

Wise Birding Holidays

Bird and mammal watching tours



MONGOLIA: Birds & Mammals Tour 1

Thursday 27th July - Friday 9th August 2019

5 Wise Birding Clients

Leaders: Chris Townend with Tselmeg Tumendelger

HIGHLIGHTS OF TRIP

Pallas's Cat: Three different encounters, one at night and two during the day. Prolonged views with some great playful behaviour between mother and youngster!

Pallas's Sandgrouse: Commonly encountered in suitable Steppe habitat allowing some very close views and some impressive numbers with 900+ birds on one day!

Wolf: Two different encounters with three animals. All sightings were recorded during the day and for a prolonged period of time.

Oriental Plover: Great to find a group of 7 birds so late in the season. We enjoyed some close views from our vehicles of at least two birds feeding on the Steppe.

Long-eared Hedgehog: Two wonderful night time encounters including one whilst enjoying dinner as it scuttled past the restaurant window!

Hooded Crane: This is an uncommon visitor to Mongolia and so we were very pleased to find 6 birds at Bayan Lake. This took the total number of Crane species seen during the tour to four; along with Demoiselle, White-naped and Common Crane.



Pallas's Cat (J. Bruce) and Oriental Plover were just two of the tour highlights

Tour Summary

Mongolia is a country of vast open space and very few people with a population of around 3 million people. Mongolia is fairly straight forward to visit with regular flights from London via Moscow and a flight time of just 6 hours from Moscow. The scenery is varied and mesmerising with vast steppe land, incredible mountains, golden sand dunes, stony desert and lush grassland and lakes. This tour was focused on trying to see Snow Leopard and Pallas's Cat as well as other key mammals, but at the same time the itinerary covered a good variety of habitats to ensure as many of Mongolia's iconic birds were also seen. Mongolia in late July and August is generally dry and has comfortable temperatures for camping and searching for wildlife. Though not the best time of year for birding, it is still possible to see the majority of specialities and often migrants too. All just a short walk from the comfort of our Toyota Land Cruisers.

This tour recorded 130 birds and 32 mammals.

Saturday 27 July: ARRIVE ULAANBAATAR - MANDALGOBI - DALANZADGAD

On arrival into Ulaanbaatar airport and the frustrating realisation that most of the baggage had not arrived, everyone completed some paperwork and Tumen organised much needed coffee and breakfast at the airport. On a more positive note, the journey to Dalanzadgad continued without any further problems. A couple of birding stops were made en route before lunch at Mandalgobi and the final journey to Dalanzadgad. The group arrived during the early evening at our very comfortable hotel

Highlights today included some iconic species and these included the first elegant Demoiselle Cranes, Upland Buzzard, Steppe Eagle, Cinereous Vulture, the *brandti* race of "Steppe" Horned Lark and the beautifully plumaged and striking Mongolian Lark. Brandt's Voles were seen during the journey and a stop before lunch at a roadside pool produced perhaps one of the key birds of the day; a small group of beautiful Pallas's Sandgrouse as well as a few Long-toed Stints.

Sunday 28 July: BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS BASE CAMP

This morning we had intended to travel to the nearby Steppe areas to look for Oriental Plovers. However, news from our local herders changed our plans after they reported having heard a Snow Leopard calling in one of the valleys close to our base camp! We therefore decided to head straight for base camp located in the Beautiful Mountains. The afternoon was spent hiking to a great viewpoint where we spent the rest of the day scanning the area for cats, but sadly no Snow Leopard appeared.

Highlights included the first Bearded Vultures and Golden Eagles of the tour as well as "Eastern" Black Redstarts, Isabelline Wheatears and White-winged Snowfinches. However, it was the sighting of two beautiful dark morph Saker Falcons that was the bird highlight of the day and quite a rare form to see in the wild. New mammal species today were Mongolian Gerbil, Pallas's Pika and some impressive Siberian Ibex.

Monday 29 July: BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS BASE CAMP

This morning we were up early and walked to a viewpoint behind our base camp that gave a good panoramic view across top quality Snow Leopard habitat. The mountains we could see were in the hub of regular Snow Leopard sightings. The whole area was being monitored in real time by a number of trail cameras by way of photos being delivered to our local guide's mobile phone! At 07.50hrs a shout from Chris confirmed a Snow Leopard was visible! Frustratingly it was seen only by Chris for a few seconds before it disappeared out of view!

The rest of the day was spent watching from a couple of viewpoints closer to the Snow Leopard sighting. Sadly, despite our best efforts and scanning between 11am and 8pm there was no further sighting. However, our luck changed during a night walk after dinner when we found a Pallas's Cat in the spotlight. There was also good news in that everybody's baggage had arrived at the camp!

Tuesday 30 July: BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS BASE CAMP - KHOSHUU LAKE

Once again, we met early for coffee and biscuits and then walked from base camp to our viewpoint where we watched from around 6am until 09.30am. After a mid morning breakfast we had time to relax and have showers. There was also time to do some birding around the camp and take photos of the numerous distractions. Isabelline Wheatears, Horned Larks, Pacific Swifts and both Gerbils that were now becoming a daily feature. After lunch we visited Koshuu Lake and the rest of the afternoon and evening was spent scanning a mountain where a Snow Leopard family was known to frequent.

The clear highlight today was watching two Pallas's Cats, a mother and youngster, during the morning from our base camp viewpoint. Despite the distance, the scope views were really impressive due to the excellent light. We watched the animals from around 08.20am - 09.00am. Bird highlights included a good selection of waders at the lake as well as four White-winged Terns and a couple of White-cheeked Starlings.

Wednesday 31 July: BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS BASE CAMP

After our usual early morning coffee and biscuits, we drove to a different valley in an attempt to get a little closer to the location of the Pallas's Cats that we found the previous morning. We arrived before 6am and after a short hike we were in position and scanning the area until 09.45am. We then spent a couple of hours before lunch exploring the Steppe habitat in our vehicles. After lunch we returned to watch the mountain where the Snow Leopard family sightings had been seen on a number of occasions. We watched from around 5pm until 8pm, but again no Snow Leopard.

Once again, the clear highlight today was watching the same two Pallas's Cats from the day before, but this time at a much closer distance. We enjoyed great views on and off between 07.50am and 09.45am. The mother stared at us frequently and the youngster seemed more interested in playing! We even heard the mother calling at one point. Bird highlights included Isabelline Shrike and a Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush.

Thursday 1 August: BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS BASE CAMP

After receiving an image of a Snow Leopard from one of the trail cameras at 8pm the previous evening, we were up very early for coffee at 04.45am. We then drove for some time until we reached a new area of mountain valleys and then started to walk. The climb was quite steep and involved a fair amount of effort, but everyone took it slow and we finally reached a viewpoint. It was a beautifully calm sunny morning. The afternoon was spent resting before another session watching the mountain with the known Snow Leopard family. We then spotlighted by vehicle from around 10pm until midnight. Despite the lack of Snow Leopard sightings, we saw plenty of Snow Leopard urine markings known locally as "boomba". It was a word and sight that we became very familiar with over the next few days!

It was a tough and long day but the highlights were certainly worth the effort.

The highlight today was seeing a Wolf during our evening scanning session as it trotted along the valley below us at around 5pm. Other mammal highlights included the first Siberian Jerboa and Argali of the tour during the spotlighting session. Bird highlights included a Pied Wheatear, a number of Brown Accentors whilst scanning for cats and a singing Godlewski's Bunting on the climb back down.

Friday 2 August: BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS BASE CAMP

This morning we reverted to our usual drill of meeting for coffee and then walking to the viewpoint behind base camp. We watched from 7am until 9am. After breakfast we travelled by vehicles to a higher altitude where a lush valley produced numerous birds and small mammals. The afternoon was very exciting but also very frustrating, as news of a Snow Leopard sighting from the herders had us heading to another valley. Here, we spent the rest of the afternoon and evening from 2.30pm - 8.30pm. We looked down on a valley where a Snow Leopard had made a fresh goat kill. Despite this being our best chance of success, frustratingly the animal never re-appeared. The herders later checked the carcass to find the animal had fed on the whole carcass shortly before we arrived and had presumably moved on!

Regardless of the lack of Snow Leopard sighting there were still a number of memorable highlights today. These included very close views of both Brown and Mongolian Accentors, a group of 20+ Small Snowfinches and at least three Alashan Ground Squirrels all in the same valley.

Saturday 3 August: BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS BASE CAMP

Another morning was spent watching from the viewpoint behind base camp from 05.50am until 09.45am. This was followed by a relaxing breakfast and time to rest until mid afternoon. We then returned to the valley near the site of the Snow Leopard kill and watched this valley from 4pm until 9pm. Finally, we took a short spotlighting session from 10.30pm until midnight.

Highlights today included the simply stunning scenery at our afternoon viewpoint which became all the more memorable when two impressive Argali appeared. This was followed by more excitement when two Wolves gave excellent scope views from 7.50pm until dusk. The final mammal highlight was a Campbell's Hamster during the late evening spotlighting session. Bird highlights included the usual suspects with more great views of Bearded Vulture, Golden Eagle and an impressive dark morph Upland Buzzard over base camp.

Sunday 4 August: BASE CAMP - KHONGOR DUNES GOBI ERDENE

Today was time for a change as we bid farewell to base camp and accepted that our chance of Snow Leopard had sadly passed. It was a unanimous decision to see more of the country rather than spend more days trying for the grey ghost!

After breakfast we headed west in our convoy of Toyota Land Cruisers, first to the small town of Bayandalai and then across the dusty Steppe and on to the impressive Khongor Sand Dunes and finally, our Ger Camp at Gobi Erdene. Here, we took advantage of the showers and then spent the afternoon birding the nearby Khongor River. After dinner, we took a spotlighting session from 9.30pm until 11.30pm.

Highlights today were all about the journey and the impressive changing landscape, but of course we saw many new birds and mammals too! Speciality birds today included great views of three Mongolian Ground-Jays and six dapper Saxaul Sparrows as well as "Steppe" Grey Shrikes and no less than 900 Pallas's Sandgrouse! Mammal highlights were equally impressive with three new mammals; Northern Three-toed Jerboa, 50(!) Desert Hamsters and a wonderful Long-eared Hedgehog!

Monday 5 August: KHONGOR - NARAN SPRING - BULAGTAI STEPPE - DZ

This morning, we met at a more civilised breakfast time and headed out for another Pallas's Sandgrouse fix as we enjoyed large flocks feeding beside the vehicles and flying overhead. A try for Asian Desert Warbler was unsuccessful, so we pushed on to

our Wild Ass stake-out. We then checked the Naran Spring for any migrant birds and enjoyed a fine picnic lunch in a mountain valley on the edge of the Western Beautiful Mountains where an adult Lammergeier entertained us all. The afternoon was spent taking one of the most incredible road journeys as we passed through the Western Beautiful Mountains and saw absolutely nobody, just fantastic scenery! We finally arrived at the small town of Bolgan where we re-fuelled and then continued to the Bulagtai Steppe, the home of Oriental Plovers and Corsac Foxes. Here we enjoyed dinner at the Gobi Naran Camp and spotlighted back to our hotel in Dalanzadgad.

Highlights today, aside from the spectacular scenery, included a fabulous sighting of 12 Mongolian Wild Ass including some younger animals, an adult Bearded Vulture carrying a sheep's skull in its talons just above us, a male Common Rosefinch at the Naran Spring and a small flock of Mongolian Finch. However, it was the evening that really performed as we managed to find a small group of Oriental Plovers, including two birds that gave some great views feeding on the Steppe. This was soon followed by our second Long-eared Hedgehog of the tour whilst eating dinner and two Corsac Foxes whilst spotlighting back to DZ. A great end to a fabulous day!

Tuesday 6 August: DALANZADGAD - ULAANBAATAR TUUL RIVER

Today was mostly a travel day and we were all prepared for the long journey having already experienced it on the first day of the tour. We made few stops en route, though a brief break on the outskirts of DZ gave excellent views of four Great Gerbils.

We arrived back in Ulaanbaatar by early evening and checked into our hotel beside the Tuul River where we just had enough light for some birding. Here, we did well to find a number of specialties including Azure Tit and White-crowned Penduline Tit.

Wednesday 7 August: HUN LAKE - BAYAN LAKE - LUN WETLAND - HUSTAI NP

Another full day today as we birded the Tuul River, this time at a more leisurely pace. We also visited the Hun Lake close to our hotel and then continued our journey west to the bird-rich site of Bayan Lake. Despite being more of a birding site there were still some good mammals to be seen here too. We then re-traced our steps back east and briefly visited the Lun wetlands before arriving at our Ger camp on the edge of the Hustai NP. After dinner, with special permission, we headed into the park and did some spotlighting on foot.

Today was one of the best days for new species with some real quality specialties! The more memorable highlights included a flock of 150+ Cinereous Vultures, both male and female Eastern Marsh Harriers, Brown Shrikes by the Tuul River, a small group of Asian Azure-winged Magpies, as well as better views of a family of Azure Tits and White-crowned Penduline Tits, plus a very smart male White-backed Woodpecker! Hun Lake revealed six juvenile Red-necked Phalaropes and four Marsh Sandpipers.

At Bayan Lake we were spoiled with some great views of 17 White-naped Cranes including two family groups, eight Demoiselle Cranes, six Common Cranes and six very unexpected Hooded Cranes! A small group of Bar-headed Geese were nice to see as well as an adult Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, a lovely Terek Sandpiper and a moulting adult Asian Dowitcher. Three Citrine Wagtails and 100 strong flock of Eastern Yellow Wagtails were impressive. An obliging Paddyfield Warbler performed and we had excellent views of no less than 12 Pallas's Buntings, including a number of very smart singing males. The grand finale on the bird front was a superb Eurasian Eagle Owl that sat on a telegraph pole in Hustai NP during our spotlighting session.

Then there were the mammal highlights! Mongolian Hamsters and a day time Corsac Fox near Bayan Lake, at least 60 Przewalski's Horses and a cracking Steppe Polecat!

Thursday 8 August: HUSTAI NP - UB WETLAND - HUN LAKE - MANZUSHIR

The morning was spent exploring Hustai NP before we returned to our hotel by the Tuul River. After lunch Charles headed to the Manzushir Forest in search of mammals and the rest of the group visited another wetland site near the airport.

New birds today included two beautiful male Lesser Kestrels and at least 10 Amur Falcons on the wires at Hustai, plus a Pintail Snipe at the airport wetland, thanks to David's quick-draw photo skills! Also seen were Lesser Whitethroat, Common Whitethroat, a male Long-tailed Rosefinch and a Paddyfield Warbler feeding young. Charles sadly failed with his quest to see Siberian Chipmunk at Manzushir, but two Eurasian Red Squirrels became the final new mammal species for the tour.

Friday 9 August: Airport Transfer

As with most flights out of Ulaanbaatar, they depart early so we met at 04.30hrs for the 15 minute transfer to the airport where the tour concluded.



**Base Camp in the Beautiful Mountains (above)
Birding in peace and tranquility (below) by tour participant Charles Hood**





**A pair of juvenile dark morph Saker Falcons
was quite a rare sighting in the wild**





Pallas's Sandgrouse views and their numbers were impressive with day counts of up to 900 birds!





We enjoyed excellent views of White-naped Cranes including a number of family groups like this family at Bayan Lake





**Corscac Fox was seen a number of times (above)
Wolves were seen on two different occasions (below)**





**The Beautiful Mountains is prime Snow Leopard habitat (above)
Khongor Sand Dunes (below) by tour participant Charles Hood**





**The elegant Demoiselle Crane (above) and one of
7 Oriental Plovers seen on the Bulagtai Steppe (below)**





**Night drives were always exciting!
Long-eared Hedgehog (above)
Desert Hamster (below) by tour participant Charles Hood**





Mongolian Lark (above) and Godlewski's Bunting (below)





Bayan Lake was great for waders where we saw Asian Dowitcher (above) and Terek Sandpiper (below)





The valleys above Base Camp were good for Blyth's Pipit (above) and Mongolia's only true endemic bird, Kozlov's Accentor (below)





One of the undoubted tour highlights was watching these two Pallas's Cats on two separate occasions
Photos by tour participants John Bruce (above) and Charles Hood (below)





Mongolian Wild Ass (above) and Mongolian Gazelle (below)





**Bearded Vulture or Lammergeier (above)
and Cinereous Vultures (below) were seen on numerous occasions**





Dark morph Upland Buzzard (above) and Black-eared Kite (below)





**Mongolian Ground Jays were seen in stony desert with scattered bushes (above)
Steppe Grey Shrikes were common in the same habitat (below)**





Top and bottom photos by tour participant Charles Hood





Siberian Jerboas were seen on a number of occasions during spotlighting sessions
Photo below by tour participant Charles Hood





“Steppe” Horned Larks of the subspecies *brandti* (above)
Male Saxaul Sparrow (below)



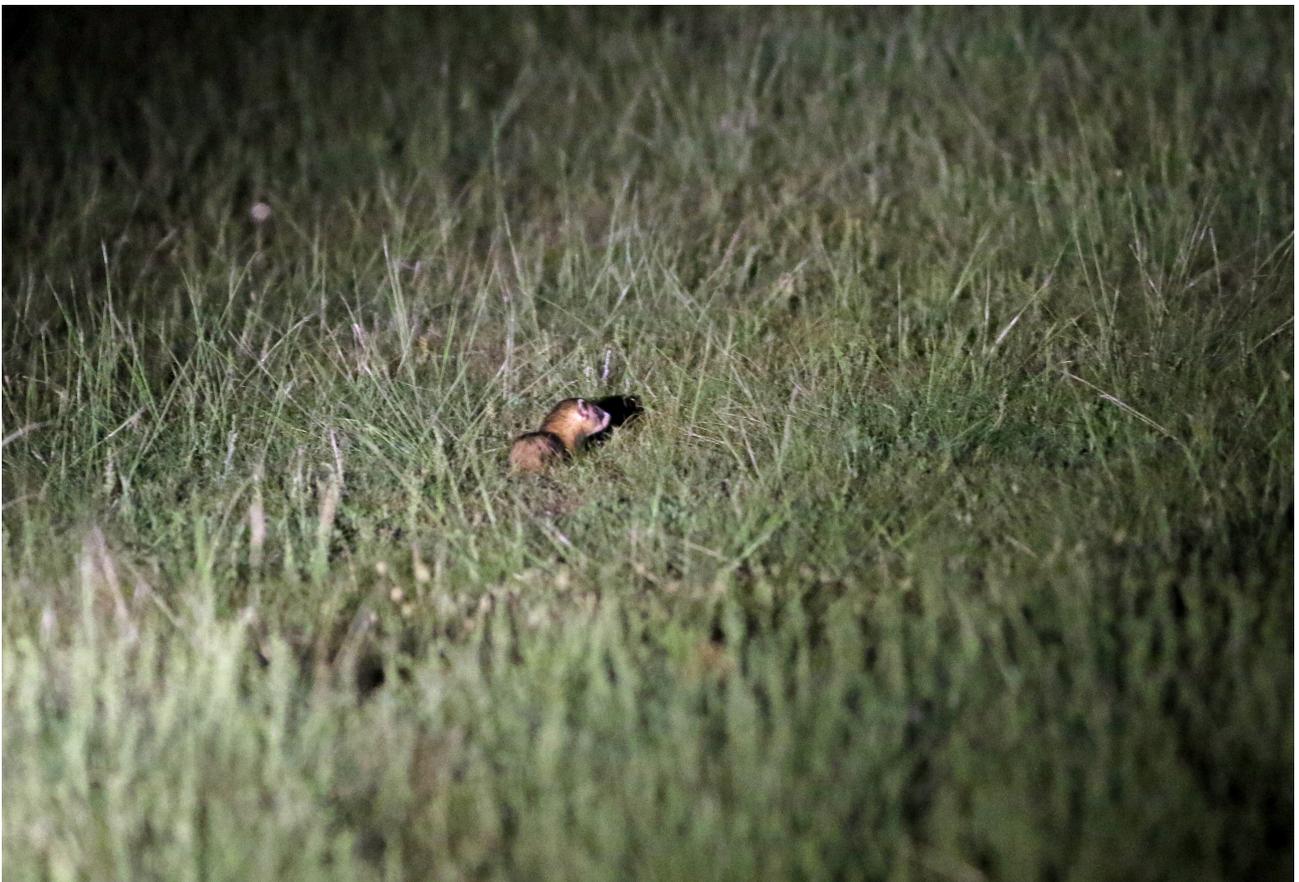


White-winged Snowfinches were common in the mountains (above) and Paddyfield Warbler was seen well at Bayan Lake (below)





**Great Gerbil near Dalanzadgad (above)
Steppe Polecat in Hustai NP (below)**





**Azure Tit (above) and White-crowned Penduline Tit (below)
were seen along the Tuul River near our hotel**





**Male White-backed Woodpecker near the Tuul River (above)
Juvenile dark morph Saker Falcons near Dalanzadgad (below)**





**Siberian Marmots were very common in Hustai NP (above)
Przewalski's Horses were seen very well in Hustai NP (below)**





Both photos by tour participant Charles Hood





Pallas's Cat near Base Camp
You can see a video of another Pallas's Cat caught on one of our trail cameras near base camp [HERE](#)

Conservation Donation – Following this tour to Mongolia £300 was transferred to the Wise Birding Holiday's central conservation fund.

Once a target amount has been reached this money will be used to support one single project in the hope of achieving more for species conservation. Currently this amounts to around £7,000. Some tours will continue to donate money to help some of the smaller projects that we feel will still benefit from smaller donations.

Please visit our [Conservation News](#) & [Latest News](#) links to find out more.

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MONGOLIA: Bird, Mammal & Reptile Checklist for 27th July - 8th August 2019

The bird list follows the nomenclature and classification from HBW Alive, del Hoyo, J, Elliott, A et al The Mammals & Reptiles checklist follows IUCN taxonomy

#	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	#	SPECIES NOTES
1	Chukar	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>	1	Seen and heard whilst scanning for cats and recorded on five days including a family group with young chicks on the 5th.
2	Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	2	Two birds seen at Hun Lake near our hotel on the 7th.
3	Bar-headed Goose	<i>Anser indicus</i>	3	A small group of 9 birds were present at Bayan Lake on the 7th.
4	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	4	At least 20 birds were recorded at Bayan Lake on the 7th.
5	Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	5	A single bird at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th was the only sighting during the tour.
6	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	6	Family groups were seen at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th and at Hun Lake on the 7th.
7	Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	7	Recorded along the Tuul River on three days with a max. count of 10 birds on the 7th.
8	Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>	8	First recorded at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th with a count of 25 birds and then a family group on the 5th and 12 birds whilst travelling from DZ to UB on the 6th.
9	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	9	Counts of 2 birds on three separate days. Khoshuu Lake on the 30th and then at Hun Lake on the 7th and 8th.
10	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	10	Recorded at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th and at Hun Lake on the 7th and 8th where numerous family groups were present totalling 80+ birds.
11	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	11	A single bird at Hun Lake on the 7th was the only sighting during the tour.
12	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	12	Numerous family groups at Hun Lake on the 7th and 8th.
13	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	13	Recorded at Hun Lake on the 7th and 8th.
14	Common Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	14	A single bird at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th was the only sighting during the tour.
15	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	15	Two adults at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th and then family groups at Hun Lake on the 7th and 8th with a max. count of 15 birds.
16	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	16	Recorded at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th.
17	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	17	A commonly encountered species throughout the tour recorded on 10 days from the mountains to the desert.
18	Eurasian Collared-dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	18	Recorded on four days with a max. count of 14 birds on the 5th.
19	Pallas's Sandgrouse	<i>Syrhaptes paradoxus</i>	19	Fantastic views, impressive numbers and certainly one of the highlights of the tour. Seen on seven days with a minimum day count of 20 on the 28th and a maximum day count of 900+ birds on the 4th!
20	Pacific Swift	<i>Apus pacificus</i>	20	Recorded on 11 days including birds hawking for insects just outside our Gers at base camp.
21	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	21	Recorded on seven days. Counts of 1-2 birds were seen on three days and heard only on the other days.
22	Common Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	22	A single bird at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th and then numerous birds at Hun Lake on the 7th and 8th.
23	White-naped Crane	<i>Antigone vipio</i>	23	These beautiful Cranes were seen at Bayan Lake where a total of 17 birds were present including two family groups. One of the juveniles was wearing a data logger and a blue ring on its right tibia.
24	Demoiselle Crane	<i>Anthropoides virgo</i>	24	An iconic species of the Mongolian Steppe recorded on five days. Counts of 50+ on the first day travelling from UB to DZ, 3 birds on the 5th, 15 on the 6th, 8 on the 7th and 2 birds on the 8th.
25	Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>	25	Six birds were seen at Bayan Lake on the 7th.
26	Hooded Crane	<i>Grus monacha</i>	26	A surprise find with 6 birds seen on Bayan Lake. It is a regular but very uncommon visitor to Mongolia.
27	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	27	Two birds seen at Hun Lake on the 7th.
28	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	28	An impressive sight of 150 birds at the Lun wetland on the 7th.
29	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	29	Recorded on three days including a count 84 birds at the Lun wetland on the 7th.
30	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	30	A single bird at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th was the only sighting during the tour.
31	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	31	Small numbers recorded at Hun Lake on the 7th and 8th.

#	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	#	SPECIES NOTES
32	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	32	Recorded on two days with 12 birds at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th and then 2 birds on the 7th at the Lun wetland
33	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	33	Four birds at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th and similar small counts on the 7th and 8th.
34	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	34	Counts of 2-6 birds over four days.
35	Oriental Plover	<i>Charadrius veredus</i>	35	One of the tour highlights was finding 7 birds on the Bulagtai Steppe on the evening of the 5th. We were very lucky to find this late post breeding flock and although flighty at first we enjoyed great views of at least 2 birds on the ground.
36	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	36	A group of 45 birds including juveniles was recorded at the Lun wetland on the 7th.
37	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	37	A single bird at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th was the only sighting during the tour.
38	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	38	Three birds on the Khongor River on the 4th was the only sighting during the tour.
39	Broad-billed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris falcinellus</i>	39	David photographed a bird on the 27th at a small pool en route to DZ.
40	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>	40	A very smart adult at Bayan Lake on the 7th was the only sighting during the tour.
41	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	41	Single birds on the 27th and the 7th only.
42	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>	42	At least 4 bird were seen at Hun Lake on the 7th.
43	Long-toed Stint	<i>Calidris subminuta</i>	43	A count of 6 birds at a roadside pool en route to DZ were the only birds recorded.
44	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	44	Four birds on the 27th and a single bird at Hun Lake on the 7th.
45	Asian Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus semipalmatus</i>	45	A single moulting adult at Bayan Lake was a very welcome sighting!
46	Pintail Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>	46	A bird photographed by David showing both the upperwing and underwing confirmed the id of a bird at the wetland near UB airport on the 8th.
47	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	47	A count of 18 birds at the wetland near UB airport were presumed to be this species but were not seen well enough to rule out Pintail or Swinhoe's Snipe.
48	Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	48	Six juveniles were seen feeding on Hun Lake on the morning of the 7th.
49	Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>	49	A lovely adult was seen very well at Bayan Lake on the 7th.
50	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	50	Counts of 1-2 birds were recorded over five days.
51	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	51	Counts of 1 or 2 birds on three days and then a count of 6+ on the 8th at the wetland near UB airport.
52	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	52	Counts of 4 birds on the 27th, a single on the 30th at Khoshuu Lake and 4 birds on the 8th at Hun Lake and the wetland near UB airport.
53	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	53	Single birds on the 27th whilst travelling from UB to DZ and at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th.
54	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	54	Recorded on the 7th at Lun wetland.
55	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	55	Recorded on three days with a count of 10 birds along the Khongor River on the 4th.
56	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	56	Recorded at Hun Lake on two days with at least 4 birds present on the 7th.
57	Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	57	A single juveniles recorded on the 27th whilst travelling between UB and DZ and 2 juveniles at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th.
58	White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	58	A single bird on the 27th whilst travelling between UB and DZ and 4 birds at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th.
59	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	59	Counts of up to 6 birds recorded on three days along the Tuul River and Hun Lake. All appeared to be of the red-billed <i>minussensis</i> subsp. rather than the dark-billed <i>longipennis</i> subsp.
60	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	60	A family group of at least 3 birds whilst travelling from Bayandalai to the Khongor Dunes on the 4th and then singles on the 7th and 8th.
61	Eurasian Eagle-owl	<i>Bubo bubo</i>	61	Great views in Hustai NP on the evening of the 7th as we watched a bird sat with prey on a telegraph pole in the spotlight.
62	Bearded Vulture	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>	62	Fabulous to see so regularly with counts of 1-4 birds including adults and immatures on eight days. A particularly memorable sighting was of an adult carrying the skull of a sheep directly overhead as we enjoyed a picnic lunch near the Naran Spring.
63	Himalayan Griffon	<i>Gyps himalayensis</i>	63	Small numbers recorded during the first eight days of the tour.
64	Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>	64	Recorded on eight days. Mostly counts of 1-10 birds except for the 7th when we enjoyed views of 150+ birds at a rubbish dump including numerous birds sat on the ground at close range.

#	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	#	SPECIES NOTES
65	Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>	65	Counts of 1-4 birds over five days including a number of very distinctive juvenile birds showing the pale dark band across the centre of the underwing.
66	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	66	Some excellent views over nine days, particularly whilst scanning for cats. Typical day counts were of 3-4 birds.
67	Western Marsh-harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	67	Single birds recorded at the Khongor River on the 4th and whilst travelling from DZ to UB on the 6th.
68	Eastern Marsh-harrier	<i>Circus spilonotus</i>	68	A total of 4 birds seen well at Bayan Lake including both male and female birds.
69	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	69	Recorded on four days with the highest count being 12 birds on the 6th whilst travelling from DZ to UB on the 6th. Subsp. lineatus: Black-eared Kite.
70	Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>	70	A single bird on the 5th near the Bulagtai Steppe was the only sighting of the tour.
71	Upland Buzzard	<i>Buteo hemilasius</i>	71	This very common raptor was recorded daily and included the distinctive dark morph plumage seen on two days.
72	Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	72	Recorded on six days. Mostly counts of 1-2 birds except for the morning of the 8th in Hustai NP when 40+ birds, presumably migrants, were counted on wires whilst travelling through the park.
73	White-backed Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos leucotos</i>	73	Single birds were seen near the Tuul River on two days, including a very obliging male on the morning of the 7th.
74	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>	74	Two males sat on wires in Hustai NP on the morning of the 8th.
75	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	75	Counts of 2-3 birds recorded on 11 days.
76	Amur Falcon	<i>Falco amurensis</i>	76	Two birds on the 6th near the Tuul River and then at least 10 birds seen very well on wires in Hustai NP on the morning of the 8th.
77	Saker Falcon	<i>Falco cherrug</i>	77	This common falcon was recorded on nine days with typical day counts of 2 birds. Of particular interest, was the sighting of a pair of rare dark morph juveniles en route to our base camp.
78	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>	78	Three birds were recorded on the 7th along the Tuul River.
79	Isabelline Shrike	<i>Lanius isabellinus</i>	79	Counts of 1-2 birds on five days of the subsp. isabellinus also known as Daurian Isabelline Shrike
80	Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	80	Counts of 2 birds on the 4th and the 5th whilst exploring the Gurvansaikhan National Park. Subsp. pallidirostris Steppe Grey Shrike.
81	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	81	Recorded on eight days with a max. day count of 250+ birds whilst travelling from UB to DZ on the 27th.
82	Asian Azure-winged Magpie	<i>Cyanopica cyanus</i>	82	Four birds were seen well near our hotel by the Tuul River on the 7th and the 8th.
83	Mongolian Ground-jay	<i>Podoces hendersoni</i>	83	Excellent views between Bayandalai and Khongor Sand Dunes on the 4th with 3 birds seen and the 5th with 4 birds seen. Alternative name: Henderson's Ground-jay
84	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	84	Recorded on three days mostly near UB and the Tuul River.
85	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	85	Recorded on two days mostly near the Tuul River. Subsp. pastinator Eastern Rook.
86	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	86	Recorded on ten days.
87	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	87	Recorded on three days mostly near UB. Subsp. orientalis larger stouter bill than nominate form.
88	Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>	88	Charles recorded the species at Manzushir on the 8th.
89	Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>	89	Charles recorded the species at Manzushir on the 8th. Subsp. baicalensis
90	Azure Tit	<i>Cyanistes cyanus</i>	90	A single bird on the evening of the 6th by the Tuul River was followed by at least 12 birds along the same river on the 7th.
91	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	91	A number of family groups were recorded on the 6th-8th.
92	White-crowned Penduline-tit	<i>Remiz coronatus</i>	92	A single bird on the evening of the 6th by the Tuul River was followed by a family group of 10 birds along the same river on the morning of the 7th.
93	Lesser Short-toed Lark	<i>Alaudala rufescens</i>	93	Recorded on three days often being flushed whilst travelling across the Steppe, though with patience a number of birds were seen well. Subsp. cheleensis Asian Short-toed Lark.
94	Mongolian Lark	<i>Melanocorypha mongolica</i>	94	This impressive and striking lark was seen well on four days with counts of up to 10 birds. Perhaps the best views were on the 7th whilst travelling to Bayan Lake.
95	Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	95	A very common lark, particularly around base camp and recorded on 11 days. Subsp. brandti Steppe Horned Lark.
96	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	96	The only sighting was of a single bird close to our vehicles whilst travelling from Bayandalai to the Khongor Dunes on the 4th.
97	Paddyfield Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>	97	Seen very well at Bayan Lake on the 7th and at the wetland near UB airport on the 8th where a bird was seen carrying food to a nest.
98	Eastern House Martin	<i>Delichon lagopodum</i>	98	Just a single bird on the 2nd and then 4+ birds on the 3rd, both near base camp whilst scanning for cats.

#	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	#	SPECIES NOTES
99	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	99	Counts of 1-2 birds on the 3rd whilst scanning for cats and then counts of 20-50 birds on the 7th/8th near Bayan Lake and Hustai NP. A number of birds were of the very smart <i>tytleri</i> subsp. with deep chestnut underparts.
100	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	100	Recorded on nine days.
101	Collared Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	101	A count of 200+ birds around Bayan Lake and the Lun wetland on the 7th.
102	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	102	At least 4 birds were seen well at the wetland near UB airport on the 8th.
103	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	103	A single bird at the wetland near UB airport on the 8th was the only sighting of the species.
104	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	104	A flock of 40+ birds on the 7th near Lun wetland.
105	White-cheeked Starling	<i>Spodiopsar cineraceus</i>	105	Two birds at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th and another 2 birds on the 5th at the Naran Spring.
106	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	106	These very smart "Eastern" birds were recorded on seven days and were particularly common around the base camp area.
107	Rufous-tailed Rock-thrush	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>	107	A female/imm bird was seen whilst most of the group were watching Pallas's Cats!
108	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	108	Small numbers recorded on six days.
109	Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>	109	A very common Wheatear, particularly around base camp, recorded on ten days.
110	Desert Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i>	110	Small numbers recorded on three days.
111	Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>	111	A very nice male was seen on the 1st whilst scanning for cats.
112	Brown Accentor	<i>Prunella fulvescens</i>	112	Some great views of this very attractive Accentor on three days with a single bird on the 29th, 3 birds on the 1st and at least 4 birds on the 2nd.
113	Mongolian Accentor	<i>Prunella koslowi</i>	113	Mongolia's only true endemic bird was seen very well on the morning of the 2nd. Alternative name: Kozlov's Accentor
114	Saxaul Sparrow	<i>Passer ammodendri</i>	114	A total of six birds including at least 2 impressive males were watched near the Khongor Sand Dunes on the afternoon of the 4th.
115	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	115	Recorded on the 7th only near Lun.
116	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	116	A very common species in Mongolia and recorded on seven days.
117	Rock Sparrow	<i>Petronia petronia</i>	117	Seen only whilst scanning for cats with counts of 6 on the 29th and 2 birds on the 30th.
118	White-winged Snowfinch	<i>Montifringilla nivalis</i>	118	Recorded on seven days and particularly common around base camp.
119	Small Snowfinch	<i>Pyrgilauda davidiana</i>	119	A small group of 20+ birds seen very well on the 2nd and then a single male on the 5th whilst travelling and another single on the 7th. Alternative name: Pere David's Snowfinch
120	Richard's Pipit	<i>Anthus richardi</i>	120	A single bird flew over calling on the 7th.
121	Blyth's Pipit	<i>Anthus godlewskii</i>	121	Recorded on seven days including a number of singing birds. Most common in the more rocky mountain edge habitat compared to the flatter often damper habitats of Richard's Pipit.
122	Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>	122	At least 3 birds at Bayan Lake on the 7th.
123	Eastern Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla tschutschensis</i>	123	At least 10 birds at Bayan Lake on the 7th, but sadly none were seen close enough to identify to subspecies. Both the Subsp. macronyx and Mongolian Y. Wagtail & tschutschensis occur in Mongolia.
124	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	124	Small numbers recorded on three days. Those seen well enough were of the Subsp. baicalensis Baikal Wagtail.
125	Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	125	A pink male was seen well at Naran Spring on the 5th and then a brown female/imm was at the wetland near UB airport on the 8th.
126	Long-tailed Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus sibiricus</i>	126	A male was seen briefly at the wetland near UB airport on the afternoon of the 8th.
127	Mongolian Finch	<i>Bucanetes mongolicus</i>	127	Recorded on eight days with small numbers often flying over our viewpoints whilst scanning for cats. A count of 20+ birds on the 5th near Naran Spring gave good views at our lunch spot.
128	Godlewski's Bunting	<i>Emberiza godlewskii</i>	128	A singing male on the morning of the 1st was some consolation after a steep hike to try and see Snow Leopard!
129	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	129	A male at Bayan Lake on the 7th.
130	Pallas's Bunting	<i>Emberiza pallasii</i>	130	Three males at a random stop whilst travelling from UB to DZ was an unexpected find. Whereas the 12+ birds including numerous singing males at Bayan Lake on the 7th was more expected.

#	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	#	SPECIES NOTES
	MAMMALS			
1	Mongolian Marmot	<i>Marmota sibirica</i>	1	Numerous sightings at Hustai NP including both sexes and some young animals. A day count of at least 74 animals thanks to Sarah's enthusiasm! Alternative name: Siberian Marmot. In Mongolia this species is experiencing an ongoing decline in population size, estimated at 70% over the past 10 years (Batbold 2002), due to exploitation and disease. It therefore qualifies as Endangered based on observed declines of greater than 50% over the past three generations due to exploitation. Most of its global range is in Mongolia.
2	Eurasian Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>	2	Charles recorded two of the dark morph form (very dark brown with pale belly) typical of this region in the Manzushir Forest on the 8th.
3	Alashan Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus alashanicus</i>	3	This highly localised species is only found in two areas in the South Gobi region. At least 3 animals were seen on at least two days on the 4th. It preferred the mountain foothills and meadows at higher altitudes above our base camp. It's upper altitude limit is quoted as 3,200M. Ground Squirrels seen at base camp on two days were probably this species due to our altitude of 2,300M - See Pallid GS.
4	Daurian Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus dauricus</i>	4	Three of these Ground Squirrels were recorded in Hustai NP where Pallid and Alashan Ground Squirrels are absent, therefore making identification easier!
5	Pallid Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus pallidicauda</i>	5	Excellent views of single animals on the 30th near Lake Khoshuu and on the 2nd near base camp. This species was recently split from Red-cheeked Ground Squirrel (<i>Spermophilus erythrogegens</i>) and is believed to be found only in isolated areas in Mongolia to altitudes no higher than 2,100M
6	Long-tailed Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus undulatus</i>	6	This very distinctive Ground Squirrel often quite orange in colour on the underparts was recorded on two days. Three animals on the 26th whilst travelling from UB to DZ and 6 animals at Hustai NP on the 8th.
7	Siberian Jerboa	<i>Allactaga sibirica</i>	7	Seen during spotlighting sessions on the 3rd near base camp and the 7th in Hustai NP. Alternative name: Five-toed Jerboa. As with all Jerboas, good views were needed to confirm the identification, but the combination of large ears, longer than head and the tail pattern seemed to confirm the id.
8	Northern Three-toed Jerboa	<i>Dipus sagitta</i>	8	Seen well during a spotlighting session in the Gurvansaikhan National Park near our accommodation. Up to 5 animals were seen and allowed close views to confirm the three hind toes and hairy feet. Alternative name: Hairy-footed Jerboa.
9	Mongolian Silver Vole	<i>Alticola semicanus</i>	9	Up to five of these cute looking voles were seen during the days on the 30th at one of our Snow Leopard viewpoints.
10	Brandt's Vole	<i>Lasiopodomys brandtii</i>	10	Recorded whilst travelling between UB and DZ on the 27th and again on the 7th en route to the Hustai NP area.
11	Midday Gerbil	<i>Meriones meridianus</i>	11	Recorded with certainty on three days when the diagnostic pale yellow claws were seen. "Gerbil sp" were recorded on another five days that could have been this or Mongolian Gerbil.
12	Mongolian Gerbil	<i>Meriones unguiculatus</i>	12	Recorded with certainty on six days when the diagnostic all dark claws were seen. "Gerbil sp" were recorded on another five days that could have been this or Midday Gerbil.
13	Great Gerbil	<i>Rhombomys opimus</i>	13	Four of this obviously larger Gerbil were seen well on the edge of Dalanzadgad in typical sand dune habitat often associated with saxaul plants.
14	Desert Hamster	<i>Phodopus roborovskii</i>	14	Found in sand and semi-desert areas where we recorded a minimum of 50 individuals during a spotlighting session in the Gurvansaikhan National Park near our accommodation on the 4th.
15	Campbell's Hamster	<i>Phodopus campbelli</i>	15	A surprise mammal during a spotlighting session above base camp on the 3rd where we had good views of the diagnostic black stripe down the spine.
16	Mongolian Hamster	<i>Allocricetulus curtatus</i>	16	Sarah and Charles spent time focused on this species whilst others focused on birding at nearby Bayan Lake. They saw 3 animals during the day at their holes.
17	Daurian Pika	<i>Ochotona dauurica</i>	17	Considered to be primarily crepuscular and nocturnal by habit and therefore animals seen at these times may have been this species. Field identification of this species seems confusing!
18	Pallas's Pika	<i>Ochotona pallasii</i>	18	This species is considered to be active day and night whereas the very similar Daurian Pika is primarily crepuscular and nocturnal. Therefore all day time Pika sightings were considered to be this species and were recorded in abundance on seven days. Their alarm calls were heard daily around our cat scanning viewpoints and base camp.
19	Tolai Hare	<i>Lepus tolai</i>	19	Singles recorded, mostly at night, on four days.
20	Long-eared Hedgehog	<i>Hemiechinus auritus</i>	20	One of the mammal highlights was seeing two individual animals. One during a night drive in the Gurvansaikhan National Park near our accommodation on the 4th and another whilst enjoying our evening meal at Gobi Naran Camp on the night of the 5th as it scuttled past the window!
21	Corsac Fox	<i>Vulpes corsac</i>	21	Some very good sightings with 2 animals on the night of the 5th during a spotlighting session on the Bulagtai Steppe outside DZ, another 2 animals at night during a spotlighting session in Hustai NP and then 2 animals during the day on the 8th whilst travelling near Bayan Lake.
22	Pallas's Cat	<i>Felis manul</i>	22	Undoubtedly, one of the tour highlights with three separate encounters. The first was during a walking spotlighting session close to base camp at around 23.00hrs the 29th where an animal was hiding in long grass and seen on a couple of occasions. The other two encounters were during the day on the 30th and the 31st and involved the same family group of a mother and at least one well grown youngster. On the 30th two animals were watched from 08.20hrs - 09.00hrs at a range of around 2Km. Despite the distance the detail was surprisingly good due to the great light. The following day, the same animals were watched from a different viewpoint 07.45hrs - 09.45hrs and at a range of only 600M.
23	Snow Leopard	<i>Uncia uncia</i>	23	The undoubted frustration of the tour was the sighting of a Snow Leopard for just a few seconds by Chris at 07.50hrs on the 29th. It was at a distance of just under 2Km and walked behind a crag and into a valley that we could not view. Despite spending the rest of the day trying different viewpoints to scan from we failed to re-find the cat!
24	Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	24	Both daytime and night encounters on four days with up to 3 animals seen on one day/night.

#	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	#	SPECIES NOTES
25	Eurasian Wolf	<i>Canis lupus lupus</i>	25	Another mammal highlight with excellent sightings of a single animal at 17.20hrs on the 1st as it trotted through the valley we were scanning at a distance of around 500M. The second sighting was on the evening of the 3rd where 2 animals were watched from 19.50hrs - 20.20hrs as they sat and walked a short distance and then lay down on the ground at a distance of around 600M.
26	Steppe Polecat	<i>Vormela eversmanni</i>	26	Great views on foot during a spotlighting session in Hustai NP on the evening of the 7th. It was quite inquisitive for a while and watched us before bounding off to hunt in the long grass.
27	Przewalski's Horse	<i>Equus ferus przewalskii</i>	27	In Hustai NP you are pretty much guaranteed to see these beautiful horses and we enjoyed views of 60+ animals at dusk and at night on the 7th and then a group of 18+ the following day.
28	Asiatic Wild Ass	<i>Equus hemionus</i>	28	A total of 12 animals in the Gurvansaikhan National Park on the 5th where we enjoyed great scope views of adults and younger animals. Subsp. hemionus: Mongolian Wild Ass.
29	Goitered Gazelle	<i>Gazella subgutturosa</i>	29	The most beautiful Gazelle species in Mongolia. We enjoyed great views in Gurvansaikhan National Park of 10 animals on the 5th. Alternative name: Black-tailed Gazelle.
30	Mongolian Gazelle	<i>Procapra gutturosa</i>	30	Some large herds with 30+ travelling from UB to DZ on the 27th and 80+ including young on the 5th. Smaller counts of 6 animals on the 31st and 4 animals on the 1st near base camp.
31	Siberian Ibex	<i>Capra sibirica</i>	31	Recorded on seven days including some very impressive males. Day counts of 10 - 25 most days.
32	Argali	<i>Ovis ammon</i>	32	A single animal on the 1st and then 2 animals together on the 3rd.
	OTHER SPECIES			
1	Siberian or Radde's Toad	<i>Bufo raddei</i>	1	A female at Naran Spring on the 5th and then many individuals near near Bayan Lake on the 7th.
2	Toad-headed Agama	<i>Phrynocephalus versicolor</i>	2	A number of this attractive reptile were recorded on two days.
3	Mongolian Agama	<i>Laudakia stoliczkana</i>	3	Recorded only on the 7th only.
4	Mongolian Racerunner	<i>Eremias argus</i>	4	Recorded at Khoshuu Lake on the 30th and again near the Khongor Dunes on the 4th.
5	Haly's Pit Viper	<i>Gloydius halys</i>	5	This impressive snake was seen near base camp on the 28th and the 3rd. Alternative Name: Siberian Pit Viper.

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