

Biodiversity Record: Feeding of a flying dragon to fledglings of greater racket-tailed drongo

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Subjects: Greater racket-tailed drongos, *Dicrurus paradiseus* (Aves: Passeriformes: Dicruridae);
Flying dragon, *Draco* sp. (Reptilia: Squamata: Agamidae).

Subjects identified by: Wei Jian Wong.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Rifle Range Nature Park; 16 April 2023; around 1030 hrs.

Habitat: Secondary forest.

Observer: Wei Jian Wong.

Observation: An adult greater racket-tailed drongo was observed offering an apparently dead flying dragon to one of two fledglings (Fig. 1). The birds were perched approximately 20 m up on a tree (Fig. 1). The fledgling dropped the lizard while attempting to consume it. This prompted the adult drongo to fly downwards to retrieve the lizard. After retrieval, the adult bird offered the lizard to the other fledgling. It managed to successfully manipulate the prey and swallow it whole. After the adult flew off, another adult, distinguishable from the first by its missing outer tail feather, flew in and offered an unidentified insect to the first fledgling (Fig. 2).



Fig 1. Adult greater racket-tailed drongo offering a flying dragon carcass to one of the fledglings. (Photograph by: Wei Jian Wong).



Fig 2. A different adult drongo, distinguishable by a missing outer tail feather, offering an unidentified insect to the same fledgling. (Photograph by: Wei Jian Wong).

Remarks: The biparental care and feeding of greater racket-tailed drongo juveniles by adults has been documented in Singapore, with prey items seemingly dominated by insects (Loei & Wee, 2019). The current observation is noteworthy as this appears to be the first record of a fledgling greater racket-tailed drongo feeding on a flying dragon, especially considering the large size of the prey in relation to the fledgling. Given the primarily insectivorous diet and observations of “false calling” and kleptoparasitism exhibited by the species (King & Rappole, 2001; Satischandra et al., 2007, 2010), it remains uncertain whether the prey was obtained by true foraging attempts.

Literature cited:

- King DI & Rappole JH (2001) Kleptoparasitism of laughingthrushes *Garrulax* by greater racket-tailed drongos *Dicrurus paradiseus* in Myanmar. *Forktail*, 17: 121–122.
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- Satischandra SHK, Kudavidanage EP, Kotagama SW & Goodale E (2007) The benefits of joining mixed-species flocks for greater racket-tailed drongos *Dicrurus paradiseus*. *Forktail*, 23: 145–148.
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