

HONG KONG BIRD REPORT

1992

香港鳥類報告



一九九二年香港鳥類報告

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紀錄委員會報告

一九九二年錄得348個 A 類和 D 類品種，又是一個驕人成績，並且輕易超越了前一年的紀錄（324個 A 類和9個 D 類）。近一、兩年來，紀錄總數屢被翻新，毫無疑問是卓越的環志工作和觀鳥活動不斷增加的結果。過去一年，除了熱門的觀鳥點外，向來受到冷落的一些地方，諸如城門水塘、蠔涌谷等，都備受垂青。新界的發展仍然繼續蠶蝕著雀鳥棲身之所，但是，在那些過去被我們忽略的地區中，應該還有不少寶地存在的吧！

在一九九二年，A 類新增了七個品種，當中有兩個是由 D 類提升上來的；同時，E 類也有一個品種轉為 D 類。有關的變動簡介如下：

新增 A 類品種：

1. 稻田葦鶯：一月一日，在米埔網獲一隻。
2. 棕褐短翅鶯：一月二十五日，在沙螺洞網獲一隻。
3. 白腰燕鷗：八月二十二日，香港島以南海面有一百九十隻；直到九月還有紀錄，數量較少。
4. 高山短翅鶯：十一月六日和二十九日，分別在蠔涌和沙螺洞網獲一隻和兩隻，並因此解決了自一九八七年以來所謂“zee-bit”鳴聲鶯類的身份問題。
5. 小咀烏鶯：十一月二十二日，有一隻在米埔，隨後在尖鼻咀，直到十二月。
6. 棕頸鉤咀鶯：因為在港島和新界廣泛地區都有紀錄，所以由 D 類升上 A 類。
7. 粉紅鸚鵡：在大幅山的一羣應屬野生的，所以由 D 類升上 A 類。

此外，還首次錄得：

1. 天鵝類：十一月十六日，米埔有十四隻天鵝，可能是小天鵝或大天鵝。

D 類新品種：

1. 絨額鵲：初期報告的均被當作是逸鳥，不過在更多的報告和在廣東省鼎湖山上發現了一隻之後，可以相信這個品種已逐漸擴展至華南。
2. 褐頭鵲或黑頭鵲：十月十七日和十九日，在蠔涌分別有一隻和兩隻；十月二十四日，柯士甸山也有一隻。

新錄到的林鴛鴦、白喉噪鶯、藍翅希鶯和黑胸太陽鳥都列入 E 類。至於灰背隼和黃腹山樹鶯的報告，則尚在審核中。

隨著一九九一年報告中發表了關於高山短翅鶯的文章，加上一九九二年又網獲兩種 *Bradypterus* 鶯類雀鳥，長期以來這方面的困惑經已消除，不過，有關 *Accipiter* 鷹類的辨別方面，進展還是相當緩慢，大概只能依賴環志工作的幫助；至於仿似北極鵲的大型鵲類的身份則仍是未解之謎。沙錐和 *Phylloscopus* 鶯類在本港雖不是稀客，但仍有辨別上的困難，本報告也分別有文章論及。

一九九二年內，紀錄委員會成員沒有變動，包括：Geoff Carey、Mike Chalmers、Peter Kennerly、Paul Leader 和 Clive Viney。

THE HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1992

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Records compiled by M.R. Leven and G.J. Carey
Report edited by G.J. Carey

Officers of the Society
(1992)

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Secretary	I. Tyzzer
Treasurer	R.D.E. Stott
Recorder	M.L. Chalmers

Front cover: Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*
Mai Po, September 1991 (Ray Tipper)

EDITORIAL NOTE

Through editing this Hong Kong Bird Report, I realise what an admirable job Verity Picken did in raising its standard to that of an internationally respected publication. We are all extremely grateful to her for seven years of hard work. I would also like to thank her for all the advice and help so readily given in the preparation of this Report.

The format of this Report deviates little from previous years. The main change concerns the Monthly Summaries which now include a description of weather conditions during the year and, if possible, an attempt to link these with notable avian events. It is felt that this is a more meaningful way of presenting this section.

Members of the Society will appreciate and, I hope, benefit from the two identification papers on Snipe and Phylloscopus warblers. These are both difficult groups that occur quite commonly in the Territory and it is hoped that more people will now be able to get to grips with their identification.

I am sure that everyone will have noted the increasing thoroughness of the systematic list over the past few years, due in no small part to Mike Leven. I would like to urge all members to submit as many records as possible so that we can further improve the standard of the systematic list and also ensure that the next Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong, now under consideration, is as complete and as accurate as possible.

It will be noticed that there is an advertisement for membership of the Oriental Bird Club and I would urge Society members who are interested in this fascinating region, to which Hong Kong belongs, to join and support a very worthwhile cause.

Many people have helped during the production of this Report but I should especially like to thank Paul Leader for giving over much time and making many constructive suggestions. I would also like to thank David Melville, Lew Young, Peter Kennerley and Mike Chalmers for advice and editorial help during the past months. Chan Ming Ming has kindly provided the Chinese translations.

I am very grateful to Swarovski (HK) Ltd., Carl Zeiss Far East Ltd., Shiro Hong Kong Ltd. (Nikon distributor), Schmidt and Co. Ltd. (Leica distributor) and Robert Lam Color for their much-needed and much-appreciated sponsorship. Without their support it would not have been possible to include such a large number of colour photographs.

Once again several Society members have donated slides for which I am very grateful. For the efficient organisation of the sponsorship and advertising I would like to thank Nigel Croft. Last, but not least, are the proof-readers who went through the several proofs necessary prior to publication - many thanks.

GEOFF CAREY

REPORT ON THE BIRDS 1992

RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Paul J. Leader

In terms of the number of species, 1992 was another record year. Cumulatively, the total of 348 Category A and five Category D species reported easily surpasses last year's record totals of 324 and nine respectively. This increase, as with last year's, is due to the high level of ringing activity and the continuing increase in observer activity. In addition to the regular sites, previously neglected areas such as Shing Mun Reservoir and Ho Chung Valley were regularly covered during the year. Valuable habitat continues to be lost to development in the New Territories, but other areas, overlooked in the past, must still remain.

During 1992 seven species were added to Category A, two of which had been in Category D. There was one addition to Category D as a result of an upgrade from Category E. The changes are summarised below while the categories used in Hong Kong are defined in the systematic list.

ADDITIONS TO CATEGORY A

1. Paddyfield Warbler. One trapped at Mai Po on 1 January.
2. Brown Bush Warbler. One trapped at Sha Lo Tung on 25 January.
3. Aleutian Tern. One-hundred and ninety south of Hong Kong Island on 22 August, with lesser numbers present into September.
4. Russet Bush Warbler. One trapped at Ho Chung on 6 November and two trapped at Sha Lo Tung on 29 November. Trapping these individuals confirmed the identity of the so-called 'zee-bit' warbler which has been heard regularly since 1987.
5. Carrion Crow. One at Mai Po on 22 November, and subsequently at Tsim Bei Tsui during December.
6. Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler. Previously in Category D but moved due to the widespread reports from Hong Kong Island and the New Territories.
7. Vinous-throated Parrotbill. Moved from Category D on the basis of the apparently wild Tai Mo Shan population.

In addition there were first records of:

1. Swan sp. Fourteen, either Bewick's or Whooper, at Mai Po on 16 November.

ADDITIONS TO CATEGORY D

1. Velvet-fronted Nuthatch. Initial records were considered to be escapes, however the pattern of records and the report of one at Dinghu Shan in Guangdong Province suggest that this species is spreading into South China.
2. Red/Black-headed Bunting. One at Ho Chung on 17 October, and two there on 19 October, and another at Mount Austin on 24 October.

First records of Wood Duck, White-throated Laughing Thrush, Blue-winged Minla and Black-throated Sunbird were added to Category E. Records of Merlin and Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler are still under consideration.

The trapping of two species of *Bradypterus* warblers and the paper on Russet Bush Warbler in last year's report have resolved what had been a long-term problem. Slow progress is being made with accipiter identification, largely with birds trapped for ringing. Large gulls resembling Glaucous-winged remain problematic. This report contains identification papers on Snipe and *Phylloscopus* warblers which, although regular in Hong Kong, pose continued identification problems.

The Records Committee remained unchanged during 1992 and comprised: Geoff Carey, Mike Chalmers, Peter Kennerley, Paul Leader, and Clive Viney.

Thanks are due to the following observers who submitted records for inclusion in this report:

T. Adams, M. Berlijn, E. Van der Burg, C. Briffet, J.E. Burton, G.J. Carey, D.P. Carthy, M.L. Chalmers, M.M. Chan, S. Chan, M.C. Cheung, T.D. Christensen, D.A. Diskin, A. Dodd, A. Dudley, E. Duggan, E. Ebels, J.S.R. Edge, S.P. Evans, A.C. Galsworthy, N. Green, N.S. Grimshaw, J.A. Hackett, M. Hale, M. Heegaard, J.G. Holmes, I. Kazuo, G. Kelley, P.R. Kennerley, S. King, C.Y. Lam, A.R. Lamont, P.J. Leader, E.P. Leven, M.R. Leven, R.W. Lewthwaite, W.Y. Lo, T. Lund, S. McChesney, C.C. McGuigan, D.S. Melville, H. Mouritsen, L. Mulford, R.C. Nicoll, V.B. Picken, S.H. Piotrowski, M. Raes, D. Rosair, P. Rostron, P.D. Round, I. Saville, P. Schrijvershof, A. Smith, G. Smith, R.D.E. Stott, C.K. Tak, Y.Y. Tung, R.P. Tipper, M. Turnbull, I. Tytzer, A. Van der Linden, C.A. Viney, G.A. Walthew, M.D. Williams, K.D. Wilson, T.W. Wong, F. Wong, T. Woodward, E. Wright, L. Young, R. Young and W.L. Young.

MONTHLY SUMMARIES

Paul J. Leader and C.Y. Lam

January

The weather for the month was characterised by the dominance of the winter monsoon. Significant surges occurred on 4th, 13th and 18th. The month's lowest temperature was 8.4°C on 15th. Towards the end of the month there was a lull in the winter monsoon and it gradually became warmer and more humid.

A Paddyfield Warbler trapped at Mai Po on 1st was an addition to the Hong Kong list. A Chestnut-crowned Warbler at Coombe Road on 3rd and 4th may have been the bird seen nearby earlier in the winter, but one in Tai Po Kau from 11th, and single Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warblers in Aberdeen Country Park on 6th, Tai Po Kau from 7th and at Ho Chung on 14th were more likely recent arrivals. Three immature Black Storks were first noted at Mai Po on 7th, and up to 11 Oriental White Storks were also present during the month. A male Orange-headed Ground Thrush was present in Tai Po Kau from 11th and a Spoon-billed Sandpiper at Mai Po on 14th and 25th was the first record in winter.



1 Oriental White Stork *Ciconia ciconia boyciana*
Mai Po, Hong Kong October 1992

T.O. Lee

The surge on 18th had the biggest impact, resulting in a large influx of chats and thrushes, many of which were more approachable than normal. White's Thrushes were noted in ones and twos at a number of sites, with nine at Kadoorie Farm on 21st. Also at Kadoorie Farm on 21st were 51 Pale Thrushes, 42 Grey-backed Thrushes, and 39 Red-flanked Bluetails. Up to four Pale and 50 Grey-backed Thrushes had been noted in Tai Po Kau the previous week and there were up to 15 Red-flanked Bluetails there the following week.

Three Dalmatian Pelicans finally arrived in Deep Bay on 24th. A Brown Bush Warbler, the first for Hong Kong, was trapped at Sha Lo Tung on 25th. On 27th, a female Japanese Robin was discovered in Tai Po Kau, and remained there into February.

February

February marked the beginning of an exceptionally wet spring. Rainfall for the month was three times the average. A strong monsoon blew from the east on 1st, and a cold front passed on 4th. Subsequently, active winter monsoon and rainy weather persisted for nearly three weeks, clearing on 24th with the arrival of dry air from the north.

The first major irruption of Black Bulbuls for many years commenced on the 1st. Records were widespread, with the biggest flock being 200 at Mount Austin. A White-bellied Green Pigeon was in Tai Po Kau on 3rd. A first-winter Kittiwake, the first for 17 years, was seen at Mai Po on 8th and the same day a Great Black-headed Gull and a Saker Falcon were also present. On 10th a male White-throated Rock Thrush was found on Hong Kong Island. A count of 1030 Curlew at Mai Po on 12th and 22nd was the highest ever in the Territory. A Slaty-legged Crake was discovered in Kowloon Park on 13th. Gulls were typically interesting towards the end of the month, with a first-winter Slaty-backed Gull at Mai Po on 19th; the peak count of Saunderson's Gull for the year was 120 on 22nd and a first-winter Glaucous Gull was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29th.

March

During March rainfall was again plentiful - the total of 242.2 mm was more than three times the average and there were only 37.6 hours of sunshine, less than 40% of normal. More than 100 mm of rain was recorded on 3rd just prior to the arrival of a cold front. The minimum temperature of the month, 9.7°C, was recorded on 6th. Another cold front arrived on 17th, followed by another easterly replenishment on 21st. A sharp fall in temperature came with a further burst of northerlies on 26th.

The wet weather early on produced exceptional numbers of Asian House Martins with a maximum of over 300 on 7th at Mai Po, the highest ever. Also on 7th at Mai Po there was a Water Pipit. The maximum count of Black-faced Spoonbills for the first winter period was 47 at Mai Po on 22nd. Towards the end of the month there appeared to be a secondary influx of Black Bulbuls with 110 at Shing Mun and 170

in Tai Po Kau on 29th. The same day a Crested Honey Buzzard was also present in Tai Po Kau.

April

492.2 mm of rain were recorded, making it the wettest April since records began in 1884. Most of the rain fell between 3rd-11th, ending with the arrival of a cold front on 11th. Rain returned on 18th and 19th when a southerly airstream prevailed over Hong Kong. Weak bursts of easterlies affected Hong Kong on 21st and 23rd, and towards the end of the month a southwesterly flow became established along the coast of southern China, and the weather became warm and fine.

The persistent rain for the first half of the month led to an accumulation of both winter and spring migrants, most notably flycatchers. There were maximum counts at various sites of up to five Blue and White, five Ferruginous, three Narcissus, three Asian Paradise and six Japanese Paradise Flycatchers during the period. The first Spoon-billed Sandpiper of the spring was at Mai Po on 3rd as was the second Slender-billed Gull for Hong Kong. At Tai Wai the same day a Crimson-legged Crake was found. On 4th a Siberian Blue Robin was trapped at Mai Po, and the next day a Rosy Minivet was in Tai Po Kau. White-vented Needletails were also very numerous with a maximum of 150 at Mai Po on 7th. A count of 1845 Redshank at Mai Po on 9th was a new record. A single Swinhoe's Egret was at Mai Po on 8th and 10th, and a Brown Hawk Owl was discovered in the ZBG, also on 10th. Around this time at Mai Po there were record numbers of Greater Sand Plover (2,000), Asiatic Golden Plover (900) and Gull-billed Tern (279). Another Siberian Blue Robin was trapped at Mai Po on the 12th, and there was a male Siberian Thrush in Tai Po Kau on 14th. At the landfill site near Mai Po there was a record 250 Red-throated Pipits on 17th. At Mai Po on 20th there was a Northern Goshawk and on 23rd, a Chestnut-cheeked Starling. Also on 23rd there was a Pechora Pipit at Tai Mo Shan. On 25th a Baillon's Crake was found at Tai Long Wan, and a Brambling near Tai O on Lantau.

May

A cool easterly surge of the monsoon on 3rd ended the fine start to the month. The wet spring then continued into May, with 602.3 mm of rain during the month, nearly twice the normal. Half the rain fell in one day on the 8th. The rainstorm of the 8th was followed by the invasion of cooler air from the north, turning easterly on 10th. Another rainstorm on 15th was followed by the passage of a cold front on 17th. More easterlies came on 28th.

White-winged Black Terns peaked on 8th when about 800 were present in Deep Bay, and on 11th 100 Sand Martins were present at Mai Po; a Pechora Pipit was trapped there on 13th. On 15th, at Tai Long Wan, there was a Schrenck's Bittern. Four others were subsequently recorded during the month, including two on Hong Kong Island. A

Lanceolated Warbler at Luk Keng on 17th was the first spring record. A Blue-throated Bee-eater at Ng Fai Tin, Clearwater Bay on 19th-20th was the second record for Hong Kong.

June

Another wetter than normal month. Typhoon Chuck in the South China Sea brought over 100 mm of rain on 28th.

A Crested Kingfisher was at Yi O, Lantau on 9th.

July

A very windy month, mainly due to the close passage of Severe Tropical Storm Eli on 12th-13th, Tropical Storm Faye on 18th and Severe Tropical Storm Gary on 22nd.

Two Black-shouldered Kites, one of which was a juvenile, were at Mai Po on 5-6th; one was still there on 11th. Another Crested Kingfisher was found at Brides Pool mid-month. Five Striated Yuhinas were at Mount Nicholson on 16th. Early returning waders at Mai Po on 28th included an Asiatic Dowitcher.

August

An exceptionally hot and dry month. Southwesterlies prevailed for the first eight days. Between 16th-21st, Tropical Storm Mark (or its remnant) was located between Hong Kong and Taiwan, bringing north to north east winds and hot dry air from the continent. Another spell of north to northwesterly winds set in on 27th, lasting till the end of the month as Severe Tropical Storm Polly came in from the Pacific and crossed Taiwan on its way to Fujian Province.

The major discovery of the year came on 22nd when 190 Aleutian Terns were found south of Hong Kong Island, the first record for Hong Kong and China, with many remaining into September. They may well have been diverted to Hong Kong by the circulation of Tropical Storm Mark which had effectively blocked the Taiwan Strait for several days. A Bridled Tern was also seen near Po Toi.

Passerine migration commenced early with an Asian Paradise Flycatcher at Shing Mun on 25th, single Pale-legged Leaf and Thick-billed Warblers and two Yellow-rumped Flycatchers trapped at Mai Po on 29th, and a further Pale-legged Leaf Warbler in Tai Po Kau the following day. A single immature Black-faced Spoonbill spent much of the month at Tin Shui Wai.

September

The month was uncharacteristically hot owing to tropical cyclones repeatedly passing over or near Taiwan which brought hot continental air from the north. Typhoon Omar crossed Guangdong from east to west and

brought some rain between 5th-8th. An easterly airstream arrived on 19th followed by a surge of the north east monsoon between 17th-21st, with another on 26th-27th.

The typical September migrants were particularly numerous this year. Notable counts include 12 Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers at Luk Keng on 6th, followed by 15 on 13th; 10 Eastern Crowned Warblers at Shing Mun on 6th; eight Yellow-rumped Flycatchers at Mai Po on 5th; 12 Pale-legged Leaf Warblers in Tai Po Kau on 27th; and no less than three Siberian Blue Robins during the month.

An immature Tiger Shrike was in Tai Po Kau on 5th and 6th, and another was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 19th. Near Mai Po on 12th the first Lesser Treeduck for 21 years was discovered. On 26th there was a Lanceolated Warbler at Mai Po and a Schrenck's Bittern was there on 27th.



2 Lesser Treeduck *Dendrocygna javanica*
Near Mai Po, Hong Kong 12 September 1992

Martin Hale

October

October was dryer than normal due to the dominance of the north east monsoon. The first significant cold front of the winter passed on 5th, accompanied by showers. It was then almost rainless for the rest of the month. The wind was northerly 13th-17th and 24th-25th, with easterlies prevailing at other times.

Two Siberian Blue Robins were trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 2nd, and at Mai Po on 8th a Blyth's Reed Warbler was trapped. Also on 8th, a White-vented Needletail was found dead at Kadoorie ARC, the first

autumn record of any needletail species. An immature Red- or Black-headed Bunting was found at Ho Chung on 17th, with two present on 19th, and one at Mount Austin on 23rd, where single Siberian Thrushes were present on 17th and 19th. A Pale-footed Bush Warbler was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 18th, the third for the locality and Hong Kong. At Ho Chung from 24th, up to three Grey Bushchats were present and, also on 24th, at Kadoorie ARC no fewer than three Radde's Warblers were trapped. On 29th there was a Meadow Bunting on the Peak. Another Siberian Thrush was present on 31st, this time in Tai Po Kau; ten Grey-cheeked Fulvettas were also present on this date. A large roost of White Wagtails at Mai Po for much of the month held up to 3,000 birds on 24th.

November

The north east monsoon continued to dominate the weather into November, easterly winds prevailing much of the time with two notable peaks on 2nd and 26th-27th. There were two major northerly surges of the winter monsoon, arriving on 8th and 20th, both bringing significant temperature falls.

Radde's Warblers were almost common during November with one at Mount Austin on 1st, two trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 7th and another at Mount Austin on 12th. Mugimaki Flycatchers were also numerous with up to five in a day trapped at Kadoorie ARC. A female Bull-headed Shrike was at Ho Chung on 7th. Bright-capped Cisticolas were again widespread during the winter, the first report was of two at Sha Lo Tung on 12th.

Early morning movements of passerines at Kadoorie ARC on 14th included 92 Eye-browed Thrushes and nearly 100 Chestnut Buntings. At Mai Po on 15th there was a rare autumn Spoon-billed Sandpiper and a Saker Falcon; at Ho Chung the same day there was the first ever autumn record of a Japanese Yellow Bunting. The second Pale-footed Bush Warbler of the autumn was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 19th.

On 21st a first-winter Relict Gull was seen from the Boardwalk hide at Mai Po, and a female Japanese Reed Bunting was found near Mai Po. Flocks of Lapwings adding up to 126 birds were noted over Mai Po the same day. The following day, also at Mai Po, a Carrion Crow, the first record for Hong Kong was discovered. Also on 22nd there were a record 170 Blackbirds seen at dusk in Tan Shan Valley.

A total of 5,616 Pintail counted on the mid-November Waterfowl Count was a new high count. Sixty-two Black-faced Spoonbills, at Mai Po on 24th, was also a new record count. A Hume's Yellow-browed Warbler was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 26th. A second first-winter Relict Gull was discovered at Lau Fau Shan on 28th and at Mai Po a Black Vulture was noted on 28th and 30th. Another Siberian Thrush, the fifth of the year, was at Mount Austin on 28th.



3 First-winter Relict Gull *Larus relictus*
Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong December 1992

Ray Tipper



4 First-winter Relict Gull *Larus relictus*
Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong December 1992

John Holmes

December

The winter monsoon was more subdued during December which turned out to be one of the warmest on record. There were only two major northerly surges, on 15th and 23rd, but the cold weather spells were rather short. Easterlies and fine weather prevailed for most of the month, with some rain in late December.

A Bull-headed Shrike was found at Fung Yuen on 4th. The following day, in Lam Tsuen Valley, there was a Japanese Grosbeak and an unusual, midwinter Asian Paradise Flycatcher; at Shek Kong, there was a Water Pipit. Two Black-necked Grebes were at Mai Po on 11th. Seventy-two Lapwings were at Mai Po on 12th, and on 16th, a lone Dalmatian Pelican arrived in Deep Bay. Four Grey Bushchats were at Tai Ho Wan, Lantau on 18th; on 21st a Chestnut-crowned Warbler was in the Aberdeen Country Park and at Shing Mun on 24th there was a female Siberian Blue Robin.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Michael R. Leven and Geoff J. Carey

In the interests of brevity, species which are generally common and widespread throughout the year in suitable habitat are listed in name only without notes. The codes 'BBR' and 'CC' at the end of the species entry indicate that the bird was recorded during the Big Bird Race on 10-11 April and/or the Christmas Count on 20 December. † indicates that more detailed data concerning spring passage are provided in Table 1.

CATEGORY A SPECIES WHICH HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN AN APPARENTLY WILD STATE IN HONG KONG IN THE LAST FIFTY YEARS

- 1 **Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
At least five broods were recorded at Mai Po and one brood was noted at Tai Mei Tuk. BBR,CC
- 2 **Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*
Regularly recorded in Deep Bay in the first part of the year with maxima of 46 off Tsim Bei Tsui on the mid-January Waterfowl Count and 50 there on 11 March. The last in spring was one at Mai Po on 22 March. In the second half of the year the first was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 15 November with 53 there on 2 December and 78 on 20 December. CC
- 3.1 **Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis*
Two were seen on the Scrape at Mai Po on 11 December (RWL,PR). This is the third record for Hong Kong, previous reports being in 1986 and 1989-90.
- 6 **Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Only 1,541 were recorded on the mid-January Waterfowl Count but 1,800 were counted at a roost on Chek Lap Kok on 19 January, 2,000 were at Mai Po on 21 January and up to 80 were regularly seen in Tolo Harbour from January to mid-March. The latest in spring was a single at Mai Po on 1 May and the first in autumn was one there on 27 September. An incomplete count in Deep Bay on 14 November produced 2,985 birds (RWL), very close to the record of 3,007 during the mid-January Waterfowl Count in 1990. Eighty were seen at Plover Cove Reservoir on 13 December. BBR,CC
- 7 **Dalmatian Pelican** *Pelecanus crispus*
Three adults were seen in Deep Bay from 24 January until 13 March and one adult returned on 16 December, remaining into 1993. CC

- 9 **Lesser Frigatebird** *Fregata ariel*
The first-stage juvenile bird first recorded on 27 December 1992 roosted fairly regularly in Aberdeen Country Park until 15 March, then again between 21 and 26 May, on 7 and 8 July and between 9 and 26 August (VBP, WLY *et al.*). Single immatures seen at Sai Kung on 25 April and Clear Water Bay on 29 April (IS) were probably the same but another immature off Po Toi on 22 August (PRK,MRL,PJL) was possibly a different individual. Single immature frigatebirds not identified as to species were off Cheung Chau on 6 February (MDW), over Aberdeen Country Park on 8 March (TA), Aberdeen Harbour on 29 March (LY) (not the bird from the Peak) and at Wong Nai Chung Gap on 13 June (IT).

- 10 **Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*
Singles were reported on ten dates between 13 January and 10 April, all at Mai Po except for individuals at Tin Shui Wai on 13 January (when a second bird was found dead in an illegal net), Sandy Spur Army Base on 15 March and Shuen Wan on 27 March. This last record is only the second away from the Deep Bay area. In the second winter period singles were recorded at Mai Po on five dates between 17 October and 28 December. BBR

- 11 **Yellow Bittern** *Ixobrychus sinensis*
Two were reported at Mai Po on 22 January with singles there on 22 February, 28 and 31 March and from 4 April with spring peaks of six on 14 and 27 April and up to nine in mid-May. Elsewhere, up to three were at Tin Shui Wai from 9 April, two at Tai Long Wan from 15 May and six at Luk Keng from 17 May. In contrast to 1991, the breeding population at Mai Po was high with a maximum count of 30 on 5 September. Five were at Luk Keng in early September but very scarce or inconspicuous after mid-September with the latest three reported from Mai Po on 16 October. BBR

- 12 **Schrenck's Bittern** *Ixobrychus eurhythmus*
In spring singles were seen at Tai Long Wan on 15 May (DAD), Luk Keng on 17 May (GJC *et al.*), Mid-Levels on 27 May (MT), Tai Po Kau Village on 28 May (FW) and Tai Tam Country Park on 29 May (GJC). In autumn there was one at Mai Po on 27 September (FW). There are now four autumn records, all between 23-29 September.

- 13 **Chestnut Bittern** *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*
In spring singles were recorded at Mai Po on six dates between 21 March and 16 May, up to three were at Tai Long Wan between 9 April and 15 May and one was at Tin Shui Wai on 10 April. There were no midsummer reports but singles were seen at Mai Po on 9 August and 5 and 25 September and Tai Long Wan on 17 October. BBR

- 16 **Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Sixty-two birds were counted at the Tai Po Market KCR Station colony on 13 April and at least 25 pairs bred at Shuen Wan. A food-

carrying adult and two juveniles seen on a wooded hillside near the Regal Riverside Hotel, Sha Tin on 1 June suggests a new or previously overlooked colony there. One hundred and fifty were recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count, 500 were counted at Mai Po on 28 November and three were in Kowloon Park on 22 December. BBR,CC

17 Little Green Heron *Butorides striatus*

Recorded at Mai Po between 4 April and 27 September with a maximum of 12 on 12 September. Summer singles were reported from several sites on the Sai Kung peninsula and around Tolo Harbour and one was seen at Wanchai Gap Road on 12 May. Two were at Shing Mun on 5 October with singles there until 28 November and singles were at Pok Fu Lam Reservoir on 23 October, Tai Po Kau on 8 and 24 November and Tung Lo Wan, Sha Tin on 24 November. BBR,CC

18 Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*

Approximately 25 pairs bred at Shuen Wan egretty and 60 were roosting there on 28 September. No counts were received from other breeding sites. Four hundred and seventy-one were recorded during the Waterfowl Count in mid-January and 309 on the Waterfowl Count in mid-November. BBR,CC

19 Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

At least one pair bred at Tai Po Market KCR Station egretty and breeding was also reported at Shuen Wan where the peak count (presumably including both adults and young) was 145 on 28 August. No counts were received from other breeding sites. One hundred and nineteen were counted during the mid-January Waterfowl Count, 58 were at Mai Po on 12 January and 40 on 8 May, 35 were at Luk Keng on 17 May and 70 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 11 December. BBR,CC

20 Swinhoe's Egret *Egretta eulophotes*

One at Mai Po on 8 and 10 April (NG,MR *et al.*) was the only report. BBR

21 Reef Egret *Egretta sacra*
BBR,CC

22 Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Several pairs bred at Tai Po Market KCR Station. Breeding also occurred, in lower numbers than in 1991, at Shuen Wan where the peak count was 140 on 13 August. As with all the egrets no counts were received from major colonies in Starling Inlet and Deep Bay. The total of 2,098 on the mid-January Waterfowl Count was only just short of the record 2,121 in 1990. A winter roost at Chung Chi Pond, Chinese University held at least 250 birds until mid-February, 140 were at Shuen Wan on 8 October, 848 were recorded during the mid-November Waterfowl Count and 820 were at Mai Po on 20 December. A grey-phase bird was at Mai Po on 26 September (DAD). BBR,CC

23 Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*

All reports came from Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui where monthly peaks were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	3	5	5	15	-	1	3	2	6	20	8

BBR,CC

24 Great Egret *Egretta alba*

Breeding numbers at Shuen Wan were lower than in 1991 possibly due to house construction. The maximum count at the egretty was 40 on 13 August with 55 at Shuen Wan pond on 15 October. A total of 559 seen during the mid-January Waterfowl Count was typical of recent years. At Mai Po, 198 were counted on 5 April and 345 were recorded during the mid-December Waterfowl Count. BBR,CC

25 Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The total of 1,478 during the mid-January Waterfowl Count was the second highest recorded (1,699 were noted in 1990). Five at Mai Po on 16 June and 11 July were presumably summering. Eight hundred and sixty-six were recorded during the mid-December Waterfowl Count. Up to 12 were at Shuen Wan in the periods January-February and October-December and up to 26 were at Ho Chung River mouth in November-December. BBR,CC

26 Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

One was seen at Shing Mun on 5 April. All other reports came from Deep Bay where monthly peaks were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	2	2	5	2	-	3	1	6	8	3	1

The absence of summer reports may be primarily a consequence of limited observer activity. BBR,CC

27 Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

Three immatures were at Mai Po on 7 January and three (probably the same) were seen on the mid-January Waterfowl Count with one immature there until 21 February (RWL *et al.*). In the second winter period one was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 25 October (MMC) and an immature ranged between there and Mai Po from 15 November to 12 December when, on the latter date, it was seen going to roost on a telegraph pole (MRL *et al.*).

28 Oriental White Stork *Ciconia ciconia boyciana*

Ten remained in the Deep Bay area from 1991, but 11 were counted during the mid-January Waterfowl Count and on 25 and 26 January (PJL *et al.*). Ten were present on 16 February, five on 22

February and one remained until 9 March (SC *et al.*). Fourteen returned, first seen on 13 November and remained into 1993 (GJC *et al.*).

This is the seventh record for Hong Kong and is the third consecutive winter of occurrence. CC

30 White Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus*

An immature was recorded at Mai Po from 4 to 8 January, one was seen on the mid-January Waterfowl Count and there were further sightings of one there on 16 and 22 February, 13 and 27 March, 12-13 April and 10 May (PRK, GJC, SC *et al.*). Perhaps only one or two birds were involved. In autumn an adult and two immatures were seen on 24 October (RWL) and at least two were noted the next day. One immature was reported subsequently until 26 December when two immatures were recorded, remaining into 1993 (SC, DAD *et al.*). CC

31 European Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Present from 1991 with six on 7 January increasing to 14 on 25 January and 15 between 12 and 23 February. Twelve were still present on 31 March decreasing to four by 27 April with the last one sighted on 10 May. In the second half of the year one was seen from 17 October, two on 12 December, three on 13 December and four from 28 December into 1993. The count of 15 was the highest since at least 1984 (when 14 were recorded). BBR, CC

32 Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*

Thirty-nine were in Deep Bay on 9 February and the highest count of the winter came on 22 March when 47 were at Mai Po (GAW). Fifteen were still present on 12 April with nine on 4 May and three on 16 May. One immature summered spending much of August at Tin Shui Wai. Two were seen on 25 September increasing to eight by 23 October, 27 on 14 November and a new record count of 62 on 24 November (RWL). BBR, CC

33 Lesser Treeduck *Dendrocygna javanica*

An immature on fishponds near Mai Po on 12 September (DAD, PRK, MH *et al.*) was the first since 1971 and the sixth Hong Kong record. No breeding occurred in the Waterfowl Collection at Mai Po in 1991 or 1992 so origin from that source is precluded.

[**Swan** *Cygnus sp.*

A party of ten adult and four immature swans seen from the Mai Po Boardwalk on 16 November (SC, WLY) were the first swans recorded in Hong Kong and were either Whooper or Bewick's Swans *C. cygnus* or *C. columbianus*.]

36 Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Two were at Mai Po on 10 January (MH) and one was seen there on 13 December (JH, RPT) and 20 December (SC). CC

37 Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

The serious decline in recorded numbers of this species continues with only 387 counted on the mid-January Waterfowl Count - the lowest total since 1983 (4,011 were counted during the Waterfowl Count in 1988). The latest in spring was a single at Tsim Bei Tsui on 13 April. Numbers were very low again during the second winter period with the first record being eight at Mai Po on 9 December and 40 there on 20 December. BBR, CC

39 Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Two males and two females in the Waterfowl Collection at Mai Po on 9 January were full-winged. Full-winged birds were regularly recorded at Mai Po until 16 May, when a pair was on the Scrape (VBP), and from 14 September (RWL). Unfortunately it seems that not all young reared in the Waterfowl Collection have been pinioned and that in early December 1992 two males and five females escaped from a collection in Fairview Park (S. Chan *in litt.*); thus, all records from Hong Kong are now of suspect origin. BBR

40 Wigeon *Anas penelope*

A new record total of 1,335 was seen during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. The latest record in spring was of two in the Waterfowl Collection on 10 May. Twenty were back at Mai Po on 12 October, 645 were in Deep Bay on 14 November and 1,243 were counted during the mid-December Waterfowl Count. BBR, CC

A first-winter male hybrid Wigeon x American Wigeon *A. americana* was seen intermittently from 2 February to 3 April at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui, (DSM, GJC *et al.*). See separate paper in this Report.

41 Falcated Teal *Anas falcata*

The count of 118 on the mid-January Waterfowl Count was rather low. The last in spring was a male on 8 May in the Waterfowl Collection. The first in autumn (and the only record away from Deep Bay) was one at Shuen Wan on 8 October. Numbers were slow to build up with a peak of only 53 recorded during the mid-December Waterfowl Count. BBR, CC

42 Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Regularly recorded in Deep Bay until 11 April, with peaks of 11 during the mid-January Waterfowl Count and eight at Tsim Bei Tsui on 16 February. In the second winter period noted from 10 November when three were at Tin Shui Wai and seven at Mai Po. The peak count was 11 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 December when two were noted at Mai Po. Wild birds of this species appear to be particularly at home in the Waterfowl Collection at Mai Po. BBR

- 43 Baikal Teal** *Anas formosa*
A full-winged drake was in the Waterfowl Collection at Mai Po from 1 to 28 February (RWL,GJC) and a full-winged drake (possibly of questionable origin) was seen in Kowloon Park on 20 December (CKT,YYT). CC
- 44 Teal** *Anas crecca*
The peak count in the first part of the year was of 2,686 during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Away from Deep Bay up to 80 were at Shuen Wan between 5 February and 4 March, one was in Kowloon Park on 26 February and a pair was there on 8 March. One hundred were still at Mai Po on 9 April but there were no later reports. Thirty were at Mai Po on 26 September, 1,257 were counted during the mid-November Waterfowl Count and 1,355 were at Mai Po on 20 December when one was again reported from Kowloon Park. BBR,CC
- 45 Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*
Small numbers were noted in Deep Bay in the first part of the year, with 23 seen on the mid-January Waterfowl Count and 17 on 22 February. The latest was recorded during the Bird Race on 10 to 11 April. Four were seen at Mai Po on 24 October and there were many reports thereafter with peaks of 13 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 15 November and 30 in Deep Bay on 5 December. BBR,CC
- 46 Yellow-nib Duck** *Anas poecilorhyncha*
A sighting of two adults with two ducklings at Mai Po on 6 June (SC) was the first breeding report since 1988. Only 190 were seen on the mid-January Waterfowl Count (the lowest number since 1985). Fifty-eight were at Mai Po on 11 July, 169 were seen during the mid-November Waterfowl Count and 256 were at Mai Po on 20 December. BBR,CC
- 47 Pintail** *Anas acuta*
A total of 3,070 was recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count but the peak count in the first part of the year was 4,560 at Mai Po on 19 February. The last five in spring were at Mai Po on 4 April and the first six in autumn were seen there on 26 September. The total of 5,616 on the mid-November Waterfowl Count was a new high count for Hong Kong exceeding the record 5,361 in January 1991. BBR,CC
1991: the record count was 5,361 as noted above, not as stated.
- 48 Garganey** *Anas querquedula*
Up to 20 wintered at Mai Po, again mostly in the Waterfowl Collection. In spring the peak count was 59 on 9 April and the last record was of five at Mai Po on 8 May. One was in the Waterfowl Collection there on 28 August and the highest count in autumn was 77 on 13 September. Twenty were in the Waterfowl Collection on 14 November with 12 still there on 12 December. BBR

- 49 Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*
A total of 3,846 was seen during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Spring departure passed unnoticed but the first two to return to Mai Po on 13 September (PRK,PJL,MRL) were nine days earlier than the previous early date in autumn. Numbers built up rapidly and 2,325 were recorded on the mid-November Waterfowl Count and 4,252 were counted at Mai Po on 20 December. BBR,CC
1991: the record count was 4,354, not as stated.
- 50 Common Pochard** *Aythya ferina*
One long-staying male was probably responsible for most or all of the records at Mai Po between 1 January and 10 April. The only other report during the first winter period was a female there on 25 January. Singles were at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 November, three males were at Tsim Bei Tsui and one male was at Mai Po on 21 November, a female was at Mai Po on 22 November and two males were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 December. BBR
- 51 Baer's Pochard** *Aythya baeri*
A male was seen in the Waterfowl Collection at Mai Po on 7 January (SC), a male and female were there on 11 January (PJL), a female was seen nearby on 31 January (RWL) and two males and a female were in the Collection on 22 February (GJC). Also at Mai Po a male was seen on 23 February (RWL) and one was seen on 11 April (ARL). The only other record in the first part of the year was a male at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 March (PRK,PJL). Five were at Mai Po on 15 November and a male was in the Waterfowl Collection on 30 December (SC). Whilst it is clear that some wild birds are attracted by the captive waterfowl at Mai Po, it also seems that some of the captive birds are almost full-winged. Whilst this suspicion persists records from the Waterfowl Collection will only be published if birds are seen flying strongly. BBR
- 52 Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*
Rather scarce early in the year with peaks of nine on 9 and 31 January and 21 on 4 February. The latest were five on 12 April and one on 27 April. All reports came from Mai Po. In the second part of the year the first report and peak count came from Mai Po where 17 were seen on 14 November. Twelve were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 December and up to ten were at Mai Po during December. BBR
- 53 Scaup** *Aythya marila*
A first-year male at Shuen Wan on 5 January (RWL) and a free-flying female in the Mai Po Waterfowl Collection on 15 November (PJL) were the only reports.
- 56 Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*
Very scarce, with only two reports: five in Starling Inlet on 1 January (DAD) and six from the Mai Po Boardwalk on 29 March (MRL).

- 57 Black Baza** *Aviceda leuphotes*
Two at Chek Keng on 17 April were the first. Thereafter two (displaying) were at Bride's Pool on 21 April, four were at Tai Long Wan on 25 April and one at Tai Mei Tuk on 26 April. Up to three were seen at Ho Chung, the Chinese University, Ting Kok, Shuen Wan and Luk Keng between May and August with the largest groups, possibly family parties, comprising five birds near Tai Po on 15 August and Three Fathoms Cove, Sai Kung on 29 August. The only later reports were of four at Ho Chung on 20 September and two, apparently migrating west, at Lok Ma Chau on 5 October.
- 58 Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus*
One was seen over Tai Po Kau on 29 March (MH,RDES).
This is the fifth record for Hong Kong.
- 59 Black-shouldered Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*
At Mai Po one was seen on 8 January (RWL), one, possibly an immature, on 26 January (GJC,PRK,PJL) and one on 23 February (JGH). An adult and a juvenile were at Mai Po on 5 and 6 July (AD,SK), and one was there on 11 July (MRL). An adult was near Ta Kwu Ling on 16 August (JGH) and singles were seen at Tin Shui Wai on 31 August (RWL), 12 September (a juvenile) (MRL) and 3 October (JGH,MH). The pattern of records and the presence of a juvenile in late summer suggest that breeding may have occurred in Hong Kong.
- 60 Black Kite** *Milvus migrans*
Apart from the winter roost on Stonecutters Island, the largest concentrations reported were of 120 in Aberdeen Country Park on 7 December and 150 at Deep Bay Fence on 24 December. BBR,CC
- 61 White-bellied Sea Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucogaster*
Only two pairs were reported during the breeding season - one of these probably reared one young. Sightings away from its usual areas on the islands and in the eastern New Territories included one at Mount Austin on 24 October and an immature in the Tsim Bei Tsui area on 1 and 25 December. CC
- 62 Black Vulture** *Aegypius monachus*
One was seen over Mai Po on 28 and 30 November (RWL,JA).H).
- 63 Serpent Eagle** *Spilornis cheela*
Reported from Shek Lin, Tai Po Kau, Sai Kung and Sheung Shui. BBR,CC
- 64 Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*
Up to three were seen at Mai Po until 13 April with adult males reported on 8 and 24 January. In autumn the first was seen at Mai Po on 19 September, four were noted on 24 September and up to three were recorded for the remainder of the year. One was killed when it flew into power lines near the Mai Po Education Centre in mid-December. BBR,CC

- 66 Pied Harrier** *Circus melanoleucos*
Single females or immatures were seen at San Tin on 12 January (RWL), Mai Po on 1 February (RWL) and Tsim Bei Tsui on 19 April (MDW).
- 67 Northern Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*
A female, probably immature, was seen at Mai Po on 20 April (RWL).
- 68 Japanese Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter gularis*
A male was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 5 November (DPC) and first-year males were trapped at Mai Po on 8 and 14 November (PJL,ACG *et al.*).
1989: A male was at Pui O on 15 April (MB).
- 68.1 Besra** *Accipiter virgatus*
Single birds were trapped as follows: a female at Mai Po on 4 January (PRK, DSM *et al.*); a first-year male on 10 October at Kadoorie ARC (DPC); a male on 31 October at Kadoorie ARC (PJL,ACG,DSM); and a first-year male at Kadoorie ARC on 28 November (PJL,ACG). In addition, one was seen at Ting Kok on 14 May (GAW).
- 69 Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*
Reports of a large immature female from Lok Ma Chau on 7 November (PJL,MRL) and 21 November (PJL) and from the Mai Po landfill area on 21 November (PJL) probably refer to the same individual which was trapped at Mai Po on 13 November (GJC,FW).
- Small accipiters, *A. gularis*, *A. nisus* or *A. virgatus*, were reported as follows:
- | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 3 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 15 | 12 | 5 |
- While the autumn to spring records possibly relate to all three species, it seems likely that the midsummer records relate only to Besra.
- 70 Crested Goshawk** *Accipiter trivirgatus*
Reported from Aberdeen Country Park, Happy Valley Cemetery, Tai Wai, Tai Po Kau (where display was frequently observed), Ho Chung, Tai Mei Tuk, Cheung Shu Tan, Shing Mun and Luk Keng. BBR,CC
- 71 Chinese Goshawk** *Accipiter soloensis*
Nine were seen flying north at Tsim Bei Tsui on 19 April (MDW) and two, also flying north, were there the next day (MDW). Single males were seen in Aberdeen Country Park on 4 May (VBP) and Fanling Golf Course on 9 May (MLC).
1989: Nine were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 18 April and one was at Tai Po Kau on 19 April (MB *et al.*).

72 Grey-faced Buzzard

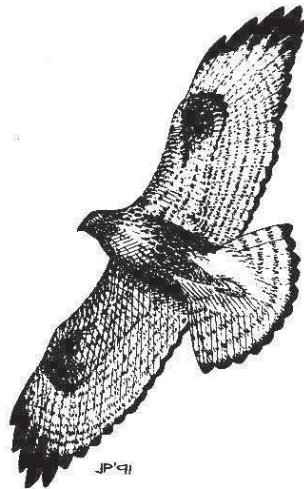
Butastur indicus

Very scarce: singles reported from Tai Po Kau on 13 March (VBP,PJL), Tai Long Wan on 9 April (RWL), Tin Shui Wai on 10 April (GAW) and Tai Po Kau on 12 April (GJC) with three there on 14 April (GJC).

73 Buzzard

Buteo buteo

Up to three widely reported in the northern and central New Territories until 9 April with singles on Hong Kong Island on 1 and 28 March. Two at Tsim Bei Tsui on 22 February showed characters of the race *B.b. japonicus* (CAV). In the second winter period recorded from 12 October with peak counts of four at Mai Po on 24 October and five at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 December. Most reports were from the Deep Bay area but one was at Mount Austin on 1 December. CC



Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

(Jeremy N. Pearse)

74 Spotted Eagle

Aquila clanga

Up to three were seen in the Deep Bay area until 8 April and up to five were noted there from 17 October until the end of the year. An immature of the '*fulvescens*' colour form was at Mai Po from 15 November until at least 20 December (SC *et al.*). CC

75 Imperial Eagle

Aquila heliaca

A maximum of seven were seen in the Deep Bay area until 10 April and up to seven were again there from 29 October. Away from the Deep Bay area, one was at Sha Lo Tung on 16 February and one was seen over Shek Kong Catchment on 6 December. BBR,CC

76 Bonelli's Eagle

Hieraetus fasciatus

Pairs were reported from at least six localities in the northern, eastern and central New Territories but the only firm evidence of breeding was a fledged juvenile being fed by an adult at Shuen Wan on 13 August. An adult was seen at Mount Austin on 15 February. BBR,CC

77 Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

Up to four were recorded in Deep Bay until 27 April and up to six were there from 8 August. One perched in a tree above Tai Po Kau orchard on 9 October was unusual. BBR,CC

79 Kestrel

Falco tinnunculus

There were widespread reports of one or two birds in the early part of the year with the latest at Chek Keng on 16 April. The first autumn bird was seen at Mai Po on 13 September and singles were again widespread until the end of the year with a maximum of three at Mai Po on 5 December. BBR,CC

82 Hobby

Falco subbuteo

A single winter report came from Sai Kung where one was seen on 14 February. Spring passage occurred between 1 April and 27 May with records at Mai Po on nine dates, two at Tai Long Wan on 17 April and single reports from Tai Mo Shan, Ta Kwu Ling and Lok Ma Chau. In autumn there were nine reports at Mai Po between 14 August and 17 October and within this period singles were recorded at Mount Nicholson, Luk Keng (two), Sai Kung and Ho Chung. The latest report was of three immatures at Mount Austin on 17 and 24 October.

82.1 Saker Falcon

Falco cherrug

An immature was seen at Mai Po on 8 and 16 February (PRK,RWL) and another immature was seen at Mai Po on 15, 21 and 30 November and 5 December (PJL,CAV,JA).

These are the fourth and fifth records of this falcon, previous sightings having been in 1953, 1988 and 1990.

83 Peregrine Falcon

Falco peregrinus

Widely reported but with most winter records from the Deep Bay area. A pair was seen in the Sai Kung peninsula in late spring and there were several summer reports from Hong Kong Island. BBR,CC

84 Chinese Francolin

Francolinus pintadeanus

Widespread reports from the New Territories and at least three calling near Shek O on Hong Kong Island on 19 July. BBR,CC

85 Japanese Quail

Coturnix japonica

Up to seven were seen on the landfill area to the east of Mai Po until 3 May and up to five were at Tin Shui Wai until 11 May. Other reports in the first winter period were of one at Tai Mo Shan on 25

January, two in Yuen Long Industrial Estate on 22 February and 12 March and three at the Tai Po waterfront reclamation area on 1 March. In the second winter period there were singles at Lau Fau Shan and Mong Tseng on 25 October, two at the Mai Po landfill site on 1 November, one in Tan Shan Valley, Hok Tau on 12 and 14 November and one at Luk Keng on 13-14 December. Also reported during the Christmas Count on 20 December. BBR,CC

88 Slaty-legged Crane *Rallina eurizonoides*
One was in Kowloon Park from 13 to 26 February (HM,PJL,MRL). This is the seventh record for Hong Kong.

90 Banded Rail *Rallus striatus*
Reported throughout the year from the Deep Bay area and Luk Keng. BBR,CC

91 Baillon's Crane *Porzana pusilla*
One was seen at Tai Long Wan on 25 April (VBP,CAV). This is the eighth record for Hong Kong.

92 Ruddy Crane *Porzana fusca*
One was seen in a ditch at the Border Fence, Tam Kon Chau Village, Mai Po on 8 January, 4 March, 7 March and 7 to 8 April (SC et al). Another was present at Cheung Shu Tan during 13-17 February and again on 10 March (GJC).

94 Crimson-legged Crane *Amaurornis akool*
One in an ornamental park at Tai Wai Bus Station on 3 and 4 April (DAD,MRL) was the first record since 1989.

95 White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*
BBR,CC

96 Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
BBR,CC

97 Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea*
One was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20 April (MDW) and a female was at Tai Long Wan on 18 October (JAH).

98 Coot *Fulica atra*
A new high total of 3,245 was recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. In summer three were recorded at Mai Po on 16 June and four adults were there on 11 July. BBR,CC

100 Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*
A female or immature was present at Tai Po Kau Village on 26 May (FW).

101 Painted Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*
A pair with three juveniles, present at Tin Shui Wai during 9-23 August, almost certainly bred locally. There is only one confirmed breeding record for this species, in 1988. A female was at Shing Mun on 17 October and two were also trapped at Mai Po on 28 October.

103 Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*
Somewhat unusually the only record in the early winter period was two birds seen during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Passage was first noted on 27 March when 15 were present at Mai Po. Numbers built up to 50 on 7 April with 40 present on 13 May. The final spring record was 13 on 27 May. Recorded in autumn from 23 July to 1 November with the maximum count being 329 on 16 October at Mai Po (RWL), a new high for Hong Kong. BBR,CC

104 Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*
Winter numbers in Deep Bay peaked at 510 on 31 January (SM) which is a new high for Hong Kong. On 5 April there were 144 still present at Mai Po; this was followed by only 36 on 13 April and the final spring record was a single on 23rd. Recorded in the second winter period from 14 November (24 at Tsim Bei Tsui), numbers building up to 355 by 20 December. BBR,CC

105 Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*
Recorded on 27 dates in spring between 9 February and 10 May with high counts of 36 on 17 April and 25 on 28 March, both at Mai Po. Noted on nine dates in autumn, between 3 October and 5 December, but apart from a second bird present on 31 October, these records relate to the same, injured individual. BBR

106 Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*
Seventy three were recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. A pair with four young was noted at the Mai Po landfill on 1 and 3 May; although this species probably breeds in small numbers every year, mainly on reclaimed land, this is the first confirmed breeding since 1986. Noted in autumn from 11 July with the maximum count being 89 at Mai Po on 11 October. In the second winter period 102 were present at Tin Shui Wai on 12 December. BBR,CC



5 Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*
Mai Po, Hong Kong March 1992

T.O. Lee

107 Ringed Plover

Charadrius hiaticula

A first-winter bird of the race *C.h. tundrae* was seen at Mai Po on 25 January (MLC,PRK,PJL *et al.*). This is presumed to be the same individual as seen on 22 December 1991.

108 Kentish Plover

Charadrius alexandrinus

The highest count in the first winter period was 3000 on 14 January and 1500 were still present on 20 March. Subsequently, spring numbers were no more than 13 (on 12 April at Mai Po) and the final spring record was on 27 May. Recorded in autumn from 22 September, with 569 present a month later and 3000 a further month later. Numbers in the second winter period reached a high of 4000 on 12 December.

BBR,CC

109 Lesser Sand Plover†

Charadrius mongolus

On 14 January 150 birds were present at Mai Po (PJL), the highest count made in winter. Spring passage noted from 30 March, numbers peaking at 200 on 3 April. The final spring record was 30 at Mai Po on 16 May. Recorded in autumn from 28 July, but no more than three birds recorded per day until the end of September. Subsequent autumn numbers reached a peak of 255 on 15 November and the final record of the year was 200 on 24 November.

BBR

110 Greater Sand Plover†

Charadrius leschenaultii

The only winter records were a single at Mai Po on 11 January and two there on 20 February. A single at Mai Po during 11-13 March was either a winter bird or an early migrant, but spring passage was

certainly apparent by 18 March. Recorded in spring until 27 May with a maximum of 2000 during 9-10 April (DR), a new high for Hong Kong. Six birds were present at Mai Po on 11 July followed by one on 28th. Recorded on 5 dates in August and three in September. The final and highest count of autumn was 300 at Mai Po on 6 October.

BBR

111 Oriental Plover

Charadrius veredus

A male was present at Mai Po on 7 April (RWL); two birds, including one male, were present there on 10 April (GJC,PRK); and another two birds were present on 13 April (MH).

112 Asiatic Golden Plover

Pluvialis fulva

The highest early winter period count was 250 on 27 January. A count of 257 on 20 March probably involved passage birds and numbers built up to 900 on 13 April (SM), a new record. The latest spring record was five on 28 May. In August a single was noted on 2nd followed by 19 on 25th. Although most autumn records occurred during September the maximum count was 155 on 16 October. On 10 November 135 were present and the final record of the year was 60 on 12 December. All records at Mai Po.

BBR

113 Grey Plover

Pluvialis squatarola

The maximum count of the early winter period was 480 in Deep Bay during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Three hundred were still present on 18 March but thereafter numbers declined to an April maximum of 75 on 15th, with the same number present on 18 May. The presence of 33 birds on 6 June and 11 during 5-6 July suggests a small over-summering population. Certain autumn passage was noted from 5 September with a slow increase in numbers to 90 by 21 November. On 20 December 321 proved the highest count of the second winter period. All records at Mai Po.

BBR,CC

114 Grey-headed Lapwing

Vanellus cinereus

Present at Tsim Bei Tsui until 8 March in the first part of the year with a high count of nine during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Apparent passage birds were seen from 26 September to 25 October with up to three birds recorded at Mai Po on seven dates during this time. The wintering population was noted from 15 November at Tsim Bei Tsui, reaching a high of four birds by the end of the year. The pattern of occurrence for 1992 was more distinct than in most years.

CC

115 Lapwing

Vanellus vanellus

January brought four records: 15 on 4th, one on 7th, two on 11th (all at Mai Po) and one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 18th. From 21 November to 18 December recorded at Mai Po on six dates, four of these involving between one and seven birds. However, 126, seven short of the highest ever count (in 1991), were recorded on the first of these dates and 72 were noted on 12 December. This is the second successive year in which there has been a notable influx of this species.

116 Great Knot † *Calidris tenuirostris*

Up to 25 were noted in the early winter period, higher than any previous year. Beginning of spring passage difficult to pinpoint but probably around 7 March. Numbers built up to 54 by the end of the month and reached a maximum of 150 on 2 April. The latest spring record was 19 on 6 June, although these could have been birds intending to over-summer. A single bird on 28 July possibly also belonged to this category. First noted in autumn from 8 September and from then until the 20 December seen on 12 dates, with a maximum of 19 on 16 October. BBR,CC

1991: The entry should read: '...noted from 29 March to 30 May with 305 at Mai Po on 8 April being the highest count.' Table 1 on page 40 should be amended to read 130 on 5 April, 300 on 6th and 305 on 8th.

117 Knot *Calidris canutus*

Higher winter numbers than ever before were recorded in the first part of the year, reaching a maximum of 64 on 24 January (PJL) and this, most unusually, was the highest count of the year. Spring passage probably commenced around 7 March with numbers building up to 50 on 18 May. The latest record was 2 on 6 June. Recorded in autumn on nine dates from 8 September to 24 November, the highest count being 17 on 24 September. BBR

118 Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Noted on eight dates from 2 April to 13 May, probably involving 14 individuals, including, on the latest date, the first to be trapped in Hong Kong. Seven were at Tai Long Wan on 16 April, otherwise all records were at Mai Po. BBR

1991: Also one at Mai Po on 9 April.

119 Red-necked Stint † *Calidris ruficollis*

Up to 12 birds were recorded in the first winter period up to 23 February. Spring passage was noted from 24 March to 27 May with the peak count being 484 at Mai Po and Tin Shui Wai on 6 May. In autumn recorded from 14 August and the highest count was 21 at Mai Po and Tin Shui Wai on 23 August. Noted on three dates in October, four in November and two in December, the latest record being at Mai Po on 20th. BBR,CC

119.1 Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Three were present at Mai Po on 10 April (GJC,PRK) with another there on 3 May (PRK) and a further bird during 5-6 May (PJL). In addition, one was seen at Tin Shui Wai on 27 April and 6 May (RWL).

120 Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Recorded on five dates in the first three months of the year, the highest count being 24 at Tin Shui Wai on 18 January. In spring noted

from 2-20 April, the highest count being 30 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 2 April. In autumn recorded from 12 September with two records in September, three in October and four in November, the highest count being 16 on 14 November. Also noted through most of December up to 25th, including 50 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5th. BBR,CC

121 Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta*

Up to six birds were noted on four dates in January, followed by three at Mai Po on 3 March. The peak spring count was 60 at Mai Po on 11 April, with 50 there the next day. Three at Tin Shui Wai on 6 May was the final spring record. In autumn noted from 28 July to 24 October with a maximum count of 20 at Mai Po on 26 September. Wintering birds were noted in the Tsim Bei Tsui area from 29 November and numbered 50 on 25 December. BBR,CC

122 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*

Recorded in spring between 24 March and 27 May with up to 15 birds noted during April but reaching a peak of 118 at Mai Po on 10 May (PJL), a new high for Hong Kong. During autumn recorded from 2 August to 9 October with a maximum of seven at Mai Po on 28 September. BBR

123 Curlew Sandpiper † *Calidris ferruginea*

What was probably a wintering bird was noted on 22 February at Mai Po. Spring passage was recorded from 3 March to at least 28 May, peaking at 4000 on 13 April, with about 100 birds still at Mai Po on 6 June. Up to 80 presumed non-breeding birds or failed breeders were present at Mai Po during July. Noted on five dates in August, three in September and once each in the three remaining months of the year, the latest being 11 December. BBR

124 Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The peak count in the first winter period was 4000 on 14 January (PJL) and 22 February (MLC,PRK), the highest ever in Hong Kong. Numbers declined to 2000 by 3 March and to 1000 by 18th. During April the highest count was 10 on 3rd and the final record of the spring was a single on 10 May. Recorded in autumn from 14 August, numbers reaching 320 on 28 September, 604 on 23 October and 2760 on 9 November. BBR,CC

125 Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus*

The first ever winter records of this species occurred on 14 and 25 January at Mai Po (PJL). Spring numbers rather low with singles noted on 3, 7-9 April and 16 May and four noted on 11 April, all at Mai Po. A first-winter bird was noted at Mai Po from 15-28 November, remaining into 1993. BBR

- 126 Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limnicola falcinellus*
Up to 80 were recorded at Mai Po in the first winter period. Spring numbers peaked at 250 during 10-11 April and the final spring record was 20 on 16 May. Noted in autumn from 28 July with numbers peaking at 30 on 26 September. The final record of the year was 30 on 26 December. All records at Mai Po. BBR
1991: 105 were at Mai Po on 8 April, making this the highest spring count.
- 127 Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*
Singles were recorded on 29 February and 11-12 March at Tsim Bei Tsui, on 12 April at Mai Po (a female) and on 17 April at the same locality. In autumn up to four juveniles were noted at Mai Po during 26-29 September. BBR
- 129 Fantail Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*
During the mid-January Waterfowl Count 123 were recorded in the Territory, similar to counts of the previous two years. Spring numbers peaked at 100 at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau on 7 April. In autumn recorded from 5 September with 60 present at Mai Po on 24 October. BBR,CC
- 130 Pintail Snipe** *Gallinago stenura*
Up to 10 birds were noted in the first winter period at Lok Ma Chau; twenty at the same locality on 1 March may have been early migrants. The highest April count was 10 on 5th and 13th and the final spring record was on 23 April. Noted in autumn from 26 August when ten were at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau; ten were also recorded on 7 and 21 November at Lok Ma Chau. BBR,CC
- 131 Swinhoe's Snipe** *Gallinago megala*
Five birds were recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Spring numbers reached a high of eight, at Tai Long Wan and Mai Po on 10 April. A single at Mai Po on 5 May was the final spring record. Noted in autumn from 28 August with the bulk of records occurring during September, the peak count being 6 at Luk Keng on 20 September. Three birds were present at Lok Ma Chau on 7 November and two were there on 19 December. BBR
- 134 Asiatic Dowitcher**† *Limnodromus semipalmatus*
Recorded in spring from 4 April to 16 May, numbers peaking at 116 on 21 April. In autumn noted from 28 July to 26 September, the highest count being eight on 2 August. BBR
- 135 Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*
Singles recorded on five dates in the year, as follows: at Chuen Lung on 10th, at Tai Po Kau on 19th, at Sha Lo Tung on 21 January; at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 February; and at Tai Po Kau on 27 December.

- 136 Black-tailed Godwit**† *Limosa limosa*
The wintering flock in Deep Bay peaked at 168 on 6 February. Spring passage noted from 21 March to 28 May, though no more than six recorded in the latter month. The peak count was 1500 on 9 April. Up to nine birds were noted at Mai Po on four dates from 11 July to 2 August. The main autumn passage was noted from 18 September to 21 November, the peak count being 200 on the latter date. Sixty were present on 12 December. BBR,CC
- 137 Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*
Up to two birds were noted in Deep Bay in the first winter period, with five on 13 March possibly including early spring migrants. Main spring passage occurred from 28 March to 13 April, the peak count being 30 at Mai Po on 6th. Recorded in autumn from 25 August, when 145 were present at Mai Po, to 6 October and then again from 19 November to 26 December, the latter period probably indicating the arrival of wintering birds and reaching a maximum of seven on 3 December. BBR
- 138 Little Whimbrel** *Numenius minutus*
One was at Mai Po on 11 April (MT). BBR
1989: One was at Kai Tak during 27-28 April and one was at Mai Po on 29 April (MB *et al.*).
- 139 Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*
Fifteen at Mai Po on 12 January was the highest winter count so far for a species whose first winter record was in 1986. Noted in spring between 11 March and 18 May, the highest count being 50 on 27 April. Up to three birds were recorded during 11-13 July. Main autumn passage was recorded from 25 August to 16 October, the highest count being 107 at Mai Po on the former date. Seven late migrants were present on 7 November followed by records on four dates up to 21 December, including 10 on 6 December. All records, except for a single at Shuen Wan on 25 August, at Mai Po. BBR
- 140 Curlew** *Numenius arquata*
A count of 1030 on 12 and 22 February at Mai Po (DAD) was by far the highest ever, almost doubling the previous record of 1991. Numbers stood at 450 on 11 March and had declined to 38 by the end of the month. The final spring record was of 11 at Mai Po on 9 June. Up to 12 birds were present during 11-13 July and the main autumn passage occurred from 25 August to 23 October when the peak count was 92 on the latter date. Winter numbers had reached 370 by 3 December. BBR,CC
- 141 Australian Curlew** *Numenius madagascariensis*
Two birds were recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Spring passage was noted from 23 March to 16 May with, as usual, ones or twos present on most days except for three on 25 March, five on 16

TABLE 1. Numbers of selected wader species at Mai Po during 4-23 April 1992

Species	Date																			
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Lesser Sand Plover	3	1	-	2	20	50	50	50	30	10	-	30	7	3	30	-	-	-	-	-
Greater Sand Plover	40	50	30	100	350	2000	2000	1500	1200	300	-	920	65	173	260	32	-	25	-	25
Great Knot	95	60	2	35	10	50	40	100	3	90	-	25	-	5	3	-	26	7	35	35
Red-necked Stint	40	30	20	50	100	175	400	200	280	20	5	45	5	35	20	-	20	35	-	-
Curlew Sandpiper	262	1730	250	300	3000	2810	3500	1800	2000	4000	500	2050	1595	2010	3000	-	-	3000	415	1247
Asiatic Dowitcher	10	15	15	17	17	21	30	15	3	32	1	23	21	48	80	-	-	116	32	75
Black-tailed Godwit	295	150	1000	1200	1200	1500	1300	1200	1200	500	-	500	701	210	300	-	-	250	8	250
Spotted Redshank	533	500	300	300	700	1440	1000	800	700	600	50	500	800	253	480	-	-	302	-	249
Redshank	601	500	150	150	300	1845	1500	400	300	350	20	620	900	710	800	-	-	62	-	535
Marsh Sandpiper	289	355	100	500	1400	1505	1500	700	700	418	50	1700	1175	225	500	-	-	-	-	53
Greenshank	274	450	200	200	1100	336	300	40	30	600	-	1470	400	198	500	-	-	380	39	253
Nordmann's Greenshank	18	11	6	8	12	7	12	4	18	12	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terek Sandpiper	12	70	50	20	100	115	100	30	30	2	-	5	70	6	10	-	-	4	-	6

- = not recorded

April and four on 7 May. Single birds were recorded in autumn on nine dates between 5 September and 6 December. BBR

142 Spotted Redshank † *Tringa erythropus*
During the mid-January Waterfowl Count 737 were recorded in Deep Bay. The highest spring count was 1440 at Mai Po on 9 April and the latest record was 40 there on 16 May. Noted in autumn from 2 August but no more than ten on any one date until 16 October when 39 were at Mai Po. Subsequently the highest count was 700 at Mai Po on 24 November. BBR,CC

143 Redshank † *Tringa totanus*
The highest winter count was 421 on 14 January. Spring passage was noted from about 20 March to 27 May, numbers peaking at 1845 at Mai Po on 9 April (GJC), a new high for Hong Kong. Up to 270 were recorded at Mai Po during 11-13 July, 200 were present there on 28th and 1337 on 2 August. Until the end of September the higher counts ranged between 400 and 735 with, apparently, a fairly marked decline subsequently. BBR

144 Marsh Sandpiper † *Tringa stagnatilis*
The highest first winter period count was 600 on 13 February. Spring passage noted from early March, numbers reaching 800 by the end of that month and peaking at 1700 on 15 April. The final spring record was 20 on 3 May. Noted in autumn from 9 August to 23 October, numbers peaking at 435 on 28 September, and then recorded again from 10 November until the end of the year. BBR,CC

145 Greenshank † *Tringa nebularia*
The highest first winter period count was 200 on 12 February. Spring passage was noted from the last half of March and proved to be strong with the peak count being a record 1470 on 15 April (SM). The main autumn passage was noted between 2 August and 16 October, the highest count being 424 on 25 September. Numbers in the second winter period reached 250 by 5 December. Relatively high numbers all year for this species. BBR,CC

146 Nordmann's Greenshank † *Tringa guttifer*
Recorded in spring from 2-15 April and then again from 3 May to 4 June, the differing passage periods of adults (early) and first-summer birds (late) being nicely illustrated. The maximum count in the first period was 18 on 12th and in the second period, seven during 7-10th. As usual, no autumn records. BBR

147 Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*
The mid-January Waterfowl Count recorded 76 birds in the Territory. The peak spring count was three at Mai Po on 5 and 17 April. The peak count in the latter half of the year was 30 during the mid-December Waterfowl Count. BBR,CC

148 Wood Sandpiper*Tringa glareola*

The highest count in the first winter period was 350 at Mai Po on 25 January. The highest spring count was 250 at Mai Po on 13 April. In autumn the highest count was 130 at Lok Ma Chau and two at Mai Po on 12 September.

BBR,CC

149 Terek Sandpiper†*Xenus cinereus*

Noted in spring from 28 March to 6 June with up to 110 also present in July. The peak spring count was 115 on 9 April. Noted up to 16 October in autumn, but numbers not higher than 30 during and after August.

BBR

150 Common Sandpiper*Actitis hypoleucos*

The mid-January Waterfowl Count recorded 122 birds in the Territory. The highest spring count was 12 at Mai Po on 16 April. In autumn the highest count was 30 roosting at Mai Po on 30 August.

BBR,CC

151 Grey-rumped Sandpiper*Heteroscelus brevipes*

Recorded in spring from 16 April to 28 May with the highest count being 123 at Mai Po on 10 May. Recorded in autumn from 2 August to 1 October, the highest count being 12 at Shuen Wan on 25 August. Tends to be noted at a wider variety of locations than other wader species including Deep Bay, Tolo Harbour, Sai Kung and, no doubt, many other suitable, but overlooked, coastal sites.



6 Grey-rumped Sandpiper *Heteroscelus brevipes*
Mai Po, Hong Kong April 1991

Ray Tipper

152 Turnstone*Arenaria interpres*

Winter records of this species are fairly unusual and a single bird recorded in Deep Bay on three dates from 25 January to 8 February was noteworthy. Spring passage recorded from 3 April to 27 May, the maximum count being 40 at Mai Po on 7 May. No records in the second half of the year.

BBR

153 Red-necked Phalarope*Phalaropus lobatus*

Recorded in spring from 15 March to 16 April, the maximum count being 150 in Tolo Harbour on 9 April. Noted in autumn from 22 August to 5 October, mainly on the sea around Hong Kong Island and in Mirs Bay, though there were also singles recorded at Mai Po on 9 September, at Shuen Wan on 15 September and at Lok Ma Chau on 5 October. The highest count was 85 in the West Lamma Channel and south of Hong Kong Island on 23 August.

BBR

156 Great Black-headed Gull*Larus ichthyaetus*

An adult winter was seen at Mai Po on 8 February (GJC *et al.*).



7 First-winter Relict Gull *Larus relictus*
Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong December 1992

Ray Tipper

156.1 Relict Gull*Larus relictus*

A first-winter bird was seen from the Mai Po Boardwalk on 21 November (PRK,MRL) and another first-winter was found at Lau Fau Shan on 28 November (MLC) and seen there again the following day (PRK,PJL,RWL). A first-winter there on 4 and 5 December (VBP,RWL,CAV) may have been either of these individuals, but a first-winter, again at Lau Fau Shan, on 12 and 20 December (PRK,PJL,MRL) was the bird originally seen at Mai Po. This bird was seen again in 1993. These are the second and third records for Hong Kong of this still rather enigmatic species; the first record (also a first-winter) was in 1987/88.

CC



8 First-winter Relict Gull *Larus relictus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong 14 February 1993

Paul Leader

157 Saunders' Gull

Larus saundersi

The highest count in the first part of the year was 120 from the Mai Po Boardwalk on 22 February, rather fewer than in the last two years. The last record in spring was 15 at Mai Po on 12 April. The first in autumn was seen on 23 October and numbers had increased to 74 on 12 December. BBR,CC

158 Black-headed Gull

Larus ridibundus

A total of 15,769 during the mid-January Waterfowl Count was close to the average of the last six years. Most counts came from Deep Bay, 500 in Starling Inlet on 25 January and 500 at Shuen Wan during 25 November to 1 December being the only significant counts elsewhere. Some remained rather late in spring with 1,500 at Mai Po on 9 April being exceptional for that month. The latest in spring was seen on 8 May and the first four in autumn were recorded on 16 October. Numbers in Deep Bay had increased to 8,045 by the mid-December Waterfowl Count. BBR,CC

159 Brown-headed Gull

Larus brunnicephalus

Single adults were seen at Mai Po on 24 January, 10, 21 and 22 February, two were seen on 6 March, three on 7 March and one on 13 March (GJC,MRL *et al.*). A single adult was at Mai Po on 21 and 22 November (DAD,PRK *et al.*).

159.1 Slender-billed Gull

Larus genei

A first-summer bird was seen from the Mai Po Boardwalk and on the Scrape from 3 to 10 April (SHP,PJL,RWL *et al.*). BBR

This is the second record for Hong Kong, the first being in 1990.

160 Black-tailed Gull

Larus crassirostris

Up to three were seen in Deep Bay from January until 10 April. All were first-winter/summer birds except for single second-winters on 16 and 23 February and an adult on 12 March. In Starling Inlet there were 11 on 19 January, three on 25 January and one on 29 January. In the second winter period one first-winter bird was reported in Deep Bay from 6 December with four first-winters at Mai Po on 13 December. BBR

161 Common Gull

Larus canus

A second-winter bird was at Mai Po on 26 January (PRK,PJL), a first-winter there on 9 February (RWL), a first-winter at Tsim Bei Tsui on 16 February (PRK,PJL), two first-winters at Mai Po on 22 and 23 February (PRK,PJL) and a first-winter at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 March (MRL). A minimum of four birds were involved in the above records.

162 Herring Gull

Larus argentatus

A total of 321 recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count was typical of recent years; thereafter, up to 140 were recorded in Deep Bay until early March with the latest being seen during the Bird Race on 10 to 11 April. Almost all records referred to yellow-legged birds, tentatively ascribed to *L. a. mongolicus*. Two adults on 26 January, one adult on 16 February and 2 adults on 1 March appeared to be the pink-legged 'Vega Gull' *L. a. vegae*. The earliest report in the second winter period was of eight at Mai Po on 21 November and 114 were recorded in Deep Bay in the mid-December Waterfowl Count. All reports referred to yellow-legged birds except for one pink-legged individual on 12 December. BBR,CC

163 Slaty-backed Gull

Larus schistisagus

One first-winter bird was seen at Mai Po on 19 February (PJL,GJC,VBP).

[Gull

Larus sp

1991: A first-winter bird at Mai Po on 2 February (PRK) showed characteristics of Glaucous-winged Gull *L. glaucescens*, but the presence of tail and secondary bars suggests, on current knowledge, hybrid origin. There remains only one accepted record of Glaucous-winged Gull (on 27 February 1985) - this was the only gull species on the Hong Kong List which was not recorded in 1992.]

165 Glaucous Gull

Larus hyperboreus

A first-winter bird was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 February (VBP,MRL).

This is the fourth record for Hong Kong; the previous records were in 1974, 1986 and 1988.

- 166 Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*
A first-winter was seen from the Mai Po Boardwalk on 8 February (GJC,PRK,CAV).
This is the second Hong Kong record, the first being an adult at Kai Tak on 20 February 1975.
- 167 Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica*
Spring passage was noted at Mai Po between 28 March and 10 May. High numbers were present in mid-April and 279 on the Scrape on 12 May (PJL) was the largest flock ever recorded in Hong Kong, the previous highest being 180 in 1990. Singles in the West Lamma Channel on 5 and 10 September were the only reports in autumn. BBR
- 168 Caspian Tern** *Sterna caspia*
One was seen at Mai Po on 8 February and two were there on 6 March. Aside from one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 8 March, all other spring records fell between 27 March and 15 May; the peak count was 120 on 8 April. Singles were noted in autumn on 23 October, 14, 22 and 28 November. BBR
- 170 Black-naped Tern** *Sterna sumatrana*
Noted in Tolo Harbour between 17 April and 3 May with the largest number being 25 apparently prospecting on Kong Chau on 25 April (MLC *et al.*). Two were seen in Sai Kung Harbour on 28 April and up to three were noted off Cheung Chau between 17 April and 13 June (MDW). There were no confirmed reports from the Soko Islands this year.
- 172 Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*
Five, at least four of which were juveniles, were seen between Lamma Island and Cheung Chau on 22 August (MRL *et al.*). At least one of these had a red bill-base and red legs and hence was probably of the race *S. h. tibetana*. Six juveniles in the same area on 18 September (PRK,PJL) were of the black-legged and black-billed race *S. h. longipennis*. Ten were in the West Lamma Channel on 10 September (RWL) and two were seen there on 19 September (MLC). Two juveniles were at Mai Po, also on 19 September, and three juveniles were noted there on 26 September (PRK *et al.*).
- 172.1 Aleutian Tern** *Sterna aleutica*
The first record of this species for Hong Kong and China was approximately 190 adults to the south of Hong Kong Island on 22 August (PRK,PJL,MRL *et al.*). These birds apparently remained 'off-passage' for approximately a month with 47 recorded on 5 September (MLC), at least 33 on 10 September (RWL,CAV), approximately 80 on 17 September (PJL) and 24 on 19 September (MLC). See separate paper in this Report.

- 173 Bridled Tern** *Sterna anaethetus*
An adult was seen off Po Toi on 22 August (PJL,PRK,MRL.).
- 174 Sooty Tern** *Sterna fuscata*
1989: Two immatures were seen off Cheung Chau on 21 May after the passage of Typhoon Brenda (MDW). (This record was previously published as referring to Bridled or Sooty Tern.) This is the third record for Hong Kong, the previous two having been in September 1976 and August 1979, and all three have been closely associated with the passage of a typhoon.
- 175 Little Tern** *Sterna albifrons*
Rather thin passage was recorded at Mai Po between 2 April and 14 May with a peak of only ten on 27 April. One at Mai Po on 23 October was the only autumn report. BBR
- 176 Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybrida*
Up to five were seen at Mai Po between 27 April and 13 May. In autumn two were seen off the Soko Islands on 22 August, two were at Mai Po on 9 October and three were there on 24 October.
- 177 White-winged Black Tern** *Chlidonias leucopterus*
Two early birds were seen at Mai Po on 3 April, two were there on 24 April and main passage occurred between 2 and 16 May. The highest counts were 800 on 8 May and 720 on 10 May. Two at Mai Po on 26 September was the only report in autumn.
- 179 Red Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica*
Regularly recorded in the Tsim Bei Tsui area until 11 May with a maximum of 32 on 22 February; also up to two seen in Kowloon Park from 8 to 19 April. One was seen in Tai Po Kau on 26 September, up to 25 at Mai Po between 5 October and 5 December, nine at Shuen Wan on 16 October, 50 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 December and one at Ho Chung on 14 to 15 December. BBR
- 180 Rufous Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis*
At least 200 were roosting in mangroves at Mai Po on 26 January and 2 February and numbers peaked at 120 in the orchard in Tai Po Kau from 10 to 16 February. There were still 20 at Mai Po on 16 May and the latest individual was in Tai Po Kau on 23 May. The first in autumn was at Mai Po on 10 October and 250 were counted there on 5 November. BBR,CC
- 181 Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis*
BBR,CC

- 183 Emerald Dove** *Chalcophaps indica*
Surprisingly, the only reports from Tai Po Kau were of singles on 2 and 21 January, two on 31 January and one on 5 September. One was on the Peak on 20 January, two were at Mount Davis on 16 February and singles were at Cheung Shu Tan on 11 April, Starling Inlet on 1 June and Three Fathoms Cove on 14 August. One was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 18 October and a young (locally bred) juvenile was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 25 October. BBR,CC
- 184 White-bellied Green Pigeon** *Treron sieboldii*
A female was seen in Tai Po Kau on 3 February (RWL). This is the third record for Hong Kong; the previous sightings were on 25 January 1983 and 10 April 1985.
- 185 Red-winged Crested Cuckoo** *Clamator coromandus*
The first was heard at Cheung Shu Tan on 11 April. Subsequently reported from Sai Kung, Lam Tsuen Valley, Chuen Lung, Tai Mei Tuk, Tai Mo Shan and Tai Po Kau until 23 May with up to four at the last site.
- 187 Large Hawk Cuckoo** *Hierococcyx sparverioides*
The earliest was heard in Aberdeen Country Park on 25 February and the latest was seen in Lam Tsuen Valley on 31 October. The latter is the latest ever autumn record although there has been one winter record, on 15 December 1990. BBR
- 189 Plaintive Cuckoo** *Cacomantis merulinus*
The first was heard in Tai Po Kau on 9 March and the latest report was of one at Tin Shui Wai on 1 December. BBR
- 190 Indian Cuckoo** *Cuculus micropterus*
First reported from Tsim Bei Tsui on 9 April. Very widespread in May but not recorded thereafter. BBR
- 192 Oriental Cuckoo** *Cuculus saturatus*
One was seen at Mai Po on 3 April and singles were subsequently recorded there between 10 and 13 April with three (including one trapped) on 17 April and one on 14 May. Other spring reports were of one on the Peak on 14 April and two in Lam Tsuen Valley on 18 April. In autumn there was one at Luk Keng on 20 September and one at Lok Ma Chau on 10 October. With better understanding of the field characteristics of this species and Common Cuckoo *C. canorus* (see Kennerley and Leader, *Dutch Birding* 13:143-145) the status of the two is becoming much clearer. BBR
- 193 Koel** *Eudynamis scolopacea*
This species is now regularly recorded at Mai Po where it was formerly absent. BBR,CC

- 194 Greater Coucal** *Centropus sinensis*
BBR,CC
- 195 Lesser Coucal** *Centropus benghalensis*
Two immatures were in Kowloon Park on 9 November - a curious locality for this species which normally prefers scrubby hillsides. BBR,CC
- 196 Collared Scops Owl** *Otus bakkamoena*
BBR,CC
- 198 Eagle Owl** *Bubo bubo*
One was seen at Chau Tau on 15 and 17 April (SHP *et al.*).
- 200 Barred Owlet** *Glaucidium cuculoides*
Singles were noted in Tai Po Kau, Lam Tsuen Valley, Sha Lo Tung, Ho Chung, Sheung Shui, near Tai Long Wan and at To Kwa Peng, Sai Kung. One was seen being carried by a Crested Goshawk in Tai Po Kau on 31 January (MH). BBR



9 Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides*
near Sheung Shui, Hong Kong November 1992

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- 201 Brown Hawk Owl** *Ninox scutulata*
One was seen in the ZBG on 10 April (PRK). BBR
- 205 Savannah Nightjar** *Caprimulgus affinis*
Up to six were seen and heard at Chau Tau between 11 April and 7 May. Also noted at Shuen Wan throughout April, at Goliath Hill, near Hoi Ha Wan on 8 June and on Ping Chau on 17 October. BBR

- 206 White-throated Needletail** *Hirundapus caudacutus*
Two were at Mai Po on 27 March and one on 28 and 29 March (PRK *et al.*). Two were at Shuen Wan (in a flock of ten needletails) on 29 March (RWL), three at Lok Ma Chau on 31 March (GJC), one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 2 April (SPE,SHP), ten at Mai Po on 8 April and one there on 10 April (PJJ,RWL). BBR
- 207 White-vented Needletail** *Hirundapus cochinchinensis*
Eleven were seen over Tai Po Kau on 13 March (PJJ,VBP), the earliest date for either needletail species. The next wave of passage occurred from 26 to 29 March during which period 20 were seen at Ho Chung, up to 20 at Mai Po, four at Shing Mun and at least two at Shuen Wan. After a small lull early in the month the period from 5 to 12 April produced the best numbers ever recorded in Hong Kong. At Mai Po the peak of 150 on 7 April (SPE,SHP) was a new high count. Elsewhere, there were flocks of 25 over Tai Po Kau and 20 at Shuen Wan; 30 over Shing Mun on 5 April were probably this species. An adult found dead at Kadoorie ARC on 8 October (per PJJ) was the first autumn record of either needletail species. BBR
- 208 Pacific Swift** *Apus pacificus*
Passage commenced as early as 14 January when three were seen at Mai Po; subsequent counts there included 100 moving north on 6 February, 250 on 22 February, 150 on 1 March, over 1,000 on 9 March and 200 on 27 March. The latest spring report from there was of nine on 26 April. Three over Lamma Island on 12 July were perhaps breeding locally. Three moving south over Ping Chau on 18 October was the only report concerning autumn passage. BBR
- 209 House Swift** *Apus affinis*
Passage flocks included 1,500 at Mai Po on 14 January, 500 moving north on 6 February, 500 on 10 February, 500 at Yuen Long on 22 February (on which date there were only five at Mai Po despite the large numbers of the previous species), 600 at Mai Po on 27 March and 2,000 there on 28 to 29 March. One hundred and fifty at Yuen Long on 15 December was the only significant count in the latter part of the year. BBR,CC
- 210 White-breasted Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis*
BBR,CC
- 211 Black-capped Kingfisher** *Halcyon pileata*
BBR,CC
- 212 Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*
BBR,CC
- 213 Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis*
Except for one at To Kwa Peng, Sai Kung on 12 June reports were restricted to Deep Bay and Plover Cove/Starling Inlet. BBR,CC

- 214 Crested Kingfisher** *Ceryle lugubris*
One was seen at Yi O, Lantau on 9 June (JSRE) and one was seen at Bride's Pool on 14 July and at Plover Cove Reservoir nearby on 19 July (MH,MRL,IT). The most recent Hong Kong record was also at Bride's Pool in August 1988.
- 215.1 Blue-throated Bee-eater** *Merops viridis*
An adult was seen at Ng Fai Tin, Clear Water Bay on 19 and 20 May (GK *et al.*). This is the second record for Hong Kong, occurring less than a year after the first which was at Mai Po on 25 September 1991. Perhaps surprisingly, Blue-tailed Bee-eater *M. philippensis* was not recorded in 1992.
- 216 Broad-billed Roller** *Eurystomus orientalis*
Approximately 15 were recorded in spring between 7 April and 3 May including six at Tai Long Wan on 25 April. In autumn around ten were reported between 11 September and 13 October. BBR
- 217 Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*
In the first winter period, single birds were noted at the Mai Po landfill area on 12 January, Tsim Bei Tsui on 23 January, Sha Tin on 30 January and Kowloon Park on 23 February. In the second half of the year there were singles at Shek O on 17 September, Clear Water Bay Golf Club on 26 September, Victoria Park on 9 November, Chau Tau on 19 December and King's Park, Kowloon on 26 December. This species often appears to show a preference for urban locations.
- 218 Great Barbet** *Megalaima virens*
BBR,CC
- 219 Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*
There were 11 reports from January to 8 April, all from the Deep Bay area except one from Sha Lo Tung. There were 25 sightings from 19 September until the year end, again mostly from the Deep Bay area but also from the central and northern New Territories and with one from Pok Fu Lam. Several individuals were retrapped or seen on more than one occasion especially during the period October-December. CC
- 225 Oriental Skylark** *Alauda gulgula*
Three were seen on the landfill area to the east of Mai Po on 23 February and 1 March and one was there on 8 March (PRK,PJJ). There were three in Yuen Long Industrial Estate on 12 March and one was singing there on 10 April (PJJ,GAW). Two were again present on the landfill area near Mai Po on 24-25 October and 21 November and one was seen again on 22 November (MLC,DAD,PJJ). BBR
- 226 Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*
In spring there was one at Mai Po on 29 March and then several singles there until 15 April and one at Clear Water Bay on 29 April. Ten were seen at Mai Po on 3 May where there was strong passage until 15

May with peaks of 50 on 7th and 100 on 11th. In autumn there were 20 at Mai Po on 24 October, five there the next day and singles on 4 and 15 December. Two were at Yuen Long on 15 December. BBR

227 Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
Passage counts included 1,000 at Mai Po on 6 March, 1,500 on 7 March, 500 roosting there on 13 March, 400 on 28 March and 500 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 March. A fledged juvenile was caught at Mai Po on 7 March. BBR,CC

228 Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*
Twelve were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 January and groups of up to six were seen in the Deep Bay area until passage peaked around 28 March when 15 were at Mai Po. Thereafter groups of up to five were seen until the latest on 10 May. In autumn/winter flocks of up to six were seen at Mai Po, Shuen Wan and Ho Chung between 16 September and 20 November and there were 58 near Yuen Long on 15 December. BBR

229 Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus*
Five were seen at Starling Inlet on 20 February. Very strong passage was observed from 6 to 9 March with daily maxima of 110, 300 (including 26 ringed, the first ever in Hong Kong) (PRK,PJL), 50 and 110 at Mai Po and smaller numbers elsewhere including one in Aberdeen Country Park on 7 March and two in Tai Tam Country Park on 8 March. One hundred were at Tai Po Kau Village on 9 March. A further wave occurred from 28 to 31 March, the highest counts during this period being 20 at Mai Po on 28th and Tsim Bei Tsui on 29th. The latest in spring was a single bird at Mai Po on 6 April. In autumn there were six at Mai Po on 1 November, 100 at Ho Chung on 8 November, 20 in Lam Tsuen Valley on 10 November and three over Kadoorie ARC on 14 November. An excellent year including both the highest total ever and the peak autumn count.

230 Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*
Counts of migrants in spring included 50 on the landfill area to the east of Mai Po on 1 March, 30 on 8 March and 50 there on 17 April. The latest (presumed) migrants were two at Luk Keng on 17 May. Summer records of the breeding race *A. n. sinensis* came from Tai Mo Shan where there were three on 28 April and four on 19 July and from Pinehill Village, Tai Po where two were seen on 28 June. One at Tin Shui Wai on 23 August was not of the common migrant race *A. n. richardi*. The first migrants of the race *richardi* were observed on 26 September at Luk Keng and Mai Po, whilst subsequent counts included nine overflying Ping Chau on 17 October and 11 the next day, 40 at the landfill area to the east of Mai Po on 25 October and 35 at Lok Ma Chau on 31 October. BBR,CC

231 Upland Pipit *Anthus sylvanus*
Two were seen on Tai Mo Shan on 14 April and again on 8 December.

232 Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*
There were no significant observations in the first winter period. In autumn the earliest report was of one at Kadoorie ARC on 3 October. Ten overflying Ping Chau on 18 October and up to 40 at Lok Ma Chau during November were the only other significant reports. BBR,CC

233 Pechora Pipit *Anthus gustavi*
One was seen on Tai Mo Shan on 26 April (PRK); a second individual may also have been present. Another was trapped at Mai Po on 13 May (PJL).

234 Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*
Forty at Shek Kong on 19 January was the highest midwinter count, whilst the spring peak of 250 on the landfill area to the east of Mai Po on 17 April (PJL) was a new high count for Hong Kong. The latest in spring was one there on 1 May. The first two in autumn were at the same site on 5 October, whilst 60 at Lok Ma Chau on 24 October was the largest concentration noted. BBR,CC

235 Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*
Single birds were seen at Mai Po on 7 March (PJL,PRK) and Shek Kong on 5 December (JAH).

236 Forest Wagtail *Dendroanthus indicus*
Singles were recorded at Tai Po Kau on 1 and 4 September, Wong Chuk Yeung on 4 September, Tai Po Kau on 26, 27 and 30 September and Shing Mun on 27 September and 3 and 5 October.

237 Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*
Twenty at Shek Kong on 19 January was the largest wintering concentration. Passage was noted from 23 February when 250 were at the landfill area to the east of Mai Po and 150 were there on 8 March and 4 April. On 17 March 250 at Mai Po were mostly of the race *taivana*, but 200 there on 26 April and 500 on 3 May were mostly *simillima*. Five hundred were at the Fence on 11 May and 60 were at Mai Po on 13 May. In autumn two were seen at Mai Po on 30 August. Whilst there was considerable overlap, most of the September migrants were *simillima*, with *taivana* following in October/November and *macronyx* mostly in November. Counts were less than 100 except for a roost of 500 in the Mai Po reedbeds on 14 November. By early December the presumed wintering population primarily comprised birds of the race *taivana* with smaller numbers of *macronyx*. BBR,CC

239 Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
The latest in spring were two at Mai Po and six at Tsim Bei Tsui on 11 May and the first in autumn were two at Shouson Hill on 26

August. A pre-roost gathering of 80 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 December was the largest count. BBR,CC

240 White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*
Twenty-five were counted at Tsim Bei Tsui on 16 February and significant passage was noted on 7 March. In autumn two adults of the race *leucopsis* were at Tin Shui Wai from 16 August. A major roost near Mai Po in autumn contained 1,000 birds on 5, 11 and 17 October, 3,000 on 24 October and 700 on 5 December. BBR,CC

A female of the race *lugens*, known as Black-backed Wagtail, was seen at Plover Cove Dam from 19 November 1992 until 18 February (RWL) and a male of this race was at Shuen Wan on 27 and 29 March (RWL).

242 Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike *Coracina melaschistos*
In the early part of the year one was seen in Tai Po Kau from 1 January until 14 April and there were singles at Ping Yeung on 1 February and Shing Mun on 15 February. In the second winter period singles were noted at Shing Mun on 5 October, Tai Po Kau from 27 October, Ping Yeung on 5 December, Lam Tsuen Valley between 5 and 21 December and Ho Chung on 20 and 27 December. BBR,CC

243 Rosy Minivet *Pericrocotus roseus*
One was seen in Tai Po Kau on 5 April and again on 12 April (MT).
Assuming both these sightings were of the same bird, this is the fourth Hong Kong record.

244 Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus*
There were ten at Tsim Bei Tsui on 3 April, one on Cheung Chau on 4 April, two at Cheung Shu Tan on 7 April, one in Lam Tsuen Valley on 11 April, one in Tai Po Kau on 14 April and two at Tsim Bei Tsui on 19 April. BBR

245 Grey-throated Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*
Thirty were in Tai Po Kau on 24 January and at least 100 were there on 14 November. At least 20 were present at Shing Mun in February and March and at least 30 were there in November and December. BBR,CC

246 Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus*
The highest count from Tai Po Kau was of 30 on 1 March. Small numbers were seen at Shing Mun on 29 February and in November and December. One was seen there between 6 March and 14 June. BBR,CC

247 Crested Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*
BBR,CC

248 Chinese Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis*
BBR,CC

249 Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster*
BBR,CC

250 Chestnut Bulbul *Hypsipetes castanonotus*
Present throughout the year in Tai Po Kau where there were at least 50 on 2 January. Also present throughout the year in Shing Mun but commoner in winter with 15 seen on 20 December. Two were singing at Ho Chung on 3 May and small numbers were there in December. Two to three were at Ng Tung Chai, Lam Tsuen Valley on 16 July. BBR,CC

251 Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes madagascariensis*
The first sizeable irruption for some years began on 1 February when ten were seen in Tai Po Kau and 21 were seen at Ho Chung the next day. Up to 40 were seen in Tai Po Kau during the first half of February and there were seven on the Peak on 10th. A further arrival appeared to occur on 15 and 16 February when there were 17 at Tsim Bei Tsui, 36 in Sai Kung and 200 on Mount Austin (JSRE). This latter group was the largest flock noted and equals the maximum previously recorded in Hong Kong. Up to 50 were in Tai Po Kau in late February and in March and smaller numbers were widely noted in suitable habitat elsewhere. Eighty were at Shek Lin on 15 March and a further arrival was indicated on 29 March when 170 were in Tai Po Kau and 110 at Shing Mun. Numbers diminished rapidly in early April, 21 on Cheung Chau on 7 April being the highest count during the month, and 15 in Tai Po Kau on 15 April the last. BBR

251.1 Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*
Recorded in Tai Po Kau during the periods January-May and September-December, four on 4 December being the peak count. Singles at Kadoorie ARC on 21 January and the Peak on 4 February were the only other reports. CC

254 Japanese Robin *Erithacus akahige*
A female was at the entrance to Tai Po Kau from 27 January until 22 February (WLY *et al.*).
This was the sixth record for Hong Kong and the first since 1987.

255 Red-tailed Robin *Luscinia sibilans*
Up to five were seen in Tai Po Kau, up to two in Aberdeen Country Park and singles were at Ho Chung, Shing Mun and Tung Chung, Lantau in the early part of the year. The latest was in Kowloon Park on 13 April. The first in autumn was on Cheung Chau on 16 October and one was at Mount Austin on 1 November. Singles were seen at Sha Tin, Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun and Ping Yeung from 6 November and eight were trapped at Kadoorie ARC between 7 and 28 November. BBR,CC

256 Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope*
 Small numbers were widespread in the early part of the year; the largest counts were of ten at Tung Chung, Lantau on 25 January and six at Mai Po on 21 March. The latest in spring was at Mai Po on 4 May. The first three in autumn were at Kadoorie ARC on 18 October and ten were at Mai Po on 8 November. BBR,CC

257 Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*
 Up to two were seen at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui until 26 April with most records falling in March and early April. Apart from the first, which was at Tai Wai on 14 October, and one at Ping Yeung on 31 December, all records in the second winter period were single birds in the Deep Bay area in November and December. BBR

258 Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane*
 Adult males were trapped at Mai Po on 4 and 12 April (ACG,PRK). An adult male was in Tai Po Kau on 6 September (MMC,CYL) and a first-winter male was there on 21 September (DAD). Also on 21 September, a first-winter male was caught after flying into a flat at Mount Butler at 2200 hours (PJL). On 26 September a female or immature was at Tai Po Kau (JAH,WLY) and on 2 October a first-winter male and a female were trapped at Kadoorie ARC (DPC). Finally, a female was seen at Shing Mun on 24 December (GAW). These nine birds compare favourably with a previous all-time total of 14 records.

259 Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*
 Numbers were high early in the year: counts included 24 at Shing Mun on 16 January, 15 in Tai Po Kau on 18 and 22 January and 39 at Kadoorie Farm on 21 January (PJL,VBP). The latest in spring was in Tai Po Kau on 29 March. In autumn two early birds were in Tai Po Kau on 12 October, the next was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 31 October. Subsequently small numbers were widely reported, the largest count being six at Mount Austin at the end of November. CC

260 Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus aureoreus*
 About 20 were reported in the first winter period from the central, northern and eastern New Territories, the latest being in Sha Tin on 13 April. The first in autumn was seen on the Peak on 16 October and about 40 were reported in various localities to the year end including several records from Hong Kong Island in late October and early November. BBR,CC

261 Plumbeous Water Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*
 In the first part of the year there were singles at Ho Chung on 11 January and 22 February (from 1991), Nam Chung on 12 and 18 January, a pair at Plover Cove on 24 and 25 January and one in the unusual location of Chater Garden, Central on 27 February. In the second winter period one was at Bride's Pool on 28 November. CC

262 Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis*
 BBR,CC

263 Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*
 Passage was noted through Mai Po on 14 March where the latest spring record was of six on 17 April. One was seen at Lok Ma Chau on 28 August but reports were few until the second week in October. BBR,CC

264 Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea*
 An adult male and an immature male were seen at Ho Chung from 24 October into 1993 and a female was there from 26 October to 5 November (JAH,MH,TW). A male and three females were at Tai Ho Wan, Lantau on 18 December (GAW). CC

265.1 White-throated Rock Thrush *Monticola gularis*
 An adult male was seen on the Peak on 10 February (GAW). This, the fourth Hong Kong record and the first adult male, closely follows the first three birds which were seen in winter 1990-91.

267 Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*
 One, of the red-bellied race *philippensis*, was on the Peak on 3-4 January; all other records in the first half of the year fell between 7 and 28 April except one near Tuen Mun on 19 May. One of the all-blue race *pandoo* was on Po Toi on 28 August and there were several reports from 13 October to the year end. At least 75% of males were of the race *philippensis*. BBR,CC

268 Violet Whistling Thrush *Myiophonus caeruleus*
 BBR,CC

269 Orange-headed Ground Thrush *Zoothera citrina*
 An adult male was at the entrance to Tai Po Kau from 11 January to 16 February (MMC *et al.*).

270 White's Thrush *Zoothera dauma*
 Up to three were reported from 14 locations throughout the Territory until 13 April although nine were at Kadoorie Farm on 21 January. Apparently scarce in the second winter period, singles at Mount Austin on 21 November, Aberdeen Country Park on 20 December and Tai Po Kau on 25 December being the only reports. BBR,CC

271 Siberian Thrush *Zoothera sibirica*
 A male was in Tai Po Kau on 14 April (MH). In autumn, a first-winter female was at Mount Austin on 17 October (MT), a first-winter male was there on 19 October (GAW), an adult male was in Tai Po Kau on 31 October (JAH,MH) and a first-winter female was at Mount Austin on 28 November (MT). A record year for this species with the series of records from Mount Austin being particularly noteworthy.

- 272 Grey Thrush** *Turdus cardis*
Up to four were reported from Mount Austin, Kowloon Park, Ho Chung, Sha Tin, Tai Po Kau, Chau Tau, Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui until 17 April. There was a clear division between wintering and passage birds with eight reports before 17 February and eight reports from 21 March. In the second winter period up to two were seen in Tai Po Kau from 10 November, 12 flew south over Kadoorie ARC on 14 November, one was trapped there later that day and one was at Mount Austin on 21 November. BBR,CC
- 273 Blackbird** *Turdus merula*
Flocks of up to ten were widespread early in the year - the largest groups were of 70 at Cheung Shu Tan in January and 65 at Sha Lo Tung on 16 February. The last record was of three at So Kon Po, Causeway Bay on 4 May. The first in autumn were at Shuen Wan on 8 October and Mai Po on 9 October, groups of up to 20 being widespread from late October until the year end. Larger flocks were 35 at Ho Chung on 31 October, 70 leaving a roost at Chek Nai Ping on 14 November, 90 in Tan Shan Valley at dusk on 15 November and a Hong Kong record count of 170 there, again at dusk, on 22 November (DAD). BBR,CC
- 274 Brown Thrush** *Turdus chrysolaus*
A male was seen at Bride's Pool on 15 and 24 January (WLY,VBP), one was seen in Tai Po Kau on 21 January (LM,AS), a first-winter, probably male, was trapped on the Peak on 16 February (ACG) and one was in Tai Po Kau on 21 November (JAH).
- 275 Grey-backed Thrush** *Turdus hortulorum*
An influx occurred in mid-January, the highest counts being 50 in Tai Po Kau on 18th and 42 at Kadoorie Farm on 21st. Subsequently flocks of up to ten were widely reported and 25 were at Shing Mun on 15 February. The latest record was of two in Kowloon Park on 15 April. Recorded from 9 November in the second winter period but remained scarce with no counts of more than ten birds. BBR,CC
- 276 Pale Thrush** *Turdus pallidus*
As with the preceding species an influx occurred in mid-January, up to four birds being reported from 15 sites, but an exceptional 51 were seen at Kadoorie Farm on 21 January (PJJ,VBP). The latest in spring was on Mount Austin on 11 April. In the latter half of the year one was on Mount Austin on 29 November, one at Shek Kong and two in Tai Po Kau on 5 December and one at Shing Mun on 20 December. BBR,CC
- 277 Eye-browed Thrush** *Turdus obscurus*
Four were at Sha Lo Tung on 17 January, ten were on the Peak on 20 January; singles were reported from two other localities thus: one in January, two in February, two in March and four in April; the latest was in Tai Po Kau on 24 April. The first autumn record was of six at Kadoorie ARC on 31 October, whilst subsequent counts there were 12 on 1 November, 17 on 7 November and 92 flying south east shortly after

dawn on 14 November. Elsewhere up to two were seen at four localities in November/December. BBR,CC

- 278 Dusky Thrush** *Turdus naumanni*
Single birds were at Tsim Bei Tsui from 12 to 16 February (GAW *et al.*), 5 April (PRK) and 15 December (GAW) and one was at Ho Chung on 18 December (MH). All were of the race *eunomus*.
- 280 Short-tailed Bush Warbler** *Cettia squameiceps*
Recorded in Tai Po Kau until 4 March with ten on 22 January. Other winter/spring reports came from Aberdeen Country Park, the Peak, Kowloon Park, Cheung Shu Tan, Lam Tsuen Valley, Kadoorie Farm and Kadoorie ARC, the latest being seen during the Bird Race on 10 to 11 April. In autumn the first singles were at Kadoorie ARC (trapped) and on the Peak on 25 October; thereafter up to two were reported from Aberdeen Country Park, Mount Austin, Ho Chung, Sha Tin, Tai Po Kau, Kadoorie ARC, Wong Chuk Hang and Luk Keng. Four were at Shing Mun on 20 December. BBR,CC
- 280.1 Pale-footed Bush Warbler** *Cettia pallidipes*
Single birds were trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 18 October (ACG,PJJ) and on 19 November (ACG).
These are the third and fourth records for Hong Kong, the first two were also trapped at Kadoorie ARC, in October and November 1990.
- 281 Chinese Bush Warbler** *Cettia diphone*
The highest counts in the first part of the year were 15 at Mai Po on 18 January and 20 there on 21 March; the latest reports came during the Bird Race on 10 to 11 April. In autumn the first three were trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 31 October and there were 12 at Mai Po on 1 November. Subsequent counts included 40 at Mai Po on 15 November, 15 at Kadoorie ARC on 28 November and 25 at Mai Po on 5 December. BBR,CC
- 282 Mountain Bush Warbler** *Cettia fortipes*
One was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 1 January and up to three were seen on Cheung Chau from 1 January to 10 March. One was in Lam Tsuen Valley on 12 January, ten were at Sha Lo Tung on 15 January with two there on 21 January and singles were at Tung Chung, Lantau on 25 January, Lok Ma Chau on 22 February and Mai Po on 7 March. In the second winter period one was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 8 November, two were at Sha Lo Tung between 12 and 29 November, four were trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 28 November including one previously trapped in 1991, one was at Mai Po on 30 November, one was seen at Ho Chung on 1 December, two were at Ngong Ping, Lantau on 17 December, three were in the Wu Kau Tang area on 19 December and one was in Aberdeen Country Park on 21 December.

282.5 Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus seebohmii*

One was trapped at Ho Chung on 6 November (PJL *et al.*) and two were trapped at Sha Lo Tung on 29 November; one of the latter was subsequently re-trapped there on 13 December (PJL, PRK *et al.*). As described elsewhere in this Report, the identification of the so-called 'zeebit' warbler has finally been confirmed as this species. Records from previous years now also considered acceptable on the basis of song are listed below.

1987: one at Mount Nicholson on 4-5 March (CAV). This is the earliest Hong Kong record. Another was at Ha Tsat Muk Kiu on 15 November (CAV).

1989: one at Castle Peak on 12 March (MLC, PRK), one at Tai Mun Shan on 4 November (JSRE), one at Hok Tau on 3 December (RWL, PJL).

1990: one in Lam Tsuen Valley on 21 February (WLY).

1991: four at Wu Kau Tang on 4 December (PRK, PJL).

Bush warblers, *Bradypterus* sp., unattributable to any species, were recorded as follows: one at Sha Lo Tung on 29 January, one at Cheung Shu Tan on 26 February, up to ten at Sha Lo Tung between 28 October and 21 December, three at Shuen Wan on 9 November, one near Wu Kau Tang on 28 November and singles on Tai Mo Shan on 20 and 31 December. The status of *Bradypterus* warblers in Hong Kong is at last becoming clearer (see separate paper in this Report).

282.6 Brown Bush Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris*

One was trapped at Sha Lo Tung on 25 January (PJL, PRK).

This is the first record for Hong Kong. See separate paper in this Report.

283 Fantail Warbler *Cisticola juncidis*

Counts included 20 at Luk Keng on 29 February and 40 at the landfill area to the east of Mai Po on 1 and 8 March. BBR, CC

283.1 Bright-capped Cisticola *Cisticola exilis*

Three were at Tung Chung, Lantau on 19 January (MLC). Two were seen at Sha Lo Tung on 12 November and 4 December with one there on 17 December (RWL). There were five at Ping Yeung on 14 November, two on 5 December and three on 31 December (DAD, TW), two at Hok Tau on 17 December (DAD) and three at Wu Kau Tang on 19 December (DAD). The records in the second half of 1992 suggest that the occurrences in winter 1991/92 were probably not the consequence of an exceptional irruptive movement but it is still not clear whether this species is a resident or a winter visitor.

284 Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata*
BBR, CC

285 Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris*
BBR, CC

286 Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola*

One trapped at Mai Po on 21 March showed characters of the race *L. c. rubescens* (PJL, PRK); one was seen at Luk Keng on 17 May. In autumn 12 (including seven trapped) were at Luk Keng on 6 September, 15 (including six trapped) on 13 September and four (including one trapped) on 20 September. All trapped birds appeared to be of the race *L. c. minor* except two on 6 September resembling *rubescens* (PRK, PJL). Elsewhere, there were singles at Lok Ma Chau on 13 September, Mai Po on 19 September and Sha Lo Tung on 7 November.

287 Styan's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella pleskei*

One trapped on 1 January had originally been ringed on 26 December 1991 (PRK, DSM). One trapped on 12 April had originally been ringed on 12 January 1991 and was trapped again on 17 October 1992 (PJL). Additional birds were trapped on 17 April and 14 November (PJL, PRK). All records came from Mai Po.

288 Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata*

One trapped at Luk Keng on 17 May (PJL, PRK *et al.*) was the first spring record for Hong Kong. One was seen at Mai Po on 26 September (PRK, PJL *et al.*), singles were trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 8 and 11 November (DPC) and one was seen at Tai Long Wan on 14 November (GJC), a new late date, though there is a record for 8 February 1987.

289 Black-browed Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*

Singles were at Mai Po on 4 January, 22 February and 7 March. Several were there on 28 March and peak numbers occurred on 25 April when 50 were present. The last in spring were eight there on 16 May. The only other spring reports were of singles in Lam Tsuen Valley on 15 April and at Kowloon Park on 19 April. In autumn the first two were trapped at Mai Po on 10 October and up to two were recorded until 12 December. One was seen at Lok Ma Chau on 24 October. BBR

289.07 Paddyfield Warbler *Acrocephalus agricola*

One was trapped at Mai Po on 1 January (PRK *et al.*) and trapped again at the same site on 29 February (PJL *et al.*).

This is the first record for Hong Kong. Details have already been published (see Hong Kong Bird Report 1991:123-126).

289.1 Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

One was trapped at Mai Po on 8 October (ACG).

This is the fourth Hong Kong record.

290 Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

One was seen at Tin Shui Wai on 11 January and one was singing at Mai Po on 29 February and 14 March. Twenty at Mai Po on

28 March was the first passage report and two were in Kowloon Park on 15 April. Numbers at Mai Po peaked at 50 on 25 April and had dropped to five by 13 May but a late peak of 25 was recorded on 14 May and 12 were still present on 16 May. The first record in autumn was of ten at Mai Po on 29 August; numbers there were generally low with a peak of 40 on 27 September. Ten were still present on 8 November and two were seen on 5 December. Away from Deep Bay the only report was of three at Luk Keng on 6 September. BBR

291 Thick-billed Warbler *Acrocephalus aedon*
Single birds were trapped at Mai Po on 29 August and 19 September (ACG,PRK) and at Kadoorie ARC on 21 November (DPC).

292 Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler *Seicercus burkii*
One was in Aberdeen Country Park on 6 January (VBP), one was seen in Tai Po Kau between 7 January and 22 February (MH *et al.*) and one was at Ho Chung on 14 January (MH). In the second winter period one was in Tai Po Kau on 5 and 27 December (RWL,VBP).

293 Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Seicercus castaneiceps*
One was in Aberdeen Country Park on 3 and 4 January (MT,VBP) and one was seen in Tai Po Kau on 11 and 24 January, 16 February and 1, 6 and 15 March (MMC,DAD *et al.*). One was again seen in Aberdeen Country Park on 21 December (GAW).

Treating all the sightings in Tai Po Kau as referring to the same bird, these are the eighth to tenth Hong Kong records.

295 Large Grass Warbler *Graminicola bengalensis*
At least one pair was frequently seen on Tai Mo Shan between 28 April and 24 August. Three chicks were ringed on 2 May. One was seen at Ho Chung on 16-17 November and 20 December (RWL,JAH *et al.*). CC

296 Long-tailed Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*

297 Sulphur-breasted Warbler *Phylloscopus ricketti*
One was seen in Tai Po Kau on 12, 21, 24 and 26 January and 2 February, with two there on 8 and 13 March (MRL *et al.*). One was at Mount Austin on 30 October (MT) and one was again noted in Tai Po Kau on 10 November and 20 December (PRK,PJL).

298 Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*
Up to three were regularly reported in Tai Po Kau in the early part of the year with five on 1 March and the latest on 20 March. Singles were at Mount Austin on 4 January, Aberdeen Country Park on 4 and 6 January, Ping Yeung on 12 January and Hok Tau on 25 January; there were up to two in Lam Tsuen Valley between 11 January and 15

February, up to three at Shing Mun between 15 February and 14 March and one at Mount Nicholson on 4 March. These records were more widespread than usual. In the second half of the year up to three were in Tai Po Kau from 1 November, with five on 25 December; there were singles at Shing Mun from 1 November, Ho Chung on 1 November and 27 December, Kadoorie ARC (the first trapped in Hong Kong) on 14 November, Aberdeen Country Park on 21 December and Mount Austin on 28 December. CC

299 Eastern Crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus coronatus*
An early single was in Tai Po Kau on 13 March, one was there on 6 April, two on 8 April and singles on 9, 12 and 15 April. One was at Shing Mun on 5 April and one in Kowloon Park on 7 and 10 April. In autumn recorded in Tai Po Kau from 29 August until 5 October with a peak of four on 6 September. One was at Coombe Road, HK Island on 5 and 8 September and there were ten at Shing Mun, probably a record count for Hong Kong, on 6 September (DAD) with singles there on 27 September and 5 October. One at Mai Po on 3 October and two there (one trapped) on 10 October were unusual. A late bird was in Tai Po Kau on 31 October.

300 Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes*
In spring one was trapped at Mai Po on 4 April and singles were seen on Cheung Chau on 5 and 9 April and in Tai Po Kau on 13 April. One trapped at Mai Po on 29 August (ACG *et al.*) was the earliest ever in autumn. Recorded in Tai Po Kau from 31 August to 8 October with up to three there on several dates and a peak of 12 on 27 September. Recorded at Shing Mun between 20 September and 17 October with five on 5 October; up to three were recorded during this period from Aberdeen Country Park, Kadoorie ARC, Mai Po and Luk Keng. Generally less numerous than in 1991. There was one winter record - one at Mong Tseng on 12 December (RWL).

300.2 Two-barred Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*
In the first part of the year single birds were seen in Lam Tsuen Valley on 12 and 19 January (PJL), Shek Kong on 16 February (MRL) and at Cheung Shu Tan from 26 February to 8 March (GJC,PJL). In the second winter period there was one at Mai Po on 10 October (GJC,PJL), two (one trapped) at Kadoorie ARC on 11 October (PJL,GJC), one at Mai Po on 17 October (PJL), one trapped at Kadoorie ARC also on 17 October (DPC) and one in Lam Tsuen Valley on 20 December (PJL).

301 Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*
Singles were recorded at several sites from 5 April with five trapped at Mai Po on 11 May and two seen there on 16 May; the last spring record was of three in Tai Po Kau on 27 May. One was in Tai Po Kau on 31 August and up to five were reported from widespread sites in September and early October, eight in Tai Po Kau on 6th being the highest count. The latest were one trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 18 October, one seen at Mai Po on 24 October and three (including one trapped) at Mai Po on 1 November. BBR

- 302 Pallas's Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus*
Widespread in good numbers in the first months of the year with 30 in Tai Po Kau in January and 80 there on 2 February. The latest two in spring were on the Peak on 15 April (GJC), one day later than the previous extreme spring date. The first in the second winter period was in Tai Po Kau on 6 November and the peak count was of 60 there on 26 November. BBR,CC
- 303 Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*
Scarcer than the preceding species in Tai Po Kau in the first months of the year with 20 on 25 January being the highest count. Twenty at Pak Nai on 16 February were the most recorded elsewhere. Passage birds included 20 in Kowloon Park on 8 to 9 April and 30 in Tai Po Kau on 9 April. Scarce thereafter, but one was at Stubbs Road, Hong Kong Island on 24 May (PJL), the same date as the previous latest spring record. One was seen in Tai Po Kau on 5 October and unexceptional numbers were present subsequently with 25 in Tai Po Kau on 20 December being the highest count. BBR,CC
A Hume's Yellow-browed Warbler *P.i. humei* was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 26 November (ACG). This is the third record of this form in Hong Kong.
- 304 Radde's Warbler** *Phylloscopus schwarzi*
In the first part of the year singles were seen on the Peak on 20 January (LM,AS) and at Pak Nai on 16 February (PRK,PJL). An excellent series of records in autumn commenced with one on Ping Chau on 18 October (MDW). Three were trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 24 October (DPC), one was retrapped and a fourth individual was trapped there on 7 November (PJL *et al.*). One was seen at Sha Lo Tung on 28 October (RWL) and singles were seen on Mount Austin on 1 and 12 November (MT).
- 305 Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus*
Up to twenty wintered at Mai Po where the last two in spring were recorded on 10 May. The first in autumn was trapped there on 19 September; numbers there reached 25 on 10 October, 40 on 17 October, 60 on 1 November and 70 on 8 November but had dropped to 15 on 12 December. Thirteen were on Ping Chau on 18 October. BBR,CC
- 307 Hainan Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis hainana*
Up to four males were singing in Tai Po Kau from 8 April and a newly fledged juvenile was seen on 8 August. Six males and a female were seen at Shing Mun on 16 April and up to two pairs were regularly seen during the summer, with two fledglings noted on 14 July. The latest reports were of single males at Shing Mun on 6 September and Tai Po Kau on 7 September. BBR
- 308 Blue and White Flycatcher** *Muscicapa cyanomelana*
One was trapped at Mai Po on 28 March, at least five were in Tai Po Kau between 29 March and 15 April, at least four at Shing Mun

from 5 to 16 April, one in Aberdeen Country Park on 8 April, up to two in Kowloon Park from 9 to 12 April, up to two at Mount Austin from 10 to 14 April, one at Mount Davis on 12 April and one at Tai Long Wan on 16 April. In autumn there were singles in Tai Po Kau on 29 September, 18 October and 8 November and at Pak Nai and Mount Austin on 25 October. One in Tai Po Kau on 10 December had a damaged tail and may have been an escape. BBR

- 309 Verditer Flycatcher** *Muscicapa thalassina*
Singles were seen in Tai Po Kau on 24 January, in Lam Tsuen Valley on 25 and 26 January, Tai Po Kau on 7 April, Shing Mun on 14 November, Lam Tsuen Valley on 26 November and Wu Kau Tang on 28 November.
- 310 Ferruginous Flycatcher** *Muscicapa rufilata*
Singles were seen in Tai Po Kau on 29 March and 8 April (GJC,SPE,SHP) and Kowloon Park on 9-10 April (PJL *et al.*), five were on the Peak on 13 April (SPE,SHP) and one was at Sha Lo Tung on 8 November (TW). Autumn records of this species are very rare. BBR
- 311 Sooty Flycatcher** *Muscicapa sibirica*
One first-winter was in Tai Po Kau on 8 September (RWL).
- 312 Grey-streaked Flycatcher** *Muscicapa griseisticta*
Two rather early birds were at Tai Long Wan on 9 April, and the remaining spring records totalled only ten birds between 18 April and 15 May. One at Shing Mun on 5 October was the only autumn record.
- 313 Brown Flycatcher** *Muscicapa latirostris*
Up to two were reported at several sites in the first winter period until 17 April with a late single at Mai Po on 15 May. The first in autumn was at Coombe Road on 31 August, up to six were widely reported in September and there were 11 at Mai Po on 10 October. No more than three were at any one site from November. One was in Chater Gardens, Central on 18 November. BBR,CC
- 314 Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Ficedula parva*
Singles in Lam Tsuen Valley on 19 January and at Lok Ma Chau on 9 April were the only reports in the first part of the year. Scarce again in the autumn, the only reports coming from Mai Po where one was trapped on 27 September, one was seen on 11 October and four were seen (including one trapped) on 17 October.
- 315 Mugimaki Flycatcher** *Ficedula mugimaki*
Spring singles were at Mount Austin on 4 and 13 April and in Kowloon Park from 7 to 12 April. Two were at Mount Austin on 30 October, 17 were trapped at Kadoorie ARC between 31 October and 28 November, at least four were in Tai Po Kau between 1 and 8 November, one was at Shek Kong Catchwater on 1 November, two were in Kowloon Park on 9th, one was trapped at Mai Po on 13th and four were at Tai

Tong Tsai, Lantau on 15 November. In contrast to 1991, most birds at Kadoorie ARC were females. BBR

316 Yellow-rumped Flycatcher *Ficedula zanthopygia*

The main passage period commenced on 29 August when two were trapped at Mai Po. Up to three were in Tai Po Kau from 3 to 6 September, two were in Lam Tsuen Valley and one at Mai Po on 4 September, eight were trapped at Mai Po on 5 September, singles were at Shing Mun on 6 September, Kowloon Park on 7 September and Wong Chuk Yeung on 9 September and two were trapped at Mai Po on 12 September. After a gap of two weeks there was one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 26 September, one at Shek Kong Catchwater on 27 September and one trapped at Mai Po also on 27 September.

317 Narcissus Flycatcher *Ficedula narcissina*

One was on Mount Cameron on 29 March, up to three were in Tai Po Kau from 8 to 15 April, one was in the ZBG on 8 April, two females were at Mount Davis on 12 April (all other reports refer to males), three were at Mount Austin on 13 April and one was at Shing Mun on 16 April. An exceptional spring for this eye-catching flycatcher. BBR

318 Grey-headed Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*

Five were in Tai Po Kau on 12 January and up to three were seen there until 29 March. Elsewhere there were singles at Coombe Road, the Peak on 3 January, Aberdeen Country Park on 4 January and at Shing Mun on 15 February. In the second winter period the first record was of three in Tai Po Kau on 12 November, remaining until the year end. Two were in Lam Tsuen Valley from 5-21 December and one was at Ho Chung on 20 and 27 December. CC

319 Asian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi*

At least two were in Tai Po Kau between 7 and 15 April, singles were in Kowloon Park on 10 and 15 April and three were at Mount Austin on 13 April. The first in autumn was at Shing Mun on 25 August and four were there on 6 September. Singles were recorded in Tai Po Kau between 3 September and 18 October with two on 7 September and there were five singles on Hong Kong Island between 29 September and 20 October. A male was seen in Lam Tsuen Valley from 5 to 21 December, with two there on 20 December (MMC *et al.*). These appear to be the first winter reports since a white-phase male wintered in Lam Tsuen Valley in 1986/87. BBR,CC

320 Japanese Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone atrocaudata*

The first report was of one in Lam Tsuen Valley on 30 March, up to six were in Tai Po Kau from 1 to 15 April, one was at Mai Po on 1 April and one was at Mount Austin on 13 April. In autumn two were in Tai Po Kau on 30 August, one on 31 August, three on 12

September and one on 19 September and 8 October. Elsewhere there were two at Shing Mun and one at Pok Fu Lam on 3 October and one at the former site on 5 October. BBR

321 Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher *Hypothymis azurea*

Singles on Cheung Chau on 10 January (probably from December 1991) and at Cheung Shu Tan from 24 February to 8 March were the only reports in the first winter period. In the second part of the year singles were reported from fourteen sites throughout the Territory from 3 October to the end of the year, with approximately six individuals being seen in each month. CC

321.2 Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*

Up to two were regularly seen and heard at Shing Mun throughout the year (DAD,GAW), one was at Big Wave Bay on 1 March (MDW), one was at Tung Lo Wan, Sha Tin on 19 May (DAD), two were at Leadmine Pass on 11 July and one was there on 3 October (DAD). Regularly heard at Coombe Road, the Peak, with reports in February, May, June and December (VBP).

This species has been moved from Category D (707) to Category A of the Hong Kong list on the basis of its occurrence in the central New Territories and on Hong Kong Island.

321.5 Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus*

Up to 12 were seen on Tai Mo Shan between 15 April and 24 August. A brood of three or four was seen on 19 April, one was seen carrying food on 2 May, two family parties were seen on 21 June and another brood was seen on 19 July.

This species has been moved from Category D (710) on the evidence of the small population which is now established on Tai Mo Shan.

322 Chinese Babax *Babax lanceolatus*

The peak count on Tai Mo Shan was ten birds on 14 April and 31 December. Two seen at the Chinese University on 22 May (FW) were possibly escaped or released birds.

323 Greater Necklaced Laughing Thrush *Garrulax pectoralis*

Up to 20 were reported in Tai Po Kau throughout the year. Up to four were seen at Shing Mun in February, July and December, two in Lam Tsuen Valley on 14 April, a party in Sai Kung West Country Park on 20 May, up to 11 in the Plover Cove/Wu Kau Tang area in July, November and December, up to six at Wong Chuk Yeung in September and December and 11 at Ho Chung on 21 October. Five were trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 22 November. BBR,CC

324 Black-throated Laughing Thrush *Garrulax chinensis*

Away from Hong Kong Island, where it is relatively widespread, two were in Kowloon Park on 17 to 18 February, 8 March, 10 April and 20 December, six were seen at Ho Chung on 8 January with similar

numbers on 2 February and two were seen in Clear Water Bay on 3 July. Recorded at Shing Mun throughout the year with a peak count of ten on 24 December. BBR,CC

325 Hwamei *Garrulax canorus*
BBR,CC

326 White-cheeked Laughing Thrush *Garrulax sannio*
Up to four were seen in the ZBG all year and two were in Aberdeen Country Park on 14 March. One was at Chau Tau on 7 May and five were there on 20 August, five at Mau Ping, Ma On Shan on 4 July, seven at Sheung Wun Yiu, Tai Po on 7 November and three in Tan Shan Valley on 15 November. BBR,CC

327 Black-faced Laughing Thrush *Garrulax perspicillatus*
BBR,CC

328 Pekin Robin *Leiothrix lutea*
Most reports came from the central New Territories where up to ten were seen in Tai Po Kau and up to six at Shing Mun throughout the year; ten were seen at Kadoorie ARC on 25 October and smaller numbers were noted at Lead Mine Pass, Tai Mo Shan, Hok Tau Reservoir, Ho Chung, Wong Chuk Yeung and Pat Sin Leng. Fifteen were on the Peak on 14 April and up to 15 were seen in Kowloon Park where breeding probably occurred. There was no evidence of any immigration during either winter period. BBR,CC

329 Striated Yuhina *Yuhina castaniceps*
Five at Mount Nicholson on 16 July (CAV) were almost certainly released birds.

330 White-bellied Yuhina *Yuhina zantholeuca*
Up to six were reported in Tai Po Kau and up to three at Shing Mun throughout the year. A pair feeding a juvenile at Shing Mun on 14 July (MDW) appears to be the first breeding record away from Tai Po Kau. BBR,CC

331 Red-headed Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*
Up to four were regularly reported from Tai Po Kau until 23 May with a maximum of seven on 18 January. A pair carrying nesting material there on 3 February (RWL) is the first evidence of breeding behaviour in Hong Kong. In the second winter period recorded in Tai Po Kau from 20 September when ten were seen, with a peak of 15, a new high count for Hong Kong, on 12 November (DAD). Up to five were seen at Shing Mun from February to April, 14 on 27 September and eight on 7 November. One was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 21 November and four were seen in Aberdeen Country Park on 7 December. CC

332 Yellow-bellied Tit *Parus venustus*
Three were seen at Sha Lo Tung from 7 to 8 November (JAH,RWL) and one was in Tai Po Kau on 8 November (JAH).

333 Great Tit *Parus major*
BBR,CC

333.1 Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus*
Up to six were regularly seen in Tai Po Kau throughout the year and at Shing Mun in February and between June and December. Two were on the Peak on 4 April and one at Pok Fu Lam on 3 October. BBR,CC

334 Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus*
Recorded at Mai Po from 4 January until 28 April with peak counts of 30 on 21 and 28 March and 10 April and 40 on 17 April. In the second winter period first heard at Mai Po on 15 November; peak counts were of 12 on 21 November and 40 passing over on 5 December. BBR

335 Fork-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga christinae*
BBR,CC

336 Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*
CC

337 Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum*
BBR,CC

338 Chestnut-flanked White-eye *Zosterops erythropleura*
One was seen in Tai Po Kau on 1 November (RWL,MT), two on 24 November (PRK,PJL) and one on 5 December (RWL). One trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 7 November (PJL,PRK) was, based on its condition, almost certainly an escape.

339 White-eye *Zosterops japonica*
Migrant flocks of 50 and 20 birds were observed passing over Kadoorie ARC on 7 November. BBR,CC

340 Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*
Two in Tai Po Kau on 14 April and one at Tai Long Wan on 25 April were the only spring reports. Autumn passage was rather thin: six were at Man Kam To on 19 September, three in Tai Po Kau on 20 September, three at Lok Ma Chau on 25 September, two at Mai Po on 26 September, four at Lok Ma Chau on 29 September, one at Mai Po on 9 October and two there on 10 October and one at Island House, Tai Po on 16 November.

341 Tiger Shrike *Lanius tigrinus*
An immature was in Tai Po Kau on 5 and 6 September (DAD,MRL) and an immature was trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 19 September (DPC).

There have now been five Hong Kong records all of which have fallen between 5 and 26 September.

341.1 Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus*
A female was seen at Ho Chung on 7 November (MT,JA) and an adult male was at Fung Yuen, Tai Po on 4-5 December (RWL,PRK). (The latter bird was seen again in 1993.)

These are the seventh and eighth Hong Kong records.

342 Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*
One was recorded at Mai Po on 15 February. One there from 27 March until 22 April was probably of the race *cristatus* rather than the common migrant race *lucionensis*. One was seen in Sai Kung on 25 April; the main passage period was from early to mid-May with ten at Tai Long Wan on 15 May the highest count and latest date. All were of the race *lucionensis*. Scarce in autumn with singles at Chek Keng on 19 September, Mai Po on 29 September and Sha Tin Central Park from 11 November to 14 December. BBR

343 Rufous-backed Shrike *Lanius schach*
BBR,CC

345 Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*
Twelve at Lok Ma Chau on 20 August and eight at Mai Po on 27 September were the highest counts. BBR,CC

346 Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*
In the early part of the year one of the race *leucogenis*, first seen in Tai Po Kau in 1991, remained until 12 April; there was one *salagensis* in Aberdeen Country Park from 3 January to 12 March, two at Shing Mun on 5 February and one until 29 March, one *leucogenis* at Cheung Shu Tan on 7, 8 and 25 March and one in Kowloon Park on 8 April. In the second half of the year one was at Lead Mine Pass on 29 September, one was seen in Tai Po Kau from 4 October, with two on 24 November and three on 11 December and one was at Shing Mun from 7 November to 20 December. BBR,CC

347 Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*
Counts included flocks of 13 in Lam Tsuen Valley on 15 April and 14 in Tai Po Kau on 24 November. BBR,CC

348 Jay *Garrulus glandarius*
One was at Nam Chung on 8 February, one at Cheung Shu Tan from 18 to 22 March, one at Lok Ma Chau on 26 April, a pair at Sai Kung on 30 April, one at Tai Mo Shan on 21 June, nine (equalling the

highest ever count) at Bride's Pool on 19 July and one at Shing Mun on 1 and 7 November.

349 Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhynchus*
BBR,CC

350 Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae*
Scarce during both winter periods with one on the Peak on 20 January, one in Tai Po Kau on 16 February and 15 April, up to three in Lam Tsuen Valley from 15 to 22 April and several in Tai Po Kau on 23 May. Up to two were at Pok Fu Lam from 3 October to 10 December, two near Lead Mine Pass on 3 October, two at Shing Mun on 17 October, one in Tai Po Kau on 14 November, one in Tan Shan Valley on 14 November and five there on 22 November.

351 Magpie *Pica pica*
BBR,CC

351.5 Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
An adult was found at Mai Po on 22 November and was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 2, 6 and 12 December (MLC,RDES *et al.*). This is the first record for Hong Kong (see separate paper in this Report).

352 Jungle Crow *Corvus macrorhynchus*
A flock of 105 at Shuen Wan on 16 February was the largest reported. BBR,CC

353 Collared Crow *Corvus torquatus*
Counts of 27 at Shuen Wan on 13 August and nine on Ping Chau on 17 October were the only significant reports. BBR,CC

354 Silky Starling *Sturnus sericeus*
The largest flocks in the first part of the year were of 100 at Shuen Wan on 18 January, 100 at Nam Chung on 29 January and 70 at Mai Po on 29 February. The latest record was of two seen during the Bird Race on 10 to 11 April. In the second winter period the first record was of 21 at Mai Po on 11 October. The largest flocks were 100 at Lok Ma Chau on 22 November, 250 there on 19 December and 200 at Mai Po on 5 December. BBR,CC

355 Purple-backed Starling *Sturnus sturninus*
One at Lok Ma Chau on 7 April (MR), was the second spring record. Six were at Tin Shui Wai on 26 September (MLC), one was in Lam Tsuen Valley on 9 October (RWL) and one was trapped at Mai Po during a wader-netting session at 0300 hours on 29 October (PJL).



10 First-winter female Daurian Starling *Sturnus sturninus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong 29 October 1992

Jari Peltoniemi

356 Chestnut-cheeked Starling *Sturnus philippensis*

A male was seen at Mai Po on 23 April (IS).

This is the seventh record for Hong Kong. Apart from one on 28 September 1986, all records have occurred between 28 March and 30 April.

357 Chinese Starling *Sturnus sinensis*

The earliest report was of 15 at Mai Po on 27 March and subsequent maxima there were 40 on 31 March, 50 on 6 April and 40 on 10 and 12 April. Most reports were from the Deep Bay area, but 15 were at Cheung Shu Tan on 2 April, 30 were in Kowloon Park on 11 April and three at So Kwun Wat, Tuen Mun on 19 May. A male collecting nesting material at Mai Po on 24 May with intermittent sightings until 23 July strongly suggests breeding locally. A juvenile was at Sha Tin Central Park on 18 August. Autumn passage took place from 20 August when there were 14 at Tin Shui Wai; thirty there on 23 August and 30 at Mai Po on 24 October were the largest flocks reported. As usual most were in Deep Bay but 25 were at Stanley on 2 September. The latest reports were of three at Mai Po on 19 December and during the Christmas Count on 20 December.

BBR,CC

358 European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

One was at Mong Tseng on 16 and 19 February (PJM,MH), two at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 28 November (MLC) and one on the south bank of the Shen Zhen River on 16 December (JGH). These are the first records since 1989.

360 Grey Starling *Sturnus cineraceus*

In the first part of the year the only large flock was at Tsim Bei Tsui, peaking at 150 on 22 February. The latest in spring were 15 there on 5 April. The earliest in autumn were six over Mai Po on 17 October and one was at Shouson Hill on 21 October. Sixty at Tin Shui Wai on 8 December and 30 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 15 December were the only flocks of note.

CC

361 Black-necked Starling *Sturnus nigricollis*

Perhaps still spreading on Hong Kong Island, where two at Coombe Road, the Peak on 2 June were new for the locality. A flock of 120 was at Mai Po on 3 October.

BBR,CC

362 Crested Mynah *Acridotheres cristatellus*

BBR,CC

363 Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

BBR,CC

364 White-backed Munia *Lonchura striata*

BBR,CC

365 Spotted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*

BBR,CC

366 Chestnut Munia *Lonchura malacca*

One was at Mai Po on 27 November (NSG). This species appears to have become quite rare and was not recorded in either 1990 or 1991.

366.1 Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

One was seen near Tai O, Lantau on 25 April (MDW).

This is the tenth record for Hong Kong.

367 Chinese Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica*

Up to two were seen in Sha Tin Central Park from 21 January to 13 April; one was carrying nesting material on the last date but they were not seen subsequently. One was seen at Tsuen Tau, Ma On Shan on 22 January, one was at Cheung Shu Tan on 4 February, with two there on 27 February, one at Kowloon Park on 13 April, two at Chuen Lung on 16 April, seven at Siu Lam on 18 April, one at Mai Po on 30 April, three at Buffalo Pass, Ma On Shan on 5 July, one at Mai Po landfill on 24 October and one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 December. These records suggest that there may still be a small breeding population in the central New Territories.

369 Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

In the first winter period one was seen on the Peak on 4 February, three were at Shek Kong on 16 February and there were singles at Tai Mei Tuk on 19 February and Kowloon Park on 19 April.

In the second part of the year one was at Ho Chung from 15 October to 3 December and five were at Wu Kau Tang on 28 November.

370 Black-tailed Hawfinch *Coccothraustes migratorius*

Scarce in the first winter period: groups of up to ten were seen in Lam Tsuen Valley, Shek Kong, Lok Ma Chau, Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui from January to March; 20 were in Kowloon Park on 8 April and ten on 13 April, three lingered at Lok Ma Chau to 22 April and one was seen flying north at Tsim Bei Tsui on 26 April. Scarce again in the second part of the year: the first single was at Mai Po on 8 November, up to 17 were in Lam Tsuen Valley from 5 December, up to 12 were at Tsim Bei Tsui from 15 December and seven were in Kowloon Park on 20 December. BBR,CC

370.1 Japanese Grosbeak *Coccothraustes personatus*

One was in Lam Tsuen Valley on 5 and 6 December (MLC *et al.*). This is the fourth Hong Kong record. The previous records were also in Lam Tsuen Valley in 1985, 1987 and 1988.

371 Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala*

The main passage period at Mai Po was mid to late March peaking on 24 March when 200 were recorded. The latest in spring was at Mai Po on 13 May and the first two in autumn were recorded there on 25 October. Thirty at Mai Po on 5 November was the highest count in the second winter period. BBR,CC

372 Japanese Yellow Bunting *Emberiza sulphurata*

In contrast to 1991, spring passage was weak, singles being recorded at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 April (RWL) and Mai Po on 17 April (PJL). One at Ho Chung on 14 November (JAH) was the first autumn record.

373 Grey-headed Bunting *Emberiza fucata*

Up to seven were present on the Mai Po landfill area from 23 February to 17 April, one was at Tin Shui Wai on 9 April and four were there on 10 April. Single birds were at Ho Chung from 17 October to 3 November, on the Mai Po landfill area on 25 October and at Lok Ma Chau on 31 October and four were at Luk Keng on 29 November and 14 December. BBR

373.2 Yellow-browed Bunting *Emberiza chrysophrys*

One trapped at Mai Po on 17 April was seen again the next day (PRK,PJL). Two were at Ho Chung from 31 October to 1 November (MH,JAH,RWL) and five were in Tan Shan Valley on 15 November (DAD). These are the eighth to tenth Hong Kong records.

374 Tristram's Bunting *Emberiza tristrami*

Counts of 16 at Kadoorie Farm on 21 January and 21 in Tai Po Kau on 22 January suggest that an influx occurred at this time. Up to seven were at Shing Mun in February and singles were seen in Pok Fu Lam Country Park and at the Peak and Shouson Hill in February and

March. The latest singles were at Mai Po on 14 and 27 April (RWL), this last being a new late date for this species. The first in autumn was at Ho Chung from 28 to 31 October, up to five were in Tai Po Kau from 12 November, three were seen (two trapped) at Kadoorie ARC on 28 November and five were at Shing Mun on 28 November and 13 December. BBR,CC

375 Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica*

1991: an adult male was at Tai Tam on 4 April (AD).

376 Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

The largest spring flocks were of 50 at Tin Shui Wai on 22 February and 50 at Mai Po on 21 March and 1 April. The latest in spring was at Mai Po on 3 May. The first in autumn was at Ho Chung on 17 October; the flock there built up to 60 on 8 November and 100 in December. Twenty were at Luk Keng on 14 December and 20 in Lam Tsuen Valley on 21 December. BBR,CC

377 Chestnut Bunting *Emberiza rutila*

Spring passage was observed at Sha Tin, Lam Tsuen Valley and Mai Po from 10 to 22 April, ten at Mai Po on 17 April being the highest count. The first ten in autumn passed over Kadoorie ARC on 18 October, 145 flew over there in the early morning on 31 October, 150 were there (including 39 trapped) on 7 November and 95 flew over on 14 November. These are exceptional numbers for this species and represent the highest numbers ever recorded in the Territory. Elsewhere small numbers were widespread until the last on 10 December, the highest counts being of ten at Mount Austin on 30 October and at Ho Chung from 28 October to 2 November. BBR

378 Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola*

Spring migrants occurred between 8 March and 3 May, most records coming from the Deep Bay area. Twenty were on the Mai Po landfill area on 17 April and 20 were at Mai Po itself on 18 April. Autumn passage commenced on 5 October and small numbers were widely reported in the New Territories until 29 November. Peak counts were 30 over Mai Po on 10 October and 35 on 17 October and ten at Ho Chung on 24 October. BBR

379.1 Pallas's Reed Bunting *Emberiza pallasi*

The individual first seen on the Mai Po landfill area on 8 December 1991 was recorded again on 15 January (PJL).

379.2 Japanese Reed Bunting *Emberiza yessoensis*

An adult female was trapped on the Mai Po landfill area on 21 November (PJL).

This is the second record for Hong Kong - the first was from the same location on 3 November 1991.



11 Adult female Japanese Reed Bunting *Emberiza yessoensis*
Near Mai Po, Hong Kong 21 November 1992

Paul Leader

380 Crested Bunting

Melophus lathami

One was at Sha Lo Tung on 30 October (RWL). Eight in Tan Shan Valley on 14 November increased to 13 on 15th, one remaining to 22 November (DAD). One was seen at Ho Chung on 14 November and three were there from 19 November into 1993 (JAH,MH), one was at Sha Lo Tung on 12 December (RWL) and one was on Lamma Island on 19 December (VBP).

CATEGORY B. SPECIES WHICH HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN AN APPARENTLY WILD STATE IN HONG KONG, BUT NOT IN THE LAST FIFTY YEARS

501 Ring-necked Pheasant

Phasianus colchicus

A male at Sir Cecil's Ride, Hong Kong Island in early January was without a tail and was an obvious escape.

CATEGORY C. SPECIES WHICH, ALTHOUGH ORIGINALLY INTRODUCED BY MAN, HAVE NOW ESTABLISHED A REGULAR FERAL BREEDING STOCK WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT BE SELF-SUPPORTING

601 Feral Pigeon

Columba livia
BBR,CC

602 Rainbow Lorikeet

Trichoglossus haematodus

Regularly recorded at Shouson Hill throughout the year, a maximum of eight being counted on 21 October.

603 Sulphur-crested Cockatoo

Cacatua sulphurea
BBR,CC

604 Rose-ringed Parakeet

Psittacula krameri

Two at Mai Po on 17 October was the only report away from the urban area.
BBR,CC

605 Common Mynah

Acridotheres tristis

Single pairs nested near Mai Po and in the Borneo Lines Camp, Shek Kong. Up to two were seen at Yuen Long in April and December and one was at Au Tau on 1 May.
BBR

606 Azure-winged Magpie

Cyanopica cyana

The only reports were of one in Hong Kong Park on 10 October and single birds in the ZBG on 9 and 13 April, during the Bird Race on 10 to 11 April and during the Christmas Count on 20 December, the latter reports presumably also coming from this site.
BBR,CC

CATEGORY D. SPECIES WHICH HAVE OCCURRED IN AN APPARENTLY WILD STATE BUT FOR WHICH THE POSSIBILITY OF ESCAPE OR RELEASE FROM CAPTIVITY CANNOT BE SATISFACTORILY EXCLUDED.

705.1 Brown-breasted Bulbul

Pycnonotus xanthorrhous

One trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 24 October and again on 4 November (DPC) had badly crippled feet and was almost certainly an escaped or released bird.

712 Grey-cheeked Fulvetta

Alcippe morrisonia

A party of at least ten were seen in Tai Po Kau on 31 October (JAH,MH). The only previous record was of a single bird in Tai Po Kau on 25 October 1984.

712.1 Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis*
Up to six were regularly seen in Tai Po Kau throughout the year but no evidence of breeding was observed. Elsewhere there were two at Coombe Road, HK Island on 20 and 24 January (VBP,MT), two at Mansfield Road, the Peak from 1 April to September (MT) and singles at Shing Mun in March, April, September, October and December. This species, formerly 806.08 in Category E, has been upgraded to Category D (see separate Note in this report). BBR,CC

712.2 Ruddy Sparrow *Passer rutilans*
Single males were in Aberdeen Country Park on 12 January (JEB) and Kowloon Park on 1 March (CYL).

715.3 Meadow Bunting *Emberiza cioides*
A female or immature was on the Peak on 29 October (GAW). The only other record of a probably wild bird was on Lantau on 30 December 1989.

[**Red-headed/Black-headed Bunting** *Emberiza bruniceps/melanocephala*
A bunting at Ho Chung on 17 October and two further individuals there on 19 October were either Red-headed or Black-headed Buntings (MH *et al.*), probably the former species. A further record of a similar bird came from Mount Austin on 24 October (MT). All were female or immature. See separate paper in this Report.]

CATEGORY E. SPECIES FOR WHICH ALL PUBLISHED RECORDS ARE SUSPECTED OF BEING BIRDS WHICH HAVE ESCAPED OR HAVE BEEN RELEASED FROM CAPTIVITY

800.5 Wood Duck*	<i>Aix sponsa</i>
801.5 Red Lory*	<i>Eos borneo</i>
802.05 Chattering Lory*	<i>Lorius garrulus</i>
808 Budgerigar	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>
810.05 Collared Finchbill	<i>Spizixos semitorques</i>
812.5 Blue-winged Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</i>
813 Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>
814.5 White-throated Laughing Thrush*	<i>Garrulax albogularis</i>
816 Silver-eared Mesia	<i>Leiothrix argentauris</i>
816.01 Blue-winged Minla*	<i>Minla cyanuroptera</i>
816.15 Black-throated Sunbird*	<i>Aethopyga saturata</i>
816.2 Green Jay	<i>Cyanocorax yncas</i>
817 House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>

818 Asian Pied Starling	<i>Sturnus contra</i>
821 White-vented Mynah	<i>Acridotheres javanicus</i>
822 Indian Grackle	<i>Gracula religiosa</i> BBR
828.1 Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>
830 Java Sparrow	<i>Padda oryzivora</i>
831 Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>

Silver-eared Mesias threaten to become established in the central New Territories. Up to five were regularly seen in Tai Po Kau and reports were frequent at Shing Mun to 11 July and from 7 November with up to 30 in the second winter period.

*First recorded in 1992

THE FOLLOWING RECORDS WERE SUBMITTED BUT NOT ACCEPTED BY THE RECORDS COMMITTEE

Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* Mai Po, 12 February
Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus* Mai Po, 25 January
Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius* Mai Po, 28 January
Mountain Hawk Eagle *Spizaetus nipalensis* Lok Ma Chau, 9 October
Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaeus* Mai Po, 14 March
Slaty-backed Gull *Larus schistisagus* Tsim Bei Tsui, 21 December
Glaucous-winged Gull hybrid *Larus sp.* Mai Po, 6 and 14 February
Ancient Auk *Synthliboramphus antiquus* Four, off Lamma Island, 23 September
Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx fugax* two heard, Tai Po Kau, 11 April
Bay Woodpecker *Blythipicus pyrrhotis* heard, Tai Po Kau, 9 April
Lark sp. *Calandrella sp.* Kai Tak, 3 May
Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava plexa* Lok Ma Chau, 28 November
Grey-sided Thrush *Turdus feae* Kop Tong, Wu Kau Tang, 29 November
Pale-footed Bush Warbler *Cettia pallidipes* Shing Mun, 16 January; Mount Nicholson, 18 October
Spotted Bush Warbler *Bradypterus thoracicus* Sha Lo Tung, 6 November
Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus seebohmi* Sha Lo Tung, 10 November
1988: five, Hok Tau, 16 January; Ting Kok, 13 February; Hok Tau, 30 November
1989: Chung Uk, 6 and 9 December; two, Sha Lo Tung, 6 December; Hok Tau, 9 December; Wu Kau Tang, 16 December; Sha Lo Tung, 25 December; two, Ma On Shan, 27 December
1990: two, Sha Lo Tung, 11 December
Brown Bush Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris* Shek Pik, Lantau, 22 March 1990
Bright-capped Cisticola *Cisticola exilis* two, Sha Lo Tung 25 January; Mong Tseng Wai, 22 February; four, Ping Yeung, 6 November
Paddyfield Warbler *Acrocephalus agricola* Mai Po, 9 October
Two-barred Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus* Lam Tsuen Valley, 8 January, 11 January (two), 6 February (two); Mai Po, 11 October
Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi* Sha Lo Tung, 7 November
White-tailed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus davisoni* Shing Mun, 3 December
Tiger Shrike *Lanius tigrinus* Tai Po Kau, 27 September

Siskin *Carduelis spinus* five, Mount Nicholson, 4 November
 Yellow-browed Bunting *Emberiza chrysophrys* San Tau Kok, 6 January
 Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis* Mount Nicholson, 15 April
 1991: Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica* Tai Po Kau 10 April



Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus* imm.

(Jeremy N. Pearse)

HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL WATERFOWL COUNT 1992

Michael L. Chalmers

The thirteenth annual coordinated waterfowl count organised by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society was held on 12 January 1992. As in the last two years, supplementary counts during the one-week period either side of the main count (ie. 5-19 January) have also been included, if higher. The count is arranged for mid-January as part of the Asian Waterfowl Census, coordinated and published by the International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau and Asian Wetland Bureau.

In addition to the traditional Deep Bay areas in Hong Kong and Futian, China, counts were carried out for the second year at Hong Kong's other significant intertidal wetland area at Starling Inlet.

The full results for each area are appended in Table 2. The total number of water birds present in the Deep Bay area was 46,911, comprising 74 species and divided into major groups as follows:

TABLE 1. Waterfowl Count subtotals by group and location

Group	Deep Bay		Starling Inlet	
	Number	Species	Number	Species
Cormorants	1,541	1	1	1
Hérons, Egrets etc.	4,944	14	216	6
Ducks	11,691	14	1	1
Rails, Coot, Moorhen etc.	3,538	7	89	4
Waders	9,061	33	12	4
Gulls and Terns	16,136	5	861	2
Total	46,911	74	1,180	18

The overall total for Deep Bay is only 3.8% below last year's record high. Cormorants, ducks, gulls and terns were all down on last year whereas the other three groups increased. For Cormorants, the drop may have been due to a new roost being established outside Deep Bay, involving about 1,800 birds located on rocks at east Chek Lap Kok.

The most numerous duck species, Shoveler, Teal and especially Pintail, all dropped back from the highs established last year whereas Wigeon continued their recent rapid increase. From the sharp peak in 1988 Shelduck numbers continued to fall to the lowest total since 1983.

On the other hand, two groups, rails etc. and waders, established significant new high counts. These were due to the very large numbers

of Coot, Kentish Plover and Dunlin recorded. In addition, the number of waders recorded was the highest ever. Many species previously considered solely as passage migrants are now regularly recorded in the winter. The most interesting wader record was the first winter occurrence of Spoon-billed Sandpiper, which was the only new species recorded on the count. However, before the end of January other interesting wader records included single Turnstone and a vagrant Ringed Plover in Deep Bay.

New high counts were established for the following 21 species, 15 of which were waders: Black Stork (3); European Spoonbill (13); Wigeon (1,335); Mandarin (4); Coot (3,245); Kentish Plover (2,182); Lesser Sand Plover (150); Greater Sand Plover (20); Asiatic Golden Plover (110); Great Knot (12); Knot (27); Red-necked Stint (12); Dunlin (3,008); Broad-billed Sandpiper (40); Whimbrel (15); Curlew (735); Swinhoe's Snipe (5); Redshank (166); Green Sandpiper (76); Common Sandpiper (122); and Black-tailed Gull (5).

For the first time since 1983 no Dalmatian Pelicans were recorded during the count period. Numbers have been declining steadily in recent years and, sadly, the loss of this endangered wintering species appears to be inevitable. At the end of January three birds did arrive but these were about a month later than usual and represented a further decrease on last year.

The large flock of over 100 Oriental White Storks recorded for the first time last winter did not return but 11 birds did come back this year and on the count day three Black Storks were also present.

All the habitat surrounding Deep Bay remains under pressure from development and pollution. Most of the sites outside Mai Po are being gradually lost and Tin Shui Wai has very little habitat remaining other than a small reserve established in the Deep Bay buffer zone.

Birds of prey were again counted in the Deep Bay area as follows: Black-shouldered Kite (1); Black Kite (178); Marsh Harrier (2); Pied Harrier (1); Buzzard (5); Spotted Eagle (4); Imperial Eagle (4); Bonelli's Eagle (1); Osprey (7); and Kestrel (4).

The assistance of the staff of WWF-HK Mai Po Reserve and the Futian Nature Reserve at Shenzhen are gratefully acknowledged. Counts were carried out by the following observers: GJ Carey, ML Chalmers, S Chan, NJG Croft, JSR Edge, P Garland, M Hale, JG Holmes, AR Lamont, PJ Leader, MR & E Leven, RW Lewthwaite, YL Mo-yung, J Pearce, N Pertwee, VB Picken, RDE Stott, RP Tipper, M Turnbull, CA Viney, MD Williams, F Wong, L Young, WL Young.

由香港觀鳥會組織的第十三次國際水禽調查在一九九二年一月十二日舉行，在米埔地區錄得74種水禽，合共47,032隻，比前一年的歷來最高的總數僅少了3.5%。鸕鶿、鴨類、海鷗和燕鷗都比前一年減少，其他三類則有所增加。

TABLE 2. Summary of Waterfowl Count 1992

Deep Bay Area										
Species	Yim Tso Ha Starling Inlet	Fu Tian	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lok Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Lau Fau Shan	Total	
Little Grebe	1	5	3	9	53	2	3	1	76	
Great Crested Grebe						*		46	46	
Cormorant	1	18	50	119	1,087	49	27	191	1,541	
Bittern					1				1	
Night Heron	5		60		90				150	
Chinese Pond Heron	7	86	64	53	92	8	42	126	471	
Cattle Egret	7		6	16	75			22	119	
Little Egret	35	221	240	43	1,069	314	28	183	2,098	
Intermediate Egret						1			1	
Great Egret	104	19	16	47	329	125	1	22	559	
Grey Heron	58	12	83	6	744	618	14	1	1,478	
Purple Heron					1	1			2	
Black Stork					3				3	
Oriental White Stork					11				11	
White Ibis					1				1	
European Spoonbill					13				13	
Black-faced Spoonbill		23			14				37	
Shelduck						387			387	
Mandarin					4				4	
Wigeon		5	210		174	856		90	1,335	
Falcated Teal					92	26			118	

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

Species	Yim Tso Ha Starling Inlet	Deep Bay Area							Total
		Fu Tian	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lok Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Lau Fau Shan	
Gadwall					3	8			11
Baikal Teal					1				1
Teal	1		427	35	921	1,285	13	5	2,686
Mallard					3	20			23
Yellow-nib Duck					102	63	25		190
Pintail		275			4	2,751		40	3,070
Garganey					15				15
Shoveler		3	1			3,834		8	3,846
Common Pochard					1				1
Tufted Duck			1		3				4
Banded Rail					1	5			6
Ruddy Crake					1				1
White-Breasted Waterhen	2		8	3	9		8	3	31
Moorhen	17		14	72	37		7	3	133
Coot	69	520	199	171	642	693		1,020	3,245
Black-winged Stilt			2						2
Avocet						391			391
Little Ringed Plover	4	39	11	6	1		5	11	73
Kentish Plover		*				2,000		182	2,182
Lesser Sand Plover						150			150
Greater Sand Plover						20			20
Asiatic Golden Plover						110			110

TABLE 2 continued

Species	Yim Tso Ha Starling Inlet	Deep Bay Area							Total
		Fu Tian	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lok Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Lau Fau Shan	
Grey Plover						480			480
Grey-headed Lapwing						9			9
Lapwing							1		1
Great Knot						12			12
Knot						27			27
Red-necked Stint						2			12
Temminck's Stint		10					24		24
Long-toed Stint						5			5
Dunlin						3,000		8	3,008
Spoon-billed Sandpiper						1			1
Broad-billed Sandpiper						40			40
Fantail Snipe	1	6	1	105	7	1	1	2	124
Pintail Snipe			1	2		2	2	1	8
Swinhoe's Snipe				5					5
Snipe sp.				2					2
Black-tailed Godwit					*	146			146
Bar-tailed Godwit						2		15	2
Whimbrel						735			735
Curlew		*							2
Australian Curlew						2			2
Spotted Redshank		84			650	3			737

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

Deep Bay Area									
Species	Yim Tso Ha Starling Inlet	Fu Tian	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lo Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Lau Fau Shan	Total
Redshank		7				13	146		166
Marsh Sandpiper						70			70
Greenshank					28	152	33	12	225
Green Sandpiper	3	30	24	7	4		9	2	76
Wood Sandpiper		1	6	57		7	2	6	79
Common Sandpiper	4	9	39	14	18	11	13	18	122
Saunders' Gull						38			38
Black-headed Gull	850	1,114	1,541	142	614	11,979		379	15,769
Black-tailed Gull	11					5			16
Herring Gull		1					320		321
Caspian Tern						3			3

* indicates total deleted to avoid possible double count

REPORT ON BIRD RINGING IN HONG KONG IN 1992

David S. Melville and A.C. Galsworthy

Ringing during 1992 resulted in the highest annual totals ever for both individual birds (5,769), and species (160). Species totals are given in Table 1, together with those from previous years. The most recent report on bird ringing in the Territory is given by Melville and Galsworthy (1992).

Ringing activities continued to be concentrated at the WWF Hong Kong Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve. Regular trapping, however, was done at the University of Hong Kong Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre at Shek Kong during the autumn and winter. Limited ringing on Victoria Peak, Lok Ma Chau and Luk Keng marsh, as well as various other sites in the New Territories, resulted in several interesting captures.

During the year three species were added to the Hong Kong list as a result of trapping: Paddyfield Warbler (Kennerley 1992), Russet Bush Warbler and Brown Bush Warbler (Kennerley and Leader 1993). The latter two species were trapped at Sha Lo Tung in an area which appears to be destined to be destroyed by a golf resort development.

Other notable captures during the year included four Besras and three Japanese Sparrowhawks, the identification of these birds being resolved on wing formula criteria (Mees 1980), general plumage characters, especially the mesial stripe, being unreliable. One of the two Painted Snipe appeared to be in post-juvenile primary moult, something not previously recorded for this species although suspected (Cramp and Simmons 1983).

The capture of five Siberian Blue Robins was unprecedented. The trapping of Hong Kong's second Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler has raised certain questions over the identity of these birds, both birds showing comparatively little yellow on the underparts. Further investigations are now in hand to determine the extent of variation in the underpart colour of this species. Netting in the Luk Keng marsh, threatened by a golf course development proposal, resulted in 14 Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers and one Lanceolated Warbler being trapped. The Blyth's Reed Warbler was the fourth Hong Kong record and the fifth for China (Kennerley and Leader 1992). Numbers of Radde's and Two-barred Greenish Warblers caught indicate that these species are overlooked by observers. The high numbers of White and Yellow Wagtails ringed are the result of successful roost netting operations.

The bird trade continues to result in additions to the Hong Kong list, although the Black-headed Sibia caught at the Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre was an obvious escape. The ringing of such birds is considered to be important, however, especially as some birds of 'escapee' origin are now breeding, as evidenced by the Silver-eared Mesias at the

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Kadoorie Agriculture Research Centre where family groups were caught in the autumn.

There were 7 reports of overseas movements during the year, with a further record from 1990 coming to light (Table 2). The Redshank from Vietnam was our second recovery from that country. There has been an increase in recoveries from China, but there remain problems. One bird recovered in Shandong, which was probably a Redshank, had the ring number wrongly recorded.

Terek Sandpiper NV04265 is of particular interest as it is the second time the bird has been controlled at Broome; it had previously been caught there in 1990.

The need for improved information exchange is highlighted by Terek Sandpiper XS31469. The initial control of this bird was reported (Melville 1989), but unfortunately the subsequent recapture was not reported to us and only came to light since it was published (Yatim 1990).

The recovery of the Curlew Sandpiper near Tianjin is of interest. A preliminary analysis of weight data of Curlew Sandpipers caught in Hong Kong suggests that birds departing in spring carry sufficient fat to reach the coast of the Bo Hai (Young and Melville in press), but this is the first indication that our birds do indeed pass through this area. There is no doubt that the coast of the Bo Hai is an extremely important area for migrant shorebirds (e.g. Brazil 1992, Wang *et al.* 1991, 1992) and thus it is of particular concern to find that much of it is being lost rapidly to shrimp ponds and salt pans (Melville 1992, Wong and Liang 1992). Indeed, the future of long-distance migrant shorebirds using the coasts of China must be in doubt since the World Bank currently predicts that most of China's coastal wetlands will be lost within the next 10 to 20 years.

The Australasian Wader Studies Group has been marking birds with coloured leg flags since 1991 (Barter and Rush 1992, Minton 1993), and there continue to be observations of marked birds in Hong Kong. During the course of the spring migration a single flagged Curlew Sandpiper was seen on 6 May and the bird caught on 14 April also was flagged. Flagged Red-necked Stints were recorded on 5, 12 and 21 May.

The number of recaptures continues to grow steadily and some of the more interesting records for migrant species are detailed in Table 3. Table 4 details longevity data for both 'resident' and migrant species. Whilst these records are of interest, it must be appreciated that these are probably approaching extreme records, and that the 'average' lifespan of these species is likely to be considerably shorter.

We continue to assist Dr R. Corlett, Botany Department, University of Hong Kong with his studies of avian seed dispersal, preliminary results of which have now been published (Corlett 1992a, 1992b).

Studies of both epidermal mite infestation, and leg 'cramp' (capture myopathy) in shorebirds are being conducted in conjunction with Dr S. Mainka.

During the course of the year Fox K.O. Wong became the first Hong Kong citizen to be recognised as a qualified bird ringer by the British Trust for Ornithology.

We wish to thank the Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology for permission to use their rings in Hong Kong. Trapping of birds is carried out under permits issued by the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries. We are grateful to our fellow ringers Geoff Carey, David Carthy, Peter Kennerley, Paul Leader, Mike Leven and Fox Wong. Many others have assisted with ringing during the year and we thank them all, especially Jan Galsworthy, Liz Leven, Steve McChesney, Vicky Melville and Lew Young.

Bird ringing in Hong Kong is a WWF Hong Kong project made possible through the generous sponsorship of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong South. We are most grateful for their continuing support.



TABLE 1. Birds ringed in Hong Kong 1966-1992

Species		MAPS*	1975-1991	1992	Total
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		1		1
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		1		1
Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>		1		1
Yellow Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>	15	61	9	85
Schrenck's Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus eurhythmus</i>		2		2
Chestnut Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>	1	2	1	4
Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>		4	2	6
Little Green Heron	<i>Butorides striatus</i>		2	4	6
Chinese Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>		84	5	89
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>		2		2
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		4		4
Falcated Teal	<i>Anas falcata</i>		1		1
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>		19	15	34
Yellow-nib Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>		3		3
Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>		1		1
Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>		4	3	7
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>		39		39
Japanese Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter gularis</i>	1	14	3	18
Besra	<i>Accipiter virgatus</i>		3	4	7
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>			1	1
Chinese Goshawk	<i>Accipiter soloensis</i>		1		1
Imperial Eagle	<i>Aquila heliaca</i>	1**			1
Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus fasciatus</i>		1		1
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	4**	1	1	6
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>		1**		1

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1991	1992	Total
Chinese Francolin	<i>Francolinus pintadeanus</i>	7**			7
Japanese Quail	<i>Coturnix japonica</i>	1**			1
Yellow-legged Button Quail	<i>Turnix tanki</i>	1**	1		2
Barred Button Quail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>	1	1		2
Baillon's Crake	<i>Porzana pusilla</i>	1			1
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	1	16	5	22
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		2		2
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		2		2
Painted Snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>		3	2	5
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>		1		1
Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		3		3
Oriental Pratincole	<i>Glareola maldivarum</i>		3		3
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>		3	2	5
Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>		22	22	44
Lesser Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>		46	18	64
Greater Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>		226	15	241
Asiatic Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>		66	38	104
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		56	14	70
Great Knot	<i>Calidris tenuirostris</i>		75	16	91
Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>		75	17	92
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>			1	1
Red-necked Stint	<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	6	195	5	206
Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>		1		1
Long-toed Stint	<i>Calidris subminuta</i>		31		31
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>		41	3	44

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1991	1992	Total
Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>		1		1
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	1	655	160	816
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>		354	16	370
Spoon-billed Sandpiper	<i>Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus</i>		3		3
Broad-billed Sandpiper	<i>Limicola falcinellus</i>		97	7	104
Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>		2	1	3
Fantail Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1	92	24	117
Pintail Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>		9	9	18
Swinhoe's Snipe	<i>Gallinago megala</i>		10	3	13
Asiatic Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus semipalmatus</i>		20	1	21
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>		23	16	39
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>		74	3	77
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>		367	54	421
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		19	10	29
Australian Curlew	<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>		1	1	2
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>		7	6	13
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		1029	254	1283
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>		55	39	94
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>		19	26	45
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		1		1
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>		157	39	196
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>		459	47	506
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	4	107	15	126
Grey-rumped Sandpiper	<i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i>		64	3	67
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>		22		22

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continue

Species		MAPS*	1975-1991	1992	Total
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>		9		9
Rufous Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>		28	5	33
Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	2	127	32	161
Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>		9	3	12
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	1			1
Budgerigar	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>		3	1	4
Plaintive Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>		3	2	5
Oriental Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus saturatus</i>		1	1	2
Koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopacea</i>		2	1	3
Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>		12		12
Lesser Coucal	<i>Centropus bengalensis</i>	2	1		3
Oriental Scops Owl	<i>Otus (scops) sunia</i>	2	1		3
Barred Owllet	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>		2**		2
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	2**	1		3
Pacific Swift	<i>Apus pacificus</i>			12	12
House Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>		1	11	12
White-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	24	34	9	67
Black-capped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon pileata</i>	5	26	7	38
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	104	731	106	941
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>		5		5
Great Barbet	<i>Megalaima virens</i>			1	1
Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	21	21	8	50
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	1			1
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	11	154	49	214
Asian House Martin	<i>Delichon dasypus</i>			26	26

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1991	1992	Total
Richard's Pipit	<i>Anthus novaeseelandiae</i>	13	1	3	17
Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	86	40	16	142
Pechora Pipit	<i>Anthus gustavi</i>		2	1	3
Red-throated Pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>			1	1
Forest Wagtail	<i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>		2		2
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>		1	73	74
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	6	3	2	11
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	18	21	473	512
Ashy Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus divaricatus</i>		2		2
Crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	80	607	255	942
Chinese Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus sinensis</i>	895	1486	525	2906
Brown-breasted Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus xanthorrhous</i>			1	1
Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus aurigaster</i>	95	15	2	112
Chestnut Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes castanonotus</i>	2			2
Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes madagascariensis</i>	1			1
White-tailed Robin	<i>Cinclidium leucurum</i>		1		1
Red-tailed Robin	<i>Luscinia sibilans</i>	6	28	13	47
Rubythroat	<i>Luscinia calliope</i>	95	131	45	271
Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>	9	21	5	35
Siberian Blue Robin	<i>Luscinia cyane</i>		1	5	6
Red-flanked Bluetail	<i>Tarsiger cyanurus</i>	30	127	87	244
Daurian Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus auroreus</i>	16	7	7	30
Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	2	45	18	65
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	48	72	14	134
Grey Bushchat	<i>Saxicola ferrea</i>	1			1

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1991	1992	Total
White-throated Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola gularis</i>		1		1
Violet Whistling Thrush	<i>Myiophoneus caeruleus</i>	11	10	1	22
White's Thrush	<i>Zoothera dauma</i>	2	3		5
Grey Thrush	<i>Turdus cardis</i>	53	18	3	74
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	1	8	2	11
Brown Thrush	<i>Turdus chrysolaus</i>	1		1	2
Grey-backed Thrush	<i>Turdus hortulorum</i>	209	110	58	377
Pale Thrush	<i>Turdus pallidus</i>	15	1	2	18
Eye-browed Thrush	<i>Turdus obscurus</i>		13	3	16
Dusky Thrush	<i>Turdus naumanni</i>	3			3
Short-tailed Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia squameiceps</i>	1	9	6	16
Chinese Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia diphone</i>	19	216	94	329
Mountain Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia fortipes</i>		10	6	16
Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia acanthizoides</i>		1	1	2
Pale-footed Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia pallidipes</i>		2	2	4
Russet Bush Warbler	<i>Bradypterus seebohmii</i>			3	3
Brown Bush Warbler	<i>Bradypterus luteoventris</i>			1	1
Fantail Warbler	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>		10	14	24
Bright-capped Cisticola	<i>Cisticola exilis</i>		4		4
Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>	12	481	100	593
Yellow-bellied Prinia	<i>Prinia flaviventris</i>	39	863	175	1077
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella certhiola</i>	5	4	15	24
Styan's Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella pleskei</i>	8	16	2	26
Lanceolated Warbler	<i>Locustella lanceolata</i>		1	3	4
Black-browed Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus bistrigiceps</i>	21	257	88	366

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1991	1992	Total
Blunt-winged Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus concinens</i>		1		1
Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	251	1580	203	2034
Paddyfield Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>			1	1
Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>		3	1	4
Thick-billed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus aedon</i>		7	3	10
Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler	<i>Seicercus burkii</i>		2		2
Large Grass Warbler	<i>Graminicola bengalensis</i>			3	3
Long-tailed Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	11	143	45	199
Blyth's Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i>			1	1
Eastern Crowned Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus coronatus</i>		4	1	5
Pale-legged Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus tenellipes</i>		25	9	34
Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>	12	116	25	153
Pallas's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i>	5	23	37	65
Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	19	121	41	181
Radde's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus schwarzi</i>		2	5	7
Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	104	948	274	1326
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		2		2
Two-barred Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus</i>		3	2	5
Hainan Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis hainana</i>		1	1	2
Blue and White Flycatcher	<i>Cyanoptila cyanomelana</i>		1	2	3
Grey-streaked Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa griseisticta</i>		1		1
Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa latirostris</i>	6	21	11	38
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	1	9	5	15
Mugimaki Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula mugimaki</i>		7	18	25
Yellow-rumped Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula zanthopygia</i>	2	27	18	47

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1991	1992	Total
Narcissus Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula narcissina</i>		1		1
Grey-headed Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	1			1
Asian Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>		3		3
Japanese Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone atrocaudata</i>		2	1	3
Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>	1	4		5
Greater Necklaced Laughing Thrush	<i>Garrulax pectoralis</i>		12	9	21
Black-throated Laughing Thrush	<i>Garrulax chinensis</i>	2			2
Hwamei	<i>Garrulax canorus</i>	7**	35	34	76
Black-faced Laughing Thrush	<i>Garrulax perspicillatus</i>	18	16	2	36
Pekin Robin	<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>	9**	35	33	77
Silver-eared Mesia	<i>Leiothrix argenteauris</i>		6	21	27
Vinous-throated Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis webbiana</i>		1		1
Black-headed Sibia	<i>Heterophasia melanoleuca</i>			1	1
Red-headed Tit	<i>Aegithalos concinnus</i>			1	1
Yellow-cheeked Tit	<i>Parus spilonotus</i>		1		1
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	34	52	18	104
Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>		93	39	132
Fork-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga christinae</i>	1	15	10	26
Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum ignipectus</i>		3	2	5
Chestnut-flanked White-eye	<i>Zosterops erythropleura</i>		8	1	9
White-eye	<i>Zosterops japonica</i>	217	2969	1050	4236
Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>		2		2
Tiger Shrike	<i>Lanius tigrinus</i>			1	1
(Bull-headed Shrike)***	<i>(Lanius bucephalus)***</i>	1			1
Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>	6	16	3	25

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1991	1992	Total
Rufous-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>	39	39	5	83
Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>		7		7
Hair-crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>	1	2	1	4
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		1		1
Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa erythrorhyncha</i>	4	3	1	8
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	2**	2		4
Silky Starling	<i>Sturnus sericeus</i>		11	5	16
Purple-backed Starling	<i>Sturnus sturninus</i>			1	1
Chinese Starling	<i>Sturnus sinensis</i>	2	6		8
Grey Starling	<i>Sturnus cineraceus</i>			1	1
Black-necked Starling	<i>Sturnus nigricollis</i>		12	2	14
Crested Mynah	<i>Acridotheres cristatellus</i>	2	11	2	15
White-vented Mynah	<i>Acridotheres javanicus</i>		2		2
Ruddy Sparrow	<i>Passer rutilans</i>		1		1
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	92**	442	74	608
Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>		4		4
White-backed Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>		20	12	32
Spotted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	34	625	54	713
Chestnut Munia	<i>Lonchura malacca</i>	1	5		6
White-headed Munia	<i>Lonchura maja</i>		1		1
Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>	5	7	2	14
Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>		8	1	9
Chinese Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis sinica</i>	1			1
Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>		1		1
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		1		1

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1991	1992	Total
Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	12	9		21
Black-tailed Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes migratorius</i>	9			9
Black-faced Bunting	<i>Emberiza spodocephala</i>	219	756	193	1168
Japanese Yellow Bunting	<i>Emberiza sulphurata</i>		1		1
Grey-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza fucata</i>	1	3	1	5
Yellow-browed Bunting	<i>Emberiza chrysophrys</i>		1	1	2
Tristram's Bunting	<i>Emberiza tristrami</i>	4	16	11	31
Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	2	146	58	206
Chestnut Bunting	<i>Emberiza rutila</i>		44	62	106
Yellow-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza aureola</i>	28	18	6	52
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>		1		1
Pallas's Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza pallasi</i>		1		1
Japanese Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza yessoensis</i>			1	1
Crested Bunting	<i>Melophus lathami</i>			1	1
TOTAL		3,190	19,118	5,769	28,077

* The Migratory Animals Pathological Survey (MAPS) programme ran from 1964-1971. Ringing was done in Hong Kong between 1965 and 1968. Details of MAPS birds are from McClure and Leelavit (1972) and from F.O.P. Hechtel's personal records. In the few cases where there is a discrepancy the higher figure has been taken.

** Some or all of these birds released from captivity by the ringer.

*** The identification of all pre-1986 records of Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus* has been questioned by Chalmers (1986).

TABLE 2. Overseas movements of ringed birds during 1992

Curlew Sandpiper 041-617484	ringed controlled (distance	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i> 29 February 1992, Werribee, Victoria, Australia 14 April 1992, Mai Po, Hong Kong 7,447 km SE)
Curlew Sandpiper NV52445	ringed hunted (distance	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i> 10 August 1990, Mai Po, Hong Kong May 1992, Tanggu, Tianjin, China 1,850 km NNE)
Redshank DK09128	ringed caught (distance	<i>Tringa totanus</i> 20 August 1988, Mai Po, Hong Kong c.10 April 1992, Chenghai, Guangdong, China (subsequently released September 1992) c. 300 km ENE)
Redshank DK09438	ringed hunted (distance	<i>Tringa totanus</i> 9 August 1989, Mai Po, Hong Kong 14 October 1992, Xuan Thuy, Red River Delta, Vietnam 840 km SW)
Redshank DK46627	ringed hunted (distance	<i>Tringa totanus</i> 9 September 1991, Mai Po, Hong Kong May/June 1992, Laizhou Bay, Shandong, China 1,680 km NNE)
Terek Sandpiper NV04265	ringed controlled controlled (distance	<i>Xenus cinereus</i> 31 August 1988, Mai Po, Hong Kong 29 March 1990, Broome, Western Australia 2 October 1992, Broome, Western Australia 4,591 km S)
Terek Sandpiper XS31469	ringed controlled controlled (distance	<i>Xenus cinereus</i> 12 October 1988, Mai Po, Hong Kong 23 November 1988, Kuala Selangor, Selangor, Malaysia 5 October 1990, Tanjung Krang, Selangor, Malaysia 2,531 km SW)
Great Reed Warbler 3A29508	ringed controlled (distance	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i> 1 August 1991, Watarasegawa Reservoir, Fujioka-machi, Tochigi-ken, Honshu, Japan 19 April 1992, Mai Po, Hong Kong 2,064 km NE)

TABLE 3. Selected captures of known migrants in 1992. All records refer to Mai Po unless otherwise stated.

Knot XR81296	ringed	<i>Calidris canutus</i> 13 May 1992/recaptured 12 November 1992
Fantail Snipe XR81123	ringed	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i> 27 October 1990/recaptured 28 November 1992 (LMC)
XR81142	ringed	20 January 1991/recaptured 7 November 1992 (LMC)
XR81145	ringed	20 January 1991/recaptured 7 November 1992 (LMC)
XS31495	ringed	2 January 1989/recaptured 7 November 1992 (LMC)
These four records, together with previous recaptures (Melville and Galsworthy 1992), indicate that there is a regular wintering population of Fantail Snipe at Lok Ma Chau.		
Whimbrel ER25019	ringed	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i> 27 August 1991/recaptured 15 August 1992
Redshank DK09398	ringed	<i>Tringa totanus</i> 9 August 1989/recaptured 14 April 1992
DK21244	ringed	8 September 1989/recaptured 15 August 1992
Terek Sandpiper XR62174	ringed	<i>Xenus cinereus</i> 22 September 1990/recaptured 25 September 1992
Wryneck VE52058	ringed	<i>Jynx torquilla</i> 4 March 1990/recaptured 27 September 1992
Olive-backed Pipit F145254	ringed	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i> 29 March 1990/recaptured 24 November 1990, 16 March 1991, 5 December 1992, 12 December 1992
Rubythroat		<i>Luscinia calliope</i> There were 5 recaptures of wintering birds showing site faithfulness. VH60964, which was ringed on 11 November 1990 at KARC, has been recaptured there 9 times subsequently.
Grey-backed Thrush		<i>Turdus hortulorum</i> There were two recaptures, the oldest being RV61762 ringed 4 February 1990/recaptured 17 March 1990, 30 November 1991, 8 February 1992

Continued ...

TABLE 3 continued

Chinese Bush Warbler *Cettia diphone*

There were 14 recaptures, the oldest being F145062 ringed 10 December 1988/recaptured 25 November 1989, 26 January 1990, 19 April 1992

Mountain Bush Warbler *Cettia fortipes*

H367075 ringed 1 January 1992/recaptured 28 November 1992 (KARC)

Styan's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella pleskei*

VH61000 ringed 12 January 1991/recaptured 12 April 1992, 17 October 1992

Black-browed Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*

There were 3 recaptures, the oldest being F353577 ringed 13 May 1990/recaptured 6 May 1992

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

There were 17 recaptures, the two oldest being:

VA23249 ringed 16 March 1986/recaptured 1 January 1992
VA23318 ringed 3 May 1986/recaptured 8 May 1990, 2 May 1992

Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

2T7423P ringed 2 February 1991/recaptured 23 February 1991, 1 January 1992 (KARC)
8T4175P ringed 27 November 1990/recaptured 30 November 1991, 22 February 1992 (KARC)

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

There were 23 recaptures, the three oldest being:

1K2944P ringed 16 March 1986/recaptured 8 November 1992
9R0125P ringed 3 December 1988/recaptured 4 November 1989, 24 December 1989, 3 March 1990, 11 January 1992, 12 December 1992
9R0147P ringed 10 December 1988/recaptured 2 February 1991, 11 January 1992, 29 February 1992, 28 March 1992

Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala*

There were 31 recaptures, the two oldest being:

C405069 ringed 9 March 1986/recaptured 24 March 1990, 2 February 1991, 1 February 1992
E051003 ringed 26 December 1987/recaptured 23 April 1988, 27 March 1989, 3 March 1990, 21 April 1990, 23 February 1991, 2 March 1991, 29 November 1992

KARC = Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre

LMC = Lok Ma Chau

TABLE 4. Longevity records for selected species in Hong Kong*

Chinese Bulbul

RX79268 ringed *Pycnonotus sinensis*
29 April 1986/recaptured 5 December 1992
(79 months, c.f. 30 months)

Chinese Bush Warbler *Cettia diphone*

C405070 ringed 9 March 1986/recaptured 17 March 1990
(48 months, c.f. 31 months)

Plain Prinia

1K2929 ringed *Prinia inornata*
15 March 1986/recaptured 8 February 1992
(71 months, c.f. 12 months)

Yellow-bellied Prinia

1K2736 ringed *Prinia flaviventris*
30 January 1985/recaptured 7 December 1991
(82 months, c.f. 61 months)

Dusky Warbler

1K2944 ringed *Phylloscopus fuscatus*
16 March 1986/recaptured 8 November 1992
(80 months, c.f. 35 months)

White-eye

5N7458 ringed *Zosterops japonica*
17 October 1987/recaptured 31 January 1993
(64 months, c.f. 25 months)

Black-faced Bunting

C405052 ringed *Emberiza spodocephala*
23 November 1985/recaptured 7 December 1991
(73 months, c.f. 61 months)

* Hong Kong data are compared with the longest surviving bird recorded in east/south east Asia during the MAPS programme (McClure 1984).

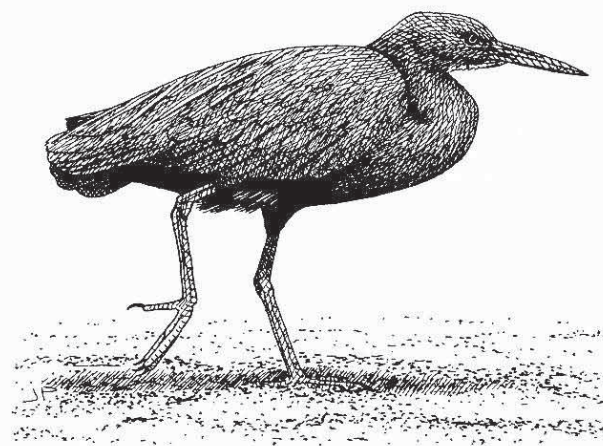
一九九二年內環志了的雀鳥，不論是數目（5,769隻）和品種（160種）都是歷來最多的。較特別的有四隻松雀鷹、三隻日本松雀鷹、五隻藍歌鵲和兩隻彩鵲。涉及海外活動的有七項，包括第二次在越南網獲紅腳鵲；在天津發現的鸕嘴濱鵲更叫人另眼相看，因為這是我們的雀鳥在該地區出現的首個証據。

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Reef Egret *Egretta sacra*

(Jeremy N. Pearse)

BREEDING BIRDS SURVEY TAI PO KAU, HONG KONG, 1992

Michael Turnbull

The fourth survey of breeding birds in Tai Po Kau Forest Reserve took place on 23 May 1992. A description of the reserve and an outline of the objectives of these surveys can be found in Viney (1989).

METHOD

Eight observers, who divided up into four groups, took part in the survey, carried out between 0600h and approximately 1230h. Most of the network of major trails (Red, Blue, Yellow and Brown Walks) and the forestry road was covered. However, in terms of the number of volunteers involved, the degree of coverage was not as thorough as it has been in some of the previous surveys.

WEATHER

The maximum air temperature recorded on 23 May 1992 at Sha Tin was 27.7°C, and during the survey temperatures at Tai Po Kau were probably around 21-25°C. The sky was overcast and there was some occasional very light rain.

RESULTS

The results are tabulated below (Table 1). For abundance the 'order of magnitude' method has again been used, as follows:

Number	'Order'
1 — 9	1
10 — 99	2
100 — 999	3

Breeding status is indicated by the use of the following codes, which follow the recommendations of the European Ornithological Atlas Committee (Sharrock 1976), and which were also used by Chalmers (1986):

A — present
B — possible breeding
C — probable breeding
D — confirmed breeding

DISCUSSION

The figures for the last three surveys in particular strongly suggest that the number of species using Tai Po Kau for breeding purposes is fairly stable and might be estimated to be about 35 to 45. There is

certainly no reason to believe it might be dropping as new breeding species, in this case Red-headed Tit, continue to be discovered, while others which have been at least suspected of breeding, such as White-bellied Yuhina, continue to be seen at Tai Po Kau throughout the year, though not necessarily on the day of the Breeding Birds Survey.

TABLE 1. Results of Tai Po Kau Breeding Birds Survey 1992

Species	'Order'	Breeding Status	Remarks
Chinese Pond Heron	1	A	5-6 birds
Black Kite	1	A	1-2 birds
Serpent Eagle	1	C	2 birds
Crested Goshawk	1	C	2 birds
Chinese Francolin	1	B	2 heard
Rufous Turtle Dove	1	A	6 birds
Spotted Dove	2	C	
Emerald Dove	1	B	1 bird
Red-winged Crested Cuckoo	1	B	5 birds seen
Large Hawk Cuckoo	1	B	7 calling
Plaintive Cuckoo	1	B	1 heard
Koel	1	B	
Lesser Coucal	1	B	1 heard
House Swift	1	A	
Great Barbet	2	C	
Grey-throated Minivet	2	C	
Scarlet Minivet	1	C	
Crested Bulbul	2	D	
Chinese Bulbul	2	D	
Chestnut Bulbul	2	C	
Orange-bellied Leafbird	1	C	
Magpie Robin	1	D	
Violet Whistling Thrush	1	C	
Yellow-bellied Prinia	2	C	
Long-tailed Tailorbird	2	D	
Hainan Blue Flycatcher	1	D	3 pairs
Arctic Warbler	1	A	2 birds
Greater-necklaced Laughingthrush	2	B	
Hwamei	2	B	
Pekin Robin	1	C	
Red-headed Tit	1	D	4 juvs
Great Tit	2	D	
Yellow-cheeked Tit	1	C	1 heard
Fork-tailed Sunbird	2	C	
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	1	C	
White-eye	2	D	
Black Drongo	1	B	
Hair-crested Drongo	1	B	
Blue Magpie	1	B	
Treepie	1	C	pair
Jungle Crow	1	B	
White-backed Munia	1	D	nest-building
Silver-eared Mesia	1	C	7 birds
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	1	C	

TABLE 2. Comparison with previous surveys

	1988	1989	1991	1992
Totals: Present	5	5	3	5
Breeding possible	15	11	16	13
Breeding probable	25	14	17	17
Breeding confirmed	12	16	10	9
Number of species	57	46	46	44

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to the seven members who assisted in the survey: M.L. Chalmers, D.A. Diskin, J.S.R. Edge, P.J. Leader, E.P. and M.R. Leven and V.B. Picken.

本文是第四次在大埔滘自然護理區進行的繁殖鳥類調查的報告。在一九九二年五月二十三日，共錄得43種，比前一年略少而已。根據連續過去三年的調查所得顯示，在大埔滘繁殖的鳥類約35至45種，情況大致穩定。

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HONG KONG CHRISTMAS COUNT 1992

I. Tyzzer

INTRODUCTION

The eighth Christmas count to survey the occurrence of bird species in Hong Kong took place on 20 December 1992. It was organised along established lines (see Lam 1990). Returns from members were analyzed to give total numbers in eight regions, the boundaries of which are as defined in Viney (1987).

COVERAGE

Some fifty people contributed to the 1992 count. Ngau Tam Mei was visited one day early to increase coverage, whilst additional records from Chau Tau the day before have also been included. The specific locations visited are described below:

Hong Kong Island - the west side of the island from Mount Davis to Aberdeen Country Park, coastal locations from Deep Water Bay to Big Wave Bay, the Peak, Mid Levels, Magazine Gap, Black's Link, Mount Nicholson, Happy Valley, Stanley Peninsula including the cemetery and fort;

Kowloon - Kowloon Park, King's Park, Stonecutter's Island;

Offshore Islands - Cheung Chau, Lamma, Western Waters;

Central NT - Lam Tsuen Valley, Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun;

Eastern NT - Clearwater Bay, Ho Chung including woods, Sai Kung, Ma On Shan, Chek Keng, Tai Long, Tolo Harbour;

Western NT - Chuen Lung, Tai Mo Shan to Shek Kong, Tsim Bei Tsui, Mong Tseng, route from Nim Wan through Lau Fau Shan and Ha Tsuen to Siu Lam and Kadoorie Beach;

Northern NT - Ngau Tam Mei, Mai Po, San Tin, Lok Ma Chau, Chau Tau, Ping Yeung, Starling Inlet, Nam Chung, Luk Keng, Wu Kau Tang to Lai Chi Wo, Brides Pool, Plover Cove, Shuen Wan, vicinity of Tai Po Industrial Estate, Island House.

WEATHER

In contrast to the 1991 count the weather was very warm with variable cloud throughout the Territory. Most locations had early morning showers and although these died out quickly in the north the rain was rather more prolonged on Hong Kong Island. The afternoon was generally sunny. The maximum temperature recorded was 25 degrees and the mean relative humidity was 56%.

RESULTS

Counting only Category A-D species, a total of 184 species was recorded in the 1992 count. Breakdown figures for individual regions are given in Table 1. For the sake of uniformity the published figures for 1985 and 1986 have been adjusted to exclude Category E species (escapes).

TABLE 1. Number of species recorded in the various regions in the eight Christmas counts

Results	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
1. Hong Kong Island	61	36	69	60	53	56	71	73
2. Kowloon	35	23	59	64	42	47	54	56
3. Offshore Islands	34	43	58	48	44	52	54	41
4. Lantau	75	63	66	51	53	62	33	60
5. Central NT	74	74	64	67	74	62	79	76
6. Eastern NT	68	55	55	43	54	55	61	81
7. Western NT	109	117	122	90	94	109	101	106
8. Northern NT	125	104	98	123	104	116	109	128
All	183	175	173	163	170	166	169	184

Once again most observers reported a quiet day in terms of the number of birds seen, habitat destruction and considerable disturbance due to hikers and picnickers in the more rural areas both playing a part. In the light of this it is perhaps incongruous that the total number of species seen is the highest yet recorded. All regions except the Offshore Islands and the Central New Territories (NT) recorded a gain over 1991, with new record totals being recorded for Hong Kong Island and the Eastern and Northern NT. The primary reason for this is that the latter three areas received more extensive coverage this year than previously. The Eastern NT in particular benefitted considerably from the inclusion for the first time of the wooded area above Ho Chung.

Eight species were recorded for the first time: Whimbrel, Relict Gull, Northern Skylark, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Large Grass Warbler, Asian Paradise Flycatcher, Hawfinch and Yellow-breasted Bunting. The cumulative total of species for all eight Christmas counts to date is 248.

Regrettably, habitat destruction continues apace, especially in the Northern and Western New Territories areas, most noticeably around Mai Po, San Tin, Lok Ma Chau and Chau Tau. The Fairview Park housing estate is being extended, fish ponds are being filled in and changes in land use from non-commercial activities to equipment and container storage areas continue to blight the environment.

All species recorded during the survey are indicated by the code

“CC” in the individual species accounts in the Systematic List elsewhere in this Report, except where records have not been accepted by the Records Committee. Observations of particular interest are also detailed there. The table giving the estimated number of birds recorded by species and by region which was published in reports of Christmas Counts prior to 1991 is not reproduced here for the sake of economy. All those taking part in the survey have received a copy, whereas other interested persons may write to the author.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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第八屆香港聖誕鳥類普查在一九九二年十二月二十日進行。雖然錄得雀鳥的數目較少，品種數目則有184之多，是歷次之冠，當中有八種是首次錄得的。此外，普查也發現在新界北部和西部的雀鳥棲息地仍然備受破壞。

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SUMMARY OF THE 1992 BIG BIRD RACE

John S.R. Edge

Following the format of recent years, the eighth annual Big Bird Race, held to raise funds for the Mai Po Marshes project of the Worldwide Fund for Nature Hong Kong, was held over 24 hours from 1800 hrs on 10 April to 1800 hrs on 11 April. It was aimed to coincide with the best possible mix of late-staying winter visitors, passage migrants and early summer visitors. For the first time the number of participating teams increased to 17 and the ensuing coverage of the territory enabled the sponsorship target of HK\$1.5 million to be met. Funds raised will go towards management, habitat improvement and the extension of educational facilities at the reserve.

The total number of species seen by all teams was a record 240, beating the previous record of 237 set in 1988. The weather prior to and during the race was largely responsible for this total. The winter was cold, bringing with it a relatively large number of winter visitors and the lack of a settled, warm spell before the race held up their departure. In addition, wet and stormy conditions during the race grounded virtually everything. April 10 was the second wettest April day ever recorded, with 160mm of rainfall, most of which fell after 1800 hrs. There were further thunderstorms and torrential rain on the morning of 11 April.

These conditions produced a very wide spread of species including 14 each of herons and ducks, 11 raptors, 4 owls, 43 waders, 11 flycatchers (only 12 are regular in spring) and 7 buntings. Eight new species were recorded: Slender-billed Gull, Black-tailed Gull, Glaucous Gull, Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo, Eagle Owl, Grey Nightjar, Blyth's Leaf Warbler, Two-barred Greenish Warbler and Rustic Bunting. These bring the aggregate total seen in all nine races to 295.

While the total number of species recorded was high, individual team scores did not generally reflect this, with the winning team's score of 156 representing 65% of the total. A Peregrine harassing roosting waders on the scrape at Mai Po prevented some teams from amassing higher counts as did fog in Deep Bay early in the morning of 11th. Other notable species recorded included Brown Hawk Owl, Oriental Plover, Spoon-billed Sandpiper, Nordmann's Greenshank, Swinhoe's (Rosy) Minivet and Ferruginous Flycatcher. The Slender-billed Gull was adjudged to be the best bird of the day.

All species seen during the 1992 Race, except for those for which adequate supporting evidence could not be provided, are indicated in the systematic list by the code "BBR".

第八屆觀鳥紀錄大賽在一九九二年四月十日舉行，有十七隊參加，港幣一百五十萬的籌款目標也達到了。各隊共錄得破紀錄的240種（前一年是237），籌得的款項將用於米埔的管理、改善和教育設施的擴展。

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BIRDS NEW TO HONG KONG

ALEUTIAN TERN: THE FIRST RECORDS FOR HONG KONG

Peter R. Kennerley, Paul J. Leader and Michael R. Leven.

On 22 August 1992 a HKBWS outing by boat to the south west of Hong Kong in search of migrating terns *Sterna* sp. resulted in the most unexpected discovery of at least 190 Aleutian Terns *Sterna aleutica*. This is the first record of Aleutian Tern for Hong Kong and also represents the first documented occurrence on the Asian mainland south of the breeding range, as well as one of only a handful of records anywhere away from the northern Pacific breeding grounds.

The Aleutian Terns were initially seen in flight between Lamma and Cheung Chau where a large flock of terns was milling around. As we approached the flock several birds were noted sitting on flotsam and with care these could be approached to within 15 metres before taking flight. Even when disturbed they would typically fly no further than adjacent flotsam and land again. They showed a distinct preference for the more polluted waters and could regularly be seen in flight or on discarded rubbish which made a convenient resting place. Fewer were present in the open water between Cheung Chau and the Soko Islands but small numbers appeared in the vicinity of the Sokos and again near Lamma on the return voyage. During this outing the birds were photographed by Martin Hale and also seen by several observers including David Carrier, Robert Ferguson and Elizabeth Leven.

The Aleutian Terns subsequently remained in the area in good numbers until 19 September, when the last sighting was reported, and birds in adult winter plumage were seen and photographed by PRK, PJJ and Verity Picken. Between these dates, the birds were seen by many observers including Michael Chalmers, Richard Lewthwaite, Michael Turnbull, Clive Viney and Martin Williams while John Holmes was able to obtain further photographs of birds in breeding plumage. When initially discovered, the majority were adults in breeding plumage and thus presented no identification problems, after the initial realization that the terns we were looking at really were Aleutians. In addition, at least two birds seen briefly on 22 August did not appear to be adults but it has not been possible to establish their ages or plumage. During the ensuing month they gradually underwent a moult of the body, inner primary and tail feathers until by mid-September many were in adult winter plumage. At the time it was believed that this plumage had not previously been described. However, it was subsequently discovered that Lee (1992) had documented the discovery of six previously unidentified specimens taken from the Philippines in May 1984 which are now housed in the North Carolina State Museum and the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, USA.

IDENTIFICATION

Almost all the birds seen on 22 August were adults in breeding plumage and identification was straightforward. The superficially similar Bridled *S. anaethetus*, Sooty *S. fuscata* and Grey-backed Terns *S. lunata* were eliminated by their lack of white rump and tail. Potentially more confusing is Common Tern *S. hirundo* of the east Siberian breeding form *longipennis* which, in breeding plumage, shares several features with adult Aleutian Tern including a black bill, a greyish wash to the underparts, a similar shade of grey on the mantle and a marked contrast between the mantle and the white rump and tail. A poorly seen or distant adult Common moulting the forecrown feathers could conceivably cause confusion.

Comparison was made on several occasions with Common Tern of the form *longipennis* although the majority of these were in juvenile plumage. In flight, the adult Aleutian Terns could readily be picked out, even at long range, by the distinctive dark line along the tips of the underside of the secondaries and outer primaries which contrasted with the unmarked underside to the inner primaries. Above, the mantle was darker than that of juvenile Common Tern and sharply contrasted with the white rump and tail. Unfortunately, there were no juvenile Aleutians present for comparison.

ADULT BREEDING

At Rest The forehead was white and this extended back at the sides of the head to the rear of the eye. The crown, nape, and lores were black resulting in a distinctive thick black stripe extending from the base of the bill and merging into the nape. The sides of the head below the black eye stripe were white. The mantle, scapulars, coverts and tertials were mid grey and unmarked. There was a conspicuous narrow white leading edge to the forewing from the body to and around the carpal joint and onto the outer wing. This feature was very distinctive at rest, appearing as a white line around the profile of the closed wing. The primaries were grey and variable in colour, some being slightly darker than the mantle while others were considerably darker. Below, the throat to lower belly was a gentle shade of pale grey while the undertail coverts were white.

In Flight The nape was black and there was no conspicuous white collar between the nape and mantle. The mantle, coverts and secondaries were mid grey. The inner primaries were slightly paler than the coverts and were unmarked while the outer primaries were rather variable. On some birds these were slightly darker than the inner primaries and showed little contrast with them; others had much darker outer primaries and displayed considerable contrast with the inner primaries and the remainder of the wing. All showed white feather shafts to the outer primaries but these were only conspicuous on the birds with darker primaries. The rump, uppertail coverts and tail were white.

Below, the underwing coverts were white while the secondaries, although similar in colour, showed a distinctive crisp, dark line along the trailing edge. The inner primaries were white, unmarked and slightly



12 Aleutian Tern *Sterna aleutica*
Breeding plumage
Hong Kong August 1992

John Holmes



13 Aleutian Tern *Sterna aleutica*
Breeding plumage
Hong Kong August 1992

Martin Hale

[The cost of reproduction of Plates 12-13 in colour has been subsidised by Carl Zeiss Far East Co. Ltd.]

translucent while the outer primaries were also white but with a diffuse, dark trailing edge.

Bare Parts The bill, legs and eye were black.

ADULT WINTER

At Rest The forehead, forecrown, lores and entire underparts were white. The rear crown was black, randomly flecked with white resulting in a mottled effect, and this was joined with the black line behind the eye. There was a white collar between the crown and mantle which was lacking on breeding plumaged birds. The mantle was mid grey and uniform while the coverts, scapulars and tertials were similar but some individuals that were moulting their greater coverts showed an irregular white patch along the length of the closed wing. The conspicuous narrow white line along the edge of the forewing and round the carpal joint of breeding plumaged birds was absent. The visible primaries were darker grey than the mantle.

In Flight The black rear crown contrasted with the distinctive white collar on the nape. The mantle, wing coverts and secondaries were uniform mid grey. Those birds moulting their coverts showed an irregular white line along the centre of the inner wing. The inner primaries were pale grey, slightly paler than the mantle, while the outer four or five primaries were darker than the remainder of the upperparts and displayed conspicuous white feather shafts. The rump, uppertail coverts and central six or eight rectrices were pale grey, slightly paler than the mantle, while the outer two or three pairs of rectrices were white and only slightly longer than the grey central rectrices. The underwing was similar to that of breeding plumaged adult birds.

Bare Parts As adult breeding.

Structure The Aleutian Terns were longer-winged and longer-tailed than Common Terns. In flight, adults with tail streamers appeared more elegant than Common Terns and showed a more buoyant flight with the emphasis on the down stroke although this effect was somewhat reduced on moulting birds.

At rest, they displayed a very distinctive posture with the body and wings being angled at approximately 30 degrees to the horizontal so the tips reached the level of the head. This distinctive posture allowed birds to be picked out even at long range when no plumage features could be seen.

Call The Aleutian Terns were remarkably vocal, giving a highly distinctive wader-like 'chit', rather similar to that of Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* which were also present in good numbers.

[The cost of reproduction of Plates 14-15 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]



14 Aleutian Tern *Sterna aleutica*
Nearing end of moult into winter plumage
East Lamma Channel, Hong Kong 17 September 1992

Paul Leader



15 Aleutian Tern *Sterna aleutica*
Nearing end of moult into winter plumage
East Lamma Channel, Hong Kong 17 September 1992

Paul Leader

MOULT

On 22 August most birds had not started to moult out of breeding plumage but a small number had just commenced moult of the crown, rump, wing coverts, inner primaries and the elongated outermost tail feathers.

By 18 September all the Aleutian Terns seen had started to moult. Some had attained what was considered to be adult non-breeding plumage, while the majority were in an intermediate stage of body, wing and tail moult from adult breeding to adult non-breeding plumage. In flight, all birds showed a distinct contrast between the pale grey inner primaries and the considerably darker and rather worn outer primaries. It would appear that the moult of the outer primaries is suspended until arrival on the wintering grounds or even later. Lee (1992) noted that the immatures collected in May 1984 were in the process of replacing the outer primaries and one had replaced all the flight feathers. Birds on the breeding grounds do not show this contrast between the inner and outer primaries to the same extent (pers. obs.) and Lee (1992) noted that there is no apparent moult of flight feathers on the breeding grounds.

STATUS

The status and distribution of the Aleutian Tern was recently summarized by Haney *et al.* (1992). Although the breeding range in Alaska, Kamchatka, Sakhalin and north east Siberia is reasonably well documented, its distribution outside the breeding season still remains a mystery. With the exception of the remarkable record from the Farne Islands in north east England in late May 1979 (Dixey *et al.* 1981), the only records away from the breeding grounds are from Japan and the Philippines. In Japan there have been about 10 reports from Honshu and Hokkaido where breeding was also suspected in 1980 (Brazil 1991). The report from the Philippines refers to six birds collected in May 1984 near Pamilacan Island in the Mindanao Sea (Lee 1992).

To date, there have been no reports from North America south of the breeding range and similarly no reports from the central Pacific. Even so, Cramp and Simmons (1983) suggested it may winter well to the south of the breeding range. The Farne Islands bird was seen in a breeding colony of Arctic Terns *S. paradisea* leading to speculation that it may share winter quarters with Arctic Terns in the southern hemisphere and that particular individual may have moved north again but into the wrong ocean.

The Hong Kong record adds further evidence to the possibility that Aleutian Terns move south rapidly after the breeding season to feeding grounds somewhere in the western Pacific where they undertake a leisurely moult before continuing south to as yet unknown wintering grounds.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank David Carrier for allowing the HKBWS to make use of his company boat on 22 August.

一九九二年八月二十二日，在香港的西南部發現了至少190隻白腰燕鷗 *Sterna aleutica*，這不但是香港的一個新紀錄，更是白腰燕鷗在繁殖地帶以南的亞洲大陸出現的第一次實証。本文詳細介紹了有關的情況，並描述了繁殖期和非繁殖期成鳥的特徵。

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RUSSET BUSH WARBLER AND BROWN BUSH WARBLER: TWO SPECIES NEW TO HONG KONG

Peter R. Kennerley and Paul J. Leader

Since being first recorded in 1987, the identification of the *Bradypterus* warbler, colloquially known as the 'zee-bit' warbler, has been the subject of long controversy and, at times, heated debate. In this paper we review the history of the problems which have surrounded the identification of *Bradypterus* warblers in Hong Kong, demonstrate that the zee-bit warbler is Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus seebohmii* and also describe the first record for Hong Kong of Brown Bush Warbler *B. luteoventris*, which was trapped while attempting to catch Russet Bush Warblers at Sha Lo Tung.

BACKGROUND

Prior to 1987 there had not been any confirmed reports of warblers of the genus *Bradypterus* from Hong Kong. In March of that year, C.A. Viney heard a distinctive *zip-a zip-a zip-a* song (subsequently transcribed as *zee-bit*) at Mount Nicholson and, based upon his experience as detailed below, this bird was tentatively identified as Spotted Bush Warbler *B. thoracicus*.

A visit to Ba Bao Shan, Guangdong Province, China (24°55'N, 113°01'E) in June 1987 by CAV, M.L. Chalmers, Ben King and others found the zee-bit warbler to be widespread between 1200 and 1600 metres in areas where forest had been cleared and a regrowth of grass and scattered scrub had taken its place (Viney 1987). The ensuing discussion concluded that this species was *B. thoracicus* due to the conspicuous spotting seen on the throat and upper breast and this identification was generally accepted as being correct at the time.

The following year a group including CAV, MLC and PRK revisited Ba Bao Shan and unsuccessful attempts were made to trap zee-bit warblers. However, sound recordings of the songs and calls were made and compared with the song of *B. thoracicus* from Sichuan Province, China. The two proved to be so distinctly different that it was difficult to believe the same species was involved.

Smythies (1953) described the song of *B. luteoventris* as a rapid repetition of two notes, *creee-ut creee-ut*, at the rate of 2-3 pairs per second and this was further endorsed by King (1975). This transcription was remarkably similar to the song of the zee-bit warbler, leading to speculation that the zee-bit warbler was *B. luteoventris*. However, a second *Bradypterus*, also considered to be *B. luteoventris* on plumage characters, was present on the summit of Wang Gang Shan (2158 metres), Wu Yi Shan Nature Reserve, Fujian Province (27°43'N 117°40'E) (Viney 1986) and above 1800 metres at Ba Bao Shan (Viney 1987). It was noted as having a reeling *Locustella* warbler-like song and clearly there was a

conflict between Smythies' (1953) description of the song of *B. luteoventris* and the observations made in south China which also required further investigation.

Further records of singing zee-bit warblers in Hong Kong came during the winter of 1987/88, and in subsequent years it has proved to be a fairly widespread winter visitor in small numbers to the higher areas of the New Territories, in particular to overgrown paddy in the Hok Tau - Sha Lo Tung region of the Pat Sin Leng Country Park, but with occasional reports of birds down to sea level. However, the extremely skulking behaviour of the birds makes obtaining good views very difficult indeed with even singing birds often remaining deep in cover, giving only the most tantalizing of views.

At the time of the earlier Hong Kong records it was not appreciated that Round (1983) had provided the first direct link between a singing zee-bit warbler and a bird which bore the characters of *B. seebohmii*. This individual, which was collected at Doi Ang Khang, northern Thailand (19°52'N, 99°03'E), was later compared to the type specimen of *B.s. melanorhynchus* and appeared virtually identical (Round 1992). Furthermore, by comparison of sonograms of singing birds from Doi Ang Khang and Ba Bao Shan, Round (1992) illustrated the extreme similarity of the songs from the two localities, thus providing convincing evidence that the zee-bit warblers in south east China and Hong Kong were Russet Bush Warbler.

In Hong Kong prior to 1988, the importance of plumage and bare part characters, including the patterning of the undertail coverts and, to a lesser extent, the colour of the breast and lower mandible, were not appreciated as being crucial to the identification process. This, combined with the difficulty of obtaining good views, made subsequent assessment of the earlier non-singing records virtually impossible.

During the circulation of records in 1987 and 1988, the Records Committee found itself unable to reach a unanimous decision on the identity of the zee-bit warbler with opinions initially divided between *luteoventris* and *thoracicus* but, latterly, also *seebohmii* when Philip Round's findings became known to the Records Committee in 1988. The confusion surrounding the entire *Bradypterus* complex gradually cleared and by early 1989 the available evidence strongly pointed to *B. seebohmii* having the distinctive *zee-bit* song, *B. luteoventris* having a reeling, *tik-tik-tik* *Locustella* warbler-like song and *B. thoracicus* an insect-like buzzing song.

However, even as late as early 1991 the Records Committee still remained divided over the identity of the zee-bit warbler, some members agreeing with Round's conclusion that the bird was *seebohmii* while others favoured the *B. thoracicus* solution. Given this scenario, it was not possible to accept the bird onto the Hong Kong list without a better understanding of the characters of the Hong Kong birds. It was decided that it would be necessary to trap one or more singing individuals in Hong Kong in order to establish the plumage and bare part characters. In addition, an examination of museum specimens was required. Observers were requested to report

any zee-bit warblers heard and it became apparent that the Sha Lo Tung area was the most likely locality to catch them, it being readily accessible and the birds present quite numerous.

EXAMINATION OF MUSEUM SPECIMENS

In June 1992 PRK visited the collection of bird specimens housed in the Institute of Zoology, Academia Sinica, Beijing. Here several specimens were labelled *B. luteoventris* but none was found which had been identified as *B. seebohmi*. However, close examination revealed that a number of those labelled *B. luteoventris* showed pale fringed undertail coverts and a dark lower mandible, features associated with a typical *B. seebohmi*. A detailed examination of the specimens exhibiting *B. seebohmi* features was made and comparison made with a random selection of *B. luteoventris*. This indicated that measurements and, in particular, tail/wing ratio would be sufficient to separate most individuals, *B. seebohmi* being > 1.10 and *B. luteoventris* being < 1.11 , and the area of overlap being between 1.10 and 1.11. However, due to the small number of specimens examined the frequency with which birds occur in the range of overlap cannot as yet be accurately determined. Details of the biometrics of the specimens in Academia Sinica are given in Table 1.

Specimens of *B. thoracicus* and *B. tacsanowskii* were also examined and it was established that on plumage, measurements or a combination of both, they were sufficiently distinct from both *B. seebohmi* and *B. luteoventris* and could be excluded from further investigation.

FIRST RECORD OF BROWN BUSH WARBLER

On 25 January 1992, Martin Hale, P.J.L. and PRK erected a mist net beside a bush in which a zee-bit warbler had just been singing. After some 90 minutes of rather frustrating glimpses of at least five separate individuals, one bird was finally driven into the net. The initial euphoria rapidly evaporated when it was realised that it lacked the pale tips to the undertail coverts and had an entirely pale pinkish-orange lower mandible, features that did not accord with the expected characters of *B. seebohmi*, but which did fit *B. luteoventris*. The bird was processed and the following detailed plumage description was taken in the hand.

Plumage Crown, nape, mantle and rump warm brown and quite uniform. The tail was slightly darker with distinctly darker feather shafts. The greater coverts were similar in colour to the mantle while the primary coverts were darker than the greater coverts with indistinct paler fringes. The primaries and secondaries were grey-brown with fringes of the same colour as the mantle. The alula was grey-brown with the outer half of the outer web pale sandy-brown. There was an indistinct pale patch on the sides of the neck which extended onto the nape but this was very difficult to see in some lights. The supercilium was indistinct and extended just beyond the eye. The lores were pale and there was no indication of an eyestripe. The ear coverts were darker than the crown with pale bases to the feathers. The chin and throat were creamy-white while the sides of the breast were a rich sandy-brown which extended across the breast to form



16 Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus seebohmi*
Sha Lo Tung, Hong Kong 13 December 1992

Paul Leader



17 Brown Bush Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris*
Sha Lo Tung, Hong Kong 25 January 1992

Peter Kennerley

[The cost of reproduction of Plates 16-17 in colour has been subsidised by Carl Zeiss Far East Co. Ltd.]

a thin, sandy breast band. The flanks were similar in colour to the sides of the breast but became greyer towards the rear. The remainder of the underparts were silky-white except for the undertail coverts which were uniform pale greyish-brown and lacked paler tips or fringes.

Bare parts The upper mandible was black with thin yellow cutting edges. The lower mandible was pinkish-yellow and slightly greyer at the sides towards the tip. The legs, feet and claws were pale greyish-pink. The iris was very dark brown.

Measurements are detailed in Table 2.

At the time this bird was trapped it was appreciated that it showed the characters of *B. luteoventris* and appeared identical to birds previously seen at Ba Bao Shan by CAV, MLC and PRK. However, the possibility of both *B. seebohmii* and *B. luteoventris* occurring together in Hong Kong seemed highly improbable and it was difficult to believe we could have trapped a species which had not been suspected of occurring in Hong Kong while attempting to catch its near relative. An alternative explanation of birds showing the plumage characters of *B. luteoventris* but giving the zee-bit song threatened to overturn our perceived understanding of *Bradypterus* identification, (but would have concurred with Smythies transcription of the song of *B. luteoventris*) and further doubts were then raised regarding the identification of *B. seebohmii* in Hong Kong.

During this investigation much informal discussion took place both within and outside the Records Committee with some convinced the bird was *B. luteoventris* while others advised a more cautious approach. Although the bird showed the characters of *B. luteoventris*, the possibility that a third species could be involved was also investigated. *B. tacsanowskii* had previously been collected in the Yao Shan range of Guangxi Province by Yen (1933) and was considered to be a distinct sub-species *B.t. chui*. Yen (1933) described *B.t. chui* as differing from the nominate form by the throat, breast and centre of belly being whiter and less rusty while the flanks were more rusty and less olive. Yen (1933) also considered *B.t. chui* to be smaller than the nominate form, the two males collected at Yao Shan having wing lengths of 50 mm and 51 mm.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to examine and compare *B.t. chui* with either the nominate form or other members of the genus. However, the similarities between the plumages and wing lengths of *B.t. chui* and *B. seebohmii* should be noted and after further investigation it may well be that *B.t. chui* is better ascribed to either *B. luteoventris* or *B. seebohmii*.

Photographs of the bird trapped at Sha Lo Tung were sent to Philip Round for comment and he was of the opinion the bird was *B. luteoventris*. He was subsequently able to examine specimens housed in the British Museum (Natural History), including the type specimen of *B. seebohmii melanorhynchus*, and, based upon measurements and a comparison of photographs with the specimens, including a large series of *B. luteoventris*,



18 Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus seebohmii*
Sha Lo Tung, Hong Kong 29 November 1992

Peter Kennerley



19 Brown Bush Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris*
Sha Lo Tung, Hong Kong 25 January 1992

Peter Kennerley

[The cost of reproduction of Plates 18-19 in colour has been subsidised by Carl Zeiss Far East Co. Ltd.]

he remained convinced the Sha Lo Tung bird was *B. luteoventris* (P. Round in litt.).

Following this investigation of the literature, examination of museum specimens, consideration of the comments made by Philip Round and the subsequent trapping of *B. seebohmii* in Hong Kong (see below), all doubts were removed and the bird was submitted to and accepted by the Records Committee as Brown Bush Warbler *B. luteoventris*.

ACCEPTANCE OF RUSSET BUSH WARBLER TO THE HONG KONG LIST

Although the evidence for the zee-bit warbler being Russet Bush Warbler was strong, the unexpected appearance of the bird trapped at Sha Lo Tung on 29 January 1992 had been a setback and made it essential that we catch at least one singing zee-bit warbler to establish whether or not the plumage and bare part characters fitted those of *B. seebohmii* or *B. luteoventris*. On 6 November 1992, PJJ along with MH and Verity Picken trapped a calling (but not singing) *Bradypterus* at Ho Chung which on plumage, bare part coloration and wing formula, fitted *B. seebohmii*. This provided an interesting comparison with the original Sha Lo Tung bird and established that birds showing the characters of *B. seebohmii* did occur in Hong Kong.

However, this still did not complete the picture since a direct link between a singing zee-bit warbler and a bird displaying *B. seebohmii* characters had yet to be established beyond doubt in Hong Kong. This final connection was made on 29 November 1992 when MLC, PJJ and PRK visited Sha Lo Tung to search for zee-bit warblers. A singing zee-bit warbler was successfully driven into the net and, when examined, it displayed characters of *B. seebohmii*, thus establishing, for the first time in Hong Kong, a direct link between the zee-bit song and the known plumage features of *B. seebohmii*. Very shortly after this, a further *Bradypterus* was heard to call near the net and was quickly trapped. This bird also showed the characters of *B. seebohmii*. These two trapped individuals were virtually identical in plumage to the Ho Chung bird of 6 November and a description of the latter is detailed below.

Plumage Crown, nape, mantle and rump rich brown with a rufous tinge on the crown and nape. The uppertail coverts and tail were similar to the upperparts but slightly duller and greyer while the tail showed blackish feather shafts. The wing coverts were similar in colour to the mantle but with slightly paler and more rufous fringes. The tertials and outer edges to the flight feathers were dark brown with rufous fringes, these fringes being broadest on the secondaries. There was an indistinct off-white supercilium which extended from the base of the bill to just beyond the rear of the eye. The lower edge of the eye ring was off-white and quite broad. The lores were plain and there was no eyestripe. The ear coverts were brown with thin white streaks. The chin and throat were white while the breast was greyish-brown with very faint dark grey spots. The flanks were dark brown, similar in colour to the mantle, and this extended almost to the



20 Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus seebohmii*
Sha Lo Tung, Hong Kong 29 November 1992

Peter Kennerley



21 Brown Bush Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris*
Sha Lo Tung, Hong Kong 25 January 1992

Peter Kennerley

[The cost of reproduction of Plates 20-21 in colour has been subsidised by Carl Zeiss Far East Co. Ltd.]

legs. The belly was whitish. The undertail coverts were greyish-brown while the outer undertail coverts also showed white shafts and broad buffy-white tips, 3.5 mm wide on the longest undertail covert.

Bare Parts Upper mandible entirely black. Lower mandible greyish-pink with darker grey shading on the sides near the tip. The legs, feet and claws were greyish-pink. The iris was rich reddish-brown. The palate was pink, becoming dark grey near the bill tip, and there were two conspicuous tongue spots.

Biometric details of three *B. seebohmi* trapped in Hong Kong are given in Table 2.

IDENTIFICATION OF BRADYPTERUS WARBLERS IN EASTERN CHINA

In eastern China four species of *Bradypterus* warbler have been recorded. In addition to *B. seebohmi* and *B. luteoventris*, which occur in south and south east China, *B. thoracicus* of the race *davidi* is a regular migrant through the north-eastern coastal provinces and breeds in Manchuria. *B. tacsanowskii* is a little known, long-distance migrant which breeds locally in Manchuria and southern Siberia and has occurred occasionally on migration in the north east coastal provinces. The wintering grounds of *B.t. davidi* and *B. tacsanowskii* are as yet unknown.

Bradypterus seebohmi, *B. luteoventris* and *B. tacsanowskii* are very similar in plumage and structure. All are uniform brown above and, although the upperparts of *B. seebohmi* are typically darker and more rufous-tinged than the other two species, this is very difficult to establish in the field when the birds are in deep cover. *B. thoracicus* is more distinct and differs from these three species by its typically heavily spotted throat and upper breast, and its distinctly shorter tail.

Bradypterus seebohmi typically shows a grey wash on the breast and the flanks are strongly washed rufous, similar to the upperparts. On a minority of individuals, this greyish wash may be replaced with a brownish wash but this is still stronger than that of *B. luteoventris*. During the breeding season *B. seebohmi* develops an indistinct line of spots along the lower throat and upper breast which, on some birds, can be quite conspicuous. The undertail coverts are darker than the flanks, and show distinctive broad buffy-white tips which are lacking in *B. luteoventris*. The upper mandible is dark in all three species and *B. seebohmi* usually shows a dark tip to the lower mandible but we have seen *B. seebohmi* with an entirely pale lower mandible and Round (1992) also noted this on two specimens he examined.

Bradypterus luteoventris is generally paler than *B. seebohmi* below. It lacks all trace of grey on the breast which is whitish with a slight brownish wash. It never shows any trace of spotting on the throat, even in the breeding season. The flanks are much paler than those of *B. seebohmi*,



22 Spotted Bush Warbler *Bradypterus thoracicus shanensis*
Tha Ton, Thailand 23 January 1993

Peter Kennerley



23 Spotted Bush Warbler *Bradypterus thoracicus davidi*
Beidaihe, Hebei, China 19 May 1991

Paul Leader

[The cost of reproduction of Plates 22-24 in colour has been subsidised by Carl Zeiss Far East Co. Ltd.]



24 Chinese Bush Warbler *Bradypterus tacsanowskii*
Qinghai, China 25 June 1993

Peter Kennerley

appearing a pale but warm brown colour and the undertail coverts are also pale brown and lack the whitish tips of *B. seebohmi*. The lower mandible is entirely pale orangish-pink and lacks a dark tip throughout the year.

Bradypterus tacsanowskii is the least known of the species under discussion. It is generally greyer-brown on the crown and nape than *B. luteoventris* while the mantle is similar but with an olive cast which contrasts with the warm brown closed wing and tail. The chin and throat are white and contrast with a sandy-grey breast which shows a distinct yellow wash. During the breeding season some individuals may display an indistinct line of small spots along the lower edge of the throat which is absent in *B. luteoventris*. The belly is white but the undertail coverts are mid brown, broadly tipped pale cream. While not as sharply defined as in *B. thoracicus* they are visible in the field on singing birds and as such can be used in separation from *B. luteoventris*.

Two specimens collected in late August and mid-September in Transbaikalia and housed in the Institute of Zoology, Academia Sinica, Beijing showed brown flanks and breast but with a strong yellow wash, while the belly was white and the undertail coverts were yellowish-buff with indistinct paler tips. However, due to their very fresh plumage, it is likely they were first-winter birds and the strong yellow wash may be lost during the winter.

Bradypterus thoracicus has several races which could theoretically occur in south east China. Some of these races differ quite markedly and further complicate an already complex problem. However, as *B. thoracicus* is not known to breed in south east China, only the two presumed long-

distance migratory races, *B.t. davidi* and *B.t. suschkini*, are considered likely to occur in south east China. The non-breeding plumages of *B.t. davidi* and *B.t. suschkini* are unknown but Round (in prep.) considers that *B.t. shanensis* (which is a common winter visitor to north and central Thailand) and *B.t. suschkini* (which breeds in southern Siberia to the west of *B.t. davidi*) are synonymous.

Like the other three species, *B. thoracicus* is uniformly brown above. However, it has a shorter tail and this, combined with the underpart pattern and coloration, can be safely used to identify *B. thoracicus*. All races of *B. thoracicus* display broad whitish fringes to the undertail coverts, broader, whiter and more conspicuous than those of *B. seebohmi*. *B. thoracicus* usually shows a faint greyish wash across the breast and, even in non-breeding plumage, a narrow line of spots across the lower throat. In the breeding season, these become particularly obvious and extend onto the upper breast as a gorget of round, blackish spots. Some individuals of the race *B.t. davidi*, probably first-winter birds, completely lack throat spotting in the autumn (J. Peltromäki pers. comm.).

DISTRIBUTION AND HABITAT PREFERENCE OF RUSSET AND BROWN BUSH WARBLERS

Round (1992) considered the range of *B. seebohmi* to be much more extensive than previously thought, extending from south east China west through northern Thailand and Burma and north to at least Emei Shan, Sichuan Province, China (29°33'N, 103°24'E). It seems likely that it occupies degraded upland habitat from southern China to the southern and eastern edges of the Tibetan plateau. In addition, isolated populations occur in Tonkin, Vietnam and on the islands of Java and Bali, Indonesia.

Bradypterus luteoventris appears to be more restricted in its range and habitat requirements during the breeding season. Observations made at Wu Yi Shan and Ba Bao Shan show that it is confined to the highest summits where it breeds in dwarf bamboo at altitudes in excess of 1800 metres. It is, therefore, very localised in southern China where there are few hills which exceed this height. However, *B. luteoventris* appears to have a wider range outside China than *B. seebohmi*, occurring west through the Himalayas to at least Nepal (Ali and Ripley 1983, Inskipp and Inskipp 1991). However, due to the difficulties involved in identifying *Bradypterus* warblers, even in specimen collections, it is perhaps appropriate that a review of this distribution is considered.

CONCLUSION

As a result of this investigation, the Records Committee of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society has accepted both Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus seebohmi* and Brown Bush Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris* onto Category A of the Hong Kong list. Furthermore, *B. seebohmi* has been shown to be a fairly widespread winter visitor to the upland areas of the New Territories. Investigations will continue in Hong Kong to establish the true status of *B. luteoventris*.

TABLE 1. Measurements of *Bradypterus* warbler specimens housed in the Institute of Zoology, Academia Sinica, Beijing.

Although no specimens were labelled *B. seebohmii*, several of those labelled *B. luteoventris* showed the plumage and bare part characters of *B. seebohmii*. These individuals have been assumed to be *B. seebohmii* and are named as such below.

Measurements (in mm)

Species	<i>B. seebohmii</i>				<i>B. luteoventris</i>		
	31.3.39	4.6.39	13.3.40	24.4.40	11.6.63	27.5.39	25.6.37
Date	53012	53014	53015	53013	52232	49772	53017
Specimen no.							
wing (maximum chord)	53	52	50	49	54	55	53
tail	59	57	58	59	60	58	58
bill (to skull)	13.0	14.3	13.4	13.0	13.1	-	12.8
bill (width)	3.4	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.1	2.9	3.3
emarginated primaries	4,5	4,5	4,5	4	3,4	3,4,5	3,4,5
tail/wing ratio	1.11	1.10	1.16	1.20	1.11	1.05	1.09
undertail coverts	tipped whitish	tipped whitish	tipped greyish	tipped whitish	uniform brown	uniform brown	uniform brown
lower mandible	dull brown	dull brown	dull brown	dull brown	pale	pale	pale
breast	greyish brown	greyish	greyish	greyish	warm brown	warm brown	warm brown
throat	spotted brown	trace on lower throat	no spotting	no spotting	no spotting	no spotting	no spotting

Wing formulae

Species	Specimen no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>B. seebohmii</i>	53012	PC+7.0	-9.0	-1.0	WP	-0.5	-1.5	-2.5	-3.5	-	-4.5
<i>B. seebohmii</i>	53014	PC+8.0	-8.0	-1.5	WP	-1.0	-	-3.5	-4.5	-6.0	-8.0
<i>B. seebohmii</i>	53015	PC+8.0	-9.5	-2.0	-0.5	WP	-2.0	-3.0	-4.0	-5.0	-7.0
<i>B. seebohmii</i>	53013	PC+5.0	-9.0	-2.0	WP	-1.0	-2.5	-4.5	-	-7.5	-8.0
<i>B. luteoventris</i>	52232	PC+8.0	-6.0	WP	WP	WP	-2.0	-3.5	-	-	-
<i>B. luteoventris</i>	49772	PC+7.5	-8.0	WP	WP	WP	-3.0	-5.0	-6.8	-8.5	-8.5
<i>B. luteoventris</i>	53017	-	-	WP	WP	WP	-2.5	-4.5	-	-	-9.5
Primary											

PC = longest primary covert
WP = wing point i.e. longest primary

Measurements (in mm)

Species	<i>B. luteoventris</i>	<i>B.. seebohmi</i>	<i>B. seebohmi</i>	<i>B. seebohmi</i>
Date	25.1.92	6.11.92	29.11.92	29.11.92
Location	Sha Lo Tung	Ho Chung	Sha Lo Tung	Sha Lo Tung
Ring no.	H501775	H698424	H698426	H698427
wing (maximum chord)	55	52	53	50
tail	60	60.5	65	58
bill (to skull)	15.0	13.3	14.2	15.7
bill (to feathering)	10.3	10.2	9.5	10.2
bill (width)	3.0	-	3.0	2.7
bill (depth)	-	3.3	3.2	3.2
tarsus	19.1	18.0	18.7	19.2
tail difference	26.1	30	30.5	28
primary projection (beyond tertials)	-	8	9	9
emarginated primaries	3,4	3,4	3,4,5	3,4,(5)
tail/wing ratio	1.09	1.16	1.23	1.16
second primary (P2) equals	P8 / P9	P6 (error?)	below secondaries	equal to secondaries
undertail coverts	no pale tips	pale tips	pale tips	pale tips
lower mandible	yellow, greyer tip	darker near tip	dark grey at tip	dark grey at tip
breast	sandy-brown	greyish-brown	greyish	greyish
throat	no spotting	no spotting	no spotting	no spotting

Wing formulae

Species	Ring no.
<i>B. luteoventris</i>	H501775 PC+ 5 -6.5 -1.0 WP -1.0 -2.5 -4.0 -6.0 -7.0 -8.0 -9.0
<i>B. seebohmii</i>	H698424 PC+10 2(?) -0.5 WP -1.0 -2.0 -2.5 -3.5 -4.5 -6.0 -5.0
<i>B. seebohmii</i>	H698426 PC+ 8 -10.0 -2.5 -1.0 WP -1.0 -2.0 -3.0 -4.5 -5.5 -6.5
<i>B. seebohmii</i>	H698427 PC+ 8 -7.5 -2.0 -0.5 WP -2.0 -3.0 -3.5 -4.5 -5.5 -7.5
Primary	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 SS

PC = longest primary covert
WP = wing point i.e. longest primary
SS = secondaries

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本文詳細介紹了高山短翅鶯 *Bradypterus seebohmii* 和棕褐短翅鶯 *B. luteoventris* 被收入香港鳥類名錄的發展過程。當中也提及在華東的 *Bradypterus* 鶯類的辨別方法。

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CARRION CROW: A NEW SPECIES FOR HONG KONG

R.D.E. Stott and M.L. Chalmers

During a visit to Mai Po on 22 November 1992, whilst walking down the bund between ponds 19 and 20, MLC noticed the head and shoulders of a corvid *Corvus* sp. perched on top of the nearby mangroves. Attention was immediately drawn to its all-black, stubby, conical bill and sloping forehead which eliminated all the common Hong Kong corvids. The bird was viewed for a few seconds by telescope before it flew off to the north. Its all-black appearance and its size indicated that it was probably a Carrion Crow *C. corone*.

A few minutes later RDES was walking past The Scrape when he noticed a black corvid feeding on the closest island with Magpies *Pica pica* and Collared Crows *C. torquata*. First impressions were that it was smaller and slimmer than Jungle Crow *C. macrorhynchus* and closer inspection showed that its bill was much thinner than that of Jungle Crow, indeed the culmen was almost straight. Its overall length was similar to that of a Magpie, but the head and body were much larger and the bill larger and more powerful. It was slightly smaller than the Collared Crows, which appeared larger-headed, more pot-bellied and shorter-legged.

It was feeding by pecking vigorously at something on the ground with Magpies but on several occasions it aggressively chased them off, even though considerably outnumbered, and often flew up and around before settling again. RDES was joined by MLC and they watched it for about 30 minutes through a 30x telescope at a distance of about 150 metres.

The following description was taken:

'A slim, long-legged corvid, sleeker-looking than the Collared Crows, whose plumage was all black with a blue-green gloss on the wing coverts. There was no grey in the plumage, nor any other colour contrast, although head, neck and mantle were closely checked for this.

The wings were long with the closed primaries crossing and reaching to about 25mm from the tip of the tail. In flight the tail was square-ended.

The bill was shining black, though it appeared greyish at times due to the angle of the light, and conical in shape with both mandibles tapering smoothly to a point and with little curvature of the culmen except near the tip. The culmen almost formed a line with the forehead, there being no abrupt change in angle where the two met. Black feathering extended from the forehead onto the top of the bill around the nostril area.

The iris colour was dark. The tarsus and feet were black and the tibia were covered with short black feathers.'

No call was recorded.

The blue-green gloss on the wing coverts indicates that it was an adult (Svensson 1992).

CONFUSION SPECIES

Jungle Crow is the most likely confusion species, however it is rather larger than Carrion Crow. In addition, Carrion Crow has a smaller, shorter, less strongly arched bill and a less steep forehead. Rook *C. frugilegus* could be ruled out by the lack of white at the base of the bill, the rather shallow forehead and the lack of thickly feathered thighs. Daurian Jackdaw *C. dauuricus* could be ruled out on size alone.

In Hong Kong the bird trade is such that exotic species cannot be ruled out and two other possibilities occur in the region.

House Crow *C. splendens*, which is found from Iran east to Sri Lanka, Thailand and the Himalayas (de Schauensee 1984), is in Category E of the Hong Kong list. However, it is rather smaller than the Carrion Crow; it also appears relatively short-winged (pers. obs.) and has a dark grey neck and nape.

Slender-billed Crow *C. enca* is the least likely species to occur naturally having a rather local distribution over the Greater Sundas, Borneo, Sulawesi and the southern Philippines (Goodwin 1976). King (1975) states that it is difficult to separate from Jungle Crow in the field. The head shape illustrated in Goodwin (1976) indicates it is quite different from that of the Mai Po bird in that the bill appears longer and less markedly pointed and there is a distinct angle between the culmen and the forehead.

RANGE

Cheng (1987) indicates that Carrion Crow winters south to Fujian Province, into south west Guangdong Province, along the Hainan Strait and to the Naozhou Islands. No records are given for central south Guangdong Province.

In summary, the characters of size, lack of plumage contrast, head shape and lack of a strongly arched culmen together indicate that the Mai Po bird was a Carrion Crow. It was accepted as the first record for Hong Kong and admitted to Category A of the Hong Kong List. The same individual was subsequently recorded frequently about 1.5 kilometres south west of Mai Po at the end of the Fence at Tsim Bei Tsui until the end of February 1993.

一九九二年十一月二十二日，在米埔發現了一隻小咀烏鴉，這是本港的一個新紀錄。該鳥逗留至一九九三年二月底。本文是有關的報告。

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RED/BLACK-HEADED BUNTING: THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Martin Hale

On an early morning walk on 17 October 1992 a large, plain, grey bunting *Emberiza* sp. was flushed from beside the path that leads through the centre of the Ho Chung valley in Sai Kung. It settled on a grass stem alongside one of several Yellow-breasted Buntings *E. aureola* flushed at the same time. It remained here for about three minutes, giving good views, and in comparison with Yellow-breasted Bunting it was obviously larger, with a length of about seven inches. During the next 15 minutes various other views were obtained before it was seen to fly off to the west. Observations were made using 10x40 binoculars, in bright sunlight, at ranges down to about 15 metres.

My impression was that this bird was either a female or immature Red-headed Bunting *E. bruniceps* or Black-headed Bunting *E. melanocephala*.

In the late afternoon of 19 October two different individuals were seen at the same site by myself and then also by Richard Lewthwaite. Photographs of one of these birds were obtained. On 23 October a further individual was seen by Mike Turnbull at Mount Austin, Hong Kong Island.

The following descriptions were taken:

Bird One (seen 17 October).

Head Plain grey and rather featureless, except that the crown was lightly streaked dark brown and there was a hint of a dark malar stripe.

Upperparts Initially recorded as grey to grey-brown, but later changed to grey on a final close view. The mantle was lightly streaked dark brown as on the crown. The upperwing was concolorous with the rest of the upperparts, but with prominent black-centred median coverts that had white tips forming a wing bar. The greater coverts and tertials were slightly darker and browner than the rest of the upperparts; the greater coverts were tipped white forming a second, less pronounced wing bar. The tertials were slightly lighter on the margins of the outer webs. The rump colour was not seen at rest. When in flight the rump colour could not be specifically ascertained, but it did not contrast with the rest of the upperparts. The primary projection was estimated as being roughly two thirds the length of the exposed tertials.

Tail Predominantly light grey, but with a hint of brown. No white was visible in the tail at rest or in flight. The tail was noticeably notched.

Underparts Light grey, appearing completely unstreaked at a distance, but very lightly streaked darker on the upper breast at close range. The vent and undertail coverts were a primrose yellow.

Bare Parts The bill was heavy, light grey and noticeably larger than that of the accompanying Yellow-breasted Buntings. The eyes were dark and very conspicuous due to the otherwise featureless face. The leg colour was not noted.

Voice No call was heard.

Birds Two and Three (seen 19 October).

The birds seen on 19 October differed from Bird One in that the basic coloration was felt to be a sandier brown. Bird Two, the individual photographed, had more prominent streaking on the breast and more extensive yellow on the underparts than either Birds One or Three, the yellow occurring forward to the lower breast. Bird Three showed the least yellow of all the birds seen, it being confined to the vent only, and then only as a weak wash. The rest of the underparts on Bird Three were somewhat buffy in coloration. The coverts and remiges on Birds Two and Three were browner than on Bird One. However, the birds observed on 19 October were seen in a rather softer light than was Bird One as there was no direct sunlight. The leg colour of these two birds was light flesh. The plumage of all three birds was in good condition.



25 Red/Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza bruniceps/melanocephala*
Ho Chung, Hong Kong October 1992

Martin Hale

AGEING AND IDENTIFICATION

The size, plain appearance, and lack of white in the tail of these birds rules out all buntings except Red and Black-headed. They were clearly either first-years or adult females, and were aged as first-winters on the basis of the freshness of the plumage, black median coverts with white tips, fairly obvious streaking on the upper and underparts and the fact that the rump appeared concolorous with the rest of the upperparts. Adult females would be expected to show greater feather wear at this time of year, black-brown rather than pure black median coverts, with buff instead of white tips, reduced streaking and a rump colour of either greenish-yellow (Red-headed) or rufous, but sometimes greenish-yellow (Black-headed) (Lewington *et al.* 1991).

The first-year plumages (and incidentally adult female plumages) of Red-headed and Black-headed Buntings are very similar. This is especially true in the autumn, and Svensson (1992) states that the identity of a few such birds must be left undetermined. Lewington *et al.* (1991) echo this sentiment, stating that first-winter Red and Black-headed Bunting generally cannot safely be distinguished.

Perhaps the most useful plumage feature in separating first-year (or for that matter adult female) Red-headed from Black-headed is the colour of the back and mantle. Svensson (1992) states that the back and mantle of Black-headed are 'almost invariably' tinged rufous, whilst Lewington *et al.* (1991) state that a rufous-tinged back and mantle is 'commonly seen' in Black-headed. These texts go on to state that Red-headed "never" (Svensson) or 'probably never' (Lewington *et al.*) shows any rufous on the back or mantle. As all four birds, including the 23 October record (M. Turnbull pers comm.), showed no rufous on the upperparts they would therefore seem more likely to be Red-headed than Black-headed Buntings. However this is clearly not conclusive.

The description and photographs were submitted to C.D.R. Heard of the British Birds Rarities Committee, who commented:

'The description and photo confirm cold grey(-brown) upperparts, and the fact that all lacked any rufous tinges is indicative of Red-headed. Further, in skins, Red-heads tend to show more well-defined streaking on the upper breast - and the photo clearly shows this (and in the notes). The relatively neat bill is also supportive (Black-headed tends to have a slightly longer, heavier bill).

I find it hard to be definite about the i.d. but I would strongly favour Red-headed.'

The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Records Committee concurred with this view, but since a definite identification has not been possible these records have been accepted as the first for Hong Kong of 'Red/Black-headed Bunting'.

RANGE AND STATUS

Red-headed Bunting breeds in an area to the east of the Caspian Sea, which includes central Asia, Kazakhstan and north Xinjiang in the Tian Shan and Kashgaria, while Black-headed breeds from the Caspian west to Italy. Where their ranges overlap hybridization has been recorded, and these species are sometimes considered conspecific (Lewington *et al.* 1991, de Schauensee 1984). Both species have a south-easterly migration route in autumn, with Black-headed wintering in north and central India, and Red-headed wintering further south and east, reaching south India and Bangladesh. Both are thus long distance migrants.

To the west of its breeding range Black-headed Bunting has been recorded as far west as the UK, where there were 64 records to 1989, although some of these are considered to refer to escapes (Dymond *et al.* 1989). Red-headed Bunting is also recorded from the UK, but all records have been assigned to category D of the British list since this is a popular cagebird and a significant possibility of escape exists. However, as Dymond *et al.* (1989) point out, 'genuine vagrancy is possible... and despite the high escape likelihood some birds may be occurring naturally'. Lewington *et al.* (1991) go one step further and state that 'general vagrancy seems very likely'.

To the east of its wintering range Black-headed Bunting has been recorded as a vagrant as far east as Japan, with 12 records to 1991, between 14 October and 29 December (Brazil 1991). For China there are records of two birds from Fuzhou, Fujian Province (La Touche 1925-1934). Interestingly, these latter birds were obtained from flocks of Yellow-breasted Buntings. Red-headed Bunting has been recorded in China at Beijing (La Touche 1925-1934) from a market purchased specimen, and has also been reported from Japan (Brazil 1991) although the latter are presumed to be escapes. The same reluctance to accept the possibility of genuine vagrancy is shown in Japan as in Europe, despite the fact that Red-headed breeds and winters further east than Black-headed. Clearly both Red and Black-headed Buntings must be considered likely vagrants to Hong Kong.

The arrival of the Red/Black-headed Buntings coincided with the arrival of other species of passerine migrants at Ho Chung. In addition to the small flock of Yellow-breasted Buntings previously mentioned, these included a Grey-headed Bunting *E. fucata*, and a Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*. However, since it cannot be conclusively determined that the buntings were genuine migrants, these records have been published as Category D species of the Hong Kong List.

Interestingly, genuine vagrancy by either of the two species would represent a further occurrence of a species which usually winters in India, but which has now been recorded in Hong Kong. This trend was first pointed out by Leader (1989) after the first Hong Kong record of Hume's Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus humei*, and is re-enforced

by Hong Kong records of Grey-necked Bunting *E. buchanani* (Cat. D), Paddyfield Warbler *Acrocephalus agricola*, Blyths Reed Warbler *A. dumetorum* and Chiffchaff *P. collybita* of the eastern subspecies *tristis*.

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一九九二年十月十七日，在蠔涌發現了一隻可能是鷓鴣，也可能是幼鳥的鷓鴣，品種屬褐頭鷓鴣 *Emberiza bruniceps* 或黑頭鷓鴣 *E. melanocephala*。十月十九日，另兩位觀鳥者亦有同樣的發現。本文討論了有關的紀錄並分析為何不能確定是哪個品種。

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THE STATUS AND FIELD IDENTIFICATION OF SNIPE IN HONG KONG

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The field identification of snipe *Gallinago* sp. is notoriously difficult due to the variability of plumage within species and the similarity of plumage across different species. Viney (1982) first drew attention to a number of features useful for separating the three commonly occurring species of snipe in Hong Kong. Both before and since then, the features of both Common (Fantail) Snipe *G. gallinago* and Pintail Snipe *G. stenura* have been clarified significantly (eg. Madge 1980, Taylor 1984, Olsson 1987), whereas those of Swinhoe's Snipe *G. megala* have remained largely unknown. Madge (1989) drew attention to aspects of its appearance in flight but substantial confusion exists concerning its appearance at rest when, as with the other two species of snipe, it is more difficult to identify.

The aim of this paper is to clarify the features found useful for separating the three species in Hong Kong. It is based mainly on field observations made in Hong Kong throughout the year, though mainly in spring and autumn. The collection of skins at Academia Sinica, Beijing was also consulted, as were other observers familiar with the three species. However, especially as regards the identification of Swinhoe's Snipe, much remains to be learned, in particular its separation from Pintail on plumage and Japanese (Latham's) Snipe *G. hardwickii*, which could occur as a vagrant to Hong Kong, on both plumage and structure.

The two remaining species on the Hong Kong list are Solitary Snipe *G. solitaria* and Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*. Observers are reminded to bear in mind the possibility of these two species occurring but not to forget that both are extremely rare in Hong Kong with only four confirmed records each (Chalmers 1986).

STATUS

It is possible to see all these three species of snipe throughout the year in Hong Kong except during the height of summer. At all times except early autumn however, *gallinago* is generally the most numerous, followed usually by *stenura* and then *megala*. Since 1981 the mid-January Waterfowl Count has recorded between 41 and 212 *gallinago* in the Territory, the majority at Lok Ma Chau (actually the vegetable fields in front of Chau Tau Village, near Lok Ma Chau). Totals for *stenura* and *megala* have been between two and 21 and one and five respectively. These proportions are probably a fairly accurate representation of relative numbers during most of the year.

For all three species spring passage occurs during the second half of March and most of April. At this time maximum counts of over 100 *gallinago*, ten *stenura* and six *megala* have been recorded at Lok Ma

Chau. All species are recorded at other localities such as Tai Long Wan, Luk Keng and Mai Po, as they are during autumn passage which occurs mainly from the end of August to the third week of October. Whereas the dominance of *gallinago* still holds during autumn, *megala* seems to be the most numerous and widespread of the other two species, though usually not more than a handful of each is recorded at any one locality.

IDENTIFICATION

It should be borne in mind that the identification of snipe, more than most species, requires that a wide range of features is considered in combination. There is substantial overlap in many of the features outlined below and, as regards *stenura* and *megala* for example, there is possibly no single plumage feature that can be relied upon as diagnostic of one or the other species. The effects of wear and bleaching should also be taken into account as, especially in spring, their presence or absence can significantly affect a bird's appearance. In addition, the description of call is to a significant extent a matter of personal interpretation and different observers place emphasis on different aspects of the same call. This fact seems especially to be the case with snipe and is possibly the reason why previous descriptions of the call of *stenura* and *megala* have been so variable. I find transcription of the structure of snipe calls very difficult and have preferred instead to concentrate on the pitch and tone.

The following sections are divided into appearance in flight and at rest. Obviously certain features are not exclusively confined to either category and some of the flight characters especially may be visible at rest.

Appearance in Flight

Identification of snipe in flight is a relatively straightforward matter compared to when the bird is at rest, as such things as call, structure and flight pattern are easier to appreciate. The features that should be looked for when a snipe takes off are: its size and structure, including shape of the wing tips and size of the head in relation to the body; the length and shape of the bill; general plumage tones and presence or absence of contrast between mantle and upperwings; strength of the wing panel formed by the median coverts; presence or absence of white tips to the secondaries; pattern of underwing coverts; the call and flight pattern.

Common Snipe

Structurally the slightest of the three species, at times appearing even rakish, with rather pointed wings and a bill that can appear relatively the longest of the three species due to its slimmer body.

The general plumage tones are a contrasting mix of brown, buff and white. The dark brown wings contrast with the warmer and paler brown of the mantle and the usually rather bright, distinctly buff-tinged mantle lines. The upperwing shows a subdued, rather indistinct median covert panel and

the secondaries are almost invariably broadly and brightly tipped white, though they have been recorded lacking this (Viney 1982, Taylor 1984), observations that almost certainly relate to very worn birds. The tips to the greater primary coverts are usually rather inconspicuous. The underwing coverts can appear largely white, especially when viewed from behind, though the greater and median coverts are in actual fact brownish-grey with very broad white tips which, when seen well, show as broad white bands in flight. Occasional birds appear to have totally barred underwings. The axillaries are always barred.

When flushed *gallinago* almost invariably calls, often repeatedly, and the call is the most urgent sounding of the three species, with a distinct rasping quality. When startled it occasionally gives a shorter, higher pitched, *stenura*-like call, that lacks its usual rasping quality, but it is not as marked as *stenura* in these respects.

The flight is the most erratic of the three species with a tendency to fly higher and further. It often flushes as a wisp of anything up to fifty birds. It often 'parachutes' on landing.

Of the three species under discussion, it prefers wetter feeding areas than the other two.

Pintail Snipe

Appears similar in size or slightly smaller than *gallinago*, but is somewhat dumper and not at all rakish, with a rather small head in relation to the body, especially compared to *megala*. The wing tips are more rounded than the other two species, and the bill is blunter, shorter and slightly thicker than that of *gallinago*, especially basally. The feet project beyond the tail to a greater degree than the other two species.

Appears rather brown overall with buff or sandy-buff tinged pale areas. The mantle lines are usually rather dull and brown, the median covert panel is well-marked and the tips to the greater primary coverts are slightly broader and buffer on average than *gallinago*. Pale tips to the secondaries are sometimes easily seen but never approach the strength of *gallinago*, excepting very heavily worn examples of the latter. The white belly patch usually appears less extensive than *gallinago*. The axillaries and lesser and median underwing coverts are closely and darkly barred; the greater underwing coverts have more subterminal pale barring than the other two species.

When flushed it calls on the great majority of occasions and often more than once. The call is more slurred and throaty than the other two species and is fairly nasal, sometimes similar in tone to a duck's quack. There is little urgency and no rasping quality. Startled birds can give a short, surprisingly high-pitched call lacking nearly all throatiness and slur.



26 Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
Lok Ma Chau, Hong Kong 3 February 1991

Paul Leader



27 Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*
Lok Ma Chau, Hong Kong 20 January 1991

Paul Leader



28 Juvenile Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megala*
Mai Po, Hong Kong 27 August 1991

Paul Leader

[The cost of reproduction of Plates 26-28 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]



29 Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
Lok Ma Chau, Hong Kong 3 February 1991

Paul Leader



30 Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*
Lok Ma Chau, Hong Kong 20 January 1991

Paul Leader



31 Juvenile Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megala*
Mai Po, Hong Kong 27 August 1991

Paul Leader

[The cost of reproduction of Plates 29-31 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

The take off is slightly slower than *gallinago* and the flight is more erratic and towering than that of *megala*, but less so than *gallinago*, compared to which it also appears slightly heavier. However, it should be noted that mixed groups of *gallinago* and *stenura* fly very similarly, in the manner of the former, no doubt due to the fact that it has always been this species that has predominated numerically within a flock in my experience. In a situation where there are a number of snipe of different species present, *stenura* has a greater tendency than *megala* to rise in a flock with *gallinago* when flushed.

Stenura is, perhaps, the most catholic in its choice of habitat and is certainly more likely to be found in drier feeding areas than *gallinago* and in more open feeding areas than *megala*.

Swinhoe's Snipe

Appears larger and heavier than *stenura* and *gallinago*, usually by 10-20%; it also appears more barrel-chested than either of the others with slightly longer wings and more pointed wing tips than *stenura*. The bill appears longer than *stenura*, but of a similar relative size to *gallinago*. The feet project beyond the tail only a very short distance, certainly less than for *stenura*.

The upperwing can appear the darkest and the coldest of the three species, more so in spring than autumn, but most birds appear almost indistinguishable from *stenura* in terms of plumage. The mantle lines very rarely appear warmly toned, instead appearing a rather cold whitish or buffish. The median covert wing panel and the pale tips to the primary coverts are usually obvious and both can appear slightly less buff than is the case with *stenura*. The flanks, face and sides of the neck can appear rather dusky and quite heavily barred; on some birds this extends obviously across the chest producing a darkness of coloration not seen on either of the other two species. This feature which, of course, is also visible at rest, seems to be far more apparent in spring, and when it occurs is a very good pointer to *megala*. The underwing coverts are darkly barred and there is little contrast between the mantle and the wings.

Megala calls noticeably less than the other two species and of the three, a silent, flushed snipe is most likely to be this species. When it does call, it is usually only once. The call of *megala* is similar in pitch to *stenura* though it can also sound rather flat and low at times. It is also thinner with little slur or throatiness and has a fairly nasal feel; there is also a very slight rattling sound. Like *stenura* there is little of the urgency or rasping quality of *gallinago*.

Megala shows a greater reluctance to rise off the ground, preferring instead to sit fairly tight in the vegetation. It almost invariably flushes singly and, although this is no doubt partly related to the species relative rarity, it seems that it is probably also a fairly consistent characteristic when compared to the other two species. When flushed the take-off is

relatively slow and heavy, at times even laborious, and the flight is somewhat heavier than both *gallinago* and *stenura* with slower wing beats. It usually covers a shorter distance, keeps rather low and flies relatively directly with little zig-zagging. The whole effect can, at times, recall Woodcock *Scolopaceus rusticola*. There is generally no marked 'parachuting' on landing, instead it executes a half or full turn before touching down. However, a bird repeatedly flushed will fly both far and high, though still generally less erratically than the other two species.

Megala shows a more distinct preference for drier feeding areas than either of the other two species and is seldom flushed from waterlogged ground.

Appearance at Rest

The identification of snipe at rest is more difficult than that in flight and a number of birds, especially *stenura* and *megala*, may, under the present state of knowledge, have to remain unidentified.

Common Snipe

Head

The head markings are usually less well-defined than the other two species due to the darker, buff tinged central crown stripe, supercilium and nape, the latter of which possesses a somewhat mealy appearance. The dark, lateral crown stripes are usually quite extensively flecked with buff-brown, reducing their intensity. Compared to *megala* the central crown stripe appears broader and the lateral crown stripes appear narrower; the latter generally meet above the bill, though possibly less broadly on average than *megala*. There is almost always a noticeable contrast between the buff colour of the supercilium and the rather white area immediately above the cheek stripe. Head-on the supercilium in front of the eye appears rather parallel-sided, which it tends not to on the other two species. Occasional birds, however, can have quite a bulging supercilium.

Mantle and Scapulars

The mantle lines tend to be distinctly tinged buff and show some contrast with the duller, upper scapular lines. The edges to the outer webs of the lower scapulars are distinctively broad and buff or whitish-buff on spring adults, this coloration sometimes extending over the whole of the outer web of the feather. On presumed immature birds seen in autumn the outer web has a narrow, white edge, indistinguishable from many *megala* and *stenura*. In either case, however, the edge to the inner web tends to be rather contrasting because it is duller and browner; it is also rather narrow.

Wing Coverts

The median coverts are noticeably less heavily marked than the other two species, though they can have distinctly white tips. These tips usually consist of two ill-defined spots separated by the dark feather shaft. The effect of a panel is very weak as is the degree of contrast with the plain greater coverts.

Structure

There is a long projection of the tail beyond the wings. The primaries do not project beyond the tertials.

The separation of *gallinago* and *megala* in the autumn is complicated by the presence of presumed immature *gallinago* that more closely resemble *megala*. These birds show darker, colder plumage tones and lack buff mantle lines and broad buff edges to the lower scapulars, these areas instead appearing white or whitish and rather narrow. The dark areas of the head and the mantle are more solidly dark than on average and there is little contrast between the coloration of the supercilium and the area above the cheek line. However, in flight, call, structure and other features such as the white trailing edge to the secondaries confirm identification.



32 Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
Lok Ma Chau, Hong Kong February 1988

Ray Tipper

Pintail Snipe

Head

The supercilium is usually broad and slightly bulging immediately in front of the eye, imparting a rather characteristic bare-faced expression at times. There is little or no contrast between the colour of the supercilium and the area immediately above the cheek stripe. The loreal stripe is often rather narrow, often disappearing immediately in front of the eye. Although the other two species can show this, it seems more common among *stenura*. Behind the eye the double eyestripe is often poorly marked and occasionally lacking. The junction of the lateral crown stripes above the base of the bill is generally not broad and occasionally there is none, in



33 Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
Lok Ma Chau, Hong Kong 3 February 1991

Paul Leader



34 Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*
Lok Ma Chau, Hong Kong 20 January 1991

Paul Leader



35 Juvenile Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megala*
Mai Po, Hong Kong 27 August 1991

Paul Leader

[The cost of reproduction of Plates 33-35 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

which case the central crown stripe reaches the base of the bill, something which hardly ever happens on *megala*.

Some birds in spring in Hong Kong have noticeably faded and bleached plumage and appear rather pale overall with almost sandy tones predominating. The central crown stripe and supercilium are very pale and outstanding and contrast well with the dark lateral crown lines; the cheek stripe and eyestripe, both in front and behind the eye, are weak. These birds also have largely unmarked, pale brown chests showing hardly any contrast with the white of the belly.

Underparts

Apart from the very pale, bleached birds noted above and very dark *megala* with noticeably dusky upper flanks and neck sides, there seems to be complete overlap in terms of the colour of the underparts and the strength of the flank barring. The fact that *stenura* in flight shows a more restricted belly than *gallinago* is not readily apparent at rest.

Mantle and Scapulars

There is little contrast in coloration between the mantle and upper scapular lines, though the former tend to be warmer. The edges to the inner and outer webs of the lower scapulars are similar in width and coloration and are thus different to *gallinago* (Olsson 1987).



36 Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*
Lok Ma Chau, Hong Kong February 1988

Ray Tipper

Wing Coverts

Stenura generally has very well marked median coverts with each feather having a broad whitish tip and distinct pale sub-marginal markings. A pale panel is formed which contrasts well with the rather darker, relatively unmarked greater coverts.

Structure

Usually there is no primary extension beyond the tertials but some birds can have a narrow one. The tail is rather short and usually does not project far beyond the closed primary tips, if at all. At times the whole effect is one of a rather stumpy or 'cut-off' rear end.

Swinhoe's Snipe

Head

Especially in spring, the dark lateral crown lines are often solidly dark or have very little of the pale flecking visible that the other two species often have, but there is a significant degree of overlap. The lateral crown lines also tend to merge rather broadly above the base of the bill, often more broadly than on the other two species, but again there is overlap. The pale central crown stripe almost never meets the base of the bill which it occasionally does on *stenura*. Head-on the supercilium bulges slightly in front of the eye, though this is not as marked as on some *stenura*. There is rarely any marked contrast between the coloration of the supercilium and the area immediately above the cheek stripe. The shape of the head is also subtly different as it is slightly squarer and the peak of the crown is more obviously behind the eye; in addition, the eye is set further back and the head itself is larger, a feature that is also visible in flight.

Underparts

In spring, *megala* tends to have the darkest, most heavily marked chest with the feathers sometimes having a rather dusky grey-brown tinge. There is overlap but some *megala* attain a degree of darkness on the chest and neck sides never found in the other two species. In autumn, this darkness is not apparent.

Mantle and Scapulars

There is usually little contrast in the coloration of the mantle and upper scapular lines, which can vary from narrow and whitish to quite broad and sandy buff. The edges to the inner and outer webs of the lower scapulars are similar in colour and width, thus resembling *stenura*.

Wing Coverts

On average *megala* shows a median covert pattern that is intermediate between the other two species, but is closer to *stenura*. *Megala* has, on average, the whitest feather tips that contrast well with the buff-brown sub-marginal marking, but there is significant overlap here. In autumn duller, browner tones predominate reducing contrast and producing a slightly less well marked panel. *Megala* has the plainest and darkest greater coverts on average, excluding the inner few which are heavily marked on all species.

Regarding *megala*, Tuck (1972) writes that spring adults are 'conspicuously paler than those in fresh plumage'. He concludes from this that 'the winters are spent in relatively open, perhaps arid, regions' which causes significant bleaching of plumage. This would presumably account for the observations of Wallace (1989) who noted *megala* as being a rather pale snipe. In Hong Kong nowever, this has not been noted and instead it is *stenura* which seems to be the more likely to suffer from this (see above).

Bare Parts

The legs are thicker than those of *gallinago* and usually thicker than those of *stenura*, a feature that is visible both in the hand and in the field, even sometimes on lone birds. They are often rather yellow. The bill can appear longer than *gallinago* but always appears longer than *stenura*. The orbital ring is generally creamy and easily visible on the lower half and often visible on the upper half as well, given reasonable views, a feature which is shared by *stenura* but not by *gallinago*.

Structure

The tail projects beyond the closed wings to a greater degree than on *stenura*, creating a more drawn out rear end. The closed primaries can project beyond the tertials a short distance but not often.



37 Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megala*
Broome, Western Australia March 1992

George Swann

SUMMARY

The useful identification criteria for each species in flight and at rest are summarised below.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

- In flight** Slim pointed wings and long bill
Contrasting brown, buff and white appearance
Faint median covert panel
Broad white secondary tips
Broad white areas on underwing coverts
Calls frequently, urgent and rasping
Erratic flight, high and far
- At rest** Head rather mealy, tinged buff
Buff supercilium contrasts with white cheeks
Strongly buff-tinged mantle lines, duller on upper scapulars
Usually broad and buff edges to outer webs of lower scapulars contrasting with narrower and browner inner web
Poorly defined wing panel
Long tail projection
Legs not thick

Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*

- In flight** Dumpy, small head, rounded wings, short and blunt bill
Obvious foot projection
Plain, rather brown appearance
Obvious median covert panel
Plain secondaries or faint pale tips
Barred underwing coverts
Calls often, slurred and throaty, nasal
Flight less erratic and extensive than *gallinago*
- At rest** Usually bulging supercilium and bare-faced expression
Little or no contrast between supercilium and cheeks
Central crown stripe occasionally reaches bill base
Eye-stripe often narrow in front of eye and poorly-defined behind
Mantle and upper scapular lines show little contrast
Width and coloration of edges to inner and outer webs of lower large scapulars similar
Strong median wing covert panel contrasting with greater coverts
Short or no tail projection, 'cut-off' appearance
Legs often do not appear thick

Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megala*

- In flight** Large, deep-chested, long, pointed wings, long bill
Square, relatively large head
Plain, rather brown or rather dark appearance
Obvious median covert panel
Plain secondaries or faint pale tips

Barred underwing coverts
Calls infrequently, usually only once
Thinner, only slightly nasal, sometimes flat call
Reluctant to fly
Slow, heavy take-off, rather slow and direct flight

At rest Often bulging supercilium
Little or no contrast between supercilium and cheeks
Central crown stripe almost never reaches bill base
Often broad junction of lateral crown lines over bill
Dark, cold head markings in spring especially
Mantle and upper scapular lines show little contrast
Width and coloration of edges to inner webs of lower large scapulars similar to those of outer webs
Strong wing covert panel contrasting with greater coverts
Some spring birds noticeably dusky on chest and neck
Long tail projection
Legs thick and usually yellowish

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本文根據在香港的野外觀察，討論了本地常見的三種沙錐的辨別方法和牠們的狀況。分辨出扇尾沙錐 *G. gallinago* 是比較容易的，把針尾沙錐 *G. stenura* 和大沙錐 *G. megala* 分辨開來就比較困難了。

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THE FIELD IDENTIFICATION OF ARCTIC, EASTERN CROWNED, TWO-BARRED GREENISH AND PALE-LEGGED LEAF WARBLER IN HONG KONG.

Paul J. Leader

Illustrated by Alan Harris

INTRODUCTION

Until fairly recently much confusion has surrounded the identification of Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*, Eastern Crowned Warbler *P. coronatus*, Two-barred Greenish Warbler *P. (trochiloides) plumbeitarsus* and Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *P. tenellipes* in Hong Kong. Some confusion still persists, in particular regarding the identification of Two-barred Greenish, which has one of the highest rejection rates of the species considered by the Records Committee of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society.

Field experience, mainly in Hong Kong and China, backed up by examination of birds trapped for ringing in Hong Kong, has shown that, with patience and adequate views, the separation of these four superficially similar *Phylloscopus* warblers is normally relatively straightforward.

This article covers the identification of these four regularly occurring *Phylloscopus* warblers and includes possible confusion species recorded in Hong Kong. Other similar *Phylloscopus* warblers not yet recorded in Hong Kong, but which could occur, are not discussed.

MOULT AND WEAR

Both the adult and first-year *Phylloscopus* warblers discussed here undergo a complete moult in the winter quarters. In autumn, and especially immediately prior to moulting, adults are noticeably more worn than first-year birds. Adult Arctic Warblers in autumn, however, have remarkably fresh plumage and are very similar to first-years. In spring, as all birds will have recently moulted, all will be in fresh plumage. The effects of wear should be borne in mind, most importantly the fact that the wing bars are prone to abrasion and can be completely lost in very worn birds. In the text, the descriptions of wing bars relate only to fresh plumage. Note also that the intensity of upperpart coloration also diminishes with wear and that young birds in autumn tend to be brighter than adults.

CALLS

The calls of *Phylloscopus* warblers are diagnostic and therefore extremely useful aids to identification. Transcribing calls, however, is rather difficult and this should be borne in mind when reading this article. An indication is given of how vocal each species is but this, of course, is a generalisation and some individuals may be atypically quiet or vociferous.

ARCTIC WARBLER

Head

The supercilium is long, thin, yellowish, of even width and does not normally reach the base of the bill. The eyestripe is well marked and flares behind the eye. The ear coverts are dark and distinctly mottled and contrast with the paler throat. The crown is olive-green and concolorous with the mantle.

Upperparts

The rump and mantle are uniform olive-green and the flight feathers are edged brighter green. The greater covert wing bar is short and thin, white or yellowish. The median covert wing bars, if present, are usually indistinct but on well-marked birds can approach those of Two-barred Greenish.

Underparts

Rather dingy, particularly on the breast, and usually with quite pronounced grey streaking on the upper breast.

Bare Parts

The bill is rather long and broad, the upper mandible is blackish and the lower is orange with darker shading near the tip. The legs are usually straw-coloured, sometimes slightly darker.

Call

A short, buzzing 'drzt', or rarely a disyllabic 'drz-it' (G.J. Carey pers. comm.). Rather vocal.

Size, structure and behaviour

A rather large, long-winged, short-tailed *Phylloscopus*, often appearing 'long-bodied'. The primary projection beyond the tertials is long, being slightly shorter than the visible tertials. When feeding, it usually keeps to the canopy.

EASTERN CROWNED WARBLER

Head

Shows a pale central crown stripe which is diagnostic among the four species under discussion. The crown stripe is grey-white, broadest on the nape, and does not extend onto the forecrown. However, due to this species behaviour, this feature can be remarkably difficult to see. The rest of the crown is darker and greyer than in Arctic and contrasts with the mantle. The supercilium is slightly thicker than in Arctic and even longer. It is whiter, sometimes pure white, but may be distinctly yellow in front of the eye. The supercilium may reach the base of the bill but this is variable. The eyestripe is longer than in Arctic and is also darker, being the same colour as the sides of the crown. The ear coverts are whiter than in Arctic, only faintly, if at all, mottled, and contrast only slightly with the throat.

Upperparts

The rump, mantle and especially the fringes to the flight feathers are a brighter lime-green than in Arctic. The wing bars are similar to those of Arctic.

Underparts

Silky-white, sometimes washed greyish on the breast but with no breast streaking. The undertail coverts are pale yellow, but this is not always obvious and they may very rarely be white.

Bare Parts

The bill is similar to that of Arctic, but slightly longer and broader-based, and the lower mandible is conspicuously entirely orange, lacking a dark tip. Leg colour is similar to or paler than Arctic.

Call

Lekagul and Round (1991) describe the call as a harsh 'zweet', but this species is remarkably quiet in Hong Kong.

Size, structure and behaviour

Size and structure are similar to Arctic but the primary projection is shorter and the tail slightly longer. When feeding it shows a strong preference for the canopy of larger trees.

Note: confusion is possible with Blyth's Leaf Warbler *P. reguloides* which also shows a pale central crown stripe. Compared to Eastern Crowned, Blyth's has a more striking head pattern with blackish sides to the crown, broader supercilium and wing bars and rather sullied underparts without yellow undertail coverts. Furthermore, its habitual nuthatch-like feeding behaviour, which in the past has been incorrectly attributed to Eastern Crowned (Dove and Goodhart 1955, Herklots 1967), is diagnostic.

TWO-BARRED GREENISH WARBLER

Head

The supercilium is longer and broader than in Arctic, often broadest above or behind the eye and tapering noticeably to a point at the rear. In front of the eye it usually reaches the base of the bill, unlike on most Arctic Warblers. The eyestripe is slightly darker and thicker than in Arctic. The ear coverts are whitish and slightly mottled. The crown is slightly darker and greyer than in Arctic and in good light contrasts slightly with the mantle.

Upperparts

The rump and mantle are as in Arctic but can be slightly darker. The greater covert wing bar is broader and longer than that of Arctic and there is a well pronounced median covert wing bar. These wing bars are almost as broad and well-marked as those of Yellow-browed Warbler *P. inornatus*.

Of the four species under discussion, Two-barred Greenish is most often recorded in winter in Hong Kong (see under Status). At this time the plumage is often heavily abraded and, consequently, the wing bars very thin or non-existent.

Underparts

As Arctic but often greyer on the flanks and only rarely streaked on the breast.

Bare Parts

The bill is shorter and stubbier than that of Arctic, especially when viewed from the side. The lower mandible is orange, usually lacking a dark tip; because of this, when seen from below, the bill can look large. The legs are usually dark grey to blackish, darker than in Arctic, but some are distinctly paler. Note, however, that the rear of the tarsus is quite bright and so, when viewed from behind, can look similar to Arctic.

Call

Loud and strident. A disyllabic 'chew-wee' or a trisyllabic 'chew-el-wee'. Rather sparrow-like in quality. Not very vocal. The call of Pallas's Warbler *P. proregulus* could be confused with that of Two-barred Greenish, but is a softer and quieter 'chwee'.

Size, structure and behaviour

Slightly smaller, dumper, shorter-winged and longer-tailed than Arctic. The primary projection is noticeably shorter than the visible tertials. Behaviour as Arctic.

Note: confusion is possible with Yellow-browed Warbler, especially when the latter is in worn plumage and the pale fringes to the tertials are not present. Compared to Two-barred Greenish, Yellow-browed has a smaller bill with an obvious dark tip to the lower mandible, darker centred coverts and tertials, a dark shadow on the closed wing below the greater covert wing bar, paler legs and a totally different high-pitched 'wee-eest' call. The (sub)-species *P. (i.) humei* has dark legs and a call very similar to Two-barred Greenish but is readily separated due to its grey-and-white plumage tones and its almost entirely black bill (Leader 1990a, 1992).

PALE-LEGGED LEAF WARBLER

Head

The supercilium is long, slightly broader than in Arctic and is buff, cream or white in colour. It is often broadest above the eye and kinks upwards at the rear. The eyestripe is darker and greyer than in Arctic and similar to that of Two-barred Greenish but, due to the paler ear coverts, it looks darker and well-defined. The ear coverts are grey-white and faintly mottled. The crown is distinctly grey, greyer and darker than Two-barred Greenish and usually contrasts very noticeably with the mantle. The head pattern is very clean cut.

Opposite from top
Arctic Warbler, Eastern Crowned Warbler,
Two-barred Greenish Warbler, Pale-legged Leaf Warbler.
All are first-winter birds in autumn.
(Alan Harris)

Upperparts

Very variable but most are similar to or more olive-brown than Arctic. Some individuals have much browner to bronze coloured upperparts, especially on the rump. On such birds the mantle is darker and the crown less grey, and thus there is less contrast between crown and mantle. There are usually two long, thin, buff-white wing bars.

Underparts

Off-white, whiter than Arctic and occasionally as clean below as Eastern Crowned. The undertail coverts can be slightly cream or pale yellow.

Bare Parts

The bill is slightly shorter and stubbier than in Arctic although some individuals have quite long-looking bills. Very dark black-brown above and below with a pale grey-pink base to the lower mandible, and a rather obvious white tip to both mandibles. Legs (and feet and claws) very pale grey-pink.

Call

A loud metallic 'chink'. Very vocal.

Size, structure and behaviour

Smaller and dumper than Arctic, similar to Two-barred Greenish but with a tail length intermediate between the two. The primary projection is noticeably shorter than the visible tertials. Habitually keeps low to the ground only rarely moving above head height. Also shows a diagnostic habit of frequent tail-pumping not shown by the other three species.

STATUS

A better understanding of the identification of this group has led to a change in their status in Hong Kong (c.f. Chalmers 1986). Arctic Warbler is still considered to be a common spring and autumn migrant, more frequent in autumn; however, there are only two recent winter records. Eastern Crowned is a fairly common autumn migrant, rare in spring and with no recent winter records. Two-barred Greenish, despite being added to the Hong Kong list as recently as 1989 (Leader 1990b), is now established as a scarce passage migrant and winter visitor with 21 accepted records up to 1992. Pale-legged Leaf is a common autumn migrant with occasional winter and spring records. Former winter records of Arctic and Eastern Crowned questioned by Chalmers (1986) seem even more likely to refer to other species.

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本文討論了極北柳鶯 *Phylloscopus borealis*、冕柳鶯 *P. coronatus*、暗綠柳鶯 *P. plumbeitarsus* 和灰脚柳鶯 *P. tenellipes* 的分辨方法。由於近期有較深入的了解，本文亦檢討了牠們在香港的狀況。

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HYBRID MALE WIGEON IN EAST ASIA

Geoff J. Carey

On 2 February 1992 near the Rocky Outcrop at Mai Po, D.S. Melville located an immature male Wigeon sp. *Anas* sp. among a flock of Eurasian Wigeon *A. penelope* that showed a marked similarity to American Wigeon *A. americana*. On the basis of his observations he was unable to say for certain whether it was a pure American Wigeon or a hybrid. He watched it for about ten minutes before the flock was disturbed and flew off. The bird was searched for in the ensuing days, but without success, until 7 February when GJC relocated it, again near the Rocky Outcrop. It remained in the Deep Bay area until 3 April when it was last seen, distantly on the sea from Tsim Bei Tsui. The following description is compiled from the five that were submitted to the Records Committee by GJC, M.L. Chalmers, P.R. Kennerley, P.J. Leader and DSM.

Structure Slightly larger than Eurasian Wigeon. Head marginally larger and squarer, with slightly steeper forehead and straighter nape; crown peak slightly higher and more forward, at front of eye. As a result head shape recalled female Falcated Teal *Anas falcata*. Tail also slightly longer.

Head Forehead and crown described variously as dull, pale yellow (GJC), yellowish-white (MLC) and creamy-white (PRK), paler than Eurasian Wigeon, feathers of sides and the top narrowly tipped darker. On rear half of crown and extreme upper nape pale area heavily obscured by dark, reddish brown feather tips, coloration appearing very similar to, but slightly duller than, Eurasian Wigeon; pale bases only visible at close range in bright sunlight. Area around eye darkest part of head extending back as broad, slightly paler, band that fell down sides of neck; colour noted as dark grey (MLC) and dull reddish-brown, becoming dull chestnut toward the nape (PRK). Area around eye and shortly behind tinged dark bottle green at certain angles. Front part of lores, cheeks, fore part of neck sides and front of neck pale greyish, closely and intricately peppered with dark. Contrast between these pale and dark areas very marked, immediately identifying the bird among flock of Eurasian Wigeon.

Upperparts and wings Upper mantle as breast; lower mantle grey, as male Eurasian Wigeon, but marginally browner. Rump not seen. Uppertail coverts had darkish centres with broad whitish fringes, thus appearing rather pale. Scapulars greyish, darker along shaft (but slightly browner than Eurasian Wigeon), with diffusely bordered buffish fringes. Tertiaries black, distinctly fringed white, latter perhaps slightly more gleaming white than male Eurasian Wigeon, though width same. When wing spread greater coverts seen to have broad white fringes indicating an immature male.

Underparts Greyish foreneck merged gradually into chest which was variously noted as peachy (MLC), dull pinkish (PRK) and pinkish-brown, similar to but slightly cleaner than most male Eurasian Wigeon, with

greyish coloration down the centre that was not easily visible (GJC). Belly and vent creamy-white, slightly cleaner than most male Eurasian Wigeon. Flank coloration, which contrasted with that of breast, was variously described as pinky-grey, very finely vermiculated (PRK), pinkish, tinged grey (GJC), greyish perhaps with a slightly warmer cast than Eurasian Wigeon (MLC) and almost entirely pink but with a greyish tone to upper flanks (PJL); the rearmost extent was clearly separated from base of legs. Undertail coverts black and extreme lower flanks and vent white, apparently exactly as Eurasian Wigeon.

Underwings On a few occasions wings were raised to reveal pure white axillaries and median underwing coverts that contrasted with grey rest of underwing. The brightness of this white was apparent in the duller of lights and was noted by all observers.

Bare Parts To all observers size, shape, and colour of the bill seemed exactly as Eurasian Wigeon (pale blue with black nail and nostril) apart from narrow black line right around the base. This line was broadest around lower part and rather narrow across top. One observer thought nail perhaps slightly broader than Eurasian Wigeon. Legs as Eurasian Wigeon.

Voice Seen and heard to call once uttering a whistle considered to be the same as that uttered by Eurasian Wigeon (MLC).

DISCUSSION

The features that point to American Wigeon are:

1. The slightly larger size and longer tail and the head shape.
2. The closely and intricately peppered pale greyish face and neck and the broad, greenish-tinged band running back from the eye and down the back of the head. Together these formed a very distinctive and contrasting head pattern.
3. Buffish fringed scapulars which in male Eurasian Wigeon are fringed greyish.
4. Pure white axillaries and median underwing coverts. This feature is of greatest interest as it is noted in the literature as diagnostic of American Wigeon. This bird indicates that although it may be true that Eurasian Wigeon never shows pure white axillaries and median underwing coverts, the presence of this feature does not necessarily indicate a pure American Wigeon.
5. Narrow black line around the base of the bill. This is something that Eurasian Wigeon does not show but which is present on male American Wigeon.

While this bird showed marked similarities to a first-winter male American Wigeon it could be ruled out as being a purely bred example of this species on a number of counts:

1. The reddish-brown feather tips to the rear crown and nape feathers and the reddish-brown/dull chestnut tinge to the dark band extending back from the eye. This coloration is absent in American Wigeon.

2. Broad whitish fringes to uppertail coverts. White central uppertail coverts are a feature of adult male Eurasian Wigeon and such broad whitish fringes would not be shown by American Wigeon.

3. Breast coloration contrasting with that of the flanks which possessed a greyish tinge. On American Wigeon the flanks should lack any grey tones, this being a feature of male Eurasian Wigeon, and they should be pinkish-brown, uniform with the chest.

4. Call exactly as that of Eurasian Wigeon. Although very similar to that of Eurasian Wigeon, the call of American Wigeon should be 'more throaty and a little weaker and less piercing' (Madge and Burn 1988) or 'less noisy....weaker, more wheezy or lisping, uttered in groups of three notes with (the) second (the) loudest' (Cramp and Simmons 1977).

The yellowish tinge to the forehead does not necessarily indicate a hybrid origin as there is some variation in the colour of this area on American Wigeon, ranging from creamy white to slightly, but distinctly, yellower (K.E. Vinicombe *in litt.*).

This combination of features indicates a hybrid origin. This is the second male *americana* x *penelope* hybrid to be recorded in Hong Kong, the first being seen on several occasions at Tsim Bei Tsui in January 1987. It was reported to be an 'aberrant' Eurasian Wigeon (Chalmers 1988) but is now considered to have been a hybrid (P.R. Kennerley *in litt.*). This latter bird differed most notably in having grey axillaries.

That the two species do hybridise was first noted by Bailey (1919) based on a bird shot in 1918 in Virginia, U.S.A., but subsequently Watson (1970) reported a presumed hybrid taken in 1845 in Florida. Brazil (1991) states that apparent hybrids are seen annually in Japan though females are rarely reported. The latter, however, is no doubt due to the difficulty of identification. Watson (1970) also refers to Gray (1958), stating that *americana* x *penelope* crosses are 'frequently produced in captivity and the hybrids are fertile'. In addition, Eurasian Wigeon has also hybridised with Chiloe Wigeon *A. sibilatrix* (Harrison and Harrison 1968).

Between December 1979 and January 1993, T. Shiota (*in litt.*) discovered at least 24 different hybrid male Eurasian Wigeon in Japan, including at least 20 birds at a single site. Four of these birds are illustrated in Plates 38-41. While most have not resembled American Wigeon so closely as this bird, at least two seem to have had an even



38 Hybrid Eurasian/American Wigeon *Anas penelopelamericana*
Hyogo Prefecture, Japan 17 November 1991

T. Shiota



39 Hybrid Eurasian/American Wigeon *Anas penelopelamericana*
Hyogo Prefecture, Japan 14 April 1984

T. Shiota

greater similarity (Shiota 1987). These separate individuals, seen on 8 December 1979 and 26 November 1983 (Plate 41), both showed breast and flanks a uniform pinkish-brown and lacked any strong reddish tones to the head, although both birds did have a reddish wash to parts of the head. In addition, the more recent bird uttered a two note call, though the quality of this call is not described (Shiota 1987).

American Wigeon breeds across North America from Alaska east to Hudson Bay and south to north east California, northern Nevada, Colorado and Nebraska. Vagrants have reached north east Siberia, Hawaii and Japan. Eurasian Wigeon breeds across northern Europe and Asia to the Pacific coast and in Asia south to extreme northern China and Lake Baikal. In North America it is a regular visitor in small numbers to both Atlantic and Pacific coasts, both in winter and spring, usually associating with American Wigeon. It is recorded as far south as California and north to Alaska (Madge and Burn 1988; Cramp and Simmons 1977).

Thus, there is no zone of overlap in proven breeding range of the two species. However, the frequency with which hybrids are found in Japan indicates that somewhere in NE Asia or Alaska, one or other of the species must be infiltrating the other's breeding grounds reasonably frequently and producing offspring that migrate south to east Asia. The numbers found in Japan suggest that it is American Wigeon which is infiltrating the breeding grounds of its Eurasian congener. In addition, American Wigeon were seen at the Chukotka peninsula, NE Siberia, during summer 1991 and 1992 (M.A.S. Beaman pers. comm. to P.R. Kennerley).

Pairing of experienced adult wigeon generally occurs on the wintering grounds and so the recorded sympatry during this period in America might be expected to have produced opportunities for hybridisation to take place. That hybrids are not found more frequently in North America is perhaps slightly surprising given the frequency with which they are recorded in east Asia where such sympatry is not known to occur. However, it should also be noted that American authors have long suspected the existence of a small breeding population of Eurasian Wigeon in the New World (eg. Forbush 1925; Hasbrouck 1944).

In conclusion, it can be seen that the identification of even a male American Wigeon in some instances may not be as straightforward as expected. The apparently rather frequent presence in east Asia of hybrids means that all suspected male American Wigeon need to be examined closely for any signs of hybridization. The most enduring of these seems to be a reddish wash to the head. Even the presence of gleaming white axillaries and median underwing coverts, which in more normal circumstances would be conclusive, cannot be regarded as such. Finally, if hybrid male Wigeon are being seen then it is certain that females are also occurring. A caveat similar to that above applies to records of female American Wigeon also, though of course the difficulties of deciding whether a hybrid is involved will be substantially greater.



40 Hybrid Eurasian/American Wigeon *Anas penelopelamericana*
Hyogo Prefecture, Japan 8 November 1983

T. Shiota



41 Hybrid Eurasian/American Wigeon *Anas penelopelamericana*
Hyogo Prefecture, Japan 26 November 1983

T. Shiota

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一九九二年二月在米埔自然保護區內發現了一隻雄性混交種赤頸鴨的幼鳥，應屬葡萄胸鴨和赤頸鴨的混交種。本文介紹了有關的情況，並提出在東亞經常有這種混交品種的證據，推測來源地是西伯利亞東北部。

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BIRDS NEW TO THE KUNMING AREA

R.D.E. Stott

INTRODUCTION

Access to Kunming is now improved with regular flights from Hong Kong and a number of Society members are taking advantage of this so it was thought useful to set down the current list of species recorded in the area. This paper attempts to do that, updating the published literature (Peng *et al.* 1987; Wang *et al.* 1984) with 34 new sightings recorded on a number of winter and spring visits by members of the Hong Kong Birdwatching Society in recent years. Additionally, it is hoped that it may stimulate further study of the area.

A total of 328 species has been recorded in the Kunming area and these are listed in Appendix 1 together with an indication of recorded frequency. Of these, 177 species have been recorded by members of the Society, mainly in the winter months.

Recent visits indicate that there is significant variation in the species recorded in the area, long distance migrants mixing with altitudinal migrants from north and north west Yunnan. It is possible that this is influenced both by changes in the weather and by migration patterns. Severe weather further north might cause montane species to move lower down, quite possibly as far as central Yunnan.

KUNMING AREA

Kunming is the provincial capital of Yunnan Province in the People's Republic of China. It lies to the south west of the centre of the province at 25°04' North, 102°41' East and is 1,895 metres above sea level. At this latitude and altitude Kunming enjoys an equable climate with diurnal average temperatures ranging from 7.8°C in January to 20°C in June and a mean annual rainfall of 1,017mm. To the south of Kunming lies Lake Dianchi, which is the sixth largest freshwater lake in China covering some 340 square kilometres. To the west of Lake Dianchi lie the Western Hills (Xishan) which extend for the full length of the lake, some 40 kilometres, and rise to a maximum of 2,404 metres. The Haikou River flows from the lake's southern end initially in a westerly direction before turning north and joining the Tanglang River, eventually becoming a tributary of the Yangtze River.

Deforestation is a serious problem in Yunnan and many of the western slopes of the Western Hills are devoid of trees. Some areas have been turned over to arable farming and others have had the top soil completely eroded. The eastern slopes overlooking the lake have three large temples linked by a well-made road. The presence of these temples has meant that comparatively little tree felling has taken place. There are many tracks over

the hillside and one other road that is only lightly used. It should be said that the birds are used to the noise on the main road, and mixed flocks can frequently be seen throughout the day passing through the woods and scrub alongside.

Records away from the Western Hills and Lake Dianchi have also come from Anning and the road thereto, 40 km south west of Kunming; the Golden Temple (Jin Dian), 7 km to the north and the Bamboo Temple (Qiong Zhu) 12 km to the north west.

ANNOTATED LIST OF NEW SPECIES

This list includes all new records made by Society members in the Kunming area. The taxonomy follows that of Sibley and Monroe (1990) and vernacular names follow Chalmers (1986, 1992). Species not referred to by Chalmers use the vernacular names from King *et al.* (1975). Where King *et al.* (1975) do not list a species, the vernacular name is taken from Sibley and Monroe (1990). The sequence of the list and Appendix 1 is that used by King *et al.* (1975). Records have been taken from the notes of the following observers:

B. King: 25 and 27 February 1985; 21-22 April 1989.
Dr. M. Williams: 1-3 and 19 December 1986; 3-4 January 1987.
P.J. Leader: 20-21 June 1988 and 17-18 March 1990.
R.W. Lewthwaite: 15-20 December 1989; 29-30 December 1990; 19-20 December 1992.
P.R. Kennerley: 1-4 and 14-15 January 1989.
R.D.E. Stott and S. Smith: 1-8 December 1991.
J.S.R. Edge: 30 December 1991 to 1 January 1992.
G.J. Carey: 23 November and 18-19 December 1992.
C.A. Viney: 16-19 April 1992.
M. and E. Leven: 24-27 December 1992.

Where the literature indicates that a record does not represent a significant range extension for a species, although apparently a new record for Kunming, no comment is made.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

A single individual was recorded on 3 December 1986 over Lake Dianchi. Cheng (1987) indicates that this species is a migrant in Yunnan.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

A single bird was recorded on 30 December 1991.

Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*

Two or more adults were present at Lake Dianchi on 17 March 1990. This species breeds on the lakes of Qinghai Province and Mongolia and disperses south in winter.

Dusky Crag Martin *Hirundo concolor*

Up to 30 birds recorded in December and January. Non-migratory in Yunnan but rather uncommon (Cheng 1987).

Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauuricus*

20 birds recorded on 20 June 1988. This species breeds at between 500 and 2,500 metres in north west and south east Yunnan and disperses in winter (Cheng 1987).

Fire-capped Tit *Cephalopyrus flammiceps*

10 and 12 birds respectively were recorded on 20 and 21 June 1988. This species breeds in north west and south east Yunnan and disperses in winter (Cheng 1987).

Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus*

Two records of this species on 30 and 31 December.

White-cheeked Nuthatch *Sitta leucopsis*

Small parties of birds were recorded in 1986 when four were seen on 3 December and three were seen on 19 December. It is described as rare, breeding in Xizang (Tibet) between 2,135 and 4,270 metres (de Schauensee 1984, Cheng 1987). These records are evidence of a considerable range extension.

Pygmy Wren Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla*

Several were recorded in December 1991. Cheng (1987) states that the species breeds at between 1,500 and 3,000 metres and its range extends over much of southern China, including Yunnan.

Spotted Wren Babbler *Spelaeornis formosus*

A single was recorded on 19 December 1986. This is at the very north of its range as given in Cheng (1987).

Rufous-winged Fulvetta *Alcippe castaniceps*

A single was recorded on 1 December 1986. This species is resident in the extreme north of Yunnan where it is regarded as rare (Cheng 1987).

[Streak-throated/Spectacled Fulvetta *A. cinereiceps/ruficapilla*

Both species are resident in the Kunming area and have been recorded on the Western Hills in good numbers but generally at different times. This suggests that more study is necessary to determine the relative status of these species.]

Striated Yuhina *Yuhina castaniceps*

A single individual was recorded on 19 December 1992.

Hodgson's Redstart *Phoenicurus hodgsoni*

A single was recorded on 2 January 1989. This is a montane species breeding at between 2,000 and 4,500 metres as far south as north west Yunnan and Sichuan Provinces. It moves further south to avoid the most severe winter weather (Étchécopar and Hüe 1983; Cheng 1987).

Chestnut-breasted Rock-Thrush *Monticola rufiventris*

Recorded in small numbers in December and January.

Long-tailed Thrush *Zoothera dixonii*

Singles recorded in December and January. This is a montane species which breeds at higher elevations in north west Yunnan and south east Xizang. C. Robson (*in litt.*) suggests that it is resident in parts of south east Xizang. These records may indicate that it winters to the south and at lower elevations.

Grey-backed Thrush *Turdus hortulorum*

A single was recorded on 20 December 1992. It breeds in the far north east of China wintering across south China and in the extreme south of Yunnan in the Simao area.

Ashy-throated Warbler *Phylloscopus maculipennis*

Recorded in December and January in small numbers. Cheng (1987) indicates that this species breeds in north west Yunnan wintering over the southern part of the Province.

[**Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus* sp.]

Pallas's Warblers of the subspecies *P. proregulus chloronotus* winter in the Western Hills. While watching a party of these near the bottom of the hills, M. Leven located several individuals that appeared to be different from the main part of the flock: 'Three or four of the birds were watched closely and appeared to be the recently described Chinese Leaf Warbler *P. sichuanensis* (Alström *et al* 1992). These birds were distinctly flatter-crowned than *P. p. chloronotus* (which were present in the same loose flock) and were thus, in shape, rather reminiscent of the Yellow-browed Warbler *P. inornatus* (which was not present). The median crown stripe was rather weak and did not reach the bill, the rump was yellowish-white (but not noticeably duller than *P. p. chloronotus*). No vocalizations were heard and as a consequence this identification can only be regarded as tentative' (M. Leven *in litt.*).

Pale-footed Bush Warbler *Cettia pallidipes*

Four individuals recorded in two locations on 3 December 1986. This species occurs in central Yunnan and may be resident there according to Cheng (1987).

Manchurian Bush Warbler *Cettia canturians*

Two were recorded on 1 December 1986. Cheng (1987) indicates that this species is a migrant to Yunnan.

Aberrant Bush Warbler *Cettia flavolivacea*

Recorded in small numbers in December and January.

Brown Bush Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris*

A single was recorded on the lower slopes on 19 December 1992. Cheng (1987) describes the species as resident in western Yunnan and indicates records from most of southern China but Round (1992) suggests that a number of these southern records refer to *B. seebohmii*. With the present level of

knowledge it is not possible to estimate the degree of overlap of the two species.

Slaty-blue Flycatcher *Ficedula tricolor*

A single was recorded on 1 December 1986. Éthécopar and Hüe (1983) describe this species as breeding at between 1,200 and 3,300 metres in the north and west of Yunnan but lower in winter.

Blue-throated Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides*

First recorded in April 1989 near the Bamboo Temple and later at the Western Hills in April 1992 when several pairs were seen and breeding was suspected.

Yellow-bellied Fantail *Rhipidura hypoxantha*

A single was recorded on the upper slopes on 19 December 1992. Cheng (1987) describes the species as resident, but uncommon, in south west Yunnan.

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea*

A single was recorded on the upper slopes on 19 December 1992.

Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophiota*

Three were recorded on 19 December 1992. This species is an uncommon resident in north west Yunnan, breeding at between 2,300 and 4,300 metres above sea level (Cheng 1987) but coming down to 1,850 metres in winter (de Schauensee 1984).

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

A single was recorded on 1 December 1986 beside Lake Dianchi. Cheng (1987) indicates that this species winters in Yunnan.

Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker *Dicaeum melanoxanthum*

Males were recorded on three occasions in late December 1989, 1990 and 1992. This species breeds at between 2,000 and 3,000 metres throughout Yunnan, wintering further south in the Province (Cheng 1987; Éthécopar and Hüe 1983).

Chinese Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica*

Recorded on 19 December 1986.

Vinaceous Rosefinch *Carpodacus vinaceus*

Ones and twos recorded in December and January. Cheng (1987) states that this species is resident in north west Yunnan and de Schauensee (1984) indicates that it winters at lower levels.

Brown Bullfinch *Pyrrhula nipalensis*

A single was recorded in late December 1990. This species is an uncommon resident over much of south China (Cheng 1987) breeding up to 3,660 metres in north Yunnan (de Schauensee 1984).

Collared Grosbeak *Mycerobas affinis*

A flock of c.40 individuals was recorded on 14 January 1989 in cold weather. This species breeds at between 3,050 to 4,275 metres in north west Yunnan and Xizang, wintering down to 2,000 metres (Cheng 1987; de Schauensee 1984).

Slaty Bunting *Latoucheornis siemsseni*

A female was recorded on 15 January 1989 and a male in late December 1990. Cheng (1987) indicates that this species breeds in Gansu, Shaanxi and Sichuan Provinces, wintering south and east as far as Fujian in the east and Guizhou in the west. It is restricted to mountainous areas (de Schauensee 1984) and these records in Yunnan are to the west of its present known range. Since 1986 there have been many winter records in the valley around Chengdu in Sichuan Province, 600 Km north of Kunming (C. Robson *in litt.*).

APPENDIX 1 Systematic list of all species recorded in the Kunming area.

The numbers to the right of the name indicate the relative frequency of records made by members of the Hong Kong Birdwatching Society and as such are only indicative of abundance

* : Referred to in the Annotated List.

Frequency

1 - Rarely recorded 2 - Uncommonly recorded 3 - Often recorded 4 - Commonly recorded
5 - Recorded on almost all visits

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* 1
Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Little Green Heron *Butorides striatus*
Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus* 1
Great Egret *Casmerodius albus* 1
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*
Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Chestnut Bittern *Ixobrychus cinamomeus*
Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*
Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*
European Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*
Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*
Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*
Pintail *Anas acuta*
Teal *Anas crecca* 1
Baikal Teal *Anas formosa*
Yellow-nib Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha*
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* 1
Gadwall *Anas strepera*
Falcated Teal *Anas falcata*
Wigeon *Anas penelope* 1
Garganey *Anas querquedula*
Shoveler *Anas clypeata* 1
Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*
Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*
Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*
Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*
Mandarin *Aix galericulata*
Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*
Smew *Mergellus albellus*
Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*
Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* * 1
Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus* 1
Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus* 1
Black Kite *Milvus migrans* 3
Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus*
Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*
Pied Harrier *Circus melanoleucos*
Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Besra *Accipiter virgatus*
Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* 1
Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* 1
Shikra *Accipiter badius* 1
Buzzard *Buteo buteo* 5
Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*
Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius* 1
Steppe Eagle *Aquila rapax*
Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*
Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraetus fasciatus*
Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* 4
Hobby *Falco subbuteo*
Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* * 1
Chinese Francolin *Francolinus pintadeanus*
Japanese Quail *Coturnix japonica*
Mountain Bamboo Partridge *Bambusicola fytchii*
Ring-necked Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*
Lady Amherst's Pheasant *Chrysolophus amherstiae* 1
Yellow-legged Buttonquail *Turnix tanki*
Barred Buttonquail *Turnix susciator*
Common Crane *Grus grus*
Black-necked Crane *Grus nigricollis*
Banded Rail *Gallinula striata*
Baillon's Crane *Porzana pusilla*
Ruddy Crane *Porzana fusca*
White-breasted Waterhen *Amamornis phoeniceus* 1
Watercock *Gallinix cinerea*
Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
Painted Snipe *Rosastrula benghalensis*
Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus* 1
Asiatic Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*
Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
Lined Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*
Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*
Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos* 1
Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*
Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* 2
Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*
Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*
Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*
Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*
Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaeus* * 1
Common Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* 2
Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunicephalus* 1
Common Gull *Larus canus*
Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris*
Pin-tailed Pigeon *Treron apicauda*
Wedge-tailed Pigeon *Treron sphenura*
Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* 1
Rufous Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis* 2
Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*
Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis* 1
Grey-headed Parakeet *Psittacula himalayana*
Derbyan Parakeet *Psittacula derbiana*
Red-winged Crested Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus*
Large Hawk Cuckoo *Cuculus sparveroides* 1
Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus*
Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*
Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus* 1
Asian Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx maculatus* 1
Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea*
Barn Owl *Tyto alba*
Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia*
Collared Scops Owl *Otus lempiji*
Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo*
Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis*
Barred Owllet *Glauclidium cuculoides*
Tawny Owl *Strix aluco* 1
Japanese Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus*
Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*
Himalayan Swiftlet *Collocalia brevirostris*
House Swift *Apus affinis* 1
Crested Kingfisher *Megaceryle lugubris*
Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* 1
White-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*
Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata*
Indian Roller *Coracias benghalensis* 1
Hoopoe *Upupa epops* 1
Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* 1
Speckled Piculet *Picumnus inominatus* 1
Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*
Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* 4
Crimson-breasted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos cathpharius*
Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Dendrocopos hyperythrus*
Grey-capped Woodpecker *Dendrocopos canicapillus* 1
Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula* 1
Northern Crag Martin *Hirundo rupestris*
Dusky Crag Martin *Hirundo concolor* * 2
Swallow *Hirundo rustica* 3
Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*
Large Cuckoo Shrike *Coracina novaehollandiae*
Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike *Coracina melaschistos*
Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus*
Rosy Minivet *Pericrocotus roseus* 1
Grey-throated Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris* 1
Short-billed Minivet *Pericrocotus brevirostris*
Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus* 5
Crested Finchbill *Spizix canifrons* 1
Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous* 5
Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster*
Mountain Bulbul *Hypsipetes melleandii* 1
Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leuccephalus*
Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocerus*
Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus* 2
Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentotus*
Slender-billed Oriole *Oriolus tenuirostris*
Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha* 2
Magpie *Pica pica* 2
Jay *Garrulus glandarius*
Eurasian Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*
Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauricus* * 1
Carion Crow *Corvus corone* 1
Jungle Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos* 5
Collared Crow *Corvus torquatus*
Black-browed Tit *Aegithalos iouschistos*
Red-headed Tit *Aegithalos concinnus* 5
Fire-capped Tit *Cephalopyrus flammiceps* * 1
Coal Tit *Parus ater*
Yellow-bellied Tit *Parus venustus* 4
Great Tit *Parus major* 5
Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus* 5
Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus* * 1
Yunnan Nuthatch *Sitta yunnanensis*
White-cheeked Nuthatch *Sitta leucopsis* * 1
Giant Nuthatch *Sitta magna*
Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria*
Bar-tailed Treecreeper *Certhia himalayana* 1
Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* 1
Spot-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus erythrocnemis* 4
Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis* 4
Pygmy Wren Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla* * 1
Spotted Wren Babbler *Spelaornis formosus* * 1
Long-tailed Wren Babbler *Spelaornis chocolatinus*
Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps* 1
Chinese Babax *Babax lanceolata* 1
Moustached Laughing Thrush *Garrulax cineraceus*
Hwamei *Garrulax canorus* 1
White-browed Laughing Thrush *Garrulax sannio* 2
White-browed Shrike Babbler *Pteruthius flaviscap* 1
Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanoptera* 5
Red-tailed Minla *Minla ignotincta*
Rufous-winged Fulvetta *Alcippe castaneiceps* * 1
Spectacled Fulvetta *Alcippe ruficapilla* * 4
Streak-throated Fulvetta *Alcippe cinereiceps* * 2
Brown-capped Fulvetta *Alcippe brunea* 5
Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrissonia* 4
Black-headed Sibia *Heterophasia melanoleuca* 2
Striated Yuhina *Yuhina castaneiceps* * 1
Whiskered Yuhina *Yuhina flavicollis*
White-collared Yuhina *Yuhina diademata* 4
Rufous-vented Yuhina *Yuhina occipitalis*
Black-breasted Parrotbill *Paradoxornis gutticolis*
Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus*
Ashy-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis alphonstanus* 5
Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope*
Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus* 4
Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis* 4
Hodgson's Redstart *Phoenicurus hodgsoni* * 1
Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis* 5
Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus aureus* 1
Plumbeous Water Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus* 1
White-tailed Robin *Cinclidium leucurus* 1
White-crowned Forktail *Enicurus leschenaulti*
Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* 4
Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea* 3
River Chat *Chaimarrornis leucocephala* 1
Chestnut-breasted Rock Thrush *Monticola rufiventris* * 4
Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* 2
Violet Whistling Thrush *Myiophonus caeruleus* 2
Plain-backed Thrush *Zoothera mollissima*
Long-tailed Thrush *Zoothera dixoni* * 1
White's Thrush *Zoothera dauma* 4
Black-breasted Thrush *Turdus dissimilis* 1
Grey-backed Thrush *Turdus hortulorum* * 1
Grey-winged Blackbird *Turdus bouboul*
Blackbird *Turdus merula* 1
Chestnut Thrush *Turdus rubrocanus* 2
Pale Thrush *Turdus pallidus* 1
Eye-browed Thrush *Turdus obscurus* 1
Dusky Thrush *Turdus naumanni* 2
Chinese Thrush *Turdus mupinensis* 4
Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler *Seiurus bukkii* 1
Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Seiurus castaneiceps* 1
Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* 3
Tickell's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus affinis* 1
Buff-throated Warbler *Phylloscopus subaffinis* 4
Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* 1
Yellow-streaked Warbler *Phylloscopus armandii*
Buff-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus pulcher* 2
Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* 4
Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus* 5
Ashy-throated Warbler *Phylloscopus maculipennis* * 1
Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*
Large-billed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris*
Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*
Two-barred Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*
Eastern Crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus coronatus*

Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides* 1
 White-tailed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus davisoni* 1
 Thick-billed Warbler *Acrocephalus aedon*
 Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis*
 Striated Warbler *Megalurus palustris*
 Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata* 1
 Brown Prinia *Prinia polychroa* 1
 Striated Prinia *Prinia criniger* 2
 Hill Prinia *Prinia atrogularis* 1
 Fantail Warbler *Cisticola juncidis*
 Pale-footed Bush Warbler *Cettia pallidipes* * 1
 Manchurian Bush Warbler *Cettia canturians* * 1
 Aberrant Bush Warbler *Cettia flavivacea* * 1
 Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler *Cettia robustipes* 1
 Brown Bush Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris* * 1
 Sooty Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica*
 Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa latirostris* 1
 Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa mutui*
 Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassina* 1
 Yellow-rumped Flycatcher *Ficedula zanthopygia*
 Narcissus Flycatcher *Ficedula narcissina*
 Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* 1
 Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophata*
 Slaty-blue Flycatcher *Ficedula tricolor* * 1
 Fukien Niltava *Niltava davidi*
 Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara* 1
 Blue-throated Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides* * 1
 Hill Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis banyumas* 1
 Grey-headed Flycatcher *Callicicapa ceylonensis* 1
 Yellow-bellied Fantail *Rhipidura hypoxantha* * 1
 White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis* 1
 White-browed Fantail *Rhipidura aureola* 1
 Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea* * 1
 Japanese Paradise Flycatcher *Tersiphone atrocaudata*
 Asian Paradise Flycatcher *Tersiphone paradisi*
 Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophata* * 1
 Maroon-backed Accentor *Prunella immaculata* 4
 White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* 4
 Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* 1
 Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*
 Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus* 1
 Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* 4

Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus*
 Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaehollandiae* 1
 Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*
 Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* * 1
 Upland Pipit *Anthus sylvanus* 1
 Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*
 Tiger Shrike *Lanius tigrinus*
 Burmese Shrike *Lanius collurioideus* 1
 Grey-backed Shrike *Lanius tephronotus* 1
 Rufous-backed Shrike *Lanius schach* 3
 Grey Starling *Sturnus cineraceus*
 Crested Mynah *Acridotheres cristatellus* 1
 Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae* 1
 Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker *Dicaeum melanoxanthum* * 1
 Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus* 2
 Chestnut-flanked White-eye *Zosterops erythropleurus*
 White-eye *Zosterops japonicus* 1
 Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosa* 4
 Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* 5
 Ruddy Sparrow *Passer rutilans* 5
 White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata*
 Spotted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*
 Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* 1
 Chinese Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica* * 1
 Black-headed Greenfinch *Carduelis ambigua* 5
 Dark-breasted Rosefinch *Carpodacus nipalensis* 1
 Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus* 1
 Vinaceous Rosefinch *Carpodacus vinaceus* * 1
 Crimson-browed Finch *Pinicola subhimachalus*
 Brown Bullfinch *Pyrrhula nipalensis* * 1
 Black-tailed Hawfinch *Eophona migratoria* 1
 Collared Grosbeak *Mycerobas affinis* * 1
 Eurasian Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia* 5
 Tristram's Bunting *Emberiza tristrami* 1
 Chestnut-eared Bunting *Emberiza fucata* 1
 Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla* 5
 Yellow-throated Bunting *Emberiza elegans* 3
 Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola*
 Chestnut Bunting *Emberiza rutila*
 Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala* 3
 Crested Bunting *Melophus lathamii* 1
 Slaty Bunting *Latouchcheornis siemseni* * 1

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本文簡介了昆明地區的情況，與及香港觀鳥會會員過去八年在該地區錄得而並未在有關文獻上介紹的品種。其後還附有該地區曾錄得的全部328個品種的名稱。

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FEEDING BEHAVIOUR OF THE LITTLE EGRET AT MAI PO, HONG KONG

Adam R.C. Britton

SUMMARY

Predictable diurnal patterns in dissolved oxygen levels, as dictated by light intensity and environmental temperature, affect the behaviour of Mosquito Fish *Gambusia affinis* through a need to avoid physiological stress. These fish are one of the main prey items of the Little Egret at Mai Po. These patterns are utilised by the Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* whose peak feeding activity coincides with the greatest prey availability in the morning and evening. Differences in feeding behaviour were also observed between adult and juvenile birds, with lower feeding efficiency and more limited prey options for the latter.

INTRODUCTION

A study of Little Egret in the Camargue, France has shown that there is a relationship between prey activity and egret feeding behaviour (Kersten *et al.* 1991). The present study, conducted in August 1991, aimed to see whether similar relationships exist between Little Egrets and their prey at Mai Po Marshes, Hong Kong.

The investigation was in two parts. The first involved study of the factors affecting the activity of Mosquito Fish *Gambusia affinis*, one of the main prey species of Little Egret in the area, and the second part involved observation of egret feeding behaviour in relation to environmental variables and *Gambusia* activity. The study site was a commercially operated fish pond (for carp *Cyprinidae* and mullet *Mugil cephalus*.) adjacent to the WWF Hong Kong Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Measurement of Prey Activity

Every hour, from dawn to dusk, air temperature, dissolved oxygen (DO), and water temperature in the fish pond were recorded.

Activity data for *Gambusia affinis* were collected by direct observation using binoculars. This method assumes an approximately even distribution of fish throughout the pond. The number of disturbances (ripples) caused by fish at the water surface were counted within a marked 1.5m x 1.5m area at the pond edge (where egrets usually fed), during a 30 second observation period. Observations were repeated five times each hour and the mean calculated. Although other factors, such as bubbles bursting at the surface, also caused ripples, it was possible to distinguish those which were caused by *Gambusia* by their larger size. Also, it was often possible to see the fish just below the water's surface.

Every hour, once the environmental parameters had been measured, Little Egrets were counted at a set number of fish ponds to give an overall impression of the intensity of use by egrets at specific times during the day. Only the number of egrets which appeared to be feeding (i.e. birds observed close to the water's edge, whether actually feeding or not) were included in the count.

Little Egret Feeding Behaviour

Data on egret feeding behaviour were collected approximately every two hours throughout the day. Egrets at the study pond were observed for a period of ten minutes, and their feeding activity (total number of strikes and successful strikes) and the number of paces taken were recorded. On each occasion, at least two individual birds were recorded separately. Usually at least three individuals were observed. Data were separated for adults and juveniles (juvenile birds did not possess breeding plumage and had greener feet).

The results of the prey activity study meant that an indirect assessment of prey activity could be obtained from information on DO and water temperature. Before and after observing each feeding Little Egret, DO and water temperature were recorded. This gave individual data for each bird.

RESULTS

Measurement of Prey Activity

Air temperature rose from an early morning low, peaked in the early afternoon and then gradually fell towards the evening (Figure 1). Water temperature and dissolved oxygen levels also followed a similar pattern (Figures 2 and 3). *Gambusia* activity decreased during the day until 1700h before it gradually increased again (Figure 4).

Regression analysis was used to determine the degree of correlation, if any, between the above factors ie. air and water temperature, DO and *Gambusia* activity (Table 1). It can be seen that *Gambusia* activity decreased quite significantly when DO increased, whilst DO levels increased with increases in both air and water temperatures. The number of egrets feeding around the fish ponds was also highly correlated with *Gambusia* activity.

Little Egret Feeding Behaviour

Initially the results for both adults and juveniles were grouped together but few correlations were found between feeding behaviour and environmental conditions eg. DO. The results were then separated into those for adult and juvenile birds and Mann-Whitney U tests were used to determine the differences in feeding behaviour between the age classes (Tables 2 and 3).

DISCUSSION

Measurement of Prey Activity

The changes in DO levels over the day can be explained in terms of photosynthesis by aquatic plants and phytoplankton in the ponds - the rate of photosynthesis being related to light intensity primarily (although this is also modified by changes in temperature). As both sunlight intensity and water temperature increased, the rate of photosynthesis also increased. This additional oxygen entering the system was reflected in elevated DO levels.

Knowing this, the trends in measured prey activity can be examined. As DO and temperature in the water increased, prey activity measured at the water's surface decreased. The negative relationship between DO levels and *Gambusia* activity is highly significant and can be explained as follows:

Plant respiration (mainly by phytoplankton) in the water during the night results in DO levels falling as oxygen is used up, but not replaced by photosynthesis. As *Gambusia* are only able to survive above a certain minimum DO level, they have no "choice" but to migrate to the surface of the pond. Here, DO levels are higher as a result of direct diffusion from the atmosphere, enabling the fish to survive. As the day progresses, the photosynthesis rate increases, and so DO levels begin to rise again deeper in the pond. The fish, thus, are able to move to deeper levels in the pond, and their activity near the surface decreases. Other prey species are affected to differing degrees, depending upon their tolerances.

Gambusia activity levels were highest in the early morning and the late evening when the rate of photosynthesis is insufficient to replace oxygen lost through respiration. It is at these times that *Gambusia* are at their most vulnerable to egret predation, being close to the surface. There is a significant, positive correlation here between *Gambusia* activity levels and numbers of egrets found to be feeding at specific times of the day (Table 1).

Little Egret Feeding Behaviour

A number of significant correlations exist for the adult age class (Tables 2 and 3). The most important result is that both strike rate and catch rate are significantly, but negatively related to DO. This implies that prey activity does affect the feeding behaviour of adult egrets. Strike rate (and therefore catch rate) was highest in the morning and evening when prey activity was high and DO levels low.

There are also other, more indirect effects of prey activity. Step rate is related to both strike and catch rate (Table 2). This may seem to suggest that birds strike more frequently as they walk faster. This is indirectly true. When prey activity was high, birds made more strikes per unit time.

Additionally, step rate was also high, as the bird could afford to be less choosy. Conversely, when prey activity was low, the bird employed a certain degree of stealth when looking for food. Dashing around may well decrease efficiency, an important consideration when prey numbers are low. It was also much hotter in the early afternoon (when step rate was low), so it may have been too costly to maintain a higher step rate.

Another behaviour recorded was the number of foot stirs (i.e. a deliberate attempt by the bird to disturb the sediment at the bottom of the pond with either of its feet). This would, in effect, disturb potential prey items resting or hiding in the mud. When disturbed, the prey are likely to attempt to escape, giving an alert bird the opportunity for capture. The matrix indicates little in the way of significant relationships except with efficiency, which is negative. This implies that the foot stirring technique was inefficient, resulting in a reduced catching efficiency. Given the dubious effectiveness of this technique, why was it being used? It seemed that, in the observations made, several birds were very efficient at using this method (perhaps a favoured individual hunting technique), whereas others were hopeless at it, but otherwise persistent. So, the foot stir technique invariably led to a strike, but few birds seemed adept at catching such fast-moving prey. Without more data, any further analysis would be speculative at best.

There were few significant relationships for juvenile birds (Table 3) and many of the relationships present in the adult birds are not evident. This implies that the juvenile birds either used different feeding techniques, or they were less efficient with strategies common to both age classes. The relationship between time and strike rate (or catch rate) is significant, implying a certain feeding pattern. Indeed, this pattern is not dissimilar to that seen in the adult birds. But in other respects, this data suggests that the juvenile birds did not conform to the "expected" rules for adults. This is quite a common situation within the animal kingdom where juveniles are less efficient in most aspects of life (Recher, 1969, refers to it as "deferred maturity"). Certainly, adults appeared to be aggressively dominant towards juveniles present around the study site, which may have further reduced the recorded feeding efficiency of the latter.

Mann-Whitney U statistical tests were performed in order to confirm significant variation between the two age classes. This variation was confirmed in both strike rate and catch rate only, with adults having higher strike and catch rates. A similar result has been found with adult and juvenile Chinese Pond Herons *Ardeola bacchus* at Mai Po (Young in prep).

Crosby (1991) has shown that the activity curves in relation to DO levels for the prawn *Macrobrachium nipponense* are fairly similar to those of *Gambusia*. Therefore, they are likely to be just as available as a food item to the egrets as *Gambusia*. However, observations indicate that only adult birds tend to take prawns. Perhaps adult birds are the only ones with sufficient experience to handle the larger prawns with their hard exoskeletons. Juveniles may, therefore, be restricted to the smaller *Gambusia*.

It is of interest that the handling time (the time spent actually manipulating and eating prey) for *Gambusia* was about one second. Catching a prawn (5-10cm in length) demanded a handling time of up to 15 seconds for the bird to manoeuvre it into position and swallow it, a feat restricted to adults, it seemed. For juvenile birds, this additional effort may not have been justified given the energy value which could have been derived from digesting the shrimp. Indeed, adults were only observed taking prawns when *Gambusia* activity levels were low (resource depression), suggesting that they were only suitable food items when *Gambusia* were scarce. This is of interest as Wong (1991) noted *Macrobrachium* as the most frequently taken prey by breeding adult Little Egrets in May and June 1990.

Overall, then, it would seem that age related differences were apparent in terms of hunting experience with the adult birds appearing to be more efficient than their juvenile counterparts. These differences would no doubt disappear over time, and repeated investigations at different times of the year may help to confirm this.

Recent studies have shown that the Mai Po fish ponds are an important feeding habitat for Little Egrets and Chinese Pond Herons breeding at the Mai Po Egretty SSSI (Wong 1991, Young in prep.). This study has gone some way to explaining the basis for this preference in that fish ponds provide a predictable food supply in the early mornings and evenings when DO levels in the pond water are low and prey activity is high. Further loss of this unique wetland type in the north and north west New Territories would lead to a decline in the population of herons and egrets due to the disappearance of feeding habitat.

APPENDIX 1

Figure 1. Air Temperature (one day only)

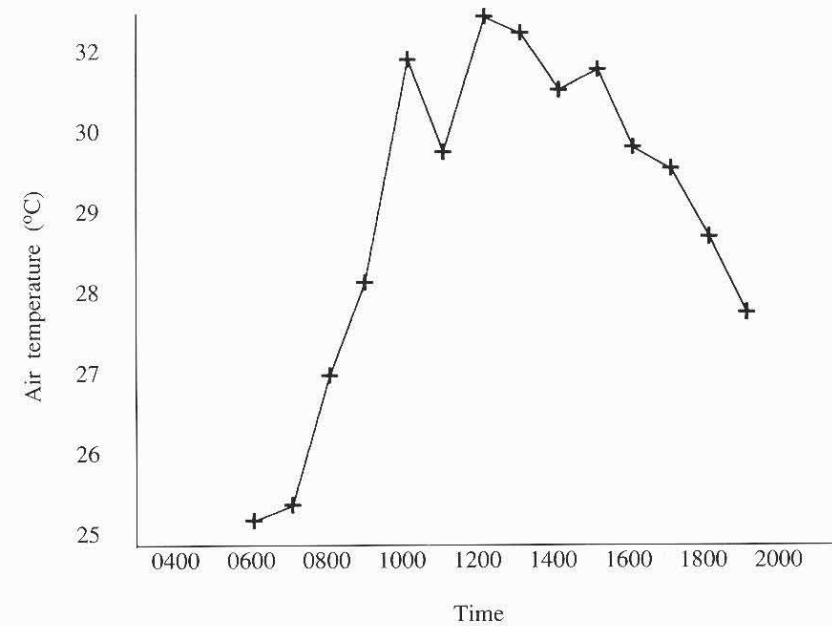


Figure 2. Water Temperature (one day only)

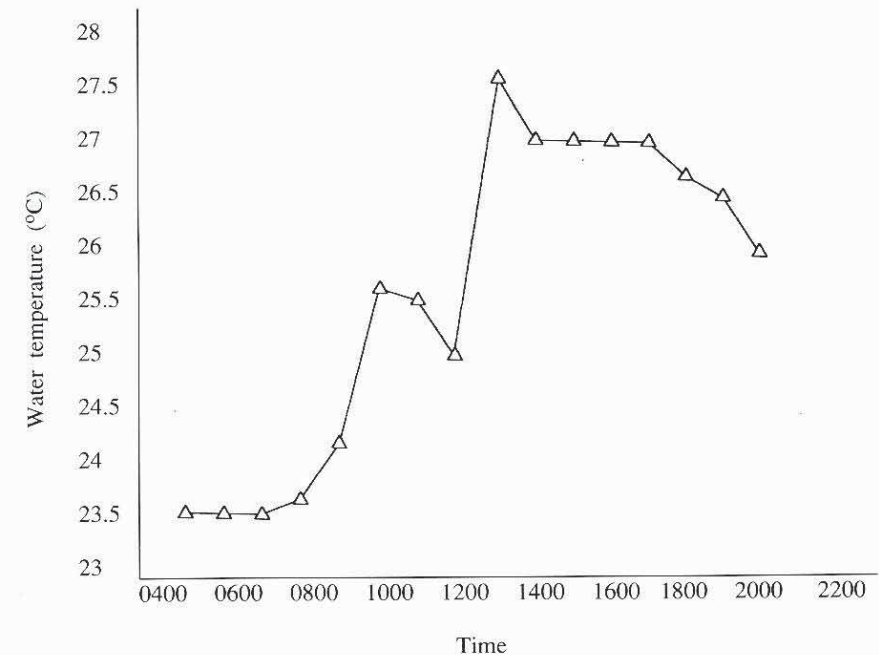


Figure 3. Dissolved Oxygen levels (one day only)

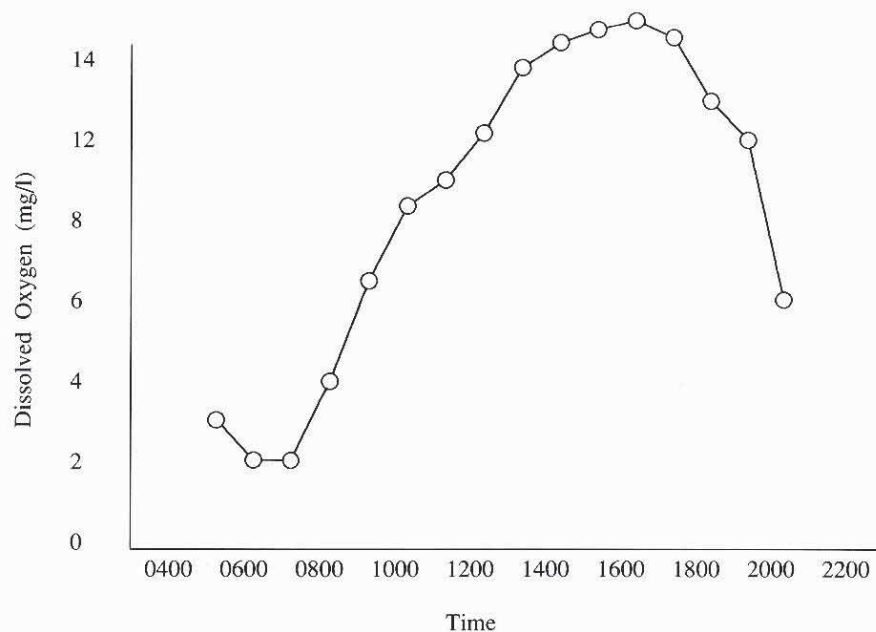
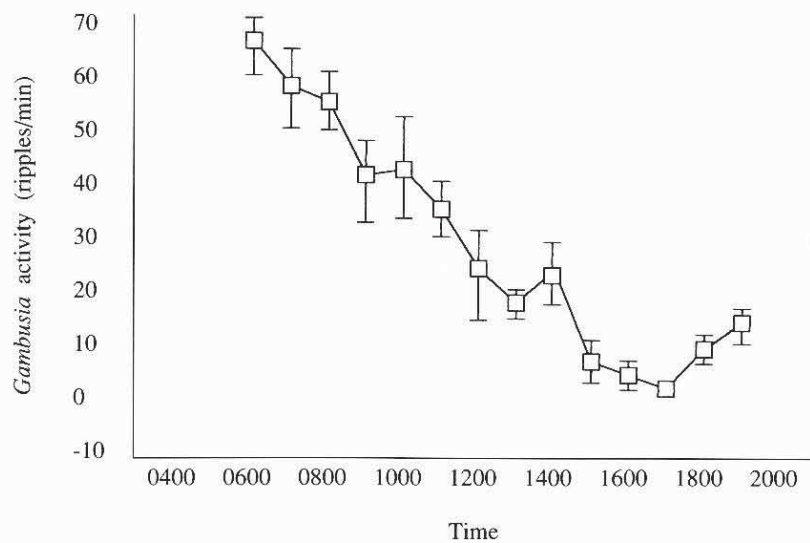


Figure 4. Gambusia activity (one day only)



Simplified Significance Matrices

Table 1 Prey Activity

	DO	ACTIVITY	EGRETS	AIR TEMP.
WATER T.	***	-**	•	***
DO		-**	-**	***
ACTIVITY			***	-**
EGRETS				-**

Table 2 Egret Feeding-Adults

	STRIKE RATE	CATCH RATE	EFF.	STEP RATE	WATER TEMP.	D.O.	FOOT STIRS
TIME	*	*	•	**	**	**	•
STRIKE RATE		***	•	***	-*	-*	•
CATCH RATE			•	***	-*	-*	•
EFFICIENCY				•	•	•	-*
STEP RATE					-*	-**	•
WATER TEMP						***	•
DO							•

Table 3 Egret Feeding-Juveniles

	STRIKE RATE	CATCH RATE	EFF.	STEP RATE	WATER TEMP.	D.O.	FOOT STIRS
TIME	*	*	•	•	•	*	•
STRIKE RATE		***	•	•	•	•	•
CATCH RATE			•	•	•	•	•
EFFICIENCY				•	•	•	•
STEP RATE					•	•	•
WATER TEMP						***	•
DO							•

* = P < 0.05

** = P < 0.001

+/- sign indicates positive/negative correlation

• = no significant correlation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to WWF Hong Kong for facilitating this study at Mai Po. I would like to express my gratitude to Michael Lau, Lew Young, Stewart Crosby, and everyone in the Zoology Department, University of Hong Kong for their encouragement and thought-provoking questions....., amongst other things. Lew Young and David Melville very kindly assisted with reviewing and editing the manuscript.

Gambusia affinis 是生活在米埔的小白鷺的主要食物。一日之內水中含氧量因為受著光照和環境溫度的支配，所以變化是有一定模式的，*Gambusia affinis* 也因應著這模式而活動，以免受各種生理壓力影响。小白鷺也利用這模式：牠們的覓食的高峯期是清早和晚上，正是食物最多的時候。本文也比較了成鳥和幼鳥的覓食行為，指出幼鳥的效率較差，兼且可供選擇的食物也相對地較少。

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COMPARISON OF FEEDING EFFICIENCY BETWEEN ADULT AND JUVENILE LITTLE EGRET

H.K. Kwok

INTRODUCTION

It has been suggested that juvenile herons and egrets are less efficient foragers than adults (Draulans 1987; Draulans & Van Vessem 1985) and that the average size of prey item taken will increase with age of bird (Siegfried 1971). The aim of this study was to compare the foraging success of juvenile and adult Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta* in gei wais at the WWF Hong Kong Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve.

METHOD

This study was carried out in gei wais 12 and 16/17 at Mai Po from 18-23 June 1991. Birds feeding at these gei wais were more easily observed as hides could be used. Observations were made in the morning, starting 15 minutes after sunrise. Foraging success was measured using the 'Time and Energy Budget' method (Recher & Recher 1972). Each bird was observed for a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 11 minutes. All activities were recorded onto tape by using a cassette recorder. The times or time taken for each activity were recorded later by replaying the tape and timing with a stopwatch. The prey items caught were recorded if they were large enough for identification. The length of the prey item could be estimated by comparing its length with that of the bill of the bird. During the study period, adult egrets could be distinguished by the presence of breeding plumage and bright yellow feet, whilst juveniles lacked breeding plumes and had green or greenish-yellow feet.

RESULTS

Foraging success

Table 1 Foraging efficiency of juvenile birds

Bird No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Total strikes	21	32	107	33	41	11	10
Successful strikes	5	2	1	2	0	6	2
Foraging success (%)	23.8	6.1	0.9	6.1	0.0	54.5	20.0

The mean foraging efficiency (ie. the number of successful strikes as a percentage of the total) of juvenile birds was 14.2%. Only 3 out of the 18 successful strikes made by the 7 birds resulted in the catching of prey large enough for identification. All were shrimps and were about 0.5 x bill length (42 mm). Of the food items eaten, 83.3% were too small to be identified and were much smaller than 0.25 x bill length.

Table 2 Foraging efficiency of adult birds

Bird No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Total strikes	22	23	23	69	10	7	14	6	5
Successful strikes	14	1	4	42	5	5	8	5	2
Foraging success (%)	64.0	4.0	17.4	60.9	50.0	71.0	51.1	83.0	40.0

Prey size

The mean foraging efficiency of adult birds was 48.04%. Out of the 86 successful strikes, 25 resulted in the catching of prey large enough for identification, as follows :

Table 3 Prey items of adults and prey size

Prey item	Length (as proportion of bill length)
Shrimp	0.5, 0.25, 0.5, 0.5, 0.5, 1.0, 1.0, 0.25, 0.5, 1.0 Mean = 0.6; SD = 0.28
Polychaete	0.5, 0.25, 0.25, 0.25, 0.5, 0.25, 1.0, 1.0, 0.5, 0.5, 0.5, 0.25, 0.25, 0.5, 0.5 Mean = 0.47; SD = 0.24

Of the food items eaten 70.9% were too small to be identified.

4 out of the 7 juvenile birds observed tried to pick up inedible objects (e.g. reeds and branches), and handled them for some time. None of the adult birds was observed picking up inedible materials.

The foraging efficiency of juvenile and adult birds differed statistically (Mann-Whitney Test: $z = -2.20$, $P < 0.05$) with adults having a higher foraging efficiency than juveniles.

DISCUSSION

The foraging success of adult egrets was significantly higher than that of juveniles. This fact may be due to adult birds being more experienced than juveniles and thus better able to distinguish prey from non-prey items. Thus, they will not waste time on inedible objects; they may also be more skilled at catching prey.

The studies of Siegfried (1971) and Draulans (1987) suggested that when food density is low, juvenile birds usually caught less food than adults. It is only when food density reaches a certain level that juvenile birds can attain a feeding rate similar to adults. Whether food density in the gei wais is a factor affecting the feeding success of birds of different ages was not determined since food density itself was not measured.

Siegfried (1971) also suggested that the average size of food items consumed by adults is larger than those by juveniles. Adult birds may concentrate more on larger prey because of their greater profitability in terms of energy. However, in this study the sizes of prey items taken by adults and juvenile birds could not be compared as the juvenile only took 3 observable prey items, all of which were shrimps.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express many thanks to Dr. David Dudgeon, David Melville, Llewellyn Young and Michael Lau for their advice and assistance.

本文比較了米埔自然保護區內基圍中的小白鷺成鳥和幼鳥覓食的成功率。成鳥的成功率明顯地高於幼鳥，原因可能是前者經驗豐富。

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NOTES

COMMON TERN SHOWING YELLOW BILL TIP

Martin Hale

On 22 August 1992, while observing Aleutian Terns *Sterna aleutica* in the waters west of Lamma Island, an unusual first summer Common Tern *S. hirundo* was seen and photographed. The extreme tip of the bill was yellow, not unlike that of Sandwich Tern *S. sandvicensis*. The rest of the bill, the legs and the feet were dark, features of the race *S.h. longipennis*. Subsequently, in May 1993, P.R. Kennerley (pers comm.) photographed an adult Common Tern of the race *S.h. tibetana* that also showed a narrow pale tip to the bill.

No reference in the literature can be found to Common Terns of any race or age showing this feature. In addition, K. Sonobe (*in litt.*) has commented that he is unaware of any records or references in Japan, where Common Tern is a common migrant, to the species having a yellow tip to the bill.

These two records indicate that a yellow tip to the bill may possibly be a normal, previously unrecorded, feature of some Common Terns of the races *S.h. tibetana* and *S.h. longipennis*. Further research is required to determine the frequency with which it occurs and whether it exists in both races to the same degree and this note is intended to alert observers to its occurrence.

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VELVET-FRONTED NUTHATCHES IN HONG KONG

Michael R. Leven

On 15 April 1989 D. Scott found a single Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis* in Tai Po Kau. The bird was also seen by J. Scott, R. Baker, A.G. and W.L. Young (W.L. Young *in litt.*). This record was accepted as the first occurrence of the species in Hong Kong but was placed in Category E as relating to a bird which was suspected as having escaped or having been released from captivity (Chalmers and Turnbull 1990).

The next report of a Velvet-fronted Nuthatch also came from Tai Po Kau where, on 3 September 1989, P.R. Kennerley saw one bird and may have heard two others. This observation was followed by regular sightings of the species in Tai Po Kau until 12 January 1990, two birds frequently being seen with four being noted on at least one occasion.

There was only a single sighting from Tai Po Kau in spring 1990, on 11 May, but one was seen on the higher slopes of Aberdeen Country Park at Carolina Gardens, Coombe Road on Hong Kong Island on 4 June and on two or three occasions thereafter. Records from Tai Po Kau resumed on 12 August and suspected juveniles were seen on this date and on 18 November. It was not clear however whether these were recent arrivals or if breeding had occurred locally. Up to three birds were present until the end of the year.

Two birds were seen regularly in Tai Po Kau in the early months of 1991 and the species was recorded as probably breeding during the Tai Po Kau Breeding Birds Survey on 25 May 1991, but no details were published (Turnbull 1992). Subsequent observations included one there on 16 July 1991 (the first midsummer report) and up to five seen in the latter part of the year. There were no reports of juveniles but it is suspected that many observers were no longer submitting records of this species from Tai Po Kau, the presence of small numbers of presumed escape birds then no longer a novelty.

The pattern of records from Tai Po Kau was similar in 1992 with a peak count of six birds on 6 September and 27 November, but again no evidence of breeding was forthcoming. However, there was some evidence that birds were becoming more widespread; single birds were noted at Shing Mun in March, April, September, October and December and a pair were regularly seen in the Coombe Road and Mansfield Road area between February and September. On 20 February the latter were seen removing dead leaves from a hole in a papaya tree but since no more than two birds were seen it must be presumed that breeding, if it took place, was unsuccessful.

Perhaps surprisingly therefore, the first confirmed breeding record in Hong Kong did not occur until 1993 when a family party, including at least two juveniles begging for food, was seen in Tai Po Kau on 5 June (pers. obs.).

The pattern of records suggests that Velvet-fronted Nuthatch is now well established as a resident species in Tai Po Kau, with smaller numbers seen, though not necessarily breeding, elsewhere. It has apparently found a vacant woodland niche and it seems reasonable to conclude that it will be a permanent addition to Hong Kong's breeding avifauna.

The Velvet-fronted Nuthatch has a wide range in Asia, extending from India through most of south east Asia to Sumatra, Borneo and Java (Howard and Moore 1991). In China the race *S.f. frontalis* is stated by Cheng (1987) to occur in western, southern and south-eastern Yunnan, central and southern Guizhou and south-western Guangxi Provinces. The other form listed by Cheng, *S.f. chienfengensis*, endemic to Hainan Island, is now considered to be a form of Yellow-billed Nuthatch *S. solangiae* (King and Liao 1989). Thus the closest area of its published range is approximately 800 km from Hong Kong.

Like most of its congeners the Velvet-fronted Nuthatch appears to be sedentary and is a bird of lowland broadleaf forest. It is replaced by other nuthatch species at higher altitudes and in coniferous woodland in, for example, Thailand, Vietnam and western Malaysia (pers. obs.) and it is not found at the Western Hills, Kunming, Yunnan where three other *Sitta* sp. have been recorded and where sub-zero temperatures are frequent in winter (Stott 1993).

Thus the first and subsequent Hong Kong records were considered likely to refer to escapes since the species is sedentary and was not known to occur in Guangdong Province. While the large number of records of apparently wild birds (none being in poor condition) perhaps gave some cause for debate, a more significant reason for review came when a single bird was recorded at Ding Hu Shan, Guangdong Province on 3 October 1992, approximately 150 km west north west of Hong Kong (R. Lewthwaite *in litt.*).

This bird was present in mature broadleaf forest in a part of the Ding Hu Shan area known for its diversity of lowland forest bird species. Thus, it is suggested that the species may be present in small numbers in Guangdong Province, its requirement for broadleaf forest and its essentially tropical distribution matching other species which have recently spread to Hong Kong such as Black Baza *Aviceda leuphotes* and Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* (Chalmers 1986). However, the location where it was found at Ding Hu Shan is close to a Buddhist temple (and hence possibly a site where birds are released) and the species had not been recorded previously during several surveys of the area during the preceding three years (M.D. Williams pers. comm.).



42 Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis*
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong April 1992

John Holmes

Accordingly, following a review, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch has been placed on Category D of the Hong Kong list, a species which has occurred in an apparently wild state but for which the possibility of escape or release from captivity cannot be satisfactorily excluded. The pattern of records, both in Hong Kong and in mainland China, will continue to be monitored.

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WHITE-BACKED MUNIA FEEDING ON ALGAE

J.E. Burton

At 1000 hrs on 25 April 1992 in Aberdeen Country Park, Hong Kong Island, a party of five White-backed Munias *Lonchura striata* were observed at a range of 12 feet feeding on algae at the shallow edges of a puddle of water formed where a hill stream empties into the main catchment west of Aberdeen upper reservoir.

The Munias were observed to hop in the shallow sides of the puddle and to pick up strands of the algae which were then teased to a thickness

about that of a strand of knitting wool. Standing very erect, the birds ate the algae strands in a way reminiscent of a snake ingesting prey, 'nibbling' along the length of each strand until it broke off and could be swallowed.

One bird consumed three strands equal to its own length of 4½-5 inches and this was by no means its total consumption. After 15 minutes observation the birds were visibly gorged and then bathed in the puddle before flying up to an adjacent bush to preen.

Such algae growths sometimes contain tiny snails but even so it was obvious that the birds were consuming the growth itself rather than extracting prey items. It was also obvious that all five birds had the knack of teasing out and consuming the algae strands. Since Munias are normally seed eaters such feeding behaviour appears to be unusual and may be a local adaption to obtain a necessary diet supplement.

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FEEDING OF BLACK-TAILED HAWFINCH

David S. Melville

On the afternoon of 17 March 1991 I saw a flock of 65 Black-tailed Hawfinches *Coccothraustes migratorius* at Island House, Tai Po. Most of the birds were perched in a large Flame of the Forest *Delonix regia* tree where some were seen to be feeding. The tree was bare of leaves with only a couple of seed pods from the previous season present.

Some of the birds were chewing at places along the twigs and at the tips. A number of twig tips were broken/bitten off and subsequently discarded. When I examined the tree I found that minute green leaf buds, less than 1mm in diameter, were present along the twigs and at the tips. It is assumed that the birds were feeding on these but this could not be confirmed as I was unable to climb to where the birds had been feeding. There was no evidence of insects being present on the broken-off twigs. The 'dead' appearance of the tree in winter may have resulted in birds making exploratory bites and not always distinguishing between 'dead' and live wood.

The birds were also frequently seen bill-wiping. This behaviour is often associated with unpalatable food and prompted me to taste a twig which proved to have a very bitter flavour. The bark of this tree is reputedly of medicinal value in Zambia (Storrs 1979), but I have been unable to find any information on its chemical content.

Three birds were also present in a Stripe Bamboo *Bambusa vulgaris* var. *vittata* (Butt *et al.* 1985), where they were seen to pull off entire leaves which were then mandibulated before being discarded. Sometimes a

bird would hold a leaf at the tip and tear it down the centre before removing it. It was not possible to determine what, if anything, the birds gained from this. When I chewed a leaf it was very dry with a slight 'sweet grass' taste.

I have previously seen Black-tailed Hawfinches feeding in a Californian Cypress *Cyprinus govenia* tree at Island House. The two birds which, judging from their appearance, had recently been released or escaped from captivity were feeding on the green cones, apparently eating the whole cone, although they could have been extracting the seeds only while chewing the rest.

These observations would appear to be worthy of record in view of the paucity of information on the feeding habits of this species. Dement'ev and Gladkov (1970) note only that the nestlings are fed on insects. Caldwell and Caldwell (1931) state that it feeds 'either upon seeds in the trees of gardens and forests, or working among fallen leaves and grasses for its food'. Cheng (1966) records it feeding on plant seeds and insects such as beetles. In Guangdong he recorded them feeding on seeds of Autumn Maple *Bischofia trifoliata*. Trollope (1992) records keeping captive birds on a basic diet of mixed millets, canary mixture, sunflower, greenfood, coarse grade softbill food, soaked seeds, meal worms, house crickets and waxmoth larvae.

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GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF RECORDS

Recording

One of the most important functions of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society is the publication of the Hong Kong Bird Report. The value of this publication depends on members submitting records and all are encouraged to submit records at the end of each year.

The Society provides 152 x 106mm record cards to facilitate analysis and storage and these are available from the Recorder. Completed cards are stored in a species-indexed filing system and members wishing to look at past records are asked to contact the Recorder. It is hoped that the ease with which records can be retrieved will result in interested people analysing migration patterns and population trends and undertaking other studies.

The Society also maintains a collection of reports of birds recorded during members' visits to various parts of Southeast Asia and China to assist others in planning overseas trips.

Rarities

While the birds of Hong Kong are better known than those of many areas of the Far East, new species are continually being added to the Hong Kong List and the status of many other species is uncertain.

Field identification techniques for species in the area still need refining and the Society has a Records Committee to assist the Recorder in the unenviable task of assessing records and ensuring that a high standard of reporting is maintained. A list of species considered by the Committee is given below. The list may seem dauntingly long and includes some apparently unmistakable species such as Oystercatcher, but nevertheless field descriptions of the birds listed are required if the record is to be considered for publication.

Ideally field notes of a rarity should cover the following points:

- a) Date, time and location of sighting.
- b) Power of binoculars/telescope used, distance of bird from the observer, weather and light conditions.
- c) Description of habitat and what other birds, if any, it was associating with.
- d) Angle of view and actions: at rest, in flight, swimming etc. The more varied the conditions the better.
- e) Its general size, shape and structure compared with other more familiar species. Structural features which may be important should be detailed e.g. bill length compared to length of head; relative position of wing tips to uppertail coverts; projection of primary tips beyond closed tertials; length of hind claw etc.

- f) The most detailed description possible of the plumage and bare parts, not just those parts thought to help in identification. This description should be logical and organised. The following sequence is suggested:

- i) Head
- ii) Upperparts
- iii) Wings, including underwing if seen
- iv) Tail, both upper and lower sides
- v) Underparts
- vi) Bare parts (iris, bill, gape if seen, legs and feet)

More experienced observers will expand on features known to be critical e.g. extent and shape of supercilium and wing bars in warblers, pattern of scapular feathers in waders etc. A rough sketch or diagram is helpful.

- g) Any calls, indicating especially the quality of the sound (harsh, rattling, shrill, hoarse, liquid etc.) and comparison with calls of other species.
- h) Notes on previous experience with the species or species with which it may be confused.
- i) Names of other observers present, if any.

If possible try to get someone else to see the bird as two descriptions are better than one. Make sure that you take full field notes on the spot - it is all too easy to imagine field marks after consulting a book!

Even if you do not know what the bird is please send in the description as it may be possible for the Committee to identify it for you. Many species of cage birds have been recorded as escapes in Hong Kong and they may not be included in any of the local books.

The increasing number of field guides on the market often make positive identification appear straightforward, but it must be remembered that there are still many difficult species and groups of birds and it is only by careful, painstaking observation that such species can be identified.

The following list of species (for which written descriptions are required) is based on the *Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong* (Chalmers 1986) plus additions detailed in the annual Hong Kong Bird Reports from 1984/85 onwards. In some cases brief notes added to the record cards describing the salient features, ranges and viewing conditions will suffice. However, full descriptions are required for the rarer or more difficult species, or any new species not yet on the Hong Kong List. In addition, the Recorder may request descriptions of other species under unusual circumstances.

Records submitted without descriptions will not be considered.

The list is subject to revision each year to include new species and delete those for which descriptions are no longer needed because of better defined status or fewer identification problems.

Species for which written descriptions of all sightings must be submitted to the Recorder for consideration by the Records Committee

CATEGORY A

Red-necked Grebe	Greater Crested Tern
Black-necked Grebe	Roseate Tern
Streaked Shearwater	Aleutian Tern
all storm petrels	Bridled Tern
all frigatebirds	Sooty Tern
Black Bittern	Ancient Auk
Japanese Night Heron	Bar-tailed Cuckoo Dove
Glossy Ibis	White-bellied Green Pigeon
Lesser Treaduck	Thick-billed Pigeon
all swans	Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo
all geese	Common Cuckoo
Cotton Teal	all owls except Collared Scops
Ferruginous Duck	Owl and Barred Owlet
Velvet Scoter	Grey Nightjar
Goldeneye	all swiftlets
Crested Honey Buzzard	Collared Kingfisher
Brahminy Kite	all woodpeckers
Hen Harrier	Blue-throated Bee-eater
Pied Harrier	Chinese Pitta
identified accipiters except Crested and	all larks except Oriental Skylark
Chinese Goshawks	Pechora Pipit
Upland Buzzard	Water Pipit
Mountain Hawk Eagle	Citrine Wagtail
White-legged Falconet	White Wagtail (all races other than
Amur Falcon	<i>leucopsis</i> and <i>ocularis</i>)
Merlin	Rosy Minivet
Saker Falcon	Brown Dipper
all button quails	Wren
Water Rail	Japanese Robin
all crakes except Ruddy	Pied Wheatear
Purple Gallinule	White-capped Redstart
Common Crane	White-throated Rock Thrush
Oystercatcher	Chestnut-breasted Rock Thrush
Ringed Plover	Slaty-backed Forktail
Oriental Plover	Pale-footed Bush Warbler
Little Stint	Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler
Pectoral Sandpiper	Brown Bush Warbler
Jack Snipe	Bright-capped Cisticola
Solitary Snipe	Styan's Grasshopper Warbler
Long-billed Dowitcher	Blunt-winged Warbler
Lesser Yellowlegs	Paddyfield Warbler
all skuas	Blyth's Reed Warbler
Great Black-headed Gull	Thick-billed Warbler
Relict Gull	Chestnut-crowned Warbler
Slender-billed Gull	Fulvous-faced Flycatcher Warbler
Common Gull	Two-barred Greenish Warbler
Slaty-backed Gull	Yellow-browed Warbler
Glaucous-winged Gull	(race <i>humei</i>)
Glaucous Gull	Radde's Warbler
Kittiwake	Chiffchaff

Fukien Niltava
Sooty Flycatcher
Striated Yuhina
Gould's Sunbird
Plain Flowerpecker
Tiger Shrike
Bull-headed Shrike
Chinese Great Grey Shrike
Daurian Jackdaw
Carriion Crow
Chestnut-cheeked Starling
Rosy Starling
Brambling
Japanese Grosbeak
Yellow-throated Bunting
Yellow-browed Bunting
Rustic Bunting
Reed Bunting
Pallas's Reed Bunting
Japanese Reed Bunting

CATEGORY B

Ring-necked Pheasant
Pygmy Wren Babbler

CATEGORY C

none

CATEGORY D

Emerald Cuckoo
Blue-winged Pitta
Singing Bushlark
Greater Cuckoo Shrike
Brown-breasted Bulbul
Japanese Waxwing
Bohemian Waxwing
Small Niltava
Pale Blue Flycatcher
Rufous-capped Babbler
Grey-headed Parrotbill
Grey-cheeked Fulvetta
Ruddy Sparrow
Burmese Shrike
Pallas's Rosefinch
Hawfinch
Rock Bunting
Meadow Bunting
Grey-necked Bunting

CATEGORY E

all new species

CATEGORY F

all