

JAPAN

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INTRODUCTION

There is a vast amount of trip reports and information about birding in Japan and no use to repeat that so I mainly keep to information not previously encountered.

This was my first trip to Japan and together with my wife I spent 18 days away from home. Not entirely a birding holiday, we also had some sightseeing in Tokyo and Kyoto and visited a couple of magnificent gardens along the way. Initially we concentrated on the northern parts of the country, with our first six days on Hokkaido (Kushiro – Lake Furen – Rausu – Tofutsu-ko – Lake Kussharo – Tomakomai), then a full day at the Tomakomai – Oarai ferry and the rest of the trip we spent on the route Tokyo – Mt. Fuji – Kyoto – Karuizawa - Tokyo.

TRANSPORTATION AND GETTING AROUND

Transportation was mainly by rented cars (Nissan) – one in Hokkaido (1200 km) – and another one on Honshu after two nights in Tokyo (1600 km). Driving was easy even for a person not used to left side traffic – even right through Tokyo – with great help from SATNAV/GPS and the pace was friendly. On our two in-car GPS:s you had to know the telephone number to get them working – as long as you don't know Japanese. In advance I had downloaded the app MAPS.ME (free) to my cellphone and than filled it with useful information, which is recommendable – it worked very well.

LODGING

All hotels and minshukus (B&B) - except the very friendly and excellent Furen Lodge, run by mr. Takeyoshi Matsuo and his wife Matsuko - were booked in advance through booking.com or hotels.com and we encountered no problems whatsoever along the way. Most friendly place was Furen Lodge and mister Take-san, with no need to further presentation (he also will help with Washi-no-yado and Ochiishi and other) and the best deal was Kiyomizu Sannezaka Guest House in Kyoto (¥ 8780 for the two of us/night) – well situated and well-equipped (we managed to do all our laundry thanks to the smart in-bathroom solution).

SITE AND SPECIES INFORMATION

In the Furen-ko area the trail leading south west of Lake Onneto (**Onneto rindo**) was very productive with good numbers of woodpeckers, thrushes and other forest birds. One of the official Blakiston's Fish Owl places – **Hattaushi Bridge** – is also the best single place to see White-throated Needle-tails before dusk. Also many warblers and flycatchers in the area.

The cultivated area **east of Shari**, between Rausu and Tofutsu-ko, was good for Chestnut-eared Bunting and Russet Sparrow. The Falcated Ducks at **Tofutsu-ko** are usually found in the north-eastern part of the inlet, according to Take-san, and 14 of them were seen well from the small road (467) east of the lake.

At **Lake Kussharo** we concentrated on the eastern coast of the lake where we had good numbers of woodpeckers, thrushes and other forest birds. Easy birding.

In the Yamanakako area I visited the **Oohora-no-mizuba spring** (35°23'51.9"N, 138°52'43.86"E) twice and the area is good for Japanese Green Woodpecker, Japanese Grosbeak, Japanese Thrush and apparently Yellow Bunting – even though I didn't find any here – beside the more common forest birds.

Yellow Bunting was more easily found in many of the clearings at **Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa**. Best place seems to be in the open area close to Akagera rest house, but we had them near Kibitaki rest house and in other places too. Japanese Green Woodpecker and Japanese Grosbeak are also easy to find in the area. No sign of any Copper Pheasant even if I spent two mornings and two evenings in the reserve ☺

Having missed the Grey Bunting due to bad weather at Shiretoko pass it was a kind of surprise to find at least four birds singing along the **road from Karuizawa to Mount Shirane**. We made a stop where the habitat seemed suitable and there they were – coniferous/mixed forest with dwarf bamboo undergrowth. The approximate coordinates are 36°34'47.24"N, 138°31'35.21"E. There were also two Lesser Cuckoos in the same area.



View from Mount Fuji in the early morning

LIST OF SPECIES

BIRDS

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*)

One at the Imperial Palace, Tokyo July 1 and several at Yamanaka-ko, July 3.

Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*)

A single bird at Tofutsu-ko, June 27.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)

At least 8 at Tofutsu-ko, June 27.

Falcated Duck (*Anas falcata*)

13 at Tofutsu-ko, June 27.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

A pair at Lake Choboshi, June 24, 30+ at Furen-ko, June 25 and 6 at Tofutsu-ko, June 27.

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

A pair at the dam above Rausu, June 26, several at Yamanaka-ko, July 3 and in Kyoto, July 5 and 6.

Eastern Spot-billed Duck (*Anas zonorhyncha*)

8 at Nemuro peninsula June 26, a pair at Yamanaka-ko, July 3, 3 in Kyoto, July 5, two along the Philosopher's Promenade in Kyoto, July 6 and ten at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 7 to 9.

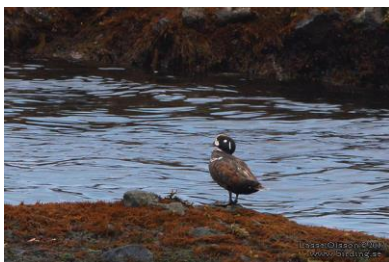


Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)

10 in a flock on Nemuro peninsula, June 25.

Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila ssp. nearctica*)

seen in small numbers most days in Hokkaido .



Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*)

Nine birds west of Utoro harbour. June 27.



Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*)

One female flying over at Hattaushi Bridge, June 23, one male at Tofutsu-ko, June 27 and a female with chicks at Lake Kussharo, June 29.

Chinese Bamboo Partridge (*Bambusicola thoracicus*)

Two birds crossing the road in front of the car in early morning at Oshino, July 4.

Green Pheasant (*Phasianus versicolor ssp. tohkaidi*)

Only record is one male seen from the train between Oarai and Tokyo, June 30.
Japanese endemic.

Black-throated Loon (*Gavia arctica ssp.viridigularis*)

At least two identified (of 300+ loons) at Cape Nosappu, June 25.

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*)

Two at Ochiishi Nature Cruise June 24 and many hundreds (Pacific/Black-throated) passing Cape Nosappu, June 25.

Laysan Albatross (*Phoebastria immutabilis*)

15+ from the ferry between Tomakomai and Oarai, June 29. →

Black-footed Albatross (*Phoebastria nigripes*)

35+ from the ferry between Tomakomai and Oarai, June 29.



Short-tailed Albatross (*Phoebastria albatrus*)

One seen from the ferry between Tomakomai and Oarai, June 29.

Band-rumped Storm Petrel (*Oceanodroma castro*)

One seen from the ferry between Tomakomai and Oarai, June 29. The only Storm Petrel seen from the ferry, probably due to thick mist during much of the journey.

Swinhoe's Storm Petrel (*Oceanodroma monorhis*)

One bird passing rather close Cape Nosappu, June 25.

Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis ssp. rodegarsi*) →
Two close to the boat at Ochiishi Nature Cruise, June 24.



Streaked Shearwater (*Calonectris leucomelas*)
Probably more than 10.000 from the ferry Tomakomai – Oarai, June 29. Outside Oarai they were everywhere!



Sooty Shearwater (*Ardenna grisea*)
50+ from the ferry between Tomakomai and Oarai, June 29.

Short-tailed Shearwater (*Ardenna tenuirostris*)
One at Cape Nosappu, June 25 and 100+ from the ferry between Tomakomai and Oarai, June 29.

Flesh-footed Shearwater (*Ardenna carneipes*)
At least one bird seen from the ferry between Tomakomai and Oarai, June 29. →



Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis ssp. poggei*)
Five in the dam outside Imperial Palace, Tokyo July 1.

Eastern Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus coromandus*)
One together with Grey Herons at Notsuke Hanto, June 26.

Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea ssp. jouyi*)
Seen almost all days

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)
Seen on eight days in different suitable habitats

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)
Seen twice in Honshu – Oarai, June 30 and south of Tokyo July 2.

Pelagic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pelagicus ssp. pelagicus*)
Common along the coast of Hokkaido.

Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo ssp. hanedae*)

Seen in small numbers in Honshu, coastal as well as inland. Endemic sub-species.

Japanese Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax capillatus*)

Common along the Hokkaido coastline.

Crested Honey Buzzard (*Pernis ptilorhynchus ssp. orientalis*)

One seen briefly in the mountains north from Yamanaka ko, July 3 and one from the car between Karuizawa and Tokyo, July 9.

Mountain Hawk-Eagle (*Nisaetus nipalensis ssp. orientalis*)

One soaring over one of the gorges east of Rausu, June 26. According to Takeyoshi Matsuo their numbers are increasing in this area.

Black Kite (*Milvus migrans ssp. lineatus*)

Seen all days in variable numbers.

White-tailed Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*)

Common in eastern Hokkaido, where they – according to Take-san – are rapidly increasing. →



Eastern Buzzard (*Buteo japonicus ssp. japonicus*)

One seen at Lake Kussharo, June 28 and one en route between Kyoto and Karuizawa, July 7.

Red-crowned Crane (*Grus japonensis*)

At least 30 individuals were seen in Hokkaido, mostly pairs in marshes in south-east.



Long-billed Plover (*Charadrius placidus*)

A pair at the dam between Rausu and Shiretoko, June 26.

Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius ssp. curonicus*)

One at Yamanaka-ko, July 3.

Eurasian Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*)

At least five at Hattaushi Bridge, June 23 and singles seen at Onneto Rindo June 24 and 25.

Latham's Snipe (*Gallinago hardwickii*)

Common in Hokkaido with at least 35 birds seen in five days. Largest concentrations at Lake Choboshi, with eight displaying birds.



Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica ssp. baueri*)

One single bird in the lagoon at the northern beginning of Onneto Rindo, June 24.

Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleuca*)

One bird at the dam above Rausu, June 26.

Black-headed Gull (*Chroicephalus ridibundus*)

Seen in single numbers along the coast at Shiretoko peninsula.



Black-tailed Gull (*Larus crassirostris*)

Very common along the coast in Hokkaido. Largest concentration at Ochiishi Nature Cruise, where thousands were nesting upon one of the visited islands, threatened only by White-tailed Eagles.

Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus ssp. pallidissimus*)

Single subadult, non-breeding individuals seen at three

locations along the coast.

Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus chistisagus*)

Very common along the coast of Hokkaido.



Spectacled Guillemot (*Cepphus carbo*)

Common at the Ochiishi Nature Cruise, with 300+ birds seen – mainly close to their breeding rocks, June 24. A couple also seen from Cape Nossapu, June 25.



Ancient Murrelet (*Synthliborampus antiquus ssp. antiquus*)
20+ seen at the Ochiishi Nature Cruise, June 24 and 10+
from the ferry between Tomakomai and Oarai, June 29. →



Rhinoceros Auklet (*Cerorhinca monocerata*)
Very common along the Hokkaido coast. Thousands were
seen at the Ochiishi Nature Cruise, June 24, 500+ at
Nosappu, June 25 and 100+ from the ferry between Tomakomai and Oarai, June 29



Tufted Puffin (*Fratercula cirrhata*)
A single bird eventually seen at the
Ochiishi Nature Cruise, June 29.
One of the main targets of the trip. →



Rock Dove (*Columba livia ssp. domestica*)
Seen most days.

Oriental Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia
orientalis ssp. orientalis*)
Seen and heard every day. →



White-bellied Green Pigeon (*Treron
sieboldii ssp. sieboldii*)
10 – 20 individuals at Onneto Rindo June
24 and 25, 4 – 6 at Lake Kussharo, June 29,
some heard at Yamanaka-ko, July 3 and at
Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 7 to 9.

Lesser Cuckoo (*Cuculus poliocephalus*)
One at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa on July 8
and another two along the road to Mount Shirane the same day.

Oriental Cuckoo (*Cuculus optatus*)
One at Nemuro peninsula, June 25, one above Rausu, June 26 and at least two at Lake
Kussharo, June 28.

Common Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*)
Heard and seen ten days on both Hokkaido and Honshu.

Oriental Scops Owl (*Otus sunia ssp. japonicus*)

One calling at near Wakoto Hanto, Lake Kussharo at dusk, June 28.

Blakiston's Fish Owl (*Bubo blakistoni ssp. blakistoni*)

One bird calling at Hattaushi Bridge, June 23 and a pair at Washi-no-Yado, Rausu June 28. Another one of the main targets, but although it didn't come before midnight, we never got worried.



Northern Boobok (*Ninox japonica ssp. japonica*)

One calling in Karuizawa at night, July 7.



White-throated Needletail (*Hirundapus caudacudus ssp. caudacudus*)

At least 8 birds at Hattaushi Bridge, June 23 and one at Onneto Rindo, June 24.



Pacific Swift (*Apus pacificus ssp. pacificus*)

Seen most days of the trip, with large numbers in the evening over Yamanaka-ko, July 3.

Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis ssp. benghaliensis*)

One at Yamanaka-ko, July 3 and one at Imperial Palace Garden, Kyoto, July 5.

Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker (*Yungipicus kizuki*)

One at the dam above Rausu, June 26 (*ssp. sebohmi*), one at Yamanaka-ko, July 3 and one at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 9 (*ssp. nippon*).

Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major ssp. japonicus*)

Common in suitable habitat in Hokkaido, less so in Honshu.

White-backed Woodpecker (*Dendrocopus leucotos*)

Two at Onneto Rindo, June 24 (*ssp. subcirris* – endemic subspecies) and one at Yamanaka-ko, July 3 (*ssp. stejnegeri* – endemic subspecies).

Japanese Green Woodpecker (*Picus awokera ssp. awokera*)

One flying across the road at Fuji, Subashiri trail, July 2, two at the Oohora-no-mizuba spring, Yamanaka July 3 and at least three at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 8 and 9. Endemic species.



Grey-headed Woodpecker

(*Picus canus ssp. jessoensis*)

At least three at Lake Kussharo, June 28 and one at Yamanaka-ko, July 3. Endemic subspecies.



Azure-winged Magpie

(*Cyanopica cyanus ssp. japonica*)

Two birds in central Oshino, July 3. Endemic subspecies.





Bull-headed Shrike (*Lanius bucephalus ssp. bucephalus*)

Single birds seen five days, often en route.



Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone ssp. orientalis*)

Seen all days

Large-billed Crow (*Corvus macrorhynchus ssp. japonensis*)

Seen all days.

Varied Tit (*Sittiparus varius ssp. varius*)

Heard a couple of times, but only seen once – at Oohora-nomizuba spring, Yamanaka July 3.



Coal Tit (*Periparus ater ssp. insularis*)

Common – seen most days.

Marsh Tit (*Poecile palustris ssp. hersoni*)

Not uncommon on Hokkaido.

Willow Tit (*Poecile montanus ssp. restrictus*)

A couple at Lake Kussharo, June 28 and common at Mount Fuji, July 2 and in Yashono-Mori, Karuizawa, July 7 to 9.



Japanese Tit (*Parus minor ssp. minor*)

Heard and seen most days of the trip.

Eurasian Skylark (*Alauda arvensis ssp. japonica*)

Common in Hokkaido in suitable habitat.

Brown-eared Bulbul (*Hypsipetes amaurotis ssp. amaurotis*)

A few sightings in Hokkaido – central Nemuro and south – but abundant in Honshu.



Sand Martin (*Riparia riparias ssp. ijimae*)

Only registered in Hokkaido, where it is not uncommon and congregates mainly where creeks meet the sea.

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica ssp. gutturalis*)

Not seen in Hokkaido but very common in Honshu.

Asian House Martin (*Delichon dasypus ssp. dasypus*)

Common in Rausu and the Shiritoko peninsula. Otherwise mainly registered at different places in Honshu (Yamanaka-ko, Kyoto ...)



Red-rumped Swallow (*Cecropsis daurica ssp. japonica*)
Only one seen - outside the Museum of Art in Kyoto, July 6.

Japanese Bush Warbler (*Horornis diphone ssp. cantans*)

Very common but not often seen. Registered all days. Endemic subspecies.



Asian Stubtail (*Urosphena squamiceps*)
Only recorded at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa. One singing at dusk, July 7, another one at dusk, July 8 and three birds singing in the early morning, July 9.

Long-tailed Tit (*Aegitalos caudatus ssp. trivigatus*)
Only seen at Onneto Rindo, June 24. Endemic subspecies.



Japanese Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus xanthodryas*)
Common at Mount Fuji, with more than 20 seen/heard, July 2 and 3.



Sakhalin Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus borealoides*) →
Heard and seen daily with up to five birds in south-east Hokkaido (Onneto Rindo, Furen-ko, Hattausi Bridge), June 23 to 26.

Eastern Crowned Warbler (*Phylloscopus coronatus*)
Not as common as expected, but seen/heard in small numbers seven days in suitable habitats in Hokkaido and Honshu.



Black-browed Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*)
Up to ten birds seen and heard every day in suitable habitat in south-eastern Hokkaido.



Oriental Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus orientalis*)

Four singing at the northern end of Yamanaka-ko, July 3.



Middendorff's Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella ochotensis*)

Common in the south-eastern Hokkaido, with up to 20 singing males recorded in one day.



Sakhalin Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella amnicola*)

Not as common as the previous species, but still noted with 3 – 4 individuals every day in south-eastern Hokkaido.

Chinese Hwamei (*Garrulux canorus ssp. canorus*)

Only recorded at Ashi-no-ko, Hakone where it was common, with five seen and heard during an hours walk along the lake, July 2.

Japanese White-eye (*Zosterops japonicus ssp. japonicus*)

Not uncommon in Honshu, with at least five records. Not recorded in Hokkaido.



Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus ssp. japonensis*)

A single bird was seen and heard around the 5th station of Subashiro trail, Mount Fuji, July 3.

Eurasian Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes ssp. fumigatus*)

Heard and seen twelve days in both Hokkaido and Honshu.

Eurasian Nuthatch (*Sitta europea ssp. clara*)

Five birds at Shunkunitai NR, Furen and two in the Lake Kussharo area June 28. Endemic subspecies.

White-cheeked Starling (*Spodiopsar cineraceus*)

Seen in small numbers in four days in Hokkaido, but more widespread and numerous in Honshu.

Chestnut-cheeked Starling (*Agropsar philippensis*)

Only recorded on Hokkaido. Seen in the Nemuro peninsula together with White-cheeked Starlings, June 25 and in the Rausu area, June 26 but in much fewer numbers than the previous species. →



White's Thrush (*Zoothera aurea ssp. toratugumi*)

One singing and seen briefly at Onneto Rindo, June 24 and another feeding on the track Onneto Rindo, June 25.

Japanese Thrush (*Turdus cardis*)

Two singing males at Lake Kussharo, June 28, at least four individuals Yamanaka-ko/Oohora-no-mizuba spring, July 3 and one at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 7 and up to five in the same place, July 8 and 9.



Brown-headed Thrush (*Turdus chrysolaus ssp. chrysolaus*) →

Seen and heard in several places in rather good numbers. At Onneto Rindo there were at least five individuals on June 24 and 25, in the Lake Kussharo area we had at least four, June 28 and at Oohora-no-mizuba spring there were two, July 3. Finally there were two birds at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 8 and one, July 9.



Asian Brown Flycatcher (*Muscicapa daurica ssp. daurica*)

A single bird at Lake Kussharo, June 28 and at two at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 7.

Blue-and-white Flycatcher (*Cyanoptila cyanomelana ssp. cyanomelana*)

One male singing Mount Fuji, July 2, a female at Oohora-no-mizuba spring, July 3 and more than four at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 7 to 9. Always perched in treetops ☺

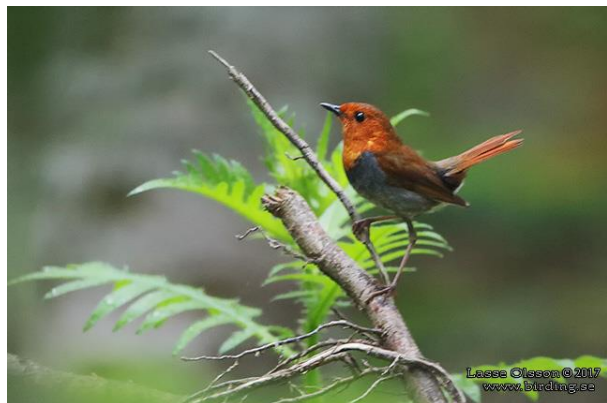
Siberian Blue Robin →
(*Larvivora cyane ssp. nechaevi*)

A pair at Onneto Rindo, June 24 and a pair with chicks at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 7 to 9.



Japanese Robin (*Larvivora akahige ssp. akahige*)

One singing bird at Onneto Rindo, June 24 and six singing males at the same place June 25. One bird at Shiretoko pass, June 27, two singing males at Lake Kussharo, June 28 and one at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 8. More easily encountered than expected.



Siberian Rubythroat (*Calliope calliope ssp. camschatkensis*)

Three singing males in Nemuro peninsula, June 25, one found on a telegraph wire(!) in Notsuke Hanto, June 26 and at least two birds seen in the Rausu area, June 27.



Red-flanked Bluetail (*Tarsiger cyanurus*)

Common in forests in Hokkaido and Honshu, at least ten at Onneto Rindo, June 24 and 25, more than ten at Lake Kussharo, June 28 and 20+ on Mount Fuji, July 3.



Taiga Flycatcher (*Ficedula albicilla*)

A single, probably first year male, calling and seen at Onneto Rindo, June 24.

Narcissus Flycatcher (*Ficedula narcissina ssp. narcissina*)

Common in any woodland type in Hokkaido as well as Honshu. Seen or heard most days of the trip. Very variable in song which sometimes makes it difficult!



Stejneger's Stonechat (*Saxicola stejnegeri*) →
Common in open areas in Hokkaido – seen all days there.

Brown Dipper (*Cinclus pallasii ssp. pallasii*)
One bird at the dam above Rausu, June 26.



Russet Sparrow (*Passer rutilans* ssp. *rutilans*) →

Not uncommon on telephone wires in the plains around Shari, June 27.



Eurasian Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus* ssp. *saturatus*)

Common near cultivation or township in Hokkaido and Honshu.

Japanese Accentor (*Prunella rubida*)

Three between the fifth and the original sixth station of the Subashiro trail on Mount Fuji, July 3.



Eastern Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla tschutschensis* ssp. *taivana*)

A single bird in the plains outside Shari, June 27.

Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea* ssp. *cinerea*)

One bird at the dam above Rausu, June 26 and 27, one in Oshino, July 3, one at Oohora-no-mizuba spring, July 3 and one between Karuizawa and Mount Shirane, July 8.

White Wagtail →

(*Motacilla alba* ssp. *lugens*)

Seen almost all days of the trip.

Japanese Wagtail

(*Motacilla grandis*)

Only one record – a pair in a creek just outside Shobetsu Fishing Harbour, July 2. Much harder to find than expected.





Olive-backed Pipit (*Anthus hodgsoni ssp. hodgsoni*)
At least twenty singing males on Mount Fuji, July 2 and 3. Five of them were territorial around the parking zone at the fifth station of the Subashiri trail.

Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes ssp. japonicus*)
A pair seen briefly from the car en route between Furen and Shiretoko.

Japanese Grosbeak (*Euphona personata ssp. personata*)
One bird seen briefly at Lake Kussharo, June 28, two males singing at Oohora-no-mizuba spring, July 3 and three males singing at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 7 to 9. Endemic subspecies.

Eurasian Bullfinch
(*Pyrrhula pyrrhula ssp. griseiventris*)
Seen in small numbers in the Furen area, June 23 – 26 and also recorded at Mount Fuji, July 3.



Long-tailed Rosefinch (*Carpodacus sibiricus ssp. sanguinolentus*)
Surprisingly numerous with at least 40 birds seen at different locations in Hokkaido, open grassland, woods as well as gardens, for example Furen Lodge.

Grey-capped Greenfinch (*Chloris sinica ssp. minor*)
Common around civilization, in Hokkaido as well as Honshu. Seen 15 days of the trip. Endemic subspecies.



Meadow Bunting (*Emberiza cioides ssp. ciopsis*)

A few birds in the fields north of Wakoto Hanto, June 28, several in the Yamanaka/Oshino area, July 3 and 4, at least two at the golfcourse between Karuizawa and Mount Shirane, July 8 and two singing birds at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 9.

Chestnut-eared Bunting (*Emberiza fucata ssp. fucata*)

At least ten birds singing in the fields outside Shari and a few at Tofutsu-ko, June 27. Also seen in the Karuizawa area, July 8.

Yellow Bunting (*Emberiza sulphurata*)

At least eight birds seen at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 7 to 9. Four of them were singing males. Another one of the main targets – easily located in different places in the reserve.



Black-faced Bunting (*Emberiza spodocephala ssp. personata*)

Common on Hokkaido and seen on all days there. Only one record from Honshu – one singing male Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 7.



Grey Bunting (*Emberiza variabilis ssp. variabilis*)

Four birds singing along the road when climbing up Mount Shirane, July 8 was definite a welcomed surprise. Stopped by chance where the habitat looked promising – mixed pineforest with bamboo undergrowth.



Common Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus ssp. pyrrhulina*)

Single birds seen in suitable habitats on Hokkaido, with 3 individuals at Lake Choboshi, June 24 being the highest count.

MAMMALS

Japanese Macaque (*Macaca fuscata ssp. fuscata*)

A group of more than 10 individuals at Yasho-no-Mori, Karuizawa, July 8. Probably returning after a raid at the tourist restaurants at Hoshino Onsen. Endemic species.

Japanese Hare (*Lepus brachyurus*)

One flushed at Mount Fuji, July 2. Endemic species.

Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)

Very common on Hokkaido, especially near human activities.



Sea Otter (*Enhydra lutris*)

Five seen at Ochiishi Nature Cruise, June 24.



Pacific White-sided Dolphin

(*Lagenorhynchus obliquidens*)

Five parties with together more than 100 individuals from the ferry between Tomakomai and Oarai, June 29.

Common Minke Whale

(*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*)

One seen briefly at Ochiishi Nature Cruise, June 24.

Sika Deer (*Cervus nippon*)

Common in Honshu but even more in Hokkaido.



Japanese Serow (*Capricornis crispus*)

One young male suddenly standing on the roadside when we were descending Mount Shirane, July 8.

A great surprise!



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