

Spotted wood-owls at East Coast Park

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Subjects: Spotted wood-owl, *Strix seloputo* (Aves: Strigiformes: Strigidae).

Subjects identified by: Karl Jun Qiang Png.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, East Coast Park, along park connector link to Marina Bay East; 7 August 2020; 2145-2215 hrs.

Habitat: Urban parkland.

Observer: Karl Jun Qiang Png.

Observation: On a cool and windy night, two adult spotted wood-owls were observed intermittently flying and landing between trees. One of the owls was first spotted when it flew and perched on the branch of a yellow flame tree (*Peltophorum pterocarpum*) around 30 metres tall. There, the owl stayed for about five minutes when it could be approached and photographed (see accompanying pictures). It then flew into the wooded corridor dominated by rhu trees (*Casuarina equisetifolia*) next to the park connector. The second owl was observed following the first from behind.



The first spotted wood-owl observed perching on the branch of a yellow flame tree. Photographs by Karl Jun Qiang Png

Remarks: The spotted-wood owl is regarded as a ‘critically endangered’ bird in Singapore (Lim et al., 2008) that seems to have become increasingly common in urban parks (e.g., Tan, 2014; Tan & Koh, 2015). The two birds at East Coast Park could be a mated pair, but there seems to be no evidence of nesting activity.

References:

- Lim KS, Ho HC, Lim KK, Lim KC, Wang LK & Davison G (2008) Birds. In: Davison GWH, Ng PKL & Ho HC [eds.] The Singapore Red Data Book: Threatened Plants & Animals of Singapore. Second edition. Nature Society (Singapore). pp. 177-189.
- Tan HH & Koh LL (2015) Spotted wood owls at Kent Ridge. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2015: 43-45.
- Tan RY (2014) Spotted wood owl at Clementi Woods. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2014: 279.