



EAST ASIAN ISLAND ENDEMIC Taiwan, Okinawa & Amami 18 Mar to 01 Apr 2018

\$7,575 double—\$8,570 single

*Featuring 2 U.S. guides plus expert local guide
and driver, with a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 6 guests.*

We went on a quest for the world's most endangered woodpecker, and we returned with an itinerary that you must not miss! Here is the story:

For years, I have been fascinated with the endangered Okinawa, or Pryer's, Woodpecker. A combination of factors got my attention: the bird's subtle yet striking plumage; its tenacity, clinging to restricted habitat by a thread; and its phylogeny, or the story of its origin—how did it get to Okinawa, which woodpeckers are its closest cousins, and how has it adapted to this rather small island. For answers, I really needed to visit the bird in its native habitat. But a trip to one small Japanese island to see one woodpecker seemed a little extravagant.

I recently learned of another threatened endemic woodpecker on another island in Japan's Ryukyu archipelago. The Amami Woodpecker lives on Amami-oshima, just spitting distance from Okinawa, and it shares the island with several other endemic and Ryukyu specialty birds. Certainly, visiting two islands in the Ryukyus would make more of an adventure. But, could I really get people excited about visiting these two pint-sized Japanese islands?

Enter Arco Huang, Taiwanese native and international birding guide. We met Arco through a trusted friend of a trusted friend. Arco had led tours to Okinawa and Amami several times in search of island endemics, and this is exactly what we wanted. Right away, Arco said to us, "Why not add Taiwan to the tour? We have 25 endemic bird species." My ears perked up. Of course. Taiwan would be the perfect complement to the comparatively tiny Ryukyus.

In March 2017, we traveled to Taiwan, Okinawa, and Amami to scout the region for a potential tour. I came home with a list of 172 birds, including 34 island endemics, 51 endemic subspecies, and 102 life birds. And, the whole trip was pretty easy. We enjoyed easy access to unique habitats, mostly on paved roads; we loved being immersed in the unique Asian culture, including the best sushi I have ever tasted; we experienced excellent birding, with great looks at nearly all of our desired bird species; and as a bonus, we found a skilled, personable birding guide who speaks excellent English and knows where to find the birds on all three islands.

We put the trip on the calendar for March 2018, and we want you to be the first to join us on this exciting excursion. The two threatened woodpeckers will be only two of many highlights. From gorgeous parks to quiet villages, and from Taiwan's Swinhoe's Pheasant to the Amami Thrush, we are ready to make you some fabulous memories. Let us take you to Okinawa and beyond!

*Owner and Lead Guide,
Steve Shunk*



The endangered
Okinawa Woodpecker

THE ISLANDS

Get ready for some island-hopping in the “Indo-Malayan terrestrial biographic realm” and some great birding in “subtropical moist broadleaf forest,” both designated as such by World Wildlife Fund. The region sort of straddles the Tropic of Cancer, but only the southernmost part of Taiwan is technically inside the tropics. However, this region gets its moisture from the warm, northbound Kuroshio Current, giving Taiwan and the Ryukyus a decidedly tropical impression. Here are a few brief notes about the three islands, followed by detailed descriptions of our planned adventures.

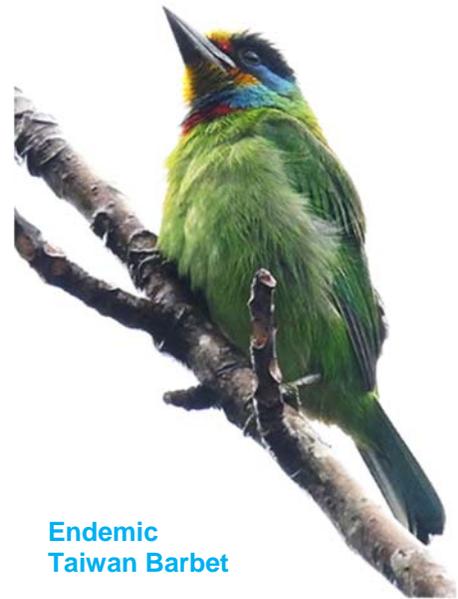
Taiwan—The island-nation of Taiwan has certainly experienced a complicated political past, but the people of this beautiful island are proudly independent and very happy to welcome tourists. The habitats on Taiwan and the distribution of its birds are greatly defined by altitude. The island is about the size of Indiana, but the terrain couldn't be more different. As the 4th highest island on Earth, Taiwan reaches 3,952 m (12,966 ft.) at the summit of Yu Shan, or Jade Mountain, with more than 200 peaks over 3,000 m (9,843 ft.). With the exception of a few lowland birding spots, much of our time will be spent in the mountains at varying altitudes in search of Taiwan's 25 endemic bird species.

Okinawa—The largest island in Japan's Nansei-shotō, or Ryukyu Islands, Okinawa has seen some amazing human history. Perhaps most significantly, the island was the stage for the largest amphibious assault and one of the bloodiest battles in the Pacific Theater of World War II. Today, Okinawa is still of critical importance to the U.S. military, with 32 bases occupying about 25 percent of the island. Despite the prominent military presence, we did not encounter a single military uniform on our scouting trip in March 2017. Instead, we spent our time in the lovely Yanbaru forest, which occupies most of northern Okinawa. The Yanbaru is one of Japan's most extensive evergreen forests, and it hosts an abundance of endemic flora and fauna.

Amami—Also known as Amami Ōshima, Amami Island is a land apart, offering an entirely different experience than Okinawa, both ecologically and culturally. Most notably, Amami is far more rugged and mountainous than Okinawa. The mountains dive right into the sea, and hence, Amami has not experienced near the level of development of its southern cousin. Tourism and military presence are nearly non-existent on Amami, which depends primarily on agriculture and fishing. Like Okinawa, however, Amami supports a host of endemic bird species, including the Amami Woodpecker, Amami Thrush, Amami Woodcock, and Lidth's Jay, all of which we hope to see on our tour.

TOUR SUMMARY

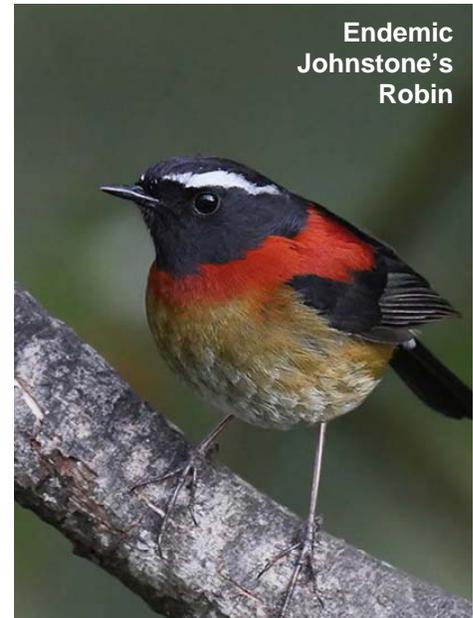
We will begin our tour on the largest of three very unique islands. Known as the “Jewel of the Western Pacific,” the diverse and vibrant island of **Taiwan** is a birder's endemic paradise. Our trip starts in Taoyuan, a city on the outskirts of Taiwan's bustling modern capital of Taipei. Your guides will meet you outside customs at the Taoyuan-Taipei International Airport (TPE), and we will spend our first night as a group in Taoyuan. On our first morning, we will head directly toward the mountains and the Dasyueshan National Forest Recreation Area, where we spend our next two nights, with ample time to experience this celebrated montane park. The majority of our birding time at Dasyueshan will be spent at around 6,500 feet elevation, with one or two excursions reaching as high as 8,000 feet. We have to get there, however, which will allow us several lowland birding stops.



Endemic
Taiwan Barbet

The lower elevations of these mountains are home to Taiwan Barbet, Taiwan Hwamei, Gray Treepie, Rufous-capped Babbler, and Collared Finchbill, as well as one of our three target woodpecker species, the endemic Taiwan race of the tiny Grey-capped Woodpecker. As we climb in elevation, brief birding stops may also produce our first Japanese White-eye, Brown Dipper, Plumbeous Redstart, Morris's Fulvetta (recently split from Gray-cheeked), Vivid Niltava, and Grey-chinned Minivet.

Dasyueshan is home to many of Taiwan's endemic bird species, so we will spend two nights here in comfortable mountain cabins, with plenty of time to explore. Besides our first chance to see the shy Taiwan Partridge and the gaudy Swinhoe's Pheasant, we should easily pick up Steere's Liocichla, Taiwan Whistling-thrush, White-eared Sibia, Collared Bush-robins, Yellow Tit, Flamecrest, Taiwan Yuhina, Taiwan Barwing, Taiwan Cupwing and Rufous-crowned Laughingthrush. This is also a good site to find the stunning Mikado Pheasant and other higher elevation specialties, such as Rusty and White-whiskered Laughingthrushes, Taiwan Fulvetta, and Taiwan Bush-warbler. Other birds here may include Fire-breasted Flowerpecker, Yellowish-bellied Bush-warbler, Green-backed and Black-throated Tits, and the Spotted Nutcracker—of the *owstoni* race and a potential split as Taiwan Nutcracker. We will also stay alert for the island's other two woodpecker species, the White-backed Woodpecker (endemic Taiwan race) and Gray-faced Woodpecker (an endemic race of Gray-headed Woodpecker). These two can be elusive, but we will have multiple chances for encounters with both of them. Other high-elevation birds may include Scaly Thrush, White-tailed Robin, Black-naped Monarch, and Taiwan Rosefinch. If we are lucky, we will encounter Mountain Hawk-Eagle and other raptors catching updrafts on the ridges.



Endemic
Johnstone's
Robin

After stopping at Guguan to search for the uncommon Taiwan Varied Tit, we will head for Huisun Forest Reserve, at about 2,400 ft., where we hope to find the stunning Taiwan Blue Magpie. This forest could also produce Malayan Night Heron, Maroon Oriole, and Taiwan Bamboo Partridge, among others. We will then head to a birder-owned guest house in Puli, a mellow lowland agricultural town surrounded by flooded fields of taro and water-bamboo (the source of 'bamboo shoots'). The Beauty Spring 'N' Harvest Guest House has an expansive patio and common area surrounded by well-manicured gardens and ponds, perfect for casual birding. We will stay here 2 nights, with a full day birding around Puli, where we will focus on waterbirds, raptors, and more of Taiwan's specialty songbirds.

After departing Puli, we will drive into the hills around Kwanghua village at about 3,000 ft, where both Swinhoe's Pheasant and the very shy Taiwan Bamboo Partridge can be found in a privately owned broadleaf forest near our next lodge. Birding here in the afternoon will give us our best opportunity of the tour to find the elusive partridge. We may also get a glimpse of Black Eagle or Crested Serpent-Eagle soaring overhead. We will spend two nights at Firefly Lodge in Kwanghua, giving us plenty of time to relax and sample the local oolong tea, with some excellent birding around the grounds and gardens.

From Puli, we head for Kwantien, a small wetland reserve surrounded by rice paddies, where Pheasant-tailed Jacanas can be seen among many other water birds, including the possible Greater Painted-Snipe. After a traditional Taiwanese lunch, we will head to the Huben area for lowland specialties. We will hope to find Taiwan Scimitar-Babbler, Emerald Dove, White-bellied Erpornis and the secretive Black-necklaced Scimitar-Babbler. In the afternoon we return to Taoyuan, where we overnight at the Novotel Taipei near Taoyuan International Airport to prepare for our flight to Okinawa, Japan!

After breakfast on our last morning in Taiwan, we will embark on our 90-minute flight to Naha, Okinawa's largest city. **Okinawa** is the principal island of the Ryukyu Island chain, a subtropical archipelago with a charming atmosphere and a unique cultural identity distinct from mainland Japan. Besides its World War II history, Okinawa was also the birthplace of karate. Today, the island is known for its distinctive local cuisine and its high concentration of centenarian residents. Of course, we are also here for its endemic wildlife.

After lunch near the airport, we will drive north to Yanbaru Forest Reserve, a large tract of relatively untouched habitat on the northern half of this long narrow island. We will spend the late afternoon birding around the Yanbaru in search of our first Okinawa island endemics: Okinawa Rail, Ryukyu Robin (Okinawa race), and of course the Okinawa Woodpecker, arguably *the world's most critically endangered woodpecker*. After dinner, we may do some night-birding, when we will listen for the Elegant (Ryukyu) Scops-owl and Northern Boobook. We will spend two nights in a colonial-style hotel at the edge of the Yanbaru. One evening we will also have a short presentation about conservation and resource management issues facing the Yanbaru, with an emphasis on the Okinawa Woodpecker.

Two full days on Okinawa will be dedicated to this northern end of the island. Okinawa Rails will call from the forest while we watch the Okinawa Woodpecker and the endemic race of the Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker. We can also expect Japanese Tit, Ryukyu Minivet, and the handsome Ryukyu Green Pigeon.

We will spend our third Okinawa night at a hotel in the central part of the island. On our final day here we will get in some early morning birding at Kin farmland, focusing on wading birds and wintering/migrating shorebirds before heading to Okinawa-Naha airport for our brief flight to Amami.

The Amami landscape is far more mountainous than Okinawa, its rugged coastline dotted with isolated coves and capes, and its forests largely intact—that's right, *virgin forests* in a corner of the world known for its overdeveloped land and immense populations. All of this combines to give Amami a wild quality and a robust birding atmosphere overall. After arriving on the island we will head to Amami City, the largest settlement on the island, with a small fishing port and a population of about 45,000 people, all surrounded by densely forested hills. We will spend our three nights on the island at the pleasant Sun Plaza Hotel. Be prepared to have some of the freshest sushi and other seafood of your life.

Each day on Amami, we will explore different habitats in search of the island's endemics and other Ryukyu specialty birds. We will walk through virgin forests and remote hill parks, small fishing villages and adjacent coastal flats and beaches. Our target birds are Ryukyu Minivet, Ryukyu Robin (Amami race), Lidth's Jay, Ryukyu Green Pigeon, Black Woodpigeon, the critically endangered Amami Thrush, and of course, the threatened Amami Woodpecker. Expect to see dozens of Grey-faced Buzzards on migration and a handful of other raptors. We will also have the chance to go out at night to look for Amami Woodcock and Ryukyu Scops Owl as well as the endemic Amami Black Rabbit, a unique taxa of very primitive lagomorph representing the monotypic genus, *Pentalagus*.

During our last day on Amami we will do some casual birding and have a delicious farewell meal of traditional Amami-style chicken soup before heading to the airport for our flights home.



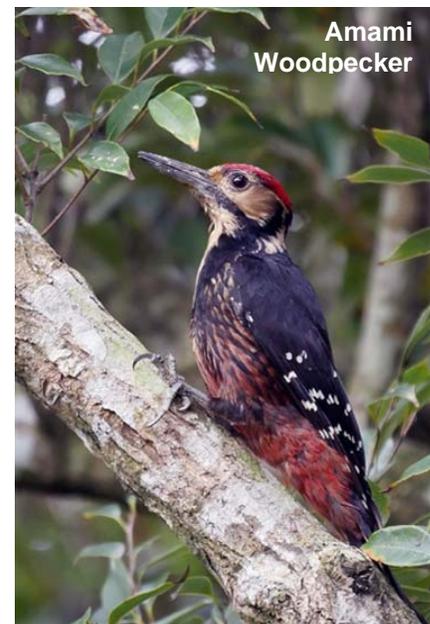
THREATENED WOODPECKERS OF OKINAWA & AMAMI

This tour is part of our International Woodpecker Conservation series. These global adventures have three goals: (1) Take you to see the most threatened woodpeckers in the world; (2) Meet biologists, conservationists, and land managers who are working toward habitat conservation that supports these species; and, (3) Contribute financially to these conservation efforts. Two threatened woodpecker species led us to Japan's Ryukyu Islands: the critically endangered Okinawa Woodpecker and the threatened Amami Woodpecker.

The primary conservation focus of this tour is the protection of the Yanbaru Forest of northern Okinawa, the stronghold of the Okinawa Woodpecker. Paradise Birding will donate \$100 USD per guest to conservation efforts that support this beautiful woodpecker, *the most endangered woodpecker in the world*. Here are a few details on these two special woodpeckers:

OKINAWA (PRYER'S) WOODPECKER—Since 1994, the Okinawa Woodpecker has been listed as “Critically Endangered” by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). This charismatic woodpecker is restricted to Okinawa's Yanbaru Forest and adjacent areas, and it is considered a “Special Natural Monument” by the nation of Japan. As few as 300 of these rare woodpeckers remain on Okinawa (and hence, the world), but they are surprisingly easy to find—in the right habitat. Southern Okinawa is heavily developed, but the forest that defines the northern half of the island remains as critical habitat for the woodpecker, as well as: the near-threatened Okinawa Robin; the endangered Okinawa Tip-nosed Frog; and the critically endangered Okinawa Spiny Rat; among others.

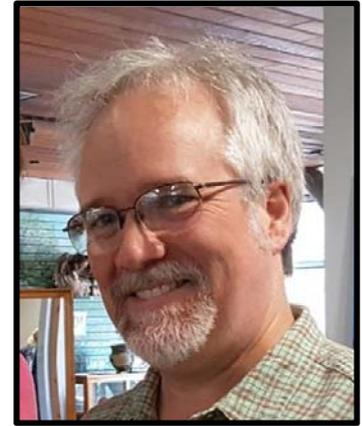
AMAMI (OWSTON'S) WOODPECKER—In 2014, the Amami Woodpecker was taxonomically separated from the widespread Asian species, the White-backed Woodpecker—of which we will see the endemic Taiwan subspecies earlier in the trip. Due to the Amami Woodpecker's extremely limited range (endemic to the island) and its globally very small population (likely fewer than 2,000 individuals), the IUCN lists the species as “Near Threatened.” Despite the broad expanse of intact mature forest on Amami, any dramatic changes in this habitat could have a detrimental impact on this woodpecker species. Climate change, agricultural development, and forest pathogens are just a few of the potential factors that could place pressure on the mature evergreen, broadleaved hill forest that supports the Amami Woodpecker, in addition to: the critically endangered Amami Thrush; the vulnerable Amami Woodcock; and the vulnerable Lidth's Jay.



MEET YOUR GUIDES

In 2015, we committed to several new initiatives for Paradise Birding, including taking two U.S. guides on every tour. Paradise Birding owner, Steve Shunk, accompanies most tours as our lead guide, and Steve hand-picks his co-leaders to ensure the best possible travel and nature experience. We are proud to feature the best guide-to-client ratios in the business, and this trip includes 3 guides and a maximum of six clients. Meet your tour leaders:

Your lead guide, **Steve Shunk**, has operated [Paradise Birding](#) for nearly 20 years, and he has been teaching adults about birds and nature since 1992. As a seasoned tour guide, Steve has led over 150 trips, across North America and in Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, South America, Sicily, and Malaysian Borneo. Based on the eastern slope of Oregon's Cascade Mountains, Steve co-founded the East Cascades Bird Conservancy (now East Cascades Audubon), and he coordinated the Oregon Cascades Birding Trail project. He is also the author of the recently published Peterson Reference Guide to Woodpeckers of North America. Steve is a patient, experienced educator with an infectious passion and enthusiasm for nature and conservation. This will be Steve's second trip to the islands.



We are joined on this tour by **Jade Ajani**, an accomplished avian field biologist and enthusiastic naturalist based in Portland, Oregon. Jade has birded in Vietnam, China, Hong Kong, Hawaii, and across North and South America, and he joined Steve on our scouting trip to Taiwan and Japan. He has worked on numerous ornithology, forestry, botany, and fisheries projects in five U.S. states for a variety of public, private and non-profit institutions. Most recently, Jade has been studying the effects of wildfire on owl ecology in Yosemite National Park. Steve and Jade met while working together on a Black-backed Woodpecker study in California in 2011. As a birding and guiding protégé of Steve's, Jade has intermittently scouted and guided for Paradise Birding over the years, and he is managing much of the planning and logistics of this tour.



Our expert local Taiwanese guide, **Arco Huang**, has had a lifelong interest in nature and wildlife, and he has been guiding since 1996, and in 2010, he took a job as a 'specialist' birding tour guide. Arco now guides around 10 birding tours each year and has taken clients to six continents, including several trips to Japan's Ryukyu Islands. With a life-list of over 5000 species, Arco has a truly incredible diversity of birding experience and knowledge. Apart from his personal birding and guiding accomplishments, he is an excellent communicator, with a good command of English and a great sense of humor. Years of both mountain and nature guiding have given him an intimate knowledge of Taiwan's richest and most notable habitats. Paradise Birding is lucky to have a guide as motivated and indefatigable as Arco.



TOUR STYLE & PACE

Our island-hopping journey across the subtropical Western Pacific will bring us to an impressive variety of locations. Daily outings will include easy hiking on trails and roadsides; strolling along well-maintained boardwalks; watching from blinds/observation points; and slow cruising in a comfortable passenger van. Birding time around some of our lodges will include casual walks through manicured gardens, gentle parkland, and agricultural areas. We will visit mountainous and hilly terrain on all three islands, but these habitats will largely be accessed by driving on paved roads, with minimal walking required to find our target species.

We will bird all day on some days, and on other days we will have plenty of leisure time. On all of our outings, your guides will move at a pace that is suitable for the entire group, and having three guides allows us to easily accommodate varying interest and ability levels.

This tour focuses on endemic, rare, and otherwise unique species (and subspecies) of birds and other wildlife. We seek quality over quantity, and we will spend plenty of time at each location enjoying the diverse local habitats. We will experience periods of bird abundance, especially when we encounter mixed flocks of songbirds in Taiwan, but you will not typically be overwhelmed by species numbers. We may ‘only’ tally 150 species for the entire trip—although more than one-quarter of these will likely represent endemic taxa, many of which are threatened and/or endangered. We will also enjoy plenty of large birds, such as waders and raptors that are easy to find and watch for extended periods. Each evening, we will review the birds and other wildlife seen during the day, but in general, we are not big ‘listers,’ so we will not let the prospect of a larger bird list drive our daily schedule.

The focus of our tours is certainly birding, but we always enjoy sharing the broader natural and cultural history of the regions we visit. We will stop regularly to admire key cultural sites, as well as the wide variety of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, insects and flora found on these unique islands and often nowhere else on Earth!



Endemic Taiwan
Scimitar Babbler

FOOD & ACCOMMODATIONS

We believe in comfortable lodging and quality food, and we especially like to feature traditional specialty foods for the regions where we travel. On Taiwan, we will enjoy the diverse cuisine of the millennia-old Chinese food culture, much of it with a distinctive Taiwanese twist. On Okinawa, we will experience the diet responsible for the longest human life-expectancy on the planet as well as some of the hybrid foods associated with modern Okinawan cuisine. Amami will feature plenty of traditional Japanese foods, often with a subtropical flare, highlighted by local seafood.

Restaurants will serve a variety of fresh fruits; ‘land’ and sea vegetables; noodle and rice dishes; local meats; super fresh seafood; unique salads; and plenty of vegetarian dishes. Some restaurants will feature very local specialty foods, with such highlights as fresh-off-the-boat sashimi and daily-fresh meats. All beverages, fruits, and vegetables are safe for consumption. Bottled water will be provided on all our excursions and at all of our accommodations. Alcohol drinks will typically be available at most meals, including light Asian lagers and rice-based spirits.

All of our lodging sites have been scouted and selected for your optimal comfort. See the daily itinerary, below, for Internet links to our accommodations. We have structured the tour to allow multiple nights in individual locations when it works with our birding itinerary.

PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP

Straddling the Tropic of Cancer, the daily weather in Taiwan is generally warm and comfortable, with temperatures in the 60s-80s F., occasional afternoon or evening showers, and some intermittent coastal fog and cool cloud forest. The high humidity of the region can make it seem warmer than the actual air temperature, especially for participants who live in arid climates. On some days, rainstorms may require us to make a hasty retreat for cover, but most rainy situations can be managed with waterproof outerwear or a personal umbrella.

In the high mountains of Taiwan, around 7,000 ft. elevation and above, it can be quite cold at night and in the early morning, so plan accordingly with some cool-weather layering options and light gloves. On the smaller islands, which are slightly farther north and outside the tropics, the climate is generally quite comfortable, neither too hot nor too cold, often in the 60s -70s F. However, the weather here is mostly influenced by the ocean, so it can be cloudy or foggy at times and there will often be cool breezes coming off the water. Conditions here can change quickly, especially in coastal areas and the higher hills of Amami. A lightweight windbreaker is recommended.

Everyone's traveling needs are different, and a detailed travel planning checklist is available from our web site. Here are a few items you definitely should not forget:

PASSPORT: We will visit two different Asian countries on this tour, and you must carry a passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure date, with at least one blank page for entry & exit stamps. Non-U.S. citizens should check with their local consulate or embassy for additional instructions.

Medical Lists: List of medications you take regularly, including dosages; list of medical conditions or special care requirements; and your list of emergency contacts. We request this information with your registration, but traveling with redundant information is a good practice.

Clothing: Lightweight field clothing, preferably long-sleeved shirts and long pants for protection against bugs, wind and sun (although insects will rarely hinder our birding). Ideal clothing incorporates synthetic fabrics or wool that wick moisture, dry quickly, and resist wrinkles. Rainwear and/or a pocket umbrella are essential, and you may want a wide-brimmed rain hat in addition to a sun hat. Limited laundry services are available at some locations during the tour, but you may want to be prepared to hand-wash some of your clothes.

Footwear: We recommend lightweight, waterproof hiking shoes or high-top hiking boots and something lighter still for casual walks and time spent in town, airports, etc. Athletic shoes will not keep your feet dry and may become quite soiled and wet if we encounter muddy conditions.

Misc. Equipment: Sunscreen, sunglasses, light daypack or fanny pack, bug repellent, headlamp or flashlight, batteries, and binoculars (your guides will bring a couple of extra pairs and a spotting scope). Electricity runs in 100 volts in Japan and 110-220 volts in Taiwan; typical U.S. 2-prong plugs should work in both nations so there is no need for a power adapter if coming from the U.S.

Luggage: We suggest one medium-to-large bag and whatever you can manage as carry-on luggage. Your carry-on should have all of your necessities in case your checked bags get delayed, including change of clothing, money, travel documents, toiletries, medicines, and optical equipment. Once we book the internal flights for our trip, we will contact you with the baggage weight restrictions for those flights.

Cash & Credit Cards: For personal essentials, and in case of emergency or other unplanned hindrances, you should have multiple ways to spend money. The unit of currency in Taiwan is the New Taiwan Dollar (TWD); the unit of currency in Japan is the Japanese Yen (JPY). You should be able to purchase TWD and JPY at your home bank or your departing airport, but don't expect easy access to cash exchange during much of the tour. Our lodges and most local shops typically accept major credit cards, though cash is the most efficient way to pay for alcohol and random souvenirs.



**Endemic
Amami
Thrush**

HEALTH & SAFETY

Some of our birding sites will be several hours from traditional medical facilities, so we expect participants to be in good health and comfortable with moderate activity levels. The weather will be everything from warm and humid to chilly, wet, and windy, especially in the high mountains of Taiwan. Many of our birding sites will be under forest canopies, which helps moderate the effects of sunshine and rain.

If you are taking prescription medications or over-the-counter medicine, be sure to bring ample supplies to get through the trip safely, plus extra days in case of delayed travel schedules. We recommend that you travel with all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging.

Please consult your physician regarding medicines required for traveling in this part of Asia. Before you visit your physician, you may want to review the general health information for travelers available online from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). You should be current on your routine vaccines before the trip, all of which you should discuss with your doctor.

If you have any health problems that you fear may limit your enjoyment of the tour or that may significantly restrict your activities—such as diabetes, asthma, heart troubles, difficulty walking, etc.—please contact us *and* talk with your doctor to discuss whether this tour will be suitable for you.

TRAVEL PLANNING

Our tour begins at Taipei-Taoyuan Airport (TPE) and ends at Amami Airport (ASJ). TPE can be reached directly from the U.S., as well as several major Asian flight hubs, including Seoul (ICN), Tokyo-Narita (NRT) and Hong Kong (HKG), among others. ASJ can only be reached by flights from within Japan, such as our originating flight at Okinawa-Naha (OKA).

You have multiple options for your departure from Amami, depending on whether you wish to travel directly back to the states or to extend your holiday in Asia. If you wish to explore Japan, flights from Amami can get you to Tokyo (Honshu), Osaka (Honshu), Kagoshima (Kyushu), Fukuoka (Kyushu), and several of the smaller islands in the Ryukyu chain. To leave Japan, you will need to fly to one of the larger airports above or return to Okinawa; this also applies for a return flight to Taipei, Taiwan.

We recommend that you arrive in Taiwan at least one day early to rest after the long flights from home. You may also want to explore Taipei on your own to experience the amazing night markets, numerous museums, towering skyscrapers, high-speed trains, parks and public gardens, restaurants and food vendors, and the general hustle and bustle of this modern city. If you arrive early, you will need to make your own reservations and arrange your own transfer to the Novotel Hotel in downtown Taoyuan.

We strongly recommend that you purchase travel insurance with your airline ticket! We have experience with medical emergencies in foreign countries, and travel insurance has always been of great benefit. Travel insurance covers costs associated with flight delays, trip cancellation, illness, medical expenses, lost baggage, and emergency transportation. If insurance is not offered when you purchase your flight, we recommend Travelex Insurance Services. Most U.S. health insurance plans do not cover costs incurred outside the US, although many credit cards include travel insurance when used to purchase your flights and tour fee.



DAILY ITINERARY

The itinerary below outlines our basic plan for 14 nights; 8 in Taiwan, and 3 each in Okinawa & Amami, Japan. This includes 13 full-days of birding plus two travel days. It does not include the travel days to get to Taiwan or to return home from Amami; you should plan additional days for your own travel. We may shuffle our daily plans depending on weather and our success at finding certain wildlife species.

Note that we will stay at most locations a minimum of 2 nights. This will allow us to relax at our lodges and spend extra time immersing ourselves in each region's wild habitats and local culture.

Sunday, March 18—Guides meet participants at Taiwan-Taoyuan airport (TPE); dinner and night at [Novotel Hotel, Taoyuan](#).

Monday, March 19—Drive into the mountains with multiple birding stops, headed for [Dasyueshan National Forest Recreation Area](#); dinner and night at Dasyueshan.

Tuesday, March 20—All-day birding in the forested mountains of Dasyueshan, with optional afternoon at leisure; dinner and night in Dasyueshan.

Wednesday, March 21—Final birding in the Dasyueshan. Drive to Puli village with many birding stops along the way; dinner and night at [Beauty Spring 'N' Harvest Guest House](#) in Puli.

Thursday, March 22—Birding around Puli with optional afternoon at leisure; dinner and night at our Guest House.

Friday, March 23—Drive to Kwanghua village and birding the private reserve at Firefly Lodge; dinner and night at Firefly Lodge & Teahouse.

Saturday, March 24—All-day birding around Kwanghua, with optional afternoon at leisure; dinner and night at Firefly Lodge.

Sunday, March 25—Morning birding at Firefly Lodge. Drive back to Taoyuan with birding stops in Kwantien, Tainan, and Huben; dinner and night [Novotel Taoyuan](#).

Monday, Mar 26—Morning flight to Naha, Okinawa, Japan. Drive to Yanbaru Forest Reserve, birding in the late afternoon; dinner and night at [Ada Garden Hotel](#); optional night-birding.

Tuesday, March 27—All day birding in Yanbaru and northern Okinawa; dinner, night at Ada Hotel.

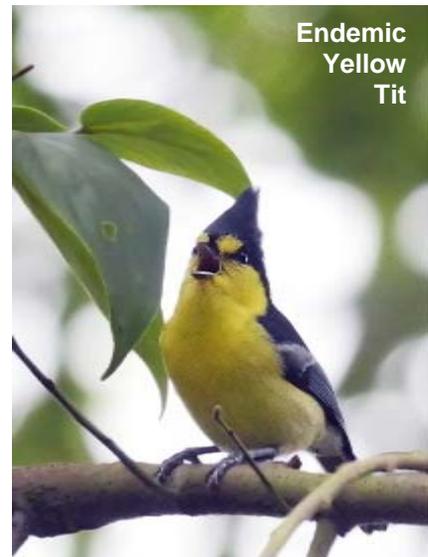
Wednesday, March 28—Morning birding in Yanbaru. Drive to central Okinawa; dinner and night at [Miyuki Hamabaru Resort](#).

Thursday, March 29—Morning birding at Kin farmland. Drive to Naha airport for afternoon flight to Amami. Drive from Amami airport to Amami City; dinner and night at [Sun Plaza Hotel](#).

Friday, March 30—All day birding on Amami; night at Sun Plaza Hotel; optional night-birding.

Saturday, March 31—Birding on Amami with optional afternoon at leisure. Dinner and night at Sun Plaza Hotel; optional night-birding.

Sunday, Apr 1—Casual coastal birding and farewell meal. Drive to Amami airport. *End of tour.*



TOUR FEE

Your tour fee includes:

- Airport transfers from Taipei-Taoyuan airport (TPE) to hotel in Taoyuan;
- Inter-island flights from Taiwan to Okinawa, and Okinawa to Amami;
- All ground transportation during the tour, including driver, if necessary;
- Lodging at single- or double-occupancy;
- All meals and non-alcohol beverages;
- Snacks and drinks throughout the tour;
- All taxes, permits, entry fees, and service-related gratuities;
- A \$100 donation toward habitat conservation in the Yanbaru of Okinawa;
- Instruction and leadership of 2 U.S. guides plus local guide.

The fee does NOT include:

- Round-trip flights: into Taipei, Taiwan, and out of Amami, Japan;
- Travel insurance (strongly recommended for this trip; contact us with any questions);
- Adult beverages;
- Souvenirs and other personal items (such as telephone, laundry, etc.);
- Guides' gratuities, which are never expected but always appreciated based on your satisfaction with our service. (As a general guideline, the maximum gratuity for such a tour would be about 10%, and we will pool tips for the tour and divide them equally among your three guides).



2018 Basic Tour Fee: \$7,575 double—\$8,570 single

Deposit, due with registration: \$500/person

Balance Due: \$7,075 double—\$8,070 single

NOTE: Our tour fees are structured to allow the best possible client-to-guide ratio for an optimal birding experience. If we run the tour with 4 clients, we will operate with one U.S. guide, plus our local guide; if we have 5 or 6 clients, we will bring a second U.S. guide.

REFUND POLICY: Once we confirm the tour has reached the minimum registration, \$100 of your deposit becomes non-refundable. If you cancel your reservation more than 120 days prior to the tour, you will be refunded any payments above the \$100 from your deposit. If you cancel between 119 and 60 days prior to the tour, you will receive a 50% refund of all fees paid. If you cancel less than 60 days prior, you forfeit your entire tour fee, unless you can fill your space with another birder. If you cancel at any time, your deposit and a portion of any other retained fees are transferrable to any Paradise Birding tour at any time in the future. If we cancel the trip for any reason, all payments will be refunded, including the \$100 from your deposit.

TOUR REGISTRATION

To reserve your space for this tour, submit your \$500 deposit (per person) with the registration forms that follow this tour summary. These are also available to download as a PDF file from our web site.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have.

We look forward to seeing you in Taiwan and Japan in 2018!

Paradise Birding
P.O. Box 547
Sisters, OR 97759

steve@paradisebirding.com
541-408-1753

SUGGESTED READING

Birds of East Asia by Mark Brazil (2009).





Paradise Birding Tour Confirmation and Registration

Greetings! This form will confirm your registration on the following tour:

TITLE: _____ **DATE(S):** _____

Please complete and return to the address below, along with either your \$500 deposit (includes nonrefundable \$100) or the complete tour fee. If you have already paid your deposit, your balance is due 90 days prior to the tour for domestic, 120 days for international tours. For your convenience, we happily accept VISA, Mastercard and American Express. Please also complete the Liability Waiver found on page two. THANK YOU!

Full Name: _____ Nickname (if any): _____

Mailing Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Sex: _____ Birth date: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Alt. Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Paradise Birding T-shirt preference; please circle your size and color. We'll do our best to accommodate you!

Size: Small—Medium—Large—Extra Large—XX Large | **Color:** Unisex (Blue—Green) or Ladies (Lavender—Yellow)

Would you like to receive periodic emailed updates & birding tips from Paradise Birding? Yes_ No _

Please tell us how you first heard about this Paradise Birding tour: _____

Roommate preference: *(If you will travel with a birding partner and wish to share a room, or if you are willing to share a room with another birder of the same sex, please indicate this here. If we are unable to match you with another birder, or where only single rooms are available, you will responsible for the single tour fee.)*

Dietary Preferences: *(Drink & food preferences. Please be specific. Our tours are often in remote regions without a wide variety of food choices, so we do our shopping for snacks and picnic lunches in advance. Also list any food allergies or dietary restrictions.)*

Medical Information: *(Please alert us to any medical or physical conditions that may affect you or your group's activities on an outdoor tour in remote locations; include any history of heart trouble, asthma, diabetes or epilepsy, as well as environmental and medication allergies. Please also include current prescription medications being taken. Use the back of this page or another sheet if necessary. NOTE: Anyone with an existing or potentially serious medical condition should consult a physician before participating in any outdoor or travel adventure.*

Emergency Contact: *(Please include detailed contact information for the person or persons we should contact in case of an emergency.)*

Name(s) and relationship(s) to you: _____

Contact number(s): _____

Credit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____ or Check #: _____

Signature: _____ Charge/Check Amount: \$ _____

Paradise Birding LLC | Stephen Shunk, Owner & Lead Guide

P.O. Box 547 | Sisters, OR 97759 | PH: 541-408-1753 | E-MAIL: steve@paradisebirding.com



HIKING AND BIRD WATCHING PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT and RELEASE and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK

In consideration of the services of PARADISE BIRDING LLC, their officers, agents, employees, volunteers, advertisers, and stock holders, and all other persons or entities associated with this business (hereinafter collectively referred to as PARADISE BIRDING LLC) I agree as follows:

Although PARADISE BIRDING LLC has taken reasonable steps to provide you with appropriate equipment and skilled guides so you can enjoy an activity for which you may not be skilled, we wish to remind you this activity is not without risk. Certain risks cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of this activity. The same elements that contribute to the unique character of this activity can be causes of loss or damage to your equipment or accidental injury, illness, or in extreme cases, permanent trauma, paralysis, or death. We do not want to frighten you or reduce your enthusiasm for this activity, but we do think it is important for you to know in advance what to expect and that you be informed of the inherent risks. The following describes some, but not all, of those risks:

- 1.) Accidents can occur on land. You could slip or fall during a hike, causing damage to equipment, personal injury, or even death. You could also otherwise be injured while hiking or visiting other land-based phenomena.
- 2.) You could suffer injuries or trauma during the land and air transportation portions of the trip, in vehicles or aircraft.
- 3.) Exposure to the natural elements can be uncomfortable or harmful. You should be aware that this exposure could cause hypothermia, sunburn, illness from drinking water or food, and/or dehydration.
- 4.) You will be staying at accommodations not owned or operated by PARADISE BIRDING LLC. You could suffer injury, damage to equipment, trauma, or even death while staying at these places.
- 5.) Errors on the part of PARADISE BIRDING LLC and its employees, including insufficient instruction or assistance.

I am aware that this birding tour, including related transportation and activities, entails risks of injury or death to myself. I understand the description of these risks is not complete and that other unknown or unanticipated risks may result in injury or death. I agree to assume responsibility for the risks identified herein and other risks inherent to a birding trip. My participation in this activity is purely voluntary and I elect to participate in spite of the risks.

I certify that I am fully capable of participating in this activity. Therefore, I assume full responsibility for myself, including my minor children, for bodily injury, death, and loss of personal property and expenses thereof as a result of those inherent risks and dangers and of my negligence in participating in this activity.

I agree that if any portion of this agreement is found to be void or unenforceable, the remaining portions shall remain in full force and effect. In the event that I file a lawsuit against PARADISE BIRDING LLC, I agree to do so solely in the state of Oregon, and I further agree that the substantive law of that state shall apply in that action without regard to the conflict of law rules of that state.

I have read, understood, and accepted the terms and conditions stated herein and acknowledge that this agreement shall be effective and binding upon myself, my heirs, assigns, personal representatives and estate for all members of my family including any minors accompanying me. I acknowledge I am not relying on any oral, written, or visual representations or statements made by PARADISE BIRDING LLC, including those made in its brochure and other promotional material, to induce me to go on the birding tour. I also acknowledge that in any and all promotional material the use of the word "safe," "safe as possible," or the like does not mean, imply or suggest that this trip is without risk. I have also read and agree to comply with the PARADISE BIRDING LLC cancellation policy.

Photographic Release: PARADISE BIRDING LLC reserves the right to take photographs or film records of any PARADISE BIRDING LLC tour, program, or activity, and each trip member hereby agrees that PARADISE BIRDING LLC may use such photographs or film records for promotional, commercial, or any other marketing purposes, including Internet use.

Name (please print): _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

If under 18, parent or guardian signature: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Cell/Primary Phone: _____ Alt. Phone: _____

Name of Trip: _____ Trip Date: _____