

Birding Ecotours



CHINA: YUNNAN TOUR

05 - 13 MAY 2026



Silver Pheasant is one of our gorgeous targets on this trip.

Yunnan is the most southwestern province in China and is the country's most diverse province, biologically as well as culturally. Yunnan contains snow-capped mountains (it is at the far eastern edge of the Himalayan uplift) and true tropical environments, thus supporting a wide range of habitats and species.

The northern part of the province forms part of the Yunnan-Guizhou (Yungui) Plateau, the province borders Guangxi and Guizhou in the east, Sichuan in the north, Tibet in the northwest, Myanmar in the west, Laos in the south, and Vietnam in the southeast.

Unlike neighboring Sichuan, Yunnan province is relatively tiny, covering only approximately four percent of the land area of China, yet it supports over half of the country's bird and mammal species. In addition, the Yunnan mountains are an Endemic Bird Area, EBA (BirdLife International) centered around the Hengduan Shan (mountains). Here three restricted-range species occur: **Brown-winged Parrotbill**, **Yunnan Nuthatch**, and **White-speckled Laughingthrush**, as well as many other amazing birds.

This short, small group Yunnan bird tour covers the best birding locations of the province, including the unparalleled Gaoligong Shan National Nature Reserve, a site which boasts over 525 bird species within its boundaries, the southern section of which is recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by BirdLife International.

Some of the fantastic birds we will look for during the tour include, in addition to the aforementioned species: **White-eared Night Heron**, **Mrs. Hume's Pheasant**, **Silver Pheasant**, **Giant Nuthatch**, **Long-tailed Broadbill**, **Spotted Elachura** (a monotypic family), **Golden Bush Robin**, **Chinese Babax**, **Yunnan Fulvetta**, **Himalayan Cutia**, and **Yellow-throated Bunting**.



*The almost plastic-looking **Long-tailed Broadbill** can be seen on this tour, it is a real beauty.*

Our Yunnan tour is the first of three China bird tours, the others, **China: Sichuan Tour** and **China: Qinghai Tour** follow. You can also join our **Taiwan: Birding Extravaganza** immediately before Yunnan too. Combining all four tours would result in a mind-boggling, once-in-a-lifetime, incredibly memorable East Asian mega bird tour.

Itinerary (9 days/8 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Kunming and travel to Zixi Mountain Forest Park

Arrival at Kunming Changshui International Airport in the morning. You will be met at the airport and then we will travel approximately three hours to Zixi Mountain Forest Park.

If your flight cannot arrive in the morning please book a flight that arrives the previous afternoon, and we will be happy to arrange a hotel for you and take you out for some early morning birding nearby before the tour gets started.

Overnight: Zixi Mountain Forest Park



*We will look for **Spot-breasted Parrotbill** at Zixi Mountain Forest Park.*

Day 2. Morning birding at Zixi Mountain Forest Park, afternoon travel to Lijiang

Zixi Mountain Forest Park is about 12 miles (20 kilometers) from the southwestern city of Chuxiong. We will spend the morning birding at the park, where we will immediately start looking for the region's special birds. Over the course of the morning, we hope to find our main

two target birds, **Giant Nuthatch** and **Yunnan Nuthatch**. Many other high-quality birds will also be sought, such as **Azure-winged Magpie**, **Orange-bellied Leafbird**, **Long-tailed Thrush**, **Black-breasted Thrush**, **Chinese Thrush**, **Large Niltava**, **Pale Blue Flycatcher**, **Chestnut-vented Nuthatch**, **Black-browed Bushtit**, **Spot-breasted Scimitar Babbler**, **Blyth's Shrike-babbler**, **Bar-throated Minla**, **Grey-hooded Fulvetta**, **Rufous-backed Sibia**, **Brown-breasted Bulbul**, the stunning **Mrs. Gould's Sunbird**, **Maroon-backed Accentor**, **Grey-headed Bullfinch**, **Spot-breasted Parrotbill**, **Godlewski's Bunting**, and **Black-faced Bunting**.

After our birding session we will spend the majority of the afternoon driving to Lijiang in the northwest of the province, where we will be based for the next couple of days and nights. Lijiang is famous (in addition to great birds) for its Old Town, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Overnight: Lijiang



Black-browed Bushtit can be found in Zixi Mountain Forest Park (photo Summer Wong).

Days 3 - 4. Birding in Lijiang

We will have two full days birding here with many target birds to keep us busy. Highlights here are many but could include the restricted-range trio of **White-speckled Laughingthrush**, **Brown-winged Parrotbill**, and **Yunnan Nuthatch**. There are numerous great birding sites near Lijiang and we will likely spend time in some or all of the following: Lijiang Wetland Park, Lashixiang Nature Reserve, Yuquan Park, Black Dragon Pool, Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, and Tiger Leaping Gorge. It is sure to be an exciting couple of days exploring the region with an interesting mix of species available from the range of habitats in the area.



Brown-winged Parrotbill is one of our localized targets in Yunnan (photo Summer Wong).



Grey-winged Blackbird is a beautiful member of the thrush family.

There are many other birds to keep us occupied in the Lijiang area, such as **Black-tailed Crake**, **Salim Ali's Swift**, **Common Pheasant**, **Grey Nightjar**, **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, **Spotted**

Nutcracker, Black-bibbed Tit, Black-streaked Scimitar Babbler, Spectacled Fulvetta, White-browed Fulvetta, Rusty-capped Fulvetta, and Yunnan Fulvetta, Chinese Babax, Elliot's Laughingthrush, Black-faced Laughingthrush, Rufous-tailed Babbler, Bar-throated Minla, Black-headed Sibia, White-collared Yuhina, Rufous-vented Yuhina, Grey-winged Blackbird, Hodgson's Redstart, Daurian Redstart, White-capped Redstart, Plumbeous Water Redstart, Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush, Sharpe's Rosefinch, Black-headed Greenfinch, and the very pretty Yellow-throated Bunting. This area is also jam-packed with a wide range of tricky warblers to keep us on our toes!

Overnight: Lijiang



*China is a wonderful country for rosefinches. We will look for **Sharpe's Rosefinch** in Yunnan.*

Day 5. Lijiang to Baihualing

This is essentially a travel day as we move between Lijiang and Baihualing, our base for the next few days. We will stop if we spot anything interesting along the way, of course. Baihualing has become famous over recent years due to the exceptional forest bird feeding set up, allowing for some amazing views and photographs of many often-secretive and rare forest birds.

Overnight: Baihualing

Days 6 - 7. Birding Gaoligong Shan National Nature Reserve

The Gaoligong Shan area offers some of *the* best birding in Yunnan, if not all of China. We will have two full days to explore a wide range of forest locations here. Possible species we will be looking out for include an exciting list of gamebirds like **Hill Partridge, Rufous-throated Partridge, Mountain Bamboo Partridge, Silver Pheasant, and Mrs. Hume's Pheasant.**



Mrs. Hume's Pheasant is one of our targets here, this is one of the best places in the world to find this often-secretive species.



Greater Yellownape is one of several woodpecker targets here.

The area is also wonderful for good-looking and colorful birds like **Greater Yellowname, Bay Woodpecker, Great Barbet, Golden-throated Barbet, Blue-throated Barbet, Red-headed Trogon, Long-tailed Broadbill, Orange-bellied Leafbird, Maroon Oriole, White-browed Bush Robin, Golden Bush Robin**, and an impressive list of sunbirds, including **Fork-tailed Sunbird, Mrs. Gould's Sunbird, Green-tailed Sunbird, Fire-tailed Sunbird, and Black-throated Sunbird.**



*A female **Red-headed Trogon** quietly watches us. The male is even more spectacular!*

This is a wonderful opportunity to get up close and personal with some dream birds like **White-eared Night Heron, Banded Bay Cuckoo, Crested Serpent Eagle, Black Eagle, Mountain Hawk-Eagle, Hodgson's Treecreeper, Slaty-bellied Tesia, Himalayan Cutia, Black-headed Shrike-babbler, Blyth's Shrike-babbler, Black-eared Shrike-babbler, Rusty-fronted Barwing, Grey-headed Parrotbill, Brown-winged Parrotbill, Black-throated Parrotbill, Streaked Spiderhunter, Brown Bullfinch, Spot-winged Grosbeak, Spot-necked Babbler**, and potentially the monotypic **Spotted Elachura**. Furthermore, other highlight birds might include secretive species such as **Scaly Thrush, Long-tailed Thrush, Himalayan Thrush, and Purple Cochoa.**

Overnight: Baihualing

Day 8. Baihualing to Tengchong

After a final morning birding, looking for the above listed species and more in the Baihualing area, we will travel to Tengchong for the final night of this short but thrilling Chinese bird tour.

Overnight: Tengchong

Day 9. Laifengshan National Forest Park and tour concludes

Near to Tengchong, we will visit the Laifengshan National Forest Park for the morning, where we hope to find a few more interesting birds before the tour concludes. Possible species to look for include **Brown-winged Parrotbill, Grey Bush Chat, Black-naped Oriole, Slender-billed Oriole, Rufous-backed Sibia, Black-headed Sibia, Beautiful Sibia, Long-tailed Minivet, Little Pied Flycatcher, Black-browed Bushtit, Bar-tailed Treecreeper, Burmese Shrike, White-tailed Robin, Verditer Flycatcher, Chestnut-vented Nuthatch, White-throated Laughingthrush, Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush, Red-faced Liocichla, Blue-winged Minla, Whiskered Yuhina**, and the stunningly beautiful **Silver-eared Mesia**.



White-browed Laughingthrush is one of several laughingthrush species possible on the tour.

For those ending their trip here, you will be taken to the airport in Tengchong, where this tour will conclude. For those continuing with our **China: Sichuan Tour**, you will fly from Tengchong to Chengdu.

Overnight: Not included (unless you are continuing onto the Sichuan Tour).

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors. In addition, we sometimes have to use a different international guide from the one advertised due to tour scheduling.

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| Duration: | 9 days |
| Group Size: | 4 - 8 |
| Dates: | 05 - 13 May 2026 |
| Start: | Kunming Airport, Yunnan |
| End: | Tengchong Airport, Yunnan |
| Prices: | US\$4,844 per person sharing – based on 4 - 8 participants (2026) |

Single Supplements: US\$326 (2026)

Price includes:

All accommodation (from Day 1 to Day 8 as described)

Meals (from lunch on Day 1 until lunch on Day 9)

Drinking water – please bring a refillable water bottle

Expert tour leader

Local bird and wildlife guides fees

Birdwatching site entrance fees and travel permits

All ground transport and tolls/taxes while on tour, including airport pick-up and drop-off

Price excludes:

Flights

Expenditures due to flight cancellations/delays or other causes beyond our control (force majeure)

Visa fees if visa required (we will provide you with an ‘Invitation Letter’, usually required to get your Chinese visa)

Departure tax

Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts, laundry, internet access, phone calls, etc.

Any pre- or post-tour accommodation, meals, or birding/sightseeing/monument excursions

Soft/alcoholic drinks

Personal travel insurance

Camera permits

Gratuities (please see our [tipping guidelines blog](#))