

UPDATE 2 – NOT IN BOHAI

There will be, inevitably, some similarities to this Update 2 to Matt's Update 1. But that is the case when we are actually in Bohai. We worry when we are there about how to make getting up way before light, driving, drinking coffee with way too much sugar in it, scanning, driving/walking scanning, walking/driving scanning, driving/walking scanning repeat---- birding, eating banging in masses of data, birding, sleeping getting up way before ---- a novel story each Update. We do at least have 10s of 1000s of wonderful migratory shorebirds to drop in to the stories.

So here goes with my, personal, Not in Bohai take on it, with a little bit of artistic licence.

Day 3 of my Not in Bohai and the view through the vans window on the way to scanning might have been this



But is, in fact, this.



And one at the scanning site I should be seeing this



I am seeing this



Sure, I agree the colours are stunning but where's the birds? Ah yes – in Bohai, well there's a few Red Knots still here but most are en-route to Bohai. And yes pedantic readers it is a different day to the image from the track to the bay above, I mentioned the artistic licence upfront!

I have though had some great scanning of Black-tailed Godwits and Red Knots and have even seen about 10 birds actually migrate from directly in front of me direct form their roosts. Of course I wish I was zooming to Bohai to see them again.

Some difficulties can occur in the field with vehicles wherever you might be, this classic from 2019.

GFN Top Tip of the Week...

If you find a large ball of discarded fishing net in the middle of the road, drive around it or, better yet, move it and dispose of it appropriately. Don't drive straight over it and hope for the best...



And this from ----- Ady, get a proper car



I will certainly miss the food in Nanpu surprisingly in Broome there are no opportunities for meals involving meat-Barbie.

Warning Vegan feminists look away now.



And no hanging around in gangs like when I was a teenager.



OK this is getting a bit random.

Some good news with a bit of bad news thrown in.

GFN and Beijing Forestry University are very keen not to have a completely empty data set for 2020 so our colleague Kath Leung agreed to go to Nanpu and get some data with organisational assistance from the ever-helpful and persistent Hebo Peng. Kath along with some students were going to cover all of May. So Kath duly arrived in Shanghai and completed her 14 days isolation. All good. And travelled to Tangshan our entry city to our study site at Nanpu.

Where she still resides. Having been met at the train station not just by Xiao Liu, the son of our ever-excellent father and son drivers, but also by the police and an ambulance! No, no one told her about the restrictions WITHIN China.



So right now Kath is in her 20th day of isolation! 14 in Shanghai and now 6 in Tangshan and counting.

We wish her well and hope she can soon be scanning Red Knots on the Nanpu seawall----

And I can't begin to say how much I will miss Nanpu (it has actually surprised me), I have real love/hate affair with the place. From 2007 to 2012 it was a depressing place to visit with rampant destruction making us really fear that there would be no mud left after 5 to 10 years. But the direct destruction of the inter-tidal mudflats has slowed to almost nothing, political, financial, environmental? Does it matter?! There are still publically available plans for a big port adjacent to the new steel works and who knows what else not publically available? However many factors are meaning we have much more confidence that these critical mudflats will last in to the future and continue to support important populations of birds on both north and southward migrations.

I will miss, in no particular order





OK, this could go on.

And on.

Thanks for reading, in 2021 you will get 'real' Updates again.

Stay safe.

Chris Hassell

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Thanks to Adrian Boyle, Bob Loos, Kath Leung, Kerry Hadley, Matt Slaymaker, Nigel Jackett and Rob Butier for the images and I even took one myself.