



# SINGAPORE AVIFAUNA

A monthly bulletin of the Nature Society (Singapore) Bird Group

**Volume 23  
Number 9**

Published by Nature Society (Singapore) Bird Group, 510 Geylang Road, #02-05, The Sunflower, Singapore 389466.

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MICA(P) 239/11/2005

## CONTENTS

- 1 Bird Report: September 2009 Compiled by Lim Kim Seng
- 15 Autumn Raptor Migration - Early arrivals for September 2009  
Compiled by Alan OwYong, edited by Kenneth Kee
- 16 Report on the 6<sup>th</sup> Fall Migration Bird Census By Lim Kim Seng

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Rail Babbler *Eupetes macrocerus* at Panti Forest Reserve on 20 September 2009 By Chong Boon Leong



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## Bird Report

### September 2009

By Lim Kim Seng

#### SINGAPORE HIGHLIGHTS



Lesser Sand Plovers *Charadrius mongolus* at Changi Cove on 21 Sep 09 By Lee Tiah Kee

The winter was well and truly on its way as evidenced by the presence of an additional 27 new migrants, for a grand total of 43 species in the winter to date. Among the more spectacular species were a stunned (but well) **Black-backed Kingfisher** at Toa Payoh Central on 24th, a new early date by 4 days, and our 12th record of **Brown-streaked Flycatcher**, a juvenile seen and photographed at Chinese Garden on 1st and 2nd, and our second record in two months. The other new migrants were **Blue-tailed Bee-eater**, present in Northwest Singapore, on 6th, a new early date by three weeks(!), **Black-tailed Godwit**, **Marsh Sandpiper**, **Ruddy Turnstone**, **Red-necked Stint**, **Broad-billed Sandpiper**, **Grey Plover**, **Oriental Pratincole**, **Swift Tern**, our probable first migrant **Crested Honey Buzzard** and **Peregrine Falcon**, **Japanese Sparrowhawk**, **Common Buzzard**, **Yellow-billed Egret**, **Tiger** and **Brown Shrikes**, **Ferruginous Flycatcher** (new early date of 21st, beating the previous record by 4 days), **Yellow-rumped Flycatcher**, **Daurian Starling**, **Barn Swallow** (overlooked surely!), **Oriental Reed-warbler** (seen on 5th, a new early date by 22 days!) **Arctic** and **Eastern Crowned Warblers**, and **Forest** and **Yellow Wagtails**. The continued presence of the globally near-threatened **Asian Dowitcher** at Sungei Buloh throughout the month was also noteworthy.

Residents of note detected this month included a count of 16 **Oriental Pied Hornbills** on Pulau Ubin, a **Blue-eared Kingfisher** at Sime Trail, **Asian Drongo Cuckoo** (Nee Soon), **Blue-rumped Parrot** (Nee Soon), **Buffy Fish Owl** (BBNP), **Greater Green Leafbird**

(Nee Soon) and **Black-headed Bulbul** (Sime Trail). In addition, there were also 7 breeding records for the month.

Bird of the month was undeniably a **Masked Finfoot** reported at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 6th, which, if confirmed, would be the third record for Singapore

## JOHOR HIGHLIGHTS

There wasn't much news from Johor but the presence of a very photogenic **Rail Babbler** at Panti Forest Reserve on 20<sup>th</sup> was noteworthy.

## SUMMARY

This report covers noteworthy bird sightings in September 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](mailto:ibisbill@yahoo.com) or Lim Kim Chuah @ [pittalover@yahoo.com.sg](mailto:pittalover@yahoo.com.sg) or Yong Ding Li at [zoothera@yahoo.com](mailto: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 systematics 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.

We would like to thank the following contributors:

Doreen Ang (DA), Maggie Bershader (MB), Steve Bershader (MB), MY Chan (CMY), Alfred Chia (AC), Avian Chia (AVC), Chong Pei Chuang (CPC), Andrew Chow (ACW), Lena Chow (LC), Simon Cockayne (SC), Geoffrey Davison (GWHD), Horst

Flotow (HF), Con Foley (CF), Willie Foo (WF), Gerald Francis (GF), Margie Hall (MH), Pete Jones (PJ), Kenneth Kee (KK), Nessie Khoo (NK), Raj Krishnan (RK), Danny Lau (DL), Ben Lee (BL), Jimmy Lee (JLe), Liao Lee Fung (LLF), Lim Jit Yin Koel (LJY), Joe Lim (JL), Lim Kim Chuah (LKC), Lim Kim Keang (LKK), Lim Kim Seng (LKS), Lim Poh Bee (LPB), Lee Poh Peng (LPP), Cyril Ng (CN), Marcus Ng (MN), Alan Owyong (AOY), Phang Seng Khai (PSK), Jaya Liang Nan Rengam (JLN), Vijaya Rengam (VJR), See Toh Yew Wai (STYW), Gloria Seow (GS), Martti Siponen (MS), John Spencer (JS), Sutari Supari (SBS), Tan Gim Cheong (TGC), Tan Kok Hui (TKH), Tan Ju Lin (TJL), Tan Soon Im (TSI), Robert Teo (RT), Wee Sau Cheng (WSC), Wing Chong (WC), Wong Chung Cheong (WCC), Yang Pah Liang (YPL), Sunny Yeo (SY) and Yong Ding Li (YDL) as well as all those who contributed by posting their sightings in the wildbirdsingapore E-group.

In addition, we would like to thank Chong Boon Leong, Lee Tiah Khee, John Spencer, Tan Gim Cheong, Wing Chong and Yong Ding Li for allowing us to use their photos in this report.

### **ABBREVIATIONS USED:**

BBNP Bukit Batok Nature Park  
CCNR Central Catchment Nature Reserve  
SBG Singapore Botanic Gardens  
SBWR Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve

## **SINGAPORE**

**WANDERING WHISTLING DUCK** *Dendrocygna arcuata*  
2 at SBG on 6/9 (YPL).

**LESSER WHISTLING DUCK** *Dendrocygna javanica*  
6 at SBG on 6/9 (YPL).

**RUFOUS WOODPECKER** *Celeus brachyurus*  
1 heard in a housing estate at Woodlands Street 81 on 8/9 and 9/9 (LKS).

**COMMON GOLDENBACK** *Dinopium javanense*  
A pair at SBWR on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS).

**LINEATED BARBET** *Megalaima lineata*  
6 at Poyan on 6/9 (CF/DL), 2 at BBNP on 6/9 (ACW/CPC/JLN/VJR), 3 at Bukit Batok West on 6/9 (WC) and 1 at Dairy Farm Road on 20/9 (LJY).

**RED-CROWNED BARBET** *Megalaima rafflesii*  
1 heard at Sime Trail, CCNR, on 6/9 (PJ/LKS/LPB) and 8 recorded at Nee Soon on 6/9 (JL/GS/YDL).

**COPPERSMITH BARBET** *Megalaima haemacephala*

1 seen in mangrove at SBWR on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) and 2 at Choa Chu Kang Jewish Cemetery on 24/9 (AC). In addition, 1 was recorded at Bukit Batok West (WC), 1 at Chinese Garden (CMY/TKP), 3 at Sembawang Park (MH/WSC), 1 at Kranji Dam (JS) and 2 at Poyan (CF/DL), all on 6/9.

**ORIENTAL PIED HORNBILL** *Anthracoceros albirostris*

16 counted on Pulau Ubin on 6/9 (WF/SBS).

**COMMON KINGFISHER** *Alcedo atthis*

Singles were seen on 6/9 at Ubin West (WF), Chinese Garden (CMY/TKP) and SBWR Route 2 (SY). In addition, 1 was also seen at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 8/9 (LKK/LKS), 1 at National Junior College on 15/9 (YDL), 1 along canal at Jalan Ibadat on 16/9 (AC), 1 at Singapore Quarry on 20/9 (LJY) and 1 at Pulau Ubin on 20/9 (JS) and 1 at Japanese Garden on 30/9 (TGC).

**BLUE-EARED KINGFISHER** *Alcedo meninting*

1 heard at Sime Trail, CCNR, on 6/9 (PJ/LKS/LPB).

**BLACK-BACKED KINGFISHER** *Ceyx erithacus*

1 crashed into a bus stop at Toa Payoh Central on 24/9 (JL). The bird was released later that same day.

**STORK-BILLED KINGFISHER** *Pelargopsis capensis*

1 at Pulau Ubin on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) and 1 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 8/9 (LKK/LKS).

**BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER** *Merops philippinus*

First arrivals: 1 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 (GWHD) and 2 at SBWR Route 2 (SY), both on 6/9. These birds set a new early date for this species in Singapore by 21 days!

**BANDED BAY CUCKOO** *Cacomantis sonnerati*

1 heard at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS).

**PLAINTIVE CUCKOO** *Cacomantis merulinus*

An adult seen at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS).

**RUSTY-BREASTED CUCKOO** *Cacomantis sepulcralis*

1 heard at Nee Soon on 6/9 (YDL).

**LITTLE BRONZE CUCKOO** *Chrysococcyx minutillus*

1 at SBWR Route 1 on 6/9 (TJL).

**ASIAN DRONGO-CUCKOO** *Surniculus lugubris*

A juvenile seen at Nee Soon on 6/9 (YDL).

**ASIAN KOEL** *Eudynamys scolopacea*

34 counted country-wide on 6/9 (sev obs).

**CHESTNUT-BELLIED MALKOHA** *Phaenicophaeus sumatranus*  
2 at BTNR on 6/9 (WCC) and 1 at Poyan on 6/9 (CF/DL).

**GREATER COUCAL** *Centropus sinensis*  
1 heard at Sime Trail, CCNR, on 6/9 (PJ/LKS/LPB).

**YELLOW-CRESTED COCKATOO** *Cacatua sulphurea*  
2 at Mt Faber on 6/9 (TSI).

**TANIMBAR CORELLA** *Cacatua goffini*  
2 at Tengah Air Base carpark on 2/9 (AC).

**BLUE-RUMPED PARROT** *Psittinus cyanurus*  
2 at Nee Soon on 6/9 (JLe/GS/YDL).

**BLUE-CROWNED HANGING PARROT** *Loriculus galgulus*  
1 over Dairy Farm Road on 2/9 (LKS) and 3 at SBG on 6/9 (YPL).

**ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET** *Psittacula krameri*  
2 at Khatib Bongsu (GF/HHC/CN) and 2 at Sembawang Park (MH/WSC), both on 6/9.

**RED-BREASTED PARAKEET**  
*Psittacula alexandri*  
At least 15 at Choa Chu Kang Jewish Cemetery on 24/9 (AC).

**LONG-TAILED PARAKEET**  
*Psittacula longicauda*  
16 at SBG on 6/9 (YPL).

**BUFFY FISH OWL**  
*Ketupa ketupu*  
1 mobbed by Greater Racket-tailed Drongos and Straw-headed Bulbuls at BBNP on 6/9 (YDL).



Buffy Fish Owl *Ketupa ketupu* at BBNP on 6 Sep 09 By Yong Ding Li

**THICK-BILLED GREEN PIGEON** *Treron curvirostra*  
5 at Nee Soon on 6/9 (JLe/GS/YDL).

**MASKED FINFOOT** *Heliopais personata*  
1 seen flying at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 6/9 (GWHD) would be, if confirmed, the third Singapore record. It was not relocated despite some observer effort.

**PURPLE SWAMPHEN** *Porphyrio porphyrio*  
2 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 8/9 (LKK/LKS).

**WHIMBREL** *Numenius phaeopus*

At SBWR, 40 were counted on 4/9 (TGC), 53 on 6/9 (TJL/SY) and 250 on 29/9 (MS). In addition, 19 birds were also counted at Sungei Mandai on 6/9 (LKK).

**BLACK-TAILED GODWIT** *Limosa limosa*

1 seen with Whimbrels at SBWR on 19/9 (SC) and 21/9 (AOY) was the first for the winter.

**COMMON REDSHANK** *Tringa totanus*

At SBWR, 40 were counted on 4/9 (TGC), 30 on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS), 116 on 6/9 (TJL) and 250 on 29/9 (MS).

**MARSH SANDPIPER** *Tringa stagnatilis*

At SBWR, 2 were counted on 4/9 (TGC), 10 on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) and 10 on 29/9 (MS).

**COMMON GREENSHANK** *Tringa nebularia*

At SBWR, 40 were counted on 4/9 (TGC), 30 on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) and 50 on 29/9 (MS). There were also 17 at Sungei Mandai on 6/9 (LKK).

**COMMON SANDPIPER** *Tringa hypoleucos*

At SBWR, 1 was seen on 4/9 (TGC), 5 on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) and 4 on 29/9 (MS).

**RUDDY TURNSTONE** *Arenaria interpres*

1 at SBWR on 19/9 (SC) and 26/9 (TKH).

**ASIAN DOWITCHER** *Limnodromus semipalmatus*

1 seen at SBWR on 21/9 (STYW), 22/9 (CWK), 23/9 (TGC), 26/9 (TKH), 27/9 (HF/KK/LKC) and 29/9 (BL).

**RED-NECKED STINT** *Calidris subminuta*

1 at SBWR on 4/9 (TGC) and 1 at Sungei Mandai on 6/9 (LKK) were the first reported this winter. 4 were also seen at SBWR on 19/9 (SC) and 3 on 26/9 (TKH).



Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* with Lesser Sand Plovers *Charadrius mongolus* and Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* at SBWR on 4 Sep 09 By Tan Gim Cheong

**CURLEW SANDPIPER** *Calidris ferruginea*

20 at SBWR on 4/9 (TGC) and 14 at Sungei Mandai on 6/9 (LKK) were the first reported this winter. There were 200 birds at SBWR on 29/9 (MS).

**BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER** *Limicola falcinellus*

1 at SBWR on 19/9 (SC) and 29/9 (MS).

**PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER** *Pluvialis fulva*

At SBWR, 3 were seen on 4/9 (TGC), 5 at SBWR on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) and 200 on 29/9 (MS). In addition, 91 were also counted at Kranji Dam on 6/9 (JS) and 35 at Sungei Mandai on 6/9 (LKK).

**GREY PLOVER** *Pluvialis squatarola*

1 at Changi Cove on 21/9 (LTK).



Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* at Changi Cove on 21 Sep 09 By Lee Tiah Kee

**LESSER SAND PLOVER** *Charadrius mongolus*

At SBWR, 50 were counted on 4/9 (TGC) and 300 on 29/9 (MS). In addition, 720 birds were counted at Sungei Mandai on 6/9 (LKK), 85 at Lower Seletar Dam on 6/9 (DA/NK) and 42 at Changi Cove on 21/9 (LTK).

**RED-WATTLED LAPWING** *Vanellus indicus*

1 at Poyan on 6/9 (CF/DL).

**ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE** *Glareola maldivarum*

First arrivals: 3 seen at Tuas on 20/9 (MS).



**SWIFT TERN** *Sterna bergii*

4 off Pulau Ubin on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS).

**LITTLE TERN** *Sterna albifrons*

At Neo Tiew Lane 2, 1 was seen on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) and 2 on 8/9 (LKK/LKS). There were also 3 birds at Lower Seletar Dam on 6/9 (DA/NK) and 2 at Sungei Serangoon on 6/9 (TKH).

**WHITE-WINGED TERN** *Chlidonias leucopterus*

5 at Kranji Dam on 6/9 (JS) and 4 at Neo Tiew lane 2 on 6/9 (GWHD).

**OSPREY** *Pandion haliaetus*

1 at SBWR on 4/9 (TGC), 2 at Sungei Mandai on 6/9 (LKK) and 1 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 6/9 (GWHD).



Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* with fish over SBWR on 4 Sep 09 By Tan Gim Cheong

**ORIENTAL HONEY BUZZARD** *Pernis ptilorhyncus*

1 at Aljunied Park on 4/9 (LC) beats the previous early date of 10 September (Lim 2009). Another was seen at National Junior College on 18/9 (YDL).

**JAPANESE SPARROWHAWK** *Accipiter gularis*

First arrival: 1 at SBWR on 19/9 (MS). In addition, there was 1 over Chinese Garden on 20/9 (PJ), 1 over Kent Ridge Park, also on 20/9 (HF) and 1 over Pulau Ubin, also on 20/9 (JS), and 1 over SBWR on 23/9 (TGC).

**COMMON BUZZARD** *Buteo buteo*

1 seen at Tengah Air Base on 25/9 (AVC).

**CHANGEABLE HAWK EAGLE** *Spizaetus cirrhatus*

1 seen and another heard at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS), 1 seen flying at SBWR on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS), 1 at Pulau Ubin on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS), 1 heard at Sime Trail, CCNR, on 6/9 (PJ/LKS/LPB), 1 juvenile photographed at the Treetop Walk, CCNR on 9/9 (MN) and 1 heard at Wallace Trail on 29/9 (LKS).

**PEREGRINE FALCON** *Falco peregrinus*

1 sparring with a White-bellied Sea Eagle above Marina Bay on 27/9 (PJ).

**LITTLE GREBE** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

4 at Singapore Quarry on 21/9 (ACW/CPC/JLN/VJR).

**LITTLE EGRET** *Egretta garzetta*

At SBWR, 3 birds were seen on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) and 33 on 6/9 (TJL/SY).

**GREY HERON** *Ardea cinerea*

2 at SBWR on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS), 25 at Pulau Ubin on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) and 52 at Sungei Mandai on 6/9 (LKK).

**PURPLE HERON** *Ardea purpurea*

At Neo Tiew Lane 2, 4 were seen on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS), 1 on 6/9 (GWHD) and 1 on 8/9 (LKK/LKS). In addition, 5 were seen at SBWR on 6/9 (TJL/SY), 1 at Kranji Dam on 6/9 (JS) and 1 at Sungei Serangoon on 6/9 (TKH)

**GREAT EGRET** *Casmerodius albus*

2 at Sungei Mandai on 6/9 (LKK).

**YELLOW-BILLED EGRET** *Mesophoyx intermedia*

1 seen at Sungei Serangoon on 6/9 (TKH) and 1 at Kranji Reservoir on 27/9 (WCC).

**CATTLE EGRET** *Bubulcus ibis*

24 at Chinese Garden on 6/9 (CMY/TKP).

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** *Nycticorax nycticorax*

2 at Bishan Park on 6/9 (CKC/MK) and 2 at SBWR Route 2 on 6/9 (SY).

**GREATER GREEN LEAFBIRD** *Chloropsis sonnerati*

A pair at Nee Soon on 6/9 (YDL).

**BLUE-WINGED LEAFBIRD** *Chloropsis cochinchinensis*

Up to 6 seen at Nee Soon on 6/9 (YDL).

**TIGER SHRIKE** *Lanius tigrinus*

At Singapore Quarry, a female was seen on 19/9 (RK) and a juvenile with a Common Draco in its mouth on 21/9 (ACW/CPC/JLN/VJR). Also a total of 6 juveniles at Dairy

Farm Nature Park on 23/9 (JS), a juvenile at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 27/9 (WCC) and an immature at Dairy Farm Road on 29/9 (LKS).

**BROWN SHRIKE** *Lanius cristatus*

1 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 27/9 (WCC).

**LONG-TAILED SHRIKE** *Lanius schach*

1 at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 6/9 (GWHD) and 8/9 (LKK/LKS).

**HOUSE CROW** *Corvus splendens*

174 birds were counted at 16 locations country-wide on 6/9 (sev obs).

**ASIAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER**

*Terpsiphone paradisi*

1 seen at Dairy Farm Loop, BTNR on 21/9 (JS) and a white morph at Japanese Garden on 30/9 (TGC).

**ASIAN BROWN FLYCATCHER**

*Muscicapa dauurica*

1 at Japanese Garden on 30/9 (TGC).

**BROWN-STREAKED FLYCATCHER** *Muscicapa williamsoni*

1 seen at Chinese Gardens, 1/9 – 2/9 (PJ/LPP).

**FERRUGINOUS FLYCATCHER**

*Muscicapa ferruginea*

A bird seen at Wallace Trail, Dairy Farm Nature Park, on 21/9 and 23/9 (JS) beats the previous early date by 4 days.

**YELLOW-RUMPED FLYCATCHER**

*Ficedula zanthopygia*

A male seen in Jurong Island on 1/9 (LKC). Another female was ringed on Pulau Ubin on 3/9 (RT), a male and a female photographed at BBNP on 21/9 (LLP/PSK/WC), and a male at Dairy Farm Nature Park on 23/9 (JS).

**ORIENTAL MAGPIE ROBIN**

*Copsychus saularis*

A female at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) and 8/9 (LKK/LKS), and 2 at SBG on 6/9 (YPL). On 6/9 (sev obs), 22 birds were counted country-wide with 15 from Pulau



Asian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi* at Japanese Garden on 30 Sep 09 By Tan Gim Cheong



Ferruginous Flycatcher *Muscicapa ferruginea* at Dairy Farm Nature Park on 23 Sep 09 By John Spencer

Ubin (WF/SBS).

**WHITE-RUMPED SHAMA**

*Copsychus malabaricus*

A female seen and another heard at Pulau Ubin on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS). 1 heard at Sime Trail, CCNR, on 6/9 (PJ/LKS/LPB) and 2 recorded at Ubin West on 6/9 (WF).

**DAURIAN STARLING** *Sturnus sturninus*

134 birds were counted at Sembawang Park on 6/9 (MH/WSC) and 32 at Lower Seletar Dam on 6/9 (DA/NK). These are the first reports of this species for the winter.

**COMMON HILL MYNA** *Gracula religiosa*

14 counted at SBG on 6/9 (YPL) and 17 at Nee Soon on 6/9 (JLe/GS/YDL).

**BARN SWALLOW** *Hirundo rustica*

76 birds were counted country-wide on 6/9 (sev obs).

**STRAW-HEADED BULBUL** *Pycnonotus zeylanicus*

2 at Pulau Ubin on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS), 1 heard along canal at Jalan Ibadat on 16/9 (AC) and 1 heard at Wallace Trail, 29/9 (LKS). In addition, 29 birds were counted country-wide on 6/9 (sev obs), with 25 coming from Pulau Ubin (WF/SBS) alone.

**BLACK-HEADED BULBUL** *Pycnonotus atriceps*

4 birds seen at Sime Trail, CCNR, on 12/9 (WCC).

**SOOTY-HEADED BULBUL** *Pycnonotus aurigaster*

1 seen at Punggol Grassland on 21/9 (WCC).

**CREAM-VENTED BULBUL** *Pycnonotus simplex*

8 counted at Nee Soon on 6/9 (JLe/GS/YDL).

**ASIAN RED-EYED BULBUL** *Pycnonotus brunneus*

5 counted at Nee Soon on 6/9 (JLe/GS/YDL).

**ORIENTAL WHITE-EYE** *Zosterops palpebrosus*

10 at BTNR on 6/9 (WCC) and 8 at Mt Faber on 6/9 (TSI).

**ORIENTAL REED-WARBLER** *Acrocephalus orientalis*

First arrival: 1 seen briefly in reeds at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) beats the previous early date of 27 September by 22 days! It was still present on 6/9 (GWHD).

**ARCTIC WARBLER** *Phylloscopus borealis*

1 seen at SBWR on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS) was our first report for the winter. Also 1 at Nee Soon on 6/9 (JLe/GS/YDL), 6 at Dairy Farm Nature Park on 23/9 (JS) and 1 at Wallace Trail on 29/9 (LKS).

**EASTERN CROWNED WARBLER** *Phylloscopus coronatus*

1 seen at Nee Soon on 6/9 (YDL).

**WHITE-CRESTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH** *Garrulax leucolophus*

2 at SBG on 6/9 (YPL) confirms the presence of this alien species at this site. In total, 21 birds were counted country-wide on 6/9 (sev obs).

**ABBOTT'S BABBLER** *Malacocincla abbotti*

1 singing near a quarry on Pulau Ubin on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS).

**LITTLE SPIDERHUNTER** *Arachnothera longirostris*

A pair seen at Dairy Farm Road on 2/9-3/9 (LKS).

**HOUSE SPARROW** *Passer domesticus*

2 males and a female seen at Jurong Island on 4/9 (LKC).

**FOREST WAGTAIL** *Dendronanthus indicus*

1 seen at Nee Soon on 6/9 (YDL).

**YELLOW WAGTAIL** *Motacilla flava*

1 at Kranji Reservoir on 27/9 (WCC).

## **BREEDING / NESTING REPORTS**

**RED-CROWNED BARBET** *Megalaima rafflesii*

A juvenile seen at Nee Soon on 6/9 (YDL).

**BLUE-THROATED BEE-EATER** *Merops viridis*

A juvenile seen at Pulau Ubin on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS).

**SPOTTED DOVE** *Streptopelia chinensis*

1 carrying nest material at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 8/9 (LKK/LKS).

**SLATY-BREASTED RAIL** *Gallirallus striatus*

An adult seen with an immature at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 8/9 (LKK/LKS).

**OLIVE-WINGED BULBUL** *Pycnonotus plumosus*

An adult seen feeding a juvenile at Pulau Ubin on 5/9 (MB/SB/LKS).

**HOUSE SPARROW** *Passer domesticus*

A female seen entering a nest and apparently feeding chicks (young birds heard) at Jurong Island on 4/9 (LKC).

**SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA** *Lonchura punctulata*

1 carrying nest material at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 8/9 (LKK/LKS).

## REPORT ON ESCAPEES

### **RED JUNGLEFOWL** *Gallus gallus*

9 birds were counted at SBWR Route 2 on 6/9 (SY). In addition, 4 chicks were seen following a hen around at SBWR on 26/9 (TKH). At Tengah Air Base, a male and six females were also seen during the month (AVC).

### **MUTE SWAN** *Cygnus olor*

2 at SBG on 6/9 (YPL).

### **BLACK SWAN** *Cygnus atratus*

3 at SBG on 6/9 (YPL).

### **ORIENTAL PIED HORNBILL** *Anthracoceros albirostris*

A pair at National Junior College on 17/9 (YDL).

### **GREAT CORMORANT** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

2 at Kranji Dam (JS) and 1 at Sungei Mandai (LKK), both on 6/9.

### **MONK PARAKEET** *Myiopsitta monachus*

A flock of 10 of this alien parrot from South-central South America was seen at Changi Cove on 21/9 (LTK). This appears to be the first record of this species for Singapore.



Monk Parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus* at Changi Cove on 21 Sep 09 By Lee Tiah Kee

**RED-WINGED STARLING** *Onychognathus morio*  
1 at Jurong Lake on 5/9 (WC).



Red-winged Starling *Onychognathus morio* at Jurong Lake on 4 Sep 09 By Wing Chong

## JOHOR

**RAIL BABBLER** *Eupetes macrocrus*  
1 photographed at Bunker Track on 20/9 (CBL).

## Autumn Raptor Migration

### Early arrivals for September 2009

Compiled by Alan OwYong from reports sent in to the WildbirdSingapore e-forum, edited by Kenneth Kee

#### SUMMARY

The five Japanese Sparrowhawks reported this month was the most numerous early arriving migrant raptors here. This was followed by two Oriental Honey Buzzards, an early Common Buzzard, an Osprey and a Peregrine Falcon over Marina Bay on 28<sup>th</sup>, which sets a new arrival date for this *Falco*.

#### **1. Oriental Honey Buzzard**

Lena Chow reported an Oriental Honey Buzzard at Aljunied Park on 6<sup>th</sup> Sept. However this time round she did not get any photos. On 4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2007, she took some photos of a pair of Honey Buzzards perched on a tree from her window at the same place. Kim Seng alerted me to check if they were the resident *torquatus* or the visiting *orientalis* race. From the side profile, there was hardly any crest showing and the barrings were confined to the lower belly. Her photo showed an *orientalis* race, most probably an adult pale morph male. We will have to revise the early arrival date for this buzzard from the old extreme date of 10<sup>th</sup> Sept. Ding Li reported another one perched on an Acacia tree at the National Junior College on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### **2. Japanese Sparrowhawk**

On 19<sup>th</sup> Sept, Martii Siponen managed to identify a flying male Japanese Sparrowhawk from a long distance photo taken at Sungei Buloh. This was the first record for this autumn. He also had another Sparrowhawk at the same place but was unable to ID it. A day later, Pete Jones and Horst Flotow, both reported sightings of this *accipiter*. Pete's had his flying over the Chinese Gardens while Horst reported his circling over Kent Ridge Park. Over at Pulau Ubin, another one was reported on the same day flying towards Changi by John Spencer. On 24<sup>th</sup>, Gim Cheong was searching for the Asian Dowitcher at Sungei Buloh when he saw a Japanese Sparrowhawk flying overhead in a westerly direction.

#### **3. Common Buzzard**

A very early arrival was reported by Avian Chia at Tengah Airbase on 25<sup>th</sup> Sept. This was a new location for this uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant which seems to confirm their preference for open airport grounds.

#### **4. Osprey**

During the public walk at Kranji on 26<sup>th</sup> Sept with Kenneth Kee, we spotted the Osprey perched on one of the BBC towers. The Osprey is both a migrant and non-breeding visitor to Singapore.

#### **5. Peregrine Falcon**

Last but not least, Pete Jones was at the F1 Race at Marina Bay on 28<sup>th</sup> Sept when he witnessed a Peregrine Falcon sparring with a White-bellied Sea Eagle overhead. This could be our new arrival date as the extreme date was on the 14<sup>th</sup> Oct. We had 2 records of Peregrines in August in the past, but we suspected that they were the *ernesti* race.



## **Report on the 6<sup>th</sup> Fall Migration Bird Census**

By Lim Kim Seng

The 6<sup>th</sup> Fall Migration Bird Census (FMBC) held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2009, was affected by wet weather recalling the rainy FMBC of 2005. Nearly all sites experienced light to heavy rain. 51 people participated at 23 selected sites island-wide compared with 48 people at 26 sites last year (Lim 2008). In all, 7,381 birds of 119 species were recorded. Not surprisingly, total species diversity was drastically below 2008's 142 species although, strangely, numbers were slightly better than last year's 7,343 birds (Lim 2008).

Of the 23 sites counted, Neo Tiew Lane 2 and Poyan were the most bird diverse with 48 species counted, followed by Serangoon with 43 species. The least diverse sites were Kent Ridge Park and Bukit Batok Nature Park, both with 17 species, followed by Bukit Timah Nature Reserve with 20 species.

The most bird populous site was Mandai Mudflats which had 1,122 birds. Coming in second was Ubin West with 574 birds and third was Ubin Central with 558 birds. The least populous sites were Kent Ridge Park with 69 birds followed by Bukit Timah Nature Reserve (75 birds) and Bukit Batok Nature Park (111).

Because of the lack of volunteers, Bukit Brown, Lorong Halus and Upper Seletar were left out of this year's census. Rain and lack of access combined to exclude Punggol from this year's census. On the positive side, Admiralty Park and Chinese Garden were counted for the first time in this census.

What then was Singapore's most abundant bird this year? Well, last year's runner-up, Asian Glossy Starling, usurped top place this year with a total of 1,153 birds, up from 817 birds last year. Dropping to second place was White-vented Myna, with a total of 885 birds, a drop from 929 recorded last year. Third was a surprise migrant, Lesser Sand Plover, with a total of 805 birds, with nearly 90% coming from Mandai Mudflats alone!

Coming in fourth to tenth positions were Common Pigeon (268 birds), Yellow-vented Bulbul (255), Pink-necked Green Pigeon (247), Long-tailed Parakeet (189), Common Redshank (186), Eurasian Tree Sparrow (181) and Pacific Swallow (179).

Making up the eleventh to twentieth positions were a kingfisher, a dove, a plover, and the rest, passerines. Of the top twenty species, fifteen (75%) were resident as compared to 2008's 70% (see Table 1).

The top 20 birds of FMBC 2009 are listed below.

Ranking	Species	Total	% of Total
1	ASIAN GLOSSY STARLING	1153	15.6
2	WHITE-VENTED MYNA	885	12.0
3	LESSER SAND PLOVER*	805	10.9
4	COMMON PIGEON	268	3.6
5	YELLOW-VENTED BULBUL	255	3.4
6	PINK-NECKED GREEN PIGEON	247	3.3
7	LONG-TAILED PARAKEET	189	2.6
8	COMMON REDSHANK*	186	2.5
9	EURASIAN TREE SPARROW	181	2.4
10	PACIFIC SWALLOW	179	2.4
11	HOUSE CROW	174	2.4
12	BLACK-NAPED ORIOLE	172	2.3
13	DAURIAN STARLING*	166	2.2
14	GREY HERON	165	2.2
15	PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER*	134	1.8
16	SPOTTED DOVE	126	1.7
17	COMMON IORA	105	1.4
18	COLLARED KINGFISHER	100	1.4
19	BARN SWALLOW*	76	1.0
20	OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD	74	1.0

Note: An asterisk (\*) denotes a migrant.

Table 1: Top 20 Most Abundant Birds in FMBC 2009

Of the 56 nationally threatened species, 16 or 28% were recorded. This compares poorly with the 36% in 2008 and 45% in 2007. The most numerous threatened species was once again Grey Heron, 14<sup>th</sup> overall, with a count of 165 birds, down from 167 in 2008. Also showing well were Straw-headed Bulbul, 41<sup>st</sup> overall with 29 birds, down from 57 in 2008, Oriental Magpie-robin (22), Oriental Pied Hornbill (16) and Red Junglefowl (13).

Two globally threatened species were recorded during the rain-soaked census. The first was the Straw-headed Bulbul which was present at 5 sites, down from 9 in 2008. Arguably the bird of the day was a Masked Finfoot which miraculously appeared at Neo Tiew Lane 2. This very rare non-breeding visitor did not re-appear despite a search of the area a few days later.

18 (15%) of the 119 species were true migrants as compared with 18% in 2008. Of these 20, five were among the top twenty birds counted. The other 13 species (in order of decreasing abundance) included Little Egret, Common Sandpiper, Cattle Egret, Curlew Sandpiper, White-winged Tern, Common Kingfisher, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Marsh

Sandpiper, Great Egret, Red-necked Stint, Yellow-billed Egret, Oriental Reed Warbler and Arctic Warbler. There were quite strangely no migrant cuckoos or flycatchers.

As in past years, migrant raptors put on a no-show and this was probably due to their generally late appearance in Singapore, as the peak season for them is in October.

In addition to the 119 species recorded, there was also an additional 4 (7 in 2008) of exotics recorded comprising 17 birds (24 in 2008). These included 9 feral Red Junglefowls, 3 Black Swans, 2 Mute Swans and 3 Great Cormorants.

A total of 1,131 unidentified birds (359 in 2008) was recorded in addition to the 7,381 birds counted. 1,052 of these (93%) were swiftlets.

The following fabulous people led or assisted in FMBC 2009:

Doreen Ang, Samantha Ang, Dennis Chan, Chan Kim Cheng, MY Chan, Angela Cheng, Andrew Chow, Geoffrey Davison, Con Foley, SC Fang, Willie Foo, Gerald Francis, Leslie Fung, Margie Hall, Han Yan You, Ho Hua Chew, Ali Jafaar, Pete Jones, Nessie Khoo, Khuan Jia Hui, Maurice Kwan, Danny Lau, Ben Lee, Jimmy Lee, Lim Kim Keang, Lim Kim Seng, Lim Poh Bee, Low Chwee Hock, Low Wai Hoe, Ng Chay Tuan, Clarisse Ng, Cyril Ng, Alan Owyong, Phang Seng Khai, Pui Cui Fen, Gloria Seow, Soh Hui Hiang, John Spencer, Tan Ju Lin, Tan Kok Hui, Tan Soon Im, KP Teh, Wee Sau Cheng, Wing Chong, Wong Chung Cheong, Yang Pah Liang, Sunny Yeo, Yong Ding Li, Yong Yik Shih, Yuet Hsin and Rehan Yusoff.

Thanks once again to everyone who helped ensure the success of this year's FMBC. Hope you had fun and see you again in 2010!

## **References**

Lim, K.S. (2008). Report on the 5<sup>th</sup> Fall Migration Bird Census. *Singapore Avifauna* 22:9: 21-23.