White-throated Kingfisher
(Halcyon smyrnensis)
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INTRODUCTION

Thailand is a country rich in biological diversity, particularly for birds, and attracts bird watchers from all around the world. Over 1,000 species (approximately 10 percent of global bird species) have been recorded in Thailand. According to BirdLife International, Thailand also plays host to more than 50 globally threatened species, of which one species, the Manchurian Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus tangorum*) has been recorded at Le Meridien Khao Lak Resort & Spa.
Welcome to Khao Lak, a very unique destination, full of local art. Nature is art and art is nature, this is how we, the team of associates see the beautiful flora and fauna that embraces Khao Lak. When thinking of the Unlock Art project and partner for Le Meridien Khao Lak Resort & Spa, we only had to look in our resort gardens and surrounding areas. The art is among us, the art we sometimes tend to forget. As Albert Einstein once quoted "Look deep into nature, then you will understand everything better". Nature has always been and will always be an inspiration to many artists across the globe. We are very excited to share our local art with you....

In partnership with the Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BCST), one of the oldest bird and nature conservation organizations in Thailand, we have crafted a truly unique Unlock Art signature program.

Through our Unlock Art program you will discover and learn about the local art; the vast variety of over 47 local bird species, in and around our resort and even more bird species at 2 of the most popular bird migration sites in Thailand. We are highly committed in carrying out conservation work by habitat management in and around our resort to ensure the local bird species thrive as well as donating funds to BCST in order for them to be able to continue their important mission.
Resident Birds

The variety of birds can be categorised by their seasonal statuses. Resident birds are species that can be found year-round within a certain area. These birds mate, build nests, rear chicks and stay around throughout the non-breeding season. About 70 percent of all bird species recorded at Le Meridien Khao Lak Resort & Spa belong to this group.
Eastern Spotted Dove***
(*Streptopelia chinensis*)

Zebra Dove**
(*Geopelia striata*)

Pale-rumped Swiftlet***
(*Aerodramus germani*)

Greater Coucal***
(*Centropus sinensis*)

*** — common  ** — fairly common  * — uncommon/rare
Lesser Coucal** — non-breeding plumage
(Centropus bengalensis)

Lesser Coucal** — breeding plumage
(Centropus bengalensis)

Asian Koel*** — male
(Eudynamys scolopaceus)

Asian Koel*** — female
(Eudynamys scolopaceus)

*** — common  ** — fairly common  * — uncommon/rare
White-breasted Waterhen**  
(*Amaurornis phoenicurus*)

Red-wattled Lapwing***  
(*Vanellus indicus*)

Barred Buttonquail*  — male  
(*Turnix suscitator*)

Barred Buttonquail*  — female  
(*Turnix suscitator*)

***— common  **— fairly common  *— uncommon/rare
Little Cormorant**
(Microcarbo niger)

Little Egret**
(Egretta garzetta)

White-throated Kingfisher**
(Halcyon smymensis)

Indochinese Roller***
(Coracias affinis)

***— common    **— fairly common    *— uncommon/rare
Coppersmith Barbet***
(Psilopogon haemacephalus)

Lineated Barbet***
(Psilopogon lineatus)

Vernal Hanging Parrot***
(Loriculus vernalis)

Common Iora***
(Aegithina tiphia)

*** — common
** — fairly common
* — uncommon/rare
Malaysian Pied Fantail*  
(*Rhipidura javanica*)

Large-billed Crow**  
(**Corvus macrorhynchos**)

Pacific Swallow***  
(***Hirundo tahitica***)

Red-whiskered Bulbul*  
(*Pycnonotus jocosus*)

*** — common  
** — fairly common  
* — uncommon/rare
Yellow-vented Bulbul***
(Pycnonotus goiavier)

Streak-eared Bulbul***
(Pycnonotus conradi)

Common Tailorbird**
(Orthotomus sutorius)

Yellow-bellied Prinia***
(Prinia flaviventris)

*** — common  ** — fairly common  * — uncommon/rare
Oriental Magpie Robin** — male
(Copsychus saularis)

Oriental Magpie Robin** — female
(Copsychus saularis)

Zitting Cisticola**
(Cisticola juncidis)

Common Myna***
(Acridotheres tristis)

*** — common  ** — fairly common  * — uncommon/rare
Asian Glossy Starling** — adult
(Aplonis panayensis)

Asian Glossy Starling** — juvenile
(Aplonis panayensis)

White-vented Myna**
(Acrideres grandis)

Eurasian Tree Sparrow***
(Passer montanus)

*** — common  ** — fairly common  * — uncommon/rare
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker** — male (Dicaeum cruentatum)

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker** — female (Dicaeum cruentatum)

Baya Weaver** — breeding male (Ploceus philippinus)

Baya Weaver** — female/non-breeding (Ploceus philippinus)

***— common  **— fairly common  *— uncommon/rare
Scaly-breasted Munia*** — adult
(Lonchura punctulata)

Scaly-breasted Munia*** — juvenile
(Lonchura punctulata)

White-rumped Munia* — (Lonchura striata)

Paddyfield Pipit** — (Anthus rufulus)

*** — common  ** — fairly common  * — uncommon/rare
Non-breeding Visitors

During the northern hemisphere winter, many species of birds migrate from their breeding grounds in the north to spend winter in the tropics. These birds are generally called non-breeding visitors or simply, winter visitors. Most non-breeding visitors that are found in Thailand breed in East Asian countries or Siberia. Each year, they generally arrive in October and leave around April. Some stay within Thailand throughout this period, while some migrate further to more southern countries.
Pacific Swift*  
(Apus pacificus)

Pond Heron**  
(non-breeding plumage)  
(Ardeola sp.)

Chinese Pond Heron**  
(breeding)  
(Ardeola bacchus)

Javan Pond Heron*  
(breeding)  
(Ardeola speciosa)

*** — common  ** — fairly common  * — uncommon/rare
Indian Pond Heron* — breeding
(Ardeola grayii)

Common Kingfisher*
(Alcedo atthis)

Chestnut-headed Bee-eater**
(Merops leschenaulti)

Brown Shrike***
(Lanius cristatus)

*** — common  ** — fairly common  * — uncommon/rare
Black Drongo**
(Dicrurus macrocercus)

Barn Swallow***
(Hirundo rustica)

Thick-billed Warbler*
(Arundinax aedon)

Oriental Reed Warbler**
(Acrocephalus orientalis)

*** — common  ** — fairly common  * — uncommon/rare
Black-browed Reed Warbler**
(Acrocephalus bistrigiceps)

Manchurian Reed Warbler*
(Acrocephalus tangorum)

Pallas’s Grasshopper Warbler**
(Helopsaltes certhiola)

Asian Brown Flycatcher**
(Muscicapa latirostris)

*** – common  ** – fairly common  * – uncommon/rare
Breeding Visitors

Unlike resident birds, breeding visitors only appear during a certain time of the year to breed, nest and rear chicks. After the nesting season, these birds migrate southward to spend the rest of the non-breeding season in other countries like Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. Most breeding visitors arrive in early summer and stay throughout the summer and rainy season.
Watercock* — male breeding
(Gallicrex cinerea)

Watercock* — female & non-breeding
(Gallicrex cinerea)

Black Bittern* — male
(Dupetor flavicollis)

Blue-tailed Bee-eater*
(Merops philippinus)

*** — common  ** — fairly common  * — uncommon/rare
Grassland around Le Meridien Khao Lak Resort & Spa is rich in bird diversity. A walk in early morning or late afternoon can produce a fruitful list of birds including the colourful Indochinese Roller and White-throated Kingfisher that often perch on tall dead trees, the well-camouflaged Lineated Barbet and Vernal Hanging Parrot, the loud but tiny Yellow-bellied Prinia that lives among the grass and the aggressive Red-wattled Lapwing that is not afraid of chasing away any intruders from their nests.
Laem Pakarang is home to over 1,000 migratory water birds during winter. From October to February, flocks of shorebirds and terns can be seen regularly at the coral spit and surrounding areas. Highlights include the globally near-threatened Malaysian Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Terek Sandpiper, Bar-tailed Godwit and Lesser Crested Tern. Rarities such as Crab Plover, a winter visitor from the Middle East, and locally scarce Beach Thick-knee have also been reported.
The lush primary forest of Khao Lak-Lamru National Park supports a range of interesting forest birds. Ton Chongfa Waterfall, located just few kilometres from Khao Lak downtown, is probably the most easily accessed birdwatching spot in the national park. Colourful resident species such as Orange-bellied Flowerpecker, Red-throated Barbet, Rufous Piculet and Black-and-yellow Broadbill can be found regularly, while the impressive Oriental Pied Hornbill can also be seen.
Located at the border between Phang Nga and Surat Thani, Ton Pariwat Wildlife Sanctuary is known for its beautiful waterfall. The forest canopy within the sanctuary is also home to many forest specialities such as the iconic Great Hornbill, Red-throated Barbet, Sooty Barbet, Scarlet Minivet and Chestnut-breasted Malkoha. The lush undergrowth and middle-storey also supports a wide range of forest birds including the beautiful Blyth's Paradise-flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker and Crimson Sunbird.
Exploring the open meadowlands at Ban Thung Yai can provide a wide range of grassland and wetland birds. The area is best visited during winter months from October to March when migratory species can be found in abundance. Flocks of Eastern Yellow Wagtail, Red-throated Pipit, Pacific Golden Plover and Grey-headed Lapwing can be found frequently, while rarity like Oriental Plover has also been reported. The sandy banks along Takua Pa River also supports a population of the nationally declining River Lapwing.
WHEN TO BIRD?

Due to the abundance and diversity of birds in Thailand, birdwatching can be done year-round depending on what you want to see. Resident species, which comprise up to more than half of all species of birds in Thailand, can be seen throughout the year. However, a significant number of species that are non-breeding visitors can be seen during the northern hemisphere winter (Oct-Mar). Many of these include migratory shorebirds and waterbirds. A smaller proportion of species can be found specifically during summer and wet season (Apr-Sep) including birds that are breeding visitors.
CONSERVATION

Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BCST) is the country partner of BirdLife International. BCST's roles include spreading awareness about urban birds, reconnecting people with nature and conserving birds and their habitats through birdwatching, research and working with local communities.

BCST's main projects include
- **Bird Walk**: guided walks led by experienced birdwatcher conducted 4 times a month in urban parks around Bangkok
- **Spoon-billed Sandpiper Conservation**: working with local people and birdwatchers to conserve habitat for the globally threatened Spoon-billed Sandpiper and other migratory shorebirds in the Inner Gulf of Thailand
- **Bird Census**: citizen science-based activity to monitor population trends and threats to bird life with the focus at Khao Yai National Park and nationwide migratory waterbirds

Together with Le Meridien Khao Lak Resort & Spa, BCST has helped set up a Bird Sanctuary about 300 meters from the resort. On this plot of land, habitat will be managed to attract higher number and diversity of birds. Guests of all ages will be educated on the local birds and biodiversity that are so unique to Khao Lak. Nowhere else guests can experience this vast variety of tropical bird species.

BCST CONTACT
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Indochinese Roller
(*Coracias affinis*)