

Vietnam Feb 2nd-21st 2012 – John Clark and Tim Doran

This trip was organised at short notice through Nguyen Hoai Bao of Vietnam Wildtour. <http://www.birdwatchingvietnam.net/> , e-mail birdvietnam@gmail.com . It consisted of two parts – a 13 day trip to central and south Vietnam for both of us, and a six day extension to the north for me only. We flew by Cathay Pacific via Hong Kong which cost around £650. It maybe worth checking out Vietnam Airlines that now fly direct from Gatwick to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon).

Central and South Vietnam Feb 2nd-15th. The aim was to target as many endemic species as possible, which was largely achieved. We visited Loxo, Mang Den/Mang Canh, Yok Don NP, the Da Lat area, Deo Nui San and Cat Tien NP. Time constraints meant it was not possible to visit Bach Ma and Phong Nha-Ke Bang in central Vietnam. On reflection, it might have been better to have at least visited the Bach Ma area, where Indochinese Wren-babbler, Annam Partridge and Grey-capped Greenfinch are available since we were denied access to areas near the Lao border at Loxo which is an alternative site for the Wren-babbler. However, there is currently some road building in the Bach Ma area which prevents access to some sites. We spent a day and a half at Yok Don en route from Mang Den to Da Lat, but the species there (including Mekong Wagtail) are readily observed in Cambodia. Bao provided his own comfortable Mitsubishi vehicle although it did lack rear seat belts. Some journeys were up to six hours but the driver was good despite the often slow progress at times. Accommodation varied from the adequate to the frankly over luxurious at Da Lat! Food was generally good but rice with everything became rather tiresome!

North Vietnam Feb 16th-21st. My six day extension to the north targeted the recently-discovered nesting White-eared Night Herons at Ba Be NP and included montane birding at Tam Dao NP and lowland forest at Cuc Phuong NP. Bao arranged another guide, Mr Tien, who was based at Cuc Phuong, to accompany me in the north. A Nissan 4x4 was provided for the Ba Be and Tam Dao sections but the driver was somewhat manic. At Cuc Phuong and for the journey back to Ha Noi I had a different vehicle and driver who was much more sedate! Unfortunately, the weather was generally cold and cloudy throughout in the north, particularly at Tam Dao where it was windy with thick fog and rain for much of the time, and I left for Cuc Phuong a day ahead of schedule. Such weather seems to be a feature of late winter in north Vietnam and this area would probably be much more productive in April. I spent the first night after arrival at Ha Noi airport hotel, but this was poor and I would not recommend it. The only decent hotels are in downtown Ha Noi so it would probably be best to stay nearer one of the birding locations. At Ba Be we stayed in a homestay that belonged to a relative of the boatman. This was expensive for what it was and it would probably be better to stay in one of the hotels near the park entrance. The town of Tam Dao is a hill station but was largely deserted. I stayed in the Green Hotel which was OK although food was hard to get and a rip off! At Cuc Phuong I stayed in a cabin at the HQ for two nights, which was very good, and another cabin at Bong for the middle night, which was adequate.

Birding in Vietnam is hard work. At most sites, birds are few and far between and bird waves are not easy to come by. There is intense hunting pressure on large birds in most areas – e.g. at Cuc Phuong, Vietnam's first national park, I did not see any hornbills or pigeons and only one large raptor in three days birding. Only at Cat Tien were such birds fairly numerous. We saw five Brown Hornbills at the newly opened-up Mang Canh area but I wonder how long they will survive. Song birds are also extensively trapped for the cage bird trade and this presumably accounts for why many species are so shy. Playback produced good results for some species but it is important to make the best use of the initial response as that is often the only chance you get. Several desired species offered only the briefest of views and about ten potential lifers wouldn't show at all!

Daily diary

Feb 2nd. Arrived Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) mid morning after overnight flight on Cathay Pacific from Heathrow via Hong Kong. Late afternoon Vietnam Airlines flight to Da Nang, where met by Mr Bao. Overnight Hotel Royal, Da Nang.

Feb 3rd. Drove to Kham Duc, where checked in to Hotel Be Chau Giang and then drove on to Loxo pass, where we birded areas on both side of road before pass from 1130-1530, when fog and drizzle forced an early return to the hotel.

Feb 4th. Pre dawn departure for Loxo pass. We were denied access to forest near the Lao border, so we revisited yesterday's sites in cool, dull weather before departing at 0830 for Mang Den, where we birded from 1330-1645 before checking into Hotel Hoa Sim.

Feb 5th. All day birding Mang Canh road (16-20 km from Mang Den junction) and side tracks on south side of road. Weather quite warm and sunny. Overnight Hotel Hon Sim.

Feb 6th. Mang Canh 0610-0940. Then long drive to city of Buon Ma Thuot. Overnight Hotel Damsan.

Feb 7th. Delayed start due to flat battery. Eventually arrived Yok Don NP 0720. Birded areas around park HQ, along river and in dry forest along road to north. Very hot by 1100. Overnight Park HQ.

Feb 8th. Dry forest on opposite bank of river until 0900. Then long drive to Da Lat. Stopped for birding and lunch at Lak Lake 1200-1300, and for birding on edge of plateau at Dam Rong 1500-1645. Overnight Hoang Anh Dat Xanh resort, Da Lat.

Feb 9th. Mixed deciduous and conifer forest by lake at Ho Tuyen Lam 0640-1120. Ta Nung valley 1500-1720. Overnight Hoang Anh Dat Xanh resort, Da Lat.

Feb 10th. Mt Lang Bian 0700-1200. Ho Tuyen Lam forest (different area on other side of lake) 1500-1630. Marsh at far end of Da Lat Flower Garden 1645-1745. Overnight Hoang Anh Dat resort, Da Lat.

Feb 11th. Ta Nung valley 0640-1020. Da Lat Flower Garden 1055-1120. Drove south to Di Linh. Birding on road up to Deo Nui San pass 1500-1845. Overnight Nhat Minh Hotel, Di Linh.

Feb 12th. Tea house trail and Deo Nui San pass 0630-1020, brief look at paddies on way back to Di Linh. Then drove to Cat Tien NP – walk towards grasslands 1630-1740. Overnight Cat Tien NP.

Feb 13th. 0630-1230 Walk along trails through forest close to HQ, then track towards Heaven Rapids and back to HQ. 1500-1800 further walks along trails in forest and along road, including stream under road where many birds were coming to drink in late afternoon. Overnight Cat Tien NP.

Feb 14th. 0600-1215 Jeep 9 km to start of Crocodile trail – walked to lake and back. 1500-1900 Jeep to Grasslands, then to stake out for Blyth's Frogmouth; walked back to HQ. Overnight Cat Tien NP.

Feb 15th. Tan Phu forest 0705-1015. Then drove to HCMC airport. I took a flight to Ha Noi at 1500 for northern extension, Tim a flight to Hong Kong at 1900 for onward flight to London. I overnighted at Ha Noi airport hotel; not recommended but little alternative near airport.

Feb 16th. Left with new guide Mr Tien at 0700, arrived Ba Be at 1330 hrs. After settling in at homestay, went in boat to heron stake-out (20 minutes), returning after dark. Overnight homestay.

Feb 17th. Left 0500 by boat to heron stake out, but area was disturbed by night fishermen. Returned for breakfast at 0730. Left at 0830 and birded Ba Be area until 0945, then drove to Tam Dao, arrived 1630 in thick fog. Attempted birding on road above ranger post and on steps trail. Overnight Green Hotel.

Feb 18th. 0630-1130 attempted birding on road above ranger post, but very windy with low cloud and drizzle, making birding very difficult. Decided to cut losses, so left for Cuc Phuong, arriving HQ 1715 hrs. Overnight Cuc Phuong HQ cabins.

Feb 19th. 0600 left for slow drive up road to Bong (20 km) for thrushes, arrived 0710. Had breakfast and then spent all day on loop trail (first 2 km), grid area and village trail. Overnight Bong cabins.

Feb 20th. All day in Bong area – complete loop trail am, then grid and village trail. Returned to HQ for night, stopping at Blue-rumped Pitta stake out just before HQ at dusk.

Feb 21st. Repeated thrush drive, then first part of loop trail and grid, before starting back down road to HQ. Stopped at Dong Nguoi Xua (cave) 1110-1205, tried Blue-rumped Pitta stake out again, then checked out. Stopped briefly at primate rehabilitation centre and Van Long Lake 1420-1435, then to Ha Noi airport. Left on Dragonair flight for Hong Kong at 2000 hrs.

Systematic List – endemics and other noteworthy species in bold.

Chinese Francolin *Francolinus pintadeanus*: Fantastic views of a calling bird in a small tree in the grasslands at Cat Tien at dusk on Feb 14th.

Rufous-throated Partridge *Arborophila rufogularis*: Heard at Mt Lang Bian.

Bar-backed Partridge *Arborophila brunneopectus*: Heard at Loxo pass.

Chestnut-necklaced Partridge *Arborophila charltonii*: Several groups heard at Cuc Phuong, but only one glimpsed despite the birds being close.

Scaly-breasted Partridge *Arborophila chloropus*: Three seen well along the trail to Crocodile Lake, Cat Tien.

Red Junglefowl *Gallus gallus*: Heard at Yok Don.

Siamese Fireback *Lophura diardi*: A superb male crossed the road slowly while we were watching the Black and Buff Woodpecker at Cat Tien.

Germain's Peacock-pheasant *Polyplectron germaini*: A pair seen briefly but well along the trail to Crocodile Lake, Cat Tien.

Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus*: One male seen well in the grasslands at Cat Tien.

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*: 4 males and 3 females displaying at Ba Be.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*: A female at Ba Be.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*: Five at Van Long Lake.

Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus*: Four roosting in dead tree in grasslands at Cat Tien.

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*: One at Crocodile Lake.

Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*: One at Crocodile Lake.

White-eared Night Heron *Gorsachius magnificus*: a pair seen well at the nest at Ba Be, probably three birds seen in flight at dusk.

Chinese Pond-heron *Ardeola bacchus*: Recorded on 13 dates.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*: Recorded on six dates.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*: 100+ at Van Long Lake.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*: Five at Cat Tien.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*: Recorded on four dates.

Intermediate Egret *Mesophoyx intermedia*: Recorded on three dates.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*: Recorded on eight dates.

Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*: One at Crocodile Lake.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*: Three at Cat Tien.

Jerdon's Baza *Aviceda jerdoni*: Frustratingly, one flew past at close range at Dam Rong but lost behind trees.

Oriental Honey-buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*: One displaying at Mang Canh.

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus*: One en route to Da Lat.

Crested Serpent-eagle *Spilornis cheela*: Recorded on six dates.

Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*: One perched at close range near Cuc Phuong HQ.

Shikra *Accipiter badius*: Recorded on four dates including four at Yak Don.

Grey-faced Buzzard *Butastur indicus*: Singles recorded on four dates.

Himalayan Buzzard *Buteo burmanicus*: One seen well en route to Ba Be.

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malayensis*: Recorded on five dates.

Mountain Hawk-eagle *Nisaetus nipalensis*: Singles at Ho Tuyen Lam and Cuc Phuong.

Collared Falconet *Microhierax caerulescens*: Prolonged views of two at Yok Don.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*: Four at Da Lat Flower Garden and two at Crocodile Lake.

Purple Swampphen *Porphyrio porphyrio*: Four at Crocodile Lake.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*: Recorded on three dates including 25 at Van Long Lake.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*: Four at Van Long Lake.

Red-wattled Lapwing *Vanellus indicus*: Two at Yok Don and four at Cat Tien.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*: 11 at Da Lat Flower Garden.

Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*: Six at Van Long Lake.

Bronze-winged Jacana *Metopidius indicus*: Four at Crocodile Lake.

Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*: Six at Da Lat Flower Garden.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*: Singles at Yok Don and Ba Be.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*: Recorded on five dates, max five at Ba Be.

Rock Duck *Columba livia*: Recorded.

Pale-capped Pigeon *Columba punicea*: One seen well in flight at Mang Canh.

Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*: Numerous at the grasslands, Cat Tien.

Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis*: Recorded on ten dates.

Common Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*: Two seen at Cat Tien, others heard.

Orange-breasted Green-pigeon *Treron bicincta*: 80 in the grasslands at Cat Tien.

Ashy-headed Green-pigeon *Treron phayrei*: One scoped at Cat Tien NP.

Thick-billed Green-pigeon *Treron curvirostra*: One at Ta Nung and 20+ at Cat Tien.

Yellow-footed Green-pigeon *Treron phoenicopterus*: Two at Yok Don.

Yellow-vented Green-pigeon *Treron seimundi*: Excellent views of a pair at Deo Nui San.

Wedge-tailed Green-pigeon *Treron sphenura*: One at Deo Nui San.

Green Imperial-pigeon *Ducula aenea*: Four at Yok Don and 80 at Cat Tien.

Mountain Imperial-pigeon *Ducula badia*: Recorded on five dates.

Vernal Hanging-parrot *Loriculus vernalis*: Five at Cat Tien.

Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri*: 25+ at Cat Tien.

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*: Recorded on six dates.

Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis*: Four in the grasslands at Cat Tien.

Green-billed Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus tristis*: Three at Cat Tien.

Asian Koel *Eudynamis scolopaceus*: Heard at Yok Don.

Banded Bay Cuckoo *Cacomantis sonneratii*: Heard at Bong, Cuc Phuong.

Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus*: One in the paddies near Deo Nui San.

Fork-tailed Drongo Cuckoo *Surniculus dicruroides*: One briefly at Ho Tuyen Lam, then good views of singles by the tea house at Deo Nui San and at Cat Tien.

Mountain Scops-owl *Otus spilocephalus*: Heard at Deo Nui San and Ba Be.

Oriental Scops-owl *Otus sunia*: Heard at Da Lat.

Collared Owlet *Glaucidium brodiei*: Heard on at least seven dates.

Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides*: Heard on at least seven dates; two seen well at Yok Don and one near Bong.

Brown Hawk Owl *Ninox scutulata*: Heard at Cat Tien and Ba Be.

Hodgson's Frogmouth *Batrachostomus hodgsoni*: One heard at close range at Deo Nui San but unfortunately not spotlighted.

Blyth's Frogmouth *Batrachostomus affinis*: Fantastic close walk-away views of one at Cat Tien 300 m after the tarmac ends en route to Crocodile Lake.

Great Eared-nightjar *Lyncornis macrotis*: Heard at Cat Tien.

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*: One seen well at Deo Nui San and heard at Cat Tien.

Germain's Swiftlet *Aerodramus germani*: Ten, including a tail-less individual, over the grasslands at Cat Tien.

Silver-backed Needletail *Hirundapus cochinchinensis*: 14 over the road to Heaven Rapids, Cat Tien.

Asian Palm Swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis*: One at Yok Don.

Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*: Five at Cat Tien.

House Swift *Apus nipalensis*: Recorded on one date.

Orange-breasted Trogon *Harpactes oreskios*: A male and then a superb pair at Cat Tien.

Red-headed Trogon *Harpactes erythrocephalus*: Four at Cuc Phoung.

Indian Roller *Coracias benghalensis*: Up to ten recorded on four dates at Yok Don and Cat Tien.

Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*: Three at Cat Tien.

Banded Kingfisher *Lacedo pulchella*: Heard at Cat Tien; would not respond to playback.

White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*: Recorded on six dates.

Collared Kingfisher: *Todiramphus chloris*: One en route to Loxo Pass.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*: Recorded on five dates.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*: One at Cat Tien.

Blue-bearded Bee-eater *Nyctyornis athertoni*: One glimpsed at Mang Den and another at Cat Tien.

Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis*: One at Yok Don.

Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*: Ten in the paddies near Deo Nui San.

Chestnut-headed Bee-eater *Merops leschenaulti*: Recorded on five dates.

Austen's Brown Hornbill *Anorrhinus austeni*: Five seen well at Mang Canh.

Oriental Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros albirostris*: Six at Cat Tien NP.

Great Hornbill *Buceros bicornis*: One seen well and others heard at Cat Tien.

Red-vented Barbet *Megalaima lagrandieri*: Seen well at Mang Den and Cat Tien; heard at Mang Canh and Cuc Phuong.

Lineated Barbet *Megalaima lineata*: Recorded on five dates.

Green-eared Barbet *Megalaima faiostricta*: Heard at Cuc Phuong.

Golden-throated Barbet *Megalaima franklinii*: Recorded on six dates.

Indochinese Barbet *Megalaima annamensis*: Recorded on six dates including 15 in one tree at Dam Rong.

Blue-eared Barbet *Megalaima australis*: Heard at Cat Tien.

Coppersmith Barbet *Megalaima haemacephala*: One at Yok Don.

Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus*: One at Cat Tien seen by Tim only.

White-browed Piculet *Sasia ochracea*: One glimpsed at Ba Be as it flew across the road.

Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos canicapillus*: Recorded on five dates.

Greater Yellownappe *Chrysophlegma flavinucha*: A female at Cat Tien. Heard on three other dates.

Lesser Yellownappe *Picus chlorolophus*: A male at Cat Tien.

Laced Woodpecker *Picus vittatus*: A female scoped at Cat Tien.

Red-collared Woodpecker *Picus rabieri*: A male was flushed from bamboo at close range at Cuc Phuong and gave good naked eye views as it flew a short distance. Responded to play back but only gave further flight views.

Black-headed Woodpecker *Picus erythropygius*: At least four seen superbly at Yak Don.

Greater Flameback *Chrysocolaptes lucidus*: Three at Yok Don and one at Cat Tien.

Pale-headed Woodpecker *Gecinulus grantia*: A pair at the start of the trail to Crocodile Lake at Cat Tien wouldn't show; another pair at Tan Phu gave brief flight views only.

Bay Woodpecker *Blythipicus pyrrhotis*: One at Ho Tuyen Lam and heard at Cuc Phuong.

Rufous Woodpecker *Micropternus brachyurus*: Two at Yok Don.

Black-and-buff Woodpecker *Meiglyptes jugularis*: Walk away views of a male drumming and calling at Cat Tien.

Great Slaty Woodpecker *Mulleripicus pulverulentus*: Good scope views of a female at Cat Tien.

Long-tailed Broadbill *Psarisomus dalhousiae*: One seen well at Ho Tuyen Lam.

Silver-breasted Broadbill *Serilophus lunatus*: One calling in the grid at Bong, Cuc Phuong would not respond to playback.

Banded Broadbill *Eurylaimus javanicus*: Excellent views of one on the trail to Crocodile Lake, Cat Tien.

Dusky Broadbill *Corydon sumatranus*: Three seen briefly at Cat Tien.

Eared Pitta *Hydrornis phayrei*: Fantastic views of one at close range for 20 minutes as it tossed leaves off the loop trail at Bong, Cuc Phuong.

Blue-rumped Pitta *Hydrornis soror* : Singles heard at Mang Canh and Tan Phu; many heard at Cuc Phuong but none seen.

Rusty-naped Pitta *Hydrornis oatesi*: One heard at Mang Canh.

Blue Pitta *Hydrornis cyanea*: One heard at Mang Canh.

Bar-bellied Pitta *Hydrornis ellioti*: Three males at Cat Tien including one scoped; several heard at Cuc Phuong.

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus*: Recorded on 13 dates.

Large Woodshrike *Tephrodornis gularis*: Two at Cat Tien.

Common Woodshrike *Tephrodornis pondicerianus*: Two at Yok Don.

Ashy Woodswallow *Artamus fuscus*: Recorded on three dates including 20+ in the grasslands at Cat Tien.

Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia*: One at Cat Tien.

Great Iora *Aegithina lafresnayei*: One at Deo Nui San and four at Cat Tien.

Large Cuckooshrike *Coracina macei*: Two at Loxo and two at Yok Don.

Indochinese Cuckooshrike *Coracina polioptera*: Recorded on seven dates.

Black-winged Cuckooshrike *Coracina melaschistos*: Three at Cuc Phuong.

Swinhoe's Minivet *Pericrocotus cantonensis*: A flock of 11 at Deo Nui San.

Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus*: Two at Yok Don and four at Cat Tien.

Small Minivet *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*: Two at Yok Don.

Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*: Two at Mang Canh.

Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*: At least six at Mang Canh and two at Deo Nui San.

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus speciosus*: Recorded on ten dates including 100 at Ba Be.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*: Recorded on six dates.

Burmese Shrike *Lanius colluriooides*: Common in Da Lat area.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*: Two at Loxo and one at Mang Canh.

Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus*: A male at Bong, Cuc Phuong.

White-bellied Yuhina *Erpornis zantholeuca*: Recorded on at eight dates.

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Da Lat Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius flaviscapis*: At least six recorded in Da Lat area and at Deo Nui San.

Clicking Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius intermedius*: One at Loxo and one at Mang Den.

Blyth's Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius aeralatus*: One at Loxo and two at Mang Canh (presumed this species and not Da Lat Shrike-babbler).

Slender-billed Oriole *Oriolus tenuirostris*: Several at Ho Tuyen Lam.

Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*: Recorded on five dates.

Black-hooded Oriole *Oriolus xanthornus*: Two at Yok Don.

Maroon Oriole *Oriolus traillii*: Recorded on five dates.

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*: One at Loxo.

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*: Recorded on ten dates.

Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus*: Recorded on nine dates.

Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus remifer*: Recorded on five dates.

Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*: Recorded on four dates.

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradiseus*: Recorded on seven dates.

White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis*: Recorded on five dates.

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea*: Two at Cat Tien.

Asian Paradise-flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi*: One at Cat Tien.

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*: Two at Ho Tuyen Lam and six at Ta Nang.

White-winged Magpie *Urocissa whiteheadi*: Four briefly in flight, Loxo, heard at Mang Canh, and several groups heard at Cuc Phuong but only brief views of five in flight.

Rufous Treepie *Dendrocitta vagabunda*: Two at Yok Don.

Racket-tailed Treepie *Crypsirina temia*: Two at Yok Don and two at Cat Tien.

Ratchet-tailed Treepie *Temnurus temnurus*: At least two at Mang Canh and several heard at Cuc Phuong.

Southern Jungle Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*: Up to five on six dates in the south.

Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*: Recorded on ten dates.

Great Tit *Parus major*: Two at Yok Don.

Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus*: Regularly recorded in Da Lat area and at Deo Nui San.

Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus sillonotus*: Recorded on five dates at Mang Canh and in Da Lat area.

Sultan Tit *Melanochlora sultanea*: At least six at Tam Dao and four at Cuc Phuong.

Chestnut-vented Nuthatch *Sitta nagaensis*: Six at Ho Tuyen Lam; also recorded at Mt Lang Bian.

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis*: Five at Yok Don.

Yellow-billed Nuthatch *Sitta solangiae*: Seven, including a nesting pair, at Mang Canh, and one at Mt Lang Bian.

Black-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus atriceps*: Four in the grasslands at Cat Tien.

Black-crested Bulbul *Pycnonotus melanicterus*: Recorded on six dates.

Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*: Recorded on three dates including 25 at Loxo.

Sooty-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster*: Recorded on six dates.

Stripe-throated Bulbul *Pycnonotus finlaysoni*: Ten at Cat Tien.

Flavescent Bulbul *Pycnonotus flavescens*: Recorded at Loxo, Da Lat and Deo Nui San.

Streak-eared Bulbul *Pycnonotus blanfordi*: Recorded at Yok Don and Tan Phu forest.

Puff-throated Bulbul *Alophoixus pallidus*: Recorded at Cat Tien, Ba Be and Cuc Phuong.

Grey-eyed Bulbul *Iole propinqua*: Four at Ta Nung valley and two at Cuc Phuong.

Mountain Bulbul *Ixos mcclllandii*: Recorded on five dates including six at Mang Canh.

Ashy Bulbul *Hemixos flava*: Recorded on four dates including four at Dam Rong and several Deo Nui San.

Chestnut Bulbul *Hemixos castanonotus*: Three seen quite well in the fog at Tam Dao.

Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*: Recorded on ten dates including six at Mang Canh and four (including a white-headed bird) near Ba Be.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: Regularly recorded.

Red-rumped/Striated Swallow *Hirundo daurica/striolata*: Two distant birds on the river Cat Tien.

Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus albobularis*: Two at Mang Den and Mang Canh.

Mountain Tailorbird *Phyllergates cucullatus*: Recorded at Loxo and Ho Tuyen Lam.

Brownish-flanked Bush-warbler *Horornis fortipes*: Heard at Cuc Phuong.

Grey-bellied Tesia *Tesia cyaniventer*: Several at Loxo and Mt Lang Bian, where very good views were obtained.

Grey-crowned Tit *Aegithalos annamensis*: Commonly recorded on seven dates in Mang Canh and Da Lat areas.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*: Common; recorded on at least 13 dates.

Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*: Singles at Mang Den and Mang Canh.

Two-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*: One at Mang Canh.

Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes*: One at Yok Don and at least three at Cat Tien.

Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*: One at Mt Lang Bian.

Kloss's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus ogilviegranti*: Commonly recorded on eight dates in Mang Den and Da Lat areas.

Limestone Warbler *Phylloscopus calciatilis*: Heard at Ba Be and two seen well at Dong Nguoi Xua cave, Cuc Phuong.

Bianchi's Warbler *Seicercus valentini*: One at Cuc Phuong.

Grey-cheeked Warbler *Seicercus poliogenys*: One or two recorded on four dates in the Da Lat area.

Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Seicercus castaniceps*: Singles recorded at Loxo, Mt Lang Bian and Ta Nung valley.

Black-browed Reed-warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*: One at Crocodile Lake.

Blunt-winged Warbler *Acrocephalus concinens*: One at Da Lat Flower Garden.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*: One heard singing at Cat Tien NP.

Brown Prinia *Prinia polychroa*: One seen well at Yok Don.

Hill Prinia *Prinia superciliaris*: Recorded on five dates.

Rufescent Prinia *Prinia rufescens*: Recorded on four dates including ten at Cuc Phuong.

Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata*: Recorded twice.

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*: Recorded on eight dates.

Dark-necked Tailorbird *Orthotomus atrogularis*: Two at Mang Canh and one at Ba Be.

Large Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus hypoleucos*: Heard twice at Cuc Phuong.

White-browed Scimitar-babbler *Pomatorhinus schisticeps*: Two at Mt Lang Bian.

Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyridopsis ruficeps*: One at Mang Canh and a total of eight in the Da Lat area.

Golden Babbler *Stachyridopsis chrysaea*: One at Loxo and at least 12 at Mang Canh. Also heard at Tam Dao.

Pin-striped Tit-babbler *Macronus gularis*: At least ten at Ba Be and four at Cuc Phuong.

Grey-faced Tit-babbler *Macronus kelleyi*: Five seen well at Cat Tien and others noted.

Chestnut-capped Babbler *Timalia pileata*: One elusive bird in the grasslands at Cat Tien.

Grey-throated Babbler *Stachyris nigriceps*: Heard and glimpsed at Mang Canh.

Black-crowned Fulvetta *Pseudominla klossi*: 15 at Mt Lang Bian.

Rufous-throated Fulvetta *Alcippe rufogularis*: At least 15 at Bong, Cuc Phuong.

Mountain Fulvetta *Alcippe peracensis*: Three at Loxo, one at Mang Den and at least 40 in the Da Lat area.

David's Fulvetta *Alcippe davidi*: At least 50 at Tam Dao.

Black-browed Fulvetta *Alcippe grotei*: At least 12 at Mang Canh.

Limestone Wren-babbler *Gypsophila crispifrons*: Common at Cuc Phuong with a group of four seen very well.

Streaked Wren-babbler *Napothera brevicaudata*: Two seen well just above the teahouse at Deo Nui San.

Abbott's Babbler *Malacocincla abbotti*: One at Cat Tien.

Scaly-crowned Babbler *Malacopteron cinereum*: A total of seven at Cat Tien.

Spot-throated Babbler *Pellorneum albiventre*: A pair at Loxo showed quite well to John.

Puff-throated Babbler *Pellorneum ruficeps*: Two at Cat Tien, one at Tan Phu and four at Cuc Phuong.

White-crested Laughingthrush *Garrulax leucolophus*: Recorded on six dates, max. 20+ at Cat Tien.

Black-hooded Laughingthrush *Garrulax milleti*: Several seen reasonably well at Mang Canh; heard on four other dates.

White-cheeked Laughingthrush *Garrulax vassali*: Recorded on five dates including a showy flock of 22 by the hotel at Mang Den.

(Black-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax chinensis*: Not recorded except in a cage in a pet shop near Tam Dao.)

Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush *Garrulax konkakhinensis*: Commonly heard at Mang Canh but difficult to see well; Tim and John both got good views in the end.

Grey Laughingthrush *Garrulax maesi*: A large flock heard only in thick fog at Tam Dao.

Orange-breasted Laughingthrush *Stactocichla annamensis*: Heard at Ta Nung valley, then several heard on the teahouse train at Deo Nui San before a pair showed superbly.

Collared Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron yersini*: At least nine at Mt Lang Bian, with good close up views obtained.

Red-tailed Laughingthrush *Garrulax milnei*: Heard at Mang Canh; would not respond to playback.

Black-crowned Parrotbill *Psittiparus margaritae*: Four at Deo Nui San.

Asian Fairy-bluebird *Irena puella*: Recorded on six dates.

Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa latirostris*: Up to three recorded on six dates.

Mugimaki Flycatcher *Ficedula mugimaki*: Single males at Dam Rong, Ho Tuyen Lam and Cuc Phuong.

Little Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula westermanni*: A pair at Ta Nung valley and a male at Cuc Phuong.

Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassinus*: One or two recorded on six dates.

Large Niltava *Niltava grandis*: A female at Ho Tuyen Lam and a male at Deo Nui San.

Fujian Niltava *Niltava davidi*: A male at Cuc Phuong provided a brief naked eye view but could not be relocated.

White-tailed Flycatcher *Cyornis concretus*: Recorded on all three days at Cuc Phuong and two males finally seen well from the loop trail on the last morning.

Hainan Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis hainanus*: A superb male at a pool in Cat Tien.

Pale Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis concolor*: A male at Deo Nui San.

Tickell's Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis tickelliae*: Three at Cat Tien.

Blue-throated Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides*: Two at Mang Den.

Taiga Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla*: One or two recorded on four dates.

Rufous-tailed Robin *Luscinia sibilans*: One on the loop trail at Cuc Phuong.

Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane*: Three all seen well at Cat Tien including a male on a trail and a female drinking at a pool.

Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis*: Recorded on three dates.

White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus*: Common at lowland sites.

Plumbeous Water-redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosa*: A female at Loxo.

White-tailed Robin *Cinclidium leucurum*: A male seen well at Mt Lang Bian while trying to see Collared Laughingthrushes.

Green Cochoa *Cochoa viridis*: One heard calling at the pass at Deo Nui San could not be located. A German group we met had photographed a pair on the tea house trail, but none could be found the next day.

Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus*: A total of six recorded on three dates.

Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea*: A total of seven in the Da Lat area and three at Tam Dao.

White-throated Rock-thrush *Monticola gularis*: A superb male in the pine plantation by the entrance to Ta Nung valley.

Blue Whistling-thrush *Myophonus caeruleus*: One briefly at Mt Lang Bian.

Orange-headed Thrush *Zoothera citrina*: A total of ten recorded on two thrush runs to Bong, Cuc Phuong.

White's Thrush *Zoothera aurea*: A superb bird watched during the first thrush run to Bong.

Japanese Thrush *Turdus cardis*: At least ten en route to Bong and several more on various trails there.

Chinese Blackbird *Turdus mandarinus*: Two males seen well near the restaurant at Bong.

Lesser Shortwing *Brachypteryx leucophrys*: Heard at Loxo and Ta Nung valley.

Silver-eared Mesia *Mesia argentauris*: A total of four at Loxo.

Vietnamese Cutia *Cutia legalleni*: A pair seen well at Mt Lang Bian.

Black-crowned Barwing *Actinodura sodangorum*: Very good views at Loxo, with at least six seen.

Blue-winged Minla *Siva cyanouroptera*: At least four at Mang Den, 40+ in the Da Lat area and 14 at Ba Be.

Grey-crowned Crocias *Crocias langbianis*: Prolonged close views of three together at Dam Rong; heard at Ta Nung Valley.

Rufous-backed Sibia *Leioptila annectens*: Two seen well with the crocias at Dam Rong.

Black-headed Sibia *Malacias desgodinsi*: At least four seen on two visits to Ta Nung Valley and at least five at Deo Nui San.

Black-chinned Yuhina *Yuhina nigrimenta*: Ten at Mang Canh.

Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonica*: Four at Mang Den.

Golden-crested Myna *Ampeliceps coronatus*: Two pairs at Cat Tien NP.

Common Hill-myna *Gracula religiosa*: Two at Ta Nung valley and one at Cat Tien.

Vinous-breasted Starling *Acridotheres burmannicus*: At least ten at Yok Don and six at Cat Tien.

Black-collared Starling *Gracupica nigricollis*: Four at Yok Don and two at Da Lat Flower Garden.

White-shouldered Starling *Sturnus sinensis*: Two, including one leucistic bird, came into roost at dusk in pines near the entrance to Da Lat Flower Garden.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*: Recorded on three dates including ten at Da Lat Flower Garden.

Chestnut-tailed Starling *Sturnia malabarica*: Ten at Yok Don.

Blue-winged Leafbird *Chloropsis cochinchinensis*: Recorded on five dates including four at Cat Tien and four at Cuc Phuong.

Golden-fronted Leafbird *Chloropsis aurifrons*: A male at Loxo and two at Yok Don.

Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*: Two at Mang Canh.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*: Common in the Da Lat area, with at least 12 recorded.

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum*: A male at Ta Nung and two at Cat Tien.

Purple-naped Sunbird *Hypogramma hypogrammicum*: A male scoped at Cat Tien.

Van Hasselt's Sunbird *Leptocoma brasiliana*: Three at Cat Tien, but only brief scope views of one male.

Purple Sunbird *Cinnyris asiaticus*: A female at Yok Don.

Mrs Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae*: Two males at Mang Den and at least ten in the da Lat area.

Fork-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga christinae*: At least three males at Cuc Phuong.

Black-throated Sunbird *Aethopyga saturata*: A male at Loxo and a pair at Mang Canh, then at least ten recorded in Da Lat area.

Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja*: Two males at Cat Tien and one at Ba Be.

Streaked Spiderhunter *Arachnothera magna*: Two at Loxo, five in the Da Lat area and one at Cuc Phuong.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*: Recorded on ten dates.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*: Two of the race *leucopsis* at Da Lat Flower Garden and one at Ba Be.

Mekong Wagtail *Motacilla samveasnae*: Four at Yok Don.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*: Two at Da Lat Flower Garden.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*: Five at Yok Don and three at Cuc Phuong.

Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus*: Two at Cat Tien.

Vietnamese Greenfinch *Chloris monguilloti*: Four at Ho Tuyen Lam and 20+ in a nearby area the next day.

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*: One flew over Ho Tuyen Lam then a perched female (and others heard) nearby the next day.

Eurasian Tree-sparrow *Passer montanus*: Recorded frequently.

White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata*: Four at Ta Nung valley and three at Ba Be.

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*: Ten at Ta Nung valley.

Birds missed: Orange-necked Partridge (missed at Bao's stakeout at Tan Phu), Pied Falconet (apparently hard to miss at Ba Be and Cuc Phuong, but I did), Indochinese Magpie (very hard to see nowadays; one glimpsed by Bao at Doi Nui San but we couldn't relocate it), Black-throated Laughing-thrush, *gayeti* Sultan Tit with black crest (missed at Mang Canh and in the Da Lat area and a potential split), White-spectacled Warbler, Siberian Thrush (a possible female glimpsed at Doi Nui San and a small black thrush on the thrush run at Cuc Phuong which hopped away before I could get a good look at it), and several species at Tam Dao.

References

A field guide to the Birds of South-East Asia, by Craig Robson, various trip reports available on www.travellingbirder.com including one by Hugh Buck detailing his travels with Mr Bao in early 2011 http://www.travellingbirder.com/tripreports/reports/11040745400_birding_trip_report.pdf and trip reports by Craig and James Eaton on behalf of Birdquest and Birdtour Asia respectively.

John Clark

20 March 2012