

BIRD MIGRATION THROUGH THE YEAR

What to look for, when

Up to 15% of forest birds are migrant visitors at this time. Egrets occur in large numbers.

JAN - FEB

MAR - APR

Birds of prey start to migrate north in large numbers. Waterbirds, swallows and other migrants are also on the move.

Migrant birds have mostly gone. There are still many resident Malaysian birds. Some of these may be breeding.

MAY - JUN

JUL - AUG

Return of migrant small birds from the north - Arctic Warblers, Grey and Forest Wagtails.

Migration is in full swing! Large numbers of Brown Shrikes, which breed in northern Asia, populate our gardens and open spaces.

SEP - OCT

NOV - DEC

Large flocks of waterbirds gather at wetlands, especially along the coast. They will stay till March before flying north again.

MIGRATORY BIRDS IN PLANTATIONS

Waterbirds

Little Egret. 55-65cm. Flooded areas, ponds, swamps, Sep – May. Black legs, yellow feet, black beak, long neck. Feeds on fish, frogs, aquatic insects.



Whiskered Tern. 24-28cm. Hawks over ponds in open areas, Sep – May. Pale grey above, white or dark grey below. Mainly aquatic invertebrates.



Common Sandpiper. 19-21cm. Drains, flooded areas, small ponds, Jul – May. Brown above, white below, with distinctive fluttering flight and high-pitched call. Wide range of food items, mainly invertebrates.



Pacific Golden Plover. 23-26cm. Flooded fields, open grassland, Sep – Apr. Spotted brown and yellow, long legs, short beak. Feeds on a wide range of molluscs and invertebrates.



Cattle Egret. 48-53cm. Flooded areas and around cattle, Oct – Apr. Black legs and feet, yellow beak, short neck. Feeds on small vertebrates, insects, cattle parasites.



Aerial Feeders

Barn Swallow. 15cm. Open areas, ponds, Jul – May. Distinguished from resident Pacific Swallow by white belly and long outer tail feathers. Feeds on winged insects.



Blue-tailed Bee-eater. 23-24cm. Aerial feeder in open areas, often perching on wires, Sep – May. Colourful, mainly green plumage, long central tail feathers. Noisy, acrobatic in flight. Feeds on larger winged insects.



MIGRATORY BIRDS IN PLANTATIONS

Perching Birds



Yellow Wagtail. 18cm. Open areas, ponds, organic waste heaps, Oct – May. Long-tailed, bright yellow or pale below, olive-brown above. Catches insects and other invertebrates.



Brown Shrike. 19-20cm. Plantations areas, especially edges, open areas, Sep – May. Noisy, brown above with darker 'mask'. Voracious feeder on insects, grubs, etc. Rare in East Malaysia.

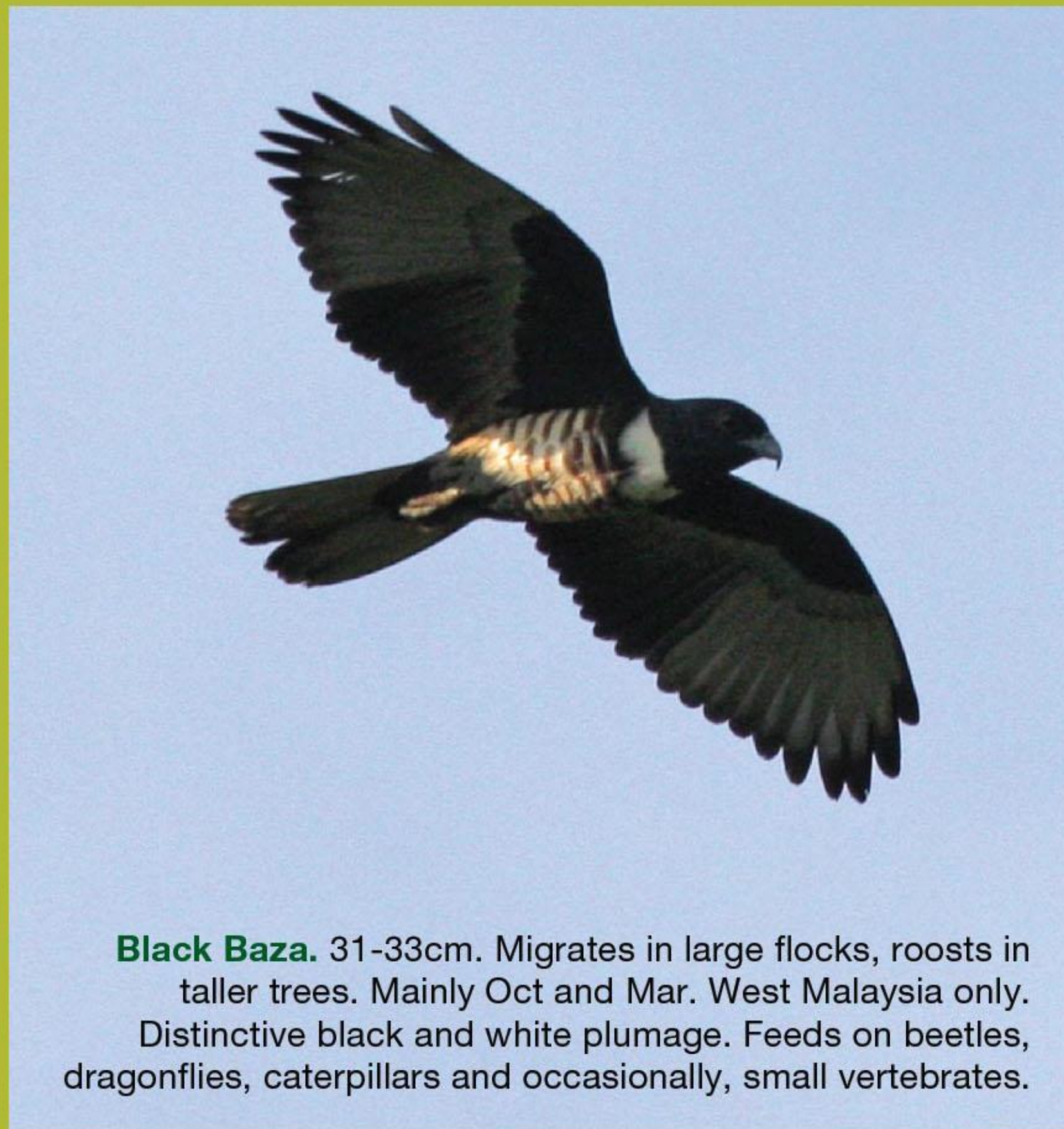


Ashy Minivet. 18-20cm. Taller trees, forest edge, Oct – Apr. Long-tailed black, grey and white. Call a musical trill. Usually in flocks. Feeds on caterpillars and insect larvae.

Birds of Prey



Oriental Honey-buzzard. 55-65cm. Migrates in flocks, roosts in forested areas, Sep – Dec, Feb – Mar. Large, broad-winged raptor with 3 tail bars and small head. Feeds on arboreal bee and wasp nests.



Black Baza. 31-33cm. Migrates in large flocks, roosts in taller trees. Mainly Oct and Mar. West Malaysia only. Distinctive black and white plumage. Feeds on beetles, dragonflies, caterpillars and occasionally, small vertebrates.