

Biodiversity Record: A king bird-of-paradise at Windsor Nature Park

Sebastian S. Y. Ow*, Eunice Y. L. Kong & Hui Zhen Han

National Parks Board, 1 Cluny Road, Singapore Botanic Gardens, Singapore 259569

Email: sebastian_ow@nparks.gov.sg (*corresponding author)

Recommended citation. Ow SSY, Kong EYL & Han HZ (2024) Biodiversity Record: A king bird-of-paradise at Windsor Nature Park, 17: e2024004. DOI: 10.26107/NIS-2024-0004

Subject: King bird-of-paradise, *Cicinnurus regius* (Aves: Passeriformes: Paradisaeidae).

Subject identified by: Hui Zhen Han.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Windsor Nature Park, Hanguana Trail; 21 December 2023, around 1215 to 1220 hrs.

Habitat: Secondary forest.

Observers: Sebastian S. Y. Ow, Yuet Hsin Toh, Ling Han, Eunice Y. L. Kong, Hui Zhen Han, Su Hooi Chan and Xue Yi Han.

Observation: One adult male (Figs. 1 & 2) was spotted moving among low foliage and feeding on fruits of the giant taro (*Alocasia macrorrhizos*) (Figs. 3 & 4). A couple of minutes later, the bird stopped feeding, moved to a nearby vine and started climbing upwards, swaying his rump left to right in an exaggerated manner (Figs. 5 & 6). Thereafter, he flew deeper into the forest out of the observers' sights.



Figs. 1 & 2. Male king bird-of-paradise at Windsor Nature Park, showing his brightly coloured features in lateral view (Fig. 1), and fronto-ventral view (Fig. 2) (Photographs by: Sebastian S. Y. Ow).



Figs. 3 & 4. King bird-of-paradise feeding on fruits of the giant taro (Photographs by: Sebastian S. Y. Ow).

Remarks: The king bird-of-paradise is native throughout New Guinea (Indonesia and Papua New Guinea) and surrounding islands (BirdLife International, 2023). It is evaluated as a species of ‘Least Concern’ (IUCN, 2023). This species is not known to be a migrant (IUCN, 2023), and the individual featured here is likely imported. Although not wearing a leg band, this bird is believed to be a former captive that had either escaped or been intentionally released.

The king bird-of-paradise is known to feed on fruits and arthropods (Beeher & Pruett-Jones, 1983), and the featured individual seemed capable of finding food in the park (Figs. 3 & 4) and appeared to be in good health. It appeared to be the only one of its kind present.

There is one other record of a bird-of-paradise in Singapore. In 1998, a female lesser bird-of-paradise (*Paradisaea minor*), also a presumed escapee, was seen at the Singapore Botanic Gardens (Lim, 2009).



Figs. 5 & 6. King bird-of-paradise swaying his rump left to right in an exaggerated manner when climbing up a vine (Photographs by: Sebastian S. Y. Ow).

Literature cited:

Beehler B & Pruett-Jones SG (1983) Display dispersion and diet of birds of paradise: a comparison of nine species. Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology, 13: 229238.
 BirdLife International (2023) Species factsheet: *Cicinnurus regius*. <http://datazone.birdlife.org/species/factsheet/king-bird-of-paradise-cicinnurus-regius> on 22/12/2023 (Accessed 22 December 2023)
 IUCN (2023) The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2023-1. <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/22706208/130412002> (Accessed 22 December 2023)
 Lim KS (2009) The Avifauna of Singapore. Nature Society (Singapore), Singapore, 611 pp.