

Trip Report — Taiwan 2026

April 28-May 9, 2026 with Phil Gregory & Arco Huang



Taiwan Liocichla is a beautiful and quite vocal endemic. Photo by Maureen Phair

This was our fifth run for the revised Taiwan tour, and just the fourth iteration of the spring trip post-pandemic, with our local organizer Arco being very good and enthusiastic, and knowing the best local sites to visit. The weather was again remarkably kind to us, and we had no significant daytime rain, somewhat to my surprise, whilst temperatures were pretty reasonable even in the mountains. Fog and cold weather at Houhanshan summit was a shame, but at least the mid and lower levels stayed clear and otherwise the lowland sites were all good and nowhere really hot except Kenting on one day.

Arrival day saw some of us just do a bit of local birding near the hotel near the airport, and we set off next day for the mountains at Dasyueshan, taking in the lovely Taiwan Blue Magpie en route, plus nice views of Taiwan Hwamei and an early bonus of Malay Night Heron.



Mountain Scops Owl showed beautifully, this can be a hard one to see. Photo by Maureen Phair.

The mountain was very rewarding, with great views of Swinhoe's Pheasant and brief views for some of Taiwan Partridge, Rufous-crowned Laughingthrush, the tame and confiding White-whiskered Laughingthrush, Taiwan (Steere's) Liocichla, Yellow Tit, skittish Flamecrest, 3 species of fulvetta, a great look at a singing Taiwan Bush-Warbler, the very vocal Yellowish-flanked Bush-Warbler, Taiwan Shortwing heard, elusive Taiwan Cupwing heard, Rufous-faced Warbler, and Chestnut-bellied Tit. Reeves' Muntjac or Barking Deer showed well at the summit too. Guguan Hot Springs came up with Plumbeous Redstart and Brown Dipper.

Next came the heights of Huhuanshan in cold foggy weather this year, with lovely looks at Alpine Accentor, Taiwan Barwing, and Taiwan Rosefinch, and beautiful atmospheric montane scenery. The nearby lowlands were mist-free and gave the tame Malay Night-Heron, the distinctive and striking Maroon Oriole, Taiwan Bamboo-Partridge, and Chestnut Munia.



Taiwan Serow was very obliging at Dasyueshan; the goat antelope seemed not to mind the tourists. Photo by Richard Kaskan.

Yushan gave us a showy pair of Golden Parrotbills that were collecting nest material. Taiwan (White-browed) Bush-Robin also showed well here, now split at last and obviously distinct from the mainland Asian birds; same comment applies to the distinctive owstoni Spotted Nutcracker, which is now part of Southern Nutcracker. Collared Bush-Robin showed well too and we had some entertainment when an enterprising Taiwan Macaque bit a bag being held by a Chinese visitor, giving her a terrible fright until Arco drove it off with his green laser pointer! A 2700-year-old sacred giant *Chamaecyparis* tree at Luilin was also astonishing to see, simply enormous, and we scored big-time with both Taiwan Shortwing and Taiwan Cupwing that we had only heard thus far.



Malaysian Night Heron is easier to see in Taiwan than anywhere else; they stand around on grassy shady lawns. Photo by Richard Kaskan

Heading south, we got the extreme south-Taiwan endemic Styan's Bulbul quite easily, though a Chinese Egret was missing in action at Long Luan Lake. Next day we birded some of the lowland areas, being rewarded with Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Oriental Pratincole, Barred Buttonquail, and the endemic formosanus taxon of Ring-necked Pheasant.

Owling on the tour was productive, with heard in the fog Collared Scops-Owl and Northern Boobook at Firefly Lodge, and two roosting Collared Scops-Owls at Linhoulin Community Park near Hengchun. We got a terrific Mountain Scops-Owl at Huben, along with a Northern Boobook; the thermal imagers really helped here.

A huge saltpan area at Budai gave a good count of 50+ Black-faced

Spoonbills, Bar-tailed Godwits, Pied Avocet, Curlew Sandpiper, summer plumage Siberian Sandplover, 5 Broad-billed Sandpipers, Caspian, Whiskered, and Little terns. A pair of Oriental White Storks were nesting on a pylon en route, with 2 big chicks; this is a vagrant here but may be getting established. A Little Whimbrel oddly hiding in a wet paddyfield led us a dance but we eventually got it, and some Greater Painted Snipe as well.



Taiwan Rosefinch is a high-altitude endemic and often quite confiding, as this male shows. Photo by Maureen Phair.

Fairy Pitta was harder this year as photographers were staking out the nest, but the second site came good where an easy short walk with Acai, the local

guide, gave us a great look at this beautiful rarity, not long arrived back. We followed that with some celebratory coffee at the Pitta Café.

Our journey back to the airport was enlivened by Snowy-browed Flycatcher, great looks at Taiwan (Steere's) Liocichla, Red-faced Warbler, Rusty Laughingthrush, Taiwan Whistling-Thrush and the final addition to the triplist, Little Forktail, at Xitou Nature Education Park in dull showery conditions.

Next came a visit to the extraordinary Wushang Temple at Jiji, which was rebuilt after being destroyed by a 7.4 magnitude earthquake in 1999. The ruins are retained in situ, and the miraculously unscathed Daoist deities duly relocated to the new adjacent site, where there is also an astonishing wooden gallery bridge over the river there, built without nails or screws. We had lunch by the temple and duly bade farewell to Arco here in his home town before heading back to Taipei.



Fairy Pitta is one of the star birds for the tour, and we saw it very well at Huben. Photo by Maureen Phair

We used a varied assortment of local eating places with primarily local menus, with assorted rice, dumpling and noodle dishes. The food was a highlight in fact, as it was varied, often delicious and best of all served quickly whilst being both hot and fresh. A nice adjunct to the trip, working for the as ever varied dietary preferences and it avoided losing lots of time with elaborate meals.

Following recent research, Taiwan now has 32 endemics, and an extraordinary 56 endemic subspecies, so there is a good haul for listers, and many spectacular birds, with Swinhoe's and Mikado Pheasant as iconic birds, and Fairy Pitta a great addition. Altogether, it was a great success from the birding point of view, having good views of almost all the endemics, bar Taiwan Thrush which was a ghost bird this year.



Taiwan Fulvetta is one of the more elusive endemics and can be quite furtive; Maureen Phair did well to get this one.

Taiwan is a beautiful country, with great scenery, some attractive hotels, enjoyable cuisine and friendly people, with a very interesting culture -- those

Daoist temples are something else! A few extra days sightseeing before or after the trip is recommended.

My thanks to Arco and Luna, our local agents, and to Arco the Energizer Bunny for his energetic guiding as well as helping with the complexities of mealtimes, also to our two excellent car drivers, and to Sue and Rowan at Sickbill Safaris, and Ruth at Field Guides for their hard work in putting together this very enjoyable fifth iteration of the new Taiwan tour. Thanks also to the group for very good company and a positive attitude to the various intricacies of the tour.

A very fine trip, a nice good-humored group, enjoyable and not too strenuous, with some wonderful birds and gorgeous scenery, and an interesting cuisine to sample too, not forgetting the wonderful Daoist temples, a remnant of historic Chinese culture. Why not join us for 2027?

Mammals on the tour: Taiwanese Macaque (*Macaca cyclopis*) Dasyueshan and Tataka; Pallas's Squirrel (*Callosciurus erythraeus*) Dasyueshan, Huben; Maritime Striped Squirrel (*Tamiops maritimus*) at Dasyueshan; Red-and-white Giant Flying Squirrel (*Petaurista alborufa*) at Dasyueshan; Reeves's Muntjac (*Muntiacus reevesi*) at Dasyueshan, Guguan, and Tataka, Taiwan (Formosan) Serow (*Capricornis swinhoei*) showing amazingly well at the car park at Km 50 at Dasyueshan.



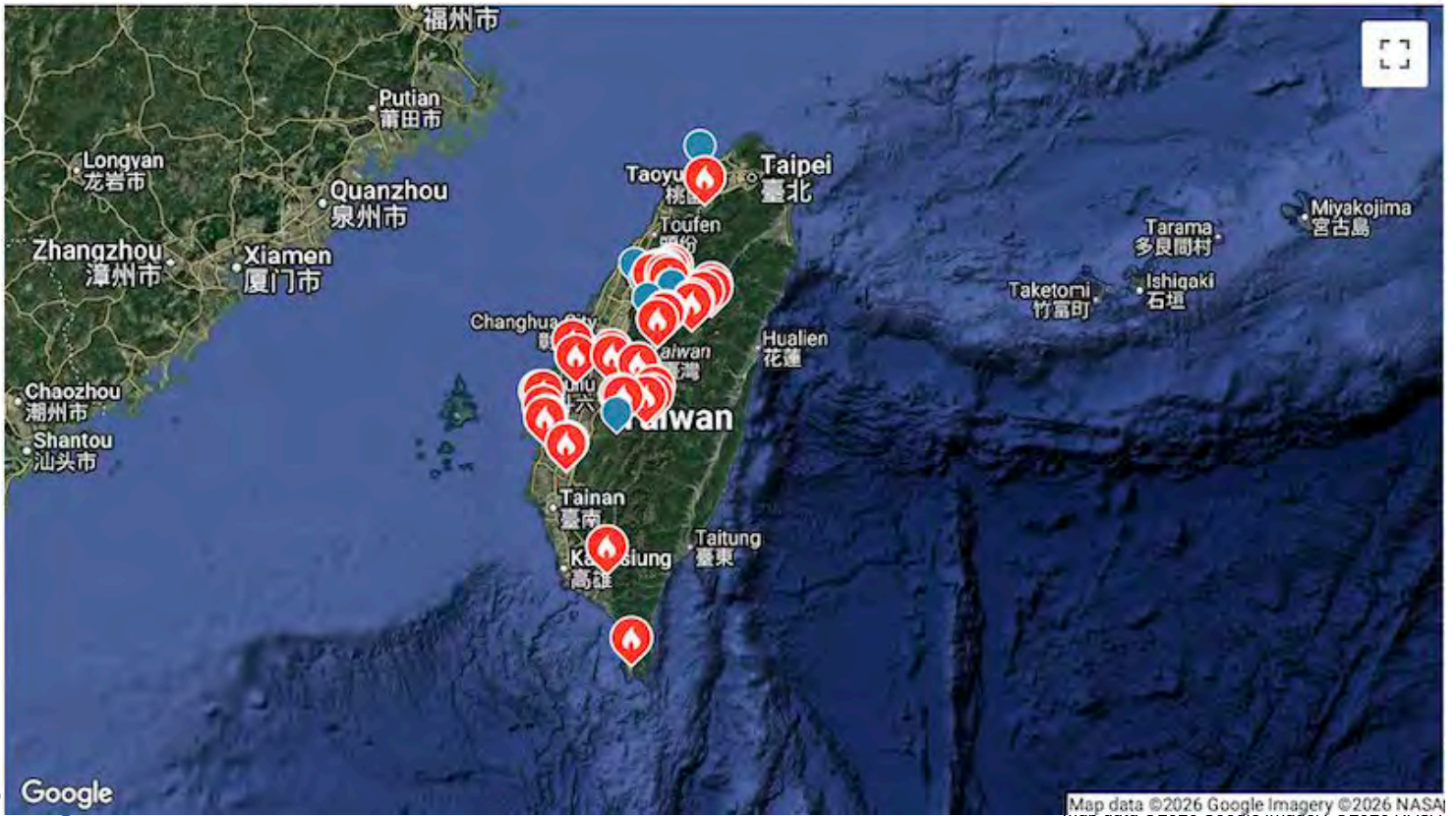
Male Mikado Pheasant, seen on the very first day this trip and always a stunner. Photo by Maureen Phair.

You can see my complete trip report on eBird at this link: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/510541>

Sicklebill (Phil Gregory)

Field Guides TAIWAN 2026

29 Apr – 10 May 2026 (12 days) Link-only



Taiwan

Chiayi County | Hualien County | Miaoli County | Nantou County | Pingtung County | Taichung City | Tainan City | Taoyuan City | Yunlin County

Phil Gregory | Sicklebill Safaris | www.birder.travel

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 170

Species Observed

 62

Checklists

Species Observed

Show all details

16 **Eastern Spot-billed Duck** *Anas zonorhyncha*













▶  5

1 **Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

▶  1

7	Taiwan Partridge <i>Arborophila crudigularis</i>	▶ 5
3	Mikado Pheasant <i>Syrmaticus mikado</i>	▶ 3
4	Ring-necked Pheasant <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	▶ 2
9	Swinhoe's Pheasant <i>Lophura swinhoii</i>	▶ 3
3	Taiwan Bamboo-Partridge <i>Bambusicola sonorivox</i>	▶ 3
8	Rock Pigeon <i>Columba livia</i> *	▶ 3
1	Ashy Wood-Pigeon <i>Columba pulchricollis</i>	▶ 1
25	Oriental Turtle-Dove <i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>	▶ 8
110	Red Collared-Dove <i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i>	▶ 19
53	Spotted Dove <i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>	▶ 21
2	Asian Emerald Dove <i>Chalcophaps indica</i>	▶ 2
4	White-bellied Green-Pigeon <i>Treron sieboldii</i>	▶ 2
3	Lesser Coucal <i>Centropus bengalensis</i>	▶ 2
1	Asian Koel <i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>	▶ 1
3	Large Hawk-Cuckoo <i>Hierococcyx sparverioides</i>	▶ 3
1	Indian Cuckoo <i>Cuculus micropterus</i>	▶ 1
3	Oriental Cuckoo <i>Cuculus optatus</i>	▶ 3
2	Savanna Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>	▶ 2
130	House Swift <i>Apus nipalensis</i>	▶ 14
37	Eurasian Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	▶ 11
5	Eurasian Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>	▶ 1
134	Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	▶ 9
125	Pied Avocet <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	▶ 4

20	Pacific Golden-Plover <i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	▶ 5
3	Little Ringed Plover <i>Thinornis dubius</i>	▶ 2
10	Siberian Sand-Plover <i>Anarhynchus mongolus</i>	▶ 1
1	Tibetan Sand-Plover <i>Anarhynchus atrifrons</i>	▶ 1
2	Greater Sand-Plover <i>Anarhynchus leschenaultii</i>	▶ 2
9	Kentish Plover <i>Anarhynchus alexandrinus</i>	▶ 3
4	Greater Painted-Snipe <i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>	▶ 1
29	Pheasant-tailed Jacana <i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>	▶ 3
1	Little Curlew <i>Numenius minutus</i>	▶ 1
5	Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	▶ 1
9	Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	▶ 4
5	Wood Sandpiper <i>Tringa glareola</i>	▶ 2
16	Common Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	▶ 6
1	Red Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>	▶ 1
5	Broad-billed Sandpiper <i>Calidris falcinellus</i>	▶ 1
90	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper <i>Calidris acuminata</i>	▶ 5
8	Curlew Sandpiper <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	▶ 3
7	Red-necked Stint <i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	▶ 3
9	Oriental Pratincole <i>Glareola maldivarum</i>	▶ 4
2	Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	▶ 1
18	Little Tern <i>Sternula albifrons</i>	▶ 4
7	Caspian Tern <i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	▶ 1
54	Whiskered Tern <i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	▶ 6

48	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	▶  7
3	Oriental Stork	<i>Ciconia boyciana</i>	▶  1
1	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	▶  1
28	Black-faced Spoonbill	<i>Platalea minor</i>	▶  2
1	Cinnamon Bittern	<i>Botaurus cinnamomeus</i>	▶  1
1	Yellow Bittern	<i>Botaurus sinensis</i>	▶  1
25	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	▶  10
3	Malayan Night Heron	<i>Gorsachius melanolophus</i>	▶  3
54	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	▶  13
99	Eastern Cattle-Egret	<i>Ardea coromanda</i>	▶  12
36	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	▶  8
2	Medium Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>	▶  2
7	Gray Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	▶  5
2	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	▶  2
7	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	▶  6
6	Crested Serpent-Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>	▶  5
2	Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malaiensis</i>	▶  2
1	Crested Goshawk	<i>Lophospiza trivirgata</i>	▶  1
1	Chinese Sparrowhawk	<i>Tachyspiza soloensis</i>	▶  1
1	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	▶  1
4	Mountain Scops-Owl	<i>Otus spilocephalus</i>	▶  2
7	Collared Scops-Owl	<i>Otus lettia</i>	▶  3
1	Collared Owlet	<i>Taenioptynx brodiei</i> Sensitive	▶  1

2	Northern Boobook <i>Ninox japonica</i>	▶ 1
2	Common Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>	▶ 2
24	Taiwan Barbet <i>Psilopogon nuchalis</i>	▶ 15
4	Gray-capped Pygmy Woodpecker <i>Yungipicus canicapillus</i>	▶ 2
4	White-backed Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos leucotos</i>	▶ 3
3	Gray-headed Woodpecker <i>Picus canus</i>	▶ 3
1	Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	▶ 1
1	Fairy Pitta <i>Pitta nympha</i> Sensitive	▶ 1
16	Gray-chinned Minivet <i>Pericrocotus solaris</i>	▶ 5
3	White-bellied Erpornis <i>Erpornis zantholeuca</i>	▶ 2
1	Black-naped Oriole <i>Oriolus chinensis</i>	▶ 1
2	Maroon Oriole <i>Oriolus traillii</i>	▶ 1
44	Black Drongo <i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	▶ 20
5	Bronzed Drongo <i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>	▶ 3
7	Black-naped Monarch <i>Hypothymis azurea</i>	▶ 5
4	Brown Shrike <i>Lanius cristatus</i>	▶ 4
3	Eurasian Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	▶ 2
2	Taiwan Blue-Magpie <i>Urocissa caerulea</i>	▶ 1
29	Gray Treepie <i>Dendrocitta formosae</i>	▶ 10
2	Oriental Magpie <i>Pica serica</i> *	▶ 2
2	Southern Nutcracker <i>Nucifraga hemispila</i>	▶ 2
9	Large-billed Crow <i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	▶ 7
10	Coal Tit <i>Periparus ater</i>	▶ 5

2	Chestnut-bellied Tit <i>Sittiparus castaneiventris</i>	▶ 1
12	Green-backed Tit <i>Parus monticolus</i>	▶ 9
3	Taiwan Yellow Tit <i>Machlolophus holsti</i>	▶ 2
7	Oriental Skylark <i>Alauda gulgula</i>	▶ 4
3	Striped Prinia <i>Prinia striata</i>	▶ 1
15	Yellow-bellied Prinia <i>Prinia flaviventris</i>	▶ 6
11	Plain Prinia <i>Prinia inornata</i>	▶ 5
8	Zitting Cisticola <i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	▶ 5
4	Golden-headed Cisticola <i>Cisticola exilis</i>	▶ 2
5	Taiwan Bush Warbler <i>Locustella alishanensis</i>	▶ 3
6	Taiwan Cupwing <i>Pnoepyga formosana</i>	▶ 3
16	Gray-throated Martin <i>Riparia chinensis</i>	▶ 2
53	Pacific Swallow <i>Hirundo javanica</i>	▶ 15
45	Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	▶ 17
76	Asian House-Martin <i>Delichon dasypus</i>	▶ 5
25	Eastern Red-rumped Swallow <i>Cecropis daurica</i>	▶ 6
96	Black Bulbul <i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>	▶ 24
13	Collared Finchbill <i>Spizixos semitorques</i>	▶ 7
82	Light-vented Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus sinensis</i>	▶ 26
7	Styan's Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus taivanus</i>	▶ 2
1	Arctic Warbler <i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>	▶ 1
16	Rufous-faced Warbler <i>Abroscopus albogularis</i>	▶ 12
1	Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler <i>Horornis fortipes</i>	▶ 1

7	Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler <i>Horornis acanthizoides</i>	▶ 5
43	Black-throated Tit <i>Aegithalos concinnus</i>	▶ 10
3	Taiwan Fulvetta <i>Fulvetta formosana</i>	▶ 2
4	Golden Parrotbill <i>Suthora verreauxi</i>	▶ 1
5	Vinous-throated Parrotbill <i>Suthora webbiana</i>	▶ 1
110	Taiwan Yuhina <i>Yuhina brunneiceps</i>	▶ 15
54	Swinhoe's White-eye <i>Zosterops simplex</i>	▶ 20
10	Rufous-capped Babbler <i>Cyanoderma ruficeps</i>	▶ 9
13	Taiwan Scimitar-Babbler <i>Pomatorhinus musicus</i>	▶ 7
6	Black-necklaced Scimitar-Babbler <i>Erythrogenys erythrocnemis</i>	▶ 3
7	Dusky Fulvetta <i>Schoeniparus brunneus</i>	▶ 3
21	Morrison's Fulvetta <i>Alcippe morrisonia</i>	▶ 7
31	White-whiskered Laughingthrush <i>Trochalopteron morrisonianum</i>	▶ 10
84	White-eared Sibia <i>Heterophasia auricularis</i>	▶ 15
10	Taiwan Barwing <i>Actinodura morrisoniana</i>	▶ 4
58	Taiwan Liocichla <i>Liocichla steerii</i>	▶ 17
8	Taiwan Hwamei <i>Garrulax taewanus</i>	▶ 4
27	Rufous-crowned Laughingthrush <i>Pterorhinus ruficeps</i>	▶ 3
6	Rusty Laughingthrush <i>Pterorhinus poecilorhynchus</i>	▶ 2
4	Flamecrest <i>Regulus goodfellowi</i>	▶ 3
5	Eurasian Nuthatch <i>Sitta europaea</i>	▶ 3
3	Eurasian Wren <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	▶ 2
2	Brown Dipper <i>Cinclus pallasii</i>	▶ 2

1	Black-collared Starling <i>Gracupica nigricollis</i> *	▶ 1
1	Chestnut-tailed Starling <i>Sturnia malabarica</i> *	▶ 1
48	Common Myna <i>Acridotheres tristis</i> *	▶ 19
56	Javan Myna <i>Acridotheres javanicus</i> *	▶ 17
3	Crested Myna <i>Acridotheres cristatellus</i>	▶ 2
2	Ferruginous Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa ferruginea</i>	▶ 2
2	Oriental Magpie-Robin <i>Copsychus saularis</i> *	▶ 2
12	White-rumped Shama <i>Copsychus malabaricus</i> *	▶ 7
20	Taiwan Vivid Niltava <i>Niltava vivida</i>	▶ 10
6	Taiwan Shortwing <i>Brachypteryx goodfellowi</i>	▶ 5
8	Taiwan Whistling-Thrush <i>Myophonus insularis</i>	▶ 6
2	Little Forktail <i>Enicurus scouleri</i>	▶ 1
19	White-tailed Robin <i>Myiomela leucura</i>	▶ 11
3	Taiwan Bush-Robin <i>Tarsiger formosanus</i>	▶ 2
5	Collared Bush-Robin <i>Tarsiger johnstoniae</i>	▶ 3
4	Snowy-browed Flycatcher <i>Ficedula hyperythra</i>	▶ 3
7	Plumbeous Redstart <i>Phoenicurus fuliginosus</i>	▶ 4
3	Plain Flowerpecker <i>Dicaeum minullum</i>	▶ 2
8	Fire-breasted Flowerpecker <i>Dicaeum ignipectus</i>	▶ 5
20	Scaly-breasted Munia <i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	▶ 5
5	White-rumped Munia <i>Lonchura striata</i>	▶ 1
1	Chestnut Munia <i>Lonchura atricapilla</i>	▶ 1
1	Alpine Accentor <i>Prunella collaris</i>	▶ 1

100	Eurasian Tree Sparrow <i>Passer montanus</i>	▶ 📄 21
2	Gray Wagtail <i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	▶ 📄 2
6	Eastern Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla tschutschensis</i>	▶ 📄 3
3	White Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	▶ 📄 3
10	Taiwan Rosefinch <i>Carpodacus formosanus</i>	▶ 📄 4
3	Brown Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula nipalensis</i>	▶ 📄 1
2	Taiwan Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula owstoni</i>	▶ 📄 2
EXOTIC: ESCAPEE		
1	Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> *	▶ 📄 1
ADDITIONAL TAXA		
3	white egret sp. <i>Egretta/Ardea sp.</i>	▶ 📄 1