

Red-breasted parakeets eating golden penda fruits

Subjects: Red-breasted parakeet, *Psittacula alexandri* (Aves: Psittaciformes: Psittaculidae);
Golden penda, *Xanthostemon chrysanthus* (Magnoliopsida: Myrtales: Myrtaceae).

Subjects identified by: Tan Heok Hui & Jeremy Yeo.

Location, date and time:
Singapore Island, Choa Chu Kang estate, Choa Chu Kang North 7; 1 October 2016; around 0930 hrs.

Habitat: Urban greenery among concrete apartment buildings.

Observers: Contributors.

Observation: Up to six red-breasted parakeets were feeding on the woody fruit capsules of the golden penda trees on the road side. Occasional screeching was heard from the feeding birds. Each of the parakeets was observed to grab part of a bunch of fruits with a foot. It bit into the brown-coloured woody capsule and crunched it into pieces (see accompanying photograph). After having fed for about 20 minutes, the birds flew away.



Photograph by Koh Li Ling

Remarks: In Singapore, the introduced red-breasted parakeet appears to thrive in urban parkland (Neo, 2012; Yong et al., 2013) by taking advantage of the many wayside trees such as the golden penda. Lim (2014) recorded the red-breasted parakeet feeding on the flowers of the golden penda. Several species of birds have been documented to feed on the nectar of golden penda inflorescence (Amar-Singh & Wee, 2011). The present observation includes the fruit of the golden penda to the diet of the red-breasted parakeet.

References:

- Amar-Singh, H. S. S. & Y. C. Wee, [30 March] 2011. Golden penda (*Xanthostemon chrysanthus*) and nectar feeders. Bird Ecology Study Group. <http://www.besgroup.org/2011/03/30/golden-penda-xanthostemon-chrysanthus-and-nectar-feeders/> Accessed on 3 October 2016.
- Lim, R., [18 April] 2014. Red-breasted Parakeet feeding on Golden Penda flowers. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hK96ibDsiI> Accessed on 3 October 2016.
- Neo M. L., 2012. A review of three alien parrots in Singapore. *Nature in Singapore*. 5: 241-248.
- 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.

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