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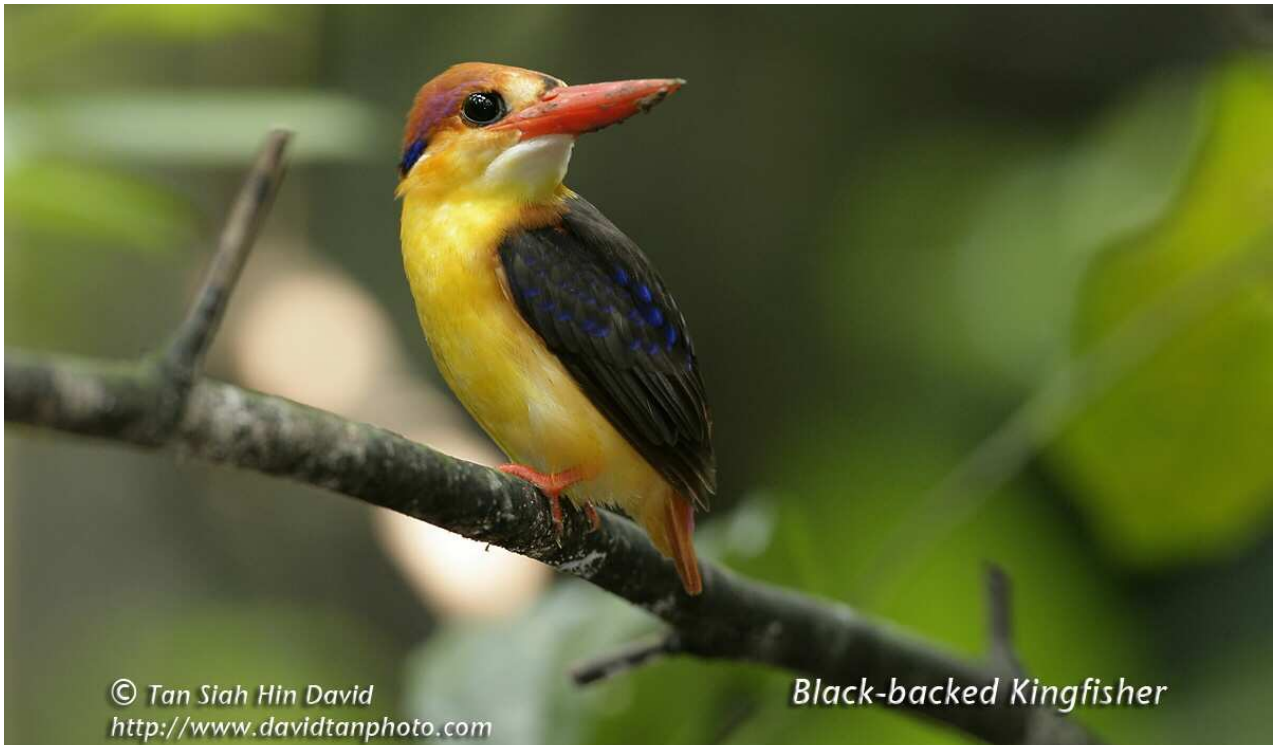
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Black-backed Kingfisher

Black-backed Kingfisher at Lower Peirce Reservoir on 14/2/2009 by Tan Siah Hin David



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Bird Report

February 2009

By Andrew Chow and Albert Low

SINGAPORE HIGHLIGHTS

February 2009 was without a doubt the greatest month for ornithology in Singapore in recent memory. It was a month of monumental rediscoveries, a month where new species for the island were photographed and surprisingly a month where rarities in general played a supporting role, instead of hogging the limelight. In short, it was a month for everything.

The action was focused squarely on the boardwalk connecting MacRitchie Reservoir & Lower Peirce Reservoir, up to this point an oft-overlooked and under-watched location. It established itself on the birding radar with reports of a predictable and unwary **Black-backed Kingfisher** which visited a sheltered cove along the boardwalk almost daily just before dusk for a bath and dinner. This individual would become the greatest ornithological attraction of 2009 thus far and hence graces the cover of this issue.



Black-backed Kingfisher at Central Catchment on 3/2 by Tan Siah Hin David

The real attractions, however, were to come later, principally due to the hard work and quick reflexes of the community of bird photographers who converged on the site to partake in this living jewel posing for the cameras. Some intrepid individuals would later stumble upon an unassuming puddle in the same area which acted as a bathing station for a host of skulking forest dwellers. Weeks of persistence paid off with initial sightings of

Short-tailed Babblers & Siberian Blue Robins quickly superseded by the appearance of a rare female **Chinese Flycatcher** and the dramatic climax featuring an epic **Slaty-legged Crane** photographed by 1 fortunate individual. This is the first record of a living individual in Singapore and comes almost 20 years after an individual was found dead in a property along Hume Avenue.

However, even this find paled in comparison to the monumental rediscovery of a certain enigmatic forest raptor. A group of photographers, who had rather fortuitously chosen to leave the forest after dark in hope of finding some night birds, were shocked to observe a raptor circling the forest edge after dark. Thanks to some quick reflexes and one record shot later, Singapore now has its first confirmed record of a **Bat Hawk** in 58 years! For full details on this extraordinary find, a full page feature detailing the sighting is included in this issue.

The boardwalk was not done yet though, and yet more quick reflexes resulted in the circulation of pictures showing a *Phylloscopus* warbler unlike any of those regularly seen on the island. After some consultation, it was determined that the long-expected **Pale-legged Warbler** had finally been photographed in Singapore after years of sight records stretching back to the 1990s. Kudos once again to the photographers who continue to contribute not only to this publication but also to the advancement of local ornithology.

As mentioned earlier, it was a month where rarities actually played the role of supporting cast, yet these were worthy of mention as well. Foremost among them were photographs of an immature **Malayan Night-Heron** at an undisclosed location within the Central Catchment, the 2nd photographic record this winter. Sightings & photographs of a **Jerdon's Baza** along the northern end of the Central Catchment were noteworthy as well, dispersants from the Western Catchment or different individuals? The speculation continues! Other notables from the Central Catchment include jewels like **Blue-winged Pitta & Orange-headed Thrush** along the aforementioned boardwalk, a juvenile **Large Hawk-Cuckoo** and **Common Kestrel** at the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, as well as rare residents such as 3 **Blue-rumped Parrots** over Upper Pierce Reservoir and a **Great-billed Heron** at Chek Jawa, Pulau Ubin.

JOHOR HIGHLIGHTS

The “star” at Pantii this month was the unusual sighting of multiple **White-necked Babblers** at various locations along the logging track. This enigmatic species, which is scarce even in tracts of primary rainforests such as Taman Negara, is only very rarely seen in Pantii, let alone photographed. Needless to say, Pantii’s avian mascot the **Malaysian Rail-babbler** put in an appearance again this month, with other uncommon forest denizens such as **Black Magpie & Rufous-collared Kingfisher** also showing well. Interestingly, a seemingly active **Great Argus** display site was also located this month, a surprising find given that the species appears to be give this tract of logged forest a wide berth, preferring to echo its far-carrying call from the foothills of Gunung Pantii.

SUMMARY

This report covers noteworthy bird sightings in February 2009 for Singapore and the surrounding region. In general, the report will include but are not limited to the following categories: rarities, breeding or nesting records, arrival and departure dates for migratory species, new locality records, escapees and unusual behaviour.

In addition, contributors are also advised to be as precise as possible concerning records. Please remember to include details such as how many birds were seen, the plumage, sex and age of the birds, the type of habitat in which they were observed, the food they were eating (if possible, identify the plant or animal), the weather encountered (what was the wind direction, tide conditions, etc.). Although it is not necessary to have such details for all record submissions, it is a good habit to cultivate and is normally required for very rare or unusual species.

Please send all your records of interest to Lim Kim Seng @ Lim Kim Seng @ ibisbill@yahoo.com or Lim Kim Chuah @ [pittalover@yahoo.com.sg](mailto:Lim Kim Chuah @ pittalover@yahoo.com.sg) or Yong Ding Li at [zoothera@yahoo.com](mailto:Yong Ding Li at zoothera@yahoo.com). Alternatively you can also post your sightings at the NSS Bird Group website at <http://wildbirdsingapore.nss.org.sg> Please send your records no later than one week after the end of every month. Your contributions will be greatly appreciated and acknowledged.

Unless stated otherwise, nomenclature and systematic follow K.S. Lim's (2007) "Pocket Checklist of the birds of the Republic of Singapore (Second Edition)", K.S. Lim & K.C. Lim's (1999) "Pocket checklist of the birds of Johor, Peninsular Malaysia" for Johor, and B.L. Monroe Jr. & C.G. Sibley's (1993) "A World Checklist of Birds " for the rest of the region.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED:

BBNP	Bukit Batok Nature Park
CCNR	Central Catchment Nature Reserve
KRM	Kranji Marsh
NTL2	Neo Tiew Lane 2
SBWR	Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve

SINGAPORE

RED JUNGLEFOWL *Gallus gallus*

1 pair on 14/2 at Pasir Ris Park along the margin of the mangrove forest and 5 males and 2 females amongst the trees on the bank of Sungei Api-Api (HoB).

RUFIOUS WOODPECKER *Celeus brachyurus*

5 birds seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). 2 heard on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK). 1 heard on 24/2 at MacRitchie Reservoir (KK).

RED-CROWNED BARBET *Megalaima rafflesii*

1 heard on 8/2 at CCNR (DA/NeK/PAH/JaR/FRw/IRw). 2 heard on 16/2 at Lower Peirce Reservoir Boardwalk (YDL). At least 3 heard on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK).

COMMON KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

1 at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). 1 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

BLUE-EARED KINGFISHER *Alcedo meninting*

1 heard on 5/2 (YDL) and 27/2 (LKC) at Upper Peirce Reservoir.

BLACK-BACKED KINGFISHER *Ceyx erithacus*

1 individual on 1/2 evening on perch in a sheltered cove, at MacRitchie Reservoir (MN) and on 7/2 (DT), 4/2 (LKC/DA/CF/YDL), 22/2 (LKC/LKS) and 24/2 (KK). This bird has the habit of bathing itself just after dusk from the same perch and vanished just before total darkness. 1 Over at Lower Peirce Reservoir Boardwalk, 1 was seen on 10/2, 14/2 (DT), 11/2 (LTK), 16/2 at Lower Peirce Boardwalk (YDL) and 23/02 (TGC) at Lower Peirce Reservoir (TGC).

STORK-BILLED KINGFISHER *Pelargopsis capensis*

1 heard 24/2 at MacRitchie Reservoir (KK).

BLACK-CAPPED KINGFISHER *Halcyon pileata*

1 at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

BLUE-THROATED BEE-EATER *Merops viridis*

2 at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). 1 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER *Merops philippinus*

10 at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). Several on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

LARGE HAWK-CUCKOO

Hierococcyx sparveroides

1 juvenile photographed on 22/2 at SBWR (HF)

INDIAN CUCKOO *Cuculus micropterus*

1 seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

BANDED BAY CUCKOO

Cacomantis sonnerati

1 on 8/2 at KRM (LKC). 1 adult seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

LITTLE BRONZE CUCKOO

Chrysococcyx minutillus

1 seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

VIOLET CUCKOO

Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus

1 heard at MacRitchie Reservoir, 18/2 (LKC)



Juvenile **Large Hawk Cuckoo** at SBWR on 5/02/2009 by Horst Flotow

ASIAN DRONGO CUCKOO *Surniculus lugubris*

1 heard on 8/2 at CCNR (DA/NeK/PAH/ JaR/FRw/IRw).

CHESTNUT-BELLIED MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus sumatranus*

2 on 8/2 at CCNR (DA/NeK/PAH/JaR/FRw/IRw). They were observed foraging in the mid-storey.

RAINBOW LORIKEET *Trichoglossus haematodus*

6 seen feeding on African Tulip flowers at Rifle Range Road, 13/2 (LKC)

YELLOW-CRESTED COCKATOO *Cacatua sulphurea*

1 was mobbed by a **Tanimbar Cockatoo** at Rifle Range Road, 13/2 (LKC)

TANIMBAR COCKATOO *Cacatua goffini*

1 was seen mobbing the larger **Yellow-crested Cockatoo** at Rifle Range Road, 13/2 (LKC)

BLUE-RUMPED PARROT *Psittinus cyanurus*

3 on 5/2 at Upper Peirce Reservoir (YDL).

BLUE-CROWNED HANGING PARROT *Loriculus galgulus*

1 seen at MacRitchie Reservoir near Prunus Trail on 6/2 (LKS) and 1 heard at Choa Chu Kang Street 51 on 7/2 (LKS). 2 on 8/2 at CCNR (DA/NeK/PAH/JaR/FRw/IRw)

ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri*

2 seen at MacRitchie Reservoir near the Prunus Trail on 6/2 (DA/LKS).

RED-BREASTED PARAKEET *Psittacula alexandri*

3 in flight over NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

LONG-TAILED PARAKEET *Psittacula longicauda*

Several on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC), in flight.

COLLARED SCOPS OWL *Otus lempiji*

1 heard on 24/2 at MacRitchie Reservoir (KK).

BROWN HAWK-OWL *Ninox scutulata*

1 heard on 24/2 at MacRitchie Reservoir (KK).

MALAYSIAN EARED NIGHTJAR *Eurostopodus temminckii*

1 foraging among the canopy at MacRitchie Reservoir, 4/2 (LKC/LBW/YDL).

RED TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia tranquebarica*

A number on 14/2 at NTL2 (LKS). 1 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

THICK-BILLED GREEN PIGEON *Treron curvirostra*

2 on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK).

RED-LEGGED CRAKE *Rallina fasciata*

1 on 16/2 at Lower Peirce Reservoir Boardwalk (YDL).

SLATY-LEGGED CRAKE *Rallina eurizonoides*

1 photographed on 21/2 at Lower Peirce Reservoir (CBL). This extremely rare visitor was last recorded in Singapore on 21/11/2000 when one was found dead at Hume Avenue. This record is being reviewed by the Records Committee.



Slaty-legged Crake at Lower Peirce Reservoir on 21/2/2008 by Cheong Boon Leong

WHITE-BROWED CRAKE *Porzana cinerea*

1 seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

WATERCOCK *Gallicrex cinerea*

1 on 8/2 at KRM (LKC). A female at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

PURPLE SWAMPHEN *Porphyrio porphyrio*

1 on 8/2 at KRM (LKC). 1 seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). Facial markings indicate this as belonging to the race *viridis*. 2 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

SNIFE SPP. *Gallinago spp.*

A few on 15/2 at Lorong Halus (MiP), one of which could either be **Swinhoe's Snipe** *Gallinago megala* or **Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago* basing on toe projection shown in photograph. 1 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

PIN-TAILED SNIPE *Gallinago stenura*

1 flushed at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos*

1 on 14/2 at NTL2 (LKS). 1 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

1 on 8/2 at KRM (LKC) perched on a tower. 2 seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). 3 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC), 1 seen earlier feeding on a fish on a telecom tower. 1 on 28/2 at NTL2 (WC). 1 on 28/2 at SBWR (CF/LWT/Mar). 2 seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

JERDON'S BAZA *Aviceda jerdoni*

1 on 14/2 at Springleaf Avenue (RjK). 1 photographed and reported on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK) is pending acceptance by the Records Committee due to its rarity status. These records are being reviewed by the Records Committee.

BLACK BAZA *Aviceda leuphotes*

More than 40 in flight 17/2 over Sarimbun Scout Camp, from Johor heading into the Western Catchment area. 1 seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). 1 on 16/2 at NIE at Nanyang Technological University (YDL). 3 on 28/2 at NTL2 (WC). 8 at Jurong Lake, 22/2 (LKC)

CRESTED HONEY-BUZZARD *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

1 pale morph on 15/2 at Bukit Batok St 21 (YDL), in flight. 1 on 28/2 at Springleaf (CF/LWT/MgY).

BAT HAWK *Macheiramphus alcinus*

1 was photographed on 3/2 at 1935 hrs at MacRitchie Reservoir, (TGC/CF/MN/DL). If accepted, this will be the first confirmed record of this rarity since 1951. See feature for full report.

BLACK-WINGED KITE *Elanus caeruleus*

1 on 8/2 at KRM (LKC), observed been robbed by a **Brahminy Kite** of its breakfast.

BRAHMINY KITE *Haliastur Indus*

1 on 8/2 at KRM (LKC) observed robbing a **Black-winged Kite** of its breakfast.

GREY-HEADED FISH EAGLE *Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus*

1 heard on 5/2 at Upper Peirce Reservoir (YDL). 1 on 8/2 in flight over Upper Peirce Reservoir (DA/NeK/PAH/JaR/FRw/IRw). 1 on 8/2 at KRM (LKC). 1 on 14/2 in flight at Springleaf Avenue (RjK). 1 on 15/2 at Sime Road (LEL) observed perched. This is probably a sub-adult, as the brown wings and breast had a slightly streaky look and the white belly was slightly mottled with brown. 2 heard on 16/2 at Lower Peirce Reservoir Boardwalk (YDL). 2 on 28/2 at Springleaf (CF/LWT/MgY), one of which flew down to a shallow side-stream on a canal. It was observed to dip its head into the water but no prey was seen. 2 heard at MacRitchie Reservoir on 18/2 (LKC)

CRESTED SERPENT EAGLE *Spilornis Cheela*

1 on 8/2 calling in flight over Upper Peirce Reservoir (DA/NeK/PAH/JaR/FRw/IRw).

JAPANESE SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter gularis*

1 on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail (DA/AC/JaR/NeK).

CHANGEABLE HAWK-EAGLE *Spizaetus cirrhatus*

1 pale morph and 1 dark morph on 8/2 in flight over Upper Peirce Reservoir (DA/NeK/PAH/JaR/FRw/IRw). 1 dark morph on 8/2 at KRM (LKC). 1 on 28/2 at NLT2 (WC). 1 heard on 28/2 at SBWR (CF/LWT).

COMMON KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

1 juvenile female on 28/2 at SBWR (CF/LWT).

PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus*

1 on 17/2 circling the building around Church Street and Pickering Street. 1 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC). It was perched on a telecom tower. 1 at Jurong Lake Garden, 22/2 (LKC)

LITTLE EGRET

Egretta garzetta

1 at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

CHINESE EGRET

Egretta eulophotes

1 on 27/2 at SBWR (DT).



Chinese Egret at SBWR on 27/2 by Tan Siah Hin David

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

1 at MacRitchie Reservoir, near the Prunus Trail, on 6/2 (DA/LKS). 2 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

GREAT-BILLED HERON *Ardea sumatrana*

1 on 14/2 at Chek Jawa, Pulau Ubin (CF/LJS/LWT). It was observed catching a fish a short while after it flew in.



Great-billed Heron at Chek Jawa, Pulau Ubin on 14/2 by Con Foley

PURPLE HERON *Ardea purpurea*

1 on 12/2 at Marina South Pier (DA). 2 seen flying over NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). 2 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC), in flight.

YELLOW-BILLED EGRET *Egretta intermedia*

2 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

CATTLE EGRET *Bubulcus ibis*

Only 1 seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

POND HERON SPP. *Ardeola spp.*

1 winter at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

MALAYAN NIGHT HERON

Gorsachius melanolophus

1 photographed on 5/2 in BTNR (JoL). The bird was foraging in a small freshwater stream.



Malayan Night Heron at CCFR on 5/02/2009 by John Lynn

CINNAMON BITTERN *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*

1 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

BLUE-WINGED PITTA *Pitta moluccensis*

1 heard just after dusk at MacRitchie Reservoir near the Prunus Trail on 6/2 (DA/LKS). 1 seen at MacRitchie Reservoir, Prunus Trail on 4/2 (LKC/LBW).

ASIAN FAIRY BLUEBIRD *Irena puella*

6 seen and heard on 5/2 at Upper Peirce Reservoir (YDL). 1 male on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK).

LESSER GREEN LEAFBIRD *Chloropsis cyanopogon*

2 heard on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK) and 1 on 27/2 at Lower Peirce Reservoir (LKC)

BLUE-WINGED LEAFBIRD *Chloropsis cochinchinensis*

1 heard at Lower Peirce Reservoir, 27/2 (LKC)

TIGER SHRIKE *Lanius tigrinus*

An immature at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

BROWN SHRIKE *Lanius cristatus*

1 at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

LONG-TAILED SHRIKE *Lanius schach*

1 at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). 1 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

ASHY MINIVET *Pericrocotus divaricatus*

10 seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). Several on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC). 2 separate flocks of 16 and 12 at Jurong Lake, 22/2 (LKC)

ORANGE-HEADED THRUSH *Zoothera citrina*

1 on 16/2 at Lower Peirce Reservoir Boardwalk (YDL).

ASIAN BROWN FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa dauurica*

1 seen at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). 3 on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK). 1 at Jurong Lake, 22/2 (LKC)

YELLOW-RUMPED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula Zanthopygia*

A female seen foraging in an albizia at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

CHINESE FLYCATCHER *Ficedula elisae*

1 female seen taking a bath on a small puddle of water at Lower Peirce Reservoir, 23/2 (LKC).

SIBERIAN BLUE ROBIN *Luscinia cyane*

1 seen and 3 heard on 16/2 (YDL) and 1 female ON 23/2 (LKC) at Lower Peirce Reservoir Boardwalk (YDL). 1 first winter male 24/2 at MacRitchie Reservoir on 11/2, 18/2 (LKC) and 24/2 (KK). This bird was seen taking a bath at a small puddle of water at the edge of the reservoir together with **Short-tailed Babbler**.

ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN *Copsychus saularis*

1 heard at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS) and 1 male seen at Westlake Avenue on 22/2 (LKS). 1 vocal pair seen on 28/2 at Choa Chu Kang Street 64. They were first seen on 25/1. (FeW).

WHITE-VENTED MYNA *Acridotheres javanicus*

A leucistic bird was seen at Choa Chu Kang Street 51 on 14/2 (LKS).

COMMON HILL MYNA *Gracula religiosus*

2 on 8/2 at CCNR (DA/NeK/PAH/JaR/FRw/IRw).

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

About 20 on 8/2 at KRM (LKC).

BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*

Several on 14/2 at NTL2 (LKS). Several on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

BLACK-HEADED BULBUL *Pycnonotus atriceps*

1 heard at Jering Trail, MacRitchie Reservoir 18/2 (LKC).

RED-WHISKERED BULBUL *Pycnonotus jocosus*

3 on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK).

CREAM-VENTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus simplex*

1 on 5/2 at Upper Peirce Reservoir (YDL). 2 on 8/2 at CCNR (DA/NeK/PAH/JaR/FRw/IRw).

PALLAS' S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella certhiola*

2 birds heard singing at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

ORIENTAL REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus orientalis*

1 heard on 14/2 at NTL2 (LKS). 1 heard on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

ARCTIC WARBLER *Phylloscopus borealis*

At least 5 on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK).

PALE-LEGGED WARBLER *Phylloscopus tenellipes*

1 on 23/2 at Lower Peirce Reservoir Boardwalk (MN). There have been several unconfirmed records from Singapore since 1990. This record is pending evaluation by the Records Committee and if accepted will be the first confirmed record for Singapore.



Pale-legged Warbler at Lower Peirce Reservoir on 23/2 by Marcus Ng

WHITE-CRESTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax leucolophus*

A flock heard on 14/2 at NTL2 (LKS). A flock heard on 8/2 (LKC) and 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

SHORT-TAILED BABBLER *Malacocinda malaccensis*

1 heard on 16/2 at Lower Peirce Reservoir Boardwalk (YDL). At least 2 heard on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK). A pair seen bathing on the edge of MacRitchie Reservoir (near Prunus Trail) on 22/2 (LKS). 2 on 24/2 at MacRitchie Reservoir (KK), calling an unusual call while they took their bath.

CHESTNUT-WINGED BABBLER *Stachyris erythroptera*

2 on 5/2 at Upper Peirce Reservoir (YDL). 1 heard 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK).

PURPLE-THROATED SUNBIRD *Nectarinia sperata*

1 female on 7/2 on a Yellow Saraca tree at Lower Peirce Reservoir Park. The bird was feeding on the tree that has just started to bloom. Subsequent sightings were made on the same tree: 18/2 (TKC), 21/02 (SrG) and 28/02 (LKC). **Brown-throated Sunbirds**, **Olive-back Sunbirds** and **Crimson Sunbirds** were also seen visiting this tree. 1 male and 1 female on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK).



Purple-throated Sunbird feeding on a Lone Yellow Saraca at Lower Peirce Reservoir on 23/2 by Lim Kim Chuah

The famous Lone Yellow Saraca at Lower Peirce Reservoir by Sreedharan G.

FOREST WAGTAIL *Dendronanthus indicus*

2 on 22/2 at Mousedeer Trail, CCNR (DA/AC/JaR/NeK).

BAYA WEAVER *Ploceus philippinus*

A few on 14/2 at NTL2 (LKS). 20 on 22/2 at NTL2 (WCC).

ESCAPEES

RED JUNGLEFOWL *Gallus gallus*

1 heard at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS).

MILKY STORK *Mycteria leucocephala*

Several seen 3/2 in a mix flock of at least 16, with Painted Storks at Admiralty Park (TKH). They were seen flying in V formation over the Park.

PAINTED STORK *Mycteria leucocephala*

Several seen 3/2 in a mix flock of at least 16, with Milky Storks at Admiralty Park (TKH). They were seen flying in V formation over the Park.

BREEDING / NESTING REPORTS

ORIENTAL PIED HORNBILL *Anthracoceros albirostris*

A male seen bringing fruits to unseen female in sealed cavity on an angšana about 6 m from the ground at Changi Village on 8/2 (LKS). Previous attempts at this mainland locality have been unsuccessful.

TANIMBAR CORELLA *Cacatua goffini*

A pair seen inspecting a tree cavity at Changi Village on 8/2 (LKS).

RED-BREASTED PARAKEET *Psittacula alexandri*

2 birds seen guarding their nest-holes on separate angkana trees at Changi Village on 8/2 (LKS).

SAVANNA NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus affinis*

1 on 11/2 at Sarimbun Scout Camp (SY), incubating 2 eggs. The eggs were later found abandoned.

WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE

Haliaeetus leucogaster

An adult seen flying with a sprig of fresh leaves at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). The nest could not be located.

LARGE-BILLED CROW *Corvus splendens*

One seen carrying a small stick into a patch of albizias at NTL2 on 14/2 (LKS). A small nest of twigs was also seen but it was unclear if it belonged to this bird.

OLIVE-WINGED BULBUL

Pycnonotus plumosus

1 pair observed on 8/2 at CCFR (DA/NeK/PAH/JaR/FRw/IRw). One of the birds was carrying nest material (thin twig) in its bill while the other was twittering away. Both birds later flew down to a low bush.



Striped Tit-babblers at BBNP on 27/02/2009 by Chow Chong Peck (Andrew)

YELLOW-VENTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus goiavier*

1 pair reported 25/2 nesting at Burgundy area (DA) on an ornamental fig.

STRIPED TIT-BABBLER *Macronous gularis*

1 tailless juvenile in the company of at least 4 adults on 27/02 at BBNP (CCP). An adult was seen to feed the juvenile and later remove its excreta.

OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD *Nectarinia jugularis*

1 nest reported on 11/2 outside a student hostel room in NTU (JeG). It was discovered about 2 weeks before and an adult was observed to fly in and out of the nest on several occasions. Soft chirping was heard from the nest on one occasion.

JOHOR

GREAT ARGUS *Argusianus argus*

2 heard at Panti Bunker Track, 15/2 (LKC/TKH/CF/SCF/GeD/YDL). 1 apparently active display ground was also found.

CRIMSON-WINGED WOODPECKER *Picus puniceus*

1 pair seen digging hole at Pantı Bunker Track, 15/2 (LKC/TKH/CF/SCF/GeD/YDL)

RUFOUS-COLLARED KINGFISHER *Actenoides concretus*

1 male seen by YDL and another heard at Pantı Bunker Track, 15/2 (LKC/TKH/CF/SCF/GeD/YDL).

JAVAN FROGMOUTH *Batrachostomus affinis*

1 heard and 1 seen at Pantı Bunker Track, 15/2 (LKC/TKH/CF/SCF/GeD/YDL)

BROWN HAWK OWL *Ninox scutulata*

1 heard at Pantı Bunker Track, 15/2 (LKC/TKH/CF/SCF/GeD/YDL)

MALAYSIAN EARED-NIGHTJAR *Eurostopodus temminckii*

1 heard at Pantı Bunker Track, 15/2 (LKC/TKH/CF/SCF/GeD/YDL)

COMMON BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

One perched on lamp-post at the end of the Linkedua Highway near Gelang Patah on 2/2 and 17/2 (LKS).

DUSKY BROADBILL *Corydon sumatranus*

A flock of 6 was seen at Pantı Bunker Track, 15/2 (LKC/TKH/CF/SCF/GeD/YDL)

MALAYSIAN RAIL-BABBLER *Eupetes macrocerus*

1 seen at Pantı Bunker Track, 15/2 (LKC/TKH/CF/SCF/GeD/YDL)

BLACK MAGPIE *Platysmurus leucopterus*

2 seen at Pantı Bunker Track, 15/2 (LKC/TKH/CF/SCF/GeD/YDL)

ASIAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER *Terpsiphone paradisi*

1 white morph was seen at Pantı Bunker Track, 15/2 (LKC/TKH/CF/SCF/GeD/YDL)

FERRUGINOUS BABBLER *Trichastoma bicolor*

At Pantı Bunker Track (TKH), 1 on 15/2 (TKH) and 2 (YDL)

SCALY-CROWNED BABBLER *Malacopteron cinereum*

1 pair at Pantı Bunker Track, 15/2 (YDL)

WHITE-NECKED BABBLER *Stachyris leucotis*

An estimated total of 6 birds were seen by YDL and another by TKH on 15/2, Pantı Bunker Track. This is a rare bird in Pantı and this represents the highest number of birds recorded in Pantı.

Singapore Raptors Report Spring Migration, February 2009

Reported by Alan OwYong and edited by Kenneth Kee

SUMMARY

The total count for migrating raptor for February was 104 boosted by a flock of 40+ Black Bazas at Sarimbun Camp on the 17th. We recorded a total of 9 species, 5 of which we suspected were wintering here. Again the **Black Bazas** topped the count with 67% of the total. We finally got the overdue **Jerdon's Baza** at Springleaf on the 14th with another record from Upper Pierce on 22nd awaiting confirmation. A **Common Kestrel** was a first for Sungei Buloh with a sighting of a female juvenile on 28th. Our previous sightings of this *Falco* were mostly at Changi Cove. The **Peregrine Falcon** made its reappearance at our downtown CBD area again, with one or two wintering at Pulau Ubin. Five **Oriental Honey-buzzards** were observed over at Telok Blangah. The only Harrier was an **Eastern Marsh** reported at Tuas partly because we had no access to Changi Cove. The most exciting find for the month was the rediscovery of the **Bat Hawk** after 58 years! Also we had the first photographic record of a rare nocturnal raptor, the **Barred Eagle Owl**, taken in Pulau Ubin.



Black-winged Kite with a rat in its talon taken at Changi Cove by Lee Tiah Khee graced this month cover

MIGRANT RAPTORS

Table 1

S/N	Species	No.	S/N	Species	No.
1	Black Baza	70	6	Jerdon's Baza	2
2	Oriental Honey-buzzard	17	7	Common Kestrel	1
3.	Osprey	4	8	Eastern Marsh Harrier	1
4	Peregrine Falcon	5	9	Unidentified Raptors	2
5	Japanese Sparrowhawk	2		Total	104

Note: The numbers are indicative only with similar species in the same area discounted to prevent duplication

Black Baza (70)

- 1st Eight birds were reported roosting at Springleaf by Margaret Yeo
- 1st Two reported hunting at Sungei Buloh (SBWR) by Martti Siponen.
- 7th One flying at Chinese Gardens by Alan OwYong
- 7th Could be the same two birds again reported by Martti at SBWR
- 8th One at Kranji Marshes by Kim Chuah
- 10th One flew over Kaki Bukit by Avian Chia
- 11th Two at Botanics Eco Gardens by Poh Bee.
- 14th One flew over at Japanese Gardens reported by Martti.
- 14th One at NTL2 by Kim Seng
- 15th Five birds seen at the same time over at Pulau Ubin by Martti Siponen.
- 15th Three recorded over at Telok Blangah Hill by Gloria Seow and Co.
- 16th One reported perched at NIE by Ding Li.
- 17th 40+ flew over Sarimbun Camp in NE direction by Sunny Yeo.
- 28th Three reported by Wing Chong over at NTL2 (NTL2)
- 28th One reported at SBWR by Martti.

Oriental Honey Buzzard (17)



A worn OHB by Martti Siponen

- 3rd A dark morph male photo by Poh Bee.
- 4th One reported by Doreen and photo by Tiah Khee at Muslim Cemetery Victoria St.
- 8th One seen flying overhead at One North by Alan OwYong
- 8th One seen circling over Clementi Ave 6 by Alan OwYong
- 8th One gliding to the NE seen at Bt Batok by Martti Siponen

- 15th A pale morph in flight over Bukit Batok by Ding Li
- 15th Five over at Telok Blangah reported by Gloria Seow and Co.
- 15th One over at Pulau Ubin by Martti Siponen
- 16th One seen over at Kent Ridge Park by Gim Cheong
- 18th Another one at Bukit Batok by Ding Li.
- 19th One circling over the AYE near Chinese Gardens by Martti.
- 28th One at SBWR by Martti.
- 28th One reported at Springleaf by Danny Lau and Con Foley

Osprey (4)

- 8th One reported at the Kranji Marshes by Kim Chuah
- 22nd Three in flight over at NTL2, one seen feeding by Chung Cheong
- 28th One again at NTL2 by Wing Chong
- 28th One at SBWR by Danny Lau, Con Foley and Martti.

Peregrine Falcon (5)

- 15th One maybe two reported by Martti Siponen at Pulau Ubin.
- 17th Ee Ling reported the Falcon again at downtown Church Street.
- 19th One reported at Bukit Batok by Ding Li
- 22nd One seen perched on Tower at NTL2 by Chung Cheong.

Japanese Sparrowhawk (2)

- 1st One was reported at SBWR by Martti Siponen
- 22nd One at Mousedeer trail reported by Doreen, Nessie, Jane Rogers and Alfred Chia

6. Jerdon's Baza (2)



Jerdon's Baza by Raj Krishnan



Jerdon's Baza? by Alfred Chia

- 14th One was seen perched and photographed by Raj Krishnan at Springleaf.
- 22nd A photo and report of one seen at Mousedeer trail was submitted by Alfred Chia. It was seen together with Doreen, Nessie and Jane and was originally thought to be an OHB *Torquatus* race. Pending acceptance by the Records Committee due to its rarity status.

Common Kestrel (1)

28th A female juvenile was seen from the main hide at SBWR by Danny Lau and Con Foley, likely a new record for SBWR.

Eastern Marsh Harrier (1)

16th Martti Siponen reported the only Harrier for the month seen at Tuas South.

Unidentified Raptors (2)

14th One dark raptor at Springleaf reported by Raj Krishnan.

28th An accipiter reported by Martti Siponen at SBWR.

RESIDENT RAPTORS

SUMMARY

We had two sightings of the **Crested Serpent Eagle** both on the 8th over at Upper Pierce and Bukit Batok NP. A pair of **Grey-headed Fish Eagles** was reported and photographed at Springleaf. Both the **White-bellied Sea Eagles** and **Brahminy Kites** were busy nesting with reports from all over the island. The **Changeable Hawk-eagle** was also observed nesting at Bukit Batok. The numbers seems to have increased steadily showing good signs that our resident raptors are doing and breeding well.

Table 2

S/N	Species	No.	S/N	Species	No.
1	White-bellied Sea Eagle	29	4	Changeable Hawk-eagle	13
2	Brahminy Kite	20	5	Grey-headed Fish Eagle	9
3.	Black-winged Kite	8	6	Crested Serpent Eagle	2
				Total	81

Note: The numbers are indicative only with similar species in the same area discounted to prevent duplication

White-bellied Sea Eagle (29)



Juv White-bellied Sea Eagle by Martti Siponen

1st One adult and five juveniles reported at SBWR by Martti Siponen

1st Two seen in flight over at Springleaf by Margaret Yeo

7th One at Chinese Gardens being harassed by crows – Alan OwYong

7th Four seen at SBWR by Martti

8th Three at Kranji Marshes seen during NSS walk reported by Kim Chuah

11th One flying over at Pandan by Alan OwYong

- 12th Three hovering over HDB at Teck Whye by Raj Krishnan
14th Two at Springleaf by Raj Krishnan.
14th One adult seen carrying fresh sprig to nest at NTL2 by Kim Seng
15th Four adults and one juvenile at Pulau Ubin reported by Martti
15th One at Telok Blangah by Gloria Seow and Co.
19th Two adults at Woodlands reported by Martti
21st Two at Lower Pierce reported by Sree
22nd A juvenile spotted with a fish at Kranji reservoir by Chung Cheong.
22nd One at Changi Boardwalk by Poh Bee.
23rd Two perched at Lower Pierce by Alfred Chia
28th A pair perched at MacRitche Reservoir by Chung Cheong
28th One at NTL2 reported by Wing Chong
28th One at SBWR by Danny Lau and Con Foley, 2 juveniles by Martti
28th One seen perched at Chinese Gardens by Kenneth Kee.

Brahminy Kite (20)

- 1st Chung Cheong's friend Jimmy Lee reported a pair nesting at Yio Chu Kang with what appeared to be 2 fledglings inside.
7th A pair of adults and one juvenile seen at Chinese Gardens by Alan OwYong
7th Three individuals seen at SBWR by Martti.
8th One seen stealing food from a Black-winged Kite at Kranji Marshes - Kim Chuah
12th One adult reported flying over the Marina Pier by Doreen Ang
14th One seen at the Chinese Gardens by Martti, one at Springleaf by Raj and another at NTL2 by Kim Seng
15th One flew over Telok Blangah Hill seen by Gloria and Co.
15th One at Pulau Ubin reported by Martti
19th Two over at Tuas South reported by Martti.
21st One reported by Sree at Lower Pierce
23rd Maybe the same Kite at Tuas South again by Martti
24th One seen carrying nesting material over AYE near the Chinese Gardens by Martti.
28th Two at NTL2 by Wing Chong
28th Maybe the same Kite seen at Springleaf by Danny Lau and Con Foley.
28th One at SBWR reported by Danny Lau, Con Foley and Martti.
28th One reported flying over the Chinese Gardens by Kenneth Kee

Changeable Hawk-eagle (13)

- 8th One pale and one dark morph seen flying over at Upper Pierce by Freda and Ian Rickwood, Nessie, Jane Rogers, Ah Huay and Doreen Ang.
8th One dark morph seen at Kranji Marshes by Kim Chuah
11th Doreen reported the nesting of one on albizia tree at Bukit Batok
15th Gloria Seow and Co reported two dark morphs over at Telok Blangah Hill.
15th Jane Rogers reported one frequently seen at Malcom Park
15th Two were reported from Pulau Ubin by Martti.
24th Nesting record with a single chick at Bukit Batok with photos by William. Could be the same one reported by Doreen on the 11th.

- 27th One flying over Mandai Park reported by Cyril Ng
28th Two reported at NTL2 by Wing Chong
28th One heard calling at SBWR by Danny Lau and Con Foley, while another was seen by Martti

Grey-headed Fish Eagle (9)

- 1st Margaret Yeo reported the presence of one at Springleaf. This was followed up another sighting by Raj Krishnan on the 14th and a pair seen and photo at the same location by Danny Lau and Con Foley on the 28th.
3rd A juvenile was reported from Seletar Camp by Poh Bee.
5th One heard at Upper Pierce by Ding Li.
7th One seen fishing at Lower Pierce Reservoir by Alan OwYong
8th Freda and Ian Rickwood, Ah Huay, Nessie, Jane and Doreen reported one adult at Upper Pierce.
8th One was reported at Bukit Batok Nature Park by Martti.
8th One seen at Kranji Marshes during NSS walk reported by Kim Chuah
10th A pair heard calling by Ding Li at Lower Pierce.
15th A sub-adult perched at Sime track reported by Ee Ling.
21st Poh Bee got one at Lower Pierce.
26th Gim Cheong and Alfred Chia sent in separate report of one at Lower Pierce.



A pair of Grey-headed Fish Eagle with one flying down to a shallow stream at Springleaf by Danny Lau

Black-winged Kite (8)

- 5th Lee Tiah Khee photographed one at Changi Cove with a rat in its talons
7th Two were reported at SBWR by Martti Siponen
8th One seen at Kranji Marshes by Kim Chuah
11th One at Tuas South reported by Martti
14th One seen perched at NTL2 by Kim Seng
15th One seen at Pulau Ubin by Martti
19th Another report from Tuas South by Martti
25th One more from Tuas South by Martti.
28th Two at SBWR reported by Martti.
28th One reported at NTL2 by Wing Chong

Crested Serpent Eagle (2)

- 8th Doreen sent in a report of an individual flying over Lower Pierce
8th On the same day, Martti Siponen also recorded one flying over Bukit Batok in a NE direction.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

Bat Hawk (1)

On the evening of 3 Feb, Gim Cheong, Con Foley, Danny Lau and Marcus Ng made a dramatic rediscovery of the **Bat Hawk**, after an absence of 58 years! They were walking out of the MacRitchie reservoir at dusk when they saw this falcon-like bird flying in the sky. Both Marcus and Gim Cheong managed to snap a clear shot for ID later. In the field, Gim Cheong was just able to make out the white throat for visual confirmation. Unfortunately, subsequent visits by other birders to the same location did not yield any sightings. The last confirmed record was an adult female collected at Pulau Senang on 20 May 1951.



Bat Hawk by Marcus Ng



Barred Eagle Owl by Marcus Chua

Barred Eagle Owl (1)

On 25 Feb, Ding Li posted an article with photo of **Barred Eagle Owl** to the Bird Group website at <http://wildbirdsingapore.nss.org.sg/indexE.html>

He reported that on the 17 Jan 2009, a **Barred Eagle Owl** was seen and photographed for the first time by Marcus Chua at Pulau Ubin. Beside the record of one seen in the Upper Pierce Forest (by Ding Li himself) a year ago and some past sightings at Bukit Timah, this was also a first record for Singapore's offshore islands. Given the close proximity of Pulau Ubin to Johore, this rare nocturnal raptor may likely be a stray bird from there. However let us hope that the quiet serenity of Pulau Ubin would entice this former long-lost resident to become a permanent resident soon.

**The numbers in brackets besides the bird name indicates the total number of raptor seen during the month. Different reports of the same raptors in the same area are discounted to prevent duplication.*

Compiled by Alan OwYong from reports sent in to the WildbirdSingapore Forum Edited and layout by Kenneth Kee. Many thanks to those who sent in their reports. Special appreciation to Lee Tiah Khee, Danny Lau, Raj Krishnan, Alfred Chia, Martti Siponen, Marcus Ng and Marcus Chua for the use of their photos.

Panti Trip Report 15 February 2009

Reported and photographed by Yong Ding Li

Panti seemed to have dropped a little out of the birding scene with the current craze over the botanic garden pittas and the kingfisher craze at Upper Peirce, but as with all Panti trips, continue to dazzle with its diversity and surprises.

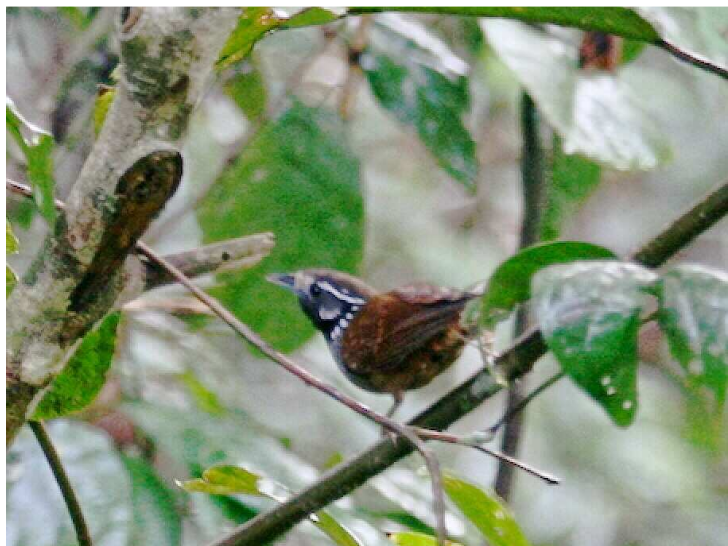
Our group arrived early way before sunset, giving us much time to work on an eagerly hoped for **Javan Frogmouth** before the sunrays rained down and drowned the limelight of the torches. The stretch of forest around the first stream never failed us as bird after bird called, pecked, flew over, hopped, perched etc etc to entertain us.

Among the first was the usual **Yellow-breasted Flowerpeckers**, **Hairy-backed Bulbuls**, **Scarlet Minivet**, **Dark-throated Oriole** and endless flows of **Purple-naped Sunbird**.



Photo © Yong Ding Li

A trilling babble in some roadside scrub revealed itself to be the rare **White-necked Babbler**, which showed itself yet again later in the morning and totalling a good 6 birds! A short stroll into the fairly open forest understorey first revealed what appears to be a **Cinnamon-rumped Trogon**, and seconds later, a silent **Rufous-collared Kingfisher** perched at eyepoint for 10 minutes, after which the forest started to rain babblers, first a confiding pair of **Scaly-crowned Babbler**, two inquisitive **Ferruginous Babblers** and a bubbly party of **Grey-headed Babblers**.



White-necked Babbler.

Photo © Yong Ding Li



A silent Rufous-collared Kingfisher on perched at eyepoint

Photo © Yong Ding Li

Panti's woodpeckers, one of earth's richest woodpecker faunas were quieter than normal, perhaps dampened by the early morning rain, but **Crimson-winged Woodpecker**, **Checker-throated Woodpecker**, **Rufous Woodpecker**, **Buff-rumped Woodpeckers** and **Banded Woodpecker** kept our necks busy.

Moving down the road, the forest was literally alive, its mid and lower levels abounding with birds, so much so that i nearly overlooked the, rare yet impressive looking **Bearded Pig** 3 metres away. Once more, the shrubs bounded with babblers, in quick succession, revealed 3 **Chestnut-winged Babblers**, a noisy party of **Pin-striped Tit-Babbler**, a **White-chested Babbler**, **Black-throated Babbler**, 2 **Black-capped Babblers** another pair of **Ferruginous Babbler**, 4 **Chestnut-rumped Babblers** and the best of the bunch, a stunning **Malaysian Rail Babbler**. Not so cooperative were a nearby calling **Red-naped Trogon**, a **Scarlet-rumped Trogon** and a nearly invisible **Red-bearded Bee-eater** at the canopy. Even when the late morning sun was shining strong, much activity was still around, including a nosy, yet noisy pair of **Black Magpies** and 6 **Dusky Broadbills** which refused to leave. Retreating back to our cars, we were still prevented from putting our Bins now but a buzz of activity around the car, including **Banded Kingfisher**, **Yellow-eared Spiderhunters**, **Yellow-bellied Bulbuls**, **Black-winged Flycatcher-Shrikes**, **Blue-winged Leafbirds** and a white morphed **Asian Paradise Flycatcher**. As if to put finishing touches to a morning of good birding, a **Great Argus** started calling from deep forest, ending yet another busy morning in the forest, and a busy evening of note writing.

SIGHTING OF BAT HAWK IN SINGAPORE

Reported by Tan Gim Cheong

Date: 03 Feb 2009

Time: 1935H

Location: Central Catchment Nature Reserves

Weather: Partly Cloudy

Observers: Tan Gim Cheong, Danny Lau, Con Foley, Marcus Ng.



Bat Hawk (*Macheiramphus alcinus*), 03 Feb 2009 evening, CCNR, Singapore © Tan Gim Cheong

The sun had already set and a Large-tailed Nightjar was “chonking” away but we could still see a bit as there was still some light. I was the last in the group as we were walking out and I noticed, some distance away on my left, a relatively large bird flying away. I lost sight of it as it flew behind some trees. It appeared to be roughly the size of a crow and also appeared all black, so I surmised it must be a House Crow for I had seen them flying at night before. Then the bird flew across our path from left to right, disappeared from view, and reappeared a bit closer. Now, I could see that it was indeed quite a large bird. It had a stout head and neck, and it lacked the long bill of a crow. Together with its pointed wings, the bird’s silhouette strongly resembled that of the Peregrine Falcon. Its wingbeats were strong and regular. As the bird flew to our back, I said “Raptor!” and was answered “At this hour?” Subconsciously, I knew what a raptor that had pointed wings and that was active at this hour could plausibly be, but I had to get a better look to be sure, so I turned around to go after it. I could still see the bird flying against the sky and amazingly, the bird flew back towards us and as it approached, I looked at its throat area and Bingo – its white throat stood out against its dark plumage even in the dim lighting and I exclaimed “White throat! Bat Hawk”! We waited and hoped the bird would come back. After a while, the bird could be seen flying above the tree line and then it flew close enough for photographic evidence of our sighting to be gathered. Back home, upon referring to the relevant literature, I was amazed to find out that despite a small number of sightings in the last 20 years, there were no confirmed records of this species for Singapore since 1951, a break of 58 years!