

Barred buttonquail at Coney Island

Subject: Barred buttonquail, *Turnix suscitator* (Aves: Charadriiformes: Turnicidae).

Subject identified by: Contributors.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Coney Island Nature Park, west entrance along shore of Punggol Reservoir; 17 December 2015, around 1140 hrs.

Habitat: Granite rock bund by artificial freshwater lake, surrounded by scrub vegetation.

Observers: Contributors.

Observation: A lone buttonquail was found motionless on the granite rock bund at the edge of the reservoir. It was about 12 cm from beak to tail tip. The pictures (Figs. 1 & 2) were obtained with a pocket camera from two different angles, with the photographer about 4 to 5 m from the subject. The bird did not appear to be injured.

Remarks: Despite its general appearance, the barred buttonquail is not a true quail as it is more closely related to plovers and sandpipers. In Singapore, it is known to be a common resident of open grassland and scrub, but is difficult to observe as it tends to keep to thick vegetation (Yong et al., 2016: 48). The black throat patch on the featured individual indicates that it is an adult female. Male birds have black bars on the neck and lack the throat patch (Yong et al., 2016: 48). It is not known why the bird was in an exposed area so close to noon, and not spooked by people moving around her. It seems possible that she was having health issues.

Reference: Yong, D. L., K. C. Lim & T. K. Lee, 2016. *A Naturalist's Guide to the Birds of Singapore*. 2nd edition. John Beaufoy Publishing, 176 pp.



Fig. 1. Frontal view of buttonquail.



Fig. 2. Lateral view of buttonquail.

Photographs by Tammy Lim

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