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Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo at Tuas Grassland on 14 June 2009 by Gloria Seow



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Bird Report

June 2009

By Chow Chong Peck and Lim Kim Seng

SINGAPORE HIGHLIGHTS

June 2009 will be remembered for the appearance of Singapore's eleventh **Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo** in Tuas Grassland as well as the presence of two **Blue-winged Pittas**, supposedly a migrant, at Kranji Nature Trail. The pitta doesn't breed south of Jerantut, in Peninsular Malaysia. Other odd records include a juvenile **Crested Honey Buzzard** at Bukit Batok East, probably of resident race *orientalis*, and a **Peregrine Falcon**, possibly of race *ernesti*, at Church Street. The **Osprey** is another raptor that is not supposed to be around but has been so for over a decade, with an individual present at Kranji. The presence of these taxa needs further verification and monitoring. There were apparently no migrant waterbirds reported in what was a typically quiet month.

Residents of note this month included **Red Junglefowl** at NTU, **Lesser Whistling Duck** (Botanic Gardens), **Oriental Pied Hornbill** (NTU), continued evidence of **Chestnut-bellied Malkoha** at Kent Ridge Park, **Asian Drongo Cuckoo** (Bukit Batok and Sime Trail), **Red-wattled Lapwing** (Bukit Batok West and Neo Tiew Lane 2), **Little Tern** (Kranji Reservoir), a pair of **Grey-headed Fish Eagles** resting in mangroves at Woodlands Checkpoint (!), **Great-billed Heron** (Ubin), **White-rumped Shama** (Sime Trail) and **Straw-headed Bulbul** (Bukit Batok). Breeding activity was also in evidence for 22 species, most welcome being that for **Savanna Nightjar**.

JOHOR HIGHLIGHTS

Once again, news of note came from the birdy Bunker Track at Panti Forest Reserve. First off though were some unusual behaviour from the raptors, with a **Barred Eagle Owl** seen devouring a Long-tailed Macaque and then a **Changeable Hawk Eagle** doing the same to a hapless Banded leaf Monkey. Other interesting birds recorded at this track included **Great Argus**, **White-bellied Woodpecker**, **Black Hornbill**, **Diard's Trogon**, **Rail Babbler**, **Grey-chested Jungle-flycatcher**, **White-crowned Forktail**, **Puff-backed** and **Black-and-white Bulbuls**, and **Chestnut-backed Scimitar-babbler**. Also of interest was a record of **Straw-headed Bulbul**, now rarely recorded in Johor, from Tanjong Sutera.

SUMMARY

This report covers noteworthy bird sightings in June 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 @ ibisbill@yahoo.com or Lim Kim Chuah @ pittalover@yahoo.com.sg or 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
SBWR Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve

SINGAPORE

RED JUNGLEFOWL *Gallus gallus*

1 seen on 2/6 at edge of secondary scrub in NTU campus, just next to the western catchment (YDL). 1 heard on 7/6 at Bukit Batok West (WC).

WANDERING WHISTLING DUCK *Dendrocygna arcuata*

2 seen on 10/6 at Botanic Gardens (SE/RH/LKS).

LESSER WHISTLING DUCK *Dendrocygna javanica*

4 seen on 10/6 at Botanic Gardens (SE/RH/LKS).

LINEATED BARBET *Megalaima lineata*

2 heard on 7/6 at Bukit Batok West (WC).

RED-CROWNED BARBET *Megalaima rafflesii*

At least 1 heard on 27/6 at Sime Forest (WCC).

ORIENTAL PIED HORNBILL *Anthracoceros albirostris*

1 seen on 3/6 flying across the road at Nanyang Ave in NTU and later seen flying over the expressway (YDL).

BANDED BAY CUCKOO *Cacomantis sonnerati*

1 heard on 7/6 at Bukit Batok West (WC). 1 heard on 15/6 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 (LKS).

RUSTY-BREASTED CUCKOO *Cacomantis sepulcralis*

1 heard on 15/6 at Neo Tiew lane 2, 15/6 (DA/LKS).

HORSFIELD'S BRONZE CUCKOO *Chrysococcyx basalis*

1 seen on 14/6 at Tuas Grassland (GIS/TiP).



Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo on 14/6 at Tuas Grassland by Gloria Seow.

ASIAN DRONGO CUCKOO *Surniculus lugubris*

1 seen in flight on 20/6 at BBNP (LKS). 1 heard on 27/6 at Sime Forest (WCC).

CHESTNUT-BELLIED MALKOHA

Phaenicophaeus sumatranus

2 seen in mid June at Kent Ridge Park (LHP).

BLUE-CROWNED HANGING PARROT

Loriculus galgulus

1 male seen on 27/6 at Sime Forest feeding on Casuarina seeds (WCC).

LONG-TAILED PARAKEET

Psittacula longicauda

A few seen on 7/6 at Bukit Batok West (WC).
1 seen on 15/6 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 and 1 seen on 20/6 at Admiralty Park (LKS).

SLATY-BREASTED RAIL

Gallirallus striatus

2 seen on 7/6 at Bukit Batok West (WC).

RED-WATTLED LAPWING

Vanellus indicus

3 seen on 7/6 at Bukit Batok West (WC). 1 seen in flight on 15/6 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 (DA/LKS).

LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons*

2 seen on 15/6 at Kranji Reservoir (DA/LKS).

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

1 seen on 15/6 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 (DA/LKS).

CRESTED HONEY-BUZZARD *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

1 juvenile seen on 3/6 flying over Bukit Batok East Ave, subsequently perching on a durian tree beside the Bukit Batok MRT station (YDL).

GREY-HEADED FISH EAGLE *Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus*

2 seen on 8/6 in mangroves near the Woodlands Checkpoint (SE/RH/LKS).

CHANGEABLE HAWK-EAGLE *Spizaetus cirrhatus*

1 heard on 15/6 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 (LKS).

PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus*

1 seen on 1/6 perched on the roof of Samsung Hub at Church Street and another 4/6 perched on a ledge below the roof of Capital Square at Church Street consuming what looks like a pigeon (LEL).



Chestnut-bellied Malkoha in mid June at Kent Ridge Park by Lam Hon Pui.

GREAT-BILLED HERON *Ardea sumatrana*

1 seen devouring an eel on 15/6 at Chek Jawa, Pulau Ubin (BL).

PURPLE HERON *Ardea purpurea*

1 seen on 27/6 at Sime Forest (WCC).

BLUE-WINGED PITTA *Pitta malaccensis*

2 seen and heard on 21/6 (PaL) and 28/6 (LKC) at Kranji Nature Trail.

LARGE-BILLED CROW *Corvus macrorhynchos*

1 seen on 3/6 at Burgundy Drive (DA) mobbed by 3 White-vented Myna.

GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO *Dicrurus paradiseus*

1 seen on 27/6 at Venus Drive carpark feeding on a butterfly (WCC).

ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN *Copsychus saularis*

1 pair seen on 27/6 at Sime Forest at the Golf Course (WCC).

WHITE-RUMPED SHAMA *Copsychus malabaricus*

At least 1 heard on 27/6 at Sime Forest (WCC).

COMMON HILL MYNA *Gracula religiosa*

At least 1 seen on 27/6 at Sime Forest (WCC).

STRAW-HEADED BULBUL *Pycnonotus zeylanicus*

3 seen on 20/6 at BBNP (LKS).

ORIENTAL WHITE-EYE *Zosterops palpebrosus*

At least 3 seen on 1/6 at Pasir Ris Park (HoB).

WHITE-CRESTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax leucolophus*

A few heard on 7/6 at Bukit Batok West (WC).

SHORT-TAILED BABBLER *Malacocinda malaccensis*

2 pairs seen on 27/6 at Sime Forest feeding on the ground and the edge of the track (WCC).

ORANGE-BELLIED FLOWERPECKER *Dicaeum trigonostigma*

1 seen on 27/6 at Sime Forest taking a bath on wet palm leaf (WCC).

PURPLE-THROATED SUNBIRD *Nectarinia sperata*

1 male seen on 27/6 at Sime Forest (WCC).

ESCAPEES

ORIENTAL PIED HORNBILL *Anthracoceros albirostris*

1 seen on 10/6 at Botanic Gardens (SE/RH/LKS).

FISCHER'S LOVEBIRD *Agapornis fischeri*

1 seen on 18/6 on a Rose of India at Toh Tuck area (DA). This is a new addition to Singapore's escapee list.

SOOTY-HEADED BULBUL *Pycnonotus aurigaster*

3 seen on 23/6 at Tampines Ave 9 (LTK).

BREEDING / NESTING REPORTS

COPPERSMITH BARBET *Megalaima haemacephala*

1 immature seen on 27/6 at Dairy Farm preening itself atop a bare tree (DA/NeK/PAH)

ASIAN KOEL *Eudynamys scolopacea*

1 juvenile male photographed on 6/6 at Pasir Ris Park apparently begging loudly to a House Crow (LJY).



A juvenile male **Asian Koel** begging a **House Crow** on 7/6 nesting at Pasir Ris by Lim Jit Yin Koel

WHITE-BREASTED WATERHEN *Amaurornis phoenicurus*

1 chick killed by a dog on 16/6 at King's Avenue (MgH).

RED-BREASTED PARAKEET *Psittacula alexandri*

1 immature seen on 27/6 at Dairy Farm calling for about 10 minutes on its perch (DA/NeK/PAH).

LONG-TAILED PARAKEET *Psittacula longicauda*

1 immature seen with adults on 27/6 at Dairy Farm on an Albizia. It was seen drinking water from a hollow in a stump (DA/NeK/PAH).

LARGE-TAILED NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus macrurus*

1 failed nesting found on 8/6 at Taus. 1 egg was found later with a small crack with a protruding egg tooth, but the chick was dead and ants were crawling all over and into the crack (TGC).

SAVANNA NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus affinis*

2 nest found on 24/6 with 2 eggs at Tuas. 1 nest was found with 2 eggs. First chick hatched on 28/6 and the second on 29/6 (TGC). The other nest also with 2 eggs but 1 did not hatch while the other found with a small crack with a protruding egg tooth, but the chick was dead (TGC).

PINK-NECKED GREEN PIGEON *Treron vernans*

1 pair seen nesting on 6/6 at SBWR (KK). 1 pair seen mating at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 15/6 (DA/LKS).

RED-LEGGED CRAKE *Rallina fasciata*

2 adults with 3 chicks were seen on 20/6 foraging in exposed mudflats at Sungei Cina, Admiralty Park (LKS).

LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons*

1 pair observed incubating 2 eggs on 1/6 at Tampiness area (LTK). 3 eggs were seen on 2/6 (DT/YWX) and 3/6 (LTK). The nesting was first reported on 31/5 (YWX).



Little Tern photographed on 1/6 nesting at Tampiness area by Lee Tiah Khee

BRAHMINY KITE *Haliastur indus*

2 seen on 25/6 busy collecting nesting materials around the pond at West Coast Park (LTK).

BLACK-NAPED ORIOLE *Oriolus chinensis*

1 adult seen on 14/6 with 2 chicks at Changi Business Park. 1 chick seen again at the same location on 15/6 and 16/6 (HoB).



Black-naped Oriole chicks on 14/6 nesting at Changi Business Park by Howard Banwell.

PIED TRILLER *Lalage nigra*

1 chick seen on 24/6 at Taus trying to climb up an Acacia Tree. The adults were seen feeding it but nest was not found. On 25/6, a chick with seen sitting on a nest located at one of the forks of the upper branch on the same tree (TGC).

GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO *Dicrurus paradiseus*

3 juveniles seen on 27/6 at Sime Forest (WCC).

YELLOW-VENTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus goiavier*

1 pair seen nesting on 6/6 at SBWR (KK). An immature seen with an adult on 15/6 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 (LKS).

ORIENTAL WHITE-EYE *Zosterops palpebrosus*

1 adult seen in a nest on 4/6 at Toh Tuck area. 1 egg was seen on 5/6 and another on 6/6. 2 adults were seen feeding 2 chicks on 19/6. The nest were observed to be empty on 24/6 (DA). 1 fledgling seen 27/6 at Dairy Farm begging for food and being fed by an adult from its perch just below the canopy of a short tree (DA/NeK/PAH)



Oriental White-eye feeding two chicks on 4/6 nesting at Toh Tuck area by Doreen Ang..

DARK-NECKED TAILORBIRD *Orthotomus atrogularis*

1 juvenile seen on 27/6 at Sime Forest (WCC).

OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD *Nectarinia jugularis*

2 chicks on 4/6 observed in a nest first reported 26/5. On 7/6 one of the fledgling was attacked by a White-vented Myna twice, each time flying off with down feathers in its bill. It was not observed to consume the dead fledgling (DA). In addition, 1 pair was seen nesting on 6/6 at SBWR (KK) and 1 juvenile seen 27/6 at Venus Drive carpark (WCC).

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

2 chicks report on 25/05 at Toh Tuck area have fledged (DA). 1 adult with nesting material seen on 27/6 at Dairy Farm flying into the roof of a nearby building (DA/NeK/PAH)

PADDYFIELD PIPIT *Anthus rufulus*

A pair seen on 15/6 prospecting for nest material on the road at Neo Tiew Lane 2 (DA/LKS).

BAYA WEAVER *Ploceus philippinus*

A few nests were seen on 7/6 at Bukit Batok West (WC). 3 nests on acacias and 1 on an albizia, all incomplete, were seen on 15/6 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 (LKS). 6 nests (3 complete and attended by birds) on two Acacias were also seen on 20/6 at Admiralty Park (LKS).

JOHOR

GREAT ARGUS *Argusianus argus*

1 heard on 8/6 and 9/6 at Bunker Track at Pantı Forest Reserve (SE/RH/LKS). 2 heard on 14/6 at Pantı Forest Reserve (TKH/YLK).

WHITE-BELLIED WOODPECKER

Dryocopus javensis

4 seen on 9/6 at Bunker Track at Pantı Forest Reserve (SE/RH/LKS).

BLACK HORNBILL *Anthracoseros malayanus*

1 seen on 9/6 at Bunker Track at Pantı Forest Reserve (SE/RH/LKS).

RUFOUS-BACKED KINGFISHER *Ceyx rufidorsa*

1 seen on 8/6 at Bunker Track at Pantı Forest Reserve (SE/RH/LKS).

DIARD'S TROGON *Harpactes diardii*

A male seen on 10/6 at Bunker Track at Pantı Forest Reserve (SE/RH/LKS).

SCARLET-RUMPED TROGON

Harpactes duvaucelii

1 seen on 10/6 at Bunker Track at Pantı Forest Reserve (SE/RH/LKS).

RED-BILLED MALKOHA

Phaenicophaeus chlorophaeus

1 seen on 14/6 at Pantı Forest Reserve (TKH/YLK).

BLUE-RUMPED PARROT

Psittinus cyanurus

1 seen on 14/6 at Pantı Forest Reserve (TKH/YLK).

BARRED EAGLE OWL *Bubo sumatranus*

1 seen 26/6 predated a young **Long-tailed Macaque** *Macaca fascicularis* predated a young Long-tailed Macaque at Pantı Forest Reserve (ReW).

LITTLE GREEN PIGEON *Treron olax*

1 seen on 14/6 at Pantı Forest Reserve (TKH/YLK).

CRESTED GOSHAWK *Accipiter trivirgatus*

1 seen on 7/6 at Pantı Forest Reserve (YDL).



Barred Eagle Owl on 7/6 at Pantı Forest Reserve with its prey, a **Banded Leaf-Monkey** by Yong Ding Li

CHANGEABLE HAWK EAGLE

Spizaetus cirrhatus

1 seen on 7/6 killing and carrying off a young Banded Leaf-Monkey at Panti Forest Reserve (YDL).



Changeable Hawk Eagle on 7/6 at Panti Forest Reserve with its prey, a **Banded Leaf-Monkey** by Yong Ding Li

BLACK-AND-YELLOW BROADBILL

Eurylaimus ochromalus

1 seen on 14/6 at Panti Forest Reserve (TKH/YLK).
A pair seen on 10/6 building a nest 10 metres up a tree at Bunker Track at Panti Forest Reserve (SE/RH/LKS).

RAIL BABBLER *Eupetes macrocerus*

1 heard on 10/6 at Bunker Track at Panti Forest Reserve (SE/RH/LKS). 1 heard on 14/6 at Panti Forest Reserve (TKH/YLK). 2 seen on 27/6 at Panti Forest Reserve foraging on the forest floor near a small stream bed (PaL) and another 2 seen nearby (LWT/LJS/PaL).

GREY-CHESTED JUNGLE-FLYCATCHER *Rhinomyias umbratilis*

1 seen on 8/6 at Bunker Track at Panti Forest Reserve (SE/RH/LKS).

WHITE-CROWNED FORKTAIL *Enicurus leschenaultii*

A pair seen on 8/6 at Bunker Track at Panti Forest Reserve (SE/RH/LKS).

STRAW-HEADED BULBUL *Pycnonotus zeylanicus*

3 seen on 17/6 at Tanjong Sutura (LKS/LWH/LWX).

GREY-BILLED BULBUL *Pycnonotus cyaniventris*

1 heard on 14/6 at Panti Forest Reserve (TKH/YLK).

PUFF-BACKED BULBUL *Pycnonotus eutilotus*

1 seen on 14/6 at Panti Forest Reserve (TKH/YLK).

BLACK-AND-WHITE BULBUL *Pycnonotus melanoleucos*

2 seen on 7/6 at Panti Forest Reserve (YDL).

STREAKED BULBUL *Ixos malacensis*

1 seen on 14/6 Panti Forest Reserve (TKH/YLK).

CHESTNUT-BACKED SCIMITAR-BABBLER *Pomatorhinus montanus*

1 seen on 7/6 at Panti Forest Reserve feeding alongside a **Greater Racket-tailed Drongo** *Dicrurus paradiseus* (YDL).

First Sighting of Pale-legged Leaf-warbler (*Phylloscopus tenellipes*) in Singapore

By Marcus Ng



Pale-legged Leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes* at CCNR on 23 February 2009 by Marcus Ng

Date: 23 February 2009

Time: 18h34

Location: Central Catchment Nature Reserves, Lower Pierce Reservoir trail

Weather: Moderately sunny evening after some rain in the afternoon

Observer: Marcus Ng.

The location is the Y-junction of the Lower Pierce trail, where a little streamlet surrounded by dense vegetation feeds the main reservoir. I was actually looking for the Slaty-legged Crake *Rallina eurizonoides*, which turned up briefly almost right by the boardwalk before retreating back into cover. So I was scanning the low undergrowth around the steep slope around the stream for the crake when this small brown bird appeared before me and I took a quick record shot, guessing that it was an Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* or Oriental Reed-warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis*. The bird was quiet and foraged within the dense network of branches close to the ground. A little further down, I could see 3-4 other small brown birds moving about close to the ground as well, although I could not determine if these were the same ones as the bird I photographed.

I am not knowledgeable about warblers, so relied on the feedback of Albert Low and Philip D. Round, both of whom responded favorably on the wildbirdSingapore mailing list. This record has also been accepted by the Records Committee as the first record of this species for Singapore.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Albert Low and Philip Round for their comments on the photograph, and the Records Committee for assessing and confirming this record.