

# Birding Beijing

## Lingshan

*Most recent update 21 March 2014*



*The view from “Przevalski’s Gully” at Lingshan (c1,550 masl), with the peak of Lingshan (2,303 masl) in the distance. Although a popular tourist destination in summer for Beijingers to escape the city’s heat, it is not uncommon to have the place to ones self in winter.*

### Overview

Lingshan is Beijing’s highest peak at 2,303 metres above sea level. It is one of the few of the high mountains in Beijing that is both accessible by car and open in winter (many peaks are closed due to “fire risk”). It is possible to drive up to 1,650 metres and park, from where one can hike to the peak or around the numerous valleys and slopes.

Lingshan was put onto Beijing’s birding map when wintering populations of GULDENSTADT’S (WHITE-WINGED) REDSTARTS and ASIAN ROSY FINCHES were discovered in the winter of 2012/2013. In the winter of 2013/2014 a flock of over 400 of the latter frequented the slopes around the peak and, in the same winter, Beijing’s third and fourth records of PRZEVALSKI’S REDSTART were found here. It is possible that

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PRZEVALSKI'S REDSTART is annual here but with very few birders visiting until recently, we simply don't yet know.

Other scarce birds that can be found here include BROWN EARED PHEASANT (heard in March 2014), KOKLASS PHEASANT, SONGAR (WILLOW) TIT, COMMON REDPOLL, PALLAS'S ROSEFINCH (probably the best site in Beijing to see this difficult-to-see wintering species) and CHINESE BEAUTIFUL ROSEFINCH.

A supporting cast including good numbers of RED-THROATED THRUSHES, SIBERIAN and ALPINE ACCENTORS, MEADOW and GODLEWSKI'S BUNTINGS, CINEREOUS VULTURE, GOLDEN EAGLE and NUTCRAKER make Lingshan a top-class destination in winter.

Lingshan has been much less birded in summer but it almost certainly hosts breeding BROWN EARED and KOKLASS PHEASANTS (both seen/heard in winter), CHINESE BEAUTIFUL ROSEFINCH, ROSY PIPIT and several species of *phylloscopus* warbler. As more birders visit Lingshan in summer, this page will be updated with the species seen.

If you visit, please send your sightings to [birdingbeijing@gmail.com](mailto:birdingbeijing@gmail.com).

## Location





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## Directions

### By Public Transport:

Take public bus 929 from Pingguoyuan (at the western end of the Metro Line 1). Apparently the first bus is at 0700 (unconfirmed). The bus stops at the base of Lingshan, at the junction between the main road (G109) and the access road (X013). From here one needs to arrange a lift up to the top with one of the locals (should be easy in summer but not so easy in winter).

The bus stops frequently and the journey takes around 2 hours and 45 minutes each way. It is possible, but not recommended (especially in winter), to visit Lingshan for a day trip using public transport.

### By Car:

Lingshan can be accessed by driving west from central Beijing along the G109. Follow the G109 until just beyond the 105km marker and then take a right turn (following the sign for “Lingshan Scenic Area”) for around 17km to the top of the mountain. Driving the road up is straightforward. After passing two small villages, including a large car park from where one can take a cable car in summer to the peak, the road plateaus at some derelict brick buildings. Park here and explore the surrounding area.

### Opening Times:

Subject to snow and ice, the mountain road is accessible all year round. Note that there is an entrance fee in the summer months, payable at a barrier across the road on the way up to the peak. From October to March there is no barrier and no entrance fee payable.

*Note: It is possible to buy drinks and food in the villages in the summer but, in winter, everything is closed, so remember to bring enough food and water for your trip.*

**WARNING:** Given the relatively high altitude compared with central Beijing, it is frequently much colder (often between 10 and 15 degrees Celsius cooler). The peak can also be windy, making temperatures feel even lower. Please remember to take appropriate clothing (gloves, hat and a down jacket are essential in winter).

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## Annotated Google Map of Lingshan

(map begins around 19km north of the G109 along the X013 road)





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## Species Hints and Tips:

**Pallas's Rosefinch:** the most reliable area to see this species is around the birch scrub just below the plateau of the road (the area between the second village and cable car car park and the derelict buildings is a reliable site), especially along the 'old road' (see map above).



**Pallas's Rosefinch (adult male)**



**Pallas's Rosefinches (imm males or females)**



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**Asian Rosy Finch:** wintering flocks of this species are annual here but they are highly mobile and it is by no means that you will encounter this species. There are many suitable peaks and rocky slopes in the area and you need luck. The most reliable areas at Lingshan are the rocky slopes on the right-hand side immediately after the derelict buildings at the plateau of the road. Check the slopes between the derelict brick buildings and the point at which the road begins to descend (see map). These birds are often noisy and mobile, so if a flock is around, it should be found.



**Asian Rosy Finch, Lingshan, February 2014**

**Guldenstadt's Redstart:** it appears that Lingshan is a regular wintering site for this high-altitude specialist. These birds feed on the sea buckthorn berries that grow in the small valleys and gullies just below the peak. The most reliable area is the old road that runs through a valley just below the peak. Park at the derelict brick buildings at the plateau of the road and then walk south (almost back on yourself) as the old road gently descends through an area of sea buckthorn and birch scrub. Follow this old road for 300-400m until it reaches the new road (see map). This area is also good for thrushes and hosted a female PRZEVALSKI'S REDSTART in winter 2013/2014.



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**Guldenstadt's Redstart (first winter male), Lingshan**



**Guldenstadt's Redstart (female) on Sea Buckthorn shrub**

**PRZEVALSKI'S REDSTART:** One of the best birds to be discovered in Beijing in 2014 was a male PRZEVALSKI'S REDSTART. This species is a China endemic, breeds in Qinghai, Gansu Provinces at high altitude, and is a difficult world bird to see. The Lingshan bird represented only the third ever Beijing record and the first since the early 1990s (when one was seen at nearby Xiaolongmen). The bird was found in a small valley on the right hand (east) side of the road just above the chairlift car park (see map for site



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labelled “Przevalski’s Gully”). Shortly afterwards a female was also seen along the old road. It remains to be seen whether PRZEVALSKI’S REDSTART is a regular winter visitor to Lingshan or the winter 2013/2014 sightings were exceptional. Needless to say, any birder visiting in winter should look out for this species!



**Przevalski's Redstart (male), Lingshan, March 2014**



**Przevalski's Redstart (female), Lingshan, March 2014**



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## Species to be expected at Lingshan

This table lists only those species seen by Birding Beijing in 12 visits to Lingshan during the winters of 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, and one during summer 2013, so will not be representative of the total species possible at this site. If you visit the site, please send sightings to [birdingbeijing@gmail.com](mailto:birdingbeijing@gmail.com) to ensure this table is as up to date and accurate as possible. Thank you.

Species (English and scientific names plus status where applicable)	Chinese Name	Pingyin
<b>BROWN EARED PHEASANT</b> <i>Crossoptilon mantchuricum</i> VU	褐马鸡	He Maji
COMMON PHEASANT <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	雉雞	Zhiji
CINEREOUS VULTURE <i>Aegypius monachus</i> NT	秃鷲	Tu Jiu
EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK <i>Accipiter nisus</i>	雀鷹	que Ying
NORTHERN GOSHAWK <i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	苍鷹	Cang Ying
EASTERN BUZZARD <i>Buteo japonicus</i>	普通鵟	Putong Kuang
UPLAND BUZZARD <i>Buteo hemilasius</i>	大鵟	Da Kuang
GOLDEN EAGLE <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	金雕	Jin Diao
COMMON KESTREL <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	红隼	Hong Sun
MERLIN <i>Falco columbarius</i>	灰背隼	Huibe Sun
HILL PIGEON <i>Columba rupestris</i>	岩鸽	Yan Ge
GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER <i>Dendrocopos major</i>	大斑啄木鸟	Daban Zhuomuniao
GREY-HEADED WOODPECKER <i>Picus canus</i>	灰头绿啄木鸟	Huitou Lü Zhuomuniao
EURASIAN JAY <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	松鸦	Song Ya
RED-BILLED BLUE MAGPIE <i>Urocissa erythrorhyncha</i>	红嘴蓝鹊	Hongzui Lanque
COMMON MAGPIE <i>Pica pica</i>	喜鹊	Xi Que
SPOTTED NUTCRACKER <i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>	星鸦	Xing Ya
RED-BILLED CHOUGH <i>Pyrrhonorax pyrrhonorax</i>	红嘴山鸦	Hongzui Shanya
CARRION CROW <i>Corvus corone</i>	小嘴乌鸦	Xiaozui Wuya
LARGE-BILLED CROW <i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	大嘴乌鸦	Dazui Wuya
BOHEMIAN WAXWING <i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>	太平鸟	Taipingniao
JAPANESE WAXWING <i>Bombycilla japonica</i> NT	小太平鸟	Xiao Taipingniao
MARSH TIT <i>Poecile palustris</i>	沼泽山雀	Zhaoze Shanque
WILLOW TIT <i>Poecile montana</i>	褐头山雀	Hetou Shanque
YELLOW-BELLIED TIT <i>Periparus venustulus</i>	黄腹山雀	Huangfu Shanque
JAPANESE TIT <i>Parus minor</i>	大山雀	Da Shanque
HORNED LARK <i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	角百灵	Jiao Bailing
SILVER-THROATED TIT <i>Aegithalos glaucogularis</i>	北长尾山雀银喉长尾山雀	
LA TOUCHE'S LEAF WARBLER <i>Phylloscopus claudiae</i>	冠纹柳莺	Guanwen Liuying
VINOUS-THROATED PARROTBILL <i>Sinosuthora webbiana</i>	棕头鸦雀	Zongtou Yaque
BLACK-THROATED THRUSH <i>Turdus atrogularis</i>	黑颈鸫	Heijing Dong
RED-THROATED THRUSH <i>Turdus ruficollis</i>	赤颈鸫	Chijing Dong
CHINESE THRUSH <i>Turdus mupinensis</i>	宝兴歌鸫	Baoxing Gedong



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PRZEVALSKI'S (ALA SHAN) REDSTART <i>Phoenicurus alaschanicus</i> NT	贺兰山红尾鸲	Helanshan Hongweiqu
GULDENSTADT'S (WHITE-WINGED) REDSTART <i>Phoenicurus erythrogastrus</i>	红腹红尾鸲	Hongfu Hongweiqu
EURASIAN TREE SPARROW <i>Passer montanus</i>	(树) 麻雀	(Shu) Maque
ALPINE ACCENTOR <i>Prunella collaris</i>	领岩鹀	Lingyan Liu
SIBERIAN ACCENTOR <i>Prunella montanella</i>	棕眉山岩鹀	Zongmei Shanyanliu
BRAMBLING <i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	燕雀	Yanque
GREY-CAPPED GREENFINCH <i>Carduelis sinica</i>	金翅 (雀)	Jinchi (que)
COMMON REDPOLL <i>Carduelis flammea</i>	白腰朱顶雀	Baiyao Zhudingque
ASIAN ROSY FINCH <i>Leucosticte arctoa</i>	粉红腹岭雀	Fenhongfu Lingque
LONG-TAILED ROSEFINCH <i>Uragus sibiricus</i>	长尾雀	Changwei Shaque
CHINESE BEAUTIFUL ROSEFINCH <i>Carpodacus pulcherrimus</i>	红眉朱雀	Hongmei Zhuque
PALLAS'S ROSEFINCH <i>Carpodacus roseus</i>	北朱雀	Bei Zhuque
PINE BUNTING <i>Emberiza leucocephalos</i>	白头鹀	Baitou Wu
GODLEWSKI'S BUNTING <i>Emberiza godlewskii</i>	戈氏岩鹀	Geshi Yanwu
MEADOW BUNTING <i>Emberiza cioides</i>	三道眉草鹀	Sandaomei Caowu
LITTLE BUNTING <i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	小鹀	Xiao Wu

