



YAKUTSK – IN SEARCH OF THE SIBERIAN NUTHATCH

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INTRODUCTION

This report covers a six-day trip to Yakutsk, the capital of the Sakha Republic in eastern Siberia made by Björn Anderson, Markus Lagerqvist and Stig-Uno Svensson. Yakutsk is known as one of the coldest cities on Earth and the largest city located in continuous permafrost and one of the largest that cannot be reached by road. The main reason for the trip was to look for the Siberian Nuthatch (*Sitta arctica*), a poorly known species restricted to parts of central and north-eastern Siberia and seen by very few birders ever. From studying distributions maps, Yakutsk seemed like a good spot to look from them, and through connections we managed to get in touch with local researchers that reported that they had indeed observed the species in a forest area just outside the city.

So, we decided to give it a go and contacted the local tourist agency Visit Yakutia (www.visityakutia.com) who helped us with the ground arrangements.

DIARY

June 5th

We landed in Yakutsk at 11.10 and were met at the airport by Alexei, our driver from Visit Yakutia. We drove straight to our hotel, the Bravo Bed & Breakfast (www.bravo-hotel.ru) in the city centre, and then walked a couple of blocks to have lunch at a good Russian restaurant. Pacific Swifts were seen in good numbers over the city. At 14.00 we headed out for our first afternoon of birding.

We then opted to spend our first day exploring the forests along the A-331, the road heading West from Yakutsk. From studying satellite maps before our visit, it looked like it should be easy to access good forest along this road, without having to drive far from the city. We spent the afternoon and early evening driving slowly along the road and making multiple stops where we thought the forest looked good, between km 20 and km 60.

We tried to explore different types of forests. Our first stop was an area of mixed larch, pine and birch forest along a small river. This area was quite birdy and we encountered several good species that were not commonly seen during the trip, including **Siberian Chiffchaff**, “**Siberian Lesser Whitethroat**”, **Dusky Warbler** and **Yellow-browed** and **Black-faced Bunting**.

A roadside wetland area produced a couple of **Siberian Rubythroats**, the only ones seen during the trip. In open areas along the road we also encountered both **Pin-tailed** and **Common Snipe**, **Lanceolated Warbler**, **Brown Shrike** and a few **Eastern Buzzards** flying by.

Several areas of pine and larch forests were also explored. These weren't quite as birdy, but still produced some good species like **Oriental Cuckoo**, **Red-flanked Bluetail**, **Olive-backed Pipit** and **Naumann's Thrush** – the common thrush in all types of forest in the area.

In the evening we met up with another team of birders, who were also visiting Yakutsk in search of Siberian Nuthatch, to have dinner and share intel. They had however not seen any sign of the bird despite being on site for three days.

June 6th

We were picked up by Alexei at 03.00 and headed south to explore the forests along road 98K-003, and check out a site close to Bestyakh, where Siberian Nuthatch had been reported by a Russian birder on eBird (September 2009). Along the way we made a stop at a small marshland where we had both **Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler** and fantastic views of a **Brown-cheeked Rail**, here at the Northern limit of its distribution. The site for the eBird observation consisted of patches of mixed forests with a high proportion of birch trees, broken up by large meadows. We saw no sign of nuthatches but had good views of **Pine Bunting** and several **Naumann's Thrushes**. At a nearby roadside stop we had great views of a singing **Two-barred Warbler**.



Around lunch we headed back to Yakutsk. Along the way we made a stop at the wetlands along Lena, close to Khatassy. The most interesting observation here was a pair and a single male **Stejneger's Stonechat**. The male in the pair showed all the characteristics of a classic *stejnegeri*, with deep, warm colours. The single male was a much paler bird, with more whitish underparts, more reminiscent of a *maurus* type. Maybe just variations within *stejnegeri* since *maurus* is not supposed to occur in the area?

After lunch we decided to do some sightseeing and visit the famous Mammoth Museum, which turned out to be a good decision. At the museum we met Sergei Fedorov, head of exhibitions and well-known mammoth expert. He became interested in our search for the Siberian Nuthatch and decided to help us by introducing us to the ornithologists at the Institute of Natural Sciences at the university in Yakutsk.

At the university we met up with several field ornithologists. One of them showed us the first photos we'd seen of the species; these were pictures of a bird that had been seen during last winter at a park in the city centre. Only one of them had records from a breeding site, an active nest he had discovered in a forest area south of the city in 2016. They were all extremely helpful and four of them agreed to come along with us during the afternoon and show us the nest site (called "*Larch forest, Site A*" in the trip list). The area was a beautiful old growth larch forest, which gave of the first clues to the breeding habitat of the species. We spent the late afternoon and early evening birding the forest, but it was fairly quiet, and we decided to return early next morning to have a better chance, with the birds being more active.

Before heading back to the hotel, we made a short stop in the city park where the bird had been seen wintering.



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The birdhouse where the nuthatch had been wintering.

June 7th

We were again picked up by a rather tired Alexei at 03.00 and headed straight to Site A. We began by staking out the area around the nest hole but had no sign of the nuthatch. We spent the full morning covering a large part of the forest, the bird activity was much better and among the birds recorded we had several singing **Red-flanked Bluetails**, **Taiga Flycatchers** and **Olive-backed Pipits**, as well as the only **Northern Goshawk** of the trip and three species of woodpecker; **Eurasian Three-toed**, **Greater Spotted** and **Black Woodpecker**. At noon we headed back, stopping on the way to have a simple, but very tasty, lunch at a small Uzbek restaurant.

After a couple of hours resting – birding activity being very low during the hot afternoons – we headed out again at 16.00. We started by heading north of the city to check out the forests around Bol'nitsa, a ramshackle mining town with a fantastic view over the mighty Lena river.



We talked to a family we met outside their house and showed them pictures of the nuthatch to see if they knew the bird. They knew it, and said it often comes in to their garden, but that they only see it during April and September and never during the summer. The forests didn't look very promising though, so we drove down to the marshlands on Lena's west bank north of Tulagino, an area where **Yellow-breasted Bunting** had been reported on eBird in July 2017. To see this now critically endangered species on its Siberian breeding ground was high on our wish list, so we were very happy when a singing male was found within minutes of our arrival. The bird gave us great views, and a second male was also heard nearby. Other species recorded included **Black-faced Bunting** and hundreds of **White-winged Terns**. After savouring this magical place for a couple of hours we returned to Yakutsk for a late dinner and a few hours of well needed sleep.

During our visit to Tulagino, we received a call from Sergei Fedorov. He had kept inquiring about the nuthatch and told us about a biology professor who often sees the nuthatch at his dacha in Magan, close to Yakutsk. They both wanted to show us the site at 09.30 the next morning. Since birding activity is best early morning, we decided to go to Magan by ourselves, and meet up there.



Björn and Markus together with the ornithologists at Institute of Natural Sciences in Yakutsk.

June 8th

As the previous mornings we were picked up by Alexei at 03.00, and headed straight to Magan, half an hour's drive northwest of Yakutsk. We didn't know exactly where the dacha was situated, but the nearby forest looked promising, so we spent the morning first birding along the road, and then walking a forest trail leading the dachas. Birding activity was good, and species recorded in the area included two species not seen at other sites; **Great Tit** and **Rusting Bunting**.

While we kept birding, Alexei headed back to town to pick up Sergei and his colleague. Just after 10.00 they arrived and we drove to his dacha, beautifully situated, overlooking a small lake. The professor showed us his garden where he had several bird feeders. He told us that during July and August of 2016 he saw nuthatches coming in to the feeders most days, in 2017 he had just seen it a few times and this year they had not showed up at all. Just like the nest hole from 2016 it confirmed that Siberian Nuthatch can be seen in the area during the breeding season, but like at Site A, there was no sign of the bird this year. All a bit puzzling to us, could the species be irruptive and therefore more common certain years, or what was going on?

At lunch we headed back to Yakutsk to drop of Sergei and had lunch together at the university canteen, followed by a couple of hours siesta. At 15.30 we headed out again to make a last effort in the forests around Magan.



En route we made a stop at The Kingdom of Permafrost – a display of ice sculptures housed in tunnels dug into the permafrost. A fascinating place, well worth a visit. As for the birding we didn't record and new species during the afternoon.

On the way back in the evening we had dinner at Chochur Muran, a restaurant that serves meals inspired by traditional Yakutian dishes, we opted for mixed grilled meat – beef, pig, deer and horse – with cranberry cake for dessert.



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Our team looking for the nuthatch at Magan, where it had been seen the previous summer.

June 9th

Our last morning, we headed out at 03.00 again, to give Site A a last chance. Our plan was covering the forest on the other side of a ravine transecting the area, which we hadn't birded during the previous visit. We spend four hours, until 08.00, systematically covering the area, but finally had to admit defeat in our search for the elusive nuthatch. Our best observation during the morning was good views of a singing **Red-flanked Bluetail**, a bird we had heard many of, but that can be very difficult to get good views of.

After a stop at the hotel to shower, do the last packing and check-out we headed to the airport to catch our 12.30 flight to Moscow.



LOCATIONS

TULAGINO MARSHES

Wetland and extensive dry and wet meadows half an hour's drive north of Yakutsk. Good site for Yellow-breasted Bunting. The marshes are probably best accessed from the south-east, driving on dirt-roads in a counter-clockwise direction around the marshes.



Overlooking the extensive Tulagino marshes and the mighty Lena river.



The arrow marks the area where we had Yellow-breasted Bunting.



LARCH FOREST SITE A

Old growth larch forest south of Yakutsk. This is the site where we were shown nest holes said to have been used by Siberian Nuthatch the previous summer.

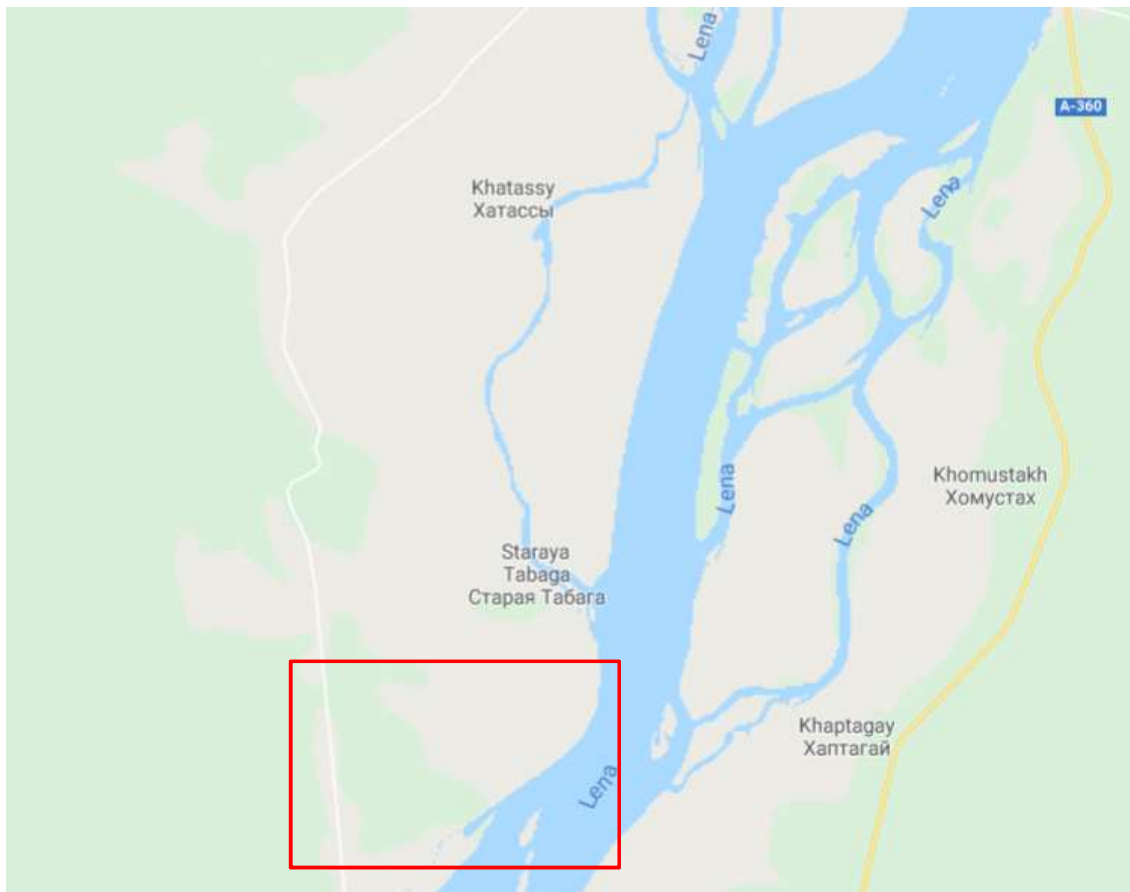
We did not find any nuthatches here, but the forest was beautiful and looked very promising with rich undergrowth and lots of old trees. Many of the typical Siberian forest species are present and we saw three species of woodpecker here.



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Markus exploring the larch forest.



Presumed nest holes used by Siberian Nuthatch.



Larch forest site A, south of Yakutsk.



The arrow marks the area where the old nest holes were.



FOREST AND DACHAS NEAR MAGAN

Along the road to Magan, northwest of Yakutsk, the nuthatch had been reported in an area of dachas – Russian summer homes.

The small forest west of the dachas (circled on the map) was the only place we saw Rustic Bunting. Two-barred Crossbill and *kapustini* Great Tit was also seen in the area.



The arrow point to the dachas where Siberian Nuthatch had been seen.



CHECKLISTS

The annotated checklist is based on iGoTerra Trips (www.igoterra.com). For birds the taxonomy is based on IOC 9.2 and for mammals it is based on IUCN.

BIRDS

Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis middendorffii*

- 1 Tulagino marshes 7.6



Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

- 2 Yakutsk city area 7.6

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

- 2 Yakutsk city area 7.6

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

- 5 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 1 Tulagino marshes 7.6

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis buteoides*

- 1 Larch forest, Site A 7.6

Black Kite *Milvus migrans lineatus*

- 5 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 2 Yakutsk city area 5.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 7.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6
- 5 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 5 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6

Eastern Buzzard *Buteo japonicus*

- 3 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 1 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 1 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6



Brown-cheeked Rail *Rallus indicus*

- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6



Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius curonicus*

- 2 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6, 2 Tulagino marshes 7.6 and 1 Yakutsk city area 7.6

Pin-tailed Snipe *Gallinago stenura*

- 4 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 1 Tulagino marshes 7.6.



Along the road west of Yakutsk, Pin-tailed Snipe species was heard displaying at the same site as Common Snipe.



Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

- 1 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 5 Tulagino marshes 7.6

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*

- 2 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

- 2 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 2 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

- 2 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 5 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 1 Larch forest, Site A 7.6, 3 Tulagino marshes 7.6
- 5 Forest near Magan 8.6 and 1 Larch forest, Site A 9.6

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

- 2 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 50 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6
- 20 Tulagino marshes 7.6

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

- 5 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 10 Tulagino marshes 7.6
- 1 Forest near Magan 8.6

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

- 5 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 2 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 1 Larch forest, Site A 9.6

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

- 50 Yakutsk city area 5.6
- 400 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 100 Tulagino marshes 7.6
- 50 Yakutsk city area 7.6
- 200 Yakutsk city area 8.6
- 50 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6

Mew Gull *Larus canus heinei*

- 100 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo longipennis*

- 10 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 50 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6
- 20 Yakutsk city area 7.6
- 20 Yakutsk city area 8.6
- 20 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6



White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

- 2 Yakutsk city area 5.6
- 150 Khatassy marshes 6.6
- 200 Tulagino marshes 7.6
- 20 Yakutsk city area 8.6
- 100 Khatassy marshes 9.6



Rock Dove *Columba livia var. domestica*

- 4 Yakutsk city area 8.6

Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 1 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 2 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 1 heard Larch forest, Site A 9.6

Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus optatus*

- 3 heard Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 1 heard Larch forest, Site A 7.6

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

- 10 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6
- 10 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 5 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 3 Larch forest, Site A 9.6



Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*

- Up to 200 Yakutsk city area 5-9.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 100 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6.



Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla chinensis*

- 1 + 2 heard Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 1 heard Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 1 heard Forest near Magan 8.6

Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker *Picoides tridactylus crissoleucus*

- 2 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 1 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 1 Tulagino marshes 7.6
- 1+1 heard Larch forest, Site A 9.6



Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major brevirostris*

- 3 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 3 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 1 Yakutsk city area 6.6
- 2 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6
- 2 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 1 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 2 Larch forest, Site A 9.6



Black Woodpecker *Dryocopus martius*

- 2 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 1 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 2 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 1 Larch forest, Site A 9.6

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus perpallidus*

- 1 Yakutsk city area 7.6

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

- 2 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*

- 4 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 2 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 3 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6
- 1 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6



Carrion Crow *Corvus corone orientalis*

- 2 Yakutsk city area 5.6
- 30 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6
- 1 Yakutsk city area 8.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6

Northern Raven *Corvus corax kamtschaticus*

- 2 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 2 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 2 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 2 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 1 heard Forest near Magan 8.6
- 1 Larch forest, Site A 9.6



Great Tit *Parus major kapustini*

- 3 Forest near Magan 8.6



Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis intermedia*

- 1 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 20 Tulagino marshes 7.6

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia taczanowskii*

- 10 Yakutsk city area 7.6
- 50 Forest near Magan 8.6

Common House Martin *Delichon urbicum lagopodum*

- 2 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

- 1 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 2 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6



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"Siberian Chiffchaff" and Arctic Warbler.



Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

- 10 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 1 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 1 heard Forest near Magan 8.6

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

- 5 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 5 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 7.6
- 1 heard Forest near Magan 8.6
- 1 heard Larch forest, Site A 9.6

Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*

- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6
- 2 Tulagino marshes 7.6
- 3 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 1 heard en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6

Two-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*

- 3 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6



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The song of Two-barred Warbler was quite distinctive from Greenish Warbler.

Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata lanceolata*

- 1 heard Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola rubescens*

- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 2 heard Yakutsk city area 8.6
- 2 heard en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca blythi*

- 1 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 1 heard Forest near Magan 8.6



Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris poltaratskyi*

- 50 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 50 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 7.6
- 10 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6

Naumann's Thrush *Turdus naumanni*

- 10 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 2 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 7.6
- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6
- 2 Larch forest, Site A 7.6, 10 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 5 Larch forest, Site A 9.6.



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Naumann's Thrush was the common thrush in the forests. All birds seen looked like good Naumann's, with the exception that the eyebrow varied in colour from reddish to pale greyish. We saw no Dusky Thrushes, so there is no real reason to believe that this colour variation came from hybrid origin but may rather be individual variation.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 2 Tulagino marshes 7.6
- 2 Forest near Magan 8.6

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 7.6

Siberian Rubythroat *Calliope calliope calliope*

- 3 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6



Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

- 2 heard Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 10 heard en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 5 heard Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 3 heard Forest near Magan 8.6
- 1+4 heard Larch forest, Site A 9.6

The persistent singer in most forests, even later during the day. Were they singing for the second brood, as this species should have arrived rather early in the season?

Taiga Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla*

- 3 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 5 Larch forest, Site A 7.6, 1 Tulagino marshes 7.6
- 2 heard Forest near Magan 8.6
- 3 heard Larch forest, Site A 9.6.

Stejneger's Stonechat *Saxicola stejnegeri*

- 3 Khatassy marshes 6.6
- 1 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 7.6



One male, which was together with a female, looked like a good stejnegeri with all rufous underparts. At the same site and at another location we saw two males which had a much more maurus-like colouration on the underparts. Maurus is expected to occur only way west and it may be that these birds were stejnegeri and that the underpart colouration just varies.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus domesticus*

- Up to 10 Yakutsk city area 5-8.6

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba ocularis*

- 5 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 1 Yakutsk city area 5.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 7.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Kangalassy 7.6
- 10 Forest near Magan 8.6, 10 Yakutsk city area 8.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6



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White Wagtail of the subspecies *ocularis*.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*

- 3 Khatassy marshes 6.6, 10 en route – Yakutsk to Kangelassy 7.6
- 10 Tulagino marshes 7.6
- 5 Khatassy marshes 9.6

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis trivialis*

- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 5 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 5 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 5 Larch forest, Site A 9.6

Tree and Olive-backed Pipits seem to be sympatric, perhaps that Tree Pipit was more in the open forest and Olive-backed more in the closed forest.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni yunnanensis*

- 2 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 10 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 1 heard Larch forest, Site A 9.6



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Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

- 5 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 2 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 3 heard Forest near Magan 8.6
- 5 Larch forest, Site A 9.6

Eurasian Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula pyrrhula*

- 1 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 2 Forest near Magan 8.6.

The nominate subspecies seems to occur through the northern taiga forest all the way east to Sea of Okhotsk, whereas Grey Bullfinch should be found in southern Yakutia.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus grebnitskii*

- 2 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 10 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 1 Tulagino marshes 7.6
- 4 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 2 Larch forest, Site A 9.6

Two-barred Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera bifasciata*

- 1 Forest near Magan 8.6

Eurasian Siskin *Spinus spinus*

- 5 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 5 Larch forest, Site A 9.6

Pine Bunting *Emberiza leucocephalos leucocephalos*

- 3 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 2 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 5 Forest near Magan 8.6
- 2 Larch forest, Site A 9.6.



At one occasion we played the song of Yellowhammer with absolutely no response until we played Pine Bunting and the response was immediate. At a second place the male responded instantly to Yellowhammer.

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Yellow-browed Bunting *Emberiza chrysophrys*

- 1 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 1 Larch forest, Site A 7.6
- 3 Forest near Magan 8.6

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica*

- 2 Forest near Magan 8.6



Yellow-browed and Rustic Bunting.

Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola aureola*

- 2 Tulagino marshes 7.6



Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala spodocephala*

- 1 Yakutsk, road 20-60 km west of 5.6
- 2 Tulagino marshes 7.6



MAMMALS

Mountain Hare *Lepus timidus*

- 1 Larch forest, Site A 7.6

Eurasian Beaver *Castor fiber*

- 2 Tulagino marshes 7.6

Arctic Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus citellus*

- 100 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 6.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 7.6
- 50 en route – Yakutsk to Kandalassy 7.6
- 20 en route – Yakutsk to Bulgunnyakhtakh 9.6



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Siberian Chipmunk *Tamias sibiricus*

- 1 Larch forest, Site A 6.6

BUTTERFLIES

Butterflies and skippers were frequently encountered in the sunny weather. The following species were identified, with a few more unidentified species:

- **Northern Checkered Skipper** *Carterocephalus silvicola*
- **Grizzled Skipper** *Pyrgus malvae*
- **Green Hairstreak** *Callophrys rubi*
- **Short-tailed Blue** *Cupido argiades*
- **Camberwell Beauty** *Nymphalis antiopa*
- **Comma** *Polygonia c-album*
- **Old World Swallowtail** *Papilio machaon*
- **Pale Clouded Yellow** *Colias hyale*

ORCHIDS

Yellow Coralroot *Corallorhiza trifida*

- 1 Larch forest, Site A 7.6 was the only orchid seen.