

## Singapore Raptors Report Autumn Migration, November 2008

### Summary :

November again proved to be the main migrating month for raptors in Singapore. We recorded a total of **11 species** (9 in Nov 07) numbering **288** raptors (240 in Nov 07) with **Black Bazas** as expected topping the count with 137 (122 in Nov 07) followed by **Oriental Honey Buzzards** at 77 (58 in Nov 08). I have excluded the records from the full-day raptor count on the 9<sup>th</sup> Nov so as not to confuse the report. The excitement for the month was the sighting of a juvenile *Torquatus* race of the **Oriental Honey Buzzard** at Toa Payoh spotted by Gloria Seow. This is a South-East Asia resident race with breeding records from Malaysia. What are the chances of this race staying and breeding in Singapore in the future? Martii Siponen, a visiting birder and keen raptor watcher spent 5 days in early half of November birding at Sungei Buloh, Pulau Ubin and Tuas. He sent in a personal record of **157** migrating raptors for the month. He had the distinction of seeing the largest flock of migrating Oriental Honey Buzzards (**55**) ever recorded in Singapore, at Sungei Buloh on 1<sup>st</sup> Nov. He followed this with another excellent record of 44 Black Bazas migrating over Chek Jawa on the 8<sup>th</sup>. We also had our first record from Pulau Tekong of two Black Bazas and a Changeable Hawk-eagle seen by Avian Chia while serving National Service on this restricted island. Both the **Ospreys** and **Peregrine Falcons** were enjoying their winters here at Kranji and Jurong areas respectively. Four **Eastern Marsh Harriers** congregated over the Changi Cove reclaimed land, a favourite location for our Harriers together with two **Common Buzzards**. The odd Common Buzzard outside the Changi area was reported migrating over Kent Ridge Park by Horst Flotow. While we had reports of only two **Chinese Sparrowhawks** during the month, we already counted 12 on the 9<sup>th</sup> Nov during the full-day raptor count. The **Grey-faced Buzzard (1), Booted Eagle (2) and Pied Harrier (1)** made up the rest of the species with low numbers.



*Peregrine Falcon tearing up a White-vented Myna by Lee Tiah Kee taken at Japanese gardens on 14<sup>th</sup> Nov, graced this month cover.*

## Migrant Raptors

**Table 1**

No	Species	Count	No	Species	Count
1	<b>Black Baza</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Common Buzzard</b>	<b>3</b>
2	<b>Oriental Honey Buzzard</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Booted Eagle</b>	<b>2</b>
3	<b>Japanese Sparrowhawk</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Grey-faced Buzzard</b>	<b>1</b>
4	<b>Osprey</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Pied Harrier</b>	<b>1</b>
5	<b>Eastern Marsh Harrier</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Unidentified Accipiter</b>	<b>21</b>
6	<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Unidentified Raptor</b>	<b>5</b>
7	<b>Chinese Sparrowhawk</b>	<b>14</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>288</b>

*Note : The total numbers are just an indicative figure for this report only as there could be a possibility of double-counting the same bird in a small island like Singapore.*

### Black Baza (137)

Again the largest migrating raptor species with sizeable flocks of 44 birds reported at Chek Jawa, 12 at Lor Halus, 19 over Changi and 10 each at Neo Tiew Lane and Punggol.

- 1 Nov Two on migration reported by Martii Siponen.
- 4 Nov Three reported in flight over Neo Tiew Lane 2 (NTL2) by Ding Li
- 4 Nov One over Sungei Buloh (SBWR) by Charlie Moores.
- 5 Nov KC Tsang shot an underside view of one at Bidadari Cemetery
- 5 Nov KC Tsang reported seeing 3 birds at NTL2.
- 5 Nov Ben Lee reported 11 hovering over east Ubin, the biggest flock so far flying towards the mainland.
- 6 Nov Four birds reported at Bidadari Cemetery by Leslie Fung
- 7 Nov Two reported at Punggol by Jia Sheng, Danny and Con Foley.
- 8 Nov A day total of 32 migrating birds counted by Martii Siponen at Chek Jawa and another flock of 12 birds flying down into the forest.
- 9 Nov A rare record from P.Tekong of 2 Bazas by Avian Chia
- 9 Nov Just one bird reported at SBWR by Martii Siponen.
- 12 Nov A flock of 12 reported by KC Tsang at Lor. Halus.
- 15 Nov One seen perched at Jurong Lake by Kok Hui, Jia Sheng and Danny.
- 18 Nov Seven reported by John Spencer at SBWR. Also reported by Wing Chong, Kim Keang and Doreen.
- 19 Nov A flock of 19 soaring over Changi reported by Gim Cheong
- 22 Nov Four reported circling at Kent Ridge Park by Horst Flotow.
- 22 Nov Three reported by Kok Hui at SBWR.
- 24 Nov A flock of 10 reported by a very wet Simon Cockayne at NTL2.
- 29 Nov Three thermaling over Changi Coastal road by Kok Hui and Danny.
- 29 Nov Kok Hui and Danny were also in Punggol to report a flock of 10.

### Oriental Honey Buzzard (71)

- 1 Nov The biggest migrating flock of 55 over at SBWR reported by Martii Siponen.
- 2 Nov One seen migrating over P.Ubin by Martii Siponen
- 5 Nov One seen by Ding Li flying over Batok Ave 6.



*OHB Torquatus race by Gloria Seow*

- 8 Nov - Richard Lim's son took a photo of one sitting at a HDB block at Balestier.
- 8 Nov - One pale morph at Punggol by Jia Sheng, Danny and Con Foley.
- 9 Nov - One migrating over SBWR by Martii Siponen.
- 10 Nov - Gloria Seow was alert enough to track down a juvenile *touquatus* SEA resident race outside her flat at Toa Payoh. Both she and Tiah Khee were able to get good sets of photos for ID.
- 12 Nov - Seven over Tuas South reported by Martii Siponen.
- 15 Nov - One with tattered wings over SBWR by Kok Hui and company.
- 22 Nov - Two over Kent Ridge Park seen by Horst Flotow.

### **Japanese Sparrowhawk (12)**

- 1 Nov One migrating over SBWR by Martii Siponen.
- 2 Nov One over at P.Ubin reported by Martii Siponen.
- 4 Nov One seen in flight at NTL2 by Felix Wong and Ding Li.
- 8 Nov Two seen migrating over Chek Jawa by Martii Siponen.
- 9 Nov Four migrating over SBWR by Martii Siponen.
- 17 Nov One seen over SBWR by John Spencer.
- 18 Nov Maybe the same accipiter at SBWR by John Spencer and also seen by Wing Chong, Kim Keang and Doreen.
- 19 Nov One juvenile at Changi reported by Gim Cheong.
- 21 Nov KC Tsang photographed one flying over Bidadari Cemetery.
- 22 Nov One reported at SBWR by Kok Hui. Maybe the same visiting accipiter.
- 24 Nov One seen hunting at NTL2 by Simon Cockayne.
- 29 Nov One over at Punggol reported by Kok Hui and Danny

### **Osprey (11)**

Ospreys were well spread out. There were two birds at P.Ubin/Chek Jawa, two at open fields at Turuk Track, one or two over at SBWR, a single bird at Lorong Halus, one at Upper Seletar, one at Changi Cove and another two at Punggol.

- 2 Nov Two seen by Martii Siponen at Pulau Ubin
- 4 Nov The two wintering Ospreys were still seen at Turut Track by Felix Wong

4 Nov Charlie Moores reported seeing one at SBWR. Could be the same bird.  
 7 Nov One seen perched at BBC Towers eating its prey by Chung Cheong  
 8 Nov One seen by Martii Siponen over at Chek Jawa tower in P.Ubin.  
 9 Nov One still around at SBWR reported by Martii Siponen.  
 12 Nov One reported at Lor Halus by KC Tsang  
 15 Nov One reported by Kok Hui and company flying over SBWR main bridge.  
 15 Nov John Spencer reported one at Upper Seletar Reservoir.  
 18 Nov One with fish in its claws at Turuk Track reported by Gim Cheong.  
 22 Nov One reported by Kok Hui at SBWR. Could be the same bird.  
 23 Nov Two flying to the coast and one perched at tower at NTL2 by Chung Cheong  
 29 Nov One over at Changi Cove reported by Kok Hui and Danny.  
 29 Nov Two at P.Punggol with one of them on the ground by Kok Hui and Danny  
 29 Nov Two still wintering at NTL2 reported by Chung Cheong and Tiah Khee.

### **Eastern Marsh Harrier ( 6 )**

From the reports, it seems that there were 4 Eastern Marsh Harriers (1 male, 2 females and 1 juvenile) at Changi Cove.



*Female Eastern Marsh Harrier by Lim Kim Chuah*

1 Nov - One male and one female on migration over SBWR reported by Martii Siponen.  
 14 Nov - Both Kim Chuah and Tiah Khee photographed an adult female EMH at Changi Cove.  
 21 Nov - Another female photographed by Tiah Khee at Changi Cove.  
 29 Nov - A male sub-adult, 1 female and 1 juvenile at Changi Cove reported by Kok Hui and Danny.

### **Peregrine Falcon (4)**

One bird wintering at Neo Tiew and Turuk area, a *japonensis* at P.Ubin, another feeding happily at the Japanese Gardens (photos by Tiah Khee and David Tan) and one flying over Queenstown.

1 Nov One at Turuk Track reported by Felix Wong.  
 2 Nov One at P.Ubin Jetty reported by Martii Siponen.  
 4 Nov Felix Wong and Ding Li were still reporting the presence of this falcon at the telecom towers at Turut Track.  
 5 Nov One photographed by Tiah Khee at Japanese Gardens. He followed up with dramatic photos of the same Falcon tearing up its prey on 14<sup>th</sup> Nov.  
 8 Nov A *Japonensis* Peregrine Falcon perched on tower at P.Ubin by Soo Yen.  
 16 Nov One reported flying over Queenstown MRT by John Spencer.  
 23 Nov One was still around the Japanese Gardens feeding on a White-vented Myna as reported by Sunny Yeo.

- 24 Nov More photos from David Tan of the same Peregrine feeding on WV Myna.  
 29 Nov One still wintering at NTL2 from Chung Cheong and Tiah Khee's report.

**Common Buzzard (3)**

- 4 Nov This Buzzard was still wintering at Changi from Gim Cheong's report.  
 11 Nov Another one but this was a pale morph juvenile at Changi Coastal Rd by Alfred.  
 22 Nov One seen circling with similar size buzzard over Kent Ridge by Horst Flotow

**Chinese Sparrowhawk (2)**

- 8 Nov Jia Sheng, Danny and Con Foley reported a sighting at Punggol.  
 15 Nov One seen flying over Jurong Lake by Kok Hui, Jia Sheng and Danny.

**Booted Eagle (2)**



5 Nov - KC Tsang sent in dramatic photo of underside shots of this rare winter visitor taken at Bidadari Cemetery. This was the first record of the season for this raptor and at a sub-urban area as well.

22 Nov - One reported by Horst Flotow at Kent Ridge Park.

*Booted Eagle by KC Tsang*

**Grey-faced Buzzard (1)**

- 1 Nov The only record of one on migration over SBWR by Martii Siponen.

**Pied Harrier (1)**

- 7 Nov Kim Chuah and Tiah Khee reported one sub-adult male flying around the Changi Cove area. Not so sharp far away photo taken.

**Unidentified Raptor ( 21)**

- 2 Nov Eight Buzzard species migrating in one flock over P.Ubin by Martii Siponen.  
 8 Nov Two unidentified eagles and one buzzard (Grey-faced?) at Chek Jawa.  
 9 Nov An unidentified eagle over at SBWR.  
 12 Nov 17 Buzzard species (OHB?) over at Tuas South reported by Martii Siponen.  
 12 Nov One at Lor Halus reported by KC Tsang  
 22 Nov An unidentified Falcon flushing waders at SBWR by Kok Hui  
 28 Nov A blurred photo of an Aquila taken at Seletar sent in by Ding Li.

## Unidentified Accipiter ( 5)

- 4 Nov Gim Cheong reported one flying over Punggol  
8 Nov One reported by Jia Sheng, Danny and Con Foley.  
8 Nov One over at Chek Jawa reported by Martii Siponen.  
12 Nov One Sparrowhawk species over at Tuas South by Martii Siponen.  
15 Nov One reported flying across Jurong Lake by Kok Hui, Jia Sheng and Danny.

## RESIDENT RAPTORS

### Summary:

Both the **Brahminy Kites** (43) and the **White-bellied Sea Eagles** (35) made up about 73% of all the **107** resident raptors reported. Their numbers were a big jump from last month's count of 17 and 16 birds respectively, mainly due to more birdwatchers in the field. But it still showed a very healthy national population, especially over at Punggol for the Kites. The **Black-winged Kites** (15) was also showing a remarkable surge over at Changi Cove with a population of about 10 birds being recorded there. The **Changeable Hawk-eagles** (12) was well spread out with good records coming from Kranji. KC Tsang had a new location for the single record of a **Grey-headed Fish Eagle** at Clementi Woods. Walad of Naturepixels had a shot of a **Crested Serpent Eagle** at Woodlands.

### Brahminy Kite (43)

- 1 Nov A total of five birds reported at SBWR by Martii Siponen.  
2 Nov Five birds reported soaring over the Marina Barrage by Felix Wong  
2 Nov Four birds counted by Martii Siponen at P.Ubin.  
4 Nov Gim Cheong reported 4 adults and 1 juvenile at Changi.  
4 Nov Two reported by Charlie Moores at SBWR.  
6 Nov Leslie Fung reported 2 birds at Bidadari Cemetery.  
6 Nov One photographed by KC Tsang at Clementi Woods.  
8 Nov A total of 10 juveniles and 2 adults were reported at Punggol by Jia Sheng, Danny & Con Foley.  
8 Nov Two recorded by Martii Siponen at Chek Jawa.  
9 Nov Four recorded by Martii Siponen at SBWR. Could be the same birds there.  
10 Nov One reported over Jurong Lake by Gim Cheong.  
15 Nov A pair of adults at Jurong Lake by Kok Hui, Jia Sheng and Danny Lau.  
15 Nov One seen in flight over Tuas by Kok Hui and company.  
15 Nov An adult in flight over SBWR by Kok Hui, Jia Sheng and Danny.  
16 Nov One soaring at Japanese Gardens reported by Felix Wong.  
18 Nov One bird mobbed by 2 CHE reported at SBWR by John Spencer, Wing Chong, Kim Keang and Doreen.  
19 Nov Two at Changi reported by Gim Cheong.  
19 Nov Two at Jurong Lake reported by Gim Cheong.  
22 Nov Four birds counted by Horst Flotow at Kent Ridge Park.  
22 Nov Two adults reported at SBWR by Kok Hui.  
23 Nov One reported by Sunny Yeo at Japanese Gardens.  
23 Nov Could be the same bird seen soaring at Jurong Lake by Felix Wong.  
24 Nov Two circling over at NTL2 reported by Chung Cheong

- 29 Nov One pretending to be a Harrier at Changi Cove by Kok Hui & Danny.  
 29 Nov One at Punggol reported by Kok Hui and Danny,  
 29 Nov A large flock of 11 at P. Punggol reported by Kok Hui and Danny. Could be the same group reported on 8 Nov by Jia Sheng, Danny and Con Foley.

### **White-bellied Sea-Eagle (35)**

- 1 Nov Four reported at SBWR by Martii Siponen.  
 1 Nov Two juveniles reported at NTL2 by Felix Wong and Ding Li.  
 4 Nov A pair of sub-adult was observed locking talons over NTL2 by Felix.  
 Another adult seen by Ding Li. Another reported at SBWR by Charlie Moores.  
 4 Nov One adult and two immatures of different ages reported by GimCheong over at Changi.  
 6 Nov One juvenile harassed by crows at Bidadari Cemetery by Leslie Fung  
 7 Nov One adult and one juvenile flying over BBC field and reservoir with another juvenile perched by Chung Cheong.  
 8 Nov An unusual large group of six juveniles reported at Punggol by Jia Sheng, Danny and Con Foley.  
 8 Nov Four counted by Martii Siponen at Chek Jawa.  
 9 Nov Three at SBWR reported by Martii Siponen, part of the residents there.  
 11 Nov One adult catching fish at Jurong Lake by Gim Cheong.  
 12 Nov Three seen by KC Tsang at Lor. Halus.  
 15 Nov One in flight over Jurong Lake by Kok Hui, Jai Sheng and Danny.  
 15 Nov An adult in flight over SBWR by Kok Hui, Jia Sheng and Danny.  
 15 Nov Two reported by John Spencer at Upper Seletar Reservoir.  
 17 Nov Two adults over SBWR reported by Gim Cheong  
 18 Nov Same bird at Turuk Track reported by Gim Cheong.  
 19 Nov One at Changi reported by Gim Cheong.  
 19 Nov Two at Mandai reported by Gim Cheong  
 20 Nov One over the Marina Barrage reported by Gim Cheong.  
 23 Nov One juvenile reported at Japanese Gardens by Sunny Yeo.  
 24 Nov One juvenile at NTL2 by Chung Chung.  
 26 Nov A sub-adult seen flying from Ubin to Changi by Felix Wong.  
 29 Nov One juvenile at Changi Cove reported by Kok Hui and Danny  
 29 Nov One at P. Punggol reported by Kok Hui and Danny  
 29 Nov Two still being seen at NTL2 by Chung Cheong and Tiah Khee.

### **Black-winged Kite (15)**

- 1 Nov One at NTL2 reported by Felix Wong and Ding Li  
 2 Nov A pair was observed copulating at Changi Cove by Ding Li and Kim Chuah. They reported seeing at least 5 birds there.  
 4 Nov One reported at Punggol by Gim Cheong  
 4 Nov One reported by Charlie Moores at SBWR.  
 7 Nov One photographed by Tiah Khee at Changi Cove.  
 12 Nov One at Tuas South reported by Martii Siponen.  
 15 Nov One seen perched at Tuas by Kok Hui, Jai Sheng and Danny.  
 19 Nov Three reported at Changi by Gim Cheong.  
 29 Nov About 10, the largest for one location at Changi Cove by Kok Hui and Danny.  
 29 Nov One at Punggol reported by Kok Hui and Danny.

## **Changeable Hawk-eagle (12)**



*Changeable Hawk-eagle by Lim Kim Chuah*

- 1 Nov - Two birds reported at SBWR by Martii Siponen
- 2 Nov - One seen perched on a lamp post at Changi Cove by Kim Chuah and Ding Li.
- 6 Nov - One heard at Bidadari Cemetery by Leslie Fung
- 6 Nov - One photographed by Tiah Khee at PIE Lornie exit.
- 7 Nov - One pale morph perched at NTL2 by Chung Cheong

- 8 Nov Two seen at Chek Jawa by Martii Siponen.
- 9 Nov Could be the same two birds seen on 1 Nov at SBWR by Martii Siponen.
- 9 Nov A confirmed sighting of one at P.Tekong by Avian Chia.
- 17 Nov A pale morph photographed by KC Tsang at Punggol.
- 18 Nov Two pale morph reported by John Spencer, Wing Chong, Kim Keang and Doreen at SBWR
- 20 Nov A pale morph being mobbed by crow at Marina Sands by Gim Cheong
- 22 Nov One hassled by unidentified Sparrowhawk at Kent Ridge Park by Horst Flotow.

## **Grey-headed Fish Eagle (1)**

- 6 Nov One spotted and photographed at Clementi Woods by KC Tsang. Could be a new record for this area.

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

- 29 Nov Walad of Naturepixels managed to photograph one perched on a lamp-post at Woodlands while driving home. Could be a new record for this area.

*\*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 e-forum.  
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