

# Birding Singapore – 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> December 2017

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Long-tailed Parakeet at the Central Catchment forest. Photo © Birding Singapore/Lim Kim Seng

Carol Matthews and her husband, Derek, were keen birders from Canada, had never birded in Singapore before and wanted to do two full days. She also had a list of some 50 bird species that would be lifers. Of course, half of the birds were vagrants (Northern Boobook), out of season (Brown-chested Jungle-flycatcher) or weren't even confirmed (Wilson's Storm-petrel). So, we had about 20-30 species to look for.

We started with some owling at the Central Catchment Nature Reserve. Like the previous night, owls were active but distant. We did see a Brown Hawk Owl briefly which was Carol's first tick of the trip. As the sky brightened, we decided to climb Jelutong Tower. Apart from the usual leafbirds, flowerpeckers and sunbirds, we also saw a number of Carol's targets, viz. Plume-toed Swiftlet, Blue-throated Bee-eater, Banded Woodpecker, Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot, Long-tailed Parakeet, Olive-winged, Cream-

vented and Asian Red-eyed Bulbuls, Asian Glossy Starling, Javan Myna and Orange-bellied Woodpecker. We finished forest birding with an impressive 41 species, including 12 life birds.

Next, we opted for a quick visit to the Singapore Botanic Gardens where we expended half an hour and added one more species: an immature/female Von Schrenck's Bittern that was found on the edge of a lake.



An immature/female Von Schrenck's Bittern at the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Photo © Birding Singapore/Lim Kim Seng

After breakfast, we dropped by Bukit Batok Nature Park where we had to scour hard for our main target, the globally endangered Straw-headed Bulbul. Eventually, we heard one bird calling and managed to trace it to a lone bird perched high up a tree. Target achieved! We also had a bonus in the form of a Rufous-tailed Tailorbird, which popped up obligingly for everyone to see!

Our fourth site was Sungei Buloh and we saw the Milky Storks but of course they couldn't be counted as these were free flying birds from our zoo! We did however add Ashy Tailorbird and Copper-throated Sunbird.

We had a quick lunch and then moved on to our last site – Kranji Marshes. It was a long walk in and out but we managed to record 35 species including the much desired Black Baza and a Booted Warbler that was only discovered a week ago.

The humidity had eased off but jet lag was affecting both Carol and Derek, and we called it a day!

Day 2 was more relaxed as we started by having breakfast with the birds at Changi Village. This was part of the old British Naval Base and was also full of birds. We did not have to work hard for birds to come in. Targets such as Tanimbar Corella, Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker, Golden-bellied Gerygone and Pied Triller were easily achieved.

At 8.15 am, we boarded the ferry to Pulau Ubin, hoping for more targets. We visited both Chek Jawa and Sungei Puaka with mixed results. Chek Jawa gave us Great-billed Heron and Greater Crested Tern but both Mangrove Pitta and Mangrove Whistler did not perform at the latter site.

We were back at Changi Village for lunch and then it was mopping up time. We only about four hours to see the remaining possible targets. After some discussion, we opted to do Sengkang Floating Wetland for Pallas’s Grasshopper Warbler, Lower Peirce Reservoir for Sunda Scops Owl and Bukit Batok Town Park for Grey-headed Fish Eagle. Despite the commuting between sites, we succeeded in seeing 100% of our targets!

At the end of the two days, we managed to record 105 species and see 30 of Carol’s 50 odd target birds, which was better than all of us expected! Merry Christmas!

## A Checklist of the Birds Recorded in Singapore on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> December 2017

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

#	English Name	Scientific Name
1	Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>
2	Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>
3	Von Schrenck's Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus eurhythmus</i>
4	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
5	Great-billed Heron	<i>Ardea sumatrana</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	Jerdon's Baza	<i>Aviceda jerdoni</i>

11	Black Baza	<i>Aviceda leuphotes</i>
12	Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>
13	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
14	White-bellied Sea Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>
15	Grey-headed Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus ichthyaeus</i>
16	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>
17	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
18	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
19	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
20	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
21	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
22	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
23	Greater Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>
24	Red Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i>
25	Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>
26	Common Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>
27	Zebra Dove	<i>Geopelia striata</i>
28	Pink-necked Green Pigeon	<i>Treron vernans</i>
29	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>
30	Lesser Coucal	<i>Centropus bengalensis</i>
31	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopaceus</i>
32	Little Bronze Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx minutillus</i>
33	Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>
34	Sunda Scops Owl	<i>Otus lempiji</i>
35	Buffy Fish Owl	<i>Ketupa ketupu</i>
36	Brown Hawk-Owl	<i>Ninox scutulata</i>
37	Plume-toed Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia esculenta</i>
38	Collared Kingfisher	<i>Todiramphus chloris</i>
39	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
40	Blue-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>
41	Blue-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops viridis</i>
42	Oriental Pied Hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros albirostris</i>
43	Lineated Barbet	<i>Megalaima lineata</i>
44	Red-crowned Barbet	<i>Megalaima rafflesii</i>
45	Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Megalaima haemacephala</i>
46	Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus moluccensis</i>
47	Banded Woodpecker	<i>Chrysophlegma miniaceum</i>
48	Laced Woodpecker	<i>Picus vittatus</i>
49	Common Flameback	<i>Dinopium javanense</i>
50	Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Micropternus brachyurus</i>
51	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>

52	Tanimbar Corella	<i>Cacatua goffiniana</i>
53	Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot	<i>Loriculus galgulus</i>
54	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
55	Red-breasted Parakeet	<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>
56	Long-tailed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula longicauda</i>
57	Golden-bellied Gerygone	<i>Gerygone sulphurea</i>
58	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>
59	Pied Triller	<i>Lalage nigra</i>
60	Ashy Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus divaricatus</i>
61	Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>
62	Crow-billed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus annectans</i>
63	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>
64	Malaysian Pied Fantail	<i>Rhipidura javanica</i>
65	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>
66	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>
67	Straw-headed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus zeylanicus</i>
68	Yellow-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus goiavier</i>
69	Olive-winged Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus plumosus</i>
70	Cream-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus simplex</i>
71	Asian Red-eyed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus brunneus</i>
72	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
73	Pacific Swallow	<i>Hirundo tahitica</i>
74	Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>
75	Black-browed Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus bistrigiceps</i>
76	Booted Warbler	<i>Iduna caligata</i>
77	Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella certhiola</i>
78	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>
79	Dark-necked Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus atrogularis</i>
80	Rufous-tailed Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sericeus</i>
81	Ashy Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus ruficeps</i>
82	Pin-striped Tit-Babbler	<i>Macronous gularis</i>
83	Abbott's Babbler	<i>Malcocincla abbotti</i>
84	Short-tailed Babbler	<i>Malcocincla malaccensis</i>
85	White-crested Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax leucolopus</i>
86	Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>
87	Asian Fairy-bluebird	<i>Irena puella</i>
88	Asian Glossy Starling	<i>Aplonis panayensis</i>
89	Common Hill Myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>
90	Javan Myna	<i>Acridotheres javanicus</i>
91	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
92	Daurian Starling	<i>Agropsar sturninus</i>



93	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
94	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa latirostris</i>
95	Mugimaki Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula mugimaki</i>
96	Blue-winged Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</i>
97	Orange-bellied Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum trigonostigma</i>
98	Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum cruentatum</i>
99	Brown-throated Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes malacensis</i>
100	Van Hasselt's Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma brasiliana</i>
101	Copper-throated Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma calcostetha</i>
102	Olive-backed Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris jugularis</i>
103	Crimson Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga siparaja</i>
104	Little Spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera longirostra</i>
105	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>



A sleeping Sunda Scops Owl at Lower Peirce Reservoir. Photo © Birding Singapore/Lim Kim Seng