

Singapore Raptor Report Autumn Migration, November 2015



*Oriental Honey Buzzards, on migration over Tuas South Avenue 16,
9 Nov 15, by Tan Gim Cheong.*

Summary for migrant species:

2,370 migrant raptors were recorded in November, a new record, thanks to the efforts of birders spending time out in the field under the warm weather. Of the 13 migrant raptor species counted, the **Oriental Honey Buzzards** made up the bulk with 2,174 birds, many passing through Tuas South on migration. The highest single day count was 894 OHB on 9 Nov, a new record and a spectacle witnessed by a few birders who took time out on a weekday to be there, and thanks in no small part to 'chief counter' Low Choon How, who had been keeping a lookout for the migrating raptors at Tuas. The previous record was 745 birds, coincidentally also on 9 Nov, two years ago. Only 1 *torquatus* OHB, an adult male was recorded at Pasir Ris Park on the 28th.

A very rare **Besra** on migration over Sisters' Islands on the morning of the 13th was photographed by Jacky Soh, and seen by a few lucky companions. Another rarity, the **Greater Spotted Eagle** was recorded twice at Tuas South Ave 16; the first on 2 Nov, photographed by Koh Lian Heng as it flew over, close by the road; the second on 11 Nov, photographed by and delighting four birders as it flew over at a distance, though giving clear views.

Zahidi Hamid posted a photo of a small flock of OHB flying over Telok Blangah Hill Park on the 16th, scrutinizing the photo I noticed a raptor with a different 'jizz' amongst the OHBs - it turned out to be an adult **Jerdon's Baza**, the only record for the month. The **Common Kestrel**, a rarity, was recorded on the 28th at Tuas South.

Another highlight was a nocturnal raptor, the **Northern Boobook**, 3 of which were recorded, 2 birds on the 9th and another on the 16th. A juvenile **Eastern Marsh Harrier** was photographed on the 5th and a male on the 14th, both at Changi, a site that is fast being lost to construction works to expand the airport. The first record of the **Booted Eagle** was on the 10th at Coney Island, subsequent sightings at nearby Seletar North Link were probably of the same individual.

Ten **Peregrine Falcons** were recorded, amongst them an *ernesti* that returned to tall buildings at Church Street, enjoying the feral pigeons for lunch and dinner, literally! Two **Ospreys** were recorded on the northern coast between Sungei Buloh and Coney Island while another was on migration through Tuas. Also recorded were 26 **Black Bazas**, 8 **Chinese Sparrowhawks** and 138 **Japanese Sparrowhawks**, mostly on migration.



Besra, adult female, at Sisters' Islands, 13 Nov 15, by Jacky Soh.

Highlights for sedentary species:

November was an exceptional month for the **Crested Serpent Eagle** with 3 individuals recorded; two at Kent Ridge Park on morning of the 21st, recorded by Alan OwYong & Keita Sin; and the third at the Botanic Gardens on the 26th, photographed by Sox Tok. For the **Grey-headed Fish Eagle**, the nesting pair at Little Guilin has had to start feeding an extra mouth starting from late November; another 2 adults were at the Botanic Gardens, 1 adult at Punggol Waterway, 1 juvenile at Kent Ridge Park and 1 at Admiralty Park. Six **Crested Goshawks** were recorded, three of them juveniles, a good indication of successful breeding.

One juvenile **Brahminy Kite** photographed by Francis Yap at Changi on the 14th lost most of its secondaries and many of its primaries, some of the remaining primaries also seemed damaged. It was not clear whether it was due to an extreme case of moult, or the result of fights, or possibly a combination of the two. Nevertheless, it was amazing that the bird could still fly given the state of its flight feathers. The **White-bellied Sea Eagle**, **Changeable Hawk-Eagle** and **Black-winged Kite** completed the roundup for the month.



*Brahminy Kite, juvenile, it is amazing that the bird could still fly!
At Changi, 14 Nov 15, by Francis Yap.*

Table 1

S/N	Species	No.	S/N	Species	No.
1	Osprey	3		<i>Residents / Sedentary Species</i>	
2	Jerdon's Baza	1	14	Black-winged Kite	8
3	Black Baza	26	15	Brahminy Kite	16
4	Oriental Honey Buzzard	2174	16	White-bellied Sea Eagle	18
5	Eastern Marsh Harrier	2	17	Grey-headed Fish Eagle	8
6	Chinese Sparrowhawk	8	18	Crested Serpent Eagle	3
7	Japanese Sparrowhawk	138	19	Crested Goshawk	6
8	Besra	1	20	Changeable Hawk-Eagle	17
9	Greater Spotted Eagle	2			
10	Booted Eagle	1		<i>Unidentified</i>	
11	Common Kestrel	1	21	Unidentified Raptors	47
12	Peregrine Falcon	10	22	Unidentified <i>Accipiters</i>	21
13	Northern Boobook	3			
Total for Migrants		2370		Grand Total	2514

Compiled by TAN Gim Cheong



Eastern Marsh Harrier, Changi grasslands, 5 Nov 15, by Lee Tiah Khee



Japanese Sparrowhawk, juvenile, at Changi grasslands, 14 Nov 15, by Lee Tiah Khee.



Greater Spotted Eagle, at Tuas South Avenue 16, 2 Nov 15, by Koh Lian Heng.



*Northern Boobook, Tuas South, 9 Nov 15,
by Tan Gim Cheong*



*Northern Boobook, Tuas South, 17 Nov 15,
by Tan Gim Cheong*