COME FLY WITH ME

RAPTOR WATCH 2016

REPORT BY MALAYSIAN NATURE SOCIETY
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Malaysian Nature Society wishes to accord her sincere thanks and appreciation to all sponsors, organizations and friends involved in the successful running of Raptor Watch 2016. We also wish to thank our MNS members, staff and volunteers whose tireless dedication and enthusiastic support year after year, captures the true spirit and essence of selfless volunteerism. We would also like to especially acknowledge and thank the raptor counters from the Raptor Study Group who have taken the time and made the necessary sacrifices to do a 23-day count at Tanjung Tuan. You are the foundation upon which we have built this unique event upon.

ORGANIZER
Malaysian Nature Society

IN COLLABORATION WITH
Tourism Promotion Division, Melaka Chief Minister Department
Kumpulan Melaka Berhad
PM Media & Event Sdn Bhd
PNB Ilham Resort
Malaysian Tourism Promotion Board, Melaka
Ministry of Tourism Melaka
Tourism Malaysia Melaka
Tourism Malaysia Negeri Sembilan
Ministry of Tourism Negeri Sembilan
Tourism Board Negeri Sembilan
Tourism Malaysia (Industry Promotions Division)

SUPPORTED BY
Majlis Perbandaran Alor Gajah Jabatan Perhutanan Melaka
Majlis Perbandaran Port Dickson Jabatan Perhilitan Melaka
Jabatan Kerja Raya, Negeri Melaka Jabatan Penyiaran Negeri Melaka
Ketua Polis, Negeri Melaka Jabatan Penerangan Negeri Melaka
Ketua Polis, Negeri Sembilan Melaka Hari Ini
Tanjung Tuan Lighthouse Keepers China Press
Minox, Leica, Trifid, Lee Photo and Schmidt RTM
Marine Department Peninsular Malaysia, Central Region (S’gor, N. Sembilan & Melaka)

SUPPORTERS
Justlife
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The phenomenon of diurnal migration of raptors in Peninsular Malaysia is not new. This spectacular aerial show has captivated and enthralled early naturalists and bird enthusiasts alike. Raptors have secured a place in the hearts of both Malaysian and international birdwatchers for their beauty, grace and the sheer wonder of their aerial display.

Annually, the raptors make their perilous journey thousands of miles from the Northern to the Southern Hemisphere for winter and then back in the opposite direction the following Spring. In February to April, the raptors can be seen converging over Tanjung Tuan (also known as Cape Rachado) on their perilous journey north to their breeding countries such as Japan, China, Taiwan and Siberia. There are no other locations in Peninsular Malaysia where the birds can be so easily observed in such numbers and it is due to Tanjung Tuan and Sumatra being only 10 nautical miles apart, making it the narrowest and “safest” point to cross between the two landmasses. It is therefore of utmost importance that this promontory be accorded highly-rated conservation status to ensure the continuation of this migratory phenomenon. The realisation of the significance and importance of this area resulted in the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) deciding to initiate and organise the first Raptor Watch in March 2000 to educate the public and show them this wonderful phenomenon and experience.

Once again, for the 17th consecutive year, Raptor Watch 2016 was held inside the beautiful coastal rainforest at Tanjung Tuan. Holding the event inside the Tanjung Tuan Forest Reserve helped to ensure that the visitors were given the opportunity to get to know this unique coastal rainforest and how it plays a role in the whole raptor migration here. The lighthouse was opened to public and people had the chance to view these beautiful raptors close up as well as to get information on the event and an explanation of the raptor migration.

A well planned collaborative and concerted partnership between Government agencies and Malaysian Nature Society was formed. It was spearheaded by the Tourism Promotion Division from the Melaka Chief Minister’s Office with the valuable support of Tourism Malaysia, which included participation from other Tourism departments from both Melaka and Negeri Sembilan states. This year, YB Datuk Wira Hj Naim Bin Abu Bakar, Melaka’s State Secretary was the guest of honour. The public response to this event and its economic spin-offs indicates enough reasons for the Malacca State Government to continue protecting the forests of Tanjung Tuan because the benefits to ecotourism will endure only as long as the phenomenon of thousands of raptors capture the sky and the attention of visitors and residents alike.
GETTING TO KNOW OUR STARS

The geographical position of Peninsular Malaysia in the Southeast Asian region coupled with its close proximity to neighboring Sumatra, Indonesia, bears witness to one of the most spectacular journey undertaken by birds. Between the months of September to November and February to April annually, thousands of raptors (also known as birds of prey) make their way from countries in the far North of Asia as winter approaches to the warmer climates of the southern Asia, and then make the same perilous journey back to their breeding grounds during spring. Malaysia is fortunate to be one of the Southeast Asian countries to play host to these regal raptors.

- **WHAT IS A RAPTOR?**
  Raptors are birds of prey (such as hawks, eagles, falcons, vultures, owls) and constitute a diverse group of highly mobile, wide-ranging, area sensitive land-based predators that occur across a broad range of habitats in all continents except Antarctica. As predators, they have many adaptations for finding and eating other animals including light-wing loading, acute vision, hooked beaks and large sharp talons.

- **WHAT IS RAPTOR MIGRATION?**
  Raptor migration is the seasonal movement of the birds between the breeding and non-breeding areas. Birds that migrate are also called migrants.

- **WHERE ARE THE RAPTORS FROM AND WHERE DO THEY MIGRATE TO EVERY YEAR?**
  The migratory raptors of Tanjung Tuan originate from North Asia, Northeastern Asia, Eastern Siberia, Kamchatka, Northeastern China, the Korean Peninsular and Japan where they breed. As the autumn season approaches (September), they will make the perilous journey south into continental Southeast Asia and its associated archipelago through the East Asian Flyaway (migratory routes taken by raptors). From late January until April, they will once again make the same journey back to their breeding grounds.

- **WHY DO THEY NEED TO MIGRATE?**
  The act of migration is influenced by the availability of food resources and climate. During the northern winter, when food resources in their breeding range are scarce, raptors migrate to other areas where food is more readily available.
• HOW DOES A RAPTOR MIGRATE?
As a group, raptors are relatively large, lightly winged-loaded birds and capable of extended soaring flight. Raptors migrate during the day and require thermals to travel efficiently. This is the primary reason why Tanjung Tuan is the focal point for raptor migration in Melaka. It offers the shortest crossing from Pulau Rupat, Sumatra to the Peninsular Malaysia over the straits of Melaka. The raptors congregate in large numbers in Pulau Rupat, waiting for suitable thermals to lift them higher enough so that they can glide straight across the Straits of Melaka before continuing their journey to their respective breeding grounds in Taiwan, Japan, China and Siberia.

• PROFILE OF TANJUNG TUAN WILDLIFE SANCTUARY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE TO RAPTORS
Tanjung Tuan with a total land area of 93.08 hectares was formerly gazette as a Permanent Forest Reserve (PFR) in 1921. However, the Reserve was excised for development, leaving a Virgin Jungle Reserve (VJR) established in 1953, with an area of 60.7 hectares. Through the Malacca State Government Gazette Plan Bill, 8,560.7 acres was gazette as Wildlife Reserve in 1971, recognizing that the area is an important final refuge for primates, small mammals and other wildlife owing to the rapid development of the surrounding areas. Internationally, Tanjung Tuan is well known as a bird sanctuary, as confirmed by a study undertaken by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (PERHILITAN) where 54 species of birds were recorded. At certain times of the year, migratory birds frequently roost at Tanjung Tuan on their way to and fro from the Australia-Sumatra-Siberia region. This annual phenomenon attracts both international and local birdwatchers to the lighthouse area to observe the migratory birds especially raptors arriving from Sumatra.

• WHY DO WE NEED TO CONSERVE RAPTORS?
Because raptors exist at the top of many food chains, their population is especially sensitive to the alterations in ecosystem structure and energy flow. As a result of this factor, raptors are relatively good indicators of the health of the environment and food chain. For example the decline of the Brahminy Kite (a resident raptor in Malaysia) population in Indonesia is intricately linked to the disappearance of the mangrove habitat.

• WHAT ARE THE THREATS TO MIGRATING RAPTORS?
Raptors currently face a variety of human threats, most notably the loss of natural habitat and consequent decline in prey availability. They are threatened by the widespread use of pesticides, direct persecution - including shooting, trapping, intentional poisoning and the wildlife trade. Almost 52% of all migratory birds are threatened by habitat loss, 21% by environmental contaminates, and 31% by direct persecution. For example, the Grey-faced
Buzzards are trapped for sale as live birds or are killed outright as they roost at the species largest stopover site in Taiwan’s Kenting National Park. In Malaysia, the greatest threats to the raptors are habitat loss and the deteriorating quality of their preferred habitats.

- **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF RAPTOR WATCH?**
  Realizing the importance of raptors and the uniqueness of the migration phenomenon, this event aims at highlighting the importance of conserving Tanjung Tuan as a raptor migration site/marine park/wildlife sanctuary and a key ecotourism site. The event is also an opportunity for birdwatchers to gather scientific information about the raptors which is vital to their survival in the future.

- **ARE THESE RAPTORS LEGALLY PROTECTED IN MALAYSIA?** Currently in Peninsular Malaysia, 65 species (which includes 5 migrant species) of raptors are totally protected under the protection of Wildlife Act 1972 (schedule Three - totally protected wild birds). Offenders, upon conviction, are liable to a fine not exceeding RM 5000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or to both. Another 276 species are listed under Schedule Four as Protected Wild Birds of the same act. Offenders are liable to a fine not exceeding RM 30,000 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or both.

- **SHOULD WE, THE PUBLIC, BE CONCERNED ABOUT RAPTORS?** Yes. The public should be aware of the plight of the raptors. Raptors are just as important as any mammals found in this country. The fact that they are sensitive to the changes of our environment makes them good indicators. It is noted that there is a decline in the number of migratory raptors over Tanjung Tuan since the 1960s.
This year, Raptor Watch 2016 was held at the iconic Tanjung Tuan Forest Reserve. Tanjung Tuan is a headland, which also happens to be the closest landmass to Pulau Rupat, Sumatra Indonesia and raptors have been using this promontory for thousands of years to crossover the Straits of Malacca. It is the one of the few remaining patch of coastal montane forest on the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia and has been gazetted as a Forest Reserve, Wildlife Reserve, Fishing Prohibited area and a historical site. Tanjung Tuan is also listed as an important raptor site by BirdLife International, National Geographic Society and Hawkmountain.

The Forest Reserve is well known for its virgin old growth forest, home to many very large tropical lowland forest trees, rich coral life and sea grass and a myriad of fish and turtles. During the spring migration, thousands of raptors can be seen flying across the Straits of Malacca and Tanjung Tuan is one of the many resting spots in their traveling route. It provides food for the raptors and for raptors arriving late in the evening, it offers shelter for the night before they take off for flight the next day.

For many years plans after plans were drawn by local authorities to develop Tanjung Tuan as the sea front of Tanjung Tuan is an expensive real estate and Malaysian Nature Society has been striving to keep Tanjung Tuan intact through these development threats.
2016 HIGHLIGHTS

"This year Raptor Watch is really interesting and pact with environmental education knowledge"

LIM, UPM

"We learned something new about Migratory Raptors! It was amazing to see and learn about them while they are here"

Muhammad Ali, SMK Darul Ehsan

Check out those raptors!
Going up to welcome the raptors
Students were taught to use the scope

Our partner-Minox team
Start them young
Look up everyone
Raptor Watch 2016 in numbers

3,960 Visitors joined our event
43,734 Raptors counted

800 Students were involved
23 DAYS spent for raptors counting

10 Government agencies took part
32 men involved in raptors counting

21 Schools participated
10 NGOs set up booth
VISITORS FACT

Visitor Categories

Students

Government Agencies

Eco-Tourism Visitors

Member of Public

Number of Visitors for 4 Years

- 2013: 2500
- 2014: 2800
- 2015: 3500
- 2016: 3400

[Graph showing the increase in visitors over 4 years]
### Types of Raptor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Raptor</th>
<th>Numbers Counted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oriental HoneyBuzzard</td>
<td>42 538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Baza</td>
<td>837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Sparrowhawk</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Goshawk</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey-faced Buzzard</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>43 734</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Raptors Counted for 2016 Season’s
42,538
Oriental (Crested) Honey-Buzzard

275
Chinese Goshawk (Accipiter soloensis)

837
Black Baza (Aviceda leuphotes)

71
Grey-faced Buzzard

4
Peregrine Falcon

7
Japanese Sparrowhawk (Accipiter gularis)

1
Besra

1
Booted Eagle
Programme

**LAUNCH (Ilham Resort field)**

9:30 AM  
ARRIVAL OF GUESTS AND MEDIA

ARRIVAL OF HENRY GOH  
PRESIDENT, MALAYSIAN NATURE SOCIETY (MNS)

10:00 AM  
ARRIVAL OF GUEST OF HONOUR  
YB DATO’ MAT ALI BIN HASSAN  
SETIAUSAHA KERAJAAN NEGERI SEMBILAN

KETIBAAN YB DATUK WIRA HJ NAIM BIN ABU BAKAR  
SETIAUSAHA KERAJAAN NEGERI MELAKA

KETIBAAN YAB DATUK SERI HJ MOHAMAD BIN HASSAN  
MENTERI BESAR NEGERI SEMBILAN

KETIBAAN YAB DATUK SERI IR. HJ. IDRIS BIN HJ HARON  
KETUA MENTERI MELAKA

10:05 AM  
BACAAN DOA

10:10 AM  
WELCOME SPEECH BY HENRY GOH  
PRESIDENT, MALAYSIAN NATURE SOCIETY (MNS)

10:15 AM  
SPEECH & LAUNCH  
YAB DATUK SERI IR. HJ. IDRIS BIN HJ HARON  
KETUA MENTERI MELAKA

10:20 AM  
PRESENTATION OF SOUVENIERS

10:30 AM  
RAPTOR HUNT FLAG OFF / PHOTO OP

11:00 AM  
TOUR OF EVENT SITE @ TANJUNG TUAN FOREST RESERVE

12:00 PM  
VIP LUNCH @ PNB ILHAM RESORT

**PUBLIC EVENT (TANJUNG TUAN FOREST RESERVE)**

8:00 AM  
BOOTH SET-UP

9:00 AM  
BOOTHs, STALLS (MERCHANDISE, ACTIVITIES AND GAMES) OPEN

9:00 AM  
REGISTRATION FOR PREDATOR RUN & BRIEFING  
AT STAGE AREA

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
LAUNCH AT PERHILITAN

10:30 AM  
FLAG OFF PREDATOR RUN @ PERHILITAN

12:00 PM  
PRIZE GIVING FOR PREDATOR RUN

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
NATURE (FOREST) WALKS (HOURLY BASIS)  
NATURE TALKS  
EXHIBITIONS  
GAMES & ACTIVITIES

5:00 PM  
EVENT ENDS
Raptor Watch Output

Great
Awareness spread to the masses

800
Students were educated of importance nature perseverance

Come Fly With Me

Good
PR Mileage & International exposure

Community
local people engagement in our biggest eco-tourism event

Thousands were exposed to protect our nature and learn about eco-tourism

Raptor Watch 2016
The success of Raptor Watch 2016 was made possible by the generous support and wholehearted participation from Government agencies and corporate supporters. The organizing costs received a needed boost, thanks to the support from Justlife, Tourism Promotion Unit from Chief Minister’s Office, Melaka and Tourism Board, Negeri Sembilan as well as other government bodies from both states, when they agreed to defray some of the cost of organizing this event. We also wish to thank Tourism Malaysia for their invaluable support and generosity towards supporting Raptor Watch 2016, especially towards sponsoring the attendance of international media from the Philippines and Singapore, as well as sponsoring the post event tour. The Malaysian Association of Hoteliers, Negeri Sembilan Chapter also generously contributed complimentary hotel stays while our Predator Run prizes were generously sponsored by Celestron - a brand promoted by our optics sponsor Infinity InFocus Co., Trifid and Schmidt. Vive.Com contributed stationery gift sets for our student activities.

This year, we had a total of 28 exhibitors and they comprised of the following:

1) MNS Information Booth  
2) Education Booth  
3) Arts & Craft  
4) Vale Minerals Malaysia  
5) MNS Selangor Bird Group  
6) BCC/My Garden Birds  
7) Hulu Selangor District Council  
8) Schmidt Marketing  
9) Leica  
10) Infinity InFocus Co.  
11) Vive.Com  
12) Ministry of Tourism Melaka  
13) Bird Conservation Society Thailand  
14) Wild Bird Club of Philippines/ABF  
15) Perhilitan (Wildlife)  
16) MNS Negeri Sembilan/Melaka  
17) MyCat  
18) Nature Guides (Forest)  
19) Nature Guides (Beach)  
20) Uniten Games Booth  
21) Green Living  
22) Turtle Conservation Society  
23) Jabatan Alam Sekitar Melaka  
24) Negeri Sembilan Tourism  
25) MNS Membership  
26) Trifid  
27) Uniten Photobooth  
28) MNS Exhibition Booth
RAPTOR WATCH 2016 ACTIVITIES

LAUNCHING OF RAPTOR WATCH 2016

This year, RW2016 was once again launched by YB Datuk Wira Hj Naim Bin Abu Bakar, Melaka’s State Secretary. The launch was held at the grounds of the PNB Ilham Resort in Tanjung Tuan while the event was held at the Tanjung Tuan Forest Reserve. After speeches by both the Guest of Honour and Henry Goh, President of MNS, the Raptor Treasure Hunt was then flagged off by the Guest of Honour, before being taken to the exhibition area at the forest reserve. A small press conference was held followed by lunch thereafter at PNB Ilham Resort.

LIGHTHOUSE & RAPTOR COUNTING

The lighthouse was once again open for members of the public to come and walk around the tower, which was much appreciated by all visitors. This was a great highlight of the event, as the lighthouse area is off limits to the public on normal days. Members of the Raptor Study Group from the MNS Bird Conservation Council (BCC) were able to educate the visitors about what they do, and about the raptors that visit us every year.

MNS EDUCATION BOOTH

The staff and volunteers handling the Education Booth did an outstanding job catering for around 800 schoolchildren primarily from the states of Melaka and Negeri Sembilan, as well as day trippers and walk-ins during the day. Various activities including talks about sun bear and tapir, environmental games, craft making, nature walk, drawing and colouring poster contest were some of the interesting activities that the students participate in.

NATURE/ BEACH WALKS

These are the core activities that are synonymous with the identity of Raptor Watch. Two types of guided walks were enjoyed by enthusiastic nature lovers, the Nature and Beach walks. These activities were ably conducted by the Nature Guides of the MNS Selangor Branch. A minimal fee was charged for each walk, and the response was overwhelming this year because of the proximity of the walks within the forest reserve.
ARTS & CRAFTS / GAMES

The Arts and Crafts Booth was a popular draw at RW2016. The beautiful artwork for henna art, tattoo stamping and glass painting. Many visitors and volunteers were seen literally “spotted” with such artwork on their hands. Activities such as glass painting attracted a lot of visitors especially children as it presented them an opportunity to create their own “masterpieces”. Some adults and even children truly displayed the makings of an artist!

Our games booth was ably run by the Uniten volunteers which boasted of traditional games including congkak and other fun-filled ones including the ever popular Limbo Rock was a big hit amongst the students.
One of the biggest assets MNS has, which made this year’s Raptor Watch and all earlier ones a resounding success, is our strong and dedicated team of volunteers who form the backbone of all our events. This year again this signature event was held as one-day event. In spite of this, regular MNS volunteers and special interest groups of the Society were there in numbers.

Because Raptor Watch 2016 was a one-day event, all volunteers were bussed to Tanjung Tuan and then back home after the event was concluded. All volunteers were provided with lunch and high tea, as well as given an official Raptor Watch 2016 T-Shirt. The briefing pertaining to the event and all other details were sent out via emails to the respective heads of activities/booths and that information were then filtered down to the volunteers under them. The spirit of volunteerism and dedication, was evident as a staggering 80 volunteers from all walks of life (comprising mostly of MNS members and their families, students and past year volunteers) combined forces to ensure the smooth running of our signature event. We had our usual support from two universities, namely Taylors and University Tenaga Nasional who also provided us with invaluable volunteer support.
A pre-event press conference was held at Melaka Tourism office on 1st March, 2016. A total of 5 media representatives attended the event; The Star, Sin Chew, MHI, China Press and RTM, which was hosted by the Melaka State Deputy EXCO for Tourism, YB Datuk Hj. Ghazale Bin Muhamad. MNS Honorary Secretary, Stephanie Bacon, gave a briefing on Raptor Watch and the history behind it.

PUBLICITY & MEDIA


Other promotions included newspaper coverages, radio interviews/announcements via RTM Melaka, magazine and blog write ups as well, both pre and post events. MNS Negeri Sembilan/Melaka Branch held Raptor Watch promotion events at at Aeon Seremban on 5th March 2016 and Aeon Bandaraya Melaka on 6th March, 2016.

For this year’s RW2016: Come Fly with Me, publicity of the event was concentrated on websites, blogs and online event announcement channels. Most websites had featured RW2016 in the March calendars which included sites such as:

1) Tourism Negeri Sembilan
2) My Event
3) Gaya Travel
4) Hey Event
5) World Eventer
6) Tourism Malaysia
7) Hey Event  
8) My Events Malaysia  
9) Outpost Camping  
10) Taiwan Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation  
11) SUPERB (Sekolah Menengah Agama Persekutuan Bentong)

**Newspaper:**  
1) NST (Online)  
2) MHI

**Social Media:**  
1) Youtube: The Star Online


4) https://www.facebook.com/events/1508842956090689/

5) https://twitter.com/MNSMalaysia

8) [http://www.tourism.gov.my/media/view/experience-malaysia-march-1](http://www.tourism.gov.my/media/view/experience-malaysia-march-1)

10) http://www.worldeventer.com/event/raptor-watch-2016,1508842956090689

Raptor Watch 2016

See thousands of Raptors crossing from Indonesia to Malaysia before heading back north to feed.

11) http://allevents.in/port%20dickson,%20malaysia/raptor-watch-2016-come-fly-with-me/570036713151354

Raptor Watch 2016 “Come Fly with Me”

Submit Resume Now.

Title of New Jobs Available: Sign up for Apply & Find Jobs.

14) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpnmYiGaNBM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpnmYiGaNBM)

Environmental Protection Promotion during Raptor Watch

It was time for migratory birds to return home to the North and South and so the birds sojourned in Tanjung Tuam Recreation Forest. This drew many birdwatchers to view these fantastic birds taking their rest at this halfway home. The Malaysian Nature Society took this opportunity to organize an exhibition to promote conservation of nature and Tzu Chi. Serenban was invited to participate.

As the winter sets in over the northern temperate and arctic zones, the migratory birds that flew south to New Zealand started to take their flight home to Mongolia, Russia and China. The Tanjung Tuam


17) http://www.superb.edu.my/2016/03/raptor-watch-2016.html
Raptor Watch gamit pencinta alam dunia

Melaka Hari Ini (MHI)

Tanjung Tuan lokasi pershargaan burung pemangsa

DPP, keilem.

Tunggai Raptor Watch 2016 terus meningkatkan awarnya masyarakat akan burung pemangsa di sekitar Melaka.

Bahagia Pengurusan Perkampungan Periuk, N“. Jajang, Pengurusan Pekan-Terajom, Melaka, Amrail, Azriah. M. D.

Oleh: HEMASOR MATDZUM & MURASPAP ABD. ABDL

Nuri, Naib Presiden Persatuan Pengurusan Pekan-Terajom, Malaysia (MPSU), Prof. Dr. Ahmad Ismail, Setiausaha Kehakim,

Menyelidik, kepada, dan beberapa orang lain yang bertanggungjawab atas kebijakan dan kenaikan harga burung pemangsa di sekitar Melaka.

Jurnal 9 November 2016

Merancang dan merancang pembangunan burung pemangsa di sekitar Melaka.

Nurtunai Shows, 2016 yang akan launching di Perdana Perkampungan di Kuala Belait.

Raptor Watch 2016 akan selalu menjadi kencana untuk memarkas burung pemangsa di sekitar Melaka.

Salam hangat kepada seluruh pembaca yang telah memberikan dukungan untuk Raptor Watch.

Raptor Watch 2016 di Pekan-Terajom, Melaka, Sungai Belait, Pulau Pinang.

Jurnal 9 November 2016

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Salam hangat kepada seluruh pembaca yang telah memberikan dukungan untuk Raptor Watch.

Raptor Watch 2016 di Pekan-Terajom, Melaka, Sungai Belait, Pulau Pinang.
RAPTOR COUNTING

Raptor Watch is more than just an event, but it will always be about the activity of monitoring raptor migration. Our team of dedicated volunteers and staff has been watching the skies and recording crucial data to feed into our research, understanding and knowledge of the numbers, distribution and species involved in this great exodus.

This year's raptor counting period is for 23 days (29th February to 22nd March 2016). This was made possible, thanks again to the leadership and spirit of our Raptor Study Group of the MNS Bird Conservation Council and members of the Selangor Branch Bird Group. However, the challenge lay in the securing of funds needed to support this research, and the available volunteers that were willing to spend their time up at the lighthouse counting raptors. Other challenges included the haze conditions that impeded the view as well as prevented the raptors from flying across.

Although it’s not possible for us to draw conclusions from the data received to date, it is noted with concern that the numbers of raptors counted seem to far from the spectacular counts recorded in the early 70’s, and seems to be on a worrying downward trend.

Nevertheless, this year was an eventful year as the raptor counters did an exchange of information with their counterparts at Pulau Rupat. We had raptor counters go over to Pulau Rupat to join their raptor count, while we welcomed representatives from the Indonesian Raptor Research and Conservation Network (RAIN) join us over here for the raptor count and the event as well.
MEETING THE OBJECTIVES

This unique event has evolved over the years, from being a modest well-kept secret of avid birders, to become one of the top eco-tourism events of the year. Nevertheless, the objectives and aspirations behind this event remain unchanged.

HABITAT CONSERVATION
The continued protection of the Tanjung Tuan forest reserve and its surroundings as a stopover point for the raptors on their sojourn to the south, remains the main thrust of Raptor Watch 2016. The recognition of this event by the local authorities and their invaluable support and participation reflects and reaffirms their support to preserve the unique ecology of Tanjung Tuan, as a valuable natural resource.

PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TANJUNG TUAN’S ECOSYSTEM - THE FOREST, THE MANGROVES, BEACH AND SEA
As the oldest and largest non-governmental organization in Malaysia, MNS has played an active role in raising awareness about and conserving Malaysia’s natural heritage. The protection of Tanjung Tuan is on our priority list and through Raptor Watch, we strive to showcase Tanjung Tuan’s diverse natural heritage. While the highlight of Raptor Watch is the raptor migration, the other activities organised, highlight Tanjung Tuan’s forest, mangrove and marine ecology including the ever popular forest and beach guided walks.

PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE MIGRATORY RAPTORS
Raptor Watch remains a popular public event with a huge turnout of visitors including participation from regional friends hailing from Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, which adds a fresh regional touch to the event. The State Secretary of Melaka launched Raptor Watch and flagged off the ever popular Predator Run which drew a lot of participants. Tourism Malaysia lent their support by bringing in international media from Philippines and Singapore. Again, during Raptor Watch day only, the lighthouse area was opened to public. This allowed members of the public to witness firsthand the beautiful raptors up close, with volunteers and raptor counters stationed there to educate and explain about the raptor migration and the event itself.

AVIAN, FOREST AND MARINE SPECIES CONSERVATION
The continued conservation and preservation of the beautiful natural heritage of Tanjung Tuan and efforts to ensure that this raptor migration continues unimpeded remains the heart of Raptor Watch. MNS recognizes the need to for a proper study on raptor migration and annual data collected would give researchers an insight on both the species and habits of migratory raptors, as well as the environmental health of the area. MNS also continues to work closely with local stakeholders such as Melaka Forestry Departments, Melaka Wildlife & National Parks Department and Marine Department, Central Region, to ensure that the one of the last remaining coastal montane rainforests in the Western Peninsular Malaysia remains protected.
RAPTOR WATCH AS A NATIONAL ECOTOURISM PRODUCT

Raptor Watch is a unique festival that has grown from strength to strength over the past years and has the potential of being an outstanding eco-tourism attraction for Malaysia. As in previous years, Tourism Melaka along with the Melaka Chief Minister’s Department, lent their support towards Raptor Watch, in recognition of the potential and popularity of Raptor Watch. The event is also listed on the Tourism Malaysia’s calendar of events. Raptor Watch event also continues to contribute towards local businesses whereby rooms in hotels within the vicinity of Port Dickson has been reported to be fully booked throughout the weekend. Every year, tourists from the US, UK, Europe, Japan, Thailand and Singapore, in particular the birders and nature enthusiasts come to Tanjung Tuan to be a part of this event. With adequate publicity, appropriate management and support from local stakeholders, Raptor Watch will continue to be a strong ecotourism draw in the region.

LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE PROTECTION OF TANJUNG TUAN

MNS recognizes that local community engagement is crucial towards the protection of the area. As such, local schools in the vicinity of Melaka and Negeri Sembilan were engaged and participated in the event. Approximately 536 students and 50 teachers, from schools in the vicinity of greater Melaka, the Alor Gajah district and Port Dickson participated in this year’s Raptor Watch, thanks to the support given by the Education Ministry and the Tourism Promotion Division of the Melaka Chief Minister’s Department. We also had groups from Universities and Colleges come in as visitors. The nature guides also had a couple of volunteers from a nearby international school.

TO GENERATE INTEREST AND ATTRACT MORE OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Raptor Watch is the largest ecotourism event in Malaysia. Despite the fact that it’s generally touted as a nature event, its appeal has spread to reach to the general public, and not just the avid birders and naturalists. The activities planned were also designed to reach out to the average family who may not have the same level of awareness as nature lovers.

Every activity planned for the event, was aimed towards raising awareness as well as creating enthusiasm towards nature conservation as well as the magnificent raptor migration that is displayed on the skies above. Interesting activities focused on environment and nature conservation including the ever interesting Predator Hunt was organized to engage the public. The free hotel stays courtesy of the Malaysian Association of Hoteliers (MAH) Negeri Sembilan Chapter as prizes for the Lucky Draw, while fantastic gifts including binoculars, and microscopes, courtesy of our optic partner, Infinity InFocus were given out as the main prize for the Predator Hunt.

It is our hope that Raptor Watch would be an event that would attract everyone, and in turn convert more and more people into becoming responsible environmental stewards by opening their eyes to the beauty of nature and the urgent need to protect it.
As with every year, organizing Raptor Watch comes with its own set of challenges, and hurdles as follows:

1. **Fundraising**
   Fundraising has been especially challenging as we have had literally no funds coming in for the event. However, thanks to Justlife, we were able to fund the 23-day Raptor Count which was the foundation of Raptor Watch event. We had also issues pertaining to Government agencies when they were unable to confirm their support as previous years.

2. **Coordination with Government Agencies**
   MNS had to liaise with two state governments, many government agencies and deal with the issue of bureaucracy and protocol while at the same time planning the attendees to the event and most of the activities.

3. **Last Minute Coordination & Confirmations**
   As in previous years, promotions on Raptor Watch was slow because of the late receipt of funds, and dependence on government agencies to fulfill some of the requirements and needs of Raptor Watch. A lot of coordination and planning had to be put on hold, pending confirmation of incoming funds. This adversely affected the marketing of this event out to the general public. Activities was also only confirmed and publicized in the final two weeks prior to the event, which gave little time for people to plan out their weekend. Nevertheless, we were pleasantly surprised because people are already familiar with this yearly event, and there was a fantastic turnout on event day as well as good response received for our Predator Run. However, it is still an issue that we face every year without fail, when we are unable to go ahead with pre-event promotions as confirmation of support from sponsors and Government agencies is slow and not forthcoming.

Nevertheless, MNS wishes to thank the various Government stakeholders including Tourism Malaysia, Tourism Promotions Division, Melaka Chief Minister Department, Malaysian Tourism Promotion Board, Melaka, Ministry of Tourism Melaka, Tourism Malaysia Melaka, Ministry of Tourism Negeri Sembilan, Tourism Malaysia Negeri Sembilan Tourism Board Negeri Sembilan, Majlis Perbandaran Alor Gajah and Majlis Perbandaran Port Dickson. Supporters such as Infinity InFocus, Schmidt Marketing, Trifid, Vive.Com, Leica and the Malaysian Association of Hoteliers Negeri Sembilan Chapter have been consistently coming on board and being a part of Raptor Watch for many years. Acknowledgement also goes to Wildlife and Forestry Departments as well as the Tanjung Tuan Lighthouse Keepers and the Marine Department, for enabling us to organize this event for the second time at the Tanjung Tuan Forest Reserve.
THE WAY FORWARD

Despite the challenges faced, Raptor Watch can only get bigger and better, given the success of this year’s event. Nevertheless raptor research will always be the underlying purpose of Raptor Watch. The raptor counters have gained considerable knowledge and data this year and plan to publish their findings in local and international journals.

For the first, the Raptor Study Group will be holding a Raptor Count in the autumn, enabling them to compare the number of birds flying back south with the outstanding numbers achieved in the Spring.

We will continue to work with regional raptor groups and train more birders in data collection and raptor migration research. For future RW, we plan to increase raptor counting points at other areas to allow for more comprehensive counts.

RW has the potential to become Malaysia’s landmark ecotourism event. If it is carefully managed, RW can be on par with other international birding festivals. In order to achieve this goal, local and federal tourism activities need to recognize the intrinsic value and economic potential of RW. Relationships need to be fostered and information needs to be disseminated to hotels and tour agencies in the region as well as expanded to other areas such as the Klang Valley, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand. With this, more manpower needs to be funded for, secured, and trained to accommodate the increasing demand for day trips.

Most importantly, the Tanjung Tuan forest reserve, the surrounding mangroves and the waters offshore need to be continually protected and kept in pristine order to ensure that these raptors that people travel so far to see, will continue to grace our shores. An Evaluation Meeting with the Raptor Watch Committee and coordinators will be held soon to discuss ideas and improvements for future events.
Appendices

APPENDIX 1 - DESIGNS

Raptor Watch 2016 Brochure (Front & Back)

Raptor Watch 2015 Bunting & Banner

Raptor Watch 2016 Logo
APPENDIX 1 (Cont’d)

Backdrop (Official and Press)
APPENDIX 2

PRE-EVENT PRESS CONFERENCE (1st MARCH 2016)
APPENDIX 3

RAPTOR WATCH 2015

Raptor Watch 2015
APPENDIX 3