



TROPICAL
BIRDING



TAIWAN: Birding with a Camera

A Tropical Birding Set-Departure

Sep. 30–Oct. 10, 2023

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TOUR SUMMARY

Taiwan is a gem of a country that lies off the coast of East Asia. Although its mention evokes huge urban areas and massive populations in the minds of most, Taiwan actually boasts rugged mountains and vast wilderness areas. These support a rich array of wildlife, including dozens of endemic bird species and even more endemic subspecies, many of which are potential future splits. Most of these endemics can readily be photographed, and fall is a good time for photography, as fruiting bushes and trees concentrate birds, and the coastal areas are full of migrants. Taiwan is a comfortable place to travel, with modern hotels, world-class roads, and excellent food. Whether you're an experienced Asia-phile birder seeking out the island's endemic birds, or a newcomer to this part of the world, Taiwan is an excellent place to visit.

With the endemic birds, we saw all save one of the 28 endemic species recognized on the current Clements list, plus several highly likely future splits, and dozens more endemic subspecies, some of which may be elevated to full endemic species in the future. And we took good photos of nearly all of these. Some of the highlights were stunning views of a pair of Mikado Pheasants at (literally) arm's length, Black-necklaced and Taiwan Scimitar-Babblers, and all the laughingthrushes. The normally elusive Taiwan Bamboo Partridge gave us great views and even some chances for photography. One of the outstanding things about Taiwan is that although it has

only one or two representatives of many major Asian groups of birds, an unusually high proportion of these are the coolest member of the group! A few examples that I'd argue are Taiwan Yuhina, Firecrest, White-eared Sibia, Steere's Liocichla, Taiwan Blue-Magpie, and Taiwan Barwing. Taiwan might not have a vast set of endemics, but all of its endemics are very cool birds. Even the drab-looking Taiwan Bush-Warbler boasts one of the coolest songs among Asian birds!

We had the bad fortune to have a typhoon bear down on Taiwan in the middle of our trip, but while this seemed potentially disastrous, it ended up not affecting our birding and photography much. And experiencing the fringes of one of these powerful storms was a fascinating experience!

As always, the food was fantastic. Since our group was adventurous when it came to food, we explored a wide range of delicious dishes, from classics like beef noodle soup and dumplings, to Japanese sushi and sashimi, even trying "infamous" dishes like 1000-year-old egg and stinky tofu!

For an immersive experience of this trip's highlights, check out the 10-minute video trip report:

[VIDEO TRIP REPORT on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shC-s1a1Czg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shC-s1a1Czg)

ITINERARY

September 30	Arrival in Taoyuan. Afternoon birding Taoyuan.
October 1	Taoyuan to Shimen Reservoir to Dasyueshan.
October 2-4	Dasyueshan.
October 5	Morning Sun-Link-Sea. Afternoon Changhua.
October 6	Changhua to Puli. Afternoon Wuling Pass.
October 7	Wuling Pass and Taroko Gorge.
October 8	Morning Qingjing. Afternoon Aogu Wetland.
October 9	Tainan area.
October 10	Tainan to Taipei. Departure from Taoyuan.

PHOTO GALLERY

A full [Flickr gallery](https://www.flickr.com/photos/kbehrens/albums/72177720314797532/) of photos from this trip, organized chronologically, is on Ken's Flickr page: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/kbehrens/albums/72177720314797532/>

BIRD LIST

The full list, including numbers and many other details, can be see as part of the [eBird trip report](https://ebird.org/tripreport/164091) for this trip: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/164091>

MAMMAL LIST

OLD WORLD MONKEYS: Cercopithecidae		
Formosan Rock Macaque	<i>Macaca cyclopsis</i>	
HORSESHOE BATS: Rhinolophidae		
Formosan Lesser Horseshoe Bat	<i>Rhinolophus monoceros</i>	
SQUIRRELS: Sciuridae		
Red-and-white Flying-Squirrel	<i>Petaurista alborufus lena</i>	
Maritime (Formosan) Striped Squirrel	<i>Tamiops maritimus formosanus</i>	
Perny's (Owston's) Long-nosed Squirrel	<i>Dremomys pernyi owstoni</i>	
Pallas's (Formosan) Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus erythraeus taiwanensis</i>	
RATS & MICE: Muridae		
Brown Rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>	
WEASELS: Mustelidae		
Yellow-throated Marten	<i>Martes flavigula chrysoospila</i>	
DEER: Cervidae		
Reeve's Muntjac		
BOVIDS: Bovidae		
(Formosan) Serow	<i>Capricornis swinhoei</i>	Guides only



Taiwan Barwings were incredibly cooperative at the fruiting bushes in Sun-Link-Sea Resort.