

# 6th Singapore Raptor Watch Report

Autumn 2013 Migration - 3 Nov 2013

by TAN Gim Cheong



Common Kestrel, at Tuas South, 03 Nov 13, 3pm, photo by TAN Gim Cheong.

The 6th Singapore raptor watch was held on Sunday, 3 November 2012 and involved 54 participants across eight sites, including Chek Jawa, on Pulau Ubin, off the northeastern coast.



Figure 1 : 2013 Raptor Watch Sites. (source of basemap – maps.google.com.sg)

The day started well with fine weather. True to its name 'Central Catchment Nature Reserve', rain hit the Jelutong Tower around 13:00 hrs forcing the team there to take shelter and end the count. Luckily the other sites were spared. The peak period for raptor activity was between 11:00 to 13:00 hrs.

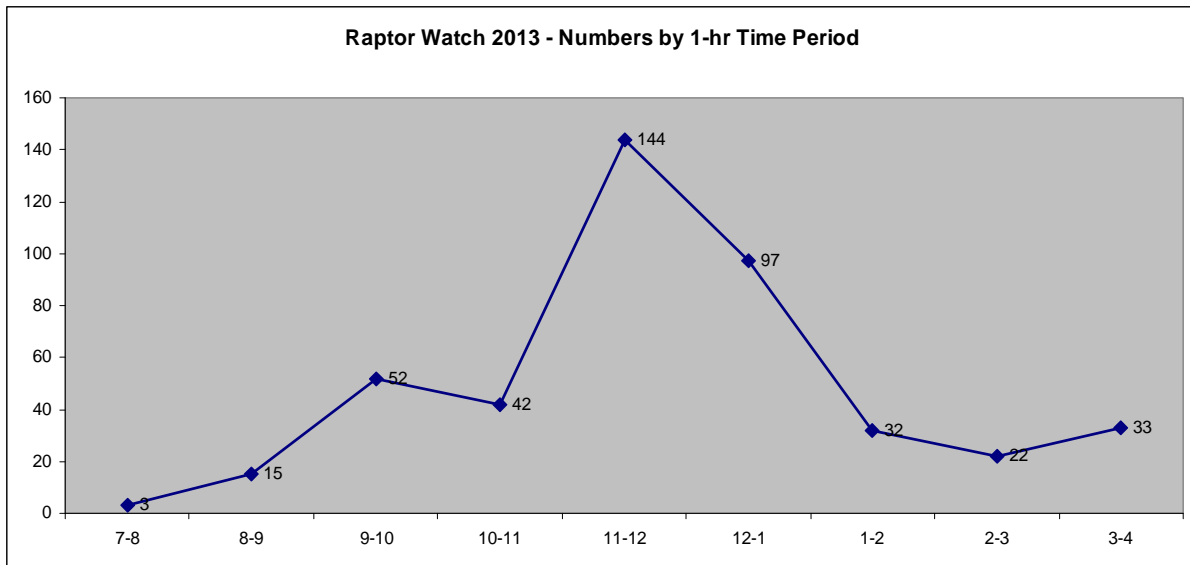


Figure 2 : Raptor numbers by 1-hour time periods

The richest site in terms of number of raptors was Tuas South followed by Kent Ridge Park, same as the year before.

SITE	Tuas South	Kent Ridge Park	Chek Jawa, Jejawi Tower	Japanese Garden	Changi Business Park	Pu;au Punggol	CCNR, Jelutong Tower	Marina Barrage Roof Garden	GRAND TOTAL
TOTAL	181	65	54	54	37	29	15	5	440

Figure 3 : Total counts by Site (descending order)

The 292 migrant raptors were identified to nine species and another 31 probable migrants were un-identified. Tuas South had the highest count of 165 migrant raptors, followed by Kent Ridge Park with 54.

The nine migrant species recorded included rarities such as a single **Common Kestrel** seen and photographed at Tuas South as it burst into the open spaces suddenly at 15:00 hrs, chasing after small birds. The hunt failed and it started to circle, allowing time for observers to have a good look at it.

Other less common migrant raptors included a **Common Buzzard** and a **Booted Eagle**, both at Pulau Punggol.

As for the resident species, the **Crested Goshawks** were once again recorded at Kent Ridge Park.

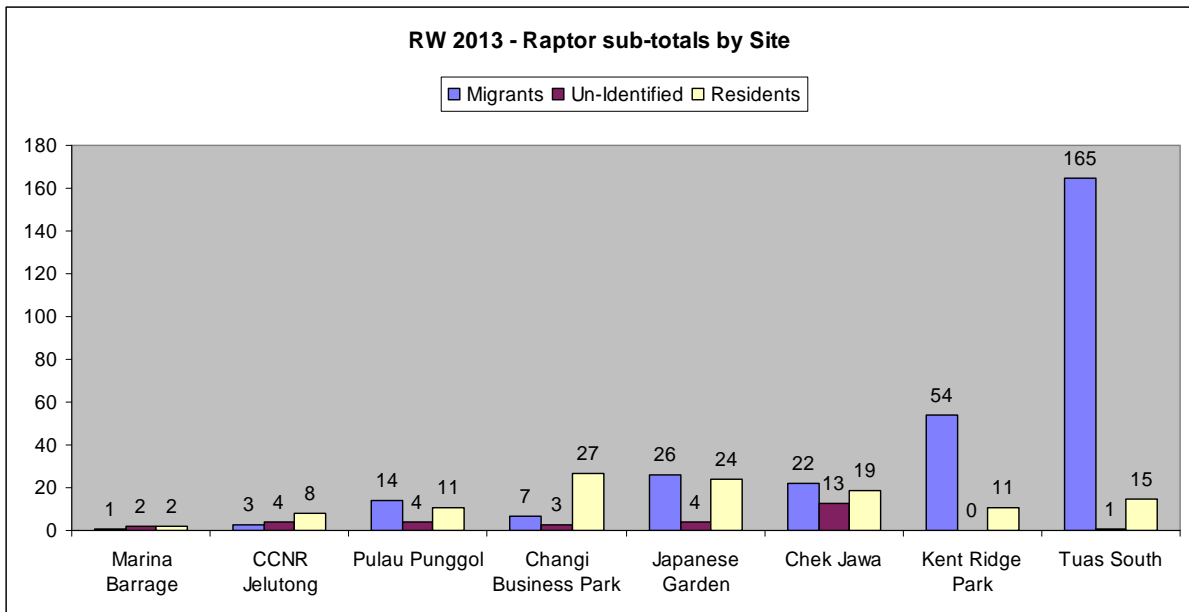


Figure 4 : Raptor Sub-totals by Site

The richest site, by migrant species, was shared by Pulau Punggol, Kent Ridge Park and Tuas South, with 6 migrant species. The other sites had between 1 to 5 migrant species.

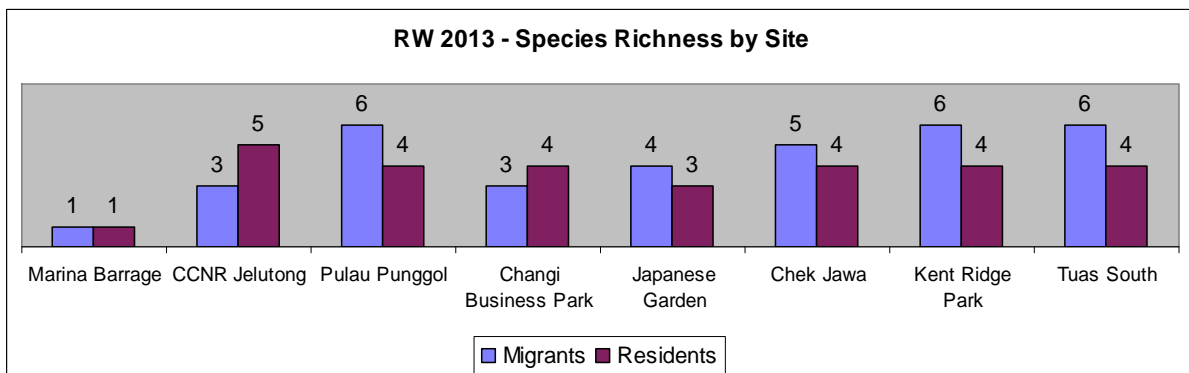


Figure 5 : Species Richness by Site

The most numerous migrant raptor was the **Oriental Honey Buzzard** with 140 birds, a drop of 70% compared to last year. The **Black Baza** was a distant second with 63 birds. In third place was the **Japanese Sparrowhawk** with 59 birds, almost three times last year's numbers. Next was the **Chinese Sparrowhawk** with 21 birds, similar to last year. There was 1 **Common Buzzard**, 1 **Booted Eagle**, 3 **Peregrine Falcons**, 3 **Ospreys** and a single **Common Kestrel**. There were another 31 unidentified raptors.

S/N	Species (Migrants)	Count
1	Oriental Honey Buzzard	140
2	Black Baza	63
3	Japanese Sparrowhawk	59
4	Chinese Sparrowhawk	21
5	Common Buzzard	1
6	Booted Eagle	1
7	Peregrine Falcon	3
8	Osprey	3
9	Common Kestrel	1
	<b>Total Migrant Raptors</b>	<b>292</b>
10	Unid. Raptor	19
11	Unid. Accipiter	12
	<b>Total Unidentified Raptors (probably migrant)</b>	<b>31</b>

*Figure 6 : Migrant Raptors Counted*

The most numerous resident raptor was the **Brahminy Kite** with 52 birds, followed by the **White-bellied Sea Eagle** with 36 and the **Changeable Hawk Eagle** with 13. There were 10 **Black-winged Kites** and 3 **Grey-headed Fish Eagles**. The 3 **Crested Goshawks** showed up at Kent Ridge; two were seen there the previous two years and are probably holding territory there.

*Note: numbers for resident raptors, especially the top two, may be over-stated. The possibility of the same birds re-appearing more than once cannot be ruled out.*

S/N	Species (Residents)	Count
1	Brahminy Kite	52
2	White-bellied Sea Eagle	36
3	Changeable Hawk Eagle	13
4	Black-winged Kite	10
5	Grey-headed Fish Eagle	3
6	Crested Goshawk	3
	<b>Total Resident Raptors</b>	<b>117</b>

*Figure 7 : Resident Raptors Counted*

## **Summary**

### **Number of raptors**

440 raptors counted, including:  
 292 migrant raptors.  
 31 Unidentified raptors  
 117 resident raptors.

### **Number of species**

15 species counted, including:  
 9 migrant species.  
 6 resident species.

A complete breakdown of the species counted at each site is presented in the table below:

SITE	Tuas South	Kent Ridge Park	Chek Jawa, Jejawi Tower	Japanese Garden	Changi Bussiness Park	Pulau Punggol	CCNR, Jelutong Tower	Marina Barrage Roof Garden	Grand Total
<b>SITE TOTAL</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>440</b>
<b>Migrants = 292</b>									<b>Total</b>
Osprey	1	1				1			3
Black Baza	11	33	10		1	7	1		63
Oriental Honey Buzzard	107	10	5	12	4		1	1	140
Chinese Sparrowhawk	14	3	1	2		1			21
Japanese Sparrowhawk	31	6	5	11	2	3	1		59
Common Kestrel	1								1
Common Buzzard						1			1
Booted Eagle						1			1
Peregrine Falcon		1	1	1					3
<b>Residents = 117</b>									
Black-winged Kite	5		1		1	2	1		10
Brahminy Kite	7	5	3	15	15	4	1	2	52
White-bellied Sea Eagle	2	1	14	6	7	4	2		36
Grey-headed Fish Eagle			1				2		3
Crested Goshawk		3							3
Changeable Hawk Eagle	1	2		3	4	1	2		13
<b>Un-identified = 31</b>									
Unid. Accipiter	1		6		2	1		2	12
Unid. Raptor			7	4	1	3	4		19

Figure 8 : Raptor numbers by Site (descending order) from L-R, and break down of Species

An appreciation dinner cum slide show was held two week's after the count to detail the results to the participants. In addition, Gim Cheong shared his experience at the Taiping Raptor Festival (Perak, Malaysia) and Bedong Raptor Workshop (Kedah, Malaysia) the week before our Raptor Watch. We also enjoyed a video on the life of the Black Eagle in Taiwan.

Thanks to all the 54 wonderful people, both leaders and participants, for spending their Sunday in the hot sun counting raptors and for some, braving the afternoon rain as well. National Parks Board staff from Pulau Ubin and NParks volunteers also participated in the count. Thanks to Lee Ee Ling for the use of her place for the appreciation dinner, and for taking charge of the food. The following fantastic people led or assisted in the raptor count:

Alice Goossens	Con Foley	Kenneth Kee	Tan Chee Keon & Wife
Alvin Yeo	Danny Lau	Kerry Pereira	Tan Gim Cheong
Alyce Ang Lay Kheng	Doreen Ang	Lee Ee Ling	Tan Kok Hui
Andy Dinesh	Francis Yap	Liana Knight Spencer	Tan Zan Ji
Ann Ang	Goh Pei Hao	Lim Kim Keang	Tang Peck Chan
Antonius Mak	Grace Ang Suet Geok	Linda Oei	Teh KP
Ben Lee	Horst Flotow	Lioe Kim Swee (NParks)	Vincent Yap & Jasmine
Brian Gaynor & Enette Ngoei	Jacky Soh (NParks)	Low Bing Wen	Willie Foo
Cecilia Mah	Jean-Marc Chavatte	Low Choon How	Winnie Wong Kah Hui
Chan MY	Jerry	Ridwan Mokri (NParks)	Wong Chung Cheong
Chee Soo Lian	John Ang	See Toh Yew Wai	Yang Pah Liang
Chiam Chye Hock	John Spencer	Sue Flotow	Yvo Goossens
Christine Kelly	Jonathan Ee Jun Xi	Susan Knight	