

THE HONG KONG
BIRD REPORT 1962



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THE HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

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Compiled by
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HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

c/o The Chartered Bank, Hong Kong.

INTRODUCTION

Like other people in Hong Kong, bird watchers come and go. However, our membership remains steady at about 50 and we certainly have some very keen new members.

At the Annual General Meeting, we were forced to recognise formally that our co-founder and first chairman, Mr. A. St. G. Walton, would not be returning to Hong Kong and he was unanimously elected an Honorary Life Member of the Society. We are now very pleased to hear that he has been chosen as resident Warden of the Nature Reserve that is being formed on Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour.

At the end of the year, the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. L. Cranmer-Byng, resigned owing to increased commitments. He has put in an enormous amount of good work and we are very pleased that he is remaining on the Committee. Mr. G. V. King volunteered to become Hon. Secretary but has had to resign owing to ill-health and Mr. F. O. P. Hechtel has now taken over.

In the summer, the Hon. Recorder, Mr. E. J. Allen, left the Colony to return to America, having completed the analysis of the records for the 1961 Bird Report. Commander J. N. Humphreys of H. M. S. "Albion" kindly undertook to compile the list of records for the 1962 Report and as he is an expert on Hong Kong Birds, having been our Hon. Secretary from 1958 to 1960, his offer was gratefully accepted by the Committee. "Albion" however has a very large parish and we are very pleased to have found a resident Hon Recorder in Major J. R. L. Caunter.

It has been a good year for birds and, particularly in the last part of the year, the Outings have been very well attended both by birds and watchers. Formal outings were as follows:

1st January	Pak Tam Valley, beyond Tai Mong Tsai
6th February	Ping Shan/Luen Tak
4th March	Mai Po Marshes
16th March	Annual University expedition to Lamma Island, to which Members were kindly invited.
1st April	Ho Chung Valley
23rd April	Mai Po Marshes
13th May	Three Fathom Cove
13th September	Mai Po Marshes
15th October	Mai Po Marshes
12th November	Ping Shan/Luen Tak
2nd December	Ho Chung Valley
26th December	Ping Shan/Luen Tak

During the year, the first part of the Field Guide project has been completed and field descriptions of 47 species have been distributed, covering nearly all birds that are neither in Herklots' "Hong Kong Birds" nor the European Field Guide. The working party for the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards for Girls Scheme has asked for our help in adapting the bird-watching projects set in Britain for use in Hong Kong. As an important step in this direction, Miss M. E. M. Benham has just completed in book form, a field guide to the commoner birds of Hong Kong, which should also appeal to a wider section of the public.

The Library is now installed in the British Council reading room, by kind arrangement of Mr. F. Clive Robinson, and is in a locked bookcase of which the Librarian holds the key.

The book "Indian Hill Birds" by Salim Ali has been bought. It has 64 illustrations in colour and includes pictures or descriptions of many Hong Kong birds. Salim Ali's "The Book of Indian Birds" is on order, and has just been received.

Towards the end of the year, we sustained a blow to our activities in the Mai Po marshes owing to a tightening up of security in the frontier closed area. Access to the mouth of the

Shum Chun river, with its possibilities of Pelicans, Ibis, Black Storks, Spoonbill and so on, is closed at any rate for the time being, but if the Waders follow last year's pattern, we shall still be able to see most of them on migration.

At the 1962 Annual General Meeting, it was reluctantly decided to raise the subscription to \$20 (\$30 for a husband and wife combination) to give us a little capital to work from.

The objects of the Society remain unchanged and are given at the back of the specimen entry form on page 63.

We are again very pleased to record that one of our members-General Hewetson, has received the honour of Knighthood during the year.

E. D. W.

COLONY RECORDS 1962

Weather

The year started well with exceptionally fine weather and long periods of sunshine from January to March. The first half of April was unsettled and wet, but the rest of the month and May were warmer. Rainfall in March, April and May was well below normal despite a torrential downpour which caused local flooding on 26th May.

June brought a marked change and nearly twenty inches of rain were recorded. July and August were remarkably hot and rainfall was well below average.

Typhoon WANDA formed on 27th August and hit Hong Kong on 1st September. It was one of the most intense typhoons ever experienced in the Colony, producing nearly twelve inches of rain and a maximum gust of 189 m.p.h. at Tate's Cairn. The rest of September was sunny and warm.

Typhoon DINAH crossed the coast 90 miles east of Hong Kong on 3rd October and rain persisted until the 7th. The rest of October was fine except for the passage of a very active cold front on the 14th.

November was cloudier than usual with wide fluctuations in temperature. December was rather mild with plenty of sunshine and only a trace of rain.

Summary and Comment

1962 was the fifth successive year of the Society's work in Hong Kong. Despite the loss of three very active members in 1961, the volume of records received was most encouraging, thanks to the continuing sterling work of some founder members and to the enthusiasm of the newcomers. Analysis of the records shows that 235 species and races were sighted, including two further additions to the Colony list: the Chinese Pitta which spent Easter week-end at Bethanie, Pokfulam, and the Large Cuckoo-shrike seen at South Bay in November. There have now been 11 additions since the publication of the *Annotated Check-List* in 1960.

In addition to the Chinese Pitta and the Large Cuckoo-shrike, the following rarities were recorded during the year:

2nd Colony Record Goldeneye, Lesser Whistling Teal, Red-footed Falcon, Crimson-legged Crake, Long-eared Owl, Brown Hawk-owl, Siberian Thrush.

3rd Colony Record Shoveller, Hoopoe, Bull-headed Shrike, Chinese Babax, Grey-headed Flycatcher, Chestnut-breasted Rock-thrush.

4th Colony Record Ruddy Crake, Grey-throated Minivet, Mountain Bush Warbler.

5th Colony Record Mandarin Duck.

6th Colony Record Chestnut Bunting.

7th Colony Record Orange-headed Ground-thrush.

It was a good year for duck, with ten species featured including a flock of 13 Garganey, a Shoveller, a pair of Mandarin, four Goldeneye and a flock of 11 Lesser Whistling Teal.

The plea in an earlier report for an eagle identification expert is echoed by the Hon. Recorder for 1962. It is regretted that several detailed records of eagles seen in the Colony have had to be placed on one side owing to lack of sufficient knowledge to classify them, even in the "doubtful" section. However, it was most satisfactory to be able to accept the record of the Red-footed Falcon. The report of a pair of Peregrines over the Harbour in April is interesting, and it is hoped that before too long there may be proof of breeding in the Colony.

The presence of a pair of Crimson-legged Crakes in one area from May to August is suggestive of breeding, as, to a lesser extent, is the sighting of a Ruddy Crake in April.

Waders were well covered without any very unusual reports, apart from the Grey-rumped Sandpiper near Tai Lam Chung Reservoir in December.

For the first time White-winged Black Terns were recorded in August and early September; Caspian Terns being also reported in the latter month. No doubt weather has a marked effect on the

comings and goings of terns in the Colony, and the occurrence of typhoon WANDA on 1st September is significant in this connection. It seems fair to assume that this typhoon also had some connection with the appearance of a Hoopoe on 31st August.

Nine species of flycatcher are listed; two more than in 1961 but not quite equal to the record of ten in 1959. The sighting of a Grey-headed Flycatcher in the same wood where this species was first recorded in 1960 was remarkable.

So it can be said that 1962 was a good year for birds in Hong Kong. It is suggested that in future it would be worthwhile making a greater effort to record breeding. In particular, further censuses of the colonies of Yellow Bitterns, Pond Herons and egrets for comparison with those made in 1958, 1959 and 1960 would be valuable.

Introduced Birds

There were no authenticated reports during 1962 of the 36 pairs of Bamboo Partridges released in December 1961, and it appears that they have not survived.

Escaped Birds

The following summarises reports received concerning escaped birds during 1962. A Chinese Grackle was seen near the old mental hospital at Sai Ying Pun on Hong Kong Island on 16th March. A Yellow-breasted Fruit-sucker was seen by several observers in the University area on 13th May, flying about and apparently feeding. An Ornamental Lory was seen and heard several times in October and November in Government House gardens.

There have been many reports of white cockatoos. Two were seen regularly in the University area in January (see pages 10 and 11 of the 1961 report), and were about the central area and the Colonial Cemetery in April. They were noticed again in Hong Kong Central in August and November. On 2nd September they were seen well by FOPH in Happy Valley; the larger bird having a yellow crest. Undated verbal reports were also received from Repulse Bay and Stonecutters Island.

J. N. H.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF BIRDS REPORTED IN HONG KONG DURING 1962

Arrangement and Status of Species

The list has been arranged in accordance with *An Annotated Check List of the Birds of Hong Kong* published with the authority of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society by South China Morning Post Ltd. in 1960, in which may be found the status of individual species (e.g. Vagrant, Winter Visitor, Resident, etc). Species first recorded since the publication of the Check List have been treated in accordance with the proposal on page 16 of the *Hong Kong Bird Report 1961*.

Observers

The initials of the observer are given in support of specific reports. Where a general statement is made as a result of several reports, no initials are given. The names of all who have contributed will be found at the end.

Abbreviations

LTV = Lam Tsun Valley
 NT = New Territories
 TMS = Tai Mo Shan
 TPK = Tai Po Kau
 UA = Hong Kong University area

- 2 **Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*
 10/20 in Deep Bay December 26 (Society outing).
- 4 **Little Grebe** *Podiceps ruficollis*
 7 at Tai Lam Reservoir December 3 (JLCB).
- 5 **Spotted-billed Pelican** *Pelecanus roseus*
 40 in Deep Bay January 21 (SPMK); an unusually large number. 4/5 over Deep Bay March 4 (Society outing). No autumn reports.
- 6 **Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*
 Deep Bay, Tai Lam Chung and Harbour: only five reports of up to 7 between January 13 and March 25. 2 at Mai Po on October 22 (FOPH) is the only autumn record.

- 10 **Yellow Bittern** *Ixobrychus sinensis*
 First reported May 6 at Luen Tak (JLCB). Seen regularly throughout July, August and September in the Deep Bay marshes. 12 near mouth of Shum Chun August 14 (SPMK).
- 11 **Chestnut Bittern** *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*
 1 at Ping Shan September 7 (JLCB).
- 14 **Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax*
 18 flying high over Mai Po marsh March 4 (Society outing),
- 15 **Chinese Pond Heron** *Ardeola bacchus*
 Kai Tak: 2 flying south April 20. Pokfulam: 5 flying in from Lamma April 21 (JLCB). Sha Tau Kok egret: first seen April 22; building a week later; young flying with adults July 6 (SPMK). Fair numbers at Yuen Long egrettries early July (EDW). 12 young birds received from the HKSPCA in Kowloon were released on the north side of Tolo Harbour June 16 (JLCB, EDW). Seen regularly in Deep Bay area in small numbers during latter half of the year.
- 16 **Cattle Egret** *Ardeola ibis*
 Mai Po: 2 on March 31 (SPMK). Yuen Long egrettries: breeding in fair numbers early July (EDW). Ping Shan: at least 60 in autumn plumage September 9 (EDW). Flocks of 15/20 and once 50 in NT in September (SPMK). There is a large roosting place for egrets on the north side of the Shum Chun river. Large numbers were seen flying in that direction at sunset, e.g. on September 19 about 50 birds in groups were flying from widely separated areas across the river to the Chinese side (JLCB).
- 17 **Little Green Heron** *Butorides striatus*
 1 at TPK in a watercourse February 4 (JLCB) is only the second winter record. 1 at Mai Po August 7 (SPMK) is the only summer record this year.
- 18 **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*
 Numbers were breeding in the Yuen Long egrettry early July (EDW). Reported in large flocks from Deepwater Bay and Tai Tam Tuk after typhoon Wanda in early September (per EDW). Widespread in large numbers in NT in October (SPMK).
- 20 **Swinhoe's Egret** *Egretta eulophotes*
 First reported from Ping Shan May 6 (EDW, JLCB). 6 at Ha Tsuen June 18 (SPMK). Several at Yuen Long egrettry July 1 (EDW).

- 21 **Reef Egret** *Egretta sacra*
1 at north end of Jubilee Reservoir February 18 (EDW, JLCB, MEMB) was in an unusual location. Seen regularly on the coast throughout the year.
- 22 **Great Egret** *Egretta alba*
Seen at Mai Po and Luen Tak in March, April and May (JLCB). Autumn records at Mai Po: 1 on September 7 (SPMK), 12 on October 22 (FOPH), 10 on December 3 (SPMK).
- 23 **Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*
Regularly reported in winter from Deep Bay area; extreme dates being May 6 (JLCB) and September 10 (SPMK).
- 24 **Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*
Mai Po: 1 in fine plumage April 15 (EDW), 1 on April 23 (Society outing), a probable July 27 (SPMK) - an early date. 1 at Ping Shan November 12 (Society outing).
- 25 **Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*
1 circling over Ping Shan December 1 (JLCB). This is earlier than previous records.
- 26 **White Ibis** *Threskiornis melanocephala*
San Tin: 9 on February 2, 2 on February 17 (SPMK). 3 flying down Shum Chun river March 4 (Society outing).
- 29 **Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*
2 probables at Lok Ma Chau September 29 (EDW), an early date.
- 30 **Yellow-nib Duck** *Anas poecilorhyncha*
Reported in January and February from San Tin (JAO). Two flights of 9 and 20 over Shum Chun river March 4 (Society outing) were probably of this species. Two flights also seen at Mai Po April 23 (Society outing). 1 shot at Wu Kwai Sha October 15 (JAO).
- 31 **Falcated Teal** *Anas falcata*
1 female at Sheung Shui January 6 (JAO).
- 32 **Teal** *Anas crecca*
Mai Po: about 45 March 25, 6 September 24/25 (SPMK). 1 at Ping Shan December 2, 3 at Tai Lam Chun December 3 (JLCB).

- 34 **Garganey** *Anas querquedula*
13 seen well at Lok Ma Chau April 15 (EDW). 1 male shot at Kam Tin September 22 (JAO).
- 35 **Wigeon** *Anas penelope*
3 feeding on the mud near mangroves at Mai Po March 4 (Society outing). 14 at Mai Po December 30 (EDW).
- 37 **Shoveller** *Spatula clypeata*
1 male in three-quarter plumage at Sheung Shui January 6 (JAO). This is the third Colony record.
- 38 **Mandarin Duck** *Aix galericulata*
A pair at Sheung Shui November 2; the male in incomplete plumage was shot (JAO). This is the fifth Colony record.
- 41 **Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*
Satisfactory details of 4 flying over the sea between Lamma and Green Island December 1 (JHMS). This is only the second Colony record although it would appear from La Touche that Goldeneye should visit this part of the China coast regularly in winter.
- 44 **Lesser Whistling Teal** *Dendrocygna javanica*
Flight of about 10, probably of this species, over Fanling Golf Course April 25 (SPMK). Satisfactory details of 11 seen well at San Tin at 50 yards April 26 (SPMK). This is the second definite report for the Colony.
- 48 **Black-eared Kite** *Milvus migrans*
Common & widespread. One on nest in pine tree near Aberdeen Upper Reservoir March 10; one egg seen, the colour of a duck's egg with pale brown blotches at the thick end. The nest was lined with paper. One seen on nest at Cape Collinson March 20; three eggs in the nest (JLCB).
- 50 **Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*
Widespread winter reports; more common than usual over Hong Kong Island in the early part of the year. Extremes were April 12, a late date, and October 7 (EDW).
- 52 **Sparrow Hawk** *Accipiter nisus*
More common than usual in the early part of the year, especially over the Island. Extreme winter dates: April 18 (JLCB) and October 10 (SPMK).
- 54 **Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*
1 at LTV November 11 (EDW).

- 57 **Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca*
1 frequenting Ping Shan/Mai Po area between December 1 and 30 (EDW, SPMK, JLCB).
- 59 **Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga*
A probable immature over Crest Hill April 1 and another over Snowdon some days earlier (SPMK).
- 60 **Bonelli's Eagle** *Hieraetus fasciatus*
2 seen well low overhead at Jubilee Reservoir February 18 (EDW, JLCB). 1 at Castle Peak March 2 (JHMS). 2 at Mai Po September 29 (EDW). 2 over TMS November 20 (SPMK). 2 near Beas Stables November 26; 2, maybe 4, circling over southern slopes of TMS December 3; and 2 over Sek Kong December 5 (JHMS).
- 62 **White-bellied Sea Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucogaster*
Reported from widespread areas throughout the year. Adult seen carrying food to Cape Collinson eyrie February 5, but nest was empty March 20 (JLCB, EDW). 2 juveniles at Stanley June 9 (DSH).
- 65 **Marsh Harrier** *Circus a. aeruginosus*
Up to 2 in Deep Bay area in January, September, October, November and December (SPMK, JLCB, EDW).
- 66 **Pied Harrier** *Circus melanoleucos*
Single males at Mai Po February 18 (SPMK) and October 15 (JLCB).
- 67 **Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*
Single females in Deep Bay area between March 19 and April 23, and on September 29, December 3 and 18 (SPMK, EDW, JLCB).
- 70 **Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*
Many winter records from Deep Bay, South Lantau, Castle Peak and Port Shelter areas. Extremes were May 6 (EDW, JLCB) and September 8 (DSH); unusually late and early dates respectively.
- 72 **Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*
1 at Pokfulam August 31 (DSH).
- 73 **Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*
Ten reports in January, April, June, September, November and December; all of singles except 2 together (one noticeably bigger than other) over UA and Harbour April 21, calling with a high pitched "kek-kek-kek" (JLCB).

- 76 **Red-footed Falcon** *Falco vespertinus*
Satisfactory details of a male at Severn Road, the Peak, December 5 (MEMB). This is the second Colony record.
- 77 **Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates April 20 (JLCB) and October 14 (JMR). Over 20 sightings by EDW between mid-October and end of year. 1 seen almost daily in King's Park, Kowloon, in November and December (JMR). 6 together on the Peak on October 15 (FOPH).
- 78 **Chinese Francolin** *Francolinus pintadeanus*
According to local reports (per JNH), the Francolin is holding its own despite widespread trapping, grass burning and shooting, but it is not as numerous as it used to be.
- 79 **Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*
Widespread winter reports in NT. About 20 shot at Ha Tsuen February/April (JAO). First autumn report: October 22 (JAO).
- 81/82 **Button-quail** *Turnix suscitator/tanki*
1 shot at Wu Kwai Sha October 15. 2 shot at Sheung Shui October 24; singles November 2 and 9 (JAO).
- 85 **Banded Rail** *Rallus striatus*
Mai Po: 2 on January 22 (SPMK), singles on February 17 (JHMS) and April 23 (Society outing). 1 at Luen Tak May 6 (EDW, JLCB). 1 at Mai Po August 13 (SPMK).
- 87 **Ruddy Crake** *Porzana fusca*
Satisfactory details of one feeding on a manure heap in a wood by a stream near Fung Yuen, 1½ miles from Tai Po along the Ting Kok road, on April 20 (JMR). This is the fourth Colony record.
- 88 **Crimson-legged Crake** *Amaurornis akool*
A pair studied during May, June, July and August in a small horseshoe of paddy just off Route 2 between Sek Kong and Fanling. They were shy but could be seen feeding in the mornings between 9 and 10, and again in the evenings between 6:15 and 7 (SPMK). They were also seen by JLCB, MEMB and EDW. Singles were seen in the same area on December 2 and 31 (SPMK). The legs of the female seemed much darker than those of the male and in some lights looked almost black. This led to the retrospective probable identification of a bird seen in the Ho Chung valley on April 1 (Society outing) as a female Crimson-legged Crake. There is only one previous record; near Tai Po in July 1959.

- 89 **White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus*
Widespread reports of singles in NT and Lantau throughout the year.
- 91 **Watercock** *Gallicrex cinerea*
A probable female at Mai Po August 26 (EDW).
- 92 **Coot** *Fulica atra*
3/4 at Sheung Shui January 6 (JAO). 1 at Luen Tak May 6 (JLCB, EDW). 4 at Sheung Shui November 2 and 5 on December 16 (JAO). An adult with one young just able to fly, swimming in a pond at Mai Po December 23 (EDW).
- 94 **Painted Snipe** *Rostratula benghalensis*
Reported from Deep Bay area between October 15 and December 30, with maximum of 10 together on December 12 (JAO).
- 96 **Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*
2 on bank of river in middle of Ping Shan valley February 6 (Society outing). A probable at Mai Po March 4 (JLCB).
- 97 **Grey-headed Lapwing** *Microsarcops cinereus*
"Many small flights" at Ping Shan October 17 (JAO).
- 99 **Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*
Seen several times in March and April at Lok Ma Chau and near Ho Chung valley (EDW, JLCB). A flock of 40/50 pretty regularly at Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau from August to November 11 (SPMK, EDW). This is the largest number ever recorded in the Colony.
- 100 **Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*
Regular reports from January to April in Deep Bay area. Last reported May 13 (EDW). 10/12 at Lok Ma Chau August 30, thereafter increasing until there were 300/400 on the Marshes on December 4. They often rested on dry mud well away from water (SPMK, EDW).
- 101 **Greater Sand Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii*
Reported from Mai Po and Luen Tak in April and May, often in large numbers. About 20 at Mai Po August 19 (EDW). Very large numbers in September (SPMK). 3/4 at Luen Tak November 18 (EDW).
- 102 **Mongolian Sand Plover** *Charadrius mongolus*
Mai Po: a few among Greater Sand Plovers April 15 (EDW) and May 13 (Society outing); at least 1 on August 30 (EDW); about 10 on September 8 (JLCB); 2 or more September 13 (EDW).

- 104 **Grey Plover** *Charadrius squatarola*
Mai Po: 1 on May 13 (Society outing); 5 on August 26, 3 on August 30 (EDW); singles on September 4 and 19 (JLCB).
- 105 **Asiatic Golden Plover** *Charadrius dominicus*
Singles at Mai Po September 13 (EDW, JLCB, SPMK) and September 23 (DSH).
- 106 **Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*
Mai Po: 3 in winter plumage April 21 (EDW) and again May 13 (Society outing); 1 in full summer plumage August 30 (EDW); 1 on September 4 (JLCB).
- 107/109 **Snipe** *Capella sp.*
JAO reports all three species in average numbers, though large bags not common. Last record for Swinhoe's Snipe was September 27. Fantail Snipe at Sheung Shui in large numbers in December.
- 112 **Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*
1 at TPK January 20 (JLCB). 1 at Tai Mong Tsai December 4 (JAO). 1962-63 was a very good shooting season for Woodcock (JAO and per JNH).
- 113 **Curlew** *Numenius arquata*
Mai Po: seen frequently in January and twice in February (JHMS); 22 on April 23 (Society outing); 7 on August 30 (EDW), 1 on September 8 (SPMK); 26 on September 19 (EDW); 2 on November 2 (SPMK).
- 115 **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*
Mai Po: up to 10 between April 15 and May 13; 4 on August 19 (EDW); about 50 on August 26; more than 50 on August 30; about 40 on September 13; thereafter numbers declining to 1 on October 7 (EDW, SPMK).
- 118 **Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*
5 at Mai Po April 23 (Society outing).
- 119 **Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*
Lok Ma Chau: 2 on January 26 (SPMK); 1 on April 15 and 21 (EDW). Mai Po: 1 on March 4 and several on April 21; 1 on April 23. 2 on Route Two March 8 (SPMK). 2 at Lok Ma Chau October 28 (SPMK).
- 120 **Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*
Deep Bay area: up to 18 in February, March and April (JLCB, SPMK); 1 on August 26 and 2 on August 30 (EDW); several regularly from September to November (SPMK).

- 121 **Common Sandpiper** *Tringa hypoleucos*
Widespread. Over 10 at Han Tin, South Lantau, October 14 (JMR).
- 122 **Redshank** *Tringa totanus*
Mai Po: many April reports with peak numbers at end of month; a few on May 13 (Society outing); about 30 on August 5 and 26; about 50 on August 30; about 30 on September 13 and 19 (EDW); about 15 up to October 15 (JLCB).
- 123 **Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*
Mai Po: 10 on March 4 (Society outing); 4 in full summer plumage May 13 (Society outing).
- 124 **Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*
Deep Bay marshes: several times in February (JHMS); 1 on April 4 (SPMK); 9 on April 23 (Society outing); up to 25 on May 6 (EDW); a few on May 13 (Society outing); regularly from September to December with maximum of 7 on October 8 (SPMK).
- 125 **Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*
Deep Bay marshes: up to 7 (one with a broken wing) April 15 and 21 (EDW); about 10 on April 23 (Society outing); 6 on May 6 (EDW); last spring report May 27 (EDW) - a late date; 2 on September 19 (EDW); 2 on November 1; 1 on December 2 (SPMK) - a late date.
- 126 **Grey-rumped Sandpiper** *Tringa brevipes*
Mai Po: 2 on April 27 and August 13; 1 on August 31 (SPMK), 3 on September 13 (Society outing). 1 in a wide water conduit in a forest area above the Sek kong end of Tai Lam Chung Reservoir on December 3 (JLCB) is a very unusual record.
- 127 **Terek Sandpiper** *Tringa terek*
Mai Po: reported between April 21 and May 27, with maximum of 10 on May 13; and again between August 26 and September 19, with maximum of 12 on September 13 (EDW, SPMK).
- 130 **Eastern Little Stint** *Calidris ruficollis*
No spring records. Reported from Deep Bay marshes between August 26 and November 2 (late date), with maximum of 20 on September 9 (EDW, SPMK).
- 132 **Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*
8 at Lok Ma Chau October 28 and 2 on December 2 (SPMK).
- 134 **Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*
Deep Bay area: 10 on February 11; 20/25 on April 4; 4/12 between September 10 and December 18 (SPMK, EDW).

- 135 **Curlew-sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*
2 at Lok Ma Chau with Sanderling May 1 (SPMK).
- 136 **Sanderling** *Crocethia alba*
Deep Bay marshes: up to 100 between April 1 and May 13 (EDW, SPMK); 1 on August 26 (EDW) is only autumn report.
- 138 **Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limicola falcinellus*
Mai Po: 2 on September 8; 7 on September 13 (JLCB, SPMK); 12 on September 18 (SPMK).
- 140 **Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus*
5 seen in the harbour from the vehicular ferry October 15 (FOPH) is the only record for the year.
- 143 **Collared Pratincole** *Glareola pratincola*
1 at Mai Po August 19 and 2 or 4 at Ping Shan September 9. Latter were approached to within 10 yards; white rump and red axillaries very noticeable in flight, but not so the forked tail (EDW).
- 144 **Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus*
About 100 came into the area between Stonecutters Island and Kennedy Town most days in January and February. They flew out towards the Lamma Channel in the evening (JLCB). Several seen from the vehicular ferry April 1 (EDW, JLCB), a late date.
- 148 **Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus*
About 20 in the harbour January 14 (JLCB). Several over Shum Chun river and well inland on Mai Po marsh January 14; many in same area March 3 (EDW).
- 150 **White-winged Black Tern** *Chlidonias leucoptera*
Large numbers at Mai Po May 27 after heavy rain and wind. 2 at Mai Po August 7 and several at Ha Tsuen September 3 after typhoon Wanda (SPMK). These are the first August and early September records. 14 at Ma Po September 29 (EDW).
- 151 **Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybrida*
Several at Ha Tsuen, Yuen Long and Mai Po between September 3 and 27, with maximum of 15 on 10th (JLCB, SPMK). 5 at Mai Po November 2/3 (SPMK), a late date.
- 152 **Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica*
Mai Po: 3 on April 21 (EDW); 20/30 on April 23 and 1 on May 13 (Society outings); 2 on May 27 (EDW); 4 on August 26 (EDW); 4 on September 18 (SPMK); 1 on September 29 (EDW). 3 over the harbour September 8 (DSH).

- 153 **Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne caspia*
 2 flying high over the harbour from south-west to north-east April 29 (JLCB). 6 at Mai Po June 17 (EDW). On June 19, 17 spiralling over Deep Bay were joined by 10 which came from the Ping Shan area (JLCB). June 17 and 19 are late dates. 1 at Sharp Island August 6 (SPMK). 1 at Port Shelter September 4 (JHMS). 2 at Starling Inlet September 9 (SPMK). 1 at Mai Po September 13 (EDW, SPMK). There are the first September records.
- 154 **Black-naped Tern** *Sterna sumatrana*
 2 probables at Yuen Long September 1 (SPMK).
- 155 **Little Tern** *Sterna albifrons*
 Mai Po: 5 on April 21 (EDW); 9 with Gull-billed Terns on April 23 (Society outing).
- 158 **Rufous Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis*
 Six reports of up to 2 between January 20 and April 10 (JLCB, EDW). No autumn records.
- 159 **Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis*
 Common and widespread resident.
- 161 **Rose-ringed Paroquet** *Psittacula krameri*
 Parties of up to 10 in Government House garden frequently in the spring and autumn; less often at other times. 1 at Sek Kong flying north over the airstrip July 2 (EDW) is only the fourth report from NT.
- 162 **Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*
 1 in LTV April 12 (JLCB). 1 at Beas Stables April 27 (SPMK).
- 164 **Indian Cuckoo** *Cuculus micropterus*
 Reported from Beas Stables in April (SPMK), Sai Kung and Fanling April 20 (JMHS), and Ping Shan May 6 (JLCB).
- 165 **Large Hawk-cuckoo** *Cuculus sparveroides*
 1 in LTV April 12 (JLCB).
- 166 **Plaintive Cuckoo** *Cacomantis merulinus*
 First record: one calling at Kowloon Tong February 23 (EJB). Thereafter widespread reports until June. Singing throughout the night of May 10, right up to dawn, from 53 Tai Hang Road (per MEMB). Juvenile being fed by Tailor Bird at Kam Tsin September 27 and October 4 (SPMK).

- 169 **Koel** *Eudynamis scolopacea*
 A female at Plover Cove January 21 (JLCB). Calling at Fanling March 7 (SPMK). Widespread reports in April and May. A male and 3 females at Kam Tsin November 5 and 1 male there December 21 (SPMK).
- 170 **Crow-pheasant** *Centropus sinensis*
 Widespread resident.
- 171 **Lesser Crow-pheasant** *Centropus bengalensis*
 Widespread resident. Apparently commoner along the South Lantao Road than in many other parts of NT (JMR).
- 172 **Barred Owlet** *Glaucidium cuculoides*
 1 at Sai Kung January 2 (JHMS). 1 in Tai Om wood LTV April 12 (EDW).
- 174 **Collared Scops Owl** *Otus bakkamoena*
 4 reported from TMS February 7. 1 and sometimes 2 every evening for last ten days of June at Beas Stables (JHMS).
- 175 **Long-eared Owl** *Asio Otus*
 Satisfactory details of one in the wood below Ha Yeung village, by the Clearwater Bay Road near Sam Yuk school, on October 27. Long and erect ear-tufts clearly seen (JLCB). This is the second Colony record, the previous one being in 1933.
- 177 **Brown Hawk-owl** *Ninox scutulata*
 Satisfactory details of one seen and later heard calling in UA April 24 (JLCB). The call was a subdued but resonant "Hoo-Hoo"; fairly fast, not long and drawn out, and repeated regularly at intervals of about 7 seconds. Heard again on May 14 and probably seen on May 18. This is the second Colony record; the first being in the winter of 1924/25.
- 179 **Japanese Nightjar** *Caprimulgus indicus*
 Reported in groups up to 12 flying round lights and on side roads near the Castle Peak Hospital from October 1961 to January 1962 (per MEMB). 1 heard on the Peak at 9 p.m. May 16 (JLCB). 1 of this or the next species seen flying across the waterfall river off Route Twisk May 27 (EDW).
- 180 **Savanna Nightjar** *Caprimulgus affinis*
 1 regularly at dusk over Beas Stables in May and June (SPMK). 1 perched along a branch in daylight at Mong Tseng November 12 (JLCB).

- 181 **Large White-rumped Swift** *Apus pacificus*
Widespread. About 30 at Jubilee Reservoir February 17 and 20 at Mai Po March 25 (JLCB).
- 182 **House Swift** *Apus affinis*
Widespread. Seen at Aberdeen, Queen Mary Hospital, Tsuen Wan, etc (JLCB).
- 183 **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis*
1 flying quite high along the coast near Castle Peak September 5 (JLCB). 1 at Luen Tak November 12 (Society outing).
- 185 **Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*
Common and widespread. 1 near possible nesting holes at 3 Fathom Cove May 13 (JLCB).
- 186 **White-breasted Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis*
Appeared more common than usual this year. Nesting holes seen at 3 Fathom Cove, Queen Mary Hospital and Ho Chung valley. 1 at Kowloon Tong all through July (EJB).
- 187 **Black-capped Kingfisher** *Halcyon pileata*
Reported from Deep Bay marshes, Tai Tam estuary, Plover Cove, 3 Fathom Cove, Ho Chung, South Lantau, Sha Tau Kok, Fanling and near Mount Davis. Still to be seen in the summer in the foothills between Sha Tau Kok and the Bride's Pool (JLCB).
- 189 **Broad-billed Roller** *Eurystomas orientalis*
Bethanie, Pokfulam: 1 regularly from March 28 (a very early date) to April 20-when first seen it appeared to be very tired (EDW, JLCB, MEMB); 1 or 2 between September 18 and October 1; 4 on October 2/3 (DSH); 2 on October 9 (EDW). 1 at Pokfulam Reservoir October 15 (EDW).
- 190 **Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*
Satisfactory details of 1 in the garden of 2, Goldsmith Road, Jardine's Lookout, for three hours on August 31 (JHM). This is the third Colony record.
- 191 **Great Barbet** *Megalaima virens*
Reported from LTV, Jubilee Reservoir, TPK, Plover Cove, Aberdeen Reservoirs and Sha Tau Kok (JLCB, SPMK, EDW). The birds which visited UA and the Botanical Gardens in previous years have not been seen or heard for some time.
- 192 **Black-naped Green Woodpecker** *Picus canus*
1 at Sek Kong April 5 (per JMHS). 2 at Fanling September 8 (JMHS).

- 10X **Chinese Pitta** *Pitta nympha*
La Touche No. 377. First seen at Bethanie, Pokfulam, on Good Friday April 20 (EDW) and again on 21st (JLCB), 22nd (EDW) and 23rd (MEMB). Full description already published. This is the first Colony record.
- 195 **Oriental Skylark** *Alauda galgula*
Ping Shan: about 25 on December 2 (JLCB), several on December 9 (EDW), about 15 on December 11 (SPMK). Alarm note and song in flight similar to European skylark (JLCB).
- 196 **Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*
Large numbers during spring migration and always to be seen in the summer around Deep Bay and Yuen Long.
- 201 **Rufous-backed Shrike** *Lanius schach*
Seemed to be everywhere and much more common than usual during the late summer and autumn. The dusky variant was reported from widespread areas including Pokfulam (JLCB), and was particularly numerous along the South Lantau Road in November and December; 5 "duskies" and 8 "rufous" being seen there on December 9 (JMR).
- 202 **Bull-headed Shrike** *Lanius bucephalus*
1 in UA February 11 answered the same description as the one seen in this area from December 1959 to April 1960 (JLCB). The latter record has been omitted in error from the Check List. This is the third Colony record.
- 203 (b) **Japanese Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus superciliosus*
1 wintered in Government House garden and was seen on 13 occasions up to April 16, and again regularly from November 6; it was always extremely shy (EDW). Singles at Mai Po (EDW) and Kowloon Peak (JLCB) August 26, an early date; and at Mount Davis, Castle Peak, Ping Shan, Ha Tsuen and Mong Tseng in September (JLCB, SPMK).
- 203 (c) **Philippine Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus lucionensis*
Singles in UA and various places in NT from January to April (JLCB, JHMS); one at Kowloon Tong being seen almost daily from January 3 to March 15, and again between April 23 and 27 (EJB). 1 at Castle Peak September 5 (EJB).

- 204 **Black-naped Oriole** *Oriolus chinensis*
 First reported from Beas Stables March 1, an early date (SPMK). Reported from Beas Stables, UA and Pokfulam during the summer, but like the Great Barbet may be withdrawing from urban areas in the face of new building. 2 adults with 1 young flying in UA July 2 (JLCB). Seen often on the Fanling golf course in September (JHMS). 1 at Lo Wu for two weeks up to December 21 (per SPMK).
- 205 **Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus*
 Reported from Chung Hom Kok (a pair and two young just able to fly July 2), Ping Shan, Mong Tseng (5 on September 10), Sha Tau Kok, UA (4 on July 23), LTV, Sharp Island, Castle Peak, Sassoon Road, Tam Mei Camp, Mount Davis, South Lantau, Beas Stables, Ha Tsuen (8 on October 4) and Stonecutters. This bird appears to be extending its range.
- 206 (a) **Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus salangensis*
 1 at Severn Road, the Peak, March 30 (JLCB).
- 206 (b) **White-cheeked Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus leucogenis*
 2 at Pokfulam April 16 and 1 in UA April 19 (EDW). 1 at Pokfulam November 4 (JLCB).
- 207 **Hair-crested Drongo** *Dicrurus hottentottus*
 4 at TPK April 14 (JMR). 1 at She Shan wood, LTV, April 20 (SPMK). 3 near Sha Tau Kok July 9 (JLCB). 2/3 at Ping Shan August 6 (EDW). 6 in LTV September 14 (JLCB).
- 208 **Chinese Starling** *Sturnus sinensis*
 Reported right through the summer from NT and Mount Davis; extreme dates being April 12 (EDW) and September 11 (JLCB). The only winter report was 8/9 at Kowloon Tong December 24 (EJB). The 1962 records therefore contradict the recommendation in the 1961 Report that the Chinese Starling should be regarded as a winter visitor with occasional summer records. The only direct evidence of breeding was 1 young bird, just able to fly, being fed by adults in a flock of about 20 at Castle Peak June 11 (JLCB).
- 209 **Silky Starling** *Sturnus sericeus*
 2 males at Kowloon Tong January 27 (EJB). 15/20 near Fanling February 4/5 (SPMK). 9 at Sek Kong December 3 (JLCB). About 10 near Sek Kong December 23 (EDW).
- 210 **Grey Starling** *Sturnus cineraceus*
 Widespread winter reports of parties up to 60. Extreme dates April 7 (EDW) and October 21 (JMR); late and early respectively.
- 211 **Black-necked Starling** *Sturnus nigricollis*
 Widespread reports from northern half of NT throughout the year.
- 212 **Common Mynah** *Acridotheres tristis*
 Up to 5 at Ping Shan and Mong Tseng September to December (JLCB, EDW).
- 213 **Crested Mynah** *Acridotheres cristatellus*
 Common and widespread resident.
- 214 **Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*
 2 at Jubilee Reservoir February 18 (JLCB, EDW). 2 in LTV April 12 (JLCB). 2 at Tai Mong Tsai October 27 (JLCB). 1 at Jubilee Reservoir November 18 (MEMB).
- 215 **Blue Magpie** *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*
 Common resident at Magazine Gap, Jardine's Corner, Tytam, Mount Davis, Pokfulam, Aberdeen Reservoirs, the Peak, and mid-levels on Hong Kong Island as well as in various parts of NT. May be more numerous now than it was three years ago. In March a pair nested in the top of a tree in UA and, by the second half of April, 3 young were ready to leave the nest (JLCB).
- 216 **Magpie** *Pica pica*
 Common and widespread resident.
- 217 **Treepie** *Crypsirina formosae*
 4 together at Kam Tsin near Fanling April 17 (JHMS).
- 219 **Jungle Crow** *Corvus macrorhynchos*
 Reported on various dates throughout the year from Diamond Hill (Kowloon), Tai Po Kau, Fanling, Jubilee Reservoir, San Miguel Brewery, Ho Chung valley, Plover Cove, LTV and, on Hong Kong Island, from Pokfulam, the Peak (12 together on the evening of October 18), Aberdeen and Tai Tam Reservoirs.
- 220 **Collared Crow** *Corvus torquatus*
 Reported on various dates throughout the year from Mai Po Wood (possibly a pair breeding), Luen Tak, Plover Cove, Lok Ma Chau, Lamma Island, Ping Shan and flying over Sassoon Road from the direction of Lamma.

- 221 **Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike** *Coracina melaschistos*
Singles at Chung Hom Kok March 10 and Shouson Hill April 12 (JLCB). A male at Castle Peak September 8 (EJB). 1 seen two or three times in October and twice in December at Severn Road, the Peak (MEMB). 1, probably a female, at Tseng Lan Shue (Clearwater Bay Road) December 29 (JMR).
- 11 X **Large Cuckoo-shrike** *Graucalus macei rex-pineti(?)*
La Touche No. 189. 1 on hillside above South Bay November 3 (JLCB). This is the first official record for the Colony although it is understood that GVK saw a pair in 1960.
- 223 **Ashy Minivet** *Pericrocotus divaricatus*
Reported between April 6 and 20 in flocks up to 20 from Kam Tsin, Dodwell's Ridge, UA, Pokfulam and Violet Hill.
- 224 **Grey-throated Minivet** *Pericrocotus solaris*
A female at Chung Hum Kok November 24. In flight the yellow of the wings showed up well against the dull grey of the rest of the upperparts (JLCB). This is the fourth Colony record.
- 225 **Scarlet Minivet** *Pericrocotus flammeus*
A male at Severn Road, the Peak, December 16 (MEMB).
- 226 **Chestnut Bulbul** *Microscelis flavalus*
1 at Tai Mong Tsai March 25 (REH). 12 at about 1500 feet near Ma On Shan (JLCB) and 1 or 2 at Sha Kong Wood (EDW) November 18. Thereafter reported in small numbers from wide-spread areas in NT and at Shouson Hill to the end of the year.
- 227 **White-headed Black Bulbul** *Microscelis madagascariensis*
1 immature on the Peak, with Crested and Chinese Bulbuls, December 31 (JLCB).
- 228 **Crested Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus*
Common and widespread resident.
- 229 **Chinese Bulbul** *Pycnonotus sinensis*
Abundant and widespread resident.
- 230 **Red-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus aurigaster*
Common and widespread resident.
- 234 **Black-faced Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax perspicillatus*
Common and widespread resident.

- 235 **Black-throated Laughing-thrush** *Garrulax chinensis*
1 singing at Tung Chung (Lantau) January 14 (JLCB). This is the first report outside Hong Kong Island. Also singing in March at Tai Tam Reservoir, Aberdeen Reservoir and below Lugard Road (JLCB, EDW).
- 236 **Hwamei** *Garrulax canorus*
Common and widespread resident on Hong Kong Island. NT: reported from Ping Shan, 3 Fathom Cove, Kowloon Peak, Tai Mong Tsai and Tai Lam Chung. Heard singing in May, August and October (JLCB).
- 4 X **Chinese Babax** *Babax lanceolatus*
A probable at Cheung Sha, South Lantau, October 14 and on two later occasions. It was skulking like a Crow Pheasant in bushes and tall grass near a stream (JMR).
- 240 **Ince's Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone paradisi*
A female or juvenile male in UA April 19 (JLCB). A male at Kam Tsin April 20 (SPMK). A female or juvenile male at Mong Tseng in September (JLCB).
- 242 **Grey-headed Flycatcher** *Culicicapa ceylonensis*
1 in She Shan Wood January 7, singing like a canary (JLCB, MEMB, EDW), and again there February 21 (REH) and December 6 (EDW). The first Colony records for this species were in the same wood in March and November 1960. 1 in UA April 2 and 17 (EDW); shy but very active. This is the first record for Hong Kong island. A male at Ho Chung December 23, 25 and 30 (REH, EDW).
- 244 **Brown Flycatcher** *Muscicapa latirostris*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being April 20 (SPMK, EDW) and September 4 (JLCB).
- 245 **Grey-spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa griseisticta*
Seen four times between April 20 and May 13 at Kam Tsin and Beas Stables (SPMK). Singles at South Bay November 3 and UA November 6 (JLCB); a late date.
- 247 **Verditer Flycatcher** *Muscicapa thalassina*
A female in UA January 29 and February 3 (JLCB). Single males near Tai Mong Tsai February 1 and Wit Kan Tang (near Bride's Pool) February 19 (SPMK, JHMS). A probable female in Ho Chung valley in heavy rain April 1 (Society outing), a late date. A male at Ho Chung December 23 (REH).

- 248 **Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa parva*
2 in UA January 31 and February 8 (JLCB). 4/5 at Kam Tsin April 21 (SPMK). Singles at UA October 28, Pokfulam October 31 (JLCB), and Ho Chung December 22 (REH).
- 249 **Robin Flycatcher** *Muscicapa mugimaki*
2 females at TPK January 20 and 27 (JLCB). A male in UA April 6 and a female April 20 (JLCB). Single females at Pokfulam November 5, Jubilee Reservoir December 9 and the Peak December 20 (JLCB). A probable at Tai Om Wood December 16 (SPMK).
- 250 **Narcissus Flycatcher** *Muscicapa narcissina*
A male in UA March 28 (in exactly the same place and on the same date as one in 1960) and another on Po Shan Road (JLCB). Single males in UA April 5, 6 and 18 (JLCB). A male at Bethanie, Pokfulam, April 7, 16, 17 and 21 (MEMB, JLCB, EDW). A male at Kam Tsin April 20 (SPMK).
- 253 **Blue and White Flycatcher** *Cyanoptila cyanomelana*
More common than usual on Hong Kong Island during the spring passage, being reported between March 25 and April 25 thirteen times from UA, Pokfulam and Severn Road, the Peak (JLCB, MEMB, EDW). 2 males in UA June 9, a late date (DSH). 1 male at Mong Tseng September 10 (JLCB).
- 254 **Chinese Bush Warbler** *Cettia diphone*
Singles at Kowloon Tong September 29 (EJB) and Tai Om Wood December 16 (SPMK).
- 255 **Mountain Bush Warbler** *Cettia montanus*
Satisfactory details of one at Telegraph Bay November 11 (JLCB). There are three previous Colony records.
- 256 **Short-tailed Bush Warbler** *Cettia squameiceps*
1 in LTV January 7 and up to 3 at TPK January 27 and February 4. 1 in UA April 5 (JLCB). This very small bird is like a wren with almost no tail. It is difficult to see as it runs about under thick bushes like a mouse.
- 259 **Von Schrenck's Reed-warbler** *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*
1 at Mai Po. April 23 (JLCB).
- 260 **Great Reed-warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*
3 at Mai Po April 23 (JLCB, DSH). Several singles at Mai Po between September 11 and October 8 (JLCB, SPMK, EDW).

- 262 **Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus*
Widespread winter reports. Last spring date May 6 (JLCB, EDW).
- 263 **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*
Widespread winter reports. First autumn record October 27 (JLCB).
- 264 **Pallas's Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus*
Widespread winter reports. Singing at Pokfulam March 25 (JLCB).
- 265 **Arctic Warbler** *Phylloscopus borealis*
Widespread reports on passage; extreme dates being April 21 to May 13, and September 8 to October 19 (JLCB).
- 266 **Pale-legged Willow-warbler** *Phylloscopus tenellipes*
1 at Castle Peak September 25 (JLCB).
- 267 **Crowned Willow-warbler** *Phylloscopus occipitalis*
Singles at She Shan Wood January 7 and TPK February 4 (JLCB).
- 270 **Long-tailed Tailor-bird** *Orthotomus sutorius*
Common and widespread resident.
- 271 **David's Hill-warbler** *Prinia polychroa*
1 on TMS June 11 (JLCB).
- 272 **Brown Wren-warbler** *Prinia subflava*
Seen and heard regularly on Mai Po marshes.
- 273 **Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler** *Prinia flaviventris*
A minimum of 40, which may have been family parties, near the path out to the Mai Po Police Post August 7 (SPMK).
- 274 **Fantail Warbler** *Cisticola juncidis*
Reported from Sunset Peak (Lantao), Ma On Shan, Lamma Island, Castle Peak, Kowloon Tong, Pokfulam and High West as well as from the Deep Bay marshes (JLCB, EJB).
- 275 **Red-tailed Robin** *Luscinia sibilans*
Singles in widespread areas between January 6 and April 6; and in November and on December 2 (JLCB, EDW). On April 6 one was singing in UA; a high musical trill, a bit louder than a male Sunbird and well sustained - rather like a Hedge-Sparrow or a canary not on its best form.
- 276 **Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica*
A female at Mai Po March 4 (JLCB).

- 277 **Rubythroat** *Luscinia calliope*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being March 16 and November 5. 3 males singing in one lantana bush at Mong Tseng December 1 (JLCB).
- 278 **Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being March 3 and December 1. Most reports were of females or immature males.
- 279 **Magpie-Robin** *Copsychus saularis*
Common and widespread resident. Sub-song heard January 4 (JLCB).
- 280 **Daurian Redstart** *Phoenicurus auroreus*
Widespread winter reports from NT including South Lantau; extreme dates being March 25 and October 27 (JLCB). Regularly seen in larger numbers than before in November and December (SPMK). A female in Government House garden November 30 and December 1 (EDW). A male at Magazine Gap October 29 (FOPH).
- 281 **Plumbeous Water-Redstart** *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*
Females or juvenile males: 1 at TPK January 20 (JLCB); 1 at Ho Chung December 2 (MEMB), December 16, 20 and 23, 2 on December 30 (REH); 1 in LTV December 16 (SPMK).
- 282 **Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being April 21 (SPMK) and September 10 (JLCB). Fewer than usual in early autumn, with marked increase in first week November (SPMK)
- 283 **Grey Bushchat** *Saxicola ferrea*
2 in Tai Om Wood January 14 (EDW). 2 males and 2 females on the Kowloon Peak/Buffalo Hill walk January 28 (JLCB).
- 284 (a) **Blue Rock-Thrush** *Monticola solitaria pandoo*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being April 3 (EDW) and September 25 (JLCB). 1 perched on a tree at Chung Hom Kok October 11 (EDW).
- 284 (b) **Red-bellied Rock-Thrush** *Monticola solitaria philippensis*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being April 29 (EJB) and September 11 (JLCB). A male singing September 25 (JLCB).
- 285 **Chestnut-breasted Rock-Thrush** *Monticola rufiventris*
A male at Severn Road, the Peak, from December 17 almost daily to end of year (MEMB and others). This is the third Colony record.

- 286 **Violet Whistling Thrush** *Myiophonus caeruleus*
Resident; common locally. A pair courting and chasing in UA April 18; the male singing loudly and fast even when in flight (JLCB). Seen flying before daylight near street lights (FOPH).
- 290 **Grey-backed Thrush** *Turdus hortulorum*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being April 20 (EDW) and November 18 (JLCB).
- 292 **Blackbird** *Turdus merula*
Widespread winter reports of single birds; extreme dates being March 27 and September 25 (EJB). 4 at Kam Tsin December 26 (SPMK).
- 293 **Grey Thrush** *Turdus cardis*
Widespread winter reports; last spring record April 20 (EDW, JLCB). 10 together drinking and splashing in a stream near the Clearwater Bay Road January 1 (EDW).
- 294 **Siberian Thrush** *Turdus sibiricus*
Single males at Plantation Road near the Peak tram February 3 and at Pokfulam April 21 (JLCB). There is only one previous Colony record.
- 295 **Orange-headed Ground-Thrush** *Turdus citrinus*
A male in UA April 26 was the seventh record for the Colony. Head, neck and upper breast were chestnut orange, and all the rest of the plumage blue-grey (JLCB).
- 296 **White's Thrush** *Turdus dauma*
1 in UA January 23, February 8 and 14, March 28 (JLCB). 1 at Severn Road, the Peak, March 30 (JLCB) and in Colonial Cemetery, Happy Valley, April 19 (MEMB).
- 299 **Great Tit** *Parus major*
Common and widespread resident. Very much more in evidence in the spring and early autumn than in the summer. Appears to favour the neighbourhood of villages and houses. Seen regularly in mid-levels on Hong Kong Island between September 2 and December 31 (FOPH).
- 301 (a) **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae richard*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being May 13 and September 10 (JLCB).
- 301 (b) **Chinese Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae sinensis*
2 at Mong Tseng June 19, singing in flight. 1 at Kowloon Peak August 26 (JLCB).

- 302 **Indian Tree-Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*
Widespread winter reports; extremes being April 29 (JLCB), a late date, and September 24 (SPMK).
- 303 **Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus*
Widespread reports to May 6 (JLCB), a late date. No autumn reports received.
- 304 **Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*
Probables in LTV January 27 and 1 at Three Fathom Cove April 20 (JLCB), a late date.
- 305 **Upland Pipit** *Anthus sylvanus*
1 singing on Ma On Shan January 28. Singles on TMS June 11 and Kowloon Peak August 19 (JLCB).
- 306 **Forest Wagtail** *Dendronanthus indicus*
1 at Mai Po April 15 (EDW). 1 at TPK September 12 (FOPH). 2 at Fanling September 24 and 26 (JHMS).
- 307 (a) ♂ (b) "Pied Wagtail" *Motacilla alba*
Widespread winter reports. As in previous years, large numbers of pied wagtails roosted in the trees round the Hong Kong Cricket Club and on the roof of the Supreme Court. They arrived just before dusk in small parties from various directions from NT until a hundred or more were assembled. Last date not recorded, but from nightly observations the day they returned to this roost was October 17 (JLCB, EDW). Extreme dates elsewhere April 28 (JMR) and September 5 (JLCB).
- 308 **Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being May 23 (MEMB) and September 2 (FOPH).
- 309 (a) **Blue-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla flava similima*
4 at Shuen Wan April 20 and 2 at Ho Chung April 21 (JMR). A female or young male at Mai Po and a male at Lok Ma Chau April 21 (EDW). 1 at Lok Ma Chau April 23 (Society outing). 1 singing at Deep Water Bay April 22 (EJB).
- 309 (c) **Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava taivana*
Many winter reports from Deep Bay area and Ho Chung valley; extreme dates being April 23 (Society outing) and August 26 (EDW). 1 landed on board HMS BULWARK about half way between Singapore and Hong Kong on August 17 and flew on northwards after some hours (per JHMS). A female at the lower end of Kennedy Road on December 19 (MEMB) was in an unusual location.

- 310 **Fork-tailed Sunbird** *Aethopyga christinae*
Reported from Jubilee Reservoir, Three Fathom Cove, Ho Chung and UA. Seen regularly at TPK throughout the year (AOB per JNH).
- 311 **White-eye** *Zosterops japonica*
Common and widespread.
- 312 **Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum cruentatum*
Reported on various dates throughout the year from TPK, UA, LTV, Three Fathom Cove, Shataukok, Ho Chung, Tai Mong Tsai, Kam Tsin and San Wai.
- 313 **Fire-breasted Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum ignipectus*
A male seen very close and heard well near Jubilee Reservoir February 18 (EDW).
- 314 **Lesser Black-tailed Hawfinch** *Eophona migratoria*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being April 18 and November 27 (JLCB). By the end of February there was a flock of 38 in UA (LR).
- 315 **Chinese Greenfinch** *Chloris sinica*
Reported from various localities in NT during February, March, April, September, November and December. A marked increase in numbers noticed in NT in the late autumn (SPMK).
- 317 **Hodgson's Rose-finch** *Carpodacus erythrinus*
2 in LTV February 21 (REH). A female at Mong Tseng December 1 (JLCB), an early date.
- 318 **Masked Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala*
Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being April 23 (Society outing) and October 31 (JLCB).
- 321 **Tristram's Bunting** *Emberiza tristrami*
LTV: a male on December 6 and a female on December 23 (EDW).
- 322 **Chestnut Bunting** *Emberiza rutila*
A female near Clearwater Bay March 23 (JLCB). Up to 5 in UA April 16 to 22 (JLCB, EDW). A male in LTV December 6 (EDW). There are five previous Colony records.
- 323 **Yellow-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza aureola*
2 females in Ho Chung valley April 1 (Society outing) was the only spring record. Autumn reports of up to 3 birds between October 7 (EDW) and November 12 (JLCB).

324 Grey-headed Bunting

Emberiza fucata

Widespread winter reports; extremes being April 23, a late date, and December 1.

325 Little Bunting

Emberiza pusilla

Widespread winter reports; extreme dates being April 12 (Society outing) and November 2 (SPMK). At least 15 in the Ho Chung valley April 1 (Society outing).

326 Crested Bunting

Melophus lathami

Widespread reports throughout the year; the largest gathering being about 12 on Lamma March 16 (JLCB, EDW). Singing pairs reported from the tops of TMS, Mount Hallowes and Kowloon Peak in the summer months.

327 Tree-sparrow

Passer montanus

Common and widespread resident. An albino seen from Macdonnell Road February 3 (JLCB).

328 Red Avadavat

Estrilda amandava

Mai Po: 2 on December 2 (JLCB), 5 on December 3 (SPMK).

330 (b) Chestnut Munia

Lonchura malacca atricapilla

2 near Maipo police post April 21, one carrying nesting material (EDW). Up to 12 at Mai Po between August 5 and 31 (EDW, SPMK).

331 Spotted Munia

Lonchura punctulata

Widespread reports. 40/50 on telephone wires at Lok Ma Chau March 19 (SPMK).

332 White-backed Munia

Lonchura striata

Satisfactory details of about 12 in LTV March 24 (JMR).

DOUBTFUL RECORDS 1962

51 Rough-legged Buzzard

Buteo lagopus

A buzzard at Ha Yeung on Clearwater Bay Road December 6, watched for nearly an hour in good light. A dark patch under each wing. Light almost honey coloured head. Frequently hovering like a kestrel (JHMS). It is considered that this description might apply to the common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) and that only the sighting of feathered tarsi is satisfactory proof of a Rough-legged Buzzard in Hong Kong.

61 White-tailed Eagle

Haliaeetus albicilla

Single eagles with white patch at base of diamond-shaped tail on March 25 and April 12 (JLCB).

75 Merlin

Falco columbarius

Telegraph Bay, November 11: a small red-brown falcon, with very pointed wings and flying at great speed, dived down into a tree, seized a small bird and flew off. A similar bird at Mong Tseng November 12 (JLCB).

231 Orange-bellied Chloropsis

Chloropsis hardwickii

Two or perhaps three birds were seen three times within half an hour at Mai Po Wood August 30. They were flying in and out of the bushes at the back of the wood. Back of kingfisher green, curved dark bill, sides of head and upper breast black or dark brown. Underparts not fully seen. Size 6 to 7" (MEMB, EDW).

This list was compiled by the Honorary Recorder from the records of the following observers :

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Mr. A. O. Barretto | Miss M. E. M. Benham |
| Miss E. J. Bollbach | Mr. J. L. Cranmer-Byng |
| Mr. R. E. Hale | Mr. F. O. P. Hechtel |
| Mr. D. S. Hill | Commander J. N. Humphreys |
| Brigadier S. P. M. Kent | Mr. J. H. Maycock |
| Mr. J. A. Ozorio | Sir Lindsay Ride |
| Mr. J. M. Rowlands | Commander E. D. Webb |
| Lieutenant Colonel J. H. M. Stephenson | |

NOTES ON SOME BIRD WATCHING AREAS IN THE COLONY

Readers of Dr. Herklots' two books 'Hong Kong Birds' and 'The Hong Kong Countryside' will be familiar with the names of some of the localities in the Colony which have been proved to be consistently good for bird-watching. However, since Dr. Herklots' time developments in the New Territories have changed the suitability of some of the areas which he mentions, while the formation of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society in 1957 has led to the discovery of new areas. Even in the last two or three years there have been considerable alterations in parts of the New Territories and a review of suitable bird watching areas is continually necessary. It is hoped that the following comments will help those who are not entirely familiar with the New Territories but who wish to make the best use of their limited free time when bird watching. It has not been found possible to print a suitably large map in the Bird Report but the reader is recommended to buy the map compiled by the Survey Division P.W.D. (Code No. 507 HKN) and sold at the G.P.O. price HK\$ 3.

MONG TSENG PENINSULA

Approach by the new road from Ping Shan to Deep Bay. On reaching the coast turn right. All this area is fruitful between October and April for Cormorants; Grebes; Ospreys; Goshawk; Crakes; Starlings; Mynahs; Wrynecks; Buntings; Flycatchers; Greenfinches; Munias and Rubythroats. In summer Terns are found along the Deep Bay Estuary, and Chinese Pipits among the coastal hillocks.

If you turn left instead of right at the roundabout you can follow a new road nearly as far as Nim Wan. In winter Rubythroats, Buntings and Pipits can be seen there.

PING SHAN

Walk from Ping Shan village to the Luen Tak embankment and then along it and back over the marshes to the vegetable marketing depot on the Deep Bay road. From here you can get a bus back to Ping Shan. Paddy fields, marshes and a river.

Pipits; Buntings; Kingfishers; Rails; Quails; Wagtails; Greenfinches; Starlings & Mynahs; Rubythroats; Skylarks. Some waders from time to time. Excellent in winter for birds of prey. In summer, Chestnut Bittern; Watercock.

MAI PO MARSHES

From Mai Po village walk to Pak Hok Chau Police Post and then South West towards Yuen Long. *Note.* Access to the mouth of the Shum Chun River is prohibited by the Police and the Out of Bounds Area has been marked by notices.

In spring and autumn these marshes contain a good variety of waders including: Stilts; Avocets; White Ibis; Terns (on migration). Throughout the winter one may see a few waders such as Spotted Redshank and Dunlin, as well as: Herons; Duck of various kinds; Avadavats; Chestnut Munias; Bluethroats. In summer a scattering of waders with occasional Terns and a fair number of Yellow Bittern. In winter it is also excellent for eagles and harriers. The best area for birds is constantly changing, depending on the state of the tide and whether or not the sluiceways are open. April and September are the best months, but a visit at any time of the year may produce surprises-or nothing at all except a long walk.

LAM TSUN VALLEY

Between Tai Po Market and Sek Kong Camp.

According to Dr. Herklots this used to be the number one bird watching area in the Colony, yielding a wealth of interesting birds whenever visited. Today, because of the spread of vegetable farming, the paddy fields hardly exist and much of the land on the Fanling side of the valley has been built over by farmers or fenced in for chickens and ducks. As a result the Fanling side of the road is hardly worth a visit, though as recently as 1959 it was good for Bushchats, Plumbeous Water Redstarts, and Black Capped Kingfishers. Unfortunately the Hang Ha Po wood in which Dr. Herklots saw so many exciting birds has shrunk in size and is noisy and often birdless.

A visit to the woods on the She Shan and Tai Mo Shan side is still worth the trouble. Here one may be lucky to see: Flowerpeckers; Woodpeckers; Drongos; Barbets; Flycatchers of various kinds, some rare ones included; Bushchats; Whitley's Barred Owl; Cuckoo in the Summer, in particular the Great Hawk Cuckoo in the Tai Om Valley; Koels; Jays; Hawks; Hawfinches; Pipits; Buntings (in winter the Crested Bunting); Munias; Rosefinch; Minivets etc. This part is still a good area for birds.

FOREST RESERVE (TAI PO KAU)

The forest paths, particularly in the vicinity of the seed beds, and also beside the stream, can provide surprises:

Plumbeous Water Redstart; Treepies; Broad Billed Roller; Swinhoe's Red-tailed Robin; Fork-tailed Sunbird; Flowerpeckers; Willow Warblers; other leaf warblers; Flycatchers; Forest Wagtail; Short-tailed Bush Warbler.

SHATIN WAI

Walk beyond the village of Shatin Wai and follow the valley that runs eastwards from the village of Wong Nai Tau. This valley has some paddy, some vegetables, and a number of small fung shui woods and a stream:

Pipits; Buntings; Flowerpeckers; Flycatchers; Daurian Redstarts; Warblers of various kinds; a few waders; Kingfishers; possibly Owls, Rubythroats etc.

HO CHUNG VALLEY

Start walking from the Sai Kung road before reaching Hebe Haven. At present this is an excellent valley for half a day's walk or for a whole day's ramble if you explore the valley up towards Buffalo Hill.

Pipits; Buntings (including Crested); Wagtails; some waders in the spring; Flycatchers (including some rare visitors); Fork-tailed Sunbird; Crested Buntings; Kingfishers; Plumbeous Water Redstart; Munias; Rubythroat; Greenfinches; Thrushes; Warblers of various kinds; White-breasted Waterhens and Crimson-legged Crakes.

TAI MONG TSAI and PAK TAM VALLEYS

Drive to the end of the road beyond Sai Kung and then walk up the Tai Mong Tsai valley. Branch right through the pine woods over the saddle and then down into the Pak Tam valley. This valley has not yet been properly recorded and might show a wider selection of birds if visited regularly throughout the year. An energetic walker can cover the two valleys in one day, but it's a long hike. Tai Mong Tsai is smaller and less varied in terrain but Jays, Rubythroats and Tristram's Buntings among other birds have been seen there. In Pak Tam watch for: Pipits; Buntings; Kingfishers; Thrushes; Flowerpeckers; Rubythroats; Flycatchers; Minivets; Hawfinches; Woodcock & Little Grebes.

HONG KONG ISLAND

Dr. Herklots saw many of his birds in the Pokfulam area (from Mt. Davis to Pokfulam village). Unfortunately this area has now lost most of its trees and is being steadily built over.

However, it is still possible to see some interesting migrants in the vicinity of University Hall and Bethanie, and also on the Dairy Farm land above Pokfulam.

The grounds of the University itself were, until 1961, excellent for all kinds of interesting and sometimes rare visitors. Unfortunately in the last two years the University compound has deteriorated into a small but busy public park and this, together with almost continuous building operations, has drastically disturbed the quietness of the grounds. However, sometimes some interesting birds can still be seen just outside the compound and in the Vice-Chancellor's garden.

The Shouson Hill area is quite rewarding, and Black-throated Laughing Thrushes live there, as well as a pair of Black-capped Kingfishers and Drongos in the summer. In winter it is also worth visiting from time to time.

LAMMA ISLAND

The best areas until now have been in the vicinity of Yung Shu Wan and Pak Kok. However, paddy fields have almost entirely given place to vegetables with the result that few birds now feed there. Also more land has been fenced in or built on. Nevertheless, when the University's annual expedition to Lamma is held on March 16th the birdwatching members have usually managed to see a fair number of species. In summer Cuckoos and Drongos may be seen at Picnic Bay, and Chinese Pipits on the hills.

LANTAO ISLAND

Insufficient data prevents any accurate assessment of the possibilities here, since few bird watchers seem to have visited it. Silvermine Bay is now too thickly populated to encourage birds and is hardly worth a serious visit. The vicinity of Tung Chung where there are still extensive paddy fields and some woods provides a fair number of birds between January and the end of April, but this area does not seem very good for bird watching at other times: Plumbeous Water Redstarts; Flycatchers; Rubythroats; Daurian Redstarts; Wryneck; Cormorants; Thrushes and Buntings.

TAI MO SHAN

Very little has been recorded from the higher slopes of Tai Mo Shan, but this is a promising area to explore, especially in summer. Birds known to inhabit the mountain above 2000 feet between May and August are: Chinese Babax; Crested Bunting; David's Hill Warbler; Upland Pipit; Oriental Skylark and various Falcons.

There may be other birds up there, and it is worth visiting regularly. There are two ways up. Either take Route TWSK and drive up the small road towards the summit, stopping at the barrier, or approach from the Sek Kong end of the Lam Tsun Valley. Climb up above the Kadoorie experimental farm until you reach a saddle above Sek Kong and explore the higher slopes of the mountain.

THREE FATHOM COVE

Leave the car or bus at the hamlet of Tai Wan just beyond Sai Kung and walk along a stone path to Three Fathom Cove (in Tolo Harbour). Keep to the West side of the cove passing three villages, and make for Wo Sha (Wu Kwai Sha) near the shore of Tolo Harbour. Here there are paddy fields, fung shui woods, scrub, open hillsides and a large area of pandanus. So far visits to this area have been a little disappointing, but its possibilities have not yet been properly assessed. It is a long walk and a disadvantage is that one has to take the same route home. Once the new road is built from Tai Wan towards Wo Sha it will be easier to get at. Birds seen in this area so far include: Flowerpeckers; Sunbirds; Kingfishers; Koels; Cuckoos; Pipits; Buntings; Hawfinches and one Scarlet Minivet.

RESERVOIRS

Reservoirs on Hong Kong island tend to be disappointing except for Kingfishers. In the New Territories Tai Lam Chung is worth a walk in winter. Follow a narrow road from the Prison along the side of the reservoir to the Sek Kong Plain end. Here, among thick pine woods are a number of catchment streams. From here it would be worth exploring up the hill streams in the direction of Tin Fu Tsai village. This area is virtually unmapped as far as birds are concerned and needs exploring. In winter the reservoir itself usually has some Little Grebe and sometimes a few Teal.

The Jubilee Reservoir is also worth a walk, starting from the Tsuen Wan end. (There is a bus stop by the main embankment). Follow the path along the western side of the reservoir, through the woods, until you come to the abandoned village of Shing Mun. There are not usually many birds in this area but the following may be seen: Jays; Thrushes; Flycatchers; birds of prey; Robins; Redstarts; Flowerpeckers and possibly Owls.

From Shing Mun one can walk up the valley, over Lead Mine Pass and down into Tai Po.

CONCLUSION

As all these areas mentioned become overrun with roads, buildings and people, those who want to watch birds will have to keep looking for new and remoter places which still hold enough birds to make a visit worth while. Eventually Hong Kong, like so many other places in the world, will need to establish a modest Nature Reserve where the ecology of birds and animals can be studied undisturbed by the encroaching tide of human activities.

THE RUBYTHROAT

Herklots mentions no sounds made by this bird, but it does, in fact, have a pretty song. This starts as a rapid warbling, rather like an English Hedge Sparrow, but then blossoms out into a canary-like song of considerable merit. The male has been observed to make a penetrating and plaintive whistle, rather long drawn out (S.P.M.K.). I have heard this call fairly often in the winter months, but as it always seems to come from the centre of thick bushes I have never yet seen the bird making it. However, in March 1963, while in the Mong Tseng Peninsula which is good Rubythroat country, I was surprised by a very loud, clear call of three notes, rather musical in intonation, but impossible to set down on paper. Eventually I located the bird and was just in time to see what looked like a female Rubythroat hopping down from the top of a bush. It disappeared and I was unable to verify my impression. Perhaps someone else has heard a Rubythroat calling, and can give an approximate notation of its call.

J. L. C-B.

FLYCATCHER WOOD

This wood is on the bank of a stream just above the village of Ho Chung on the road to Hebe Haven. The first time I really took an interest in it was when I caught a glimpse of a small blue bird hiding well back in the undergrowth above the stream. Further watching produced no results and the friend I was with scornfully brushed aside my "flycatcher" mutterings, saying that it must have been an escaped budgerigar. I thought no more about the matter.

A fortnight later, in December, having some time to spare I revisited the wood in the late afternoon and sat on the bank of the stream. For once there were no passers-by, and in the warm sunshine everything seemed very peaceful. Suddenly, quite unheralded, a Black-naped Blue Monarch Flycatcher appeared and sat on a dead branch some eighteen inches above the water. Obviously feeling contented, he warbled happily to himself and seemed to be settling down for a sleep. All at once, however, he dived into the water, splashed about and returned to his perch to fluff out his feathers and sing again. This was repeated four times before he started the serious business of the afternoon, that of dealing death and destruction to the gnats and midges.

After this and for the next two months he was seen by numerous other people as well as myself on many occasions, but usually in the afternoon. This was, however, only one of the five kinds of flycatcher I have seen in this wood, sometimes all at the same time.

The Verditer Flycatcher stayed most of the winter but I rarely saw him low down by the stream. He seemed to prefer the higher branches of the large trees and could often be seen silhouetted against the sky.

The Red-throated Flycatcher spent many hours pretending to be a Plumbeous Water Redstart, and was usually to be found a few yards further upstream on the stones in the stream, or in the bushes close by. Early on, the red throat was not at all red, and the bird could only be identified by the white three quarter side bars on the tail which was frequently raised like the Dayal Bird or the English Robin.

A Brown Flycatcher was usually about, but didn't advertise its presence. This could not be said about the fifth, the Grey-headed Flycatcher who could almost always be heard, and if he wasn't beside the stream could be tracked down inside the wood.

Of course, flycatchers were by no means the only birds about. Bulbuls, White Eyes and Warblers abounded, and a female Plumbeous Water Redstart spent most of her time in the vicinity. Two more lived further downstream. Magpie Robins, Kingfishers and Buntings all appeared from time to time, and once I saw White bellied Sea Eagles overhead. Further up the valley lived a Crimson-legged Crake, and downstream below the textile factory a Pale Thrush was seen on several occasions.

Undoubtedly the best months to visit the wood are from November to March, preferably in the late afternoon, and half an hour's wait will produce a variety of flycatchers unrivalled as yet by any other wood in the Colony.

R. E. H.

CRIMSON LEGGED CRAKE

I leave my house at Beas Stables at about 8.15 most mornings and drive along Route Two to my office in Sekkong Camp. One morning in May - and I was careless enough to make no note of the date - I happened to look at a patch of old paddy fields just below the pass, which had lain fallow for some time. My eye was caught by two darkish birds feeding in the short grass. There was no time to stop and my immediate reaction was "Moorhen". From that time on, it of course became a habit to look at the same place as I drove to and from work, and in the evenings when I had the chance I drove there in my own car to try to get another sight -ing.

It was, I suppose, inevitable that every time I paid a deliberate visit I drew a blank, while whenever I did happen to get another glimpse of these birds, which were invariably together, I was on duty bound, without binoculars, and could not stop.

On 9th June I went out in the evening at 6.30 and on seeing one bird I stopped at the side of the road and had time to focus my glasses on it before it took fright and scuttled into a clump of pandanus by the side of a stream running down from the Nameless Feature. I clearly registered an image of red legs, a greyish head, and chestnut upperworks. There was no patch of white in the tail which gives away the Moorhen in retreat or alarm. This was a drab fellow over all with red legs and a grey or off-white throat.

When I got home I looked up Herklots at once and with the red legs in mind turned straight to the Crimson-legged Crake. Wishful thinking was quickly corroborated. "...Common though shy.... keeps to dense vegetation.... inhabits hilly country.... may be found along mountain streams where there is sufficient vegetation...."

I was by now quite convinced and one evening soon afterwards was lucky enough to find the pair feeding busily in the same fields which had, however, that morning been flooded and ploughed ready for the rice seedlings. Both birds were apparently unaffected by what must have been a sharp change of diet and environment. The traffic along the main road above their heads created no alarm, and as they had not seen me they continued feeding. Then to add a different note they took a vigorous wash in the shallow water in front of the pandanus and retired.

I could still not be sure, and was made more doubtful by the report that there had been only one previous record, that by Jack Cranmer-Byng. I rang him up that evening and asked him to come and see if there was a similarity. He arrived two days later and I drove him to the appointed place hoping that I was to be justified in asking him to make the long journey. Our luck was in, for as we arrived both birds were at their evening meal. We were able to sit by the side of the road and have a prolonged look at this for once obliging couple. In the late July sun Father's legs were clearly crimson and were reflected in an inch or so of grey water as he dipped his head in search of food and jerked his dark tail. His mate meanwhile, nearer her pandanus home, took another bath.

Identity was established. I thought it best to leave them as they were, and not to pry too closely into that clump of pandanus. I kept a look out for any possible appearance of young but the planting of the paddy seemed to have driven them away until I saw one bird, probably the male, on 24th July and again on 11th August. By then the paddy was growing fast and any passing look would reveal nothing. I assumed that they had gone in search of winter quarters in another land or had sought a more undisturbed place to live. As the autumn and winter drew on I scarcely gave them another thought, but after the rice was harvested occasionally gave the place a glance.

On 3rd December on my way from Sekkong I saw one bird in the terraced fields on the opposite side of the road. Once again I was in my staff car and was unable to stop. I write this on 5th December and am again about to make the daily look at the new area.

I wonder if this crake is a resident. There have been no signs of breeding; yet from May to December with one interruption, the Crimson-legged Crake and his wife would appear to have settled.

S. P. M. K.

BALLAD OF BIRD NAMES

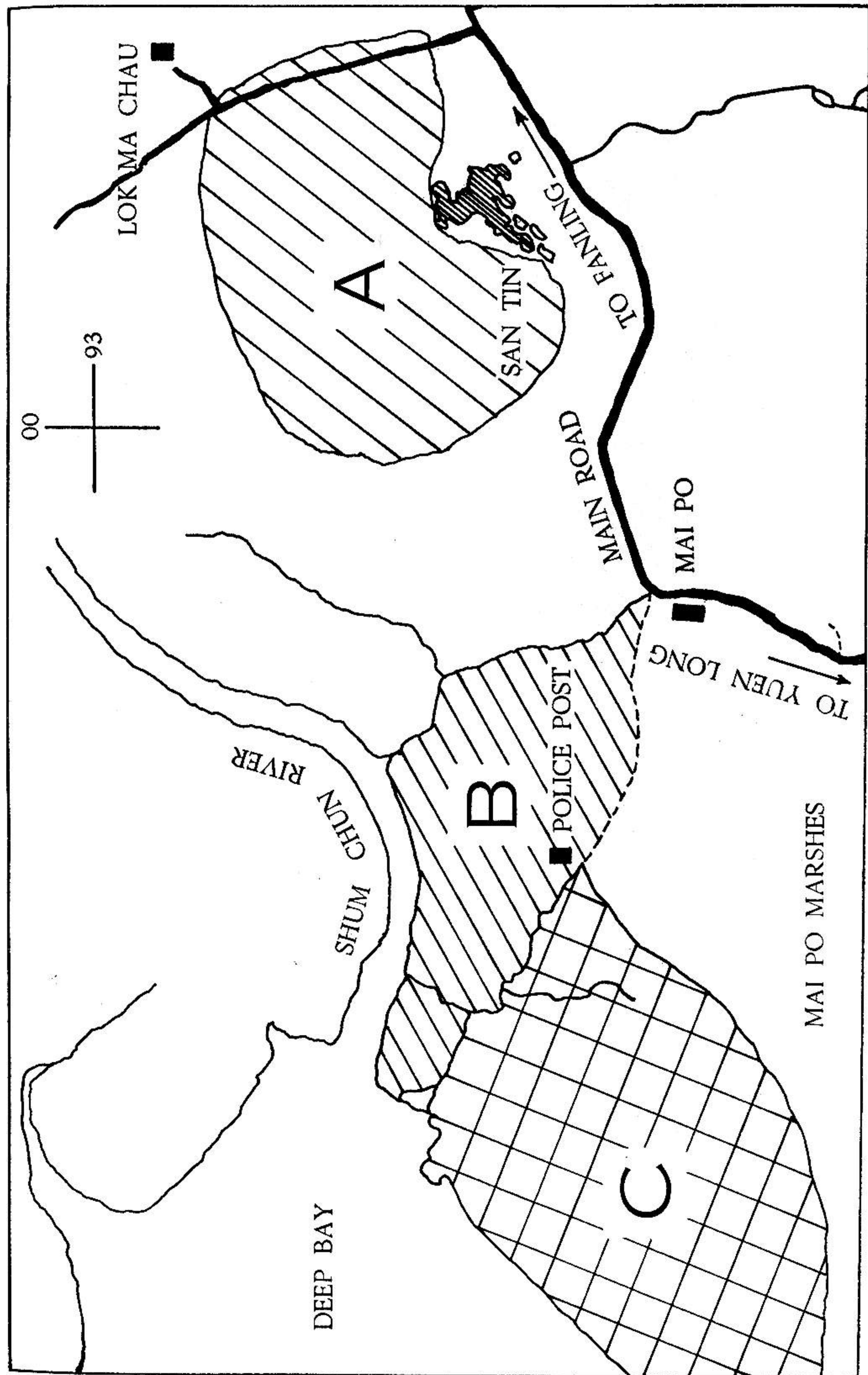
To anyone who's fond of words
There's music in the names of birds.
For instance there is quite a lilt
In Himantopus (Black-winged Stilt).

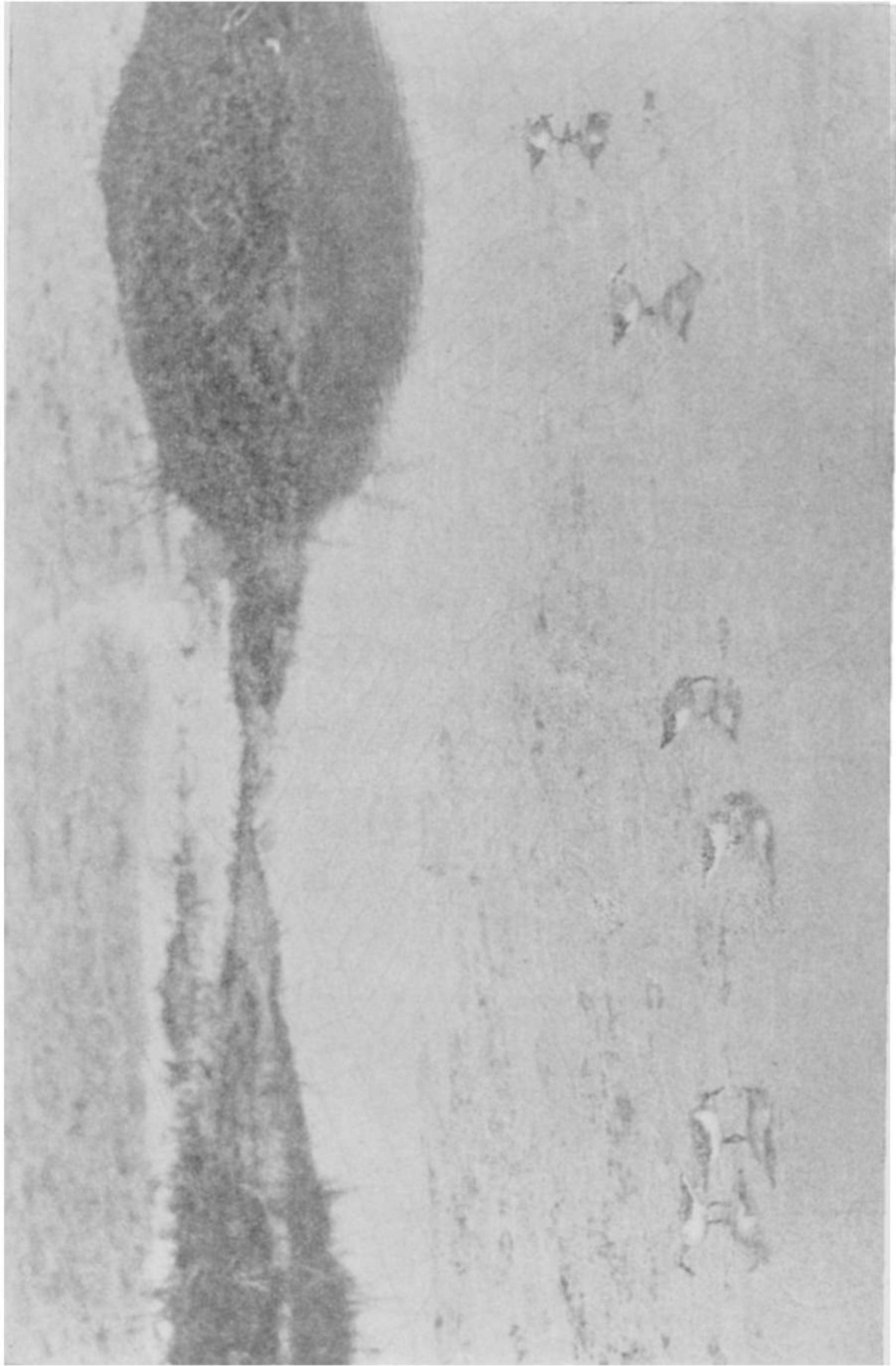
For several years it was my hope
To see a Red-necked Phalarope,
And even now my sights are set
Upon a White-legged Falconet.

How gratifying it must feel
To flush a Lesser Whistling Teal,
And worth a jumping-out-of-bed start
To glimpse a Plumbeous Water Redstart.

Then Fairy Pitta and Fork-tailed Sunbird,
Quite a large list, but we must see ONE bird
Before we enter our long Nirvana
And THAT is a Pheasant-tailed Jacana.

E. D. W.

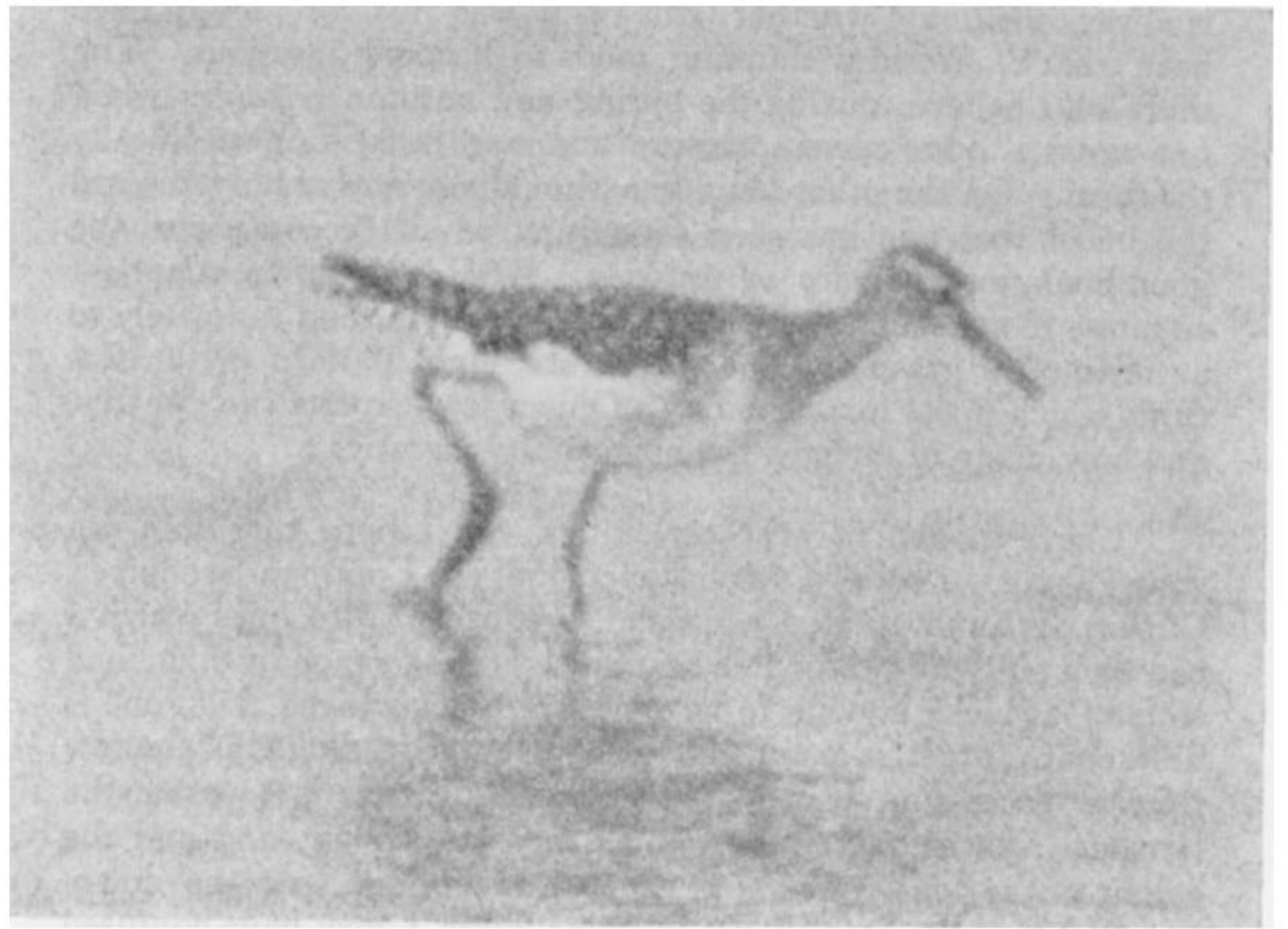




WHAT ARE THESE BIRDS? SEE PAGE 58



WHAT IS THIS BIRD? SEE PAGE 58



WHAT IS THIS BIRD? SEE PAGE 58

THE MARSHES

I had never been much good at Waders before I came to Hong Kong. Not that I am now; but I fancy myself to know a bit more than I did. My interest had been stimulated by a tour of duty at Poole, in Dorset, where the Wareham estuary and the sandbanks near Studland had given me my first real chance to get acquainted with this fascinating but bewildering race.

Since my posting to the New Territories I have been lucky enough to live for three years within easy reach of the Mai Po, Deep Bay and Lok Ma Chau marshes, and so have been able to visit them fairly regularly throughout the year. Usually it has been for a short time in the evening after the day's work, sometimes on a Sunday morning before breakfast, and, occasionally, bird watcher's wife and children permitting, for the best part of a day.

I find that despite this fancied growing familiarity with many of them, the waders generally offer a persistent and provoking challenge to positive recognition. There are some which once seen or heard, or both, should remain firmly imprinted on the memory. More of this later. But when, as so often happens, they are seen only at tantalisingly long range, feeding or in flight, there is always the doubt whether "this really was this" or "might have been that". Wishful thinking tends to become insidious. The more so, I believe, during the spring and autumn passages when one expects to see certain visitors and may be looking specifically for them. On the other hand one should not too readily discard the belief that one has seen something which, according to the good book, may be rare or unlikely. It all boils down simply, I suppose, to constant practice and familiarisation, and ultimately to an instinctive grasp of the call, posture, flight pattern or the features which make for certainty. Only a few experts can do this, and how many of us have the opportunity anyway?

I have spoken of near certainties, and I hope this does not sound smug. I believe, for instance, that the Common Sandpiper, Curlew, Whimbrel, Redshank and Greenshank are ones which I can pick out with reasonable assurance at long range by sight and sound. If lucky enough to have seen a Black-winged Stilt, one is unlikely to forget him. I can recognise the feeding gait; the few hurried paces and pause of the Sand Plovers, and separate the Greater, Kentish and Little Ringed by size, collar band and the colour of the legs. At short range I reckon to spot the down-curved bill of the Dunlin, yet in some lights I may have confused

him with the Curlew Sandpiper. If I can get close enough to see the pale legs I can say that it is a Temminck's and not a Little Stint; but at a hundred yards and more the two seem indistinguishable, and in the season when the plumage is similar, I cannot always be sure that I have not muddled them with Sanderling. The Sandpipers should be clear as such, yet it is not easy to say whether it was a Wood, a Green, a Marsh or a Grey-rumped, unless one can combine field marks, flight and call. The Wood Sandpiper is a noticeably active feeder. If one can get within range, its decurved bill is the stamp of the Terek, and the head of the Broad-billed, banded like a snipe, is its prominent feature. I look for the white rump of the Spotted Redshank in flight, or its orange legs, to avoid a suspicion that it might be the Redshank itself.

The purpose of this article is to suggest where you might look for some of our waders with the best chance of seeing them, rather than an attempt to help identification. I find the European Field Guide and the Popular Handbook of British Birds quite the clearest reference books and would also recommend Coward's Birds of the British Isles which gives admirable descriptions of behaviour and habits. If anyone says to me, and people often do, "You never see any birds in Hong Kong", I am tempted to offer them a short car ride and an hour's walk on the Marshes to make them think again. Waders apart, there is a wealth of general bird life to add to the attraction of the Marshes.

With the help of the map, therefore, I shall try to show the areas which I have found to be the most rewarding as regards Waders and to add some of the other less common birds I have seen at one time or another.

AREA A - LOK MA CHAU

This area consists of the low-lying marshy ground on either side of the road leading to the Police Post and stretching west towards San Tin. Some of this is now being turned into fish ponds. Sometimes there is no need even to get out of the car and I have seen Plovers so tame that they will continue feeding almost at arm's length. At times, when the ground is completely dried out, there is little to be seen.

Waders

Little Ringed Plover	Oct., Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb.
Kentish Plover	Apr., Aug., Dec.
Mongolian Sand Plover	One in May 1961.
Green Sandpiper	Oct., Jan.

Wood Sandpiper	Oct., Nov., Feb., Mar. Most often in Mar.
Redshank	Apr., one year only.
Greenshank	Sept., Dec.
Marsh Sandpiper	Nov., Dec. on two occasions only. Once feeding with Greenshank when the fine bill and slimmer appearance contrasted noticeably with them.
Little Stint	Late Oct., Early Nov.
Temminck's Stint	Oct., Dec. twice only.
Dunlin	Nov., Apr.
Curlew Sandpiper	Nov., May near San Tin.
Sanderling.	Apr. regularly.

Others of Interest

Wagtails - Pied, Yellow & Grey	Regularly in winter.
Yellow Bittern	Oct.
Egrets	Regularly
White Ibis	Jan., Feb., Apr., 1961. Only three times.
Lesser Spoonbill	Feb., Apr. '61 only near San Tin.
Lesser Whistling Teal	Apr. '62 once near San Tin.
Hen Harrier	Occasionally in winter
Moorhen	Once only in Oct. '60.
Coot	Once only in Nov. '60.
Little Bunting	Regularly
Buzzard	Regularly
White winged Black Tern	May in rough weather.
Caspian Tern	Occasionally

AREA B - MAI PO EAST

This area covers the whole of the marsh area to the right of the path running from Mai Po village to Pak Hok Chau Police Post. It extends up to the Shum Chun river and includes its mouth and the rocky outcrop on its southern bank. I have found this a profitable stretch which is but a short walk from the main road by the Mai Po temple. The raised mud paths are good vantage points and also provide cover if one tries to make a hidden approach. I have always thought it to be well suited to the building of a hide or two for observation and photography. I usually walk half way up this path, turn right and join another bund which runs parallel to and about two hundred yards short of the river.

Waders

Little Ringed Plover	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., Mar., & once in August.
Kentish Plover	Sept., Oct., Nov., Jan.
Greater Sand Plover	Sept., Oct., Apr.
Asiatic Golden Plover	Sept.
Curlew	Sept., and once in Nov.
Whimbrel	Aug., Sept.
Bar-tailed Godwit	Mar., Sept.
Green Sandpiper	Sept.
Wood Sandpiper	Sept., Oct., Mar., Apr.
Redshank	Aug., Sept., Apr.
Spotted Redshank	Jan., Mar., Apr. Always in much the same place near the river. Probably a wintering party.
Greenshank	Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec., Apr., May.
Grey-rumped Sandpiper	Aug., Sept., Apr. Usually in same place.
Little Stint	Mar., once only.
Temminck's Stint	Jan., once only.
Dunlin	Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.
Sanderling	Mar.
Black-winged Stilt	Oct. once only.

Others of Interest

Little & Masked Bunting	Regularly beside the paths - winter.
Wagtails, Pipits including Red Throated.	Regularly - winter.
Egrets	Regularly
Grey Heron	Regularly
Green Heron	Aug., once only.
Yellow Bittern	Regularly in summer.
Teal	Dec., Mar.
Marsh & Hen Harrier	Frequently in winter.
Banded Rail	Mar., Aug., Jan.
White-winged Black Tern.	May., Aug. over Mai Po fish ponds.
Whiskered Tern	Sept., Nov. over Mai Po fish ponds.
Black-capped Kingfisher	Regularly
Collared Crow	Regularly
Great Reed Warbler	Sept., Oct.

Red Avadavat	Oct., Nov., Dec.
Chestnut Munia	Aug., Sept., Oct.
House Martin	Mar.

One will invariably see the Dusky Warbler and Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler. I have once seen a Wryneck on the path, and one female Bluethroat. In the winter there are often flights of Duck or Teal over the mouth of the river but I have never been close enough to identify them positively.

AREA C - MAI PO WEST

The area to the west of Pak Hok Chau Post running up to Deep Bay and south toward Yuen Long. These marshlands are almost in the form of fields bounded by the raised mud bunds and are occasionally quite dry. Here is all the space to roam that one could wish and I have certainly never covered it all. I have visited it less often than the other areas because of its greater distance. Once there it is hard to tear oneself away, but there have been a few occasions when I have drawn a virtual blank.

Waders

Little Ringed Plover	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., Mar.
Kentish Plover	Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec., Mar.
Greater Sand Plover	Sept. in large numbers.
Asiatic Golden Plover	Sept.
Whimbrel	Aug., Sept.
Redshank	Aug., Sept.
Spotted Redshank	Mar.,
Terek Sandpiper	Sept.
Broad-billed Sandpiper	Sept.

Others of Interest

Caspian Tern	Sept.
Gull-billed Tern	Sept., once only.
Egrets, Grey Heron	Regularly
Banded Rail	Jan.
Black-capped Kingfisher	Regularly
Osprey	Occasionally.

Once I have seen a Spotted Eagle and a White-bellied Sea-eagle, and also Pelicans on a sand bank just off shore in Deep Bay. It is a pity that a belt of unwadable swamp runs back to the shore, since at low tide many waders are sometimes to be seen feeding in abundance at the water's edge but cannot be approached even at binocular distance.

These then are the areas I visit most regularly. I have not mentioned the Ping Shan-Luen Tak district because I do not go there often enough. There are others who know it well, and I hope to see more of it this spring. I have seen Wood Sandpipers close by the road to Ha Tsuen.

Starling Inlet can provide occasional interest and one can drive alongside it as far as Luk Keng. Opposite Sha Tau Kok Police Station there are sometimes Little Plover and I saw two Grey-rumped Sandpipers on the shore in the evening. The Common Sandpiper is usually about, and one gusty, autumn evening a flight of six Curlew flew in low over the sea to pass within a yard or two. This area has contributed other surprises in the form of six Frigate-Birds cruising high over the inlet and drifting in the wind away to China. Two Cormorants spent two days on a little rocky islet close to the shore. There is, of course, the Heronry in the wood on the knoll by the road junction where Pond Herons and Little Egrets raise their families in squawky, smelly company. I shall be interested to see if it remains so popular a resort this year after the wood suffered so badly at the hands of Typhoon Wanda last September. I have seen the Great Barbet in this wood and one evening in July my wife, children and I watched a Peregrine Falcon, plainly irritable after some futile sorties against domestic ducks on the foreshore, make a low level, tree-top stoop to snatch a nestling Heron from the nest and carry it away to be devoured in a tree by the school across the bay.

I fear I have digressed from the theme. It seemed a pity, though, to omit the birds, other than waders, which might be seen on a visit to these areas. At least I hope that this account may help those who are not lucky enough to live on the spot and who may only find a limited chance to get out into the country. If they head for one of these areas I guarantee that they will see something of interest.

The dates I have given are only those when I have personally made identification. Other watchers will surely have recorded more and different sightings. There will always be the need for regular and sustained observation if we are to broaden our knowledge of what rare and perhaps unrecorded visitors pass to and fro, and pause for rest and food on their journeys north and south. I believe too that we see many of our migrant waders at a stage of

plumage and colouring which sometimes differs from the illustrations we refer to in guide books dealing, naturally, with European forms.

This, to my regret, is my last summer in Hong Kong. I shall have the happiest memories and, I fear, a lasting nostalgia for my hours on the marshes; for their tranquillity and their isolation from the hurly-burly of the town; for their friendly, simple, stalwart fisherfolk and farmers; and above all for what they have offered in the way of bird life.

S. P. M. K.

(Due to new regulations some of the areas referred to in the above article may no longer be visited without a Police Pass. Ed.)

SEVERN ROAD, THE PEAK

Temporary residence in this area from October onwards made a watch on the birds frequenting it possible. It was, however, a sparse watch carried out mostly in the evenings and at weekends.

The area consists of a wide stretch of hillside facing south and covered in scrub and low trees, sloping steeply down to two reservoirs and the sea. There are no buildings below those on the road. The crest of the hill, about two hundred feet above the road, is some seventeen hundred feet above sea level and is sheer and rocky with trees and bushes growing on part of the southwest face.

The most obvious birds in the area were the Black-eared Kites. Twenty or thirty were often perched in the trees below the summit, flying off when disturbed to join the others circling low over the wooded slopes. In the evening they were often to be seen flying high in the sky, singly or in small parties. Over one hundred in one flock were counted one evening at sunset, circling and wheeling together. An unidentified falcon-type bird was seen on one occasion to have a short encounter with a Kite in flight and then to fly off into the hillside. A Kestrel was seen once only, and a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo perched and swung on a flagpole one day in December. Jungle Crows often appeared in small numbers, and once twenty of these birds were seen circling together.

Bulbuls were present in large numbers throughout the period, the Chinese Bulbul being in the majority, accompanied by numerous Crested Bulbuls. No Red-vented or Chestnut bulbuls were seen, but one immature White-headed Black Bulbul was with the flocks in mid-December. Several Brown Flycatchers were seen in the first week of October but not again, and no other kinds were observed. A Great Tit could usually be seen in the bushes beside the road, White Eyes frequently passed through in small flocks and there was often a Yellow-browed Warbler about. Indian Tree Pipits were first noticed towards the end of November, and were subsequently often seen on the grass in the gardens. Daurian Redstarts, male and female, were noted several times, the first being on 24th November and a male Scarlet Minivet in immature orange plumage was watched for a few minutes on 16th December.

Black-faced Laughing Thrushes and Rufous-backed Shrikes were sometimes about, but they seemed to have little inclination to

scold or chatter. Violet Whistling Thrushes were, frequently heard and seen in shady places throughout the period, and a Red-bellied Rock Thrush appeared in late November.

From 17th December until the end of the year a fine Chestnut breasted Rock Thrush, a bird not recorded in the Colony for many years, frequented the trees near the summit, perching regularly in the evening sun on the branches or on the masonry of nearby buildings, and eating the lantana berries.

M. E. M. B.

BIRD WATCHING IN THE COUNTY OF NORFOLK, ENGLAND.

Norfolk is rich in wild life generally, and as it occupies a prominent position on the North Sea migration routes is particularly rich in bird life. I have been told that, on a good day in the autumn, the migrants can be seen from the cliffs at Cromer and elsewhere on the flight lines streaming in from the North all day long. This has been most noticeable during the periodic "avalanches" of buntings, blackbirds, waxwings, bramblings and even woodcock, which seem to be more marked in East Anglia and Kent than elsewhere in the country.

In addition to Norfolk's favourable position the diversity of its natural regions adds to the charms of bird watching and to the variety of birds met with in the county. The reed-lined waters of the Broads are ideal for comfortable bird watching from a boat, but have a very different selection of wild life to that of the meres, forests and heaths of the Breckland extending into Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. The heaths of the Cromer Moraine and the Sandringham Ridge being exposed to the North Sea have an avifauna different to that of those of the Breckland, while the freshwater and salt marshes and shingle ridges of Scolt and Blakeney form a world of their own.

With all its natural advantages and a long tradition of wildfowling and game-preservation behind it, it is not surprising that the county is a well filled repository of bird-lore, and that it has an excellent ornithological section in the Castle Museum in Norwich. Neither is it surprising that the county should have been a pioneer in nature conservation, nor that in 1926 "The Norfolk Naturalists Trust laid the foundation of a Nature Reserve system which is still unrivalled in any other British county". (Country-Side. Vol. xix No. 6. 1962)

Apart from small properties, the Trust owns and administers fourteen nature reserves or bird sanctuaries on the coast, in Broadland and in Breckland. In conjunction with the National Trust and the Nature Conservancy it manages Scolt Head Island and Blakeney Point, both noted for their terneries. Together with the Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists Society, the Trust publishes The Norfolk Bird & Mammal Report. This contains reports from all the Trust's main reserves as well as comprehensive reports on all aspects of bird-life in the county. In the 1961 report 236 species are recorded, and there is a note on the privately owned reserve at Horsey Mere, haunt of harriers, bitterns and the Bearded Tit.

There are wardens at Scolt, Blakeney, Cley and Salthouse (the best place I know for variety of waders and duck) and also at Hickling, all of whom are experts and pleased to impart their knowledge. If you or any other member of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society are in the vicinity or are hoping to go to Norfolk to see the birds, I would strongly recommend you to get in touch with one or other of the following:-

The Norfolk Naturalists' Trust,
No. 4, The Close,
Norwich, NOR 16 P. Telephone: 25540

The Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists Society,
Castle Museum, Norwich.

Membership of both bodies is cheap and well worthwhile (£1 per annum at the moment) and the secretaries will let you know the arrangements for visiting the sanctuaries owned by the Trust and a few others besides.

Bird watching in Norfolk is good all the year round but the best months are May and June for breeding species and January/February for geese and wildfowl.

R. H. H.

ANSWERS. (what are these birds?)

Page 46 Sanderling.
Page 47 Wood Sandpiper
Page 47 Wood Sandpiper

(Photographs taken by S.P.M.K. at Lok Ma Chau in April)

A NOVEL APPROACH TO BIRDS

Between the Luen Tak embankment and the mouth of the Yuen Long river there is a wide lagoon, neatly parcelled out by narrow bunds running at right angles to the sea wall. Beyond the sea wall is a wilderness of creeks and mangroves, reaching far into Deep Bay and inhabited by egrets and herons, four varieties of kingfisher and sundry crakes and rails. The lagoon itself is generally kept too full of water to be much used by waders except sometimes near the mouth of the Yuen Long river. But on occasion the cross-bunds are used as sitting-out places and it is then that the novel approach comes in.

One sunny day in the autumn we were lunching in the shade of a sluice-keeper's hut when a flock of curlew (or whimbrel?) was seen a long way off on the next bund. One bird was smaller than the rest and the question arose "Was it a Little Whimbrel among a company of Whimbrels, or merely a Whimbrel among Curlew?" Binoculars did not provide an answer and the next, slightly frivolous, question was "Why not swim out and see?".

Close inside all the sluices the bottom is scoured to a depth of twenty feet or more and the lower layers of water are always cold, which is a tip worth remembering in the heat of the summer. I was able to start swimming with a sedate breast stroke, keeping my head just above water, but soon it became so shallow that the arms had to be used like a couple of punt poles. By this time it was clear that the birds were quite unaffected by a disembodied head moving across the face of the waters and I was able to be certain that alas no Little Whimbrel could be recorded, long before the birds made off.

I was sitting at the same spot the other day eating my sandwiches when a large flock of Kentish plover flew in from the sea and snuggled down on the same bund. I wondered whether there were any Dunlin or other strangers among them and remembered the previous approach. Again the birds were unsuspecting and several Dunlin gave themselves away before all took flight, even then in a sheepish and rather apologetic way.

This method is not recommended for dawn lighting in an English winter.

E. D. W.

CHOOSING BINOCULARS

The most important feature about binoculars for bird watching is their light-gathering power, which is dependent upon the field of view (measured as the diameter of the object lens in mm.) and magnification. Ideally the field should be not less than 30 mm. and not more than 50 mm.; and the magnification between 6 and 8 times. The more common combinations of magnification and field used in binoculars now are 6 x 30, 7 x 35, 7 x 50 and 8 x 30. Those with a field of more than 30 mm. tend to be rather large and cannot normally be carried in one's pocket, whereas the smaller ones may be.

Binoculars with a reasonably low magnification (about 7) and a large field (about 50 mm.) tend to have a greater depth of focus than do other types, and in practice you may find that on one setting the glasses will be in focus from about 20 yards to infinity. This is a distinct advantage when 'picking up' flying birds, for with some 8 x 30 models the bird has gone by the time the glasses are in focus.

Do not be tempted to buy larger models such as 12 x 50 for not only are they bulky and heavy but they are difficult to hold steady and tiring to use for long periods, and may result in eyestrain.

On the whole, if you prefer a smaller binocular suitable for carrying in the pocket then buy an 8 x 30 model. If you are not so concerned with weight and size then the 7 x 50 binoculars are very good and strongly recommended.

Types with central focusing are easier to use than those with separate eyepiece focusing, and there is no advantage in the latter type from the point of view of being more airtight, for none of the binoculars sold locally can be guaranteed airtight anyway.

The best makes of binoculars are undoubtedly Zeiss, Agfa Bausch and Lomb, etc., but are very expensive. However, several makes of Japanese binoculars are both good and quite cheap, these being Cannon, Nikon and Limer, for which one has to pay about H.K.\$100-200. The other Japanese makes are cheaper than this but may not be very good.

Limer also manufactures prismatic telescopes and various models are available in Hong Kong. The best ones have an objective of 60 mm. and magnifications of 2-40 times, are provided with a small tripod and cost about \$200.

D. S. H.

RECORDING

1. Records can be sent in to the Hon. Recorder at any time, but preferably quarterly or at worst half-yearly. Anyone leaving the Colony is asked to send in his records before departure if possible; notes have a nasty habit of getting mislaid "en voyage".

2. Use a separate sheet of paper (4½" by 6" approx.) for each species.

3. Head each sheet and complete it as follows:—

YEAR	SPECIES	CHECK LIST NO.
Date	Place	Observer's Initials Numbers, age, sex, etc.
e.g. 1961	BONELLI'S EAGLE	
1st Jan.	Tai Mo Shan	One Male
4th Feb.	Ping Shan Marshes	Two immatures flying South about 2 P.M.

4. Please do NOT use diary form.

5. Whenever possible obtain confirmation of a rarity by getting someone else to see it. At least take full notes on the spot and send them in with your records. Do NOT guess or imagine details afterwards. Please read the extract from the British Birds editorial on the following page. It is important that our standards in Hong Kong should be as high as possible. Nevertheless, it is hoped that members will send in reports of rarities even when they are doubtful whether they have enough supporting evidence to make the observation a certainty. Subsequent events sometimes support a report of this kind, or it may tie in with those of other observers.

6. Remember that your records will be kept for future reference. Please type or write them neatly and legibly.

7. The following information about the Colony's birds is particularly needed:—

(a) Positive breeding records for all species in all areas.

(b) Nesting data, such as breeding period, clutch size, incubation and fledging periods.

(c) Arrival and departure dates of summer and winter visitors.

(d) Reports from the New Territories **East** of the Kowloon-Canton railway.

(a) and (b) are best recorded on nesting cards which may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary. Full instructions are printed on them. When completed they should be sent to the Hon. Recorder.