42nd Singapore Bird Race® 2026

Participant Handbook

14 - 15 November 2026



NATURE SOCIETY SINGAPORE

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1. About The Singapore Bird Race

The Singapore Bird Race® (SBR), organised annually by Nature Society Singapore (NSS) since 1984, is one of the nation's longest-running conservation and citizen science initiatives. Over the decades, it has grown into a key platform for biodiversity education, community engagement, and conservation research.

The 42nd edition in 2026 adopts the theme **"Asia's Vanishing Songbirds: The Bird Trade"** to raise awareness of the caged bird trade. Across Asia, wild songbirds face intense pressure from trapping and trade, leading to steep population declines.

This year's **focus species is the globally Critically Endangered Straw-headed Bulbul**. Prized for its rich song, it is a target in the songbird trade with fewer than 1,700 mature individuals remaining in the wild. While populations have declined dramatically across the region, Singapore remains one of the species' last major strongholds, harbouring about one-third of its global population.



Photo credit: Tan Gim Cheong

Since 2021, NSS has co-chaired the Straw-headed Bulbul Working Group (SHBWG), a partnership of researchers, conservationists, local authorities and organisations, which works to monitor populations, study species behaviour and biology, curb poaching and illegal trade, and support outreach efforts.

Objectives

The 42nd Singapore Bird Race aims to:

- Raise awareness on the impact of the **songbird trade**, with emphasis on the **Straw-headed Bulbul**.
- Spotlight the **importance of collaboration** so safeguard Asia's songbirds, positioning Singapore as both sanctuary and advocate.
- **Contribute citizen-science data** to NSS's long-term bird monitoring programmes and records, supporting bird conservation efforts locally and across the region.
- Inspire and nurture **youth participation** in nature conservation.

Race Categories

S/N	Race Category	Team Composition	Duration
1	Marathon	3-4 members	**24 hours** Race starts at **12:00 pm** on 14 Nov (Sat) and ends at **12:00 pm** on 15 Nov (Sun);
2	Sprint	3-4 members	**5 hours** Race starts at **7.30 am** and ends at **12.30 pm** on 15 Nov (Sun)
3	Novice	3-4 members	
4	Family	2-4 members *At least 1 adult and 1 child under 13 years old*	
5	Youth	3-4 members *Aged 13 to 18 years and may be supervised by a teacher or parent for safety reasons*	
6	School (Primary)	3-4 members *Aged 12 years and below and must be*	**2.5 hours** Race starts at **7.30 am** and ends at **10.00 am** on 15 Nov (Sun)

		supervised by a teacher or parent for safety reasons	
7	Non-competitive	No limitations	**5 hours** Race starts at **7.30 am** and ends at **12.30 pm** on 15 Nov (Sun)

Please note the following:

1. **All categories**, **except School (Primary) and non-competitive participants**, will be required to **submit photos** of their observations via memory card along with their logsheets.
2. There is no 'Photographer' category this year.
3. As part of NSS' commitment to citizen science, observations from the bird race will be uploaded onto eBird and images submitted to NSS might be used to verify these observations.

Race Details

	Marathon Category	All Other Categories
Dates	14 Nov - 15 Nov (Sat - Sun)	15 Nov, Sun
Time	12PM - 12PM (next day)	School (Pri): 7.30AM - 10AM Other Categories: 7.30AM - 12:30PM
Flag-off Venues	Remote	• Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park (The Promenade); **AND*** • Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve (Visitor Centre) **Teams will be assigned their flag-off location by category (see below).
Closing Venue	Town Hall – Auditorium, Mapletree Business City (MBC)	

For *School (Primary) category*, the end point shall be the **Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park – Promenade** (Address: 1384 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 1, Singapore 569982).
Transport from the Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park – Carpark A to the Town Hall of Mapletree Business City will be provided.

For all other categories except School (Primary), the end point shall be the **Town Hall of Mapletree Business City** on the **Mezzanine Level**. Participants have to find their way over by the end of their race to submit their images and logsheets.

Venues: Flag-off and Closing Ceremony

Each team will be assigned their flag-off venue based on race category. This is to ensure that the race is within the carrying capacity of each flag-off location.

Remote	Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve	Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park
Marathon	*Novice* *Sprint*	School (Primary) Youth Family Non-competitive

Flag-off

Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park (The Promenade)

Address: **1380 Ang Mo Kio Ave 1** View in Google Maps

The Promenade is located next to the Riverside Gallery in Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park and is about a 200m walk from the nearest carpark and bus stop.

Getting There

🚊 By Public Transport

- Nearest MRT Station: Bishan MRT
- From Bishan MRT station (*Bus Stop 53239*), it can be reached by services 50, 53, 55, 58, 71, 156 and 162.
- Alternatively, from Ang Mo Kio Bus Interchange, it can be reached by services 132, 133, 136, 165, 166, 169 and 262.

🚕 By Taxi/Private Transport

- Nearest Car park: Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park Carpark A

Please refer to NPark's website for the park map and for more information on Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park.

Sungei Buloh Wetlands Reserve (Visitor Centre)

Address: **60 Kranji Way, Singapore 739453** View in Google Maps

Please make sure to go to the **Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve's VISITOR CENTRE** – **Not the Wetland Centre**.

Getting There

🚊 By Public Transport

- Nearest MRT Station: Kranji MRT
- From Kranji MRT station, take bus 925 (Mondays to Saturdays) or 925M (Sundays and public holidays) to *Bus Stop 49219 Opp Pub Quarter*.

🚕 By Taxi/Private Transport

- Nearest Car park: Kranji Way Carpark or Kranji Carpark B (SBWR Map)
- Free parking and bicycle racks are available at the Visitor Centre

Please note: Wi-Fi connectivity at SBWR may be limited. Wireless@SG is available, but signal strength may vary and can be patchy in some areas.

Please refer to NPark's website for the park map and for more information on Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve.

[NEW!] Exclusive Location Available for Racing

Our supporting partners, NParks, has kindly opened the Kranji Marshes Core Conservation Area for participants to bird at for this year's race on **15 Nov (Sun) only**. Please see details below:

Kranji Marshes - Core Conservation Area

Address: **11 Neo Tiew Lane 2, Singapore 718814** View in Google Maps

The Core Conservation Area is usually closed to the public (except for activities approved by NParks) as it is an important habitat for the conservation of wetland plants and animals. When birdwatching, please be mindful of nature and practise responsible birding etiquette.

Getting There:
Please view this video for more information on how to get here.

This area is most accessible by car and we encourage you to make your own transport arrangements to and from the area.

Please refer to NPark's website for the park map and for more information on Kranji Marshes and the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve Network.

Closing Ceremony and Award Presentation

Townhall, Mapletree Business City
Address: **10 Pasir Panjang Road, Singapore 117438** View in Google Maps **Getting There** 🚊 By Public Transport ● Nearest MRT Station: Labrador Park Station ● Nearest Buses Services Available ○ By Pasir Panjang Road: 10, 30, 30e, 51, 143, 175, 176, 188, 188e ○ By Alexandra Road: 51, 57, 61, 93, 97, 97e, 100, 120, 166, 175, 408, 963, 963E, 963R 🚕 By Taxi/Private Transport ● The main entrance to MBC is situated along Pasir Panjang Road and there is another entrance to MBC off Alexandra Road via the road leading to ARC and mTower.

Packing List

Suggested Items
1. Water Bottle 2. Small snack 3. Binoculars (If any) 4. Camera (if applicable) 5. Card Reader 6. Laptop (If necessary) 7. Rain gear - *e.g. umbrella, raincoat, cover for camera, etc.* 8. Pen

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Featured Activities

Pre-race Activities

Saturday 29 Aug	**[Walk] Birdwatching for Beginners at Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park** by NSS Bird Group Members ⏰ 7.30 am - 10.30 am
Saturday 19 Sep	**[Talk] Capturing Nature's Unexpected Moments & Stories** by Alan OwYong, Veteran Birder and NSS Bird Group Member ⏰ 2 pm - 4 pm
Sunday 20 Sep	**[Walk] Birdwatching at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve** by Veronica Foo, NSS Bird Group Chair ⏰ 7.30 am - 10.30 am
Monday 21 Sep	**[Talk] The Song Bird Trade** by Serene Chng, Traffic International ⏰ 8 pm - 9 pm (Online via Zoom)
Saturday 03 Oct	**[Walk] Birdwatching at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve** by Yong Ding Li, NSS Bird Group Member ⏰ 7.30 am - 10.30 am
Saturday 31 Oct	**[Photography Workshop] Feathers & Focus** by Master D Imaging X Alan Photo 🕰️ 31 Oct (Sat), 12:00 PM - 2:15 PM 📍 Alan Photo, Funan Mall 📝 **Register by 25 Oct (Sun)**: nss.org.sg/events/feathers-focus/

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Race Day Activities

Book Launch & Conservation Talk *by Yong Ding Li and Sayam U. Chowdhury*	🕰️ 15 Nov (Sun), 01:00 PM - 01:15 PM, *During Closing Ceremony* 📍Auditorium, Mapletree Business City – Townhall 📖Tune into this talk during the closing ceremony by co-authors Yong Ding Li and Sayam U. Chowdhury as they launch their newest publication '***A Field Guide to the East Asian-Australasian Flyway***', a beautiful photographic field guide to the birds and habitats of the world's largest migratory flyway used by nearly 600 species of migratory birds.
Book Signing *by Yong Ding Li and Sayam U. Chowdhury*	🕰️ 15 Nov (Sun), 11:00 AM - 12:35 PM 📍Outside Meeting Room 2, Mapletree Business City – Townhall 📝Purchase '***A Field Guide to the East Asian-Australasian Flyway***' and have it signed by the authors of this book!
Booths *By various nature groups and optic companies*	🕰️ 15 Nov (Sun), 12:00 PM - 2:15 PM 📍Mapletree Business City. Mezzanine Level 👥About the Booths: The featured booths cover a diverse range of nature and wildlife-related topics, from biodiversity and wildlife trade awareness to nature publications, as well as camera and binocular companies.
Asian Songbird Trade Talk & Quiz *by Shelby Wee, BirdLife Asia*	🕰️ 15 Nov (Sun), *1:30 PM - 1:50 PM* 📍 *Meeting Room 1,* Mapletree Business City. Mezzanine Level 👥About the Talk: Find out more about the Critically Endangered Straw-headed Bulbul and the realities of the Asian Songbird trade!
Publication Talk *by Yong Ding Li and Sayam U. Chowdhury*	🕰️ 15 Nov (Sun), 01:50 PM - 02:10 PM 📍Meeting Room 1, Mapletree Business City. Mezzanine Level 📖Join this panel sharing as co-authors Yong Ding Li and Sayam U. Chowdhury do a deep dive into their newest publication, '***A Field Guide to the East Asian-Australasian Flyway***'.

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Programme Flow for 15 November, Sunday

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Time</th><th>SBWR (Visitor Centre)</th><th colspan="2">BAMK (Promenade & Riverside Gallery)</th><th>Remarks</th></tr>
<tr><th>Sprint, Novice Race Categories</th><th>Family, Youth, Non-competitive Race Categories</th><th>School (Primary) Race Category</th><th>Marathon category starts remotely on 14 Nov (Sat)</th></tr>
<tr><td>06:45 AM - 07:15 AM</td><td colspan="3">Registration Opens</td><td>Participants register and collect their goodie bags and logsheets.</td></tr>
<tr><td>07:15 AM - 07:30 AM</td><td colspan="3">Opening and Photo-taking | Flag-off at 07:30 AM</td><td>Teams will be ushered to take a seat at the flag-off area 5-10 minutes before flag-off.</td></tr>
<tr><td>7:30 AM</td><td colspan="3">Race begins</td><td>Participants can race at the official flag-off venue or choose to visit other nature areas across Singapore.</td></tr>
<tr><td>10:00 AM</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">Race Continues for Marathon, Sprint, Novice, Family, Youth & Non-competitive Categories</td><td>School (Pri):
Submission of Logsheets @Promenade, BAMK</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>10:30 AM - 11:30 AM</td><td>Head to Mapletree Business City (MBC)</td><td>Buses will be chartered for School (Primary) Category from BAMK to MBC.</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="5">Townhall – Mapletree Business City (MBC)</th></tr>
<tr><td>11:00 AM - 12:45 PM</td><td colspan="3">Post-race Activities
(i.e. Booth, Photo Exhibit, Book Signing)</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>12:00 PM</td><td colspan="3">Marathon:
Submission of log sheet and photos at MBC</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>12:00 PM - 12:45 PM</td><td colspan="3">Buffet Lunch for VIPs, School (Pri) and Marathon categories</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>12:00 PM</td><td colspan="3">Guest Registration</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>12:30 PM</td><td colspan="3">Sprint, Novice, Family, Youth:
Submission of log sheet and photos at MBC</td><td rowspan="2">Lunch is served later in the day. A quick reminder to pack snacks & water to stay fuelled and hydrated!</td></tr>
<tr><td>12:45 PM - 01:30 PM</td><td colspan="3">Closing Ceremony with Conservation Talk</td></tr>
<tr><td>01:30 PM - 02:15 PM</td><td colspan="3">Buffet Lunch & Post-race Activities</td><td>I.e. Booth exploration</td></tr>
<tr><td>01:30 PM - 02:10 PM</td><td colspan="3">Bird Trade Talk & Publication Talk</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>02:15 PM - 4:00 PM</td><td colspan="3">Awards Presentation</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>4:00 PM</td><td colspan="3">Event Ends</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

2. Competition Format

Teams are to identify and document as many bird species as possible within the competition period. All teams shall record their sightings on the hard copy bird race log sheet, which will be issued on 15th November 2026 at the start point. For Marathon category, the log sheet will be emailed to the team, and they will be required to self-print the log sheet.

In addition to submitting completed log sheets, **teams are required to provide photographic evidence of their bird observations on a memory card**. The photographs must be submitted together with the completed log sheet for verification during the arbitration process.

Rules & Conditions

The following are the **Rules and Conditions for the 42nd Singapore Bird Race 2026**. **All participants must familiarise themselves with these rules**; they must agree and comply with these rules fully to compete. Failure to do so may lead to team penalties or disqualification.

Code of Conduct

All participants must put the welfare of the birds and our environment above winning. While we have fun, let's **Respect Nature, Respect Others and Respect the Event.** Participants are expected to act responsibly, show consideration for others, and uphold the spirit of fair play.

The following behaviours are strictly prohibited:

1. Teams must not engage in practices that bait, harass, stress, restrain or endanger wildlife for the purpose of photography.
2. Flash and artificial lighting must not be used in a manner that startles, disturbs, disorients, or causes distress to wildlife.
3. Do not pre-position shelters or equipment next to perches regularly used by wildlife, or attach them to fragile trees. This may cause damage to the trees, or compromise the welfare of wildlife.
4. Do not alter nesting sites or disturbing foliage that keep wildlife in their concealed positions. Doing so may result in loss of shade and wildlife having higher risk of exposure to predators.
5. Do not blast loud music or use playback recordings of birdsong or calls to disturb wildlife and surrounding communities.

In addition to the behaviours outlined above, participants should also observe **NParks Parks and Nature Reserves Etiquette** and **NSS Code of Ethics for Nature Lovers & Photographers**.

Appendix

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Registration

1. **Is this event free?**

   This event is free of charge for participants 18 years old and under. However, registration is still required for participation. For other participants, the registration fees are as follows:

   - Per Adult NSS Member: **SGD 15** (Become a member here!)
   - Per Adult Non-NSS Member: **SGD 20**

2. **Who can participate in the SBR?**

   The Singapore Bird Race is open to participants of all ages and experience levels! Learn more about the different categories here.

3. **Where and how do I register for the race?**

   You may register via our Eventbrite page by **16 October (Fri)**. Please note that you will be directed to an external site.

4. **If I prefer racing solo or have trouble forming a team, can I still participate?**

   Yes, you can still participate. However, you will have to participate on a non-competitive basis (see below/next frame).

5. **How do I participate non-competitively?**

   Yes, you can participate non-competitively. Simply register via our Eventbrite page under the 'Non-competitive Category'.

   On the day of the event, register at the flag-off point and collect your goodie bag and log sheets. Please confirm with registration that you will be participating non-competively on the day of the race.

   Similar to competitive teams, record your observations on the log sheets, and take photographs of your observations for submission.

   At the end of the event, submit your completed log sheets and memory card (if any) at Mapletree Business City.

   While you will not be eligible for prizes, your observations will still contribute to citizen science. You can still join the flag-off, post-race activities and lunch at Mapletree Business City.

General

6. **What is a Bird Race?**

   The Singapore Bird Race® is a bird spotting competition where teams identify, record and photograph as many bird species around Singapore as possible within the time given to contribute valuable citizen-science data that supports NSS' conservation efforts.

7. **What is different in 2026?**

   This year, all categories, except School (Primary), will be required to submit photographs of their observations via memory card together with their log sheet at the end of the race. The photographs will serve as evidence to verify participants' bird observations.

   In previous years, only the Photographer Category was required to submit photographs for verification. As photographic verification will now apply to all categories, there will be no separate Photographer Category in 2026.

   Please note that the **2026 Bird Checklist** has been updated and will serve as the official checklist for the Singapore Bird Race.

8. **Why is there photo verification across all categories this year?**

   Based on feedback from previous years, we have introduced photo verification to strengthen fairness and integrity across teams in order to keep the race fun and competitive for everyone.

9. **What happens if there is wet weather on the day of the race?**

   Participants are strongly encouraged to join the official **42nd Singapore Bird Race® 2026 Telegram channel**, where important updates, including weather-related announcements and changes to race arrangements, will be shared.

   NSS may delay, modify or cancel the race due to inclement weather. If conditions become unsafe during the race, participants should prioritise their safety by seeking shelter or moving to a suitable location.

   Participants who do not join the Telegram channel are responsible for missing out on any updates.

10. **Will food be provided?**

    Yes, lunch will be provided after the race at Mapletree Business City, where the Closing Ceremony and Award Presentation will take place.

11. Will transport be provided?

Transport will be provided only for participants in the School (Primary) category, from Bishan–Ang Mo Kio Park to Mapletree Business City.

About Flag-off

12. Where is my flag-off venue?

Please refer to Page 5 of the Participants Handbook for the most updated flag-off locations.

13. Must we be present for the flag-off?

Yes. All teams, except those of the **Marathon Category**, must be present at the flag-off to register their team and collect their log sheet.

Before the race begins, each team will be instructed to photograph a designated verification subject announced by the Organising Committee.

Please note that teams in the Marathon Category will receive instructions for their pre-race verification photograph **5 minutes before their remote flag-off**.

Race and Photography

14. How many cameras and memory cards can be used for the race?

Each team is only allowed to use one camera during the race and one memory card to submit photos.

15. What cameras can I use?

You may use any type of camera for the race, as long as you can transfer the photos to a memory card or USB stick for submission at the end of the race.

Please note that pictures submitted need not be sharp, but should have the metadata intact as well as feature distinguishable markings so that the arbitrators can verify your sighting.

Recommendations: bridge cameras, mirrorless cameras, superzoom cameras, or cameras with telephoto/telescopic lenses. Mobile phone cameras can also be accepted but are not recommended.

16. What format should my photos be in?

Photos should be submitted in JPG/JPEG format with the original metadata intact.

17. How do we submit the photos after the race ends?

Photos are to be submitted at Mapletree Business City, Townhall, at the end of the race. As photos of species observations will be reviewed in chronological order, please ensure that the files submitted correspond with the observations and image file names recorded onto the logsheet.

Please note, participants are required to bring their own card reader to transfer their photos for submission.

18. What if I forgot to take a picture of my sightings?

Unfortunately, sightings will not count without a photograph. So please remember to snap a photo of every sighting.

19. What happens if I have multiple sightings in one photo?

You may indicate the same photo file names next to the corresponding sightings on your log sheet.

20. What happens to late submissions?

One species will be deducted for every minute late. Teams must submit their logsheets on time and are encouraged to arrive back at the submission venue earlier for submission.

In the event that two or more teams record the same total number of species, the team that made their last observation first will be ranked higher.

Closing & Post-race Activities

21. Must we attend the closing ceremony?

Yes, attendance at the Closing Ceremony is strongly encouraged. The closing ceremony is an opportunity for participants to come together to celebrate nature and Singapore's rich avian biodiversity.

At least one or two team representatives should stay if your team is participating in a competitive category to collect the prize should your team win.

There will also be post-race activities such as talks and booths.

22. What can participants of the *School* (*Primary)* Category expect to do after the race?

Participants can look forward to a buffet lunch, partner booths, interactive sharing sessions and quizzes by experts, and a photo exhibition at Mapletree Business City where the Closing Ceremony and Award Presentation will take place.

Please note that transport will be arranged for participants of the School (Primary) Category from Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park to Mapletree Business City.

Other FAQs

23. What happens if the competition is cancelled?

The race will not be rescheduled if the race is cancelled. Should the race be cancelled there will be no refund.

Contact/Follow Us

Queries: sbr@nss.org.sg
Follow us:

- Website: nss.org.sg/singapore-bird-race
- IG, FB, LinkedIn: @naturesocietysingapore
- IG, FB: @singaporebirdrace