



14 Days West Sichuan Birding Tour

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7 April - 20 April 2021



Outline

- Day 1: Chengdu, Sichuan, China
- Day 2: Chengdu / Longcanggou
- Day 3-4: Longcanggou
- Day 5: Longcanggou / Labahe NR
- Day 6: Labahe NR
- Day 7: Labahe NR / Kangding
- Day 8: Kangding / Yajiang
- Day 9: Yajiang / Danba
- Day 10: Danba / Rilong
- Day 11-12: Balang Mountain
- Day 13: Rilong / Chengdu
- Day 14: Chengdu / Depart



Temminck's Tragopan



Highlights

1. This trip covers some of the most popular birding sites in Sichuan including Balang Mountain and Longcanggou National Forest Park. We can expect a great diversity of pheasants, parrotbills, rosefinches, and warblers on this trip.
2. Our experienced guides have guided birding tours in these areas many times, they have great knowledge about local birds and birding sites with good access to the latest bird info. At the same time, they have rich experiences of guiding birders from different countries and understand clients' needs well.
3. Besides birds, we can enjoy some fascinating mammals like Red Panda. The unique Tibetan culture is also a bonus for this trip.
4. The scenery is absolutely breath-taking. The highest places we will visit during this tour are Pamuling at around 4,000m and Balang Mountain pass at around 4,484m, we will see some magnificent snow mountains there.
5. A small group size of no more than 8 birders.
6. Years of working as a local partner for some prestigious western companies specialized in birds and other wildlife.
7. A strong logistic team in the office to ensure our trip goes smoothly and every participant has a comfortable and memorable journey.

Tour Info Sheet

Highlight Birds	Lady Amherst's Pheasant, Snow Partridge, Temminck's Tragopan, Golden Pheasant, Tibetan Snowcock, Buff-throated Partridge, Chinese Monal, Blood Pheasant, White Eared Pheasant, Grandala, Vinous-throated Parrotbill, Brown Parrotbill, Fulvous Parrotbill, Ashy-throated Parrotbill, Great Parrotbill, Three-toed Parrotbill, Grey-hooded Parrotbill, Golden Parrotbill, Emei Shan Liocichla, Ibisbill, Collared Grosbeak, White-winged Grosbeak, Goldcrest, Giant Laughingthrush, Elliot's Laughingthrush, Slaty Bunting, White-browed Tit Warbler, Chinese Fulvetta, Sichuan Tit, Wall Creeper, Lammergeier (Bearded Vulture), Red-billed Chough, Yellow-billed Chough, Long-tailed Rosefinch, Common Rosefinch, Chinese Beautiful Rosefinch, Chinese White-browed Rosefinch, Pink-rumped Rosefinch, Dark-breasted Rosefinch, Crimson-browed Finch, Red-fronted Rosefinch, etc.
Numbers of Species to Expect	120-150
Ease of Birding	mostly easy birding with a few tricky species
Highlight Mammals	Red Panda, Hog Badger, Tibetan Macaque, Chinese Goral, Sambar, Masked Palm Civet, Red and White Giant Flying Squirrel, etc.
Other Attractions	Tibetan culture, wild panda habitat, delicate food
Photography Opportunities	birding focused but with good photography chances
Habitats Covered	subtropical forests, woodlands, snow mountains
Expected Climate	mostly comfortable, windy and cold on snow mountains, rain is possible
Physical Requirements	mostly easy, demanding but optional on certain part
Accommodation	very comfortable
Transportation	19-seat van



Map



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Chengdu, China.

On the first day of the tour, a private guide or driver will meet you once you arrive in Chengdu Shuangliu Airport or Tianfu International Airport. After meeting our guide and driver, you will be transferred to the downtown hotel for one night stay. For people who arrive early, we will go for a relaxing birding at a local park near the hotel.

Day 2: Chengdu to Longcanggou National Forest Park.

We will have a short visit to the Chengdu Botanical Garden before driving to the Longcanggou National Forest Park. Chengdu Botanical Garden has been considered as one of the best city parks for birding thanks to its big diversity of cultivated plants and good forest coverage. We can find some urban and special resident birds here, including Vinous-throated Parrotbill, Chinese Bulbul, White-browed



Chinese Bulbul

Laughingthrush, Red-billed Leiothrix, Japanese White-eye, Chinese Blackbird, Chinese Grosbeak, Collared Finchbill, Long-tailed Shrike, Fork-tailed Sunbird, Hoopoe, etc.

Followed the exploration, we will drive on and take a 3-hour journey to the Longcanggou area. Upon arrival, we will have some light birding around the guesthouse looking for Ashy-throated Parrotbill, Hwamei, Red-billed Leiothrix, Oriental Greenfinch, etc.



Grey-hooded Parrotbill

Day 3-4: Longcanggou National Forest Park.

Located on the western edge of the Sichuan Basin, Longcanggou is in the core area of the transition zone between the basin and Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. The high mountains in this area block the moisture-rich fogs from drifting further onto Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. The accumulation of these fog eventually turns into rain and falls down, nurturing lush vegetation and the dense subtropical evergreen broadleaf forest on the mountain slopes and making it home to a lot of range-restricted and endemic species. Two brilliant pheasants, namely

Temminck's Tragopan and Lady Amherst's Pheasant inhabit here. In the lush bamboo forest of high elevation, we will look for Great Parrotbill, Brown Parrotbill, Three-toed Parrotbill, Grey-hooded Parrotbill, Golden Parrotbill, Emei Shan Liocichla, Grey-hooded Fulvetta, Golden-breasted Fulvetta, Red-winged Laughingthrush, Spotted Laughingthrush, Black-faced Laughingthrush, Darjeeling Woodpecker, Vinaceous Rosefinch, White-throated Needletail, Coal Tit, Fire-capped Tit, Ashy-throated Warbler, Sichuan Leaf Warbler, Emei Leaf Warbler, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler, Aberrant Bush Warbler, etc.

In the broadleaf forest of lower elevation, we will look for Gold-fronted Fulvetta, David's Fulvetta, Crimson-breasted Woodpecker, Speckled Piculet, Yellow-browed Tit, Yellow-bellied Tit, Black-throated Tit, Sichuan Bush Warbler, Pygmy Cupwing, Black Bulbul, Emei Leaf Warbler, Chestnut-crowned Warbler, Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler, Rufous-capped Babbler, Red-billed Leiothrix, Red-tailed Minla, Blue-winged Minla, Ferruginous Flycatcher, Snowy-browed Flycatcher, Taiga Flycatcher, Brown Bullfinch, etc.



Black Bulbul

Day 5: Longcanggou to Labahe Nature Reserve.

This morning we will have another chance to search for our targets again before driving to Labahe Nature Reserve. Upon arrival, we will go birding around the hotel to look for some low-elevation species including Red-billed Blue Magpie, White-capped Water Redstart, Plumbeous Water Redstart, Collared Finchbill, Brown Dipper. We may encounter our first mammal, the Tibetan Macaque. Followed dinner at the hotel, we will go out to look for nocturnal creatures such as Red and White Giant Flying Squirrel, Sambar, etc.



Tibetan Macaque



Red Panda

Day 6: Labahe Nature Reserve.

Lying deep in the Hengduan Mountains, Labahe is a significant wild panda habitat and by far one of the best places in China to look for Red Panda. The mixed alpine forest and dense bamboo understory make an ideal habitat for Red Panda, though it will still require an amount of hard work and patience to find one. Additionally, Labahe is undisputedly a great birding site. We will walk with all our eyes on the paved road and search both sides and rugged mountains around. We will likely encounter a variety of interesting species including Lady Amherst's Pheasant, Brown Parrotbill, Fulvous Parrotbill, Sichuan Treecreeper, Speckled Wood Pigeon, Spotted Nutcracker, Yellow-browed Tit, Fire-capped Tit, Coal Tit, Pere David's Tit, Black-browed Tit, Aberrant Bush Warbler, Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler, Chinese Cupwing, Pygmy Cupwing, Ashy-throated Warbler, Sichuan Leaf Warbler, Grey-hooded Fulvetta, Golden-breasted Fulvetta, Stripe-throated

Yuhina, Black-faced Laughingthrush, Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher, Golden Bush Robin, etc.

Although the chance is really slim, we can have some particular search for giant pandas, they are occasionally spotted in this reserve during the spring mating season. We can pay special attention to the dense bamboo forest for white and black patches while looking for our targets.

Day 7: Labahe Nature Reserve to Kangding.

We will spend the morning in Labahe to search for our targets again. After that, we will spend the rest day traveling to Kangding.



Lady Amherst's Pheasant

Day 8: Kangding to Yajiang via Xinduqiao.

We will spend the morning birding in Kangding searching for Lady Amherst's Pheasant, Barred Laughingthrush, Chinese Babax, White-collared Yuhina, Black-browed Tit, Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler. Following that, we drive on to Yajiang. We will drive along streams for some time, we will have several stops to search the riverbank where is a favorite habitat for Ibisbill. Besides, we can also see Brown Dipper, White-throated Dipper, Daurian Jackdaw, etc.

Day 9: Yajiang to Danba via Pamuling (Alt.: up to 4,000m).

We will drive to Pamuling Mountain in the early morning. On the top of Pamuling Mountain, there is a Tibetan monastery. Buddhism has long become part of local Tibetans' daily life which requires people to treat wildlife as equal living creatures as human beings. The belief in Buddhism has turned this place into a paradise for wildlife and an ideal destination for birding as birds here are not afraid of humans. We have good opportunities to see Buff-throated Partridge, Blood Pheasant, White-browed Tit Warbler, Yunnan Nuthatch, Black-browed Tit, Rufous-vented Tit, Grey-crested Tit, Grey-backed Shrike, Chinese White-browed Rosefinch, Pink-rumped Rosefinch, White-backed Thrush, etc. After our exploration in Yajiang, we will drive on to Danba.



White-browed Tit Warbler

Day 10: Danba to Rilong.

After having breakfast at the hotel, we drive to the last and most important birding place on this trip, the Balang Mountain. We will have some stops along the way, particularly at the Yala Mountain area where we can look for White Eared Pheasant, Chinese Babax, Brown Dipper, etc. After that, we will drive on to Balang Mountain to look for Red-billed Chough, Yellow-billed Chough, Grandala, Pink-rumped Roesfinch, Beautiful Rosefinch, Dark-breasted Roesfinch, Common Rosefinch, Streaked Rosefinch, Plan Mountain Finch, Brand's Mountain Finch, White-winged

Grosbeak, etc.

Day 11-12: Balang Mountain area (Alt.: up to 4,484m).

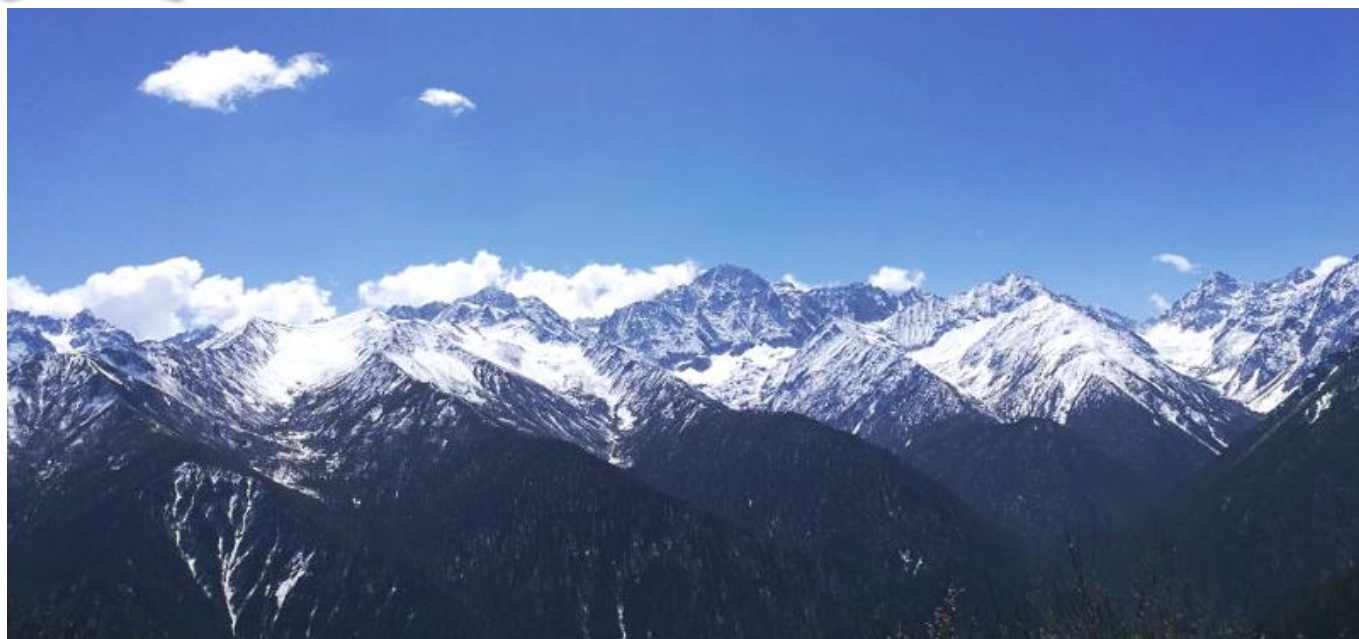
We will spend two days birding in this fascinating birding site. Balang Mountain is the first high mountain standing between the Sichuan Basin and the Qinghai Tibetan Plateau, from the foot to the pass, the elevation rises sharply from 2,000m to 4,500m which provides a wide variety of habitats to support a lot of creatures. The mountain pass, around 4,500 meters, is the highest point we will reach on this entire tour. Around the snowline of the alpine flowstone slope, we will search for the scurrying Snow Partridge, Tibetan Snowcock, and Grandala. Other high altitude specialties we could see include Lammergeier (Bearded Vulture), Golden Eagle, Red-billed Chough, Yellow-billed Chough, Alpine Accentor, Brandt's Mountain Finch, Snow Pigeon, Red-fronted Rosefinch, Rosy Pipit, etc.



Chinese Monal

We will also spend some time at the lower elevations around the timberline where alpine meadows and scrubs carpet the snow-covered mountains. We will visit this area several times in search of birds including the endemic Chinese Monal, and White Eared Pheasant, Chestnut-throated Partridge, as well as other birds including Blood Pheasant, Koklass Pheasant, Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Chinese Fulvetta, Chinese Rubythroat, Golden Bush Robin, Streaked Rosefinch, Dark-breasted Rosefinch, Dark-rumped Rosefinch, Crimson-browed Finch, Common Rosefinch, Kessler's Thrush (White-backed Thrush), Rufous-vented Tit, Sichuan Tit, Asian House Martin, Alpine Leaf Warbler, Giant Laughingthrush, White-throated Redstart, etc.

Additionally, we will visit broad-leaved forest and bamboo undergrowth lower down for Large Hawk Cuckoo, Himalayan Cuckoo, Eurasian Nutcracker, Green-backed Tit, Yellow-streaked Warbler, Buff-throated Warbler, Chinese Leaf Warbler, Sichuan Leaf Warbler, Martens's Warbler, Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler, White-collared Yuhina, Chinese Babax, Chestnut Thrush, Verditer Flycatcher, Daurian Redstart, Slaty Bunting, Yellow-throated Bunting, etc. Golden Pheasant's call can be heard here, but it normally hides in the bush, we may see it with luck.



Scenery on Balang Mountain

Day 13: Rilong to Chengdu via Balang Mountain.

We will spend most of the day search for our targets again before driving back to Chengdu. On our last night in Chengdu, we will experience the authentic Chengdu hotpot to bring our wonderful birding experience to a successful conclusion.

Day 14: Departure from Chengdu.

Following a lovely breakfast at the hotel, you will be transferred to the airport to depart from Chengdu or start your extension in another part of China. The services of AlpineBirding for this trip will end here.



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