

Central and Southern Vietnam Endemic Birds

January 3rd – 13th 2012

Vietnam is one of the most beautiful, friendly and fascinating countries in Asia and an early season visit there finds the country at its best, the climate mostly cool, dry and enjoyable, the winter birds still in and the resident ones gearing up for breeding. Vietnam hosts, according to your splitting beliefs, no less than 13 true endemic species (and this number continues to increase as further work is done and new discoveries made), a further 7 or so restricted to Indochina and a number of very interesting and distinct “subspecies” several of which are destined to be future splits. A large range of Southeast Asian species of wider distribution and a host of birds wintering from further north add to the richness of this destination.

Our relative short itinerary is design to visit key sites in Central and Southern of Vietnam and to go over three Endemic Bird Areas (Kon Tum, Da Lat and Southern Lowland forest). We will look for our main targets; they are endemic to Vietnam and Indochina:

Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush, Yellow-billed Nuthatch, Black-hooded Laughingthrush, Ratchet-tailed Treepie, White-winged Magpie, Mekong Wagtail, Giant Ibis, White-rumped Falcon, Vietnamese Cutia, Grey-crowned Crocias, Black-crowned Fulvetta, Collared Laughingthrush, Black-headed Parrotbill, Indochinese Green Magpie, Orange-breasted Laughingthrush, Germain Peacock Pheasant, Orange-necked Partridge, Bar-bellied Pitta, Blue-rumped Pitta.

Transport by Vietnam Airlines SGN – Pleiku and model minibus, accommodation in luxury/good standard hotels and park bungalows and memorable Vietnamese food throughout. Includes park entry fees, local transportation and all drinks, within reason and including beer and Vietnamese wine, are complementary.

Price does not include air fares to and from Vietnam, optional tipping or items of a personal nature.

Tour leader: Nguyen Hoai Bao <http://www.birdwatchingvietnam.net/birdguide.asp>

Prices are as follows:

Main Tour: US\$ 2,600.00 Single supplement US\$ 350.00 Ho Chi Minh– Ho Chi Minh

Pre-tour extension: will be announced

These prices are based on a minimum of 6 participants. If less a supplement may be applicable

Our more comprehensive tour is running on February can be referred here:

[THE BEST BIRDING TOUR IN 2012](#)

Related tour report:

[2008 - February: Central and South Vietnam](#)

[2008 - March: Central and South Viet Nam](#)

[2010 Central and Southern Vietnam](#)

[2011 - Endemic birds and endangered primates in the heart of Indo-China](#)

PRE-TOUR EXTENSION

January 1st 2012 – Fly to Da Nang, drive on to the Lo Xo pass which has reached recent birding fame as the site to see the endemic *Black-crowned Barwing*. Here, at the forest edge, we have a great chance of finding this recently described species and others to look for include *Brown Hornbill*, *Indochinese Wren-Babbler* (formerly known as Short-tailed Scimitar-Babbler), *White-winged Magpie*, *Red-tailed Laughingthrush* and *Yellow-billed Nuthatch*.

Overnight Kham Duc hotel

January 2nd 2012 – Birding at Lo Xo pass then drive to Kon Tum for *overnight at Tinh Vuong hotel*.

January 3rd 2012 – meet the group in Kon Tum city for the main tour

MAIN TOUR

Day 1. (Jan 3-2012) This day, we will take our early flight to Pleiku at 6:30 am, drive to Mang Den for afternoon birding around Mang Den.

Overnight at Hoa Sim hotel (2 nights)

Day 2. (Jan 4) Mang Canh Forest. This wilderness forest experience will allow us to link with a student studying the rare Grey-shanked Douc Langur, one of our prime mammal targets and where another fine range of Indochinese birds may be expected.

Our main targets at Mang Canh are Grey-shanked Douc Langur and Chestnut-eared Laughing-Thrush but we will also be on the lookout for Black-hooded Laughingthrush, Pale-capped Pigeon, the endemic Ratchet-tailed Treepie and we have our first chance for Yellow-billed Nuthatch.

Day 3. (Jan 5) In the morning, we will finalise our bird seen nearby Mang Den then we drive on to Mang Den, afternoon drive to Yok Don national park (Dak Lak province).

Overnight Dakruco hotel for 2 nights (Ban Don Tourist area)

Day 4. (Jan 6) Birding at Yok Don NP, the largest protected area in Vietnam. This dry open forest dominated by dipterocarps is home to many woodpeckers but our greater targets including *Mekong Wagtail*, the new discovery species of the Mekong region in 2001 (Duckworth et al. 2002), *Giant Ibis*, the rarest large waterbird, *White-rumped Falcon*, typical species of this habitat, and the rare Red-headed Vulture as well as White-rumped Vulture.

Day 5. (Jan 7) Morning birding at Yok Don, afternoon drive to Da Lat, stop en route at Lak lake for some waterbirds and wintering warblers.

Overnight at Hoang Gia Da Lat resort (3 nights)

Day 6 & Day 7. (Jan 8&9) We will explore the Da Lat Plateau including the 2169 metre Mt Langbian, cloaked with evergreen forest right up to its peak and accessed by a progressively steeper footpath. Our efforts should be rewarded however as this is the home of the spectacular endemic Collared Laughing-Thrush, as well as Yellow-billed Nuthatch and the Vietnamese forms of Cutia, Rufous-winged (Black-crowned) Fulvetta and Black-throated (Grey-crowned) Tit which are sure fire bets for splitting before too long. The elusive and handsome Green Cochoa is also here and should be vocal at this time of year and a number of other Asian and wintering birds will also be encountered.

Nearer to Da Lat itself is Ta Nung Valley, famous for the relatively recently re-discovered Grey-crowned Crocias which is regularly encountered here. Other endemics such as Black-hooded and Orange-breasted Laughingthrushes and Vietnamese Greenfinch are also possible.

Day 8. (Jan 10) Our final morning is flexible, we might leave early in the morning to visit Di Linh forest (known as Deo Nui San) to finalise missed species in Da Lat (if happen) and also look for Blue Pitta then continue our route to Cat Tien national park in the afternoon.

Overnight Cat Tien HQ guest house (3 nights)

Day 9 & Day 10. (Jan 11&12) The premier National Park in South Vietnam, Cat Tien is located in Cochinchina in the Da Lat foothills and boasts an impressive mosaic of forest and seasonal wetlands which largely escaped the defoliants used in the Vietnam War. We will bird by jeep track and forest trails to seek out the endemic Germain's Peacock-Pheasant, other spectacular birds such as Siamese Fireback, Green Peafowl and Scaly-breasted Partridge, endemic Pittas, the endemic Grey-faced Tit-Babbler and a host of other species also known from Malaysia and Thailand.

The park is host to several primate species with our main targets Buff-cheeked Gibbon and Black-shanked Douc Langur. Other mammals such as the huge Gaur, Sambar, Wild Boar and Pig-tailed Macaque are also possible

Day 11. (Jan 13) Our last day is leaving Cat Tien early to visit Tan Phu, the best site for the rare endemic Orange-necked Partridge. Other endemic forms here include Indochinese Green Magpie and our first (of several) chances for Bar-bellied and Blue-rumped Pittas. Onward to Ho Chi Minh city to conclude the tour.