

MOSAIC

Gaining a 'bird-watcher's-eye view' of the natural world

When my husband and I spotted a dusky brown bird bobbing on a rock in a stream not far from the family home in rural Zhejiang, a feeling of excitement swept through me.

"That's a dipper, I'm certain of it!" I whispered in his ear, prompting him to reach for the camera draped over his shoulder and snap a photo.

The last time I laid eyes on such a bird was in Yosemite National Park, while trudging up switchbacks that rose 300 meters from the valley floor to the top of Upper Yosemite Falls.

There, I encountered a bird perched on a rock near the cascading waters, and my hunch was later confirmed in the pages of the North American bird guide in my backpack: I had seen an American dipper. The sweat slathered across my brow as well as sore feet and legs seemed a worthy trade-off for a glimpse of the only aquatic songbird in North America and one capable of "flying" underwater, as a nature documentary on TV had revealed. It didn't count as a rare sighting, since the dipper isn't endangered.

Still, the majesty of one of America's most picturesque national parks framed the moment, leading me to cherish this bird — one not native to the Cleveland, Ohio, region



A brown dipper. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

where I grew up — all the more.

Never did I expect that, instead of spending hours on a strenuous hike up the granite cliffs of Yosemite, I only needed to venture on a short walk from my husband's family

home, tracing a mountain creek that cut through the valley.

This brown dipper, as if taking the stream as a stage, didn't disappoint with its performance. It "danced" before us on the rock and then flew off in a dramatic flourish, belting out a rhythmic series of "bzzzzzzzz" calls that sounded like raspy, but adorable, whistles. Jun's camera, meanwhile, kept clicking away with such a singular focus, reflecting how much he had also embraced this charming little bird.

Why had Jun, who had long known of my passion for bird-watching, never mentioned the dippers in his hometown? The answer surprised me — he hadn't seen them before. Had their drab, brown plumage rendered the dippers for-

gettable, or easily confused with others? Or had the birds, after years of seeking refuge in wilder and more remote streams, quietly reclaimed their place in the village as the local environment improved?

Whatever the reason, their discovery sparked the formation of our two-person "Rural Zhejiang Bird-watching Club."

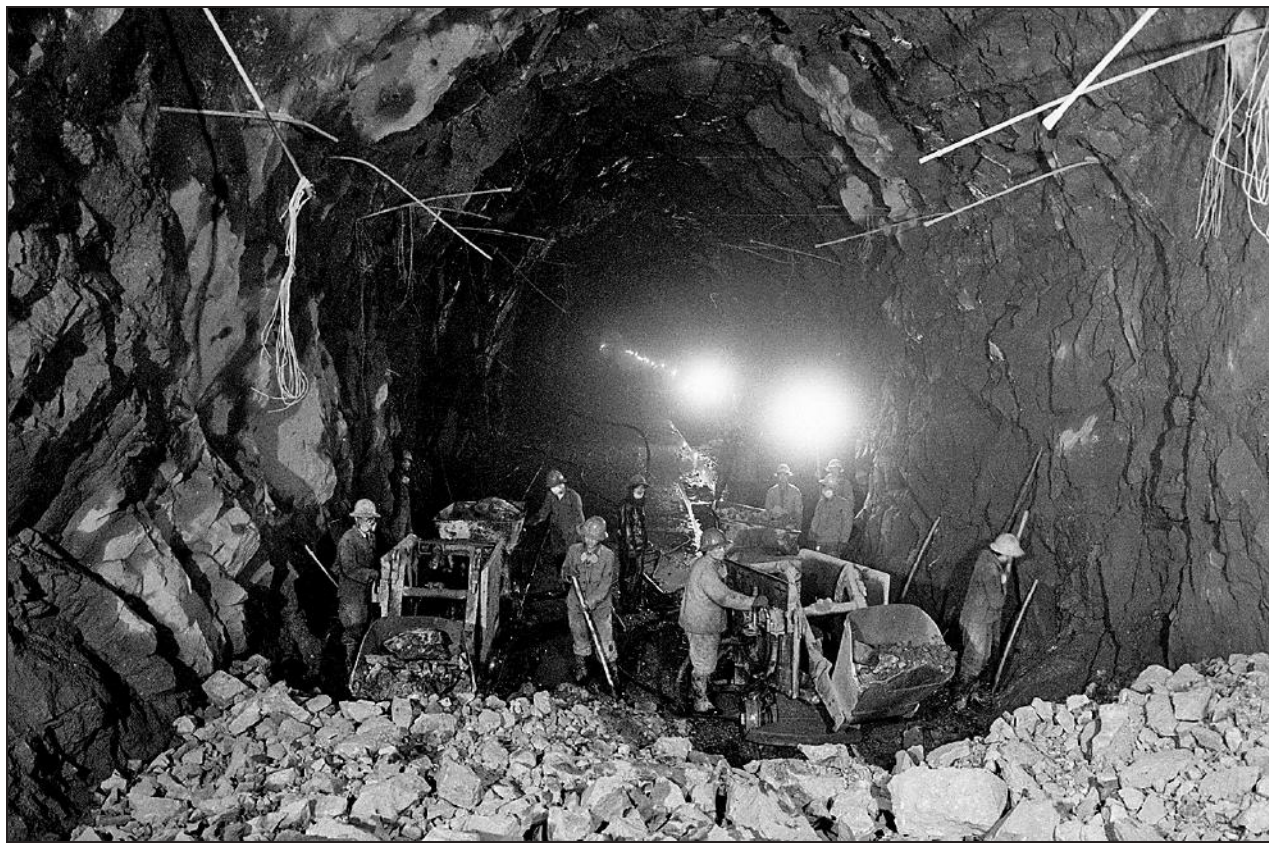
Together, we remapped the entire landscape of Jun's village with further sightings of birds new to one or both of us, from the jewel-like kingfisher and its rainbow of plumage that shimmered in the sun to the nearly four-foot wingspan of a large owl that catapulted out of the bushes and passed above our astonished faces. Each sighting added a fresh layer of fascination to our

lives and the feeling that, even in familiar territory, we could always encounter something new.

So next time you're out in a park, the woods or even just a countryside village, keep an eye open for those feathered friends fitting about. With a little patience — and luck — you too can experience the transformative power of having a "bird-watcher's-eye view" of the world.

Contact the writer at jocelyn@chinadaily.com.cn

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XINHUA

A moment in time: Tunneling to progress

Workers clear rocks after blasting in a tunnel for the Luanhe River Diversion Project in 1982. Completed in 1983, the project directs water from the Luanhe River in eastern Hebei province to Tianjin, ending the port city's reliance on the salty Haihe River for drinking water. However, 22 workers lost their lives during the project. With the use of modern boring machines, tunneling has made advances in safety procedures, as seen in the photo (right) at a site in Yunnan province in May.



YANG ZONGYOU / XINHUA

The newspaper and beyond

On our Sina Weibo

Alipay opens to international travelers in China

From Tuesday, tourists visiting China were able to download and use mobile payment service Alipay during their trip. Visitors just need an overseas phone number, a visa and their bank card to sign up for Alipay's Tour Pass mini-program. They can top up in increments of as much as 2,000 yuan (\$285). Access to Tour Pass lasts three months, and then any leftover funds are refunded automatically. Previously, visitors would need to have a local mobile number and a Chinese bank account in order to sign up for the service.



Liu Yifei on Hollywood's emerging talent list

Actress Liu Yifei is among Hollywood's rising young stars, according to the Next Gen Talent 2019 released by Hollywood Reporter, an entertainment magazine in the United States. The annual list offers a snapshot of Hollywood's most promising young actors. Last year, Walt Disney unveiled Liu as the heroine for the live-action *Mulan*. Directed by Niki Caro with a March release date, *Mulan* is inspired by both the legendary Chinese ballad and the popular 1998 Disney animated film. It follows Hua Mulan, the young daughter of warrior Fa Zhou, who impersonates a man to take her father's place during a Hun invasion and becomes one of China's greatest heroines.



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Culture: Smart Cinema launches in US

Smart Cinema, a movie screening app backed by the country's top film regulator, officially launched its North American version in Los Angeles during the 15th China-US Film and TV Festival on Sunday. Currently, 17 movies are being screened on the Smart Cinema US platform, including *Looking Up*, *Dying to Survive* and *Men on the Dragon*. Unlike streaming websites, Smart Cinema is like a theater in your pocket. Users need to purchase an e-ticket to watch a film at a scheduled screening time. Gao Qunyao, CEO of Smart Cinema, said: "Smart Cinema will bring the latest Chinese theatrical releases to the North American audience through the platform."

Society: Massacre survivor passes away

Yang Guizhen, a Nanjing Massacre survivor, passed away on Tuesday at the age of 102. Her death reduced the number of registered survivors to 81. Ten

survivors have died this year, according to the Memorial Hall of the Victims in the Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders. The Nanjing Massacre took place when Japanese troops captured the city on Dec 13, 1937. Over six weeks, they killed about 300,000 civilians and unarmed soldiers. After the Japanese troops captured Nanjing, Yang, then a 20-year-old, hid in an underground cave to escape, according to her testimony. The documents on the massacre were listed by UNESCO in the Memory of the World Register in 2015.



Sports: Haikou to host top boxing event Haikou, Hainan province, will host Super Bouts — an interna-

tional boxing tournament — on Feb 2, organizers said on Tuesday. The event will attract golden belt boxers from the World Boxing Organization, World Boxing Council, World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation during Spring Festival. The event will be organized by Mission Hills Group. Bob Arum, CEO of Top Rank, announced that WBC and WBO light-welterweight champion Jose Ramirez will fight former champion Viktor Postol. Tenniel Chu, vice-chairman of Mission Hills Group, said the professional boxing competition can boost tourism in Haikou. He added that it's expected Super Bouts will become a new addition to Spring Festival celebrations and attract visitors to the island. The event will be held in Haikou over the next three years.

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What's on

Sutra

When: Nov 8 and 9, 7:30 pm; Nov 10, 2 pm

Where: Shanghai International Dance Center

Few dance productions have made such an impact as *Sutra*. Since its premiere in early 2008, the striking collaboration between Belgian choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, British sculptor Antony Gormley and 19 Buddhist monks from the Shaolin Temple, has toured the world, selling out to audiences in 33 countries.

In *Sutra*, Cherkaoui explores the way that the monks, famous for their warrior skills, relate spiritually to animals and the environment and how they blend faith and physical strength. He manages to break down Eastern and Western perceptions of each other and proves that martial arts are poetry in motion.

Sutra, taken literally, is a rope or thread that holds things together. Metaphorically, it is a rule, or set of rules, also binding. In Buddhism, the term was originally given to the sermons of the Buddha.

Ghetto

When: Nov 9 and 10, 7 pm

Where: Suzhou Poly Theater

Ghetto is a play by Israeli playwright Joshua Sobol about the experiences of Jews in the Vilna Ghetto during Nazi occupation in World War II.

It is inspired by an actual theater which operated in the ghetto from 1941 to 1943. It tells the story of the ghetto theater during the Lithuania occupation.

The theater responded to despair with song, satire and criticism of the Nazi regime, proving that theater can provide courage and hope even amidst a time of atrocities.

Hong Kong Ballet:

The Great Gatsby

When: Nov 15 and 16, 7:15 pm

Where: Shanghai Oriental Art Center

Created by artistic director Septime Webre, Hong Kong Ballet premiered *The Great Gatsby* early this year.

Written by F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* centers on an elusive millionaire called Jay Gatsby. It presents a critical portrait of the American dream through its portrayal of the 1920s New York elite. By exploring themes of wealth, class, love and idealism, the novel raises powerful questions about American ideas and society.

The Dawns Here Are Quiet

When: Nov 29 and 30, 7:30 pm; Dec 1, 1 pm

Where: Shanghai City Theater

The St. Petersburg Master-skaya Theater in Russia will bring *The Dawns Here Are Quiet* to Shanghai.

Based on Boris Vasiliev's 1969 novel of the same name, it tells the story of a senior sergeant in the Soviet Red Army and five female anti-aircraft gunners, who courageously fight off invading German troops in 1942.

My Bucket List

When: Nov 23, 8 pm

Where: Guangxi Culture and Art Center, Nanning

The Chinese version of musical *My Bucket List* tells the story of two young men during

their last few days of life.

Rather than receiving treatment, 19-year-old Liu Bao chooses to complete his bucket list by doing things like giving a concert, marrying his idol and designing his own funeral.

He hires a rebellious teenager, Yang Xiaoyu, who has previously attempted suicide, to help him. While keeping the general structure of the original South Korean version, many Chinese jokes are carefully mixed into this version.

It's a story of laughter, instead of one of tears.

Le Nozze di Figaro (The Marriage of Figaro)

When: Nov 24-30, 7 pm

Where: National Center for the Performing Arts, Beijing

Le Nozze di Figaro is a comic opera in four acts composed in 1786 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, with an Italian libretto written by Lorenzo Da Ponte. It premiered at the Burgtheater in Vienna in 1786. The National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing produced *Le Nozze di Figaro* in 2016.

It is a fantastic farce, continuing the story of the characters from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. The couple, Rosina and Count Almaviva, are established in their estate near Seville, Spain.

Count Almaviva has become an aggressive, manipulative womanizer, and Rosina, the countess, has become despondent and upset about the state of their relationship.

Figaro is now employed as Count Almaviva's personal butler, but the count is actively pursuing Figaro's fiancée. The count keeps putting off the wedding, finding ways to delay their union, even on the day of their planned ceremony.

Sam Tsui: The Gold Jacket Tour

When: Nov 29, 7:30 pm

Where: Shanghai Mao Livehouse

Internet celebrity Sam Tsui will begin *The Gold Jacket Tour* this month in support of his latest album *Trust* and new single *Gold Jacket*.

Tsui debuted his own social media channel in 2011 and was featured on Britney Spear's official website with the cover of the song *Hold It Against Me*. Tsui is known for covering songs by popular artists including Adele, Spears, Justin Timberlake and many more.

While studying at Yale University, Tsui was able to utilize tools of the digital music age to independently create a popular channel and brand.

La Petite Fille Aux Allumettes (The Little Match Girl)

When: Dec 1, 7:30 pm

Where: Beijing Exhibition Theater

Based on a short story by Danish poet and author Hans Christian Andersen in 1845, the musical is about a dying child's dreams and hope.

It begins on a cold, snowy winter night. A poor girl tries to sell matches because she was ordered to do so by her father and he won't allow her to return home until all the matches are sold on pain of a beating.

She tries to warm her hands by lighting the matches. After lighting the last match, she sees her dead grandmother whom she loved very much and who eventually takes her to heaven.