



2019_5 Days China Jiangxi Birding Trip





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January 2019



Details

Sitting in the southeast of China, Jiangxi Province has a milder temperature in winter compared with cities further north in China with abundant water resources. The numerous lakes and rivers here attract a huge number of wintering birds such as storks, cranes, ducks, swans and plovers including some rare and endangered species. The two most famous birding destinations in this area are Poyang Lake near Nanchang and Wuyuan located to the east of Nanchang. I feel very lucky that I guided two clients from Spain coming here in search of great birds as a special way to welcome the arrival of 2019.

January 1st, Poyang Lake.

After picking up Alex and his wife Carla from Nanchang Train Station in the afternoon of December 31st, we drove directly to Wucheng, a village by the side of Poyang Lake so that we could start our birding early in the next day.

In the morning after breakfast, we drove to our birding site near the village where we had stayed for the night to look for birds. We drove to the lakeside along a small paved road and found there were already lots of waders and waterfowls feeding or resting in the lake or on the mudflat. We got off from our car and started our search, we found rare Siberian Crane, White-naped Crane, Hooded Crane, Black Stock, Tundra Swan, and Eurasian Spoonbill and numerous other water birds such as Swan Goose, Chinese Spot-billed Duck, Eurasian Teal, Spotted Redshank, Grey Heron and Northern Lapwing.



Siberian Crane



Chinese Hwamei

We drove back to the town to have lunch before we drove to another lake to continue our birding. En route, we drove past a small river, here we spotted a rare and endangered species, a female Scaly-sided Merganser, from a mixed flock of Chinese Spot-billed Ducks and Mallards. After we got to our destination lakeside, we continued our search for birds and found Oriental Stock and Eurasian Spoonbill as well as a number of other water birds including Greylag Goose, Greater White-fronted Goose, Tundra Bean

Goose, Falcated Duck, Mallard, Eurasian Wigeon and Pied Avocet. From the woods by the side of the lake, we spotted a good number of forest birds such as Common Pheasant, Chinese Hwamei, Chinese Bulbul, Red-billed Starling, Crested Myna, Black-collared Starling, White-cheeked Starling, and Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler, Red-flanked Bluetail, Daurian Redstart and Long-tailed Shrike. Toward the end of the day, we found beautiful Pied Kingfisher and Common Kingfisher near the fish pond by the side of the lake. It became dark so we decided to drive back to our hotel in the village. The discovery of a Common Buzzard perching on a wire post on our way back concluded our first birding

January 2nd, Poyang Lake.

Early in the morning, we drove to the same lake I had visited the previous morning to try another search for birds we had missed. On the way to the lake, we found a big flock of cute Vinous-throated Parrotbill feeding on the harvested farmland and a Brown Crake. When we searched the bushes on both sides of the road, we spotted Chinese Grosbeak, White-browed Laughingthrush, Black-faced Bunting, and Yellow-bellied Tit. Though most of the birds we found from the lakeside have already been seen the previous day, we eventually spotted two Smew and two Northern Shoveler from thousand ducks. We did some more search but failed to find new birds, so we decided to drive to our next spot.



Vinous-throated Parrotbill

It took us about two hours to get to our next birding site, a relatively smaller lake located in the south of Jiujiang City. While we were driving through a small village and some woods, we saw a



Bae's Pochard

ponds by the side of the lake, the extremely rare and critically endangered Baer's Pochard. The estimated population of this bird in the world is only about 500, on the verge of extinction. Every year about 200 Baer's Pochard come to this small lake for wintering. Now the small lake is under the protection of local government, hopefully they will be able to enjoy a safe wintering here.

After finishing our birding here, we drove on to our next birding site called Nanji Wetlands located by the side of Poyang Lake. Though by the time we arrived it already got pretty dark, we still spotted 4 beautiful birds we haven't seen before, namely Common Crane, Black-winged Kite, Black-winged Stilt, and Common Snipe. With that, we concluded our birding for the day and drove to the nearby village to rest and prepare for the next birding day.

January 3rd, Poyang Lake-Wuyuan.

After early morning breakfast, we drove to Nanji Wetlands for birding. We first came to the front of big reed clusters and started our search there. After some search, we spotted Chinese Penduline Tit, Chestnut-eared Bunting, Black-faced Bunting, Palla's Bunting, Yellow-bellied Prinia, and Plain Prinia. Then we drove on to another lake and continued our search. Though most birds found here, we have seen them before such as Oriental Stock, Eurasian Spoonbill, and Tundra Swan, we were still able to find some new species, the Eurasian Curlew and White-throated Kingfisher.

In the afternoon, we drove to Kangshan Township located on the south side of Poyang Lake. When we drove along the road by the side of the river, we saw critically

flock of very stunning Red-billed Blue Magpie. As soon as we arrived at the lakeside, we started our search with our spotting scope. From the little island in the middle of the lake we saw Tundra Swan, Greylag Goose, Taiga Bean Goose and Tundra Bean Goose on the island. From the lake, we saw big flocks of Coot, Little Grebe and Common Pochard. Eventually, we found our target birds from the lotus



Oriental Stock

endangered Yangtze Finless Porpoise, the only one in the world that can live in freshwater. Its total population is only about 1000 while there are 450 living in Poyang Lake. After enjoying a great view of Yangtze Finless Porpoise, we headed to another birding destination, Wuyuan.



Pied Falconet

us. Here we had an encounter of beautiful Orange-bellied Leafbird, the panda bird Pied Falconet, the elegant Crested Goshawk as well as Great Barbet, Grey Treepie and Chinese Blackbird. We walked out to search for birds when the rain stopped, we found Plumbeous Water Redstart, White-crowned Forktail and Brown Dipper at a creek by the side of the village.

After a quick lunch in a village restaurant, we drove to another important birding site named Dutou. It was raining heavily and had to search for birds from our car window most of the time. Whenever we found the rain became less heavy, we searched for the birds hiding in the trees or feeding by the riverside. Even under such tough situations, we spotted the precious Scaly-sided Merganser and beautiful Mandarin Duck. From the roadside, we spotted some forest birds including Grey-sided Scimitar Babbler, Collared Finchbill, Mountain Bulbul, Chestnut Bulbul and Black-throated Tit.

January 5th, Wuyuan.

We were lucky with the weather today, it was not raining. We drove to the street to find a restaurant before daybreak and had breakfast there instead of having breakfast in our hotel which served much later

January 4th, Wuyuan.

After early breakfast at our hotel, we drove to our first birding spot in Wuyuan, Xiaoqi Village. We saw a beautiful Crested Kingfisher perching on the wire by the side of the road. Before we got into the village, we saw rare Mountain Hawk Eagle, lovely Spotted Woodpecker, and cute Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker. It was raining, so we came to the village and stayed in the shelter on the top of the village house in face of several big trees, searching for birds in the lush tree branches in front of



Yellow-throated Bunting



so that we could search for the birds we missed the previous day. The morning light just fell when we got to Dutou. Here we found Russet Sparrow, an auspicious beginning for birding today. Then we found Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush, White-rumped Munia, Yellow-throated Bunting, David's Fulvetta, and Rufous-faced Warbler. After that, we drove to Wuyuan Train Station where our clients would take a speed train back to Hongkong and we drove back to Nanchang. Thus we concluded our New Year 5-day New Year birding trip in Jiangxi successfully.

After this trip, we got an email from Alex in which he told us he had written a review for us on TripAdvisor. If you have the interests, you can either search for AlpineBirding tour on TripAdvisor or click open the following link: https://www.tripadvisor.com>ShowUserReviews-g297463-d8145857-r644238795-AlpineBirding-Chengdu_Sichuan.html

In this five-day birding trip, we saw 116 species of birds in total. All of us have been impressed by many beautiful birds we saw on this trip. They became lasting sweet memories in our mind including four species of elegant cranes, Siberian Crane, White-naped Crane, Hooded Crane, and Common Crane, precious Black Stork, Oriental Stock, Eurasian Spoonbill, Scaly-sided Merganser, the critically endangered Baer's Pochard, beautiful Pied Falconet, and Orange-bellied Leafbird. We also have been impressed by the beautiful critically endangered mammal Yangtze Finless Porpoise.

In short, this New Year birding trip in Jiangxi has rewarded us with some unique and charming birds. I hope every year I have a chance to come here and meet them here again.



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