

Oriental white-eye nesting at Kent Ridge

Subjects: Oriental white-eye, *Zosterops palpebrosus* (Aves: Passeriformes: Zosteropidae/Timaliidae).

Subjects identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Kent Ridge, National University of Singapore campus, at end of Science Drive 4; 21 March to 9 April 2007.

Habitat: Urban parkland at the edge of secondary forest patch.

Observers: Contributor and others.

Observation: On 21 March 2007, an adult Oriental white-eye was seen sitting in its nest constructed of dried fibrous material and what seemed to be spider web, and suspended like a cup-shaped hammock from two perpendicular twigs (Fig. 1). The nest was located some 15 metres from the ground on a sea almond tree. On 27 March 2007, the bird was seen to be brooding three white eggs (Fig.2). On 3 April 2007, a parent bird was observed feeding a green caterpillar to the three nestlings (Fig. 3). By 9 April 2007, the nestlings had fledged and two of them were seen outside their nest (Fig. 4). They were not seen thereafter, and it is not known if the third chick had fledged.

Remarks: Only one adult bird was observed at the nest at any one time, and it is not known if both parents had participated in the brooding and rearing of the young. The entire process, from egg-laying to chicks fledging and leaving the nest, had taken about 20 days to complete. It is not known when the chicks had hatched, but the period between hatching and fledging took, at the very most, only 13 days. Growing to 11 cm in total length, the gregarious Oriental white-eye is regarded as a common resident bird in Singapore (Yong et al., 2013: 132). The nesting record featured herein is interesting for according to Yong et al. (2013: 132), the nest is built in low bushes. However, Robson (2008: 501) cites nests as having been located at heights ranging from 1.5 to 18 m above ground.

References:

Robson, C., 2008. *A Field Guide to the Birds of South-east Asia*. Second edition. New Holland Publishers, London. 544 pp.

Yong D. L., K. C. Lim & T. K. Lee, 2013. *A Naturalist's Guide to the Birds of Singapore*. John Beaufoy Publishing Limited, Oxford, England. 176 pp.



Fig. 1. 21 March 2007 at 1102 hrs.



Fig. 2. 27 March 2007 at 0932 hrs.

Photographs by Tan Heok Hui



Fig. 3. 3 April 2007, 1651 hrs. Parent feeding caterpillar to nestlings.



Fig. 4. 9 April 2007, 1057 hrs. Two of the three fledgelings outside the nest.

Photographs by Tan Heok Hui

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