Dear Birdwatcher

Hereby the List of species observed during Mikstures Snow leopard Expeditions in Kyrgyzstan: 2000, 2001 and 2003. Two expedition members contributed with comments and additional notes: Mr Morten Heegaard and Mr. Henning Vikkelsø Rasmussen

Since I began birding in Kyrgyzstan I’ve searched for this elusive animal. Being one of the worlds most rare and shy mammals I quickly found out it was no easy task. During the years I spoke with several people to gather information about where and how. In the years of 2000, 2001 and 2003, Mikstures/Michael Westerbjerg Andersen organised and accomplished three expeditions to the mountains south of the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek. Indeed the idea was to observe the elusive Snow leopard. Being an ornithologist this was an outstanding opportunity to study the mountain birds in early spring; a time of year where almost nothing is written and reported from the Kyrgyz Mountains. Other mammals seen during the expeditions include species like Wolf, Lynx, Red fox, Cossack Fox, Long-tailed Marmot, Ibex, Red deer, Roe deer, Altai deer, etc.

The first signs of Snow leopards were in 1996 where I found tracks from snow leopard high up in the eastern Tien Shan, Kyrgyzstan. But one thing is to find tracks, to find a mammal is another story. Tracks are quite obvious in the snow, though tracks can be several days or weeks old. Nevertheless I get in touch with some local hunters in winter 1999 and began planning a spring expedition. This time the information seemed to be reliable. In April 2000 I travelled to Kyrgyzstan and out
in the mountains. This was a serious attempt and within a week I was able to spot a Snow leopard in a short glimpse for about 15 seconds; when it was running near the top of a mountain ridge.

In spring 2001 I was back with a little group. Nevertheless we didn’t find the Snow leopard. Probably we were closer than expected, but we had to leave before the observation came true. That’s the game.

2003 we were back again. This time to a new location. From the beginning there were evident signs of Snow leopard activity. We found markings and almost felt the presence of the Snow leopard. Nevertheless we worked hard in the tough terrain for more than a week and when the last day came and we were leaving the camp, two of us went uphill to watch for the beautiful titwarbler. This turned out to be one of the really magic moments. Of course we didn’t expect to find the Snow leopard. We were heading up seeing the bird and left most of our gear; including spottinscopes and photographic equipment in the Foothills while heading uphill. We should return during the day and therefore minimised the burden, only walking along with our binoculars. Approximates 200 meter from the camp, I observed the bird, but Henning didn’t. Therefore we continued for approx half an hour. It was superb weather; crystal clear air with sparkling white snow. We found an excellent habitat for the bird and shortly after found the bird. Actually we were not disappointed not finding the Snow leopard. All in all, the expedition had been excellent anyway. We had lots of amusements and the group really worked well. We had excellent sightings of birds and mammals during the week. And were ready travelling back to the civilisation. Our local guide then suddenly pointed out two Ibex running downhill on the opposite mountain ridge approx. 7-800 meters away. It really looked suspicious and we by instinct focussed in opposite direction of the fleeing Ibex. I think we saw the Snow leopard at the same second. We almost couldn’t believe and were quite suspicious whether it should be a wolf or something else. The animal walked slowly downhill in our direction. Quite soon it became obvious it was a Snow leopard. No doubt so ever. We were able to spot the long tail, the leopard-like jizz and the spotted fur. We were amazed. The Snow leopard continued its walking app. 150 meter, and then it sat down and looked at our direction..... For several minutes it stalked and for sure it knew our presence. Then it continued walking uphill; slowly and impressing and we lost it out of sight. A truly magic experience.

**Bird watching in the mountains in April has to be planned and implemented with care.**

The climate is continental: hot in summer, cold in winter. April – spring weather can range from mild to cold; snow storms may occur at every moment. Ice and snow persist in the mountains well into May, and this may hinder access. Night temperatures are variable and influenced by the altitude, too. Nights can be very cold; April 2003 we had temperatures below 15 minus degrees at night. Then it takes 50 minutes getting out the sleeping bag – and 50 seconds to get dressed, washed, brushed and seated around the table in the kitchen tent embracing a hot mug of coffee. Various elevations, exposition of mountains slopes to the sun...
and air flows, create a variety of features of climate and climatic belts:
1) Valley-foothill belt (from 500 – 600 to 900 – 1200 m) is defined by a hot summer, moderate – cool and snow less winter with a large deficiency of precipitation. Winter temperatures on average are -4 to -7 degrees, in April higher without I know the average temperatures; but I would say around 0 degrees.
2) The Mid-altitude belt (from 900 – 1200 to 2000 – 2200 m) is characterized by a typically moderate climate and moderate-cold winter. The temperature here is much lower than in the bottom belt: in February -5 to -3 degrees.
3) The High –altitude belt from 2000-2200 to 3000-3500 m is defined by cool summer and cold winter with a lot of snowfall in some places. Up here the winter is long, from November to March with average -7 to -3 degrees below zero. Above this belt (Nival belt) from 3500 m and higher there is winter all-year round; more or less. This is where you have to look for Snow Leopard. If it was birds only, there are plenty of other habitats - in more pleasant surroundings e.g. Issyk Kul: this is the place where huge concentrations of waterfowl gather during winter. On the other hand; it’s another story with will be described in another report.

The birds migrate vertically during the winter according the availability of food. In general the mountain birds occur just below the snowline and this line moves up and down – at altitudes between 1500 and 3500 m. - according precipitation which in these altitudes is snow. This is also where Ibexes occur (main prey for the Snow leopard). In April the spring settles and there are pleasant warm days with sunshine and blue skies. But as mentioned, the weather changes rapid and sometimes its springtime in the morning, autumn at lunch and winter in the evening. This influence on our bird lists and especially 2000 were tough. Almost daily we experienced snow and rain. Species usually associated with the high altitude belt are seen in the Mid- and valley-foothill belt and this is particularly interesting.

The Snow leopard

The snow leopard is extremely rare in most of their range. Information to the wrong person about the snow leopards presence and location can be very dangerous - for the snow leopard. The activities of humans threaten the snow leopard’s survival. There is a growing market for the bones, skin and organs of snow leopards for traditional Asian medicine. Furthermore snow Leopards are in great danger of being shot not only due illegal poaching - Villagers with growing domestic herds have moved into snow leopard habitat crowding out the native prey. Villagers in Kyrgyzstan depend on their flocks of sheep and goats to supply their family’s meat, dairy products and wool. Snow leopards are turning to this domestic prey which is corralled in roughly built stone pens that are easy for the snow leopard to penetrate. We are fortunate to be living in a time when Snow leopards still roam the mountains of Kyrgyzstan – if the mountains lose their last snow leopard, a spark will have gone from the world – and this we have to prevent! In Kyrgyzstan there are no resources to support reserves, rangers or conservation, by collecting information and write about the snow leopard in Kyrgyzstan, I hope this may be a step on the road to support and protect the snow leopard in Kyrgyzstan.

Well. This is about the birds seen during the expeditions. Most of us are actually birders and surely the birds have been a major attraction during the expeditions. In April large numbers of birds migrate through Kyrgyzstan, particularly the surrounding farmland and the city parks is interesting places. Both species of cranes predominates in the northern part of Kyrgyzstan, but other migrants: larks, buntings, thrushes and raptors add variety to a long watch. Therefore I have included sightings from less mountainous parts of Kyrgyzstan; to give an idea about the composition of species at e.g. Issyk Kul Lake and Bishkek.

The birds described in this report are from Ala-Too Mountains south of Bishkek. It’s not
the same area I’ve used every year; instead I use the effort where the chance for seeing the Snow leopard is best. You maybe wonder why, I don’t specify the location more precise, but it’s a matter of protect the snow leopard. But I would make the assertion that’s its possible by luck to observe a snow leopard in most of the remote mountains in Kyrgyzstan. There is plenty opportunities seeing these birds in similar habitats all over Kyrgyzstan – e.g. Ala Archa Natural Park 40 km south of Bishkek. The important and essential thing is being out in the mountains and in similar altitudes: from 1500 – 3500 m. Then you for sure will observe the same species – if not more. Kyrgyzstan is not well ornithological described and there are plenty of possibilities. Similar you are always welcome to contact me for information and advices.

I hope that this report will stimulate more birdwatchers to undertake a journey to Kyrgyzstan – in April as well.

**Snow leopard Expedition 2005**

In April 2005 we make a Snow leopard Expedition to Kyrgyzstan. Maximum 8 participants. Please contact me for further information. Program can be studied on our web: www.sitecenter.dk/kirgistan or www.miksture.dk (from ultimo September 2004). All birders are welcome and on our travels there usually is a mixture of nationalities. Language is no problem: English, German and Danish are spoken. Miksture provide information about travelling in the region and specific ornithological information. Likewise it’s possible to book Michael as leader or co-leader for your journey in the region. Likewise our facilities and experienced team in Kyrgyzstan will join and arrange everything in superior quality. We use our own vehicles, our own gear – tents, kitchen-team, vehicles, etc. Everything to increase your birding and your safety. In addition our prices are reasonable for everyone. Michael can be contacted for further information and I welcome any remarks and dialogue:

**On behalf of Miksture**

Michael Westerbjerg Andersen
Rungsted Kyst, 10. September 2004

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I have included taxonomical remarks issued by AERC TAC (2003) AERC TAC’s Taxonomic Recommendations. Online version: www.aerc.be. I assume most travellers in the region would appreciate some taxonomical hints. Subspecies are mentioned, though not in every occasion detailed. In many occasions it’s impossible or difficult to pinpoint the ssp. - marked with a parenthesis e.g. *Podiceps grisegena (holboellii)*. Unrecognized ssp. Is marked with an asterix e.g. *Anas strepera* The AERC TAC recommendation is a useful tool for every taxonomist and certainly a great help for any birder travelling in the region. No doubt – there is several non-described ssp. in the region. Lots to see – lots to do! I have added further info about the birds in Kyrgyzstan due general lack of information about ornithology in this country.
**Puffinus yelkouan** - Yelkouan Shearwater  
2003: 8/4 400-600 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan.

**PODICIPEDIDAE**  
**Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis** - Black-necked Grebe - Sorthalset Lappedykker  

**PHALACROCORACIDAE**  
**Phalacrocorax carbo (sinensis)** - Great Cormorant - Skarv  
Breeds in Western Tien Shan; at present, colonies in Chui Valley and in the north of the country near Bishkek. Sometimes winters in small numbers in Issyk Kul. Juveniles considered rather pale (white) compared to European birds, maybe bleaching or so.  
2003: 8/4 5 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan.

**ARDEIDAE**  
**Ardea cinerea cinerea** - Grey Heron - Fiskehejre  
Kyrgyzstan: Breeds country-wide; winters in small numbers. Ssp. (2) cinerea Africa (except Mauritania), Europe, and northern and south-western Asia.  
2003: 8/4 1 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan.

**CICONIIDAE**  
**Ciconia ciconia** - White Stork - Hvid Stork  
2001: 8/4 approx. 200 Bishkek. This is a record of migrating storks; a quite unusual one as well. The White Stork is not common in Kyrgyzstan, though breeds in southern parts of the country in low numbers. I suppose this record could be birds from western populations probably Uzbek birds.  

**ANATIDAE**  
**Aythya ferina (monotypic)** - Common Pochard - Taffeland  
Kyrgyzstan (Breeds in north of country; resident in Issyk Kul). Winters in good numbers.  
2003: 15/4 8 southern shore of Issyk Kul; ponds, small lakes and fields.

**Netta rufina** (monotypic) - Red-crested Pochard - Rødhovedet And  
Kyrgyzstan: Breeds country-wide in small numbers; resident. Issyk Kul is one of the most important wintering sites for this species in the region.  
2003: 15/4 35 southern shore of Issyk Kul; ponds, small lakes and fields.

**ACCIPITRIDAE**  
**Gypaetus barbatus aureus [includes hemachalanus]** – Lammergeier - Lammegrib  
Resident country-wide. Birds belong for some authors to a different race altaicus but it’s now replaced into aureus.  
2001: 9/4 3 imm. Base Camp, 10/4 3 (1 ad. & 2 imm.) Base Camp, 11/4 5 ad. Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 2 adult around Camp1, 13/4 2 adult Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 1 adult Camp1, 15/4 2 ad. Camp2 and surrounding valleys and 16/4 2 (1 ad. + 1 imm.) Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m.  
2003: 10/4 2, 11/4 2 and 12/4 1 Eastern Alatoo mountains; Valley East of Bishkek.

**Gyps himalayensis** * - Himalayan Griffon Vulture - Himalayagrib  
Resident country-wide. Easy to identify, look for pale breast and the strong contrast on the under wing.  
2000: 16/4 1 adult Gorge in Alatoo; eastern part.  
2001: 9/4 6 Base Camp, 10/4 6 Base Camp, 11/4 4 Base Camp – Camp1, 13/4 3 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1 and 14/4 4 Camp1 – Base Camp.  
2003: 10/4 1 and 11/4 1 Eastern Alatoo mountains; Valley East of Bishkek.

**Aquila chrysaetos (chrysaetos)** - Golden Eagle - Kongeorn  
2000: 17/4 4 adult; probably two breeding pairs, Gorge in Alatoo; eastern part.  
2001: 9/4 2 imm. Foothills – Base Camp, mountains E of Bishkek, 9/4 3 Base Camp,
10/4 2 Base Camp, 11/4 2 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 1 imm. near Camp1, 13/4 2 adult Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 1 pair on nest Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 2 (1 ad. + 1 imm.) Camp2 and surrounding valleys and 16/4 1 adult Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m.

2003: 10/4 3; 11/4 1 and 12/4 1 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; Valley East of Bishkek and 14/4 1 Tamga, Issyk Kul.

**Aquila nipalensis (orientalis)** - Steppe Eagle - Steppeørn


**Hieraaetus pennatus (monotypic)** - Booted Eagle - Dværgørn


**Milvus migrans** - Black Kite - Sort Glente or **Milvus lineatus** - Black-eared Kite

Common. Breeds in the north of the country; migrant in big numbers. Local birds belong to Black-eared Kite *M.m.lineatus*. Birds are distinctive due to their characteristic primary pattern, colour of the under body and the dark eye-mask. In general they looked larger than European Black Kite *Milvus migrans*. Ssp *lineatus* occur in Asia east from west Siberia, vagrant WP [includes *formosan*, *tianschanicus*]. Species status uncertain, though most authors split it in two species. Black Kite *Milvus migrans* now regarded more as a European/South Asian species. In Central Asia further northwards it is referred to as the Black-eared Kite *Milvus lineatus*. 2003: 9/4 1 Bishkek, 14/4 1 Tamga, Issyk Kul and 15/4 1 southern shore of Issyk Kul; ponds, small lakes and fields.

**Circus aeruginosus (aeruginosus*)** - Western Marsh Harrier - Rørhøg

2003: 15/4 1 southern shore of Issyk Kul; ponds, small lakes and fields.

**Buteo rufinus rufinus** - Long-legged Buzzard - Ørnevåge

Common resident. 2001: 10/4 2 Base Camp

**Buteo buteo vulpinus** - Eurasian Buzzard - Musvåge (ssp Steppevåge)

Resident country-wide; migrant in large numbers. Note local ssp. Steppe Buzzard *Buteo buteo vulpinus* – breeding range from Finland to Altai Mountains in southern Siberia. Other subspecies: Eurasian Buzzard *Buteo buteo* and eastern *B. b. japonicus* may occur migrating in September and October, the latter in low numbers; sporadic. I have observed Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius* in eastern Kyrgyzstan in some years – even at summertime, which is interesting from the point of view concerning possible breeding birds. Upland Buzzard breeds central Asian highlands from east Tien Shan and Altai east to western Manchuria and south to southern Tibet, and perhaps Himalayas. In winter, also northern and central China, northern India and Russian Turkestan (Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and probably western central Asian as well, pers. com. MWA): Cramp, S and Simmons, K E L (eds.) (1980) *The Birds of the Western Palaearctic*, Vol. 2.

2000: 15/4 1 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.


**Accipiter gentilis** - Northern Goshawk - Duehøg

2001: 9/4 1 Base Camp.

**Accipiter nisus (nisosimilis)** - Eurasian Sparrowhawk - Spurvehøg

Resident country-wide. Ssp. *Nisus*: Europe, West Siberia, and the Middle East [includes *hibernicus*, *optimi*, *peregrinoides*, and *salamancae*] or ssp. *nisosimilis*: central and eastern Siberia, migrant WP [includes *pallens*]. 2003: 9/4 1 Bishkek and 15/4 1 Tamga, Issyk Kul.

**Accipiter badius cenchroides** [includes chorassanicus] - Shikra - Shikra

2001: 8/4 1 Bishkek.
FALCONI DAE

Falco tinnunculus - Common Kestrel - Tårnfalk
Resident country-wide; also migrant.
2000: 15/4 1 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.
2001: 8/4 3 Foothills – Base Camp, mountains E of Bishkek, 10/4 1 Base Camp, 11/4 1 Base Camp – Camp1, 14/4 1 Camp1 – Base Camp, 14/4 2 Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 1 Camp2 and surrounding valleys and 16/4 10 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m., 17/4 5 Camp2.
2003: 11/4 9, 12/4 1 and 13/4 1Eastern Ala-Too mountains; Valley East of Bishkek.

Falco peregrinus* - Peregrine - Vandrefalk
2003: 7/4 1 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan.

Tetrogallus himalayensis* - Himalayan Snowcock - Himalaya Kongehøne
Resident country-wide in mountainous areas.
2000: 16/4 2 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part and 17-18/4 15-20 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.

Alectoris chukar* - Chuckar - Chu-karhøne
Resident country-wide up to alpine zone in the mountains.
2001: 10/4 2 Base Camp, 15/4 5 Camp2 and surrounding valleys and 17/4 5 Camp2.
2003: 9/4 1 and 10/4 2 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; Valley East of Bishkek.

Perdix dauurica - Daurian Partridge
2001: 10/4 4 Base Camp.

RALLI DAE

Phasianus colchicus* - Common Pheasant - Fasan
Resident in valleys and near mountains; popular object for hunting. More
ssp. in the region e.g. turcestanicus in Almaty. (1) colchicus Western and central Transcaucasia [includes lorenzi], (2) septentrionalis Western and northern shores of Caspian Sea south to northern foot of Caucasus, west to mouth of Kuban' River, (3) talischen-sis Eastern Transcaucasia to northern Iran, (4) principalis South-east Turkmenistan to west-central Asia; introduced birds WP show characters of (especially) this and following 2 races, or variable mixture of these and others [includes bogdanowi, komarovii], (5) mongo-licus Eastern Kazakhstan and eastern Tien Shan to western Dzungaria (Xingjian, China), introduced WP (6) torquatus South-east China, introduced WP.

2000: 15/4 1 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.
2003: 9/4 1 Eastern Ala-Too Mountains; Valley East of Bishkek.

**Gruidae**

*Grus virgo (monotypic) - Demoiselle Crane - Jomfrutrane*
Breeds in low numbers - migrates in larger numbers in spring and autumn, mainly in the north of the country.
2001: 8/4 15 migrating NE; Bishkek.

*Ibidorhyncha struthersii - Ibisbill - I bisnæb*
Resident mainly in the centre and East of Kyrgyzstan; restricted breeding in high mountain streams, lower in winter. Sometimes in small groups. Note: The call is much like a Whimbrel!
2001: 1 10/4 1 Base Camp.

**Charadriidae**

*Charadrius dubius curonicus - Little Ringed Plover - Lille Praestekrave*
2003: 15/4 1 southern shore of Issyk Kul; ponds, small lakes and fields.

*Gallinago solitaria - Solitary Snipe*
2001: 17/4 1 Camp2 – Base Camp.

**Laridae**

*Larus michahellis - Yellow-legged Gull*
Ssp. michahellis
2003: 8/4 100 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan.

*Larus ridibundus (monotypic) - Black-headed Gull - Hættemåge*
Breeds country-wide; partly resident.
2003: 8/4 20 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan.

*Larus minutus (monotypic) - Little Gull - Dværgmåge*
2003: 8/4 25 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan.
**COLUMBI DAE**

*Colombia livia neglecta* - Rock Dove - Klippedue

*Colombia livia neglecta* have a grey rump (sometimes white which can cause confusion with Yellow-eyed Stock Dove). Very similar to nominate in coloration. (2) *neglecta* Northern Turkey, Transcaucasia, and Transcaspia from northern Kazakhstan and Turkmensia eastward [includes *korejewi*, *ferghanensis*].


*Colombia rupestris rupestris* - Hill Pigeon - Østlig Klippedue

Resident in mountainous areas country-wide. 2001: 13/4 2 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1 and 16/4 4 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3,100 m.

2003: 11/4 2 Eastern Ala-Too Mountains; Valley East of Bishkek.

*Colombia eversmanni* (monotypic) - Yellow-eyed Dove - Turkestandue

Rarely breeds in steep valleys of Talas, Chui and Fergana; migrant. (Hunted in Kyrgyzstan, but in Red Data Book of Kazakhstan). Birds have a pale rump, less black in the wingtips and are generally smaller than Stock Dove and Rock dove and easy to pick out the flocks of pigeons. The population, which migrates through Chokpak in Kazakhstan, has been shown to decline by 75% in the last 20 years - thought to be attributable to the destruction of Turanga woodland (Aspinall 1996). Note: Vulnerable (Birdlife International).

2003: 15/4 1 Tamga, Issyk Kul.

**PSITTACIDAE**

*Psittacula krameri* - Ring-necked Parakeet

2003: 7/4 6 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan.

*Asio otus* - Long-eared Owl - Skovhornugle

Resident country-wide in coniferous forests; also migrant. Ssp. (2) *otus* Azores, North Africa, and Eurasia [includes *turcmenica*].

2001: 14/4 1 Base Camp – Camp2 and 15/4 1 Camp2.

*Surnia ulula* - Northern Hawk Owl - Høgeugle

2003: 13/4 1 heard, Eastern Ala-Too Mountains; Valley East of Bishkek.

*Aegolius funereus* - Boreal Owl - Perleugle

2000: 17-18/4 2 calling during the night, Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.

2001: 11 and 12/4 2 heard all night long at Camp1, 14/4 1 seen Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 1 Camp2 and surrounding valleys and 16/4 1 Camp2.

**APODI DAE**

*Apus apus* - Common Swift - Mursejler (1) *apus* North Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and western and north-central Asia and (2) *pekinensis* Iran to south-central Asia, migrant WP [includes *turkestanicus*].

2001: 8/4 50 Bishkek and 18/4 2 Bishkek.

*Apus melba* - Alpine Swift - Alpesejler

In foothills in the north of the country and West Tien Shan. (1) *melba* Northern Morocco and southern Europe east to Caucasus area and north-west Iran [includes *obscurus*] (2) *tuneti* North Africa (except northern Morocco), Lebanon, Syria, and from south-west Iran and Transcaspia east to western Pakistan, Alai ranges, Tien Shan, and Dzhungarian Alatau.

2003: Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan: 7/4 10 and 8/4 40, and 9/4 30 Bishkek.

**UPUPI DAE**

*Upupa epops* - Eurasian Hoopoe - Hærfugl

Breeds country-wide. Birds might winter in the south of the country. First birds return in February, leaving as late as possible in au-
tumn. (2) *epops* North-west Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and western Asia [includes *loudoni, orientalis, renzoi*] and (3) *major* Egypt, northern Chad, and northern Sudan. 2003: 9/4 1 Bishkek and 15/4 1 southern shore of Issyk Kul; ponds, small lakes and fields.

**ALAUDIDAE**

*Alauda arvensis (dulcivox)* – Eurasian Skylark - Sanglærke
Breeds country-wide; some birds might winter. (7) *armenica* Eastern Turkey, Caucasus area, northern Iran, and south-west Turkmenistan, (8) *dulcivox* Urals east to Yenisey and western Mongolia, south to foot of Tien Shan and northern foot of Altai, on migration in WP. 2003: 14/4 30 Tamga, Issyk Kul.

*Calandrella acuirostris acuirostris* *- Hume’s Short-toed Lark - Humes Lærke*
Breeds in dry areas, in general higher in the mountains than other *Calandrellas*. Mainly occurs in the west of the country. Winters in India. 2003: 15/4 2 southern shore of Issyk Kul; ponds, small lakes and fields.

**HIRUNDINIDAE**

*Hirundo rustica rustica* – Barn Swallow - Landsvale
2001: 19/4 2 Bishkek. 2003: 8/4 15 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan.

*Delichon urbicum* *- Common House Martin - Bysvale*
Common in Bishkek. 2001: 8/4 159 Bishkek, 9/4 300 and 19/4 50 Bishkek.

**MOTACILLIDAE**

*Anthus spinoletta* *- Water Pipit - Bjergpiber*
Breeds country-wide mainly in the mountains. 2001: 11/4 5 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 4 near Camp1, 13/4 2 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 1 Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 1 Camp2 and surrounding valleys, 16/4 20 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3100 m. and 17/4 1 Camp2. 2003: 11/4 4, 12/4 1 and 13/4 10 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley East of Bishkek.

*Anthus trivialis* *- Tree Pipit - Skovpiber*
Maybe two subspecies: *haringtoni* and *trivialis*. 2003: 8/4 1 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan, 9/4 5 Bishkek and 14/4 15 Barskaun Gorge, Issyk Kul.

*M.a.personata* widely accepted as its own species *M. Personata* Masked Wagtail: Eastern Iran and Turkmenistan east to mountains of north-central Asia, migrant WP; *persica* is a name given to an intermediate form from Iran (except north-west, coastal zone of Caspian Sea and east). *Motacilla alba personata* has been split of already for years by some authors and by others it’s still a race of the White Wagtail, also at Clements list. In Ka-
Kazakhstan M. alba more common than personata. White Wagtail Motacilla alba suggested by Sangster et al. (1998) to be split in nine species: 1. White Wagtail Motacilla alba (incl. dukhunensis): Europe, from Iberia, France, Netherlands, Iceland, and Norway east to Levant, western half of Turkey, lower Volga, and Urals; including ‘dukhunensis’: West Siberia from Urals and basin of Lower Ural River east to Yenisey, south to northern Kazakhstan; apparently this subtle race eastern half of Turkey, Caucasus area, and north-west and northern Iran, 2. Pied Wagtail Motacilla yarrellii (monotypic), 3. Moroccan Wagtail Motacilla subpersonata (monotypic), 4. Masked Wagtail Motacilla personata (monotypic), 5. Himalayan Wagtail Motacilla alboides (monotypic), 6. Black-backed Wagtail Motacilla lugens (monotypic), 7. East Siberian Wagtail Motacilla ocularis (monotypic), 8. Amur Wagtail Motacilla leucopsis (monotypic) and 9. Baikal Wagtail Motacilla baicalensis (monotypic). STC Until more research is done with this complex suggested to be monophyletic by Alström & Mild (2003) and references therein, it was decided to following taxa combined as one species M. a. alba, yarrellii, baicalensis, ocularis, lugens and subpersonata. Kyrgyzstan: Breeds almost country-wide; some birds winter. All birds seen in Kyrgyzstan belongs to Motacilla personata - Masked Wagtail. 2001: 8/4 4 Bishkek, 9/4 5 Bishkek, 14/4 1 Camp1 – Base Camp, 15/4 1 (2.750 meter above sea-level) Camp2 and surrounding valleys, 17/4 11 Base Camp – Bishkek, 18/4 4 Bishkek and 19/4 1 Bishkek. 2003: 9/4 15 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek, 14/4 50 Tamga, Issyk Kul and 15/4 15 southern shore of Issyk Kul; ponds, small lakes and fields.

Motacilla citreola calcara - Citrine Wagtail - Citronvipstjert
Majority of birds in Kyrgyzstan is ssp. calcara, but both ssp. may be seen; especially during migration (MWA). 2003: 14/4 6 Tamga, Issyk Kul.

Motacilla cinerea cinerea [includes melanope] - Grey Wagtail - Bjergvipstjert
Very common in the mountains and along streams in cities, reservoirs; also high in the mountains. 2000: 16/4 11 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part. 2001: 9/4 1 Bishkek, 9/4 1 Foothills – Base Camp, mountains E of Bishkek, 9/4 1 Base Camp, 10/4 2 Base Camp, 11/4 5 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 4 observations around Camp1, 13/4 2 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 2 Camp1, 14/4 1 Camp1 – Base Camp, 14/4 3 Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 3 Camp2 and surrounding valleys, 16/4 6 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m., 17/4 1 Camp2 and 17/4 1 Camp2 – Base Camp. 2003: 10/4 15, 11/4 5, 12/4 1 and 13/4 1 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

TROGLODYTIIDAE
Troglodytes troglodytes* - Winter Wren - Gærdesmutte
Local ssp. tianschanicus? 2001: 9/4 3 Foothills – Base Camp, mountains E of Bishkek, 9/4 1 Base Camp, 10/4 3 Base Camp, 11/4 7 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 3 observations around Camp1, 13/4 2 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 1 Camp1, 14/4 2 Camp1 – Base Camp, 14/4 5 Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 1 Camp2 and surrounding valleys, 16/4 2 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m. and 17/4 1 Camp2 – Base Camp. 2003: 9/4 19 Bishkek.

Bombycillidae
Bombycilla garrulus garrulus - Bohemian Waxwing - Silkehale
2001: 9/4 5 Base Camp, 10/4 15 Base Camp, 11/4 11 Base Camp – Camp1, 13/4 5 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1 and 14/4 few heard; Base Camp – Camp2 2003: 9/4 19 Bishkek.
CINCLIIDAE

*Cinclus cinclus leucogaster* - White-throated Dipper - Vandstær
Resident country-wide in mountain streams; in winter near open water. Notice distinct local ssp. *leucogaster* has white belly.
2000: 16/4 1 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.
2001: 9/4 1 Base Camp, 10/4 3 Base Camp, 11/4 2 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 2 Camp1, 15/4 3 Camp2 and surrounding valleys, 17/4 1 Camp2, 17/4 2 Camp2 – Base Camp and 17/4 2 Base Camp – Bishkek.

*Cinclus pallasii* *- Brown Dipper - Himalaya Vandstær*
Resident mainly in the north of the country in mountain streams; in winter near open water.
2001: 9/4 1 Foothills – Base Camp, mountains E of Bishkek, 10/4 3 Base Camp, 11/4 2 Base Camp – Camp1, 13/4 2 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 2 Camp1, 14/4 1 Camp1 – Base Camp, 14/4 2 Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 1 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; 16/4 2 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m. and 17/4 9 Base Camp – Bishkek.
2003: 10/4 6, 11/4 14, 12/4 25 and 13/4 11

PRUNELLAIDA

*Prunella collaris* *- Alpine Accentor - Alpejernspurv*
Uncommon resident in all higher mountains, above the tree-line; in winter lower (2) *collaris* Southern and central Europe, east to Carpathians, in Balkan countries south to Slovenia and north-east Serbia [includes *tschusi*], (4) *montana* Northern and eastern Turkey, Caucasus area, Iran, and south-west Turkmenistan [includes *caucasicus, hypanis*].
2001: 12/4 1 Camp1 and 16/4 8 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m.

*Prunella atrogularis* *- Black-throated Accentor - Sortstrubet Jernspurv*
Common resident in coniferous areas in the eastern and northern part of the country.
2000: 16/4 1 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part and 18/4 5 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.
2001: 9/4 2 Base Camp, 10/4 15 Base Camp, 11/4 19 Base Camp – Camp1, 13/4 1 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 10 Camp1 – Base Camp, 14/4 5 Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 6 Camp2 and surrounding valleys, 16/4 4 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m.a.s., 17/4 1 Camp2 and 17/4 4 Camp2 – Base Camp.
2003: 10/4 6, 11/4 14, 12/4 25 and 13/4 11
Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

*Prunella himalyana* - *Himalayan Accentor*
Resident almost country-wide in higher mountains; above tree line, lower in winter.
2001: 16/4 2 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m.

*Prunella fulvescens* - *Brown Accentor*
Uniform unstreaked upper parts and yellowish belly.
2001: 13/4 2 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1 and 16/4 4 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m.

**TURDIDAE**

*Luscinia svecica* - *Bluethroat - Blåhals*
More subspecies occur in the region. In Kazakhstan both birds of *pallidigaris* and *svecica* is being caught during migration:
Look for the pattern of breast band which is much broader in *svecica* than in *pallidigaris* and the markings in the throat differ as well.
More subspecies occur in the region than the two mentioned. Kyrgyzstan: Especially common during migration; probably breeding country-wide in low marshy areas on several locations; migrant.  
2003: 15/4 1 Tamga, Issyk Kul.

*Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides* - *Black Redstart - Husrødstjert*
Local ssp *phoenicuroides*: Central Asia from Tien Shan to Mongolia, vagrant WP. Kyrgyzstan: Breeds country-wide; in general migrates to Iran and India.
2001: 10/4 3 Base Camp.
2003: 8/4 2 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan and 9/4 6 Bishkek.

*Phoenicurus erythronotus* (monotypic) - *Eversmann's Redstart - Altairødstjert*
Breeds in forests a country-wide; winters in small numbers in forests and open areas.
2000: 18/4 several pairs already present on breeding grounds; approx. 15 birds seen, Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.

2001: 10/4 3 Base Camp, 12/4 4 around Camp1, 14/4 2 male Base Camp – Camp2 and 16/4 1 male Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m.
2003: 11/4 4 and 13/4 2 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; Valley East of Bishkek.

*Phoenicurus caeruleocephalus* - *Blue-headed Redstart*
Tien Shan Resident, winters in lower valleys country-wide.
2001: 10/4 7 Base Camp, 11/4 3 Base Camp – Camp1, 14/4 2 Camp1 – Base Camp and 14/4 1 Base Camp – Camp2.
2003: 9/4 1 Bishkek and 10/4 1 and 11/4 1 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

*Oenanthe oenanthe* - *Northern Wheatear - Stenpikker*
Possible local ssp. (1) *seebohmi* (monotypic) (2) *libanotica* Southern Europe from Iberia east through Greece, Turkey, and Levant to Transcaucasia and Iran, north to Pyrenees, Alps, west and south of former Yugoslavia, southern and eastern Rumania, southern Ukraine, and Caucasus, and in Transcaspia from Tien Shan, Dzungaria, Mongolia, and Tuva east to Transbaikalia and western Manchuria [includes argentea, nivea, virago].
Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* proposed by Walters (1997) to be treated as two species: Pending decisions with comments on the progress: 1) Seebohm’s Wheatear *Oenanthe seebohmi* (monotypic) and 2) Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* (polytypic: *Oe. oe. libanotica, oenanthe, leucorhoa*). A.J. Helbig Seebohm’s Wheatear was described in 1882 by C. Dixon (1858–1926), a naturalist, author, journalist and lecturer who studied the migration of birds and geographic distribution of species. Seebohm’s Wheatear could be treated as a separate species based on consistent differences in morphology, including male-like female plumage, and song. There is no consensus on this, however, within the AERC TAC. Its audibly different song is more measured, melodious and sonorous than that of nominate oenanthe; units are longer and lower-pitched, mostly below 4
kHz, whereas much of oenanthe song exceeds 4 kHz. Also pauses between units are longer (cf. Cramp et al. 1988 for sonograms and discussion). Recognised as a distinct species by Walters (1997) and A.J. Helbig in Svensson et al. (2000).

2001: 16/4 1 pair Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m.

**Oenanthe isabellina** (monotypic) - Isabelline Wheatear - Isabellastenpikker
Breeds country-wide also in higher mountains; winters in India and NE Africa.

**Oenanthe pleschanka** (monotypic) [includes hendersoni] - Pied Wheatear - Nonnestenpikker
Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*: Pied Wheatear is already treated as separate species in the Swedish Holarctic checklist (SOF 1995). The BOURC commented on the taxonomic status of Pied and Black-eared Wheatears in its 13th report (BOURC 1988): Haffer (1977) presented detailed information on the hybridisation of these two species in Iran. Recent work by Panov (1986, 1999) on the W coast of the Caspian Sea has emphasised the extent to which these taxa interbreed and the variety of plumages found in the resulting hybrids. However, *Oe. pleschanka* and *Oe. hispanica* are largely parapatric with limited areas of contact.’ G. Sangster added ‘but where they meet, they show introgressive hybridisation without evidence for reproductive isolation.’ Pied and Black-eared Wheatears are poorly differentiated acoustically; in playback experiments, they react to each other’s songs. G. Sangster then asked: ‘Why still consider them as species if this is the case?’ whereupon L. Svensson replied: ‘I agree that same or extremely similar song should make us very cautious before we split. However, taxonomy (or speciation) is complex, and in a few cases the song does not seem to be as important for upholding largely distinct species, as witnessed by Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella* and Pine Bunting *E. leucocephalos*, Red-headed *E. bruniceps* and Black-headed Buntings *E. melanocephala*, Willow *Parus montanus* and Songar Tits *P. songar*, and others. Habitat choice, altitude, breeding season, mating behaviour etc. can sometimes be enough, while selection has apparently not (yet) developed distinct songs.’ Further reading: Panov, N. & Ivanitzky, V.V. (1975) Evolutionary and taxonomic relations between *Oenanthe hispanica* and *Oe. pleschanka*. Zool. Zhurn. 54: 1860-1873.

Breeds country-wide in plains and hills along valleys.

**Oenanthe picata** - Variable Wheatear - Østlig Nonnestenpikker
Locally common breeding in Tien Shan, Fergana; hills and lower mountains.

**Saxicola torquatus** (ssp. Maurus-group) - Common Stonechat - Sortstrubet Bynkefugl
There is more subspecies in the region. Obvious is the *maurus*-group, but we have seen more odd-looking birds and I assume there is much more to study and learn about this.
2001: 10/4 1 Base Camp

**Monticola solitarius** - Blue Rock Thrush - Blådrossel
2001: 10/4 3 Base Camp, 11/4 1 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 1 near Camp1 and 13/4 2 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1.

**Turdus viscivorus viscivorus** - Mistle Thrush - Misteldrossel
Ssp. *viscivorus* Europe (except Corsica and Sardinia) to west Siberia, Caucasus area, and northern Iran [includes *bithynicus*, *hispaniae*, *jordansi*, *jubilaeus*, *loudoni*, *precinctor*, *tauricus*, *uralensis*] plateau.
2000: 16/4 2 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.
2001: 9/4 1 Foothills – Base Camp, mountains E of Bishkek, 9/4 6 Base Camp, 10/4 5 Base Camp, 11/4 2 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 3 observations around Camp1, 13/4 7 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 2 Camp1, 14/4 3 Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 4 Camp2 and surrounding valleys, 16/4 2
Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m., 17/4 1 Camp2, 17/4 1 Camp2 – Base Camp and 18/4 4 Bishkek

Turdus merula intermedius - Common Blackbird - Solsort
Ssp. (9) intermedius Central Asia, vagrant WP [includes brodkorbi].
2001: 8/4 15 Bishkek, 9/4 3 Bishkek, 9/4 1 Base Camp, 10/4 3 Base Camp, 11/4 5 Base Camp – Camp1, 14/4 1 Camp1 – Base Camp, 14/4 3 Base Camp – Camp2, 16/4 2 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m., 17/4 1 Camp2, 17/4 2 Camp2 – Base Camp and 18/4 3 Bishkek.

Turdus ruficollis* - Dark-throated Thrush - Sortstrubet Drossel
Uncommon in summer, though very common spring migrant. Dark-throated Thrush Turdus ruficollis suggested by some to be treated as two species: Dark throated Thrush Turdus ruficollis includes T. r. atrogularis (Black throated form) and T. r. ruficollis (Red throated form). Pending decisions with comments on the progress. Black-throated Thrush Turdus atrogularis (monotypic): Western Urals through west and central Siberia east to upper Lena, south to Tarbagatay [includes relicta, vogulorum], and Red-throated Thrush Turdus ruficollis (monotypic): ruficollis Eastern Altai and Angara basin east to northern Mongolia, Transbaikalia, and western Manchuria, occasionally breeding west to Urals [includes hyemalis].
Arkhipov et al. (2003) described the differences in song between these two taxa. Molecular studies are still lacking and the contact zone is poorly studied. See Clement et al. (2000) for a review of currently available information. More research is needed. ID: Clement et al. (2000).

Myiophoneus caerleus (temminckii) - Blue Whistling Thrush
Resident country-wide in narrow mountain rivers; gorges. Birds warbling loudly at the first light of morning from spring to ult. Sep-
tember. 2001: 13/4 1 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 1 Camp1, 15/4 3 Camp2 and surrounding valleys and 16/4 1 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m.

**SYLVIIDAE**

*Phylloscopus collybita* - Chiffchaff - Gransanger

*Phylloscopus trochiloides viridanus* - Greenish Warbler - Lundsanger
Kyrgyzstan: Very common in summer in forested areas country-wide. Most common ssp. *viridanus*: Eurasia east to Yenisey, Altai, and north-west Mongolia, south in mountains of westcentral Asia to Pamir [includes *intermedia*, *sushkini*, *tenuirostris*]. Proposed by BOUC TSC (Collinson et al. 2003) to be treated as one species: Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* (polytypic: *Ph. t. viridanus*, 'Green Warbler' *nitidus*, 'Two-barred Greenish Warbler' *plumbeitarsus*; extralimital: *ludlowi*, *obscuratorus* and *trochiloides*).
2001: 10/4 1 Base Camp, 14/4 1 Base Camp – Camp2.

*Phylloscopus griseolus* - Sulphur-bellied Warbler - Stensanger
2001: 10/4 1 Base Camp.

*Phylloscopus humei* (polytypic: *Ph. h. humei*; extralimital: *Ph. h. mandelli*) - Hume's Leaf Warbler - Humes Sanger
Very common country-wide. In breeding season mainly in the mountains ≥ 1.700m, but also recorded in city parks and similar forested areas. 2001: 9/4 1 Bishkek, 9/4 1 Foothills – Base Camp, mountains E of Bishkek, 14/4 2 Camp1, 14/4 1 Base Camp – Camp2 and 18/4 4 Bishkek. 2003: 9/4 1 Bishkek and 15/4 1 southern shore of Issyk Kul; ponds, small lakes and fields.

*Cettia cetti* - Cetti's Warbler - Cetti-sanger
Local ssp. could be one of following: (3) *orientalis* Central and eastern Turkey, Levant, Caucasus area north along western Caspian to Volga delta, western and northern Iran, and westernmost Turkmenistan [includes *interposita*] (4) *albiventris* Iran (except west and north) and from Ural valley and central Turkmenistan east through Transcaspia to Dzhungaria (western China) [includes *cettioides*, *stolickzae*, *semenowi*].
2003: 15/4 1 Tamga, Issyk Kul.

**Leptopoecile sophiae** - White-browed Tit Warbler [F: Severtzov's Tit Warbler]
Kyrgyzstan: Resident country-wide in higher mountains above tree line in scrub; winters at lower altitude. 2001: 11/4 1 adult male Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 2 (female and male) near Camp1, 13/4 1 female Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 1 female Camp1, 14/4 2 Base Camp – Camp2 and 15/4 4 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; seen up to 2.700 m. 2003: 12/4 2 and 13/4 2 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

*Regulus regulus* - Goldcrest - Fuglekonge
Kyrgyzstan: Resident country-wide in forested areas. Interesting ssp. *tristis*: These birds miss the complete black lateral crown-stripes compared with *regulus*; also the upper parts were duller and greyer. (4) *regulus* Europe (except Crimea and Caucasus area) and west Siberia east to Tomsk and middle Yenisey (5) *buturlini* Asia Minor, Caucasus area, and (probably this race) Crimea. 2001: 9/4 1 Base Camp, 10/4 10 Base Camp, 11/4 10 Base Camp – Camp1, 13/4 5 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 5 Camp1, 14/4 5 Camp1 – Base Camp and 17/4 5 Camp2 – Base Camp. 2003: 14/4 2 Barskaun Gorge, Issyk Kul.

**PARIIDAE**

*Parus major* - Great Tit - Musvit
Resident in the of the country and Bishkek (Birds were introduced from Russia about 40
years mainly in Almaty and Bishkek; birds are now found further west) Confusion: Central Asian form (no yellow) and Siberian form (yellow breast with tie) This yellow form is nowadays common and one can find it up to 500 kilometres west of Almaty.). Now both forms occur in region. The originally form (without yellow) of P. major is not regularly observed. At Chokpak, Kazakhstan some bokharensis have hybrid signs; hybrids between bokharensis x major caught. Birds had more yellow on the breast and more contrast in the wing (wing bar versus rest of the wing). (8) major Continental Europe from central Spain, France, and Norway east to Asia Minor, northwest Iran, Caucasus area (except south-east Azerbaydzhjan), Altai, and central Siberia [includes caucasicus, holsaticus, scytharum, sulfureus].

Parus cyanus* - Azure Tit - Azurmejse
All birds seen belongs to ssp. Parus cyanus (tianschanicus)
Both ssp. occur in Kyrgyzstan. The one: The Yellow-breasted Tit Parus flaviepectus or rather P.c.carruthersi I have observed only west of Son Kul in the Suusamyr Valley. Don't know the precise distribution, but all birds I have seen during the years, in the central and eastern Kyrgyzstan have been Azure Tit Parus cyanus. Resident in all types of forests and with a preference for near water; more common in the east of the country. Two distinct forms occur 1) The Yellow-breasted Tit Parus flaviepectus or rather P.c.carruthersi and Azure Tit Parus cyanus tianschanicus. The Yellow-breasted Tit Parus flaviepectus flaviepectus by Clements regarded as a separate species although it's doubted by some authors that it is a true species. 2000: 15/4 2 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part. 2001: 8/4 1 Bishkek, 18/4 2 Bishkek. 2003: 15/4 2 Tamga, Issyk Kul.

Parus rufonuchalis* - Rufous-naped Tit
Resident in mountain forests, mainly coniferous and juniper; most common in the south and west of the country. 2000: 15/4 5 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part. 2001: 10/4 2 Base Camp, 11/4 4 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 15 observations around Camp1, 13/4 1 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 2 Camp1, 17/4 1 Camp2, and 17/4 2 Camp2 – Base Camp. 2003: 11/4 2 and 13/4 5 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

Parus ater* - Coal Tit - Sortmejse
Resident in coniferous and mixed forests in hills and plains. Mainly in the east of the country. P.a.rufipectus is the subspecies for the Tien Shan and the form part of the Aemodius group of Coal Tits but looks like nominate - only very detailed feather marks form a difference, and one of the small differences is the small crest. 2000: 16/4 2 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part. 2001: 8/4 10 Bishkek, 9/4 3 Bishkek, 10/4 2 Base Camp, 10/4 1 Base Camp, 11/4 3 Base Camp – Camp1, 14/4 1 Camp1, 14/4 1 Camp1 – Base Camp and 14/4 4 Base Camp – Camp2.

Aegithalos caudatus* - Long-tailed Tit - Halemejse
2003: 14/4 2 Barskaun Gorge, Issyk Kul. An interesting observation; Long-tailed Tit is uncommon in Kyrgyzstan; especially in central Kyrgyzstan.

Tichodromadidae
Tichodroma muraria* - Wallcreeper - Murlober

LANIIDAE
Lanius isabellinus* - Isabelline Shrike - Isabellatormskade

CORVIDAE
**Pica pica (bactriana)** - Common Magpie – Husskade
2000: 15/4 1 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.
2001: 9/4 4 Bishkek, 9/4 1 Bishkek – Foothills in the mountains E of Bishkek, 9/4 1 Foothills – Base Camp, mountains E of Bishkek, 11/4 1 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 1 above Camp1 – approx. 3.500 m, 13/4 5 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 2 Base Camp – Camp2, 16/4 2 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m. and 18/4 8 Bishkek.
Ssp. *bactriana* Eastern Ukraine and southern and eastern European Russia, south to northern Caucasus, east to central Siberia, western Himalayas, and Pakistan [includes *hemileucoptera*].
Kyrgyzstan: Resident country-wide. Subspecies *P. p. bactriana*: whiter in wings and more whitish rump.

**Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax (brachypus)** - Red-billed Chough - Alpekrage
Resident country-wide in mountainous areas; lower in winter. Winters at lower altitude often in large flocks mixed with Alpine Chough

**Pyrrhocorax graculus**. Local ssp. *P.p. brachypus* has a shorter tarsus and bill compared to all other races, gloss rather faint, body satin-black, wing and tail slightly purplish makes them recognizable from the other races.
2001: 9/4 8 Base Camp, 10/4 10 Base Camp, 11/4 2 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 4 around Camp1, 13/4 5 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 10 Camp1 – Base Camp, 14/4 10 Base Camp – Camp2 and 16/4 5 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m.
2003: 10/4 15 and 12/4 10 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek and 14/4 app. 200 in mixed flocks with other corvidae.

**Pyrrhocorax graculus** - Alpine Chough - Alpeallike
Resident country-wide; lower in winter. One of the local ssp. *Forsythi*: tail and legs longer than European birds.
2000: 16-18/4 50 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.
2001: 9/4 10 Foothills – Base Camp, mountains E of Bishkek, 9/4 3 Base Camp, 10/4 10 Base Camp, 12/4 10 observations around Camp1, 12/4 30 around Camp1, 13/4 5 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 20 Camp1 – Base Camp, 14/4 34 Base Camp – Camp2 and 16/4 125 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m.
2003: 10-14/4 40 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

**Corvus frugilegus** - Rook - Råde
Very common resident country-wide; winters in big flocks; migrant in very large numbers through West Tien Shan.
2001: 9/4 100 Bishkek – Foothills in the mountains E of Bishkek

**Corvus corone orientalis** - Carrion Crow - Sortkrage
*orientalis* (monotypic) West central Asia and central Siberia east to eastern Asia, east from easternmost Iran, Turkmenistan, Aral Sea, central Kazakhstan, Altai, and Yenisey; vagrant WP Hooded Crow. The two black taxa *C. corone* and *C. orientalis* are well separated,
and some authors believe that they probably evolved independently in the wetter, maritime regions at the opposite ends of the Eurasian continent (Madge & Burn 1994). Many experts believe, however, that the last ice ages cleaved and isolated the corone and orientalis populations, and that mutation produced the cornix population in one of the enclaves. Then, after glaciation, the once-separated populations merged. The intraspecific variability of crows is currently studied by Haring, Gamauf & Kryukov (in prep.).

Resident country-wide. Local ssp. orientalis is bigger than nominate, some birds look almost as big as Raven Corvus corax.

2000: 15/4 1 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.
2001: 9/4 1 Bishkek – Foothills in the mountains E of Bishkek, 10/4 10 (C. corone) Base Camp, 11/4 5 Base Camp – Camp 1, 12/4 5 observations around Camp1, 13/4 5 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 5 Camp1, 14/4 1 Camp1 – Base Camp, 14/4 4 Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 1 Camp2 and surrounding valleys, 16/4 3 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m., 17/4 5 Camp2 – Base Camp and 17/4 30 Base Camp – Bishkek.


**Corvus corax** - Common Raven - Ravn
Resident country-wide in mountainous areas. Local subspecies could be C.c.tibetanus. (4) corax France, Ireland, and Norway east through northern, central, and south-east Europe to west and central Asia, south to Pyrénées, Corsica, Italy, western Greece, north-east Turkey, Caucasus area, and north Iran (6) lauracei Eastern Greece (Thrace, Aegean islands, Crete), Turkey (except north-east), and from Middle East, Iran (except north),
and lower Volga east to western China and north-west India [synonym: ‘subcorax’].

2001: 9/4 4 Base Camp, 12/4 1 Camp1 and 17/4 1 Base Camp – Bishkek.
2003: 9/4 2 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

**Corvus ruficollis** - Brown-necked Raven - Ørkenravn
2003: 15/4 2 southern shore of Issyk Kul; ponds, small lakes and fields.

**STURNI DAE**

**Sturnus vulgaris** - Common Starling - Stær
Local ssp. *S. v. porphyronotus*? (5) *poltarat-ski*’Ural River valley and south-western and central Urals east to Lena basin, south to Kazakhstan, Altai, Mongolia, and western Transbaikalia [includes *menzbieri*] (6) *taurus* South-east Ukraine (including Crimea), eastern shore of Sea of Azov, and westernmost end of Caucasus, as well as western and central Asia Minor (7) *purpurascens* Eastern Turkey, north-east Iraq, and western Transcaucasia (8) *caucasicus* Northern Caucasus (except extreme west) through plains north of Caucasus northeast to Volga delta, and in eastern Transcaucasia and north-west, northern (except east), and south-west Iran [includes *heinrichi, satunini*].

2003: 9/4 15 Istanbul; stop-over on our way to Kyrgyzstan and 9/4 75 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

**Sturnus roseus**
(monotypic) - Rosy Starling - Rosenstær
Common country-wide. A very opportunistic migrant. Arrives late in spring; leaves by the end of July to Asia. Breeds in large colonies in the lower mountains, especially in the west of the country and all over West Tien Shan.

2003: 9/4 2 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

**Acidotherees tristis** - Common Myna - Almindelig Mynah
2003: 9/4 45 Bishkek and 9/4 40 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

**PASSERI DAE**

**Passer domesticus** - House Sparrow - Gråspurv

**Passer montanus dilutus** - Eurasian Tree Sparrow - Skovspurv
Local ssp. *P. m. dilutus* is larger than nominate, colours are marked paler. (1) *montanus* Europe (except Caucasus area and south-east European Russia), east to Russian Far East, south to northern Kazakhstan, Altai, north-east Mongolia, and Transbaikalia [includes *catellatus, hispaniae, margaretae, stegmanni*] (2) *transcaucasicus* Central Turkey, northern Caucasus east to Lower Volga, and Transcaucasia to northwest and northern Iran (except
north-east) [includes *ciscaucasicus, volgensis*] (3) *dilutus* Transcaspia, from basin of lower Ural River and north-east Iran east to Pakistan and Xinjiang (China) [includes *gobicus, pallidus, zaissanensis*].

2001: 18/4 20 Bishkek.

**FRINGILLIDAE**

*Fringilla coelebs* - Common Chaffinch - Bogfinke

9/4 1 Foothills – Base Camp, mountains E of Bishkek, 10/4 1 Base Camp, 14/4 1 male Base Camp – Camp2 and 18/4 2 Bishkek.

2003: 9/4 1 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

*Fringilla montifringilla* - Brambling - Kvækerfinke

2001: 14/4 1 Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 2 Camp2 and surrounding valleys and 18/4 2 Bishkek.

*Carduelis carduelis paropansi* - European Goldfinch - Stillits

Chinese races greyer than European taxa and black on head; hence local name Grey-headed Goldfinch. Proposed split from nominate. All birds seen in Kyrgyzstan, belongs is paropansi: Resident country-wide.

2001: 8/4 2 Bishkek, 9/4 10 Bishkek, 9/4 1 Bishkek – Foothills in the mountains E of Bishkek, 11/4 5 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 5 observations around Camp1, 13/4 5 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 2 Camp1 and 18/4 50 Bishkek.

2003: 9/4 5 Bishkek.

*Carduelis chloris (turkestanicus)* - European Greenfinch - Grønirisk

Kyrgyzstan: Breeds mainly in the north and west of the country in forests, gardens and parks; nomadic.

2001: 8/4 5 Bishkek, 9/4 8 Bishkek, 9/4 1 Bishkek – Foothills in the mountains E of Bishkek and 18/4 1 Bishkek.

Serinus pusillus (monotypic) - Red-fronted Serin - Rødpandet Irisk
Common resident in mountains up to 3,000m; country-wide. In winter at lower altitudes in small flocks.
2000: 15/4 1 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part and 16/4 1 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.

Loxia curvirostra - Common Crossbill - Lille Korsnæb
2001: 9/4 1 Base Camp, 10/4 10 Base Camp and 11/4 2 Base Camp – Camp1.

Mycrobas carnipes - White-winged Grosbeak
Resident country-wide in the mountains, usually above tree line at higher parts of juniper.
2001: 12/4 2 females Camp1, 14/4 3 Base Camp – Camp2 and 16/4 2 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3,100 m.

Carpodacus erythrinus* - Common Rosefinch - Karmindompap
Abundant in summer; especially late spring May and June. Breeds country-wide in forests, scrub and near streams; winters India. Probably most if not all birds belong to ssp. *Erythrinus* Europe east to Lena basin, south to northern France, Czech Republic, and northern Ukraine [includes diamesa]. However, there could be more local subspecies present e.g. migratory race ferghanensis.
2001: 9/4 1 sg Bishkek, 11/4 1 Base Camp – Camp1 and 14/4 2 Base Camp – Camp2.

Carpodacus rhodochlamys* - Red-mantled Rosefinch
Share same habitats and thereby frequently seen along with Common Rosefinch Carpodacus erythrinus. 2001: 14/4 3 Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 3 Camp2 and surrounding valleys.
2003: 13/4 1 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

Carpodacus puniceus - Red-faced Rosefinch
2003: 12/4 3 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

Carpodacus rubicilla - Great Rosefinch - Stor Karmindompap
2001: 15/4 2 Camp2 and surrounding valleys.

Bucanetes mongolicus (monotypic) - Mongolian Finch - Mongolsk Ørkendompap
Not much available information about its presence in Kyrgyzstan. It might not be that rare.
2003: 12/4 2 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

Lecosticte brandti* - Brandt’s Rosy Finch
Kyrgyzstan: Present at higher altitude than previous species, often in flocks up to 100 birds or more; lower inter in mixed flocks with White-winged Snowfinch. Former known as ‘Brandt’s Mountain Finch’.
2000: 17/4 250 Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.
2003: 13/4 5 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

*Leucosticte nemoricola* - Plain Mountain Finch

Common resident at high altitude country-wide; lower in winter. Often present in large flocks numbering hundreds. Former known as 'Hodgson's Rosy-Finch'.

2000: 17/4 500 in more flocks; Gorge in Ala-Too; eastern part.. Due the heavy blizzard the birds migrated to lower altitudes and gathered in mixed flocks. The majority of these flocks consisted of Plain Mountain Finch and Brandt’s Rosy Finch.

2001: 9/4 100 Foothills – Base Camp, mountains E of Bishkek, 11/4 6 Base Camp – Camp1, 12/4 12 around Camp1, 13/4 3 Camp1 + excursions around Camp1, 14/4 40 Base Camp – Camp2, 15/4 5 Camp2 and surrounding valleys, 16/4 30 Camp2 and surrounding valleys; up to 3.100 m. and 17/4 100 Camp2.

2003: 13/4 4 Eastern Ala-Too mountains; valley east of Bishkek.

**EMBERIZIDAE**

*Emberiza cia* (par) - Rock Bunting - Klippeværling

Resident country-wide in dry open areas. (1) *cia* North-west Africa, southern and central Europe, western Asia Minor, and Levant (2) *pragri* Eastern Turkey and Crimea east through Caucasus area (3) *par* Iran to west-central Asia, in winter in south-east WP.

2001: 11/4 1 Base

**Emberiza calandra** - Corn Bunting - Kornværling

Common resident country-wide in cultivated areas and open grasslands; in flocks in winter also with other buntings and finches. Ssp. *buturlini* South-east Turkey and interior Levant east through Iraq and Iran to western China and Afghanistan.


**About Miksture**

*Miksture* was established with the purpose of encourage and combine Eco-tourism and biological scientific research in Central Asia; mainly Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. The approach of combining Eco-tourism and Nature Conservation is in many ways opposite activities, but in Kyrgyzstan we have done it without severe compromises for the visitors and the environment. Our tours are the result of friendship and *strange* ideas and our carefully planned itineraries and intensive approach have since 1994 given those who travel with us an extraordinary experience.
Miksture is an independent company, established by Michael Westerbjerg Andersen and operated together with Kyrgyz-Travel. You will always be in contact with Michael when you contact us. Miksture is strongly committed to bird protection and to conservation in general. We participate and try to raise funds for conservation projects in Kyrgyzstan and surrounding countries. The potential income from developing special interest tourism can, in the long term, partly or even wholly offset the potential short-term gain from destroying an area. Miksture keep a close watch on environmental issues in Central Asia and do whatever to support local and international conservation initiatives.

All itineraries are accompanied by the staff of Kyrgyz-Travel who posses the knowledge and experience to make the tour wholly successful. They know the areas thoroughly and take pride in showing those who travel the local hotspots, confidently coping with any problems that may arise and so greatly increasing the chance that everything will run smoothly. Leading a tour in Europe or North America is one thing, leading one in Central Asia where logistical problems are a fact of life is quite another! Where practicable and necessary we obtain the assistance of local leaders who have both an intimate knowledge of their home areas and the ability to look after the group to the required standard.

Best greetings to all of you

Michael