

Singapore Raptor Report Autumn Migration, December 2012

Summary for migrant species:

The star raptor for December 2012 must have been the **Short-toed Snake Eagle** that put in a fine performance on the 23rd at Changi for a small group of extremely lucky birders, namely Alan Owyong, Jimmy Lee, Lim Kim Keang, Yong Yik Shih, as well as photographer Francis Yap, who captured some stunning images of the rare raptor in flight. The record also extended the 'late date' from 11 Dec to 23 Dec. Other goodies such as the **Greater Spotted Eagle**, **Grey-faced Buzzard**, **Jerdon's Baza** and **Booted Eagle** brought a fine closure to 2012.



Short-toed Snake Eagle, at Changi, 23/12/12, by Francis Yap.

A total of 89 migrant raptors of 14 species were recorded, the highest species count so far this season. The **Black Baza** was most numerous migrant raptor again, with 36 birds. The **Oriental Honey Buzzard** maintained the second placing with 18 birds. The third most common migrant raptor was the **Jerdon's Baza** (surprise!) with 7 birds.

The single **Greater Spotted Eagle** for December, a juvenile, showed up at Seletar North Link on the 29th. This was the third bird of this species for this winter. Unfortunately, it was mobbed in flight by a pale morph Booted Eagle and flew north across the straits to Johor to escape the smaller raptor! – a spectacle witnessed by Lau Jia Sheng, Danny Lau and Tan Kok Hui. An adult **Grey-faced Buzzard** showed up at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve on the 5th, perched on a tree, and was photographed by Lee How Sung.

For the **Jerdon's Baza**, there were quite a number of records. 2 were at Lorong Halus in the early part of the month – photographed by Aldwin Recinto, 1 of which probably stayed till the 24th and was recorded by Fance & Jimmy Lee; 1 was photographed in flight at Telok Blangah Hill Park on the 17th – much to the delight of Terry & Jane Heppell; and 4 were at Tampines biking trail on the 23rd – recorded/photographed by Yang Weixing. The Tampines group could have moved over to Changi where 3 were recorded by Lau Jia Sheng, Danny Lau & Tan Kok Hui on the 29th.

The **Booted Eagles** were out in force at Seletar North Link, where 4 birds – 2 pale morphs and 2 dark morphs – were recorded! A few lucky photographers, including Michael Tay, managed to get close-up perched shots of these raptors which are more often seen soaring high up.



Booted Eagle, pale morph, at Seletar North Link, 241212, by Michael Tay.

Changi continued to be a reliable site for the **Common Buzzard** and the harriers. There were 2 Common Buzzards – a pale morph and a dark morph. The harriers included 3 **Eastern Marsh Harriers** and a female **Pied Harrier**.

For the *Accipiters*, 5 **Japanese Sparrowhawks** and 4 **Chinese Sparrowhawks** were recorded. There were 4 **Ospreys** – 2 at Seletar North Link and 2 at Sungei Buloh / Neo Tiew area. Only 1 **Peregrine Falcon**, a juvenile, was recorded.

Highlights for sedentary species: Nil! Only the usual resident raptors were recorded.

Table 1

S/N	Species	No.	S/N	Species	No.
1	Osprey	4			
2	Jerdon's Baza	7		<i>Residents / Sedentary Species</i>	
3	Black Baza	36	15	Black-winged Kite	9
4	Oriental Honey Buzzard	18	16	Brahminy Kite	18
5	Short-toed Snake Eagle	1	17	White-bellied Sea Eagle	16
6	Eastern Marsh Harrier	3	18	Changeable Hawk-eagle	9
7	Pied Harrier	1			
8	Chinese Sparrowhawk	4			
9	Japanese Sparrowhawk	5			
10	Grey-faced Buzzard	1			
11	Common Buzzard	2		<i>Unidentified</i>	
12	Greater Spotted Eagle	1	19	Unidentified Raptors	1
13	Booted Eagle	5	20	Unidentified <i>Accipiters</i>	3
14	Peregrine Falcon	1			
Total for Migrants		89	Grand Total		145

Compiled by Tan Gim Cheong