

BUSINESS PEOPLE

ENDEMIC BIRDS IN VIETNAM



• **Annam Partridge**
Arborophila merlini
(Ga So Trung Bo) – Bach Ma National Park

• **Edwards' Pheasant**
Lophura edwardsi
(Ga Loi Mao Trang) – Quang Tri Province



• **Orange-breasted Laughingthrush** *Garrulax annamensis* (Khuou Nguc Dom) – Dalat Plateau



• **Collared Laughingthrush**
Garrulax yersini
(Khuou Dau Den Ma Xam) – Dalat Plateau

• **Golden-winged Laughingthrush**
Garrulax ngoclinhensis
(Khuou Ngoc Linh) – Kontum Province



• **Chestnut-eared Laughingthrush** *Garrulax konkakhensis* (Khuou Tai Hung) – Mount Ngoc Linh

• **White-throated Wren Babbler** *Rimotor pasquieri* (Khuou Duoi Cut) – Sapa

• **Pale-throated Wren Babbler** *Spelaornis kinneari* (Khuou Duoi Dai) – Sapa

• **Vietnamese Cutia** *Cutia legalleni* (Khuou Hong Do) – Dalat Plateau

• **Black-crowned Fulvetta** *Alcippe klossi* (Lach Tach Dau Dom) – Dalat Plateau



• **Grey-crowned Crocias**
Crocias langbianis
(Mi Langbian) – Dalat Plateau

• **Vietnamese Greenfinch**
Carduelis monguilloti (Se Thong Dau Den) – Dalat Plateau



The Love Of A Business-Savvy Birder In Vietnam

A British businessman and birdwatcher sees Vietnam as an opportunity to watch an array of avian species and build up his love for birding

By Ngoc Tran

Some among you may have heard the story of Richard Craik, an Englishman who came to Vietnam 17 years ago to explore the country and has eventually worked in the field of tourism. Craik has since been an integral part of Vietnam's and the world's birdwatching community. Over the course of his time in this country, he has gained considerable amounts of knowledge about Vietnam's 12 endemic bird species. Both a preservationist and a lover of nature, Craik has brought many people from around the world to Vietnam to see what attracted him in the first place.

Birdwatching excited Craik ever since he was a child. At the age of 11, he took birdwatching trips around his hometown of Chester in the U.K. According to Craik, birding has a unique flair that makes it different from any other hobby. "It's like being a hunter," Craik says, "but instead of hunting and killing birds, you use the same skills as a hunter just for the pleasure of seeing them. You have to put together all of the clues, like a detective. You have to think about the habitat, time of the year, and the weather. Many different ingredients come to make up the picture."

Birdwatching, for Craik, has always been about more than just going out and ticking off a new bird on his comprehensive list. A birder gets to develop an intimate connec-

tion with nature as all of life's everyday troubles fade away into the background. "You really get back to nature. Often when you are birding, it will be just you, in the forest with your colleagues, the birds, the animals, and that's it. There's no cars, no motorbikes, no telephones, no email. So you really do get back to nature and away from everything that's involved in our everyday life."

Craik began to orient his career around birdwatching when he moved to Vietnam in 1992. Before that, he held a variety of jobs including English teacher, clothing store manager, international

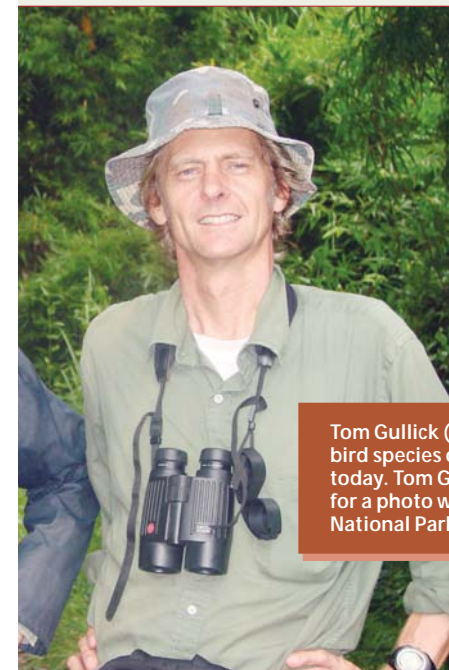
marketer, graphics designer, and many others. He was trying out all of the career options available to him, and as he learned more and more about each one, it only convinced him further of his love to travel and be a part of nature. Even when he wasn't spending much of his free time birding, it was always calling to him.

Risk has always played an integral role in Craik's life. He has shifted career directions many times in order to fulfill his dreams. Before his journey to Vietnam, Craik owned and operated a restaurant in the U.K. He sold this venture, at the behest of his friends, because of his passion for international travel and birdwatching. He landed a job at a travel company in Vietnam. During this time, he learned to speak Vietnamese from the local tour guides he was working with.

Craik loved his position in the company, but it also required him to travel more than he wanted to. He missed spending time with his family, and he missed the connection he has to Vietnam. "About two and a half years ago," Craik says, "I decided I didn't want to do that anymore. I was in international marketing, so I was traveling over-



PATRICIA MALDONADO VIDAL



Tom Gullick (L), an Englishman living in Spain, has seen nearly 8,800 bird species out of a total of around 10,000 species in the world today. Tom Gullick came to Vietnam in 2007. In this photo, he poses for a photo with Richard Craik during their visit to Nam Cat Tien National Park in Dong Nai Province.



Collared laughingthrush

LUYEN NGUYEN

