

# Singapore Raptor Report

## Spring Migration, January 2009

### Summary

Following a report of a mini invasion of 16 Himalayan Griffon Vultures to Thailand by Chaiyan of the Thai Raptor Group, we were hoping to see a few coming down our way. Unfortunately, none appeared. There were also no reports from Peninsula Malaysia. We also missed the Jerdon's Baza this month. Both were recorded in January 2008. As with the start of the Spring migration, the numbers and species count were low. We had 9 species totaling 92 raptors including 7 unidentified. The two reports of the **Booted Eagle** stood out for this month. It appeared to be more common than before. The **Black Bazas** again top the count as expected, with a single roosting flock of 16 at Changi Cove. The **Ospreys** were still enjoying their stay at the Kranji area while the **Peregrine Falcons** were reported elsewhere. Good counts of 19 **Oriental Honey-buzzards** were reported at various locations with one *Torquatus* race at Bidadari. We had a small number of **Japanese Sparrowhawk** (3) and **Chinese Sparrowhawk** (2) still hanging around the island. A single **Common Kestrel** and at least 3 **Eastern Marsh Harriers** were reported at Changi Cove. This site proved to be a magnet for raptors with 8 species recorded this month.



*Two Eastern Marsh Harriers taken at Changi Cove on 21<sup>st</sup> Jan by Lee Tiah Khee graced this month cover.*

### Migrant Raptors

Table 1

S/N	Species	Count	S/N	Species	Count
1	<b>Black Baza</b>	45	6	<b>Booted Eagle</b>	2
2	<b>Oriental Honey-buzzard</b>	19	7	<b>Chinese Sparrowhawk</b>	2
3	<b>Osprey</b>	5	8	<b>Eastern Marsh Harrier</b>	3
4	<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>	5	9	<b>Common Kestrel</b>	1
5	<b>Japanese Sparrowhawk</b>	3	10	<b>Unidentified Accipiter Raptor</b>	7
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>92</b>

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

## **Black Baza (45)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Martti Siponen reported 2 at SBWR
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Simon Cockayne reported a large flock of 14 birds perched on a tree at Changi Cove. He had 2 more flying overhead. Over at the CCK Cemetery, Con Foley, Kok Hui and Danny had 3 flying over. Alfred reported 1 over at the Punggol Grasslands. Martti seen 1 at Pulau Ubin.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Pah Liang had 1 flying over the AIA building at Alexandra.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Jin Zhao reported one over at Clementi Woods.
- 10<sup>th</sup> Martti counted a total of 5 birds over at SBWR.
- 11<sup>th</sup> Kenneth Kee and Tobias Ljungquist, a visiting Swedish birder seen one flying over Kranji Reservoir. Martti reported 1 at Sime Forest
- 14<sup>th</sup> Doreen Ang sent in a report of 1 flying over Alexander Park towards Normanton.
- 18<sup>th</sup> Alan OwYong saw 2 circling over the hillsides at Sungei Tengah.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Martti reported 2 at SBWR, could be part of the same flock seen on 10<sup>th</sup>?
- 25<sup>th</sup> Sunny's team reported 2 at SBWR during the AWC census. Ho Hua Chew and Cyril also reported one flying over the Kranji Bund.
- 26<sup>th</sup> Martti reported a total of 9 birds at the Chinese and Japanese Gardens.
- 27<sup>th</sup> Martti recorded 2 at Pulau Ubin.

## **Oriental (Crested) Honey-buzzard (19)**



*Oriental Honey-buzzard by KC Tsang*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Martti Siponen reported 2 at SBWR.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Danny, Con and Kok Hui reported 2 over at the CCK Cemetery. 2 dark morphs were seen attacking a beehive at Queen Astrid Park by colleague of Kenneth Kee.
- 7<sup>th</sup> KC Tsang photographed a dark morph at Bidadari Cemetery
- 10<sup>th</sup> Ben Lee saw 1 flying low over West Coast Road
- 11<sup>th</sup> Wing Chong may have seen the same bird this time perched at West Coast Park. KC Tsang sent in a photo of a *Torquatus* race taken at Bidadari.
- 18<sup>th</sup> Alan OwYong reported 2 birds harassed by House Crows over at Changi Road. He also reported an adult pair and a juvenile enjoying the thermals at Sungei Tengah

- 19<sup>th</sup> Ding Li came in with a report of 1 flying over National Institute of Education.
- 28<sup>th</sup> One over at Clementi by Gim Cheong
- 26<sup>th</sup> One at Chinese Gardens reported by Martti.
- 31<sup>st</sup> One at Jalan Teck Whye by Raj Krishnan.

### **Osprey (5)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> One seen by Martti Siponen at SBWR. He reported another one at SBWR on 10<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. Most likely to be the same bird.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> One seen fishing over at Changi Cove by Simon Cockayne
- 11<sup>th</sup> One reported by Martti at Sime Forest from Venus Drive.
- 25<sup>th</sup> One reported flying over Mandai Mud Flats by Kim Keang and David Li. Over at the Kranji Bund, Cyril and Hua Chew also reported one there.
- 31<sup>st</sup> Kenneth Kee reported one at the Kranji Telecom Towers. Kok Hui saw one at Changi Cove.

### **Peregrine Falcon (5)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Martti Siponen reported one flying over at SBWR
- 3<sup>rd</sup> A large female was seen harassing other birds over at Changi Cove by Simon Cockayne and friends
- 9<sup>th</sup> Another by Martti at Tuas South.
- 7<sup>th</sup> One was reported by Jin Zhao feeding on a lizard at Clementi Woods
- 24<sup>th</sup> One reported by Martti at Pulau Ubin.
- 25<sup>th</sup> One at Chek Jawa Towers seen by Doreen Ang, Siew Kwang and Ah Huay during AWC census, could be the same falcon seen a day earlier by Martti.

### **Japanese Sparrowhawk (3)**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> One was reported hunting at Changi Cove by Simon Cockayne. Doreen Ang and Nessie reported one flying across Bidadari Cemetery.
- 12<sup>th</sup> Alan OwYong reported one chasing after Pacific Swallows over at Keppel Club. Later he saw one flying away with the Swallow on its talons. Probably the same bird.

### **Booted Eagle (2)**



- 3<sup>rd</sup> Danny, Con Foley and Kok Hui reported a pale morph flying across the road at the CCK Cemetery. Alan OwYong went there the next day but did not see it
- 19<sup>th</sup> Alan OwYong saw an adult pale morph flying low over at Sungei Tengah nurseries.

*Booted Eagle by Kok Hui*

### **Chinese Sparrowhawk (2)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Raj Krishnan reported one at Woodleigh Park.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Alfred Chia saw one at Punggol Grasslands.

### Eastern Marsh Harrier (3)

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Simon Cockayne saw an adult at Changi Cove.  
21<sup>st</sup> Lee Tiah Khee's photographed at least 3 birds, 1 male and 2 female at Changi Cove. See his dramatic photos below.  
31<sup>st</sup> Kok Hui saw a female at Changi Cove, probably the same bird recorded earlier.



*Eastern Marsh Harrier (M) by Lee Tiah Khee*



*Eastern Marsh Harriers (F) by Lee Tiah Khee*

### Common Kestrel (1)

- 31<sup>st</sup> Kok Hui submitted the only record of this rare *Falco* at Changi Cove.

### Unidentified (7)

- 10<sup>th</sup> An accipiter over at SBWR by Martti.  
14<sup>th</sup> One raptor over at Alexander Park by Doreen Ang  
18<sup>th</sup> One accipiter flying over the Changi Coastal Walk by Alan OwYong  
18<sup>th</sup> Another accipiter over at Sungei Tengah by Alan OwYong.  
26<sup>th</sup> Two accipiter and an eagle seen over at Chinese Gardens by Martti.  
31<sup>st</sup> A raptor over at Bukit Timah Nature Reserve by Martti

### Resident Raptors

#### Summary:

The surprise resident find was the **Crested Serpent Eagle** seen by Doreen Ang while driving along Lavender Street. Martti Siponen, a keen raptor watcher sent in more than 50 sightings from all over the island for January. Many of them could be the same birds seen at the same location but on different days. Well done Martti. The **White-bellied Sea Eagles** were seen gathering twigs at Pulau Ubin and Keppel Club for nest building on Albizia trees. Two other reports of nesting were from Fort Canning and the Mandai area. From the reports, it seems that there were at least 3 pairs at the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (SBWR) and Kranji area. This location also supports at least 5 **Brahminy Kites** with another cluster at Choa Chu Kang (CCK) Cemetery. There was a healthy population of **Changeable Hawk-eagles** reported at the Alexander Park and Kent Ridge areas. More than 5 **Black-winged Kites** were sighted at Changi Cove while a pair of **Grey-headed Fish Eagle** was reported back at Little Guilin.

**Table 2**

S/N	Species	Count	S/N	Species	Count
1	White-bellied Sea Eagle	30	4	Changeable Hawk-eagle	11
2	Brahminy Kite	31	5	Grey-headed Fish Eagle	3
3	Black-winged Kite	11	6	Crested Serpent Eagle	1
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87</b>

**White-Bellied Sea Eagle (30)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> A total of 6 was reported by Martti at SBWR.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> One adult at CCK Cemetery reported by Danny, Con and Kok Hui. Martti reported a pair bringing back nesting material at Pulau Ubin.
- 4<sup>th</sup> A pair nesting at Fort Canning reported by Pah Liang and also by Chung Cheong 1 week later
- 7<sup>th</sup> 2 were reported at SBWR by Martti. Could be part of the family at SBWR.
- 10<sup>th</sup> One at Pulau Semakau by Ben Lee. 4 at SBWR by Martti.
- 11<sup>th</sup> Two at Lower Pierce Reservoir and one juvenile by Kenneth Kee & Tobias Ljungquist. Kenneth reported the same pair later in the month. Another one was reported at Sime Forest by Martti.
- 12<sup>th</sup> A pair seen flying with nesting material to an Albizia tree at Keppel Club by Alan
- 18<sup>th</sup> A pair seen fishing at dusk off the Changi Board walk by Alan OwYong.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> 1 adult and 3 juveniles reported at SBWR by Martti.
- 24<sup>th</sup> Martti reported the same pair collecting nesting material at Pulau Ubin.
- 25<sup>th</sup> Four reported by Doreen Ang, Siew Kwang and Ah Huay off Chek Jawa. 2 at SBWR by Kenneth Kee . 2 at Lor Halus by KC Lim and 2 at Kranji Bund by Cyril Ng and Hua Chew, 1 at Mandai Mud Flats by KK Lim and David Li, all during AWC 2009.
- 26<sup>th</sup> A pair seen flying over Bedok Reservoir by Doreen Ang. One at Chinese Gardens by Martti.
- 27<sup>th</sup> Two adults and one juvenile at Pulau Ubin by Martti. Could be from the same group.
- 31<sup>st</sup> One was reported by Raj Krishnan over at Teck Whye. Another pair at SBWR reported by Kenneth Kee. One adult and one juvenile at Bukit Timah Hill by Martti. Kok Hui got another one at Changi Cove.

**Brahminy Kite (31)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> 3 at SBWR reported by Martti.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Simon Cockayne reported 4 over at Chang Cove. An adult and 1 juvenile at CCK Cemetery by Danny, Con and Kok Hui. One over AIA building by Pah Liang. 2 at Pulau Ubin by Martti.
- 7<sup>th</sup> 2 at SBWR reported by Martti. Could be from the same group.
- 9<sup>th</sup> A pair of adults flying over Punggol by Chung Cheong
- 10<sup>th</sup> One at Pulau Semakau by Ben Lee. A total of 4 at SBWR by Martti.
- 11<sup>th</sup> One over Kranji Reservoir by Kenneth Kee and Tobias Ljungquist. 2 over the Sime Forest from Venus Drive by Martti.
- 12<sup>th</sup> One flying over Keppel Club by Alan OwYong
- 14<sup>th</sup> One hunting above Alexander Park, a juvenile on top of Kent Ridge and another hunting over at Normanton Park by Doreen Ang.
- 18<sup>th</sup> 2 flying overhead at Changi Coast walk by Alan OwYong.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> The largest group of 5 reported at SBWR by Martti.
- 24<sup>th</sup> 2 at Pulau Ubin by Martti.

- 25<sup>th</sup> One at Chek Jawa (Doreen Ang, Siew Kwang, Ah Huay), one at SBWR (Kenneth Kee), 3 at SBWR by Sunny's team, 2 at Halus (KC Lim), 1 at Mandai (KK Lim and David Li) and 3 seen at Kranji Bund, two were mating (Cyril Ng & Hua Chew) during AWC 2009.
- 26<sup>th</sup> 2 at Chinese Gardens by Martti.
- 27<sup>th</sup> 2 at Pulau Ubin by Martti.
- 31<sup>st</sup> Kok Hui got 4 at Changi Cove. Could be the same flock spotted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> by Simon.

### **Changeable Hawk-eagle (11)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> One over at SBWR by Martti.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Two were seen at Woodleigh Park by Raj Krishnan.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Simon Cockayne reported one at Changi Cove. Another reported by Doreen Ang and Nessie of one mobbed by White-vented Mynas at Bidadari Cemetery. Probably the same bird reported by Sree at Bidadari the next day. Martti reported one flying over Sime Forest.
- 13<sup>th</sup> Doreen reported a flock of 5 circling over Alexander Park. She ID one that was perched as a juvenile. All were flying towards Kent Ridge.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> A pale morph was photographed by Johnny Wee over at Bidadari.
- 31<sup>st</sup> Kok Hui got one juvenile pale morph over at Changi Cove.

### **Black-winged Kite (11)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> One over at SBWR, another sighting on 7<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> and another two on the 10<sup>th</sup>, all by Martti Siponen.
- 5<sup>th</sup> One at Tuas South by Martti with another sighting on 21<sup>st</sup>.
- 9<sup>th</sup> One seen perched at Punggol Grassland by Chung Cheong.
- 10<sup>th</sup> One at Pulau Semakau by Ben Lee, could be a resident on the island?
- 18<sup>th</sup> One seen hunting at Sungei Tengah by Alan OwYong
- 25<sup>th</sup> One reported over at Kranji Bund by Cyril Ng and Hua Chew during AWC.
- 31<sup>st</sup> More than 5 reported by Kok Hui at Changi Cove.

### **Grey-headed Fish Eagle (3)**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> A pair was reported back at Little Guilin by Myron Tay via Doreen.
- 10<sup>th</sup> Martti reported one over at SBWR.

### **Crested Serpent Eagle (1)**

- 31<sup>st</sup> A surprised find for Doreen Ang while driving along Lavender Street. The eagle flew low overhead but slow enough for a clear ID.

*\*The numbers in brackets besides the bird name indicates the total number of raptor seen during the month. Different reports of the same species 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 the numerous contributions and reports from the birders. Special appreciation to Lee Tiak Khee, Tan Kok Hui and KC Tsang for the use of their photos.*