Hawks to patrol Singapore shopping district: report

October 12 2011

A hawk is pictured in Mexico in September 2011. Businesses along Singapore's famous Orchard Road shopping street plan to deploy trained hawks to scare off thousands of birds whose droppings rain down on pedestrians' heads, a report said Wednesday.

Businesses along Singapore's famous Orchard Road shopping street plan to deploy trained hawks to scare off thousands of birds whose droppings rain down on pedestrians' heads, a report said Wednesday.

The Straits Times said retailers were in talks with Jurong Bird Park, whose attractions include trained birds of prey, to try a natural solution after artificial methods such as high-pitched recordings failed to drive the birds away.

Wildlife groups estimate that around 2,000 to 5,000 starlings and

mynahs roost along Orchard Road in the evening, releasing droppings on pavements and parked cars and creating a din that even overpowers traffic noise.

The use of chemicals to poison the birds was ruled out by the Orchard Road Business Association (ORBA) for being too cruel.

"We are still in discussions with the relevant people and nothing has been firmed up at this stage," a spokeswoman for Wildlife Reserves Singapore, which oversees the bird park, told AFP.

ORBA officials were not available for comment.

"The idea is to scare the birds away. At the end of the day, we want the pleasant shopping experience to return to Orchard Road," Steven Goh, the executive director of ORBA, told the Straits Times.

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Citation: Hawks to patrol Singapore shopping district: report (2011, October 12) retrieved 26 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2011-10-hawks-patrol-singapore-district.html

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