

# Birding Singapore – 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015

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Can you see me? A Red-crowned Barbet feeding at MacRitchie Reservoir. Photo © Lim Kim Seng

What a way to start a birding day! It's the four letter word we all fear – RAIN! I picked up Ian MacMahon, a birder from Australia, for a full day tour. It was drizzling when we met and got heavier as we approached our first site. We decided to have an early breakfast at 6.00 am. At 6.40 am, we were in the forests of the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, keen to start birding even though it was still drizzling. The owls were largely quiet except for two Brown Hawk Owls which remained out of sight. We did see several Pink-necked Green Pigeons and a Red-crowned Barbet feeding on ripe figs on the way to MacRitchie Reservoir.

We reached MacRitchie Reservoir when it was already bright. Thankfully, the rain had ceased and we began to have birds calling and moving about. One of the first was a Brahminy Kite that flew over us. We

also explored the clump of fig trees nearby and this was fruitful as we saw Lineated and Coppersmith Barbets, Asian Fairy-bluebird, Greater Green Leafbird and the usual green pigeons, mynas and starlings.

Eventually, we left MacRitchie Reservoir and made for Jelutong Tower. It was gloomy and birds were really quiet. We left after half an hour and made our way out of the forest. Despite the poor weather, we did exceptionally well in recording 44 species in four hours.

Our next spot was Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. We got there at 11.00 am and it was drizzling again. We heard a Rufous Woodpecker calling but could not find it in the carpark. We then stopped by the visitor centre and saw that the pond had been swollen by rain. I also saw a Blue-eared Kingfisher fishing at the far end but it flew before I could show it to Ian. At the river, we saw Oriental Dollarbird and Collared Kingfisher. We moved on to the main hide where we found no activity, so we walked to the coastal Platform 1. We saw only Grey and Striated Herons, some Little Terns and lots of House Crows. We walked back to the visitor centre and on to the mangrove boardwalk where we found the mangrove dependent Copper-throated Sunbird without much problem. Back at the visitor centre, we bumped into Bari, a staff at the reserve, who told us two Terek Sandpipers had been spotted at one of the hides. Since we had time, we decided to walk the half hour to that hide. It had stopped raining and we were soaked in sweat as we made our way there. It was a good move. We found where all the waterbirds and waders had been hiding. And we saw the Terek Sandpipers! After making sure there was nothing else of interest, we moved back to the river where we saw a small Estuarine Crocodile to end our two hour adventure at Sungei Buloh with 38 species in the bag.

It was lunch next and we stopped by a nearby café for lunch. We checked the lawn nearby and found 16 Little Ringed Plovers. After lunch, we moved eastwards to Lorong Halus Wetland. This was an area of reedbeds and open country beside an old landfill and a new reservoir, home to grassland birds. It was overcast as we got out of the car and scour for birds. I was happy to find a male Barred Buttonquail where I had seen it five days earlier. This time I was able to get some pictures before the bird disappeared into the reeds. We also saw Savanna Nightjar, Long-tailed Shrike and Common Myna before we left the reedbeds amidst warning of lightning activity. On the way out, we saw Purple Heron and Baya Weaver. Despite the short (45 minutes) visit, we logged 26 species.

Our last site was Pasir Ris Park and we got there at 3.00 pm. We saw two Red Junglefowls and several Collared Kingfishers in the park but it was mostly quiet so we moved on to the mangroves. Here we saw Grey, Striated and Black-crowned Night Herons, a male Asian Koel and a pair of Olive-winged Bulbuls. A pair of Common Flamebacks entertained us as we walked back to the car.

It was a great day despite the rainy weather and we saw an impressive 66 species and heard an additional 17 more. Our bird of the day was the unexpected Barred Buttonquail that lingered for fantastic views!

## A Checklist of the Birds Recorded in Singapore on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015

Nomenclature, sequence and taxonomy follow IOC. Species highlighted in yellow indicate those that were “heard only”.

| #  | English Name              | Scientific Name                  |
|----|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1  | Red Junglefowl            | <i>Gallus gallus</i>             |
| 2  | Black-crowned Night Heron | <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>     |
| 3  | Striated Heron            | <i>Butorides striata</i>         |
| 4  | Grey Heron                | <i>Ardea cinerea</i>             |
| 5  | Purple Heron              | <i>Ardea purpurea</i>            |
| 6  | Little Egret              | <i>Egretta garzetta</i>          |
| 7  | Changeable Hawk-Eagle     | <i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>        |
| 8  | Brahminy Kite             | <i>Haliastur indus</i>           |
| 9  | White-breasted Waterhen   | <i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>    |
| 10 | Barred Buttonquail        | <i>Turnix suscitator</i>         |
| 11 | Little Ringed Plover      | <i>Charadrius dubius</i>         |
| 12 | Common Redshank           | <i>Tringa totanus</i>            |
| 13 | Marsh Sandpiper           | <i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>        |
| 14 | Common Greenshank         | <i>Tringa nebularia</i>          |
| 15 | Terek Sandpiper           | <i>Xenus cinereus</i>            |
| 16 | Common Sandpiper          | <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>        |
| 17 | Little Tern               | <i>Sternula albifrons</i>        |
| 18 | Rock Dove                 | <i>Columba livia</i>             |
| 19 | Spotted Dove              | <i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>      |
| 20 | Common Emerald Dove       | <i>Chalcophaps indica</i>        |
| 21 | Zebra Dove                | <i>Geopelia striata</i>          |
| 22 | Pink-necked Green Pigeon  | <i>Treron vernans</i>            |
| 23 | Asian Koel                | <i>Eudynamis scolopaceus</i>     |
| 24 | Little Bronze Cuckoo      | <i>Chrysococcyx minutillus</i>   |
| 25 | Brown Hawk-Owl            | <i>Ninox scutulata</i>           |
| 26 | Savanna Nightjar          | <i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>       |
| 27 | Grey-rumped Treeswift     | <i>Hemiprocne longipennis</i>    |
| 28 | Oriental Dollarbird       | <i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>     |
| 29 | Stork-billed Kingfisher   | <i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>      |
| 30 | White-throated Kingfisher | <i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>        |
| 31 | Collared Kingfisher       | <i>Todiramphus chloris</i>       |
| 32 | Blue-eared Kingfisher     | <i>Alcedo meninting</i>          |
| 33 | Blue-throated Bee-eater   | <i>Merops viridis</i>            |
| 34 | Oriental Pied Hornbill    | <i>Anthracoceros albirostris</i> |
| 35 | Lineated Barbet           | <i>Megalaima lineata</i>         |
| 36 | Red-crowned Barbet        | <i>Megalaima rafflesii</i>       |

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|----|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 37 | Coppersmith Barbet           | <i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>     |
| 38 | Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker       | <i>Dendrocopus moluccensis</i>    |
| 39 | Banded Woodpecker            | <i>Chrysophlegma miniaceum</i>    |
| 40 | Laced Woodpecker             | <i>Picus vittatus</i>             |
| 41 | Common Flameback             | <i>Dinopium javanense</i>         |
| 42 | Rufous Woodpecker            | <i>Micropternus brachyurus</i>    |
| 43 | Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot  | <i>Loriculus galgulus</i>         |
| 44 | Blue-rumped Parrot           | <i>Psittinus cyanurus</i>         |
| 45 | Red-breasted Parakeet        | <i>Psittacula alexandri</i>       |
| 46 | Long-tailed Parakeet         | <i>Psittacula longicauda</i>      |
| 47 | Golden-bellied Gerygone      | <i>Gerygone sulphurea</i>         |
| 48 | Common Iora                  | <i>Aegithina tiphia</i>           |
| 49 | Pied Triller                 | <i>Lalage nigra</i>               |
| 50 | Long-tailed Shrike           | <i>Lanius schach</i>              |
| 51 | Black-naped Oriole           | <i>Oriolus chinensis</i>          |
| 52 | Greater Racket-tailed Drongo | <i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>        |
| 53 | Malaysian Pied Fantail       | <i>Rhipidura javanica</i>         |
| 54 | House Crow                   | <i>Corvus splendens</i>           |
| 55 | Yellow-vented Bulbul         | <i>Pycnonotus goiavier</i>        |
| 56 | Olive-winged Bulbul          | <i>Pycnonotus plumosus</i>        |
| 57 | Pacific Swallow              | <i>Hirundo tahitica</i>           |
| 58 | Yellow-bellied Prinia        | <i>Prinia flavicentris</i>        |
| 59 | Common Tailorbird            | <i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>        |
| 60 | Dark-necked Tailorbird       | <i>Orthotomus atrogularis</i>     |
| 61 | Ashy Tailorbird              | <i>Orthotomus ruficeps</i>        |
| 62 | Chestnut-winged Babbler      | <i>Stachyris erythroptera</i>     |
| 63 | Pin-striped Tit-Babbler      | <i>Macronous gularis</i>          |
| 64 | Abbott's Babbler             | <i>Malcocincla abbotti</i>        |
| 65 | Short-tailed Babbler         | <i>Malcocincla malaccensis</i>    |
| 66 | Oriental White-eye           | <i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>      |
| 67 | Asian Fairy-bluebird         | <i>Irena puella</i>               |
| 68 | Asian Glossy Starling        | <i>Aplonis panayensis</i>         |
| 69 | Common Hill Myna             | <i>Gracula religiosa</i>          |
| 70 | Javan Myna                   | <i>Acridotheres javanicus</i>     |
| 71 | Common Myna                  | <i>Acridotheres tristis</i>       |
| 72 | Oriental Magpie-Robin        | <i>Copsychus saularis</i>         |
| 73 | Greater Green Leafbird       | <i>Chloropsis sonnerati</i>       |
| 74 | Blue-winged Leafbird         | <i>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</i> |
| 75 | Orange-bellied Flowerpecker  | <i>Dicaeum trigonostigma</i>      |
| 76 | Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker  | <i>Dicaeum cruentatum</i>         |
| 77 | Brown-throated Sunbird       | <i>Anthreptes malacensis</i>      |

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|----|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 78 | Copper-throated Sunbird | <i>Leptocoma calcostetha</i>    |
| 79 | Olive-backed Sunbird    | <i>Cinnyris jugularis</i>       |
| 80 | Crimson Sunbird         | <i>Aethopyga siparaja</i>       |
| 81 | Little Spiderhunter     | <i>Arachnothera longirostra</i> |
| 82 | Baya Weaver             | <i>Ploceus philippinus</i>      |
| 83 | Scaly-breasted Munia    | <i>Lonchura punctulata</i>      |



Bird of the day – a male Barred Buttonquail taking cover at Lorong Halus Wetland. Photo © Lim Kim Seng