

Pacific golden plovers in breeding plumage at Serangoon Reservoir

Subjects: Pacific golden plover, *Pluvialis fulva* (Aves: Charadriiformes: Charadriidae).

Subjects identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Serangoon Reservoir; 23 April 2015; 1030 hrs.

Habitat: Sparsely vegetated rocky bank of freshwater body, adjacent to urban parkland.

Observers: Contributor and others.

Observation: A flock of Pacific golden plovers in various stages of breeding plumage were seen on the rocky reservoir bank (Fig. 1-4); eleven individuals were counted. The subjects remained relatively still and only broke into a slight run when a motorboat drove by.

Remarks: Before the onset of the breeding season, many long-distance migrants have a second molt annually (prealternate molt), which produces the breeding plumage. A male Pacific golden plover assuming breeding plumage will show black from ear-coverts to belly; a white band runs from the lores to behind the ear-coverts and down to the side of the breast; the flanks are white, and the vent marked black (Fig. 2 & 3). In comparison, the female has less black on the face, and more white admixed in black on the underside. Unlike the breeding adults, the juvenile is strongly golden-washed at the head. The sides, neck and breast are covered with fine spots and dark streaks; and the upperparts have bold, yellowish-buff patterns (Fig. 1 & 3).

References:

- Beaman, M & S. Madge, 2010. *The Handbook of Bird Identification for Europe and the Western Palearctic*. Christopher Helm, A & C Black, London. 868 pp.
Hill, G. E., 2010. *National Geographic Bird Coloration*. National Geographic Society, Washinton D. C., USA. 256 pp.
Robson, C., 2010. *New Holland Field Guide to the Birds of South-east Asia*. New Holland Publishers (UK) Ltd, London, United Kingdom. 304 pp.



Fig. 1. Individual starting to assume breeding plumage.



Fig. 2. Male in full breeding plumage.

Photographs by Ng Wen Qing



Fig. 3. Two individuals: male in full breeding plumage (left) and a juvenile (right).



Fig. 4. A flock of nine individuals in different stages of breeding plumage.

Photographs by Ng Wen Qing

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