# **MALAYSIA**

# The Malay Peninsula

# Tue 21 February-Sun 5 March 2017



**Trip photos**: Malaysian Partridge at Richmond Cottage, Fraser's Hill • Hooded Pitta seen in the botanical gardens, Shah Alam • female Whiskered Treeswift – the male has chestnut cheeks • the super little Rufous-browed Flycatcher near the Fraser's Hill hotel • Greater Flameback at Kuala Selangor mangroves • Stripe-throated Bulbuls at Taman Negara © Brian Small, Limosa

# Report compiled by tour leader: Brian Small

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## **MALAYSIA | The Malay Peninsula**

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with Luise Addison, Hazel Cunningham, Vicky Graham, Dave Holberton-Jones, Richard Langley, Roger Le Voir, Martin Phillips, Cathryn Pritchard and Miles & Vivien Roberts

From the first day and its fine Hooded Pitta at Shah Alam to the last with an active fly-catching Oriental Paradise Flycatcher at Taman Negara, our tour to Malaysia was a blast. Though the weather was less kind to us than last year, we saw many fine birds and had a lot of fun, too!

Malaysia is a country with a good infrastructure, roads and accommodation are often of a high standard, and we travelled about easily (and sedately) with absolutely no problems at all. We took the traditional Limosa triangular route, heading from Kuala Lumpur northwest to the coast at Kuala Selangor (via Shah Alam), before heading northeast to the more temperate forests at Fraser's Hill, then east to the tropical rainforest of Taman Negara.

From the heat of the coast, the cooler Fraser's Hill is always welcome, though we spent a fair amount of time in the clouds and had to duck and dive around a few showers. Taman Negara lived up to its name as a rainforest, though by the last two days, the rain had cleared and the temperatures soared again to 34C!

The nature of such a tour is that we will each have many individual highlights and memories, and it is hard to pick out one species that excited more than others, though those most 'drooled' over perhaps were the Crested Fireback at Taman Negara, which was suggested to 'knock the spots off' other pheasant species, whiskered Blyth's Frogmouth at Taman Negara, colourful Hooded and Garnet Pittas, but also Malayan Whistling Thrush and Chestnut-naped Forktail at Fraser's Hill.

Lee's fine eyesight and hearing was again much admired and helped us find so many great birds and I would like to thank him for his great planning and choice of some superb restaurants. This is a tour of many great birds - including 22 species of bulbul - but the food was excellent too!

# **Trip Diary**

## **Tuesday 21 February**

Most of the group departed London Heathrow on time for the overnight BA flight to Kuala Lumpur...

#### Wednesday 22 February

...arriving mid afternoon at KLIA. Immigration was admirably speedy and with currency exchanged, we met Lee (along with our drivers Vincent and Ali) and Hazel, loaded the vans and set off for the hour-long drive to Shah Alam. En route we picked up some typical roadside birds – Javan and Common Myna, Germain's Swiftlet, Tree Sparrow – before arriving at our hotel overlooking the Blue Mosque at 17:30. Having met Miles and Vivien, a few got out to see some of the many Grey Herons, egrets and House Crows overflying the city to roost, plus the local Asian Koel calling loudly from a tree. Indeed the latter species was still in the tree as we walked to a fine local restaurant (a 'Lee special' and actually the same as last year) for our first meal of the tour.

# **Thursday 23 February**

Waking relatively early, we had our breakfast at the hotel, before loading up and driving a short distance to a local park, but not before a small lake attracted us with its Painted Storks and for one vehicle a group of Smooth-coated Otters. A brief walk at a Shah Alam park gained us good views of our first Pink-necked Green Pigeons, Brown-throated Sunbirds, Black-naped Orioles and Oriental Magpie Robins, but the hoped-for Buffy Fish Owl eluded us – we would have to wait 'til later...

Following another short drive we pulled up at the National Botanical Gardens, the temperatures and humidity by now rising. The car park alone was good and we immediately started picking up views of new species: Asian Glossy and Daurian (Purple-backed) Starlings, Baya Weavers, ubiquitous Yellow-vented Bulbuls and 100s of swiftlets. Inside the park we had a short walk to a small viewing area, where a branch had been laid and on which Lee placed some mealworms. Preparing for a good wait, it took a whole minute before a superb Hooded Pitta popped into view and performed superbly – being picky, for the photographers it was quite dark, but we couldn't complain at the stunning turquoise, scarlet and black vision in front of us! Olive-winged Bulbuls popped

about the trees and Grey-breasted Spiderhunters picked amongst the flowers as we walked back along the trail crossing the lake and paddies. A large raptor on a high bare tree was our first Changeable Hawk-eagle, accompanied by a Hill Myna; three Sooty Barbets were seen well; and both Crested Serpent Eagle and a very briefly seen White-bellied Sea Eagle flew over the trees. We spent a fair amount of time looking for a Bluewinged Pitta calling below us, and most got views of it as it popped into view now and again, but the heat and humidity was becoming great so we walked slowly back to the garden entrance for a bit of welcome shade. Looking into the paddies we picked out both White-headed and White-rumped Munias, Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, lots of Pacific Swallows and Paddyfield Pipits.

Following a bit of a tour of Shah Alam, we arrived at lunch and welcome AC. Cooler and fully refreshed we departed for the 1.5-hour drive to our hotel at Kuala Selangor. Recently refurbished, the rooms here were very welcome and some decided to rest for the afternoon, while others set off to the extensive rice fields to the north of town. Many egrets – largely Cattle, Little and Great, but a few Intermediate – fed as dark clouds loomed overhead. A Striated Heron nipped along the road from a nearby ditch, but even better was the pair of Cinnamon Bitterns that stood or fed close to the road offering great views. Another Striated Heron was also found using a small red rag as 'bait': it spent most its time holding it in its beak, but occasionally would carefully place it next to the water and watch for insects or small fish to come to it – a really lovely moment to watch. Over the fields 10,000s of swiftlets flew but try as we might we could only find Germain's this year; an eastern race Blackwinged Kite swept in and hovered above the paddies and a couple of Brown Shrikes also hawked about. As the winds picked up and rain beckoned we headed back, but not before two distant hornbills were picked out crossing a water channel. We sat with patience waiting for the rain to ease before Lee called in two ace Rhinoceros Hornbills to the trees opposite.

Back at the hotel we had a short rest before heading to a Kuala Selangor restaurant for another great meal, and on our return to the hotel, collected binoculars and torches for a brief walk about the grounds. Success was swift, with a beautiful Buffy Fish Owl perched in the torchlight, then almost immediately the first of two or three Large-tailed Nightjars perched on the fenceline. Job done, though the leaders went out to get a few pictures of the owls after all had retired to bed, finding a female and young fish owl.

#### Friday 24 February

An early breakfast and we were off at first light to the nearby Kuala Selangor Nature Park for a morning walk amongst the mangroves – with a few key species available. Arriving early meant that the temperatures were at their lowest but it was still warm. A good number of Brahminy Kites soared overhead and one was appreciated as it perched on a bare snag. A Common lora was calling constantly and eventually tracked down to a small tree where it looked like a miniature oriole; a Green-billed Malkoha was picked out in the tree tops as were a handful of Oriental White-eyes and migrant Ashy Minivets. Finally we set out amongst the mangroves, the first section being quiet apart from calling Abbott's Babblers, close views of Ashy Tailorbirds, Asian Brown Flycatcher and a Black (Equatorial) Spitting Cobra *Naja sumatrana*. Emerging from the tall trees into the mangroves proper we checked the channel and had great views of a Stork-billed Kingfisher and a couple of Common Sandpipers before being checked out by a huge gang of Long-tailed Macaques. From the viewing tower we had a super 45 minutes of observations, with numerous species: monochromatic Pied Trillers; both Greater and Common Flamebacks – the former coming in close and giving ace views; Blue-tailed Bee-eaters and Black-naped Orioles added splashes of colour; Malaysian Pied Fantails wafted their tails but less spectacular were the Golden-bellied Gerygones.

Back on the clockwise walk round the raised bank many butterflies enjoyed the warmth and we picked out more Ashy Tailorbirds and a Yellow-bellied Prinia eventually showed after some patience. A pair of Ruby-cheeked Sunbirds came into a mobbing tape, whilst out on the raised walkway we were straight into Laced Woodpeckers and Mangrove Whistler; Collared Kingfishers called about the trees and were eventually picked out; however, a Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker found by Roger sadly failed to return. A couple of fine pairs of Cinereous Tits – the males with almost totally black bellies were up next, but only the appetiser for a male Mangrove Blue Flycatcher that came in above our heads and sang its resonant *Cyornis* blue-flycatcher song. With time pushing on, back out in the open we got great views of a Little Bronze Cuckoo, Malaysian Hawk-cuckoo and several very vociferous Crested Serpent Eagles – the latter were joined by a handful of huge Lesser Adjutants (sometimes thought of as ugly, in flight they are incredibly impressive!). A briefly seen immature Chestnut-winged Cuckoo disappeared all too quickly sadly; eventually we arrived back at the reserve centre and drove back to the hotel to have a quick shower, final pack, then depart for lunch at a riverside restaurant from which large numbers of Grey Herons, Great Egrets and Striated Herons were seen. Replete we set off east for Fraser's Hill.

As the road began to rise to into the hills, we passed Selangor Dam and immediately began to pick up flocks of roadside swallows and swifts. Stopping by a bridge, we promptly found the target Rufous-bellied Swallows that nest below, and watched and listened as they cruised about – a great bird and so dark and chunky. House Swifts, too, were plentiful amongst the swiftlets that nest below the bridge. By the time we had driven higher the

clouds were closing in and we made a couple of stops on our way up to the Gap, both of while were fruitful birdwise. Species seen were Red-billed Malkoha, Blue-throated Bee-eaters, several fine Whiskered Treeswifts – one of the birds of the trip for some, Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrikes, Scarlet Minivets, Tiger Shrike, Sultan Tit high above us and Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler thankfully lower and our only Spectacled Spiderhunter of the tour. It was all very busy despite the light rain that continued to fall. Finally we headed on up to Fraser's Hill where clouds and light rain were all about, checked in for a four-night stay, then drove to the Chinese restaurant of choice for yet another fine meal.

## Saturday 25 February

We gathered in reception in the halflight as we were to make the short walk down to the top of Old Gap Road for a bit of a stake-out for Malayan Whistling Thrush. It was still fairly dark as we positioned ourselves across the road and Lee threw out some mealworms; Cathryn was the first to pick out the dark shape of the thrush as it popped onto the road – about the only detail we could initially see was the yellow bill, like an overfed Blackbird. As the light improved, more of the bird could be seen and in reality we had pretty good views of a species we had missed last year – an ace start to our stay!

With time in hand before breakfast we strolled up the Army Camp Road and picked up yet more great birds – even though some were high in the canopy. First up was a showy Streaked Wren-babbler followed by a pair of Large Niltayas, then a very mobile flock high in the trees produced some smart birds - Blue-winged Minla. Golden Babbler, Mountain Fulvettas - all always the mainstay of species here. A Rufous-browed Flycatcher called then showed, but we were quickly pulled away by the two Blue Nuthatches that Lee had found in the high flock. A breathless few minutes eventually allowed us to get views of them as they moved quickly about and we headed back to the hotel for breakfast – passing the preparations for the bird-race due to start at midday. Even as we ate, birds came into the feeders: Long-tailed Sibias plus another key species, Fire-tufted Barbet. The rest of our morning was taken with a stroll clockwise along the lower section of the Telekom Loop. Having driven to the start we didn't get very far before we were in the thick of new birds. Mugimaki Flycatchers first but then we played a wait-and-see game with two very elusive Large Scimitar Babblers before we got any sort of view. The first of several Black-throated Sunbirds were found "chip" ing away at each other. On our slow walk we picked up yellow-bellied Mountain Tailorbird, White-throated Fantail, Red-headed Trogon, Glossy Swiftlets and a Dark Hawk-cuckoo, before returning back to the village early to make sure we had a table for lunch. With a little down time after lunch, some strolled about the grounds or up the local roads, but the numbers of people about for the weekend and bird-race made things harder than normal. Greater Yellownape and Orange-bellied Leafbirds were seen by some but would wait until later for others.

For the afternoon we took a drive down the New Gap Road, stopping at various places en route. Misty cloud came and went, but generally the weather was okay and we saw a few nice birds: three Rhinoceros and a couple of fly-over Wreathed Hornbills; Red-throated, Black-browed and more Sooty Barbets; three small Buff-rumped Woodpeckers, White-bellied Erpornis, Lesser Racquet-tailed Drongos, plus Grey-headed Canary-flycatchers and one more Sultan Tit. Black-crested Bulbul was new and admired though the Everett's White-eyes were typically lively in the trees.

## **Sunday 26 February**

The day dawned cloudy, but despite a bit of sun in the morning, the cloud soon dominated the day and we had a bit of rain to contend with in the afternoon. After breakfast we again visited the Telekom Loop, this time walking in an anticlockwise direction, but even before we had arrived we had super view of a male Siberian Thrush on the road ahead of us – such is the charisma of this bird that it caused a frenzy amongst the photographers in the vehicles behind us. Our aim this morning was to focus on species we had yet to find and were lucky to pick several up during the course of our stroll. Amongst the Mountain Fulvettas and Blue-winged Minlas, we saw Chestnut-crowned Warbler, Blyth's Shrike-babblers were found singing from high in a couple of bare trees. Another Dark Hawk-cuckoo was seen near to the Glossy Swiftlet colony, but the calling Long-tailed Broadbills failed to show. A Lesser Yellownape spend quite some time in a tree as we angled about it trying to get better light in which to view. Mountain Bulbul and Brown Shrike were also found, but the calling Malaysian Partridges did not want to appear. Asian Brown and Mugimaki Flycatchers again showed, but the latter were still being shy. Eventually we called it a morning, but not before stopping at a small roadside area where we had cracking views of two tiny and tail-less Pygmy Wren-babblers and a Grey-throated Babbler before lunch.

After lunch and a little more down time, during which again a few mooched about taking photos and seeing a pair of Fire-tufted Barbets at their nest hole and several Silver-eared Mesias. At 15:00 we all got into the vans and drove down the steep road to Jerian Waterfall, which despite it being a Sunday was relatively quiet. Strolling down we picked up a few great species including our first views of Collared Owlet then both Cinereous and Ochraceous Bulbuls, and several Grey-chinned Minivets, before we got into the waterfall and rocky section of

the river. Lee's acute hearing had picked out the calls of a forktail above the noise of the river and a smart Slaty-backed Forktail was promptly found before equally promptly heading off up a side stream into the trees. Views had been a little brief so we waited and eventually it came back onto the main boulder-strewn riverbed and showed really well – a fine bird. Heading back to the vans, we picked out a couple of Black Eagles and Crested Honey Buzzards before heading back up the road to Fraser's Hill.

Our day was not yet done, and taking a side road up to Richmond Cottage we parked amongst the pines, and after a short walk, during which we gained great views of Orange-bellied Leafbirds, we sat at a little stakeout, where Lee put out some grain. In a matter of moments the ground was covered in scratching Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrushes and even better at least two scarce Malayan Laughingthrushes – much more olive and maroon in coloration – and a relief as I had begun to worry. Oriental Magpie-robins and close Black-eared Shrike-babblers entertained us as we waited and eventually the key species came (ran more like) in – four Malaysian Partridges – showing brilliantly and offering a rare chance to see them well. After dinner, we drove up the Old Camp Road and enjoyed some good views of a couple of Grey Nightjars in the light drizzle, perched atop a street lamp, but our search for Brown Wood Owl was in vain as the rain came in and we had to leave.

#### **Monday 27 February**

After heavy overnight rain, the day inauspiciously dawned to low cloud and heavy rain and it more or less continued all day. Undeterred, we had no choice but to drive downhill out of the cloud and hope for a little better weather, which luckily we managed to find a few drier moments throughout the day.

The New Gap Road was hopeless, but at the Gap itself, having gained some respite from the rain under a shelter, it began to clear for a while. Immediately it was obvious that the low cloud was forcing large numbers of swifts to pass along the valley and amongst them were many 100s of Pacific Swifts – indeed these poured through all day, alongside Germain's Swiftlets, Silver-rumped Spinetails and many hirundines. Smaller birds too appeared and we got good views of Orange-bellied Flowerpeckers, but after a short walk checking the bamboo out for woodpeckers and parrotfinches we drove down to the small picnic spot, which proved a good decision as we soon found several new species. By the parking area, two Bronzed Drongos perched on the bamboo, a pair of Hill Blue Flycatchers appeared followed by a group of noisy Yellow-bellied Warblers and Pin-striped Tit-babblers; across the road an Asian Brown Flycatcher hawked across a bank and whilst watching it a Rufescent Prinia popped into view and skulked along the bank as did two Dark-necked Tailorbirds. We could hear Bamboo Woodpecker calling below, but try as we might it did not want to show; compensation came in some great views of a Black Laughingthrush close by.

Heading back up the Old Gap Road, we had a couple of stops, but it was hard work in the light rain and generally gloomy conditions, so we headed up for lunch. With the rain continuing after lunch we again dropped down the hill, this time stopping for good views of a Blyth's Hawk-eagle, before continuing below the Gap for c. 10 km to the small Sungai Gumut waterfall. Here almost immediately Lee found the target — a superb male Chestnut-naped Forktail, which walked about the leaf letter, before slipping away up the waterfall and into the forest. A brief but brilliant moment and one of the birds of the trip. We hung about for a while hoping for a second look, but as the rain closed in once more we only managed a Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker for compensation. Again we returned up the Old Gap Road and made a short walk uphill around km 5. For our efforts we got a good look at Square-tailed Drongo-cuckoo, another Green-billed Malkoha, a female Orange-breasted Trogon, a Large Woodshrike was heard but did not show, a Chestnut-backed Scimitar-babbler showed well by the road, a Velvet-fronted Nuthatch appeared in the bare branches of a tree and a small flock of Everett's White-eyes fed close by. It was time to head back up hill but we were thankful at least that we had managed some birding (and seen some great birds) on a difficult day.

#### **Tuesday 28 February**

Our three days at Fraser's Hill were at an end, and with yet more heavy rain and strong winds overnight, we departed before first light winding our way down the New Gap Road, avoiding any fallen branches along the way. After 1.5 hours we arrived at Bentong and enjoyed another superb Indian breakfast at a small restaurant in town – and started to pick up a few species we had not seen for a while: Common and Javan Mynas plus Asian Glossy Starlings.

It was not too long after leaving Bentong when we arrived at the small wetland area near Lanchang – some had even picked up Red Junglefowl along the way. Parking up, we began to get new species straight away: Blackheaded Bulbuls, the huge-billed Golden-whiskered Barbet, Oriental Pied Hornbills, a Rufous Woodpecker, but most excitingly two Black-and-red Broadbills flew about. Other species seen before – White-breasted Waterhen, Purple Herons flying over and Blue-throated Bee-eaters – were also enjoyed. Walking along the track, we found two Scarlet-backed Flowerpeckers, a couple of Hill Mynas on a dead palm, but two Blue-rumped Parrots flew off

too quickly. We then had a wonderful 40 minutes or so standing in the shade watching birds come and go across the water's edge: two more Black-and-red Broadbills, a Crested Goshawk in display, more Oriental Pied Hornbills, a Plaintive Cuckoo and a pair of Oriental Dollarbirds flapped lazily about the trees across the water.

Pressing on, we arrived at the Krau Forest late morning and had an hour or so exploring the forest from the roadside. This area is always great for bulbuls and babblers and so it proved: Black-headed, Stripe-throated, Cream-vented, Asian Red-eyed, Grey-cheeked, Yellow-bellied, Hairy-backed, Buff-vented and Streaked Bulbuls; plus Black-throated, Chestnut-winged, Moustached and Sooty-capped Babblers as well as Fluffy-backed Tit-babbler. Even better and certainly more colourful was a jewel-like rufous-backed form of Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher found by (guess who?) Lee as we passed by; it then sat watching small pools by the road offering the best views I have ever had of this amazing species. In the woods we got good views of Raffles's Malkoha, plus Olive-backed and Orange-backed Woodpeckers. At a small feeding station, we got Rufous-winged Philentoma and another fine Hooded Pitta. Finally we headed off for lunch at a local restaurant, where we found several Long-billed Spiderhunters after a fine meal we picked up Blue-eared Kingfisher on the river. Then, with local knowledge we spent some time at a fruiting tree, where with our necks aching as we peered into the high branches we saw many Asian Fairy-bluebirds, Lee heard and called in two Black-and-yellow Broadbills just over our heads, Blue-eared and two more Golden-whiskered Barbets, a single Black Hornbill flew over, several Greater Green Leafbirds and Thick-billed Flowerpeckers.

With a good drive ahead of us to reach Taman Negara, we eventually left, stopping en route at Jelantut for a pit stop and short spell of birding round a fuel station: as usual the Baya Weavers were building nests and many Tree Sparrows fed about, but the good numbers of Scaly-breasted Munias were new. We eventually arrived at Kuala Tahan, where we unloaded the vehicles, said a brief farewell to Ali and Vincent, then packed onto a boat for the river crossing. After being greeted by a Great Hornbill and brief check-in formalities, we went off to our nice chalets and settled in prior to dinner.

#### Wednesday 1 March

The weather followed the same pattern as the last few days, with cloud, some sun, but also heavy showers in the afternoon. With no vehicles we did a good amount of walking today along the raised trails through the forest, initially the canopy but then various other trails before ending at the Tahan hide. We found 10 Brown-backed Needletails, many Blue-crowned Hanging Parrots and four Black Magpies on a walk amongst the chalets; Raffles's, Chestnut-breasted, Chestnut-bellied and Black-bellied Malkohas; Chequer-throated and another Orange-backed Woodpecker; Abbott's Babbler and Chestnut-winged Babbler building a nest; and two Large Woodshrikes. From the hide we saw Puff-backed and Scaly-breasted Bulbuls, an Emerald Dove found by Richard, plus three Dark-throated Orioles and our first Lesser Green Leafbird. There were several highlights this morning, but the best (and maybe bird of the trip) was the stunning Crested Fireback that showed close to the trail through the trees— if there is a finer pheasant in the world it is hard to name!

After a lovely lunch and bit of downtime for some, we set off along another trail through the campsite initially to check a fruiting tree. We arrived just as a heavy shower set in and waited patiently for it to clear through; finally as it departed we managed a great spell of birds with the top spot held by the brilliant Green Broadbill – of which we saw several. Two or three Eastern Crowned Warblers came in overhead, another Scaly-breasted Bulbul and a Grey-bellied Bulbul, also Grey-and-buff Woodpecker, two Bar-bellied Cuckooshrikes arrived and showed well above us, before we set off to the beach at Lubok Simpon. Along the way there and back we found many more great species: a female Red-naped Trogon, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Rhinoceros and Helmeted Hornbills were heard, but Great, Oriental Pied, Black and Wreathed were seen. A Maroon and three Great Slaty Woodpeckers were picked out before again we had to return to the lodge. After dinner we had a brief walk along one of the trails for owls, but despite hearing Reddish Scops Owl deep in the woods we did not see any.

#### **Thursday 2 March**

The day dawned sunny and we had a very fine morning – generally sunny with a bit of cloud. The afternoon however let us down with heavy, protracted and unseasonal rain. Lucky it was sunny and dry as it meant that our planned boat trip up the Sungai Tahan could go ahead. This is a fine way to see the rainforest at its best, pushing up the tea-stained rivers into the ancient trees that crowd right up to the river's edge. Even if you saw no birds it would still be a great experience. However, luckily we saw some good species too, though it is more challenging when sat in a moving boat to see them and get everyone onto them. Two Greater Coucals sat out in full view and many Silver-rumped Spinetails sped along the river channel, a Black-bellied Malkoha rummaged about a leafy vine, and a Black-capped Kingfisher was seen by some, a very elusive Tickell's Blue Flycatcher sang and showed briefly, but birding became easier (even if the landing wasn't) when we beached the boats and walked to a clearing from which to scan for birds.

This proved a very fruitful 40 minutes or so, though the highlight most probably was the pair of Banded Broadbills. Three smart woodpeckers in the form of Buff-rumped, Crimson-winged and Chequer-throated showed well, though the fly-over Thick-billed Green Pigeons and Blue-rumped Parrots were not so good. Another Plaintive Cuckoo was found and then an active flock of Black-winged Flycatcher-shrikes came into a bare tree with a Green lora, with (close by) more Dark-throated Orioles and three Scaly-breasted Bulbuls. A small wing-barred *Phylloscopus* warbler was calling and behaving like a Pale-legged Leaf, but showed poorly low down in a tangle of dead wood a female Tiger Shrike was found, but our eyes were again taken by the Banded Broadbill and many Fairy-bluebirds flying over. Back down the steps and on the boats we continued upriver just enjoying the ride – it was exciting up the rapids and some got a little wet – and in the hope of perhaps some new kingfishers or trogons... After a while we turned back and on the final return stretch we picked up at least two noisy Crested Jays that crossed the river then behaved typically elusively in the woods; a Common Kingfisher was then seen and was followed by an equally tantalising view of Blue-banded Kingfisher as it perched briefly and then flew downstream. However, the real highlight of the morning on the boats were the views of Straw-headed Bulbul in riverside bushes; this highly endangered bulbul is said by BirdLife to number between only 600-1700 individuals due to trapping by the cagebird industry! A sad reflection of our times.

As we approached Taman Negara two Lesser Fish Eagles flew off from the trees calling and we followed them downriver for a while. Extricating ourselves from the boats, we walked up to the dining room for lunch before a siesta. Sadly the afternoon was a bit of a wash out with the normal heavy showers interspersed with dry spells deserting us and it rained virtually all afternoon. We were very patient as we waited by the cluster of chalets surrounding a flowering tree (Oriental White-eye, green leafbirds and a few Orange-bellied Flowerpeckers of note), but after 90 minutes most decided to return to their rooms, whilst others walked to the hide, here a Black Hornbill perched bedraggled in a tree was the only thing of real note, though a fine Tailed Jay butterfly sat in the gloom brightened the afternoon.

That evening a few keen members walked to the campsite and after a short while a Blyth's Frogmouth (now 'split' from Javan Frogmouth on voice) started up. It called but did not seem to come any nearer until suddenly another chimed up nearby. Lee was on the case quickly and soon we were getting great views of this very bizarre-looking bird just about us. With its staring eyes and long, whiskered eyebrows and cheek feathers it had a very unusual appearance and ended a difficult afternoon brilliantly. This bird was destined to be 'Bird of the Tour' for at least one member of the group.

## Friday 3 March

The heavy rain yesterday must have washed all the bad weather through as today dawned fine, sunny and warm and stayed so more or less all day. It was perfect weather for a ten-minute boat journey down stream to the Bumbun Blau Trail, though we had to first drag ourselves up the steep and muddy bank to the top first — which was fun... The other thing of note before the birding started was the number of members in leech socks and it proved a good decision...

Anyway, we spent the first 30 minutes walking and backtracking in search of the Malayan Peacock-pheasant that taunted us from a relatively small patch of dense trees between two tracks. We tried one side then the other before we eventually realised we were not going to win - it was close... A Great Argus also called from way into the woods, as did the first of several heard-only Rail-babblers - the last one coming so close but we just could not find it (!). The truth was that the first 90 minutes or so were quiet and like last year it was not until mid morning that things began to happen. We came across a couple of Crested Jays, that though secretive did give slightly better views; babblers appeared in small groups and included Chestnut-rumped, Ferruginous, Shorttailed, Sooty-capped, Scaly- and Rufous-crowned, plus Black-capped. As we waited for yet another Rail-babbler to appear, Lee took the group into the forest and there, briefly at least, on a log was a pair of Garnet Pittas – the only word is stunning! More colourful birds were found: a fine pair of Scarlet-rumped Trogons; a Banded Kingfisher perched nearby and sat raising and lowering its crown feathers at us – though a calling Rufouscollared Kingfisher remained a 'heard-only'; several Raffles's Malkohas came through in skulking groups. Two calling White-bellied Woodpeckers again taunted us from a tall tree, several hornbills flew over given away by their wingbeats - remaining unseen, but time pressed on and we had to return to the boat. Another odd moment happened on the boat trip back to Taman Negara, when a Red Junglefowl frantically flew the 300m across the river ahead of the boat - clearly not built for long-distance flights...

A late lunch was followed by a brief rest then walk round the chalets, before we made one more walk through the campsite and along the Lubok Simpon trail. Given the sun, it was a hot afternoon and some turned back from the campsite, though not before Little Green Pigeon, Little Spiderhunter, Banded Woodpecker and a couple more Grey-bellied Bulbuls had been seen. For those that continued along the trail it was relatively quiet. Just before dinner we waited by the river-viewing area checking the trees opposite for Malaysian Eared Nightjars and were

rewarded with sightings of three out across the trees – looking like large model aircraft. Of equal note was the roosting flock of over 500 Blue-throated Bee-eaters that seemed to arrive from all quarters to roost in the trees on the opposite bank – a fine sight indeed!

#### Saturday 4 March

Another hot and sunny day and sadly our last in Malaysia. We had almost the whole morning at the camp and spent two hours or so trying get a few last new species or vies of heard-only birds. Two Black-bellied Malkohas were at the camp, but better here were at least three Great Slaty Woodpeckers and two Buff-rumped Woodpeckers – a little later in the lodge grounds two Grey-and-buff Woodpeckers showed at close range. A female Rufous-winged Philentoma and a fine male Oriental Paradise Flycatcher offered our best views of this species; a pair of Lesser Cuckooshrikes and a Green lora actively fed about a tree and we also found our only Crow-billed Drongo of the tour. A busy spell concluded with a fine Black-throated Babbler and both Sootycapped and Scaly-crowned Babblers and a streaky Purple-naped Sunbird.

Some chose to return to their rooms early to finalise packing and freshen up the journey back to KL, while others continued round the walkways in the hope of one final new bird. Though this did not materialise we got good views of Abbott's Babbler and Yellow-bellied Bulbul, before we too returned and prepared to depart. Taking our final lunch at Taman Negara was nice, but we left soon after, crossing the river to be met by Vincent ands Ali, packing our bags and settling for the drive. We made a couple of rest stops and one brief walk at Bukit Tinggi, where the hirundines included more chunky Rufous-bellied Swallows and the swifts our first and only Asian Palm Swifts. A Yellow-bellied Prinia showed well as did an Asian Brown Flycatcher, but we had a plane to meet and so moved on, but not before dinner at a very fine local ('Lee-special') restaurant – delicious. We arrived early evening, checked in and then did the checklist in the lounge, eventually boarding the plane and departing in the first few minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup>.

#### Sunday 5 March

The arrival Heathrow was smooth and early. With relatively prompt baggage collection we said our farewells and went our separate ways.

Many thanks to you all for your great company and humour. I hope to see you again on another Limosa tour. Take care!

Brian Small

# ANNOTATED LIST OF THE BIRD SPECIES RECORDED (n=287)

#### Malaysian Partridge Arborophila campbelli

Having heard a group along the Telekom Loop it was great to see four at close range near Richmond Cottage on 26/2

#### Red Junglefowl Gallus gallus

Seen and heard on three dates

#### Crested Fireback Lophura ignita

This very fine pheasant was seen along one of the trails at TN on 01/3 – a single male and two females

## Malayan Peacock-pheasant Polyplectron malacense - H

We got close to this species along the Bumbun Blau trail on 03/3, but try as we might only Lee managed to see it before it disappeared into the trees

#### Great Argus Argusianus argus

One habituated bird at TN was seen every day, but we heard one on 03/3

#### Painted Stork Mycteria leucocephala

Five we seen on a lake at Shah Alam, 22/2

## Lesser Adjutant Leptoptilos javanicus

Five flew above the mangroves at KS, 24/2

# Cinnamon Bittern Ixobrychus cinnamomeus

A pair was found close to the road in the paddies north of KS, 22/2

## Black-crowned Night Heron Nycticorax nycticorax

Several seen on 24/2 at KS, one well by the restaurant along the river

## Striated Heron Butorides striata javanica

Noted on four dates at the beginning and end of the tour – KS and TN

## Chinese Pond Heron Ardeola bacchus

One seen en route by Martin, 22/2

#### Eastern Cattle Egret Bubulcus coromandus

Seen on two dates near KL and the coast - many at KS paddyfields, 23/2

#### Grey Heron Ardea cinerea

Seen on five dates, most numerous near the coast, with many on the river as we had lunch, 24/2

#### Purple Heron Ardea purpurea

Seen on the coast at KS and at Lanchang wetland, 28/2

#### Great Egret Ardea alba

Very numerous near KL, SA and KS

## Intermediate Egret Egretta intermedia

Several at KS on 22/2 and 23/2

## Little Egret Egretta garzetta

Numerous in the lowlands and at Lanchang

## Black-winged Kite Elanus Caeruleus vociferous

Seen well at KS pddies, where one hovered by the road on 23/2 - the eastern form has darker secondaries

## Crested Honey Buzzard Pernis ptilorhynchus

Noted on three dates in low numbers, with three at Krau on 28/2. May well be split into at least three species

#### Crested Serpent Eagle Spilornis cheela

Seen or heard on just three dates

## Changeable Hawk-eagle Spizaetus limnaeetus

Singles seen on three dates – 23/3 at the Botanical Gardens being the best

## Blyth's Hawk-eagle Nisaetus alboniger

Just one seen perched along the New Gap Road, 27/2

## Black Eagle Ictinaetus malaiensis

Three seen at Jeriam waterfall, 26/2

#### Crested Goshawk Accipiter trivirgatus

A displaying bird at Lanchang was seen well as it flared it undertail coverts

#### Brahminy Kite Haliastur Indus

Good numbers over Kuala Selangor on 23/2 and 24/2

## White-bellied Sea Eagle Heliaeetus leucogaster

One flew across the tree tops at the Botanical Gardens, Shah Alam, 23/2, but disappeared before all the group could see it

## Lesser Fish Eagle Ichthyophaga humilis

Two along the Tahan River on 02/3

# White-breasted Waterhen Amaurornis phoenicurus

Twos seen at a Shah Alam park, 23/2 and at Lanchang 28/2

# Red-wattled Lapwing Vanellus indicus

A single bird noted en route to Shah Alam from the airport, 22/2

#### Common Sandpiper Actitis hypoleucos

Up to three at the mangroves, KS, 23/2

## Whiskered Tern Chlidonias hybrid

A single small flock by the road bridge at KS, 24/2

## Rock Dove Columba livia

Many feral birds seen on four dates near large towns and cities

## Spotted Dove Streptopelia chinensis

Similar distribution to Feral Pigeons, with many on roadside fences

#### Little Cuckoo-dove Macropygia ruficeps

Seen on three dates at FH, with good views in the pines by the hotel

#### Common Emerald Dove Chalcophaps indica

Singles seen at TN on two dates: one at Bumbun Tahan by Richard, 02/2, and another crossed the river 03/3

#### Zebra Dove Geopelia striata

Three dates and low numbers in lowland areas

## Little Green Pigeon Treron olax

Found in the fruiting tree at the Krau restaurant, 28/2, then up to seven at TN

## Pink-necked Green Pigeon Treron vernans

First seen in Shah Alam, 23/2, then on two subsequent dates – a smart pigeon

# Thick-billed Green Pigeon Treron curvirostra

Noted in low numbers near Krau and at TN – their numbers depend on the abundance of fruiting trees, which were low this year

#### Large Green Pigeon Treron capellei

Two along Lombok Simpon, 01/3, were good to see as they are scarce

# Yellow-vented Green Pigeon Treron seimundi

Seen and heard at Fraser's Hill, where a small flock was found distantly in a fruiting tree, 27/2

## Mountain Imperial Pigeon Ducula badia

Just one at Lanchang, 28/2

#### Greater Coucal Centropus sinensis

Seen and heard on five dates at the end of the tour, with two perched by the river at TN, 02/3 the best views

#### Raffles's Malkoha Rhinortha chlorophaea

This smart malkoha was seen well at Krau and TN on five dates, first at Krau on 01/3

## Red-billed Malkoha Zanclostomus javanicus

Only seen as we ascended Fraser's Hill on 24/2

#### Chestnut-breasted Malkoha Phaenicophaeus curvirostris

Noted on three dates at TN, with good views about the chalets

## Chestnut-bellied Malkoha Phaenicophaeus sumatranus

One along the canopy trail at TN, 01/3

# Black-bellied Malkoha Phaenicophaeus diardi

Seen on three dates, the first were four above the chalets at TN on 01/3

# Green-billed Malkoha Phaenicophaeus tristis

Noted on three dates; at KS – at the mangrove entrance – on 24/2, along Telekom Loop and Old Gap Road

#### Asian Koel Eudvnamvs scolopacea

Seen and heard on eight dates, the first in the evening at Shah Alam, 22/2

## Little Bronze Cuckoo Chrysococcyx minutillus peninsularis

One seen well and others heard at KS mangroves, 24/2

## Plaintive Cuckoo Cacomantis merulinus

Singles noted at Lanchang - calling on 27/2, and at TN on 04/3

## Square-tailed Drongo-cuckoo Surniculus lugubris

One was found in the gloom along OGR, 27/3 and four at TN on 02/3

#### Dark Hawk-cuckoo Hierococcyx bocki

One along Telekom Loop, 25/2 and again the next day – a recent split

## Malaysian Hawk-cuckoo Hierococcyx fugax

Just one at KS mangroves, 24/2

#### Reddish Scops Owl Otus rufescens - H

Heard near our chalets at TN on two dates

## Buffy Fish Owl Ketupa ketupu

One was found at the hotel at KS on the evening of 23/2 – two (an adult and youngster) were seen at midnight by the guides as they went out to photograph them...

# Collared Owlet Glaucidium brodiei

Seen and heard at FH on two dates - the single seen was at Jeriam Waterfall on 26/2

#### Blyth's Frogmouth Batrachomotomus affinis

Two heard at the campsite, 02/3, with one whiskered bird showing very well above the small crowd below

## Malaysian Eared Nightjar Lyncornis temminckii

Three glided above the trees from the TN river lookout on the evening on 03/3

## Grey Nightjar Caprimulgus jotaka

Two at the Army Camp, FH, in the drizzle late on 26/2

## Large-tailed Nightjar Caprimulgus macrurus - H

Three seen perched on the fence round our KS hotel in the evening of 23/2

#### Whiskered Treeswift Hemiprocne comate

Seen superbly well on seven dates, with those en route, 24/2 perched at eye level being the best

#### Glossy Swiftlet Collocalia esculenta

Huge numbers in the highlands at FH, with a nice breeding colony just beginning to nest-build along the Telekom Loop; also noted at Bukit Tinggi, 04/3

#### Germain's Swiftlet Aerodramus germaini

Nine dates and seen well in huge numbers near KS, passing through the Gap, 27/2, and at TN

# Silver-rumped Spinetail Rhaphidura leucopygialis

Several along New gap Road, but many seen at TN along the river, notably 02/3

#### Silver-backed Needletail Hirundapus cochinchinensis

Just one at TN lodge, 02/3

#### Brown-backed Needletail Hirundapus giganteus

One tight flock of 10 soared above the TN hotel, 01/3

#### Asian Palm Swift Cypsiurus balasiensis

A few at Bukit Tinggi, 04/3

#### Pacific Swift Apus pacificus

A superb swift and one that we saw well at FH as huge flocks sped through the Gap, 27/2, and many were at TN at the end of the tour

# House Swift Apus nipalensis

Seen locally on seven dates in good numbers, e.g. bridges near Selangor Dam

#### Red-naped Trogon Harpactes kasumba

Noted on three dates, with the first at FH, 24/2

#### Scarlet-rumped Trogon Harpactes duvaucelii

Heard at Krau, 28/2, but then thankfully seen along the Bumbun Blau trail, 03/3

#### Orange-breasted Trogon Harpactes oreskios

Seen and heard on two dates at FH, with the immature female seen along the Old Gap Road, 27/2

## Red-headed Trogon Harpactes erythrocephalus

Seen on three days at FH, with the first found by Lee as we drove up the OGR on 24/2

# Oriental Dollarbird Eurystomus orientalis

Four dates, 28/2-04/3, with the first views the best at Lanchang wetland on 28/2

## Rufous-collared Kingfisher Actenoides concretus

Sadly heard only at Bumbun Blau trail, 03/3

#### Banded Kingfisher Lacedo pulchella

Having heard one on 02/3 at TN resort we were pleased to see one on 03/3

# Stork-billed Kingfisher Pelargopsis capensis

A huge and vocal kingfisher, seen and heard on six dates, at KS and TN, with our first in mangroves, 24/2

## White-throated Kingfisher Halcyon smyrnensis

Common and widespread, often along the edge of roads with 27 counted along telegraph wires between Jerantut and Kuala Tahan, 28/2

#### Black-capped Kingfisher Halcyon pileata

Seen at the KS mangroves, 24/2, and along the Tahan River, 02/3

## Collared Kingfisher Todirhamphus chloris

As expected, only seen in the mangroves near the coast on 24/2. This species has recently been split into six species by IOC with "more to come"...

## Blue-banded Kingfisher Alcedo euryzona

One was found on our river trip on 02/3, when one flew ahead of the boats then away down river

## Blue-eared Kingfisher Alcedo meninting

Just one showed very well as it fished under a bank below our lunch stop at Krau, 28/2

## Common Kingfisher Alcedo atthis

One at TN along our river trip, 02/3

## Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher Ceyx [erithaca] rufidorsa

The rufous-backed bird we saw at Krau on 28/2 was very much admired; still treated as a variant of Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher by IOC – not even a subspecies – but we enjoyed it nevertheless

#### Blue-tailed Bee-eater Merops philippinus

Noted on three dates in relatively low numbers

# Blue-throated Bee-eater Merops viridis

Much more common than last year. First seen en route to Fraser's Hill, 24/3, but the large numbers at TN with 500+ roosting in trees by the river

## Rhinoceros Hornbill Buceros rhinoceros

First seen at KS, 23/2, where two flew into a tree across a water channel; three were seen along the NGR, 25/2, then heard only after that

# Great Hornbill Buceros bicornis

A single habituated bird at TN was joined by another on 04/3

# Helmeted Hornbill Rhinoplax vigil

Heard distantly near the resort on 01/3 by sadly not seen

#### Oriental Pied Hornbill Anthracoceros albirostris

Two noted at KS on 23/2, but much better views had at Lanchang on 28/2 and at TN over the next two days **Black Hornbill** *Anthracoceros malayanus* – H

Seen on four dates. One flew over the Krau lunch stoop, 28/2, with three at Lombok Simpon the next day.

# Wreathed Hornbill Rhyticeros undulates

Two flew over the NGR at Fraser's Hill, 25/2, with singles at TN, 01/3 and 02/3

#### Fire-tufted Barbet Psilopogon pyrolophus

With its distinctive voice, we found several of these on just two dates at FH, with the nest hole of a pair found on 26/2

#### Golden-whiskered Barbet Megalaima chrysopogon

A huge-billed barbet, first seen at Lanchang wetland, two 23/2, then two the same day in a fruiting tree at Krau lunch stop; also seen at TN on 03/3

# Red-throated Barbet Megalaima mystacophanos

Its odd, "off beat" call was often heard, but we saw two along NGR, 25/2

# Black-browed Barbet Megalaima oorti

Hard to pin down this year we found two in a distant fruiting tree along NGR, 25/2

#### Blue-eared Barbet Megalaima australis

Picked out on three days, the first at FH, 25/2 by the road, then also Krau, 28/2 and heard at TN

# Coppersmith Barbet Megalaima haemacephala

Seen and heard near the coast, with good views at the hotel and mangrove park entrance. Also seen at Lanchang, 28/2

#### Sooty Barbet Caloramphus hayii

Three wers een well at the botanical gardens, 23/2, then one along the NGR, 25/2, before our final views at Lanchang, 28/2

## Grey-and-buff Woodpecker Hemicircus concretus

One was at the campsite at TN, 01/3, with a pair showing very well at the lodge gardens, 04/3

## Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker Dendrocopos moluccensis

A single in mangroves, 24/2, by Roger but disappeared quickly and we were diverted by Mangrove Whistler

# White-bellied Woodpecker Dryocopus javensis

Heard calling along the Lubok Simpon trail on two dates, but sadly not seen

## Banded Woodpecker Chrysophlegma miniaceus

Superb views of one in the trees in the campsite, 03/3, and one the next day

## Chequer-throated Woodpecker Chrysophlegma mentalis

Two seen in the grounds of the hotel at TN< 01/3, and one along the river the next day in the clearing

#### Greater Yellownape Chrysophlegma flavinucha

One seen and heard at FH on two dates, 25/2 and 26/2, was quite possibly the same bird

#### Lesser Yellownape Picus chlorolophus

Three on 26/2 at FH included a single that showed well along the Telekom Loop

## Crimson-winged Woodpecker Picus puniceus

One along the river, 02/3, was again in the clearing when we got out the boats

## Laced Woodpecker Picus vittatus

Several seen in the mangroves at KS, 24/2

## Olive-backed Woodpecker Dinopium rafflesii

We got stunning views of one in the trees by the road at Krau Forest, 28/2

## Common Flameback Dinopium javanense

Seen only at KS park, by the hide on 24/2

#### Greater Flameback Chrysocolaptes guttacristatus

At least two came into the trees by the tree hide in the mangroves at KS, 24/2, offering comparison with Common Flameback

#### Bamboo Woodpecker Gecinulus viridis

Heard well in sevarl clumps of Bamboo at the Gap and along OGR, 27/2, but was seen by a leader only

# Maroon Woodpecker Blythipicus rubiginosus

After a brief view of one up OGR, 27/2, it was nice to see one well at the Lombok Simpon trail, TN, 01/3

## Orange-backed Woodpecker Reinwardtipicus validus

A bit of a misnomer – Orange-barred would be better – we got views at Krau and at TN on two consecutive dates, 28/2 and 01/3

## Rufous Woodpecker Macropternus brachyurus

One showed well in a bare tree at Lanchang wetlands, 28/2

#### Buff-rumped Woodpecker Meiglyptes tristis

Noted on three dates, with three along NGR, 25/2, the highest total; up to two seen at TN

## Great Slaty Woodpecker Mulleripicus pulverulentus

Three seen along Lombok Simpon at TN, 01/3, we then saw four on our last morning

## Black-thighed Falconet Microhierax fringillarius

Our first at the botanical gardens, Shah Alam 23/2, caught a huge beetle and then flew off to the nest hole; others een at TN, sometimes in the grounds of the hotel

#### Long-tailed Parakeet Psittacula longicauda

Two flew across the waterway at the paddies north of KS. 23/2

#### Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot Loriculus galgulus

Seen and heard at  $\overline{\text{TN}}$  on a few dates, but we had plenty (and great views) in the hotel grounds on our first morning's walk, 01/3

## Blue-rumped Parrot Psittinus cvanurus

Two picked out in flight at Lanchang, 28/2, but more seen in flight at the clearing on our river trip at TN, 02/3

## Green Broadbill Calyptomena viridis

As last year the campsite at TN did us proud with some ace views of three or four birds – both male and female - on 01/3

# Black-and-red Broadbill Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchos

The first at Lanchang, 28/2, was of a noisy pair that came into the bushes in front of us just as we parked up: we then saw two more here across the lake - our first (seen) broadbill and very much enjoyed. Then seen in low numbers each day at TN

## Long-tailed Broadbill Psarisomus dalhousiae

Heard only on our anticlockwise walk at the Telekom Loop, 26/2 – disappointing as they seemed relatively close, but did not respond to play-back

## Silver-breasted Broadbill Serilophus lunatus

# Also heard only – distantly at FH on 26/2 Banded Broadbill *Eurylaimus javanicus*

On the other hand, we had fantastic views of a pair at the clearing during our boat trip at TN, 02/3; performing well right in front of us we were able to savour the relatively subtle colours and turquoise-blue bill

## Black-and-yellow Broadbill Eurylaimus ochromalus

A slightly comical-looking species, our first were two above us as we checked out the fruiting tree at Krau - just after lunch - on 28/2; singles were then found at TN on two dates

## Garnet Pitta Erythropitta granatina

The stake-out at Krau was quiet this year, but luckily another spot at TN was occupied, so on 02/3 along just off the track a shy pair was found offering good views, but blink and you would miss them

#### Hooded Pitta Pitta sordida

We did not have to walk far or wait long at Shah Alam, 23/2, for a fine bird to come into one of the feeding stations at the botanical gardens – a great way to start to the tour; another was seen well at Krau Forest, 28/2, but somehow did not seem as bright or as colourful...

#### Blue-winged Pitta Pitta moluccensis

Calling frequently in the botanical gardens at Shah Alam, 23/2, we were very patient in the heat as we waited for one to tease us in the leaf litter as we pieced together views over a period of 40 minutes

## Golden-bellied Gerygone Sulphurea

Not quite as exciting, but seen along the raised walkway in the mangroves at KS, 23/2

## Bar-winged Flycatchershrike Hemipus picatus

Noted on five dates inexcitable, flycathing groups that move through the canopy and are gone: first seen on our drive up to FH on 24/2

## Black-winged Flycatchershrike Hemipus hirundinaceus

Three seen a bare tree at the clearing on our boat ride at TN, 02/3

#### Large Woodshrike Tephrodornis virgatus

Heard in the gloom and cloud along the Old Gap Road, FH, 27/2, but then two were thankfully seen on our first morning at TN, 01/3, along one of the raised walks

# Rufous-winged Philentoma Philentoma pyrhoptera

The male at Krau Forest, 28/2, was very fine with the wings looking as if they have been dipped in burnt sienna dye; a femal on our last morning near the camsite at TN, 04/2 was not as colourful, but good all the same

#### Common Iora Aegithina tiphia

Seen and heard initially at the hotel at KS, 23/2, but then at the KS mangroves the next day

#### Green Iora Aegithina viridissima

Recorded on three dates at TN, with our first elusive bird on 01/3, but then better views at the clearing on the boat ride, 02/3 and finally two on our last morning

# Large Cuckooshrike Coracina macei

Noted regularly in noisy pairs or even bigger groups at FH, notably about the village

#### Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike Coracina striata

A pair came above us in the rain at the campsite, TN, 01/3

## Lesser Cuckooshrike Coracina fimbriata

An active pair feeding in a tree near the campsite on our last morning showed well through the 'scope if you could get your eye to it before they moved...

## Pied Triller Lalage nigra

Seen in the mangroves at KS, 24/2

## Ashy Minivet Pericrocotus divaricatus

Seen on three dates; first in trees at the car park at the KS mangroves, 24/2; others seen at TN, 01/3 and 02/3

## Grey-chinned Minivet Pericrocotus solaris

A very smart bird and small parties were seen every day at FH

#### Scarlet Minivet Pericrocotus speciosus

Not as common as Grey-chinned, but we saw a few en route to FH, 24/2, at the Gap, 27/2, en route to TN, 28/2, and at TN, 02/3

# Mangrove Whistler Pachycephala cinerea

Just the one in the mangroves at KS, 24/2

## Tiger Shrike Lanius tigrinus

A barred first-winter along the road near FH, 24/2, say still for quite some time below us; another was found in the clearing at TN, 02/3

#### Brown Shrike Lanius cristatus

Regularly noted on six dates often along fence lines but seen nicely at FH near the hotel

#### White-bellied Erpornis Erpornis zantholeuca

Only seen at FH on three dates, most frequently as we dropped to slightly lower elevations down the New and Old Gap Roads; bright yellow-olive above with a small crest and pearly white below, these are nice to see

## Blyth's Shrike-babbler Pteruthius aeralatus

Another smart bird, again often picked out by its voice, finally saw two males at Telkom Loop om 26/2, having heard them the previous day

## Black-eared Shrike-babbler Pteruthius melanotis

An even smarter species, with its rich yellow underparts, wing bars and head pattern, we very much enjoyed these at FH on two dates

#### Dark-throated Oriole Oriolus xanthonotus

Only seen at TN: we saw a female in the tree in front of Tahan hide and two others at the campsite, 01/3; but then again the next day near the clearing on our boat trip

## Black-naped Oriole Oriolus chinensis

Seen and heard well in low elevation parks and woodlands on four dates, the first en route to and at Shah Alam. 22/3

## Crow-billed Drongo Dicrurus annectans

Finally one at TN on our last morning

#### Bronzed Drongo Dicrurus aeneus

Up to three seen at the Gap, perched in bamboo, 27/2

## Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo Dicrurus remifer

The common drongo in the higher elevations of FH, and seen on three dates

## Greater Racket-tailed Drongo Dicrurus paradiseus

Seen lower at the Gap 27/2 and on five dates at Krau and at TN

# White-throated Fantail Rhipidura albicollis

Seen well on several occasions on two days at FH – notably along Telekom Loop

## Malaysian Pied Fantail Rhipidura javanica

Seen only at KS Park on 23/2

## Black-naped Monarch Hypothymis azurea

Seen or heard on four dates at Krau and TN - the first a male at Krau, 28/2, but often elusive

## Oriental Paradise Flycatcher Terpsiphone affinis

Now split into three species, 'Asian Paradise Flycatcher', in old money, was seen on four dates – the first at Krau, but perhaps the best (an adult male) was the last near the campsite on 04/2

#### Crested Jay Platylophus galericulatus

Typically elusive and hard to get good views of, we had three cross the river in front of us on our boat ride, 02/3, but then two more along Bumbun Blau trail the next day

#### Black Magpie Platysmurus leucopterus

Four above the northernmost chalets on our first morning at TN, 01/3, were good to see

#### Common Green Magpie Cissa chinensis

Sadly just the one was seen in front of the hotel as we gathered for a walk, 26/2 – latecomers missed it...

#### House Crow Corvus splendens

Common in lowland areas, and seen on five dates with huge flocks gathering to roost by the raod at KS, 23/2

## Large-billed Crow Corvus macrorhynchos

Noted only on four dates in very low numbers

## Rail-babbler Eupetes macrocerus - H

A repeat performance to last year, despite getting within 10 metres of a bird at TN, we simply could not see it I n the leaf litter. We heard a number but still no joy at seeing them

#### Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher Culicicapa ceylonensis

Just one along NGR, FH, 25/2

#### Sultan Tit Melanochlora sultanea

It took a while for all to catch up with this smart species, though we saw them on five dates – four at FH and one at TN

#### Cinereous Tit Parus cinereus

Five at KS mangroves on 24/2 - the males with almost solidly black bellies not really shown in ield guides

#### Straw-headed Bulbul Pycnonotus zeylanicus

We were really pleased to catch up with this increasingly rare species near the end of our boat trip at TN, 02/3, showing well in bushes by the river – the last of our 22 species of bulbul!

#### Black-headed Bulbul Pycnonotus atriceps

Seen firstly at Lanchang, 28/2, we then saw them at TN on the next two dates

#### Black-crested Bulbul Pycnonotus flaviventris

Noted on three dates in low numbers, FH - always nice to see

## Scaly-breasted Bulbul Pycnonotus squamatus

A fabulous bulbul seen only at TN on two dates, the best at the clearing on the boat ride, 02/3

## Grey-bellied Bulbul Pycnonotus cyaniventris

Illustrations don't do this species justice - the bright olive upperparts and smoky grey underparts looked good; seen at FH on 24/2 but then better and more frequently at TN on two days

## Red-whiskered Bulbul Pycnonotus jocosus

One in the mangroves at KS – an introduced/escaped bird according to Lee

## Puff-backed Bulbul Pycnonotus eutilotus

Noted on two dates - at TN on 01/3 and 04/3

## Stripe-throated Bulbul Pycnonotus finlaysoni

Seen well, this is a nice species; noted on one date at FH and four at TN

# Yellow-vented Bulbul Pycnonotus goiavier

The common bulbul in all areas, but notably in lowland areas

# Olive-winged Bulbul Pycnonotus plumosus

Firstly noted at Shah Alam and then at Krau, 28/2 and TN campsite

## Cream-vented Bulbul Pycnonotus simplex

Seen regularly at TN on five dates

## Asian Red-eyed Bulbul Pycnonotus brunneus

Likewise, seen well at Krau and TN on five dates

## Spectacled Bulbul Pycnonotus erythropthalmos

Only seen on two dates at KS, 24/2, and at TN, 01/3

## Ochraceous Bulbul Alophoixus ochraceus

Crested and white-throated and seen only at Jeriam Waterfalls, 26/2

## Grey-cheeked Bulbul Alophoixus bres

Similar to the last species, seen at the feeding station at Krau, 28/2, then on three subsequent dates at TN

# Yellow-bellied Bulbul Alophoixus phaeocephalus

Only seen at Krau on the log at the feeding area, 28/2, then on our final walk at TN, 04/3

# Hairy-backed Bulbul Tricholestes criniger

Similarly seen fistly at Krau, 28/2, then on two dates at TN - quite oleaginous yellow below

#### Buff-vented Bulbul lole olivacea

Krau and Taman Negara again produced the goods

#### Mountain Bulbul Ixos mcclellandii

Quite active as it flicks about well-vegetated banks picking at small fruits, but only in the hills at FH

#### Streaked Bulbul Ixos malaccensis

Similar to Mountain, but streaked on throat and chest; only seen at Krau, 28/2, and TN, all days

#### Cinereous Bulbul Hemixos cinereus

Now treated as separate from Ashy Bulbul; seen on two dates at FH and just one at TN, 01/3

#### Barn Swallow Hirundo rustica

Seen daily in good numbers every day, but notably 100s passed through the Gap on 27/2, in wet and windy conditions with 100s of swifts and swiftlets

## Pacific Swallow Hirundo tahitica

Common and seen daily

## Rufous-bellied Swallow Cecropis badia

An endemic, seen at Selangor Dam, four on 24/2, and up to 10 at Tinggi on our drive back to KL

## Pygmy Wren-babbler Pnoepyga pusilla

The two that came into the roadside feeding station at FH, 26/2, where we were filmed by a TV crew as we watched them, were very sweet

#### Yellow-bellied Warbler Abroscopus superciliaris

Good views of at least six at the Gap, 27/2, as they bickered in noisy groups at close range

#### Mountain Tailorbird Phyllergates cucullatus

Another smart species and seen only on one date along the lower Telekom Loop at FH, 25/2

## Yellow-browed Warbler Phylloscopus inornatus

Low numbers seen and heard at FH on two days and two days at TN

## Eastern Crowned Warbler Phylloscopus coronatus

Small groups at FH and TN on four dates, but certainly not numerous

## Pale-legged Leaf Warbler Phylloscopus tenellipes

One was at the clearing on our boat trip at TN, 02/3

#### Chestnut-crowned Warbler Seicercus castaniceps

Seen brilliantly on the Telekom Loop, 26/2, but that was it!

#### Rufescent Prinia Prinia rufescens

One seen well at the Gap, 27/2, as it fed along the bank across the road

#### Yellow-bellied Prinia Prinia flaviventris

An inhabitant of grassy wetlands, we had brief views of two at KS, but the best were saved until last at Tinggi on our way back to KL, 04/3

## Common Tailorbird Orthotomus sutorius

Noted on four dates on low numbers firstly at Lanchang, 28/2

#### Dark-necked Tailorbird Orthotomus atrogularis

Seen only at FH on two dates, with good views at the Gap

## Ashy Tailorbird Orthotomus ruficeps

Recorded at KS mangroves, 24/2 and three at Krau, 28/2

# Large Scimitar Babbler Pomatorhinus hypoleucos

Two very elusive birds moved through the undergrowth at Telekom Loop, FH, 25/2, were best as they fed on the bank along the stream below us

## Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler Pomatorhinus montanus - H

Seen and heard on two days on FH, 24/2 and then our best views along OGR, 27/2

#### **Grey-throated Babbler Stachyris nigriceps**

One popped out as we waited for the Pygmy Wren-babblers at FH, 26/2

#### Chestnut-rumped Babbler Stachyris maculate

Only seen on 03/3 along Bumbun Blau trail at TN

#### Black-throated Babbler Stachyris nigricollis

Two at Krau, 28/2, but then singles at TN, 01/3 and 04/3

## Chestnut-winged Babbler Stachyris erythroptera

Several along the road at Krau Forest, 28/2, gave us good looks, then a pair nest building at TN the next day **Golden Babbler** *Stachyridopsis chrysaea* 

Fair numbers at FH on two dates, often in small groups with Mountain Fulvettas but quite elusive this year

# Pin-striped Tit-babbler Macronous gularis

Two near FH on 24/2 then several at the Gap and OGR on 27/2, with others in the hotel grounds at TN, 01/3

#### Fluffy-backed Tit-babbler Macronous ptilosus

Several at Krau at the feeding station, 28/2

#### Mountain Fulvetta Alcippe peracensis

Fraser's Hill produced many small groups on three dates

## Streaked Wren-babbler Napothera brevicaudata

One seen well on our first morning at the lower end of Jahan Lady Maxwell, FH, 25/2

#### Abbott's Babbler Malacocincla abbotti

Seen and heard in the mangroves at KS, 24/2, then seen each day at TN

## Short-tailed Babbler Malacocincla malaccensis

One showed really well as it circled us along the Bumbun Blau trail at TN, 03/3

# Moustached Babbler Malacopteron magnirostre

One was seen on our first morning's walk at TN, 01/3

# Sooty-capped Babbler Malacopteron affine

Noted for three days at TN in low numbers, often joining mixed babbler groups

# Scaly-crowned Babbler Malacopteron cinereum

Likewise, often joins mixed babbler flocks and we saw this at TN on two dates, 03-04/3

# Rufous-crowned Babbler Malacopteron magnum

Three seen at TN on 03/3 – along the Bumbun Blau trail

#### Ferruginous Babbler Trichostoma bicolor

Seen on two dates: the first was a brief visit to the Krau feeding station, 28/2, then one was along the Bumbun Blau trail, 03/4

# Buff-breasted Babbler Pellorneum tickelli

Noted on just one day at FH, but with great views at a small roadside feeding area, 25/2

## Black-capped Babbler Pellorneum capistratum

Seen and heard on 03/3 at TN

# Chestnut-capped Laughingthrush Garrulax mitratus

A showy stunner and with lots of character, and seen easily at FH on three dates

#### Black Laughingthrush Garrulax lugubris

One of the highlights of a very wet day on FH, 27/2, when one came into view in roadside bamboo at the Gap

#### Malayan Laughingthrush Trochalopteron peninsulae

We had begun to worry when we hadn't seen this as easily as we had hoped, but we were relieved when we had cracking views of two at the partridge feeding area at FH, 26/2 – though in fact I think Martin had seen one near the hotel the previous day

## Blue-winged Minla Minla cyanouroptera

A rather plain species with a surprised expression and seen on two days at FH

#### Silver-eared Mesia Leiothrix argentauris

Fairly common on FH, but a real stunner and seen on three dates, most notably at the hotel

#### Long-tailed Sibia Heterophasia picaoides

Seen daily at FH, often on good-sized groups

# Oriental White-eye Zosterops palpebrosus

Seen in the mangroves at KS and at TN, but never in large numbers

## Everett's White-eye Zosterops everetti

Seen on three days at FH, 20/2, in mobile flocks with good views at Jeriam Waterfalls

## Asian Fairy-bluebird Irena puella

Three seen at FH, 24/2, but many at the fruiting tree at Krau, 28/2, and about TN over the next four days

#### Velvet-fronted Nuthatch Sitta frontalis

A single bird appeared on moss-covered branches along OGR, FH, 27/2

## Blue Nuthatch Sitta azurea

Much desired and it was good to see two along Jahan Lady Maxwell, FH, 25/2, with another later along Telekom loop the same day

#### Daurian Starling Agropsar sturninus

Also known as 'Purple-backed Starling', we had views of one at Shah Alam botanical gardens, 23/2

#### Asian Glossy Starling Aplonis panayensis

Found near the coast, with good views near the Chinese restaurant at KS, then also at Bentong and Jerantut

# Common Hill Myna Gracula religiosa

One at the botanical gardens, 23/2 then two at Lanchang, 28/2

## Javan Myna Acridotheres javanicus

Common away from FH

## Common Myna Acridotheres tristis

No longer common having been ousted by the introduced Javan moving up from the south, and seen in small numbers by the road and at KL airport and at Bentong/Lanchang, 28/2

#### Siberian Thrush Geokichla sibirica

A superb male was seen on the road as we approached the Telekom Loop, 26/2, causing excitement amongst the photographers; a female was seen further round the loop the same day

## Oriental Magpie-robin Copsychus saularis

Seen daily

## White-rumped Shama Copsychus malabaricus

The lovely song was heard on several dates, but we had our initial, cracking views at Krau Forest at the feeding station, 28/2, then others at TN the next day

## Asian Brown Flycatcher Muscicapa dauurica

Noted on eight days, with numbers increasing as the tour went on the weather finally improved

# Rufous-browed Flycatcher Anthipes solitaris

Another lovely small flycatcher seen and heard at FH on two days – the first on Telekom Loop, 25/2, but even better views at a small roadside feeding area near the hotel

## Hill Blue Flycatcher Cyornis banyumas

A pair was seen at the Gap in the rain on 27/2

## Tickell's Blue Flycatcher Cyornis tickelliae

Only on two dates at TN, with a male seen and heard by the river from the boats, 02/3

## Mangrove Blue Flycatcher Cyornis rufigastra

We worked hard to find this species in the mangroves at KS on 24/2, and our efforts were rewarded when a male came out above us

#### Large Niltava Niltava grandis

Our first morning at FH produced our only vies of the trip – a pair along Jahan Lady Maxwell, 25/2

#### Verditer Flycatcher Eumyias thalassinus

Seen on three days at FH, with the first near the Gap, 24/2

## Lesser Shortwing Brachypteryx leucophrys

Two dates at FH produced two birds seen and heard, but we had to work hard

#### Chestnut-naped Forktail Enicurus ruficapillus

One of the highlights of the trip, on the wet day at FH, 27/2, we made a special drive down to the small Sungai Gumut waterfall and as soon as we got out of the buses there was one on the ground. Sadly it all too quickly f lew up the waterfall and disappeared into the trees

#### Slaty-backed Forktail Enicurus schistaceus

One at the Jeriam Waterfall was seen well on 26/2

## Malayan Whistling Thrush Myophonus robinsoni

An increasingly special bird, we had relatively good views at FH on our first morning, 25/2

#### Mugimaki Flycatcher Ficedula mugimaki

Seen on four days throughout the tour, with our first four on FH, 25/2

## Little Pied Flycatcher Ficedula westermanni

Only seen on one day, with a single male at the hotel then a pair along Telekom Loop, 25/2

## Pygmy Flycatcher Muscicapella hodgsoni

A male at the hotel, 26/2

## Greater Green Leafbird Chloropsis sonnerati

Seen on the final five days, with the first at Krau in the fruiting tree

## Lesser Green Leafbird Chloropsis cyanopogon

Seen in lower numbers than Greater at TN on three days, 01-03/3

# Blue-winged Leafbird Chloropsis cochinchinensis

Seen on three days, the first four as we dropped down New Gap Road, 25/2, then on 27/2 and 02/3 at TN

## Orange-bellied Leafbird Chloropsis hardwickii

Seen on three days at FH, but it was on 26/2 near Richmond Cottage that we had our best views

#### Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker Prionochilus maculatus

One at the Sungai Gumut waterfall, 27/2, then another two at TN, 01/3

#### Crimson-breasted Flowerpecker Prionochilus percussus

A male and female at Krau, 28/2

#### Thick-billed Flowerpecker Dicaeum agile

Several feeding in the fruiting near our lunch stop at Krau, 28/2

#### Orange-bellied Flowerpecker Dicaeum trigonostigma

A lovely little species, especially the males, we had great views at several places, including the Gap, 27/2 and at TN resort gardens

# Fire-breasted Flowerpecker Dicaeum ignipectus

Seen on three dates at FH, notable along the Telekom Loop, 25-27/2

# Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker Dicaeum cruentatum

A male and female fed just above the track near the lake at Lanchang, 28/2

#### Ruby-cheeked Sunbird Chalcoparia singalensis

Two at KS, a pair, 24/2, than at TN on two dates

## Plain Sunbird Anthreptes simplex

One at Krau on 28/2, then low numbers in the flowering trees at the resort, TN

## Brown-throated Sunbird Anthreptes malacensis

The first was in a park at Shah Alam, 23/2, then sevarl at KS the next day; finally seen again at TN, 03/3

#### Purple-naped Sunbird Hypogramma hypogrammicum

Only seen at TN on our final morning, when a male came in just above the track near the campsite, 04/3

#### Olive-backed Sunbird Cinnyris jugularis

Only seen at Shah Alam and near the coast on 23-24/2

#### Crimson Sunbird Aethopyga siparaja

At least one male and a female at TN on three dates

#### Black-throated Sunbird Aethopyga saturate

A very smart sunbird and the only sunbird species we saw at FH on three dates

## Little Spiderhunter Arachnothera longirostra

We sworked hard to get views of this and finally saw them at TN on three dates about the flowering trees

## Thick-billed Spiderhunter Arachnothera crassirostris

Seen at the TN resort, 01/3

## Long-billed Spiderhunter Arachnothera robusta

Several near the lunch stop at Krau, 28/2, and others about the resort at TN the next day

## Spectacled Spiderhunter Arachnothera flavigaster

Just one at FH on 24/2

## Yellow-eared Spiderhunter Arachnothera chrysogenys

One at FH, 24/2, then at the Gap, 27/2, but seen commonly at TN on three dates

#### Grey-breasted Spiderhunter Arachnothera modesta

Only noted on three dates, with our first at the botanical gardens on 23/2

## Streaked Spiderhunter Arachnothera magna

Cracking views of several at FH on three dates

#### Eurasian Tree Sparrow Passer montanus

Common away from FH

#### Baya Weaver Ploceus philippinus

Seen at Shah Alam, where it was nesting, 23/2, and at Jerantut, where we watched several nest building, 28/2

## White-rumped Munia Lonchura striata

Several at the botanical gardens, Shah Alam, 23/2

## Scaly-breasted Munia Lonchura punctulata

Only seen at the service station, Jerantut, 28/2 and 04/3

#### White-headed Munia Lonchura maja

Six at the botanical gardens, Shah Alam on 23/2

# Grey Wagtail Motacilla cinerea

Seen at FH on one day, 24/2, then at TN along the river on 02/3

# Paddyfield Pipit Anthus rufulus

At least five at Shah Alam, 23/2

#### **MAMMALS**

Common Treeshrew Tupaia glis

Siamang Symphalangus syndactylus

Lar (White-handed) Gibbon Hylobates lar

Silvered Leaf-Monkey Presbytis cristata

White-thighed Leaf-Monkey Presbytis siamensis

Spectacled (Dusky) Leaf Monkey Trachypithecus obscurus

Long-tailed Macaque Macaca fascicularis

Southern Pig-tailed Macaque Macaca nemestrina

Black Giant Squirrel Ratufa bicolor

Prevost's Squirrel Callosciurus prevostii

Grey-bellied Squirrel Callosciurus caniceps

Pallas's Squirrel Callosciurus erythraeus

Himalayan Striped Squirrel Tamiops macclellandii

Low's Squirrel Sundasciurus Iowii

Slender Squirrel Sundasciurus tenuis

Asian Red-cheeked Squirrel Dremomys rufigenis

Plantain Squirrel Callosciurus notatus

Smooth-coated Otter Lutrogale perspicillata

Malayan Porcupine Hystrix brachyura

#### **BUTTERFLIES**

Rajah Brooke's Birdwing Trogonoptera brookiana

Common Birdwing Troides helena

Common Rose Pachliopta aristolochiae

Black-and-white Helen Papilio nephelus

Common Mormon Papilio polytes

Common Mime Papilio clytia

Common Bluebottle Graphium sarpedon

Tailed Jay Graphium agamemnon

Redbase Jezebel Delias pasithoe

Common Yellow Jezebel Delias baracasa

Striped Albatross Appias libythea

Large Tree Nymph Idea hypermnesta

Yellow Orange Tip Ixias pyrene

Orange Emigrant Catopsilla scylla

Malayan Grass Yellow Eurema nicevillei

Plain Tiger Danaus chrysippus

White Tiger Danaus melanippus

Blue Glassy Tiger Idiopsis vulgaris

Striped Blue Crow Euploea mulciber

Great Crow Euploea phaenareta

Magpie Crow Euploea radamanthus Common Four-ring *Ypthima huebneri* Common Five-ring *Ypthima baldus* Malayan Lacewing Cethosia hypsea Common Yeoman Cirrochroa tyche Small Leopard Phalanta alcippe Common Sailer Neptis hylas Psyche Leptosia nina Malayan Viscount Tanaecia pelea Common Earl Tanaecia julii Great Egg-fly Hypolimnas bolina Chocolate Soldier Junonia iphita Common Hedge Blue Acytolepis puspa Dark Grass Blue Zixeeria karsandra Common Cerulean Jamides celeno Common Posy Drupadia ravindra Fulvous Pied Flat Pseudocoladenia dan

[An as yet unidentified large - 20cm wide - butterfly at TN - below]

