

## **Birds chasing after their reflections collide with skyscrapers**

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Skyscrapers have become very much part of the cityscape in every city in the world today. Unfortunately for many birds, these buildings created a huge problem. Every year, millions of birds are killed by collisions into buildings. In Singapore, the situation is no different. A recent study found that birds are most likely to crash into buildings in the western and central part of Singapore. This is probably because birds migrate mostly through these parts of the island. And sadly, most of these birds don't survive the collisions. The problem is exacerbated by bright lights used to adorn buildings during the nights. The lights attract and confuse migrating birds and cause them to crash into the buildings.

In Singapore, the following four species of birds made up a big proportion of all collisions: blue-winged pitta, yellow-rumped flycatcher, western hooded pitta and oriental dwarf kingfisher. This is probably because these birds migrate mostly at night.



Yellow rumped flycatcher



Blue winged pitta

To reduce these collisions, lights in buildings should be reduced or dimmed during the peak migrating season from Sep-Nov. Also, reflective stickers can be used on glass panels and windows on buildings. These reflective stickers help to warn birds of obstacles the way glass stickers are used to warn human of glass doors.

The best thing you can do for an injured bird is to:

- Put it in a box with cover. Make sure there are air vents.
- Provide some food and water.
- If the injuries are life threatening, bring it to a vet
- Or you may contact:

ACRES (Animal Concerns Research and Education Society)

ACRES Wildlife Rescue

Website: [acres.org.sg](http://acres.org.sg)

Hotline (24-hour) Tel: +65 9783 7782



Lewin Education Centre

Composition by: Liu Yu Xuan (P3 Creative Writing, Choa Chu Kang Branch)

### **An injured bird**

Have you ever taken care of an injured bird? Well, I have. This is my experience...

The sky was an expanse of sapphire blue, dotted with fluffy white clouds. I was at home watching my favourite cartoon programme. Excitement bubbled in me as I was finally able to set aside some time to do so after clearing a huge pile of homework.

'Screech'....a sudden noise reverberated through the air and caught my attention. Thinking that it could be the sound of falling high-rise litter, I did not pay much attention to it. I continued watching my cartoon. Within the next second, another 'screech' caught my attention. Out of curiosity, I looked out of the window from the second floor. I spotted something on the ground and decided to go downstairs to investigate.

When I reached the ground floor, the 'screeching' sound became louder. I thought to myself, "What could it be?" To my horror, the sound came from a bird lying on the ground, motionless. I leaned forward to have a closer look. "Oh! An injured bird!" I felt so sorry for it and scooped it up with my palms. I carried it home gingerly.

When I reached home, I placed it in a shoe box and I looked for the first-aid kit. There were some scratches on its legs. I applied some medicine gently on the injuries. I also tried to bandage the wound as it struggled. It continued to screech in pain, making a lot of noise. I transferred it into a cage and wished it could recover soon. I took good care of it by giving it water and worms daily. I also cleaned the wound regularly.

After a few days, the bird chirped and hopped excitedly in the cage. I checked its wound and found that it has recovered well. I heaved a sigh of relief and seeing it fly about in the cage drew smiles on my face. I was glad it had regained its health.

I pestered my mother to keep the bird as a pet. However, she did not accede to my request. Reluctantly, I brought it to the park near my house and released it. It flew around in circles, as if saying goodbye to me. Although I cannot bear to part with it, I was happy to set it free as birds belong to the skies.

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### **Be kind whenever possible, it is possible**

One scorching day, I was on my way to Lot 1 shopping mall with a light-hearted mood. Suddenly, I heard a loud 'thud'. I looked around and spotted a bird with green and blue wings among some grass patch. It was struggling in pain with injured wings and legs. Without hesitation, I searched the vicinity and found a small box. I placed it in the box and took a taxi to the nearest vet.

The vet examined the bird and assured me that it would recover as the injuries were not serious. He prescribed some medicine and instructed me to feed it and take care of it. When I reached home, I placed the injured bird in a cage. I tried to use a syringe to feed medicine to the bird. However, I realised that it was almost impossible as it has a beak and the medicine would leak through each time I tried to feed it. It was messy. An idea struck my mind! I decided to pour some medicine over some worms. Finally, it was able to eat the worms and the medicine!

A week later, the bird started to stand but it kept tumbling over. I tried to give it support and it could stand on its feet eventually. I decide to name it 'Blu' – after its blue wings. On the second week, it could hop! I was elated! But it could not fly as it was too weak. I gave Blu more worms for more strength. On the third week, it started to fly about in the cage. Blu had finally regained its health.

I decided that the only right thing to do is to set it free. Let it go home.

The next morning, I brought Blu to the park in a cage. Even though I was sad to see Blu go, I realised it needed freedom. I must return freedom to him. I opened the trap door. It hopped out. 1, 2, 3...It flapped its wings and started to fly. After flying around for a while, it soared towards the sky. With tears in my eyes, I waved Blu goodbye and went home. I wish I could see Blu again...

