



The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Limited

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From the Editor



This special edition of the HKBWS Bulletin contains a variety of pieces by mainland authors about birds, birdwatching and birdwatching societies on the mainland. It is a "napshot" of the state of China- birdwatching in 2008.

Some articles are of narrower interest than others, but, reading between the lines where necessary, a picture of the healthy development of birdwatching as an activity in China is made clear.

-John Holmes

The development of birdwatching in Mainland China

Han Lianxian



Searching through thick bushes and shrubs, gazing at lake shores, beaches or agricultural land as if doing a treasure hunt or sheltering quietly under the trees to observe, identify and appreciate the beauty of birds! Simply equipped with a pair of binoculars and a field guide in pocket anyone can enjoy this treasure hunt-like activity alone or with friends. Those affected by ornithological madness will also carry a telescope and tripod in order to have a better view of the birds. This kind of recreational activity is named "bird watching" and has been rapidly expanding in mainland China over the last decade.



The development of birdwatching in Mainland China

Early days of birdwatching in China

The popularity of birdwatching among Hongkongers and Taiwanese is much higher than among mainlanders due to historical and economical reasons. The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society was established in 1957 and the number of members has been steadily increasing. They have had regular birdwatching and bird conservation activities over the past fifty years. On the other side of the strait in Taiwan, birdwatching started in the 1970's when its economy was enjoying a boom. These activities continue to flourish since the early 1980's and there are more than 30 birdwatching organizations or bodies in Taiwan today. China is a relative newcomer in this field.



The Chinese understanding of “bird watching” as an activity only started in the early 1980's when China was undergoing a series of economic reforms and a number of diplomats or delegates were permitted to come to China for research. They brought with them the concept of bird watching. In 1984, Ms. Zheng Baolai (郑保来), an ornithologist from Kunming Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, was seconded to the United States (美国) to do research with US scholars on ornithology. Upon her return from the States she told me (I was then studying for a Masters degree) that the Americans regarded birdwatching as a kind of recreational activity. Bookstores in the United States were replete with every kind of birding guide. At that time, Ms. Zheng was actively collecting information and intended to write a field guide to the wild birds of China. Her idea was turned down by Professor Zheng Zuoxin (郑作新) of the Beijing Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences as Professor Zheng thought the publication of “A Synopsis of the Avifauna of China”, of which he was main editor, was the prime concern for him. He preferred Ms. Zheng to concentrate on the progress of his book. Probably he believed that there was no urgency to publish a field guide in China at that time. Ms. Zheng departed to the US in 1986 and this matter was not raised again.

In 1985, Professor Donald Messersmith, an ornithologist from the State University of Maryland, the head of Audubon Bird-watching Society came to Xishuang Banna, Yunnan for

birdwatching with the special permission from the Security Bureau of China. In 1988, another American, Mr. Ben King of Kingbird Tours came to China as well. He also did birdwatching in Simao and Xishuang Banna. This Simao trip was subsequently reported in the annual report of the HKBWS in 1990. Birdwatching was still a mystery in the eyes of the general public of China at that time. I dare to say even the Chinese ornithologists knew very little about birdwatching at that time. People from overseas who wanted to birdwatch in China could only do so in the name of scientific research with the universities and/or research centers. I could recall that Don Messersmith brought a suitcase full of books about birds of Asian countries as a reference as there was an absence of guidebooks to the Chinese birds at that time. I was so inspired by what Mr. Ben King told me during the trip to Simao. Hardly can I forget what he said: “Observation is the trend for doing research on the birds rather than gathering specimens. Chinese ornithologists should use binoculars to study the wild birds instead of firearms.” Since then, I have seldom collected bird specimens for my studies.

Thanks to the momentous changes and economic liberation by the Chinese government since the 1990's, birdwatchers from abroad were then allowed to enter into China for watching birds. Prof. Messersmith and Mr. Ben King had bought a number of groups into China for this purpose. Their footsteps in China included Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan. Most of these visitors were from the US, UK, France, Australia, Canada, Netherlands, Denmark, Singapore and Japan. Simultaneously, birdwatchers from Taiwan and Hong Kong also joined the queue into China.

With the invitation of the HKBWS and Mai Po Nature Reserve, Chinese ornithologists went to Hong Kong to join the annual big bird race (BBR) in April 1996. This was the first time that

The development of birdwatching in Mainland China

participants from China made up their own team to join the event. I subsequently wrote an article about birdwatching in the 2nd edition of the "China Nature" (Daziran) (大自然) magazine in 1997. The article aimed to introduce birdwatching activities to the general public of China. Since then, scholars, conservationists and enthusiastic birdwatchers have organised various birdwatching activities in Beijing for the general public. The veil of these mysterious birding activities was raised and accepted by the general public only after persistent efforts by various parties.

Germination and growth of birdwatching in China

Thanks to the burgeoning economy and the ongoing economic transformation in mainland China, the general public has been enjoying the fruits of such growth. Conservationists have grasped this opportunity in a timely way to promote the concept of environmental protection while people started to learn birdwatching as a way for relaxation. Since the mid-1990's, birdwatching as a leisure activity has been widely accepted by the general public and it has grown steadily.

Birdwatching continued to thrive in China as we entered the 21st century. The concept of environmental protection was further strengthened among the general public after the introduction of a weekly birdwatching lecture by Lecturer Chiu Xin Ru (許新如) of the Beijing Normal University. Two conservation organizations from Beijing namely "Friends of Nature" and "Green Earth" have been especially active in organizing conservation activities for the general public. With protection of Black-headed Gulls as the main theme, Kunming Birdwatching Society carried out various surveys on them and organised birdwatching camps. Needless to say our pioneer, the WWF China office, in protecting the wildlife of China has made a tremendous effort to promote birdwatching to the Chinese public. As suggested by Dr. James Harkness's

forum was then set up in WWF China's web page enabling birdwatchers to exchange their experiences and ideas. This turned out to be quite successful. The forum has attracted many birdwatchers and proved to be a seabed for the new comers. In fact, the birdwatchers and birdwatching organizations from Hong Kong and Taiwan have given considerable help to advance this activity further in China.

Birdwatching in China has come into an era of consolidation after the first Chinese Big Bird Race at Dong Ting Lake in 2002. Provincial or municipal governments have set up or actively plan to set up birdwatching societies in order to promote these activities to the general public.

With the sponsorship of Birdlife International to further promulgate the concept of birdwatching in China, HKBWS has successfully established its China office. A number of training workshops and scientific research projects have been done. In May 2006, the China office organised a symposium in Chengdu to exchange experiences of the administrative difficulties in managing birdwatching societies in China. Representatives from these organizations had congregated to discuss the future strategic plan of birdwatching activities in China as well as to share managerial experiences among the delegates. They also mapped out birdwatching on a countrywide scale and decided to set up the China Bird Net (a website). Committee members were elected to smoothly coordinate birdwatching all over China. Undoubtedly, this symposium marked a milestone in the history of birdwatching in China.

In 2005, the 8th Congress of the China Ornithological Society, a branch of the China Zoological Society, was held in Hainan. It was announced that they have established various Specialist Groups to provide professional support to other birdwatching societies and to liaise with birdwatching enthusiasts around the world with a view to strengthen the growth of birdwatching in China.

At present, we have about 30 registered and soon-to-be-registered organizations with the object of promoting birdwatching activities and bird conservation. Among those registered organizations, the prominent ones are Shenzhen Birdwatching Society, Fujian Birdwatching Society, Zhejiang Wild Bird Society, Wild Bird Society of Shanghai, Xiamen Birdwatching Society, Kunming Birdwatching Society, Chengdu Birdwatching Society, Wuhan Birdwatching Society, Jiangxi Birdwatching Society and Luzhou Birdwatching Society. It is incredibly exciting to learn that some "First" bird records for China were made by these enthusiastic birdwatchers. Their information has proved to be vitally important as they provided





new data about the geographical distribution of the new species.

Birders nowadays can never be satisfied by just a glance of the birds but they have also invested a lot on photographic equipment in order to make records of what they have seen. They have captured different postures of the wild birds and many of them were masterpieces. These high quality pictures have boosted the standard of the bird photography in China to the highest level.

It is not an easy task to set up and register an organization in China because the Chinese Government has imposed a number of stringent regulations which organizations must strictly observe. In order to circumvent the red tape, most birdwatching societies, if not all, have organised themselves under the head of their provincial wildlife conservation associations. China Wildlife Conservation Associations are administered by the State Forestry Administration and each province has its own wildlife conservation association. These provincial associations are under the control of their provincial forestry administration.

The organization set up under this system is called “G-NGO” which means a non-governmental organization is under the influence of the government. Nowadays most of the birdwatching organizations are operated in this way and you may appreciate that this is the Chinese wisdom for administrative purposes.

Publications and bird reference books

Guide books for bird identification were not available until a few years ago. As noted before, Ms. Zheng Baolai's plan to write a field guide to the birds of China was aborted. In the late 1990's then Chinese publishers started to publish some

guide books and photographic guides to the birds of China, for instance, “Guide to the Birds of Guangdong Province”, “Guide to the Birds of Sichuan Province” and “Birds of China” etc. However, these books were not field guides for birders and were not that helpful in the field. Probably the first practical guide book especially for field trips was “Atlas of Birds of China” written by Professor Qian Yanwen from the Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Science in 1995. Professor Qian was able to write and publish this book with the full support from the China Wildlife Conservation Association. It was published by Hunan Technological Publishing House. However, circulation was not good due to the poor quality of drawings and birdwatching activities were still not popular at that time. In 1996, another book called “Field guide to the Birds of China” was jointly published by the ornithologists from China and Taiwan. Despite its better quality drawings and comprehensive information, circulation was limited due to its high price. This book was mainly used by the ornithologists and serious birders at that time. The publication of “A Field Guide to the Birds of China” in 2000, co-authored by British scholar John Mackinnon and Chinese scholar He Fenqi, illustrated by Karen Phillipps, was a landmark publication. It quickly became the most important tool book for birdwatchers. It was highly popular because of its' comprehensive information, high quality printing and relatively low price. The publication of this book greatly boosted the popularity of birdwatching in China. Bird books flourished after the success of this field guide. A number of geographical field guides were also published in China such as “Field Guide to the Birds of Northeastern China”, “Field Guide to the Wild Birds of Beijing”, “Bird Guide to Yunnan” and “Guide to Birdwatching in China” .

"China Bird Watch" was originated by the conservationist Mr. Wen Bo in November 2001. He was then a reporter of China Environmental Newspaper (中国环境报). At first, this periodical consisted of 4 pages in A4 size, printed in monochrome. The purpose of these newsletters was to spread the idea of bird and nature conservation among university students. The publication of "Bird Watch" was suspended for unknown reasons for two years and was then relaunched after birdwatching had gained some popularity in China. It was a great success after it was re-launched. In 2006, "Bird Watch" consisted of 24-pages and was colour-printed. This highly informative and updated biweekly newsletter has always been awaited by the birdwatchers and their organizations. In fact, when "China Bird Watch" was first published, Mr. Wen Bo also published another newsletter called "Liberation of Wild Birds in China". The latter newsletter heavily condemned the appalling behaviour of illegal hunting and rearing of wild animals as well as treating the birds as objects to be eaten. As its name was quite inflammatory and not conducive to establish a smooth and harmonious society "The Liberation of Wild Birds in China" has not been re-launched together with "China Bird Watch". However, it is my humble opinion that this "Liberation of Wild Birds in China" has a valid purpose, as there are still millions of people rearing captive birds in China and this newsletter may help to persuade them to leave the cages behind and become birdwatchers. However, surely the provocative name could be changed in order to get the message across more effectively.

After the first Dongting Lake Bird Race, with sponsorship by related organizations, some scholars, research students and enthusiastic people have produced various publications such as "China Bird Report", "China Bird Watch" and societies bulletins, newsletters, leaflets from different areas. These are big contributions to make birdwatching better known.

Big Bird Races and the promotion of birdwatching activity

"Bird Races" have long been deployed as a means to promote birdwatching in China yet not all of them have been successful.

For instance in late 1990's, International Bird Races were held in Beidaihe, (Hebei) and successfully drew enthusiasts from the UK, Hong Kong and Beijing. Diplomats and their relatives were also attracted to join this event. Sadly, they were only able to organize for 3 years and came to a halt due to the blithe attitude of the local government to the protection of natural habitats and their surrounding environment. However, I have learnt this bird race has been restarted recently.

In December 2002, Dongting Lake Natural Reserve organised their first Bird Race around Dongting Lake with generous assistance from the WWF China office with the aim of protecting this wetland along the Yangtze River. Thanks to the journalistic support of Ms. Zhong Jia (钟嘉) this event has been ongoing

till now. However, the divergence in the views between the organizers and the participants poses a serious threat to its sustainability and is the major challenge ahead.

The first Chinese Bird Photography competition was held in Dongzhai, (Henan Province) in June 2004. It was jointly organised by Henan Xinyang Dongzhai Nature Reserve staff and some enthusiastic birders. It later moved to Hangzhou and further moved to Fujian and Anhui. Bird photography symposia and exhibitions had been conducted across the strait to Taiwan by Zhejiang, Xiamen and Jiangxi Birdwatching Societies.

Bird races on a more local scale have been organised too. For instance Beijing district organised a Northeastern Bird Race in five provinces whereas Chengdu Birdwatching Societies organised a Bird Race in Mengtun, Sichuan province. Kunming Birdwatching Society had also organised some unofficial bird races in Yunnan province.

Out of the birdwatching activities organised so far I would certainly vote the Weining Birdwatching Festival in Guizhou province, one to be the most futile one. "The Sea of Grass", Caohai in Weining, is a very famous nature reserve and is a good place for birdwatching. In fact the local government had organised certain birdwatching activities there. However, it seems that the organizers did not understand the underlining meaning of birdwatching and yet they did not actively liaise with the bird watchers to understand what they wanted. As a result, only limited numbers of people turned up for this festival and in my opinion it was a complete failure. What is even worse was the organizers built a giant brick-made platform decorated in hard white porcelain materials in Caohai especially for this event. This unsightly giant whitewashed platform is protruding onto the lake edge which can be seen miles away. It became an object of derision within the birdwatching community.

At present the executive committee of the China Bird Net actively plans to organize a bird race in Beijing for institutes of higher education in China, so that the message of birdwatching can reach the university students and researchers.

At moment, almost all the nationwide birdwatching activities and bird photo contests are basically held along economic advanced coastal cities and south of midstream areas of Yangtze River. On the contrary, there was not even single event organised in the western part of China and this may suggest that birdwatching as an activity has a close tie with the economic development of the area. I would very much like to see the growth of birdwatching and have countrywide birdwatching activities organised in western China in the future, so more people and government officials may have a better chance to understand and appreciate the joys of nature.

Nature Reserves in China – Dong Jiang Tian

The development of Nature reserves in China can be generally divided into three stages—Establishment, Stagnation and Developing at a high speed.

1. Establishment (1956-1965)

Dinghu Shan Nature Reserve in Guangdong Province was established in 1956. It was the earliest nature reserve in China. Later on, Fujian, Yunnan, Heilongjiang, Jilin and Guangxi Provinces announced their own nature reserves one after another. At the end of 1965, there were 19 nature reserves in China, with an area of 649 thousand hectares.

2. Stagnation (1966 -1978)

Early during the Cultural Revolution, no new nature reserves were set up. Some existing nature reserves lost their reserve status and there was a great deal of habitat destruction. Coinciding with the later stage of the Cultural Revolution, there were more global concerns about environmental protection issues and establishment of nature reserves resumed gradually. There were a few newly created nature reserves in Zhejiang, Anhui, Guangdong and Sichuan respectively, however, progress was slow. There were 34 nature reserves in China at the end of 1978, with a total surface area 1,265 thousand hectares, about 0.13% of the total China land area.

3. Developing at a high speed (1979 onwards)

Between 1978 and 1999, the number of nature reserves

increased almost 33 times, with the reserve area multiplying 66 times, an annual average growth rate of 15.54% and 38.01% respectively.

By the end of 2005, there were 2,349 nature reserves of various grades and categories (excluding Hong Kong, Macao Special Administrative Regions and Taiwan area), with a total area of 149,949 thousand hectares; reserve area on land 143,949 thousand hectares, about 14.99% of the total land area of China.

Distribution of the nature reserves (according to 2005 year end census)

Most of the reserves were located in Guangdong, Yunnan, Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, Sichuan, Jiangxi, Guizhou and Fujian Provinces, with a total number of 1,371, about 58.37% of the total number of the nature reserves in China.

In 2005 there were 106 newly set up nature reserves in Guangdong, Sichuan, Jiangsu, Fujian and Hubei Provinces. This was 68.39% of the total newly set up reserves in China.

The reserves with largest area are located in west China, - Tibet, Xinjiang, Qinghai, Inner Mongolia and Sichuan. Total area 115,961.3 thousand hectares. About 77.33% of the total area of all the nature reserve in China. Of the 20 extra large nature reserves in China, 17 of them are in the west of the country.

Categories of the nature reserves

According to the principles of classification and ranking of Nature reserves in China, the nature reserves in China can be divided in three categories:

Category	Protecting Target(s)	Percentage of total number of reserves	Percentage of size of total reserve area	Real example
Ecosystem	Ecosystem of a typical zone	67.73%	68.10%	Dinghu Shan Nature Reserve in Guangdong, protect target is the sub-tropical evergreen broadleaf forest; Linguceng Nature Reserve in Gansu. Protects plant community in semi-desert and desert area; Chegen Hu Nature Reserve in Jilin, protects ecosystem of lake.
Wildlife and flora	Rare, endemic wildlife and plants	26.69%	30.71	Zhalong Nature Reserve in Heilongjiang, the key protected species is Red-crowned Crane. Wenchang Fish Nature Reserve in Fujian, Wenchang fish is the protected target. Shangyu Nature Reserve in Guangxi, protected species is the Golden Camellia
Natural Historical Relics		5.58%	1.18%	Shanwang Nature Reserve in Shangdong, protects the fossil bed; Zhangjiajie Forest Park in Hunan, "Sandstone Forest" Scenic Area; Wudalianchi in Heilongjiang; volcanic geology is the target to preserve.



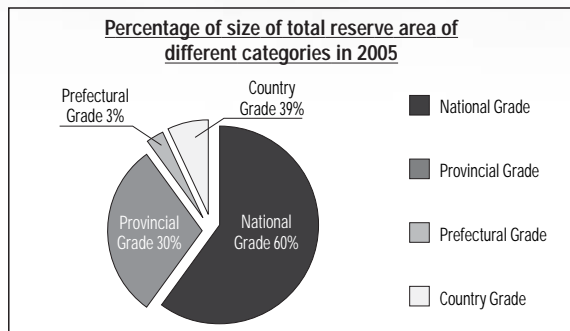
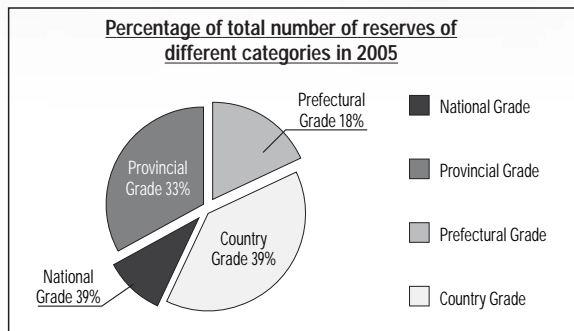
Types of Nature Reserve

There are 9 classes of Nature Reserve in China; forestry eco system; inland wetland and fresh waters eco systems, wildlife oriented, plants oriented, geologic relics related, oceanic and coastal eco-system, grasslands and meadow ecosystem, desert ecosystem, and paleontological relics oriented. Wildlife oriented nature reserves occupy the biggest area among the other types of the reserves.

Nature Reserves in China

Classification by Nature Reserve Size

The size of a single nature reserve can reflect largely whether it can function properly as a reserve. A bigger reserve area might more easily avoid outside disturbances. There are six ranges of size of nature reserve in China: Small (less than 100 hectares), medium small (101 to 1,000 hectares), medium (1,001 to 10,000 hectares), medium large (10,001 to 100,000 hectares), large (100,001 hectares to 1,000,000 hectares) and the extra large (over 1,000,000 hectares). According to the statistics, Hajia Nature Reserve in Gongjue County in Tibet is the smallest, protected species are Golden Pheasant and Common Pheasant.



Departmental Management of Nature Reserve

Two main government departments are involved in establishment and management of nature reserves in China include: Forestry (1,648) and Environmental protection (272).

More than ten other departments are also concerned with nature reserves devoted to, agriculture, land resources, oceanic, water conservancy and irrigation, construction, tourism, Chinese herbal medicine etc.

Scientific research institutes and academies are also involved as well as nationally -owned forestry enterprises. Some of the local farmland or forest related organisations have established and managed some other nature reserves.

Management Organisation and Human Resources

By 2005, among 2,349 nature reserves, 1,398 have set up their management organisation.

All 243 National category nature reserves, except Selincuo Nature Reserve and Black-necked Crane Sanctuary at midstream of Yalucang Baojiang in Tibet, have their management organizations.

For those have not established a management organization in their reserves, some are managed by professionals.

There are 1,759 reserves managed by professionals and management organizations, with staff 38.1 thousands, among them 11.6 thousands are skilled professionals.

Operational structure of the Nature Reserves

Nature reserves in China are generally divided in the three sections, core area, buffer zone, and periphery area.

Core Area

Protected species oriented, source of natural diversity and assessments and monitoring the reserves. All disturbances are forbidden within the core area.

Buffer Zone

Area surrounding the core area, it can be an experimental and production base for scientific research; it is a study centre for all recycling ecosystems and energy flow; it is also a location for major facilities and educational base for the reserve.

Periphery Area

It is the area around the buffer zone area with many purposes. Functions of this area are more or less similar to the buffer zone, besides those, limited production activities are allowed, with a small number of residents and tourist facilities.

Functions of Nature Reserve

- 1) Provide a place for scientific research of various Ecosystems.
- 2) Provide a background of Eco-system. It is a place to conjecture the consequences of human activities.
- 3) A natural laboratory for various ecosystem researches. An important area conducting long term, systemic researches. A study centre for rare species breeding and domestication.
- 4) A living Natural Museum for promoting education.
- 5) Part of the reserve can be developed as tourist area.
- 6) Important to conserve water sources, prevent soil erosion, enhance environment and maintain balance of the ecosystem.

According to censuses by the related departments, nature reserves provide protection to more than 70% of China's special ecosystems and over 80% of wildlife. 60% or more of the flora and important natural relics are also preserved.

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Birdwatching activities in mainland China have been going for almost 10 years. Increased communication with and between mainland birders has led to the discovery of more terrific birding routes and birding sites in different provinces. Many of these have drawn the attention of overseas birders. A brief introduction to each birding site is described below in 5 different aspects—

- A. Suggested route
- B. Habitat
- C. Species
- D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total
- E. Special notes

We hope you will find this information useful for you to plan your future mainland China birding trips. Pass this report around to any friends who might be eager to watch birds in China. China possesses a large variety of landscapes. From the deserts of Xinjiang in the west, to the mountain ranges and grassland plateaus of Tibet, and to the rivers, marshes and seashore areas in the east of the country. Many remote corners of China are becoming more accessible every year, leading to new discoveries by both researchers and birders.

1. Beidaihe, near Qinhuangdao in Hebei Province

- A. Suggested route:
Beijing—Beidaihe—Leting
- B. Habitat:
A seashore and mudflat site which was the first birding migration site studied in northern China. A popular holiday resort with plenty of accommodation, it is a major stopover for migratory birds.
- i E C. Species:
Waders, raptors, thrushes, warblers, flycatchers and buntings. Special birds are Relict Gull, White-winged Scoter, Swinhoe's Crane and Band-bellied Crane.
- D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total
May and mid-September; 140 species in 5 days is possible.
- E. Special notes
Visit on weekdays to avoid the holiday crowds, advance booking for hotel and private car is a must.

2. Dongzhai, Xinyang, Henan Province

- A. Suggested route:
Xinyang (or Wuhan) —Luoshan—Dongzhai
- B. Habitat:
A national nature reserve with a mixture of primary forest and deciduous trees. It has become well-known to birders since a national bird photo-taking competition was first held at the reserve.
- C. Species:
A mixture of migrating woodland and resident birds with some distinctive birds such as Reeve's Pheasant, Fairy Pitta, Crested Kingfisher and Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher
- D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total
June. 100 species possible in 4 days

E. Special notes

Contact the country park officers to arrange accommodation and transport in advance. Weather can be warm in summer, bring lightweight clothing, carry snacks on daytrips.

3. Wuyuan, Jiangxi Province

- A. Suggested route:
Easy to get to and access not restricted
- B. Habitat:
Beautiful scenery and landscape, a popular sightseeing place for general tourists. There are several village conservation communities.
- C. Species
Since the Yellow-throated Laughingthrush (*G. courtoisi*) was found again in 2000 by Professor HE Fen-qi and his students, it has become a hot site for birders too. Specialty species include Yellow-throated Laughingthrush, as well as Brown Wood Owl, Scaly-sided Merganser, Pied Falconet, Mandarin Duck, Short-tailed Parrotbill and Elliot's Pheasant...etc.
- D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total
April to May and in winter; 100 species in 4 days
- E. Special notes
Find out the locations of the target birds before hands.

4. Dongting Lake, Yueyang, Hunan Province

- A. Suggested route:
Changsha — Yueyang — Junshan
- B. Habitat:
Dongting Lake, a National Nature Reserve, is the second largest freshwater lake in China comprising marshland and swamp. Such habitat provides favorable conditions for migratory birds in winter and summer. A Bird Race has been held at Dongting three times and it is also a popular place for mainland birders.
- C. Species
Large number of waterfowl such as swans, geese and ducks. At Junshan (Needle Hill), with high density woodland birds. Special species in the area: Berwick Swan, Oriental White Stork, Eurasian Spoonbill, and Long-eared Owl... etc.
- D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total
Winter. Late November/early December recommended 110 species in 3 days.
- E. Special notes
Misty and cool in winter, often windy. Muddy near the water's edge. Wear waterproof & windproof clothing to stay warm and dry.

5. Qinghai Province

- A. Suggested route:
 - (i) Beishan in Xining, Dongxia Linchang (Forest) in Datong, Huzhubei Shan (east northeast of Xining)
 - (ii) Qinghai Lake area, Xiangpi Shan (Rubber Mountain), Chaka Salt Lake
 - (iii) KM148 in Gonghe, Erla Shan Pass, Huashixia, Maduo,



Yushu, Nangqian (*all along route 214 southwest of Xining*)

- (iv) Make River in Guoluo County (*a nature reserve on the Sichuan Province border*),
- (v) Qianzi Lake in Guide (*a town on the Yellow River south of Xining*)
- (vi) Mengda Tian Chi (Heaven Lake) at Mengda, Xunhua, *a nature reserve 100km southeast of Xining (near Gansu border)*
- (vii) putting Lianghua Shan at Kangle County in Gansu Province on your route.

You may plan a longer route and visit more birding sites if time permits.

B. Habitat:

Qinghai consists of a variety fascinating natural landscapes: high-altitude lakes, floodplains, grassy swamps, marshland, desert and open alpine habitats.

C. Species

Plateau and desert birds are highlights of Qinghai. Black-necked Crane, Tibetan Partridge, Chinese Grouse, Tibetan Bunting, Tibetan Rosefinch, Pale Rosefinch, Pink-tailed Rosefinch, Ala Shan Redstart, White-cheeked Nuthatch, Rusty-necked Partridge, Pallas's Sandgrouse, Tibetan Sandgrouse and Gansu Leaf-warbler are all area specialties. Snowy-cheeked Laughingthrush and Spectacled Parrotbill may be found in the eastern parts.

- D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total Late June to late August, 200 species in 12-15 days

E. Special notes

Beware of Altitude Sickness. Bring sunscreen and wear adequate warm clothing like warmers and fleece. This is a remote and undeveloped area. Bringing your personal medical kit is recommended. Contact local guides to arrange accommodation and vehicles in advance.

6. Poyang Lake & Wuyi Shan, Jiangxi Province

A. Suggested route:

Nanchang—Poyang Lake, Yongxiu—Nanchang—Wuyishan Nature Reserve, Yanshan, Jiangxi Province—Wuyishan, Fujian Province—Wuyishan City, Fujian Province

B. Habitat:

Poyang lake in Jiangxi Province is the biggest freshwater lake in China. It is a huge lake surrounded by numbers of smaller lakes. Wuyishan is an area of outstanding natural beauty with large tracts of good-quality southern Chinese subtropical forests at differing elevations.

C. Species

Poyang for waterbirds such as Siberian Crane, White-naped Crane and Japanese Swamp Warbler. Wuyishan has Cabot's Tragopan, White-necked Partridge, Elliot's Pheasant, Spot-breasted Parrotbill, Brown Bullfinch and Greater Yellowthroat.

- D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total: Visit Poyanghu in winter and Wuyishan in May during breeding season. 100 species are possible in 6 days.

E. Special notes

Contact the professional local bird guide, Mr. Lin, in advance. Tell him what birds you want, and he can arrange a programme.

7. Minjiangkou (Min River Estuary), Fuzhou, Fujian Province

A. Suggested route:

Fuzhou

B. Habitat:

Wetland habitat located at the mouth of the Min river, at the coast of Fujian Province. This place became well-known to birders when Chinese Crested Terns (considered extinct for years) were found here in 2000. Lately, a picture of Chinese Crested Tern taken by a Chinese birder named Chen Lin received 4th prize in the International Rare Bird Species Photo Competition.

C. Species

Chinese Crested Tern and flocks of other vulnerable species such as Great Crested Tern, Roseate Terns, Black-faced Spoonbill, Spoonbilled Sandpiper and Chinese Penduline Tit also found on the site.

- D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total:

May to August for Chinese Crested Tern; try your luck in March or November for Spoonbill Sandpiper; 40 species possible in 2 days

E. Special notes

Bring enough sun-screen and water to lower the risk of heatstroke and sunburn.

8. Baihualing, Gaoligongshan in West Yunnan Province

A. Suggested route:

Kunming—Baoshan—Baihualing

B. Habitat:

Gaoligongshan National Nature Reserve is situated to the east of the Nujiang (Salween) River near the Myanmar border. Mixed mature evergreen forest and old pine trees support a wide variety of plants and animals. The foremost ornithologist of Yunnan, Prof. HAN Lian-xian, has conducted many bird surveys in the reserve.

C. Species:

Slender-billed Scimitar Babbler, Wedge-billed Wren babbler and Fire-tailed Myzornis are three major target species. Other characteristic birds like Slater's Monal, Mrs Hume's Pheasant, Sichuan Partridge, Hill Partridge, Temminck's Tragopan, Cutia, Yellow-billed Blue Magpie, Asian Fairy Bluebird, Plain Martin, White-gorgetted Flycatcher, Gould's Shortwing, Black-headed Shrike- Babbler, Large and Small Niltava and Purple Sunbird ...etc.

- D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total:

Winter to early Spring, 160 species in 6days

E. Special notes

Contact the field officers in the Nature Reserve to arrange accommodation and vehicles in advance, Large daily temperature range, bring enough clothing



9. West Yunnan

A. Suggested route:

Kumming—Bahualing, Gaoligong Shan (Baoshan)—Tengchong—Nabang (Burmese border near Yingjiang)—Nanjingli (Ruili)—Moli (Ruili) and Wanding (Ruili).

If time permits, extend your stay and spend extra days at the famous bird spot—Bahualing at Gaoligong Shan

B. Habitat:

Situated on the far west of Yunnan near the border with Burma, this area comprises tall evergreen forest, secondary forest to paddy fields and low shrubs. Avifauna shared with Myanmar, recent records of species new to China, such as Asian Pied Starling, Alexandrine Parakeet and Long-billed Thrush.

C. Species:

Highlights are Grey Peacock Pheasant, Spot-bellied Eagle Owl, Green Cochoa, Blue Pitta, Pale-headed Woodpecker, White-crested Laughingthrush, Red-billed Scimitar Babbler, Oriental Hobby, Lesser Rufous-headed Parrotbill, Greater Rufous-headed Parrotbill, Scarlet Finch, River Tern, Green Bee-eater, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater and Hodgson's Frogmouth, River Tern

D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total:

Winter to Spring, 180 species in 10 days

E. Special notes:

Apply mosquito repellent and be aware of leeches.

10. Xishuangbanna, south Yunnan Province

A. Suggested route:

Kunming—Simao—Jinghong—Kunming

B. Habitat:

Xishuangbanna National Nature Reserve lies in the south of Yunnan, a large area of primary tropical rain forest which supports precious flora and fauna. Wild Asiatic Elephants survive here.

C. Species:

The most attractive and fantastic records are undoubtedly the Brown-headed Hornbill and Fairy Pitta. Other amazing birds include Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher, Ruddy Kingfisher, Long-tailed Broadbill, Violet Cuckoo, Oriental Pied Hornbill and Collared Treepie. A recent (2007) record of Rufous-vented Laughingthrush is a "first" for China.

D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total:

Winter to Spring, 130 species in 7 days

E. Special notes:

Contact the local guide to arrange transport and accommodation in advance, beware of mosquito bites

11. Hainan Island

A. Suggested route:

Haikou—Changjiang—Bawangling—Jianfengling—Sanya

B. Habitat:

Bawangling is a National Nature Reserve, famous for being the home for the critically endangered Eastern Black Crested Gibbon (*Nomascus nasutus*). Jianfengling is a forest growing on tropical limestone which is well preserved and supports many important species.

C. Species:

Hainan endemic species include the Hainan Peacock Pheasant, Hainan Partridge, and Hainan Leaf Warbler. Endemic "races" include Yellow-billed Nuthatch, Greater Yellowthroat, White-winged Magpie, Scaly breasted Wren Babbler, Grey Laughingthrush, and Black-browed Barbet. Large Scimitar Babbler, and Ratchet-tailed Treepie are also sought-after birds.

D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total:

Winter to Spring, 120 species in 6 days

E. Note:

Be ready to get rid of the annoying leeches and birding in humid environment

12. Wawu Shan in Hongya County, Sichuan Province

A. Suggested route:

Chengdu—Hongya—Wawu Shan—Chengdu

B. Habitat:

Wawu Shan is a table mountain surrounded by limestone forest with bamboo undergrowth. It is worthwhile to stay a night at the guesthouse located at the summit because of birds and its spectacular scenery.

C. Species:

Wawu Shan is regularly visited by birdwatchers in search of the Grey-hooded Parrotbill, and Emei Liochichla. The site where Sichuan Treecreeper was first identified. There are eight species of parrotbill on the mountain, Temminck's Tragopan, Lady Amherst's Pheasant, Golden Bush Robin, Golden-fronted Fulvetta, Fire-capped Tit..etc..

D. When to go, length of trip and overall species total

May to July, 110 species possible in 5 days

E. Special notes

Very wet and misty.

13. Suggested birding routes in Sichuan Province

Sichuan, with its mild climate and natural landscapes, has a high number of Chinese endemic birds and is popular with birdwatchers, local and foreign. Keen birdwatchers in Chengdu have thought of different birding routes to meet your need. Here are some suggestions:

a) A popular birding route:

Chengdu—Balangshan in Wolong—Siguniangshan (set base at Rilong or Xiaojin)—Danba—Jinchuan—Zhuokeji near Maerkang—Mengtun (Lixian)—Chengdu

b) For Mianyang and Qinchuan Counties

Chengdu—Mianyang—Tangjiahe in Qinchuan County—Chengdu

c) A route for habitat variety:

Chengdu—Ruoergai—Baxi—Jiuzhaigou—Wanglang NNR, Pingwu—Chengdu

d) For a productive short break :

Chengdu—Emei Shan—Chengdu

e) A cross-country route from Sichuan to Yunnan :

Chengdu—Ya'an—Tianquan Labahe—Mt Gongga in Luding—Xindu Qiao in Kangding—Mt Pamu in Yiang—Daocheng, Yading—Lijiang in Yunnan

Field guides for birds are essential for bird watching to become popular. The recent rapid development of bird watching in China goes hand in hand with the availability of better and better field information on birds in China. Here I will review the development of field guides for China.

The first period was from 1980 to about 1990. I will call this period the Stone Age of bird watching. At this stage, bird watching information was very basic, and bird watchers were mostly foreigners. The most important and only field guide was Rodolphe Meyer De Schauensee: "The Birds of China", published by Smithsonian Institution Press (1984). This field guide included 1195 species, in 88 families. About half of the species were illustrated. The author was very careful to praise Chinese Ornithologists, and he encouraged more bird studies in China. I believe the author already sensed that bird watching activities would increase greatly in China after China began to allow foreigners to visit China after the Cultural Revolution. The illustrations in De Schauensee's work are far from perfect,

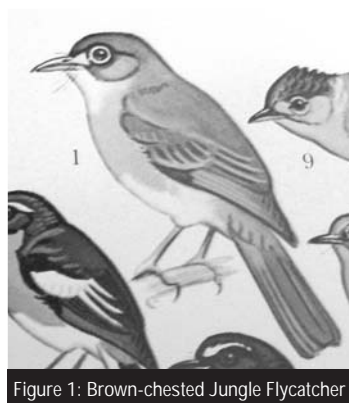
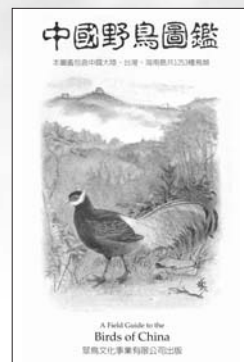
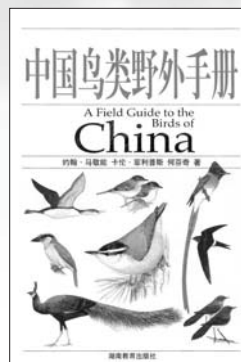


Figure 1: Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher

and so not easy to work with. Figure 1 illustrates what I am referring to. You need a substantial amount of imagination to figure out that this illustration is referring to a Flycatcher. Even though this field guide was difficult to use, it was the best available at that time. No matter how difficult, this had not deterred keen birdwatchers to explore for birds in

China. These keen birdwatchers made exciting discoveries and rediscoveries in a relatively short period. In turn, this encouraged more birdwatchers to come to China. At that time, the only other useful field guide was Ben King's "A field guide to the birds of Southeast Asia", which was very useful for southern China. Similar to De Schauensee, this book had incomplete illustrations.

Soon there was more information available from outside China. I called this the Bronze Age. After all the frustrations of using De Schauensee in China, bird watchers in China began to see good field guides turning up gradually in neighbouring countries. The most important at this time was "Bird of Thailand" by Lekagul and Round in 1991. This was the first field guide of the region that has good and complete illustrations in a country/region. Leaf Warblers illustration in this book was particularly good. Other species groups such as Laughingthrushes and Raptors were usefully described and depicted. Immediately, "Birds of Thailand" became a key field-guide for birdwatchers going to Yunnan for birds. It was also useful for Tibet, Sichuan, Guangxi, and Guangdong. For

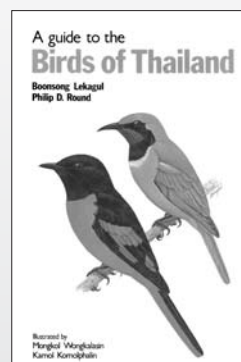


northern China, "A Field Guide to the Birds of Japan" was useful.. Bird photography started to develop rapidly at this time and some photoguides also came out in this period. In western China, one could rely on the excellent field guides on European birds.

Then came the Iron Age. Since information on birds in China gradually became available, it would naturally be time to collect and put them together in a single book. Then there came a pocket-sized book written by a group of ornithologists from all over China, including Taiwan, and illustrated by Chinese artists. For a brief moment, this was the best field guide for use in China. Then came the book by John Mackinnon; "A Field Guide to the Birds of China". Undoubtedly this is the most influential field guide. At present, it is very widely used by the rapidly increasing number of Chinese birdwatchers. It is cheap because it is subsidized by charitable organizations headed by World Bank, and is available in both Chinese or English versions. Although the content is often not perfect, it is the most useful book so far mainly because of its good illustrations, mostly the work of Karen Philipps.

Still, I believe the modern age of birdwatching field guide in China has yet to come. The perfect field guide has not appeared in China yet. Photoguides are still not up to western standards.

Much birdwatching information is still lacking. Photos and sound recordings are greatly in need. Information on species distribution, subspecies and newly-split species need to be passed to birdwatchers more efficiently. I think Chinese birdwatchers will participate a lot more in this area in the near future, an effort that may lead to the production of the perfect field guide for their motherland.



Bird Watching Organizations in Mainland China

Shanghai Wild Bird Society



Mission:

The mission of the Shanghai Wild Bird Society is to protect bird habitats and the ecosystem through bird rescues, bird surveys, outreach and education, and the promotion of birdwatching.

About the organization:

The Shanghai Wild Bird Society was established in 2005 by a group of people who care about bird protection. Registered as a professional and non-profit organization under the Shanghai Wildlife Conservation Association, the Shanghai Wild Bird Society currently has 83 members. The Society conducts bird surveys and monitoring, bird rescue and habitat protection projects, promotions of birdwatching, and outreach and educational activities in Shanghai and its surrounding areas.

Events:

- Birdwatching competitions were held on April 15, 2006 and April 14, 2007 in the Shanghai Botanic Garden. These events have attracted numerous participants.
- The first Shanghai Birdwatching Expo was held on October 21, 2006. Activities included guided bird walks in the botanic garden, exhibitions, participatory games, a drawing event for children, workshops, multi-media exhibitions, and exhibits of bird photography and Important Bird Areas. About 60

interpreters from Shanghai Wild Bird Society and Shanghai Oasis Wildlife Conservation Center

have volunteered in these events. The expo attracted about 1200 attendants.

- The first exhibition on bird photography and Important Bird Areas in and around Shanghai was held in Li An Town Square on October 19, 2006. The exhibit was shown afterwards for two weeks in the Shanghai Botanic Garden starting from October 21 and for one and a half month in the Shanghai Xuhui Caohe Community Cultural Center in starting from November 6.
- The "Wild Bird Rescue Handbook" was published in 2007.
- Weekly guided bird walks in the Shanghai Botanic Garden commenced in May 2007. The bird walks attract almost a hundred people each time.

Contact information:

Website: <http://www.shwbs.org>

Email: shanghaiwbs@gmail.com



Chengdu Birdwatching Society



Caring for the Earth - Soaring with the Birds

Chengdu Birdwatching Society was established in 1st November 2004. The Society is a non-profit making local community organization officially approved by the mainland government's Home Affairs Department. Society members include experts in biology, ecology, environment, education, journalism, and art, as well as devoted amateurs from other walks of life. Activities of the society cover the whole of Sichuan province, and other parts of western China. Chengdu Birdwatching Society has expanded rapidly to a membership of more than three hundred, and has now become the most active and largest bird watching society in western China.

With the objectives of researching and protecting birds and their habitat and promoting birdwatching, the Society advocates birdwatching as a pastime with the slogan "fashion, sport, health and ecology". Targeting government agencies, public communities and professional associations, the Society also participates in different aspects of work and campaigning — including environmental education and bird watching promotion; research and conservation of birds and their habitats; and building local community involvement in the study of the living environment.

Chengdu Birdwatching Society has developed many projects in co-operation with different non-governmental organizations and government agencies — including World Wide Fund for Nature, Conservation International, Asia Foundation, BirdLife International, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Darwin Initiative, China Forestry Administration,

Sichuan Forestry Office, Chengdu Forestry Administration. All these projects are spreading birdwatching-related concepts of respect for nature, protection of the environment and harmonized ecology in Sichuan and western areas of China. Meanwhile, the Society also probes into issues arising from the conflict between city development and environmental protection, in the hope of building a harmonious society and for the benefit of sustainable development.

Website: www.scbirds.org.cn

Email: cdbws@scbirds.org.cn ; cdbirding@yahoo.com.cn



Zhejiang Wild Bird Society



Established on 29 December 2002, the Zhejiang Wild Bird Society is a regional professional non-profit making society with the aim of the protection of wild birds and their habitats, to publicise birdwatching as an activity and to promote wild bird conservation. At present it has about 200 members.



With the joint efforts of members and support from various sectors of the community, the Society has organized important events like the "Cross-Strait Avian Photography Fair cum Exchange Session" in 2006, the "National Wild Bird Photography Exhibition of Superb Works" in Dongzhai (Henan Province) in the same year, followed by the "China Bird Photography Annual Meeting" (at Gutian Shan) in 2007. The ZJ BWS also sent teams to participate in the 2nd to the 4th Lake Dongting birdwatching races in Yueyang, Hunan from 2003 to 2005. In May 2007, it successfully hosted an operation to safeguard the breeding of Mandarin ducks in the West Lake in Hangzhou.

CHEN Shui-hua, the incumbent Chairman, has a PhD in Bird Ecology, is a Deputy Curator of the Zhejiang National History Museum, researcher, and one of the ex-officio members of the China Ornithological Society. He is engaged in the study of bird ecology and the promotion of birdwatching activities.

Website: www.zjbird.cn
Email: zjwbs2002@126.com



Shenzhen Birdwatching Society

After a year of preparation, the Shenzhen Birdwatching Society (SZ BWS) was registered on 3 March 2004 as a non-profit making civil organization. At present it has evolved with a membership of some 200 people and 25 group affiliates. With the aim of "Conserving wild birds and treasuring a good environment", it emphasizes the promotion of birdwatching activities to the public and environmental protection in schools together with studies on birds and conservation projects.

Apart from the above, public birdwatching activities are held in the Mangrove Ecological Park in Futian, Shenzhen every winter from October to April. The SZ BWS has also engaged in a series of activities for four consecutive years including the Shenzhen Wetland Day, Earth Day, Biodiversity Day, Environment Day and

Bird Appreciation Week. It subsequently designed, published and distributed 30,000 copies of pamphlets titled '100 common bird species in the South China region', 12,000 copies of stickers titled 'Common birds of Shenzhen', 15,000 copies of posters titled 'Birdwatching and nature appreciation' and 'Meeting the Black-faced Spoonbill', yielding publicity to an estimated audience of around 300,000.

Over the past three years, the Society successfully hosted three birdwatching competitions for primary and secondary schools in Futian. It has also organized participation in a sustainability education training programme for primary and secondary school teachers from Shenzhen for the past 2 years. One hundred seminars titled 'Birdwatching and loving nature' involving nearly 60 schools in Shenzhen have been conducted.

Apart from the above, the Society has

also geared itself to ornithological studies and environmental monitoring. It participated in the Global Census of Black-faced Spoonbill and Wader Monitoring Programmes in Deep Bay and the Pearl River Delta. Monitoring of the Avian Influenza situation in the Mangrove Swamp of Futian was also conducted. The SZ BWS also launched studies in other provinces such as annual surveys in Tibet, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Qinghai. A survey on the breeding status and conservation of Streak-backed Swamp Warbler in Poyang lake (Jiangxi) in 2007, and a census of waders in the lower course of the Yangtze River in 2005 were also carried out. A database on birds in Shenzhen has been established, a website set up (www.szbird.org.cn), and, upon the request of the China Ornithological Society, the design, maintenance and promotion of the pictorial database of wild birds of China (www.cnbird.org.cn) has been undertaken.



Birder in Beijing & Beijing Birdwatching Society

In 1996, birdwatching activities, a kind of activity includes science, environmental protection, leisure and entertainment, became popular with the development of environmental conservation organizations (NGOs). NGOs in Beijing started the birdwatching activities in China with many thanks to the professional guidance of Professor Gou Wu and Professor Zhao Xing Ru from Capital Normal University and Beijing Normal University respectively.

In the ten years, birders in Beijing have birdwatching in every parts of Conservation Areas in China instead of only staying in Beijing. According to incomplete survey, more than 10 thousands people participate in birdwatching in Beijing. As Birdwatching becomes popular and the standard of birder raised, record of birds number has increased from 344 in 80s to 410 in 2006.

Through birdwatching, birders learn to concern more about environmental conservation, especially concerning habitats that are have close relationship to birds, as habitats can be a kind of index for number of birds.

In 2004, Beijing Birdwatching Society established and running by some enthusiastic birders. In these few years, objective of the society is to have scientific birdwatching, birders in Beijing keeping scientific attitude to have birdwatching, and the birders make use of their leisure time to be volunteer to participate in different projects.

1. From 1996 till now, we continue to give lessons to new comers to learn the basic or even advance skills for birdwatching in every Wednesday. In every Wednesday, we provide lessons on relationship of birdwatching and the environment.
2. In 2006, we finished the project of broadcasting lessons in the website, therefore birders from different places can have sharing. We persist to continue giving training on bird ringing for volunteer. Bird ringing is the basics for migrant research. Therefore Beijing Birdwatching Society provided 3 bird ringing training for volunteers every year in Beidaihe national bird ringing center. In August, 06, the Beijing Birdwatching Society has conducted a bird ringing training for all birder in China.
3. We started bird surveys and promotion of projects on protection.
 - a) From autumn of 2003 till now, water bird survey in Beijing during spring and autumn has been conducted for 4 years
 - b) Bird surveys in urban parks like Old Summer Palace, Temple of Heaven's has been carried out for four years,
 - c) "Grey-sided thrush survey in Beijing and the surrounding areas" was conducted in 2005-2006, and found the breeding site of this endangered species and recorded the condition of their breeding.
 - d) The project "Protection of wild Mandarin ducks in Beijing" has been started from spring of 2006 till now.
 - e) A survey on Chinese crested tern (which was believed to be extinct and found again in 2005 in southeast coast) in Jiadong peninsula had been carried out during Aug, 2006
 - f) Survey on the newly discovered species in 90s of 20th centuries, the Relict Gull, has been carried out in Tianjin for 2 years
 - g) By using the image of the mascot for Olympic 2008 in Beijing, we promote the project "survey and protection of swift and swallow in Beijing" as the theme of the China Birdwatching Festival in 2006, and by making use of the image to promote birdwatching.
4. To assist Beijing Secondary School and the Beijing Forestry Administration in the autumn birdwatching competition in wild duck lake every year.
5. Our website, "Birdwatch China", was built up, for both communication between birders and providing a forum to disperse the informations.
6. A magazine, China Birdwatch, has been published, written in both Chinese and English with many beautiful photos and it is popular among birdwatching readers.

Contact:

Website: <http://www.cbw.org.cn> E-mail: cbw_2004@163.com



Fujian Birdwatching Society

Understanding Nature— Protecting the Environment

The "Fujian Birdwatching Society"—an abbreviation from "Fujian Wildlife Protection Association—Birdwatching Branch"—is a not-for-profit society aimed at protection of wild birds and their natural habitats. The society was registered officially on 12th February 2004 and membership reached more than 270 by October 2007.

The Fujian Birdwatching Society actively participates in promoting birdwatching activities, environmental education and protecting Important Bird Areas. Since its establishment, the Society has organized more than 150 birdwatching outings, serving more than thirteen thousand people. Having built up a long-term partnership with eight primary schools in Fuzhou district, the society often holds environmental protection activities with an emphasis on wild bird protection. They also zealously take part in propaganda campaigns to protect the Important Bird Area at Mianjiang estuary wetland.* The Society's efforts have been recognized by the local community and highly praised.

2004, the Society was praised with the title "For the Public Interest" environmental award in Fujian.

2004, the Society was praised with the title "Distinctive Organization" appellation by Fujian Forestry Office.

Chairman of the Society Yang Jin was praised with the title "2004 vibrant China (Fujian District)—the big ten nominee" 2005, the public welfare secretary of the Society, Zhu Lichao, was praised with the title "The most advanced educated Chinese youth with environmental mortal"

2005, the Society awarded with an title of "advanced professional committee" of Fujian province wildlife protection work.

2005, Chairman of the Society, Yang Jin, was awarded with the title "the most benevolent M-zone people"

2006, Chairman of the Society, Yang Jin was awarded with the title "Golden volunteer" by Fuzhou city corps committee.

2007, Chairman of the Society, Yang Jin was awarded with the title "Fujian Forth May Youth Medal"

Website: www.fjbirds.com

Email: fjbirds@126.com

(*The mainland site for Chinese Crested Tern—Ed.)



Jiangsu Wild Bird Society



Jiangsu Wild Bird Society is a professional non-profitable civilian organization, which was found in October 2005, by a group of people active in Jiangsu especially in Nanjing area who love wild bird. Now registered members exceed 150, with approximately 35 active ones.

Objectives: love wild bird, protect environment, and create a beautiful future with human beings and the nature developing in harmony.

Slogan: LOVE BIRDS, LOVE NATURE.

Tasks:

1. Publicize knowledge of loving and protecting wild bird; promote the birding and educational activities.
2. Develop survey and study of wild bird resource and the environment.
3. Develop wild bird rescue program in alliance with other wildlife rescue organizations.
4. Create the protective system of wild birds and their environment with other social strength.



Changzhou Wild Bird Society

Changzhou, named Yanling City in ancient, is an old town of nearly 2500 years history located in Jiangsu Province. On October 29th, 2006, Changzhou Wild Bird Society (CWBS) was founded by Qi Feihong and Tang Yongjun, which is the first organization of wild bird watching and conservation in Changzhou.

CWBS supports the policy and law issued by the government and tries our best to cooperate with the government. Now she already develops around 30 members and builds up a six person core team, and keeps a good relationship with the Green-Stone, Jiangsu Wild Birds Society and other environmental organizations.

Vision: Based on bird watching, conservation and education, build up and spread the ideas of cherishing life, protecting birds and loving nature.

Aim: Possess a favorable public credence, build a platform of the wild bird conservation of Changzhou and improve the people's awareness of wildlife protection.

Position: Acutely notice the movements of wild birds of Changzhou, gather the resources of ours and every field to impulse the idea of cherishing life and spread the knowledge of bird protection, meanwhile, impulse the practice of wildlife protection in Changzhou, build a platform integrated watching, public education and action.

Priority projects: Wild bird watching and conservation, public participation and environmental education.

Regular Actives: Watching the local birds, investigating the movements and probable number of migrated birds every time, studying the influence from migrated birds to the local birds. Meanwhile, we are processing an environmental education, which the theme is "Protect bird, Cherish life".

Representative activities –The theme activity for 2007 Children's Day "Different perspective, Different world"

As children's day of this year is Friday (01/06/2007), we consulted with

Present work:

1. Education for wild bird knowledge and their protection, including citizen-birding popularization, training for university and middle school students, etc.
2. Wetland bird survey of Nanjing (with Nanjing Forestry Bureau); bird survey of Zijin Shan (the Purple Mountain) (with its administrative office).

Contact:

Website: www.freebird.org.cn

E-mail: jswbs@sina.com

Address: 128 Andemen, Nanjing, Jiangsu Post Code: 210012

Contact Persons: Liu Wei: lw1975@126.com

Zhang Yu: shrikezhang@163.com



our relative cooperators that we decided to delay the activity to the second day (02/06/2007).

At 2:00pm, 2nd Jun, Tong Yi Group Of "Shanghai Wednesday" gathered some children aged 7 or older. We led them to make their first close contact with the wild birds in Hong Mei Park.

As there were couples of citizens enrolling, we separated the time into 2 parts to watch birds. Those who participated the activity were kids with their old grandpa and grandma or parents, and also students with their teacher. Especially, a keen reader Ms Zhou of "Shanghai Wednesday" not only took her daughter to join us, but also a boy named Chang Weinan from the welfare. We also together made all the children from the welfare enjoy the beauty of nature and share the joy with each other.

At the beginning, we gave the children a brief study and introduction, and then divided them into 4 groups, after that we workers led group members to start.

Visitors were here and there in the park, though, we handled the equipments for bird watching with a cheerful frame of mind. Nature is wonderful, but we sometimes overlook the minutiae even they are existing somewhere around us. Thanks to those birds inhabiting in the woods, who remind us of the existence of the minutiae with their graceful movements and beautiful voice. Through the lens of telescope, we represented the children a totally different and pure world.

Contact

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Email: ylbirds@126.com

Translated by Lin Jingjing and Zhou Min of CWBS



Bird Watching Association of Southwest Forestry College

Bird watching Association of Southwest Forestry College was proposed by ornithologist Han Lianxian, then the 6 students from 98 and 99 grades of wildlife and nature reserve management speciality of the Conservation Biology Faculty to plan concerned routines and it was established in October of 2000.

The Association using bird watching activity as a platform, to organize classmates whom loving the nature or concerning to the environment and wildlife protection, to carry various environment protection and science researches by bird watching to gather. The Association has 67 members, among 62 undergraduate students, 5 graduate students. The association has technology division, propaganda division, public division, organize activity division, editing division and secretary division. The association journal is "Wing". The present director is Ma Zongchuan and vice-directors are Liu Yueqiang and Wu Zhong. Professor Han Lianxian takes the Association's science consultant and activities guidance.

The association organized many times bird watching and promoting bird watching with to hold lectures, birds photo

exhibition and birding in the campus. The association joined some bird diversity survey in some nature reserves. It also took part in the propaganda activities of "the week to protect birds" that were held by Forestry Bureau of Yunnan Province. In March 2002, the association joined the Birding Race of the week to protect birds in Yunnan Province and got special classification award. The birding team attended the first birding race of Dongting Lake in Yueyang and won the Third Honors. The association cooperated with Kunming Conservation Birds Association to applied financial support of The Birds Festival of the World from Chinese Program Office of Hong Kong Bird Watching Society to be successful and launched birding popularizing activity for 30 days in Kunming Zoo in October of 2006.

Contact :

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Post Code : 650224



Wuhan Birdwatching Society

Wuhan Birdwatching Society was newly sponsored by the bird enthusiasts who devoted to promoting bird watching and collecting the data of birds in Wuhan and surrounding areas for bird research. The Society was formally founded in January 22, 2007, which had 50 registered members and 327 active members online now.

We aims to foster a deeper appreciation of wild birds and advance our collective knowledge about them , as well as to cooperate with other ornithological organizations to promote the protection of birds and their habitats.

We published a handbook of Hubei wild bird watching; designedly organized a one year project to spread the birdwatching to local citizen; put out bird watching leaflet; conducted three bird-watching competitions of the primary and middle school students in Wuhan and a large collective activities for members in Sanyang Village. In addition, we had carried out the survey of the winter waterfowl at Chen Lake in the last three years, provided the bird records of the first half of 2007 in Wuhan and Hubei.

In next, we will keep on promoting the bird watching , recruiting new members among young and beginning birders, and uniting various individuals and constituencies interested in birds. We will work hard for a strong community of active members and supporters who love birds and value nature.



Website: www.whbws.org



Xiamen Bird Watching Society

Xiamen Bird Watching Society was founded in March 2002; it is one of the earlier non-governmental organizations of Bird Watching in the mainland of China. It now has a membership base of around 70 with network membership close to 1000. All members come from all walks of life of Xiamen, with mainly young and middle-aged from 25-45. There are also some honorary members at other area of the country.

An atmosphere of good comity is the treasure tradition for Xiamen Bird Watching Society. Xiamen Bird Watching Society adopted the "project-centered" management pattern, accompanying with democratic construction and pluralistic goals, focusing on skills and bird watching related knowledge training, and encourage spontaneous cooperation among the members. "Take photo for bird" and "Bird watching" are integrated at Xiamen Bird Watching Society; "Bird survey" and "Special studies" bring out the best in each other; "Targeted education" and "Universal propaganda" promote each other. Currently, Xiamen Bird Watching Society gradually expands its effect in arousing people's concern, at the same time, trying to serve for the local government, to promote "Bird watching" and "Birds Conservation" to have a long-term development.

Xiamen Bird Watching Society keeps closed, long-term contacts and cooperation with the International Bird watching Society and the Bird watching society in China. In addition the constant exchanges between the bird watching societies, Xiamen Bird Watching Society also has been actively participating in other national bird watching activities.

The website of Xiamen Bird Watching Society provides rich knowledge on birds; it is also the channel to release activities information and contact with members. The website together with irregular meetings, trainings, seminars, and colorful group activities, has come into being the communication platform among all members.

If you wish to contact with Xiamen Bird Watching Society or any of the members of Xiamen Bird Watching Society, you can logon to the website of Xiamen Bird Watching Society, or you can contact with the current Secretary-General Ms. Yanlu.

Contact:

Website: <http://www.xmbirds.org>

Contact Person: Ms. Yanlu, Secretary-General

Contact Number: 13306006644

Xinjiang Bird Observation Panel



Xinjiang Bird Observation Panel started to arrange in February, 2004, started bird observation activities from April, 1998 until now, the main members have gradually developed to 16 people. The panel members have provided precious material information for the Xinjiang bird research through observation, photography and research, and many years' accumulated record materials of Xinjiang birds: First, in summer, 2007, its observation record of world rare species white head hard tail ducks' discovery; Second, it has provided massive materials for Qinggida lake wetland protectorate (established in 2002); Third, "Xinjiang Birds Name list" in 2001; Forth, on-site surveying of Taklamakan desert's unique species white tail crows; Fifth, "the Xinjiang Birds Observation and Research".

Environmental protection and educational activities which have been conducted to help Xijiang government organs and schools are as following: First, the panel has held Qinggeda late bird observation festival 3 times for Wujiacqu municipal government; Second, it has helped 3universities to carry out bird observation activities; Third, starting from

June, 2007, it has held bird observation lectures twice in Urumqi; Forth, It has organized bird observation activities for 17 times including 900 people. Some members have participated in Dongting Lake national bird observation big contests.

Objectives:

- To conduct bird cherishing and protecting propaganda, to strengthen people's environmental protection awareness;
- To participate in bird investigation and study, to do popular science education propaganda well;
- To organize people bird observation activities, to pay attention to human survival environment.

Contact:

E-mail: xinjiangguanniaohui@126.com

Xinjiang Letianpai bird observation forum:

<http://www.xjltp.com>



Kunming Birds Conservation Association



Kunming Birds Conservation Association is a local academic crowd's organization, with the aim of protection and study birds, to promote the human harmoniously developing with nature. The association registered and established in Kunming in 1987. It gets management of Kunming City Science and Technology Association. The association has current members more than 200 persons, 2 group members. The members including scholars, teachers of schools, zoo workers, graduate students, university students and bird fancier of the local society. The association established five branches. They are secretary division, propaganda division, common black-head gull protection division, birding popularizing division and scientific research division. The incumbent chairman of the association is Professor Wang Zijiang. Associate researcher Yang Xiaojun, Professor Han Lianxian, Professor Wu Zhaolu,

Senior Engineers Huang Haikui and Yang Mei take vice-chairman.

The association carries out bird banding, bird migration survey, ecological research and population monitoring of rare birds. To develop birding and variety of environment education to citizens and students of primary and secondary schools is an important task of the association. The association has been studying and protecting on common black-headed gull that wintering in Kunming for 20 years. Recent 10 years, the association has been assisting China Bird Banding Center and some nature reserves in Yunnan to carry bird banding. Until 2006, more than 150 species, 50,000 individual birds were banded and about 300 bird banding staff were trained. The association is a member of Work Net of China Bird Watching Organizations. The Association journal is "Sunbird."

Common mailing address:

Kunming Birds Conservation Association
C/O Kunming Zoo
Youth Road No.93
Yunnan, China
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Tel :0871 - 5158155
Fax :0871 - 5158155
Website: www.kmbird.org
E-mail: kmbird3@163.com

Mianyang-Wild-Bird-Society

Located in northern Sichuan and at the foot of the Min Shan (Min Mountains), Mianyang has several national and provincial nature reserves nearby, including Wanglang, Xuebaoding, Xiaozhaizigou and Piankou. The Min Shan has a large population of Giant Pandas and is also a habitat for rare bird species such as the Chinese Monal Pheasant. Mianyang birdwatchers have exerted enormous efforts in environmental education with the compilation of a photographic guide titled "Wild Birds of Mianyang". They have also undertaken ornithological research and have published a number of academic papers to date. One of the studies confirmed the first bird species which adopts echolocation. At present, members organize themselves on an annual basis to probe into the caves inhabited by Himalayan Swiftlets to experience the unique sound generated by the air vibration during the flight of millions of swiftlets passing by.

Established in the summer of 2006, the society has a membership of about 100 people with a core of 10 members.



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Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

China Conservation Fund

- Lo Wai Yan

"The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society China Conservation Fund (HKBWS China Conservation Fund)" was established by the Society in 1999 aimed at promoting bird watching activities, encouraging conservation activities and research in Mainland China.

Objectives of the Fund include:

- Facilitating the promotion of bird watching activities;
- Facilitating bird observation and the publication of bird records;
- Supporting research related to avifauna conservation

A small amount of funding will be allocated to HKBWS China Conservation Fund each year and the maximum of amount granted to successful proposals is HK\$10,000.

Previously funded projects are as follows:

2005/06	Beijing Bird Watching Society (in prep.)	A survey of Grey-sided Thrush and its conservation
	Southwest Forestry University	A survey of the birds in Cangshan, Dali, Yunnan
	Shenzhen Bird Watching Society	Survey of Birds of Shenzhen
	Xiamen Bird Watching Society	A national coastal waterbird survey
	Zhao Junfeng, Shanghai	Upgrade of "Birdtalker - the record system for amateur bird watchers"
2006/07	Xiamen Bird Watching Society	A national coastal waterbird survey
	Xiamen Bird Watching Society	A survey for Blyth's Kingfisher in Wuyishan
	Southwest Forestry University	A survey of Green Peafowl and Mrs Hume's Pheasant in Konglonghe Nature Reserve
	Shenzhen Bird Watching Society	A bird survey in Baiyu Villiage, Qinghai
	Zhao Huaidong, Beijing	A survey on the distribution of hornbills in Xishuangbanna
	China Ornithological Society	Development and management of "China Birdwatching Database"
2007/08	Xiamen Bird Watching Society	Survey on birds in Longxishan Mountain
	Wuhan Bird Watching Society	Bird survey in Shennongjia Forest 2007
	Beijing Bird Watching Society	Survey and protection of swallows and swifts in Beijing
	Bird Watching Club of the Southwest Forestry University	Investigation of swift species, their abundance and status in Yanzi Cave, Guizhou
		A national coastal waterbird survey (coordinated by HKBWS, bird watching groups in Mainland China and individuals)

In order to strengthen the organisation of bird watching activities in a national scale, the China Bird Watching Alliance was established in Chengdu in 2006. So far, the Alliance has assisted in organizing various activities like the Bird Race in Dongting Lake and the China High School Bird Race this year. Furthermore, the establishment of China Bird Net (www.chinabirdnet.org) and the discussion forum also foster a closer connection among birders in the whole country.

Through these various kinds of work, we hope that a better cooperation among various bird watching societies in China can raise the awareness of birds and need for environmental protection among the general public. We also aim to strengthen work on conserving threatened bird species and the promotion of Important Bird Areas. In addition, the establishment of China Bird Net also symbolizes more and more cooperation and exchange between bird watching societies in China.

Hong Kong Bird Watching Society and BirdLife International

Joint programme to promote birdwatching in China - Cheung Ka Wing



Home to 13 % of the world's bird species (of which 6% are "Threatened" in various categories) and 6% of the world's Important Bird Areas, Greater China enjoys a rich biodiversity. China has a long tradition of working towards nature conservation. China was a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. China also became a Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention in the same year. The number of inland national nature reserves has been increased from 124 a decade ago to today's figure of 303. Despite the government's effort in the area of conservation, there is still room for improvement in arousing public awareness and understanding of conservation issues.

BirdLife International (BLI) and the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS), supported by the "Darwin Initiative" (a UK government grant scheme), have collaborated to launch a China Programme since April 2005. The programme aims to reinforce the well-rounded development of mainland birdwatching organizations and encourage them to protect bird species and Important Bird Areas (IBAs) on the mainland. Communication and exchange, the provision of extra resources and other activities are being dedicated to this purpose.



There are about 25 bird watching societies operating in China, which are divided into four categories: 1) Incorporated Non-Government Organizations; 2) Birdwatching Societies

as sections of Provincial Wildlife Protection Organizations; 3) Amateur (and unaffiliated) Birdwatching Societies; and 4) Small-scale Interest Groups. Despite the unique organisation and culture of each birdwatching group, the major aim of the HKBWS China Programme is to organize different training opportunities to nurture the healthy long term development of these non-government organizations.

Since 2005, the HKBWS China Programme has organized several different training sessions in various locations on the mainland. These events also became valuable opportunities to exchange views among enthusiastic birdwatchers. Most activities were carried out at weekends in order to allow more local birdwatchers to participate.



The training sessions can be summarized as follows:

Waterfowl Count Training and Exchange

The training programme aims at reinforcing mainland bird watching societies abilities in waterfowl counting, to encourage more mainland bird watchers to help carry out monthly nationwide coastal waterfowl counts. In order to accommodate more members from bird watching societies in waterfowl count training, two training sessions have been organized in Xiamen, Fujian Province and Beidaihe, Hebei Province in March and October 2006 respectively. In the Xiamen training session, the 27 participants came from bird watching societies of 11 different south china districts. In the Beidaihe training session, the 23 participants came from bird watching societies of 11 different districts. The training included an explanation of the importance of bird migration and waterfowl counting, research and planning methodology, and data analysis as well as conducting fieldwork practice at wetland regions.

72% and 28% of participants felt "very satisfied" or "satisfied" respectively with the training offered. They especially welcomed training conducted in the form of seminars, where they could exchange ideas, discuss, learn and seek inspiration. Sharing sessions about Mai Po (HK), Hainan, Shenzhen, Xiamen,



Fujian and Beijing in Waterfowl Count Training provided participants with clearer ideas of waterfowl count preparation, as well as a better knowledge of the practicalities of waterfowl counting. The training programme also encouraged participants to launch bird count projects in their own region.

Education, Training and Exchange for Bird Watching Society Committee

Marketing and branding promotion can play an important role in the image of mainland birdwatching societies and membership building. Barrie Cooper, International Education Manager of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) explained how bird watching societies, when conducting environmental education, can promote their own organizations and their birdwatching activities. Role-playing games about environmental education became the most popular training sessions. Through the games, participants were able to understand the importance of bird conservation and bird habitat protection in a relaxing atmosphere. At the same time, the HKBWS team described their own promotional efforts and shared past experiences.

Similar training was carried out at Kunming and Hangzhou in August and September 2006 respectively. A total of 50 participants, who came from 20 birdwatching societies, joined the activities. Many of these birdwatchers put their newly-acquired environmental and educational skills to good use in "China Birdwatch 2006".

China's Important Bird Area Exchange Conference

The existing list of Chinese Important Bird Areas (IBAs) was compiled a decade ago. With more mainland birdwatching going on and the discovery of more Important Bird Areas within China, the China Project organized a Chinese Important Bird Area Exchange Conference in Fujian in March 2007. The conference was organized in the hope of updating the list of Important Bird Areas in China and providing a better understanding of bird species distribution over different provinces. As part of the conference, seventeen participants visited the Min River Estuary, a Chinese IBA. At the same time, Simba Chan of BirdLife International, Yu Yat Tung and Fion Cheung (China Programme Officers of HKBWS) shared their experiences in monitoring one of Hong Kong's Important Bird Areas (Deep Bay) as well as shared overseas case studies.

China's Woodland Birds Count Training and Exchange

China's Important Bird Areas are located inland, as well as in coastal areas. Part of the programme aim has been to increase the ability of China's birdwatching societies to

conduct woodland bird counts. The training was conducted in Baishuihe National Reserve, Sichuan in July 2007. The programme model was similar to the Regional Waterfowl Count Training, and participants had even more opportunities to conduct fieldwork and experience the differences between Transect Counts and Point Counts. In addition, HKBWS invited Professor Han Lianxian, mainland bird expert and Mr. Lei Jinyu, one of the editors of the China Bird Report to introduce woodland bird counting and identification of bird species by listening to their calls. Thirty-three participants, who came from birdwatching societies in places such as Beijing, Tianjin and Henan, joined the event.



Since October 2001, BirdLife International has organized a "World Birdwatch" once every two years, with the aim of getting birdwatching societies from all over the world to co-ordinate their birdwatching-related activities. Birdwatching societies in China joined in for the first time in 2006. Eleven birdwatching societies from different regions organized seminars, bird races, birdwatching at fixed points and bird photo exhibitions. To welcome the Beijing Olympics 2008, a "Bird Nest" theme (like the shape of the new National Stadium) has been chosen as the design for the China Birdwatch event. "Give Birds A Home" has been made the slogan of China Birdwatch 2008. More details at China Bird Net's website (<http://www.chinabirdnet.org>).

Publication of Educational Material

The HKBWS China Programme team has produced material for educational and promotional purposes such as manuals in "Practical Bird Count Methodology" and "Practical Bird Species Protection Programme Management".

Booklets on "Practical Environmental Education — Experience Sharing by BirdLife International", "Birds Exploration on School Campus" were also created as well as posters depicting "Threatened Bird Species in China". Flyers in different categories have also been distributed. □



Greater Mekong Subregion–Core Environment Project

Xishuangbanna Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Initiative

Dong Jiangtian
China Programme Officer (Yunnan Project),
Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS)

Since March 2007, the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, entrusted by BirdLife International, has been responsible for the Core Environment Project (CEP) of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) – Xishuangbanna Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Initiative between 2007 and 2009. The preliminary briefing of the Project is summarized below.

Background Information

The GMS economic cooperation was initiated by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in 1992. Six countries along the Mekong River, including Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Vietnam, as well as Yunnan and Guangxi Provinces of China, were involved in the Project. The project aimed at boosting the Subregion's economy and social development by reinforcing the economic ties between these member countries.

GMS includes some of the world's most important primary forest and wildlife species, such as Asian Elephant, Sumatran Rhinoceros, Tonkin Snub-nosed Monkey and Asian Tiger, etc. However, disturbance of biodiversity and its habitats worsened following rapid economic growth along the economic corridor formed by the 6 countries in the Mekong Region. In May 2005, the Subregion Environment Secretary, in support of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), inaugurated the Core Environment Project (CEP) and Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Initiative (BCI), with technical support by the ADB. In early 2006, the Environment Operation Center (EOC) was established to take charge of the operation of the BCI.

The biodiversity area of the CEP includes Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Initiative (the BCI includes seven important regions) and its Environmental Impact Assessment (collection of relevant indicative information). It aims at measuring and adjusting directions for sustainable development by collecting relevant indicative information of Biodiversity.

The “10 year” Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Initiative, as part of the Greater Mekong Subregion, was divided into 3 stages:

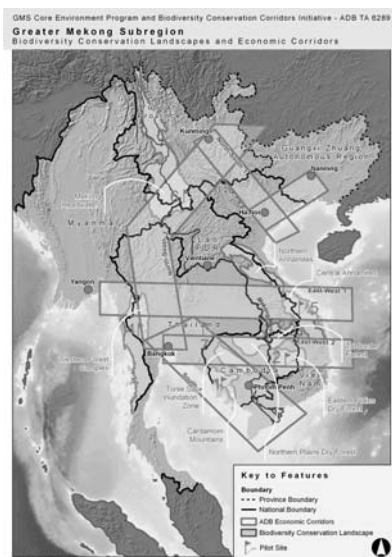
1. First Stage (2005–2008): According to the important and fragile level of the wildlife species, seven (7) important areas (Map 1) have been selected among the six (6) countries along the Mekong River Region for establishing the Corridors Conservation Pilot Site, in the hope of restoring and maintaining connections between the existing national parks (reserves) along with wildlife's sanctuaries.
2. Second Stage (2009–2011): After appraisals have been done in the pilot sites, infrastructure planning will be elaborated in every aspect, while more Conservation Corridors will be built in the important areas.
3. Third Stage (2012–2014): In this stage, the BCI aims at consolidating revenue generated from the use of sustainable natural resources and environmental protection.

Index Appraisals carried out in the First Stage

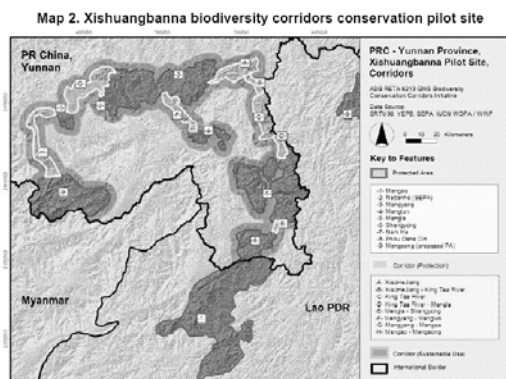
1. Inaugurate the GMS community organization's partnership cooperation network before the end of 2008.
2. Establish basic monitoring of the indicative information. Afterwards, a second-year analysis will be carried out at the end of 2009.
3. Establish basic information for the Detailed Monitoring Index. At the same time, a third yearly analysis is planned to be conducted before the end of 2009.
4. Basic information at each observation point and latest information in basic and detailed monitoring are to be provided to local governments participating in the CEP, donors and community organizations. At the same time, an integrated report is planned to be handed in before 2009.

Natural forest covers 53% of the Xishuangbanna Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Pilot Site, with 62% of the area forest of good quality. (Photo By: Dong Jiangtian, HKBWS)

Greater Mekong Subregion – Core Environment Project Xishuangbanna Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Initiative



Map 1: the Greater Mekong Sub-region's Economy Corridor (Area Framed in Red) and the seven regions covered by the Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Initiative (Areas Highlighted in Green)



Map 2: Xishuangbanna Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Initiative

BirdLife International's role in the GMS Project

GMS Project's strategic partnerships include the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), BirdLife International (BirdLife), Fauna & Flora International (FFI), WildAid and the World Conservation Union (IUCN), etc.

BirdLife International participates in CEP's establishment and testing of a system of monitoring norms of environmental derivation, threats and protective action within the GMS economic corridor.

BirdLife International is a global network jointly established by nationwide and regional strategic partners. It carries out projects and works in over 100 countries and regions. In countries of the GMS, BirdLife International has lined up with partners in Myanmar and Thailand; set up a Special Project Team covering Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam; and is co-operating with the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society in a China Special Project.

Hong Kong Bird Watching Society's role in the GMS Project

The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS) is now working on the area of Xishuangbanna, an important experimental site in the GMS-BCI Special Project. HKBWS, with the help and co-ordination of the Environmental Protection Board of Yunnan Province, has carried out basic and detailed monitoring duties at selected monitoring points in the experimental area through local Yunnan Province working partners.

Basic Monitoring and Detailed Monitoring Index Type

Category	Area	Index
Driver	Site	Road density (no. of km of road per km ² of the site)
Pressure	Site	Level of pressure on the habitats of key species of animal and plant from habitat loss and degradation
	Site	Level of pressure on key species of animal and plant from over-harvesting
	Landscape	Number of wildlife restaurants within the landscape
	Site	Level of pressure on key species of animal and plant from invasive alien speciesDD
	Site	Level of pressure on key species of animal and plant from pollutionDD
State	Site	Extent and quality of natural forest habitats
	Site	Relative abundances of key speciesDD
	Landscape	Relative abundances of landscape species

Response	Sub Regional	Red List Index of vertebrate and vascular plant species occurring in the GMS
	Site	Relative abundances of selected resources of high socio-economic value
	Site	Area of natural forest >2 km from forest edge as a percentage of total area of natural forest at the site
	Site	Comprehensiveness of management planning
	Landscape	Area included within continuous networks of protected areas, other appropriate conservation designations and biodiversity corridors, in km ² and as percentage of total landscape
	Site	Comprehensiveness of measures to engage local communities in conservation
	Landscape	Percentage of biodiversity corridors where plantation with native species and/or assisted or monitored natural regeneration are underway
	Site	Comprehensiveness of conservation action
	Site	Number of sustainable financing mechanisms providing operational funding for conservation activities at the site

Note: The Green Proportion founded within the Yunnan Area of Map 1 is a Landscape, Xishuangbanna is a Site.

Monitoring Work carried out in the Xishuangbanna Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Pilot Site

Xishuangbanna Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Pilot Site is an integrated region covering several government-established nature reserves (Xishuangbanna, Nabanhe and Xishuangbanna National Nature Reserve's five (5) subsidiary nature reserves, namely Mangao, Mengla, Menglun, Mengyang and Shangyong); a planned Nature Reserve in Mengsong; several Conservation Corridors connecting biodiversity; as well as buffer regions beyond these nature reserves and boundaries of corridors (Map 2).

The Environmental Protection Board of Yunnan Province and the Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanic Garden are the primary execution units. Information collection work of the Biodiversity relational index has been carried out since May 2007, with the help of these working units. Condition assessment was made based on analysis of wildlife habitats and biodiversity of pivotal species. Stress assessment was made based on the analysis of threats human activities made to pivotal species. Reaction assessment was made based on the analysis of management conditions of the nature reserves as well as encouragement of local community involvement and level of environmental protection.

In the preliminary stage (May to September 2007) of the special project, analysis of the natural environment within the region by remote satellite sensor was carried out primarily through basic information collection work in referring to relevant documents and interviewing management personnel on developing a detailed monitoring index. The Special Project Report will be published by early 2008. The next

stage of the special project (commencing in Oct 2007) will be carried out by updating basic information as well as providing important supplements to replenish the existing report. Methodology includes conducting fieldwork research inside the experimental regions with designated strategic partners and execution units of minimum investment fund (supported by BirdLife International).

Reference Information

Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Initiative of the Greater Mekong Subregion of Core Environment Project — Case Study: Xishuangbanna Biodiversity Corridors Conservation Initiative (An indicative analysis). Edited and compiled for the Asian Development Bank by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society and BirdLife International (Drafted in 2007). Edited By: Dong Jiangtin, John Pilgrim, and Mike Crosby.



Enjoying Bird Watching

Through Hiking at Cang Shan — Feng Li

Cang Shan, also named Dian Cang Shan, is so called because snow always covered the mountain top. From a long distance, the mountain top of Dian Cang Shan looked like it was covered with many white dots. The Cangshan range consists of nineteen consecutive mountain peaks ranging fifty kilometers from Dengchuan in the north to the west of Xiaguan in the south. The mountains overlook Erhai (a large lake) and the ancient city of Dali. The city, the lake and the mountains have all become major tourist attractions.

In May 2006, Professor Han, our tutor, led seven of us to Dali, to conduct research into the bird biodiversity of Cang Shan. We were all looking forward to learning a lot from Professor HAN. The trip was an eye opening birding experience for all of us.

My graduate thesis research focus was about the ecology of Black Stork at Napahai, NW Yunnan. In my last few fieldwork trips, I had focused on waterfowl observation and had not observed woodland birds at all. On the Cang Shan trip, I observed a lot of woodland bird species for the first time, and at the same time gained relevant knowledge about their living environment and habits. Between Kunming and Dali we started to look around, staring at the birds resting on the electricity wires over the highway.

In the early morning of 25 May, we drove towards the foot of the mountains to the west of Dali. Long-tailed Shrike was the first bird species to welcome us. When we were discussing the species, a tiny dark colored bird flew through the underbrush of the farmland, and perched on a stalk of grass. We were so melancholy about not being able to recognize the species, but Professor HAN came to the rescue, telling us it was a Common Stonechat, the first of several we noted.

We started walking uphill following a track. On the way, we only saw some common species such as Eurasian Hoopoe and Brown-breasted Bulbul. It was extraordinarily quiet and fewer birdcalls were heard than we expected in this time of early morning. We were bored and thought if the situation of birds lives over the region is not satisfactory. Professor Han, later on, “delivered” a lesson on bird ecology and geology to us. He said: “The alluvial fan formed by debris flow at the slope over the mountain foot of Cangshan causes little yet monotonous vegetation in the region. In addition, rock mining was heavy over there. Therefore, only little number of common farmland and scrubland bird species could be observed.” He continued: “After reaching a certain height above sea level, a better number of bird species could be observed.” Professor Han’s words proved to be right after we arrived at the mountain waist after half an hour’s walk. Many bird calls were heard, and they later on coming out, jumping onto branches, flying over trees, wandering over the region. This made all of us excited to be able to observe this rich number of bird species. Within 30 minutes, we saw at least ten bird species, namely Japanese White-eye, Oriental White-eye, Rufous-capped Babbler, Chinese Babax, Rusty-capped Fulvetta, Chestnut-tailed Minla, Elliot’s Laughingthrush, White-collared Yuhina, a lot of Black-browed Tits and countless Chinese *Phylloscopus* species. Since it is very difficult to identify the exact species of *Phylloscopus*, they could all looked like *Phylloscopus reguloides* (Blyth’s Leaf-Warbler) in my eyes.

Hiking through the mountain trail, we passed a rock mining area, where a Peregrine Falcon rested on a broken wall of a ruined house, calling mournfully. We set up our gear immediately to observe its details carefully. We suspected that this small sized Peregrine Falcon could have been calling mournfully due to hungry and unable to catch any prey. Nevertheless, it changed poses and we could observe and photograph its body carefully and clearly.

Later on in the trip, we were excited by the appearance of a male juvenile Lady Amherst’s Pheasant, who ran into us suddenly. Despite its lacking of the beautiful plumage which appears only in the adults of the species, the juvenile pheasant looked cool and brave, staying 10 meters in front of us for over three seconds, which looked like trying to block our way uphill. When we tried to pull out our cameras, taking photographs of it, it ran quickly into the wood, leaving us with feelings of regret. This was an eye opening experience for me, being able to observe a state protected species at a remote area for the first time.

Right after this eye catching experience, someone yelled: “Look! Blue Whistling Thrush!” A violet colored bird with a body length of 30 centimeters was gliding over us, disappearing after flying into the wood. Professor Han explained to us about the difference between the Blue Whistling Thrush sub-species found in China and Taiwan.

At the same time, I observed a bird-like image over branches of a tree. The telescope was set up and a beautiful Verditer Flycatcher was observed. I felt delighted with the recognition of the bird species and called my companions to observe it too.

Later on, we continued to see many of the common species like Brown-breasted Bulbul, Great Tit, Black-browed Tit, and we all longed to observe new or beautiful species. Despite our warm discussion, changes of the environment and decreased appearance of birds have been neglected. Professor Han reminded us to keep quiet, to talk softly and move slowly, in order to not frighten the birds.

After 20 minutes' walk on the hiking trail, one of us pointed to the sky and shouted: "Look! There is a sunbird!" Looking through the binoculars, I saw the beautiful little bird flapping its wings, flying between flowers, sipping honey from them. It was a male Mrs Gould's Sunbird, with beautiful combination of blue, red, green and yellow plumage covering its body, looking like a flying diamond. It became a eye opening experience, giving tremendous impact yet wonderful enjoyment to us. I felt the miracles brought by the wonderful nature and the power of evolution.

The appearance of Mrs Gould's Sunbird lit up our passion for birdwatching. Very quickly, a pair of Orange-bellied Leafbirds caught our attention. The female leafbird had an eye catching greenish body, which lighted up our eyes and lives. The male Orange-bellied Leafbird, in other hand, had a bright green upper body, an orange belly and a black throat embroidered in bluish color. Watching them, I realized that, single colored birds like the Orange-bellied Leafbird could be as beautiful as other colorful species.

During the trip, we ran into the Black-headed Sibia several times. On the other hand, we heard birdcalls from different bird species, feeling that harmony is surrounding us. When we got close to the mountain top, we heard calls of the Eurasian Cuckoo. Suddenly, we heard two strange birdcalls. With very limited knowledge in recognizing birds through birdcalls, we all moved our attention to Professor Han. Han explained: "There were actually bird calls of three birds instead of two." He continued, "Two of them are male and female of the Spot-breasted Scimitar-Babbler, while the third one is the Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler." We concentrated on listening to the birdcalls of these species after the explanation of Professor Han, in order to make sure we all got a clearer idea of their voice.

Passing through the Jade Belt Walk, walking from the north to south, we met Great Tit, Black-headed Greenfinch, White Wagtail, Grey-winged Blackbird, Daurian Redstart and Olive-backed Pipit. From the mountain top, we saw Erhai and the Ancient City of Dali. We saw farm fields, villages, towns and transportation networks closer to us. A breeze blew and we felt comfortable being at the location. Therefore, we rested over there, switching from birdwatching to nature scenery appreciation and taking photographs.

Afterwards, we continued our along the Jade Belt Path. At that time, we saw a lot of House Swifts and Nepal House-Martins flying over the sky. Very often, a few House Martins held mud with their beaks in order to build nests at the rock eaves over the path. The rock eaves were very close to the hiking trail, where we could see clearly without using any binoculars. Those species seemed adapted to the human crowd, and were not afraid of humans. They concentrated at building nests without being frightened by our appearance, even if we were only about 3 to 4 meters from them. Dozens of martins collected mud from a nearby patch. At the time, Professor Han switched from a bird species professional to an experienced photographer, capturing the birds' behavior with his powerful Canon Camera.

Time flew and it was almost dark. Our Yunnan Province Forest Reserve vehicle was waiting for us downhill. During the return trip, we felt extremely tired after spending the whole day birdwatching and appreciating nature. Despite our numb legs and exhausted bodies, our heads were filled with images of birds. I felt touched in knowing that bird watching could be a leisure activity on one hand, and becomes a way to environmental education on the other hand. By birdwatching, a relationship between wildlife and me had been built up and I love nature very much. The birds changed me from a person indifferent to the environment to someone who is concerned about every aspect of nature.

We will visit Cang Shan in the future for conducting research in the birds' biodiversity and expect to observe more beautiful birds during our fieldwork sessions.

Useful Links

www.chinabirdnet.org	China Bird Watching Network
www.chinabird.org	China Ornithological Society
www.cnbird.org.cn	A Database of the Birds of China
www.wwfchina.org/birdgallery	China Bird Gallery
www.cbw.org.cn	Beijing Bird Watching Society (in prep)
www.wwfchina.org/bbs/chengdu.htm	Chengdu Bird Watching Society
www.fjbirds.org	Fujian Bird Watching Society
www.szbird.org.cn	Shenzhen Bird Watching Society
http://shwbs.org/swb/index.php	Wild Bird Society of Shanghai
www.xmbirds.org	Xiamen Bird Watching Society
www.zjbird.cn	Zhejiang Wild Bird Society
www.cbw.org.cn/forums	BirdWatch China
www.brrc.org.cn	Beijing Raptor Rescue Center
www.wildchina.cn	Wild China Film
http://bbs.wildchina.cn	China Wildlife Photography Training Camp
www.cwca.org.cn	China Wildlife Conservation Association
www.cnwildlife.com	China Wildlife
www.baohu.org/csis_search	China Species Information Services
www.wwfchina.org	World Wide Fund China
www.wwfchina.org/bbs/guanniao.htm	World Wide Fund China Bird Forum
www.nre.cn	Nature Reserve of China
www.baohu.org/index.php	Wildlife Conservation Society
www.conservation.org.cn	Conservation International
www.cnwm.org.cn/wildlife	Department of Wildlife Conservation, State Forestry Administration
www.cbik.ac.cn	Centre for Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge, Yunnan

Publications

China Bird report (started from 2003)	China Bird report (started from 2003)
www.chinabirdnet.org	China Bird Watch (newsletter also available at)