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A Field Guide to the Birds of Singapore by Lim Kim Seng, Yong Ding Li and Lim Kim Chuah. Illustrated by Dana Gardner. John Beaufoy Publishing, 2023. 236 pp. ISBN 978-1-913679-50-7 (softcover).

This slim, softback field guide is adapted from a 2020 book by the same authors, *A Field Guide to the birds of Malaysia and Singapore,* from the same publisher. It provides a much-needed update to an earlier book, Lim & Gardner (1997) *An Illustrated Field Guide to the Birds of Singapore*. The intervening years have seen a great increase in knowledge and coverage of the avifauna of the island republic, and the authors' knowledge of Singapore birds is encyclopaedic in scope The text accounts and illustrations in the present book cover all species known for Singapore up to January 2023: 424 bird species are covered in the main text, and a separate section covers another 12 species that are naturalized escapees—a legacy of the island republic's role as a past entrepot in the bird and wildlife trade.

A very pleasing and useful feature for the more casual user is the illustrated graphic index of Singapore birds by habitat in the opening pages. The introductory chapters cover climate, habitats (liberally illustrated by photographs), broad details of the avifauna, taxonomy and nomenclature, migration, breeding seasonality, conservation, how to observe birds, details of local bird societies, and how to use the book. These sections give much more information than in any previous works, especially relating to conservation issues and natural history in Singapore. A traditional topographical diagram, without which no bird field guide is complete, depicts feather tracts, and there is a useful glossary of terms. The nicely organized species accounts start by introducing the identification features, follow with concise descriptions of age or sex-classes, where applicable, and describe voice, world range, followed by the habitat and status of each. Distinctive sub-species that have occurred in Singapore are illustrated. Details of key birding sites, with labeled maps. follows the species texts and there is a comprehensive bibliography. Indexes of English common names, scientific

names and both Chinese and Malay names are provided. While many of the illustrations are reproduced from the 2020 book, new depictions covering recent faunal records, including those stemming from escapees, have been added, and some others re-done in the interests of improved accuracy.

Notwithstanding past forest loss, law-abiding Singapore remains a good place to watch birds. It is one of the best places in which to observe some that are today very scarce residents across their formerly extensive southeast Asian ranges such as Great-billed Heron *Ardea sumatrana*, Grey-headed Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus ichthyaetus* and Straw-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus zeylanicus*. It is also a good place to study bird migration. This highly attractive and well-organized field guide is the very book to help you on the way.

Philip D. Round
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