



Field Guides Tour Report

**Vietnam 2016**

Nov 25, 2016 to Dec 15, 2016  
Dave Stejskal & Doug Gochfeld

*For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).*



*Vietnam is full of surprises. This very distinctive race of Black-throated Sunbird might be a good candidate for a split -- the 'normal' Black-throated occurs in central Annam just north of where this one was photographed, and there doesn't seem to be any intermediate population. (Photo by guide Doug Gochfeld)*

It had been a few years since I was last in Vietnam, but it sure was great to get back! Not much had changed since my last visit to this very friendly country, but we visited a couple of new sites, which added greatly to the richness and enjoyment of the tour. It was great fun having Doug along as my co-leader for this one, and it was also wonderful that we were able to co-lead with local Vietnamese leader Le Quy Minh -- both really added so much to this trip!

Late November is typically an excellent time of year to visit this country for birds, though this year we had to deal with some unseasonal rain from time to time in the Da Lat and Cat Tien areas (more in Cat Tien NP). Minh told us of the flooding in his hometown of Hue to the north of Da Lat, saying that his home had never flooded before this year, so something was amiss climatologically in Vietnam, for sure. Still, despite some missed opportunities due to the rain, we did great!

We started our tour in the north, with most folks taking advantage of a Hanoi city tour offer before the official start of the trip. All agreed that it was well worth the time and effort of coming a couple of days early. Our first birding venue was at Vietnam's oldest national park, Cuc Phuong, to the southwest of Hanoi. It was a great place to start the trip, and we were out daily exploring the fine forest that this beautiful park boasts. We enjoyed a long list of widespread S.E. Asian species here, but it was the local specialties that really made it worth a visit. Among the targets we were able to track down here were Red-vented Barbet, Red-collared Woodpecker, Pied Falconet, White-winged Magpie, Limestone Leaf Warbler, Gray-cheeked Warbler, White-tailed Flycatcher, Fujian Niltava, Rufous-tailed Robin, Limestone Wren-Babbler, Rufous-throated and Black-browed fulvettas, Gray-backed and Japanese thrushes, Chinese Blackbird, Fork-tailed Sunbird, and even an immature male Green Cochoa for some at Bong Substation! A morning visit to nearby Van Long Reserve on our way north to Hanoi and Tam Dao gave us our best waterbirding of the tour along with fantastic studies of the Critically Endangered Delacour's Langur!

After that great start, we spent the next couple of days at the old French hill station of Tam Dao north of Hanoi. While this site produced a few good finds for our group, we all agreed that Tam Dao was a bit past its prime. Lots and lots of development had happened here since my last visit -- a far cry from when I first visited here in 1993 -- and the town and surrounding areas were overcrowded with noisy visiting tourists. Nevertheless, we did come

away with some nice birds, like Ratchet-tailed Treepie, Red-billed Blue-Magpie, our best Sultan Tit of the tour, Chestnut Bulbul, Blyth's Shrike-Babbler, Short-tailed Parrotbill, Indochinese Yuhina, Spot-necked Babbler, David's Fulvetta, Silver-eared Mesia, and Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher, among others.

We then flew from Hanoi to the south, basing ourselves for the next four nights in lovely Da Lat in the endemic-rich southern Annam highlands. Exploring the extensive pine forests and patchy evergreen broadleaf forest patches proved exciting indeed, and our efforts were rewarded with the likes of the near-endemic Indochinese Barbet, soon-to-be-split endemic annamensis race of Black-throated Tit, Indochinese Cuckooshrike, endemic Dalat Shrike-Babbler, Gray-bellied Tesia, the endemic Black-crowned Fulvetta (for some), the endemic Collared Laughingthrush (for a few), the endemic Vietnamese Cutia and Gray-crowned Crocias, Black-headed Sibia (endemic race robinsoni), distinctive endemic races of both Black-throated (johnsi) and Gould's (annamensis) sunbirds, the endemic meridionalis race of Red Crossbill, and the endemic Vietnamese Greenfinch. What a productive visit!

On our way south, we made a brief one-night detour to Di Linh and the rich forests of nearby Deo Nui San pass. Our morning visit here was some of the best birding that I've ever enjoyed in Vietnam, with good, close looks at Indochinese and Golden-throated barbets, Silver-breasted Broadbill, Clicking Shrike-Babbler, Red-billed Scimitar-Babbler, Black-hooded and White-cheeked laughingthrushes, Vietnamese Cutia, and the near-endemic Black-headed Parrotbill. That late-afternoon termite swarm on our way back to our hotel was pretty phenomenal as well!

Cat Tien NP was our final stop on the tour and it proved to be our single richest venue, despite the unseasonal rain. Lovely accommodations and excellent meals added immensely to our enjoyment here, and birding from the veranda was an agreeable alternative to trying to bird in the rain in the forest. We managed to get some productive time in the forest, though, during our multi-night stay here and had such lovelies as Green Peafowl, Germain's Peacock-Pheasant, Siamese Fireback, Woolly-necked Stork, Gray-headed Fish-Eagle, Bronze-winged Jacana, Ashy-headed Green- and Thick-billed pigeons, Violet Cuckoo, Great Eared-Nightjar, Orange-breasted Trogon, Oriental Pied-Hornbill, Blue-eared and Black-capped kingfishers, Blue-bearded and Chestnut-headed bee-eaters, White-browed Piculet, Laced, Black-and-buff, and Heart-spotted woodpeckers, Collared Falconet, both Red-breasted and Blossom-headed Parakeets, Black-and-red, Banded, and Dusky broadbills (in one morning!), Bar-bellied Pitta, Blyth's Paradise-Flycatcher, and so many others. Unsurprisingly, it proved to be our best venue for mammals as well, with highlights in the fur department being Crab-eating, Pig-tailed, and Stump-tailed macaques, the rare Black-shanked Douc Langur, Yellow-cheeked Gibbon, Lesser Mouse-Deer, and Barking Deer. Who knows what else we might have seen if the weather had only cooperated!

A special thanks is due to our local guide throughout this tour, Le Quy Minh. His company throughout and his knowledge of the flora, fauna, and culture were wonderful complements to our total tour experience. And thanks to each of you for joining Doug and myself for this thoroughly enjoyable trip to one of S.E. Asia's under-birded gems. We enjoyed traveling with all of you and sharing our many and varied bird sightings. We can't wait to travel with you all again! Take care until then.

--Dave

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#### KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: \* = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

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## BIRDS

### Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

**LESSER WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna javanica*) – The folks who hiked in to Crocodile Lake at Cat Tien NP in the rain were treated to a flock of these Asian whistling-ducks - among other goodies!

### Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

**RUFOUS-THROATED PARTRIDGE** (*Arborophila rufogularis*) [\*]

**BAR-BACKED PARTRIDGE** (*Arborophila brunneopectus*) [\*]

**SCALY-BREASTED PARTRIDGE** (*Arborophila chloropus*) – After a serious try to see these skulkers, only a few folks came away with what could be termed a 'countable' look! On a taxonomic note, the birds that we heard at very close range next to the trail at Cuc Phuong NP were initially called Chestnut-necklaced Partridge. The subspecies up there, tonkinensis, is now lumped with Scaly-breasted.

**GREEN PEAFOWL** (*Pavo muticus*) – Cat Tien NP seems to be that last stronghold for this species in Vietnam. Great views out along the road through the pastures - despite the rain!

**GERMAIN'S PEACOCK-PHEASANT** (*Polyplectron germaini*) – One of the best birds seen on the Crocodile Lake hike with Doug and Minh. Restricted to the humid lowland forests - what's left of them - in s. Vietnam and nearby Cambodia.

**RED JUNGLEFOWL** (*Gallus gallus*) – We found one particularly cooperative male in the road at Cat Tien NP one rainy day there.

**SIAMESE FIREBACK** (*Lophura diardi*) – Another goodie seen by the Crocodile Lake crew.

### Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**LITTLE GREBE** (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) – Plenty at Van Long Nature Reserve - including a very washed out individual.

### Ciconiidae (Storks)

**ASIAN OPENBILL** (*Anastomus oscitans*) – One of the surprises at Van Long was one of these big storks hanging out with the egrets in the marsh.

**WOOLLY-NECKED STORK** (*Ciconia episcopus*) – We all got good looks in the scope of this one at Cat Tien when we spotted one just off of the main road in a tree.

### Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

**YELLOW BITTERN** (*Ixobrychus sinensis*) – Heard by some of us at Van Long, but seen well by the Crocodile Lake bunch.

**CINNAMON BITTERN** (*Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*) – Another nice find for the Crocodile Lake crew. (also seen by David at Cuc Phuong at Mac Lake).

**GRAY HERON** (*Ardea cinerea*) – We only ran into these once on the entire tour - at Cat Tien at the edge of the Dong Nai R. while we birded from the truck in the pastures.

**PURPLE HERON** (*Ardea purpurea*) – At Crocodile Lake only.

**GREAT EGRET (AUSTRALASIAN)** (*Ardea alba modesta*) – I think that these Old World Great Egrets will soon be split from birds in the New World.

**INTERMEDIATE EGRET** (*Mesophoyx intermedia*) – It was nice to see at least three different sizes of white egrets together, including this one, for comparison at Van Long Nature Reserve as we birded from the dam there.

**LITTLE EGRET** (*Egretta garzetta*)

**CATTLE EGRET (EASTERN)** (*Bubulcus ibis coromandus*) – Most ornithologists in the Old World now split the Cattle Egret into two species, Eastern and Western. The birds in the New World are Western Cattle-Egrets.

**CHINESE POND-HERON** (*Ardeola bacchus*) – The Asian Ardeolas are impossible to distinguish from one another in basic plumage - which all of our birds were in - but I feel comfortable calling most, if not all, of the pond-herons that we saw this species.

**STRIATED HERON (OLD WORLD)** (*Butorides striata javanica*) – A couple of birds at Cat Tien along the Dong Nai R. Called Little Heron in the guide.

#### Pandionidae (Osprey)

**OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*) – I think we all ended up seeing a couple of these near our lodging at Cat Tien, but it was very interesting that Doug and crew saw a bird on a nest at Crocodile Lake. [N]

#### Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

**BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE** (*Elanus caeruleus*) – A couple of birds from the bus in the south.

**ORIENTAL HONEY-BUZZARD** (*Pernis ptilorhynchus*) – Some folks saw this one with Minh at Cuc Phuong NP, then the rest of us caught up with it as we headed to Saigon from Cat Tien NP on that final day.

**CRESTED SERPENT-EAGLE** (*Spilornis cheela*) – Fantastic views overhead near Da Lat!

**MOUNTAIN HAWK-EAGLE** (*Nisaetus nipalensis*) – I'm glad that first distant look in Da Lat wasn't our only look at this one! Wonderful views on our one sunny morning in the highlands before driving to Di Linh.

**BLACK EAGLE** (*Ictinaetus malaiensis*) – I think that I've had a Black Eagle along that same forested ridge in Cuc Phuong near Bong Substation every tour I've ever led there.

**GRAY-FACED BUZZARD** (*Butastur indicus*) – We had a couple of really fine looks at this one, with the rusty-tinged wing feathers very evident in one bird that we saw near Da Lat (a feature that's seemingly never illustrated!).

**CRESTED GOSHAWK** (*Accipiter trivirgatus*) – The most commonly seen raptor on the tour this year.

**SHIKRA** (*Accipiter badius*) – One adult bird perched briefly on the wire at dusk near Di Linh as the termite hatch started to diminish.

**JAPANESE SPARROWHAWK** (*Accipiter gularis*) – One bird flying above the Deo Nui San road appeared to be this small Accipiter.

**GRAY-HEADED FISH-EAGLE** (*Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus*) – A vocal pair high overhead was a nice surprise on our final morning at Cat Tien NP.

#### Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

**WHITE-BROWED CRAKE** (*Amaurornis cinerea*) – I've seen this one in a number of countries in this part of the world before, but I can't think of an easier place to see it than Van Long Nature Reserve!

**RUDDY-BREASTED CRAKE** (*Zapornia fusca*) – Very close... [\*]

**BLACK-BACKED SWAMPHEN** (*Porphyrio indicus viridis*) – A few of these came out to see some of us on our boat ride through the marsh. It was also present at Crocodile Lake for those who went there with Doug & Minh. Formerly called the Purple Swamphen, this one has finally been split into six species.

**EURASIAN MOORHEN** (*Gallinula chloropus*) – Now split from the Common Gallinule of the New World.

#### Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

**GRAY-HEADED LAPWING** (*Vanellus cinereus*) – A couple of these big wintering plovers at Crocodile Lake for the hikers in the group.

**RED-WATTLED LAPWING** (*Vanellus indicus atronuchalis*) – In the fields at Cat Tien and also present at Crocodile Lake. These eastern birds (ssp. *atronuchalis*) may get split from the birds to the west (mostly India) that don't have that isolated white ear patch.

#### Jacanidae (Jacanas)

**PHEASANT-TAILED JACANA** (*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*) – These were a very pleasant surprise for the group at Van Long Nature Reserve - I just wish they had a little more in the way of tail plumes at this season.

**BRONZE-WINGED JACANA** (*Metopidius indicus*) – At Crocodile Lake for some folks.

#### Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

**EURASIAN WOODCOCK** (*Scolopax rusticola*) – One of the biggest surprises on the tour for me came early when we heard this bird walking in the dry leaf litter just off of the road in Cuc Phuong. Thinking it was going to be a 'chicken' of some sort, I was astonished to see that it was this wintering species in this dry forest habitat!

**COMMON SANDPIPER** (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – Regularly seen on the rocks in the Dong Nai River at Cat Tien NP.

**WOOD SANDPIPER** (*Tringa glareola*) – A couple of birds flushed from a flooded field at our first stop on our way to Cuc Phuong that first full morning of the tour.

#### Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) [I]

**RED COLLARED-DOVE** (*Streptopelia tranquebarica*) – The numbers that we saw in the afternoon at Cat Tien were pretty amazing!

**SPOTTED DOVE** (*Streptopelia chinensis*) – Our most frequently-seen columbid on the tour.

**BARRED CUCKOO-DOVE** (*Macropygia unchall*) – We had some surprising numbers of these forest doves near Da Lat.

**ASIAN EMERALD DOVE** (*Chalcophaps indica*) – Now split from the birds of Australasia.

**ZEBRA DOVE** (*Geopelia striata*) – A new addition to the Cat Tien avifauna since my last visit. Called Peaceful Dove in the book. [I]

**ASHY-HEADED GREEN-PIGEON** (*Treron phayrei*) – Seen by the hikers who went to Crocodile Lake in Cat Tien NP. The old Pompadour Green-Pigeon was recently split into six species - this is the widespread s.e. Asian form.

**THICK-BILLED PIGEON** (*Treron curvirostra*) – Good scope looks from the deck at our lodge at Cat Tien NP.

**YELLOW-VENTED PIGEON** (*Treron seimundi*) – Heard well, but seen poorly, at Deo Nui San Pass near Di Linh.

**WEDGE-TAILED PIGEON** (*Treron sphenurus*) – One of the few birds that we saw well on our blustery morning visit to the Tanung Valley near Da Lat.

**GREEN IMPERIAL-PIGEON** (*Ducula aenea*) – Several of these big pigeons sitting up in the bamboo at Cat Tien in the rain.

**MOUNTAIN IMPERIAL-PIGEON** (*Ducula badia*) – A frequent flyby in the highland forests in the Da Lat area.

#### Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

**GREATER COUCAL** (*Centropus sinensis*) – Heard frequently at Cat Tien, but only seen a few times.

**LESSER COUCAL** (*Centropus bengalensis*) – Much smaller than the above Greater Coucal, which never shows the streaking above at this season that Lesser shows.

**GREEN-BILLED MALKOHA** (*Phaenicophaeus tristis*) – We had this spectacular cuckoo throughout the tour, but it was most common at Cat Tien NP. One of the few non-parasitic cuckoo genera in the Old World.

**CHESTNUT-WINGED CUCKOO** (*Clamator coromandus*) – For those who happened to be watching at the right moment, we had pretty decent views of one of these big, distinctive cuckoos fly across the road right in front of us in the company of all of those White-cheeked Laughingthrushes at Deo Nui San Pass.

**VIOLET CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus*) – One bird in the rain - but right next to the truck - as we birded the fields near the HQ at Cat Tien NP gave us some super views.

**LITTLE BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx minutillus*) – A surprise right outside the front door at our lodging at Cat Tien NP on our final morning of the tour.

**BANDED BAY CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis sonneratii*) – We heard a few of these and saw one fly over our heads in the pine forest near Da Lat on our first afternoon there.

**PLAINTIVE CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis merulinus querulus*) – Mostly just some poor looks of a bird in flight at Cat Tien.

**SQUARE-TAILED DRONGO-CUCKOO** (*Surniculus lugubris*) – One of these put in a brief appearance along the main road at Cat Tien on our first full morning there. "Drongo Cuckoo" was rather recently split up into multiple species.

**LARGE HAWK-CUCKOO** (*Hierococcyx sparveroides*) – Poor looks of a bird in flight near Da Lat.

#### Strigidae (Owls)

**MOUNTAIN SCOPS-OWL** (*Otus spilocephalus*) – How could we NOT see this bird!! [\*]

**COLLARED SCOPS-OWL** (*Otus lettia*) – Crippling views of a very cooperative bird at Cuc Phuong NP while we were looking for the above Mountain SO.

**COLLARED OWLET** (*Glaucidium brodiei*) – We came close to seeing this one a couple of times. [\*]

**ASIAN BARRED OWLET** (*Glaucidium cuculoides*) – Pam was the only one who got a really good look, and the rest of us had to be satisfied with the voice and a brief look in flight.

**BROWN WOOD-OWL** (*Strix leptogrammica ticehursti*) [\*]

#### Podargidae (Frogmouths)

**HODGSON'S FROGMOUTH** (*Batrachostomus hodgsoni*) – I thought that this one was interested enough to be able to see it, but it wasn't meant to be. [\*]

#### Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

**GREAT EARED-NIGHTJAR** (*Lyncornis macrotis*) – The late afternoon show of these flying over the forest and calling at Cat Tien was really impressive!

**GRAY NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus jotaka jotaka*) – Wonderful looks of a couple of birds in flight and then scope views of a roosting bird in the daylight the following day.

#### Apodidae (Swifts)

**HIMALAYAN SWIFTLET** (*Aerodramus brevirostris*) – Swiftlets are a real pain to try and i.d. and I mostly identified this one as Himalayan given the habitat and elevation at Da Lat and Deo Nui San Pass.

**GERMAIN'S SWIFTLET** (*Aerodramus germani*) – Seemingly everywhere in the lowlands of Cochinchina south of Di Linh. Formerly lumped with Edible-nest Swiftlet.

**HOUSE SWIFT** (*Apus nipalensis*) – Our most widespread swift on the tour.

**ASIAN PALM-SWIFT** (*Cypsiurus balasienis*) – Quite common and widespread once we got to the south.

#### Trogonidae (Trogons)

**RED-HEADED TROGON** (*Harpactes erythrocephalus*) – Some of us got a pretty good perched view of this trogon along the road at Cuc Phuong, but it was heard only otherwise.

**ORANGE-BREASTED TROGON** (*Harpactes oreskios*) – Great views of perched birds at Cat Tien NP, thanks to Minh.

#### Bucerotidae (Hornbills)

**ORIENTAL PIED-HORNBILL** (*Anthracoceros albirostris*) – A pair of these striking hornbills made regular appearances to those watching from the deck at our lodge in Cat Tien NP.

#### Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

**COMMON KINGFISHER** (*Alcedo atthis*) – Calling this one 'Common' is such a disservice!

**BLUE-EARED KINGFISHER** (*Alcedo meninting*) – One shy bird was eventually scoped along the road at Cat Tien NP on our final morning there.

**BANDED KINGFISHER** (*Lacedo pulchella*) [\*]

**WHITE-THROATED KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon smyrnensis*) – Both common and spectacular!

**BLACK-CAPPED KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon pileata*) – This migrant from China was a 'regular' from the deck at the Forest Floor Lodge.

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

**BLUE-BEARDED BEE-EATER** (*Nyctornis athertoni*) – This big, forest-based bee-eater doesn't flock in the open country like the Merops bee-eaters do.

**BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER** (*Merops philippinus*) – Nice views of several birds with the more common Chestnut-headed out in the open fields at Cat Tien NP.

**CHESTNUT-HEADED BEE-EATER** (*Merops leschenaulti*) – This one lacks the long tail streamers that most of the other Merops sport.

Coraciidae (Rollers)

**INDIAN ROLLER** (*Coracias benghalensis*) – Not much to look at - until it flies!

**DOLLARBIRD** (*Eurystomus orientalis*) – At Cat Tien NP only on this tour.

Megalaimidae (Asian Barbets)

**BLUE-EARED BARBET** (*Psilopogon duvaucelii*) [\*]

**RED-VENTED BARBET** (*Psilopogon lagrandieri*) – I think our best views were on that first morning at Cuc Phuong in the Bong parking lot. One of the biggest of the Asian barbets.

**GREEN-EARED BARBET** (*Psilopogon faiostrictus*) – Streaks below and the green ear-patch make this one easy to i.d.

**LINEATED BARBET** (*Psilopogon lineatus*) – Only out in the open country at Cat Tien on this tour.

**GOLDEN-THROATED BARBET** (*Psilopogon franklinii*) – We had some super looks at this one along the trail to Mt. Langbian. The race here (*auricularis*) can easily be confused with the similar Indochinese Barbet (more confusing than they appear to be in the field guide).

**INDOCHINESE BARBET** (*Psilopogon annamensis*) – This is a fairly recent split from the Black-browed Barbet, which was split into at least four species. The bird here is confined mostly to the highlands of s. and c. Annam, but it does spill over into e. Cambodia and e. Laos, so a Vietnamese near-endemic.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

**SPECKLED PICULET** (*Picumnus innominatus*) – Doug and a few others were lucky enough to find one of these in the roadside forest patches near Da Lat on our final morning.

**WHITE-BROWED PICULET** (*Sasia ochracea*) – We all ended up seeing this one pretty well in the bamboo at Cat Tien NP on our first full morning there.

**GRAY-CAPPED WOODPECKER** (*Dendrocopos canicapillus*) – This little guy was one of our most widespread woodpeckers on the tour. It used to be called the Gray-capped Pygmy Woodpecker.

**WHITE-BELLIED WOODPECKER** (*Dryocopus javensis*) – Doug & Peggy were the lucky ones to see this one from the deck at Forest Floor Lodge. The rest of us heard one distantly on our final morning at Cat Tien NP.

**LESSER YELLOWNAPE** (*Picus chlorolophus*) – We had one particularly great view in the scopes along the main road at Cat Tien NP.

**GREATER YELLOWNAPE** (*Picus flavinucha*) – I believe our best look was on that first morning at Cuc Phuong. I usually don't see this species and the Lesser Yellownape in the same forest, but they certainly occurred together on this tour.

**LACED WOODPECKER** (*Picus vittatus*) – Nice looks for most folks in the bamboo at Cat Tien NP near the HQ there.

**RED-COLLARED WOODPECKER** (*Picus rabieri*) – We got this one to respond pretty well, but it was so darned dark up where he was, it was difficult to make out any of those field marks! Still, this scarce and local specialty was a good one to get.

**GRAY-HEADED WOODPECKER (BLACK-NAPED)** (*Picus canus hessei*) [\*]

**COMMON FLAMEBACK** (*Dinopium javanense*) – Only one in the sparse trees in the fields at Cat Tien NP. Very similar to the Greater Flameback and usually outnumbered by that species.

**BLACK-AND-BUFF WOODPECKER** (*Meiglyptes jugularis*) – A nice find on our final morning at Cat Tien NP! Superficially similar to Heart-spotted Woodpecker, but this one has a much more restricted range.

**GREATER FLAMEBACK** (*Chrysocolaptes guttaeristatus*) – Surprisingly difficult this year on the tour.

**BAY WOODPECKER** (*Blythipicus pyrrhotis*) – This one's always difficult, so consider yourself lucky if you got a decent flyby look!

**HEART-SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (*Hemicircus canente*) – Several of us got good looks at a perched male along the main road between HQ and our lodge one afternoon at Cat Tien.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

**COLLARED FALCONET** (*Microhierax caerulescens*) – This tiny falcon is seemingly pretty scarce at Cat Tien (my first record there), so it was nice to see it so well right along the Dong Nai R.

**PIED FALCONET** (*Microhierax melanoleucos*) – We scored on this local specialty at Cuc Phuong NP on three consecutive days.

**EURASIAN KESTREL** (*Falco tinnunculus*) – A couple of birds at Van Long only.

Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots)

**BLOSSOM-HEADED PARAKEET** (*Psittacula roseata*) – We knew they were out there - we just had to find them among the more numerous Red-breasted Parakeets. Good looks of a perched pair, at long last.

**RED-BREASTED PARAKEET** (*Psittacula alexandri*) – These fancy parakeets made their presence known daily at Cat Tien NP.

**VERNAL HANGING-PARROT** (*Loriculus vernalis*) – Most of our encounters were of little green bullets zooming overhead and calling at Cat Tien NP.

Eurylaimidae (Asian and Grauer's Broadbills)

**BLACK-AND-RED BROADBILL** (*Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchus*) – This was the first species of our broadbill 'trifecta' on our first full morning at Cat Tien NP. Delightfully bizarre and beautiful!

**LONG-TAILED BROADBILL** (*Psarisomus dalhousiae*) – We all heard these, but not all of us could get back to where they were being seen before they flew off.

**SILVER-BREASTED BROADBILL** (*Serilophus lunatus*) – These gorgeous little broadbills were the best behaved species in the family for us, giving all of us super views up at Deo Nui San.

**BANDED BROADBILL** (*Eurylaimus javanicus*) – It was quite a lucky coincidence that one of these started calling when we stopped for the first pair of Black-and-reds. They went quiet for a while, but they were spotted up in the canopy, allowing good scope looks for all.

**DUSKY BROADBILL** (*Corydon sumatranus*) – The last of our possible broadbills at Cat Tien were pretty cooperative in the rainy forest near the Crocodile Lake trail head.

#### Pittidae (Pittas)

**EARED PITTA** (*Hydrornis phayrei*) – The briefest of looks as it scurried off the edge of the road in front of our bus at Cuc Phuong. Heard distantly by all.

**BLUE-RUMPED PITTA** (*Hydrornis soror*) [\*]

**BAR-BELLIED PITTA** (*Hydrornis elliotii*) – We employed a good strategy in a spot with good visibility at Cat Tien, and everyone came away with some sort of look at this shy species. Woo Hoo!!

#### Vangidae (Vangas, Helmetshrikes, and Allies)

**LARGE WOODSHRIKE** (*Tephrodornis virgatus*) – Most folks caught up with this one at Deo Nui San pass after our initial Cuc Phuong sighting.

**BAR-WINGED FLYCATCHER-SHRIKE** (*Hemipus picatus*) – Once we got to the south, this one was a frequent component of mixed species flocks in the canopy.

#### Artamidae (Woodswallows)

**ASHY WOODSWALLOW** (*Artamus fuscus*) – Another bird that we didn't encounter until we ventured to the south. The northernmost representative of this distinctive family.

#### Aegithinidae (Ioras)

**COMMON IORA** (*Aegithina tiphia*) – Ioras were pretty scarce before we pulled into Cat Tien NP, then they were with every mixed flock that we encountered. This is the smaller of the two and the only one here with wingbars.

**GREAT IORA** (*Aegithina lafresnayei*) – A bit reminiscent of a female Scarlet Tanager perhaps.

#### Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes)

**GRAY-CHINNED MINIVET** (*Pericrocotus solaris*) – A few birds in the Da Lat area only. Similar to Scarlet, but with a different wing pattern and a gray throat on both sexes.

**SHORT-BILLED MINIVET** (*Pericrocotus brevirostris*) – A couple of birds seen briefly by some in the broadleaf forest near Da Lat. Where this one and Long-tailed occur in close proximity, Long-tailed is almost exclusively a pine bird, and this one is in the broadleaf forest.

**LONG-TAILED MINIVET** (*Pericrocotus ethologus annamensis*) – Several good looks in the pine forest around Da Lat.

**SCARLET MINIVET** (*Pericrocotus speciosus*) – Very widespread on this tour, we had them at both low and high elevation, and in a variety of habitats.

**ASHY MINIVET** (*Pericrocotus divaricatus*) – A migrant from the north, our best were probably the birds at breakfast at Deo Nui San pass.

**BROWN-RUMPED MINIVET** (*Pericrocotus cantonensis*) – Several dull wintering birds at Cat Tien NP. Similar to Ashy, this one has a brownish rump and a low-contrast head pattern, among other subtle marks. Also called Swinhoe's Minivet.

**BLACK-WINGED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Lalage melaschistos*) – Our most widespread cuckooshrike on the tour and usually found in good broadleaf forest.

**INDOCHINESE CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Lalage polioptera*) – When we see this species on the tour, it's usually found in drier habitats than the above species, such as in the pine forests around Da Lat.

#### Laniidae (Shrikes)

**BROWN SHRIKE** (*Lanius cristatus*) – A widespread winter visitor from farther north.

**BURMESE SHRIKE** (*Lanius colluriooides*) – No other shrike here has that rich chestnut back combined with a dark slate crown.

**LONG-TAILED SHRIKE** (*Lanius schach*) – Perhaps the most common open country shrike species that we encountered.

**GRAY-BACKED SHRIKE** (*Lanius tephronotus*) – I think that the bird we found at Bong Substation in Cuc Phuong NP was our only one of the trip.

#### Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

**BLYTH'S SHRIKE-BABBLER (GRAY-BREASTED)** (*Pteruthius aeralatus ricketti*) – Great encounters with this one in a mixed species flock at Tam Dao NP. White-browed Shrike-Babbler was recently split into four species, including this one (which is quite widespread) and the very local Dalat Shrike-Babbler. I'm starting to think that this race (*ricketti*) should have been split off as well.

**DALAT SHRIKE-BABBLER** (*Pteruthius annamensis*) – We had a few encounters with this very similar species in the Da Lat area. A Vietnam endemic, this one almost surely crosses the border into n.e. Cambodia and s.e. Laos. [E]

**CLICKING SHRIKE-BABBLER** (*Pteruthius intermedius*) – After a rather unsatisfying encounter with this one on Mt. Langbian, we all had super views of a stunning male at Deo Nui San pass. The shrike-babblers are now thought to be close relatives of the New World vireos! Called Chestnut-fronted Shrike-Babbler in the book.

**WHITE-BELLIED ERPORNIS** (*Erpornis zantholeuca*) – We had this charismatic species almost daily on this tour, but it seemed quite scarce in Cat Tien NP. Formerly called the White-bellied Yuhina.

#### Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

**BLACK-NAPED ORIOLE** (*Oriolus chinensis*) – These wintering orioles were a fairly common sight at Cat Tien NP.

**SLENDER-BILLED ORIOLE** (*Oriolus tenuirostris*) [\*]

**BLACK-HOODED ORIOLE** (*Oriolus xanthornus*) – A few were spotted at Cat Tien NP, especially in the fields.

**MAROON ORIOLE** (*Oriolus traillii*) – Most of the Maroon Orioles that we saw on the tour (Cuc Phuong, Dalat, Deo Nui San) were the dark maroon-colored breeding form.

**MAROON ORIOLE** (*Oriolus traillii nigellicauda*) – The first adult male Maroon Oriole that we saw on the tour was a fine example of this brilliant red race that was wintering (?) in Cuc Phuong.

#### Dicruridae (Drongos)

**BLACK DRONGO** (*Dicrurus macrocercus*) – In open country next to the highways only.

- ASHY DRONGO** (*Dicrurus leucophaeus*) – Most of the Ashy Drongos that we saw on the tour were dark-faced resident birds.
- ASHY DRONGO (CHINESE WHITE-FACED)** (*Dicrurus leucophaeus leucogenis*) – We did have quite few of the white-faced wintering birds from China in the south. I haven't heard any serious talk about splitting any of these distinctive forms of Ashy Drongo.
- BRONZED DRONGO** (*Dicrurus aeneus*) – The smallest of the drongos on this tour, we didn't encounter our first until we arrived at Cat Tien NP.
- LESSER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO** (*Dicrurus remifer*) – Usually at slightly higher elevations than Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, though I was surprised to see one at Cat Tien NP!
- HAIR-CRESTED DRONGO** (*Dicrurus hottentottus*) – Sometimes lumped with Spangled Drongo, we saw these wintering birds throughout, but they were most common at Cat Tien NP. At this season, these drongos spend much of their time feeding on nectar.
- GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO** (*Dicrurus paradiseus*) – Seeing a dozen or more of these going after emerging winged termites at Cat Tien one afternoon was really entertaining!

*Rhipiduridae (Fantails)*

- WHITE-THROATED FANTAIL** (*Rhipidura albicollis*) – One of the first birds we saw on this tour was one of these with a mixed flock right at the Cuc Phuong HQ. It was with us nearly daily until we got to Cat Tien NP.

*Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)*

- BLACK-NAPED MONARCH** (*Hypothymis azurea*) – This widespread species was most common at Cat Tien NP.
- BLYTH'S PARADISE-FLYCATCHER** (*Terpsiphone affinis*) – What a fabulous encounter with this spectacular species at Cat Tien NP on our final morning together! The old Asian Paradise-Flycatcher was recently split up into three species, with this one being the expected breeding form here.

*Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)*

- EURASIAN JAY (WHITE-FACED)** (*Garrulus glandarius leucotis*) – Most memorable was the pair of these 'flycatching' for the emerging winged termites near Di Linh on our first afternoon there!
- RED-BILLED BLUE-MAGPIE** (*Urocissa erythroryncha*) – Excellent views of several of these gaudy jays in the pines below Tam Dao. A very widespread species in s. Asia.
- WHITE-WINGED MAGPIE** (*Urocissa whiteheadi*) – This shy species is almost entirely restricted to Vietnam - I'm glad we got the views of this one that we did!
- COMMON GREEN-MAGPIE** (*Cissa chinensis*) [\*]
- INDOCHINESE GREEN-MAGPIE** (*Cissa hypoleuca*) – A lucky couple of folks got looks at this shy magpie below Deo Nui San pass. It's hard to imagine a jay being this shy!
- RACKET-TAILED TREEPIE** (*Crypsirina temia*) – Surprisingly not all that difficult this year at Cat Tien NP. Those blue eyes are pretty amazing!
- RATCHET-TAILED TREEPIE** (*Temnurus temnurus*) – We worked hard on this one and it paid off pretty well with decent views of it up the slope from the road at Tam Dao NP.
- LARGE-BILLED CROW (LARGE-BILLED)** (*Corvus macrorhynchos macrorhynchos*) – It was fun watching a pair of these harassing a perched Crested Goshawk near Da Lat. Watch for a split of Large-billed Crow soon...

*Hirundinidae (Swallows)*

- BARN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo rustica*)
- RED-RUMPED SWALLOW** (*Cecropis daurica*) – The streaky swallows with forked tails and pale rumps that we scrutinized to our satisfaction turned out to be this species, but I suspect that we saw a number of Striateds that went unidentified.
- ASIAN HOUSE-MARTIN** (*Delichon dasypus*) – We had a few of these wintering swallows mixed in with other swallows and swifts throughout the tour, but nowhere were they common.

*Stenostiridae (Fairy Flycatchers)*

- GRAY-HEADED CANARY-FLYCATCHER** (*Culicicapa ceylonensis*) – Nearly every day, but scarce at Cat Tien.

*Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)*

- SULTAN TIT** (*Melanochlora sultanea*) – Unforgettable views of a family group of three teed up in a bare tree right next to the road at Tam Dao!
- GREEN-BACKED TIT** (*Parus monticolus legendrei*) – The endemic race in the Da Lat area is quite different from birds farther north and west - possibly different enough to warrant a split?
- JAPANESE TIT** (*Parus minor nubicolus*) – Only around Tam Dao this year. These birds were recently split from Great Tit to the west of here and from Cinereous Tit to the south.
- YELLOW-CHEEKED TIT** (*Machlolophus spilonotus*) – Fantastic looks at this beauty on Mt. Langbian!

*Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)*

- BLACK-THROATED TIT (GRAY-CROWNED)** (*Aegithalos concinnus annamensis*) – Incredibly cute! Separated from the nearest different race of Black-throated Tit by some 800 kilometers, this near-endemic race might be best considered a separate species - like so many other distinctive, isolated forms in the Annam Highlands.

*Sittidae (Nuthatches)*

- CHESTNUT-VENTED NUTHATCH** (*Sitta nagaensis*) – The race around Da Lat is much duller than the nominate race that I see elsewhere.
- VELVET-FRONTED NUTHATCH** (*Sitta frontalis*) – Excellent views of this strangely different nuthatch at Deo Nui San pass. I thought we had the much scarcer Yellow-billed Nuthatch for a second...

*Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)*

- BLACK-CRESTED BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus flaviventris johnsoni*) – This one was found throughout the route, but it wasn't very common anywhere.
- RED-WHISKERED BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus jocosus*) – A couple of spots near Da Lat still had pretty good numbers of this one, despite their popularity as a cagebird.
- SOOTY-HEADED BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus aurigaster*) – We had red-vented birds in the north, and yellow-vented birds in the south.
- STRIPE-THROATED BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus finlaysoni*) – Cat Tien NP is a particularly great place for this one. We had them daily in the fruiting tree next to the observation deck at Forest Floor Lodge.

**FLAVESCENT BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus flavescens*) – Some elevation is needed before you start to encounter this one.

**STREAK-EARED BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus blanfordi*) – Common and widespread in the lowlands of the south. About as dull as a bulbul gets in this region.

**PUFF-THROATED BULBUL** (*Alophoixus pallidus*) – All of our Puff-throated Bubbles were in the north. It's replaced in the lowlands and foothills by the next species in the south.

**OCHRACEOUS BULBUL** (*Alophoixus ochraceus*) – Very inconspicuous this year at Cat Tien NP.

**GRAY-EYED BULBUL** (*Iole propinqua innectens*) – This is the race that we saw at Cat Tien, while the north hosted the nominate race. These southern birds sound much more like Buff-vented Bulbul to my ear and might be better placed with that species.

**BLACK BULBUL** (*Hypsipetes leucocephalus*) – All of our birds in the Da Lat/Di Linh area were resident black-headed birds.

**ASHY BULBUL** (*Hemixos flava*) – A foothill species that is very closely related to the next species.

**CHESTNUT BULBUL** (*Hemixos castanonotus*) – Mostly a s.e. China bird, this one is found in many of the highland areas of Tonkin, including Tam Dao.

**MOUNTAIN BULBUL** (*Ixos mcclellandii*) – Surprisingly scarce this year in the Da Lat area.

#### Cettiidae (Bush-Warblers and Allies)

**ASIAN STUBTAIL** (*Urosphena squameiceps*) – It took some patience, but we ended up with good looks of this skulking winterer in the understory next to the trail at Cuc Phuong.

**GRAY-BELLIED TESIA** (*Tesia cyaniventer*) – Several folks got smashing looks of this one along the trail on Mt. Langbian, but it didn't cooperate for everyone.

**YELLOW-BELLIED WARBLER** (*Abroscopus superciliosus*) – Very brief encounters on a couple of days at Tam Dao NP. Seriously tied to bamboo thickets.

**MOUNTAIN TAILORBIRD** (*Phyllergates cucullatus*) – Not really a 'tailorbird', this one is actually quite close to the above Yellow-bellied Warbler and not to the *Orthotomus* tailorbirds! We heard quite a few, but saw just a couple of them.

**JAPANESE BUSH-WARBLER** (*Horornis diphone*) – For a lucky few people at Mac Lake in Cuc Phuong and at the Tam Dao NP headquarters. The wintering race here, H.d. canturians, was recently moved from Manchurian Bush-Warbler to Japanese BW.

**BROWNISH-FLANKED BUSH-WARBLER** (*Horornis fortipes*) – Fleeting looks along the trail at Tam Dao NP for some.

#### Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers)

**DUSKY WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus fuscatus*) – We had one bird for the entire tour - at the first rest stop outside of Hanoi on our way to Cuc Phuong on our first morning together.

**PALLAS'S LEAF WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus proregulus*) – A few in the Tam Dao area. Wintering here from n. China and Siberia and smaller than even those tiny Yellow-browed Warblers.

**YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus inornatus*) – Every single day. Sometimes called the Inornate Warbler.

**TWO-BARRED WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*) – A single bird caused a little excitement at the Tam Dao NP HQ, but then we had them daily at Cat Tien NP. A recent (re-)split from the Greenish Warbler.

**PALE-LEGGED LEAF WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus tenellipes*) – Most folks ended up with some sort of look at this one wintering at Cat Tien NP. Not a canopy bird like many of its congeners, this one stays low in the forest and is solitary for the most part.

**KLOSS'S LEAF WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus ogilviegranti klossi*) – Pretty common in the forests around Da Lat and Deo Nui San. Quite yellow for a *Phylloscopus*, this form was recently split from the old White-tailed Leaf-Warbler.

**LIMESTONE LEAF WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus calciatilis*) – This recently-described species was seen by most of us on that first afternoon foray into the forest at Cuc Phuong NP.

**GRAY-CROWNED WARBLER** (*Seicercus tephrocephalus*) – I think Pam was the only one who got onto this warbler in the weeds at Cuc Phuong. This one is part of the six-way split of Golden-spectacled Warbler.

**MARTENS'S WARBLER** (*Seicercus omeiensis*) – A single bird heard near the HQ at Cuc Phuong before lunch there on the day we arrived. Another one of the splits of Golden-spectacled Warbler and sometimes called Omei Spectacled Warbler. [\*]

**BIANCHI'S WARBLER** (*Seicercus valentini*) – This one was the most common and widespread of the 'Golden-spectacled' warblers that we encountered. The only way to separate these very similar birds on the wintering grounds is to i.d. them by voice.

**WHITE-SPECTACLED WARBLER** (*Seicercus affinis affinis*) – Alice may have gotten the best look at this one near Da Lat. Very similar to the 'Golden-spectacled' warblers, the race that winters here similarly has a yellow - not white - eye-ring, making it particularly difficult to i.d. Unless, of course, you know the voice!

**GRAY-CHEEKED WARBLER** (*Seicercus poliogenys*) – A couple of brief run-ins early on with this one at Cuc Phuong NP.

**CHESTNUT-CROWNED WARBLER** (*Seicercus castaniceps*) – Nicely in the pines below Tam Dao on the morning that we left there for the Hanoi Airport. The song of this one is incredibly high-pitched!

#### Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

**PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER-WARBLER** (*Locustella certhiola*) – Doug and maybe a couple of others glimpsed this one in the marsh grass at Mac lake in Cuc Phuong NP. Called Rusty-rumped Warbler in the field guide.

**LANCEOLATED WARBLER** (*Locustella lanceolata*) [\*]

#### Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

**ZITTING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola juncidis*) [\*]

**COMMON TAILORBIRD** (*Orthotomus sutorius*) – Entirely common.

**DARK-NECKED TAILORBIRD** (*Orthotomus atrogularis*) – In virtually all of the forested habitats that we visited.

**HILL PRINIA** (*Prinia superciliosus klossi*) – The briefest of looks was had when one flew across the track near Da Lat. The tail was impressively long.

**RUFESCENT PRINIA** (*Prinia rufescens*) – Our best was in the clearing at the Bong Substation at Cuc Phuong NP.

**YELLOW-BELLIED PRINIA** (*Prinia flaviventris*) – Frustratingly difficult to see from the back of the truck at Cat Tien.

**PLAIN PRINIA** (*Prinia inornata*) – We saw two very different races of this bird on the tour. The one we saw at Cat Tien is the same subspecies (herberti) that I see in much of Thailand.



**PLAIN PRINIA** (*Prinia inornata extensicauda*) – The race that we saw early on in the tour, at Van Long Nature Reserve, is quite yellow overall and is likely often confused with Yellow-bellied Prinia. This race is restricted to s.e. China and n. Vietnam, for the most part.

*Paradoxornithidae (Parrotbills, Wrenit, and Allies)*

**BLACK-HEADED PARROTBILL** (*Psittiparus margaritae*) – After experiencing nothing but frustration trying to see a bunch of calling birds across a small valley near Da Lat, we really hit the jackpot with this one at our picnic breakfast spot at Deo Nui San pass! Fabulous looks at this recently split (near-)endemic (split from Gray-headed Parrotbill). [E]

**SHORT-TAILED PARROTBILL** (*Neosuthora davidiana*) – We had a nice encounter with this tiny, cute parrotbill in the bamboo (always in the bamboo) at Tam Dao NP.

*Zosteropidae (White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies)*

**INDOCHINESE YUHINA** (*Yuhina torqueola*) – Recently split from Striated Yuhina, which is distributed to the west of Vietnam. Most of the yuhinas are now placed with the white-eyes.

**CHESTNUT-FLANKED WHITE-EYE** (*Zosterops erythropleurus*) – We had a decent encounter with this migrant species at Tam Dao NP.

**ORIENTAL WHITE-EYE** (*Zosterops palpebrosus*) – A few at Deo Nui San pass. Brighter yellow-green above with more yellow on the underparts than the others.

**JAPANESE WHITE-EYE** (*Zosterops japonicus*) – Most of our white-eyes appeared to be this migrant species.

*Timaliidae (Tree-Babblers, Scimitar-Babblers, and Allies)*

**CHESTNUT-CAPPED BABBLER** (*Timalia pileata*) [\*]

**PIN-STRIPED TIT-BABBLER** (*Mixornis gularis*) – Called Striped Tit-Babbler in the book, this was a common sight and a more common voice in the north and south, though it was outnumbered by the very similar Gray-faced Tit-Babbler at Cat Tien.

**GRAY-FACED TIT-BABBLER** (*Mixornis kelleyi*) – The common tit-babbler at Cat Tien, this bird has a tiny range in s. Indochina.

**GOLDEN BABBLER** (*Cyanoderma chrysaeum*) – Quite warbler-like in appearance at first glance, we had some great looks of a few birds at Tam Dao NP.

**RUFIOUS-CAPPED BABBLER** (*Cyanoderma ruficeps*) – Briefly for some near Da Lat on our final morning there.

**RED-BILLED SCIMITAR-BABBLER** (*Pomatorhinus ochraceiceps*) – We found an incredibly responsive and cooperative bird below Deo Nui San pass. It was great to finally see one of the scimitar-babblers in the open!

**STREAK-BREASTED SCIMITAR-BABBLER** (*Pomatorhinus ruficollis*) [\*]

**LARGE SCIMITAR-BABBLER** (*Megapomatorhinus hypoleucos*) – We worked on seeing this big babbler for quite some time at Cuc Phuong, but everyone came away with good looks - including scope views!

**GRAY-THROATED BABBLER** (*Stachyris nigriceps*) – Furtive and shy is usually not a good combination of characters in a bird if you want to see it well.

**SPOT-NECKED BABBLER** (*Stachyris striolata*) – This one was interested, but it was so fast-moving that it was difficult to nail down for everyone at Tam Dao.

*Pellorneidae (Ground Babblers and Allies)*

**SCALY-CROWNED BABBLER** (*Malacopteron cinereum*) – One of the first birds that made an appearance at Cuc Phuong on our first afternoon there, but it was difficult to see through the tangle.

**BLACK-CROWNED FULVETTA** (*Schoeniparus klossi*) – This tiny endemic was seen well by part of the group as we started our hike out of the forest on Mt. Langbian. A recent split from the similar Rufous-winged Fulvetta and found only in the highlands around Da Lat. [E]

**RUFIOUS-THROATED FULVETTA** (*Schoeniparus rufogularis*) – Another bird that we saw pretty well on that first afternoon at Cuc Phuong NP. Unlike other fulvettas, these birds seem to travel in pairs instead of in flocks.

**PUFF-THROATED BABBLER** (*Pellorneum ruficeps*) – Out in the open at the edge of the road in Cuc Phuong - not the typical behavior of this normally shy species!

**BUFF-BREASTED BABBLER** (*Pellorneum tickelli*) – We finally got a decent view of this shy babbler just off the edge of the road below Deo Nui San pass.

**ABBOTT'S BABBLER** (*Turdinus abbotti*) – We added several birds to our tour list that last morning at Cat Tien, including this responsive bird just down the road from our lodge.

**LIMESTONE WREN-BABBLER** (*Turdinus crispifrons annamensis*) – After being teased by this one at Cuc Phuong NP, we finally nailed it on the trail to the Cave of the Prehistoric Man.

*Leiothrichidae (Laughingthrushes and Allies)*

**DAVID'S FULVETTA** (*Alcippe davidi*) – A recent split from the Gray-cheeked Fulvetta, this form almost completely lacks any black brow so prevalent in other species of that group.

**MOUNTAIN FULVETTA** (*Alcippe peracensis*) – This was the 'default' fulvetta in the broadleaf forest around Da Lat.

**BLACK-BROWED FULVETTA** (*Alcippe grotei*) – A rather recent split from the very similar Mountain Fulvetta and quite common in the understory at Cuc Phuong NP.

**VIETNAMESE CUTIA** (*Cutia legalleni*) – We saw this colorful endemic on our way into the broadleaf forest on Mt. Langbian and then caught up a few folks with another sighting below Deo Nui San pass. A rather recent split from the similar, but disjunct, Himalayan Cutia. [E]

**WHITE-CRESTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** (*Garrulax leucolophus*) – Most of the birds that we encountered were distant heard only flocks, but one flock gave us quick looks next to the road in Cat Tien NP. Pretty striking if you can see it well!

**LESSER NECKLACED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** (*Garrulax monileger*) – Doug and a few other saw one of these fly across the road with the numerous White-cheeked Laughingthrushes below Deo Nui San pass. Originally called a Greater, distribution points to Lesser as being the more likely species here.

**BLACK-HOODED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** (*Garrulax milleti*) – I've never had this bird in the scope before - what was it thinking?! This regional endemic just spills over the borders of Cambodia and Laos, but its distribution is mainly Vietnamese.

**GRAY LAUGHINGTHRUSH** (*Garrulax maesi*) – We sure heard enough of these birds, and we even managed to get a quick look as a couple of birds flew across the road at dusk, but hardly a satisfying encounter.

- ORANGE-BREASTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** (*Garrulax annamensis*) – We really had this one quite close in the Tanung Valley near Da Lat, but no dice. A recent split from Spot-breasted Laughingthrush. [E\*]
- BLACK-THROATED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** (*Ianthocincla chinensis*) – Again, quite close but not even a glimpse. [\*]
- WHITE-CHEEKED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** (*Ianthocincla vassali*) – I was beginning to wonder where these laughingthrushes were hiding out when a couple of dozen or so flew across the road right in front of the group below Deo Nui San pass. Another bird that is primarily Vietnamese in its distribution.
- COLLARED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** (*Trochalopteron yersini*) – We worked quite a while on this gorgeous endemic laughingthrush on Mt. Langbian. As is usually the case with these extremely shy birds of the forest understory, you see it if you happen to have the right hole in the vegetation to look through. [E]
- BLACK-HEADED SIBIA (LANG BIAN)** (*Heterophasia desgodinsi robinsoni*) – It's a simple black, white, and gray pattern - but what a lovely bird this was! There's probably more than one species involved in this taxon.
- SILVER-EARED MESIA** (*Leiothrix argenteauris*) – We had just one encounter with this showy species - at Tam Dao NP.
- RUFOUS-BACKED SIBIA** (*Minla annectens*) – We finally tracked this one down near Da Lat on the final (sunny) morning there. Note that this one was taken out of *Heterophasia* and placed in the genus *Minla* - while the *Minlas* were taken out of *Minla* and put in *Actinodura*! I don't blame anyone for being confused!
- GRAY-CROWNED CROCIAS** (*Crocias langbianis*) – YESSSSS!!!! After striking out at Tanung Valley, we ran across a small group of these endemic birds at another site near Da Lat - thanks to Minh's local knowledge. Only recently rediscovered here after going unrecorded for decades. There seem to be a number of sites now for this distinctive endemic babbler. [E]
- BLUE-WINGED MINLA** (*Actinodura cyanouroptera*) – The birds that we saw below Tam Dao were what I would characterize as 'normal-looking' for the species, with blue in the wings, crown and uppertail.
- BLUE-WINGED MINLA** (*Actinodura cyanouroptera orientalis*) – This endemic race, found only in the s. Annam highlands, almost completely lacks any and all blue in the plumage, making it stand out from the other subspecies of Blue-winged Minla.
- Irenidae (Fairy-bluebirds)*
- ASIAN FAIRY-BLUEBIRD** (*Irena puella*) – We encountered our first birds high in the Tanung Valley near Da Lat. Very distinctive and unlikely to be confused with anything else here.
- Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)*
- DARK-SIDED FLYCATCHER** (*Muscicapa sibirica*) – One of the first birds of the trip was this little flycatcher darting out from the same set of dead branches just off of the road near the Cuc Phuong NP HQ. Sometimes called the Siberian Flycatcher.
- ASIAN BROWN FLYCATCHER** (*Muscicapa dauurica*) – We encountered this one daily at Cat Tien NP.
- ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN** (*Copsychus saularis*) – This one isn't ubiquitous here, like it is in Thailand.
- WHITE-RUMPED SHAMA** (*Copsychus malabaricus*) – Only in the lowland forests of Cuc Phuong and Cat Tien.
- WHITE-TAILED FLYCATCHER** (*Cyornis concretus*) – This one was pretty sneaky this year, with only brief looks at a couple of birds at Cuc Phuong NP.
- HAINAN BLUE-FLYCATCHER** (*Cyornis hainanus*) – Our most frequently-seen *Cyornis* on the tour.
- TICKELL'S BLUE-FLYCATCHER** (*Cyornis tickelliae*) – This one is really tied to lowland stands of bamboo, so Cat Tien NP is the place for this one on this tour.
- LARGE NILTAVA** (*Niltava grandis*) – A brief adult male on our final morning near Da Lat was the only group sighting of this one. Strange that we never heard this normally vocal species.
- FUJIAN NILTAVA** (*Niltava davidi*) – This was a very good year for this local specialty, with our first one coming at that tiny city park in downtown Hanoi!
- BLUE-AND-WHITE FLYCATCHER** (*Cyanoptila cyanomelana*) – A single female had us scratching our heads for a bit below Deo Nui San pass, but we finally figured it out.
- VERDITER FLYCATCHER** (*Eumyias thalassinus*) – Numerous good looks at this beautiful flycatcher, once we got to Da Lat.
- LESSER SHORTWING** (*Brachypteryx leucophris*) – We heard quite a few of these beautiful songsters, but seeing them was another matter. Some folks got lucky with one bird in the bamboo at Cuc Phuong.
- RUFOUS-TAILED ROBIN** (*Larvivora sibilans*) – Seeing this one on the road at Cuc Phuong was quite a treat! It's normally and extreme skulker on the wintering grounds.
- BLUE WHISTLING-THRUSH (BLACK-BILLED)** (*Myiophonus caeruleus caeruleus*) – The only whistling thrushes that we saw or heard on the tour were this migrant form from China. I suspect that the black-billed birds and the resident yellow-billed birds will someday be split.
- SIBERIAN RUBYTHROAT** (*Calliope calliope*) [\*]
- WHITE-TAILED ROBIN** (*Cinclidium leucurum*) – All of our sightings of this one were very brief.
- RED-FLANKED BLUETAIL** (*Tarsiger cyanurus*) – I suspect that Himalayan Bluetail (a recent split from Red-flanked) is possible in the mountains of w. Tonkin, but I've never encountered it in the country. It does winter regularly in n.w. Thailand. This one is called Orange-flanked Bush-Robin in the book.
- MUGIMAKI FLYCATCHER** (*Ficedula mugimaki*) – The s. Annam highlands in Vietnam seems to be a very good place to see this one wintering.
- RUFOUS-GORGETED FLYCATCHER** (*Ficedula strophiate*) – A single female in the tiny city park in downtown Hanoi was a surprise!
- LITTLE PIED FLYCATCHER** (*Ficedula westermanni*) – Cute as a button!
- TAIGA FLYCATCHER** (*Ficedula albicilla*) – Called Red-throated Flycatcher in the guide and now split from Red-breasted Flycatcher in the w. Palearctic.
- BLUE ROCK-THRUSH (PANDOO)** (*Monticola solitarius pandoo*) – All of the males we saw had blue bellies, as I recall.
- SIBERIAN STONECHAT (SIBERIAN)** (*Saxicola maurus maurus*) – Called Common Stonechat in the book, the taxonomy of this group seems to still be uncertain. This eastern form is now split out from European Stonechat, but there are other groups within this broader eastern form that might deserve species status as well.
- GRAY BUSHCHAT** (*Saxicola ferreus*) – Very shrike-like in appearance, but one look at that tiny bill will put you on the right track.

*Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)*

**ORANGE-HEADED THRUSH** (*Geokichla citrina*) – I wish that we had gotten a better look of this beautiful bird from the bus at Cuc Phuong.  
**WHITE'S THRUSH** (*Zoothera aurea aurea*) – Fantastic looks of a couple of birds wintering here at Cuc Phuong. Now split from Scaly Thrush, White's is the larger of the two and it breeds much farther north.  
**GRAY-BACKED THRUSH** (*Turdus hortulorum*) – Some folks got on a good male from the bus and also at Bong Substation.  
**BLACK-BREASTED THRUSH** (*Turdus dissimilis*) – Just a couple of birds at Cuc Phuong and below Tam Dao.  
**JAPANESE THRUSH** (*Turdus cardis*) – By far, this was the most common of the *Turdus* thrushes that we saw on this tour.  
**CHINESE BLACKBIRD** (*Turdus mandarinus mandarinus*) – One male magically appeared right in the main compound at Cuc Phuong HQ just as we were preparing to leave for Tam Dao. Recently split from Eurasian Blackbird.  
**EYEBROWED THRUSH** (*Turdus obscurus*) – Never common anywhere on this tour.  
**GREEN COCHOA** (*Cochoa viridis*) – A young male stuck around Bong for the longest time, calling almost continuously, but trying to see him was another matter. If you happened to be out in the parking lot when he flew from one tree to another, then you got a pretty good flyby look at this scarce thrush.

#### *Sturnidae (Starlings)*

**GOLDEN-CRESTED MYNA** (*Ampeliceps coronatus*) – A couple of distant birds sitting up at Cat Tien with a pair of Common Hill Mynas - in terrible light - was the best that we could muster with this one.  
**COMMON HILL MYNA** (*Gracula religiosa*) – Most of our views of this one were of birds in flight.  
**BLACK-COLLARED STARLING** (*Gracupica nigricollis*) – These big starlings were pretty common in the open country around Da Lat this year.  
**COMMON MYNA** (*Acridotheres tristis*) – Small numbers around the city in Da Lat. I'm always struck by the lack of mynas in this country, compared to Thailand where they are absolutely everywhere!  
**VINOUS-BREASTED STARLING** (*Acridotheres burmannicus*) – We have photographic evidence that we actually saw a pair of these starlings fly by at Cat Tien - but I doubt anyone will tick them with that look!

#### *Chloropseidae (Leafbirds)*

**BLUE-WINGED LEAFBIRD** (*Chloropsis cochinchinensis*) – Fantastic looks from the deck at the Forest Floor Lodge!  
**GOLDEN-FRONTED LEAFBIRD** (*Chloropsis aurifrons*) – The only ones we saw well were also from the deck at the lodge, but they, unfortunately, didn't stick around for all to see.  
**ORANGE-BELLIED LEAFBIRD** (*Chloropsis hardwickii*) – A couple of fine looks at this primarily highland species.

#### *Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)*

**YELLOW-VENTED FLOWERPECKER** (*Dicaeum chrysorrheum*) – Semi-regular from the deck at Forest Floor Lodge at Cat Tien NP.  
**PLAIN FLOWERPECKER** (*Dicaeum minullum*) – I think that the deck was the only place where we saw this one, too.  
**FIRE-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER** (*Dicaeum ignipectus ignipectus*) – Only at the higher elevations along our route.  
**SCARLET-BACKED FLOWERPECKER** (*Dicaeum cruentatum*) – We had some nice males from the deck at Forest Floor Lodge in Cat Tien NP.

#### *Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)*

**RUBY-CHEEKED SUNBIRD** (*Chalcoparia singalensis*) – I was a little surprised to see this one right at Deo Nui San pass; that seems a little high for this one to me.  
**OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris jugularis*) – Only at Cat Tien NP this year. Usually quite widespread in disturbed habitats throughout.  
**BLACK-THROATED SUNBIRD** (*Aethopyga saturata johnsi*) – I'm sure that this colorful endemic subspecies is called Gould's Sunbird all of the time by visiting birders - until they see a real Gould's, that is! This very distinctive race might be a good candidate for a split - the 'normal' Black-throated Sunbird occurs just north of there in c. Annam and there doesn't seem to be any intermediate population.  
**GOULD'S SUNBIRD (PURPLE-RUMPED)** (*Aethopyga gouldiae annamensis*) – Just like the above endemic race, this one is replaced by 'typical' Gould's Sunbird just to the north in c. Annam and ought to be considered a decent candidate for a split. Gorgeous!  
**CRIMSON SUNBIRD** (*Aethopyga siparaja*) – Not quite as fancy as the previous two species - but still pretty nice - this beautiful sunbird gave us a few good looks.  
**FORK-TAILED SUNBIRD** (*Aethopyga christinae*) – We had this tiny sunbird every day on the first half of the tour.  
**LITTLE SPIDERHUNTER** (*Arachnothera longirostra*) – I don't think that anyone every really saw this spiderhunter well at Cat Tien, though we sure heard a bunch.  
**PURPLE-NAPED SPIDERHUNTER** (*Arachnothera hypogrammicum*) – One of the last birds that we all saw along the road in Cat Tien NP before we packed up our things. Long placed in the monotypic sunbird genus *Hypogramma*, this one was recently moved into the spiderhunter genus *Arachnothera*.  
**STREAKED SPIDERHUNTER** (*Arachnothera magna*) – Several excellent looks at this distinctive species with bright orange legs.

#### *Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)*

**EASTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL** (*Motacilla tschutschensis*) – One bird seen in flight overhead at our first rest stop out of Hanoi on that first full morning.  
**GRAY WAGTAIL** (*Motacilla cinerea*) – Regularly on the rocks of the Dong Nai River right in front of our lodging at Cat Tien NP.  
**WHITE WAGTAIL** (*Motacilla alba*) – Very few on this tour were seen, and they all appeared to be "Chinese" White Wagtail (*M. a. ocularis*).  
**OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT** (*Anthus hodgsoni*) – Our only pipit of the tour. Formerly called the Olive Tree-Pipit.

#### *Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)*

**VIETNAMESE GREENFINCH** (*Chloris monguilloti*) – We encountered this one nearly every time we birded in the pines near Da Lat. Probably the easiest of the s. Annam endemics to see. [E]  
**RED CROSSBILL (DA LAT)** (*Loxia curvirostra meridionalis*) – Doug got some folks onto a pair of these perched in a deciduous tree on Mt. Langbian for our only look of the trip of this endemic 'race' (it really should be split!).

#### *Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)*

**HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – This species seems to have colonized much of the southern lowlands since my last visit to the country.

**PLAIN-BACKED SPARROW** (*Passer flaveolus*) – The only look we had of this one was in the parking lot at the base of Mt. Langbian while we waited for the jeep to return for the second run up the mountain.

**EURASIAN TREE SPARROW** (*Passer montanus*) – Widespread.

*Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)*

**WHITE-RUMPED MUNIA** (*Lonchura striata*) – A pair here and there, even up in the forest below Deo Nui San pass.

**SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA** (*Lonchura punctulata*) – Also called the Nutmeg Mannikin.

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## MAMMALS

**NORTHERN TREESHREW** (*Tupaia berlangeri*) – One seen along the trail near Da Lat.

**CRAB-EATING MACAQUE** (*Macaca fascicularis*) – Also called Long-tailed Macaque, we saw a troop of these in the bamboo at Cat Tien NP.

**RHESUS MONKEY** (*Macaca mulatta*) – I believe that the Crocodile Lake hikers saw this one, which apparently was introduced into the park. [I]

**PIGTAIL MACAQUE** (*Macaca nemestrina*) – Including one walking back and forth across the road in front of us at Cat Tien NP.

**STUMP-TAILED MACAQUE** (*Macaca arctoides*) – Another species of macaque seen by the Crocodile Lake crew.

**DOUC LANGUR** (*Pygathrix nemaeus*) – More precisely, this was the Black-shanked Douc Langur that we saw in the rain at Cat Tien NP that first morning. Probably the easiest to see of the three Douc Langurs in the country.

**DELACOUR'S LANGUR** (*Trachypithecus delacouri*) – WOWWW!!! What a pleasant surprise it was to visit Van Long Nature Reserve and see this Critically Endangered primate so well!! I doubt that the forest in this area of rugged limestone karst will ever be cut, so it looks like the small population here is safe for the time being.

**YELLOW-CHEEKED GIBBON** (*Nomascus gabriellae*) – This one was what we called Crested Gibbon on the checklist, but recent taxonomic changes split this one out as Yellow-cheeked Gibbon. Great views of a family unit at HQ at Cat Tien NP.

**BLACK GIANT SQUIRREL** (*Ratufa bicolor*) – This one's a real monster - hard to believe that it's actually a squirrel!

**RED-BELLIED SQUIRREL** (*Callosciurus erythraeus*) – The other name for this one is Pallas's Squirrel and it's one that we saw pretty frequently on the tour.

**HIMALAYAN STRIPED SQUIRREL** (*Tamiops macclellandi*) – We heard far more of these than we saw. This was the 'chipmunk' that made an appearance now and then throughout the tour.

**NORWAY (BROWN) RAT** (*Rattus norvegicus*) – For a lucky few in the restaurant in Tam Dao!

**LESSER MOUSE DEER** (*Tragulus javanicus*) – Seeing one of these tiny deer walking down the road at Cat Tien in the daylight was a complete surprise!

**MUNTJAC (BARKING DEER)** (*Muntiacus muntjak*) – One of the few rewards for us on that rainy late afternoon foray in the truck to the fields at Cat Tien.

**SAMBAR** (*Cervus unicolor*) [\*]

*Herps*

**COMMON HOUSE GECKO** (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) – This was presumably the common gecko that we saw in nearly all of our hotels.

**SIAMESE CROCODILE** (*Crocodylus siamensis*) – Those who hiked in to Crocodile Lake at Cat Tien NP were rewarded with looks of this endangered species there.

**FOREST CRESTED LIZARD** (*Calotes emma*) – I'm not 100% convinced, but I think that the big lizard that we found in the forest at Deo Nui San was this widespread species (if not, it's probably in the same genus and closely related).

*Other Creatures of Interest*

**VIETNAMESE CENTIPEDE** (*Scolopendra subspinipes*) – The huge centipede that we saw in the restaurant at Cuc Phuong NP was this widespread Oriental region species.

**COMMON LANTERN BUG** (*Pyrops candelaria* (Flatidae, Hemiptera)) – One of our final observations at Cat Tien on our final morning there at the end of the tour was this strange and beautiful species.

**FOREST SCORPION, SP.** (*Heterometrus laoticus*) – I don't think a final positive i.d. was made, but the big scorpion at our lodge at Cat Tien was likely this large species.

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## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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**Totals for the tour: 327 bird taxa and 15 mammal taxa**