

Singapore Raptor Report Spring Migration, March 2010

Summary:

79 raptors from 8 migrant species were reported this month. **Black Bazas** continued to be the most numerous with a total of 41 birds. **Oriental Honey Buzzards** came in second in terms of numbers again with a total of 16 birds. The third most numerous was the **Peregrine Falcon** with 8 birds. One (very) rare/accidental migrant species was recorded for the 1st time this season and two rare resident species were reported.

Martti Siponen spent many weekends at Tuas hoping for a repeat of the hundreds seen on spring migration last year but the birds did not show. Ulf Remahl kept up the vigilance concerning the Black Bazas at Singapore Quarry and he found out that the dead tree is a staging post in the morning. After roosting in the surrounding trees, the Black Baza spend up to an hour in the dead tree before taking off for the day.



*A (very) rare first winter male Lesser Kestrel at Changi Cove, March 2010.
Note the back of the bird which is more plain and less spotted compared to the Common
Kestrel. Photo by Jonathan Cheah*

Highlights for migrant species:

The most exciting sighting of the month was of a single first winter male **Lesser Kestrel** at Changi Cove. First detected on 6th March, Nicholas Tan photographed the bird on 13th March and Jonathan Cheah reported seeing and photographing the bird from 16th to 18th March. The observers took it as a Common Kestrel until Peter Kennerley identified the bird as a first

winter male Lesser Kestrel. Thanks to Peter Kennerley for the ID and David Bakewell for passing the message. This is the second time this species is recorded in Singapore. The only previous record was of 4 birds, with at least one male, from Jan-Mar 2001. What makes the sighting of this species all the more significant is the fact that the Lesser Kestrel has not been recorded in Peninsular Malaysia and Thailand. The nearest records are from Laos and Myanmar! (This record is currently being reviewed by the Nature Society (Singapore) Bird Group's Records Committee.)

For the uncommon migrant raptors, 2 **Chinese Sparrowhawks** were seen at Pulau Seletar/ Pulau Punggol by Alan Owyong and friends while one was seen during the Sentosa survey by Willie Foo and Ali Jaafar. A total of 3 **Eastern Marsh Harriers** were recorded – 2 seen in flight at Changi (Nicholas Tan and separately - Frankie) and one at Tuas South (Martti Siponen). Small numbers of **Ospreys** and **Japanese Sparrowhawks** were also reported.

Highlights for sedentary species:

For the sedentary species, it was a good month for the rare **Crested Serpent Eagle** as there were 4 sightings - at Springleaf by Leslie Fung; at Malcolm Road by Jane Rogers and friends during the Census; at MacRitchie by Richard Carden and on Pulau Ubin by Doreen Ang. For our rare **Grey-headed Fish Eagle**, there were 3 sightings – at MacRitchie by Richard Carden; at Kranji bund by Lim Kim Seng and at Chinese Gardens by Peter Jones. Nesting activity was observed for the White-bellied Sea Eagle and Changeable Hawk-eagle.



*A rare Crested Serpent Eagle at Springleaf.
Photo by Leslie Fung.*

Table 1

S/N	Species	No.	S/N	Species	No.
1	Osprey	4		<i>Residents / Sedentary Species</i>	
2	Black Baza	41	9	Black-winged Kite	4
3	Oriental Honey Buzzard	16	10	Grey-headed Fish Eagle	3
4	Eastern Marsh Harrier	3	11	Crested Serpent Eagle	4
5	Chinese Sparrowhawk	3	12	Changeable Hawk-eagle	7
6	Japanese Sparrowhawk	3			
7	Lesser Kestrel	1		<i>Unidentified</i>	
8	Peregrine Falcon	8	14	Unidentified Raptors	2
			15	Unidentified <i>Accipiters</i>	1
Total for Migrants		79	Grand Total		100

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