



2026_8 Days Hainan Birding Tour



8 Days Hainan Birding Tour

Jan 04 - Jan 11, 2026

Trip report compiled by Shay Xie



Hainan Peacock-Pheasant



Summary

In early January 2026, we led an eight-day birding trip to Hainan Island, aiming to explore the island's rich tropical avifauna with a focus on its famed endemics. From the rainforests of the southern mountains to the coastal wetlands in the west, the itinerary covered key habitats and proved highly productive, with a total of 142 species recorded. Highlights included excellent views of all three Hainan endemics—Hainan Peacock-Pheasant, Hainan Partridge, and Hainan Leaf Warbler—as well as a memorable encounter with the critically endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper on the mudflats. Other specialties such as Pale-capped Pigeon, Ratchet-tailed Treepie, Red-headed Trogon, and Oriental Bay Owl added to the experience. With strong local support, well-planned hides, and diverse habitats, the journey showcased the remarkable biodiversity of Hainan and became a deeply rewarding trip for everyone involved.



Details of the Trip

Day 1 (Jan 4th): Chengdu to Jianfengling via Sanya

This afternoon, we took a direct flight from Chengdu to Sanya City, Hainan Province. After arrival, we drove to the Rice National Park. Unfortunately, the park was under maintenance, so we conducted some casual birding around the periphery. Species observed included **Light-vented Bulbul**, **Ornate Sunbird**, **Little Ringed Plover**, **Chinese Pond Heron**, and **Little Egret**. Afterwards, we proceeded directly to **Jianfengling National Park** for check-in.

Day 2 (Jan 5th): Jianfengling National Park

Today, we focused on birding the southern part of Jianfengling, primarily visiting recently established birding hides to target two scarce Hainan endemics. After sunrise, we first waited by a dead tree along the roadside for the **Mountain Imperial Pigeon**, which appeared within minutes. The surrounding forest also held **White-bellied Erpornis**, **Huet's Fulvetta**, and **Orange-bellied Leafbird**.

After the pigeon, we moved to a birding hide to wait for the **Hainan Peacock-Pheasant** and **Hainan Partridge**. Before the establishment of these hides, these two species were extremely difficult to observe in the wild, with the Hainan Peacock-Pheasant being particularly elusive and rarely even heard.

Upon arrival at the hide, everyone settled in quietly. Soon, a succession of smaller birds appeared: **Black-throated Laughingthrush**, **Rufous-cheeked Laughingthrush**, **Dusky**



Hainan Peacock-Pheasant

Fulvetta, **Spot-necked Babbler**, and **Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler**.

Suddenly, a large, grey bird emerged silently from the undergrowth onto the platform. With its distinctive red facial skin and iridescent blue-green spotting, it was a magnificent male **Hainan Peacock-Pheasant**! The activity continued with visits from **Fork-tailed Sunbird**, **Puff-throated Bulbul**, **White-rumped Shama**, and **Rufous-tailed Robin**.



Hainan Partridge

After lunch, we relocated to another hide where we successfully observed the other target, the **Hainan Partridge**, along with a **Silver Pheasant**.

Day 3 (Jan 6th): Jianfengling National Park

We spent the entire day birding the northern part of Jianfengling, around the **Mingfenggu Loop** area. Even before breakfast, birding along the forest edge near our lodge yielded a good variety: **Grey-chinned Minivet**, **Scarlet Minivet**, **Bronzed Drongo**, **Greater Racket-tailed Drongo**, **Sultan Tit**, **Chestnut Bulbul**, **Mountain Bulbul**, **Yellow-billed Nuthatch**, and **Pale Blue Flycatcher**.



Eyebrowed Wren-Babbler

Post-breakfast, we walked slowly along the Mingfenggu Loop boardwalk. Not far into the trail, we encountered a

mixed-species flock containing many familiar birds. However, high in the canopy, we spotted a yellow warbler with a prominent eye-stripe – the endemic **Hainan Leaf Warbler**! Later, while descending, we found another bird flock that added **Rufous-capped Babbler**, **Black-naped Monarch**, **Black-winged Cuckooshrike**, and **Chinese Barbet** to our list. While observing these, a familiar call drew our attention. After a brief wait, the caller hopped into an open spot, revealing itself as the adorable **Eyebrowed Wren-Babbler**.

A night walk yielded the incessant calls of **Mountain Scops Owl** echoing through the hills, though visual sightings proved difficult. We did, however, get excellent views of a **Collared Scops Owl**.

Day 4 (Jan 7th): Jianfengling National Park to Danzhou

This morning, we searched for the forests near our lodge for more target species. Success came along a roadside woodland where we found the **Ratchet-tailed Treepie** mixed with a flock of **Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush**. Along yesterday's trail, we also enjoyed excellent, prolonged views of a stunning **Red-headed Trogon** and a hard-foraging **Bay Woodpecker**.



Pale-capped Pigeon

In the afternoon, before heading to Danzhou, we visited two wetland areas: **Fengtang Wetlands** and **Fengshou Rd**.

Wetlands. They provided numerous waterbirds, including **White-browed Crake**, **Grey-headed Swamphen**, **Northern Shoveler**, **Garganey**, **Black-winged Stilt**, **Common Snipe**, **Common Sandpiper**, **Whiskered Tern**, **White-throated Kingfisher**, **Common Kingfisher**, and **Yellow Bittern**.

We arrived in Danzhou in the evening and met a local guide for a night excursion. Despite the late hours, it was highly rewarding, with sightings of **Oriental Bay Owl**, **Eastern Barn Owl**, **Eastern Grass Owl**, **King Quail**, and **Lanceolated Warbler**.

Day 5 (Jan 8th): Danzhou

Having returned very late from the night walk, we rested through the morning. After lunch, we began birding at **Nan'an Mudflats**, aiming to find the globally Critically Endangered **Spoon-billed Sandpiper**. As the tide receded, the exposed mudflats attracted thousands of shorebirds wintering in Hainan. The task was to find the rare sandpiper among them.

Carefully scanning every small shorebird with a telescope and binoculars, we recorded **Red-necked Stint, Sanderling, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Dunlin, Curlew Sandpiper, Kentish Plover, Greater Sand Plover, Siberian Sand Plover, Pacific Golden Plover, and Grey Plover.**

Finally, guided by our local guide to a favored feeding area, we got a **Spoon-billed Sandpiper** and enjoyed exceptional, close-range observations for over an hour – an absolute highlight.



Spoon-billed Sandpiper

Day 6 (Jan 9th): Danzhou

This morning, we visited a village near Danzhou to search for the nationally rare **Pale-capped Pigeon**. On site, our local guide led us to a dead tree where the pigeons regularly perch. Sure enough, they arrived one by one shortly after we settled in. **Thick-billed Green Pigeon** occasionally joined them. Other notable birds here included **Grey-headed Parrotbill** and **Crested Serpent Eagle**.



Pale-capped Pigeon

In the afternoon, we explored nearby **salt pans and agricultural fields**, adding **White-faced Plover, Great Knot, Red Knot, Black-faced Spoonbill, Caspian Tern, Pied Kingfisher, Greater Coucal, Oriental Skylark, Richard's Pipit, and Red-throated Pipit** to our trip list.

Day 7 (Jan 10th): Danzhou to Haikou

Our morning in Danzhou was dedicated to "cleaning up" missed species. Rewards included **Ashy Woodswallow, Long-toed Stint, Temminck's Stint, Cinnamon Bittern, White-shouldered Starling, and Red-billed Starling.** We departed for Haikou in the late afternoon.



Shrika



Day 8 (Jan 11th): Departure

Before heading to the airport, we utilized our last hours for birding at **Dongzhai Harbor** near Haikou. While most birds were already on our list, we managed to add a few final species: **Shikra**, **Black-winged Stilt**, and **Northern Pintail**, concluding a highly successful Hainan birding expedition.



www.alpinebirding.com

For an Exclusive Birding Experience!

info@alpinebirding.com; www.alpinebirding.com