

# Thailand

## South

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### Participants

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**Whiskered Treeswift**

A personal account by Martin Tribe

**Day 1** Our journey took us from London Heathrow to Mumbai where we changed planes to fly to Bangkok, arriving in Thailand on the 2nd of February. We were met at Suvarnabhumi Airport, where we spotted our first Red Collared-doves and were driven to the hotel in Petchaburi (also spelt Phetchaburi). We made one stop en route for our first taste of Thai birding to look for jacanas. A marshy area of land gave us five Bronze-winged Jacanas, plus a hovering Pied Kingfisher, a Plaintive Cuckoo in a nearby bush and overhead were Barn Swallows and Germain's Swiftlets. Behind the marshy areas, we saw a lone Eastern Marsh-Harrier and about 20 Grey-headed Lapwings. Nearby were Plain Prinia and Brown Shrike. A little further along the road another stop gave us Green and Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, an Oriental Pratincole, Greater Coucal and Scaly-breasted Munia (Nutmeg Manakin).

After lunch at the hotel we headed out for some more birding, stopping by the side of the road where there is a track running alongside a stream, some marshy land and some dry grassland. Our first birds were two Coppersmith Barbets on a nearby tree and four smart-looking White-vented Mynas. Pond-herons were common although differentiating between Chinese and Javan is pretty well impossible. The best tip I have heard is that in summer Javan prefer beaches and Chinese are never seen on the shore. So, assuming this is also true in winter the birds we saw are most likely Chinese Pond-herons. Streak-eared Bulbuls (a common species) put in an appearance as did a Black-capped Kingfisher and a couple of Pied Fantails. A Red-wattled Lapwing was found and a Thick-billed Warbler heard calling from a bush. Eastern Yellow Wagtails fed on the drier areas where another five Red-wattled Lapwings were found along with Siberian Stonechat, Brown Shrike, Richard's Pipit and an Intermediate Egret. A soaring raptor was a Greater Spotted Eagle and another Plaintive Cuckoo was heard. Olive-backed Sunbirds flitted in various trees and an Indian Roller showed nicely. As we walked back a Yellow Bittern flushed and gave us brief flight views.

Next we went to Pak Thale saltpans to search for waders. A target species here is Spoon-billed Sandpiper but is more likely to be seen in the morning so we planned to return the next day. Waders are why people come here and we saw 30+ Marsh Sandpipers, Curlew Sandpipers, Red-necked and Long-toed Stints, 10+ Broad-billed Sandpipers, Black-winged Stilts, Spotted Redshank, Common Greenshanks, Pacific Golden-plovers, Black-bellied (Grey) Plover, Greater Sand-plover and Common Sandpiper. Common and Little Terns were also here along with a few Brown-headed Gulls. A Wood Sandpiper was found and then it happened, the holy grail, a Spoon-billed Sandpiper was found. The bird I most wanted to see. We spent quite a while admiring this bird as it did its characteristic side-to-side sweeping motion as it fed.

After admiring the spoonie we walked the hundred metres or so to the shore and some mangroves. A Black-shouldered Kite hovered over the mangroves and the mangroves themselves gave some of us a very brief view of an Ashy Tailorbird and better views of Yellow-bellied Gerygone and Common Iora. A Pied Fantail showed well at the edge of a pool and a Collared Kingfisher sat in a nearby tree. The shore itself held Terek Sandpipers, Eurasian Curlews and Common Terns.

Our next location was Laem Pak Bia Project, where, when we stopped at the entrance, we found two male and one female Plain-backed Sparrows. Inside we found some reedy areas, with a Ruddy-breasted Crake showing briefly, open pools, muddy mangroves and saltpans. Scanning through a flock of about 500 Brown-headed Gulls I found a lone Black-headed Gull. Not that exciting for a British birder but interesting none-the-less.

Walking around the area we had Little Cormorants, Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, White-breasted Kingfisher, Red-wattled Lapwings, Red Collared-doves, Spotted Doves and Scaly-breasted Munias. After setting up 'scopes by a marshy area we found two White-breasted Waterhens and, during the next half hour, had superb views of five Ruddy-breasted Crakes and two Slaty-breasted Rails. Also here we recorded Asian Pied Starlings, Paddyfield (Oriental) Pipit, Brahminy Kite and Zebra Dove. Amongst the mangroves we found a few waders: Ruffs, Little Ringed Plovers, Long-toed and Red-necked Stints and Wood Sandpipers. The sun was setting over a nearby temple so we headed back to our hotel having had a very successfully first day.

**Day 2** We began the day at a different part of the extensive saltpans of this area of Thailand. Flocks of waders could be seen but we needed to get closer so after some walking along narrow mud ridges between salt pans we positioned ourselves to scan the flocks. Immediately we had one of our target birds, Nordmann's Greenshank. Another rare and declining wader, we were privileged to see quite a large chunk of the world population as, in total, we found 54 birds. Other waders here were Great Knots, Kentish and Black-bellied Plovers, Pacific Golden-plovers, Spotted Redshanks, Red-necked and Long-toed Stints, Marsh, Broad-billed and Curlew Sandpipers, Sanderlings and Little Ringed Plovers. Brown-headed Gulls, 65 Caspian Terns and some Little Terns were also seen as were 10 Painted Storks.

Next we visited another area of saltpans where we found more of the same birds plus our one and only Temminck's Stint. We were checking all the flocks of Black-tailed Godwits in search of Asian Dowitcher but there are a lot of godwits and a lot of saltpans. We did check a flock of 100+ Black-tailed Godwits but no dowitchers so we moved to another site and check through another few hundred godwits, sadly with no success. However, we did find another Spoon-billed Sandpiper in a place where they have never before been recorded. As ever waders were everywhere with Great Knot, Nordmann's Greenshank, Greater and Lesser Sand-plovers, Broad-billed and Marsh Sandpipers, Kentish Plover and Red-necked Stint. One Red-necked Stint spent a lot of time chasing off the Spoon-billed Sandpiper, despite the latter being a bigger bird.

Now it was time for lunch by a river and a boat ride down the river to a sandspit. Lunch was good as ever and the 20-minute boat ride gave us Black-capped and Collared Kingfishers. At the sand spit we all leapt from the boat to avoid landing in the water and walked only a few metres to where 'scope some plovers. Immediately we had two birds I really wanted to see: Malaysian and Kentish (*dealbatus* White-faced) Plovers, at least five of the former and a pair of the latter. The male Kentish Plover was very white faced when it looked directly at us. A dark-phase Pacific Reef-egret landed on some rocks off shore and three Grey-headed Lapwings flew over some nearby trees. A nearby island gave us Common, Little, Great Crested and a lone Lesser Crested Tern plus Greater Sand-plover and Sanderling.

Returning to the place where we had lunch we found plates of cake awaiting us and as we ate these we discussed whether to return to the saltpans to check more godwit flocks for the dowitchers or drive to a dry woodland (not on the planned itinerary) for species we would not get elsewhere. The woodland choice won out and we were soon in a nice forest listening to calling Lineated Barbets and watching an Ashy Woodswallow flying overhead. A Green-billed Malkoha was found in a nearby tree and Asian Koels could be heard calling. A drongo was found that turned out to be a Bronzed Drongo and, after some mp3 playing, a party of Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrushes was admired as they came to investigate the noise.

We didn't walk that far as we kept getting good birds. Five Orange-breasted Pigeons showed well as did a Coppersmith Barbet. Two Red-wattled Lapwings emerged from the woodland suddenly making a real racket and flew overhead still calling loudly. A Spotted Owlet was found in a conveniently leaf-free tree and was much photographed. The owlet was soon followed by a really smart-looking bird: Black-headed Woodpecker. This bird

showed exceptionally well for a few minutes, moving from tree to tree in a fairly open area in front of us. Definitely one of the birds of the trip. We kept hearing Red-breasted Parakeets but couldn't get a view of one beyond very brief flight views. A Taiga Flycatcher was admired before we found two Rufous Treepies and three Indian Rollers, the latter, in my experience, not usually found in the middle of a forest. Walking back we heard a Rufous Woodpecker and found a stationary Red-breasted Parakeet that showed very well. This was followed by Greater Racket-tailed Drongo and an Asian Barred Owlet. Then it was back to the hotel after another successful day.

**Day 3** Today we began back at the un-named roadside stop we had visited on our first day. However, we were there a lot earlier in the day this time. The usual and ubiquitous Germain's Swiflets and Asian Palm-swifts soared overhead and a Black-naped Oriole sat in a tree with a Coppersmith Barbet. We had a target bird and were scanning the wetter areas. Two Slaty-breasted Rails were found but no target bird. A short way along the path, after flushing a Yellow Bittern from the same place as before, we found what we sought, two Watercocks, both brown female types, but that's what the male looks like in winter so they were probably a pair.

A surprise find was another Asian Barred Owlet, a bird not seen here before and unusually far south for this species. Other birds in the trees were Olive-backed Sunbird, Common Tailorbird, Black-naped Monarch and Yellow-browed Warbler. Then a bird flew across the stream and settled, hidden, in a tree over the path. It soon flew again and we added Black Bittern to our list. In a reedy area some of the group had brief views of a Black-browed Reed Warbler, much easier to see later in the year when they are singing.

Now we had to head to the airport for our flight down to Krabi in peninsular Thailand. After a short and uneventful flight we checked into our hotel and were soon out again walking down the road to a large river, as usual bordered by mangroves. Our first birds were Pacific Swallows and both Plaintive and Banded Bay Cuckoos. An Asian Brown Flycatcher was found followed by Plain-throated (Brown-throated) Sunbirds and two Pink-necked Pigeons.

We set up by the river and soon had great views of a Brown-winged Kingfisher showing well in the open on the other side of the river. Five Chestnut-headed Bee-eaters flew overhead and two Ashy Drongos were found. Over the time we were here, which was a couple of hours, we had 11 Dollarbirds. The sun began to set and we moved to a slightly higher position to get a wider view of the area. Over the far side of the river large bats could be seen zooming around what we assumed was a large cloud of insects. These were soon joined by a total of five Great Eared-nightjars. Closer by we had a least four Large-tailed Nightjars calling and showing. Finally, as we were about the head back to the hotel, a party of 12 Lesser Whistling-ducks flew overhead.

**Day 4** Today we visited Tone Pariwat Wildlife Sanctuary, an area of hills and forest. The van dropped us on the road to the sanctuary and we planned to spend a few hours walking a very short distance as we tracked down the birds of the area. We certainly didn't walk that far and did find a lot of birds. First of them was an Asian Emerald Dove on the road before we had even left the van. After setting up 'scopes we were immediately onto a Dark-sided Flycatcher, apparently feeding from the same branch as it had been two weeks earlier. This was quickly followed by Spectacled and Stripe-throated Bulbuls quite high in the trees and two much closer Dark-necked Tailorbirds. Ochraceous Bulbul and Striped Tit-babbler soon followed as did a very briefly seen Buff-rumped Woodpecker. Black-crested Bulbuls moved past and Vernal Hanging-parrots flew over; a party of Brown-rumped (Swinhoe's) Minivets put in an appearance as did a Greater Green Leafbird, followed by a Crimson-breasted Flowerpecker, ten Chestnut-headed Bee-eaters and a Yellow-bellied Warbler. All this and we hadn't actually moved from where we started!

A short walk of only about 30 metres added two Verditer Flycatchers, soon followed by a superb Black-and-yellow Broadbill. A bird everyone really enjoyed and appreciated as it sat still in the open for us to admire and study.

We saw some activity in a high tree and 'scoped Black-headed and the very-good-looking Scaly-breasted Bulbuls. Closer by was our first Orange-bellied Flowerpecker, a common but beautiful bird, and an Arctic Warbler. Pacific Swifts soared overhead and we found Eastern Crowned Warbler, Streaked Bulbul and a couple Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrikes. Bulbuls kept appearing and we added Red-eyed and Grey-eyed Bulbuls plus Asian Brown Flycatcher.

Moving on little we added two Oriental Honey-buzzards, one pale, one dark, and a pair of Ruby-cheeked Sunbirds. Stopping at a place where we had a reasonable view over the valley we added Crested Serpent-eagle. Nearby we found an Asian Fairy-bluebird.

We could hear Red-throated Barbets constantly calling, but they call from the tops of very tall trees and are somewhat of a challenge. However, we persevered and eventually got views of this colourful bird.

A little further on a white-eye could be heard but despite it being very close it was tough to see. Eventually we found it, and Oriental White-eye, and all got good views. As we looked above the road a Silver-rumped Needletail was found and two Fiery Minivets located in a nearby tree, albeit quite high up. Two Grey-rumped Treeswifts were seen hawking over the trees and our first Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker located. Then we found perched Whiskered Treeswift, a bird everyone always really likes to see, another Great Green Leafbird and finally, as we were almost at the van, a Blyth's Hawk-eagle showed well soaring above but close to the trees.

After lunch we visited Phang-Nga mangroves. It seemed that most of the birds were in cages, caught by the locals and kept as pets, but after some work, hearing both Ruddy Kingfisher and Mangrove Pitta, we found the pitta, sitting quietly but in the open low in the mangroves. Some of the group were lucky enough to see a Ruddy Kingfisher. The only other bird around was Oriental Magpie-robin.

En route back to the hotel we stopped by one of the many limestone pinnacles to admire a long Dusky Crag-martin and a few Rufous-bellied Swallows. Finally, as we were almost back at the hotel, we made a quick stop for 12 Asian Glossy Starlings.

**Day 5** First stop was another area of mangroves, this time known as Ban Bang Phat mangroves. On arrival we found a Brown-winged Kingfisher perched by the river side, two Collared Kingfishers and Large-billed Crows. This mangrove has a boardwalk running through it and although it was pretty quiet as we approached the end of the boardwalk we called in four Mangrove Whistlers, and as we reached the road a lone Pale-legged Leaf Warbler was found. Walking back to the van we added an Osprey, two Small Minivets and a Forest Wagtail. In the car park our final bird of this site flew in, a Grey-capped Woodpecker. It landed on the closest and best open branch it could find and sat there to be admired and photographed.

Next stop was an area of dry grassland that has been bought by an investor and is being converted to a holiday resort. The coastal woodland habitat is very degraded but the grassy areas make it worth a walk around. It was very hot here so we took things slowly. Brown Shrike and Blue-tailed Bee-eaters were the first birds we saw soon followed by the expected and common White-breasted Kingfisher and Spotted Doves. An area of marshy land gave us a total of five Grey-headed Lapwings, six Red-wattled Lapwings and great views of a quartering Eastern Marsh-harrier. We found our first Yellow-vented Bulbul and, along a river, found two River Lapwings.

The shoreline held a few distant and inaccessible plovers so we headed to the drier, grassy areas. First bird was a Common Flameback in a small group of trees along the path and we had great views of stationary Chestnut-headed Bee-eater. The grasslands held Richard's and Paddyfield Pipits, and at least one Red-throated Pipit plus Pintail Snipe. A Brahminy Kite flew overhead and as we were about to get into the van a Booted Eagle was found.

After lunch we visited a coastal site where, underfoot, is nothing but white and grey coral remains. Immediately off shore, extending out about 80 metres, are many small rock and boulders and these held quite a few waders. Whimbrels were common as were Ruddy Turnstones. A couple of Great Knots were about as were a few Red-necked Stints and at least 25 Terek Sandpipers (19 on one rock). Our target bird was found, a Grey-tailed Tattler, with another seen a bit later on. A bonus bird was found when the lone white egret feeding at the far edge of the rocks turned out to be a Chinese Egret in almost summer plumage. We then returned to Phang Nga mangroves to try again for the Ruddy Kingfishers. None were seen but Kevin did find a star bird in the form of a Streak-breasted Woodpecker, sitting quietly in a tree and giving good 'scope views.

**Day 6** Today we went to Khao Sok National Park for some more forest birding. The car park contained a large fruiting tree, alive with birds but we needed to get moving, and the birds would still be there when we got back, so we had only a few minutes to check out the birds: Black-headed, Grey-eyed, Grey-bellied, Stripe-throated and Black-crested Buleuls were all noted along with Asian Fairy-bluebirds and a Green-billed Malkoha.

We walked over a bridge and along the wood-surrounded path. Our first bird was Yellow-bellied Warbler, soon followed by two Rufous-fronted Babblers. A monkey turned out to be a Pig-tailed Macaque, much rarer than the usual Long-tailed variety. We called in a White-rumped Shama and had brief views of an Abbott's Babbler. A

Black-naped Monarch was found above the path and a Little Spiderhunter heard and briefly seen by some. Two Puff-throated Babblers were lured in and showed well followed soon by a Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker. Two Crested Serpent-eagles soared over the forest and a Purple-naped Sunbird flitted quickly through the forest, staying low down but not staying still.

Further on a bee-eater was spotted, which, rather surprisingly was not the hoped-for Red-bearded but was Blue-bearded. The view was brief as it almost immediately flew off but the feeling was definitely for Blue-bearded, despite the fact that it was rather out of its usual range. A large Chestnut-breasted Malkoha was found before we stopped by some large stands of bamboo and rather hopefully played the call of Bamboo Woodpecker. Surprisingly, and happily, two Bamboo Woodpeckers came in and flew around us showing well. The male was confirming his territory by drumming loudly on bamboo trunks. Close by a Tickell's Blue Flycatcher was found, a female, with a male being located later on during the walk. At least five Ashy Minivets were found before we stopped in an open area to scan for raptors. Two were seen, both goodies: Crested Goshawk and Lesser Fish-eagle.

Back into the forest and we added a female Asian Paradise-flycatcher, a Square-tailed Drongo-cuckoo and finally a Great Iora. Then we were back at the fruiting tree and again searching through the large number of birds enjoying the feast. As well as those first seen we added Yellow-vented, Thick-billed, Scarlet-backed and Orange-bellied Flowerpeckers and Ochraceous, Yellow-vented and Spectacled Bulbuls, a total of eight species of bulbul seen in this one tree. And a lone Giant Squirrel. Last bird of this site was a soaring, then powerdiving, Rufous-bellied Eagle.

Unsurprisingly, we were now running a bit late and after a late lunch we drove to Wat Bang Rieng, a temple high up on a rock outcrop. As well as being a very impressive temple this is also a site for Brown-rumped Needletail. The trees around and skies above the carpark were empty of birds so we walked up the road to the temple, between sculptures of two giant snakes that ran at least 50 metres up the road leading to the temple. For those who wish to see inside the temple, beware that it closes at 5pm. Those who did go in were suitably speechless afterwards so it seems worth it. Not knowing the closing time most of us positioned ourselves where we could see over a valley and began hunting needletails. Two weeks before there were about 200 here, today, none. We did see the usual Asian Palm-swifts and Germain's Swiftlets plus two Crested Goshawks, a Grey-faced Buzzard, a Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike and a Yellow-browed Warbler.

**Day 7** Today we were heading to the Similian Islands, a group of rocky, tree-covered islands in the Andaman Sea, about 65km west of Phang-nga Province. It was a sunny day as we boarded our fast boat to the islands. Fast = bouncy so bins were pretty useless on the crossing over. We did stop briefly for a group of Common Terns but otherwise we saw only glimpses of distant terns.

The island we stopped at, known as No. 4, had plenty of tourists and holidaymakers staying on it and we received a few curious looks as we walked around dressed in usual birding gear rather than shorts and tee-shirts. First thing is to de-shoe and de-sock as the landing on the island means jumping from the boat into the water. The walk from the landing point to the other side of the island took all of five minutes and included a lone, on-the-ground, Nicobar Pigeon that immediately waddled in the forest.

Twenty metres on and we were walking under trees surrounded by tents and toilets. However, in the trees were our target species: Pied and Green Imperial Pigeons. The Pies were a bit strange in that some looked very white and others very yellow. We found at least fifteen Pied and five Green Imperial-pigeons and eight Nicobar Pigeons. Most of the Nicobars were roosting in trees 3-4 metres up and could be easily seen. A few Asian Brown Flycatchers were found in one area and a Brahminy Kite and a Grey-faced Buzzard flew overhead appearing and disappearing through the gaps in the canopy.

Hill Myna is also a target species here and as we were about to have lunch two were found in a nearby tree, deep in a nearby tree, but all the salient features were eventually seen. Two flew out, away from us, but our first two were still there. These birds are usually more easily heard than seen.

Our final island bird was seen by all as we sat on the boat a little offshore enjoying fruit and cake provided by the crew: the island's pair of White-bellied Sea-eagles flying along the hillside. On the trip back we saw more Common Terns and single Bridled, Little and Great Crested Terns and about five Lesser Crested Terns.

**Day 8** A visit to another temple was the plan for this morning although the temple grounds would be a better description as the main temple was high on a hill and up a very large number of steps. A few trees at the entrance held Black-naped Oriole, Vernal Hanging-parrot, Coppersmith and Blue-eared Barbets and four Thick-billed Green Pigeons. Nearby we found a Blue Rock-thrush. High over the top temple swifts soared, mostly House Swifts that were soon joined by at least five Brown-rumped Needletails. Further into the temple complex we admired a confiding Blue Whistling-thrush.

A short walk up some steps, and back down the other side, brought us to a wooded canyon enclosed on all sides by high rock walls. This proved to be a very tough place to see birds although we could hear things calling. We walked around the area looking for species seen by the previous Birdfinders group but with no luck. Some managed a brief view of a Grey-breasted Spiderhunter but nothing was coming in to the recordings. Eventually we managed to lure in a Fulvous-breasted Jungle-flycatcher that stayed quite high but often in the open. As we reached the steps to climb out of the canyon we found a Striped Wren-babbler feeding in the open. Although it didn't stay still all got good views as it fed on the forest floor.

In the afternoon we were at Krabi mangroves, another site with a boardwalk through the mangrove forest. On our first walk along the boardwalk we found a Ruddy Kingfisher that stayed still and 'scopable for all. Finally, I was getting worried about this one. A walk alongside the mangroves rather than in the mangroves added a Dollarbird in excellent light and the usual Germain's Swiflets and Oriental Magpie-robin. As we walked back towards the boardwalk a bird flew in and was quickly identified as Chestnut-bellied Malkoha. We followed it into the mangrove and saw there were two birds in the canopy about two metres above us. Soon after these birds were admired we located a perched Buffy Fish-owl clutching and eating a large fish. Another sat nearby although we saw it only when it flew. The first bird was watched through 'scopes for about 20 minutes. A great bird on which to end the day.

**Day 9** Today was the first of two visits to Khao Nor Chuchi, a site for Gurney's Pitta. We tried but we didn't see or hear the pitta but we had a lot of other good birds. The 'hide', located within the forest, is actually a screen of black semi-transparent plastic netting that surrounds four sides but open above. Whilst in the hide some calls were played and soon we had lured in a Scarlet-rumped Trogon. A little later we had a Green Broadbill come in, followed by Chestnut-capped Babbler and Grey-cheeked Bulbul, and then a tiny, almost tailless Rufous Piculet. A white-phase male Asian Paradise-flycatcher showed well here.

Leaving the hide we walked through the forest and found a Crow-billed Drongo soon followed by a Rufous-winged Philentoma. Chestnut-rumped Babbler was seen by a few and we found Buff-vented Bulbul. As we moved through the forest more birds were found: Raffles' Malkoha, Rufous-winged Babbler and two Black Magpies, known for being extremely shy so a great bird to get. A couple of us managed brief views of Buff-vented Woodpecker but everyone got great views of the perched Black-thighed Falconet on top of a leafless tree and in the open.

After lunch, whilst remaining near the restaurant, we watched some bananas placed for the birds and saw Crimson-backed and Orange-bellied Flowerpeckers and Streak-eared Buleuls.

The afternoon was spent stopping at various sites. First stop gave us Purple-throated Sunbirds, a pair feeding young, and Red-eyed Bulbul. Second stop added Puff-backed Bulbul and Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker. The third stop yielded Ruby-cheeked Sunbird, Large Cuckooshrike, another Rufous Piculet and a Little Bronze Cuckoo.

Later that evening, at some hot springs, we saw Shikra and Chestnut-breasted Malkoha as we waited for Javan Frogmouth (which sadly didn't appear). We did see a mystery owl who's identification is underway. Probability is that it was a juvenile Sunda Scops-owl.

**Day 10** Another hour and a half in the hide but no pittas. There is another site where Gurney's is 'guaranteed' but there is much talk about the wildness of these birds. We did another forest walk and as well as some of the species we had already seen we picked up some good new species: Olive-winged Bulbul, Scaly-crowned Babbler and the rest of the group got onto Chestnut-rumped Babbler. Grey-rumped Treeswift, Greater Racket-tailed and Crow-billed Drongos and Ashy Minivet were also found.

Moving into a woodland with a small stream running through it we called in an Orange-breasted Trogon but it didn't stay long enough for all to see it. A little further on we found Moustached Babbler followed by White-throated Bulbul and then Rufous-tailed Tailorbird.

Next stop was at a site now rarely visited, a forest largely ignored now it had a large road running through it. However, it was worth a stop as, after some hunting we found a superb Banded Kingfisher. A bit further in we had fun trying to get views of two noisy but cover-loving Fluffy-backed Tit-babblers.

Final stop of the day was at another area where hot water flows from underground. Although we didn't see any new species it was a lovely area and the boardwalk around the mangroves and streams was a delight. We did see Common Kingfisher, Grey-rumped Treeswift, Red-rumped Swallow, Vernal Hanging-parrot and a lone Striated Heron.

**Day 11** Our last day before the flight from Krabi to Bangkok. We began in the gardens of Krabi resort where, despite the trials of day four where we tried to track down a Red-throated Barbet, we had another Red-throated Barbet atop a tree but a much lower tree with few trees around it so we all got excellent views. Coppersmith and Blue-eared Barbets were also seen well here. Some other common species were seen including Black-naped Oriole, Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike, and Streak-eared and Black-headed Bulbuls.

A place named Hat Noparat Thara, next to a sandy beach gave us a Plaintive Cuckoo, three unexpected Pied Imperial-pigeons, Dollarbird and a swarm of bees that caused us to move quickly on. The beach itself held 100+ Lesser Sand-plovers and two Greater Sand-plovers plus nearby Pacific Reef-egret, Collared Kingfisher and two Brahminy Kites.

That was our last birding in Thailand. We had covered a lot of ground and seen some great birds. Two of my personal targets, Spoon-billed Sandpiper and Nordmann's Greenshank proved to be no problem and some unexpected species were found. Of course, no trip ever gets everything (sadly) but we had a great group and all enjoyed our birding in Thailand.