

Singapore Raptor Report Spring Migration, March 2009

Summary:

We finally had our first migrating flock of **Oriental Honey-buzzards** for Spring, thanks to Martti Siponen. On 22nd afternoon at Tuas South, he counted a total of **359** OHBs flying along the western coast of Tuas towards Johore in the north. Largest single group counted was 40 raptors. This could be part of the larger flocks that migrate over from Sumatra to Tanjong Tuan, Malacca in March every year and maybe forced to the south by change of prevailing winds. We will make a point to do a count at Tuas come next March. Martti met a casual birder who told him that he counted 159 “eagles” flying over Ang Mio Kio Town Gardens on the same morning. With Martti’s count, the Honey-buzzards top the list for the first time with a total record of **429** counted. This gave us a grand total of **499** raptors for March, the highest monthly count since we started compiling the records in October 2007. We had a total of 8 species with single record of **Chinese Sparrowhawk** and a late **Common Buzzard**. A pair of **Eastern Marsh Harriers** were reported wintering at Tuas Grasslands. **Peregrine Falcons** were recorded in the resident area of Bishan and downtown Novena. **Black Bazas** were seen by many observers all over Singapore during the Annual Bird Census. **Ospreys** were spotted at Sime Forest and Tuas beside its usual haunt in Kranji while **Japanese Sparrowhawks** were still reported wintering at three locations.



A pair of Black-winged Kites in aerial combat at Changi Cove by Lee Tiah Khee graced this month cover.

Migrant Raptors

Table 1

S/N	Species	No.	S/N	Species	No.
1	Oriental Honey-buzzard	429	6	Chinese Sparrowhawk	1
2	Black Baza	43	7	Common Buzzard	1
3	Peregrine Falcon	8	8	Eastern Marsh Harrier	2
4	Osprey	5	9	Unidentified Raptors	6
5	Japanese Sparrowhawk	4		TOTAL	499

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

1. Oriental Honey Buzzard (429)



- 1st One seen at Chek Jawa flying ENE by Martti Siponen
- 5th Two soaring birds over Holland Village by Martti Siponen
- 6th One reported at the Japanese Gardens by John Spencer
- 15th Eight were seen thermaling over Queensway by John Spencer. The flock then headed North West.
- 15th One over at Serangoon by Kok Hui
- 18th 34 migrating across Tuas South flying to NE by Martti Siponen
- 21st Three reported at Japanese Gardens attacked by crows by Martti Siponen.
- 22nd One flying to WNW at SBWR by Martti Siponen

Migrating flocks of OHBs over Tuas by Martti Siponen

- 22nd **The largest ever migrating flock of 359 OHBs reported at Tuas South by Martti Siponen between 3.00pm and 6.00pm. All were flying towards Johore to the north. Check out his short video clip posted @ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X6v2Roe0EYM>**
- 24th The last group of 17 over the same area at Tuas South by Martti Sipoden.
- 26th One reported perched on a roof at Alexandra Road by John Spencer.
- 27th One flying over the AYE at Clementi by Martti Siponen.

2. Black Baza (43)

- 1st Four at Chek Jawa, Pulau Ubin by Martti Siponen
- 8th A total of 14 birds reported by Martti at Sungei Buloh (SBWR)



Black Baza at Japanese Gardens by Martti Siponen

- 10th Two seen swooping around Tiup Tiup Trees at South Buona Vista side of KRP by Margie Hall
- 15th Four reported by Martti at Pulau Ubin.
- 15th During the Annual Bird Census (ABC), Wing Chong and SK Phang reported 4 at Bukit Batok West. Kok Hui had 3 thermaling over Serangoon.

15th *Continued from ABC*, Con Foley and Danny Lau reported 3 over at Poyan, with one at Sembawang Park by Margie Hall. John Spencer got 2 at SBWR route 2 while Mendis Tan and Kenneth Kee got 1 at SBWR route 1, likely the same bird seen by John. 2 were seen soaring at BTNR by Lim Kim Chuah. A single bird at Pulau Ubin reported by SK Kwang and in Ubin West also a single bird noted by Willie Foo and SC Fang.

16th One over at CCK Christian Cemetery by Alfred Chia

21st Two seen at Japanese Gardens by Martti Siponen.

21st Pah Liang reported one flying over the food court at Botanic Gardens

23rd One spotted flying over Sime Forest by John Spencer

3. Peregrine Falcon (8)



Peregrine Falcon at Pulau Ubin's Jetty by Martti Sipoden

1st One seen at the Jetty of Pulau Ubin by Martti Siponen, was spotted again on the 15th.

3rd One seen over at Novena Square by Piet Opstaele

6th One perched on antenna at Bishan by Sun Chong Hong.

15th One reported at Pulau Ubin by SK Kwang during ABC

15th One seen above Steven's Road by John Spencer.

21st One at Tuas South seen hunting by Martti with another reported on 24th.

28th A pair seen having an aerial duel over at Kranji by Alan OwYong

29th One seen at Pulau Ubin by John Spencer, most likely the same bird spotted during ABC.

29th Two reported at Bishan by Sun Chong Hong. *Note: Falcon was still around in April.*

4. Osprey (5)

11th One was spotted from the Jelutong Tower at Sime Forest by John Spencer

15th Doreen and Ah Huay reported one fishing at Seletar Dam area

- 15th Mendis Tan and Kenneth Kee sighted one at SBWR during ABC
- 21st One seen hunting at Neo Tiew Lane 2 by Doreen and Sherub from Bhutan
- 25th One seen carrying fish over at Tuas by Martti Siponen.
- 29th One reported at SBWR by Martti, probably the same bird sighted on the 15th.

5. Japanese Sparrowhawk (4)

- 2nd A male was seen circling above Camden Park by Piet Opstaele
- 12th Two reported at MacRitchie by John Spencer
- 15th One at SBWR by Mendis Tan during ABC. John Spencer sent in another report, likely the same one over at SBWR.

6. Chinese Sparrowhawk (1)

- 12th A single male was seen flying across MacRitchie by John Spencer.

7. Common Buzzard (1)

- 5th One was seen harassed by crows at Sembawang camp by Avian Chia.

8. Eastern Marsh Harrier (2)



- 24th A second year bird was seen hunting at Tuas South grasslands by Martti Siponen.
- 25th A male reported at Tuas South by Martti. Could be the same Harrier reported there last month.

Eastern Marsh Harrier hunting at Tuas by Martti Sipoden

9. Unidentified Raptors (6)

- 1st One Sparrowhawk species seen at Chek Jawa by Martti.
- 8th Two Sparrowhawks species seen at SBWR by Martti
- 21st One Sparrowhawk species over at Japanese Gardens by Martti.
- 22nd One Sparrowhawk species at SBWR by Martti.
- 28th A possible juvenile Rufous-bellied Eagle soaring over Kranji Marshes reported by Alan OwYong.

Resident Raptors

Summary:

Nesting records of the **White-bellied Sea Eagles** (Yishun and Mandai), **Brahminy Kites** (Seletar Air Base with fledglings) and the **Changeable Hawk-eagles** (Laguna Golf Club) were still reported for March. The Changeable Hawk-eagle nest reported last month near Bukit Batok Park was observed to have successfully fledged. Thanks to the Annual Bird Census held on the 15th, there were good numbers of resident raptors reported from all over the island. The Kranji Marshes area retained the top spot for the highest species count for both the migrant and resident raptors. The **Crested Serpent Eagle** was again spotted this month at Chestnut Water Works followed by a posting in Stomp website of one perched on a lamp-post at Lentor Avenue in early April. The **Grey-headed Fish Eagles** were reported flying over at Holland Village and Pulau Ubin while the **Black-winged Kites** were doing well at Sungei Buloh, Changi and Tuas.

Table 2

S/N	Species	No.	S/N	Species	No
10	White-bellied Sea Eagle	34	13	Grey-headed Fish Eagle	9
11	Brahminy Kite	23	14	Black-winged Kite	9
12	Changeable Hawk-eagle	11	15	Crested Serpent Eagle	1
				TOTAL	87

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

10. White-bellied Sea Eagle (34)

- 1st Martti started the month with report of 3 adults and 3 juveniles at Pulau Ubin.
- 7th Lena Chow reported 2 at Lower Pierce.
- 8th Martti had 2 adults and 2 juveniles at SBWR
- 10th Raj Krishnan reported a juvenile flying over Changi Beach
- 11th John Spencer sighted 2 adults and 1 juvenile from Sime Forest's Jelutong Tower
- 12th A juvenile attacked by crows reported by Ben Lee at Kranji Marshes
- 12th A large nest with a pair of adults was photographed by Poh Bee at Yishun Ave 6.
- 15th We had good records during ABC at various locations: 1 at Seletar Dam by Doreen and Ah Huay. A juvenile over the Eco Pond at Botanic Gardens by Pah Liang. 2 at Lorong Halus by Alfred Chia. 2 at Serangoon from Kok Hui. 1 at Poyan from Con Foley and Danny Lau. 1 from Sembawang Park by Margie Hall. 1 from SBWR by Kenneth Kee and Mendis Tan. 2 over at Pulau Ubin West with one in nest by Willie Foo and SC Fang. Note that Martti also reported an adult and 3 juveniles at Pulau Ubin on the same day.
- 17th An adult over at Holland Village by Martti Siponen
- 20th Two adults and one juvenile over at SBWR by Martti.
- 21st Two adults at Japanese Gardens by Martti.
- 21st A pair of adults over at Neo Tiew Lane 2 by Doreen and Sherub from Bhutan. Three were seen flying over Kranji reservoir by Alan OwYong
- 22nd One over at SBWR in the morning and another over at Tuas in the afternoon by Martti.
- 24th An adult over at Tuas South by Martti and again on 25th and 26th.
- 28th Two reported at the Kranji Marshes by Alan OwYong
- 29th Three adults and one juvenile at Pulau Ubin by John Spencer
- 29th An adult at Bukit Batok NPark by Martti.
- 31st Raj Krishnan reported one perched at Mandai Crematorium. Raj suspected it may be nesting nearby.

11. Brahminy Kite (23)



Juvenile Brahminy Kites at SBWR by Martti Sipoden

- 1st Two reported at Pulau Ubin by Martti Siponen.
- 3rd Two at SBWR by Martti Siponen and three on 8th at SBWR
- 6th Two reported over at the Japanese Gardens by John Spencer
- 8th Two fledglings and one adult noted by Lena Chow and Poh Bee at Seletar Air Base. Poh Bee reported 1 juvenile flying over Bah Soon Pah Road

- 15th ABC counts: Single bird seen at Bukit Batok West by Wing Chong and SK Phang, Seletar Dam by Doreen and Ah Huay, Serangoon by Kok Hui, Poyan by Con Foley and Danny Lau, SBWR by John Spencer, Malcom Road by Jane Rogers, Ubin West by Willie Foo and SC Fang and Ubin by Siew Kwang. (Martti had 1 at Ubin on same day). 2 at SBWR by Kenneth and Mendis (1 of which could be the same bird reported earlier by John Spencer)
- 16th One at CCK Christian Cemetery by Alfred Chia
- 21st An adult and 2 juveniles reported at Japanese Gardens by Martti.
- 22nd An adult and 2 juveniles at SBWR by Martti.
- 22nd Two reported at Tuas South by Martti and again the next three days.
- 25th One at Murai Farmway by Alfred Chia.
- 26th Two adults at Tuas South by Martti and the next 2 days.
- 28th A juvenile seen together with the same pair of adults at Tuas South by Martti.
- 28th One at Kranji Marshes by Alan OwYong
- 28th Two adults at the Japanese Gardens by Martti.
- 29th Two reported by John Spencer at Pulau Ubin. Could be the same birds seen earlier by Martti.

12. Changeable Hawk-Eagle (11)

- 1st A dark morph reported at Pulau Ubin by Martti Siponen
- 4th Cyril reported a nest at Laguna Country Club together with an adult nearby.
- 8th Two individuals reported at SBWR by Martti.
- 11th One over at Sime Forest's Jelutong Tower by John Spencer
- 12th One over at Kranji Marshes by Ben Lee
- 15th ABC counts: 1 at Bukit Batok West by Wing Chong and SK Phang, 1 at Poyan by Con Foley and Danny Lau, 1 heard over at Malcom Road by Jane Rogers and a dark morph at Bukit Timah nature reserve by Lim Kim Chuah.
- 21st An adult dark morph over at Neo Tiew Lane2 by Doreen Ang and Sherub.
- 27th William reported the successful fledgling of the pair at Bukit Batok. Their nesting was reported in last month report.

13. Grey-headed Fish-Eagle (9)

- 7th One over at Lower Pierce Reservoir by Lena Chow
- 8th One also reported at Lower Pierce by Ben Lee
- 8th Two reported over Bukit Batok by Martti Siponen
- 12th Ben Lee reported an individual flying off with a squirrel on its talon at Kranji Marshes
- 12th One reported by John Spencer over at MacRitchie Reservoir



Grey-headed Fish Eagles at Lower Pierce by Lee Tiah Khee

- 14th A pair was photographed by Lee Tiah Khee at Lower Pierce after being attracted by their noisy calls
- 15th One over at Pulau Ubin by Siew Kwang
- 17th Two seen by Martti flying north over at Holland Village

14. Black-winged Kite (9)

- 1st One at Pulau Ubin reported by Martti Siponen.
- 3rd One at SBWR reported by Martti Siponen
- 8th A pair at SBWR by Martti Siponen
- 13th A pair was photographed fighting over at Changi Cove by Lee Tiah Khee (front cover)
- 19th One over at Tuas by Martti Siponen.
- 21st One at Neo Tiew Lane2 by Doreen and Sherub.
- 22nd Two at Tuas reported by Martti and again on 25th & 27th followed by individual sightings on 24th, 26th, 28th and 29th, all at Tuas.
- 25th One hovering the green field along Choa Chu Kang Road by Alfred Chia.

15. Crested Serpent Eagle (1)

- 15th One perched high up at Chestnut Water Works reported by Eddy Lee.
On 7th April, Victor Kuah posted a picture of one perched on a lamp post at Lentor Avenue in the Stomp website. Sun Chong Hong alerted us on this post.

** The numbers in brackets besides the bird name indicates 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 by Kenneth Kee. Many thanks to those who sent in their reports and special thanks to Lee Tiah Khee & Martti Siponen for the use of their photographs and video clip.*