon we tracked down a lovely Large Niltava that showed well with its iridescent blue plumage. Maryanne spotted some raptors which turned out to be four Blyth’s Hawk-Eagles and later on a Changeable Hawk-Eagle was seen circling high above us. A nice pair of Blue-throated Bee-eaters was seen perched for some nice views. We picked up several noisy Fire-tufted Barbet and at one point we were treated to great views of several Long-tailed Broadbills just below us as they foraged through the gulley. Several Mountain Bulbul were seen as well and a Chestnut-crowned Warbler was picked out of a flock of Mountain Fulvettas and Yellow-bellied Warblers.

Our last morning was spent along the higher roads where we tracked down a calling Sunda Cuckoo in the canopy and Mountain Imperial Pigeon and Little Cuckoo-Dove. The two-note whistle of Pygmy Cupwing was heard and we stopped to see if we could find it. Peering down into the depths of the foliage below us we waited expectantly for the tiny bird to pop along a small branch when suddenly there it was, right at our feet. It crept like a mouse along the edge of the understorey of the bank in front of us, then to our surprise popped out to the edge of the grass and proceeded to hop under the rear of the car out along the edge of the road. It faced us showing its scaled breast before hopping across the road and flying up the bank leaving us aghast at how well this tiny bird had performed. We also found two White-tailed Robins feeding along the road but our main target was always very distant. Eventually we were birding the last part of the road when we heard a close Malayan Partridge calling from down the road a little. We rushed to a spot that looked good and waited a bit set back from the road in some cover. The bird called just up slope from us and crossed an open area but through some understorey foliage showing only briefly. It continued to call just up the slope but was moving down towards us. With some coaxing it was now just meters from the edge of the road when we could hear some people walking towards us, disaster! We frantically waved our hands for them to stop and they just waved back a hello at us but quickly enough got the message and froze where they were, crisis averted. Then with a small poof of dead fern leaves the partridge popped down onto the road about ten meters from us and seeing the couple down the road froze solid. We got staggering looks at the bird before it quickly trotted across the road and continued down the embankment.

We continued on birding for the remainder of the morning picking up circling Oriental Honey Buzzard, Little Pied Flycatcher and Black-browed Barbet before heading back to the lodge for and early lunch.

We had a little time on the way back to Kuala Lumpur and we birded the forested road below the gap in several places but as it was the hottest part of the day we didn’t have a lot of luck but we did pick up some nice birds like Maroon-breasted Philentoma and Scaly-breasted Bulbul. At a waterfall we enjoyed good looks at both Whiskered and Grey-rumped Treeswift. We continued on down to the bustle of Kuala Lumpur and said our farewells over some tea and the final checklist.
Streaked Wren-Babbler and Spectacled Laughingthrush

Streaked Spiderhunter and Grey-chinned Minivet

**Bird-of-the-tour**

1. Silver-eared Mesia
2. Malaysian Partridge
3. Pygmy Cupwing
4. Large Niltava
5. Long-tailed Broadbill

**Systematic List**

**GALLIFORMES: Phasianidae**

- Malaysian Partridge
- *Arborophila campbelli*

**ACCIPITRIFORMES: Accipitridae**

- Oriental Honeybuzzard
- Crested Serpent Eagle
- Black Eagle
- Blyth’s Hawk Eagle
- *Pernis ptilorhynchus torquatus*
- *Spilornis cheela*
- *Ictinaetus malayensis*
- *Nisaetus alboniger*
Changeable Hawk Eagle  
* Nisaetus limbataet 

**COLUMBIFORMES: Columbidae**
- Little Cuckoo Dove  
  * Macropygia ruficeps malayana 
- Mountain Imperial Pigeon  
  * Ducula badia 

**CUCULIFORMES: Cuculidae**
- Bock's Hawk Cuckoo  
  * Cuculus [sparverioides] bocki 
  heard only 
- Sunda Cuckoo  
  * Cuculus lepidus 
- Violet Cuckoo  
  * Chrysococcyx xanthorrhynchos 
  heard only 
- Plaintive Cuckoo  
  * Cacomantis merulinus 
- Raffles's Malkoha  
  * Rhinortha chlorophaea 

**STRIGIFORMES: Strigidae**
- Mountain Scops Owl  
  * Otus spilocephalus vulpes 
  heard only 
- Collared Owlet  
  * Glaucidium brodiei brodiei 

**CAPRIMULGIFORMES: Caprimulgidae**
- Large-tailed Nightjar  
  * Caprimulgus macrurus 

**APODIFORMES: Apodidae**
- Glossy Swiftlet  
  * Collocalia esculenta cyanoptila 
- Silver-rumped Spinetail  
  * Rhiphadura leucopygialis 
- House Swift  
  * Apus [affinis] nipalensis 

**APODIFORMES: Hemiprocnidae**
- Grey-rumped Treeswift  
  * Hemiprocnus longipennis 
- Whiskered Treeswift  
  * Hemiprocnus comata 

**TROGONIFORMES: Trogonidae**
- Orange-breasted Trogon  
  * Harpactes oreskios uniformis 
- Red-headed Trogon  
  * Harpactes erythrocephalus chaseni 

**CORACIIFORMES: Meropidae**
- Red-bearded Bee-eater  
  * Nyctyornis amictus 
  heard only 
- Blue-throated Bee-eater  
  * Merops viridis viridis 

**PICIFORMES: Megalaimidae**
- Fire-tufted Barbet  
  * Psilopogon pyrolophus 
- Gold-whiskered Barbet  
  * Psilopogon chrysopogon laeta 
  heard only 
- Red-throated Barbet  
  * Psilopogon mystacophanos mystacophanos 
  heard only 
- Black-browed Barbet  
  * Psilopogon orti 
- Yellow-crowned Barbet  
  * Psilopogon henricii 
  heard only 
- Blue-eared Barbet  
  * Psilopogon duvaucellii duvaucellii 
- Sooty Barbet  
  * Caloramphus hayii 

**PICIFORMES: Picidae**
- Rufous Piculet  
  * Sasia abnormis 
- Greater Yellownape  
  * Picus flavinucha wrayi 
- Bamboo Woodpecker  
  * Gezinius viridis viridis 
- Maroon Woodpecker  
  * Blythipicus rubiginosus 
  heard only 

**PASSERIFORMES: Eurylaimidae**
- Long-tailed Broadbill  
  * Psarismus dalhousia 

**PASSERIFORMES: Hirundinidae**
- Pacific Swallow  
  * Hirundo tahitica 
- Barn Swallow  
  * Hirundo rustica gutturalis 
- Rufous-bellied Swallow  
  * Cecropis badia 

**PASSERIFORMES: Tephrodornithidae**
- Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike  
  * Hemipus picatus 
- Maroon-breasted Philentoma  
  * Philentoma velata 

**PASSERIFORMES: Campephagidae**
Malaysian Cuckooshrike
Grey-chinned Minivet
Scarlet Minivet

**PASSERIFORMES: Pycnonotidae**
Black-crested Bulbul
Scaly-breasted Bulbul
Grey-bellied Bulbul
Cream-vented Bulbul
Red-eyed Bulbul
Spectacled Bulbul
Finsch’s Bulbul
Ochraceous Bulbul
Hairy-backed Bulbul
Buff-vented Bulbul
Mountain Bulbul
Cinereous Bulbul

**PASSERIFORMES: Chloropseidae**
Greater Green Leafbird
Orange-bellied Leafbird

**PASSERIFORMES: Turdidae**
Lesser Shortwing
White-tailed Robin
Slaty-backed Forktail

**PASSERIFORMES: Cisticolidae**
Rufescent Prinia
Dark-necked Tailorbird

**PASSERIFORMES: Cettidae**
Yellow-bellied Warbler
Mountain Tailorbird

**PASSERIFORMES: Phylloscopidae**
Chestnut-crowned Warbler

**PASSERIFORMES: Muscicapidae**
Oriental Magpie Robin
White-rumped Shama
Little Pied Flycatcher
Verditer Flycatcher
Pale Blue Flycatcher
Large Niltava

**PASSERIFORMES: Stenostiridae**
Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher

**PASSERIFORMES: Rhipiduridae**
White-throated Fantail

**PASSERIFORMES: Timaliidae**
Buff-breasted Babbler
Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler
Marbled Wren-Babbler
Streaked Wren-Babbler
Pygmy Cupwing
Golden Babbler
Pin-striped Tit-Babbler
Black Laughingthrush
Spectacled Laughingthrush
Malayan Laughingthrush
Silver-eared Mesia
Blue-winged Siva

**Coracina [javensis] larutensis**
**Pericrocotus solaris montanus**
**Pericrocotus speciosus xanthogaster**

**Pycnonotus melanicterus**
**Pycnonotus squamatus weberi**
**Pycnonotus cyaniventris**
**Pycnonotus simplex simplex**
**Pycnonotus brunneus brunneus**
**Alophoixus finschi**
**Iole olivacea**
**Tricholestes criniger**
**Enicurus schistaceus**

**Chloropsis sonneratii**
**Chloropsis hardwickii**

**Brachypteryx leucophrys wrayi**
**Myiomela leucura**

**Prinia rufescens extrema**
**Orthotomus atrogularis atrogularis**

**Abroscopus supercilialis sakaorum**
**Phyllergates cucullatus malayanus**

**Seicercus castaniceps**

**Copsychus saularis musicus**
**Copsychus malabaricus**
**heard only**

**Ficedula westermanni**
**Eumyias thalassinus**
**Cyornis unicolor**
**Niltava grandis**

**Culicicapa ceylonensis**

**Rhipidura albicollis**

**Pellorneum tickelli**
**Pomatorhinus montanus occidentalis**
**Napothera marmorata**
**Napothera brevicaudata leucosticta**
**Pnoepyga pusilla**
**Stachyridopsis chrysea**
**Macronus gularis**
**Garrulax lugubris**
**Rhinocichla mitrata**
**Trohalopteron peninsulae**
**Leiothrix argentauris**
**Actinodura cyanouroptera**
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