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Peninsular Malaysia

2nd – 5th November 2015

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Participant: Dylan Edwards



Mountain Scops Owl, Fraser's Hill

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This short tour was an extension to our scheduled Sulawesi and Halmahera tour. We visited a couple of sites near to Kuala Lumpur before heading to the cool climes of Fraser's Hill for the remainder of the three and a half days. We managed to tick all the Malay Peninsula endemics - Mountain Peacock Pheasant, Malaysian Partridge, Rufous-bellied Swallow, Malayan Laughingthrush and Malayan Whistling Thrush, as well as a number of Sundaic specialties such as Fire-tufted Barbet and Blue Nuthatch. Mammal highlights included Masked Palm Civet, Red-cheeked Squirrel and extended views of a family party of Siamangs on our final morning.

Our first morning saw us pre-dawn at a hill station not far from Kuala Lumpur, where our first bird was a confiding Blyth's Frogmouth which sat at just above eye level gazing at us. A short climb from here gave us stunning views of the sun glowing orange above a sea of clouds pocked with mountaintop islands, before we were treated to wonderful close range views of Siberian Blue Robin and Siberian Thrush and then - the stars of the show - two male Mountain Peacock Pheasants! Once these had departed as quietly as they had arrived, we decided to head for our next destination. However, 'one last scan' before getting into our vehicle revealed a small passage of swifts overhead, which included several Pacific Swifts, one White-throated and

one Silver-backed Needletail. Our next stop was the casino-infested Genting Highlands, where, despite the density of development, we found a good selection of upper montane species, including Malayan Laughingthrush, Streaked Wren Babbler, Mountain Leaf Warbler and Chestnut-tailed Minla. Arriving at Fraser's Hill in late afternoon, we were enveloped in thick cloud and fine rain, but still managed to add Red-headed Trogon, Fire-tufted and Black-browed Barbets, and a wet and miserable-looking Yellow-vented Pigeon, before worsening weather put an end to plans to go out for owls after dark. All was not lost however, as we enjoyed the luxury of watching a Masked Palm Civet from the comfort of our accommodation living room.



Siberian Thrush and Mountain Peacock Pheasant



Malayan Whistling Thrush and Malayan Laughingthrush

The following morning we started at a likely spot for Malayan Whistling Thrush, and when that failed to materialize, began some roadside birding. We saw numbers of Fire-tufted and Black-browed Barbets, and Orange-bellied Leafbirds, but little else of note. Moving to forest trails, we added Golden Babbler and Chestnut-crowned Warbler, but not much else before lunch, when we saw Rufous-bellied Eagle and Japanese Sparrowhawk high overhead. In the afternoon we tried more roadside birding. In general things continued to be very quiet, but with persistence we picked up Red-bearded Bee-eater, and then one of the big targets - Blue Nuthatch - three of them in a bird wave which also included a vagrant *Phylloscopus* warbler of the Greenish/Two-barred complex. Back at our accommodation, we enjoyed a flock of Long-tailed Broadbills, counting 21 birds as they left the tree, and a Red-cheeked Squirrel on the bird table! We took advantage of the clear weather after dinner to go looking for Mountain Scops Owl, and were rewarded with prolonged views of a bird at close range.

Our next morning was a modified repeat of the first, and this time we had close up views of a Malayan Whistling Thrush as it hopped along the roadside, unconcerned by our presence. From here we headed down the 'New road' to the Gap, flushing a number of Slaty-backed Forktails and a single Chestnut-naped Forktail off the road, as well as a Blue Whistling Thrush lower down. The Gap was initially lively - we had

good views of Black Laughingthrush and Collared Babbler within minutes of parking the car. From then on though, it was hard work. We had brief flight views of Bamboo Woodpecker, and a 'heard only' Marbled Wren Babbler which refused to show itself. A male Orange-breasted Trogon was a welcome sight, a number of Yellow-bellied Warblers flitted around in the bamboo clumps, and two migrant Cook's Swifts gave brief views as they zoomed overhead. A Red-billed Malkoha was the only other bird to relieve the almost unrelenting tedium of the mid-morning. Back at the top after lunch, we started off with great views of a male Lesser Shortwing, a pair of animated eyebrows on legs! A Brown-backed Needletail completed our 'needletail hat-trick' for the trip, and a couple of Asian House Martins joined the Rufous-bellied Swallows hawking overhead. In late afternoon we found a stretch of open road with Malaysian Partridges duetting nearby. A patient wait was rewarded with great views of the birds as they appeared on the roadside verge before rocketing up the slope above the road. A briefly calling Rusty-naped Pitta would not be coaxed into view, but a Rufous-browed Flycatcher was some reward for our scrutiny of the forest floor below our vantage point. Evening mist and rain once again curtailed our nocturnal activities, though we did enjoy a reprise of the Masked Palm Civet in the garden.

We elected to spend our final morning walking up the 'Old road' from the Gap. Once again, bird activity was rather poor, but there were some quality moments to make up for the lack of quantity. First of these was the unexpected sight of a pair of White-crowned Hornbills in some roadside trees. Later on, we also enjoyed close views of two Great Hornbills. A Tiger Shrike was a much-wanted species which Dylan had missed earlier, so was greatly appreciated. Grey-breasted Spiderhunter was another species in this category and three Hill Blue Flycatchers were also noteworthy. One of the best moments of the day belonged not to a bird but a mammal - or rather a group of them - several Siamang, including a small infant, watched feeding at close range, apparently aware of us but strangely unconcerned by our presence. This was certainly a memorable way to finish off this short extension.

Bird-of-the-tour

1. Mountain Scops Owl
2. Malaysian Partridge
3. Mountain Peacock Pheasant
4. Blue Nuthatch
5. Blyth's Frogmouth

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More Tour Photos



Orange-bellied Leafbird and Orange-breasted Trogon



Black-eared Shrike Babbler and Black-throated Sunbird



Fire-tufted Barbet and Red-bearded Bee-eater



Mountain Leaf Warbler and Great Hornbill



Siamang and Dusky Leaf Monkey

Systematic List

GALLIFORMES: Phasianidae

Malaysian Partridge	<i>Arborophila campbelli</i>	e
Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>	
Mountain Peacock Pheasant	<i>Polyplectron inopinatum</i>	e

COLUMBIFORMES: Columbidae

Little Cuckoo Dove	<i>Macropygia ruficeps malayana</i>	
Asian Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica indica</i>	
Yellow-vented Green Pigeon	<i>Treron seimundi</i>	
Mountain Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula badia</i>	

CUCULIFORMES: Cuculidae

Bock's Hawk Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus [sparverioides] bocki</i>	heard only
Red-billed Malkoha	<i>Zanlostomus javanicus</i>	
Black-bellied Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus diardi</i>	

APODIFORMES: Apodidae

Glossy Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia esculenta cyanoptila</i>	
White-throated Needletail	<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	
Silver-backed Needletail	<i>Hirundapus cochinchinensis</i>	
Brown-backed Needletail	<i>Hirundapus giganteus</i>	
Pacific Swift	<i>Apus pacificus</i>	
Cook's Swift	<i>Apus cooki</i>	
House Swift	<i>Apus [affinis] nipalensis</i>	

CAPRIMULGIFORMES: Podargidae

Blyth's Frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus affinis affinis</i>	
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ACCIPITRIFORMES: Accipitridae

Oriental Honeybuzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus torquatus</i>	
Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>	
Japanese Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter virgatus</i>	
Rufous-bellied Eagle	<i>Lophotriorchis kienerii</i>	
Blyth's Hawk Eagle	<i>Nisaetus alboniger</i>	

STRIGIFORMES: Strigidae

Mountain Scops Owl	<i>Otus spilocephalus vulpes</i>	
Collared Owlet	<i>Glaucidium brodiei brodiei</i>	heard only

TROGONIFORMES: Trogonidae

Orange-breasted Trogon	<i>Harpactes oreskios uniformis</i>	
Red-headed Trogon	<i>Harpactes erythrocephalus chaseni</i>	

BUCEROTIFORMES: Bucerotidae

Rhinoceros Hornbill	<i>Buceros rhinoceros rhinoceros</i>	heard only
Great Hornbill	<i>Buceros bicornis</i>	
Helmeted Hornbill	<i>Rhinoplax vigil</i>	heard only
White-crowned Hornbill	<i>Berenicornis comatus</i>	

CORACIIFORMES: Meropidae

Red-bearded Bee-eater	<i>Nyctyornis amictus</i>	
Blue-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops viridis viridis</i>	

PICIFORMES: Megalaimidae

Fire-tufted Barbet	<i>Psilopogon pyrolophus</i>	
Golden-throated Barbet	<i>Psilopogon franklinii ramsayi</i>	
Gold-whiskered Barbet	<i>Psilopogon chrysopogon laeta</i>	heard only
Black-browed Barbet	<i>Psilopogon oorti</i>	

PICIFORMES: Picidae

Lesser Yellownappe	<i>Picus chlorolophus chlorolophus</i>	
Checker-throated Woodpecker	<i>Picus mentalis humii</i>	heard only
Greater Yellownappe	<i>Picus flavinucha wrayi</i>	
Bamboo Woodpecker	<i>Gecinulus viridis viridis</i>	
Bay Woodpecker	<i>Blythipicus pyrrhotis</i>	heard only
Buff-rumped Woodpecker	<i>Meiglyptes tristis grammithorax</i>	heard only

PASSERIFORMES: Eurylaimidae

Long-tailed Broadbill	<i>Psarisomus dalhousiae</i>	
Black-and-yellow Broadbill	<i>Eurylaimus ochromalus</i>	
Dusky Broadbill	<i>Corydon sumatranus</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Pittidae

Rusty-naped Pitta	<i>Hydrornis oatesi</i>	heard only
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PASSERIFORMES: Vireonidae

Erpornis	<i>Erpornis zantholeuca</i>	
Blyth's Shrike Babbler	<i>Pteruthius faeralatus cameroni</i>	
Black-eared Shrike Babbler	<i>Pteruthius melanotis</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Oriolidae

Black-and-crimson Oriole	<i>Oriolus cruentus</i>	
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PASSERIFORMES: Campephagidae

Malaysian Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina [javensis] larutensis</i>	
Grey-chinned Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus solaris montanus</i>	
Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus speciosus xanthogaster</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Vangidae

Large Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis virgatus</i>	
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PASSERIFORMES: Rhipiduridae

White-throated Fantail	<i>Rhipidura albicollis</i>	
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PASSERIFORMES: Dicruridae

Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>	
Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus remifer</i>	
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Laniidae

Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>	
Tiger Shrike	<i>Lanius tigrinus</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Corvidae

Common Green Magpie	<i>Cissa chinensis</i>	
Southern Jungle Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Stenostiridae

Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	heard only
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PASSERIFORMES: Hirundinidae

Pacific Swallow	<i>Hirundo tahitica</i>	
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica gutturalis/mandschurica</i>	
Rufous-bellied Swallow	<i>Cecropis badia</i>	
Asian House Martin	<i>Delichon dasypus</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Paridae

Sultan Tit	<i>Melanochlora sultanea</i>	
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PASSERIFORMES: Pycnonotidae

Black-crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus melanicterus</i>	
Stripe-throated Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus finlaysoni</i>	
Ochraceous Bulbul	<i>Alophoixus ochraceus sordidus</i>	
Mountain Bulbul	<i>Ixos mccllellandii</i>	
Cinereous Bulbul	<i>Hemixos cinereus</i>	heard only

PASSERIFORMES: Timaliidae

Golden Babbler	<i>Stachyridopsis chrysaea</i>	
Grey-throated Babbler	<i>Stachyris nigriceps</i>	
Pin-striped Tit Babbler	<i>Macronus gularis</i>	
Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler	<i>Pomatorhinus montanus occidentalis</i>	heard only

PASSERIFORMES: Pellorneidae

Buff-breasted Babbler	<i>Pellorneum tickelli</i>	
Marbled Wren Babbler	<i>Napothera marmorata</i>	heard only
Streaked Wren Babbler	<i>Napothera brevicaudata leucosticta</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Leiothrichidae

Mountain Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe peracensis peracensis</i>	
Black Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax lugubris</i>	
Spectacled Laughingthrush	<i>Rhinocichla mitrata</i>	
Malayan Laughingthrush	<i>Trohalopteron peninsulae</i>	
Silver-eared Mesia	<i>Leiothrix argentauris</i>	
Collared Babbler	<i>Gampsorhynchus torquatus</i>	
Blue-winged Siva	<i>Actinodura cyanouroptera</i>	
Chestnut-tailed Minla	<i>Minla strigula</i>	
Long-tailed Sibia	<i>Heterophasia picaoides</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Zosteropidae

Everett's White-eye	<i>Zosterops everetti tahanensis</i>	
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PASSERIFORMES: Phylloscopidae

Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	
	<i>Seicercus plumbeitarsus/trochiloides</i>	
	<i>obscuratus</i>	
Two-barred/Greenish Warbler	<i>Seicercus coronatus</i>	
Eastern Crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus trivirgatus parvirostris</i>	
Mountain Leaf Warbler	<i>Seicercus castaniceps</i>	
Chestnut-crowned Warbler		

PASSERIFORMES: Cettidae

Yellow-bellied Warbler	<i>Abroscopus superciliaris sakaorum</i>	
Mountain Tailorbird	<i>Phyllergates cucullatus malayanus</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Pnoepygidae

Pygmy Cupwing	<i>Pnoepyga pusilla</i>	heard only
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PASSERIFORMES: Cisticolidae

Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius maculicollis</i>	
Dark-necked Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus atrogularis atrogularis</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Sittidae

Blue Nuthatch	<i>Sitta azurea</i>	
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PASSERIFORMES: Sturnidae

Javan Myna	<i>Acridotheres javanensis</i>	
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Muscicapidae

Oriental Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis musicus</i>
White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>
Hill Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis banyumas coerulifrons</i>
Rufous-browed Flycatcher	<i>Anthipes solitarius</i>
Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>
Large Niltava	<i>Niltava grandis</i>
Siberian Blue Robin	<i>Larvivora cyane</i>
Lesser Shortwing	<i>Brachypteryx leucophrys wrayi</i>
Chestnut-naped Forktail	<i>Enicurus ruficapillus</i>
Slaty-backed Forktail	<i>Enicurus schistaceus</i>
Malayan Whistling Thrush	<i>Myophonus robinsoni</i>
Blue Whistling Thrush	<i>Myophonus caeruleus</i>
Little Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula westermanni</i>

PASSERIFORMES: Chloropseidae

Orange-bellied Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis hardwickii</i>
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PASSERIFORMES: Irenidae

Asian Fairy-bluebird	<i>Irena puella</i>
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PASSERIFORMES: Dicaeidae

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum ignipectus dolichorhynchum</i>
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PASSERIFORMES: Nectariniidae

Black-throated Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga saturata wrayi</i>	
Little Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera longirostra</i>	heard only
Long-billed Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera robusta</i>	heard only
Purple-naped Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera hypogrammicum</i>	heard only
Grey-breasted Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera modesta</i>	
Streaked Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera magna</i>	

PASSERIFORMES: Motacillidae

Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>
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MAMMALS

Common Treeshrew	<i>Tupaia glis longipes</i>
White-thighed Langur	<i>Presbytis siamensis</i>
Dusky Langur	<i>Presbytis obscurus</i>
Long-tailed Macaque	<i>Macaca fascicularis</i>
Sunda Pig-tailed Macaque	<i>Macca nemestrina</i>
Siamang	<i>Symphalangus syndactylus</i>
White-handed Gibbon	<i>Hylobates lar</i>
Masked Palm Civet	<i>Paguma larvata</i>
Grey-bellied Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus caniceps concolor</i>
Pallas's Squirrel	<i>Callosciurus erythraeus erythraeus</i>
Western Striped Squirrel	<i>Tamiops mcclllandii</i>
Low's Squirrel	<i>Sundasciurus lowii</i>
Red-cheeked Squirrel	<i>Dremomys rufigenis</i>