

Birding Singapore – 27th April 2015

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A distant Red-crowned Barbet at the Central Catchment Nature Reserve. Photo © Lim Kim Seng

Sirus Tanya, a businessman and a birder from Thailand, contacted me for a half day trip so we made arrangements for April 27th. We got to the Central Catchment Nature Reserve by 6.00 am, got ready and were in the wet and muddy trails very quickly. The recent rains had turned the undulating trail into an uncomfortable mess but we were soon cheered by a soft crash to our left. A quick shine of my torch showed it was a Sunda Pangolin climbing up a vine just two metres from us! This is a rare ant-eating mammal that is globally threatened and staring at us up close. It continued on its ascent and was soon lost to view. Wow!

We didn't see anything as exciting as the pangolins as the owls were largely silent except for two distant Brown hawk Owls. We did see a small scorpion as we emerged from the forest. We also saw two Large-tailed Nightjars on the prowl near MacRitchie Reservoir.

As the sun came up at the lake, we were hopeful that the weather would be good and the birding great. As it got light, we started seeing the swiftlets and then the usual White-throated Kingfisher, Long-tailed Parakeets and Oriental Magpie-robin and rather less common Pacific Swifts and a Brown-backed Needletail.

Back at Jelutong Tower, a spot for finding canopy species, we did well as we scored on a palor morph Changeable Hawk Eagle, a distant female Thick-billed Green Pigeon, a surprise female Jambu Fruit Dove well spotted by Sirius, Blue-throated Bee-eater, Red-crowned Barbet, Glossy Swiftlet, a pair of Asian Fairy-bluebirds and lots of Van Hasselt's Sunbirds.

At 9.30 am, we finished our birding in the forest and went for breakfast. Even though we had done well, seeing 41 species in just three-and-a-half hours, I still couldn't forget our close encounter with the pangolin. Pity I didn't have my camera ready.

After breakfast, we had one more place to try. The hilly parkland at Bukit Batok Nature Park. We spent an hour exploring this placid park and saw some really nice birds including Malaysian Pied Fantail, a group of globally threatened Straw-headed Bulbuls and an even noisier group of ten White-crested Laughingthrushes. We saw 14 species despite the very short time we spent there.

Overall, we recorded 45 species in total including some really cool birds and the super cool pangolin!

A List of Species Recorded on 27th April 2015

Species highlighted in yellow indicate those that were "heard only". Sequence, taxonomy and nomenclature follow IOC.

#	English Name	Scientific Name
1	Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>
2	Pink-necked Green Pigeon	<i>Treron vernans</i>
3	Thick-billed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron curvirostra</i>
4	Jambu Fruit Dove	<i>Ptilinopus jambu</i>
5	Violet Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus</i>
6	Brown Hawk-Owl	<i>Ninox scutulata</i>
7	Large-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus macrurus</i>
8	Glossy Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia esculenta</i>
9	Silver-rumped Spinetail	<i>Rhaphidura leucopygialis</i>
10	Brown-backed Needletail	<i>Hirundapus giganteus</i>
11	Pacific Swift	<i>Apus pacificus</i>

12	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>
13	Collared Kingfisher	<i>Todiramphus chloris</i>
14	Blue-eared Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo meninting</i>
15	Blue-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops viridis</i>
16	Lineated Barbet	<i>Megalaima lineata</i>
17	Red-crowned Barbet	<i>Megalaima rafflesii</i>
18	Banded Woodpecker	<i>Chrysophlegma miniaceum</i>
19	Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot	<i>Loriculus galgulus</i>
20	Long-tailed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula longicauda</i>
21	Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>
22	Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>
23	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>
24	Malaysian Pied Fantail	<i>Rhipidura javanica</i>
25	Straw-headed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus zeylanicus</i>
26	Yellow-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus goiavier</i>
27	Olive-winged Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus plumosus</i>
28	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
29	Pacific Swallow	<i>Hirundo tahitica</i>
30	Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>
31	Dark-necked Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus atrogularis</i>
32	Pin-striped Tit-Babbler	<i>Macronous gularis</i>
33	Short-tailed Babbler	<i>Malcocincla malaccensis</i>
34	White-crested Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax leucolopus</i>
35	Asian Fairy-bluebird	<i>Irena puella</i>
36	Asian Glossy Starling	<i>Aplonis panayensis</i>
37	Common Hill Myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>
38	Javan Myna	<i>Acridotheres javanicus</i>
39	Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>
40	Dark-sided Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa sibirica</i>
41	Orange-bellied Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum trigonostigma</i>
42	Brown-throated Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes malacensis</i>
43	Van Hasselt's Sunbird	<i>Leptocoma brasiliana</i>
44	Crimson Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga siparaja</i>
45	Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>