

Trip Report ---- Bird Watching at Tagore Lane on 25/May2008

On 25/May/2008, 29 NSS members made a maiden Bird-watching trip to this woodland. While most of this ex-kampong area had been taken over by thick under-growth and gigantic Albizias, there were scattered patches, where elephant grass and bamboo grow in luxuriant. Many fruit trees such as Mata Kuching, Rambutan, Jackfruit, Banana and Durian were still standing among the green. There were also a few large, beautiful specimens, of strangling figs of both *Ficus benjamina* and *Ficus microcarpa* species.



Are we ready to go?

Photo by Dr NY Ho

Upon entering the trail, the evidence of ex-kampong was apparent. Besides the easy to spot fruit trees there were many cultivated food plants such as the Wild Pepper, Tapioca, tiny brinjal *Solanum torvum* and Sirih. There were also many, ornamental plant such as Canna, Heliconis, Dump Cane, Common Snakeweed, Silver Queen, Iron Plant, Money Plant and Indian Kale. Foreign workers around the vicinity harvest some of the edible plant here.



Birdsongs from every directions

Photo by Dr NY Ho

Drongo Cuckoo, Black Naped Oriole, Striped Tit Babbler, and Olive-backed Sunbirds were all singing to their own tune.

The bird watching trip went off with a good start when Siew Kwang spotted a single, not so common, White Rumped Munia feeding on the seeds of elephant grass by a roadside. It stayed for a good 20 minutes for everyone to take a good look through binoculars and telescopes. A Blue Crowned Hanging Parrot tried to rob away the limelight by stopping briefly on a 'botak' tree nearby. A Laced Woodpecker joined the excitement by flow low across our path of view and called with its typical loud short single note call. There were plenty of birdcalls at the morning hours. Ashy Tailorbird, Common Iora,



**Oh....there goes our noisy
Laced Woodpecker !!!**

Photo by Dr NY Ho

The gigantic Albizias blocked out much of the sky from us as we walked along the overgrown trails. Swiftlets glided in and out with occasional screeches of Rose Ringed Parakeet and Long Tailed Parakeets. A Tanimbar Cockatoo flew in and checked us out briefly before flew off again. A few elusive Strew-headed Bulbuls were heard calling melodiously nearby. It was heard again later at another patch of bush. These birds were really shy and very mindful of our approach. They froze and kept quiet, in thick bushes, every time when we get them. Members were challenged for the first to spot the Straw-headed Bulbul of this

area. However, until the end of the trip, nobody in the group seen the Straw-headed Bulbuls. It was so near and yet so far away!



Parakeets screeching overhead

Photo by Dr NY Ho



A morning-sun facing bungalow

Photo by Dr NY Ho

We came across an abandoned Olive-back sunbird nest. It hung on a small Acacia branch, about 1 meter above the ground, allowing members to appreciate it at close range.

A crane like creature were spotted crossing the path but unfortunately was too brief to allow any positive identification. Two Scaly Breasted Munias were found feeding on seeds of grass. While they appeared to be very engrossed with their feeding they consciously move further away from us while continuing their feeding. Two active Tailorbirds on a banyan tree give the group a hard time

trying to identify them. While the call resembled Dark-necked Tailorbird the neck didn't look dark. The front was very white looking. And there were no distinctive feature to pinpoint the identity. The group finally agreed that they were indistinctive juveniles ...so everyone was happy with their argument and that adds fun to bird watching.



At the open area

Photo by Bee Yong

Many Durian and Rambutan trees were observed to be at early stage of fruiting. Some members spontaneously requested for a re-visit when the fruits ripen in about 2 months' time. Siew Kwang was requested to plan for the re-visit. (Note: Planned to re-visit on 13/July/2008)

Trip leader pointed out an Olive-winged Bulbul nest among some low bush. Members tried hard but saw nothing but a mess of brown among green. Members were denied closer examination as it was believed that the nest was

still in use. The couple of Olive Winged Bulbul seen building the nest a week ago were not seen when we were around.

A pair of Long-tailed Parakeet was spotted on a bare tree. It appeared that the adult male was feeding the juvenile with some regurgitated food.

We were looking out for the persistent calling Drongo Cuckoo when it started to rain. And later when we were examining an abandoned Tailorbird nest to see why a Tailorbird is a tailor, the rain got heavier and sends the group running for covers. Trips ended rather abruptly.

Additional sighting: a few lumps of Civet Cat droppings were seen along the trails. The droppings were mainly made up of seeds of Fish-tailed Palms that were seen abundant at the area.

Reported by: Wing Chong (Trip Leader)

Dated: 26/May/2008

Photos courtesy of Bee Yong and Dr NY Ho

Bird-list on 25/May/2008 at Tagore Lane:

White-rumped Munia
Laced Woodpecker
Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot
Rose-ringed Parakeet
Long-tailed Parakeet
Black-naped Oriole
Stripped Tit-babbler
Drongo Cuckoo (Heard)
Collared Kingfisher
Scaly-breasted Munia
Olive-backed Sunbird
Yellow-vented Bulbul
Yellow-bellied Prinia (Heard)
Tanimbar Cockatoo
Dark-necked Tailorbird
Common Iora
Pied Fantail
Spotted Dove
Zebra Dove
White-breasted Waterhen (Heard)
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo
Asian Glossy Starling
Emerald Dove
Pink-necked Green Pigeon
Straw-headed Bulbul
White-vented (Javan) Myna