



2021\_4 Days Ruergai Birding Tour



## 4 Days Ruogai Birding Tour

Sep 18-21, 2021

Trip report compiled by Bella Zhang



Sichuan Jay



### Summary

We had a 4-day customized trip to Ruogai during this year's Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival. Ruogai is a vast grassland located on the eastern edge of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau that is known as the 'lungs of Sichuan'. The habitat diversity that Ruogai provides is high, including grasslands, wetlands, alpine coniferous forests, and shrubs. To maximize the chances of finding our target species, we spent most of our time in the forest, with only a brief visit to Flower Lake on the grassland. We had great success as not only did we enjoy great views of a high number of distinctive plateau birds such as Blue Eared Pheasant, Sichuan Jay, Black-necked Crane, Przevalski's Nuthatch, Plain Laughingthrush, Snowy-cheeked Laughingthrush, Giant Laughingthrush, Elliot's Laughingthrush, Sichuan Tit, White-browed Tit Warbler, Crested Tit-Warbler, Chinese Leaf Warbler, Sichuan Leaf Warbler, Chinese Fulvetta, etc., but we also had fantastic views of some plateau mammals like Tibetan Fox, Sika Deer, Siberian Roe Deer, Siberian Weasel, etc.





## Details of the Trip

### Day 1 (Sep. 18<sup>th</sup>): Arrival in Huanglong, then drove to Diebu.

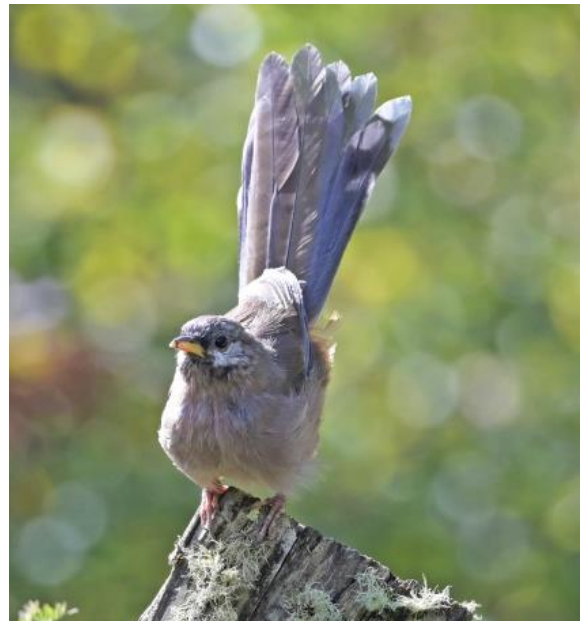
Our flight was delayed for 2 hours due to the heavy rain in the morning. After meeting at the airport, we drove to the plateau directly. After a 1-hour drive, we reached the edge of the plateau. We were welcomed by a pair of Black-necked Cranes foraging on the snowy grassland. Soon after, we found a Tibetan Fox by the roadside. It was peeking at us behind a small mound for a while before running away. We continued our exploration along the drive to Diebu. Despite the rain, we managed to see Ruddy Shelduck, Himalayan Griffon, Black Kite, Upland Buzzard, White-rumped Snowfinch, Ground Tit, Daurian Jackdaw, Common Raven, Azure-winged Magpie, Black-rumped Magpie, Red-billed Chough, Sichuan Leaf Warbler, Alpine Leaf Warbler, Yellow-streaked Warbler, Buff-barred Warbler, etc.



Ground Tit

### Day 2 (Sep. 19<sup>th</sup>): Diebu to Ruogai.

We started our morning in the nearby village where we found a small flock of Green-backed Tit and Yellow-bellied Tit. We also found Bar-tailed Treecreeper, Yellow-streaked Warbler, Taiga Flycatcher, and Little Bunting in this area. We then drove further up to the shrubby area of the coniferous forest edge. We soon found a female Sika Deer and a fawn by the roadside, followed shortly by nice views of a Siberian Weasel. We were also rewarded with great looks at Snowy-cheeked Laughingthrush, Plain Laughingthrush, Giant Laughingthrush, Elliot's Laughingthrush, Grey-crested Tit, Rufous-vented Tit, Sichuan Tit, Sooty Tit, Grey-headed Woodpecker, Japanese Tit, Hume's Leaf Warbler, Chinese Fulvetta, Long-tailed Minivet, Himalayan Bluetail, Hodgson's Redstart, White-throated Redstart, Blue-fronted Redstart, Slaty-backed Flycatcher, Grey-headed Bullfinch, Chinese White-browed Rosefinch, Twite, Common Crossbill, Oriental Turtle Dove, Godlewski's Bunting, etc.



Snowy-cheeked Laughingthrush

After a successful morning, we drove back to Ruogai along a gorge. Several stops for the gorgeous scenery also produced a Northern Goshawk, a small flock of Salim Ali's Swifts, and some nice additional views of the species we saw this morning. Since a storm was in the forecast, we did a quick search on a pasture where we found Horned Lark, Ground Tit, White-rumped Snowfinch, Upland Buzzard, Black Kite, etc. Besides, two fighting Siberian Roe Deers were spotted on the top of a slope. The drive back to our hotel didn't bring up new species, but nice and close views of more Upland Buzzard, Plateau Pika, White-rumped Snowfinch, etc.

### Day 3 (Sep. 20<sup>th</sup>): Baxi Forest & Flower Lake.

Our morning in the Baxi Forest didn't start quite the way we had hoped it would, as our search brought up no Blue Eared Pheasant in those regular slopes. Road construction in this area in the past two years could be one of the main reasons. The good thing is that the well-paved road largely cuts the drive time. We then walked into the forest. For starters, we picked up Crested Tit-Warbler, Grey-crested Tit, Rufous-vented Tit, Common Pheasant, Chinese Fulvetta, Sichuan Leaf Warbler, White-bellied Redstart, Goldcrest, etc. Not long after, a strange call was heard from the woods. It was the Sichuan Jay! One of the most desirable birds of China. We luckily got a small flock of five jays. They stuck around for about ten minutes before disappeared into the woods. We then drove back to the grassland. A Chinese Grey Shrike was spotted on a wire during the drive.



**Crested Tit-Warbler**

For the afternoon, we visited Flower Lake. The ticket office had moved to the other side of the road. It took us five minutes to walk from the ticket office to the shuttle bus, then a short shuttle ride followed by a walk of about 1.5 km that eventually brought us to the edge of the lake. We wasted no time in getting to birding and photography. Although it was not the best season, we managed to see some nice waterfowl like Black-necked Crane, Ruddy Shelduck, Greylag Goose, Red-crested Pochard, Northern Shoveler, Black-necked Grebe, Pallas's Gull, etc.

### Day 4 (Sep. 21<sup>st</sup>): Baxi Forest & Departure.

We went back to Baxi and visited two valleys this morning. The first valley provided us excellent views of three Siberian Roe Deers and a bunch of sought-after species like Snowy-cheeked Laughingthrush, White-browed Tit Warbler, Crested Tit Warbler, Przevalski's Nuthatch, Sichuan Tit, Rufous-breasted Accentor, Lammergeier, Eurasian Sparrowhawk, etc. We went to the second valley around noon time where we were surprised by a flock of five Blue Eared Pheasants near the forest edge. Other birds spotted here including White-throated Redstart, Siberian Stonechat, Great Spotted Woodpecker, etc., in addition to nice views of more White-browed Tit Warbler and Crested Tit Warbler.



**Przevalski's Nuthatch**

After lunch, we left the forest and drove back to Huanglong to catch our late afternoon flight. A few brief stops along the way for birds and photos helped to pass the time quite nicely until we said goodbye to each other at the airport.

## *Bird species recorded (94 seen in total)*

No.	English Name	Scientific Name	Chinese Name
	<b>Phasianidae</b>	<b>GALLIFORMES</b>	<b>雉科</b>
1	Blue Eared Pheasant	<i>Crossoptilon auritum</i>	蓝马鸡
2	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	雉鸡
	<b>Anatidae</b>	<b>ANSERIFORMES</b>	<b>鸭科</b>
3	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	灰雁
4	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	琵嘴鸭
5	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	赤膀鸭
6	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	绿头鸭
7	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>	赤嘴潜鸭
8	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	红头潜鸭
9	Ferruginous Duck/Ferruginous Pochard	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	白眼潜鸭
	<b>Podicipedidae</b>	<b>PODICIPEDIFORMES</b>	<b>鸬鹚科</b>
10	Slavonian /Horned Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	角鸬鹚
11	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	黑颈鸬鹚
	<b>Ardeidae</b>	<b>PELECANIFORMES</b>	<b>鹭科</b>
12	Chinese Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>	池鹭
13	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	大白鹭
14	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	白鹭
	<b>Phalacrocoracidae</b>	<b>SULIFORMES</b>	<b>鸬鹚科</b>
15	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	普通鸬鹚
	<b>Accipitridae</b>	<b>ACCIPITRIFORMES</b>	<b>鹰科</b>
16	Bearded Vulture/Lammergeier	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>	胡兀鹫
17	Himalayan Griffon/ Vulture	<i>Gyps himalayensis</i>	高山兀鹫
18	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	雀鹰
19	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	黑鸢
20	Crested Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	凤头蜂鹰
21	Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	苍鹰
22	Upland Buzzard	<i>Buteo hemilasius</i>	大鵟
23	Eastern Buzzard	<i>Buteo japonicus</i>	普通鵟
	<b>Rallidae</b>	<b>GRUIFORMES</b>	<b>秧鸡科</b>
24	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	骨顶鸡
	<b>Gruidae</b>	<b>GRUIFORMES</b>	<b>鹤科</b>
25	Black-necked Crane	<i>Grus nigricollis</i>	黑颈鹤
	<b>Laridae</b>	<b>CHARADRIIFORMES</b>	<b>鸥科</b>
26	Brown-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus</i>	棕头鸥
27	Pallas's Gull	<i>Ichthyaeetus ichthyaeetus</i>	渔鸥
	<b>Columbidae</b>	<b>COLUMBIFORMES</b>	<b>鸠鸽科</b>
28	Rufous/Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>	山斑鸠
	<b>Apodidae</b>	<b>APODIFORMES</b>	<b>雨燕科</b>
29	Salim Ali's Swift	<i>Apus salimalii</i>	青藏白腰雨燕
	<b>Picidae</b>	<b>PICIFORMES</b>	<b>啄木鸟科</b>
30	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	大斑啄木鸟
31	Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>	灰头绿啄木鸟



	<b>Falconidae</b>	<b>FALCONIFORMES</b>	<b>隼科</b>
32	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	红隼
	<b>Campephagidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>鵙鵙科</b>
33	Long-tailed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus ethologus</i>	长尾山椒鸟
	<b>Laniidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>伯劳科</b>
34	Grey-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius tephronotus</i>	灰背伯劳
35	Chinese Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius sphenocercus</i>	楔尾伯劳
	<b>Corvidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>鸦科</b>
36	Sichuan Jay	<i>Perisoreus internigrans</i>	黑头噪鸦
37	Azure-winged Magpie	<i>Cyanopica cyanus</i>	灰喜鹊
38	Black-rumped Magpie	<i>Pica bottanensis</i>	青藏喜鹊
39	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	红嘴山鸦
40	Daurian Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus dauuricus</i>	达乌里寒鸦
41	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	大嘴乌鸦
42	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	渡鸦
	<b>Paridae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>山雀科</b>
43	Rufous-vented Tit	<i>Periparus rubidiventris</i>	黑冠山雀
44	Yellow-bellied Tit	<i>Pardaliparus venustulus</i>	黄腹山雀
45	Grey-crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes dichrous</i>	褐冠山雀
46	Sichuan Tit	<i>Poecile weigoldicus</i>	川褐头山雀
47	Ground Tit	<i>Pseudopodoces humilis</i>	地山雀
48	Japanese Tit	<i>Parus minor</i>	远东山雀
49	Green-backed Tit	<i>Parus monticolus</i>	绿背山雀
	<b>Alaudidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>百灵科</b>
50	Shore Lark/Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	角百灵
	<b>Hirundinidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>燕科</b>
51	Asian /Common House Martin	<i>Delichon dasypus</i>	烟腹毛脚燕
	<b>Aegithalidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>长尾山雀科</b>
52	Sooty Bushtit	<i>Aegithalos fuliginosus</i>	银脸长尾山雀
53	White-browed Tit Warbler	<i>Leptopoecile sophiae</i>	花彩雀莺
54	Crested Tit Warbler	<i>Leptopoecile elegans</i>	凤头雀莺
	<b>Phylloscopidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>柳莺科</b>
55	Alpine Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus occisinensis</i>	华西柳莺
56	Yellow-streaked Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus armandii</i>	棕眉柳莺
57	Buff-barred Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus pulcher</i>	橙斑翅柳莺
58	Chinese Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus yunnanensis</i>	云南柳莺
59	Sichuan Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus forresti</i>	四川柳莺
60	Hume's Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus humei</i>	淡眉柳莺
	<b>Leiothrichidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>噪鹛科</b>
61	Snowy-cheeked Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax sukatschewi</i>	黑额山噪鹛
62	Giant Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax maximus</i>	大噪鹛
63	Pere David's /Plain Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax davidi</i>	山噪鹛
64	Elliot's Laughingthrush	<i>Trochalopteron elliotii</i>	橙翅噪鹛
	<b>Sylviidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>莺鹛科</b>
65	Chinese Fulvetta	<i>Fulvetta striaticollis</i>	高山雀鹛
	<b>Regulidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>戴菊科</b>
66	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	戴菊

	<b>Sittidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>鸺科</b>
67	Przevalski's Nuthatch	<i>Sitta przewalskii</i>	白脸鸺
	<b>Certhiidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>旋木雀科</b>
68	Bar-tailed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia himalayana</i>	高山旋木雀
	<b>Turdidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>鸺科</b>
69	White-backed /Kessler's Thrush	<i>Turdus kessleri</i>	棕背黑头鸺
	<b>Muscicapidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>鸺科</b>
70	White-bellied Redstart	<i>Hodgsonius phaenicuroides</i>	白腹短翅鸺
71	Himalayan Bluetail	<i>Tarsiger rufilatus</i>	蓝眉林鸺
72	Hodgson's Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus hodgsoni</i>	黑喉红尾鸺
73	White-throated Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus schisticeps</i>	白喉红尾鸺
74	Blue-fronted Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus frontalis</i>	蓝额红尾鸺
75	Plumbeous Water Redstart	<i>Rhyacornis fuliginosa</i>	红尾水鸺
76	White-capped Water Redstart	<i>Chaimarrornis leucocephalus</i>	白顶溪鸺
77	Siberian Stonechat	<i>Saxicola maurus</i>	黑喉石鸺
78	Dark-sided Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa sibirica</i>	乌鸺
79	Slaty-backed Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hodgsonii</i>	锈胸蓝姬鸺
80	Taiga Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>	红喉姬鸺
	<b>Passeridae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>雀科</b>
81	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	麻雀
82	White-rumped Snowfinch	<i>Onychostruthus taczanowskii</i>	白腰雪雀
83	Rufous-necked Snowfinch	<i>Pyrgilauda ruficollis</i>	棕颈雪雀
	<b>Prunellidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>岩鸺科</b>
84	Rufous-breasted Accentor	<i>Prunella strophia</i>	棕胸岩鸺
	<b>Motacillidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>鸺鸺科</b>
85	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	灰鸺鸺
86	Pied Wagtail/White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	白鸺鸺
87	Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	树鸺
	<b>Fringillidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>燕雀科</b>
88	Grey-headed Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula erythaca</i>	灰头灰雀
89	Plain Mountain Finch	<i>Leucosticte nemoricola</i>	林岭雀
90	Chinese White-browed Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus dubius</i>	白眉朱雀
91	Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>	黄嘴朱顶雀
92	Common /Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	红交嘴雀
	<b>Emberizidae</b>	<b>PASSERIFORMES</b>	<b>鸺科</b>
93	Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	小鸺
94	Godlewski's Bunting	<i>Emberiza godlewskii</i>	戈氏岩鸺
95			
96			
97			
98			
99			
100			
101			
102			
103			
	Note: (*) = New species		

# *Mammal Species recorded (6 seen in total)*

No.	English name	Scientific name	Chinese name
	<b>Canidae</b>	<b>CARNIVORA</b>	<b>犬科</b>
1	Tibetan Fox	<i>Vulpes ferrilata</i>	藏狐
	<b>Mustelidae</b>	<b>CARNIVORA</b>	<b>鼬科</b>
2	Siberian Weasel	<i>Mustela sibirica</i>	黄鼬
	<b>Cervidae</b>	<b>ARTIODACTYLA</b>	<b>鹿科</b>
3	Sika Deer	<i>Cervus hortulorum</i>	梅花鹿
4	Siberian Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus pygargus</i>	狍
	<b>Sciuridae</b>	<b>RODENTIA</b>	<b>松鼠科</b>
5	Himalayan Marmot	<i>Marmota himalayana</i>	喜马拉雅旱獭
	<b>Ochotonidae</b>	<b>LAGOMORPHA</b>	<b>鼠兔科</b>
6	Plateau Pika	<i>Ochotona curzoniae</i>	高原鼠兔
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			
32			
33			
34			
35			
36			
37			
38			
Note: (*) = New species			





[www.alpinebirding.com](http://www.alpinebirding.com)

*For an Exclusive Birding Experience!*

info@alpinebirding.com; [www.alpinebirding.com](http://www.alpinebirding.com)