

Great billed and grey herons at West Coast Park

Subjects: Great billed heron, *Ardea sumatrana* (Aves: Coraciiformes: Ardeidae);
Grey heron, *Ardea cinerea* (Aves: Coraciiformes: Ardeidae).

Subjects identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, West Coast Park, coastline near western end of park boundary; 1 November 2016, 1845-1852 hrs.

Habitat: Muddy-silty intertidal shore exposed at low tide along a rocky breakwater and urban parkland.

Observer: Contributor.

Observation: An individual each of grey heron (right picture) and great billed heron (both pictures) were observed near each other along the exposed muddy-silt shores exposed by low tide. The birds appeared to be stalking prey in shallow water, and seemed to be ignoring each other (right picture). The birds were also apparently unperturbed by a pack of eight smooth-coated otters (*Lutrogale perspicillata*) frolicking nearby.

Remarks: In the Singapore Red Data Book, the grey heron is listed as ‘vulnerable’ and the great billed heron as ‘critically endangered’ (Lim et al., 2008). A common resident and probable migrant, the grey heron is believed to be commonest large heron in Singapore, while the great-billed heron is an uncommon resident there (Yong et al., 2016). Sin (2016) documented a great-billed heron perching on a tree at West Coast Park in 2015.

References:

- Lim K. S., H. C. Ho, K. K. Lim, K. C. Lim, L. K. Wang & G. Davison, 2008. Birds. In: Davison, G. W. H., P. K. L. Ng & H. C. Ho (eds.), *The Singapore Red Data Book: Threatened Plants and Animals of Singapore*. 2nd Edition. The Nature Society (Singapore). pp. 177-189.
- Sin, K., 2016. Birding West Coast Park. *Singapore Bird Group, Nature Society (Singapore)* - <https://singaporebirdgroup.wordpress.com/2016/10/07/birding-west-coast-park/>. Accessed on 2 November 2016.
- Yong D. L., K. C. Lim & T. K. Lee, 2016. *A Naturalist's Guide to the Birds of Singapore*. 2nd edition. John Beaufoy Publishing, United Kingdom. 176 pp.



Left picture. Great-billed heron standing in the shallow water near the shore. Right picture. A great-billed heron (lower left) and a grey heron (upper right) near each other. Photographs by Tan Heok Hui

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