



Notes

- Most species have white plumage
- Adults will look different when in breeding and non-breeding plumage
- Unless otherwise stated, description here applies to their non-breeding adult plumage

Egrets

Bill Colour

Yellow

Black

Leg Colour

Yellow

Black

Chinese Egret

Egretta eulophotes



68 cm

Can be distinguished from other egrets by greenish legs. Breeding adult has blue facial skin and yellow-orange feet.

Pacific Reef Heron

Egretta sacra



58 cm

Dark morphs have grey plumage, white morphs look like Chinese Egret with shorter legs.

Large (>80cm)

Great Egret

Ardea alba



85 - 102 cm

Long, strongly-kinked neck.

Size

Medium Egret

Ardea intermedia



65 - 72 cm

Resembles Great Egret, but has less kinked neck and shorter bill.

Small (~50cm)

Eastern Cattle Egret

Ardea coromanda



48 - 53 cm

White plumage with thick neck and short bill. Breeding adult has reddish-brown head and neck.

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta



55 - 65 cm

Black legs with yellow feet.



Herons

Notes

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Size

Large (>80cm) with longer neck

Medium (50 - 65cm) with shorter neck

Black stripe(s) on head

No stripe on head

Dark/Black crown

White/Brown crown

Light Grey plumage



Grey Heron
Ardea cinerea
90 - 98 cm

Grey upperside, prominent black stripe on white head.

Reddish-brown plumage



Purple Heron
Ardea purpurea
78 - 90 cm

Black stripes on head and neck, reddish-brown/purple plumage.

Great-billed Heron
Ardea sumatrana



114 - 115 cm
Dusky grey plumage and dagger-shaped bill.

Black-crowned Night Heron



Nycticorax nycticorax
58 - 65 cm

Bluish-black crown contrasting against grey plumage.

Striated Heron



Butorides striata
40 - 48 cm

Dark crown, grey plumage with white streaks on wings.

Malayan Night Heron



Gorsachius melanolophus
48 - 51 cm

Black crown, rest of body is chestnut/reddish-brown.

Javan Pond Heron



Ardeola speciosa
45 cm

Light brown head and neck, black back and white underside.

Indian Pond Heron



Ardeola grayii
45 cm

Light brown head, whitish throat and maroon back.

Chinese Pond Heron



Ardeola bacchus
45 - 52 cm

Chestnut-maroon head and neck, black back and white underside.

Pond Heron (non-breeding)



Ardeola sp.
Brown with white streaks on the neck and breast.

Only distinguishable in breeding plumage



Bitterns

Notes

- All species have coloured plumage with streaks on their chest



Yellow Bittern

*Botaurus
sinensis*
36 - 38 cm

Yellow-brown plumage with dark crown.



Cinnamon Bittern

*Botaurus
cinnameus*
38 - 41 cm

Males have cinnamon plumage, while females are browner with flecks on their wings.



Von Schrenck's Bittern

*Botaurus
eurhythmus*
39 - 42 cm

Males have dark brown upperparts and light brown underparts, while females are distinctly spotted on their back and wings.



Black Bittern

*Botaurus
flavicollis*
54 - 61 cm

Males are black with a yellow patch on the neck, while females are darker brown on top.



Others

Storks



Milky/Painted Stork

Mycteria sp.
93 - 102 cm

White plumage with black on the wings and a downcurved bill.
The two species often interbreed.



Lesser Adjutant

Leptoptilos javanicus
122.5 - 129 cm

Bare head and neck, with a horn-coloured bill and black wings.



Buffed Fish Owl

Ketupa ketupu
45.5 - 47 cm

Brown with prominent ear tufts and white eyebrows.



Grey-headed Fish Eagle

Ichthyophaga ichthyaeus
69 - 74 cm

Brown upperparts and belly, with distinct grey head and white undertail coverts.



White-bellied Sea Eagle

Ichthyophaga leucogaster
70 - 85 cm

White underside and black flight feathers, wings form a 'V' when in flight.



Brahminy Kite

Haliastur indus
44 - 52 cm

Reddish-brown underside with white head and breast. Wings form an 'M' shape when in flight.



For a full list of birds and their descriptions, check out Bird Society of Singapore's checklist!



Shorebirds



Common Redshank

Tringa totanus
30 - 34 cm

Grey-brown plumage and bright orange-red legs.



Common Greenshank

Tringa nebularia
27 - 29 cm

Grey plumage, long, dirty green legs with a slightly upturned bill.



Common Sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos
19 - 21 cm

Short, yellowish-brown legs, dark grey-brown upperparts, and white underside.



Pacific Golden Plover

Pluvialis fulva
23 - 26 cm

Golden plumage, short and thin bill with dark brown legs.



Tibetan Sand Plover

Anarhynchus atrifrons
19 - 21 cm

Short and blunt bill with grey to greenish-grey legs.



Eurasian Whimbrel

Numenius phaeopus
40 - 46 cm

Greyish-brown body with a distinct black crown stripe and eyestripe, long downcurved bill.



Clues to

Identify Shorebirds

1 Size & Shape



Small



Medium



Large

2 Bill Length & Shape



Short



Medium



As long as head



Longer than head



Straight



Tip slightly downcurved

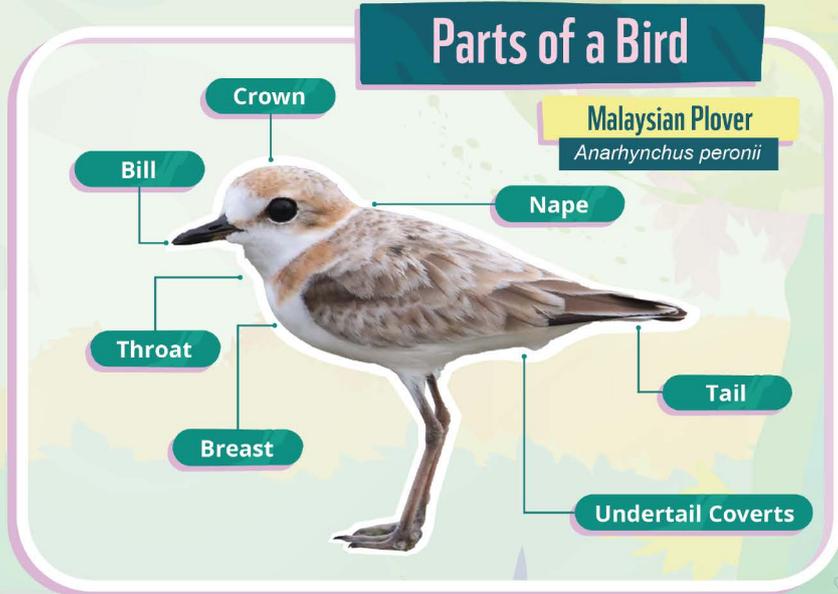


Upturned



Downcurved

Parts of a Bird



Malaysian Plover

Anarhynchus peronii

Undertail Coverts

Photo by Syed Al-Idid