

Autumn Raptor Migration Report

Full-day Raptor Count

9th November 2008

This was our first full day count for migrating raptors in Singapore. Five groups totaling 37 counters fanned out across the island to capture as wide a front as possible. The locations covered were Lorong Halus and Punggol in the North, Telok Blangah Hill in the South, Bukit Timah Hill in Central, Japanese Gardens in the West and Changi in the East.

The thunder storm in the early morning and overcast weather during the day did not help with the numbers of raptors recorded. There were hardly any thermals in the morning for the raptors to soar. We had 6 migrants and 4 resident species totaling 106 birds, which were not bad, considering the weather.

Telok Blangah Hill recorded the highest count with 44 raptors followed by 24 at Lorong Halus and Punggol. Even the Japanese Gardens had 23 raptors. The surprise was at Bukit Timah, where Ding Li had the lowest count of 7 raptors with none in the morning! This was less than 10% of what he got last year on 6th Nov.



The largest species number counted were the Black Bazas (22) followed by Oriental Honey Buzzards (20). Both the Japanese and Chinese Sparrowhawks contributed 12 each.

The bird of the day must be the Booted Eagle at Punggol Grasslands with a Common Buzzard and a Harrier Sp at Changi adding to the mix.

Black Baza flying over Telok Blangah Hill by KC Tsang

Looking at the times when the raptors were sighted, the peak periods were from 10 -11am with 22 counted. As expected, when the ground heats up in the afternoon, good numbers were recorded from 12 till 4pm with between 17-19 raptors every hour.

John Spencer meticulously recorded the direction of flight of each raptor at Japanese Gardens and it was interesting to see that 75% of the raptors flew generally towards the West (WNW/NW/W). Were they flying there to join the main flock from Malaysia?

We will include Tuas for next year's count and try to get access to Changi Cove for a proper count. The end of the barrage near Marina East would be another good location as it offers an all round view.

We finished the day with a get together at Chantilly Rise Condo, tuck into a yummy Indian buffet while comparing the days sighting and lap up the stunning all action slide show by Lee Tiah Khee.

Many thanks to all who spent the Sunday UV tanning and squinting their eyes trying to ID the dark shape flying overhead.

Con Foley, Danny Lau, Tan Kok Hui, John Spencer, Lim Kim Keang; Alfred Chia, Yong Ding Li, Richard Garden and Kaori, Ee Ling and sister, Shun Deng, Gloria Seow, Clive Harris, Tom Yua, Felix Wong, Tan Gim Cheong, Mohd. Walad B. Jamaludin, Peter Cheong, Tan Siew Kwang, Ali Jaffar, Kenneth Kee, Ian and Freda Rickwood. KC and Amy Tsang, Tay Boon Hui, Chung Cheong, Alan OwYong, Lim Kim Seng, Tan Ju Lin, Lim Kim Chuah, Soe Tint, Tan Teck Chye and Family.

We would also like to thank Lee Tiah Khee for the wonderful slide show, Lim Kim Chuah for the use of his Condo's club house and KC Tsang for his photo.

Table 1 : Summary of full-day raptor count

Locations	Halus	Punggol + Halus	Telok Blangah Hill		Japanese Gardens		Bt Timah Hill		Changi	
Wind Speed			0 to 1		1	1				
Wind Direction			Variable		SW	SW				
Temperature			32 C		23-25C	25-28C				
Cloud Cover			90-100%		100%	75-100%	100%	75-90%		
Visibility			10-15 Km		8-10Km	10 Km				
Precipitation			0 to 1		0	0				
Time	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	
Species :										Total
Black Baza	4	4	5	9						22
Oriental Honey Buzzard	8			2	1	6		3		20
Japanese Sparrowhawk	1		1	3		7				12
Chinese Sparrowhawk			7			3		2		12
Booted Eagle		1								1
Common Buzzard									1	1
Unidentified Accipiter		1			1	1	1			4
Unidentified Harrier									1	1
Unidentified Raptor		1	4	3						8
White-bellied Sea Eagle				1				1		2
Brahminy Kite		2	3	4	2	2			3	16
Changeable Hawk Eagle	1		1	1						3
Black-winged Kite	1								3	4
Total	15	9	21	23	4	19	1	6	8	106

*Reported by Alan OwYong
Edited by Kenneth Kee*