

## Taiwan Trip Report Dec 21st 2005- Jan 14th 2006

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### A few tips on travel in Taiwan

I hired a car and drove around, the easiest way to get to the good sites. A map of the island in English to use with one in Chinese is recommended. Many of the road signs use different systems of pinyin (romanisation) and for the uninitiated this can be confusing. It's best to double-check using both maps. When asking for directions, pronunciation of romanised place names is far from easy. Here are some pronunciations for place names noted in the text:

Wushe "oo sr"

Hehuan "hr huan"

Hsitou "see toe"

Taitung "tai doong"

Kenting "kun ding"

Lanyu - no matter how many times you say it, no-one knows what on earth you're talking about...

Lonely Planet is by far the most concise travel guide, and features many of the good birding sights, tips on communications, prices, hotels to suit different budgets etc.

Taiwan is probably the most friendly country I have ever visited. This is my second visit, and I'm planning on staying here a while to work and study. When you go to places a little out of the way you'll be surprised at how friendly people are. The one exception is Kenting, where locals don't seem to know about birders- when I was there I was constantly stopped by the police, harrassed by farmers who thought I was stealing fruit, barked at by unfriendly dogs, and worst of all beeped by passing motorists even when I was 5m from the road trying to photograph species which then flew away. In the rest of Taiwan (and especially the magnificently welcoming Lanyu Island) there were none of these annoyances. My friend from Tainan suggested it was because Kenting people are the most conservative in Taiwan.

A note about Lanyu Island- crossing the sea is tricky by ferry in winter: crossings are often cancelled due to choppy seas. It rains a lot in Lanyu in winter. It's best to reserve a seat on the plane (Daily Airlines tel. 089 732 035) to reserve a ticket (about 40 US dollars each way). The 16 seater plane is small and bumps around a bit. The place to stay there is in Hungtou village. There is a small blue restaurant opposite the post office, where a kind Filipino lady who speaks excellent English can help you find a homestay (like a minshuku). Hungtou is a good place to be because it is right by the only cross-island road that transects the forest a bit. The forest on Lanyu looks incredible from the plane, but there are very few trails and access points to enter it. The only road basically hugs the coast line. You would need at least a week here to suss out how best to get into the forest a bit. There is a trail to a mountain summit in the south of the island, but the forest is not so pristine there. Everyone (and I really mean everyone, from 80 year old grannies working in the fields to guys on bikes) I met on Lanyu, or even passed on the road, was super-friendly and welcoming. I definitely recommend a visit to this wonderful place.

There are some things to watch for in Taiwan- gasoline stands are few and far between in the mountains and in smaller towns and villages. Gasoline is also more expensive in the mountains. Natural Parks and the like can be a little officious. They are essentially tourist havens- so if you like wandering around concrete trails in manicured woodland for a fee, then you won't have a problem.

There are usually some quieter trails. I'm still a little baffled by Alishan- how are you supposed to get to good sites for gallids when the trains leave after 8am and come back at 4am? In Kenting I took some trouble to get a permit to visit Nanren Lake, and I had to go to a briefing etc. Admittedly a beautiful place, but an hour after the gate opens, be prepared for busloads of tourists shouting so hard you can't even hear the bulbuls!

Other than that, compared to Japan it's much easier to communicate with people using no language. ATMs that take foreign cards are in most convenience stores. Many shops and restaurants are open 24 in the cities. People don't laugh at you and say "hello" in stupid voices. And the food is amazing!

SPECIES RECORDED Order based on MacKinnon & Phillipps Birds of China (2000)

**1. Blue-breasted Quail *Coturnix chinensis***

A female was seen feeding on a track with 2 Red Turtle Dove in an overgrown grassy grave yard on the E outskirts of Wandan in Kaohsiung county, within the restricted range of this species in Taiwan. the bird scuttled into cover before I could get a photograph. Compared to similar-sized (14cm) male Little Buttonquail *Turnix sylvatica* mikado, colder and plainer brown above, lacking rusty buff breast, but has buff area at vent. Head appeared rounder, and neck shorter than that sp.

**2. Taiwan Hill Partridge *Arborophila crudigularis***

Just 3 noted along the 14km of Patungkuan Ancient Pathway through Dweikuan forest in Yushan Nat. Park on 11th Jan. 4 birds seen very well (to 2m) along the Bird Watch Trail in the Hsitou reserve on 12th Jan. 5 Blue Gate Trail (start is at km 16.5 on route 14 N of Wushe) in the morning of 13th Jan, and 8 together in a different place in the afternoon. Also 3 including 1 calling along the Continuation Trail (adjoining the Blue Gate Trail) same day.

**3. Chinese Bamboo Partridge *Bambusicola thoracica***

**ssp. *sonovorix*** This distinctive ssp. is a common bird around Taiwan from sea level to 2200m asl. seen and heard at Wulai, Wushan near Tainan, near Kaohsiung, Kenting, Maoilin area, Dongpu (Yushan), near Wushe and just N of Ilan. Birds were easy to see in the steep tea terraces at Motian (1600m asl on the cross-island Highway Route 20).

**4. Swinhoe's Pheasant *Lophura swinhoii***

A pair were viewed feeding for up to 1 min in the Dweikuan Forest, Yushan Nat Park 11th Jan. 4 other pheasants feeding in thick suski grass at nearby Kangao Forest were either this sp. (more likely) or the next sp. Not noted at the Blue Gate Trail on 13th Jan.

**5. Mikado Pheasant *Syrmaticus mikado***

A male with half length tail (a younger bird?) seen feeding quietly on last remaining Chinese Knotweed berries at the trackside 500m from the start of the Blue Gate trail at dusk on 13th Jan. The bird took off with a deep, loud wing flutter when it noticed me.

**6. Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus***

**ssp. *formosanus*** A male was seen from the car in the southern part of the Eastern Rift Valley, just S of Guanshan on 9th Jan. Note this ssp. has a white neck ring and pale greyish rump.

**7. Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos***

4 Chungshang Park pond, central Tainan City 29th Dec. A pair were at Longlang Lake, Kenting area on 30th Dec.

**8. Asian Spotbill *Anas poecilorhyncha***

4 Chigu flooded area NW of Tainan City on 25th Dec. 12 Binlangken pond near Longlang Lake (Kenting) on 29th Dec. 50 Longlang Lake 30th Dec.

**9. Gadwall *Anas strepera***

A single male Longlang Lake 1st Jan.

**10. Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope***

4 Longlang Lake 30th Dec and 1st Jan.

**11. Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata***

5 Binlangken pond 29th Dec but 47 counted on nearby Longlang Lake next day. A single male was in a flooded taro field at Hongtou village, Lanyu Island on 7th Jan.

**12. Garganey *Anas querquedula***

6 Binlangken pond 29th Dec and 2 Longlang Lake next day.

**13. Common Teal *Anas crecca***

50 Chigu area 25th Dec. 4 Binlangken pond 29th Dec. 1 Longlang Lake 30th Dec. 2 females Hongtou, Lanyu Island 7th Jan. 60 Ilan fields near Lanyan estuary 14th Jan.

**14. Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula***

25 Binlangken pond 29th Dec but an impressive 320 was at Longlang lake at this time.

**15. Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator***

A single female was on rocks off Bijing village on the E coast of Lanyu Island on 8th Jan. Probably a scarce winter visitor to Taiwan coasts.

**16. Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Dendrocopus canicapillus***

**ssp. *kaleensis*** This sp. has a 'kick' call that sounds similar to Great-spotted and White-backed Woodpecker calls, and looks like a diminutive version of the former in terms of shape. Birds were noted at Wushan in Tainan County, Chehping Springs in Taitung County, Maolin, Hsitou and in Yushan Park near Dongpu (3 birds).

**17. White-backed Woodpecker *Dendrocopus leucotos***

**ssp. *insularis*** This ssp. has a buff-brown patch on central belly and cleaner-looking, more finely streaked underparts than Kyushu ssp. *namiyei*. A female was photographed in hemlocks at 2800m asl at Yakou, S Yushan Park on 9th Jan. 6 birds were seen and heard in 3 different areas along the 14km of Patungkuan Ancient Pathway through the Dweikuan and Kuangao forests (Yushan Park) on the 11th Jan. Birds were heard in 2 areas of cedar plantation at Shanlinsi Forest near Hsitou on 12th Jan. A single was heard calling along the Blue Gate Trail near Wushe on 13th Jan.

**18. Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus***

**ssp. *tancolo*** A pair were calling, and the male drumming in response to my call imitation, halfway along the Blue Gate Trail on 13th Jan. The drums are 1 sec long, weaker and tinnier than those of the previous species, and maintain a more even rhythm.

**19. Mueller's Barbet *Megalaima oorti***

**ssp. *nuchalis*** Birds were seen at Wulai, Kenting National Park, Gaoshufoshan just N of Kenting on route 199 (3 birds) and a single was photographed sunning itself on a hotel sign at Chihpen springs near Taitung.

**20. Eurasian Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis***

**ssp. *bengalensis*** 1 seen Wulai stream just S of Taipei on 24th Dec. 1 near Wandan 28th Dec. 1 Ilan 14th Jan.

**21. Ruddy Kingfisher *Halcyon coromanda***

**ssp. *bangsi*** A single was heard calling once in hill forest above Hongtuo village on Lanyu Island on 8th Jan. This ssp. is apparently resident here.

**22. House Swift *Apus nipalensis***

**ssp. *kuntzi*** 7 outside Taipei from expressway 3 on 24th Dec, 1 Wndan 28th Dec, 40 near Binlangkeng, Kenting 29th Dec, 6 over summit of 804m Nurengshan near Suangliao Forest area N of Kenting Park on 31st Dec, 30 Gangkou, Kenting 3rd Jan, 7 Maolin 5th Jan, 6 Wushe 13th Jan.

**23. Mountain Scops Owl *Otus spilocephalus***

**ssp. *hambroeki*** 1 was heard calling 'pu pu' continuously from 8pm from the river onsen at Dona Springs, Maolin Scenic Area on 4th Jan, and another at 9pm from the car park there. Later that night a total of 4 birds were heard calling along the mountain track to the Dona Experimental Forest 4km above Dona village.

**24. Ryukyu Scops Owl *Otus elegans***

**ssp. *botelensis*** Just 1 bird was heard calling and seen briefly in torchlight in the rain, Hongtuo village, Lanyu Island on the 7th Jan.

**25. Brown Wood Owl *Strix leptogrammica***

**ssp. *caligrata*** 1 bird giving a quite deep two tone 'bu-hu' call from 7pm at the start of the continuation trail, but not seen. The call is tricky to imitate loudly because the 'whistle' is quite deep.

**26. Himalayan Wood (Tawny) Owl *Strix (aluco)***

**ssp. *yamadae*** A single was heard calling 'HU.....HU....' (4 sec intervals) continuously at 11pm at entrance to Nanren Lake special reserve in N Kenting Park on 3rd Jan. 2 birds giving 'wick' calls similar to Tawny Owl in Europe, but monosyllabic at start of Blue Gate Trail at 8pm on 12th Jan thought to be this species and not Brown Wood Owl, despite the elevation (2000m asl).

**27. Collared Owlet *Glaucidium brodiei***

**ssp. *paradalotum*** 2 birds calling a high 'po po-po po' from 9pm outside Wandan City on 27th Dec.

**28. Savannah Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis***

**ssp. *stictomus*** A male and two females flushed in thick grass among graves just E of the outskirts of Wandan City on 27th Dec. One of the females was photographed sleeping on a tombstone. Note the white tail feathers of males are often closed and not so noticeable in flight.

**Feral Pigeon *Columba livia* var. *domestica***

A common sight in many towns and villages, particularly in the lowlands. Most flocks were comprised of racing pigeons- mostly white-and-grey birds with smaller numbers of white, dark and mealy often seen. 40 at Hontou, Lanyu Island on 7th and 8th Jan are resident there.

**29. Ashy Woodpigeon *Columba pulchricollis***

No large flocks seen this year. 3 Wulai 23rd Dec. 2 Gaoshufoshan near Kenting on 30th Dec, 15, 7 and 2 seen over forest at Nu Rengshan N of Kenting on 31st Dec.

1 Dweikuan Forest, Yushan 11th Jan, 2 Blue Gate Trail and remains of a bird taken by a raptor found on Continuation Trail on 13th Jan.

**30. Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis***

**ssp. *orii*** This ssp. has a yellowish-buff flush to underparts and is much paler above and below than the next ssp. Noted in smaller numbers than other *Streptopelia* sp. at a variety of sites, eg. 2 near Anlin, Tainan area on 25th Dec, 1 Gangkou, Kenting Park on 30th Dec, 1 1st year Shichongsi, Kenting on 3rd Jan, 3 singing Shanlinsi Forest near Hsitou 12th Jan (in cedar plantations).

**ssp. *stimpsoni*** A surprise was an individual I feel sure was of this dark ssp. from the Ryukyu Islands was in fields near Hongtougou, Lanyu Island on 8th Jan. In some respects, Lanyu has an avifauna more similar to that of Yonaguni Island (Japan) than mainland Taiwan.

**31. Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis***

**ssp. *formosana*** A common bird of lowlands and villages in Taiwan. Note rather shy, and numbers less in some areas (notably between Tainan and Kaohsiung and in the Ilan area than the more gregarious next sp.

**32. Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica***

A common bird of lowland agricultural areas. In the farmland between Tainan and Kaohsiung it was not unusual to see flocks of 50 plus on roadside wires. Rather lower numbers in the Kenting area, but still quite common there.

**33. Brown Cuckoo Dove *Macropygia amboinensis***

**ssp. *phaea*** 2-4 males seen above Hongtougou village, Lanyu Island on 7th and 8th Jan. Rather wary, but regularly flushes onto exposed branches to check out the intruder before fluttering to another perch. Large and long tailed, the ventral area and underwings look particularly rich reddish brown in flight. Not heard calling. Note the crown and face of males is a cinnamon brown, paler than rest of plumage. Rear neck shows purple sheen in light. Bill is straw yellow and iris petrol-green. Not seen in the Kenting Nat. Park, where this sp. is recorded occasionally (according to park literature).

**34. Emerald Dove *Chalcochaps indica***

**ssp. *indica*** A pair seen very well at dawn along the path to the southernmost tip of Taiwan at Eluanbi coastal forest, and one other bird seen over the car park there. The hollow quite deep drawn-out whistles of this species were a common sound at Kenting Forest Botanical Reserve on 2nd Jan (at least 6 calling birds), and one over Shedding car park same day. No records from Lanyu Island.

**35. White-bellied (Japanese) Green Pigeon *Treron sieboldii***

**ssp. *sororius*** 6 noted at end of Blue gate Trail and 11 calling Continuation Trail on 13th Jan. No large flocks there as seen last year (up to 40 together).

**36. Whistling Green Pigeon *Treron formosae***

**ssp. *formosae*** Appears to be rare and difficult to see in both Kenting and Lanyu Island. A single was noted in low trees by open fields in the Kenting Nat. Park on 30th Dec, when another called at dawn at Eluanbi. Not noted on Lanyu Island.

**37. Black-chinned Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus leclancheri***

**ssp. *taiwanus*** A deep 'boo boo' call heard in the Kenting Botanical Reserve on 2nd Jan may have been this sp. (deeper than Emerald Dove calls). A single was seen in flight with Brown Cuckoo Doves near Hongtou village, Lanyu Island on 7th Jan. Because of the rainy weather and difficulty of forest access on Lanyu it was very tricky to record doves. This sp. is more shy than Brown Cuckoo Dove and it was impossible for me to locate it perching.

**38. White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus***

**ssp. *chinensis*** 1 scrubby verge Wandan fields 27th Dec, and another in a creek nearer Wandan next day. 1 near Cantan, Kenting 29th Dec. Total of 4 birds seen around Lanyu Island including a very muddy bird pattering around in a concrete pig sty, Lanyu Island 7th and 8th Jan. 1 near Taitung 9th Jan.

**39. Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus***

**ssp. *indica*** A common bird of lowland flooded fields. Larger groups were 36 Binlangkeng pond, Kenting area 29th Dec, with over 50 there next day and 60 on Longlang Lake; 15 Lanyan fields near Ilan on 14th Jan. I was on the pond in Chishong Park in central Tainan 25th Dec. Just 2 were recorded in fields on Lanyu Island 7th Jan.

**40. Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra***

**ssp. *atra*** 1 Chigu area 25th Dec, 5 Binlangkeng pond 29th Dec and 4 Longlang Lake, Kenting area on 30th Dec. A single was seen at Wanda Reservoir below Wushe on 12th Jan.

**41. Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago***

1 Laonong River near Ligang 27th Dec. 2 river mouth at Suzu on SW coast road to Kenting 29th Dec. 2 Binlangkeng fields 29th Dec. 1 in a taro field Lanyu Island 8th Jan.

**42. Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata***

17 Chigu Reserve N of Tainan 25th Dec.

**43. Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis***

1 Chigu Reserve 25th Dec.

**44. Common Redshank *Tringa totanus***

2 Chigu 25th Dec.

**45. Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia***

60 Chigu 25th Dec. 2 Laonang River 27th Dec. 1 Lanyan fields 14th Jan.

**46. Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus***

1 Chigu 25th Dec. 1 Laonang River 27th Dec. 1 Suzu 29th Dec. 1 Hongtou, Lanyu 7th Jan. 2 Lanyan fields 14th Jan.

**47. Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola***

11 Laonang River 27th Dec. 1 near Wandan 28th Dec. 25 Binlangken fields 30th Dec. 24 Ilan fields 14th Jan.

**48. Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis***

1 Laonang River 27th Dec.

**49. Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos***

Singles noted at Wulai stream, near Maolin, Tainan, Chigu, Kenting (3 sites) and quite common in the taro fields around Lanyu Island, 12 counted during a walk round the island on 8th Jan.

**50. Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis***

2 Chigu 25th Dec (but probably more in distant Dunlin flocks).

**51. Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii***

2 photographed, Laonang River 27th Dec.

**52. Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta***

16 Laonang riverbed 27th Dec. 20 in a pool at Suzu 29th Dec. 4 Binlangkeng fields 30th Dec. 14 Lanyan fields 14th Jan.

**53. Dunlin *Calidris alpina***

*ssp. sakhalina* 300 Chigu 25th Dec. 60 Lanyan fields 14th Jan.

**54. Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis***

A female was photographed in the Binlangkeng fields near Kenting on 30th Dec.

**55. Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus***

1 Laonang River 27th Dec. 5 N of Kaohsiung on 2nd Jan.

**56. Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva***

5 Chigu 25th Dec. 14 on open pasture in Kenting Park on 30th Dec.

**57. Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola***

120 Chigu 25th Dec. 1 on open pasture, Kenting Park on 30th Dec. 43 Lanyan fields near Ilan on 14th Jan.

**58. Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius***

*ssp. curonicus* 2 Chigu 25th Dec. 25, including 2 birds in breeding plumage mating, Laonang River 27th Dec. 20 Suzu 29th Dec. 1 Jioupeng 4th Jan. 1 soaked bird Hongtou, Lanyu Island 7th Jan. 27 Lanyan fields 14th Jan.

**59. Snowy Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus***

*ssp. dealbatus* 30 Chigu 25th Dec. 15 Laonang riverbed (30km inland) 27th Dec. 15 Suzu 29th Dec. 2 in open pasture in Kenting Park on 30th Dec. Single at river mouth at Jioupeng, N of Kenting Park on 3rd Jan. 18 Lanyan fields 14th Jan.

**60. Mongolian Plover *Charadrius mongolus***

100 Chigu 25th Dec.

**61. Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris***

1 first winter Taitung sea front 7th Jan. 3 first winters and 1 adult seen offshore at Hongtou and Yehyu port, Lanyu Island 7th and 8th Jan. 17 Lanyan river mouth at high tide on 14th Jan.

**62. Vega Gull *Larus vegae*/ Mongolian Gull *Larus cachinnans mongolicus***

2 adults seen on coast road 17 S of Kaohsiung on 2nd Jan could not be specifically identified. Neither could two first winters off Hongtou port, Lanyu Island on 8th Jan. There appeared to be less

white on upperparts and rumps were browner than most first winter Vega, which may be a feature of Mongolian? I'm still not at all confident about identifying Mongolian Gull...

**63. Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus***

1 Chigu 25th Dec.

**64. Saunder's Gull *Larus saundersi***

10 N of Chigu in pans and 4 at Chigu Reserve 25th Dec.

**65. Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia***

An impressive wintering flock of 182 at Chigu Reserve on 25th Dec.

**66. Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus***

60 seen N of Chigu over salt pans and 4 at Chigu Reserve on 25th Dec.

**67. Osprey *Pandion haliaetus***

1 Chigu Reserve 25th Dec. 2 near Kenting 27th Dec. 2 singles Lanyu Island 8th Dec, inc. one carrying a saury-type fish. 1 lanyan estuary 14th Jan.

**68. Oriental Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus***

**ssp. *orientalis*** 1 pale first year Wulai valley 23rd Dec. 1 brown individual watched in flight over Gaoshufoshan off route 199 north of Kenting on 3rd Jan. 1 fulvous bird was being mobbed by a Peregrine Falcon over hills in the N of Lanyu Island on 8th Jan, and headed SE over the sea.

**69. Black-eared Kite *Milvus lineatus***

A scarce resident in central Taiwan. 6 viewed from the Meiya store in the Maolin valley (4km from the gate) on 5th Jan, and another single seen soaring over Laonang same day. Birds appear and sound identical to Japanese birds to my eyes and ears.

**70. Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela***

**ssp. *rutherfordi*** 1 Wushan 26th Dec. 2 Nurengshan and 4 Gaoshufoshan 31st Dec and 3rd Jan respectively. Up to 4 calling around the Naren special reserve on 3rd Jan and 2 Maolin 4th Jan. Not noted Lanyu Island. Singles heard Blue gate trail and Pautungkwan Pathway.

**71. Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus***

**ssp. *formosae*** 1 Nurengshan N of Kenting Park on 31st Dec. 1 Chihpen hot springs woodland 9th Jan. 1 over road outside Guanzilin 10th Jan. 1 seen off route 9 N of Ilan on 14th Jan. Note not all birds show bushy ventral area in flight.

**72. Chinese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter soloensis***

2 singles seen near Dona Hot Springs, Maolin area 5th Jan. Probably a small number winter in this area every year.

**73. Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus***

**ssp. *nisosimilis*** Single females seen over the summit of Hehuan mountain and bathing in a puddle along the Continuation Trail downhill from there on 13th Jan- though I suppose there is a chance they could have been the same bird. Possibly the raptor that took an Ashy Woodpigeon whose remains I found along the Continuation Trail that day.

**204. Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis***

**ssp.** not known. 1 Ist yr over forest above Hongtou village, lanyu Island, 8th Jan.

**74. Grey-faced Buzzard *Butastur indicus***

1 Jioupeng N of Kenting 3rd Jan. 1 rather rufous-winged individual Manjiou next day. Total of 3 birds seen Lanyu Island 8th Jan. Not as common in Taiwan in winter as in the Ryukyu Islands in Japan.

**75. Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malayensis***

A pair soaring level to the car at Motian (1500m asl) on cross-island highway 20 on 9th Jan. A single seen over Wushe from route 14 on 13th Jan, also at around 1500m asl. This species is more dark brown than black, in appearance rather like a kite (rather long tail with slightly notched appearance when folded) or even a small Golden Eagle (broad wings with noticeably pinched bases, and long fingers splayed outwards and downwards). The birds were all adults, and all had a thin whitish band across the uppertail coverts. Rather similar to Great Spotted Eagle in head-on flight, but note: smaller size, smaller yellow gape, narrow-based wings and longish tail make it appear quite different.

**76. Mountain Hawk Eagle *Spizaetus nipalensis***

**ssp. *fokiensis*** A single adult seen in soaring flight by the entrance to the Dona Experimental Forest Reserve on 5th Jan. (You have to apply for a permit to enter this reserve 80km away in the police bureau at Kaohsiung!) The bird appeared just like Japanese *ssp. orientalis*, but as it came closer, I noticed the lower belly, thighs and vent were a sort of liver brown colour, and were barred white (this feature was only seen when the bird was directly overhead. I also thought the bird looked slightly larger than Japanese birds seen in Kyushu (*ssp. orientalis*). Note that wintering birds of that *ssp.* also occur in the Taiwan mountains.

**77. Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus***

**ssp. *interstictus*** A few sightings of singles in farmland in lowland areas, and 3 noted on Lanyu Island on the 8th.

**78. Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus***

*ssp.* not seen: 1 on a hotel roof Sof Hungchong, Kenting area 3rd June. This place is very close to Longlang Lake. Possibly *ssp. calidus*: a female with very pale underparts was mobbing an Oriental Honey Buzzard in N Lanyu Island on 8th Jan.

**79. Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis***

**ssp. *philippensis*** 1 Chigu 25th Dec. 5 Longlang Lake 30th Dec. This *ssp.* has pale irides like *ssp. poggei*.

**80. Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis***

**ssp. *nigricollis*** 2 in front of the visitor center at Longlang Lake on 30th Dec.

**81. Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo***

4 adults on a fallen tree in front of the visitor center at Longlang Lake on 30th Dec. Total of just 3 noted at mouth of Lanyan estuary 14th Jan.

**82. Temminck's Cormorant *Phalacrocorax capillatus***

1 immature on rocks of Bijing village, Lanyu Island was the only record. This species is probably scarce in winter in Taiwan.

**83. Little Egret *Egretta gazetta***

Commonly sighted in salt pans, riverbeds and fields in lowland areas. The largest flock seen was of around 400 in the Chigu area on 25th Dec, but elsewhere generally numbered less than Cattle Egret. 1 was on Lanyu Is. 7th Jan.

**84. Pacific Reef Egret *Egretta sacra***

2 singles seen off Kenting coasts in early Jan, and 4 singles seen around Lanyu Is coasts on 8th Jan. All sightings refer to dark birds.

**85. Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea***

Seen in small numbers at a number of lowland sites. The largest group was 50 at the Chigu reserve on 25th Dec.

**86. Great Egret *Casmerodius albus***

10 in the Chigu area was the highest count. Not noted as much as other Egret sp.

**87. Intermediate Egret *Mesophyx intermedia***

**ssp. *intermedia*** 2 near Changhua City 25th Dec. At least 50 Chigu area 25th Dec. Elsewhere numbers rather low and 1 noted on Lanyu Is. 7th Jan.

**88. Cattle Egret *Bulbulcus ibis***

Commonly seen in ricefields and cattle fields, particularly in the Kenting area, where the highest count was of 350 in one field at Shicheongsi on 3rd Jan. 2 Lanyu 8th Jan.

**89. Striated Heron *Butorides striatus***

**ssp. *javanicus*** 1 in a river near Wandan on 28th Dec and 2 on houseboats on Wanda reservoir at dusk on 12th Jan.

**90. Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus***

3 photographed in wet fields at Bilangkeng village on 30th Dec.

**91. Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax***

Commonly heard and seen even over cities. No particularly big groups seen.

**92. Japanese Night Heron *Gorsachius goesagi***

2 seen hunting frogs (probably Letouche's Frog) at 500m asl in evergreen Laurel forest near the summit of Gaoshufoshan N of Kenting Park. Winter records for this species are important. Both birds appeared to be adults.

**93. Malayan Night Heron *Gorsachius melanolophus***

A single was photographed in the Heping Botanical Gardens in Taipei on 22nd Dec. The bird was seen taking a lizard sp. with lightning fast movements, then curiously 'rippling" its neck while holding its head level to "swallow" its prey.

**94. Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis***

An adult female was seen well in a taro field on Lanyu Island on 7th Jan.

**95. Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia***

1 with Black-faced Spoonbills at the Chigu Spoonbill Reserve 25th Dec.

**96. Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor***

The roost at Chigu held a healthy 350 individuals on the afternoon of the 25th Dec. About 10 ringed birds were seen but they were too distant to read. Elsewhere, an adult was at the mouth of a river at Jioupeng in the Kenting area, photographed.

**97. Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus***

**ssp. *lucionensis*** A common bird of lowlands and agricultural areas, particularly in the Kenting Park, and on Lanyu Island, where 16 were counted on a coastal road walk around the greater part of the island on 8th Jan. 1 was photographed in the Taipei Botanical Garden on 22nd Dec.

**98. Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach***

**ssp. *formosae*** Noted only along the Laonang river, near Wandan and in the Lanyan fields area, but appeared to be common in those places. Males on adjoining territories along the Laonang river displayed varied mimicry of Black Drongo, Light-vented Bulbul, Blue-naped Monarch, Crested Mynah and Oriental Reed Warbler.

**99. Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius***

**ssp. *taivanus*** 2 near Dinghu on route 18 to Alishan in cedar plantations, 10th Jan. Just 2 seen along the Patungkwan trail at Kuangao forest (Yushan) 11th Jan. Note this ssp. has uniform rusty-buff upperparts, with blue wing patch 'split' by a black tertial, and thin black malar strips, and black forecrown spot. A common mimicked call is that of Japanese Sparrowhawk.

**100. Taiwan Blue Magpie *Urocissa caerulea***

Seen in just 2 places this time: 3 Wulai village 23rd Dec, and a single seen from route 9 just N of Ilan on 14th Jan.

**101. Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae***

**ssp. *formosae*** No larger flocks seen this time, but still 1-5 birds recorded at the following sites: Maolin, Chihpen, Hsitou, Dona, 5 sites in or near the Kenting Park, Dongpu Springs (Yushan) and in central Taipei. Note the call is a rather Nutcracker-like chatter: 'gwe ge-ge gwe gweh', and occasionally a bizarre, popping 'ker- PLINK!'

**102. Black-billed Magpie *Pica pica***

**ssp. *sericea*** 1 seen in central Taipei on an aerial from the train 22nd Dec, and 2 seen from expressway 3 south of the city the next day.

**103. Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga caryocatactes***

**ssp. *owstoni*** 2 birds seen at Yakou near the Daguanshan tunnel at the top pass of the cross-island highway 20, on 9th Jan. The chin and throat are streaked white in this ssp. but the rest of the underparts appear dark and unmarked.

**104. Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos***

**ssp. *colonorum*** Rather uncommon. Up to 4 called in the early morning over Wulai village near Taipei on 23rd Dec. Elsewhere, singles noted near Laonang and Wushe.

**105. Maroon Oriole *Oriolus trailii***

**ssp. *ardens*** Just a single sighting of a 1st year male and an adult male in a leafless tree above Wulai waterfall on 23rd Dec (photographed). The younger bird had crimson upperparts, but the lower breast to vent was off white with blackish streaks. Note that the iris is whitish and not yellow in this ssp., which is also coloured a more vivid crimson than the more maroon nominates. 1 bird was

heard calling in forest at Chihpeng near Taitung on 9th Jan. restricted range in Taiwan but quite easy to see where it occurs. The sites are: Wulai, Chihpeng and the lower slopes along cross-island highway 20 (below Litao) near Taitung, and the Maolin scenic area (especially around Dona).

**106. Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris***

**ssp. *griseogularis*** 1-3 birds seen at Wulai, Maolin, Hsitou and at the blue Gate Trail. One male seen well had yellow feather bases to vermilion belly. Call is higher and sweeter than Ryukyu Minivet *P. tegimae*: 'tsee ree-dee'. Birds are quite active and restless while feeding and can be hard to observe.

**107. Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocerus***

**ssp. *harteri*** Very common along the banks of the Laonang river at Ligang (15 seen along a 4km stretch), and common throughout lowland areas in the south and at Ilan. Note that at Kenting (Jiaopeng village) 2 were photographed perching on the backs of Water Buffalo. No sightings on Lanyu Island, 7th and 8th Jan. At Chihpeng 1 bird was on wires close to the forest, about 100m away from where some Brozed Drongo were calling.

**108. Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus***

**ssp. *braunianus*** Pairs were seen at Wulai, Maolin, Hsitou and Chihpeng and also near wushe at the Wanda reservoir. Note that like Eurasian Jay in Taiwan, a commonly mimicked call is that of Japanese Sparrowhawk. Birds at Dona were heard mimicking Collared Finchbill calls as part of a song.

**109. Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii***

**ssp. *pallasii*** 4, including 2 singing males involved in a territorial chase, upstream from Dona Hot Spring (Maolin Scenic Area) 5th Jan.

**110. Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius***

**ssp. *philippensis*** Quite common in villages and farm fields in the Kenting area. 12 counted on Lanyu Island 8th Jan. Also singles seen at Wulai, near Tainan, and in the Maolin valley.

**ssp. *pandoo*** Two sightings, both of males in near-full adult plumage: one was at Eluanbi Park at the southernmost tip of Taiwan on 30th Dec, and another was found on concrete road sidings above Hongtou village on 8th Jan.

**111. Taiwan Whistling Thrush *Myophonus insularis***

6 seen and heard around Wulai village 23rd Dec. 1 seen well in the Meiya valley, about 5km from the entrance to the Maolin Scenic Area, 4th Dec. 4 calling around Dona Hot Spring at dawn on 5th Jan. 2 noted from highway 20 at 1600m asl (about 10km downslope from Yakou) on 9th Jan. 1 calling near Hsitou village in the afternoon of 112th Jan. Note that this species is most active (and very bold!) just before dawn and at last light, becoming much more retiring during daylight hours. Birds foraged among boulders along streams, clambering under rocks at times. When disturbed the flew into nearby forest edge to forage, sometimes up to 700m away from the stream (as at Wulai). While perching on rocks the tail is deliberately cocked then slowly lowered while being fanned out, a very characteristic movement.

**112. Scaly Thrush *Zoothera dauma***

All sightings given below:

Kenting area: 1 flushed from side of route 199 near the junction with the road to Taitung on 30th Dec, 1 flushed Gaoshufoshan forest off route 199 on 3rd Jan. Lanyu Island: 1 heard calling from woodland edge on E coast, the thin 'tseeoooo' alarm call, 8th Jan. Cross-island Highway 20 around

Daguanshan tunnel: 1 flushed from moss at roadside at 1700m asl in the same place as 1 seen well in Jan 2005. Patungkwan Ancient Pathway through the broadleaf Dweikuan forest (2000- 2500m asl): 8 singles (5 flushed and 3 watched) 11th Jan. Hsitou Reserve: 3 together on trail sides through cedar woods to the Giant Cypress, 12th Jan- all seen well. Daan bamboo plantation area near Shanlinsi Reserve (400m asl): 4 birds noted in 12m tall bamboo groves and edge of cleared area. Blue Gate Trail: 1 heard giving the 'tseeooooo' call 13th Jan, early morning.

Notes:

1. All birds seen appeared to be of a similar size and appearance to Scaly Thrush ssp. *aurea* from Japan.
2. However, 1 bird in Kenting and 1 bird in Hsitou appeared to have colder greyish toned upperparts. It is possible these birds are 1st yrs, as the one in Hsitou seemed to be behaving 'with less experience' than the 2 more richly buff brown-toned 2 birds accompanying it. That bird was always the last to flush, and flushed to rather open perches where it looked a bit vulnerable, compared the other 2, which perched more cryptically.
3. All 7 birds seen relatively well had quite distinct dark 'tear' smudge marks leading down vertically from the eye. This is a feature shown distinctly on all Amami Thrush *Z. amami*, but only faintly on about 20 % of ssp. *aurea* in Japan.
4. I checked the longest uppertail covert tips on a "golden buff" bird and the more greyish "young" bird at Hsitou. In ssp. *aurea* the black tips are shaped like arrow heads with indentations clearly visible 'cutting into' the top border of the tip, whereas in Amami Thrush the black tips have a more flat upper edge, making the feather tips look as if they have been 'dipped in ink'. The 'young' greyer bird had arrowlike tips, the nearby golden-buff bird had tips still arrowlike, but approaching the dipped-in-ink look of Amami tips.
5. The size of the pale golden-buff crown feather centres appeared to be like ssp. *aurea*. Amami Thrush shows larger centres.
6. On the Kenting birds, the tail appeared quite long and full, as ssp. *aurea*. But in birds observed well in Hsitou, Daan and Dweikuan the tail appeared to be shorter in relation to the wing tips.
7. On two birds in Daan and Hsitou, the outermost shortest retrices were more than three-quarters white. I'm not sure about this feature in ssp. *aurea* or sp. *amami*.
8. The white undertail on two birds seen perched from below in Hsitou were sparsely marked with 2 rows of faint, thin brown chevrons. I'm not sure about this feature in ssp. *aurea* or in sp. *amami*.
9. The retrices could not be counted from below as is sometimes possible with Amami Thrush in contrasty spotlit views. It's anyone's guess as to whether these birds have 12 (like sp. *amami*) or 14 (like ssp. *dauma* and *aurea*). I am going to the Natural History Museum in Taipei to see if I can look at skins.
10. All birds were rather more wary than ssp. *aurea* I have observed wintering in Kyushu, but then resident ssp. *aurea* in S Kagoshima were very wary and tricky to see all year. Amami thrush is also difficult to observe.
11. What interests me is that no birds were seen doing the curious quivering 'double bob and scuttle' movement of ssp. *aurea* (and nominate *dauma*), rather they scuttled horizontally and stalled erect with a wing-flick like foraging Amami Thrush. However, maybe because they were wary and aware of my presence, they weren't settled enough to 'bob', as I did not see any birds actually foraging and feeding.
12. The contact call on flushing was a thin, 'broken' (two-tone) 'tsi-ih' (up, then down in tone), different from Amami Thrush's short, flat 'tsih' and ssp. *aurea*'s more drawn out (but still flat) 'tsiih'. This was heard from all birds flushed at Hsitou and Daan, and one bird flushed in the Dweikuan forest.

So the Scaly Thrushes I observed in Taiwan in the last few weeks appear to be slightly different from both ssp. *aurea* and sp. *amami*. Interestingly, they also seem to show a number of characteristics of both, too. I have to wait a few more weeks to start listening for song. There's going to be a lot of

camping... I wonder how many singing birds I hear versus the number of times I get down to the police station! It would be so fantastic if resident Scaly Thrush have an early morning song similar to Amami Thrush...

**113. Island Thrush *Turdus poliocephalus***

**ssp. *niveiceps*** 1 bird heard giving a scolding series of Blackbird-like 'chuck' notes in coniferous woodland edge by a water treatment plant about 5km upslope from the main gate to Alishan Park on route 18. 1 male flew across the Blue Gate Trail in front of me on the 13th Jan, while another individual called 30m away. A tricky species to observe!

**114. Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus***

At least 4 were present in the Gaoshufoshan forest N of Kenting Park with groups of the next species on 30th Dec.

**115. Pale Thrush *Turdus pallidus***

Singles were noted at Wulai, near Kenting and on Lanyu Island.

**116. Brown-headed Thrush *Turdus chrysolaus***

2-5 birds seen at Wulai, Maolin, Kenting, Chihpeng, Yushan, Blue Gate Trail and near Ilan. The highest counts were 25 at Gaoshufoshan (Kenting area) on 30th Dec and a day count of 36 on Lanyu Island 8th Jan. All those seen well appeared to be nominate.

**117. Dusky Thrush *Turdus eunomus***

1 1st year Yehyu village, Lanyu Island 8th Jan. Treated as distinct from the next entry as per Dickinson et al., and Brazil (pers.comm.)

**118. Naumann's Thrush *Turdus naumanni***

2: an adult and a 1st year in palms by Yehyu port, Lanyu Island 8th Jan.

**119. Ferruginous Flycatcher *Muscicapa ferruginea***

A single adult on the same branch as a male Vivid Niltava along the Dona mountain road to Dona Experimental Forest, Maolin Scenic Area, 5th Jan, 600m asl.

**120. Blue-and-white Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelena***

A 1st yr male with 2 female Vivid Niltava in trees by a waterfall N of the summit of Lurengshan (N of Kenting Park) 31st Dec. Note the call is a hard 'chuck-chuck'.

**121. Vivid Niltava *Niltava vivida***

**ssp. *vivida*** 1-3 birds seen at a number of sites: Wulai, Dona, N Kenting, Nanren Lake area, Chihpeng, Patungkuan Pathway (Yushan), Blue Gate Trail. Females are colder greyish brown above and below compared to females of the previous sp., and have a distinctive but rather faint orange flush to face, throat and orbital. The crown looks flatter, the head squarer in certain attitudes. The call is like a loud, metallic Asian Stubtail call, a sharp 'pit!' sometimes occurs by a churred note in excitement.

**122. Siberian Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope***

A common winter visitor throughout, from sea level to about 4000m asl in open areas, though note a pair were in scrub at the summit of Lurengshan (814m asl) on 31st Dec and 4 birds including a singing male were noted in steep tea terraces at Motian (1500m asl) off route 20. 8 were counted on

8th Jan around Lanyu Island. Easier to observe in winter in Taiwan than winterers further N in the Ryukyu Islands.

**123. White-browed Bush Robin *Tarsiger indicus* (*Luscinia indica*)**

**ssp. *formosanus*** One female or 1st yr bird seen on a tree root at 1800m asl along the Patungkuan Pathway through Dweikuan forest on 11th Jan. Note compared to females of the next species, shows a paler throat and more defined ear coverts (less of a 'hooded' appearance), a rusty tint to the crown, a more clearly defined supercilium, and slightly darker looking upperparts.

**124. Collared Bush Robin *Tarsiger johnstoniae* (*Luscinia johnstoniae*)**

1-5 birds noted at Dona, Yakou, Patungkuan Pathway, Hsitou reserve and Blue Gate Trail. Note that males have a strange frog-like alarm reminiscent of Ryukyu Robin *L. komadori* alarm, a quite deep but upslurred and croaking 'grret'.

**125. Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus auroreus***

**ssp. *auroreus*** Singles were observed at Laonang river, Ilan, near Tainan, Kenting area and Chihpen and at 1500m asl at Motian.

**126. White-capped Water Redstart *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus***

A single adult male was photographed feeding among boulders and entering a hole in a concrete bank below Wulai power station on 22nd Dec. The bird could not be found the following morning. This is probably a scarce or rare winter visitor to Taiwan, but I suppose there is also a slight possibility it might have been an escaped cagebird...

**127. Plumbeous Water Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus***

**ssp. *affinis*** A common sight along streams in hills and mountains from Wulai to Kenting. Note that compared to the next species, the tail is fanned open and shut 3-4 times followed by a pause, then again, etc.

**128. Little Forktail *Enicurus scouleri***

**ssp. *fortis*** 2 were seen well from the Patungkuan Pathway (5km mark), working water chutes and giving a shrill call. The birds were 1.5km apart. Note the legs and feet are so sickly-pale as to appear white, and these limbs are strong: one bird easily walked up slippery and mossy boulders against the falling water. The tail is bobbed and quivered open and shut continuously while working streams. The characteristic Forktail head profile is achieved in excitement, when birds stretch neck up and out, crane head slightly forward and raise frontal crown feathers.

**129. Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus***

**ssp. *stejnegeri*** A single noted near Hongtong, Lanyu Island, 8th Jan.

**130. Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus***

3 in palms near Yehyu port, Lanyu Island 8th Jan.

**131. Red-cheeked Starling *Sturnus philippensis***

1 with a small flock of the next sp. on set-aside at Gangkou village in Kenting Park, 30th Dec.

**132. White-shouldered Starling *Sturnus sinensis***

6 Gangkou 30th Dec, 12 Kenting 31st Dec, 60 on sorsops in an orchard near Shichongsi N of Kenting 3rd Jan and 7 on outskirts of Taitung in orchards 9th Jan.

**133. White-cheeked Starling *Sturnus cineraceus***

2 seen from the car on in the N outskirts of Taichung on 24th Dec.

Black-collared Starling *Sturnus nigricollis*

An adult male landed on a tall bamboo by my car on the E outskirts of Wandan city at dusk on 27th Dec. This large (28cm!) *Sturnus* is rather Myna-like in appearance and has a very loud call- a discordant 'WERR!' The bird flew N alone after a few seconds. in view of the proximity of a sighting of the next sp., perhaps best considered an escape.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*

1 on wires with Crested Myna before dusk on 27th Dec, E of Wandan City (photographed). An established escape in Taiwan, so not included in the Species List.

**134. Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus***

ssp. *formosanus* A common birds of towns, lowlands and fields with shrill calls. Note that the ssp. here is greyer than Chinese nominate, with a white vent and broader white tail patches and a less full crest, so appears similar to White-vented Myna *A. cinereus*. An established escape in Taiwan, so not included in the Species List.

**135. Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta europaea***

ssp. *sinensis* Fairly common in montane coniferous and mixed forests in central mountains; seen at Yushan, Alishan and near Wushe, and also noted lower down in evergreen forest at Chihpen. Note there is some variation in the extent of the rufous underparts- about 70 % seen showed paler cream buff to earcoverts and throat, as opposed to wholly rust from chin to vent.

**136. Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes***

ssp. *taivanus* 1 Yakou Forest track 9th Jan. 4 in scrub by car parks at Hehuan pass (3400m asl) on 13th Jan.

**137. Coal Tit *Periparus ater***

ssp. *ptilosus* 1 or 2 birds were noted at the following sites: Yakou, Highway 20 at 2600m asl, Yushan (where seen hover-gleaning in a tall hemlock with Flamecrest flock) and near Hehuan mountain. Note this sp. is prominently crested.

**138. Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus***

ssp. *insperatus* 1-5 birds noted at Chihpen, Hsitou, Yakou, Maolin, Alishan, Yushan and Blue Gate Trail. Not noted at all in the Kenting area. The call is rather like a cross between those of Great Tit and Blue Tit: 'sirrrrrr pitchou pitchou pitchou'. Note undertail coverts are black with white edges.

**139. Taiwan Tit *Parus holsti***

Singles noted at Blue Gate Trail and Chihpen, and 3 together observed at Hsitou along the quiet Bird Watch trail, 12th Jan.

**140. Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus***

ssp. *concinnus* Commonly seen: a total of 50 in 3 groups noted along highway 20 in the mountains 9th Jan, and groups of 10-20 birds noted at Patungkuan pathway, Yakou, Blue Gate Trail and near Wushe. Calls are similar to, but higher than, Long-tailed Tit *A. caudatus* calls. Often found in parties with Tits, Yuhinas or Fulvettas.

**141. Plain Martin *Riparia paludicola***

**ssp. *chinensis*** 40 at the Laonang river near Ligang, 27th Dec. Birds constantly landed briefly to pick up grass heads or feathers from a concrete embankment, when photographed. One bird carrying the feather would be chased by the others in a mob, would let go of the feather only for another to catch it and continue the "play"- really an astonishing demonstration of group dynamics! I think this behaviour has been noted for other *Riparia* spp. though. About 10 birds were seen over a river in the Kenting area near Shichingsi, 4th Jan.

**142. Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica***

**ssp. *gutturalis*** (probably this ssp., both a resident and a migrant here) Small groups noted in lowlands throughout, but some large flocks on wires among fields and betel Palm plantations in the SW, eg. 1000 plus in the Wandan area 27th Dec.

**143. Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica***

**ssp. *namiyei*** A common resident from sea level right up to 200m asl in the central mountains. Although ascribed to this ssp., birds appear to have paler underparts and lack the White-cheeked Starling-like 'skreet' call of birds in the Ryukyu islands. 2 were seen to repeatedly enter a cavern at the N tip of Lanyu Island. It could be there are some natural cliff-nesters on this island.

**144. Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica***

**ssp. ?** Small groups of 10-20 birds were noted over wooded hills in the Kenting, Wulai but also high over salt pans at Chigu, Tainan. Very hard to separate from Striated Swallow, but not impossible if one can scale them on other hirundines. Perhaps shows less of a contrast between dark flight feathers and underwing coverts than Striated. I think the two species can't be separated by the amount of rust colouration on the underwing coverts, as this seems to vary individually in both species. 2 seen on wires in Tainan county had only faint streaking to face and underparts.

**145. Striated Swallow *Cecropis striolata***

**ssp. *stanfordi*** This species appears to be common around the Laonang river at Ligang, in lowlands between Tainan and Kaohsiung, just N of Kenting and also in the foothills of the Maolin Scenic Area. Large and long-tailed- often single birds in flight looked almost Parakeet-like! Even single birds look appreciably larger than the average Red-rumped. Bold contrast between underwing coverts and underflight feathers. 1 bird on wires dwarfed a neighbouring Pacific Swallow, and had dense streaking to face and underparts, appearing grey below from a distance. A call that appears to be distinct for this sp. and not given by Red-rumped is a distinctive gravelly 'squerLITCH' uttered singly in flight.

**146. Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus***

**ssp. *nigrimentalis*** Fairly common resident ssp. in the central mountains, right up to 3500m asl at Hehuan, and also seen well a Yakou and in the Shinlansi area. This ssp. appears to have white underparts, glossier upperparts, and slightly higher 'sweeter' chittering flight calls than nominate.  
**ssp. *dasypus*** 6 birds flying around the Shinlansi area had distinctly swarthy grey underparts and lower chittering calls and were judged to be of this ssp..

**147. Flamecrest *Regulus goodfellowi***

About 5 seen in Spruce at Yakou on 9th Jan, but a single flock of 15 were flutter-gleaning and performing sallies with Coal Tit in 20m high hemlocks in Kuangao forest (Yushan Park) at 2300m asl. Call is a thin 'see-see', occasionally in series of threes, when very similar to Goldcrest *R. regulus* calls.

**148. Collared Finchbill *Spizixos semitorques***

**ssp. *cinereicapillus*** Birds were seen at Wushan in Tainan County, 4 on 26th Dec. Also 5 were singing around Dona village on 5th Jan and 2 were seen on the outskirts of Wushe from route 14 on 13th Jan. The calls are throatier and more mellow than those of Light-vented Bulbul, and have a repeated 'pree tu pree-pree' motif.

**149. Light-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis***

**ssp. *formosae*** Common at Wulai, Tainan- Kaosiung lowlands, Taitung, Wushe (Wanda reservoir) and Ilan areas, and also noted in parks in central Taipei.

**150. Styan's Bulbul *Pycnonotus taivanus***

Rather common in restricted range. 5 birds were with 3 Light-vented Bulbul in scrub by Suzu village between Kaohsiung and Kenting, presumably this is the range boundary. A common resident in Kenting. Not seen on Lanyu Island. Note that 2 birds at Motian, in exactly the same bush as 2 seen last year, at 1500m asl, appears to be at the altitudinal limit for this species.

**151. Brown-eared Bulbul *Hypsipetes amaurotis***

**ssp. *nagamichii*** This is the commonest passerine on Lanyu Island: a day count of 160 (inc. a single flock of 40 birds) was made on 8th Jan in the greaterpart of the island on a circuit by foot of the coastal road there. In the Kenting area, this sp. is scarcer, but still widespread- 1-5 were noted at Kenting and Shedding Forest Reserves, Eluanbi Park, Gaoshufoshan, Runengshan, and atNanren Lake Specially Protected Area, but not in hills west of Longlang Lake. This is the ssp. that occurs on Yonaguni Island in SW Japan, an island whose avifauna has more in common with Lanyu than the island of Taiwan.

**152. Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus***

Common to very common in wooded areas throughout, and also in suburban areas, trees along riverbanks and in farmland in the lowlands. Gregarious and noisy. Flocks over forest regularly number 50-70 birds. 1st years lack the red bill. A flock of 40 were noted in tall hemlocks at 2600m asl in the Kuangao Forest (Yushan Park).

**153. Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis***

**ssp. *tinnabulans*** First noted in grassy pastures to the S of Kenting Park (6 calling on 30th Dec) and also anoted in grassy scrub near the beach front park at Taitung, 9th Jan.

**154. Bright-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis***

**ssp. *curtoisi*** 4 birds were seen in 1.5m tall reeds and grass by the Laonang river N of Ligang on 27th Dec. Birds were rather shy, flitting quickly between grass stands and dropping into cover, but once one bird 'popped out' onto a stem. Note that in winter pl. the crown is not 'bright' but more heavily streaked darker than the last sp.. The tail is noticeably longer, rather spool-shaped (gradated), and has fine barring on the upper side to the feathers. Uperparts cold brown streaked blackish. There were fine dark streaks on the breast sides, and the breast was flushed buff (also this buff on flanks). Buffy-white supercilium accentuated by dark crown. One call is very different, a wheezy, straight, drawn-out 'queesh' given when flushed from cover.

**155. Striated Prinia *Prinia criniger***

**ssp. *striata*** 1 bird seen in low scrub covering an area of collapsed ground at the start of the Patungkuan Pathway near Dongpu on 11th Jan.

**156. Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata***

**ssp. *flavirostris*** A common resident in Lowland farmland. Quite easy to watch in low weeds, but becomes more tricky to rackdown in taller reeds etc. Birds with yellower-buff underparts thought to be females and young; birds with greyer crowns and whiter underparts possibly males in breeding plumage??

**157. Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonicus***

**ssp. *simplex*** Small flocks 5-10 birds noted at Wulai and in central Taipei. Elsewhere, two flocks of about 5 birds were noted in Shedding forest, Kenting on 2nd Jan. Very common in scrub around the coast and forest edge on Lanyu Island, wherearound 120 were seen in total on 8th Jan.

**ssp. *batanis*** Because of rain and lack of knowledge about access to the Lanyu hill forest, I couldn't track down this larger, greener ssp. which is resident there, and according to pamphlets produced by Kenting Nat Park, is also occasional in Kenting.

**158. Asian Stubtail *Urosphena squamiceps***

1 calling 'tchik' on the cross-island road above Hontou, Lanyu island 7th Jan, and 3 counted in forest edge around the island the next day.

**159. Manchurian (Korean) Bush Warbler *Cettia (canturians)***

**ssp. *borealis*** 2 in creepers overhanging a stream near Wandan 28th Dec, 3 in 1.5m tall reeds by Laonang river near Ligang on 27th Dec, 2 seen at the edge of a grassy field next to Yellow Mountain near Cantan, Kenting area on Dec 30th. Note the call is a quite deep, downslurred 'chrrt', often a harder 'drrt' that is easily confuseable with the calls of the next 2 species and Black-browed Reed Warbler's 'trruc'.

**160. Strong-footed Bush Warbler *Cettia fortipes***

**ssp. *robustipes*** 4 noted in grassy scrub in a graveyard E of Wandan 28th Dec, and noted as common in reeds in clearings in the forest at Shinlanshi, and at Hsitou on 12th Jan. Note that the calls are intermediate in pitch between the previous and the next sp. , a hard 'tik' , followed by a hard, downslurred 'trrk', rather grating and dry.

**161. Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler *Cettia acanthizoides***

**ssp. *acanthizoides*** Rather common in dwarf bamboo habitats above 2500m asl in mixed and coniferous forest, eg. at Yushan, Blue Gate Trail and Patungkwan, but note also found at lower levels in small numbers, eg. in dwarf bamboo at 1600m asl in cedar plantations at Shinlansi. The calls are very similar to Asian Subtail's cheek[sucking 'tchik': a quiet but penetrating 'chick' or 'chk', followed by a straight, high 'chrrrt'.

**162. Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis***

A single was observed in reeds in a graveyard near Wandan City on 28th Dec. Calls were a loud, abrupt 'tack!' and a piercing, higher 'tick!' in alarm.

**163. Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus***

One was observed in reeds by a taro field , Lanyu Island on 8th Jan.

**164. Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus***

Singles were seen and heard at widespread localities: Wulai, Maolin, near Tainan, Kenting (3 sites), Chehping, Hsitou and 3 were counted on Lanyu Island on 8th Jan.

**165. Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis***

A bird with a high-pitched 'tzrrri', similar to those heard calling commonly on Tairajima in the N Ryukyu Islands (Japan) in early Nov 2003-5, was observed at Wulai village on 22nd Dec. The bird had yellow-washed underparts. Elsewhere, records referred to birds giving 'normal' 'dzih' calls: 4 at Yellow mountain just W of Longlang Lake, Kenting on 30th Dec, 1 Kenting Park 31st Dec, 1 at Guanziling on 10th Jan, 1 near Chihpeng 9th Jan and a single calling Lanyu Island forest edge on 8th Jan near the airport. Also 2 heard at Meiya, Maolin on 5th Jan. Three birds seen had yellowish wash to underparts.

*Ijima's Warbler* *Phylloscopus ijimae*

*This possible record is included here in the hope that it will encourage someone in Taiwan to take up the search. I searched the woodlands of Kenting Nat Park and the higher forested hills of Gaoshufoshan (514m asl) and Runengshan (804m asl) just N of the park boundary, and also the temperate and sub-tropical/ tropical forest around Nanren, and I skirted the broadleaf forest at Chihpeng, SW of Taitung and the tropical forest on Lanyu Island. I also checked the drier forest at Hsitou and cedar plantations at Shinlangsi. I couldn't hear or see Ijima's Warbler at any of these sites, except for one: Gaoshufoshan is covered with evergreen temperate laurel forest similar in appearance to the forest preferred by Ijima's Warbler on Miyakejima and on passage at Inaodake in the S of Kyushu, Japan. I heard what I think was this ssp. calling three or four times at 500m asl there, on 30th Dec. The sound was drowned out a bit by calling Brown-eared Bulbuls, but I distinctly heard a high, down-slurred, plaintive 'tiu'. I was unable to see the calling bird and despite much waiting and a return visit to the site on the 3rd Jan, I couldn't find it. The other sites checked seemed not so suitable for Ijima's: Nanren was covered with a drier forest, and Nanren was so rich botanically that the amount of passerines found there was significantly lower than in less 'diverse' habitats (like Yakushima in Japan). Perhaps I was aiming too low in altitude and I need to concentrate in future on forest above 1500m asl.*

**166. Sakhalin Leaf Warbler *Ph. borealoides*/ Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Ph. tenellipes*** A single, in appearance most similar to Sakhalin, with brown upperparts and pinkish horn legs with dark brownish shins was watched foraging in low weeds in an overgrown graveyard on the E outskirts of Wandan, 28th Dec. It is impossible to identify these two species with my current knowledge (very little), so the bird is assigned to both here.

**167. Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus albogularis***

**ssp. *fulvifacies*** A common sight in higher evergreen forest 220m asl-2600m asl at Litao, Yakou, Blue Gate trail, near Wushe, and also at Hsitou. Birds often in flocks 5-20 strong. Hover-gleans a lot. The common feeding calls are a high 'srreee' and some whimpering 'pyeh' notes.

**168. White-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax albogularis***

**ssp. *ruficeps*** 3 seen together in roadside grasses near the E side of the Daguanshan tunnel at the highest pass of route 20. The laughing calls given in excitement, 'zerzerzezerzzer...' are higher-pitched than those of Rusty Laughingthrush.

**169. Rusty Laughingthrush *Garrulax poecilorhynchus***

**ssp. *poecilorhynchus*** 2 glimpsed in low tropical forest understorey near Nanren Lake, Kenting Park on Jan 4th. 7 seen well in scrub in a cedar plantation along route 18 at the turn-off to Dinghu on Jan 10th. 6 were noisily chattering around cane grass at km3 of the Patungkuan Pathway (Yushan Park at 800m asl) on 11th Jan. And a total of 10 in two groups were observed well in low ground cover (taros and ferns) in a cedar plantation at Hsitou on 12th Jan. Note this ssp. is entirely rusty brown on upperparts, with an unmarked crown, and has a white vent. Odd loud whistles given by feeding birds.



**176. Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps***

**ssp. *praecognita*** A common species of scrub covered landslides in evergreen forests up to 2600m asl, sometimes higher. Sometimes 3-4 seen moving through understorey below a bird party. Noted from Wulai to Kenting, but not noted at Lanyu. Note song is a mellow whistle repeated five or six times: 'phu- pupupupu (pu)', and this is easily imitated. The alarm calls are rather insistent 'styer tyer' with a slightly *Cisticola* like-ring to them.

**177. Taiwan Barwing *Actinodura morrisoniana***

Noted moving up lichen clad trunks like a woodpecker; seems to be fond of beard-lichen covered trunks. 5 off route 20 at 2200m asl on 9th Jan. 2, 3 and 1 seen in the upper Dweikuan and Kuangao forests 11th Jan. 8 together on cedar trunks at Hsitou (one seen catching and crushing a beetle larva with its bill prior to eating it). Like a miniature *Garrulus* jay in structure and flight pattern. Not seen along the Blue Gate Trails.

**178. Steak-throated Fulvetta *Alcippe cinereiceps***

**ssp. *formosana*** Noted in the bamboo understorey of coniferous forest at Yakou, Kwangao and Hehuan, above 2600m asl. Note that 2 were seen at 2300m asl in understorey of broadleaf forest at the Continuation Trail on 13th Jan. Squeaky calls, quite wary.

**179. Dusky Fulvetta *Alcippe brunnea***

**ssp. *brunnea*** 4 on forest edge floor at Wulai 23rd Dec, 2 noted in lower forest at Rufengshan N of Kenting 31st Dec, 2 seen at Chihpeng on 9th Dec and 3 seen in Dweikuan forest (Yushan), but not noted at Blue Gate Trail on 13th Jan. Note forages in (also under) leaf litter, keeps low to the ground. Rather low 'jurt' calls repeated by foraging birds. Not shy and quite approachable, but hard to locate in gloom of forest.

**180. Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisoniana***

**ssp. *morrisoniana*** Probably the commonest passerine sp. in woodland in Taiwan, groups seen wherever woodland was visited. Birds were a little less numerous in Kenting than elsewhere, perhaps. The highest flock counts were at Dweikuan, where 2 flocks of 30- 40 noted on 11th Jan. Flocks burst into rounds of high, jeering 'zee zeee' calls on spying an intruder. The song is a clear, jaunty whistled phrase, alternating in pitch.

**181. White-eared Sibia *Heterophasia auricularis***

Commonly seen in woodland at Wulai, Kenting, Maolin, Yushan, Blue Gate and Hsitou. Note that as well as the wispy 'ears' the underwing coverts are also wispy and are occasionally exposed by singing birds.

**182. Taiwan Yuhina *Yuhina brunneiceps***

Flocks seen at 2200m asl off route 20 on 9th Jan, at Patungkwan (2000- 2600m asl) on 11th Jan, Hsitou (10 on 12th Jan) and Blue Gate trail (3 groups totaling about 60 birds 13th Jan. Note the thrum from an overhead flock in flight sounds a bit like that of a Barn Swallow roost.

**183. White-bellied Yuhina *Yuhina zantholeuca***

**ssp. *griseoloris*** Noted in small numbers in woodland at Wulai, Chihpeng, Nanren and Hsitou, where confusion with Varied Tit call is possible- White-bellied Yuhina's 'v-v-vay vay vay' sounds similar! Also 4 in Gaoshufoshan forest N of Kenting 30th Dec.

**184. Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus***

**ssp. *bulomachus*** 2-3 noted near Chigu 25th Dec. 5 Lanyan flat area 14th Jan.

**185. Golden Parrotbill *Paradoxornis verreauxi***

**ssp. *morrisonianus*** 2 noted with Steak-throated Fulvettas in dwarf bamboo at 2600m asl at Kuangao forest on 11th Jan.

**186. Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula***

**ssp. *wattersi*** Up to 60 seen in the grassy pastures and roadside lay-bys of Kenting Park on 30th Dec, and 2 noted in grassy cow pastures at Jiaopeng on 3rd Jan. At the Lanyan fields E of Ilan, up to 5 birds were signing. The common call is a high 'swit, swit-swit' on take-off and in low flight. Occasionally 'swzz' was uttered by a flushed bird. Not that wary, though, and easy to photograph.

**187. Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus***

**ssp. *formosum*** 6 noted in mistletoe clumps in tall 20m trees, Dweikuan forest on 11th Jan. 4 Hsitou next day and 4 Blue Gate Trail the following day. Active and also rather shy when spotting an observer, moves off quickly.

**188. Russet Sparrow *Passer rutilans***

2 seen at a rest stop on a fence near Taichung on 24th Dec.

**189. Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus***

**ssp. *saturatus*** Common and widespread in agricultural lowlands and cities, towns and villages throughout. 3 seen Yehyu and 5 seen Hongtou, Lanyu Island 8th Jan.

**190. White Wagtail *Motacilla alba***

**ssp. *lugens*** 4 seen on Lanyu island on 8th Jan. 1 Lanyan fields 14th Jan.

**ssp. *leucopsis*** 1 winter male Longluan Lake, Kenting 2nd Jan. 1 male in breeding plumage on road through Maolin valley at 700m asl, 5th Jan. 2 noted on Lanyu Island on 8th Jan.

**ssp. *ocularis*** 1 ad by the Laonang River at ligang on 27th Dec. 2 1st yrs in fields near Wandan on 28th Dec.

**191. Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava***

**ssp. *taivana*** Commonly seen (10-20 birds total at each site) at Chigu, Laonang riverbed near Ligang, agricultural fields around Wandan and in Kenting, Taitung and Ilan areas. None recorded on Lanyu 8th Jan.

**192. Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea***

1-4 birds recorded at Wulai, Maolin, Kenting (3 areas), Lanyu Island, Chehping, Ilan and 1 was at 2600m asl in Kuangao forest stream on 11th Jan.

**193. Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi***

1 Chigu 25th Dec. 7 in Kenting Park pastures 30th Dec. 1 Jiaopeng 3rd Jan. 5 Lanyan fields 14th Jan.

**194. Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni***

1-2 birds noted over forest at Gaoshufoshan, Nanren, Chihpen, and Maolin; Kenting Botanical reserve held 5 on 3rd Jan.

**195. Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus***

1-5 birds noted at Chigu, Laonang river near Ligang, Jiaopeng in Kenting area, and at taitung beach front.

**196. Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens***

**ssp. *japonicus*** 2 seen in a sandy seeded field near Anli (Tainan area) 25th Dec.

**197. Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris***

**ssp. ?** 2 photographed at my feet, feeding on crumbs at the top of the Hehuan Pass (3400m asl) on 13th Jan. The male responded to my subsong.

**198. White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata***

**ssp. *swinhoei*** 5 noted in creeper-strewn scrub at forest edge, Wushan, Tainan county on 26th Dec.  
**ssp. *subsquamicollis*** Possibly this ssp. were 4 birds with some buff scaling on ear coverts in a graveyard off route 1 on the way to Kenting from Kaohsiung. Note the call of this sp. is a high 'prrrit'.

**199. Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata***

**ssp. *topela*** Common and widespread in the Tainan- Kaohsiung lowlands. Often encountered while birdwatching there.

Indian Silverbill *Lonchura* (sp.?)

Probably an established escape in Taiwan. I photographed 2 flocks that were found in scrub near, but separate from flocks of the previous sp. 12 Laonang River scrub near Ligang 27th Dec and 8 in tall grasses at an overgrown graveyard on the E outskirts of Wandan city the following day.

**200. Eurasian Siskin *Carduelis spinus***

12 in tamarisks and feeding on grass seeds at Taitung beachfront park on 7th Jan.

**201. Vinaceous Rosefinch *Carpodacus vinaceus***

**ssp. *formosana*** A female was feeding flower buds 2m from me on the Continuation trail at 2200m asl on 13th Jan. And a fine adult male was feeding at my feet in the lower car park at Hehuan pass (3000m asl) later that day. Note that the call note is a rather whispery, flat 'hees', a little like Asian Brown Flycatcher call.

**202. Brown Bullfinch *Pyrrhula nipalensis***

**ssp. *uchidai*** 20 over the Dweikuan forest (Yushan Park) on 11th Jan and 14 in deciduous trees at 1600m asl above Hsitou village the next day. Note fast and direct flight in flock, with 'pwee' calls constantly ringing out- quite different from the piped calls of *P. pyrrhula* flocks.

**203. Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala***

**ssp. *spodocephala*** 2 noted near Longlang lake 29th Dec. 3 in a weedy field in Lanyan estuary area 14th Jan.

**ssp. *sordida*** A single male with yellowish underparts seen in Eluanbi park thought to be this ssp.