

Singapore Raptors Report Autumn Migration, December 2008

Summary:

December was the tail end of the autumn migration with many of the raptors spending the winter on the island. We had **9** species totaling **143** migrant raptors including 10 unidentified for the month. This was higher than last December 2007 record of 6 species and 102 raptors. The **Black Bazas** were still the largest group wintering here with Kim Seng reported a flock of 45 birds at Kranji. Changi Cove was attracting lots of Harriers this month with a record of 4 **Pied** and 6 **Eastern Marsh** co-existing there. Kim Chuah had our second **Torquatus Honey-buzzard** at the CCK Christian Cemetery, but an adult this time round. Both the **Ospreys** and **Peregrine Falcons** were happily enjoying their stay at various places obviously delighted with the abundance of food. The **Common Buzzard** made it first appearance at Bidadari Cemetery, which was turning out to be a favourite wintering area for both raptors and passerines. We had only one record of the **Chinese Sparrowhawk** while the smaller **Japanese Sparrowhawk** was more widespread.



Juvenile white morph Changeable Hawk-eagle by Jimmy Chew taken at Pulau Semakau on 20 Dec graced this month cover.

Table 1

S/N	Species	No.	S/N	Species	No.
1	Black Baza	79	6	Eastern Marsh Harrier	6
2	Oriental Honey-buzzard	24	7	Osprey	3
3	Japanese Sparrowhawk	7	8	Common Buzzard	3
4	Peregrine Falcon	6	9	Chinese Sparrowhawk	1
5	Pied Harrier	4	10	Unidentified Accipiter Raptor	10
				Total	143

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

Black Baza (79)

Who else but Lim Kim Seng came in with the largest single flock of **45 birds** at Neo Tiew Lane2 on Christmas Eve flying towards Sungei Buloh. Several observers (Doreen Ang, Tiah Khee, David Tan, Danny Lau & Kok Hui) had also recorded seeing between 5 (13th) to 7 (20th) birds there. Bidadari was another roosting location with at least 12 reported by Willie Foo on 14th flying towards Potong Pasir. KC Tsang counted a total of 10 wintering there 2 days earlier. Other records were from Punggol (4) by Kok Hui on 6th, Springleaf (7) by Margaret Yeo on 22nd, Pulau Ubin (7) by Kim Seng on 23rd, 3 over at D’Kranji resort by Felix Wong on 13th, 2 flying across Japanese Gardens by Alan OwYong on 7th. Single bird was reported by Kim Seng at CCK Christian Cemetery on 24th and Sungei Buloh on 21st, at Taman Serasi on 14th by Pah Liang and at Ubin quarry by Doreen Ang & Ah Huay on 14th.

Oriental (Crested) Honey-buzzard (24)



Oriental Honey-buzzard by KC Tsang

Lim Kim Chuah reported the second *Torquatus* race on 24th, an adult this time, at the Choa Chu Kang Christian Cemetery. KC Tsang sent dramatic shots of 2 birds in hunting flight taken at Bidadari on 12th. Danny Lau had 4 bee stings on 13th when one bird attacked a bee-hive at the western catchment area. Gloria Seow had 3 circling over Toa Payoh on 7th. Pah Liang also reported 3 birds from his balcony at Taman Serasi. Doreen Ang reported 2 chasing after House Crows and robbing them on 25th at Changi, and not the other way round.

Alan OwYong seen 2 flying west across Japanese Gardens. Other single bird sighting: Simon Road on 10th by KC Tsang, an adult light morph on 17th at King’s Avenue by Margie Hall, Neo Tiew Lane 2 on 20th by Danny & Kok Hui, Pulau Semakau by Wing Chong on 20th, flying over Bidadari on 22nd by Chung Cheong, an *Orientalis* perched at MacRitchie Reservoir on 23rd by Kim Seng, a dark morph over Semakau by Wing Chong & Hang Chong on 20th, a juvenile female photographed by Raj Krishnan’s friend at Yew Tee on 23rd and at Tuas Drive by Felix Wong on 24th.

Japanese Sparrowhawk (7)

Alan OwYong reported one soaring over Japanese Gardens on 7th. Kok Hui reported one flying across Admiralty Park on 9th. KC Tsang observed a pair roosting at Bidadari Cemetery on 12th. Wing Chong and Hang Chong reported one at Pulau Semakau on 20th. Kim Seng saw one hunting at MacRitchie Reservoir on 23rd and another on 25th over Henderson Waves Bridge.

Peregrine Falcon (6)

Most of the Peregrine Falcons reported last month were still wintering at their favorite haunts. Doreen & Ah Huay reported one perched on telecom tower at Pulau Ubin on 14th. Ee Ling was

still watching the one circling around Capital Square on 19th. Chung Cheong reported one at Neo Tiew Lane 2 on the 19th. Two new site records were reported with one perched at Woodlands Checkpoint on the 17th by Kim Seng and the other by Jia Sheng of one flying over Teck Whye towards NE. Another one was observed screaming low over the waders at Changi Cove by Simon Cockayne and friends on 21st.

Pied Harrier (4) and Eastern Marsh Harrier (6)

Changi Cove proved again to be the favorite wintering ground for the Harriers. On 20th, Simon Cockayne and friends Martin Kennewell & Peter Hayman reported 4 there while wader watching. They also counted a total of 6 Eastern Marsh wintering at the Cove. Chung Cheong on 25th reported a male and a juvenile Pied at the same area reinforced by Sunny Yeo's record of 4 Eastern Marsh there on the same day.

Osprey (3)

All the reports for the month came from the Kranji area. At least 3 were wintering at Neo Tiew Lane 2 based on report from Chung Cheong on 19th, followed by report of 2 birds from Danny & Kok Hui a day later. Other reports came from Doreen, Tiah Khee & David Tan on 5th. Kim Seng had one on a kelong seen from Kranji trail on 23rd and another one at Neo Tiew Lane 2 the next day.

Common Buzzard (3)

The one at Changi Coast Road was still around on the 6th seen by Kok Hui. Alfred Chia sent a photo of one taken at Airport Road on 29th. This was the first record of this buzzard in an urban location. Doreen Ang and others reported one at Bidadari Cemetery on 30th, confirmed by Danny Lau and Albert Low the next day.

Chinese Sparrowhawk (1)



KC Tsang submitted the only record of this Accipiter with an excellent photo of one adult female perched at his favourite hunting ground at Bidadari Cemetery.

Chinese Sparrowhawk by KC Tsang

Unidentified Accipiter (2) and Raptor (8)

Alfred Chia reported an accipiter at Lorong Asrama on 2nd. Danny Lau and Kok Hui had one accipiter and one raptor at Neo Tiew Lane2 on 20th. Pah Liang recorded 2 raptors flying over Taman Serasi on 20th. Doreen counted 4 raptors at Changi Cove on 25th. Kenneth and Willie saw a large raptor flying low, chasing prey at the Albizia forest at Bidadari on 28th.

Resident Raptors

The numbers and species for our resident raptors went down for December. We had only the five commoner species totaling about 40 birds. It could be due to the lower records coming in and lesser sightings.



OHB Torquatus race by Lim Kim Chuah

White Bellied Sea Eagle (12)

- 5th 2 adults and 1 juvenile at Neo Tiew Lane2 by Doreen Ang, Tiah Khee & David Tan
- 6th 1 at Punggol by Kok Hui
- 9th 1 juvenile at Admiralty Park by Kok Hui
- 9th 1 seen at Pulau Tekong by Alfred Chia
- 11th 2 adults seen calling at Pekan Quarry at Pulau Ubin by Doreen & Ah Huay
- 19th 1 juvenile circling above D’Kranji Resort by Chung Cheong.
- 20th 2 adults and 1 juvenile at Neo Tiew Lane2 by Danny Lau & Kok Hui
- 21st 2 juveniles being chased off by an adult Brahminy Kite at SBWR by Kim Seng
- 23rd A pair at Pulau Ubin by Kim Seng
- 24th An adult seen inspecting nest at CCK Parsi Cemetry by Kim Seng
- 25th 1 at the beach at Changi Cove by Chung Cheong
- 30th 1 flying over the West Coast Marshes by Alan OwYong & Doris Lim.

Brahminy Kite (12)

- 6th An adult and 1 juvenile at Punggol by Kok Hui
- 6th 3 seen flying around Jurong Lakeside by Alan OwYong
- 9th An adult flying over Admiralty Park by Kok Hui
- 9th 1 over at Pulau Tekong by Alfred Chia
- 12th 2 at Bidadari Cemetry by KC Tsang. Must be roosting at the cemetery.
- 20th 1 bird was reported at Pulau Semakau by Wing Chong and Hang Chong.
- 21st An adult chasing a juvenile White-bellied Sea Eagle at SBWR by Kim Seng.
- 21st 1 flying over KJE by Kenneth Kee
- 28th A juvenile reported flying over Bidadari by Kenneth Kee & Willie Foo

Black-winged Kite (4-5)

- 6th 1 at Punggol by Kok Hui
20th 1 at Neo Tiew Lane2 by Danny Lau & Kok Hui
25th Chung Cheong reported a few at Changi Cove

Grey-headed Fish Eagle (3)

- 15th Margaret Yeo reported one perched on tree branch at Springleaf Woodlands
20th An adult was reported at Neo Tiew Lane 2 by Danny Lau & Kok Hui
23rd One heard at MacRitchie Reservoir by Lim Kim Seng

Changeable Hawk-eagle (8)



Juvenile white morph CHE by Jimmy Chew

- 6th A dark morph reported at Changi Coastal Road by Kok Hui
13th 1 heard at Bidadari by Willie Foo.
20th 3 at Neo Tiew Lane2 by Danny Lau & Kok Hui
20th A juvenile white morph and an adult over at Taman Serasi by Pah Liang
20th A juvenile white morph was photographed soaring over Pulau Semakau by Jimmy Chew and reported by Dr Ho Hua Chew.
21st One dark morph at Changi Cove reported by Simon Cockayne and friends.
23rd A pale adult was reported at MacRitchie Reservoir by Kim Seng
28th 1 seen soaring over Bidadari Cemetery by Kenneth Kee & Willie Foo.

** The numbers in brackets besides the names indicate the total number seen for this month.
Different reports of the same raptors from the same area are discounted to prevent duplication.*

*Compiled by Alan OwYong from reports sent in to the Wildbirdsingapore e-forum.
Edited and Layout by Kenneth Kee. Many thanks to those who sent in their reports and special thanks to Kim Chuah, KC Tsang and Jimmy Chew for the use of their photographs.*