

# Birding Singapore – 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2017

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A Rufous Woodpecker foraging at MacRitchie Reservoir. Photo © Birding Singapore/Lim Kim Seng

I picked up David and Tracey Crawford, bird tour operators ([closeupbirding.com](http://closeupbirding.com)) from northern Queensland, from their hotel in Chinatown and, after an exchange of pleasantries, set off for our first destination – the central forests.

We got to the Central Catchment Nature Reserve around 6.15 am and ventured into the gloomy trails. The owls were active and we eventually got a glimpse of a Sunda Scops Owl. The Brown Hawk Owls remained uncooperative as they were high and obscured. Soon, it got bright and we continued our walk to MacRitchie Reservoir. The sunrise was gorgeous but birds were quiet except at one spot on the boardwalk where we saw a Greater Coucal, two Rufous Woodpeckers, Pin-striped Tit-babbler and a surprise female Japanese Paradise-flycatcher, a new bird for my Singapore tours.

We returned to the forest and climbed Jelutong Tower. Here we got the usual sunbirds, flowerpeckers and leafbirds as well as a good selection of raptors in the form of Crested Honey Buzzard, Changeable Hawk Eagle and Jerdon's Baza, yet another new one for my Singapore tours.

After almost four hours, we left the forest with 38 species of birds, three mammals and one snake – a beautiful Paradise Tree Snake seen “in flight”!

Next, we had a quick breakfast followed by a short drive to the Singapore Botanic Gardens. A pair of Buffy Fish owls roosting in a big tree was our first target and we saw them, and a young one, easily. Not wishing to disturb them, we moved on to the Ecolake, where we saw our next target, an immature/female Von Schrenck's Bittern, an uncommon migrant. Lots of photographers were present and we did not have long to wait to see the bird well.



A Buffy Fish Owl at its roost at the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Photo © Birding Singapore/Lim Kim Seng

Our next site was Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. It was very warm when we got there so we retreated to the hide to watch waders. Other than the visiting storks, we also saw three egret species, Grey Heron, and a few common waders. The river provided some additional excitement as we added two young Estuarine Crocodile to our list of interesting wildlife. Next, we explored the mangrove boardwalk and saw the locally rare Copper-throated Sunbird and the commoner Ashy Tailorbird. On the way out, we encountered two noisy Oriental Pied Hornbills that posed for photos.

Satisfied with our adventures in the wetlands, we decided to stop at a nearby café for lunch. At 3.00 pm, we got to our last stop – Kranji Marshes. We only had half an hour as the Crawfords had another evening appointment, so we did our best. The place did not disappoint with Cinnamon Bittern, Black-winged Kite, Indian Cuckoo and Red-breasted Parakeet being the highlights.

Overall, it was a good day as I enjoyed sharing birding experiences with David and Tracey, and also showing them our birds and wildlife. We recorded 76 species of birds in total, including 2 species that had been the first ever for Birding Singapore. Not bad for a relaxed birding day!

## A Checklist of the Birds Recorded in Singapore on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2017

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	Von Schrenck's Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus eurhythmus</i>
3	Cinnamon Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>
4	Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus coromandus</i>
5	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
6	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
7	Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>
8	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
9	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
10	Crested Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
11	Jerdon's Baza	<i>Aviceda jerdoni</i>
12	Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>
13	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
14	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>

15	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
16	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
17	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
18	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
19	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
20	Pink-necked Green Pigeon	<i>Treron vernans</i>
21	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>
22	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>
23	Little Bronze Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx minutillus</i>
24	Drongo-Cuckoo	<i>Surniculus lugubris</i>
25	Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>
26	Sunda Scops Owl	<i>Otus lempiji</i>
27	Buffy Fish Owl	<i>Ketupa ketupu</i>
28	Brown Hawk-Owl	<i>Ninox scutulata</i>
29	Oriental Dollarbird	<i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>
30	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
31	Collared Kingfisher	<i>Todiramphus chloris</i>
32	Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>
33	Oriental Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros albirostris</i>
34	Red-crowned Barbet	<i>Megalaima rafflesii</i>
35	Banded Woodpecker	<i>Chrysophlegma miniaceum</i>
36	Laced Woodpecker	<i>Picus vittatus</i>
37	Common Flameback	<i>Dinopium javanense</i>
38	Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Micropternus brachyurus</i>
39	Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot	<i>Loriculus galgulus</i>
40	Coconut Lorikeet	<i>Trichoglossus haematodus</i>
41	Red-breasted Parakeet	<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>
42	Long-tailed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula longicauda</i>
43	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>
44	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
45	Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>
46	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>
47	Japanese Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone atrocaudata</i>
48	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
49	Straw-headed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus zeylanicus</i>
50	Yellow-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus goiavier</i>
51	Olive-winged Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus plumosus</i>
52	Cream-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus simplex</i>
53	Pacific Swallow	<i>Hirundo tahitica</i>
54	Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>
55	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>

56	Dark-necked Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus atrogularis</i>
57	Ashy Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus ruficeps</i>
58	Pin-striped Tit-Babbler	<i>Macronous gularis</i>
59	Abbott's Babbler	<i>Malcocincla abbotti</i>
60	Short-tailed Babbler	<i>Malcocincla malaccensis</i>
61	White-crested Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax leucolopus</i>
62	Asian Fairy-bluebird	<i>Irena puella</i>
63	Asian Glossy Starling	<i>Aplonis panayensis</i>
64	Common Hill Myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>
65	Javan Myna	<i>Acridotheres javanicus</i>
66	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
67	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa latirostris</i>
68	Siberian Blue Robin	<i>Larvivora cyane</i>
69	Blue-winged Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</i>
70	Orange-bellied Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum trigonostigma</i>
71	Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum cruentatum</i>
72	Brown-throated Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes malacensis</i>
73	Van Hasselt's Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma brasiliانا</i>
74	Copper-throated Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma calcostetha</i>
75	Olive-backed Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris jugularis</i>
76	Crimson Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga siparaja</i>



An Indian Cuckoo at Kranji Marshes. Photo © Birding Singapore/Lim Kim Seng