

# Japan: Birding and Nature Spring Species List | May 29 – June 12, 2025 with Naturalist Journeys



**Compiled by guide Carlos Sanchez, with guide Bryan Shirley, and eight participants: Cathy, Eileen, Jeff, Lise, Sandy, Steven, Val, Webb**

(HO)= Distinctive enough to be counted as heard only

(I)= Introduced

(E)= Endemic

**Summary:** A journey through Japan with long time tour guests and friends, some of whom have been with me on ten trips or more. We started our journey on the island of Okinawa, part of the Ryukyu Islands. In this subtropical paradise, we explored the Yanbaru Forest on the northern half of the island where we saw the legendary Okinawa Rail. Continuing onwards to Amami (about two degrees further north), persistent rains tried to dampen our spirits, but we still observed the endemic Lidth's Jay, Amami Woodcock, and Amami Rabbit. Continuing to Hokkaido, the northernmost of the four main islands of Japan, we observed Red-crowned Crane, Brown Dipper, Siberian Rubythroat, and more. We enjoyed the beautiful Yorouchi Onsen, a highlight for everyone in the tour.

We recorded 147 bird species during our two weeks in Japan – species such as Mandarin Duck, Falcated Duck, White-throated Needletail, Spectacled Guillemot, Ural Owl, Ruddy Kingfisher, White-backed Woodpecker, Black Paradise-Flycatcher, Brown Dipper, Siberian Blue Robin, Chestnut-eared Bunting, and more. Our guests nominated twelve bird species as their bird of the trip, with Blakiston's Fish-Owl being the clear bird of the trip – the largest owl in the world!

The eBird link below details the 137 species of birds our group observed during the tour. If you're new to eBird, be sure to click "Show All Details" on the right side of the list to expand the report and reveal where and when each of the birds were seen and how many.

[Japan: Birding and Nature Spring | May 29 – June 12, 2025 | eBird Trip Report](#)

**BIRDS (147 species recorded, of which 2 were heard only); additional species not on the eBird Trip Report:**

**CUCKOOS: Cuculidae (1):**

***Lesser Cuckoo* *Cuculus poliocephalus* (HO)—heard on the island of Okinawa (05/31).**

**GREBES: Podicipedidae (1):**

***Little Grebe* *Tachybaptus ruficollis* (HO)—heard at Cape Notsuke, giggling in the marshes (06/06).**

**CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae (1):**

***Eurasian Jay* *Garrulus glandarius*—seen on Hokkaido near Nemuro (06/05).**

**SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae (1):**

***Barn Swallow* *Hirundo rustica*—seen sporadically on Hokkaido (as well as on the main island of Honshu).**

**MAMMALS (10 species recorded):**

**Eurasian Red Squirrel** *Sciurus vulgaris*

**Red Fox** *Vulpes vulpes*

**Harbor Seal** *Phoca vitulina*

**Sika Deer** *Cervus nippon*

**Amami Rabbit** *Pentalagus furnessi*

**Small Indian Mongoose** *Urva auropunctata* (I)

**Amami Spiny Rat** *Tokudaia osimensis*

**Ryukyu Flying Fox** *Pteropus dasymallus*

**Orca (Killer Whale)** *Orcinus orca*

**Dall's Porpoise** *Phocoenoides dalli*

**REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (8 species recorded):**

**Sword-tailed Newt** *Cynops ensicauda*—observed on Okinawa and Amami, a Ryukyu Island endemic

**Raffaelli's Spiny Crocodile Newt** *Echinotriton raffaellii*—the subspecies endemic to the island of Amami

**Oshima Amami Frog** *Odorrana splendida*

**Okinawa Tree Lizard** *Diploderma polygonatum*

**Okinawa Pitviper** *Ovophis okinavensis*

**Habu** *Protobothrops flavoviridis*

**Japanese Ratsnake** *Elaphe climacophora*

**Japanese Forest Ratsnake** *Euprepiophis conspicillata*

**Other Organisms:**

**FISH:**

**Barred Mudskipper** *Periophthalmus argentilineatus*

**BUTTERFLIES:**

**Green-veined White** *Pieris napi*

**Chestnut Tiger** *Parantica sita*

**Angled Sunbeam** *Curetis acuta*

**Large Map** *Araschnia burejana*