

Yunnan

China's Land of the Blue Poppy

A Greentours Tour Report

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Daily Reports by Chris Gardner

Days 1 & 2 UK to China

We checked in without problems at Heathrow and began the long journey to China, landing at Hong Kong early, descending through an impressive array of cloud formations. We had a few hours between our flights and eventually found a Starbucks to sup strong coffee from and keep us going until our next flight to Kunming which left bang on time and arrived in less than two hours. Here we passed fairly smoothly through immigration and baggage except my bag which hadn't turned up and was still in Hong Kong! There was a bit of a faff at check-in for flight three to Lijiang when we were moved to a different flight because the first was stuck somewhere else, but this also left on time for the half hour flight across increasingly rugged landscapes of forested hill tops and wonderful swirls of rice terraces rising up the lower slopes.

Arriving at the old town area of the city we walked through the labyrinthine cobbled streets to our hotel past quaint waterways, intricately carved ornate wooden panels and doorways, hanging red lanterns and the many tourist shops that have replaced the traditional merchants. After quickly settling in we went to a restaurant for the first of many excellent Chinese meals with a big variety of freshly cooked meals and our first stab at using chopsticks! Knives and forks for some though! It was getting dark by the time we left and some of us wandered about the narrow streets to sample the lively nightlife with the town attractively lit and all the red lanterns aglow.

Day 3 Yulong Shan

It was a lovely sunny morning and well worth an early wander around the much quieter streets with a good clear view of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain or Yulong Shan as it peered over the sloping roofs. It was only a short drive to the national park gradually climbing into an area of pine woods brimming with the mixed yellow and purple colours of orchid-like *Roscoea cautleoides*. We spent some time looking around one of these areas where we also found the delicate slipper orchid *Cypripedium plectrochilon*, many deep pink *Androsace spinulifera*, Bluish-mauve *Primula pulchella*, yellow *Stellera chamaejasme* and the pretty pink non-climbing *Clematis chrysocoma*. Joan then found a good colony of *Pleione bulbocodium* a deep pink flowered orchid

tucked under a bush and there were more slipper orchids too. Hume' Warblers were common in the shrubberies calling frequently and there were two handsome White-naped Yuhinas. We only moved on a short distance before we stopped again in an area of mixed habitats with some large limestone outcrops. Almost immediately along the track there were our first stunning *Cypripedium flavum* with their gorgeous soft yellow green pouched flowers, together with *Paris polyphylla* (a plant that is declining rapidly through over-collection), *Morina nepalensis* subspecies *delavayi*, the pretty dark blue *Iris ruthenica* variety *nana* and the radial-leaves and striped spathe of *Arisaema consanguineum*. There were several more, plainer forms of the latter as we descended into a little valley where the shady rocks were peppered with the pink stars of *Primula yunnanense* and in sunnier spots there were still some decent golden yellow flowers of *Primula forrestii*. A bit more exploration found the odd *Disporum cantonense* and the purple of *Roscoea tibetana* with distinctly broader leaves and shorter spikes than *caulteooides*. A species of pale blue and black veined tiger butterfly glided about a clearing and just as we thought it was safe to leave Allan turned up a superb *Fritillaria cirrhosa* with lovely dark purple and green markings and there was also the golden yellow trumpet of *Hemerocallis fulva* and a pristine *Cypripedium plectrochilon* close by.

We reached the top of the climb and entered a flat area with many vivid pink trumpets of *Incarvillea mariei* (greatly-enlarged terminal leaflet) scattered across the turf and stopped to photograph these and a small colony of a musk orchid *Herminium* sp (not sure which as there are 16 species in China!). By now it was certainly lunchtime, except the restaurant was closed because of the Olympic torch that was coming tomorrow – don't ask why, because nobody knows. This wretched torch was to dog our progress over the next couple of days. Fortunately there was an adjacent pancake stall that was open so we all enjoyed our selection of pancakes before the fun and games that is Chinese mass tourism. For some reason we could not take our bus any further and had to buy tickets and board a separate green bus to be taken to Yak Meadow. By the time we had ascended on the cableway to the meadow cruising over mixed forests of maples, poplars, larch and fir time was a little short and the weather was closing in but initially still dry. Some of us made it around the boardwalk to the colony of pale blue poppies *Meconopsis horridula* that grew there, but almost as soon as we arrived the heavens opened and a big rain and hail storm lashed down sending us back in a hurry. By the time we got back it was all squelchy boots and for some of us soaked through. We descended and returned to our bus in the rain driving directly back to Lijiang where by dinner time it had stopped raining.

Day 4 To Zhongdian

The immense farce that is the Chinese Olympic torch relay came into full effect today when we were obliged to leave town by six in the morning or be denied an exit until the afternoon – go figure. Anyway we were on the road by 5.35am (!) and passing through the rural landscapes of Yunnan, past paddyfields and vegetable gardens before climbing up to a good viewpoint where we watched the swathing mountain mists swiftly dissipate at dawn revealing the jagged tooth outline of Yulong Shan. We continued onto to the town at the entrance Tiger Leaping Gorge and spent some time looking around the market with everything on display from fruit to pig entrails and even a box of dried *Saussurea leucoma* plants and another stall with dug up *Paris*

polyphylla. We took a direct route up onto the Zhongdian plateau passing first along a valley with many fine trees of *Cornus capitata* and then climbing up onto the plateau. The arresting sight of a meadow brimming with the large magenta trumpets of stately *Incarvillea zhongdianensis* had us reaching for our cameras. Growing with these were plenty of *Euphorbia nematocypha*, *Aster souliei* and a few of its larger flowered cousin *Aster yunnanensis* and nearly opened *Iris barbatula*. Crested Lark, White-browed Rosefinch and Stonechat were also seen. In shorter turf were plentiful little sky blue *Gentiana pubigerum* and the purple of *Lancea tibetica*.

We carried on out of Zhongdian and then towards the small village of Julong where we took lunch in a simple roadside restaurant, with Başak acting as assistant potato peeler. A side road led to an area of scrub with the small pink flowered *Rhododendron trichostomum* and many orchids with many delicate white-pouched *Cypripedium plectrochilon*, fine colour forms of *Pleione bulbocodium* as well as *Cypripedium flavum*, *Oreorchis erythrochrysea* and *Calanthe delavayi*, the latter of which weren't quite in flower. On the way back we stopped beside an impressive display of both *Rhododendron rubiginosum* and *oreotrephe* and then further along Basak spotted a fine *Meconopsis prattii* beside the road. Nearing Zhongdian there was just time to stop for some wonderful groups of *Iris barbatula* with the late afternoon sun streaming through their petals. We could have stayed longer as there was a bit of delay getting into town while the army practised for the coming of ... you guessed it ... the Olympic torch!

Day 5 Napa Hai

It was a grey day but this didn't prevent us finding some outstanding flora and driving the short distance out of town where we stopped beside the local in situ protection area with its tall encompassing wall. However, outside were many big clumps of *Incarvillea zhongdianensis*, tall *Meconopsis prattii*, two roses; the distinct winged stems of *Rosa omeiensis* and white flowered *Rosa sericea* (the former is regarded as a subspecies of the latter by some) along with feisty stands of red stemmed *Euphorbia sikkimensis*. Climbing the wooden steps into the garden we walked up through meadows brimming with the spidery flowers of edelweiss *Leontopodium haplophyloides* as two Cuckoos chased through the 'garden' and then into a idyllic area of woodland full of *Morina alba* and the big, inflated purple pouches of *Cypripedium tibeticum*. The local warden of the garden then led us to a sensational clump of pale pink *Cypripedium yunnanense* growing among stands of a tall lousewort, probably *Pedicularis rex*. There were also two familiar European orchids with plentiful white *Cephalanthera longifolia* and crisp spikes of Greater Butterfly Orchid *Platanthera chlorantha*. As we walked down out of the garden the rockier slope here held many fantastic red-orange drumsticks of *Androsace bulleyana* which were a challenge to photograph in the wind. The rain had also arrived by now as we took lunch in the bus before driving up to the pass with three jeeps.

We transferred into the jeeps and continued further along a rough track to a slope dotted with superb bushes of *Rhododendron wardii* smothered in soft yellow bell-shaped flowers. Among this and the other shrubs on the hillside were many good forms of *Cypripedium tibeticum* including some lovely pale pink flowers with white markings. There were also a number of its very pretty cousin reddish pink *Cypripedium guttatum* and scattered elsewhere were *Cypripedium flavum* and *Cypripedium plectrochilon*. Orchids aside there were also a couple of

pink *Nomocharis aperta* a bulb of rare refinement with the broad saucer-shaped spotted flowers drooping downwards to protect the golden stamens. *Androsace rigida* was throughout in little mats particularly along the roadside and as we walked back down we also saw a few flowering *Podophyllum hexandrum*.

Day 6 Shika Shan

It was all change weather wise today with fast blueing skies that were to stay with us all day. A bit of a slow start saw us climbing up on the cableway to the summit of 4263m Shika Shan passing over extensive forests with much *Rhododendron decorum* and higher up *Rhododendron wardii* before disembarking onto an area of high alpine turf peppered with the electric blue *Corydalis pachycentra*. We spent some time photographing the collection of buddhist stupas spun with lines of prayer flags making sure to go around clockwise to not offend the gods. From here we walked down the slope finding many superb cushions of pink flowered *Diapensia purpurea* and rounded shrubs of dwarf mauve *Rhododendron* species among which were occasional intense pink *Primula chionantha* subspecies *sinopurpurea* and the turf was studded with the delicate nodding bells of purple *Primula amethystina*. Both of these became more numerous as we descended, the latter mixed in with many *Anemone obtusiloba* in various colour forms from white to blue and in places oceans of yellow *Oxygraphis glacialis*. *Rhododendron phaeochrysum* had a number of good flowering plants mainly white but also some good pink forms and tucked in here and there were our first *Meconopsis pseudointegrifolia*. Dropping down towards Lingxi Lake a White-winged Grosbeak flew into the scrub and then we encountered the first of many *Primula sonchifolia* and decided to take lunch at that spot. Further down was a small clearing with a ruined building around which grew some wonderful specimens of *Meconopsis pseudointegrifolia* along with a tall yellow mystery primula and excellent deep pink *Primula chionantha* subspecies *sinopurpurea*. Back into luxuriant forest we found a couple of good *Omphalogramma vincaeflora*, a few *Primula deflexa* by a stream and then along a rockier section plentiful *Primula polyneura*. It was getting late by now and we had to push ourselves the last bit but there was still time to appreciate the wonderful dells brimming with taller versions of *Corydalis pachycentra* and *Podophyllum hexandrum*. We made it in time for the last cable car down and returned to town after a very enjoyable day in the sunny mountains.

Day 7 Tianchi Lake

Another good day and we made our way east across the plateau turning off onto a dirt road and driving through the rural landscape. We stopped in a village and everyone looked around the quiet streets lined with the typical pitched roofed houses of the plateau, being invited into one where we were plied with local yak cheese. A short distance above the village large tracts of birch forest were full of stunning *Nomocharis aperta* the elegant pink saucer-shaped flowers gently angling downwards. With them was plentiful *Morina alba*, the mauve-backed white *Anemone rivularis* and both *Smilacina henryi* and *paniculata* together with a beautiful *Osmunda* fern. It was again only a short distance on to where there was a large colony of *Cypripedium flavum* and *guttatum* growing together along with many of the now familiar plateau flowers.

We moved on with more urgency towards Tianchi lake but were stopped in our tracks by a feisty *Megacodon stylophorum* that had just begun to open and as we paid attention to this a couple of women wandered along carrying hefty baskets full of fodder on their backs.

Higher still was a wonderful colony of *Meconopsis pseudointegrifolia* the big pale yellow bowl-shaped flowers beautifully backlit. Finally arriving at the lake our lavish barbecue was well underway and as we waited for it to be ready we looked at the many mahogany bells of *Lilium souliei* growing out of the dwarf rhododendron scrub. Elsewhere in the scrub were blackish-flowered *Mandragora caulescens* and drifts of *Allium humile*, good forms of *Fritillaria cirrhosa* and towering plants of *Primula chionantha* subspecies *sinopurpurea*. It was a fantastic barbecue with heaps of everything from pork chops to potato salad, devilled eggs to red wine.

Just before we left there was *Primula boreocalliantha* and *Beesia calthaefolia*, then descending via steep short cut we stopped for a display of sky-blue *Hackenia brachytuba*. A little valley further down had a thriving population of dissect-leaved *Adonis brevistyla* and both *Primula deflexa* and *Arisaema elephas*. Our last stop of the day was for a superb display of *Primula secundiflora* mixed with a thick drift of *Primula sikkimensis* and a few *Iris bulleyana* for a splash of blue.

After such a big lunch we opted for a low key meal of Tibetan momos in the bar.

Day 8 To the Cheese Factory

Unfortunately it was a grey overcast day and as we progressed north of Zhongdian and then as we climbed high into the mountains the rain set in and was to dog us all day. However, that didn't stop us finding some outstanding plants and after a lengthy bounce along the dirt road we encountered the tall broad-faced lilac flowers of *Primula hongshangensis*. After a warming cuppa we started climbing the first high pass through an area of loose shale with large chunks of vegetation sliding down in places. An area of more stable turf held a number of unusual *Saussurea nidularis* and many lovely cushions of *Androsace delavayi* with their golden-eyed pink flowers. Everywhere the turf was full of nodding *Primula amethystina*. Despite the rain there were some wonderful moody landscapes to admire and photograph before we had lunch, naturally sat in the vehicles while the drivers built themselves a fire. The turf around here was also thronged with *Primula amethystina* but this time joined by the charming purple flowers of *Primula nanobella*.

An even higher 4600m pass followed with more brooding cloud-swept views then as we descended we encountered some big yellow poppies which were swiftly identified as *Meconopsis integrifolia* (clearly possessing three-nerved leaves) and more delights followed lower down among the stunning lichen-clad fir forests with *Podophyllum hexandrum*, delicate yellow *Corydalis atuntsuensis* and then a beautiful group of purple *Omphalogramma vincaeflora*, the pink-backed white flowers of *Clematis montana* and thin-leaved *Polygonatum verticillatum*. It wasn't much further to our accommodation the recently renovated and improved Cheese Factory where we settled into our rustic but nonetheless adequate rooms, the whole complex surrounded by lush forests and next to a rushing river.

Day 9 To Daocheng

Given the bad weather we encountered yesterday we headed back up towards the pass climbing back up through the luxuriant fir forest festooned with hanging lichens until we reached some good stands of big *Meconopsis integrifolia* above the tree line. However, even now the rain arrived, but it wasn't as bad as before and after taking our photographs we returned stopping to look at the fine *Omphalogramma vincaeflora* again then for the odd view picture before we reached the Cheese Factory and picked up Jason and Başak and continued down the spectacular forested valley with firs giving way to towering Sichuan Poplars *Populus szechuanicus* all the time with a cascading river beside us. Eventually we reached lower, drier tracts of pine forest and the odd settlement stopping to photograph a large stupa with a commanding view back up the valley and then a little further on for a superb tree of *Cornus capitata* smothered in cream-bracted flowers. We passed through quaint villages before we were brought to a halt by a pile of recently felled timber that blocked the road, but this was soon shifted and we carried on soon entering Sichuan via a deep gorge that ran for many kilometres until it opened out enough for some charming villages one of which we stopped by for a lunch of bread and delicious yak cheese bought from the Cheese Factory. A Red-billed Blue Magpie took an interest in our picnic and showed very well.

After lunch we headed back down the valley to where some beautiful *Arisaema candidissima* had been seen finding a fine spathe beside the road and then a group of five together on a huge boulder. Time was moving on but the whole journey was one stimulating rush of landscapes, flora and Tibetan culture that we couldn't resist a stop at the idyllic village we ate lunch near, spending nowhere near enough time exploring its narrow streets, finely built houses and of course meeting the equally inquisitive residents who happily posed with their children and looked at the digital images we took.

Pushing on we climbed a 4100m pass where at the top the turf was studded with bright yellow *Androsace bisulca* along with creamy *Astragalus acaulis*, many diminutive *Iris ruthenica* variety *nana*, the spicate potentilla-like *Spenceria ramalana* and dwarf forms of *Incarvillea mariei* (this variable species has a golden throat, similar *compacta* has a white throat) There was the bonus of almost clear views of the mountains in Yading National Park before we had to continue down yet another spectacular road reaching Rimu and then climbing steadily again into an area of granite rock where we stopped for pale blue *Primula bellidifolia* ssp *hyacinthina* and some fine *Polygonatum curvistylum*(?). The light was dimming by the time we reached the top of the next 4000m+ pass a long gradual ascent across an extensive yak pasture hemmed in by mountains swathed in vast acreages of rhododendron scrub. We descended past big congregations of prayer flags then along the flat river plain lined with poplars to Daocheng where after a bit of searching we found our hotel before venturing out for a delicious Chinese meal.

Day 10 To Xiancheng

A more leisurely morning saw us enjoying a breakfast of fried momos at a nearby café before we began our drive up on to Haizi Shan pausing first beside a stupa and traditional flat-roofed

stone houses and then for a fine colony of pink *Primula involucrata* growing with *Trollius yunnanense*. Gaining height there was a wonderful show of striking black-purple *Thermopsis barbata* growing with *Iris goniocarpa* and a dark form of *Incarvillea mariei* which we enjoyed until a heavy shower of rain sent us running for cover. This soon cleared up and as we continued up onto bizarre plateaux of granite boulders and lakes the weather improved. We stopped by one large outcrop where there were tight cushions of *Arenaria polytrichoides*, yellow *Anemone rupestris*, creamy *Primula chionantha* subspecies *chionantha* and the purple-rayed daisy, *Aster himalaicus*. There were better cushions of *Androsace bisulca* and precariously perched big boulders with *Meconopsis integrifolia* as we retraced our journey. A visit to a monastery followed and then lunch.

The highest point of tour was achieved afterwards when we climbed via a superb big clump of *Primula chionantha* subspecies *chionantha* to 4630m where there were wonderful rosettes of a *Saussurea* species and deep blue *Iris dolicosiphon* subspecies *orientalis*. After a warming cuppa we descended stopping only for wonderful views of neat green fields that spread along a valley flanked by forested hills then it was onto Xiancheng and dinner in restaurant. Afterwards the leaders sampled the ambience of a Xiancheng nightclub where the free popcorn proved the highlight.

Day 11 to the Da Xue Shan

A long but rewarding day today saw us away by 8am and driving along the immaculately cultivated valley floor with well-tended fields and handsome whitewashed flat-roofed dwellings. We stopped to photograph this pleasant rural landscape where the fields were still being ploughed with horses and scrambling plants of *Clematis akebooides* and bushes of gracefully arching *Rosa sericea* lined the road. Turning onto a dirt road we began to climb stopping to photograph some superb white forms of *Stellera chamaejasme* variety *chamaejasme* that grew among open pine woods along with the dwarf *Incarvillea compacta* and slender *Pedicularis lachnoglossa*. The weather was improving all the time and the clouds began to dissipate as we turned a corner to see a superb slope coloured pink with *Rhododendron rubiginosum*. A Black Woodpecker posed well for several seconds on a dead tree before we moved off soon stopping again to revel in the amazing pink carpet of *Androsace rigida* that stretched up and down the slope. Some even denser patches were seen after we crested the first pass where we saw our first views of the jagged limestone teeth of Da Xue Shan, which although still shrouded in cloud above was changing fast and by the time we reached the second higher pass at 4300m, this had all but gone revealing a stunning, rugged landscape of raw limestone peaks and immense screes.

We took lunch just below the pass then explored the nearest slopes, some of us climbing up to find some lovely specimens of purple *Meconopsis lancifolia* together with many yellow *Corydalis atuntsensis*, *Pedicularis oederi*, scattered pink bells of *Primula dryadifolia* and occasional tall *Megacarpaea delavayi*. The weather was amazing and the landscape matched this becoming no less magnificent as we descended through great tracts of forest with beautiful backlit floriferous bushes of *Rhododendron wardii* and fine vistas of rugged rock spires emerging from the forest in the late afternoon light and towering over the villages below. The last two hours to

Zhongdian were on a sealed road and we negotiated the numerous yaks crossing the road to arrive just before nightfall and after settling in at the hotel we enjoyed a relaxing evening at The Raven with takeaway pizza – very Chinese.

Day 12 to Zhongdian

After our long and intense road trip today was all about taking it easy and a leisurely breakfast was followed by a rewarding trip to Zhongdian monastery where Jason explained more about the intricacies of Tibetan Buddhism as we explored the gaudy temples capped in gold-leaf roofs. There were colonies of *Primula pulchelloides* as we walked to the monastery past the lake and marshes full of a tall *Oenanthe* sp, Moorhens and laughing Little Grebes.

Dinner was a barbeque Tibetan style, cooking our food over a large hotplate.

Day 13 to Weixi

Today involved a long but rewarding drive across Yunling Shan to Weixi on the Mekong River watershed. We had a Tibetan breakfast before we left first driving north past Napa Hai where the drier banks were dotted with intense red-orange *Androsace bulleyana*. There was a brief delay because of a collision between two lorries but we were soon descending towards the Yangtse River passing billowing stands of pink *Incarvillea arguta*, yellow *Hypericum forrestii* and then stopping for an impressive field of blue *Platycodon grandiflorum* which appeared to be grown as a crop (we saw one or two similar fields during the drive). Blue Rock Thrush and Stonechat were common as we carried on alongside the river stopping for tea and necessary bush stops before we turned off the main road and entered rural China. Here were tidy traditional houses with pitched roofs and typical upturned roof finials, herds of pigs scuttled about the road along with water buffalo and ducks, while the locals got on with the day to day business of tending fields. We climbed up above this to a bird's-eye view of the patchwork of fields hemmed in by forested hills. Interesting flowers began to appear with first a fine sprawling shrub of *Rosa multiflora* growing next to a plot of burdock, bushes of handsome *Hydrangea heteromalla* and a purple and white form of *Aquilegia rockii*. Further along there was the odd *Iris barbatula* and tall yellow *Pedicularis rex*, then a good few bends on there was a wonderful stand of wine-red *Aquilegia rockii* together with the delicate yellow *Corydalis pterygopetala* and two species each of *Philadelphus* (*subcanus* and *purpurascens*) and *Deutzia* (*glomeruliflora* and *calycosa*). The dense herbage was fairly lively bird-wise with Grey-crested Tit, Black-browed Tit, Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush and handsome White-naped Yuhinas.

When we made the fairly low pass (a mere 3300m) we were treated to a superb colony of *Nomocharis pardanthina* growing among *Stellera chamaejasme* var *chrysantha* and *Pedicularis axillaris*. One of the star plants of the trip for me, but more delights awaited us below so we had to continue to where a thriving colony of vivid orange bracted *Euphorbia bulleyana* grew. That was not all and a bit of searching produced the diminutive purple *Roscoea schmeideriana*, a pale blue form of *Iris bulleyana*, lovely pale yellow and purple *Salvia flava* and a tall *Arisaema* sp.

We wound down through the scattered farmsteads and fields to where there was a fine display of both *Euphorbia bulleyana* and *Primula poissonii*. The final stretch to Weixi was through now familiar countryside including one area of beautifully contoured rice terraces perfectly lit with the late afternoon sun.

A fine meal was enjoyed in town.

Day 14 to Dechen

From Weixi the winding Mekong River cuts deep into the hills and we stopped first to photograph one of the tight bends in the greener lower valley before travelling along through classic rural landscapes where the corn was threshed by laying it in the road for passing vehicles to drive over. A short bouncy climb up to an old rundown monastery saw the end of an unwary piglet which the drivers then had to pay the pwner the princely sum of RMB200 or £17! The monastery had a collection of semi-erotic bronze statues and interior designs to inspire Tie Rack whilst the hillside opposite was dripping with magnificent trees of *Cornus capitata*. Some classic rice paddy scenes followed before we stopped for lunch and these were combined with vineyards at the small village of Cuizhong from where the plant hunter George Forrest had made his daring escape from bloodthirsty Tibetans a hundred years ago. We spent time looking around the church here, built in 1906 after the original (where George Forrest would have fled from) was burnt down and the actual site of this is possibly about a mile away downstream. There was also the chance to sample the local wine, this made using techniques taught by the missionaries a hundred years ago.

Continuing upstream we now entered the narrower more dramatic parts of the Mekong Valley with sheer gorge walls above which we climbed along a spectacular winding road stopping at a couple of viewpoints for the plunging views of the dry hills and tiny hamlets below. Work on some landslips held us up a while before we arrived at a village outside the somewhat grimy town of Dechen.

Day 15 Baima Shan part 1

Best laid plans were comprehensively sabotaged by Chinese road building and we took an age to pass through Dechen and then past the landslip works before finally making it up into the lovely forest-clad slopes of Baima Shan and some amazing mountain scenery. A fine colony of *Primula zambalensis* brought us to a halt with its soft lilac flowers and closer inspection of the surrounding area found the deep reddish-purple of *Primula apocrita*, the delicate white bells of *Cassiope pectinata*, pale yellow *Rhododendron chryseum* and many *Primula sikkimensis*. Our tea supplies finally arrived having been held up at the roadworks and we had a hot drink before heading up to the pass where the weather had cleared to reveal a magnificent landscape of craggy limestone mountains and huge orange scree slopes of truly wild high country. We descended a short way for colony of deep chocolate-brown *Fritillaria delavayi* growing alongside the flat rosettes of purple flowered *Lamiophlomis rotata* and bright pink *Androsace wardii* together with many more *Primula zambalensis* including some pure white forms. After

lunch we looked at another area where the nearest crags held some good *Paraquilegia anemonoides*, the diminutive *Chusua pauciflora* (Orchis *chusua*) and some decent *Meconopsis pseudointegrifolia*. Some of us climbed to the high screes at over 4400 metres passing singing White-tailed Rubythroat and Rufous-breasted Accentor to where we found a superb big clump of *Corydalis melanochlora*, together with many *Astragalus yunnanensis*, *Solmlaubachia pulcherrima*, *Pedicularis rhinanthoides* subspecies *labellata* and one *Lilium lopophorum*.

The weather had remained glorious all day and as we drove back past fine displays of *Primula sikkimensis* an amazing sky developed over Meli Shan and we stopped at the stupa-lined gateway to Baima Shan for some very atmospheric photos.

Day 16 Baima Shan part 2

The amount of road works in operation meant we opted to leave early to avoid any delays. It was a misty morning with the Meli Shan well and truly wrapped up, but we had learnt of a thriving colony of *Arisaema flavum* the previous night and it was only yards from the hotel so we had time to quickly photograph these before heading off and negotiating the road works before work began. At the 'viewpoint' there was nothing but cloud and misty stupas although the scrub below held Daurian Redstart and Common Rosefinch, whilst a Godlewski's Bunting perched on a stupa. We climbed directly up to Baima Shan from here stopping below the pass by an area of degraded rhododendron scrub and small streams. Up among the scrub in the clear areas was a superb colony of *Megacodon stylophorum* with their large greenish-yellow bells in good flower and scattered among them were dark purple forms of *Anemone demissa* and delicate little *Primula nanobella*. Buff-barred Leaf Warblers buzzed about the shrubs as we spent time photographing the spectacle before continuing down the road to our next location. Here a little valley led towards tall limestone cliffs and on these and the much smaller outcrops along the way were many *Paraquilegia anemonoides* in various colour forms from deep pink to dark lilac. However, the prize specimen involved a short scramble across some scree where a plant fully sixty centimetres in diameter hung from the cliff swathed in hundreds of flowers. There were also many *Androsace wardii*, *Aster himalaicus*, a tiny pink orchid *Chusua pauciflora* and Allan and Molly found a colony of dark blue *Meconopsis rudis* growing among *Fritillaria delavayi* on a steep slope. White-tailed Rubythroats called from the shrubs and a female Blue-fronted Redstart flitted between bushes as we enjoyed a refreshing cuppa.

After a couple of view shots of the superb montane landscape we began to descend more meaningfully not stopping again until we reached a mere four thousand metres. Here a short walk took us to a magnificent expanse of flowering primulas with many thousands of deep pink *Primula secundiflora* and soft yellow *sikkimensis* growing alongside a series of little woodlands streams.

There was still a good way to go before lunch and we continued to descend seeing a few flowering *Paeonia lutea* on the way and then the spectacular landscape of plunging dry valleys and villages clinging to their sides, none more impressive than the big bend in the Yangtze which presented an incredible panorama. A very good lunch was taken in Benzilan before we moved on stopping for another impressive view and then a superb population of *Androsace*

bulleyana with hundreds of the intense scarlet flowers studding the ground. A quick stop to look at the traditional Naxi pottery was all that stood between us and Zhongdian where we had another very good meal at the hotel before a last drink at The Raven and some more questionable cocktails.

Day 17 to Lijiang and Wenghai

It was time to begin our journey home departing the charms of Zhongdian at 9am and dropping down off the Zhongdian plateau towards the Yangste River then climbing back up to Shuhe, a town close to Lijiang. After a tasty lunch that included some large carp, we headed towards Wenghai. There were many big bushes of *Clerodendron peii* and a feisty red flowered parasite growing on some pines that had huge heavy cones. As we walked back down the road there were tall *Thalictrum delavayi* with their delicate mauve flowers and then a delightful meadow with many tall pink *Primula bulleyana* subspecies *beesiana* and a scattering of deep pink *Primula poissonii* and tucked among the scrub were quite a few beautifully striped *Arisaema franchettii*. The rain held off although it looked grey and grim on nearby Yulong Shan. In the evening we drove into Lijiang for a final look around and a good meal of duck and various other dishes including pizza!

Day 18 to Hong Kong/UK

An early breakfast had us on the road by 7am and the group all checked in at Lijiang airport by 8am for their flight to Kunming where they were to be met and taken into town for lunch before their onward flight to Hong Kong and various home countries. I assume everyone arrived safely since I was remaining in China for two weeks to recce a new tour to western and northern Sichuan.

Systematic List (Selected) Flora

The following represents the main flowers seen during the trip, however, the flora of Yunnan alone amounts to 15000 species so for obvious reasons the full flora is a monumental task and to this end many woody genera remain unrepresented at this moment in time. Also a number of genera are particularly difficult e.g. anemone and therefore they could not be identified in the field.

Pinaceae

<i>Abies delavayi</i>	The widespread fir
<i>Pinus yunnanense</i>	The widespread pine

Ranunculaceae

<i>Adonis brevistyla</i>	Fine colony below Tianchi Hai, also Shika Shan
<i>Anemone demissa</i>	Yulong Shan, etc, dissect leaves and prominent dissect bracts, variable colour with deep purple forms on Baima Shan
<i>Anemone demissa ssp villosissima</i>	Lovely sky-blue form seen on the approach to Haizi Shan
<i>Anemone obtusiloba</i>	Abundant on pastures, white and blue forms
<i>Anemone rupicola</i>	Baima Shan, extra-large white flowers on the descent from Baima Shan
<i>Anemone rupestris</i>	A clear yellow form was seen on Haizi Shan
<i>Anemone spp.</i>	Many confusing anemones were seen, particularly white ones and unfortunately remain unidentified
<i>Anemone trullifolia</i>	Yulong Shan, distinctive tri-lobed square cut leaves
<i>Anemone vitifolia</i>	Leaves in mid-altitude forests
<i>Aquilegia rockii</i>	Frequent e.g. Weixi where both pure purple and white rimmed forms
<i>Batrachium bungei</i>	A crowfoot, occasionally seen in ditches and ponds
<i>Beesia calthaefolia</i>	Unusual species with sprays of whitish flowers and round leaves under rhododendrons at Tianchi
<i>Caltha palustris</i>	Very common and widespread in wet areas
<i>Caltha scaposa</i>	Common, dwarf highland species with large flowers
<i>Cimicifuga sp</i>	Napa Hai, leaves only
<i>Clematis akeoides</i>	Yellowish, bell flowers north of Xiancheng
<i>Clematis chrysocoma</i>	An attractive pink flowered species on Yulong Shan, growing as a small scrambling shrub
<i>Clematis Montana</i>	Smaller flowered with pink backed petals, e.g. Hongshan
<i>Clematis montana var grandiflorum</i>	Common and widespread climber with large white flowers
<i>Oxygraphis glacialis</i>	Scattered in highlands, a miniature celandine, abundant on Shika Shan
<i>Paeonia delavayi</i>	Blackish-red flowers, Yulong
<i>Paeonia lutea</i>	Good population below Baima Shan but few good flowers 2008

<i>Paeonia veitchii</i>	fine species with dissect leaves and deep pink flowers on Balang Shan and Tagong Grasslands
<i>Paraquilegia anemonoides</i>	Magnificent plants on Baima in various colours, but primarily deep lilac-blue
<i>Thalictrum alpinum</i>	Probably this species on the high alpine turf
<i>Thalictrum delavayi</i>	Yulong Shan, Wenghai, Napa Hai, a tall lilac-pink species
<i>Thalictrum virgatum</i>	Delicate white flowered species, Yulong Shan, etc
<i>Trollius yunnanensis</i>	Typical deep yellow trollius, common on Baima, near Daocheng and elsewhere

Berberidaceae

<i>Berberis jamesiana</i>	Napa Hai botanic garden
<i>Berberis spp.</i>	Several species seen but not identified
<i>Podophyllum hexandrum</i>	Frequent in woodland edge e.g. Shika

Papaveraceae

	<i>Meconopsis</i> – the taxonomy of this genus is confused, the widespread species <i>horridula</i> having been split, but now recombined by some authors. However, many are quite distinct and I have retained the former nomenclature here.
<i>Meconopsis horridula</i>	Lovely pale blue poppy with orange stamens on Yulong. Probably var <i>racemosa</i>
<i>Meconopsis integrifolia</i>	Abundant above 4000m on Balang Shan (2007), also Da Xue Shan, Hong Shan – distinctive three veined leaves. Flowers tend to be less open and lax. Leaves on Da Xue Shan showed some intermediate character with <i>pseudointegrifolia</i>
<i>Meconopsis lancifolia</i>	Gorgeous purple species seen on Hong Shan 2007 and Da Xue Shan
<i>Meconopsis prattii</i>	Fine blue species with white stamens on gravelly roadsides near Zhongdian. Formerly included in <i>horridula</i>
<i>Meconopsis psuedointegrifolia</i>	Common above 4000m on Shika Shan, Tianchi Hai and Baima, the leaves with only one prominent vein and more open saucer-shaped flowers
<i>Meconopsis rudis</i>	A colony on the approach to Da Xue Shan growing in crevices on shale, also on limestone and steep slopes on Baima. Dark spotted bases to prominent bristles, dark blue flowers with white stamens

Fumariaceae

<i>Corydalis atuntsuensis</i>	Lovely elegant, slender yellow species in alpine turf of Hong Shan and Da Xue Shan
<i>Corydalis bencincta</i>	Fine brown-marbled leaves and purple flowers, one on Hong Shan, leaves only on Baima
<i>Corydalis hamata</i>	Handsome dense flowered yellow species on Hong Shan, not seen 2008 because of enforced route change
<i>Corydalis melanochlora</i>	Screes on Baima at 4450m, various colour forms from white to purple
<i>Corydalis pachycentra</i>	Da Xue Shan, pass south of Daocheng, Shika Shan, widespread electric blue species of variable habit depending on habitat, although I feel other species might be involved, possibly <i>pseudoadoxa</i> .
<i>Corydalis pterygopetala</i>	Lovely delicate yellow species en route to Weixi
<i>Corydalis schaeereri</i>	Pretty pink species with long upright pointed spur at Wolong, Sichuan.
<i>Corydalis smithinana</i>	Napa Hai. Not 2008

Brassicaceae

<i>Cardamine griffithii</i>	Wolong only
<i>Cardamine macrophylla</i>	Very common and widespread
<i>Cardamine sp.</i>	Fine-leaved species at Wolong
<i>Draba jucunda</i>	Tighter growing species with typical bright yellow flowers e.g. Yulong
<i>Draba surculosa</i>	Zhongdian
<i>Draba yunnannensis</i>	Common on high passes of Hong Shan, Baima, etc
<i>Loxostemon delavayi</i>	Pretty dwarf pink crucifer, common on Baima and elsewhere
<i>Megacarpa delavayi</i>	Similar to <i>Cardamine macrophylla</i> frequent on Da Xue Shan and perhaps overlooked elsewhere
<i>Pegaeophyton scapiflorum</i>	White flowers, Hong Shan among rocks
<i>Solmslaubachia pulcherrima</i>	Common in high scree and rock slopes e.g. Baima

Violaceae

<i>Viola biflora</i>	Widespread from Wolong to Zhongdian, rounded leaves
<i>Viola delavayi</i>	More pointed leaves than the above found on Hong Shan and especially Weixi

Crassulaceae

<i>Rhodiola spp.</i>	Two or three species were seen in the mountains, but not identified
<i>Rhodiola dumulosa</i>	Shika Shan, reddish flowers

Saxifragaceae

<i>Bergenia purpurascens</i>	Baima Shan, Hong Shan and elsewhere
<i>Chrysplenium griffithii</i>	Widespread in woodland, springs, etc
<i>Rodgersia pinnata</i>	Very common large pinnate-leaved herb with dense pink flowers on branched spikes
<i>Saxifraga rufescens</i>	Near Tianbaoshan in woodland

Caryophyllaceae

<i>Arenaria oreophila</i>	Cushion forming. Balang Shan, Gongga Shan?
<i>Arenaria polytrichoides</i>	Balang Shan, Haizi Shan

Polygonaceae

<i>Oxyria digyna</i>	Common roadside species in highlands
<i>Polygonum forrestii</i>	

<i>Polygonum macrophyllum</i>	Common and widespread e.g. Haizi
<i>Rheum alexandrae</i>	Damp areas in highlands e.g. Haizi, Kangding
<i>Rheum forrestii</i>	Possibly this species near Tianchi, reddish heart shaped leaves and red-stemmed inflorescence
<i>Rheum palmatum</i>	Near villages, dubiously wild

Geraniaceae

<i>Geranium delavayi</i>	Scattered e.g. Weixi, downward pointing pink flowers
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Onagraceae

<i>Chamaerion angustifolium</i>	Scattered
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Apiaceae

<i>Hacquetia sp.</i>	Napa Hai
<i>Oenanthe sp</i>	Marsh near Zhongdian monastery
<i>Tetrataenium nepalense</i>	Large white umbels and broad-lobed pinnate leaves reminiscent of <i>Heracleum</i> . Widespread

Thymeleaceae

<i>Daphne bholua</i>	Abundant below Balang Shan, in Yunnan scattered e.g. Shika Shan, Baima
<i>Daphne calcicola</i>	Yellow flowered species, Napa Hai
<i>Stellera chamaejasme</i>	Common in pastures, alpine turf in white, cream and yellow forms

Hypericaceae

<i>Hypericum forrestii</i>	Very common on roadsides
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Actinidiaceae

<i>Actinidia kolomikta</i>	Climber in shrubberies in mid-altitudes e.g. Wolong
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Euphorbiaceae

<i>Euphorbia bulleyana</i>	Stunning orange bracted species, common below Weixi pass
<i>Euphorbia nematocypa</i>	Very common near Zhongdian
<i>Euphorbia sikkimensis</i>	Red-veined leaves, large bracted inflorescences, Napa Hai
<i>Euphorbia stracheyi</i>	Scattered low growing species wider than tall
<i>Euphorbia yunnanensis</i>	Widespread in Yunnan

Hydrangeaceae

<i>Deutzia calycosa</i>	Pink flowered species at Wulong and elsewhere e.g. near Weixi
<i>Deutzia glomeruliflora</i>	Roadsides at mid-elevation in Sichuan, also Weixi
<i>Hydrangea heteromalla</i>	Weixi pass, a fine lacecap species
<i>Philadelphus purpurascens</i>	Distinctive smaller flowers species with dark reddish purple pedicels and calyces
<i>Philadelphus subcanus</i>	Yulong Shan and elsewhere, the common Mock Orange

Rosaceae

<i>Cotoneaster microphyllus</i>	Widespread
<i>Fragaria orientalis</i>	Very common on banks, etc
<i>Kerria japonica</i>	Wulong roadsides
<i>Potentilla coriandrifolia</i>	Alpine turf e.g. Shika Shan
<i>Potentilla glabra</i>	Widespread shrubby species with white flowers
<i>Potentilla leuconota</i>	Denser leaves than <i>coriandrifolia</i> on Hong Shan
<i>Potentilla</i> spp.	Several similar species of yellow flowered herbaceous species were seen but not identified
<i>Potentilla stenophylla</i>	North-east of Zhongdian at 4300m
<i>Princepia utilis</i>	Spiny arching branched shrub with bluish oval berries on Yulong
<i>Rosa lichiangensis</i>	Yulong Shan. Pink flowers
<i>Rosa multiflora</i>	Handsome dense flowered species, widespread and common
<i>Rosa omeiensis</i>	Impressive thorny stems. Scattered e.g. Napa Hai
<i>Rosa sericea</i>	Common upland species with white to cream flowers
<i>Rosa sweginzowii</i>	Fine deep pink species, scattered e.g. Napa Hai
<i>Sanguisorba filiformis</i>	Small capitate white infl., frequent in marshy ground with primulas
<i>Sibbaldia sikkimensis</i>	Very distinctive red-flowers on Baima
<i>Spenceria ramalana</i>	Yulong Shan and scattered elsewhere e.g. en route to Daocheng
<i>Spiraea schneideriana</i>	Probably this species at Wulong
<i>Spiraea</i> spp.	Other white flowered species were seen but not identified

Fabaceae

<i>Albizia julibrissum</i>	Roadside tree at lower altitudes
<i>Astragalus acaulis</i>	Stemless creamy yellow flowers with rosette of pinnate leaves on high mountains en route to Daocheng and Baima Shan
<i>Astragalus yunnanensis</i>	Handsome white edged yellow flowers with black haired calyces and stems on Baima

<i>Campylotropis capillipes</i>	In drier areas, scruffy pink shrub
<i>Caragana jubata</i>	Spiny highland shrub with pink flowers e.g. near Haizi, Baima
<i>Caragana maximovicziana</i>	Yulong Shan, etc
<i>Indigofera balfouriana</i>	Widespread pink shrub
<i>Indigofera pendula</i>	Widespread e.g. Yulong Shan, attractive hanging racemes of lilac flowers
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Roadsides, widespread
<i>Piptanthus nepalensis</i>	Tagong Grasslands (Sichuan), Hong Shan, etc and other high areas, scattered. Yellow flowered shrub with large trifoliolate leaves
<i>Spongiocarpella paucifoliata</i>	Attractive reddish-purple pea flowers above prostrate mat on Baima
<i>Spongiocarpella yunnanensis</i>	Another fine species with yellow and red flowers, Baima
<i>Thermopsis barbata</i>	Haizi Shan, blackish-purple flowers, also near Zhongdian
<i>Thermopsis smithiana</i>	Very common on Baima Shan also Haizi
<i>Tibetia tongolensis</i>	Widespread little legume with purple flowers on long stems
<i>Vicia nummularia</i>	Roadsides, a typical vetch

Salicaceae

<i>Populus szechuanicus</i>	Magnificent trees on the descent from Langdu
<i>Salix brachista</i>	Prostrate species on Shika Shan turf
<i>Salix spp</i>	Other species seen, often planted

Betulaceae

<i>Betula utilis</i>	Widespread
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Fagaceae

<i>Quercus aquifolioides</i>	Widespread evergreen oak with ovate, obtuse leaves
<i>Quercus spp</i>	Other unidentified species seen including a spiny one akin to <i>coccifera</i> of the Mediterranean

Celastraceae

<i>Euonymus frigidus</i>	Wolong
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Aceraceae

<i>Acer cappadocicum</i>	Yulong Shan
<i>Acer forrestii</i>	En route to Weixi and elsewhere, pronounced larger mid-lobe

Cornaceae

Cornus sp/alba(?)

Very large flowering shrub akin to *alba* en route to Weixi

Cornus capitata

Common along roads between 1000 and 2000m, superb flowering shrub/tree with wide creamy bracts

Ericaceae

Cassiope pectinata

Da Xue Shan, Hong Shan and Baima shrublet with small white bell flowers

Enkianthus deflexus

Weixi pass, growing with *Rhododendron glischrum*

Gaultheria hookeri

Probably this species en route to Weixi, dominant in open pine woods where it was reminiscent of *Leucothoe* (USA) a dwarf evergreen shrub with white bell flowers

Lyonia ovalifolia

Evergreen shrub seen en route to Weixi with rows of pendant white flowers beneath the stems reminiscent of *Oxydendron* (USA)

Pieris formosa

Good shrubs en route to Weixi

Rhododendron calostrotum

Relatively large crimson-purple flowers on small bushes, Shika Shan

Rhododendron chryseum

Pale yellow dwarf species, widespread e.g. Kangding

Rhododendron decorum

Very common in mid altitude woodlands, pines, etc – pink and white forms – easily confused with *vernicosum* but this flowers earlier
Weixi pass, blackish hairy leaves and stems

Rhododendron glischrum

Rhododendron oreotrepes

En route to Julong (Haba) pink, growing with *rubiginosum*

Rhododendron phaeochrysum

Common and widespread high altitude species in variety of colours from white to pink e.g. Shika and var *aglutinosum* at Tianchi

Rhododendron primulaeflorum

Common small flowered species in white or pink e.g. Baima, Tianbaoshan

Rhododendron racemosum

Common and widespread

Rhododendron roxieanum

Common on Baima and Da Xue Shan, narrower leaves than *phaeochrysum*

Rhododendron rubiginosum

Widespread bright to pale pink common on drier hillsides e.g. WDa Xue Shan, near Julong, Weixi

Rhododendron rupicola

More delicate dwarf shrub on Baima

Rhododendron russatum

Another small lilac species, upland moors

Rhododendron trichostomum

Similar to *primuliflorum* but narrower, smaller flowers. Near Julong

Rhododendron vernicosum

Easily confused with *decorum* so probably under recorded

Rhododendron wardii

Lovely clear yellow species, Shika Shan, Napa Hai, Da Xue Shan, etc

Rhododendron yunnannense

Frequent along Weixi pass, not flowering 2008

Vaccinium fragile

Widespread

Pyrolaceae

Pyrola sororia

Haba Shan, not 2008

Diapensiaceae

Diapensia purpurea

Plentiful on Shika Shan also Hong Shan.

Loganiaceae

Buddleja crispa(?)

Maybe this or a similar species along roadside north of Xiancheng

Oleaceae

Jasminum polyanthum

Roadsides between Xiancheng and Da Xue Shan

Ligustum paniculatum

Fine shrubs with creamy panicles en route to Daocheng

Osmanthus delavayi

Widespread in shrubberies

Syringa yunnanensis

Scattered and widespread, white flowers

Asclepiaceae

Vincetoxicum hirundinaria

Widespread component of meadows on Zhongdian plateau and elsewhere, whorls of small green flowers

Caprifoliaceae

Dipelta yunnanensis

Yulong Shan in shrubberies. Not 2008

Leycesteria formosa

Scattered in shrubberies and roadsides

Lonicera spinosa

Deliciously fragrant prostrate shrub on Baima

Lonicera spp.

Various shrubby honeysuckles were seen but not identified

Lonicera tangutica

A pretty shrub with delicate hanging yellowish cream flowers. Weixi

Sambucus ebulus

Abundant roadside weed, an herbaceous elder

Viburnum spp.

Several species seen but not identified

Dipsacaceae

Morina alba

Scattered e.g. Tianchi, Napa Hai, white flowers

Morina nepalensis

Common and widespread in light woods, meadows, etc. Deep pink

Cannabinaceae

Cannabis sativa

Occasional roadside weed

Solanaceae

Hyoscyamus niger

Near Zhongdian monastery

Asteraceae

<i>Anaphalis nepalensis</i>	Widespread
<i>Aster himalaicus</i>	Fine wide flowered species with large mauve rayed flowers on short stems, Haizi, Baima.
<i>Aster soulei</i>	A lovely variable mauve daisy, widespread with huge meadow populations near Zhongdian
<i>Aster yunnanensis</i>	Yulong Shan 2007, a few near Zhongdian 2008, darker, wider flowers with few ray florets than <i>soulei</i>
<i>Cirsium</i> sp.	An impressive thistle near Zhongdian
<i>Crematodium campanulatum</i>	Baima Shan, Da Xue Shan, Tianchi, etc
<i>Leontopodium haplophyloides</i>	Widespread in meadows e.g. Napa Hai, long spidery rays
<i>Ligularia cymbrifera</i> .	A fine large leaved species, widespread e.g. Yulong, Zhongdian, not flowering but corymbose when it does
<i>Ligularia lankongensis</i>	Widespread species on damp roadsides, spicate inflorescence
<i>Ligularia nelumbifolium</i>	Common in marshy areas, very large orbicular leaves e.g. Shika Shan
<i>Saussurea nidularis</i>	On the first pass on Hong Shan growing in alpine turf with <i>Androsace delavayi</i>
<i>Saussurea</i> sp.	A wonderful species with broad woolly domes and rosettes of undulate leaves at 4700m near Daocheng

Gentianaceae

<i>Gentiana asterocalyx</i>	Tiny annual species at Napa Hai
<i>Gentiana pubigerum</i>	Common and widespread, variable little gentian growing on roadsides and alpine turf
<i>Megacodon stylophorum</i>	Impressive colony on Baima, also en route to Tianchi and Hong Shan (2007). Massive, tall gentian with greenish bell-shaped flowers
<i>Veratrilla baillonii</i>	Curious dark green flowered herb, widespread in uplands
<i>Veratrilla</i> sp.	What appears to another of this genus on Shika Shan, broader leaves and inflorescences

Primulaceae

<i>Androsace bisulca</i> var. <i>aurata</i>	Bright yellow mats all over Haizi Shan and en route to Daocheng
<i>Androsace bulleyana</i>	Startling scarlet-orange, frequent at Napa Hai and west, dryish areas of pine or <i>Corylopsis</i>
<i>Androsace delavayi</i>	Pretty pink species on Hongshan at 4500m
<i>Androsace rigida</i>	Fantastic carpets in various shades of white to deep pink, Da Xue Shan also Napa Hai
<i>Androsace spinulifera</i>	Common and widespread. Tall drumsticks of pale pink to deep purplish-pink
<i>Androsace</i> spp.	A number of unidentified low growing species were seen in high areas
<i>Androsace wardii</i>	Deep pink species on Baima Shan at 4300m+
<i>Omphalogramma vincaeflora</i>	Many in alpine turf on Balang Shan (possibly a different species), a few scattered elsewhere e.g. Shika and Hongshan
<i>Primula amethystina</i>	Charming species, abundant on Shika Shan, widespread on high turf elsewhere e.g. Baima
<i>Primula apoclita</i>	Probably this species in damp areas below pass at Baima, reddish-purple dense inflorescence, softly hairy leaves. However, it does not seem to key perfectly for any of the species in this group
<i>Primula bellidifolia</i> ssp <i>hyacinthina</i>	What appears to be this species on pass before Daochang, lilac-blue flowers, growing on granite especially near water seeps

<i>Primula boreocalliantha</i>	Tianchi Lake under shrubs, pink, but I'm not convinced that's what we saw 2008!
<i>Primula brevicula</i>	Baima Shan above 4200m on high scree and among shrubs. Not 2008
<i>Primula bulleyana</i>	Common between Lugu and Lijiang also on Yulong Shan but unable to stop this year! Apricot orange
<i>Primula bulleyana ssp beesiana</i>	Good displays near Wenghai
<i>Primula calliantha</i>	One seen below Da Xue Shan 2007
<i>Primula cernua</i>	A few in alpine turf on Shika Shan
<i>Primula chionantha ssp chionantha</i>	Haizi Shan. Pale yellow form of the species growing among scrub and granite boulders
<i>Primula chionantha ssp sinoplantaginea</i>	Possibly attributable to some of the high altitude dwarf forms found on Da Xue Shan, etc
<i>Primula chionantha ssp sinopurpurea</i>	Widespread and variable e.g. Tianchi, Baima with some sumptuous colour forms from lavender to cerise
<i>Primula deflexa</i>	Shika Shan and Tianchi Hai, differs from <i>cernua</i> in efarinose hairy stem and flatter leaf rosette
<i>Primula dryadifolia</i>	Lovely species on Hongshan, a few on Da Xue Shan 2008
<i>Primula forrestii</i>	Fine clumps at Yulong Shan
<i>Primula hongshangensis</i>	Fine species, good population east of Zhongdian
<i>Primula involucrata</i>	Apologies – the widespread pink species seen in wet flushes on the Sichuan loop e.g. near Daocheng was this one NOT <i>pulchella</i>
<i>Primula nanobella</i>	Common on Baima, Shika
<i>Primula poissonii</i>	Yulong Shan with superb displays along road to Haba and Wenghai
<i>Primula polyneura</i>	Good population on Shika Shan, scattered elsewhere
<i>Primula pulchella?</i>	There was some confusion with this taxa, with contradicting descriptions and photographs in Richards book – but I am now happy that the bluish-mauve species seen at Yulong Shan was this species.
<i>Primula pulchelloides</i>	Several populations near Zhongdian e.g. monastery, pink with yellow centre
<i>Primula secundiflora</i>	Very common, spectacular display on Baima
<i>Primula sikkimensis</i>	Very common, large drifts at Tianchi
<i>Primula sonchifolia</i>	A few very late flowers below Shika
<i>Primula szechuanica</i>	Handsome tall species with reflexed pale yellow flowers in whorls, Shika Shan only, but the mystery primula on Hong Shan may be a depauperate form of this species or ...new!
<i>Primula yunnanensis</i>	Yulong Shan on rocks
<i>Primula zambalensis</i>	Common on Baima Shan

Boraginaceae

<i>Cynoglossum ambile</i>	Very common along roadsides
<i>Hackelia uncinata/brachytuba</i>	Big population near Tianchi growing in logged areas with masses of blue flowers

Scrophulariaceae

<i>Lancea tibetica</i>	Widespread, dwarf, purple flowered
<i>Pedicularis axillaris</i>	Pinewoods, Zhongdian, deep pink, scrambling species
<i>Pedicularis dichotoma</i>	Zhongdian
<i>Pedicularis oederi</i>	Widespread, fine forms on Da Xue Shan, spicate, yellow with red tipped beak
<i>Pedicularis rhinanthoides</i>	Tagong grasslands
<i>Pedicularis sigmoidea</i>	Pink with white centre and twisted beak, e.g. Weixi pass
<i>Pedicularis rex</i>	Tall yellow flowered species en route to Weixi, also Napa Hai botanic garden
<i>Pedicularis rhinanthoides ssp labellata</i>	Baima, large pink flowers in flattened heads
<i>Pedicularis przewalskii ssp australis</i>	Pretty small deep pink species with twisted beak, flowers borne singly, Baima
<i>Pedicularis lachnoglossa</i>	Elegant slender species with dark pink flower en route to Da Xue Shan
<i>Pedicularis pseudomelampyriflora</i>	The abundant lousewort on the Zhongdian plateau, covering large areas of damp meadow, especially near Napa Hai. Branched stems with brown tipped pink flowers, pinnatisect leaves, villous hairy
<i>Pedicularis siphonantha</i>	Da Xue Shan, pink white white centre and twisted beak
<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>	Common along roadsides in drier areas
<i>Pedicularis monbeigiana</i>	Spicate white species with pink beak on Zhongdian plateau
<i>Scutellaria orthocalyx</i>	Frequent along roadsides pinkish-blue spikes
<i>Lagotis yunnanensis</i>	Round heads of whitish flowers, reddish leaves on running stems Da Xue Shan
<i>Melampyrum klebelsbergianum</i>	Pink Cow-wheat en route to Weixi
<i>Veronica pyroliflora</i>	Unusual speedwell on Yulong Shan

Gesneriaceae

<i>Corallodiscus lanuginosus.</i>	Blue flowers and wrinkled leaves, Yulong Shan, Yangste Valley en route to Weixi A confusing genus at times with some taxa a little uncertain*
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Bignoniaceae

<i>Incarvillea arguta</i>	Very common along roadsides in drier areas, bushy with small pinnate leaves
<i>Incarvillea compacta</i>	Baima Shan, en route to Da Xue Shan in loose soil and light scree. Much shorter and compact with a white throat
<i>Incarvillea lutea</i>	Wenghai, tall yellow species
<i>Incarvillea mariei</i>	Common and variable with a golden/yellow throat and greatly enlarged terminal leaflet e.g. Yulong, Da Xue Shan. Mention made of <i>delavayi</i> was incorrect.
<i>Incarvillea zhongdianensis</i>	Very common around Zhongdian with some impressive tall specimens

Verbenaceae

<i>Clerodendron bungei</i>	Village roadsides in Sichuan
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<i>Clerodendron peii</i>	White flowered shrub with pubescent red calyces en route to Wenghai
<i>Verbena officinalis</i>	Roadsides, small whitish spikes, branched stems
Lamiaceae	
<i>Lamiophlomis rotata</i>	Baima and other high areas
<i>Salvia digitaloides</i>	Drier roadsides at 3000m
<i>Salvia evansiana</i>	Napa Hai, Zhongdian, roadsides.
<i>Salvia flava</i>	Fine yellow and purple flowered species below pass near Weixi
<i>Salvia przewalskii</i>	Lugu Lake and elsewhere a fine species with deepest purple lip, not 2008
<i>Salvia subpalmatinervis</i>	Pink species at the orchid site near Julong
Campanulaceae	
<i>Platycodon grandiflorum</i>	Appeared to be cultivated as a crop along the Yangtse
Zingiberaceae	
<i>Roscoea cauleoides</i>	Very common at Yulong, in both yellow and purple forms, scattered elsewhere. Tall and narrow leaved
<i>Roscoea schmeideriana</i>	Tiny species below pass near Weixi
<i>Roscoea tibetica</i>	Yulong Shan, scattered elsewhere e.g Zhongdian. Shorter with broad leaves, dominant on the plateau at Yulong where most are a pale rose colour
Liliaceae	
<i>Allium humile</i>	Tianchi Hai and elsewhere, white
<i>Disporum cantonense</i>	Yulong Shan
<i>Fritillaria cirrhosa</i>	Da Xue Shan, Tianchi, Hong Shan, variable colour form yellowish to purplish
<i>Fritillaria delavayi</i>	Baima Shan, maroon-brown
<i>Hemerocallis fulva</i>	Yulong Shan, etc
<i>Lilium bakerianum</i>	Two flowers on Yulong Shan. Not 2008
<i>Lilium lophophorum</i>	Rhododendron scrub east of Zhongdian and Da Xue Shan
<i>Lilium souliei</i>	A few at Tianchi Hai
<i>Lloydia delavayi</i>	Widespread, yellow with reddish inside
<i>Lloydia serotinum</i>	Yulong Shan
<i>Nomocharis aperta</i>	Superb colony near Tianchi, also Napa Hai
<i>Nomocharis pardanthina</i>	Gorgeous pink to white flowers with red spots, near Weixi and Lugu
<i>Ophiopogon intermedius</i>	Scattered

<i>Polygonatum curvistylum</i>	Woodlands. Sichuan
<i>Polygonatum hookeri</i>	Diminutive pink flowered species common on Baima alpine turf
<i>Polygonatum verticillatum</i>	Or similar species on Hongshan
<i>Smilacina henryi</i>	Tubular green flowers, Tianchi birchwoods, Hongshan, etc
<i>Smilacina paniculata</i>	Tianchi birchwoods, etc
<i>Smilacina sp.</i>	A pink flowered species below Hongshan
<i>Streptopus sp 1</i>	Pretty white bells on pass above Weixi
<i>Streptopus sp 2</i>	Brownish bells en route to Wenghai

Trilliaceae

<i>Paris polyphylla</i>	Widespread e.g. Yulong, Zhongdian
<i>Paris tibetica</i>	Napa Hai, not 2008

Iridaceae

<i>Iris barbatula</i>	Pretty purple species with white striped falls, near Zhongdian, possibly also this en route to Weixi
<i>Iris bulleyana</i>	Abundant in grazed areas
<i>Iris chrysographes</i>	Deep purple species seen near Langdu Cheese Factory
<i>Iris colleti</i>	Possibly this small species at Yulong Shan also Lugu Lake both 2007, not refound 2008.
<i>Iris cuniculiformis</i>	Lovely species, east of Zhongdian, Tianchi, etc, not 2008
<i>Iris dolichosiphon ssp orientalis</i>	At 4700m above Daocheng
<i>Iris goniocarpa</i>	A population on Haizi Shan, lilac.
<i>Iris japonica</i>	Non-flowering, widespread in mid-altitudes
<i>Iris ruthenica</i>	Widespread in small numbers. Common on Haizi Shan where var <i>nana</i>
<i>Iris sp</i>	A member of the <i>Lophiris</i> section seen along Tiger Leaping Gorge, with branched inflorescence and pale lilac flowers
<i>Iris spp.</i>	A number of lovely species were seen in the mountains and await identification
<i>Iris tectorum</i>	Common in northern Sichuan, also planted in hotel garden Daocheng. Large blue flowers

Araceae

<i>Arisaema candidissima</i>	There was some confusion regarding arisaemas which I have now clarified, please read the notes; Beautiful white species in gorge en route to Daocheng where common
<i>Arisaema ciliatum</i>	This species was actually quite common on Yulong Shan, bearing beautifully green or purple striped spathes with a fringing of hairs around the mouth of the spathe and whorls of narrow leaflets. I mistakenly called this as <i>consanguineum</i> !
<i>Arisaema consanguineum</i>	Widespread and variable species with green or reddish-green spathes and whorls of narrow leaflets, but generally much larger than <i>ciliatum</i> . A superb stand on the way to Weixi
<i>Arisaema elephas</i>	Widespread, e.g. below Tianchi Hai. largely purple and white striped spathe with smooth spadix with long upward pointing appendage

<i>Arisaema flavum</i>	Small yellow spathes in abundance near hotel at Deqen
<i>Arisaema franchettii</i>	A good population en route to Wenghai, striped with downward pointing spathe tip and broad trilobed leaves
<i>Arisaema handelii</i>	Similar to <i>elephas</i> but spathe predominantly green striped white and rough-looking spadix that has an upward pointing appendage. Only seen en route to Weixi in 2007 not refound 2008
<i>Arisaema spp.</i>	Other confusing taxa were found!
<i>Arisaema taliense</i>	Maybe this species at Lugu Lake on the reccy 2007. Trifoliate upward folded leaves and green and white striped spathes with curved thin green spadixes
<i>Arisaema yunnanense</i>	Hear Haba in pine forest above the village 2007, trifoliate flat leaves with green and white striped/lined spathes and curving green spadix. Not 2008

Orchidaceae

<i>Calanthe delavayi</i>	En route to Haba, Napa Hai, etc
<i>Cephalanthera longifolia</i>	Napa Hai, Weixi
<i>Chusua pauciflora (Orchis chusua)</i>	Small pink orchid on Baima
<i>Coeloglossum viride</i>	One noted at Napa Hai 2007
<i>Cypripedium flavum</i>	Frequent in areas on pine, usually on top of banks e.g. Tianchi, Napa Hai and Yulong
<i>Cypripedium franchettii</i>	Tianbaoshan and Napa Hai, not 2008
<i>Cypripedium guttatum</i>	Widespread e.g. Napa Hai, Tianchi, etc
<i>Cypripedium margaritaceum</i>	Fine species with attractive spotted leaves. One in superb flower above Haba
<i>Cypripedium plectrochilon</i>	Scattered in small numbers e.g. Yulong and near Tianbaoshan
<i>Cypripedium tibeticum</i>	Good colony above Napa Hai, also Balang Shan, Sichuan
<i>Cypripedium yunnanense</i>	Lovely pink species at Napa Hai
<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	Wenghai
<i>Herminium monorchis?</i>	Widepread on rocks in Yulong Shan
<i>Oreorchis erythrochrysea</i>	Widespread
<i>Platanthera chlorantha</i>	Napa Hai botanic garden
<i>Pleione bulbocodioides</i>	Nice colony near Tianbaoshan