

Birds observed at Huang Nian Shan, Mabian county, southern Sichuan, China

BEN KING

Huang Nian Shan (i.e. Huang Nian mountain) lies perhaps 25 km east of Mabian city, Mabian county in southern Sichuan, south-west China, at about 28°50'N 103°44'E. It contains a fine tract of about 800 ha of primary broadleaf forest at 1,200-1,500 m elevation. Large parts of the remainder are already planted with fast-growing conifers and other parts are freshly logged. It is planned to log the primary forest entirely and replace it with a tree farm within 15 years. Huang Nian Shan is administered by the Sichuan Forestry Department.

I first visited Huang Nian Shan on 24 April and 7 May 1986. On both those days I heard the Sichuan Hill-Partridge *Arborophila rufipectus*, but could neither see it nor get a tape-recording. I therefore arranged to return for the period 26 April to 1 May 1987, with the express aim of finding and tape-recording this species. The visit was successful, and a healthy population of the bird was found, though this is probably one of the few left in existence. The only other forest in Mabian county capable of harbouring the Sichuan Hill-Partridge is planned to be logged in 40 years, and as the bird's range is only 150 × 60 km and it appears not to exist in any reserve, it must be the most threatened galliform in China. It was declared a category 1 (i.e. endangered) species by the Chinese government in November 1988.

Other interesting finds were: Mountain Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus nipalensis*, perhaps the first record for Sichuan, although I have an unpublished record from Wolong Panda Reserve; Purple Cochoa *Cochoa purpurea*; and Silver Oriole *Oriolus mellianus*.

During the 1987 visit, I stayed at Huang Nian Shan in the loggers' camp at 1,200 m, still in primary forest. Most of my observations were made along a logging road built through the primary forest at about 1,200 m elevation and in the forest above it. I got up to 1,400 m in the forest, but did not go into the forest below the track at 1,200 m.

Accompanying me on the 1986 visit were: Leslie Hogan, Walter Krawiec, W. Graham Metson and Roy Woodall. Our interpreter was Wu Baihui. In 1987, I was accompanied by Yuan Shi Jun, interpreter, and Wang Zhenhuan, driver. The Sichuan Forestry Department operated both trips.

Square brackets signify uncertain identification, or records outside the locality in question.

ANNOTATED LIST

BLACK BAZA *Aviceda leuphotes*: one on 30 April 1987, possibly a first

spring arrival. A pair on 1 May 1987 and 7 May 1986 (male in courtship display).

BLACK KITE *Milvus migrans*: one on 30 April 1987.

EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*: singles on 29 and 30 April and 1 May 1987; one probably this species on 7 May 1986.

MOUNTAIN HAWK-EAGLE *Spizaetus nipalensis*: one on 26 April 1987. There are apparently no previous records for Sichuan (Li 1980). Possibly breeding at this late date.

SICHUAN HILL-PARTRIDGE *Arborophila rufipectus*: two heard on 24 April and three heard on 7 May 1986. Two to eleven heard and seen daily 26 April–1 May 1987. This is probably China's most endangered galliform and the population here seems a healthy one. Huang Nian Shan might make a good reserve for this species, which is confined to southern Sichuan and whose known range is only 150 × 60 km.

CHINESE BAMBOO-PARTRIDGE *Bambusicola thoracica*: 1–3 heard daily; fairly common in second-growth and forest edge.

SILVER PHEASANT *Lophura nycthemera*: two on 28 April and three on 29 April 1987; fairly common.

LADY AMHERST'S PHEASANT *Chrysolophus amherstiae*: one heard in scrub outside the forest on 26 April 1987 at 1,000 m.

[WEDGE-TAILED PIGEON *Treron sphenura*: birds heard were believed to be this species, one on 28, 29 and 30 April, and two on 1 May 1987.]

ORIENTAL TURTLE-DOVE *Streptopelia orientalis*: one on 29 April 1987.

LARGE HAWK-CUCKOO *Cuculus sparverioides*: 3–6 heard daily.

HODGSON'S HAWK-CUCKOO *Cuculus fugax*: one heard daily 28 April–1 May 1987. The 28 April record was possibly a first arrival. Two heard 7 May 1986.

ORIENTAL CUCKOO *Cuculus saturatus*: 1–4 heard daily.

ORIENTAL SCOPS-OWL *Otus sunia*: 5–10 heard daily.

COLLARED SCOPS-OWL *Otus lempiji*: one heard on 26 April 1987.

COLLARED OWLET *Glaucidium brodiei*: 2–10 heard daily.

ASIAN BARRED OWLET *Glaucidium cuculoides*: one heard 28 April 1987.

GREY NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus indicus*: one heard on 29 April and 1 May 1987. The 29 April record was possibly a first arrival.

WHITE-THROATED NEEDLETAIL *Hirundapus caudacutus*: six on 30 April 1987.

FORK-TAILED SWIFT *Apus pacificus*: 10 on 26 April, two on 27 April, and two on 29 April 1987.

GREAT BARBET *Megalaima virens*: 2–5 heard daily.

GREY-HEADED WOODPECKER *Picus canus*: 1–2 daily.

GREATER YELLOWNAPE *Picus flavinucha*: two on 26 and 28 April and one on 1 May 1987.

CRIMSON-BREASTED WOODPECKER *Picoides cathpharius*: 2–4 daily.

RUFIOUS-BELLIED WOODPECKER *Picoides hyperythrus*: one on 26 April 1987.

GREY-CAPPED WOODPECKER *Picoides canicapillus*: 1–2 daily.

BAY WOODPECKER *Blythipicus pyrrhotis*: 1–3 daily.

BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*: several on 26 April 1987.

ASIAN HOUSE-MARTIN *Delichon dasypus*: two on 26 April 1987; two on 7 May 1986.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*: common along road through logged and tree farm areas.

WHITE WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*: fairly common in cultivated areas outside Huang Nian Shan.

OLIVE TREE-PIPIT *Anthus hodgsoni*: several on 24 April 1986; two on 26 April 1987.

ROSY PIPIT *Anthus roseatus*: two on 24 April 1986.

BLACK-WINGED CUCKOO-SHRIKE *Coracina melaschistos*: one on 27 and 28 April and two on 1 May, 1987.

LONG-TAILED MINIVET *Pericrocotus ethologus*: several on 24 April 1986 at 1,300 m.

COLLARED FINCHBILL *Spizixos semitorques*: 2–8 daily in edge and second-growth.

MOUNTAIN BULBUL *Hypsipetes mccllellandii*: 4–10 daily. Active nest found on 29 April 1987.

BLACK BULBUL *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*: one on 29 April 1987.

SILVER ORIOLE *Oriolus mellianus*: three on 7 May 1986.

HAIR-CRESTED DRONGO *Dicrurus hottentottus*: 2–12 daily.

EURASIAN JAY *Garrulus glandarius*: 3–15 daily.

BLUE MAGPIE *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*: 3–8 daily.

LARGE-BILLED CROW *Corvus macrorhynchos*: 3–8 daily.

WHITE-CROWNED FORKTAIL *Enicurus leschenaulti*: one on 30 April 1987.

PURPLE COCHOA *Cochoa purpurea*: one female seen on 7 May 1986; one heard on 28 April 1987.

GREY BUSHCHAT *Saxicola ferrea*: one on 24 April and 7 May 1986 on cut-over area.

RIVER CHAT *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*: one on 24 May 1986.

[BLUE WHISTLING THRUSH *Myophonus caeruleus*: one between Mabian and Huang Nian Shan on 26 April.]

SCALY THRUSH *Zoothera dauma*: two heard on 29 April and one on 1 May (first arrival perhaps on 29 April).

EYE-BROWED THRUSH *Turdus obscurus*: 15 on 29 April, one on 30 April and three on 1 May 1987.

RUFOUS-TAILED THRUSH *Turdus naumanni naumanni*: one on 30 April 1987.

STREAK-BREASTED SCIMITAR-BABBLER *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*: 5–20 daily.

PYGMY WREN-BABBLER *Pnoepyga pusilla*: one on 26 April, six on 29 April, and one on 1 May 1987; one on 7 May 1986.

RUFOUS-CAPPED BABBLER *Stachyris ruficeps*: 3–10 daily.

WHITE-THROATED LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax albogularis*: 1–15 most days.

MOUSTACHED LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax cineraceus*: one on 29 April 1987.

RUSTY LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax poecilorhyncha*: 2–20 daily.

[WHITE-BROWED LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax sannio*: several near Huang Nian Shan at 1,100m on 24 April 1986 in roadside scrub.]

RED-WINGED LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax formosus*: 2–6 daily.

RED-BILLED LEIOTHRIX *Leiothrix lutea*: 25–50 daily.

GOLDEN-BREASTED FULVETTA *Alcippe chrysotis*: four at 1,300m on 24 April 1986; one on 27 and 30 April 1987.

DUSKY FULVETTA *Alcippe brunnea*: one on 29 April, two on 30 April, and one on 1 May 1987; three on 7 May 1986.

GREY-CHEEKED FULVETTA *Alcippe morrisonia*: 2–10 daily.

BLACK-HEADED SIBIA *Heterophasia melanoleuca*: one on 28–29 April 1987; four on 7 May 1986.

STRIPE-THROATED YUHINA *Yuhina gularis*: one on 1 May 1987.

WHITE-COLLARED YUHINA *Yuhina diademata*: 1–6 most days.

BLACK-CHINNED YUHINA *Yuhina nigrimenta*: 4–12 daily.

[ASHY-THROATED PARROTBILL *Paradoxornis alphonsianus*: 12 in roadside scrub near Huang Nian Shan on 24 April 1986.]

GOLDEN PARROTBILL *Paradoxornis verreauxi*: two on 28 April 1987 at 1,400m in bamboo.

GREY-HEADED PARROTBILL *Paradoxornis gularis*: 1–20 daily.

BROWNISH-FLANKED BUSH-WARBLER *Cettia fortipes*: 6–15 daily.

GREY-SIDED BUSH-WARBLER *Cettia brunnifrons*: one on 29 April 1987, probably a late migrant or winter visitor.

SPOTTED BUSH-WARBLER *Bradypterus thoracicus*: one on 29–30 April and 30 May 1987; three on 24 April and 7 May 1986.

[TICKELL'S LEAF-WARBLER *Phylloscopus affinis*: several near Huang Nian Shan in roadside scrub at 1,100m on 24 April 1986.]

[BUFF-THROATED WARBLER *Phylloscopus subaffinis*: several near Huang Nian Shan in roadside scrub at 1,100m on 24 April 1986.]

LEMON-RUMPED WARBLER *Phylloscopus proregulus*: several 24 April 1986; one on 26 April 1987.

LARGE-BILLED LEAF-WARBLER *Phylloscopus magnirostris*: two on 7 May 1986.

BLYTH'S LEAF-WARBLER *Phylloscopus reguloides*: 1–10 daily. One nest-building on ground on 29 April 1987.

CHESTNUT-CROWNED WARBLER *Seicercus castaniceps*: 5–15 daily.

GOLDEN-SPECTACLED WARBLER *Seicercus burkii*: 3–20 daily.

RUFOUS-FACED WARBLER *Abroscopus albogularis*: two on 26 April 1987.

RED-THROATED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula parva*: three on 24 April 1986.

SNOWY-BROWED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hyperythra*: 2–8 daily.

SLATY-BLUE FLYCATCHER *Ficedula tricolor*: one on 27 April 1987.

[FUJIAN NILTAVA *Niltava davidi*: one on 7 May 1986 and another on 26 April 1987 were believed to be this species.]

CHINESE FLYCATCHER *Cyornis glaucicomans* (I judge this a good species distinct from *C. rubeculoides*): 1–4 daily; eight on 7 May 1986.

VERDITER FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa thalassina*: several 24 April 1986; one on 26 April 1987.

GREY-HEADED FLYCATCHER *Culicicapa ceylonensis*: 1-5 most days.

BLACK-THROATED TIT *Aegithalos concinnus*: 3-10 most days.

YELLOW-BELLIED TIT *Parus venustus*: two on 28 April 1987.

[GREAT TIT *Parus major*: 1 on 26 April 1987 between Mabian and Huang Nian Shan.]

GREEN-BACKED TIT *Parus monticolus*: 6-20 daily.

YELLOW-CHEEKED TIT *Parus spilonotus*: 2 on 29 April 1987.

CHESTNUT-VENTED NUTHATCH *Sitta nagaensis*: 1-4 daily. An active nest on 29 April-1 May. Not listed for Sichuan by Li (1980).

WHITE-EYE sp. *Zosterops (japonicus?)*: flock of unidentified white-eyes heard 29 April-1 May.

RUSSET SPARROW *Passer rutilans*: several near and at Huang Nian Shan in roadside scrub and tree farm areas on 24 April and one on 7 May 1986.

EURASIAN TREE-SPARROW *Passer montanus*: near settlements between Mabian and Huang Nian Shan.

GREY-CAPPED GREENFINCH *Carduelis sinica*: common in the tree farm and settlements.

BLACK-HEADED GREENFINCH *Carduelis ambigua*: 1 male at western (tree farm) edge of Huang Nian Shan on 24 April 1986.

VINACEOUS ROSEFINCH *Carpodacus vinaceus*: 1 on 29 April 1987.

LITTLE BUNTING *Emberiza pusilla*: several on 24 April 1986 and four on 26 April 1987 in secondary scrub and tree farm.

YELLOW-THROATED BUNTING *Emberiza elegans*: fairly common in second-growth and tree farm areas 24 April 1986, 26 April and 1 May 1987.

BLACK-FACED BUNTING *Emberiza spodocephala*: several in second-growth and tree farm areas on 24 April 1986.

REFERENCE

Li Guiyuan (1980) *Aves. Sichuan Fauna Economica* 1: 96-145.

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Birds observed at Dafengding Panda Reserve, Mabian county, southern Sichuan, China

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From 25 April to 6 May 1986 I ran a KingBird Tours ornithological expedition to Dafengding Panda Reserve, in the range of mountains west of Mabian city, Mabian county, southern Sichuan, south-west China. The reserve is administered by the Sichuan Forestry Department, which also operated the expedition. Expedition members were: Leslie Hogan, Walter Krawiec, W. Graham Metson, Roy Woodall and myself. Our Forestry Department interpreter was Wu Baihui.

The reserve ranges from perhaps 1,000 to 4,000 m. We camped during our entire stay as follows: 1,100 m, 25-27 April; 1,800 m, 27 April-1 May; 2,500 m, 1-4 May; 1,800 m, 4-5 May; 1,500 m 5-6 May. The part of the reserve above about 1,700 m was mostly primary forest. Below that there were fingers of primary forest, a bit of secondary forest, and much scrub and cultivation. Bamboo was abundant in the understorey from about 1,100 to 2,600 m. We heard a Giant Panda *Ailuropoda melanoleuca* at 1,800 m and found lots of scat. All camps but the first were on a broad track that cuts through the reserve and is fairly heavily travelled by the local Yi people. The weather was dismal and rainy most of the time, reducing our field time and our observations.

The objective of the expedition was to find the Sichuan Hill-Partridge *Arborophila rufipectus* and the Gold-fronted Fulvetta *Alcippe variegaticeps*, as well as to do a general avifaunal survey. We failed to find the partridge, although we found it subsequently in a rather drier and perhaps different type of forest in another part of Mabian county (see King, *Forktail*, this issue). It remains possible that the partridge exists in another part of Dafengding, but I believe it does not exist in the section of the reserve we covered as it certainly would have been calling and noticeable if it did. However, we found the rare and local Gold-fronted Fulvetta, the first record for Mabian county, but saw four birds only, suggesting the species is not common. I feel this species should be classified as threatened, because it is known from only a few localities and may not be common in any of them.

We also found five Blue-fronted Robins *Cinclidium frontale*, apparently only the second record for China. They probably breed here. Two specimens of the rare Slaty Bunting *Latoucheornis siemsseni* were found behaving territorially, a long distance from their known breeding grounds in northern Sichuan and Shaanxi province. Several Purple Cochoas *Cochoa purpurea* were heard, and the first records of Grey-hooded Parrotbills *Paradoxornis zappeyi* in Mabian county were obtained.