

Birding
Beijing 

A Guide to the Mammals of Beijing

Last update 8 March 2018



Terry Townshend

Introduction

This guide has been collated to help residents and visitors to Beijing interested in specifically looking for mammals and/or identifying any species they record through casual observations. Given the lack of english-language resources and data this guide is certainly not comprehensive and reflects only a partial summary of the mammals in the capital. At the moment it includes information about only some of the orders and families. For example, mice, rats, voles, shrews, moles and bats are not included; as information is discovered or made available, the guide will be updated to rectify as many of these omissions as possible. Please contact Birding Beijing if you can help improve the information contained in this guide in any way. Individual sightings of any mammal in Beijing are also of interest. Please send any details, including species, location, date and time via email to birdingbeijing@gmail.com. Thank you.

Format

The list of mammals follows the order of “A Guide to the Mammals of China” by Andrew T Smith and Yan Xie¹, the best reference guide to mammals in China. The format includes English name, scientific name, Chinese name and ‘pinyin’ (the Romanisation of Chinese characters based on their pronunciation). Photos are included where available together with a short paragraph about the status in Beijing.

¹ Smith, Andrew T and Xie, Yan, “A Guide to the Mammals of China”, Princeton University Press, 2008

The Mammals

Rhesus Macaque – *Macaca mulatta* – 猕猴 – Mi Hou

Historically thought to have occurred in Beijing and today occasionally seen in Fangshan District, although sightings are thought to involve animals introduced for tourism purposes.

Eurasian Red Squirrel – *Sciurus vulgaris* – 松鼠 – Songshu

Fairly common in mountainous areas in the north and west, especially Mentougou and Huairou Districts. In the city, can be seen in the Botanical Gardens. Possibly introduced.



Eurasian Red Squirrel, Beijing Botanical Gardens, 22 November 2014

Pere David's Rock Squirrel – *Sciurotamias davidianus* – 岩松鼠 – Yansongshu

Common in mountainous areas such as Fangshan, Mentougou and Huairou Districts



Pere David's Rock Squirrel, Lingshan, 3 March 2018

Siberian Chipmunk – *Tamias sibiricus* – 花鼠 – Huashu

Can be found in any wooded areas from mountains to parks, including many of the parks in the city (e.g. Ritan Park, Temple of Heaven Park).



Siberian Chipmunk, Lingshan, 28 June 2011

Swinhoe's Striped Squirrel – *Tamiops swinhoei* – 隐纹松鼠 – Yinwensongshu

Regular in hilly and mountainous areas on the outskirts of the city. Told from the similar Siberian Chipmunk by the duller face pattern, white tufts behind the ears and overall less contrasting pattern.



Swinhoe's Striped Squirrel, Labagou, 31 December 2016

Tolai Hare – *Lepus tolai* – 托氏兔 – Tuoshi Tu

Fairly common in open areas, even in the city suburbs. Can be seen in the Olympic Forest Park and birding sites such as Ma Chang, Yeyahu and Miyun Reservoir.



Tolai Hare, Hengshui Hu, Hebei, 21 March 2017

Amur Hedgehog – *Erinaceus amurensis* – 东北刺猬 – Dongbei Ciwei

Fairly common but due to its nocturnal habits, difficult to see. Has been recorded along the Wenyu River, in scrubby areas around Shunyi District and several mammal watchers have seen it in the grounds of the Citic Hotel, close to the airport.



Amur Hedgehog, Shunyi District, Beijing, 15 May 2017

Daurian Hedgehog - *Mesechinus dauuricus* - 大乌尔猬 - Da'wu'er Wei

Reported from the Old Summer Palace (Yuanmingyuan) and in coastal Hebei.

Short-faced Mole - *Scaptochirus moschatus* - 麝鼯 - She Yan

According to “A Guide to the Mammals of China”, the only mole species to occur in the capital. It's a species of mole adapted to arid conditions. Recorded at Shahe Reservoir on 19 June 2016 by Tsien Din-Kun.

Large Mole - *Mogera robusta* - 大缺齿鼯 - DaQueChiYan

By far the largest mole in China. Smith and Xie give its distribution as NE China; extending into Russia and Korea. Records from Heilongjiang, Liaoning, Jilin, Henan and Anhui. Inhabits montane woodland, forest, farmland and grassland. A large mole hill at Lingshan in March 2018 could well be of this species.



A sizeable mole hill at Lingshan, possibly the work of Large Mole *Mogera robusta*. If so, probably the first Beijing record of this species.

(Amur) Leopard Cat – *Prionailurus bengalensis* – 豹猫 – Baomao

Probably common in the mountains but primarily nocturnal, so encounters in daytime are rare. Has been recorded at Miyun Reservoir, Lingshan and at Wulingshan (Hebei).



(Amur) Leopard Cat, Miyun Reservoir, Beijing, 22 November 2013

Leopard – *Panthera pardus* – 豹 – Bao

It is likely that a few Leopards exist in the mountains in the far west/southwest of Beijing. One individual was caught on a camera trap at Xiaowutaishan (Hebei) in 2012, just 10km from the Beijing boundary. Seen regularly in the Shanxi part of the Taihang Mountains and, with large territories, the odd animal is likely to wander into Beijing on occasion. Back in 2001 Professor Gao Wu (高武) of Capital Normal University told Xinhua news agency that he believed there were about 10 leopards in the Beijing area. Gao said that as recently as the 1950s local farmers had reported leopards frequently attacking livestock in Huairou, Mentougou and Fangshan counties but there had been no such reports since the 1990s. However he added: "In fact leopards continue to survive against the odds in Beijing. They feed on roe deer, goats and rabbits, etc in broadleaved forest and have a radius of less than 100 km."²

Masked Palm Civet – *Paguma larvata* – 花面狸 – Huamian Li

Status uncertain. One rehabilitated animal was released at Wulingshan (on the border of Hebei and Beijing) in summer 2017.

Wolf – *Canis lupus* – 狼 – Lang

Probably now extinct in Beijing but it's possible a few linger in the remote mountains of north or west Beijing. In June 2007, Michael Rank wrote: "a 1956 Peking University study recorded "a certain number" of wolves which attacked livestock and humans. Records from the 80s of furs bought [by the state] showed 74 wolf skins in period 1974-79 in Miyun county and 195 in Changping [both in northern outer suburbs] in 1979-81, but very few after this. A national survey 1995-2000 found signs of wolves in Yanqing, Huairou and Pinggu counties but no live specimens."³

² Taken from the article "Wild Leopards of Beijing" by Michael Rank. See URL: http://www.danwei.org/wildlife/wild_leopards_of_beijing_by_mi.php accessed 21 February 2018.

³ See URL: http://www.danwei.org/beijing/wild_animals_of_beijing.php (comments section), accessed 21 February 2018

Raccoon Dog – *Nyctereutes procyonoides* – 貉 – He

Recorded occasionally from mountainous areas such as Lingshan. Status clouded somewhat by the escape/release of animals from fur farms. I have personally recorded Raccoon Dog at Lingshan and Badaling Forest Park.



Raccoon Dog, Wuerqihan, Inner Mongolia, 22 October 2015
.....

Red Fox – *Vulpes vulpes* – 赤狐 – Chi Hu

Probably resident in small numbers in the mountains but the author couldn't trace any recent records.



This presumed RED FOX was photographed at Lingshan on 2 March 2018. An unusual colouration. Could it be an escape from a fur farm?
.....

Hog Badger – *Arctonyx collaris* – 猪獾 – Zhu Huan

Thought to be reasonably common. Has been recorded from Yeyahu/Ma Chang and many of the mountainous areas in Mentougou, Huairou and Fangshan Districts.

Asian Badger – *Meles leucurus* – 狗獾 – Gou Huan

Thought to occur in many of the wooded hilly and mountainous areas around Beijing.

Mountain Weasel – *Mustela altaica* – 香鼬 – Xiang You

Status uncertain. The mustelid below, photographed at Lingshan on 9 November 2015, is thought to be a Mountain Weasel (or possibly Least Weasel); probably the first record for Beijing of either species.



Weasel sp, Lingshan, 9 November 2015

Siberian Weasel – *Mustela sibirica* – 黄鼬 – Huang You

The Siberian Weasel, known as “Huang Shu Lang” is common in Beijing and can even be found in the city centre. Due to superstition (this animal is thought to have the ability to possess people’s souls), they are not persecuted.



Siberian Weasel, Yeyahu, 3 November 2013

Steppe Polecat – *Mustela eversmanii* – 艾鼬 – Ai You

Thought to be resident in Beijing but not aware of any recent sightings.

Wild Boar – *Sus scrofa* – 野猪 – Ye Zhu

Certainly exists in small numbers in remote mountainous areas in Mentougou, Fangshan and Huairou Districts. I have seen tracks and areas of disturbed earth consistent with Wild Boar in Mentougou District.

Siberian Roe Deer – *Capreolus pygargus* – 西伯利亚狍 - Xiboliya Pao

Occasionally recorded in Mentougou District. The author has recorded Siberian Roe Deer on two occasions (one group of two at km75 along the G109 and a single at Lingshan). Formerly thought to be the same species as Eurasian Roe Deer but is considerably larger with different shaped antlers; now treated as a separate species.



A Siberian Roe Deer caught on a camera trap in Mentougou District, 17 February 2018.

.....

Long-tailed Goral – *Naemorhedus caudatus* – 中华鬣羚 - Zhonghua Lieling

Scarce. Has been recorded at Lingshan in Mentougou District and Fangshan District.

Cover photo: Tolai Hare, Hengshui Hu, Hebei Province (Terry Townshend)