

CHINA 2018

Itinerary

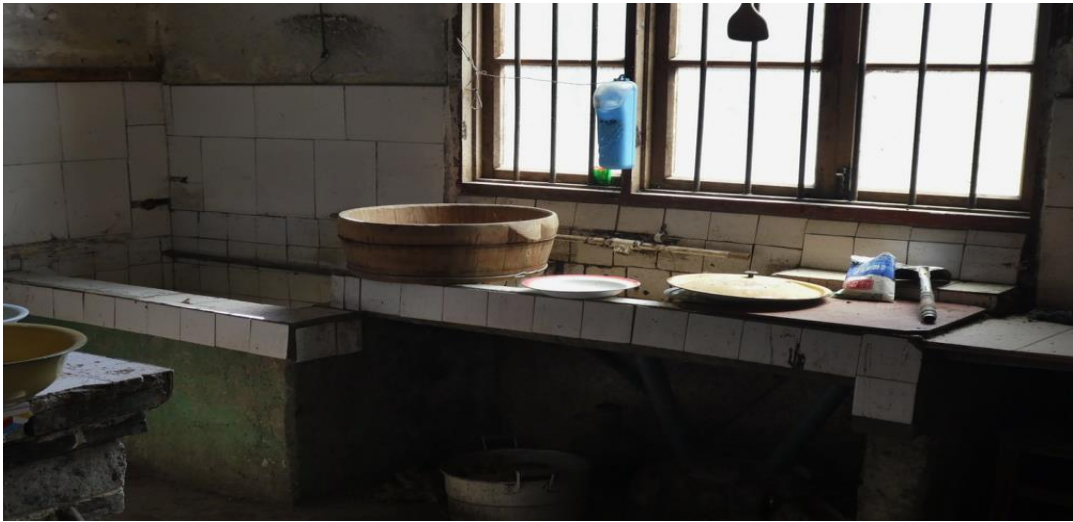
Mar 14 Flight MF812 from Amsterdam to Xiamen. Departure 12.35.

Mar 15 Arrival 06.20. Picked up by bird guide Shi Jinze. Birdquest (www.birdquest-tours.com) provided me a local contact, Mrs. Summer, who arranged the logistics including the local birder. Taxi to Xiamen North High Speed Train station, train D6524 to Sanming North (8:46-11:20). Picked up by driver and 1.5-2 hours drive to the Junfeng Temple near a village, Ziyun. During the drive, a few Ring-necked Pheasants were seen in flight.



Overall, the Buddhist Junfeng temple looks a bit run down and shabby, elevation about 800 meter. From a bird hide there is a nice overview of a little meadow bordering surrounding forest, partially bamboo. During our first late afternoon attempt, we had stunning views of two male Cabot's Tragopan and a female Elliot's Pheasant. Nice weather, about 20-25 °C. Dinner opposite the guest house, eating with chop sticks from shared bowls of rice, meat, vegetables, etc.





Mar 16 Despite the hard bed, I slept very well and it took Shi Jinze some effort to wake me up. The room is in a “guest house” without too much comfort, with a shared squatting toilet. The toilet is at the first or second floor, with an active bee hive next to the entrance door.



Visited the temple from 06.30-09.00. Great views of males and females Elliot’s Pheasant and a female Cabot’s Tragopan. Then Shi Jinze and I walked along a pond (artificial lake?) to a small village. A very nice walk with many butterflies, insects, rice fields, mixed forest, bamboo forest, etc.





Bamboo partridge heard. After lunch, again opposite the guest house, walked for about half an hour with a young dog. Nice dog, well kept, but chained and clearly needing a stroll. At 14.00 "Stone" (Shi Jinze) and I walked to a bird hide close to the village. The walk was through some rural area with rice fields, with many Black-faced Bunting.



Stayed in bird hide from about 15.00 to 18.00, and despite the fact that the starbird didn't show up (White-necked Partridge), we had great views of Grey Tree-Magpie, Red-flanked Bluetail and Silver Pheasant. Fine weather.



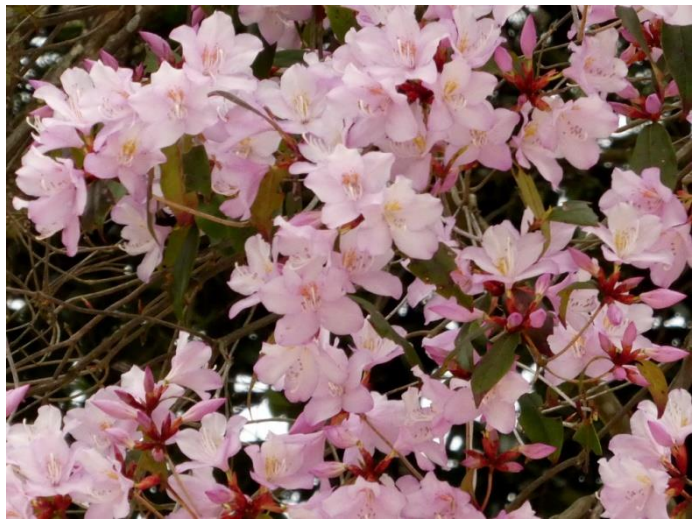
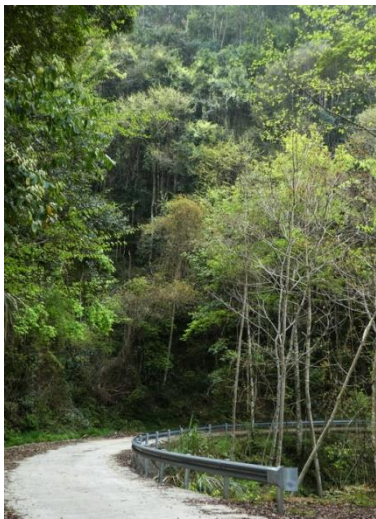
Mar 17 Despite being tired, had difficulties to sleep. Breakfast at 07.00, walk from village to lunch. Spend some time in an open pasture, where we saw several a handful of raptors, including Indian Black Eagle.



After lunch again a stroll with the young dog, and at 14.00 by car to a 'close-by' walk. A long paved forest path with stairs with educational signs all over the place, designed as a tourist trap, but bit run down and apparently without many visitors. Briefly saw flying White-necklaced Partridge.



At the end of the day we spend several hours in well forested hills, with flowering Magnolia and Rhododendron. Still beautiful weather, about 20 °C, sun.



Mar 18 Departure at 06.00. Didn't sleep to well, bed not too comfortable and warm, but being waked up by the local roosters. Breakfast "at street" and again bird watching in the mountains.



Best birds were two single Red-headed Trogon, the last one –a male- distant but otherwise seen well. Weather still fine, and departure at 14.00 by train to Xiamen, and dropped by Shi Jinze at the Swiss International Hotel Xiamen. Nice hotel with a great view from my hotel window, but the airco wasn't too active and the bed was very hard. Paracetamol at 01.30 to catch some sleep.



Mar 19 From March 19 to 22, attended the NanoCytometry Workshop at Xiamen University upon invitation by professor Xiaomei Yan, College of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering. Two lectures given. Excellent breakfast with real coffee! Day trip to the island of Gulangyu with several students, Maggie, Joanne Lannigan and Paul Robinson.



The island is a well known location for marriages, and Chinese Blackbird is common.

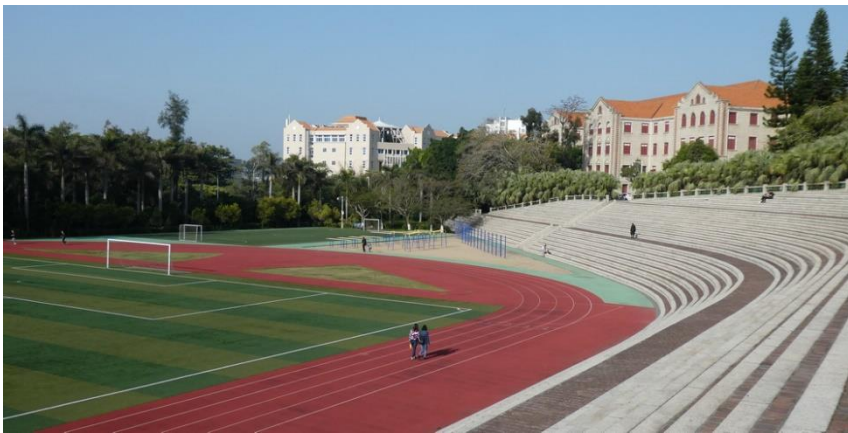




Visited the botanical garden, an organ museum, a piano museum, and a museum about the local history. The ferries, which go every 15 or 20 minutes to the island, attract a surprising number of Chinese tourists. Beautiful weather.



Mar 21 Few birds at the university campus and at the temple.



Mar 22 Walk in the botanical garden next to Xiamen University.





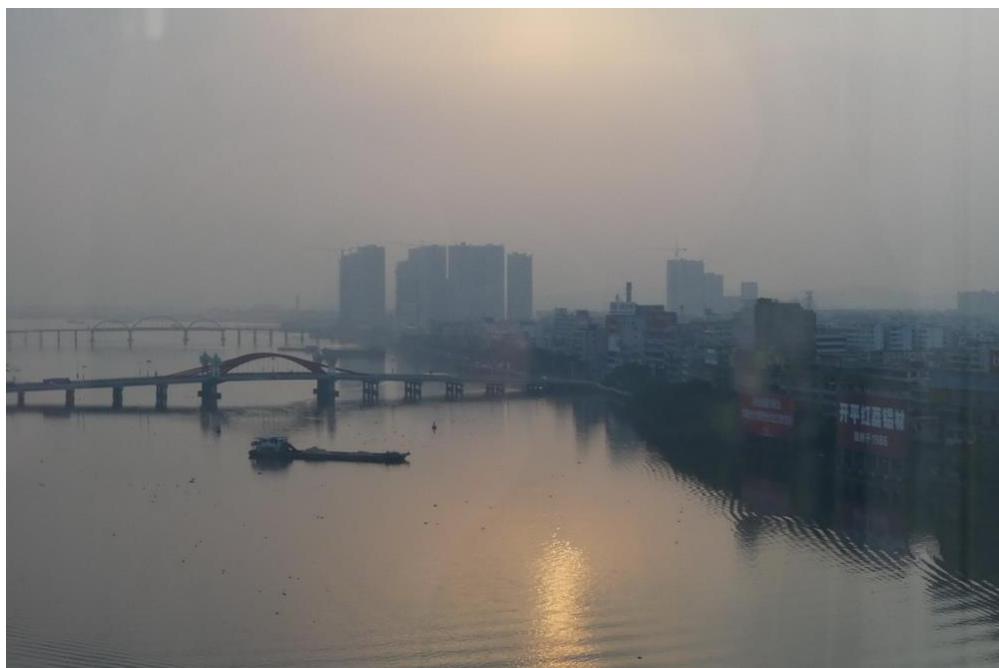
Flight MF8391 from Xiamen to Guangzhou (15.50-17.20). Overnight stay at the Nanfang hotel at the campus of the university.

Mar 23 Morning lecture at Academic Conference on Laboratory Technology for Thrombosis and Haemostasis 2018, at the Nanfang Hospital, Southern Medical University of Guangzhou. After lunch with both rice wine and red wine, departure at about 14.00 to Birds' Heaven, Xinhui. Birds' Heaven is one of the most well-known spots for bird watching in China due to an article written by Ba Jin, a famous Chinese writer.





The reserve is a small island, on which a large Banyan tree grows, which was apparently planted in the Song Dynasty (960-1279). After some walking and a boat tour, another 1.5 hour drive to an enormous hotel. Two bathrooms! Below: early morning view from hotel room.



Mar 24 Morning drive to Diaolou, but the car got stuck in a traffic jam. National (or local) tomb cleaning (sweeping) day. We ended up with a walk over a little dike with a village on one side and rice fields etc. on the other side. Sunny and sticky. People were busy cleaning graves, slaughtering and offering ducks (which they later take home to eat with the family), lots of firecrackers, etc. Some typical road side birds like Zitting Cistacola and Yellow-bellied Prinia.





Afternoon visit to Diolou, known for its “clock towers”, fortified multi-storey watchtowers. Most towers were build early 20th century by Chinese who had been abroad. A typical Chinese tourist trap on the one hand, on the other hand also a very nice village. Excellent weather. March 25: flight Guanghzou to Amsterdam (00.25-06.55).



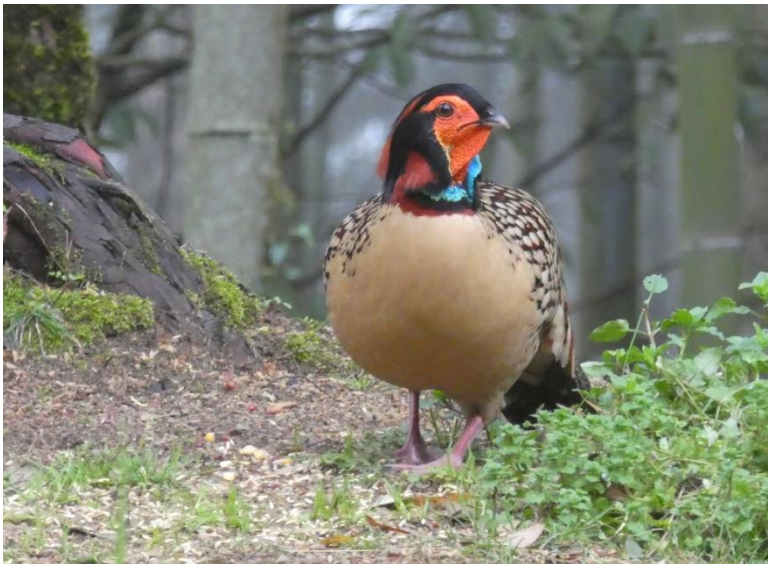
BIRDS

ANATIDAE

1. **Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos* – A few birds at the Botanical garden of Xiamen University, March 22.

PHASIANIDAE

2. **White-necklaced Partridge** *Arborophila gingica* – A single bird seen flying in the forest, 2 or 3 more heard on March 16.
3. **Chinese Bamboo Partridge** *Bambusicola thoracicus* – Heard on March 15-17.
4. **Cabot's Tragopan** *Tragopan caboti* – Great views of two males at the temple on March 15, a single female on March 16.



5. **Elliot's Pheasant** *Syrnaticus ellioti* – A female near the temple on March 15, great views of a male on March 16.



6. **Silver Pheasant** *Lophura nycthemera* – A total of 7 birds from the hide close to Ziyun.



7. **Common (Ring-necked) Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus* – Seen while traveling to Ziyun on March 15. Also several birds seen near Ziyun on March 16.

PODICEPEDIDAE

8. **Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis* – Several birds at the Botanical garden of Xiamen.

THRESKIORNITHIDAE

9. **Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia* – A single bird flying over while trying to reach Diaolou, March 24.

ARDEIDAE

10. **Black-crowned Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax* – About 200-500 birds at Birds' Heaven, March 23.
11. **Chinese Pond Heron** *Ardeola bacchus* – At least 100 birds at Birds' Heaven, March 23.
12. **Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea* – About 50 birds, as previous species.
13. **(Eastern) Great Egret** *Ardea (alba) modesta* – As previous species.
14. **Little Egret** *Egretta garzeta* – Over 200 birds.

ACCIPITRIDAE

15. **Black-eared Kite** *Milvus lineatus* – A single distant bird seen flying when at the boat to Gulangyu, March 19.
16. **Crested Serpent Eagle** *Spilornis cheela* – A single bird on March 16.
17. **Crested Goshawk** *Accipiter trivirgatus* – A single bird on March 15. Great views of 2 birds on March 16.
18. **Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus* – A single bird on March 16.
19. **Indian Black Eagle** *Ictinaetus malaiensis* – Possibly one seen on March 15, two single birds seen well on March 16.
20. **Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis* – A single and very distant bird flying over, migrating. Likely this species.

LARIDAE

21. **Black-headed Gull** *Chrococephalus ridibundus* – Several birds seen from the boat to Gulangyu, March 19.
22. **Vega (Mongolian) Gull** *Larus (vegae) mongolicus* – Common near Gulangyu.
23. **Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne caspia* – A single bird at Xiamen.

COLUMBIDAE

24. **Oriental (Rufous) Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis* – Two birds seen well from the hide near Ziyun.
25. **Spotted Dove** *Spilopelia chinensis* – Few birds at Birds' Heaven, March 23.

CUCULIDAE

26. **Greater Coucal** *Centropus chinensis* – Two birds flying at Birds' Heaven, March 23.

STRIGIDAE

27. **Collared Owlet** *Glaucidium brodiei* – Heard on March 15 and 16.

APODIDAE

28. **House (Little) Swift** *Apus nipalensis* – At least 10 birds at Birds' Heaven, March 23.

TROGONIDAE

29. **Red-headed Trogon** *Harpactes erythrocephalus* – Brief views of a single bird on March 16, great views of a single perched male on March 17. A third bird briefly seen on March 17. Picture below, left. Picture below, right: *Speckled piculet*.



ALCEDINIDAE

30. **Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis* – Heard on March 15.

RAMPHASTIDAE

31. **Great Barbet** *Psilopogon virens* – Heard on March 16 and 17.
32. **Black-browed Barbet** *Megalaima nuchalis oorti* – Heard on March 16 and 17.

PICIDAE

- 33. **Speckled Piculet** *Picumnus innomiatatus* – Great views of 2 birds in a mixed flock on March 17.
- 34. **Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker** *Yungipicus canicapillus* – Two birds seen on March 16.
- 35. **Great-spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major* – Heard on March 17.

PLATYSTEIRIDAE

- 36. **Large Woodshrike** *Tephrodornis virgatus* – Great views of a flock, 6-10 birds, on March 17.



CAMPEPHAGIDEA

- 37. **Grey-chinned Minivet** *Pericrocotus ethologus* – Three females and two males on March 15. At least 5-10 birds on March 16.
- 38. **Scarlet Minivet** *Pericrocotus flammeus* – A male and two females, March 17.

LANIIDAE

- 39. **Long-tailed Shrike** *Lanius schach* – Single birds on March 17, and at Birds' Heaven, March 23.

CORVIDAE

- 40. **Red-billed Blue Magpie** *Urocissa erythrorhyncha* – Seen on most days in low numbers.



41. **Grey Treepie** *Dendrocitta formosa* – Stunning views of a flock, about 20 birds, from the hide near Ziyun, March 15.



42. **Eurasian Magpie** *Pica pica* – Two birds on March 17.

PARIDAE

43. **Yellow-cheeked Tit** *Periparus sibilator* – Great views of a single bird on March 16. Also a single bird on March 17 (picture below, left).
44. **Japanese Tit** *Parus minor* – About 5-6 birds on March 16 and 17.
45. **Sultan Tit** *Melanochlora sultanea* – A single male seen on March 17 (picture below, right).



HIRUNDINIDAE

46. **Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* – At least 10 birds on March 17. Also at Birds' Heaven, March 23.
47. **Red-rumped Swallow** *Cecropis daurica* – At least 10 birds, also breeding in Ziyun, on March 16. Another 20+ birds on March 17. Also seen on March 23.

AEGITHALIDAE

48. **Black-throated Tit** *Aegithalos concinnus* – Two birds on March 16.

PYCNONOTIDAE

49. **Collared Finchbill** *Spizixos semitorques* – A flock of 5 birds near the hide, March 15. A single bird on March 16.



50. **Chinese (Light-vented) Bulbul** *Pycnonotus sinensis* – Five or 6 on March 16. Common at Gulangyu, March 19. Also seen at Birds' Heaven, March 23.
51. **Mountain Bulbul** *Ixos mccllellandii* – Three birds well seen on March 16 (below, left).



52. **Chestnut Bulbul** *Hemixos castanonotus* – Common, at least 10-20 birds on March 15.
53. **Himalayan Black Bulbul** *Hypsipetes leucocephalus* – Two birds seen from the hide near Ziyun on March 15, striking subspecies with a white head (*leucocephalus*). A single bird, the entirely black form *nigerrimus*, seen. Apparently, this is just the border between these two very distinctive subspecies (picture above, right).
54. **Red-whiskered Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus* – Several birds at the Botanical garden of Xiamen University, March 22, and at Birds' Heaven, March 23.

SYLVIIDAE

55. **Pallas's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus* – One seen and one heard on March 15.
56. **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus* – A single bird seen on March 15.
57. **Kloss's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus ogilviegranti* – At least 3 birds on March 16. Characteristic wing fluttering while feeding.

CISTICOLIDAE

- 58. **Zitting Cisticola (Fan-tailed Warbler)** *Cisticola juncidis* – Several birds on March 24.
- 59. **Yellow-bellied Prinia** *Prinia flaviventris* – A single bird on March 24.
- 60. **Plain Prinia** *Prinia inornata* – A single bird on March 16.
- 61. **Common Tailorbird** *Orhotomus sutoriums* – Two birds at the Botanical garden of Xiamen University, March 22.

TIMALIIDAE

- 62. **Grey-sided Scimitar Babbler** *Pomatorhinus swinhoei* – Heard on both March 16 and 16.
- 63. **Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler** *Pomatorhinus ruficollis* – Heard on March 15.
- 64. **Huet's Fulvetta** *Alcippe hueti* – Common March 15-17.
- 65. **Dusky Fulvetta** *Alcippe brunnea* – Heard on March 16.
- 66. **White-bellied Erpornis** *Erpornis zantholeuca* – Two or 3 birds on March 16. A single bird on March 17.
- 67. **Masked Laughingthrush** *Garrulax perspicillatus* – Three birds on March 17. Great views of a single bird at the campus of Xiamen University, March 21.
- 68. **Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush** *Garrulax pectoralis* – Great views of 2 birds on March 16.



ZOSTEROPIDAE

- 69. **Japanese White-eye** *Zosterops japonicus* – At least 10 birds seen from the hide near Ziyun, March 15.

SITTIDAE

- 70. **Eurasian Nuthach** *Sitta europaea* – Heard on March 17.

STURNIDAE

- 71. **Crested Myna** *Acridotheres cristatellus* – Seen on March 17, and at Gulangyu, March 19. Also seen at Birds' Heaven, March 23.
- 72. **White-cheeked Starling** *Spodiopsar cineraceus* – A few birds at Gulangyu, March 19. Also seen at Xiamen University.

73. **Daurian Starling** *Sturnus sturninus* – Likely this species at Xiamen University campus, March 21. Another 2 birds, likely this species, at Birds' Heaven, March 23.

TURDIDAE

74. **Chinese (Mandarin) Blackbird** *Turdus mandarinus* – Two single birds on March 17, but common at Gulangyu, March 19, and at Xiamen University.

MUSCICAPIDAE

75. **Oriental Magpie-Robin** *Copsychus saularis* – A male and female at Gulangyu, March 19. A male at the Xiamen University campus.
76. **Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus* – A single bird from the hide near Ziyun, March 15. (picture below, left).



77. **White-crowned Forktail** *Enicurus leschenaulti* – Two or three birds daily, March 15-17 (picture above, right).
78. **Daurian Redstart** *Phoenicurus aureus* – Single birds (all male) on March 15-17.



CHLOROPSEIDAE

79. **Orange-bellied leafbird** *Chloropsis hardwickii* – A male and female on March 16.

PASSERIDAE

80. **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus* – Seen on March 15-17. Common at Xiamen.

ESTRILDIDAE

81. **White-rumped Munia** *Lonchura striata* – Common near the temple.

MOTACILLIDAE

82. **White (Amur) Wagtail** *Motacilla (alba) leucopsis* – Rather common on March 15-17. Several Wagtail ssp. at Birds' Heaven, March 23.

83. **Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni* – About 10 birds on March 15 and March 16.

EMBERIZIDAE

84. **Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla* – At least 2 birds on March 15.

85. **Black-faced Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala* – Common near the village on March 15. Picture below, right. Picture below, left: *White-rumped Munia*.



MAMMALS

Père David's Rock Squirrel *Scuriotamias davidianus* – One seen from the hide near Ziyun, March 15.

MISCELLANEOUS

Tortoise sp. Botanical garden of Xiamen University. Several insects seen during the walk on March 16.



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