



Northumberland & Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA - June to December 2002 An easy way to see some common Malaysian Birds Steve Barratt

There are numbers of trip reports, which tell a birding visitor how to spend days on the hunt for species in the hills and forests of Malaysia. However if you only have a couple of hours first thing in the morning in KL and you would like to see 30 or so of the common species take a taxi to one of the Chinese cemeteries close to the city centre. I lived close to the Seputeh cemetery about 3km out of KL centre during the second half of 2002. The cemetery is bounded by Jalan Syed Putra, the Federal Highway and Sungei Besi airport. During casual visits during the second half of 2002 I saw some 40 species, of which all but a couple are unrecorded in Europe.

Access is from side roads off the main roads. One of the free maps given out by hotels should allow you to locate an access but coming from the city centre take Jalan Robson off Jalan Syed Putra and then first left to the top of Jalan Syed Putra Kiri seems the simplest to find. A taxi would be 5 or 6 RM - about £1. The local landmark is the Thean Hou Temple. A dawn or dusk visit will be most productive. The cemetery is overgrown and has numbers of mature ornamental trees and much thick grass but all the birds can be seen without leaving the narrow roads. The north end is quieter as the south side is used as a short cut by taxis. Please note that the area is still used as a cemetery so please show respect to the graves.

The common birds which are not easy to see in most places but which are findable during a visit to the cemetery include barred button quail, slaty-breasted rail, blue throated bee-eater, baya weaver, rufescent prinia, Richard's pipit and three species of munia -scaly breasted, white headed and black headed.

I guess that in the northern winter other species will appear and I'm sure a more diligent search or maybe a search by a more diligent person would discover other species.

Species list

Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala*

A free flying flock, which I believe originates from the zoo, sometimes flies over. Maybe for the purist they are not tickable but they look great.

Little Heron *Butorides striatus*

Over-flying once

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*

A Family party frequently seen soaring on the look out for lunch

Barred Button Quail

Several seen walking along the tracks on the north side at dusk. They seem unafraid if you use a car as a hide.

White breasted Waterhen *Amaurorinus phoenicurus*

Timid but common

Slaty-breasted Rail *Rallus striatus*

Timid

Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pyncnonotos goavivier*

abundant

Red whiskered Bulbul *Pyncnonotos jocosus*

Several present. Smart birds which look as if they should be in a cage, which is where they are!

Pink Necked Pigeon *Treron vernans*

Common -flying fast and roosting in the greenery

Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*

Peaceful Dove *Geopelia striata*

Cute, tiny and tame

Thick-billed Pigeon *Treron curvirostra*

Common Goldenback *Dinopium javanense*

Seen once

Green billed Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus tristis*

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*

Large Tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*

Seen at dusk hawking around the central group of buildings and often heard calling. Biggest group was of four together.

House Swift *Apus affinis*

White Breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*

common

Blue Throated Bee-eater *Merops viridis*

roosting on bare trees and hawking

Blue Tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*

Winter visitor

Coppersmith Barbet *Megalaima haemocephala*
 A common and cute bird with a distinctive call

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
 Winter visitor

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*
 resident

Black Naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*
 a super bird to have common

House Crow *Corvus splendens*

Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis*
 several around

Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*

Rufescent Prinia *Prinia rufescens*
 skulking in the grass

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*
 on the tracks

Phillipine's Glossy Starling *Aplonis panayensis*
 common

Purple-backed Starling *Sturnus sturninus*
 Winter visitor in flocks in bare trees

Common Mynah *Acridotheres tristis*

White Vented Mynah *Acridotheres javanicus*

Olive Backed Sunbird *Nectarinia jugularis*

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*
 How come they are so uncommon in UK?

Baya Weaver *Plocueus phillipinus*
 Resident and numbers of their nests can be seen hanging from the trees

Scaly Breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*
 The three munia species can sometimes be seen together in the long grasses.

Black Headed Munia *Lonchura malacca*

White Headed Munia *Lonchura maja* Magpie Robin