

What is raptor migration?

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Every autumn and every spring, thousands of migrating raptors pass over our skies!

Asian Raptor Migration
Survey Project



What is Raptor Migration?

Migration is the seasonal movement or dispersal of wildlife, from one region to another for the purpose of feeding or breeding. Although many animals migrate, the most spectacular example of this natural phenomenon is the migration of birds. After the breeding season at the end of summer, most birds and raptors (birds of prey) in the Temperate Zone(Northern Hemisphere) usually move south to feed in food-abundant areas. This is called "**Raptor Migration**".

When do raptors migrate?

Raptors migrate in autumn from their breeding grounds to wintering areas, and in spring they return to their breeding areas, in a reverse cycle. Although the timing of migration is different according to the species of raptor, it usually occurs from September to November (autumn migration) and from March to May (spring migration).



Where can we see raptors on migration?

The best places to observe migration are along mountain ranges or at a peninsula facing the sea (strait), but we can also see them along migration routes. These routes are well known and have been used since ancient times in the same area. It is better to watch migrating raptors with "binoculars". There are also special areas where regular raptor migration events are held according to the migration season.

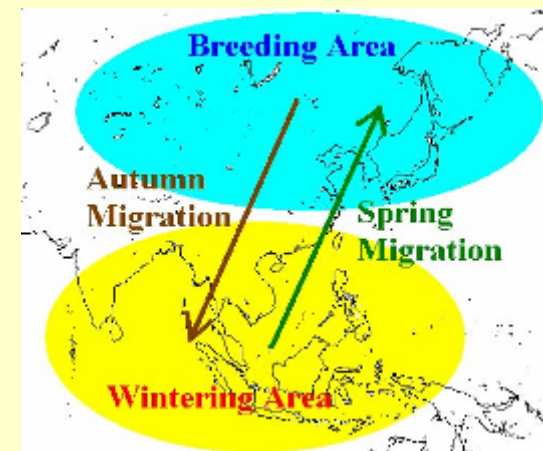
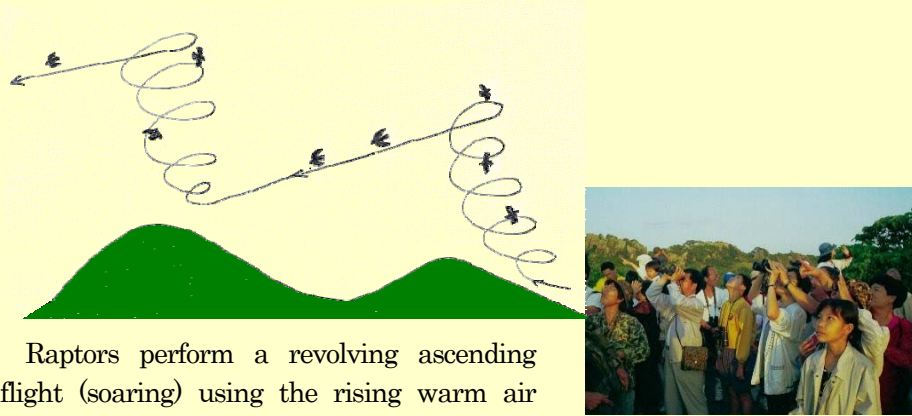


Image of Raptor migration in Asia

How do they migrate?



Raptors perform a revolving ascending flight (soaring) using the rising warm air currents called “thermals” generated on a mountain or lowland area, etc. After reaching a certain height, they glide (cruise) a long distance to their next destination. This is repeated many times until they reach their final destination.

What migrant raptors species can we see?

In Southeast Asia, during peak migratory seasons, we can usually observe hundreds and even thousands of migrating Oriental Honey-buzzard (*Pernis ptilorhyncus*), Grey-faced Buzzard (*Butastur indicus*), Chinese Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter soloensis*), or Black Baza (*Aviceda leuphotes*), and less of other raptor species.

Why are raptors important?

Raptors are at the top of the food chain, so their healths depend on the health of the whole ecosystem they live in. Declines in their populations can indicate a problem in the specific ecosystem that raptor species depend upon or visit.



What is “the Asian Raptor Migration Survey”?

This survey was started in 1999. Studies of migratory raptors in Asia have gained momentum in recent years. The Asian Raptor Research and Conservation Network (ARRCN) was formed in 1998 to support and coordinate researchers in the field. It is hoped that when data from ARRCN members in different countries are put together in the near future, we will be able to have clearer picture of raptor populations and their migratory behaviors and patterns.



Chinese Sparrowhawks flock

The main objectives of our activities are:

- To find out and determine the migration routes of raptors
- To find out the wintering areas of migrant raptors
- To compile information on raptors' breeding area
- To compile data on population and species during migration

If you wish to get more information about this survey project, please visit the following homepage below.

Asian Raptor Migration Survey Project

URL: <http://www5b.biglobe.ne.jp/~raptor/index.htm>

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Asian Raptor Research and Conservation Network (ARRCN)