

Biodiversity Record: Eleven oriental darters on Pulau Ubin

Kah Ming Teo*, Jacky S. M. Soh & Fatin Nabila Mohd Haidir

National Parks Board, Singapore Botanic Gardens, Singapore 259569

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

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Subjects: Oriental darter, *Anhinga melanogaster* (Aves: Suliformes: Anhingidae).

Subjects identified by: Jacky S. M. Soh.

Location, date and time: Pulau Ubin, Pekan Quarry; 17 April 2026; around 0806 hrs.

Habitat: Freshwater. Open quarry lake with vegetation at its edges and a few artificial floating platforms of wetland vegetation, surrounded by secondary forest and fruit orchard.

Observers: Jacky S. M. Soh, Teo Kah Ming and Fatin Nabila Mohd Haidir.

Observation: Eleven oriental darters in non-breeding plumage were observed. Nine individuals were photographed perching along the edge of the lake (Fig. 1), while another two had flown away before they could be photographed.

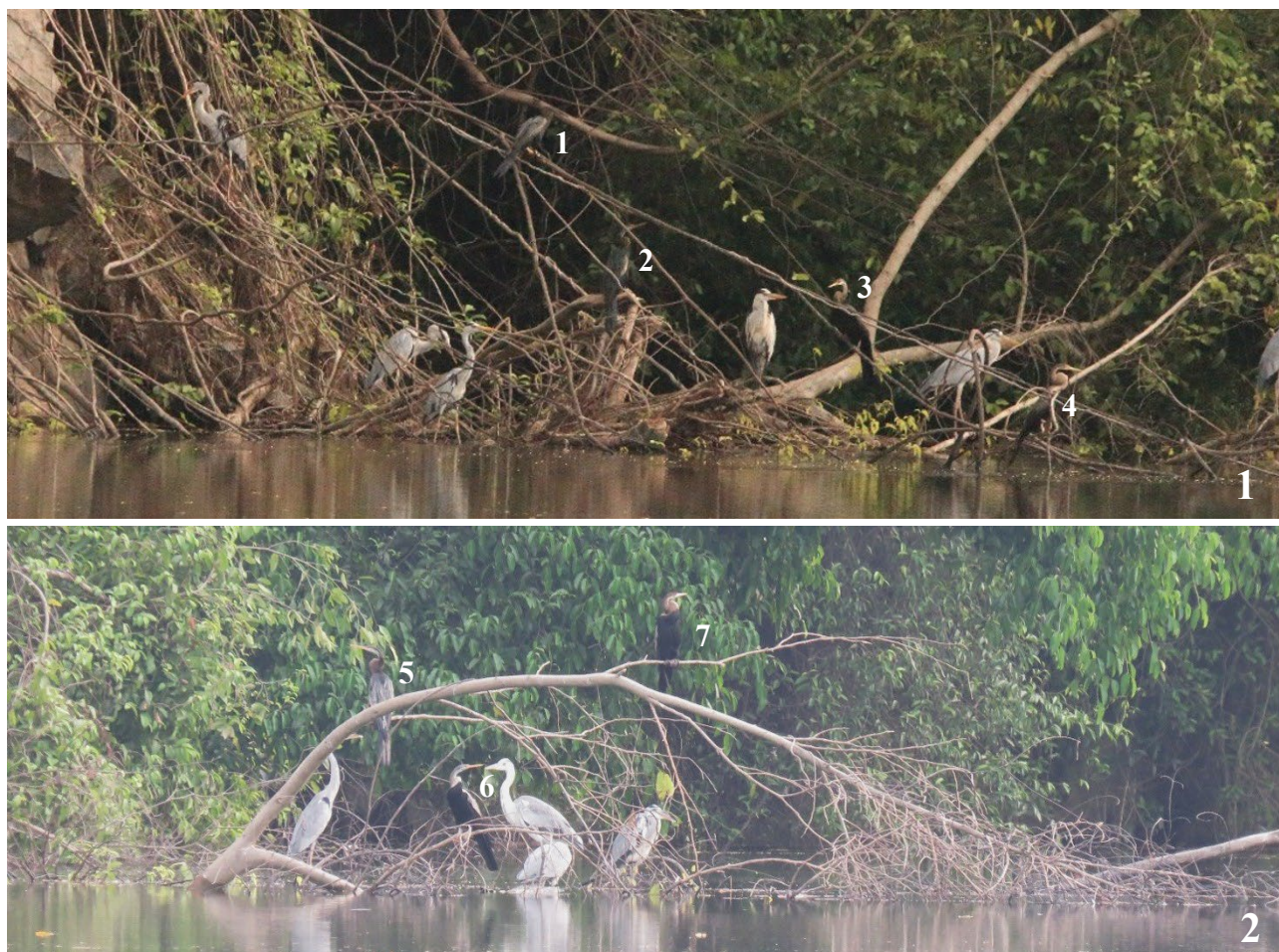


Fig. 1. First to fourth of the nine Oriental darters (individually numbered) perched alongside grey herons. (Photograph by: Teo Kah Ming) Fig. 2. Fifth to seventh Oriental darter among grey herons. (Photograph by: Jacky S. M. Soh).



Fig. 3. The eighth and ninth Oriental darter perching on dead branches. (Photograph by: Teo Kah Ming).

Remarks: In Singapore, the Oriental darter is an uncommon non-breeding visitor (Lim et al., 2020). Non-breeding adults are identified by their mostly dark brown head, neck and mantle with pale throat, and white streaks on upper mantle, scapulars and upperwing-coverts (Robson, 2017). This species has also been observed at Jurong Lake, Singapore Quarry, Hindhede Quarry, Kent Ridge Park, Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, and Pulau Ubin (Bird Society of Singapore, 2026a). Known sightings of this species on Pulau Ubin are compiled in Table 1. The present record holds the most number of birds sighted on a single occasion at one location since the first record of the species on the island in February 2014.

Table 1. Previous sightings of the Oriental darter on Pulau Ubin compiled with records (available until December 2021) from BSS (Bird Society of Singapore, 2026b) and hitherto unpublished records collected by NParks (National Parks Board, Singapore).

Date	Location	Individuals	Remarks on activity (if any)	Source
11 Feb 2014	Pekan Quarry	1		NParks
30 Oct 2014 – 31 Jul 2015	Unspecified	1		BSS
30 Nov 2014	Unspecified	1		BSS
8 Dec 2014	Ketam Quarry	1	Quite skittish, did not stay long.	NParks
10 Jan 2015	Ketam Quarry	2		NParks
13 May 2015	Pekan Quarry	1		NParks
5 Jun 2015	Pekan Quarry	1		NParks
5 Dec 2016 – 27 Dec 2016	Unspecified	1		BSS
21 Mar 2017 – 22 Mar 2017	Unspecified	1		BSS
14 May 2017	Unspecified	1		BSS
4 Jun 2017	Unspecified	1		BSS
24 Dec 2017 – 03 Apr 2018	Unspecified	1		BSS
26 Jan 2019 – 23 Feb 2019	Unspecified	1		BSS
23 Jan 2020	Ketam Quarry	1	Perching/sun-bathing.	NParks
27 Jan 2021	Pekan Quarry	2	Perching on dead tree.	NParks
27 Jan 2021	Ketam Quarry	1	Perching/sun-bathing.	NParks
8 Feb 2022	Pekan Quarry	1	Swimming in quarry lake.	NParks
8 Feb 2022	Ketam Quarry	3	Sunning/perching on dead tree.	NParks
1 Feb 2023	Pekan Quarry	2	Perching/sun-bathing.	NParks
1 Feb 2023	Ketam Quarry	4	Perching/sun-bathing.	NParks
1 Feb 2024	Ketam Quarry	1	Perching/sun-bathing.	NParks
22 Jan 2025	Pekan Quarry	1	Perching on branch of dead tree.	NParks
22 Jan 2025	Ketam Quarry	2	Perching on dead tree.	NParks
28 Jan 2026	Pekan Quarry	9	Seven sighted at 0813 hrs perched on heron nesting platform on a floating wetland; one perched at edge of quarry; one flew away.	NParks
28 Jan 2026	Ketam Quarry	6	Perching/sun-bathing.	NParks
26 Feb 2026	Pekan Quarry	1	Sunning on log in quarry lake.	NParks
18 Mar 2026	Pekan Quarry	1	Perching on log in quarry lake.	NParks

Literature cited:

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