

# Recorder's Report

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Since the last AGM in October 2016, the **HKBWS Records Committee** (members Geoff Carey, Gary Chow, Paul Leader, Richard Lewthwaite and Yu Yat Tung plus secretary Carrie Ma), has met on three occasions (26 Jan, 17 May, 5 Sep 2017), resulting in the changes listed below, which bring the main Hong Kong list (Cats I-II) to **549 species**.

### Additions to Category I:

- **Small Pratincole** *Glareola lactea* at San Tin fishponds on 4 April 2017
- **Rosy Minivet** *Pericrocotus roseus* at Po Toi on 27 April 2014.
- **Pacific Swallow** *Hirundo tahitica* at Tai Shang Wai on 3 October 2016.

### Additions to Category III:

- **Black-throated Laughingthrushes** *Garrulax chinensis* subspecies *monachus*. A series of puzzling brown laughingthrushes photographed at Tai Po Kau Headland and elsewhere have been identified to this taxon, which is endemic to Hainan and a potential split "Swinhoe's Laughingthrush *G. monachus*". Since it is not known to migrate, Cat III is appropriate for Hong Kong records. This does not affect the nominate subspecies of Black-throated Laughingthrush *G. c. chinensis*, which is widespread in Hong Kong and remains in Cat II.

### Potential first records still circulating:

- **Chinese Bush Warbler** *Locustella tacsanowskia*, Mai Po NR, 3 September 2014
- **Black-throated Thrush** *Turdus atrogularis*, Chek Lap Kok, 4 December 2016
- **Desert Wheatear** *Oenanthe deserti* Chek Lap Kok, 19 February 2013

### Potential first records awaiting circulation:

- **Great Egret** *Ardea alba* subspecies *alba*, Shuen Wan, 7 February 2017
- **"Cox's Sandpiper** *Calidris paramelanotos*" (hybrid), Deep Bay, 4 March 2017
- **Iceland Gull** ("Thayer's Gull") *Larus glaucooides*, Deep Bay, 3 March 2017
- **Black Noddy** *Anous minutus*, Kung Chau, 18 June 2017
- **Maroon Oriole** *Oriolus traillii*, Po Toi, 30 March 2017
- **Chestnut-capped Babbler** *Timalia pileata*, Kam Tin, 2 June 2017
- **Ogilvie-Grant's Leaf Warbler** ("Kloss's Leaf Warbler") *Phylloscopus ogilviegranti*, Tai Po Kau, 16 March 2017

### Reviews completed:

- **Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush** *Garrulax monileger* – a comparison of specimens of various subspecies at Tring with photographs of birds at Tai Po Kau has confirmed that HK birds are of the subspecies *melli*, which occurs in Guangdong and other parts of SE China. However, since there is no evidence of breeding, the species remains in Cat III.

### On-going work on difficult species or species groups:

- **Eastern Barn Owl *Tyto javanicus*** and **Eastern Grass Owl *T. longimembris*** are more similar in appearance than was previously thought. The RC is working to establish reliable identification criteria for separating the two.
- **Styan's / Middenforff's Grasshopper Warbler** (awaiting DNA results)
- **Vivid Niltava *Niltava vivida*** – subspecies *vivida* and *oatesi* are potential splits. Hong Kong records (Ng Tung Chai 4 Feb 1995, Po Toi 29 Nov 2005 and 24 Nov 2012) have been pended until further museum research can be carried out to establish reliable identification criteria for the two taxa.

### Taxonomic changes:

- The former “**Barn Owl *T. alba***” complex has been split, and the species occurring in China and adjacent parts of continental Asia is **Eastern Barn Owl *Tyto javanicus*** (IOC 7.3).
- **Mongolian Short-toed Lark *Calandrella dukhunensis*** (2 accepted HK records; one other about to be circulated) split from **Greater Short-toed Lark *C. brachydactylla*** (IOC 7.3).

### Record assessment:

- The Records Committee is working to complete assessment of all URFs for the year 2016 by the end of this year.

### Hong Kong Bird Reports (HKBR)

- **HKBR 2015** was available to members in printed or digital format in May 2017. **HKBR 2016** is expected to be published in May 2018.

### Number of species by year

No. of species	Year
318	2000
380	2006
382	2007
385	2008
397	2009
399	2010
396	2011
404	2012
393	2013
411	2014
413 (to date)	2015
n/a	2016