A crested goshawk at West Coast Park

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Subject identified by: Tan Heok Hui.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, West Coast Park; 22 November 2018 at around 1820 hrs and 23 November 2018 at around 1215 hrs.

Habitat: Coastal urban parkland.

Observers: Tan Heok Hui & Koh Li Ling (22 November); Tan Heok Hui & Kelvin K. P. Lim (23 November).

Observations: At least one bird was observed on two consecutive days.

On the evening of 22 November 2018, a crested goshawk was observed on the ground at the base of some trees near a walking path. It then flew about 10 m and perched on a tree, about 3 m off the ground. When the observers followed, the bird flew again and perched on another tree about 15 m away, also around 3 m off the ground. The observers decided to not go nearer and left.

The following day at around noon, the sky was partially overcast. The bird was not at the location where it was seen the previous evening. At about 25 m away, on a bare-branched sea almond tree by the shore, a crested goshawk, presumably the same individual seen the previous evening, was observed perched 10-15 m off the ground (Fig. 1 & 2). It proceeded to sun itself periodically, stretching both wings outwards on a horizontal plane (Fig. 3), as well as spreading its tail feathers (Fig. 4).

Remarks: In Singapore, the crested goshawk is an uncommon resident, and has been recorded from Ang Mo Kio, Bishan Park, the Botanical Gardens, Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, Central Catchment Nature Reserve, Changi, Goldhill Avenue, Jurong Lake, Kent Ridge, Kranji Dam, Mount Faber, Neo Tiew, Pasir Ris Park, Punggol, Pulau Ubin, Sembawang Park, Senoko, Telok Blangah and Mandai Lake Road (Lim, 2009; Yong et al., 2017; Kokhuitan, 2015). West Coast Park is now added to the list of localities where this bird has been seen. It has been documented to nest and rear chicks successfully in an urban park in Bedok (Lim, 2017), and previously known to nest at the Botanic Gardens (Lim, 2009). Although regarded as a critically endangered species in Singapore, the IUCN listed the crested goshawk in the ‘Least Concerned’ category (Birdlife International, 2016). The grey head of the featured individual (Fig. 1 & 2) indicates that it is an adult male (Yong et al., 2017).

References:
Fig 1. Ventral view of goshawk.

Fig 2. Latero-ventral view of the bird perched on branch.

Fig 3. Lateral view of bird sunning its wings.

Fig 4. Ventral view of sunning bird with tail feathers fanned open.

Photographs taken on 23 November 2018 by Tan Heok Hui