



## INDONESIA: 1-DAY BALI BIRDING TOUR REPORT

23 FEBRUARY 2022

By Andy Walker



*Greater Painted-snipe is a localized species in Bali and we had good views of three birds during this Bali birding day tour.*

## Overview

Finally, after almost two years of being closed due to Covid, Indonesia has started opening up again. Chad contacted us in early February about putting together a one-day birding tour out of Ubud, Bali, where he would be based for a few days. Andy has been living and birding in Ubud over the last two years and so a plan was hatched to visit a couple of nearby sites. Chad had already visited and birded in Bali a few times but still had a few species he was keen to see.

## Detailed Report

We left Ubud at 5.15 am and made our way down to the Unda River Mouth, a site that is undergoing massive change due to an ongoing major infrastructure project, but one that Andy has birded extensively over the last few months and found several rare birds, including a Black-browed Reed Warbler in January 2022, which was a first for Bali!

We spent about six hours birding this coastal site as we walked out along the black sand beach and spent time scouring the reedbeds, freshwater marshes, adjacent rice paddies, and an old river route. As we made our way along the beach at first light, we found several **Savanna Nightjars** roosting in the tidal debris that line the beach.



*Savanna Nightjars roost among the tidal debris and their camouflage works very well!*

As we got to one particular reedbed, we enjoyed fantastic views of **Ruddy-breasted Crake** and **White-browed Crake**, as well as three **Greater Painted-snipes**, all three big targets for the day!



We also enjoyed good looks at **Yellow Bitterns**, several stunning **Purple Herons**, and a few **Eastern Yellow Wagtails** here. **Barred Buttonquails** also gave us some remarkable views.



*White-browed Crake gave excellent views.*



*Barred Buttonquail was a big feature of the morning birding session, being a big target of Chad's, and this one stood patiently right in front of us for what felt like an age!*



We found plenty of other great birds during the morning, including **Javan Plover**, **Pacific Golden Plover**, **Common Greenshank**, and **Wood Sandpiper**. Herons and egrets were particularly well represented, with **Intermediate Egret** (breeding and non-breeding plumage), **Great Egret**, **Pacific Reef Heron** (both dark and pale-phase birds), **Javan Pond Heron**, **Little Egret**, and multiple **Black-crowned Night Herons** all enjoyed.

We soaked in close looks at **Collared Kingfisher** and prolonged views of the pretty **Blue-eared Kingfisher**. **Blue-tailed Bee-eaters** also provided a flash of color, as did **Striated Swallow**, **Barn Swallow**, and **Pacific Swallow** as they fed overhead, with the less colorful **House Swift**, **Cave Swiftlet** and **Edible-nest Swiftlet** also flying around above us.

Other interesting birds seen during our time here included **Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler** (one bird giving particularly good views), **Oriental Reed Warbler**, **Olive-backed Tailorbird**, **Malaysian Pied Fantail**, **Pied Triller**, **Pied Bush Chat**, **Golden-headed Cisticola** (looking absolutely stunning in full breeding plumage), **Zitting Cisticola**, **Streaked Weaver**, **White-headed Munia**, **Scaly-breasted Munia**, and **Javan Munia**.



*Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler is often a super-skulking species, but we did get some good views during our day of birding in Bali and heard some birds singing too.*

After a long and exciting morning birding session (extended due to the surprising lack of heat in the day), we grabbed lunch and then commenced our journey part of the way up Gunung (Mount) Agung, Bali's highest point and a spectacular cone-shaped volcano too. This site has been very good recently with some excellent rare resident species and some scarce migrants. Unfortunately, a couple of families had decided to spend the afternoon playing very loud games in our prime birding spot, meaning that activity was far lower than it should have been. Nevertheless, we connected with several different species during our couple of hours birding.

As we drove up the mountain we saw a few **Crested Honey Buzzards** flying west across the island, continuing their long journey north, raptor migration started in mid-February this year. Our primary birding area yielded **Javan Whistling Thrush**, **Sooty-headed Bulbul**, and a brief **Orange-spotted Bulbul**. A flock of **Mees's** (Javan Grey-throated) **White-eyes** were busily feeding in the fruiting trees and they were eventually joined by a pair of **Warbling White-eyes**, which gave some prolonged views. One of the highlights of the afternoon birding session was a low flyby from a stunning **Peregrine Falcon**, also likely migrating north. Several other very good migrant species were keeping very well hidden, including **Siberian Thrush**, **Eyebrowed Thrush**, and **Mugimaki Flycatcher**, their calls giving them away as they flushed, but they were proving very elusive, no doubt due to all the commotion in their preferred feeding area.



*Warbling White-eye gave some good views while we were birding at Gunung Agung.*

A short walk to get away from the noisy locals gave us brief glimpses of **Long-tailed Shrike**, with both **Lesser Shortwing** and **Javan Bush Warbler** calling from a dense patch of undergrowth and unwilling to come out into view. A small family group of vocal **Javan Cuckooshrikes** flew over and a gorgeous **Flame-fronted Barbet** gave some excellent views as the light was starting to beat us, with this bird providing a fitting end to our day out birding.

The drive back was uneventful, but we did have **Javan Kingfisher** on the outskirts of Ubud and then at Chad's drop off point at 7 pm in central Ubud a couple of very vocal **Savanna Nightjars** were flying around.

A huge thanks to Chad for making the day such an enjoyable Bali birding experience, it was a fun-filled day with lots of great birds and a surprising lack of rain given the previous few days and the forecast! The bird list for the day follows, below.





*Flame-fronted Barbet* proved one of the highlights of our afternoon birding.

### **Bird List - Following IOC (12.1)**

Birds 'heard only' are marked with (H) after the common name, all other species were seen.

Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Nightjars (Caprimulgidae)</b>	
Savanna Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>
<b>Swifts (Apodidae)</b>	
Cave Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia linchi</i>
Edible-nest Swiftlet	<i>Aerodramus fuciphagus</i>
House Swift	<i>Apus nipalensis</i>
<b>Cuckoos (Cuculidae)</b>	
Plaintive Cuckoo (H)	<i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>
<b>Pigeons, Doves (Columbidae)</b>	
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>
Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>
Little Cuckoo-Dove	<i>Macropygia ruficeps</i>
Zebra Dove	<i>Geopelia striata</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Rails, Crakes &amp; Coots (Rallidae)</b>	
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Ruddy-breasted Crake	<i>Zapornia fusca</i>
White-browed Crake	<i>Poliolimnas cinereus</i>
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>
<b>Buttonquail (Turnicidae)</b>	
Barred Buttonquail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>
<b>Plovers (Charadriidae)</b>	
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>
Javan Plover	<i>Charadrius javanicus</i>
<b>Painted-snipes (Rostratulidae)</b>	
Greater Painted-snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>
<b>Sandpipers, Snipes (Scolopacidae)</b>	
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
<b>Gulls, Terns, Skimmers (Laridae)</b>	
Greater Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>
<b>Hérons, Bitterns (Ardeidae)</b>	
Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>
Javan Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola speciosa</i>
Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Intermediate Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Pacific Reef Heron	<i>Egretta sacra</i>
<b>Kites, Hawks, Eagles (Accipitridae)</b>	

Common Name	Scientific Name
Crested Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
<b>Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)</b>	
Javan Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon cyanoventris</i>
Collared Kingfisher	<i>Todiramphus chloris</i>
Cerulean Kingfisher (H)	<i>Alcedo coerulescens</i>
Blue-eared Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo meninting</i>
<b>Bee-eaters (Meropidae)</b>	
Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>
<b>Asian Barbets (Megalaimidae)</b>	
Flame-fronted Barbet	<i>Psilopogon armillaris</i>
<b>Caracaras, Falcons (Falconidae)</b>	
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
<b>Australasian Warblers (Acanthizidae)</b>	
Golden-bellied Gerygone	<i>Gerygone sulphurea</i>
<b>Woodswallows, Butcherbirds &amp; Allies (Artamidae)</b>	
White-breasted Woodswallow	<i>Artamus leucorhynchus</i>
<b>Ioras (Aegithinidae)</b>	
Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>
<b>Cuckooshrikes (Campephagidae)</b>	
Javan Cuckooshrike	<i>Coracina javensis</i>
Pied Triller	<i>Lalage nigra</i>
<b>Whistlers &amp; Allies (Pachycephalidae)</b>	
Rusty-breasted Whistler (H)	<i>Pachycephala fulvotincta</i>
<b>Shrikes (Laniidae)</b>	
Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>
<b>Drongos (Dicruridae)</b>	
Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>



Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Fantails (Rhipiduridae)</b>	
Malaysian Pied Fantail	<i>Rhipidura javanica</i>
<b>Bulbuls (Pycnonotidae)</b>	
Orange-spotted Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus bimaculatus</i>
Yellow-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus goiavier</i>
Sooty-headed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus aurigaster</i>
<b>Swallows, Martins (Hirundinidae)</b>	
Pacific Swallow	<i>Hirundo tahitica</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Striated Swallow	<i>Cecropis striolata</i>
<b>Reed Warblers &amp; Allies (Acrocephalidae)</b>	
Oriental Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus orientalis</i>
<b>Grassbirds &amp; Allies (Locustellidae)</b>	
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Helopsaltes certhiola</i>
Javan Bush Warbler (H)	<i>Locustella montis</i>
<b>Cisticolas &amp; Allies (Cisticolidae)</b>	
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
Golden-headed Cisticola	<i>Cisticola exilis</i>
Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>
Olive-backed Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sepium</i>
<b>White-eyes (Zosteropidae)</b>	
Mees's White-eye	<i>Heleia javanica</i>
Warbling White-eye	<i>Zosterops japonicus</i>
<b>Babblers, Scimitar Babblers (Timaliidae)</b>	
Javan Scimitar Babbler (H)	<i>Pomatorhinus montanus</i>
<b>Starlings, Rhabdornis (Sturnidae)</b>	
Short-tailed Starling	<i>Aplonis minor</i>
<b>Thrushes (Turdidae)</b>	

Common Name	Scientific Name
Siberian Thrush	<i>Geokichla sibirica</i>
Eyebrowed Thrush	<i>Turdus obscurus</i>
<b>Chats, Old World Flycatchers (Muscicapidae)</b>	
Fulvous-chested Jungle Flycatcher (H)	<i>Cyornis olivaceus</i>
Lesser Shortwing (H)	<i>Brachypteryx leucophris</i>
Javan Whistling Thrush	<i>Myophonus glaucinus</i>
Mugimaki Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula mugimaki</i>
Pied Bush Chat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>
<b>Sunbirds (Nectariniidae)</b>	
Brown-throated Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes malacensis</i>
Olive-backed Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris jugularis</i>
<b>Old World Sparrows, Snowfinches (Passeridae)</b>	
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
<b>Weavers, Widowbirds (Ploceidae)</b>	
Streaked Weaver	<i>Ploceus manyar</i>
Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>
<b>Waxbills, Munias &amp; Allies (Estrildidae)</b>	
Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>
Javan Munia	<i>Lonchura leucogastroides</i>
White-headed Munia	<i>Lonchura maja</i>
<b>Wagtails, Pipits (Motacillidae)</b>	
Eastern Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla tschutschensis</i>

<b>Total seen</b>	<b>74</b>
Total heard only	7
Total recorded	81