

Red-breasted parakeets eating rambutan

Subjects: Red-breasted parakeet, *Psittacula alexandri* (Aves: Psittaciformes: Psittaculidae);
Rambutan, *Nephelium lappaceum* (Magnoliophyta: Sapindaceae).

Subjects identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Choa Chu Kang estate, Choa Chu Kang North 7; 1 August 2015; around 1830 hr.

Habitat: Urban parkland. Roadside trees in residential housing estate.

Observer: Contributor.

Observation: Five red-breasted parakeets were observed feeding on the ripe fruits of a rambutan tree at the roadside. They peeled the skin off the red-coloured fruit, then removed and discarded the pulp (see accompanying pictures), consuming only the seeds. Occasional screeching was heard from the feeding birds.

Remarks: The red-breasted parakeet is an introduced species with well-established populations in Singapore (Neo, 2012). It has been photographed eating green rambutan fruit (Wee, 2015). The related alexandrine parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*) has also been photographed eating rambutan, similarly preferring the seed over the pulp (Wee, 2013).



Red-breasted parakeets eating rambutan by skinning the fruit (left) and removing the pulp and seed (right). Photographs by Tan Heok Hui

References:

- Neo M. L., 2012. A review of three alien parrots in Singapore. *Nature in Singapore*. 5: 241-248.
- Wee, J., 2013. Alexandrine parakeet eating rambutan (*Nephelium lappaceum*). Bird Ecology Study Group. <http://www.besgroup.org/2013/09/15/long-tailed-parakeet-eating-rambutan-nephelium-lappaceum/> [accessed 3 August 2015].
- Wee, J., 2015. Birds and rambutan (*Nephelium lappaceum*) fruits. Bird Ecology Study Group. <http://www.besgroup.org/2015/08/01/birds-and-rambutan-nephelium-lappaceum-fruits/> [accessed 3 August 2015].

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