

Birding Peninsular Malaysia, April 13-19 2015

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The noisy but beautiful Common Green Magpie, Fraser's Hill. Photo © Lim Kim Seng

Ian Halliday, an Australian birder wanted a week's birding in Peninsular Malaysia and so we made arrangements for seven days in the magnificent rainforests of the country, both in the humid lowlands and up in the misty mountains.

After an early morning start, we arrived at Fraser's Hill just after noon. The first thing we did was to have lunch in the town centre. As we ate, we saw our first montane birds as Javan Cuckooshrike, Long-tailed Sibia and Black-throated Sunbird moved around flowering bottle brush trees in the vicinity. Lunch done, we checked in our luggage at our hotel before exploring Telecoms Loop and the circular road around the golf course, ending at Jalan Lady Maxwell. The first place was quiet but we did see a nice Blyth's Hawk Eagle perched in a tree. At Jalan Lady Maxwell, we encountered more of the usual montane species,

adding the colourful Fire-tufted Barbet, the ubiquitous Chestnut-capped Laughingthrush and the mouse-like Mountain Fulvetta. We retired at 6 pm with 37 species in the bag.



The tiny Collared Owlet seen near the Gap Road, Fraser's Hill. Photo © Lim Kim Seng

On our second day, we descended to the Gap for some hill birding. The drive down the new road was memorable as we bumped into a Collared Owlet. It flew across our path and we managed to locate it for a few photographs before it flew off. We also had great views of a few Slaty-backed Forktails on the road. We arrived at the Gap just after 8 am and started walking up the Gap Road past the Lower Gates. The first kilometer was quiet but once past that we started seeing a good selection of birds including a noisy flock of Black Laughingthrushes and a pair of Orange-breasted Trogons. Shortly before 10 am, we descended the Gap Road and also explored the area around the now abandoned Gap Rest House, adding Rufous-bellied Swallow and Black-headed Bulbul.

At 11.30 am, we returned to Fraser's Hill and explored the usual places and added more species including the colourful Silver-eared Mesia, White-tailed Robin and Rufous-browed Flycatcher. At night, as we had our dinner, the heavens opened up and we wondered if this would pose problems the next day. We had done well, as we mustered a total tally of 73 species after birding the Gap and Fraser's Hill.

Day 3 started much the same as the previous day as we descended to the Gap once again. As in the previous day, the first kilometer of the hill was quiet but we enjoyed the climb. Highlights of the morning included Green-billed Malkoha, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, 3-5 Collared Babblers moving in the low bushes as well as 3-4 noisy Sultan Tits and some Black Laughingthrushes.

At noon, we were back at Fraser's Hill to explore all the usual spots with a calling Rusty-naped Pitta the highlight. We also found that some places were affected by tree falls caused by the previous night's rain.

We spent Day 4 exploring the Telecoms Loop and Bishop-Hemmant area, and then drove down to the Jeriau Falls to find a pair of Silver-breasted Broadbills and some noisy Sultan Tits. Rusty-naped Pittas called again at Bishop's Trail but we did not see them. At 11 am, we bid farewell to Fraser's Hill as we drove south to Kota Tinggi.



The striking Sultan Tit making a racket at Jeriau Falls, Fraser's Hill. Photo © Lim Kim Seng

Day 5 started early with breakfast at 5 am. We arrived at Panti by 6 am and as it was still dark, we listened for owls. We found none but were pleased to see both Large-tailed and Malaysian Eared Nightjars. As dawn broke, we explored the clearing at the 8 km mark and then headed back to the

forest for more birds to backdrop of singing Black-throated Babblers. Near the 7 km stream, we stopped to tick off Thick-billed Green Pigeons, Red-bearded Bee-eater, Red-crowned and Blue-eared Barbets and three hornbills in succession – Bushy-crested, Black and Rhinoceros – and 2 Grey-bellied Bulbuls. We also stopped at the 5 km stream where we saw a huge Smith's Giant Gecko, quite a lot of bulbuls and heard a Malayan banded Pitta. At 10.30 am, we left the spot and headed for the headquarters, exploring the tower trail only to be halted by rain. We decided to go for lunch.

We came back at 3.20 pm for our evening birding but it proved to be futile with no bird activity for almost an hour. At 4.30 pm, we stopped by the 5 km stream and camp-site and managed to see some activity, mostly leafbirds and bulbuls. We called it a day at 6.30 pm, with 83 species in the bag, our best yield of the trip!



The rarely seen Smith's Giant Gecko, a surprise find at Panti. Photo © Lim Kim Seng

Day 6 started almost at the same time as the previous day but we opted to wait for dawn at the 5 km stream instead. Once the sky brightened, we were greeted by the loud *kelp* calls of five White-bellied Woodpeckers and then took a long walk to the temple trail. This proved a masterstroke as we saw both

Red-naped and Scarlet-rumped Trogons to take our trogon tally to four, an Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher and a noisy Rufous-crowned Babbler. The rest of the morning was somewhat uneventful.

We came back for the evening and spent time birding the shrine area. Unfortunately, it proved to be rather quiet except for another encounter with a pair each of Red-naped and Scarlet-rumped Trogons.



A male Diard's Trogon staring back at us at Panti. Photo © Lim Kim Seng

Our final morning was spent looking for night birds, so we were in the forest by 4 am. We did not see or hear any owls but we saw 2 Malaysian Eared Nightjars. Once it got bright, we birded the 5 km stream and saw several Brown Barbets, a Crested Goshawk and a singing Straw-headed Bulbul. We drove on to the 7 and 8 km streams but found little of interest except for a Finsch's Bulbul and a calling Great Argus, so we stopped by at the shrine and managed to add a pair of Diard's Trogons, Chestnut-breasted Malkoha and Crimson-breasted Flowerpecker to our growing list. We also heard a distant Rail Babbler. At the headquarters, we saw four Black-and-yellow Broadbills and four Grey-bellied Bulbuls to end the day and week with 64 species. After lunch in Kota Tinggi, it was a routine drive back to Singapore.

Our list of birds for the week in Peninsular Malaysia's greatest rainforests yielded us a total of 201 species, including some really fantastic birds and a staggering 19 species of bulbuls, beautiful scenery as well as other wildlife, including six species of primates.

A Checklist of the Birds Recorded During the Peninsular Malaysia Birding Tour of April 2015 (IOC)

#	English Name	Scientific Name
1	Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>
2	Great Argus	<i>Argusianus argus</i>
3	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
4	Crested Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
5	Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>
6	Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>
7	Blyth's Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus alboniger</i>
8	Rufous-bellied Hawk-Eagle	<i>Lophotriorchis kienerii</i>
9	Black Eagle	<i>Ictinaetus malayensis</i>
10	Crested Goshawk	<i>Accipiter trivirgatus</i>
11	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>
12	Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>
13	Little Cuckoo-Dove	<i>Macropygia ruficeps</i>
14	Common Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>
15	Little Green Pigeon	<i>Treron olax</i>
16	Pink-necked Green Pigeon	<i>Treron vernans</i>
17	Thick-billed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron curvirostra</i>
18	Mountain Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula badia</i>
19	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>
20	Chestnut-breasted Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus curvirostris</i>
21	Chestnut-bellied Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus sumatranus</i>
22	Green-billed Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus tristis</i>
23	Violet Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus</i>
24	Banded Bay Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis sonneratii</i>
25	Plaintive Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>
26	Rusty-breasted Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis sepulcralis</i>
27	Square-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo	<i>Surniculus lugubris</i>
28	Dark Hawk-Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx bocki</i>
29	Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>
30	Sunda Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus lepidus</i>
31	Sunda Scops Owl	<i>Otus lempiji</i>
32	Collared Owlet	<i>Glaucidium brodiei</i>

33	Blyth's Frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus affinis</i>
34	Malaysian Eared Nightjar	<i>Lyncornis temminckii</i>
35	Grey Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus jotaka</i>
36	Large-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus macrurus</i>
37	Grey-rumped Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne longipennis</i>
38	Whiskered Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne comata</i>
39	Glossy Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia esculenta</i>
40	Silver-rumped Spinetail	<i>Rhaphidura leucopygialis</i>
41	Pacific Swift	<i>Apus pacificus</i>
42	House Swift	<i>Apus nipalensis</i>
43	Red-naped Trogon	<i>Harpactes kasumba</i>
44	Diard's Trogon	<i>Harpactes diardii</i>
45	Scarlet-rumped Trogon	<i>Harpactes duvaucelii</i>
46	Orange-breasted Trogon	<i>Harpactes oreskios</i>
47	Red-headed Trogon	<i>Harpactes erythrocephalus</i>
48	Banded Kingfisher	<i>Lacedo pulchella</i>
49	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
50	Blue-eared Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo meninting</i>
51	Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher	<i>Ceyx erithaca</i>
52	Red-bearded Bee-eater	<i>Nyctyornis amictus</i>
53	Blue-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops viridis</i>
54	Bushy-crested Hornbill	<i>Annorhinus galeritus</i>
55	Black Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros malayanus</i>
56	Rhinoceros Hornbill	<i>Buceros rhinoceros</i>
57	Wreathed Hornbill	<i>Rhyticeros undulatus</i>
58	Fire-tufted Barbet	<i>Psilopogon pyrolophus</i>
59	Golden-whiskered Barbet	<i>Megalaima chrysopogon</i>
60	Red-crowned Barbet	<i>Megalaima rafflesii</i>
61	Red-throated Barbet	<i>Megalaima mystacophanos</i>
62	Black-browed Barbet	<i>Megalaima oorti</i>
63	Blue-eared Barbet	<i>Megalaima australis</i>
64	Brown Barbet	<i>Caloramphus fuliginosus</i>
65	Grey-and-buff Woodpecker	<i>Hemicircus cocnretus</i>
66	White-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus javensis</i>
67	Banded Woodpecker	<i>Chrysophlegma miniaceum</i>
68	Checker-throated Woodpecker	<i>Chrysophlegma mentale</i>
69	Greater Yellownape	<i>Chrysophlegma miniaceum</i>
70	Crimson-winged Woodpecker	<i>Picus puniceus</i>
71	Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Micropternus brachyurus</i>
72	Buff-rumped Woodpecker	<i>Meiglyptes tristis</i>
73	Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot	<i>Loriculus galgulus</i>

74	Long-tailed Broadbill	<i>Psarisomus dalhousiae</i>
75	Silver-breasted Broadbill	<i>Serilophus lunatus</i>
76	Banded Broadbill	<i>Eurylaimus javanicus</i>
77	Black-and-yellow Broadbill	<i>Eurylaimus ochromalus</i>
78	Dusky Broadbill	<i>Corydon sumatranus</i>
79	Rusty-naped Pitta	<i>Hydrornis oatesi</i>
80	Malayan Banded Pitta	<i>Hydrornis irena</i>
81	Golden-bellied Gerygone	<i>Gerygone sulphurea</i>
82	Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	<i>Hemipus picatus</i>
83	Large Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis virgatus</i>
84	Rufous-winged Philentoma	<i>Philentoma pyroptera</i>
85	Green Iora	<i>Aegithina viridissima</i>
86	Javan Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina javensis</i>
87	Lesser Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina fimbriata</i>
88	Fiery Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus igneus</i>
89	Grey-chinned Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus solaris</i>
90	Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus speciosus</i>
91	Tiger Shrike	<i>Lanius tigrinus</i>
92	White-bellied Erpornis	<i>Erpornis zantholeuca</i>
93	Blyth's Shrike-babbler	<i>Pteruthius aeralatus</i>
94	Black-eared Shrike-babbler	<i>Pteruthius melanotis</i>
95	Dark-throated Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthonotus</i>
96	Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>
97	Black-and-crimson Oriole	<i>Oriolus cruentus</i>
98	Bronzed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus aeneus</i>
99	Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus remifer</i>
100	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>
101	White-throated Fantail	<i>Rhipidura albicollis</i>
102	Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>
103	Asian Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>
104	Common Green Magpie	<i>Cissa chinensis</i>
105	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
106	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>
107	Rail-babbler	<i>Eupetes macrocerus</i>
108	Sultan Tit	<i>Melanochlora sultanea</i>
109	Straw-headed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus zeylanicus</i>
110	Black-headed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus atriceps</i>
111	Black-crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus flaviventris</i>
112	Grey-bellied Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cyaniventris</i>
113	Stripe-throated Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus finlaysoni</i>
114	Yellow-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus goiavier</i>

115	Olive-winged Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus plumosus</i>
116	Cream-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus simplex</i>
117	Asian Red-eyed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus brunneus</i>
118	Spectacled Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus erythrophthalmos</i>
119	Finsch's Bulbul	<i>Alophoixus finschii</i>
120	Ochraceous Bulbul	<i>Alophoixus ochraceus</i>
121	Grey-cheeked Bulbul	<i>Alophoixus bres</i>
122	Yellow-bellied Bulbul	<i>Alophoixus phaeocephalus</i>
123	Hairy-backed Bulbul	<i>Tricholestes criniger</i>
124	Buff-vented Bulbul	<i>Iole olivacea</i>
125	Mountain Bulbul	<i>Ixos mccllellandii</i>
126	Streaked Bulbul	<i>Ixos malaccensis</i>
127	Cinereous Bulbul	<i>Hemixos cinereus</i>
128	Pacific Swallow	<i>Hirundo tahitica</i>
129	Rufous-bellied Swallow	<i>Cecropis badia</i>
130	Pygmy Wren-babbler	<i>Pnoepyga pusilla</i>
131	Yellow-bellied Warbler	<i>Abroscopus superciliaris</i>
132	Mountain Tailorbird	<i>Phyllergates cuculatus</i>
133	Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>
134	Eastern Crowned Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus coronatus</i>
135	Chestnut-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus castaniceps</i>
136	Yellow-bellied Prinia	<i>Prinia flavicentris</i>
137	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
138	Dark-necked Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus atrogularis</i>
139	Rufous-tailed Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sericeus</i>
140	Grey-throated Babbler	<i>Stachyris nigriceps</i>
141	Grey-headed Babbler	<i>Stachyris poliocephala</i>
142	Chestnut-rumped Babbler	<i>Stachyris maculata</i>
143	Black-throated Babbler	<i>Stachyris nigricollis</i>
144	Chestnut-winged Babbler	<i>Stachyris erythroptera</i>
145	Rufous-fronted Babbler	<i>Stachyridopsis rufifrons</i>
146	Golden Babbler	<i>Stachyridopsis chrysaea</i>
147	Pin-striped Tit-Babbler	<i>Macronous gularis</i>
148	Fluffy-backed Tit-Babbler	<i>Macronous ptilosus</i>
149	Mountain Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe peracensis</i>
150	Collared Babbler	<i>Gampsorhynchus torquatus</i>
151	Horsfield's Babbler	<i>Malcocincla sepiaria</i>
152	Short-tailed Babbler	<i>Malcocincla malaccensis</i>
153	Moustached Babbler	<i>Malacopteron magnirostre</i>
154	Sooty-capped Babbler	<i>Malacopteron affine</i>
155	Rufous-crowned Babbler	<i>Malacopteron magnum</i>

156	White-chested Babbler	<i>Trichastoma rostratum</i>
157	Buff-breasted Babbler	<i>Pellorneum tickelli</i>
158	Black-capped Babbler	<i>Pellorneum capistratum</i>
159	Chestnut-capped Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax mitratus</i>
160	Black Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax lugubris</i>
161	Blue-winged Minla	<i>Minla cyanouroptera</i>
162	Silver-eared Mesia	<i>Leiothrix argenteauris</i>
163	Long-tailed Sibia	<i>Heterophasia picaoides</i>
164	Everett's White-eye	<i>Zosterops everetti</i>
165	Asian Fairy-bluebird	<i>Irena puella</i>
166	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta frontalis</i>
167	Asian Glossy Starling	<i>Aplonis panayensis</i>
168	Common Hill Myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>
169	Javan Myna	<i>Acridotheres javanicus</i>
170	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
171	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
172	White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>
173	Dark-sided Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa sibirica</i>
174	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa latirostris</i>
175	Rufous-browed Flycatcher	<i>Anthipes solaris</i>
176	Pale Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis unicolor</i>
177	Hill Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis banyumas</i>
178	Large Niltava	<i>Niltava grandis</i>
179	Verditer Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias thalassinus</i>
180	Lesser Shortwing	<i>Brachypteryx leucophris</i>
181	White-tailed Robin	<i>Myiomela leucura</i>
182	Slaty-backed Forktail	<i>Enicurus schistaceus</i>
183	Little Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficeula westermanni</i>
184	Lesser Green Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis cyanopogon</i>
185	Blue-winged Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</i>
186	Orange-bellied Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis hardwickii</i>
187	Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker	<i>Prionochilus maculatus</i>
188	Crimson-breasted Flowerpecker	<i>Prionochilus percussus</i>
189	Orange-bellied Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum trigonostigma</i>
190	Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum ignipectus</i>
191	Ruby-cheeked Sunbird	<i>Chalcoparia singalensis</i>
192	Plain Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes simplex</i>
193	Red-throated Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes rhodolaemus</i>
194	Purple-naped Sunbird	<i>Hypogramma hypogrammicum</i>
195	Black-throated Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga saturata</i>
196	Little Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera longirostra</i>

197	Yellow-eared Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera chrysogenys</i>
198	Grey-breasted Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera robusta</i>
199	Streaked Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera magna</i>
200	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
201	White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>



Arguably the best looking bird at Fraser's Hill, the Silver-eared Mesia. Photo © Lim Kim Seng