

Mongolia

Birds & Snow Leopards

31st July to 11th August 2023 (12 days)

Trip Report



Snow Leopards by Holger Teichmann

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Trip report compiled by Tour Leader: Nigel Redman

Tour Summary

The stakes are high when a tour is designed around a single species, especially a notoriously elusive species such as Snow Leopard, and the pressure to deliver was keenly felt by all. We need not have worried. Our trusted team in the Mongolian Altai understood this, and pulled all the stops out to achieve our goal. With over five days dedicated to searching for the big prize, there was inevitably going to be a lot of scanning and waiting, and success only came on the fifth day. But what a day! In the end, we spent 10 hours with three six-week-old Snow Leopard cubs, and the last two hours of that with their mother present. It was probably one of the best wildlife experiences ever for each and every one of us.

But there was a lot more besides Snow Leopards. Special birds included Swan Goose, Baikal Teal, White-headed Duck, Altai Snowcock, Pallas's Sandgrouse, White-naped and Demoiselle Cranes, Little Curlew, Sharp-tailed, Broad-billed and Terek Sandpipers, Asian Dowitcher, Relict Gull, Amur and Saker Falcons, Mongolian Ground Jay, Mongolian Lark, Sulphur-bellied Warbler, Asian Desert Warbler, Güldenstädt's Redstart, Blyth's Pipit, Mongolian Finch, and Pallas's Reed Bunting. There were some great mammals too: Wild Horse is a true Mongolian speciality, but we also found Siberian Ibex, Goitered and Mongolian Gazelles, Argali and Saiga, as well as a variety of smaller species. This was a tour to remember!

Tour in Detail

On arrival at Ulaanbaatar, our enthusiastic group undertook a pre-tour excursion to the Tuul River, on the outskirts of the city. Despite the heat and a healthy population of mosquitoes, we enjoyed multiple views of two pairs of Amur Falcons, and located a nest of one of them. Black Kites were very much in evidence, and we also found single Steppe and Golden Eagles, but smaller passerines were few and far between.

An early morning flight took us to Ulgii, in far western Mongolia, and from there we drove south to Khovd. In the afternoon we birded the shores of Khar-Us Lake. It was teeming with birds, but almost the first bird we saw was an adult Relict Gull with a faded hood that flew right past us. There were good numbers of Pallas's and Mongolian Gulls, but no more Relicts. Most of the ducks on the lake were Red-crested Pochards, but about 20 White-headed Ducks were rather distant, as was a single Dalmatian Pelican. Other good birds included a pair of Demoiselle Cranes, a variety of terns, hundreds of hirundines, and a few Asian Short-toed Larks. A couple of Pallas's Sandgrouse were seen on the journey to Jargalant Mountain, and a single Goitered Gazelle.



Demoiselle Cranes and Güldenstädt's Redstart by Holger Teichmann



Mongolian Finch and Pallid Ground Squirrel by Holger Teichmann

A productive early morning on Jargalant Mountain produced many Mongolian Finches and Horned Larks, as well as a few Rock Sparrows and Twites, and our first Cinereous Vulture. An obliging Pallid Ground Squirrel was very photogenic. Later, we enjoyed many Hill Pigeons in Chandmani before heading to Durgun Lake. The endless plains en route to the lake held many small groups of Saiga, always running at great speed, as well as hundreds of feral Bactrian Camels. Birds were less obvious on the plains, but at the lake we were treated to a wealth of waterbirds. We spent some time studying Asian Short-toed Larks, while the lake itself produced Black-throated Loon, many Greater Sand Plovers, two Ferruginous Ducks and a female Red-breasted Merganser with ten ducklings (the latter out of range according to the book). Some heavy rains prior to our visit had turned the plain into a quagmire in places, but with skilful driving, we managed to make it there and back, only having to tow one vehicle out of the mud!

The following day we ventured up the mountain. The road was almost non-existent in places, but we made it up to 3,000m. Several stops on the way produced Brown Accentors, Black Redstarts, and a fine Sulphur-bellied Warbler. At our highest point, we spent a considerable time scanning, finding a large number of Altai Snowcocks, a magnificent Bearded Vulture, many Cinereous Vultures, two Saker Falcons, White-winged Snowfinches and a distant male Gldenstdt's Redstart. Mammals were represented by several Pallas's Pikas and Tarbagan Marmots, and a Tolai Hare.



Pallas's Sandgrouse by Nigel Redman and Mongolian Lark by RT Cox



Snow Leopards by Holger Teichmann

We returned to the plains below the mountain where we found an Asian Desert Warbler constantly bringing food to a nest. Kholboo Lake was very productive, although hot in the late morning sun. There were large numbers of ducks of 10 species, about 15 Demoiselle Cranes, an obliging family party of Bearded Reedlings, and a variety of waders. Nearby, Khodoo Lake was equally productive, the highlights including four Asian Dowitchers, a male White-headed Duck, Paddyfield Warbler, and several Masked Wagtails. On the way back, we again stopped at the plains where we found around 80 Pallas's Sandgrouse, both in flight and on the ground, as well as several Desert Wheatears and scores of Asian Short-toed Larks. The day ended with a brief sighting of a Mongolian Ground Jay for some, but good views of a pair of Goitered Gazelles provided some compensation.

Our second foray up the mountain still did not produce a Snow Leopard, although this time we only just missed one that had been found by our scouts. We had good views of Bearded and Himalayan Vultures, as well as several Gldenstdt's Redstarts. Small mammals showed well, with good views of Tolai and Mountain Hares, Pallas's Pika, Tarbagan Marmot and Long-tailed Ground Squirrel. In the evening several Siberian Jerboas showed well outside our gers.



Wild Horse by Holger Teichmann

On our final day in the Mongol-Altai we were woken early to news that Snow Leopards had been located on



Mongolian Gazelles by Nigel Redman

Viewing conditions were superb and we were able to observe this rarely seen family without disturbance and at relatively close range. It was without doubt one of the best wildlife experiences for each and every one of us.

Before leaving the Altai, we made a final search for Mongolian Ground Jay, close to the ger camp. It took some searching, but at the very last minute we found a single bird that showed well to everyone as it sheltered from the hot sun beside a small bush. We drove to Khovd to catch a flight back to Ulaanbaatar, and then continued to Hustai National Park.

A full morning in Hustai NP proved to be a great success. Two small family groups of Wild Horse showed well, as did a few Wapiti. Later, we encountered a herd of several hundred Mongolian Gazelles. Birds were less conspicuous, but we had some great raptors including an obliging Saker Falcon and several Amur Falcons. After a long search a Meadow Bunting showed itself, and a Mongolian Lark close to the road gave great views. In the afternoon, we headed east to Gun Galuut, via Ulaanbaatar. At Gun Galuut, we had our first taste of migrant waders with several new species for the trip.

A full day in the Gun Galuut area was very rewarding. The lakes and marshes were teeming with birds, especially waders and wildfowl. More than 20 new species were added to the checklist today, including no fewer than 21



White-naped Cranes and Pallas's Reed Bunting by Holger Teichmann



Little Curlew by Holger Teichmann

White-naped Cranes (including 6 chicks), Black Stork, Swan Goose, a huge flock of Pacific Golden Plovers, Sharp-tailed, Terek and Broad-billed Sandpipers, Pin-tailed Snipe, Pied Wheatear, Blyth's Pipit, Common Rosefinch and Pallas's Reed Bunting. An evening search for Pallas's Cat proved unsuccessful, but we saw a Little Owl instead, and on a night drive back to camp some people managed to see a Corsac Fox.

It was raining on our final morning, but a pre-breakfast excursion produced two small groups of Argali. After breakfast we returned to the lakes where we added several new

species to the list including Long-toed and Red-necked Stints, Citrine Wagtail, Horned Grebe, Baikal Teal, and Great Bustard. Best of all were three Little Curlews which eventually showed well to everyone. In the afternoon we returned to Ulaanbaatar. It had been a truly successful trip. Our top target had given us spectacular views, and the supporting cast of birds and mammals had been first rate too. Late summer visits to Mongolia are surely set to become a permanent fixture in the calendar.

Acknowledgements

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Bird of the trip (as voted by the tour participants):

1. White-naped Crane (18 votes)
2. Demoiselle Crane (15 votes)
3. Little Curlew (14 votes)
4. Swan Goose (9 votes)
5. Pallas's Sandgrouse (8 votes).



Team photo at Jargalant by Nigel Redman

Annotated List of species recorded

Note: The number in brackets at the beginning of each species entry indicates the number of days on the tour that the species was recorded.

Birds (148 species seen)

Nomenclature and taxonomy follow Gill, F., Donsker, D. & Rasmussen, P. (eds). 2023. IOC World Bird List (v13.1). doi: 10.14344/IOC.ML.13.1.

IUCN codes: **CR** = Critically endangered, **EN** = Endangered, **VU** = Vulnerable, **NT** = Near Threatened, **DD** = Data Deficient

Visited Locations

Ulaanbaatar: Tuul River

Mongolian Altai: Khar-Us Lake; Jargalant Mountain (up to 3,250m); Chandmani; Durgun Lake, Kholboo Lake; Khodoo Lake

Hustai National Park

Gun Galuut Nature Reserve

Ducks, Geese and Swans *Anatidae*

Bar-headed Goose

Anser indicus



(3) 8 Durgun Lake 2.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Greylag Goose

Anser anser rubrirostris

(3) 50 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 30 Durgun Lake 2.8 and 40 Kholboo Lake 4.8.

Swan Goose

Anser cygnoides

(2) 2 singles Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Whooper Swan

Cygnus cygnus

(6) 50 en route from Ulgii to Altai Mountains 1.8, 1 Durgun Lake 2.8, 10 Kholboo Lake 4.8 and up to 10 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Common Shelduck

Tadorna tadorna

(3) 20 Kholboo Lake 4.8, 30 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 20 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Ruddy Shelduck

Tadorna ferruginea

(5) 8 en route from Ulgii to Altai Mountains 1.8, 2 Durgun Lake 2.8, 50 Kholboo Lake 4.8 and up to 50 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Baikal Teal

Sibirionetta formosa

(1) 1 female Gun Galuut 10.8.

Garganey

Spatula querquedula

(2) 10 Gun Galuut 9.8, 7 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Northern Shoveler

Spatula clypeata

(4) 8 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 60 Kholboo Lake 4.8, 8 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 10 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Gadwall

Mareca strepera strepera

(2) 6 Khar-Us Lake 1.8 and 20 Kholboo Lake 4.8.

Eurasian Wigeon

Mareca penelope

(1) 15 Kholboo Lake 4.8.

Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos

(4) 8 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 50 Kholboo Lake 4.8 and 50 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Northern Pintail

Anas acuta

(2) 20 Kholboo Lake 4.8 and 3 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Eurasian Teal

Anas crecca

(2) 8 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 20 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Red-crested Pochard

Netta rufina

(3) Large numbers at Khar-Us Lake 1.8, Durgun Lake 2.8 and Kholboo Lake 4.8.

Common Pochard (VU)

Aythya ferina

(6) 1 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, several Durgun Lake 2.8, 2 Kholboo Lake 4.8, and up to 20 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.



Ferruginous Duck (NT)

Aythya nyroca

(1) 2 Durgun Lake 2.8.

Tufted Duck

Aythya fuligula

(4) 3 Kholboo Lake 4.8 and 20 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Common Goldeneye

Bucephala clangula clangula

(3) Up to 120 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Red-breasted Merganser

Mergus serrator

(1) A female with 10 ducklings Durgun Lake 2.8.

White-headed Duck (EN)

Oxyura leucocephala

(2) 20 Khar-Us Lake 1.8 and 1 Khodoo Lake 4.8.

Pheasants and Allies Phasianidae

Altai Snowcock

Tetraogallus altaicus

(2) 25 Jargalant Mountain 3.8 and 1 Jargalant Mountain 5.8.

Chukar Partridge

Alectoris chukar

(2) 5 Jargalant Mountain 2.8 and 10 Jargalant Mountain 6.8.

Swifts Apodidae

Common Swift

Apus apus pekinensis

(11) Small numbers seen every day.

Pacific Swift

Apus pacificus pacificus

(4) A few in Ulaanbaatar 31.7 and 8.8, and about 10 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Bustards Otididae

Great Bustard (VU)

Otis tarda

(1) 1 distant male Gun Galuut 10.8.

Sandgrouse Pteroclididae

Pallas's Sandgrouse

Syrrhaptes paradoxus

(3) 2 en route from Ulgi to Altai Mountains 1.8, about 80 Jargalant Mountain 4.8 and 30 Jargalant Mountain 7.8.

Pigeons and Doves Columbidae

Rock Dove

Columba livia

(8) Frequently seen in towns and villages, especially Ulaanbaatar.

Hill Pigeon

Columba rupestris rupestris

(3) 1 en route from Ulgii to Altai Mountains 1.8, 20 Chandmani 2.8 and 1 Zereg 4.8.

Eurasian Collared Dove

Streptopelia decaocto

(1) 2 Ulaanbaatar (Tuul River) 31.7.

Rails, Crakes and Coots *Rallidae*

Common Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus chloropus

(1) 1 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Eurasian Coot

Fulica atra atra

(5) 2 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 4 Durgun Lake 2.8, 50 Khodoo Lake 4.8, 50 Kholboo Lake 4.8, and up to 30 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Cranes *Gruidae*

White-naped Crane

Antigone vipio

(2) 21 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 4 Gun Galuut 10.8. At Gun Galuut, we observed 7 pairs of adults (two with two chicks and two with a single chick), plus a single adult.

Demoiselle Crane

Grus virgo

(5) 2 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 15 Kholboo Lake 4.8, 3 en route from Hustai NP to Gun Galuut 8.8, 30 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 20 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Grebes *Podicipedidae*

Great Crested Grebe

Podiceps cristatus cristatus

(5) 20 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 15 Durgun Lake 2.8, 10 Khodoo Lake 4.8, 2 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 1 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Horned Grebe

Podiceps auritus auritus

(2) 1 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Black-necked Grebe

Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis

(2) 20 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 10 Gun Galuut 10.8, including several with small chicks.

Stilts and Avocets *Recurvirostridae*

Black-winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

(5) 6 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 10 Durgun Lake 2.8, 50 Kholboo Lake 4.8 and 10 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.



Pied Avocet

Recurvirostra avosetta

(3) 2 singles Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Plovers Charadriidae

Northern Lapwing (NT)

Vanellus vanellus

(5) 4 Durgun Lake 2.8, 20 Khodoo Lake 4.8 and up to 100 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Pacific Golden Plover

Pluvialis fulva

(2) About 300 Gun Galuut 9.8 but only 30 there on 10.8.

Grey Plover

Pluvialis squatarola squatarola

(1) 4 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Little Ringed Plover

Charadrius dubius curonicus

(3) 1 Durgun Lake 2.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Kentish Plover

Charadrius alexandrinus alexandrinus

(2) 2 Durgun Lake 2.8 and 20 Khodoo Lake 4.8.

Greater Sand Plover

Charadrius leschenaultii leschenaultii

(1) About 30 Durgun Lake 2.8.

Sandpipers and Snipes Scolopacidae

Little Curlew

Numenius minutus

(1) 3 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Eurasian Curlew

Numenius arquata orientalis

(1) 6 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Black-tailed Godwit (NT)

Limosa limosa

(4) 2 Durgun Lake 2.8, 1 Kholboo Lake 4.8, 50 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 100 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Ruddy Turnstone

Arenaria interpres interpres

(2) 2 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Ruff

Calidris pugnax

(1) 1 Gun Galuut 8.8.

Broad-billed Sandpiper

Calidris falcinellus

(2) 15 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 16 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (VU)

Calidris acuminata

(2) 6 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 29 Gun Galuut 10.8.



Curlew Sandpiper (NT)

Calidris ferruginea

(2) 4 Gun Galuut 8.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Temminck's Stint

Calidris temminckii

(4) 1 Durgun Lake 2.8, 3 Khodoo Lake 4.8, 3 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 4 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Long-toed Stint

Calidris subminuta

(1) 1 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Red-necked Stint (NT)

Calidris ruficollis

(1) 1 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Asian Dowitcher (NT)

Limnodromus semipalmatus

(1) Two pairs Khodoo Lake 4.8.

Pin-tailed Snipe

Gallinago stenura

(2) 10 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Common Snipe

Gallinago gallinago gallinago

(3) Up to 6 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Terek Sandpiper

Xenus cinereus

(1) 4 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Red-necked Phalarope

Phalaropus lobatus

(3) Up to 6 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Common Sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos

(3) 1 Khodoo Lake 4.8, 2 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 5 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Green Sandpiper

Tringa ochropus

(5) 2 Chandmani 2.8, 1 Khodoo Lake 4.8 and up to 4 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Common Redshank

Tringa totanus ussuriensis

(3) 5 Kholboo Lake 4.8 and 6 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Marsh Sandpiper

Tringa stagnatilis

(2) 12 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 10 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Wood Sandpiper

Tringa glareola

(4) 2 Kholboo Lake 4.8 and up to 60 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Spotted Redshank

Tringa erythropus

(4) 2 Kholboo Lake 4.8 and up to 20 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Common Greenshank

Tringa nebularia

(2) 1 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Gulls and Terns *Laridae*

Black-headed Gull

Chroicocephalus ridibundus

(4) 30 Kholboo Lake 4.8, 6 Khodoo Lake 4.8 and up to 10 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Relict Gull

Ichthyaetus relictus

(1) 1 Khar-Us Lake 1.8.

Pallas's Gull

Ichthyaetus ichthyaetus

(2) 40 Khar-Us Lake 1.8 and 20 Durgun Lake 2.8.

Vega (Mongolian) Gull

Larus vegae mongolicus

(4) 30 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 20 Durgun Lake 2.8, and up to 10 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Gull-billed Tern

Gelochelidon nilotica

(3) 6 Durgun Lake 2.8, 2 Gun Galuut 8.8 and 4 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Caspian Tern

Hydroprogne caspia

(2) 4 Khar-Us Lake 1.8 and 1 Durgun Lake 2.8.

Little Tern

Sternula albifrons albifrons

(1) 3 Durgun Lake 2.8.

Common Tern

Sterna hirundo

(7) 6 Ulaanbaatar (Tuul River) 31.7, 2 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 20 Durgun Lake 2.8, 3 Khodoo Lake 4.8 and up to 6 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Whiskered Tern

Chlidonias hybrida hybrida

(3) 1 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 1 Durgun Lake 2.8 and 6 Khodoo Lake 4.8.

White-winged Tern

Chlidonias leucopterus

(5) 6 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 6 Durgun Lake 2.8, 10 Khodoo Lake 4.8, 10 Kholboo Lake 4.8, at least 100 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 20 Gun Galuut 10.8; many adults still in summer plumage and juveniles too.

Loons (Divers) *Gaviidae*

Black-throated Loon

Gavia arctica arctica

(2) 3 Durgun Lake 2.8 and 2 Khodoo Lake 4.8.

Storks *Ciconiidae*

Black Stork

Ciconia nigra

(1) 1 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Cormorants and Shags *Phalacrocoracidae*

Great Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis

(4) 6 en route from Ulgi to Altai Mountains 1.8, 4 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 10 Durgun Lake 2.8, 2 Khodoo Lake 4.8, 4 Kholboo Lake 4.8 and 1 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Ibises and Spoonbills *Threskiornithidae*

Eurasian Spoonbill

Platalea leucorodia leucorodia

(5) 15 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 7 Durgun Lake 2.8, 8 Kholboo Lake 4.8, 2 Khodoo Lake 4.8 and 8 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Hérons and Bitterns *Ardeidae*

Grey Heron

Ardea cinerea

(5) 6 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 2 Durgun Lake 2.8, 2 Kholboo Lake 4.8, 2 Khodoo Lake 4.8, 30 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Great Egret

Ardea alba alba

(4) 30 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 4 Durgun Lake 2.8, 6 Kholboo Lake 4.8, 4 Khodoo Lake 4.8 and 1 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Pelicans *Pelecanidae*

Dalmatian Pelican (NT)

Pelecanus crispus

(1) 1 distant bird Khar-Us Lake 1.8.

Kites, Hawks and Eagles *Accipitridae*

Bearded Vulture

Gypaetus barbatus barbatus

(3) 1 Jargalant Mountain 3.8, 2 Jargalant Mountain 5.8 and 2 Jargalant Mountain 6.8.

Himalayan Vulture (NT)

Gyps himalayensis

(2) 2 Jargalant Mountain 5.8 and 6.8.

Cinereous Vulture (NT)

Aegypius monachus

(9) Up to 10 per day Jargalant Mountain 2–7.8, 2 Hustai NP 8.8, 15 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Booted Eagle

Hieraaetus pennatus

(1) 1 pale morph Jargalant Mountain 6.8.

Steppe Eagle

Aquila nipalensis nipalensis

(10) 1 Ulaanbaatar (Tuul River) 31.7, 1 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 2 Durgun Lake 2.8, up to 3 Jargalant Mountain 3–7.8, 1 Hustai NP 8.8 and up to 2 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Golden Eagle

Aquila chrysaetos kamtschatica

(7) 1 Ulaanbaatar (Tuul River) 31.7, singles Jargalant Mountain 2–6.8, 2 Hustai NP 8.8 and 1 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus*

(2) 1 Khar-Us Lake 1.8 and 1 Durgun Lake 2.8.

Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus*

(2) 1 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 10.8.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans lineatus*

(11) Commonly seen throughout, with up to 50 birds per day.

Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius*

(4) 3 Durgun Lake 2.8, 1 Jargalant Mountain 2.8, 2 en route from Hustai NP to Gun Galuut 8.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Owls Strigidae

Little Owl *Athene noctua plumipes*

(1) 1 at dusk Gun Galuut 9.8.

Hoopoes Upupidae

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops epops*

(7) 1 Durgun Lake 2.8, 1 Jargalant Mountain 3.8, 1 Khodoo Lake 4.8, 1 Jargalant Mountain 5.8, 1 en route from Hustai NP to Gun Galuut 8.8, 10 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 8 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Falcons Falconidae

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

(5) 2 Jargalant Mountain 4.8, 1 Jargalant Mountain 7.8, 1 Hustai NP 8.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis*

(3) 4 Ulaanbaatar (Tuul River) 31.7, 5 Hustai NP 8.8 and 1 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo subbuteo*

(1) 1 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Saker Falcon (EN) *Falco cherrug*

(5) 2 Jargalant Mountain 3.8, 1 Jargalant Mountain 6.8, 1 Jargalant Mountain 7.8, 1 Hustai NP 8.8 and 1 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Shrikes Laniidae

Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus isabellinus*

(8) 1 Ulgii Airport 1.8, 4 Chandmani 2.8, 1 Jargalant Mountain 3.8, up to 5 Jargalant Mountain 5–7.8, 1 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 8 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Crows and Jays *Corvidae*

Eurasian Magpie

Pica pica

(5) 10 Ulaanbaatar (Tuul River) 31.7, 2 Chandmani 2.8, 4 en route from Hustai NP to Gun Galuut 8.8, 6 Hustai NP 8.8, 6 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 4 en route from Gun Galuut to Ulaanbaatar 10.8.

Mongolian Ground Jay

Podoces hendersoni

(2) 1 Jargalant Mountain 4.8 and 1 Jargalant Mountain 7.8.

Red-billed Chough

Pyrrhonorax pyrrhonorax

(6) 6 Ulaanbaatar 1.8, 4 Jargalant Mountain 6.8, 4 Hustai NP 8.8 and up to 6 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Daurian Jackdaw

Coloeus dauuricus

(3) Several with Rooks at Ulaanbaatar (Tuul River) 31.7, about 300 en route from Hustai NP to Gun Galuut 8.8 and again from Gun Galuut to Ulaanbaatar 10.8.

Rook

Corvus frugilegus pastinator

(4) 100 Ulaanbaatar (Tuul River) 31.7, 100 Hustai NP 8.8 and 20 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Carrion Crow

Corvus corone orientalis

(4) 2 Ulaanbaatar (Tuul River) 31.7, 4 en route from Ulgii to Altai Mountains 1.8, 4 en route from Hustai NP to Gun Galuut 8.8 and 4 en route from Gun Galuut to Ulaanbaatar 10.8.

Northern Raven

Corvus corax kamtschaticus

(10) 6 en route from Ulgii to Altai Mountains 1.8, 4 Durgun Lake 2.8, up to 6 Jargalant Mountain 3–7.8, 4 en route from Hustai NP to Gun Galuut 8.8, 2 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 6 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Bearded Reedling *Panuridae*

Bearded Reedling

Panurus biarmicus russicus

(1) 6 Kholboo Lake 4.8.

Larks *Alaudidae*

Horned Lark

Eremophila alpestris brandti

(9) 20 Durgun Lake 2.8, up to 10 per day Jargalant Mountain 2–7.8, 2 Hustai NP 8.8 and up to 5 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Mongolian Lark

Melanocorypha mongolica

(3) 1 Hustai NP 8.8, 15 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 8 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Asian Short-toed Lark

Alaudala cheleensis

(5) 4 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 10 Durgun Lake 2.8, at least 100 on the plains below Jargalant Mountain 4.8, 2 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 1 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Swallows and Martins *Hirundinidae*

Sand Martin

Riparia riparia

(5) Many at Khar-Us lake 1.8, about 20 with Pale Martins at Durgun Lake 2.8, several with Pale Martins at Khodoo Lake 4.8 and singles at Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Pale Martin

Riparia diluta diluta

(3) At least 1 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, about 30 with Sand Martins at Durgun Lake 2.8 and several with Sand Martins at Khodoo Lake 4.8.

Eurasian Crag Martin

Ptyonoprogne rupestris

(1) 6 Jargalant Mountain 3.8.

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica tytleri

(6) Many at Khar-Us lake 1.8, 10 Chandmani 2.8, 10 Kholboo Lake 4.8, 6 Hustai NP 8.8 and up to 20 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Siberian House Martin

Delichon lagopodum

(9) 20 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 6 Chandmani 2.8, at least 2 Jargalant Mountain 3–6.8 and up to 6 Gun Galuut 8–10.8.

Leaf Warblers *Phylloscopidae*

Sulphur-bellied Warbler

Phylloscopus griseolus

(1) 1 Jargalant Mountain 3.8.

Greenish Warbler

Phylloscopus trochiloides viridanus

(1) 1 Chandmani 2.8.

Reed Warblers and Allies *Acrocephalidae*

Paddyfield Warbler

Acrocephalus agricola

(1) 1 Khodoo Lake 4.8.

Sylviid Babblers *Sylviidae*

Lesser Whitethroat

Curruca curruca

(1) 1 Jargalant Mountain 5.8.

Asian Desert Warbler

Curruca nana

(1) 1 on plain below Jargalant Mountain 4.8, feeding young at the nest.

Starlings *Sturnidae*

Common Starling

Sturnus vulgaris

(1) 5 Khar-Us Lake 1.8.

Chats and Old World Flycatchers *Muscicapidae*

Spotted Flycatcher

Muscicapa striata mongola

(2) 2 Chandmani 2.8 and 1 Jargalant Mountain 5.8.

Black Redstart

Phoenicurus ochruros

(1) 10 Jargalant Mountain 3.8.

Güldenstädt's Redstart

Phoenicurus erythrogastrus grandis

(3) 1 Jargalant Mountain 3.8, 3 Jargalant Mountain 5.8 and 1 Jargalant Mountain 6.8.

Northern Wheatear

Oenanthe oenanthe

(8) 1 en route from Ulgi to Altai Mountains 1.8, 2 Chandmani 2.8, up to 6 Jargalant Mountain 3–6.8, 4 Hustai NP 8.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Isabelline Wheatear

Oenanthe isabellina

(10) 1 Ulaanbaatar 31.7, 2 en route from Ulgi to Altai Mountains 1.8, 6 Durgun Lake 2.8, up to 8 Jargalant Mountain 2–7.8, 2 en route from Hustai NP to Gun Galuut 8.8 and up to 4 Gun Galuut 9–10.8.

Desert Wheatear

Oenanthe deserti deserti

(2) 3 Jargalant Mountain 4.8 and 1 Jargalant Mountain 7.8.

Pied Wheatear

Oenanthe pleschanka

(2) 1 Jargalant Mountain 3.8 and 2 juveniles Gun Galuut 9.8.

Old World Sparrows and Snowfinches *Passeridae*

Rock Sparrow

Petronia petronia brevisrostris

(5) 10 Jargalant Mountain 2.8, 4 Jargalant Mountain 3.8, 12 Jargalant Mountain 6.8, 4 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 10.8.

White-winged Snowfinch

Montifringilla nivalis groumgrzimaili

(3) 3 Jargalant Mountain 3.8, 5 Jargalant Mountain 5.8 and 2 Jargalant Mountain 6.8.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow

Passer montanus

(9) Commonly seen throughout.

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus domesticus

(5) Small numbers seen on several occasions, but much less common than Tree Sparrow.

Accentors *Prunellidae*

Brown Accentor

Prunella fulvescens dahurica

(2) 4 Jargalant Mountain 3.8 and 1 Jargalant Mountain 6.8.

Wagtails and Pipits *Motacillidae*

Western Yellow Wagtail

Motacilla flava

(3) 1 Khar-Us Lake 1.8, 2 Durgun Lake 2.8 and 10 Khodoo Lake 4.8.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail

Motacilla tschutschensis

(2) 4 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Citrine Wagtail

Motacilla citreola

(1) 1 Gun Galuut 10.8.

White Wagtail

Motacilla alba

(3) About 10 at Khodoo Lake 4.8 were the race *personata* (Masked Wagtail). Up to 6 at Gun Galuut 9–10.8 were the race *baicalensis*.

Blyth's Pipit

Anthus godlewskii

(2) Up to 15 per day Gun Galuut 9–10.8; several were feeding young in the nest.

Water Pipit

Anthus spinoletta blakistoni

(2) 1 Jargalant Mountain 3.8 and 1 Jargalant Mountain 5.8.

Finches *Fringillidae*

Mongolian Finch

Bucanetes mongolicus

(5) At least 50 at a small stream on Jargalant Mountain 2.8, and a few others on 3–6.8.

Common Rosefinch

Carpodacus erythrinus

(1) 1 male Gun Galuut 9.8.

Twite

Linaria flavirostris altaica

(2) 9 Jargalant Mountain 2.8 and 1 Jargalant Mountain 3.8.

Buntings *Emberizidae*

Meadow Bunting

Emberiza cioides

(2) 1 seen + 2 heard Hustai NP 8.8 and 3 Gun Galuut 9.8 (including a juvenile).

Pallas's Reed Bunting

Emberiza pallasii

(2) 3 Gun Galuut 9.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 10.8; the latter were carrying food to the nest.

Common Reed Bunting

Emberiza schoeniclus

(1) 1 Khar-Us Lake 1.8.

Mammals (22 species)

Cats Felidae

Snow Leopard (VU)

Panthera uncia

(1) A female with three cubs (about 6 weeks old) at Jargalant Mountain 6.8.

Wolves and Foxes Canidae

Corsac Fox

Vulpes corsac

(1) 1 at night Gun Galuut 9.8.

Red Fox

Vulpes vulpes

(2) 1 Jargalant Mountain 3.8 and 1 Jargalant Mountain 6.8.

Horse and Asses Equidae

Wild Horse (EN)

Equus ferus przewalskii

(1) 12 in two family groups at Hustai NP 8.8.

Deer Cervidae

Eastern Roe Deer

Capreolus pygargus

(1) 1 Hustai NP 8.8.

Wapiti

Cervus canadensis

(1) 3 Hustai NP 8.8.

Antelopes, Sheep and Goats Bovidae

Siberian Ibex (NT)

Capra sibirica

(1) 5 Jargalant Mountain 6.8.

Goitered Gazelle (VU)

Gazella subgutturosa

(3) 1 Jargalant Mountain 1.8, 4 Jargalant Mountain 4.8 and 5 Jargalant Mountain 7.8.

Argali (NT)

Ovis ammon

(1) 12 (in two groups) at Gun Galuut 10.8.

Mongolian Gazelle *Procapra gutturosa*

(2) A herd of about 700 Hustai NP 8.8 and 3 Gun Galuut 10.8.

Saiga (CR) *Saiga tatarica mongolica*

(2) 50 Durgun Lake 2.8 and 1 Jargalant Mountain 7.8.

Rabbits and Hares *Leporidae*

Tolai Hare *Lepus tolai*

(6) Up to 3 per day Jargalant Mountain 3–7.8 and 1 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Mountain Hare *Lepus timidus*

(1) 2 Jargalant Mountain 5.8.

Pikas *Ochotonidae*

Daurian Pika *Ochotona daurica*

(1) 3 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Pallas's Pika *Ochotona pallasii*

(4) Up to 6 per day Jargalant Mountain 2–6.8.

Squirrels *Sciuridae*

Tarbagan Marmot (EN) *Marmota sibirica*

(5) 1 Durgun Lake 2.8, up to 4 Jargalant Mountain 3–6.8 and 15 Hustai NP 8.8.

Long-tailed Ground Squirrel *Urocitellus undulatus*

(5) 1 en route from Ulgi to Altai Mountains 1.8, 4 Jargalant Mountain 5.8, 1 Jargalant Mountain 6.8, 1 Hustai NP 8.8 and 1 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Pallid Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus pallidicauda*

(1) 2 Jargalant Mountain 2.8. This species was formerly lumped with Red-cheeked Ground Squirrel *S. erythrognys*.

Jerboas and Allies *Dipodidae*

Siberian Jerboa *Allactaga sibirica*

(4) Up to 2 Jargalant Mountain 3–5.8 and 2 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Mongolian Three-toed Jerboa *Stylodipus andrewsi*

(1) 2 Jargalant Mountain 4.8.

True Mice and Rats, Gerbils and Allies *Muridae*

Central Midday Jird

Meriones meridianus

(4) Singles at Jargalant Mountain 3–7.8.

Mongolian Jird

Meriones unguiculatus

(1) 1 Gun Galuut 9.8.

Amphibians and Reptiles (3 species)

Siberian Toad

Bufo raddei

(1) At least 4 at Gun Galuut 9.8.

Toad-headed Agama

Phrynocephalus versicolor

(2) At least 6 each day on the plains below Jargalant Mountain on 2.8 and 4.8.

Pallas's Coluber

Elaphe dione

(2) One dead 2.8 and one alive 4.8, both near the ger camp at Jargalant.