Before I started writing this trip report, I just had one goal: to publish it (much) quicker than my last trip report of the Philippines. At the time, despite the urge for an updated all-inclusive report on this archipelago, it took me well over one-and-a-half year to finish it. By the time this trip report will be finished and published online, I hope it will not be over six months (it is...). However, being a perfectionist pur sang and suffering from CANS, this is still a real challenge for me. Moreover, but I choose to (sorry Bas!), I prefer writing on my own - in particular when I did most of the preparation like in the case of both the Philippines and Vietnam. Again, for those having plans to visit Vietnam in the (near) future, I just hope this trip report will be of help in finding all the target species.

Despite I choose writing on my own, I haven’t travelled on my own. Therefore, I would like to thank my travel companions Martijn Hammers, Thomas Lameris and Pieter van Veelen for their pleasant company and excellent birding during those four weeks. For the latter two weeks, we were joined by the just-married couple Bas and Blanca Garcia...in fact, this trip was their delayed honeymoon. Though we differed in our birding skills, experience and knowledge, we still totally enjoyed Vietnam and - again - in the end the birds totally made up for all of those subtle differences.

Hereby, I would like to also thank the following people: Bao Nguyen (owner of Wildtour Co.) for helping us on getting more information on Mt. Ngoc Linh (Golden-winged Laughingthrush) - not in our trip itinerary -, Lo Xo pass and many other places; Simon Mahood for pointing out where and how to find Chestnut-eared and Red-tailed Laughingthrush at Mang Den and some additional information on Black-crowned Barwing; Patrik Åberg and Hans Metheve for their willingness to share some recordings with us; Johannes Fischer for his comments on our itinerary and some target species and the people of Bi Doup Nui Ba NP for helping to arrange climbing Mt. Bi Doup (unfortunately cancelled due to bad weather).
Vietnam has, from a birders’ perspective, gained more and more attraction in the last decade or so due to numerous recent splits and even some discoveries of new species at the end of the 20th century. While most of these endemics are in fact mostly (often hardly) shared with Laos and/or Cambodia, Vietnam still holds eight true country endemics: all Dalat specialties (except Black-headed Parrotbill), White-throated Wren-Babbler and Golden-winged Laughingthrush. However, the number of near-endemics is much higher and currently just above 30. Most likely, subspecies *auricularis* of Golden-throated Barbet will soon be added to that list too (see den Tex, R.J. & Leonard, J.A., 2013). Moreover, to our opinion, the isolated and resident subspecies of Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher (*fuscgularis*) might be a potential split too - based on physical appearance and vocal differences alone (see xeno-canto). Though, for sure, more splits are about to happen in the near-future and the number of Vietnamese (near-)endemics will be growing.

Let’s zoom in a bit on these targets. Next to the Dalat specialties and the more known very range-restricted species like Orange-necked Partridge, Black-crowned Barwing, Vietnamese Cutia, Yellow-billed Nuthatch, Sooty Babbler and another four species of laughingthrushes, other range-restricted species include Germain’s Peacock Pheasant, Red-collared Woodpecker, Red-vented Barbet, both Bar-bellied and Blue-rumped Pitta, White-winged Magpie, Indochinese Green Magpie (or Yellow-breasted Magpie) and Grey-faced Tit Babbler. In the north, some good laughers can be picked up too including Rufous-cheeked, Grey and Red-winged Laughingthrush. So although birding can be hard (see later), the birds are fairly good! Moreover, next to all these goodies, Vietnam has a fine mix of both highland species in central and northern Vietnam (Tonkin, Annam) and lowland species in southern Vietnam (Cochinchina). Vietnam seems to offer both quality and quantity!

However, don’t expect to see as many species as people often record in Thailand. The highest total number of species seen in Vietnam recorded is 436 in 20 days, for Thailand that is 592 in 28 days and - for comparison - 471 in 20 days (and 481 in 18 days). But note Thailand holds no endemics and less goodies compared to most other countries in Southeast-Asia. If you opt for visiting only central and southern Vietnam, like we did, expect to see 350+ species. We saw all possible endemics, except Black-crowned Fulvetta and Mekong Wagtail. Both are rarely missed by others, so maybe it was just bad timing. Of the possible range-restricted species we dipped on the woodpecker, though we didn’t visit Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park in northern Central Annam (the best spot, also for Sooty Babbler and Limestone Leaf-Warbler). To our surprise we recorded both Pygmy Flycatcher and Sulphur-breasted Warbler in South Annam, south of their currently known range. So be aware of surprises to be found elsewhere in Vietnam!
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**Visa**

A visa for Vietnam was easily obtained online via vietnamvisa.govt.vn (US 17$). Once you fill out their online application form, you’ll get a confirmation in your e-mail. After two working days, you’ll get another e-mail including a Visa Approval Letter. For the Visa Stamp Procedure at a Vietnam Airport (Hanoi, Danang of Ho Chi Minh City (hereafter: HCMC)) you’ll need an original passport (valid at least six months after arrival), two passport photos of 04 x 06 cm or similar size, two completed Entry/Exit forms (download link in e-mail), printed Visa Approval Letter (in the attachment) and cash stamp fee. For 01/03 months single entry, you’ll pay US 45$, for 01 month multiple entry (less than 30 days) you’ll pay US 65$ and for 01/03 month multiple entry (more than 30 days) US 95$. All these documents are submitted at the Visa Counter at one of the aforementioned airports. This may take a while, but after submitting it only takes a few minutes before you’ll be having your Vietnam Visa. Make sure you’ll fill out the Entry/Exit forms correctly and don’t try to outsmart them...

**Logistics**

As always, being on a low-budget and independent trip, we travelled mainly using public transport. This worked out quite well for all of the trip, although some trips were much longer than expected. Only to get to Than Thanh using public transport alone might be difficult. Martijn and Thomas tried, taking them 7 hours to get there (ok ok, they found themselves being in the wrong bus) and 3 hours to get away. Furthermore, it seems road constructions are going on continuously all over the country. As a consequence, we had many bumpy rides at the back of a van or bus. It seems hard to tell whether you’ll be travelling by a van or a bus, both pass by frequently. Couple of times, we apparently found ourselves with a suicidal driver driving like a maniac. That would be ok on an empty Route 66, but not in the mountains with dangerous hairpin bends one after another. But hey, we’re all still here...

To get to the actual birding spots from our accommodation, we mostly used taxis. For Lo Xo pass, Mang Canh and Bidoup Nui Ba NP this involves quite some driving (30m+ minutes) before birding starts. For Mang Canh one has to hire a private car in Mang Den to get to the forest of Mang Canh as there are not taxis around here. And, as said, it might be easier to hire a car in HCMC to get to the spot of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper. Only one time the four of us hitchhiked from Yok Don NP to Ban Don waterpark/tourism area. As taxi drivers - mostly Vietnamese - barely speak English, make sure they’ll pick you up at a certain time at a certain spot by writing it down. You’ll have a problem if they don’t turn up, especially at Bidoup Nui Ba NP.
Money / credit cards

The national currency in Vietnam is the Vietnamese Dong (VND). At the time of writing, 1 EUR is close to 23.400 VND and 1 USD is 21.600 VND. In most cases, it’s fairly easy to get some cash money from an ATM though you’ll pay 30.000 VND extra using your MasterCard. Maestro mostly doesn’t work. ATM’s are to be found in most places, except in all national parks (Bach Ma, Yok Don and Cat Tien) so make sure you’ll have enough money. I’m not sure about Mang Den, but for sure there’s one in Kon Tum. In all the other cases we daytripped from a bigger city (Kham Duc, Dalat, Di Linh and HCMC). The only time I believe it’s worth toggling down a bit is when hiring a private car in Mang Den. All taxis had meters, so there was no room for toggling. But there’s is no real need either, it’s still fairly cheap. All prices for transport, accommodation and sometimes meals are mentioned per site in this report.

Language

The official language is Vietnam is - of course - Vietnamese. Some speak English, but even in bigger cities most people barely understand let alone speak English. As a consequence, on many occasions, we found ourselves having problems getting to a birding spot or even to a simple bus station, hotel or whatsoever. In Kham Duc we communicated with our hotel staff via Google Translate. It worked out pretty well, but still... In all national parks we always succeeded to find at least one person speaking some English, but communication problems will still arise. The only time we had no problems at all was at out hotel in Dalat, where the owner speaks English fluently. In Than Thanh it was the worst and we had to cling on to a local tourist guide to help us ordering lunch. So, if you’re an alpha picking up languages pretty soon you might wanna learn some Vietnamese before your trip!

Health

The only required vaccination for Vietnam is yellow fever, but unless you have visited a country in the yellow-fever zone six days prior to your stay in Vietnam, a proof of vaccination is not needed. For other required and/or recommended vaccinations see the Lonely Planet. Regarding malaria there seems to be enormous amount of misinformation and while many parts of Vietnam (particularly city and resort areas) have minimal to no risk of malaria, in most rural areas the risk of contracting the disease is higher. It is strongly advised to take Malarone tablets in the Central Highlands and most of the southeast (except the coastal zones). For the rest of Vietnam’s interior, it is advised to use mosquito-resistant measures. The coastal zones are generally considered to be safe. If you just want to take not risk, take Malarone tablets throughout except the coastal zones. If you are really on the budget, you might consider taking Larium but side-effects can be serious and it’s around 90% effective in Vietnam (Lonely Planet, 2014).
While southern and northern Vietnam are considered to be generally safe, central Vietnam (Central Highlands) still has some off-limits areas. Most of them are not only off-limits for foreigners, but even for Vietnamese. Most famously known is Mt. Ngoc Linh (2598m; the region’s highest mountain), where back in 1996 Golden-winged Laughingthrush has been found by a team of ornithologists. But more to the south, also Mt. Kon Ka Kinh (1748m) is still off-limits too. It was here where Jonathan Eames ringnetted a new laughingthrush back in 1999 now known as Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush. However, it is in this very same region that some minority groups are still living (Banaar and Sodang respectively) and the government strongly discourages contact between minority people and foreigners (Rheindt, 2003).

Back in 2003, only Frank E. Rheindt was lucky to get a local permit to enter the Ngoc Linh area. At the time, though it being declared as a restricted zone for foreigners by national authorities, Vietnam’s local authorities had the last say on who is admitted on their land. Hereafter, regulations has changed and now a permit on national level is required (pers. comm. Fischer, 2014). Thus, despite Rheindt’s hope the area will soon open up, after twelve years it seems it is now even more difficult to enter the Ngoc Linh area. Too bad, as during the ornithological quest back in 1996 also a whole range of new subspecies has been found, like robsoni Golden-breasted Fulvetta, uthaii Stripe-throated Yuhina and cui Rusty-capped Fulvetta - all isolated populations of high altitude species confined to this equally isolated mountain range.

Recently, in the autumn of 2013, Bao Nguyen and Johannes Fischer tried to do climb Mt. Ngoc Linh from the southeast. They started walking to the top just northeast of the village of Dak Kin, along the newly built road 616. However, soon after, they were ‘caught’ by military and were instantly told to get back. Their ‘permission’ by the local policeman meant nothing to them. Despite all this, they recorded Black-crowned Barwing, Red-tailed Laughingthrush and Green Shrike Babbler(!). Locals asked them to join them hunting Crested Argus...

Nevertheless, despite all this, there seems to be a possibility the Ngoc Linh area will be (more) open for the public in the future. On February 8th 2014 Bao Nguyen (owner of Wildtour Co.) saw Golden-winged Laughingthrush and posted a photo on his Facebook quoting: ‘(...) It is not open for foreigner yet, but I have special permit to arrange tour to see it. It is needed about 1 month in advance to apply permission. We will have first tour in early March and many more later. Email me if you need more info’. You’ll start climbing at 900 meters, all the way up to 1800 meters and camp for two nights. So if you might wanna give it a try, you can contact him for more details.
Climate

Ok, it’s rather easy: don’t go in December. Unfortunately, we had no other choice but the weather was horrible... While birders mostly visit this country between November and April (see Cloudbirders), November and December can still be pretty wet particularly in central Vietnam, from Danang to Cuc Phuong NP. Also, rainfall only drops to almost zero in January in the Central Highlands, Yok Don NP, Dalat region and Cat Tien NP. However, on the other hand, November and December might be the best months to visit the northern mountain areas as January till March being described as cool and drizzly (Lonely Plane, 2014). In HCMC and the Mekong Delta the dry season starts in November and you can expect clear skies and sun all day. The best time to go might be between February and March, as January can still be pretty wet and from April onwards temperatures are on the rise, in particular in central Vietnam. In general: the more to the south, the better the weather. And, of course, in high, mountainous areas the weather can always be unexpectedly unpleasant at times.

Without even having being far up north, where other birders have reported windy, foggy and drizzling conditions, we did have our own (un)fair share of bad weather. As a matter of fact, we hardly saw any sun for the first 8 days. During our stay of four days in Bach Ma NP we saw some blue sky and sun only for about half an hour or so. For most of the time we had foggy conditions and a slight drizzle. At times strong winds too. The exact same conditions were found at the Lo Xo pass and Mang Den, making birding quite hard. Although we did managed to see most of our targets, I do believe we dipped on some targets (for example Northern Brown Hornbill) because of the weather. We left Mang Den half a day early to ‘chase’ the sun and headed for Yok Don NP. Dalat region was ok, but our trip to Mt. Bidoup was cancelled due to heavy showers. And again, we found ourselves birding in thick fog, strong winds and a slight drizzle at Mt. Lang Bian an twice at Ho Tuyen Lam. Hereafter, we mostly had good weather throughout the rest of our trip except some typical late afternoon showers at Deo Nui San and Cat Tien NP. Anyway, expect to get wet...
Planning a birding trip to Vietnam involves some difficult decision-making. If you have about a month or more, one could opt to do both the north, the central and the south, but if you have let’s say about 2-3 weeks that’s not really an option. In general, one could distinguish three birding zones: the north (Tonkin and northern Annam), central Annam and south Annam. Cochinchina, the most southern part, is rarely visited by birders. These three birding zones can be visited all together on one trip, but most independent birders will not. However, several tour operators do so (BirdQuest 2014 even in 21 days!) and also Belgium birders Matheve (2010) and Collaerts (2012) did. See their trip reports for more information.

If you do only have about 2-3 weeks, from a birders’ perspective starting in the south might be your best option. Ten days (without travelling) should be enough to cover both Cat Tien NP, Deo Nui San and the Dalat region. While Cat Tien typically holds some Southeast-Asian lowland species and other specialties, both Deo Nui San and Dalat hold most of Vietnams (near-)endemics. If you have over 2 weeks off, consider visiting the Central Highlands: Mang Den / Manh Can (Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush) and Lo Xo pass (Black-crowned Barwing). Both will take you about a day, but involve some travelling time too. If you do have some more time left, one could include Bach Ma NP, Yok Don NP and/or Phong Nha-Ke Bang NP. Reserve a few days for Bach Ma NP, one or two for Yok Don NP and just one day for Phong Nha-Ke Bang NP (holding two real targets: Sooty Babbler and Limestone Leaf Warbler). In the latter case, take a flight to Dong Hoi from HCMC. Please note, there’re only four flights a week. If you want to start in Bach Ma NP, take a flight to Hue (four flights a day). From here, it’s about 4 hours to Phong Nha-Ke Bang NP.

In northern Vietnam, i.e. Tonkin, most birders will visit Cuc Phuong, Ba Vi and Tam Dao (all national parks) as well as Sapa in the extreme north-northwest. Birding can be tough, but rewarding at times. Please note this region can best be visited between October and December, but still the weather in this mountainous area can be quite unpredictable. Stories of heavy showers, fog and sweeping winds are not uncommon. However, this region holds lots of good birds, including some more recent splits like White-throated Wren-Babbler, Manipur Fulvetta and Pale-throated Wren-Babbler. Furthermore, it holds some typical highland species of which most are shared with the higher parts of Myanmar (W,N,E), Thailand (NW) and/or Laos (N) in Southeast-Asia. In the past Spoon-billed Sandpiper has been seen in Xuan Thuy NP near Hanoi, but records date back to 2002(?). Furthermore, an unpredictable low tide can prevent boats to take you to the high tide roost plus thick fog doesn’t help finding the birds. Good luck...
No, if you wanna have a real shot for Spoon-billed Sandpiper, just opt for Than Thanh in the Mekong Delta in Cochinchina. Yes, the region rarely visited by birders. Nonetheless, it was here that - back in 2010 - Bao Nguyen found wintering Spoonies at the end of April. Since then, wintering Spoon-billed Sandpipers have been found here yearly between the start of November and the end of April. Add to this it’s only about a 2-hour drive south from HCMC, several more goodies (Nordmann’s Greenshank, Black-faced Spoonbill) and for sure it will become a more popular birding destination in Vietnam over the years.

Unlike most other birders, we started our trip half-way up north: Bach Ma NP. From here, we birded our way south. We did so, as we expected higher vocal activity of both Bar-bellied and Blue-rumped Pitta by the end of December in Cat Tien NP. In retrospect, I don’t think it’s much of a difference being there early or late December. Starting in HCMC and working your way up north could result in better weather from Dalat northwards (the dry season starting in December), although these mountainous regions - in particular Central Highlands and Bach Ma NP - are said only to be relatively dry from March/April onwards. Up in Tonkin, it’s supposed to be better around this time of the year but still many have encountered bad weather circumstances year round making birding a real challenge (or experience, as you wish...!)

Having said all this, what to expect from birding Vietnam? Well, birding can be quite tough: birds are generally shy and scarce outside national parks. Of course, there are always some birds around but the lack of some culture-related species (crows, sparrows, etc.) in Vietnam was apparent. Although it’s hard to believe, this is mostly the cause of active hunting in this country. Add to this a high deforestation rate and one can imagine birds are scarce and shy. Also flocks move fast and sometimes high up in the canopy, making it extremely hard to get good views. Oh yeah, and all in bad weather conditions of course... but still we enjoyed birding Vietnam :)

NORDMANN’S GREENSHANK
(Tringa guttifer)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Itinerary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 Dec</td>
<td>HCMC</td>
<td>Arrival Ho Chi Minh City (SGN)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2   | 2 Dec| BM   | Flight Ho Chi Minh City (SGN) - Hue (HUI)  
|     |      |      | Travel to Bach Ma NP  
|     |      |      | Birding upper Bach Ma |
| 3   | 3 Dec| BM   | Birding upper/lower Bach Ma |
| 4   | 4 Dec|      |           |
| 5   | 5 Dec| BM   | Birding lower Bach Ma  
|     |      |      | Travel to Kham Duc (via Danang) |
| 6   | 6 Dec| LX   | Birding Lo Xo pass |
| 7   | 7 Dec|      | Travel to Mang Den (via Kon Tum) |
| 8   | 8 Dec| MC   | Birding Manh Canh forest  
| 9   | 9 Dec|      | Travel to Buon Ma Thout |
| 10-12| 10 Dec-12 Dec| YD | Birding Yok Don NP  
|      |      |      | Travel to Dalat |
| 13  | 13 Dec| D   | Birding Ta Nung valley  
|     |      |      | Birding Ho Tuyen Lam |
| 14  | 14 Dec| D   | Birding Mt. Lang Bian |
| 15  | 15 Dec| D   | Birding Bi Doup Nui Ba NP |
| 16  | 16 Dec| D   | Birding Ta Nung valley  
|     |      |      | Birding Ho Tuyen Lam |
| 17  | 17 Dec| D   | Birding Bi Doup Nui Ba NP  
|     |      |      | Travel to Di Linh |
| 18  | 18 Dec| DNS | Birding Deo Nui San  
| 19  | 19 Dec|      | Travel to Cat Tien NP |
| 20  | 20 Dec| CT  | Birding HQ + main road  
|     |      |      | Birding grassland W of HQ |
| 21  | 21 Dec| CT  | Birding Bau Sau trail + Crocodile Lake |
| 22  | 22 Dec| CT  | Birding Heaven’s Rapid + HQ  
|     |      |      | Birding grassland W of HQ |
| 23  | 23 Dec| CT  | Birding HQ + main road  
|     |      |      | Birding grasslands W of HQ |
| 24  | 24 Dec| CT  | Birding HQ + main road  
|     |      |      | Travel to HCMC |
| 25  | 25 Dec| TT  | Than Thanh |
| 26  | 26 Dec| HCMC| Time for some relaxing... |
| 27  | 27 Dec|      |           |
| 28  | 28 Dec| HCMC| Departure Ho Chi Minh City (SGN) |
Bach Ma NP, in central Annam, is located close to the airport of Hue. This national park has been under construction for years and only recently opened for the public again. The entrance of the park (lower Bach Ma) is just above sea-level, while the upper accommodations (upper Bach Ma) are at about 1300m. From road marker 3km at lower Bach Ma it’s 5 km to the famous Pheasant trail (road marker 8km) and another 8 to upper Bach Ma. From here, it’s another 3km to the top of this mountain. A walk from upper to lower Bach Ma will take you about 5 hours. Only the first 8km is broadleaved evergreen forest, the last 5km is mostly secondary scrub. Walking back down saves a lot of money and one covers both high and low altitude species (and for sure will get you Austin’s Brown Hornbill). You have be lucky with the weather - we were not - but otherwise birding should be great.

Please note the weather in Bach Ma NP is far from good most of the times. It’s famous amongst Vietnamese people for its bad weather and December is not the best time to visit this site. We experienced extremely torrential rain and strong winds during our visit, making birding on our first day impossible. During our 2-day visit at upper Bach Ma we birded in fog for most of the time. Our 1-day stay at lower Bach Ma was slightly better, but still we had grey skies and slight drizzle.

Before, Bach Ma NP was the home to two target species: Crested Argus (near-endemic) and Annam Partridge (endemic). With Crested Argus being last heard (as always) back in 2010 and Annam Partridge now being a subspecies of Green-legged Partridge (synonym: Scaly-breasted Partridge), both are no longer real targets. However, still some good birds can be seen in Bach Ma like Indochinese Green Magpie, White-winged Magpie, Red-collared Woodpecker, Indochinese Wren-Babbler (all region endemics) and Ratchet-tailed Treepie. It also holds the isolated and endemic subspecies of Sultan Tit ssp. gayeti and the sure future split of Golden-throated Barbet ssp. auricularis (proposed name: Necklaced barbet. P. auricularis).
Other species which are rarely recorded further south in Vietnam Puff-throated Bulbul, White-gorgeted Flycatcher and Black-throated Laughingthrush. That is also true for the commonly seen Indochinese Yuhina (always in small flocks), formerly the torqueola race of Striated Yuhina, now confined to S China, N & C Vietnam and NE Thailand.

Logistics

From the airport of Hue take a direct taxi to Bach Ma NP (620.000 VND). It will take you about an hour to the parks head quarters at lower Bach Ma and another 40 minutes to the accommodations at upper Bach Ma. This is a winding road uphill. Pay an entrance fee of 40.000 VND per person to enter the park. If you are at upper Bach Ma opt for a walk back to lower Bach Ma (see above). For the transport of our backs we paid only 300.000 VND. To get away from Bach Ma NP, ask the reception at lower Bach Ma to take you to the main road in Cau Hai (45.000 VND/3km), from where buses go south to Danang or north back to Hue (all the way to Hanoi).

Facilities

At upper Bach Ma we stayed at the recently re-opened Kim Giao villa (550.000 VND per double), a few 100m down the road where the ‘village’ starts. You really can’t miss it. The restaurant is located in this sharp bent to the left. Go straight down for the villa. It has kingsize beds, hot water and it’s clean and spacious. Meals are served at the restaurant for around 150.000 VND. It’s ok, not very special. Note meals needs to be pre-arranged and early breakfast is possible. At lower Bach Ma we slept in a 4p-bedroom for only 300.000 VND in total. Not to our surprise, beds are bad and the shower broken (or the pipe was, so no pressure). It has fan though. Food and water can be bought at the canteen left of the entrance gate. Meals cost you about 50.000 VND.

Birding

At upper Bach Ma there are a couple of trails one could follow. From the summit area, a trail starts down to the glasshouse just a few 100m along the main road from the restaurant. It’s said to be overgrown, but it’s not that hard to find. It offers good views of the forest floor including several gullies and this is where we had Short-tailed Scimitar Babbler. Others and us have seen and/or heard this species also along the Rhododendron trail (a 30-minutes walk down from the restaurant), but views here are bad. For the rest, we focused mainly on birding from the newly built main road. We found several flocks here including typical flock species like White-throated Fantail,
Golden Babbler, Grey-headed Canary-Flycatcher, Mountain Fulvetta and Grey-cheeked Warbler. Red-headed Trogon is usually easily found just a few 100 meter down the road from the restaurant. People have seen Silver Pheasant down the slopes here too. The short trail across the Chicken Restaurant (with a pool in front) resulted in Indochinese Green Magpie and Black-throated Laughingthrush. At lower Bach Ma we focused on the track leading west in front of the canteen (left of the reception). Several tracks can be followed and the area can be very wet at times. In the scrub close to some forested areas we found Masked Laughingthrush, in a flock with White-crested Laughingthrush and White-browed Scimitar-Babbler. Note they move quickly and usually stay pretty low in the vegetation!

**Key species**

- **SHORT-TAILED SCIMITAR BABBLER** - One heard-only at the start of the Rhododendron trail, 2 seen and 1 heard-only along the Summit trail [GPS: 16.1985,107.8563] - all on 13/2. Very tape-responsive. Two heard singing down somewhere along the main road walking downhill on 14/2.

- **INDOCHINESE GREEN MAGPIE** - Two shortly seen (mostly heard) along the short trail across the Chicken Restaurant [GPS: 16.1943,107.8627]. Responded to tape, but remained high up in the canopy.

- **WHITE-WINGED MAGPIE** - A flock of 9 birds of the race *xanthomelana* seen in fairly degraded habitat along the main road 2 kilometres up from lower Bach Ma on 5/12 [GPS: 16.2366,107.8658].

- **RATCHET-TAILED TREEPIE** - Up to 4 seen on 3/12.

Really, there is not much to say about this spot in the western Central Highlands except its star bird: Black-crowned Barwing. This bird was discovered only back in 1996 (described in 1999) during two years of ornithological exploration in this previously unsurveyed region of Vietnam. Together with both Golden-winged and Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush they are endemic to the Kon Tum Plateau in the western highlands of Vietnam and three localities in southeastern Laos. Surprisingly it favours scrub and secondary forest along the highway and it is predicted to occur at other localities in this region too.

Regarding the Dak Blo road some things have changed in the recent past. Like some others, we were sent back (no room for discussion) by the border police after some 1.5km up the road. Others have paid $100 per person to bird this road. However, in the past, birders have birded this road without any problems and found good birds here too. Star bird now here is Crested Argus, as it recently dropped out from Bach Ma NP. Most likely, it’s now the only spot to hear this species in Indochina - it’s hardly ever seen. Fortunately, it still can be found at Gunung Tahan in Malaysia though. Another good bird on the Dak Blo road is Red-tailed Laughingthrush - a mindblowing laugher which we unfortunately missed during our stay in Vietnam.

**Logistics**

Coming from Bach Ma, take a bus to Danang (100.000 VND/1h+) and from here a direct private(?) mini-bus to Kham Duc (160.000 VND, paid only 440.000 VND/2-2.5h). It’s a bumpy ride at times and we apparently had a maniacal driver, but we made it to Kham Duc safely. To get to the actual pass we hired a taxi at the Phuoc Son Hotel as the owner also runs a taxi company (1.200.000 VND drop-off and pick-up/35min).
Facilities

We stayed at the Phuoc Son Hotel. It’s right where Kham Duc’s main street forks of to the left. At both corners are hotels, but we found our hotel worth the money (170.000 VND per double). Beds are fine, as is the shower (how water) and the airco. Musquito nets included. Wi-Fi in the rooms. Also worth mentioning is the ATM right across the street and the good restaurant a few 100m down the block off to the left (~80.000 VND per plate). The hotel staff can tell you where to go (with a little help of Google Translate...). At the Lo Xo pass, there is a small restaurant next to the bridge where they simple hate leeches but make good fried noodles.

Birding

The spot for the barwing is near the concrete bridge just north of Mang Khenh (Dak Son) - 35km south of Kham Duc [GPS: 15.2238, 107.7300]. Both north and south of this bridge several trails lead up to the forested mountains tops more to the west. Some have seen Red-tailed Laughingthush here, but we did not. We followed the most distinct trail up a hill just south of the bridge. This trail is quite steep and slippery if wet. It leads right through some cultivation, but expect the birds to be around here anywhere. We found a party of 5 birds after strolling around for about two hours. Listen for their calls; they’re easy to tape-in after. Another 5 birds were found late afternoon on the reed bed just north of the bridge on the east side of the highway. But really, they’re hard to miss. The rocky stream below the bridge is a known stake-out for Plumbeous Water Redstart and we found a pair.

Not being able to bird the Dak Blo road (see above) and still having an afternoon left, we were surprisingly ‘invited’ by a Vietnamese farmer to go up a trail leading up to the mountains east of the highway, just behind the last house on the left side coming from the village [GPS: 15.2076, 107.7354]. First it leads along some agricultural fields on your right side, but then it goes into the forest all the way up to 1260m! Even better, the condition of both the forest and the trail are excellent. At the start of the trail one can go straight or take a left-turn; this trail we walked on the way back to the village. Amongst others we found Great Hornbill, White-winged Magpie (rarely seen here), White-spectacled Warbler ssp oculis, Rufous-winged Fulvetta ssp stepanyani, Red-vented Barbet and a surprise Rufous-tailed Robin giving excellent views. Again, we had some bad luck with the weather higher up...
Key species

- **BLACK-CROWNED BARWING** - Five birds found early morning in the scrub around the (higher) plantations south of the famous bridge on 6/12 [GPS: 15.2225,107.7277] and another 5 found late afternoon next to the main road (east side), a 100m north of the bridge area [GPS: 15.2255,107.7314].

Together with the Lo Xo pass, this is one of the two birding spots in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. Although much of this region is still covered in pristine forest, most of it is off the limits for foreigners. To give an example of its exclusiveness: only back in 2003 a westerner, Frank E. Rheindt, succeeded in getting a permit on national level to explore Mt. Ngic Linh. It’s only here that Golden-winged Laughingthush has been recorded, for the first time back in 1999. Or officially recorded I should say, as it has also been found on Mt. Ngoc Boc by J.C. Eames at a height of 1480m in January 2001. An intriguing observation, as its altitudinal range is set between 2000-2200 in the type description. However, Mahood (pers. comm, 2014) states: ‘It is no great surprise that they occur down to 1,500, since the other species in that species complex (Collared, Malayan, Assam, Silver-cheeked, Chestnut-crowned) all do.’ Unfortunately, since then nobody has returned to Mt. Ngoc Boc and only a few have seen Golden-winged Laugher since its discovery back in the days. See for more details also the subchapter on safety in the general information section of this trip report (page 7).

Ok, back to the Mang Canh plateau. It was here that Mahood and others - finally - easily found Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush between 21-24 April 2010. Before, it was almost exclusively confined to Mt. Kon Ka Kinh where it was found at a height between 1600-1700m by J.C Eames and others in 1999. Since then, it was seen at three other sites of which two involve government-imposed access restrictions (one is Mt. Ngoc Boc). At the third site, along Highway 24, it was seen only in March 2002 and April 2010 (Mahood et al., 2010). Since its discovery at the Mang Canh plateau, its found to be common in evergreen forest above 1200m. However, as this forest patch is within the Kon Plong State Forest Enterprise deforestation is still a serious threat.
Logistics

The closest village to the Mang Canh plateau is Mang Den, from where it’s a 30-minutes’ drive to the forest edge. Transport can be arranged via the owner of the Doi Thong Hotel, 500m south of the actual town. She can arrange a private car for 1,400,000 a day, but we agreed to pay 2,500,000 for two days. To get to the village from Kham Duc, take a bus or mini-bus to Kon Tum (200,000 VND/4.5h incl 30min break) which is 50km southeast of Mang Den. From Kham Duc, take a mini-bus to Mang Den / Kon Plong (50,000 VND/1.5h). Road construction is going on here permanently, so it can be quite a bumpy ride.

Facilities

We stayed at the Doi Thong Hotel, in the touristic area south of Mang Den. We booked two doubles for 300,000 VND each. Rooms are big, clean and modern, but have no airco (only fan) and the beds are quite hard. Bath rooms come with hot water. Dinner cost you around 80,000-140,000 VND. Take away breakfast and lunch can be arranged too and water bottles are available.

Birding

Birding here is easy. In short: you’re coming in from the east. As soon as you enter the forest, the road bends off to the right (north) and this is where the parking is (GPS: 14.6687, 108.2577). From here, there are two roads one could follow; both barely visible on Google Maps. One goes north and one goes south (bends to the left soon after). Unlike the southern road, the road north soon passes through degraded habitat. The southern road however (676) is probably the best, as the evergreen forest is still quite intact and there are several side trails going into the forest. However, continous road side construction is going on and birding from the road can be hindered by earthworks obstructing the view. The best side trail can be found just 450 meter down the road on the right side. Here we easily located two Chestnut-eared Laughingthrushes. Black-hooded Laughingthrush and Short-tailed Scimitar Babbler were also found along this trail. We found the best spot to be the open spot after about 900m down the trail, holding left. For the rest we concentrated on birding along the 676, just randomly trying some side trails. We found several flocks, including goodies like Rufous-faced Warbler (frequently), Yellow-billed Nuthatch (twice) and Ratchet-tailed Treepie (once). Worth mentioning too here are Stripe-breasted Woodpecker, Coral-billed Scimitar Babbler, Yellow-cheeked Tit (frequently), a flock of 8 Silver-breasted Broadbills and the local race gayeti of Sultan Tit. A Green Cochoa was seen briefly by some; perched up high in the canopy.
Following the main road further up north, we ended up getting send back by police(?) after a 3 kilometre’ drive. There seems to be some kind of checking point here where tourist are not allowed to enter the forest (or do some roadside birding). Maybe it’s their power plant they’re constructing? The 676 can also be reached via the other end, as it turned out to be connected to almost directly to the hotel - coming in from the northwest. It’s along this road we found a mixed flock of wintering Vineous-breasted and Chestnut-tailed Starlings on both days. Due to bad weather on the second day, we did some birding south of Mang Den which resulted in a good spot for Blue Pitta [GPS: 14.3338, 108.1632].

Key species

- **CHESTNUT-EARED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** - One heard singing along the trail west of the main road (676) and 1 more heard and seen at the open area at the very end of this same trail on 8/12 [GPS: 14.6607, 108.2538]. One heard singing along another trail a little bit further south on 9/12 [GPS: 14.6401,108.25].
- **BLACK-HOODED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** - One flock of 8 birds found (shortly seen by some) at the same GPS-spot as the CELT on 8/12 and another flock of 5 birds found singing along the trail of the CELT on 9/12. Another 6 bird heard-only on 8/12 at this very same spot.
- **YELLOW-BILLED NUTHATCH** - Two seen in a huge bird flock just right along road 676 on 8/12, where a muddy track forks of to the left [GPS: 14.6617,108.2613]. Two other birds seen along the northern road, seen from the parking [GPS: 14.67,108.2556].
- **RATCHET-TAILED TREEPIE** - Two were seen along the northern road, in the same flock as Yellow-billed Nuthatch on 9/12.

+ other birds of interest seen: *Coral-billed Scimitar-Babbler, Stripe-breasted Woodpecker, *Rufous-faced Warbler, *Green Cochoa, *Yellow-cheeked Tit, Mountain Fulvetta and Sultan Tit
Yok Don, is a rarely visited national park in south Annam. However, every birder travelling from the Central Highlands to Dalat will actually pass Buon Ma Thout (also known as Dak Lak) which is less than an hour to the entrance of the park. The park holds no specific endemics or so, but targets here include Mekong Wagtail, White-rumped Falconet and Black-headed Woodpecker. With the latter being widespread and common, the first two are not and can be easily missed. Only Hanno Stamm reported White-rumped Falconet to be ‘quite common’ here, being there early April. Earlier in the season others have missed it and so did we. Surprisingly we also dipped on Mekong Wagtail, a new species of wagtail only being formerly described in 2001 (Duckworth et al.) and previously only known from extreme S Laos and NE Cambodia. Craig and others have found this species in 2002 right along the Srepok River next to the park’s headquarters. It has also been seen in the Ban Don tourist area up north, but we did not. A local guide told us he also didn’t manage to see them here and presumed it has something to do with a new dam there’re constructing upstream. Just hope for the best...

Still, as it is only dry dipterocarp forest in most birders’ itinerary, the avifauna is unlike the other birding spots. In fact, it is similar to that of northwest Cambodia - bordering the western section of the park. It is also here were both White-shouldered and Giant Ibis have been recorded, as well as White-winged Duck. Unfortunately, this section of the park is closed for visitors. However, new birds come thick and fast. Among others we saw Rufous Treepie, Yellow-footed Green Pigeon, Grey-headed Parakeet, Purple Sunbird, Streak-throated Woodpecker and Jerdon’s Baza - all exclusively seen here. Also some flock species were encountered only here, like Small Minivet, Common Woodshrike and Neglected Nuthatch. Species rarely recorded in Cat Tien NP proved to be common here, like Crested Treeswift and Collared Falconet. Others have seen Yellow-crowned Woodpecker, Rufous-bellied Woodpecker and both Alexandrine and Blossom-headed Parakeet here too.
Logistics

Coming from Kon Tum in the Central Highlands, take a direct bus to Buon Ma Tout (180.000 VND/6h including a 30 minutes’ break). With much of the road being under construction, this can be a bumpy ride. Quite freaky at night sometimes. From BMT take a taxi to the park’s entrance (510.000 VND/1h). This is a good road and it might take you less than one hour but we had a slow driver. On our way back we took a bus back to BMT (20.000 VND/1.5h).

Facilities

In BMT we slept in the Ngoc Hoi Hotel (250.000 VND for a double with double beds). It’s good and clean, but the beds felt like concrete and the hot water didn’t worked. In Yok Don NP we booked two rooms (300.000VND for a double). Rooms are fine and the staff is real nice. Meals are expensive though and we opted to have lunch and dinner just outside the entrance of the park for about 30.000 VND a meal.

Birding

If you opt to stay in Yok Dons headquarters, you’re not allowed to enter the forest on your own. A guide will cost you 300.000 VND for 2 hours and 450.000 VND for 5 hours. That is... according to the price list. Surprisingly we paid less, don’t know why. The appointed (and only) bird guide turned soon out to be useless, although he was nice and his English above average. However, you might better ask for a guard named Ty Truong as he turned out to have an interest in birds and even knows some of the birds. Back to birding...

In short, it’s real simple: the Mekong Wagtail can be found right along the river next to the headquarters or in the Ban Don tourist area (GPS: 12.884, 107.780) which is about 5k north of the headquarters (45 minutes’ walk). We searched in vain for about 2,5 hours. Not much to see here, although we did see our only Golden-crested Myna’s of the trip here. Another good spot for the wagtail is to be found just north of the headquarters, but not to be seen from here (GPS: 12.875, 107.801). All the other aforementioned birds were seen in the forest just across the Srepok River, easily accessed via the bridge just outside the parks’ headquarters. As the forest is open, we had good views of multiple pigeons, barbets and laughers.
Key species

- **NEGLECTED NUTHATCH** - One bird was seen in the dry dipterocarp forest on 11/12 [GPS: 12.8536, 107.7911].
- **BLACK-HEADED WOODPECKER** - Not a real target, but for sure one of the best-looking woodpeckers worldwide and thus still a must-have. Fairly common and up to 3-5 seen together on both 10/12 and 11/12.

Dalat, in south Annam, is an isolated highland plateau holding many endemics. All can be found by visiting just three birding spots which are all conveniently located around Dalat: Ta Nung Valley in the southwest, Ho Tuyen Lam in the south(east) and Mount Lang Bian in the north. All of the regular targets can be found here. Targets are specified below per site. In recent years, this list of targets grew even longer due to some splits. More additions to this list are probably to come in the near-future, like the meridionalis race of Red Crossbill (S Annam), the johnsi race of Black-throated Sunbird (S Annam) and the orientalis race of Blue-winged Minla (S Annam and adjacent extreme E Cambodia). While all can be identified as such in the field, only the crossbill is very much isolated. However, that this argument isn’t always concluding is proved by the split of Blyth’s Shrike-Babbler in 9 species including Dalat Shrike-Babbler following Rheindt & Eaton (2009). Almost like the minla, the shrike-babbler has a very patchy distribution in South-East Asia involving many subspecies being sometimes only marginally different. In the case of the Dalat Shrike-Babbler, diagnostic features are hard to see but it’s still a split by IOC. Proper research on the minla and in particular the crossbill will certainly help splitting these species in the future. Also note the very distinct local races of both Rufous-backed and Black-headed Sibia in this region.

If you want to have a shot at Indochinese Fulvetta, only to be found in NE, SE Laos and C and S Annam, you can arrange a trekking to Mt. Bi Doup. We did arranged this beforehand, but on site it was cancelled due to heavy showers. For more details, see the Vietnam Birding website. Contact via bidouptour@gmail.com. One can also opt to visit Bi Doup Nai Ba, about a 45’ minutes drive northeast of town. Back in November 2010 this site was visited by Peter Schmidt, but apparently no one did ever since. We did, due to the drop-out of our trekking and found this site to be very productive. To our surprise we recorded the local race fuscogularis of Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher and found an out-of-range Pygmy Flycatcher.
Logistics

From the bus station in Buon Ma Thout take a direct van to Dalat (120.000 VND/6h). For the best part of the route the road is pretty bad and it’s - again - a bumpy road one needs to be ‘prepared’ for. From the Dalat bus station, located just a bit out of town, you can take of the numerous taxis in front of the entrance. To our hotel, Hang Nga 1 Hotel, is was only a 5 minutes’ drive (80.000 VND).

Facilities

We stayed in the Hang Nga 1 Hotel, located just outside Dalat’s downtown. We paid 23 USD for a 4p-bedroom (2 kingsize beds) and 12 USD for a standard double. The hotel has good Wi-Fi, hot water and good beds. It’s conveniently located east of Dalat’s city centre. The owner speaks good English and is very willing to help, also early morning. A stay here is highly recommended. Also recommended is the Yofana bar, located just above the market hall. It serves very good coffee, frozen yoghurts and shakes!

Black-headed Sibia (ssp. robinsoni)
Logistics

Getting to Ta Nung Valley is rather easy. Just take the road (south)west of town to Ta Nung. You’ll pass the old airport, turn left and after a few kilometres you’ll find a track left. It used to be signposted on the right side of the road with a sign saying ‘Di Nong Trai’ as referred to in many trip reports, but I didn’t notice. Anyways, in case you have a GPS park at 11.9339 / 108.3760, just after a sharp bent to the left. It will cost you about 10 to 15 minutes and around 200.000 VND.

Birding

From the ‘parking’, you just walk down to the actual valley. In case the gate is closed (most likely it is), you can wake up the people living in the house next to it. They will open the gate and afterward you pay them 20.000 VND a person. Since years, Ta Nung Valley is the best spot to see the endemic Grey-crowned Crocias. They can be easily located by their calls in the morning and hereafter taped-in if far away. We heard/saw them on both mornings. Except for the winding road and the open valley, there aren’t any tracks leading up somewhere. You can follow the stream into the forest which will probably get you not much except the resident Black-backed Forktail.

We saw most of our targets just in and around the open valley. On our first morning we found Vietnamese Greenfinch, Annam Barbet, the Crocias, White-cheeked and Orange-breasted Laughingthrush, Black-headed Parrotbill and both Rufous-backed and Black-headed Sibias! We heard Black-hooded Laughingthrush at the end of the trail into the forest. This is also were we found an Alstroms Warbler. On our second morning we saw the barbet, the crocias and the sibias again, but none of the other targets. We did however had good views of Bay Woodpecker (finally!) and the scarce to uncommon Pintailed Green Pigeon. Note this the best spot to see Indochinese Green Magpie, but we did not see it here.
Key species

- **GREY-CROWNED CROCIAS** - Flocks of 3 and 4 birds seen one 13/12 [GPS: 11.9356, 108.3787] and just 1 bird found singing on 16/12 [GPS: 11.9344, 108.3791].
- **VIETNAMESE GREENFINCH** - Usually not seen here, but 2 seen really well in one of the pine trees along the entrance road to the valley on 13/12.
- **ORANGE-BREASTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** - One heard singing and subsequently seen in the dense bamboo patch down in the valley and one singing a bit higher up on 13/12 [GPS: 11.9352, 108.3792]
- **BLACK-HEADED PARROTBILL** - One seen by some in a flock of White-cheeked Laughingthrushes on 13/12.
- **BLACK-HOODED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** - Heard-only at the end of the trail leading northeast out of the valley into the forest on 13/12 [GPS: 11.937, 108.383].
- **WHITE-CHEEKED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** - A huge flock of about 30-35 birds seen near the bamboo patch down in the valley and another 5 more heard singing in the valley on 13/12.

+ other birds of interest seen: Indochinese Barbet, Alstrom’s Warbler, Mountain Fulvetta (ssp. annamanensis), Grey-cheeked Warbler (HO), *Rufous-backed Sibia, Black-headed Sibia, Black-throated Sunbird (ssp. johnsi), Slender-billed Oriole (rarely seen here), *Pin-tailed Green Pigeon and Bar-backed Partridge.
Logistics

From Ta Nung Valley, it will take you about 30 minutes to the far eastern end of the lake (490.000 VND). Park at the Phuong Nam’s Da Tien restaurant. From here, it is a 20 minutes’ drive back to Dalat (200.000 VND). Note that Ho Tuyen Lam is developing fast, so new accommodations are popping up everywhere and roads now reach further down both sides of the lakes than before. Even Florian Klingels good map (2009) is already outdated, see hannostamm.com/images/trip_reports/Dalat_Yokdon/Birding_at_Tuyen_Lam_Lake[1].pdf

Birding

Most people birding Ho Tuyen Lam will only focus on the known birding spots southeast of the lake. From the Da Tien restaurant follow the trail bordering the lake through pine forest into broadleaved evergreen forest (good for Vietnamese Cutia, Yellow-billed Nuthatch and Indochinese Green Magpie). In the past, this spot could only be reached by boat but nowadays you can walk from the restaurant. Eventually this trail goes up Mt. Quan Du and it is possible to make a loop back the other way. This will take you a day, while the first option (going back the same way) will take you only half a day. Initially we planned to walk the long route, but bad weather prevented us from doing so. See Florian Klingels map for a detailed trail description and GPS-coordinates on this route.

One can also opt to go out west of the Da Tien restaurant, as Klingels proposes in his report on this site. Just follow the red arrows on the trees here. This seems to be good for pine forest specialists (Slender-billed Oriole, Red Crossbill, Chestnut-ventured Nuthatch etc.) but we birded this trail in slight drizzle and only recall Vietnamese Greenfinch being surprisingly common here (up to 11 in one group). I think most of the pine forest specialists can also be seen along the first part of the forementioned trail.
Key species

- **VIETNAMESE GREENFINCH** - Endemic to the Dalat Plateau in S Annam. Regularly encountered during a afternoon stroll in the rain on 16/12, up to 11 seen together [GPS: 11.8793,108.4219]
- **WHITE-CHEEKED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** - Endemic to S Laos, C and S Annam and adjacent extreme E Cambodia. A huge flock of about 35 birds seen near the bamboo patch down in the valley on 13/12 [GPS: 11.8745,108.4213].
- **RED CROSSBILL** - Local race *meridionalis* is confined to the Dalat plateau in S Annam. one heard-only and 1 seen perched in the same tree as 11 Vietnamese Greenfinches on 16/12.

+ other birds of interest seen: Indochinese Cuckooshrike, Slender-billed Oriole, Chestnut-vented Nuthatch, Green-backed Tit, Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon, Blue-winged Minla (ssp. *orientalis*)
Logistics

To get to Mt. Lang Bian, take an early morning taxi to the parking at the bottom of this famous mountain north of town (210.000 VND/20-25 min). The taxi driver might just assume he can drive you up there by himself, but there is a second barrier just around the corner. So, from the parking, arrange a jeepney to bring you (and pick you up) at the start of the summit trail (300.000 VND). Most likely, the place seems desolated but you can just politely wake some people up. Finally, please note you have to pay another fee at the start of the summit trail, as this part of the park seems to belong to another organisation (too).

Birding

As it comes to birding this mountain, it’s again rather easy and straightforward. Just follow the summit trail. Birdwise I don’t think it’s necessary to follow the trail all the way up the summit (like we did) and the last few 100s meters are quite steep, but it’s worth the view. Note birding can be hard at the mountain, with low clouds (fog) and strong winds. Furthermore, it’s pretty hard to get good views of birds here due to the dense foliage. Quite frustrating at times...

After a few kilometres, at the border of pine forest to broadleaved evergreen forest [GPS: 12.0458, 108.4314] there is a more open area to the left of you and shortly after also to the right of you and this is where others have seen huge bird flocks. We did not. There is also an obvious side trail a little but firther to the left and this is where we found a flock of 6 Collared Laughingthrushes. As all laughers, they’re skulky and mostly stay low to the ground. A juvenile was spotted foraging in a fruiting tree along the summit trail too. If you’re only birding Ta Nung Valley and Ho Tuyen Lam (like mist birders do), this is your only proper shot to see this endemic, beautiful laughingthrush.
That also holds for the endemic Black-crowned Fulvetta, a split from Rufous-winged Fulvetta following Collar (2006). Surprisingly we dipped on this species, despite extensive searching both here and Bidoup Nui Ba NP (where is was seen by Peter Schmidt in 2010). Also pay attention the the following species, for which this is the best spot: Dalat Shrike Babbler, Grey-bellied Tesia, Pygmy Wren-Babbler and Ashy-throated Warbler. Vietnamese Cutia is possible here too and so is the crossbill and the greenfinch. We did not see the crossbill nor the greenfinch here. In both cases, Ho Tuyen Lam is a better spot to see these targets.

**Key species**

- **Collared Laughingthrush** - On our 1-day visit on 14/12 2-3 were heard singing along the trail and taped-in successfully (although seen by just one of us), another 1 - a presumed juvenile bird - was seen in a fruiting tree somewhere along the Summit Trail [GPS: 12.0477,108.4385] and a group of 6 were skulking in some dense tangles along the side trail [12.0494,108.4372].
- **Vietnamese Cutia** - A family of three birds (male, female and young) was seen just below the summit [GPS: 12.048,108.4392]
- **Dalat Shrike Babbler** - A single male was seen high up in the canopy of a tree at the start of the steep part to the summit of Mt. Lang Bian. [GPS: 12.0477,108.4387]

Logistics

If you have plans to visit Bidoup Nui Ba NP (so not the mountain, but the national park), arrange a taxi to take you to Suoi Vang - a lake northwest of Dalat. From here, continue driving up north to the point where Peter Schmidt puts ‘Bidoup NP junction’ (see map in his report). From Dalat, it’s a 45 minutes’ drive and cost you about 500,000 VND. It is now even possible to drive to the horseradish plantation, as the whole road is now paved. So there’re no longer a need to arrange a 4w-drive, motorcycle or so. At the time we were there, road construction was still going on.

Birding

This birding spot mainly involves roadside birding, but this can be very rewarding. While some of the forest is already cleared here as part of on-going road construction, there are some patches left still bordering the road. Just from the road we had good views of Black-headed Sibia, Clicking Shrike Babbler and a surprise Pygmy Flycatcher. All in flocks with Mrs. Gould Sunbird, Mountain Fulvetta, Blue-winged Minla, Green-Backed Tit, Fire-breasted Flowerpecker and many more.

Furthermore, there are a couple of trails leading down to some nice forest. The first is the trail eventually leading to Mt. Bidoup that starts right at the aforementioned junction. For the first kilometre or so, it’s nothing special but hereafter it’s broadleaved evergreen forest all along. Unfortunately we had (again) foggy and windy conditions being here, but still managed to had good views of Dalat Shrike Babbler, White-spectacled Warbler and a surprise Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher. Grey-bellied Tesia and Pygmy Wren-Babbler were heard singing frequently, but never seen. A good spot might be GPS 12.10251600 / 108.38582700. At the start of the trail we found our only Eurasian Woodcock of the trip.
The second spot here is just a little bit further down the road, where Schmidt puts 'start of narrow trail'. Probably due to road construction (there was a large pile of sand here) the narrow trail was hard to find but once you manage it's worth the quite steep trail down the valley. The trail finally leads to a more open spot near a small stream (White-tailed Robin) and then further up the opposite mountain side. As there is hardly any undergrowth here, this is a good spot to play the tape for Grey-bellied Tesia. We had magical views of this great bird here. Also found our first pair of Clicking Shrike-Babbler here.

A third spot is the horseradish plantation mentioned by Schmidt too. Note that the steep track down leads through some boring ‘forest’ first and then slowly into (some) broadleaved evergreen forest. We found this site to be very birdy, despite it being only for a small stretch along the track. Amongst others we recorded White-spectacled Warbler, Yellow-billed Nuthatch and Maroon Oriole. This is where Schmidt saw Black-crowned Fulvetta. Unfortunately we dipped on this bird, but we managed to tick off a final target: the always-soon-to-be-split Red Crossbill. It was found in the top of a pine tree along the track going down at GPS 11.9783 / 108.4155.

**Key species**

- **COLLARED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** - One heard singing deep down in the valley along the road [GPS: 12.1035,108.3761]
- **DALAT SHRIKE-BABBLER** - Two males were seen in some low bushes at the top of the hill along the trail towards the Bidoup NP on 17/12 [GPS: 12.1031,108.3883]
- **YELLOW-BILLED NUTHATCH** - One bird seen bad by two of us, along the trail leading into some horseradish plantations [GPS: 12.10922600, 108.37204500]
- **VIETNAMESE GREENFINCH** - Two single birds were seen really well in some pine trees along the main road on 18/12.
- **RED CROSSBILL** - Two flying-over and later found perched in a pine tree on 15/12 [GPS: 12.1048,108.3773]

Deo Nui San, a mountain pass located just a 30’ minutes drive south of Di Linh, is good birding and holds numerous goodies. As it is conveniently located between Dalat and Cat Tien, it should be on every birders’ visit to Vietnam. Despite the fact that all the targets can be seen at the Dalat plateau too and (thus) it holds no targets on its own, it’s still a good back-up for species easily missed around Dalat. For example, both Black-hooded and Orange-breasted Laughingthrush are fairly common here and we found Vietnamese Cutia, Vietnamese Greenfinch, Black-headed Parrotbill, Indochinese Green Magpie and Dalat Shrike-Babbler. Ahead of current taxonomy, all the three endemic barbets can be seen here too. In spring (March-April), it’s a good spot to hear and see Green Cochoa. In the recent past it also proved to be good night birding with sightings of Hodgson’s Frogmouth and Mountain Scops Owl.

**Logistics**

From Dalat’s bus station take a bus to Ho Chi Minh City and make sure you get out in Di Linh (120.000 VND/<1,5h). It does not seem to have a regular bus station or alike, so make sure you’ll get off that bus before it’s too late….yes, we know. From the village, arrange an early morning taxi to take you the pass (318.000 VND/<30min).

**Facilities**

We stayed in the Long Hotel (200.000 VND/double), located just a few kilometres east of the crossing south to Deo Nui San. The beds are ok and the hotel has good Wi-Fi, hot water and a fan. A bakery is just found around the corner (turn left-left if you get out of the hotel). Restaurants are to be found all along the main road (which is basically the village). It might be a better option to stay closer to the turn-off to Deo Nui San in the centre of town.
Birding

Birding is concentrated along the main road, mostly between kmp 78 and 76. On our first day we were overwhelmed by so many birds in huge flock waves. On our second day it was less busy with birds, but still we found it to be more birdy than all of the other visited birding spots during our stay in Vietnam. Shortly after arrival we started picking up new birds like Asian Emerald Cuckoo, Swinhoe’s Minivet and a surprise Sulphur-breasted Warbler. This last species shouldn’t be here, but we recorded one on both days. During the few hours spent along this road (before entering the trail behind the tea stall, see below), we further recorded Indochinese Green Magpie, Black-chinned Yuhina, Spot-throated Babbler (finally!) and Vietnamese Greenfinch. A calling Rusty-naped Pitta was heard by some of us. On our second day of roadside birding here we added Long-tailed Broadbill, Yellow-vented Green Pigeon (together with Wedge-tailed) and Clicking Shrike-Babbler. Plus a huge flock of White-cheeked Laughingthrush (around 20) and Black-headed Parrotbills (around 40). Keep checking the sky for Mountain Hawk-Eagle. Grey Nightjars forage above the road at dusk.

The trail behind the tea stall mentioned in older trip reports is now partly overgrown, but with the help of a GPS one will manage to overcome this problem. In fact, it’s only the upper steep part of the trail behind the tea stall that is overgrown; the rest of the trail is actually quite good! The trail starts at about GPS: 11.4474 / 108.0630 (an indistinct and steep trail near some bamboo patches) and takes you up to a more open area, where a wide track slowly descends north. At a certain point you’ll have to take a fairly indistinct trail to the left (GPS: 11.5927, 108.0785), from where you’ll soon find yourself lost in some high bushes, vines and tangles. Don’t panic, stay calm and just try to reach GPS-point 11.4482 / 108.0680, where a narrow and steep trail takes you down to the tea stall. Birding this triangular loop is good, as we found several goodies here including both Black-hooded and Orange-breasted Laugher, Vietnamese Cutia, Dalat Shrike-Babbler and Black-headed Parrotbill. This latter species we found to be mostly in flocks with White-cheeked Laughingthrush and Red-billed Scimitar-Babbler. Of further interest were a male Clicking Shrike-Babbler, a party of Black-headed Sibia’s and a group of Long-tailed Broadbills. On our second visit we only birded the lower part of the trail, right behind the tea stall. We found Indochinese Green Magpie here as well as Streaked Wren Babbler. Spotted Forktail can be found in stream behind the tea stall, but we did not.
Key species

- **VIETNAMESE CUTIA** - A party of three birds found in a large tree at the ‘back’ of the trail on 18/12 [GPS: 11.443,108.0726]
- **INDOCHINESE GREEN MAGPIE** - Three birds were seen crossing the main road and calling loudly on 18/12 and another 2 were mostly heard and only seen by one of us behind the tea stall on 19/2 [GPS: 11.4474,108.0662]
- **DALAT SHRIKE-BABBLER** - A pair found in a flock at the ‘back’ of the triangular loop on 18/12.
- **BLACK-HEADED PARROTBILL** - Two huge groups found: 20+ seen at the ‘back’ of the trail on 18/2 and another 40 were seen along the main road on 19/12.
- **ORANGE-BREASTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** - Two heard singing along the trail on 18/12 and another 1 heard singing from the main road on 19/2.
- **BLACK-HOODED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** - Daily heard-only along both main road and trail, but 7 seen along the trail on 18/12 and another two seen very well on 19/12 along a small trail near the main road [GPS: 11.4536,108.061]
- **WHITE-CHEEKED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** - Three parties of up to 20 birds together along the main road on both days.
- **VIETNAMESE GREENFINCH** - Two single birds perched and singing on power lines on 18/12.

CAT TIEN NP
20-24 dec

Logistics

To get to Cat Tien NP from Di Linh, like we did, we arranged a taxi to take us all the way to the river across the park's headquarters (1,780,000 VND/3.5h > 1 hour delay). However, it wasn’t easy as our driver was very reluctant to drive us all the way there for some reason. In Ma Da Gui, he turned right (DT 721) towards Da Teh up north. After being persistent, we turned back to DMG and succeeded to get on the right track - the road paralleling DT 721 for a while and then slowly bending off to the west. Most birders will go there by motorbike from DMG, but it seems possible to get there by car too. It might even be easier to get here from Phu Trung, south of DMG, as this was all paved road for the latter part. For only 120,000 VND per person direct transport to HCMH can be arranged at the park’s reception. Please note this took us a staggering 5 hours, unlike most other trip reports (up to 2.5 hours only).

Facilities

If on the budget one can sleep at the dorm, but they come with no mattress (80,000 VND). If budget allows, one could easily share a bungalow (480,000 VND). They come with two double beds and hot water. Wi-Fi at the reception and in the canteen. Bikes can be rent here too: 30,000 VND per hour and 150,000 VND for a full day. A car from the park can drop you off and pick you up at the start of the Bau Sau trail (to Crocodile Lake) for 500,000 VND.

Birding

Birding here involves basically three locations: the headquarters, the famous Bau Sau trail / Crocodile Lake and the grasslands west of the HQ. We spent four mornings birding the HQ (including Heaven’s Rapid for half a morning), three subsequent afternoons birding the grasslands and one full day walking the Bau Sau trail and birding Crocodile Lake.
Let’s kick off with the parks head quarters. Birding the HQ itself can be productive and we found a surprise Indochinese Cuckoo-shrike here, as well as Collared Falconet, Green-eared Barbet and van Hasselt’s Sunbird. Mangrove Pitta is said to be heard and sometimes seen at the southern end of the HQ. Tickell’s Blue Flycatcher and Black-and-Red Broadbill are right along the river and can be seen while having breakfast or dinner in the canteen. Watch the monkeys! At night, owling can be productive here too. Collared Scops Owl is behind the restaurant and easily taped-in. Brown Boobook can be found anywhere at the HQ. Some have seen Blyth’s Frogmouth here.

From the parks head quarters, a paved path goes up north along which is good birding. We saw Orange-breasted Trogon, Black-and-red Broadbill, Black Baza, Blue-breasted Bee-eater and Heart-spotted Woodpecker just by walking this road up and down. The dead tree at GPS 11.4275 / 107.4293 is fairly attractive for birds and we noted Lesser Yellownape, Common Flameback, Laced Woodpecker, Red-breasted Parakeet, Vernal Hanging-Parrot and the bee-eater all in that single tree. Flocks here can be huge and mostly include Great Iora, Bronzed Drongo, Swinhoe’s Minivet and alike. Both here and at the HQ itself Racket-tailed Treepies are easily found.

If one continues to follow the road, past the lodge on the right, a track forks off to the right at about GPS 11.2621 / 107.2535. This track is called Heaven’s Rapid. The large patches of bamboo are supposed to hold the near-endemic Orange-necked Partridge and Pale-headed Woodpecker, but according to a local guide we spoke to there are simply no longer here. The partridge is no longer present in Cat Tien NP and can better be done in Than Pu forest (southeast of the national park). However, here it is mostly heard-only and still can be missed. As for Pale-headed Woodpecker, the best spot is now past the Bau Sau trail. Here, a large patch of bamboo is still supposed to hold the woodpecker but we didn’t try. The only bird of interest we found to be here was a surprise Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike (rarely seen here, like Indochinese). The more open area at the start usually holds some green pigeons.

An extensive network of trails is located at the western side along the road. The network of trails can best be entered via GPS point 11.429 / 107.429. Soon after one enters the forest, one can go either left or right. As it is kind of a loop, it’s not much of a difference. Several side-trails can be taken, but some of them seem to be a dead end. The one that forks off behind the huge tree (GPS: 11.4284, 107.4275) one will see after going left, leads backs to the HQ. As for the other trails, it’s just trial-and-error. I believe the good birds can be found anywhere along these trails. They include Germain’s Peacock-Pheasant, Bar-bellied Pitta and the enigmatic Grey-faced Tit-
Babbler. Less good, but worth a view are Banded Kingfisher and Banded Broadbill. Note Bar-bellied Pitta is just common here, as it along the Bau Sau trail (see below). Randomly playing the tape, sometimes results in 3-4 birds responding. Must be one of the most commonest pittas for sure. Some record Blue-rumped Pitta here too. Green-legged Partridge, by some known as Scaly-breasted Partridge, are heard calling everywhere.

Now let’s focus on the second birding spot; the Bau Sau trail and Crocodile Lake. Well, it’s all fairly easy. Arrange a car at the reception of the HQ and ask to be dropped off and picked up at the start of this trail (GPS: 11.4600, 107.3744). Be early, as the road will certainly always get you Siamese Fireback foraging along/at the road. We had one on the way there and another two on the way back. In Spring, even displaying Germain’s Peacock-Pheasant is possible. At GPS-point 11.4458, 107.3862, 7k from the parks HQ, there’s a real nice pond where Painted Stork, Woolly-necked Stork and Lesser Adjutant can all be present early morning. From here, it’s about 2k further down the road where the actual trail start.

The trail is really straightforward and all the birds can be seen from here. Be early, as soon after the first noisy Vietnamese with their loud music will come to let you stand frustrating aside the trail. Been there, done that. Back to the birds. Again, Bar-bellied Pitta is common with multiple birds responding at times. We heard Blue-rumped Pitta on our way back around 1k before the start of the trail. We just randomly played the tape here as it seemed a little bit better (more undergrowth). Change your tactics: don’t wait to tape it in (it will never come), but try to slowly approach it. Bar-bellied walks in, Blue-rumped sits still. At least, that’s what they told us... Most people also will see Germain’s Peacock-Pheasant here as well as Grey-faced Tit-Babbler. We also found both here. Other birds of ‘interest’ were a pair of Black-and-buff Woodpecker, two single Banded Kingfisher singing, a surprising Pale-footed Bush Warbler and a small party of Greater Flamebacks in the mangroves near the lake. Green-legged Partridge is calling everywhere. However, birding can be slow here at times...

The Crocodile Lake is the final station of the Bau Sau trail and most birders will spent most of the afternoon here. For lunch, noodle soup can be ordered. The beautiful lake can get you lots of surprises, ranging from waterfowl and fish-eagles to even an Amur Falcon (van der Spek, 2010). It is a good spot to look for fly-by Great Hornbills too. Out on the lake one could find Lesser Whistling Duck, Yellow Bittern and Watercock, but we didn’t find any. We recorded Bronze-winged Jacana, Purple Swamphen and Red-wattled Lapwing. Grey-headed Fish Eagle, Wooly-necked Stork and Lesser Adjutant flew overhead.
Last but not least I will come to the third spot: the grasslands west of the parks head quarters. From the HQ, one can either opt to walk there, hire a bike at the reception or opt for a car to drop you off and pick you up. Based on our experiences, opt for the latter two options. It's a long walk and the main target (Green Peafowl) might already been gone by the time you are there. Moreover the first few kilometres will probably get you not much... although we did record Indochinese Cuckoo-shrike, Lesser Adjutant (flying past) and White-crested Laughingthrush here. Anyways, no real targets. Only after 3.3k, just past the house on the right, it becomes more interesting. Typical open country species are present, like Blue-tailed Bee-eater (up to 15 seen together), Indian Roller and Oriental Dollarbird. Red Turtle Dove is abundant (250+). Watch for Orange-breasted Green Pigeon in the savannah-like trees. Both Great-eared and Long-tailed Nightjar are seen flying overhead here at dusk.

Spent most of your time checking the fields between tower two (GPS: 11.4047, 107.3915) and the start of the forested area. Or, maybe better, past this ‘forest’ at the third tower (see below). Amongst the many Red-wattled Lapwings, these fields hold Red Junglefowl, Chinese Francolin and - mostly - Green Peafowl. They usually are quite shy, so the best tactic might be to let everyone check just one field at a time and somehow inform the others when a birds start foraging here. In between the fields are clumps of reed or alike, holding Lesser Coucal, Stejneger’s Stonechat, Pied Bushchat and both Plain and Yellow-bellied Prinia. Also keep checking the groups of parakeets flying by regularly. Standing on the tower, we found Blossom-headed Parakeet (on both days). The needletails flying over regularly involve both Brown-backed and Silver-backed Needletail.

The third tower can be found just past the forested area (with Emerald Dove) near tower two. This last tower overlooks a more swampy area on the right where Green Peafowl comes out in the open around late afternoon. Watch for them in the forest edge. As this spot is likely to be far less sensitive to disturbance than the small fields near the second tower, it is probably better to opt for this third tower first. By the way, the first tower is located quite far from the road near the first house on the right after 3.3k from the HQ.
Key species

- **GERMAIN’S PEACOCK-PHEASANT** - One shortly seen by some of us along the Bau Sau trail [GPS: 11.4297,107.4275] and two more were seen along the trails near the HQ.
- **BAR-BELLED PITTA** - Surprisingly common at both the trails near the HQ and the Bau Sau trail. Responds very well to taping and randomly taping can result in multiple birds responding. Comes into tape. Recorded on all days (20 in total), with up to 8 birds seen/heard on 21/2.
- **BLUE-RUMPED PITTA** - Much less common than Barbelled Pitta and much less likely to be seen. Responds to taping, but doesn't come into tape. Only 1-2 heard-only along the Bau Sau trail on 21/2 [GPS: 11.4554,107.368]
- **GREY-FACED TIT-BABBLER** - Takes good lighting conditions and close distance to confirm determination. Three birds seen in a group along the Bau Sau trail on 21/12 [GPS: 11.4559,107.368], 1 seen along the trails near the HQ on 22/12 and 3 more seen here at 24/12.
- **GREEN PEAFOWL** - One flushed from one of the fields west of tower 2 on 20/12, 1 singing and 1 seen shortly perched on a branch in the forest here on 22/12 [GPS: 11.4059,107.3875] and another 5 (1 adult male/4 immature males) seen from tower 3 on 23/12 [GPS:
- **PAINTED STORK** - Two seen at the pool en-route to the Bau Sau Trail on 21/12 (GPS in text).
- **LESSER ADJUDANT** - One seen in flight on our way to the western grasslands and 1 flying-over near Crocodile Lake.

Than Thanh, a small village in the Go Cang district, is one of numerous villages in the Mekong Delta. For years, this region has rarely been visited by birders. However since Bao Nguyen (owner of Wildtour Co.) found wintering Spoon-billed Sandpipers out on the mudflats just south of here back in April 2010, birders have started to include it in their itinerary too. Ok ok, most world birders have seen this species in Pak Thale near Bangkok, but also well within 10 meters? Probably not. Add to this other targets like the endangered Nordmann’s Greenshank and Black-faced Spoonbill and for sure it’s well worth the little over 2 hour’ drive south of Ho Chi Minh City.

Logistics

If you’re staying in the Pham Ngu Lao Area in HCMC, one can book a car via Visa Sun. Their office is located along eponymous D Pham Ngu Lao. At first they were reluctant about the time (04.00), but finally they were willing to take us there for a total of 2,000.000 VND. From here, it takes you about 2,5 hour to get to the village of Than Thanh. Park at the parking near the beach on your left side, walk back and turn left. This road parallels the coastline southwards. After about 2km [GPS: 10.2775, 106.7657], take a small path left to the beach. Take off your shoes here or at the beach. At the beach, don’t go out on the mudflats directly (unless you like knee-high mud), but stay between the ‘fields’ by following the poles and fishing nets. The locals also do (and like if you do) and the mud here is harder which makes walking easier.

Facilities

Than Thanh can be easily daytripped from HCMC and there is no actual need to stay overnight. We enjoyed breakfast at the market hall and had lunch at the beach club behind the parking. People speaking English are even more rare here than elsewhere in Vietnam...
Birding

Birding Than Thanh is easy once you get at the beach. See logistics on how to get there. Except for some interesting waders next to the main target, like Nordmann’s Greenshank, Asian Dowitcher or Black-faced Spoonbill, there isn’t much to see. Both Greater and Lesser Sand Plover are common, but we also recorded Broad-billed Sandpiper (around 25), Curlew Sandpiper (around 25), Eurasian Curlew (around 25), Terek Sandpiper (around 20), Bar-tailed Godwit (around 10), Kentish Plover ssp. dealbatus (around 10), Common Greenshank (around 10), Common and Green Sandpiper (5), Grey Plover (3), Sanderling (2), Great Knot (2) and Curlew (2).

Next to this waders, we recorded many new species for our trip list: Little Cormorant (common), Collared Kingfisher (common), Freckle-breasted Woodpecker and Plain-backed Sparrow (next to the parking), Yellow-vented Bulbul (very common), Golden-bellied Gerygone (several heard and one seen; note their shama-like song), Malayan Pied Fantail, Yellow Bittern and Asian Koel. Both Yellow-bellied and Plain Prinia are common along the road to the beach (know their songs) and we encountered Plaintive Cuckoo here twice. Gull-billed Terns and Whiskered Terns are common, but we also recorded Caspian Tern and Little Tern during two visits. Just a little bit further down south we found a group of White-shouldered Starlings, our second last new species for all of us (the last one being a surprise Great Myna in downtown HCMC).

Some last tips on how to find both Spoon-billed Sandpiper and Nordmann’s Greenshank in Than Thanh. The first one can be easily picked out in a flock of stints by their larger size, their light greyish plumage and their foraging. As they forage faster than the accompanying Red-necked Stints, it can be a clue. Their spoon-shaped bill can be hard to pick up at a distance and be aware of stints with mud on their bill! The second target, Nordmann’s, can be picked out by looking for their blunt and stocky bill, their short tibia and unstreaked greyish upperparts. Good luck!

Key species

- **SPOON-BILLED SANDPIPER** - A total of three were found on the mudflats south of the village [GPS: 10.2696,106.7672]
- **NORDMANN’S GREENSHANK** - One single bird was found on the same mudflats [GPS: 10.2701,106.7744]
- Other birds of interest seen: **Great Knot**, **White-shouldered Starling**, **Kentish Plover** (ssp. dealbatus)
**Prenotes**

During our stay in C & S Vietnam from December 2nd to December 26th we recorded 347 species of which 5 true endemics: Collared and Orange-breasted Laughingthrush, Dalat Srike Babbler, Vietnamese Greenfinch and Grey-crowned Crocia. We dipped on Black-crowned Fulvetta, another Dalat Plateau-only endemic species. However, we recorded another 10 species that are highly-localised in Vietnam and adjacent S Laos and E Cambodia: Germain’s Peacock-Pheasant, Vietnamese Cutia, Black-headed Parrotbill, Yellow-billed Nuthatch, Black-crowned Barwing, Indochinese Wren-Babbler and another 3 laughingthrushes - White-cheeked, Black-hooded and Chestnut-eared*. We dipped on Orange-necked Partridge, only to be found in extreme E Cambodia too. Less highly localised in (mostly) Indochina, but for sure near-endemics include - amongst about 15 others - Annam Barbet, White-winged Magpie and Indochinese Green Magpie.

In the trip list below, endemic species are listed with a capital E (Endemic), while near-endemics are listed as NE (Near-Endemic). Also, if not monotypic, all subspecies are listed below (+). In some cases, like Little Ringed Plover, multiple subspecies are recognized but both occur at the same time in Vietnam and therefore are not mentioned below. In case of an endemic (e) or near-endemic (ne) subspecies, also its occurrence in Vietnam or the region is indicated. In case of an endemic (E) or near-endemic (NE), further information on its occurrence and alike is given below. The information is mostly based on the (digital) Handbook of the Birds of the World, sometimes further complemented by information of the factsheets of Birdlife International on this species. Furthermore, though the English and scientific names follow IOC, the subdivision in families is based on ’A Field Guide to the Birds of South-East Asia’ (Robson, 2008) - this allows for a more detailed subdivision.

Last but not least it is good to know (almost) all our observations can be easily accessed via www.observado.org (> users > Sjoerd Radstaak > observations). Put from 02-12-2014 to 26-12-2014 as dates et voila.

*All except one highly localized species (Yellow-billed Nuthatch) are treated in the trip list as endemic and followed by a capitol E, as they have a very restricted range in Indochina only.

HO = heard-only (species)
| **Francolins & partridges** | **1** Chinese Francolin (*Francolinus pintadeanus*)  
|                          | + phayrei  
| **2** Rufous-throated Partridge (*Arborophila rufogularis*) - HO | e  
|                          | + guttata: NE Laos and C Vietnam  
|                          | + annamensis: SC Vietnam  
| **3** Bar-backed Partridge (*Arborophila brunneopectus*) - HO | e  
|                          | + henrici: N & C Vietnam  
|                          | + albigula: SC Vietnam  
| **4** Green-legged Partridge (*Arborophila chloropus*) | e  
|                          | + cognacqi: S Vietnam  
|                          | + merlini: interior of C Vietnam  
| **Junglefowl & pheasants** | **5** Red Junglefowl (*Gallus gallus*)  
| **6** Siamese Fireback (*Lophura diardi*)  
| **7** Germain’s Peacock-Pheasant (*Polyplectron germaini*) | E  
|                          | S Vietnam in SC Vietnam and extreme E Cambodia (part of the Da Lat Plateau). Near-threatened, mostly by hunting (for food) and habitat destruction by agriculture.  
| **8** Green Peafowl (*Pavo muticus*)  
|                          | + imperator  
|                          | In present days confined to Thailand (c 300), S China (800-1100), Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia (no recent numbers, but probably seizable remaining populations) and a remnant population at Java (1200+). Extinct in most of Thailand and India and totally extinct in Malaysia and Bangladesh. In Vietnam locally common until late 1970s/early 1980s, but numbers dropped dramatically due to hunting for meat and feathers, collection of eggs and chicks and habitat loss and degradation. In Cat Tien NP numbers increased since 1991, now 4.7 calling birds/km². Endangered.  
| **Grebes** | **9** Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)  
|                          | + poggei  
| **Storks** | **10** Painted Stork (*Mycteria leucocephala*)  
|                          | Once common and widespread in most of its large range in SE Asia and the Indian subcontinent, but now mostly rare in much of its range except India, Sri Lanka and Cambodia. Regional stronghold (5000 pairs) in SE Asia at Prek Toal in the Tonle Sap Lake (Cambodia). Near-threatened due to hunting, drainage and pollution.  
|                          | **11** Woolly-necked Stork (*Ciconia episcopus*)  
|                          | + episcopus  
|                          | **12** Lesser Adjutant (*Leptoptilos javanicus*)  
|                          | Patchy distribution throughout the Indian subcontinent, SE Asia, Greater Sundas, Indonesia and Bali. Substantial populations only in India (c 2000 pairs) and Cambodia (c 1500-3500 pairs; 600 at Tonle Sap Lake). Extinct in China. Considered to be vulnerable due to hunting, drainage and pollution.  
| **Heron & egrets** | **13** Striated Heron (*Butorides striata*)  
|                          | + javanica  
| **14** Chinese Pond Heron (*Ardeola bacchus*) |
15 Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)  
   + jouyi

16 Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*)  
   + manilensis

17 [Eastern] Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)  
   + modesta

**Cormorants**

18 Little Cormorant (*Microcarbo niger*)

**Osprey**

19 Western Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)  
   + haliaetus

**Hawks, eagles & allies**

20 Jerdon’s Baza (*Aviceda jerdoni*)  
   + jerdoni

21 Black Baza (*Aviceda leuphotes*)  
   + syama

22 Crested Serpent Eagle (*Spilornis cheela*)  
   + burmanicus

23 Crested Goshawk (*Accipiter trivirgatus*)  
   + indicus

24 Shikra (*Accipiter badius*)  
   + poliopsis

25 Besra ssp affinis (*Accipiter virgatus*)  
   + affinis

26 Black Eagle (*Ictinaetus malaiensis*)  
   + malaiensis

27 Grey-headed Fish Eagle (*Haliaeetus ichthyaetus*)

28 Crested Honey Buzzard (*Pernis ptilorhynchus*)  
   + orientalis / ruficollis

29 Changeable Hawk-Eagle (*Nisaetus cirrhatus*)  
   + limnaeetus

30 Mountain Hawk-Eagle (*Nisaetus nipalensis*)  
   + nipalensis

31 Collared Falconet (*Microhierax caerulescens*)  
   + burmanicus

32 Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)  
   + perpallidus / interstinctus
Rails, crakes, gallinules & crakes

33 Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*)
   + viridis

34 Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)
   + chloropus

Pluvialis plovers

35 Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

Stilts & avocets

36 Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)

Lapwings & allies

37 Red-wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*)
   + atronuchalis ('Black-necked Lapwing')

Charadrius plovers and allies

38 Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*)

39 Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)
   + dealbatus
   This subspecies of Kentish Plover has previously been believed to be a separate species known as White-faced Plover (*C. daelbatus*), but is now treated as being a subspecies of Kentish Plover. It breeds probably in S China and winters further south to Vietnam, Gulf of Thailand, Malay Peninsula and Sumatra.

40 Lesser Sand Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*)
   + atrifrons / schaeferi

41 Greater Sand Plover (*Charadrius leschenaultii*)
   + leschenaultii

Jacanas

42 Bronze-winged Jacana (*Metopidius indicus*)

Woodcocks

43 Eurasian Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*)

Godwits, dowitchers, curlews, sandpipers and allies

44 Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)
   + menzbieri / baueri

45 Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)
   + orientalis

46 Nordmann’s Greenshank (*Tringa guttifer*)

47 Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*)

48 Terek Sandpiper (*Xenus cinereus*)

49 Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)

Calidris sandpipers and allies

50 Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)

51 Red-necked Stint (*Calidris ruficollis*)

52 Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*)
53 Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*)

54 Broad-billed Sandpiper (*Limicola falcinellus*)
   + sibirica

**Noddies & terns**

55 Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*)
   + affinis

56 Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*)

57 Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*)
   + javanicus

**Typical pigeons & doves**

58 Red Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia tranquebarica*)
   + humilis

59 Barred Cuckoo-Dove (*Macropygia unchall*)
   + minor

60 Emerald Dove (*Chalcophaps indica*)
   + indica

61 Peaceful Dove (*Geopelia placida*)

**Green pigeons, fruit-doves, imperial pigeons and allies**

62 Thick-billed Green Pigeon (*Treron curvirostra*)
   + nipalensis

63 Pin-tailed Green Pigeon (*Treron apicauda*)
   + lowei ('Lowe’s Green Pigeon'): mountains of W, NW and NE Thailand, C Laos and C Vietnam

64 Yellow-vented Green Pigeon (*Treron seimundi*)
   + modestus: see below
   Confined to most of Vietnam, N & S Laos and remnant populations in W, NW and SE Thailand (uncommon) as well as Malay Peninsula (ssp.seimundi, rare).

65 Green Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula aenea*)
   + sylvatica

66 Mountain Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula badia*)
   + griseicapilla

67 Spotted Dove (*Spilopelia chinensis*)
   + tigrina

68 Orange-breasted Green Pigeon (*Treron bicinctus*)
   + bicinctus

69 Ashy-headed Green Pigeon (*Treron phayrei*)
   + phayrei
70  Yellow-footed Green Pigeon \( (Treron phoenicopterus) \) ne
+ annamensis: E Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and S Vietnam

71  Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon \( (Treron sphenurus) \) e
+ delacouri: C & S Annam

**Hanging parrots**

72  Vernal Hanging Parrot \( (Loriculus vernalis) \) + vernalis

**Parrots & parakeets**

73  Grey-headed Parakeet \( (Psittacula finschii) \)

74  Blossom-headed Parakeet \( (Psittacula roseata) \) + juneae

75  Red-breasted Parakeet \( (Psittacula alexandri) \) + fasciata

**Coucals**

76  Greater Coucal \( (Centropus sinensis) \) + intermedius

77  Lesser Coucal \( (Centropus bengalensis) \) + bengalensis

**Malkohas and allies**

78  Green-billed Malkoha \( (Phaenicophaeus tristis) \) + tristis

**Old World Cuckoos**

79  Asian Emerald Cuckoo \( (Chrysococcyx maculatus) \)

80  Violet Cuckoo \( (Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus) \) - HO + xanthorhynchus

81  Banded Bay Cuckoo \( (Cacomantis sonneratii) \) + sonneratii

82  Plaintive Cuckoo \( (Cacomantis merulinus) \) + querulus

83  Indian Cuckoo \( (Cuculus micropterus) \)

84  Large Hawk-Cuckoo \( (Hierococcyx sparverioides) \)

85  Hodgson's Hawk-Cuckoo \( (Hierococcyx nisicolor) \) - HO

86  Asian Koel \( (Eudynamys scolopaceus) \) + chinensis

87  Fork-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo \( (Surniculus dicruroides) \) + dicruroides

**Typical owls**

88  Mountain Scops-Owl \( (Otus spilocephalus) \) - HO + siamensis
89 Brown Wood Owl (*Strix leptogrammica*) - HO + laotiana: S Laos, C Vietnam
ne

90 Collared Owlet (*Glaucidium brodiei*) - HO + brodiei

91 Asian Barred Owlet (*Glaucidium cuculoides*) + deignani: SE Thailand, Cambodia and S Vietnam
ne

92 Brown Hawk-Owl (*Ninox scutulata*) + burmanica

93 Collared Scops Owl (*Otus lettia*) + lettia

**Typical nightjars**

94 Grey Nightjar (*Caprimulgus jotaka*) + jotaka

95 Large-tailed Nightjar (*Caprimulgus macrurus*) + bimaculatus

**Eared nightjars**

96 Great Eared Nightjar (*Lyncornis macrotis*) + cerviniceps

**Treeswifts**

97 Crested Treeswift (*Hemiprocne coronata*)

**Typical swifts**

98 Silver-backed Needletail (*Hirundapus cochinichensis*)

99 Brown-backed Needletail (*Hirundapus giganteus*) + indicus

100 Asian Palm Swift (*Cypsiurus balasiensis*) + infumatus

101 House Swift (*Apus nipalensis*) + nipalensis

102 Germain’s Swiftlet (*Aerodramus germani*) + germani

**Trogons**

103 Orange-breasted Trogon (*Harpactes oreskios*) + stellae

104 Red-headed Trogon (*Harpactes erythrocephalus*) + annamensis: NE Thailand and S Indochina
ne

**Rollers**

105 Indian Roller (*Coracias benghalensis*) + affinis

106 Oriental Dollarbird (*Eurystomus orientalis*) + cyanicollis / orientalis
Larger kingfishers
107 Banded Kingfisher (*Lacedo pulchella*)
   + amabilis
108 Stork-billed Kingfisher (*Pelargopsis capensis*)
   + burmanica
109 White-throated Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*)
   + perpulchra
110 Black-capped Kingfisher (*Halcyon pileata*)
111 Collared Kingfisher (*Todiramphus chloris*)
   + armstrongi

Smaller kingfishers
112 Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)
   + bengalensis

Bee-eaters
113 Blue-bearded Bee-eater (*Nyctyornis athertoni*)
   + athertoni
114 Little Green Bee-eater (*Merops orientalis*)
   + ferrugeiceps
115 Blue-tailed Bee-eater (*Merops philippinus*)
   + javanicus
116 Chestnut-headed Bee-eater (*Merops leschenaulti*)
   + leschenaulti

Hornbills
117 Oriental Pied Hornbill (*Anthracoceros albirostris*)
   + albirostris
118 Great Hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*)

Asian barbets
119 Red-vented Barbet (*Megalaima lagrandieri*)
   + lagrandieri: S Laos, E Cambodia and S Vietnam
   Confined to Vietnam, N & S Laos and E Cambodia.
120 Lineated Barbet (*Megalaima lineata*)
   + hodgsoni
121 Green-eared Barbet (*Megalaima faiosticta*)
   + faiosticta
122 Golden-throated Barbet (*Megalaima franklinii*)
   + auricularis: SE Laos and S Vietnam
   This distinct subspecies is a proposed split based on molecular grounds (deep level of
divergence), supported by morphological differences: yellow extending down
throat onto upper breast, with much more pronounced narrow blackish upper
breastband than seen in other taxa, with a bluish lower border; blackish-flecked
blue-tinged vs plain greyish-white ear-coverts and lower submoustachial area
name: Necklaced Barbet.
123 Blue-eared Barbet (*Megalaima duvaucelii*)
   + orientalis

124 Coppersmith Barbet (*Megalaima haemacephala*)
   + indica

125 Indochinese Barbet (*Megalaima annamensis*)    NE

**Piculets**

126 Speckled Piculet (*Picumnus innominatus*)
   + malayorum

127 White-browed Piculet (*Sasia ochracea*)
   + ochracea

**Typical woodpeckers**

128 Grey-capped Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos canicapillus*)
   + delacouri: SE Thailand, Cambodia and S Vietnam

129 Stripe-breasted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos atratus*)
   + vietnamensis: Vietnam

130 White-bellied Woodpecker (*Dryocopus javensis*)
   + feddeni

131 Lesser Yellownape (*Picus chlorolophus*)
   + annamensis: SE Thailand to S Vietnam

132 Laced Woodpecker (*Picus vittatus*)

133 Streak-throated Woodpecker (*Picus xanthopygaeus*)
   Note: HBW states 'few records from Indochina, where current status uncertain'. I
   was able to find one other recent sightings online (Jan-Feb 2014) in Cat Tien NP,
   but it seems to be very uncommon in Vietnam at least.

134 Black-headed Woodpecker (*Picus erythropygius*)
   + erythropygius

135 Grey-headed Woodpecker (*Picus canus*)
   + hessei

136 Common Flameback (*Dinopium javanense*)
   + intermedium

137 Bay Woodpecker (*Blythipicus pyrrothotis*)
   + annamensis: S Vietnam

138 Black-and-buff Woodpecker (*Meiglyptes jugularis*)

139 Heart-spotted Woodpecker (*Hemicircus canente*)

140 Great Slaty Woodpecker (*Mulleripicus pulverulentus*)
   + harterti
| 141 Greater Yellownape (*Chrysophlegma flavinucha*) | ne + pierrei: SE Thailand to S Vietnam |
| 142 Greater Flameback (*Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus*) | + guttacristatus |

### Typical broadbills

| 143 Black-and-red Broadbill (*Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchos*) | + malaccensis |
| 144 Long-tailed Broadbill (*Psarisomus dalhousiae*) | e + divinus: S Annam |
| 145 Silver-breasted Broadbill (*Serilophus lunatus*) | + yet remains unresolved, most likely atretus or alphobus (or a new undescribed subspecies) |
| 146 Banded Broadbill (*Eurylaimus javanicus*) | + pallidus |

### Pittas

| 147 Blue-rumped Pitta (*Hydrornis soror*) | NE - HO + soror: C & S Annam and Cochinchina |
| Confined to S China, Hainan, SE Thailand, C Laos, SW Cambodia and all of Vietnam except W Tonkin. Patchy distribution results in 5 subspecies of which 3 occur in Vietnam. Tonkinensis in C Tonkin, petersi in N Annam and nominate soror. |
| 148 Bar-bellied Pitta (*Hydrornis elliotii*) | NE Endemic to extreme E and SE Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. Until 1988 thought to be extremely rare with few reported, but ever since turned out to be common in most of its range except Thailand (hardly ever seen). |
| 149 Rusty-naped Pitta (*Hydrornis oatesi*) | ne - HO + bolovenensis: S Laos and S Annam |
| 150 Blue Pitta (*Hydrornis cyaneus*) | ne - HO + willoughbyi: C Laos to S Annam |

### Gerygones and allies

| 151 Golden-bellied Gerygone (*Gerygone sulphurea*) | + sulphurea |

### Flycatcher-shrikes, woodshrikes and philentomas

| 152 Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike (*Hemipus picatus*) | + picatus |
| 153 Common Woodshrike (*Tephrodornis pondicerianus*) | ne + orientis: Cambodia and S Vietnam |
| 154 Large Woodshrike (*Tephrodornis virgatus*) | ne + mekongensis: SE Thailand to S Vietnam |

### Woodswallows

| 155 Ashy Woodswallow (*Artamus fuscus*) |

### Ioras

| 156 Common Iora (*Aegithina tiphia*) | ne + cambodiana: SE Thailand, Cambodia and S Vietnam |
Cuckooshrikes, trillers, minivets and allies

157 Great Iora (*Aegithina lafresnayei*)
   + xanthotis: Cambodia and S Vietnam

158 Large Cuckooshrike (*Coracina macei*)
   + siamensis

159 Indochinese Cuckooshrike (*Coracina polioptera*)
   + indochinensis

160 Black-winged Cuckooshrike (*Coracina melaschistos*)

161 Swinhoe’s Minivet (*Pericrocotus cantonensis*)
   Sometimes also known as Brown-rumped Minivet

162 Ashy Minivet (*Pericrocotus divaricatus*)

163 Small Minivet (*Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*)
   + sacerdos: Cambodia and S Vietnam

164 Grey-chinned Minivet (*Pericrocotus solaris*)
   + deignani: S Laos and C & S Annam

165 Long-tailed Minivet (*Pericrocotus ethologus*)
   + annamensis: S Annam

166 Scarlet Minivet (*Pericrocotus speciosus*)
   + semiruber

Shrikes

167 Brown Shrike (*Lanius cristatus*)
   + superciliosus

168 Burmese Shrike (*Lanius collurioide*)
   + nigricapillus: S Vietnam

169 Long-tailed Shrike (*Lanius schach*)
   + schach

Shrike-babblers, White-bellied Erpornis & allies

170 Dalat Shrike-babbler (*Pteruthius annamensis*)
   E Endemic to the Dalat plateau in S Annam. Split from White-browed Shrike-Babbler, as proposed by Rheindt and Eaton (2009). The species shows a high degree of genetic distinctiveness from all other taxa and vocal distinctiveness from its nearest neighbour aeraltus. However, they also acknowledge more sampling is needed (Insipp, T.P et al, 2010). Morphological differences are smaller: the male has no black tips in tertials, is paler below (clear white in some views, see photo) and darker grey above than aeraltus. The female is less buffy below and has much more extensively chestnut on tertials. Both sexes have smaller white tips on primaries than other taxa.

171 Clicking Shrike-babbler (*Pteruthius intermedius*)

172 White-bellied Erpornis (*Erpornis zantholeuca*)
   + sordida: E Thailand to S Indochina
173 Blyth’s Shrike-babbler (*Pteruthius aeralatus*)
+ ricketti

**Orioles and allies**

174 Slender-billed Oriole (*Oriolus tenuirostris*)
+ invisus: S Annam

175 Black-naped Oriole (*Oriolus chinensis*)
+ diffusus

176 Black-hooded Oriole (*Oriolus xanthornus*)
+ xanthornus

177 Maroon Oriole (*Oriolus traillii*)
+ robinsoni: S Laos and S Vietnam

178 Black Drongo (*Dicrurus macrocercus*)
+ cathoecus / thai(?)

179 Ashy Drongo (*Dicrurus leucophaeus*)
+ leucogenis: grey morph
+ bondi (resident)

180 Bronzed Drongo (*Dicrurus aeneus*)
+ aeneus

181 Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo (*Dicrurus remifer*)
+ peracensis

182 Hair-crested Drongo (*Dicrurus hottentottus*)
+ hottentottus

183 Greater Racket-tailed Drongo (*Dicrurus paradiseus*)
+ rangoonensis
+ paradiseus

**Fantails**

184 White-throated Fantail (*Rhipidura albicollis*)
+ cinerascens: S Indochina

**Monarchs, paradise-Flycatchers and allies**

185 Black-naped Monarch (*Hypothymis azurea*)
+ styani

**Crows, nutcrackers, jays, treepies and allies**

186 Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*)
+ leucotis

187 White-winged Magpie (*Urocissa whiteheadi*)
+ xanthomelana
Confined to S China, Tonkin, N & C Annam and N & C Laos.

188 Indochinese Green Magpie (*Cissa hypoleuca*)
+ chauleti: C Annam
+ hypoleuca
Confined to Vietnam (except W Tonkin), S & C China, C & S Laos and SE Thailand (very rare and localised). Also known as Yellow-breasted Magpie.
Orioles and allies

189 Rufous Treepie (*Dendrocitta vagabunda*)
   + sakeratensis

190 Racket-tailed Treepie (*Crypsirina temia*)

191 Ratchet-tailed Treepie (*Temnurus temnurus*)
   NE
   Confined to Tonkin, N & C Annam, N Cochinchina, extreme S Myanmar and adjacent
   Thailand and C Laos.

192 Large-billed Crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*)
   + colonorum

Canary Flycatchers and allies

193 Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher (*Culicicapa ceylonensis*)
   + calochrysea

Typical tits

194 Green-backed Tit (*Parus monticolus*)
   + legendrei: S Annam (Dalat plateau)

195 Yellow-cheeked Tit (*Machlolophus spilonotus*)
   + basileus: endemic to S Laos and C & S Annam

196 Sultan Tit (*Melanochlora sultanea*)
   + gayeti: C Annam

197 Cinereous Tit (*Parus cinereus*)
   + templorum

Bulbuls

198 Black-headed Bulbul (*Pycnonotus atriceps*)
   + atriceps

199 Black-crested Bulbul (*Pycnonotus flaviventris*)
   + vantynei
   Subspecies *johnsoni* (red throat) supposedly in S Indochina, but we only recorded
   *vantynei* in S Annam.

200 Red-whiskered Bulbul (*Pycnonotus jocosus*)
   + pattani

201 Sooty-headed Bulbul (*Pycnonotus aurigaster*)
   + dolichurus: C Vietnam
   + germani: SE Thailand and S Indochina

202 Stripe-throated Bulbul (*Pycnonotus finlaysoni*)
   + eous

203 Flavescent Bulbul (*Pycnonotus flavescens*)
   + sordidus: S Laos and S Vietnam

204 Yellow-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus goiavier*)
   + jambu
205 Streak-eared Bulbul (*Pycnonotus blanfordi*)
   + conradi

206 Puff-throated Bulbul (*Alophoixus pallidus*)
   e
   + annamensis: C Annam

207 Ochraceous Bulbul (*Alophoixus ochraceus*)
   e
   + hallae: S Vietnam

208 Grey-eyed Bulbul (*Iole propinqua*)
   ne
   + simulator: SE Thailand, Cambodia, S Laos and S Annam

209 Ashy Bulbul (*Hemixos flavala*)
   ne
   + remotus: S Laos, S Annam and SE Cambodia.
   Please note this subspecies is shown way to dull in the Robson Field Guide!

210 Black Bulbul (*Hypsipetes leucocephalus*)
   + concolor (resident)
   + leucothorax (wintering)
   Both resident and wintering populations in mixed flocks. Also called Himalayan Black Bulbul.

211 Mountain Bulbul (*Ixos mcclellandii*)
   e
   + griseiventer: S Annam
   *Similis* is supposedly in N Indochina (including C Annam?), but in retrospect we believe not to have seen this rather conspicuous subspecies.

Martins, swallows and allies

212 Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*)
   + ijimae

213 Asian House-Martin (*Delichon dasypus*)
   + dasypus

214 Red-rumped Swallow (*Cecropis daurica*)
   + daurica / japonica

**Abroscopus** warblers, Mountain Tailorbird, *Cettia* bush-warblers, tesias and allies

215 Grey-bellied Tesia (*Tesia cyaniventer*)

216 Asian Stubtail (*Urosphena squameiceps*)

217 Rufous-faced Warbler (*Abroscopus albogularis*)
   + fulvifacies

218 Yellow-bellied Warbler (*Abroscopus superciliaris*)
   e
   + euthymus: Vietnam

219 Mountain Tailorbird (*Phyllergates cuculatus*)
   + coronatus

220 Pale-footed Bush Warbler (*Urosphena pallidipes*)
   + laurentei
Long-tailed tits

Black-throated Tit (*Aegithalos concinnus*)
+ annamensis: S Laos, C & S Annam and adjacent Cambodia

Seicercus & Phylloscopus warblers

Dusky Warbler (*Phylloscopus fuscatus*)

Sulphur-breasted Warbler (*Phylloscopus ricketti*)
Supposedly a year-round resident in C Annam, but no records found in S Annam (2 seen at both days at Deo Nui San). The newly described Limestone Leaf Warbler (*P. calciatili*) not safely excluded here, but only in broadleaved evergreen forest on limestone. Currently only known from Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park in northern C Annam and unlikely(?) to turn up outside limestone crops.

Radde’s Warbler (*Phylloscopus schwarzi*)

Ashy-throated Warbler (*Phylloscopus maculipennis*)
+ maculipennis

Arctic Warbler (*Phylloscopus borealis*)
+ borealis

Two-barred Warbler (*Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*)

Pale-legged Leaf-Warbler (*Phylloscopus tenellipes*)

Blyth’s Leaf-Warbler (*Phylloscopus reguloides*)
+ ticehursti: S Annam (Dalat Plateau)

White-spectacled Warbler (*Seicercus affinis*)
+ affinis

Grey-cheeked Warbler (*Seicercus poliogenys*)

Chestnut-crowned Warbler (*Seicercus castaniceps*)
+ sinensis (?)
+ annamensis: S Vietnam (Dalat Plateau)
Individuals recorded in C Annam presumably ssp. sinensis, recorded as south as N Annam according to HBW / IOC.

Alström’s Warbler (*Seicercus soror*)

Kloss’s Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus ogilviegranti*)
+ klossi: S Indochina

Acrocephalus warblers

Oriental Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus orientalis*)

Cisticolas, tailorbirds, prinias and allies

Hill Prinia (*Prinia superciliaris*)
+ klossi: S Laos, C & S Annam, N Cochinchina

Rufescent Prinia (*Prinia rufescens*)
+ dalatensis: SC & S Vietnam

Yellow-bellied Prinia (*Prinia flaviventris*)
+ delacouri
239 Plain Prinia (*Prinia inornata*)
+ herberti

240 Common Tailorbird (*Orthotomus sutorius*)
+ maculicollis

241 Dark-necked Tailorbird (*Orthotomus atrogularis*)
+ nitidus

**Scimitar Babblers**

242 Large Scimitar Babbler (*Pomatorhinus hypoleucos*)
+ brevirostris: S Indochina

243 White-browed Scimitar Babbler (*P. schisticeps*)
+ humilis
+ annamensis: E Cambodia, S Annam and N Indochina

244 Red-billed Scimitar Babbler (*P. ochraceiceps*)
+ alius
Also called Orange-billed Scimitar Babbler by some authors.

245 Coral-billed Scimitar Babbler (*P. ferruginosus*)
+ dickinsoni: endemic to C Annam and S Laos

**Stachyris babblers**

246 Grey-throated Babbler (*Stachyris nigriceps*)
+ rileyi: S Indochina

247 Chestnut-capped Babbler (*Timalia pileata*)
+ dictator

**Tit-Babblers**

248 Grey-faced Tit-Babbler (*Macronus kelleyi*)
Endemic to C & S Laos, E Cambodia and SE Tonkin S to N Cochinchina.

249 Pin-striped Tit-Babbler (*Macronus gularis*)
+ kinneari: C Annam
+ versuricola: E Cambodia, S Annam and Cochinchina

**Stachyridopsis babblers**

250 Rufous-capped Babbler (*Stachyridopsis ruficeps*)
+ pagana: S Laos, C & S Annam

251 Golden Babbler (*Stachyridopsis chrysaea*)
+ aurata

**Parrotbills**

252 Black-headed Parrotbill (*Psittiparus margaritae*)

**White-eyes**

253 Oriental White-eye (*Zosterops palpebrosus*)
An intriguing sighting of several birds in the Central Highlands thought to be this species, though it nearest breeding grounds are to be found in NW Vietnam (HBW / IOC). Unfortunately no pictures were taken, but extensive yellow on forehead and yellowish ventral stripe exclude Japanese White-eye (*Z. japonicus*). This latter species has its non-breeding grounds reaching from SE China to S Thailand and C Indochina.
Yuhinas

254 Black-chinned Yuhina (Yuhina nigrimenta) + intermedia

255 Indochinese Yuhina (Yuhina torqueola) Split from Striated Yuhina (Y. castaniceps) following Collar (2006). Also called Chestnut-collared Yuhina by some authors, for example Robson (2008).

Fairy-bluebirds

256 Asian Fairy-bluebird (Irena puella) + puella

Nuthatches

257 Chestnut-vented Nuthatch (Sitta nagaensis) + grisiventris

258 Velvet-fronted Nuthatch (Sitta frontalis) + frontalis

259 Yellow-billed Nuthatch (Sitta solangiae) NE + fortior: SE Laos, C & S Annam (Dalat Plateau) Confined to NW Tonkin, C & S Annam, adjacent SE Laos and Hainan Island (S China). Race in C Annam and adjacent SE Laos only recently discovered and presumed race fortior - as in S Annam.

260 Burmese Nuthatch (Sitta neglecta) Split from Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch by Rasmussen & Anderton in 2005, also known as Neglected Nuthatch.

Mynas, starlings and allies

261 Golden-crested Myna (Ampeliceps coronatus)

262 Hill Myna (Gracula religiosa) + intermedia

263 Great Myna (Acridotheres grandis) Also called White-vented Myna by some authors, for example Robson (2008).

264 Common Myna (Acridotheres tristis) + tristis

265 Black-collared Starling (Gracupica nigricollis)

266 White-shouldered Starling (Sturnia sinensis)

267 Vinous-breasted Starling (Acridotheres burmannicus) + leucocephalus

268 Chestnut-tailed Starling (Sturnia malabarica) + nemoricola

Thrushes, cochoas and allies

269 Scaly Thrush (Zoothera dauma)

271 Eyebrowed Thrush (*Turdus obscurus*)
272 Green Cochoa (*Cochoa viridis*)
273 Siberian Thrush (*Geokichla sibirica*)

**Whistling Thrushes**
274 Blue Whistling Thrush (*Myophonus caeruleus*)
+ eugenei

**Shortwings**
275 Lesser Shortwing (*Brachypteryx leucophrys*)
+ langbianensis: S Indochina

**Robins**
276 Siberian Rubythroat (*Calliope calliope*)
+ calliope / camtschatkensis
277 Siberian Blue Robin (*Larvivora cyane*)
+ cyane
278 Rufous-tailed Robin (*Larvivora sibilans*)
279 White-tailed Robin (*Myiomela leucura*)
+ leucura
280 Red-flanked Bluetail (*Tarsiger cyanurus*)

**Redstarts**
281 Plumbeous Water Redstart (*Phoenicurus fuliginosa*)
+ fuliginosus

**Rock Thrushes**
282 Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*)
+ pandoo

**Chats**
283 Grey Bush Chat (*Saxicola ferreus*)
284 Stejneger’s Stonechat (*Saxicola stejnegeri*)
285 Pied Bush Chat (*Saxicola caprata*)
+ burmanicus

**Forktails**
286 Slaty-backed Forktail (*Enicurus schistaceus*)

**Old World flycatchers and allies**
287 Oriental Magpie-Robin (*Copsychus saularis*)
+ erimelas
288 White-rumped Shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*)
+ interpositus
289 Asian Brown Flycatcher (*Muscicapa dauurica*)
+ siamensis (resident) / dauurica (wintering)
290 Mugimaki Flycatcher (*Ficedula mugimaki*)
291 Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher (*Ficedula strophiata*)  
+ fuscogularis
This resident, isolated race of Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher is confined to E Laos and S Annam. Most obviously the male lacks the blackish throat of the nominate and supposedly has warmer olive-brown upperparts and a larger rufous patch on the breast. Comparison of the songs of both subspecies on Xeno Canto seems to be different too, but quality and number of recording insufficient.

292 Little Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula westermanni*)  
+ langbianis: S Laos and S Annam (Dalat Plateau)

293 Hainan Blue Flycatcher (*Cyornis hainanus*)

294 Tickell’s Blue Flycatcher (*Cyornis tickelliae*)  
+ indochina

295 Blue-throated Flycatcher (*Cyornis rubeculoides*)  
+ klossii: endemic to E Thailand, S Laos and S Vietnam

296 Large Niltava (*Niltava grandis*)  
+ decorata: S Annam

297 Pygmy Flycatcher (*Muscicapella hodgsoni*)
Also called Pygmy Blue Flycatcher, for example Robson (2008)

298 Taiga Flycatcher (*Ficedula albicilla*)

299 Verditer Flycatcher (*Eumyias thalassinus*)  
+ thalassinus

**Leafbirds**

300 Blue-winged Leafbird (*Chloropsis cochinchinensis*)  
+ kinneari (S-Indo) / aeropectus (N-Indo)

301 Golden-fronted Leafbird (*Chloropsis aurifrons*)  
+ incompta: SW & SE Thailand, Cambodia and S Vietnam

302 Orange-bellied Leafbird (*Chloropsis hardwickii*)  
+ melliana

**Flowerpeckers**

303 Thick-billed Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum agile*)  
+ modestum

304 Fire-breasted Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum ignipectus*)  
+ ignipectus

305 Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum cruentatum*)  
+ cruentatum

**Sunbirds & spiderhunters**

306 Mrs. Gould’s Sunbird (*Aethopyga gouldiae*)  
+ annamensis: S Laos and SC Vietnam
307 Black-throated Sunbird (*Aethopyga saturata*)
+ ochra: S Laos and C Vietnam
+ johnsi: S Annam

308 Crimson Sunbird (*Aethopyga siparaja*)
+ mangini: SE Thailand and C & S Indochina

309 Little Spiderhunter (*Arachnothera longirostra*)
+ pallida: SE Thailand and C & S Indochina

310 Streaked Spiderhunter (*Arachnothera magna*)
+ remota: SC & S Vietnam

311 Ruby-cheeked Sunbird (*Chalcoparia singalensis*)
+ koratensis

312 Van Hasselt’s Sunbird (*Leptocoma brasiliana*)
+ emmae: Cambodia, S Laos and S Vietnam

313 Purple Sunbird (*Cinnyris asiaticus*)
+ intermedius

314 Olive-backed Sunbird (*Cinnyris jugularis*)
+ flammaxillaris

**Sparrows and allies**

315 Plain-backed Sparrow (*Passer flaveolus*)

**Munias, parrotfinches and allies**

316 White-rumped Munia (*Lonchura striata*)
+ subsquamicollis

317 Scaly-breasted Munia (*Lonchura punctulata*)
+ topela

**Wagtails & pipits**

318 Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*)
+ cinerea

319 Paddyfield Pipit (*Anthus rufulus*)
+ malayensis / rufulus

**Siskins, serins, finches, grosbeaks and allies**

320 Common Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)
+ meridionalis: S Annam (Dalat Plateau)

321 Vietnamese Greenfinch (*Chloris monguilloti*)
Endemic to the Dalat Plateau in S Annam.

**Jungle babblers**

322 Spot-throated Babbler (*Pellorneum albiventre*)
+ cinnamomeum

323 Puff-throated Babbler (*Pellorneum ruficeps*)
+ deignani: S Annam and E Cambodia
324 Buff-breasted Babbler (*Pellorneum tickelli*)
   + annamense: N & E Cambodia, S Laos and C & S Vietnam

325 Abbott's Babbler (*Malacocincla abbotti*) - HO
   + williamsoni: E Thailand to S Vietnam

326 Scaly-crowned Babbler (*Malacopteron cinereum*)
   + indochinense

327 Short-tailed Scimitar Babbler (*Jabouilleia danjoui*)
   + parviostris: E Tonkin, N & C Annam and C Laos
   Endemic to E Tonkin, Annam and C Laos. The highly localised race *aungmungensis* in the northern Kachin State in Myanmar is treated by some as a subspecies of Short-tailed Scimitar-Babbler, but split by IOC as a different species: Naung Mung Scimitar-Babbler (*J. aungmungensis*). *Parviostris* is found in most of its range, *danjoui* in S Annam. Previously called Indochinese Wren-Babbler

328 Streaked Wren-Babbler (*Napothera brevicaudata*)
   + rufiventer: S Annam (Dalat Plateau)

329 Pygmy Wren-Babbler (*Pnoepyga pusilla*)
   + annamensis: SW Cambodia and S Annam

330 Masked Laughingthrush (*Garrulax perspicillatus*)

331 White-crested Laughingthrush (*Garrulax leucolophus*)
   + diardi

332 Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush (*Garrulax monileger*)
   + mouhoti: SE Thailand and S Indochina
   + pasquieri: C Vietnam

333 Black-hooded Laughingthrush (*Garrulax milleti*)
   + sweeti: C Annam en adjacent SE Laos
   + milleti: S Annam

334 Black-throated Laughingthrush (*Garrulax chinensis*)
   + chinensis

335 White-cheeked Laughingthrush (*Garrulax vassali*)
   Endemic to S Laos, C and S Annam and adjacent extreme E Cambodia.

336 Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush (*Garrulax konkakinensis*)
   Endemic to the Central Highlands in C Annam and adjacent S Laos.

337 Orange-breasted Laughingthrush (*Garrulax annamensis*)

338 Collared Laughingthrush (*Trochalopteron yersini*)
   Endemic to the Dalat plateau in S Annam
| **Fulvettas** | 339  Rufous-winged Fulveta (*Alcippe castaneceps*) | ne |
|              | + stepanyani: C Annam and adjacent SE Laos |
| 340  Mountain Fulvetta (*Alcippe peracensis*) | ne |
|              | + annamensis: C Laos and C Vietnam |
| **Minlas**   | 341  Blue-winged Minla (*Minla cyanouoptera*) | e |
|              | + sordida |
|              | + orientalis: SE Cambodia and S Annam (Dalat plateau) |
| **Silver-eared Mesia** | 342  Silver-eared Mesia (*Leiothrix argentauris*) | ne |
|              | + cunhaci: S Indochina |
| **Grey-crowned Crocias and sibias** | 343  Grey-crowned Crocias (*Crocias langbianis*) | E |
|              | Endemic to the Dalat plateau in S Annam. Previously only known from 3 specimens collected at two localities in 1938 and 1939. In 1994 rediscovered at Le Trong Trai by J.C Eames and Nguyen Cu at Chu Yang Sin National Park. Only in 2012, it was discovered by David Bishop in the Kon tum Province in C Annam. Scarce and local, but highly elusive and easily overlooked. |
|              | 344  Rufous-backed Sibia (*Heterophasia annectans*) | e |
|              | + eximia: S Annam |
|              | 345  Black-headed Sibia (*Heterophasia desgodinsi*) | e |
|              | + robinsoni: S Annam |
| **Cutias**   | 348  Vietnamese Cutia (*Cutia legalleni*) | E |
| **Barwings** | 347  Black-crowned Barwing (*Actinodura sodangorum*) | E |
|              | Endemic to the western highlands of C Annam and adjacent SE Laos. |