

## Transition to Tianjin

Our training in Beijing went well. For me it was similar to what we did in the three previous years. The most special event for me was the visit one evening by Angela, the student that I met on the airplane, and her mother. For another tourist outing I joined the group visiting Beihai Park in the middle of Beijing. There is a strong Buddhist influence in the buildings. There is also a large wall with 9 large carved dragons on both sides. Here are two photos from there.

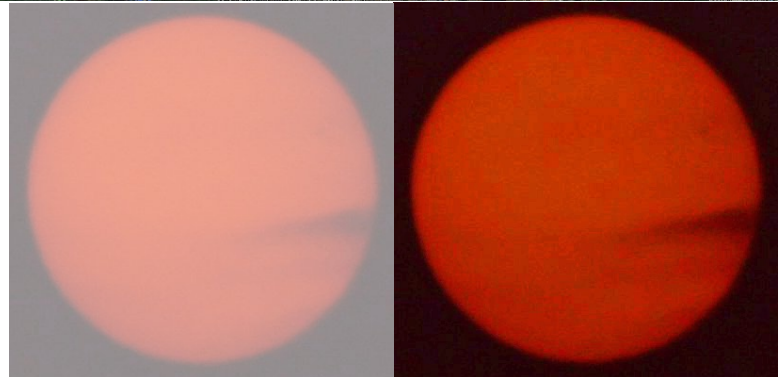


The trip to Tianjin was by van on a road, taking a little over two hours along a superhighway.

The campus is large. In this satellite view I have circled our classrooms and dorm. The 3-story dining center is between to the north of the 6 dorm buildings. The subway station at the north end of the campus is supposed to be operational in September.



The air here has been very hazy from pollution, as expected. Visibility is about a mile, more or less. On Saturday morning the sun was blocked so much that it was safe to view it through binoculars and camera. In the first view I have shown the sun with a trace of cloud on the right. In the second view I removed the



foreground haze, but the several large sunspots near the upper right edge did not focus well and show only as a slightly darkened smudge above the cloud blockage.

Today, Sunday, we are meeting our students as they register for our training. So far most are from this university and taking computer software classes, as we had been told to expect. Their English is better than our Chinese, but needs improvement. We will need to speak slowly and distinctly in the classroom.

Of course I have been looking at the birds. Here are some photos. So far, three are for my Lifetime List, birds I had never seen before.



Black-crowned Night-Heron, common in America and Asia.



Azure-winged Magpie, seen since 2004.



Eastern Spot-billed Duck. New. Looks like female Mallard but with head stripes.



White-cheeked Starling-New



Spotted Dove. See neck.



Zitting Cisticola. New.

Some photos are on the next page. There were several fountains. One set sprayed water into the air in an visual sculpture with animation set to classical music. Of course single photos cannot do the view justice. Some fountains were for kids to play in and get wet.

One of the bad noxious weeds across North America is purple loosestrife. When it invades wetlands it out competes cattails and causes a ninety percent reduction in wildlife use. It is hard to control, though in Colorado a couple decades of effort have shown great improvements. In China it is native and used for decorations.





Here is some decorative purple loosestrife at the water park.

Ed Holroyd, 8 July 2012, now at Tianjin, China.