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Report 1999 & 2000

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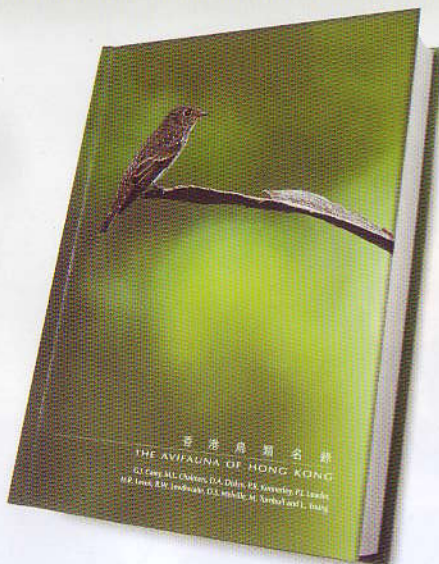


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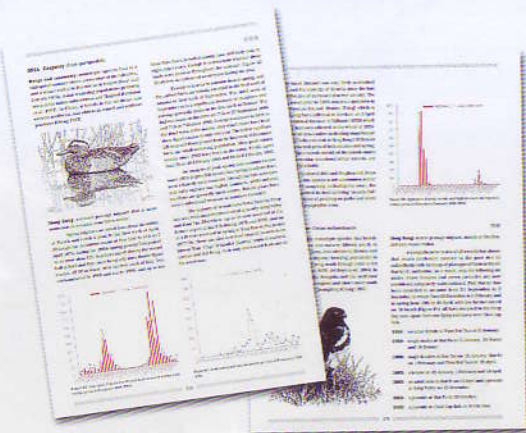


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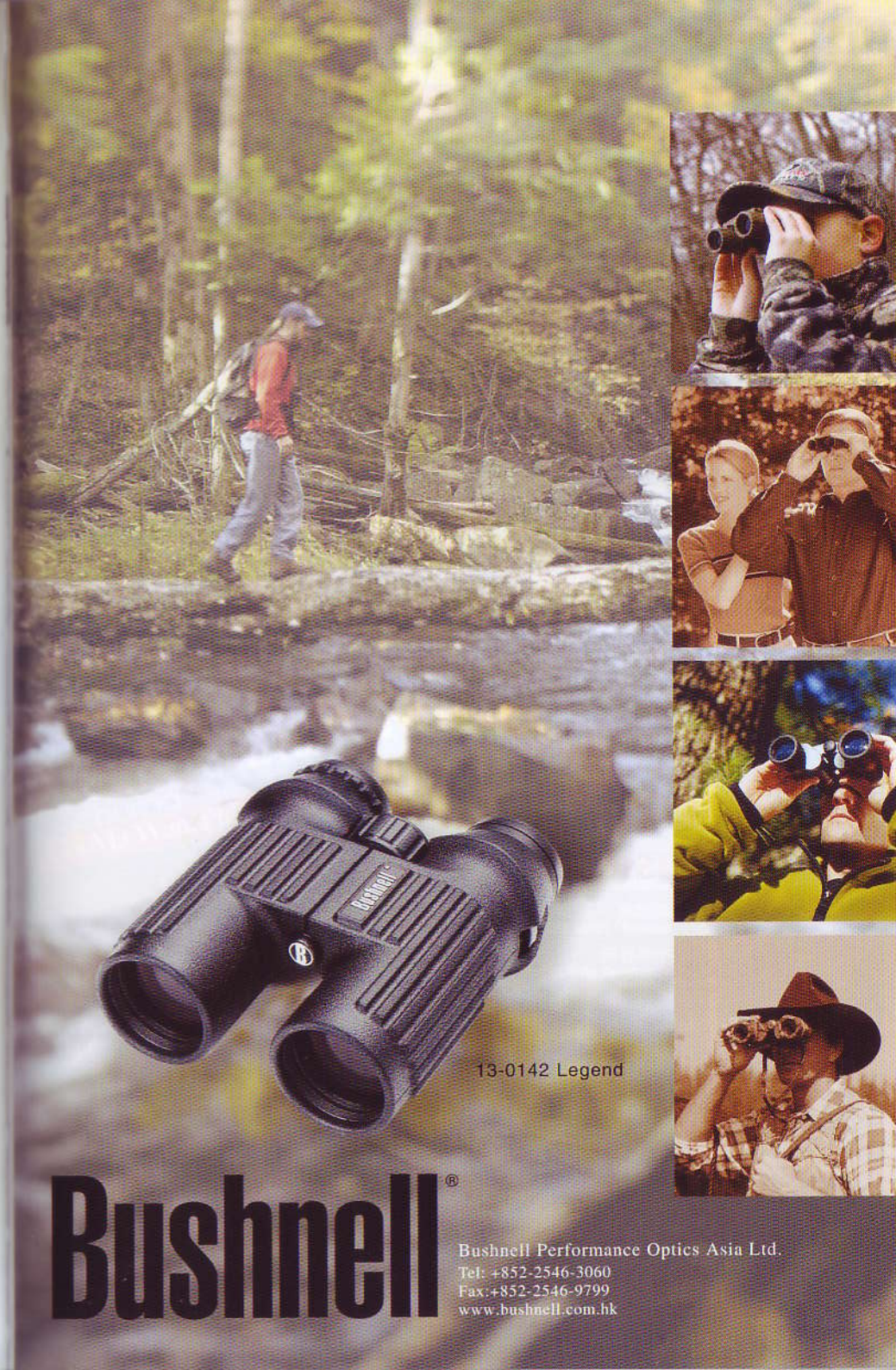


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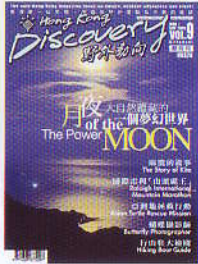
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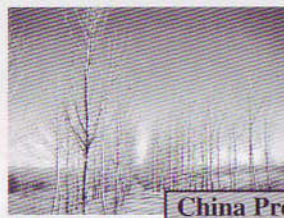
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Report 1999 & 2000

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EDITORS' PREFACE

This report covers the two years 1999 and 2000. As a result, some of the observations presented here are now five years old, representing a serious and deeply regrettable delay in their publication. As mentioned in the Editors' Preface to the 1998 report, at the origin of this delay lie the considerable efforts which, especially during the period from 1999 to 2001, went in to the publication of *The Avifauna of Hong Kong*. When the 1998 report, which should have been prepared in 1999, finally appeared in the autumn of 2002, some of the observations it contained were almost five years old, and even the most recent were almost four years old. Since the most recent observations covered here are just over three years old, it can be seen that the delay has been at least slightly reduced. However, unlike at the time of the publication of the 1998 report, work on the next report is already quite well underway. This will again be a two-year one, for 2001-2002, with a target publication date of June 2005. This means that we will then be much closer to getting back on schedule. Moreover, we are determined to produce a joint report for 2003-2004 by early 2006, meaning that report production should by that stage be fully on schedule. It is assumed at this stage that publication of annual, as opposed to biannual, reports will then resume.

Breakdown in regular publication of the Report may be one reason why observers appear not to be submitting records promptly, or indeed at all. In the last few years, it is quite clear that the number of people getting out into the field in Hong Kong has actually grown; however, they do not seem to be getting into the routine of submitting records. Another aspect of this problem is that, as mentioned in the Records Committee report, perhaps as many as 40% of observations reported by telephone to the Society's English-language 'Birdline' service during 1999 and 2000 appear not to have been submitted, and readers who compare the 'Recent Reports' that appeared in the Bulletins for those years with either the Monthly Summaries or the Systematic List will note considerable discrepancies, again due mainly to non-submission. It is perhaps appropriate to emphasise here that, at present, telephone reporting of bird records is not sufficient to place observations on record, as the Society does not have sufficient manpower to convert such reports to written records. Further, records reported to Birdline typically constitute only the highlights of a day's birdwatching, and the production of the Systematic List requires more than just the highlights. The Society and the Records Committee are investigating alternative ways for observers to submit records, but in the meantime we continue to urge observers to submit records via Excel file, by 31 January of the following year. Ultimately data inputting, which even after a highly productive day's birding takes little more than ten minutes at the most, must be the responsibility of the individual observer. On a more positive note it should also be emphasised that birdwatchers can make no greater contribution to the conservation of birds and their habitats than through the submission of their observations. These observations may seem insignificant in

themselves but, when combined with those of others and when viewed over time, they provide in many cases the basis for our knowledge, at a local level, of the migration patterns, population distributions and habitat needs, and status changes of our approximately 350 regularly occurring bird species.

In addition to the Systematic List and other regular features, this report contains papers dealing with the addition of a further five species to Category A of the Hong Kong List, as well as, for the first time, two dealing with species currently assigned to Category E. In addition to this, two papers deal with perhaps our most magnificent resident raptor, the White-bellied Sea Eagle *Hieraaetus leucogaster*, three relate to waterbirds and one reports on the initial results from what is intended to be a long-term survey of bird populations at Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden. Hopefully, there will be something of interest for a range of readers.

In addition to all other report contributors, we would particularly like to thank Geoff Carey, who despite having relinquished the editorship of this publication, continues to make a significant contribution to ensuring its quality. We would also like to acknowledge the special contribution of G.J. Carey, D.P. Carthy, W.K. Cheng, C.S. Cheung, H.F. Cheung, R. C. Corlett, K.L. Chow, T.D. Dahmer, R. Griffiths, E.M.S. Kilburn, H.K. Kwok, P.J. Leader, S.Y. Lee, W.H. Lee, R.W. Lewthwaite, M.R. Leven, Y.N. Ma, R. Stott, S.T. Tsim, M. Williams, L.C. Wong, T. Woodward, K.Y. Liu, L. Young and Y.T. Yu. Finally, Mike Turnbull would like to thank his family for the understanding they have shown during the preparation of this Report.

Mike Turnbull and Carrie K.W. Ma, Editors.

HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1999 & 2000

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RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT 1999 AND 2000

G.J. Carey

In order to move towards bringing production of our annual Bird Report back up to date, we have produced a combined report for 1999 and 2000.

During 1999 the number of species recorded in Categories A to D (see Carey *et al.* 2001 for justifications of these new categories) was 332. During 2000 the number was 317. These figures compare with between 342 and 370 for the years 1993-98. Particularly with regard to the very low figure for 2000, while it may be that meteorological factors, amongst others, did indeed result in fewer migrant species occurring, it also seems likely that failure to submit significant records may have played a part. Readers will notice from the list of those who have submitted records a decline in the number for these two years compared with most of the 1990s. This has emerged as a worrying trend for bird recording in Hong Kong, with almost 40% of reports received by the Society's English 'Birdline' telephone services and subsequently published in the 'Recent Reports' section of the Bulletin, not being formally submitted. In fact for 1999 those reports include reference to a further 21 species, and for 2000 to a further 22 species. A small number of these species have been submitted and are being dealt with (see below), but the majority were not. While in some cases observers may have reconsidered their identification and not been completely satisfied with it, it is regrettable that more were not submitted.

With new additions to the Hong Kong List (listed below), the Hong Kong List of Categories A-D now numbers 453. In addition to those in 1999 and 2000, a first record was received and accepted for 1998 (the only one of the year).

Category A
1998

Lesser Shortwing *Brachypteryx leucophrys*: two birds trapped at KARC on 14 November.

1999

Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis*: a juvenile, possibly male, was seen at Mai Po NR on 24 October.

Parasitic Jaeger *Stercorarius parasiticus*: at least 18 birds on 1 and 2 May from Cape D'Aguiar during the close approach of Typhoon Leo.

Drongo Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris*: One was seen at Po Toi on 9 May.

2000

Eurasian Oystercatcher *Himantopus ostralegus*: one was present in Deep Bay on 9 and 10 December.

Pygmy Wren-babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla*: one first heard in Tai Po Kau on 25 February was subsequently seen on 13 and 15 March

Category E

1999

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*: a male on 11 July at Mai Po NR.

Ultramarine Flycatcher *Ficedula superciliaris*: a first-winter male was present at Kadoorie FBG on at least 16 and 17 January.

Reports on each of these finds are included in this report, with the exception of the Amur Falcon, for which a claim pre-dating the 1999 observation is still under consideration by the Committee.

Claims during 1999 and 2000 for the first records of Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*, Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* and Mountain Tailorbird *Orthotomus cuculatus* are at an advanced stage in the process of verification and categorisation, but publication of the outcome of this process will have to be held over to the next report. Readers should note that the use of the spelling '*cucullatus*' for the specific name of the latter species — used for example in Cheng (1987), and once in Viney *et al.* (1994) — has been pointed out as being in error by Inskipp *et al.* 1996.

There were several other notable records during the two years. In 1999 there occurred Hong Kong's third records of Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* and Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus*, fourth records of Pomarine Jaeger *Stercorarius pomarinus* and Sooty Tern *Sterna fuscata* and fifth record of Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush *Monticola rufiventris*. In 2000 there occurred the second record of Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*, the third record of Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauuricus*, and the third and fourth records of Glaucous-winged Gull *Larus glaucescens*.

On two further points of scientific nomenclature, readers should note that the spelling of the scientific name of Small Niltava *Niltava macgrigoriae* used in the 'List of Species Recorded in Hong Kong' in Carey *et al.* (2001:40) was in error, and that in accordance with the latest edition of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (David and Gosselin 2002), the scientific name of Red Phalarope is changed to *Phalaropus fulicarius*.

Records Committee membership remained unchanged during the two years, comprising Geoff Carey (Chairman), Ho-fai Cheung, Paul Leader, Mike Leven and Richard Lewthwaite.

The Systematic List for the two years was compiled by Mike Turnbull, Geoff Carey, Richard Lewthwaite, Yat-tung Yu and Paul Leader. Thanks are due to the following observers who submitted records for inclusion in this report:

J. Allcock, R. Barretto, J. Bell, D. Bradshaw, G.J. Carey, D. Carthy, M.L. Chalmers, H.F. Cheung, L. Cheung, J. Chim, J.S.R. Edge, M. Hale, J. and J. Holmes, J.R. King, P.J. Leader, M.R. Leven, R.W. Lewthwaite, D.S. Melville, K. Ng, D. Phillippe, V.B. Picken, S.H. So, G. Tedbury, W. Tsui, M. Turnbull, M.D. Williams, C.Y. Wong, H.K. Ying, L. Young and Y.T. Yu.

Thanks are also due to Mike Turnbull, who assisted in the preparation of this report, providing information on the number of species which occurred in 1999 and 2000, on the non-submission rate of observations appearing in "Recent Reports", and on certain of the items relating to nomenclature.

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序

這是個橫跨一九九九至二〇〇〇年度的年報。部份年報內刊載的記錄是大概是五年前的，對年報出版的延誤，我們謹此致歉。我們於一九九八年年報內曾提到這延誤的原因是於一九九九至二〇〇〇年製作《香港鳥類名錄》時，動員了大部份人手。原本要於一九九九年刊登的一九九八年的年報，最終要在二〇〇二年夏天才能出版，很多記錄已經積存了四、五年。這本報告積存的紀錄大約是三年左右，情況已經開始改善。與一九九八年年報不同，下期年報已經開始製作，這個兩年合訂版(二〇〇一至二〇〇二)將於二〇〇五年六月出版，並更接近原有進度。此外，我們亦計劃於二〇〇六年出版二〇〇三至二〇〇四年年報，到時該報告將會回復出版進度，以後的報告亦將由雙年改回單年出版。

年報脫期，其中原因是觀察者不準時提交紀錄。近年來，愈來愈多人跑到野外，不過似乎很多都沒有提交紀錄。紀錄委員會還提到另一原因，就是於一九九九至二〇〇〇年間，大約四成使用英文觀鳥熱線的人都沒有正式提交紀錄。此外，各位可有發現本會英文會員通訊內容，與本報告的每月簡報和分類總覽內容有很大差距，這亦是由於不提交紀錄而造成的。我們要強調，現時以電話方式報告觀鳥，內容並不詳盡，加上本會沒有足夠人手去將這些資料收集、並編寫成文字紀錄，還有電話訊息一般都是當日觀鳥見到的特別鳥種，這些資料是不足夠成為分類總覽的內容。本會及紀錄委員會現正尋求鼓勵觀察者提供資料的方法，我們期望各會員能繼續以Excel試算表的方式，於每年1月31日前提交去年的觀鳥紀錄。我們相信每次觀鳥後，花上大概10分鐘時間記錄觀察資料，是每個會員的義務。從正面看，觀察者提交紀錄，事實上已為本地的鳥類和生境保育作出貢獻。不要以為這些紀錄看來不明顯，當資料集腋成裘，就可成為本地常見350種鳥類遷徙、種群、繁殖以及狀況的資料庫。

除了分類總覽以外，本報告亦包含了本地新增五種A類鳥種，以及首次將E類鳥種歸類的報告。此外，還有兩篇本地大型猛禽白腹海鷗的報告、三篇有關水鳥、以及一篇關於嘉道理農場暨植物園長期鳥類調查的初步報告。我們相信這迎合廣大讀者的需要。

除了各位資料提供者外，我們感謝前編輯 Geoff Carey 繼續提供支援，維持報告的質素。我們感謝 G.J. Carey、D.P. Carthy、W.K. Cheng、張智新、張浩輝、高力行、周家禮、T.D. Dahmer、R. Griffiths、吳敏、郭漢佳、P.J. Leader、李成業、利偉雄、R.W. Lewthwaite、M.R. Leven、馬衍年、R. Stott、詹肇泰、M. Williams、黃倫昌、T. Woodward、廖家業、楊路年、余日東。最後 Mike Turnbull 要感謝家人於編輯報告的過程中，給予的支持和理解。

年報編輯

Mike Turnbull、馬嘉慧

一九九九及二〇〇〇年香港鳥類報告

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一九九九及二〇〇〇年紀錄委員會報告

G.J. Carey

為了回復鳥類的年報出版時間，我們將一九九九年及二〇〇〇年報告結合一起出版。

一九九九年 A 類至 D 類的鳥種數目為 332 種(Carey 2001)，二〇〇〇年為 317 種。比較一九九三至一九九八年的鳥種數目，是間介乎 342 及 370 之間，二〇〇〇年的紀錄比較少，其中可能包含很多因素，以致較少遷徙鳥種出沒，還有這年明顯較少人提交紀錄。讀者或者會發現，近兩年提交的紀錄亦較九十年代的少。這情況漸漸令人憂慮，本會的英文觀鳥熱線以及本會會員通訊的鳥類紀錄中，有四成是沒有正式提交的：一九九九年有 21 種，二〇〇〇年有 22 種。其中只有很少數是有正式提交，也許是觀察後需重新考慮所觀察得的鳥種時，不感滿意。對我們來說，這是很可惜的。

自從新增香港鳥種以後（見以下列名字），香港現時 A 類至 D 類鳥種數字為 453 種。除了一九九九年和二〇〇〇年外，一九九八年還有一種新增鳥種。

A 類

一九九八年

白喉短翅鵐 *Brachypteryx leucophrys*: 11 月 14 日於嘉道理農業研究所網捕兩隻。

一九九九年

亞穆爾隼 *Falco amurensis*: 10 月 24 日在米埔自然護理區錄得雄性幼鳥一隻。

短尾賊鷗 *Stercorarius parasiticus*: 5 月 1 和 2 日颱風里奧襲港期間，在鶴嘴錄得至少 18 隻。

烏鶇 *Sumiculus lugubris*: 5 月 9 日於蒲台錄得 3 隻。

二〇〇〇年

蠟鵒 *Himantopus ostralegus*: 12 月 9 和 10 日在尖鼻嘴錄得一隻。

小鷓鴣 *Pnoepyga pusilla*: 3 月 13 和 15 日，在大埔溜聽到一隻。

E 類

一九九九年

赤嘴潛鴨 *Netta rufina*: 7 月 11 日於米埔錄得一隻。

白眉藍姬鵲 *Ficedula superciliaris*: 1 月 16 和 17 日，在嘉道理農場暨植物園錄得一隻首年越冬的雄鳥。

紀錄委員會進一步確認一九九九年的亞穆爾隼的紀錄，其餘以上每種鳥種都於本年報告內詳細報告。

一九九九年和二〇〇〇年香港首次錄得灰斑鳩 *Streptopelia decaocto*、水鵲 *Anthus spinoletta* 和栗頭鏟葉鶯 *Orthotomus cucullatus*，現時正於在確定和分類階段，有關結果將於下期年報刊登。讀者請留意栗頭鏟葉鶯的學名“*cucullatus*”有誤，這曾在一些參考書例如鄭作新(1987)、費嘉倫等(1994)出現，這可能均來自 Inskipp *et al.*(1996)。

過去兩年有一些特別的記錄，一九九九年香港第三次錄得褐鵞鳥 *Sula leucogaster* 和長嘴鴿 *Charadrius placidus*、第四次錄得中賊鷗 *Stercorarius pomarinus* 和烏燕鷗 *Sterna fuscata*、第五次錄得栗腹磯鴨 *Monticola rufiventris*。二〇〇〇年第二次錄得短耳鴉 *Asio flammeus*、第三次錄得達烏里寒鴉 *Corvus dauuricus*，第三和第四次錄得灰翅鷗 *Larus glaucescens*。

至於學名命名方面，請各位留意在 Carey *et al.*(2001:40) “List of Species Recorded in Hong Kong” 內的小仙鷓 *Niltava macgrigoriae* 學名有誤。紅頸瓣蹼鷗的學名亦更改為 *Phalaropus fulicarius*，這方便與 International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (David and Gosselin 2002) 對照。

過去兩年，紀錄委員會的名單像以往一樣，分別為 Geoff Carey (主席)、張浩輝、Paul Leader、Mike Leven 和 Richard Lewthwaite。

本年報的分類總覽由Mike Turnbull、G.J. Carey、R. Lewthwaite、余日東和Paul Leader一起編寫。感謝各觀察者提供資料，讓本報告得以完成：

I. Allcock、R. Barretto、J. Bell、D. Bradshaw、G.J. Carey、D. Carthy、M. L. Chalmers、張浩輝、張勇、詹玉明、J.S.R. Edge、M. Hale、孔思義、黃亞萍、J.R. King、P.J. Leader、M.R. Leven、R.W. Lewthwaite、D.S. Melville、伍耀成、D. Phillippe、V.B. Picken、蘇紹熙、G. Tedbury、徐智健、M. Turnbull、M.D. Williams、黃振宇、英克勤、楊路年和余日東。

特別感謝Mike Turnbull協助準備這個報告、提供一九九九和二〇〇〇年的鳥種數量和「鳥類報告」內未提交鳥種資料、以及有關分類學名的資料。

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MONTHLY SUMMARIES FOR 1999 AND 2000

Michael Turnbull (with weather reports supplied by C.Y. Lam)

(These summaries are based entirely on the data included in the Systematic List, and are merely intended to give a chronologically ordered impression of ornithological events in the years in question, allowing for the identification of the possible ways in which changes in season and particular weather events may have affected birds and their movements. In the case of any discrepancies, it should be assumed that the information given in the Systematic List is correct.)

1999

January 1999 was warmer than normal. The only major surge of the winter monsoon during the month brought northerlies on 11th and caused the temperature to drop to 10.3 degrees, the lowest of the month, on 12th. A further replenishment of the monsoon from the north occurred soon after on 15th, and there was a spell of fresh easterlies on 26th.

A Ruddy-breasted Crake, perhaps the bird that had been present there in December 1998, was seen at Long Valley on 3rd; it was to be reported from that location up to 3 March. On 5th a male Greater Scaup was discovered at Tsim Bei Tsui. Also during the first few days of the year there were continued reports of Chestnut Bulbuls on Hong Kong Island. Ahead of the temperature drop that began on 11th, a Northern Lapwing was reported at Mai Po on 8th; it was seen again there on 18th. On 11th itself a male Baer's Pochard was first seen at Mai Po, and the next day a female was also present. There were also some indications of an influx of Red-flanked Bluetails around this date. However, at this time and indeed throughout the late part of the winter of 1998/99, which, as the weather reports indicate, was exceptionally warm, numbers of wintering chats did not appear high, though there were felt to be quite good numbers of some of the larger thrushes, such as Scaly, Grey-backed and, especially, Pale. The double monsoon surge of 11th and 15th may certainly have been responsible for Hong Kong's fifth record of Chestnut-bellied Rock-thrush, a pair found at Kadoorie Farm on 16th; whether or not it was responsible in any way for the appearance of Hong Kong's first Ultramarine Flycatcher on the same day is a more intriguing question, but the species has been placed in Category E. On 22nd a Common Starling was seen at Kam Tin, and on 23rd Hong Kong's second Small Niltava was seen at Ho Chung woods; however, this species continues to be assigned to Category E. Also on 23rd a male hybrid Eurasian/American Wigeon was found at Mai Po. On 24th the wintering flock of Dalmatian Pelicans peaked at 22, and the waterbird count produced a record total of 5411 Common Teal in the Deep Bay area. On 26th three Baer's Pochards were present at Tsim Bei Tsui; there were also three at Mai Po the next day, but at least four different birds were involved. On 30th the highest count of Black-faced Spoonbills for the 1998-1999 midwinter period (130) was made, and Crested Kingfishers were seen at both Lai Chi Wo and Plover Cove.

February 1999 was the third warmest on record. It was fine most of the time. A cold front arrived on 2nd, bringing northerlies which took the temperature down to 12.2 degrees, the lowest of the month, on 4th. A surge of the winter monsoon in the form of easterlies arrived on 12th. Two more cold fronts arrived on 18th and 27th.

The cooler weather at the beginning of the month may have been responsible for the presence of a flock of 20 Striated Yuhinas on Tai Po Kau on 6th. The four Ferruginous Ducks, which had been present since 3 December 1998, were last reported from Pond 20 at Mai Po on 20th, when a Baer's Pochard was again reported at the same location. On 21st a record count of Tufted Ducks (1140) was made during the waterbird count, while the 22nd also produced a new high midwinter count of Black-winged Stilts for Hong Kong, when 348 were counted at Wo Shang Wai. Two Baer's Pochards were again seen at Mai Po on the same date and this increased to three again on 28th. In the meantime, on 23rd a Ruddy-breasted Crake had been found at Mai Po. The Bull-headed Shrike, which had been present in the orchard at Tai Po Kau for its second successive winter, was last reported on 27th; a Barn Owl (Category E) was found at Long Valley on the same date.

March 1999 was again very warm, ranked the sixth warmest on record. Two cold fronts crossed the coast in quick succession on 8th and 10th. The most significant cold front of the month arrived on 20th. It cleared the fog which had been present and brought the temperature down to 12.7 degrees on 22nd. Another cold front arrived on 27th and brought strong easterlies the following day.

An unidentified warbler *Seicercus* was seen at Tai Po Kau on 4th, but as usual it was an increase in the diversity of gulls present in Deep Bay which captured attention during this month; a first-winter Mew Gull was present on 8th and 9th, two different Brown-headed Gulls were seen on 20th, another first-winter Mew Gull put in an appearance on 21st and a second winter Glaucous Gull was noted on 22nd. Counts of Yellow-legged Gulls had peaked at eight on 11th, and three or four Slaty-backed Gulls were present daily between 10th and 18th. Red-breasted Mergansers have been scarce in Hong Kong in recent years, but on 21st four were off the Mai Po boardwalk and another was reported from Ma Tso Lung, a rather unusual location. Evidence that late March sees a peak in spring passage of Great Bitterns in Hong Kong again came on 25th, when 14, a new high count, were noted at Mai Po at dusk. On 29th, as wader migration gathered momentum, the first Nordmann's Greenshank of the spring was seen.

April 1999 was the third warmest on record. The dying winter monsoon exerted itself in three spells of strong easterlies on 3rd, 7th (marginal) and 14th. Troughs of low pressure brought thunderstorms on 12th and 19th. As the unusually early Typhoon Leo approached on 29th and 30th, it brought rain and strong northeasterly winds and the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 was hoisted

on 30th, the first time it has ever been raised in April.

On 1st a female Baikal Teal was seen at Mai Po; it remained until 11th. Single male and female Oriental Plovers were at Chek Lap Kok on 2nd, when the earliest ever Grey-tailed Tattler was seen at Mai Po. On 3rd four Grey-faced Buzzards flew north over Mai Po, and another was seen there on 4th, when the highest count of Nordmann's Greenshanks of the spring (18) was made and the first Spoon-billed Sandpiper of the spring was seen. Also on 4th the first of five reports during the month of Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoos singing at Tai Po Kau was received; one was also heard at Shing Mun on 17th. Little Stints were seen at Mai Po on 8th and 26th, and other scarce waders recorded there during the month were an Oriental Plover on 11th, and a Little Curlew on 17th. A Swinhoe's Egret was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 5th and 8th, and what was presumed to be a different bird was seen there on 16th. The first of just four Japanese Yellow Buntings of a very weak spring passage was seen at Mai Po on 8th, and the only Eastern Crowned Warbler of the spring was seen at Tung Ping Chau on 10th. Observers present at Mai Po on 12th were fortunate, since the only Ferruginous and Narcissus Flycatchers (two) of the year were present, together with the only Japanese Paradise Flycatcher seen during the spring. On 14th the only report of Grey-capped Greenfinch during the year was received from Fo Tan, while on 17th four Blue-tailed Bee-eaters were seen at Mai Po; these were the first of up to 48 recorded during the following three-week period, in flocks of up to 14. On 15th a male Citrine Wagtail was found at Long Valley, where the only Chestnut-eared Bunting of the spring was found on 17th. At Tai Mo Shan a Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler was heard in song, also on 17th; this was the latest ever by ten days and occurred in what would appear to be suitable breeding habitat. Another warbler heard in song at this time, albeit certainly well-outside its known breeding range, was a Styan's Grasshopper Warbler at Mai Po on 19th; this was in fact the only record of the year. On 20th, the first Black Bazas of the year (11) were seen over Tai Po Kau, and singles of both species of Needletail were seen at Kadoorie FBG. On 22nd, what was amazingly the only Blue-and-White Flycatcher reported during the entire year, a female, was seen at Mai Po. On 29th a male Watercock, which was to remain at Mai Po until 3 May, throughout the passage of Typhoon Leo, was found, and the final two days of the month also saw counts of in excess of 50 Whiskered Terns off Cheung Chau on both days, as well as the passage of 195 Chinese Goshawks at Green Island on 30th; this was to prove to be approximately 80% of the total spring passage of this species. Also, at Green Island was seen the very first of what was to turn out to be an unprecedented fall of at least 146 Pechora Pipits in the six-day period to 5 May, as well as seven Grey-streaked Flycatchers.

May 1999 was cooler than normal. It was also drier than normal despite the fact that there were four periods of wet weather during the month, the first two of which clearly impacted on bird migration in the region. Typhoon Leo brought two days of strong northerly winds, reaching gale force over offshore waters, on

1st and 2nd. A spell of fresh northeast monsoon between 6th and 8th then brought further rainy and unseasonably cool weather. Two troughs of low pressure crossed the coast, one on 18th and one on 27th. Both brought several further days of cool, rainy weather.

The month started in absolutely spectacular fashion with the passage of Typhoon Leo, which resulted in a wide range of seabirds and other species being noted at Cape D'Aguilar and other exposed locations on 1st and 2nd. Given the timing of the typhoon it was predictable that jaegers would be involved. Amongst these, at least 50 Long-tailed Jaegers were seen at Cape D'Aguilar on 1st, as well as at least 35 on 2nd. Hong Kong's first Parasitic Jaegers (two) were seen on 1st, with at least a further 16 on 2nd, and 14 Pomarine Jaegers were seen on 2nd; this was just the fourth record of Pomarine Jaeger in Hong Kong. Jaeger migrations through the South China Sea presumably accompany those of terns; the numbers of various species of the latter noted were in fact quite exceptional, suggesting that birds that would otherwise have been migrating on a very wide front indeed were forced close inshore; a count of 742 Common Terns at Cape D'Aguilar on 1st easily surpassed the previous highest spring and autumn counts, but was itself exceeded by a factor of almost three the following day, when 2100 passed. High counts of Aleutian Terns were also made; spring counts had never previously exceeded 23, so counts at Cape D'Aguilar of 618 on 1st and 865 on 2nd suggest that in normal conditions most passage probably occurs well to the east of Hong Kong. Other new high counts were of Whiskered Tern (93 on 1st), and Little Tern (400 on 2nd), while seven Bridled Terns on 1st were the earliest ever in Hong Kong. Other interesting non-passerine records (all at Cape D'Aguilar, unless otherwise indicated) were of a Brown Booby (on 2nd: the third for Hong Kong), a small all-dark shearwater (on 2nd), three Swinhoe's Egrets (on 1st one was on Cheung Chau and two at Tai Tam), a Black-winged Kite (heading north over Cheung Chau on 1st), 1194 Red-necked Phalaropes (on 1st), a Silver-backed Needletail (on 1st), and 23 White-throated Needletails (on 2nd), with a further 20 at Mt. Austin on 4th. Passerines included Hong Kong's latest ever Mugimaki Flycatcher at Cheung Chau on 2nd. Also, in addition to the Pechora Pipit influx (which included a flock of 103 going to roost at Mai Po on 3rd), huge numbers of Yellow Wagtails (overwhelmingly of the race *simillima* but with some *taivana* present) were noted: about 3000 over Cheung Chau on 1st, and 3840, a new high count, going to roost at Mai Po on 4th. There was also a Citrine Wagtail at Cheung Chau on 1st. Not perhaps related to the typhoon, a Little Stint was seen at Mai Po on 1st and 3rd, with the latter date producing the highest count of Asian Dowitchers of the spring (202). A Ruddy-breasted Crake at Long Valley on 5th was the latest ever and the first ever recorded in May. As noted above Typhoon Leo had hardly abated before further unsettled weather arrived as a result of late winter monsoon surges on 6th and 8th. The resultant cool, wet weather produced record counts of Brown Shrikes (53 at Clear Water Bay on 18th and 61 at Po Toi the following day) and Oriental Cuckoos (five on Po Toi on 9th), as well as Hong Kong's first Drongo Cuckoo, also at Po Toi on 9th. Arctic Warblers and, in particular, Grey-streaked

Flycatchers were also seen in numbers in the sustained wet weather at this time; a record count of 50 Grey-streaked Flycatchers was made at Mai Po on 8th. During a brief spell of less inclement weather on 15th and 16th, a Black Bittern, a rather late Swinhoe's Egret and a Little Curlew were all seen at Mai Po, while on 15th a Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler was seen at Yung Shue O.

June 1999 was the warmest on record since 1884 while rainfall was less than half of normal. Typhoon Maggie crossed Hong Kong in the early hours of 7th, lashing the territory with storm force winds. In the remaining part of the month, the southwesterly monsoon prevailed, apart from a brief interlude on 20th after a trough of low pressure crossed Hong Kong.

In a very quiet month, at Mai Po a Pheasant-tailed Jacana was seen on 10th and one of only two Watercocks seen during the year (a female) was seen on 16th, while towards the end of the month four overwintering Black-tailed Godwits were regularly seen.

July 1999 was the sixth warmest on record. It was also the cloudiest July since 1884. The only notable event of the month was the close approach of an unnamed tropical storm as it moved north-eastwards, towards Shantou. It was closest during the morning of 20th, when it was about 120 km southeast of Hong Kong.

A count of 120 Roseate Terns at Kung Chau on 9th was one of the highest counts ever made in Hong Kong. On 11th a Red-crested Pochard at Mai Po was a first record for Hong Kong, but has been placed in Category E due to doubts over the likelihood of a wild non-juvenile turning up on such a date. The presence of possibly two Black Bazas at Sha Lo Tung on 12th and 13th indicated possible breeding in the area. By 15th the first Black-winged Stilt, Whimbrel and Common Redshank of the autumn passage were present at Mai Po. At Mai Po by 29th over 1000 returning shorebirds were already present, for the greater part Common Redshank (635); this turned out to be the peak count for the entire autumn passage period. Also included were the first Greater Sand Plover, Eurasian Curlew, Asian Dowitcher and Wood Sandpiper of the season. Regular reports of both Rufous-capped Babbler and Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler at Tai Po Kau during this month suggested that the colonisation of that location by both species, from their existing populations in Shing Mun, had commenced.

August 1999 saw the second highest rainfall on record. A minor low-pressure system drifted from the sea east of Hainan to the Taiwan Strait between 4th and 6th. However, most of the rain fell as Typhoon Sam crossed Hong Kong on 22nd and during the three days that followed.

Greater Sand Plover numbers had their seasonal peak of 350 at Mai Po on 3rd; this was the highest ever autumn count and occurred three weeks earlier than

the usual peak, suggesting that the low pressure area referred to above might have had some bearing on bird movement at this time. Also, the first Lesser Sand Plover of the passage period was seen on that date. On 4th came the first of two reports of Cinnamon Bittern at Mai Po during the month; the other was on 24th. On 8th three Black Bazas were seen at Nam Chung and the first Pacific Golden Plover, Marsh Sandpiper and Broad-billed Sandpiper were seen at Mai Po. The first Great Knot was seen there on 15th, when a Eurasian Hoopoe was also present. On 22nd the passage of Typhoon Sam resulted in 20 Bridled Terns coming in close at Cape D'Aguiar, though very little else of note was seen. In fact, 500-600 Bridled Terns still were present at the breeding site at Shek Ngau Chau on 28th. Also on 28th Asian Dowitcher numbers hit their seasonal peak of 24, which was a new high count for autumn, and on 29th a juvenile Schrenck's Bittern and a Black-winged Kite were seen at Mai Po.

September 1999 was notable for the direct hit of Typhoon York, which necessitated the raising of the tropical cyclone signal No. 10 on 16th, the first time it had been raised since 1983. The northeasterlies on 14th and 15th, ahead of York, were the first of the autumn. A second spell of persistent fresh northeasterlies commenced on 21st. It was interrupted by the passage of Tropical Storm Cam on 26th. The northeasterlies returned on 27th and 28th.

The first of five Forest Wagtails recorded during the month was seen at Tai Po Kau on 3rd. On 11th a Siberian Blue Robin was seen at Kap Lung, and during 14th-16th, before and during Typhoon York at least 41 Aleutian Terns and 89 Bridled Terns were seen in southern waters. In fact Typhoon York did not result in quite the spectacular numbers of seabirds a typhoon of its ferocity and timing might have been expected to produce, but it did produce only the fourth ever Sooty Tern for Hong Kong, a juvenile at Cape D'Aguiar on 16th, at the height of the storm. In addition, 110 Whiskered Terns, surpassing the record count of 93 made on 1 May, were seen there on 16th. These birds contributed to a total of about 260 seen at various places between 15th and 17th. The storm clearly also had an impact on the passage of Cattle Egrets through Hong Kong; no fewer than 450 were counted scattered across the grassy banks around Tseung Kwan O Industrial Estate on 17th; this represented a new high count. Also no fewer than 11 Black Bitterns were seen at Cape D'Aguiar on 16th, while the following day and on 19th singles were seen at Mai Po, where there were also two juveniles on 25th. What was amazingly the only Eastern Crowned Warbler of the autumn was seen at Tai Po Kau on 18th, and the only Oriental Cuckoo of the autumn was seen the same day at Long Valley. The only Thick-billed Warbler of the year was trapped at Mai Po on 19th. Scarce raptors noted during the period were a Black-winged Kite at Mai Po from 19th, and a juvenile Pied Harrier on 24th, while the only Chinese Goshawks of the autumn were seen at Po Toi and Mt. Austin on 30th. Chek Lap Kok hosted a juvenile Oriental Plover on 21st and the only Sanderling of the autumn on 28th. The passage of Tropical Storm Cam on 25th and 26th produced counts of 74 Aleutian Terns and 102 Bridled Terns in southern waters,

between Cape D'Aguiar and Cheung Chau. Significantly, neither Cam nor York made landfall to the west of Hong Kong, which seems necessary if a storm is to bring significant numbers of seabirds into our waters. Two Purple-backed Starlings were seen at Po Toi on 30th; they were part of a fall of migrants which included eight Blue Rock Thrushes, 50 Black Drongos, four Black-naped Orioles, and the only Ashy Minivet of the autumn, as well as the two Chinese Goshawks mentioned earlier.

October 1999 was the third warmest on record, and also very dry, with one quarter of the normal rainfall. Strong northeast monsoon winds affected Hong Kong on 3rd and 4th. A northerly surge of the monsoon arrived on 16th, lasting till 18th. At the very end of the month a brief easterly surge occurred on 30th.

An unidentified warbler *Seicercus* and a Siberian Blue Robin were at Ho Chung woods on 1st, when a Baillon's Crake was seen at Long Valley. A juvenile Schrenck's Bittern was seen there on 3rd, followed by two adult males on 4th. On 6th a female Citrine Wagtail was seen at Long Valley, followed by an adult male White Wagtail of the race *lugens* at the same location on 10th. Also on 10th, an adult male Pied Harrier was seen near Kam Tin, while between 11th and 17th up to two Pheasant-tailed Jacanas were seen at Mai Po. On 12th a Crested Kingfisher was seen at Plover Cove and on 14th a female Siberian Thrush was seen at Mt. Austin. A further Pied Harrier, this time a juvenile, was seen at Mai Po on 16th and 18th, while on 17th the only Nordmann's Greenshank of the autumn was seen at Mai Po. On 18th 12 Purple-backed Starlings were seen at Mai Po, with six Blue-tailed Bee-eaters arriving there the next day. On 23rd a Common Ringed Plover was seen from the boardwalk, and on the same date the first returning Greater Spotted Eagle was seen, with the first Imperial Eagle the next day. On 25th a Black-headed Ibis and a female Greater Scaup were seen at Mai Po, and a new high count of Ruff (ten) was made. On 31st a male Baikal Teal was found at Mai Po, a Eurasian Sparrowhawk was seen at Long Valley, a Brown Crake, the only one of the year, was discovered at Nam Chung, and there was a Brown Hawk Owl at Sha Lo Tung.

November 1999 saw the northeast monsoon maintaining generally fine conditions in Hong Kong. Rainfall was less than half of normal. A cold front crossed Hong Kong on 1st, but thereafter no meteorological events of any significance occurred until another cold front arrived on 28th; this caused temperatures to dip down to 13.7 degrees on 29th.

On 3rd, another Citrine Wagtail, this time a first-winter, was seen at Long Valley. On 4th the final Pied Harrier of the year, a female, was seen at Mai Po, while on 7th the only Grey-faced Buzzard of the entire autumn was noted over Fanling Golf Course and three Common Starlings were seen at Kam Tin. On 13th the only Chestnut-eared Bunting of the autumn was seen at Long Valley. On 15th a Red-breasted Merganser was seen at Shuen Wan and a Pheasant-tailed Jacana

was noted at Mai Po. A Ruddy-breasted Crake was reported from Long Valley on 16th, and around this date, despite there being no significant cold front active, some movement of Northern Lapwings was noted; six were seen at Long Valley on 16th and seven were seen at Mai Po on 17th. Kadoorie Farm hosted both the only Chestnut-flanked White-eye and the only Radde's Warbler reported during the year on 19th. A further single Northern Lapwing was noted at Mai Po on 20th, when two Eurasian Skylarks were found in Long Valley; throughout the month up to four Oriental Skylarks were also present at that location, facilitating comparison of plumage, structure and call. On 22nd the only Spoon-billed Sandpiper of the autumn was noted at Mai Po and on 24th a record 164 Black-faced Spoonbills were counted there; late November has consistently over the years produced the highest counts, though the reasons for this remain unclear (see Carey *et al.* 2001). On 26th the earliest ever Slaty-backed Gull, a first-winter, was seen from the boardwalk, on 27th an adult Black-headed Ibis, perhaps the one seen just over a month earlier, was reported from Mai Po, and on 28th the only Grey Bushchat of the year was found at Mong Tseng.

December 1999 was cooler and drier than normal. Arrivals of minor surges of the winter monsoon occurred on 2nd and 5th. A long spell of northerlies began on 16th, with winds strengthening on 19th. Temperatures then fell steadily, reaching the month's minimum of 5.8 degrees on 23rd, and seeing ice reported on hilltops from 22 to 24 December.

Interesting records in the early part of the month included two Oriental Scops Owls at Cloudy Hill on 2nd, a Ruddy-breasted Crake and a Long-billed Plover (just the third record for Hong Kong) at or near Mai Po on 5th, and a Blyth's Leaf Warbler at Lai Chi Wo, also on 5th. The first Dalmatian Pelican was noted at Mai Po on 8th, a rather early date. A visit to Sha Lo Tung on 11th produced Hong Kong's sixth Brown Bush Warbler, as well four Lanceolated Warblers, the highest single site count of the year. On 14th an immature Black Stork was seen at Mai Po, on 16th another Blyth's Leaf Warbler, was seen at Tai Po Kau and on 17th Eurasian Woodcocks, which were being regularly reported from Cloudy Hill, peaked at seven at that location; this equalled the highest count, made at the same location in December 1998. On 22nd two male Mugimaki Flycatchers, a 1st winter and an adult winter, were unusual as this species is now very rare outside the established passage period, but the very low temperatures recorded at this time were not felt to have resulted in any discernible influx of winter visitors. On 30th a female White Wagtail of the race *lugens* was found at Kam Tin. The last day of 1999 saw the arrival of a first-winter Oriental Stork at Mai Po; the yellow ring that it wore revealed it had been ringed as a chick on 6 July at Bolon Lake, Khabarovsk, Russia.

2000

January 2000 was warmer and wetter than usual. Weak cold fronts crossed the coast of Guangdong on 7th and 13th. A stronger one arrived on 16th, causing temperatures to drop below 10 degrees on 19th and evolving into an easterly surge on 20th and 21st. Under the influence of a moist easterly airstream, occasionally heavy rain affected Hong Kong on 23rd and 24th. A northerly surge of the winter monsoon arrived on the evening of 24th, and the temperature dropped to 7.2 degrees on 27th.

The peak count of Dalmatian Pelicans for the 1999-2000 winter was made on 4th; at 21, it was one fewer than the previous winter. Diving ducks noted at the beginning of the year included a Greater Scaup at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4th, a Baer's Pochard at Mai Po on 8th and a Common Pochard, also at Mai Po, on 12th. A Black-legged Kittiwake in Deep Bay on 13th was only the sixth for Hong Kong. On 15th the monthly waterbird count produced the second highest ever count of Northern Pintail (8086), a new high count of Great Crested Grebes for Deep Bay (438), and the highest ever winter count of Black-tailed Godwits (454). There was also a first-winter Glaucous-winged Gull, only the third record for Hong Kong, an adult Brown-headed Gull, which was to linger for almost three months, and the first report of a Long- or Short-billed Dowitcher of the winter; up to three were subsequently seen at Mai Po up to 8 April. Also during the count a Ruddy Sparrow was found at Tsim Bei Tsui. Mai Po also held a hybrid Eurasian/American Wigeon and a Common Ringed Plover on 17th and a Ruddy Shelduck on 18th. What was presumably the same Common Ringed Plover was in fact reported on a further five dates at Mai Po up to 9 March and was also reported once from a fishpond at Tsim Bei Tsui in late February. At Tai Po Kau on 18th a Slaty-backed Forktail was first reported; it was to remain until 1 March. On 25th a record count of seven Slaty-backed Gulls was made in Deep Bay, while on 27th a first-winter Mew Gull was found there; two were noted on 30th. The 28th produced the highest ever count of Heuglin's Gulls (865), and the following day 23 Yellow-legged Gulls were present. As well as the two Mew Gulls noted above, the 30th also produced another first-winter Glaucous-winged Gull. Three Pallas's Gulls were also present in Deep Bay from around this time.

February 2000 was cooler and drier than usual. The low temperatures recorded at the end of January continued, under the influence of the winter monsoon, with 8.5 degrees recorded on 1st. A weak northerly surge arrived on 7th. Further cold fronts arrived on 14th and 20th. Successive replenishments of the monsoon from the north on 23rd and 25th brought cold weather which was unusual for so late in February; there was frost on Tai Mo Shan. Another feature of note was the long period of cloudy and drizzly weather in the second half of the month starting on 17th.

What was presumably the same Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler first seen in the bamboo clump on the Red Walk at Tai Po Kau in late 1999 was again

noted on 1st, and two days later one was noted in song at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen; it was to be present there for a further three weeks. On 4th a Northern Lapwing was found at Ma Tso Lung and a Chestnut-flanked White-eye was noted in Tai Po Kau. A Slaty-backed Forktail was seen at Shing Mun on 8th.

On 12th two Common Pochards were seen at Mai Po, while on 13th, nine Common Buzzards, a new high count, were noted in the Deep Bay area during the monthly waterbird count, in which wetland dependent non-waterbird species, such as this are also included. Wintering Black-winged Stilts in Hong Kong show a preference for disused fishponds, and such a location, at Wo Shang Wai, produced a new high count of 560 on 15th, while the peak count of the winter for Saunders's Gulls was made on 19th; however, it involved a mere 58 birds. On 23rd and 24th a Ruddy Shelduck was again reported from Mai Po. On 25th Hong Kong's first Pygmy Wren Babbler was heard in Tai Po Kau, though it was to be more than two weeks before it was actually seen and its identity confirmed. Also on 25th a Grey-capped Greenfinch was seen at Mai Po; just under a week earlier, on 19th, one had been seen at the more usual location of Fo Tan.

March 2000 was warmer and drier than usual, though it started cold and rainy, as the northerlies, which began in late February, continued; the temperature of 11.0 degrees recorded on 1 March was to be the lowest of the month. Most of the rest of the month saw an alternation of moist easterly airstreams and replenishments of the northeast monsoon, which reached coastal Guangdong on 7th, 16th (cold front), 20th (easterly surge) and 23rd (cold front).

Two Common Rosefinches at Palm Springs on 2nd represented the first record of this species since 1997. On 7th a first-winter Brown-headed Gull was found in Deep Bay. On 8th a Styan's Grasshopper Warbler was heard at Mai Po; there were to be a further three reports, of up to three birds, up to 4 April. A Common Pochard was again seen at Mai Po on 9th. Two days later, on 11th, the first-winter Oriental White Stork, first seen on 31 December 1999, was seen for the last time, while on 12th a female Baikal Teal was seen from the boardwalk. As spring gull migration continued, on 13th peak counts for the winter of 17 Black-tailed Gulls and 25 Yellow-legged Gulls were made in Deep Bay, and a first-winter Mew Gull was again noted. An indication that wader migration was getting underway came on 16th when four Oriental Plovers were seen at Chek Lap Kok; they were also present the following day. Another indication of generalised migratory movement was the appearance of 500 Pacific Swifts at Mai Po. On 21st Hong Kong's third Daurian Jackdaw, a first-winter, was found at Mai Po. It was also present there the next day. There was a second influx of no fewer than 18 Oriental Plovers at Chek Lap Kok on 22nd, and on the same date the earliest ever record of a calling Slaty-legged Crake came from Sha Lo Tung. By 31st the first Spoon-billed Sandpiper of the spring had been seen at Mai Po.

April 2000 was warmer and much wetter than usual; frequent passages of troughs of low pressure and a very active southwest monsoon resulted in its being the wettest April since records began, with a total rainfall more than three times the normal figure. Brief easterly surges occurred on 6th and 11th. A cold front arrived at the coast of Guangdong on 15th. The most significant event was the trough of low pressure which brought torrential rain on 23rd. The month ended with a brief easterly surge on 28th.

The month began with the first report of a singing Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo from Tai Po Kau; there were to be a further twelve reports up to 11 May. A Swinhoe's Minivet and a Grey-faced Buzzard on Po Toi both turned out to be the only ones seen during the year. For the second year running the first Grey-tailed Tattlers occurred on the exceptionally early date of 2nd, and as wader migration gathered more momentum during the early part of the month, Great Knot numbers peaked at 250 on 3rd, while Nordmann's Greenshank did the same with a count of 26th on 10th, when a Little Curlew was still present at Mai Po, having been found the previous day. On 3rd the Daurian Jackdaw was relocated at Nam Sang Wai, where it was present until 14th, and on 4th a Siberian Thrush was seen at Tai Po Kau and the first of a total of at least 16 Swinhoe's Egrets noted during the spring passage period was seen at Mai Po; on 24th four were present. Four Blue-and-White Flycatchers were present at Tai Po Kau on 6th and the earliest ever record of Chinese Goshawk came on 7th, when five passed over Mai Po; another was seen at Cheung Chau on 11th. On 8th a Narcissus Flycatcher was seen at Tung Ping Chau and a second Brown-headed Gull was found at Mai Po. There were further reports of Narcissus Flycatchers at Cheung Chau on 14th and at Po Toi on 15th. On 16th a new high count of Gull-billed Terns (341) was made at Mai Po and Curlew Sandpiper numbers peaked at 3800. There were also seven Blue-tailed Bee-eaters at the same location that day. On 18th the only Black Bazas of the spring — three at Ta Kwu Ling (Lo Wu) — were seen. Four Swinhoe's Egrets were present at Mai Po on 24th, and 11 Brown Shrikes were counted on Tung Ping Chau, their onward migration perhaps halted by the torrential rain at that time. On 27th Asian Dowitcher passage peaked at the rather low figure of 57, and on the last day of the month a Black Bulbul was an unusual visitor to Po Toi.

May 2000 was warmer and drier than usual. It started hot, but by 3rd the first of a series of troughs of low pressure brought easterly winds, heavy rain and temperatures as low as 20.6 degrees. Another trough brought heavy rain on 10th. Continental air returned for a couple of days following a brief spell of northerlies on 19th. The first spell of the southwest monsoon showed up in the last week of the month.

The easterly surge noted at the end of April may have played a part in the arrival of a pair of Black Bitterns, seen at Kam Tin on 1st. On 2nd and 3rd a female Citrine Wagtail was seen in Long Valley, while on the latter date a Silver-backed Needletail, the only one of the year, was seen at Cheung Chau, a count of

3000 Sand Martins was made at Mai Po and a Lesser Sand Plover showing characters of the taxon *altifrons* was seen at Mai Po, just the fourth ever seen in Hong Kong. Further counts of four Swinhoe's Egrets were made there on both 2nd and 3rd, and again on 8th, while waders whose passage peaked in the early part of this month included Red-necked Stint (1100 on 2nd), Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (40 on 8th) and Red Knot (138 on 10th). An Ancient Murrelet was seen at Tap Mun on 6th. The rest of the month was unusually quiet, though a Yellow-breasted Bunting at Long Valley on 23rd was the latest ever in spring.

June 2000 was warmer and wetter than usual. The two major events were torrential rain on 12th and 17th, brought on by monsoon troughs typical of this time of the year. The summer monsoon then became well established over southern China.

Apart from regular observations of breeding tern species, the only report of any interest involved two Black Bazas at Hang Tau Tsuen on 28th.

July 2000 was slightly drier than normal. Weak easterlies prevailed in the first half of the month. Typhoon Kai Tak lingered in the Luzon Strait area between 5th and 8th and eventually crossed Taiwan on 9th. Another tropical cyclone skirted Hong Kong in the southwest, making landfall on Hainan Island on 16th. It brought three days of significant wind and rain between 16th and 18th. Southwesterlies prevailed in the last ten days or so.

The first returning Wood Sandpipers were seen from 10th, while on 15th the first Black-tailed Godwit, Eurasian Curlew, Common Greenshank and Terek Sandpiper were noted. On 22nd came the first Marsh Sandpiper and Whimbrel. On 23rd, a Black Baza was again seen near Hang Tau Tsuen, and on 27th the first confirmed Common Kestrel to be seen in Hong Kong during the summer months was seen at Chek Lap Kok.

August 2000 saw 600 mm of rain recorded, exceeding the average for that month by more than fifty percent. A trough of low pressure between 1st and 6th brought the first spell of rain. Mostly fine weather then followed, until the spell of rain associated with Typhoon Bilis, which made landfall in Fujian on 23rd and which brought heavy rain to Hong Kong from 24th to 27th. Of significance to birds would be the broad northeasterlies occurring over southern China from 29th to 31st, marking the beginning of conditions favourable to southward migration.

An Asian Paradise Flycatcher at Tai Po Kau on 6th was the earliest ever in autumn. Return wader migration continued to become gradually more diverse, with the first Spotted Redshanks on 4th, as well as the first Grey-tailed Tattler, the first Broad-billed Sandpipers and Red-necked Stints on 12th, and the first Red Knot on 19th. At the end of the month, a boat trip in southern waters, primarily in search of terns, produced a surprise in the form of a small dark petrel in East

Lamma Channel. Although seen repeatedly it did not allow close enough approach for its specific identification to be clinched, though it appeared to be a Swinhoe's Petrel. Twenty-seven Aleutian Terns and three Common Terns were also seen.

September 2000 was drier than normal, reflecting the prevalence of a continental airstream from around 10th until the end of the month. Severe Tropical Storm Maria landed near Shanwei to the east of Hong Kong on 1st and brought two days of heavy rain. A weak surge of the northeast monsoon arrived on 6th. Combined with Typhoon Wukong skirting Hong Kong to the south, this caused northeasterlies to strengthen between 7th and 9th. Typhoon Saomai in the Pacific then maintained a broad northeasterly airstream over much of eastern and southern China up to 16th, favouring southward bird migration and bringing dry and fine weather to Hong Kong. Weak easterlies prevailed in Hong Kong for the rest of the month.

The earliest ever Red-rumped Swallow in autumn occurred on 1st at Long Valley and on 2nd the first of at least seven Forest Wagtails during the month was reported from Clear Water Bay. As Typhoon Wukong came close to Hong Kong on 9th, a Fairy Pitta was seen at Kap Lung and a Black Bittern and a Thick-billed Warbler were seen at Mai Po, while two Bright-capped Cisticolas on the High Junk Peak Trail in Clear Water Bay CP were the earliest ever in Hong Kong in autumn, by almost a month. Also on 9th, ten Yellow-rumped Flycatchers were trapped at Mai Po, a record single-site count in Hong Kong, at least seven Asian Paradise Flycatchers were seen at Kap Lung and three Japanese Paradise Flycatchers were reported from various locations. On 10th 15 Aleutian Terns were seen in southern waters; forty-five were recorded in the same area on 17th. A Siberian Blue Robin was seen at Kap Lung on 11th. The somewhat unusually dry, fine weather may have played a part in the sighting of an unusually early Crested Honey Buzzard at Shing Mun on 12th, as well as the appearance of the first Eastern Marsh Harrier of the autumn at Mai Po on 15th. Other raptors noted at this time included a Black Baza at Mong Tseng on 15th and a Chinese Goshawk — the earliest ever in autumn — at Kadoorie FBG on 16th. On 12th the only Pechora Pipit of the year was seen at Long Valley, on 14th the earliest ever Grey Bushchat in autumn was reported from Mt. Austin, on 16th and 17th a flock of 15 Striated Yuhinas was present at Kadoorie FBG and on 16th an Oriental Cuckoo was seen near Lau Fau Shan. Ten White-cheeked Starlings at Tsim Bei Tsui on 26th were the earliest ever, and on 28th the only Oriental Plovers of the autumn were seen: three at Chek Lap Kok. A young male Japanese Sparrowhawk at Shuen Wan on 29th was the earliest ever by two days. On the final day of the month two Black Bulbuls were noted at Leadmine Pass.

October 2000 was warmer and wetter than usual. A weak surge of the northeast monsoon arrived on 4th. A stronger easterly surge affected the region on 11th and 12th, followed by a cold front crossing the coast on 13th. The spell of strong wind lasted till 15th. The northeast monsoon again brought strong winds

and wet weather to Hong Kong between 18th and 21st, rain being the heaviest on 20th. An intense surge of the winter monsoon reached the south China coast on the morning of 29th, while at the same time Severe Tropical Storm Xangsane entered the South China Sea. Under their combined influence, northerly winds occasionally reached gale force offshore and on high ground, and temperatures fell to 18.7 degrees on 30th.

Another Siberian Blue Robin was seen at Ho Chung on 1st. On 5th an Oriental Cuckoo was seen at Mt. Austin and 16 Blue-tailed Bee-eaters were seen at Mai Po. On 7th a Pheasant-tailed Jacana was seen at Mai Po. The imminent arrival of a cold front may have played a part in the passage of nine Purple-backed Starlings at Kam Tin on 9th and of a flock of 33 Black Bazas at Ho Sheung Heung on 11th; this was one of the largest flocks ever seen in Hong Kong. It would also appear to have played a part in the arrival on 14th of a Baer's Pochard at Mai Po, the earliest ever by eight days. The 14th also produced the earliest ever Chestnut-eared Bunting, seen at Long Valley, where on 12th the only Citrine Wagtail of the autumn was reported and where Lanceolated Warblers were reported on 16th and 21st. The strong winds and wet weather between 18th and 20th may have been responsible for the build-up of 20 Yellow Bitterns at Mai Po on 21st, an unusually high count at any time these days, and quite exceptional for the second half of October, and also of 120 Red-throated Pipits at Long Valley on 24th. A Blyth's Leaf Warbler of the taxon *goodsoni*, which was trapped at Kadoorie FBG on 23rd, was the earliest ever record of that form. On 26th the first sighting of a Nordmann's Greenshank of the autumn was made; up to two were subsequently seen up to 12 November, and two Long- or Short-billed Dowitchers found on 27th remained until 11 November. Finally the intense monsoon which arrived on 29th may well have influenced the arrival of a Pheasant-tailed Jacana at San Tin on 25th, and of another at Kam Tin on 31st. Also, on 27th and 29th a Common Ringed Plover was seen from the boardwalk. A Buff-bellied Pipit was seen at Long Valley on 29th and 30th.

November 2000 was cooler than usual, with more than twice the average rainfall. On 4th. Severe Tropical Storm Bebinca started moving closer to the coast, passing over the waters south of Hong Kong over the next three days and dissipating to the west of Hong Kong on 8th. A northerly surge reached Hong Kong on 11th, followed by a replenishment on 16th to 17th. Another northerly surge arrived on 19th, resulting in temperatures dropping to 14.1 degrees on 21st.

A Purple-backed Starling at Kam Tin on 1st was unusually late. A Black-winged Kite was first seen at Long Valley on 3rd, and was noted there again the following day and on 14th. Lanceolated Warblers were reported from Sha Lo Tung on both 4th and 5th, and a small influx of Radde's Warblers involved one at Sha Lo Tung on 4th, one at Kadoorie FBG on 5th, and two there on 6th. Two Eurasian Hobbies at Kam Tin on 5th provided the latest ever adequately documented record. Other interesting records during the first few days of the month

included a Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler at Hok Tau on 4th, a new high count of 200 Chestnut Buntings over Kadoorie FBG on 6th, and flocks of four Common Rosefinches, possibly the same, at Sha Lo Tung on 5th and Kadoorie FBG on 6th. On 10th, as numbers of Black-faced Spoonbills grew at Mai Po, a new high count of 173 was made. By the time a further count was made on 24th the flock had grown to 252, a very significant part of the global population of a species believed to number fewer than 1000 individuals at the time, though now believed to be slightly more numerous. Another Radde's Warbler was trapped at Kadoorie FBG on 17th. In the wake of the cold weather which arrived on 19th, a Northern Lapwing was seen at Mai Po on 22nd and two Dalmatian Pelicans on 25th; these were the first of the winter and unusually early, first arrivals usually being noted during the third week in December. The cold weather may also have been responsible for an influx of Chestnut-flanked White-eyes around this time; reports included three at Shing Mun on 19th and seven at Tai Po Kau on 22nd. On 23rd a flock of 12 Striated Yuhinas was seen at Wo Hop Shek. On 24th, the second Short-eared Owl for Hong Kong was found at Chek Lap Kok, and Brownish-flanked Bush Warblers were seen at Cheung Chau and Pak Tam Au on 25th and 26th respectively. Two Common Starlings found at Kam Tin on 25th remained until 2 December, and on 27th a Lanceolated Warbler was seen at Ma Tso Lung and a Radde's Warbler was seen at Lok Ma Chau.

December 2000 was warmer than usual and the rainfall was more than twice the average. A weak northerly surge occurred on 3rd. A cold front crossed the coast of Guangdong on 11th, taking the temperature down to 11.3 degrees by 13th, the lowest in the month. Another cold front arrived on 20th, producing markedly colder weather on 22nd and 23rd. A weak easterly surge on 26th was followed by a weak northerly surge on 30th.

The month began with a report of two Black-tailed Gulls in Deep Bay on 1st. On 4th there was a report of a Red- or Black-headed Bunting at Ma Tso Lung, while on 6th a Common Starling was at Tsim Bei Tsui, and reports of Northern Lapwings involved singles at Lok Ma Chau and Tsim Bei Tsui, and two at Shuen Wan. The two seen later in the month at Mai Po on 16th and 17th may have been from amongst these birds. Two record counts were made at Lok Ma Chau on 7th; these were of 3000 Red-billed Starlings (an new all-time high) and of 69 Red Turtle Doves (a new winter high). On 9th, possibly related to the cold weather heading towards southern China at the time, a Eurasian Oystercatcher was found at Tsim Bei Tsui. The following day it was seen by many observers from the boardwalk at Mai Po, and a Terek Sandpiper, a very rare bird indeed in the winter months, was also present. A further Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler was seen at Shuen Wan on 15th and both Greater Scaup and Baer's Pochard (two) were seen at Mai Po on 18th and 23rd respectively. The year ended with the arrival of an immature Black Stork at Mai Po on 28th and the discovery of a flock of 35 Striated Yuhinas at Tai Po Kau on 29th.

SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR 1999 AND 2000

分類總覽

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Researchers should note that, in the interests of brevity, this systematic list provides a summary of the ornithological observations reported in Hong Kong during the years in question, and does not include all records received and stored. The conservation status of all species placed in any category other than 'Not globally threatened' in BirdLife International (2000) is indicated by the use of the following abbreviations after the scientific name: CR — critically endangered, EN - endangered, VU - vulnerable, CD — conservation dependent, N - near-threatened. Other abbreviations used within species entries are: CP — Country Park, DB — Deep Bay, HK — Hong Kong, KARC — Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, KFBG — Kadoorie Farm and Botanical Gardens, NT — New Territories, SI — Starling Inlet, ZBG — Zoological and Botanical Gardens. The order, categorisation and nomenclature used in this Systematic List follow Carey *et al.* (2001), with certain corrections to scientific names.

The precise dates of the Deep Bay waterbird counts referred to were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1999	24th	21st	21st	18th	16th	13th	11th	15th	12th	10th	21st	12th
2000	15th	13th	12th	23rd	21st	nc	16th	13th	17th	15th	12th	10th

However, it should be noted that these waterbird totals might include counts made up to a week either side of the actual count date. The abbreviation "nc" indicates that no count took place due to extreme weather conditions.

Species accounts were originally drafted by the following compilers:

1999: 002A-062A (YTY), 063A-087A (RWL), 088A and 089A (MT), 093A-188A (GJC), 191D-253A (RWL), 254A-279A (EMSK), 282A-322C (GJC), 323A-332A (PJJ), 334A-448A (MT).

2000: 002A-062A (YTY), 063A-087A (RWL), 088A and 089A (MT), 93A-188A (GJC), 191D-253A (RWL), 254A-279A (MT), 282A-322C (GJC), 323A-361A (MT), 367A-386A (GJC) 387A-448A (MT).

All species requiring acceptance by the Records Committee in both years: GJC

CATEGORIES A-D

002A Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

小鵝鵝

1999: A total of 142 in the January waterbird count was the highest count of the first winter period, while the highest count in the second part of the year was 162 in the December waterbird count. The June count of 106 probably represents the post-breeding population. Away from Deep Bay, in the first winter period up to three were at Starling Inlet, up to seven were at Shuen Wan and one was at Pak Tam Chung on 13 February. In the second winter period, up to five were at Shuen Wan. Deep Bay area counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
142	138	119	94	83	106	23	65	66	70	94	162

2000: As usual most records were from the Deep Bay area, but it was also reported from High Island Reservoir, Kam Tin and Shuen Wan. Adults with chicks were noted at Lok Ma Chau on 4 April, 22 May, 2, 14 and 22 June. A further adult was observed on a nest there on 25 July. Deep Bay area counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
140	120	87	30	43	nc	47	59	114	146	108	130

003A Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

鳳頭鸕鶿

1999: The peak count in the first winter period was 309 during the January waterbird count, while in the second part of the year 162 were noted in the December waterbird count. The latest spring record was of four seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 19 April, while the earliest in the second part of the year were the 55 birds seen during the November waterbird count. Deep Bay area monthly counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
309	40	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55	162

2000: In the Deep Bay area, a total of 438 was counted on 15 January, 431 at Tsim Bei Tsui and seven near Lau Fau Shan; this was a new high for Hong Kong. The number present fell to 353 on 20 February, with 85 remaining on 11 March, the latest record of the first winter period. The earliest in the second part of the year was one seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 26 October. Fifty-two were recorded at Tsim Bei Tsui on 13 December. Away from the Deep Bay area, one moulting to breeding plumage was seen at Starling Inlet on 18 December. Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
438	327	96	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0	67

Dark shearwater *Puffinus* sp.

1999: One was seen from Cape D'Aguilar on 2 May (MT).

Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma* sp.

2000: An unidentified *Oceanodroma* petrel (considered to be probably Swinhoe's Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma monorhis*) was seen in the southern part of the East Lamma Channel on 30 August (MT *et al.*)

007A Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus* CD

卷羽鶉鷗

1999: In the first winter period the flock in Deep Bay peaked at 22 birds, present from 24 January to 1 March. A departure occurred soon after that date, as only nine were present from 5 to 10 March, the latter date being the final one on which the species was recorded. In the second winter period, eight birds were reported on 8 and 11 December, and two on 19 December.

2000: In the early part of the year, numbers increased to 21 on 4 January; this number continued to be reported until 18 March, when they were all seen flying up to a great height, and after which date the number present fell to two birds, reported on 21 March and the last record during the early part of the year. A record of two on 25 November was the earliest in the second part of the year; the number present rose to five on 10 December and the highest subsequent count was 12 on 29th. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

009A Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*

褐鯉鳥

1999: One was seen from Cape D'Aguilar on 2 May during the close approach of Typhoon Leo (PJJ). This is the third Hong Kong record.

010A Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

鸕鷀

1999: The highest count in the first winter period was of 7511 birds in the February waterbird count, with 5300 noted in January. Such differences are considered to be probably due to variations in the timing of the arrival of birds at the roost, rather than being a true reflection of the relative number of birds present in Deep Bay. A total of 2020 remained at the time of the March waterbird count, but no more than three were present in April. At the Centre Island roost in Starling Inlet, approximately 60 birds remained as late as 27 March. Unusually, there were two records of over-summering birds: two at Shek Wu Chau on 10 June, and one at Mai Po until at least the end of July. The earliest record of a returning bird was of one in Victoria Harbour on 23 September (just two days later than the earliest ever), while the first in Deep Bay was noted on 3 October. Eight hundred were noted as early as 17 October, while a total of 7345 was present in the November waterbird count, significantly higher than previous counts in that month and, despite comments above, probably indicating an earlier than usual arrival of at least some

of the wintering population. Away from the Deep Bay area, 900 were counted at roost on Kung Chau, near Tap Mun, on 12 January, and 76 were recorded at the Centre Island roost in the first winter period, with 273 there in the December waterbird count. Counts of up to 190 at Shuen Wan are presumed to have involved birds roosting at Centre Island, or possibly Kung Chau. Deep Bay area monthly counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
5300	7511	2020	5	1	0	1	0	0	88	7345	5306

2000: One at Lok Ma Chau on 22 May was the latest recorded in the early part of the year, while the first returning bird was one at Starling Inlet on 18 September, the earliest ever by three days. Away from Deep Bay about 120 were recorded at Sha Chau, a maximum of 165 was recorded at Shuen Wan on 28 February and 260 were recorded at Starling Inlet in February. In addition, one was at Shuen Wan on 19 October and 2 December, seven were at Tai Lam Reservoir on 5 November, seven flew over Long Valley on 28 November, three were recorded at Lai Chi Wo on 20 December and over 700 were recorded on 18 December at Starling Inlet. Deep Bay area monthly counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
7712	7500	6000	0	0	nc	0	0	0	224	4256	5671



1 Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 9 December 2001
Immature

Ho-fai Cheung

014A Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* 蒼鷺

1999: The highest count in the first winter period was of 909 birds during the February waterbird count, while in the second winter period numbers rose to 1167 during the December waterbird count. Away from the Deep Bay area, birds were reported from Ho Pui, Kam Tin, Lai Chi Wo, Long Valley, Tseung Kwan O Industrial Estate (on 17 September after the passage of Typhoon York), Shuen Wan (up to 43 in the first winter period and up to 32 in the second), Starling Inlet (up to 126 in the first winter period and 129 in the second) and Tung Chung. Deep Bay area monthly counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
766	909	335	80	33	1	11	2	76	422	617	1167

2000: Nearly all records were from the immediate vicinity of Deep Bay, but elsewhere this species was reported from Kam Tin (one on 7 July), Long Valley from 29 September (maximum 41 on 19 October), Nam Wai, near Ho Chung (15 on 20 February), Shuen Wan (maximum 31 on 12 February), Tai Mei Tuk (five on 21 February and one on 5 March) and Tung Chung (two on 23 October). Deep Bay area monthly counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1164	690	623	11	5	nc	6	3	101	682	603	596

015A Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* 草鷺

1999: In the first winter period a maximum of three birds was counted on 6 February, with the same number also noted in spring during the first half of April. Sporadic summer records of one or two birds included juveniles seen on 22 April and 12 July, indicating local breeding. As usual, the highest numbers were seen in autumn, with six on 21 September, six to eight birds during 23-25 October and eight on 29 October. After three were recorded on 2 November, only ones and twos were noted. The only records away from Mai Po were of one at Cape D'Aguiar on 2 May during the passage of Typhoon Leo, and a juvenile at Long Valley on 22 October. Deep Bay area monthly counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	5	8	4

2000: The peak count of nine birds was recorded at Mai Po on 4 October, as well as in the same month's monthly waterbird count, and a further noteworthy count was of four at Mai Po on 18 December. All records were from the Deep Bay area, where monthly counts as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	2	0	0	0	nc	0	1	0	9	3	1

016A Great Egret *Egretta alba* 大白鷺

1999: The peak count in the first winter period was 492 in the January waterbird count, the largely non-breeding population peaked at 430 in the July count, and the highest count in the second winter period was 640 in the October waterbird count. Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Chek Lap Kok, Cheung Chau (two records, both associated with the approach of tropical storms, on 1 May and 15 September, the latter involving 25 birds), Victoria Harbour, Lai Chi Wo, Long Valley (two records of single birds), Pak Tam Chung, Penfold Park, Sham Chung, Shuen Wan (up to 85 in the first winter period, 50 in midsummer and 60 in the second winter period), Starling Inlet (up to 218 in the first winter period, 230 in midsummer and 258 in the second winter period), Tai Po, Tap Mun, Three Fathoms Cove, Tolo Harbour and Yung Shue O. Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po Village (six nests), Tai Po Market (five nests), Centre Island (three nests) and A Chau (57 nests). Monthly counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
492	342	358	120	308	250	430	264	250	640	551	496

2000: Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: A Chau (37 nests), Mai Po Village (eight nests), Centre Island (five nests), Stonecutters (one nest) and Tai Po Market (one nest). Away from Deep Bay, Great Egrets were recorded at Long Valley (one on 26 July, two on 12 September, 13 October and 14 November), Shuen Wan (maximum of 70 on 21 January and 28 October), Tai Mei Tuk (122 on 21 February and 90 on 5 March) and Tung Chung (two on 23 October). Monthly waterbird counts were as follows:

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
DB	632	285	241	81	245	nc	197	281	499	336	1050	1205
SI	199	nc	197	111	nc	nc	nc	nc	175	340	314	201

017A Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia* 中白鷺

1999: The wintering population peaked at 18 birds in January, the summering population at ten in July and the autumn migrant population at 15 in October. In addition, 14, noted at Mai Po on 1 April, represented the peak count of spring migrants. Away from Deep Bay, one flew west at Cape D'Aguiar on 26 September during the close approach of Severe Tropical Storm Cam, one was at Lai Chi Wo on 5 December, and up to six were present at Starling Inlet during the waterbird counts from January to May and from September to December. Monthly counts in Deep Bay during the year were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
18	5	4	7	8	10	8	0	6	15	5	2

2000: Most records were from the area immediately around Deep Bay, but it was also recorded at Kam Tin (one on 6 August), Lai Chi Wo (one on 20 December), Long Valley (one on 30 and 31 August), Sha Po (two on 4 April) and Shuen Wan (one on 21 January, two on 23 February, one on 25 February, two on 31 March and 19 April, one on 20 October). Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
21	10	18	7	6	nc	0	4	4	32	9	11

018A Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* 小白鷺

1999: Away from the Deep Bay area, the most notable counts were 290 in Inner Tolo Harbour on 27 June, 250 at Lai Chi Wo on 5 December, 130 at Starling Inlet on 10 October and 150 in the Tai Po Market egretty on 12 October. Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po Village (39 nests), Ho Sheung Heung (11 nests), Pak Nai (23 nests), Ngau Hom Shek (six nests), Tai Po Market (24 nests), Centre Island (23 nests), Penfold Park (11 nests), Ho Pui (two nests), Tai O (eight nests), A Chau (22 nests) and Stonecutters (seven nests). Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
935	1145	705	411	482	387	608	634	771	754	870	806

2000: Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po village (44 nests), Pak Nai (40 nests), Centre Island (38 nests), Ho Chau Leng near Au Tau (21 nests), Penfold Park (20 nests), Stonecutters (20 nests), Ho Sheung Heung (19 nests), A Chau (15 nests), Ngau Hom Shek (11 nests), Tai Po Market (10 nests), Tai O (five nests), Ho Pui (two nests), Shek Wu Wai (one nest), Shui Mei (one nest) and Tam Kon Chau (one nest). Away from Deep Bay and its immediate vicinity, recorded at Causeway Bay (80 roosted on the typhoon shelter breakwater on 6 December), Ho Sheung Heung (24 on 13 June), Kam Tin (two on 30 July), Long Valley (maximum 46 between 24 May and 28 November), Sha Po (45 on 11 January), Shuen Wan (maximum 155 on 21 January and present throughout the year), Tai Lam Chung (three on 3 September), Tai Lam Reservoir (four on 5 November), Tai Mei Tuk (31 on 21 February and eight on 5 March), Tai Po Kau (one on 10 October) and Tung Chung (51 on 28 September and 40 on 23 October). Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1241	615	818	238	364	nc	383	737	1629	1985	1233	1460

019A Swinhoe's Egret *Egretta eulophotes* VU 黃嘴白鷺

1999: Singles were noted at Mai Po (including the boardwalk) on 5, 8 and 16 April, and again on 16 May, and on Cheung Chau during the passage of Typhoon Leo on 1 May, when two were also seen at Tai Tam.

2000: During spring passage, between 4 April and 11 May, a total of 16 individuals was recorded, mainly from the Mai Po boardwalk, with a maximum of four, recorded on four dates: 24 April, and 2, 3 and 8 May.

020A Pacific Reef Egret *Egretta sacra* 岩鷺

1999: Reported from the north Lantau coast, Green Island, Cape D'Aguiar, Po Toi, Kung Chau, Shek Ngau Chau, Tap Mun, Tolo Harbour and Tai Long Wan; the highest count was of ten birds at Shek Ngau Chau on 1 July.

2000: Records were received for the Brothers, Tap Mun and Po Toi. The highest count was five at Tap Mun on 1 July. This species undoubtedly continues to occur in many more locations than this, and observers are encouraged to submit more records to provide a fuller picture of its current status in the region.



2 Pacific Reef Egret *Egretta sacra*
Cheung Chau, Hong Kong, 29 January 2003

Henry Lui

021A Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* 牛背鷺

1999: Away from Deep Bay, birds were noted at Big Wave Bay (HK Island) on 18 September, Cape D'Aguiar (peak count 115 on 1 and 2 May during the passage of Typhoon Leo), Chek Lap Kok (peak count 27 on 27 April), Cheung Chau (including a total of 36 from 29 April to 1 May during the approach and passage of Typhoon Leo), Hok Tau (three on 9 May), Kam Tin (peak count ten on 17 October), Kowloon Park (one on 7 November), Long Valley (peak count six on 27 October), Causeway Bay (25 on 25 September), Po Toi (peak count five on

30 September), Starling Inlet (peak count 191 during the April waterbird count), Tai Tam CP (40 on 1 May during the passage of Typhoon Leo and three on 23 September), Yung Shue O (peak count 30 on 18 September) and, finally, at Tseung Kwan O Industrial Estate, where 450 were noted on 17 September, immediately after the passage of Typhoon York. The latter was the highest count of the year, and the highest autumn count since 1980. Breeding was noted at the following egretries: Mai Po Village (22 nests), Pak Nai (two nests), Centre Island (two nests), Ho Pui (16 nests) and A Chau (77 nests). Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
36	67	85	69	271	168	252	143	136	83	49	17

2000: Away from the immediate vicinity of Deep Bay, Cattle Egrets were recorded at A Chau (one on 8 February), Cheung Chau (six flying north on 14 April), Ho Sheung Heung (four on 13 June), Kam Tin (16 on 1 November), Long Valley (maximum of 21 from 24 May to 19 December), Po Toi (five on 15 April), Shuen Wan (maximum of 39 on 13 April), Wu Kau Tang (25 on 28 May). Peak count in the autumn was 195 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 27 October. Breeding was noted at the following egretries: A Chau (42 nests), Mai Po Village (10 nests), Ho Pui (nine nests), Centre Island (three nests), Pak Nai (two nests), Ho Sheung Heung (one nest). Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
105	57	54	104	172	nc	153	240	146	168	45	76

022A Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus* 池鷺

1999: Though the great majority were seen in the Deep Bay area, also noted in widespread areas, the highest count at any of these other sites being of 32 at Fanling Golf Course on 29 March. Breeding was noted at the following egretries: Mai Po Village (12 nests), Ho Sheung Heung (67 nests), Ngau Hom Shek (four nests), Penfold Park (two nests), Ho Pui (four nests), Ma On Kong (seven nests), Tai O (one nest) and A Chau (two nests). Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
143	208	189	127	211	213	286	206	179	211	194	209

2000: Away from the immediate vicinity of Deep Bay, recorded at Chek Lap Kok (three on 12 April, thought to be migrants), Kam Tin (three on 30 July), Long Valley (maximum of 35 on 19 December), Po Toi (eight on 15 April and one on 10 September), Sha Lo Tung (one on 5 November), Sha Po (two on 2 January), Shuen Wan (maximum of 37 on 14 March), and Tai Lam Chung (ten on 3 September

and thought to have perhaps bred there). Breeding was noted at the following egretries: Ho Sheung Heung (40 nests), Shui Mei (15 nests), Shek Wu Wai (14 nests), Lam Tsuen (12 nests), Tam Kon Chau (12 nests), Ho Chau Leng near Au Tau (seven nests), Ma On Kong (six nests), Mai Po Village (six nests), Ngau Hom Shek (four nests), A Chau (two nests), Ho Pui (two nests), Pak Nai (two nests), Penfold Park (two nests) and Tai O (one nest). Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
196	133	91	68	131	nc	186	351	377	488	256	297

023A Striated Heron *Butorides striatus* 綠鷺

1999: A series of records in February, all involving single birds, suggested a midwinter influx; birds were noted at Mai Po on 6th, Tai Po Kau on 6th and 13th, Tai Po Kau village on 8th (possibly the same as the latter bird), Wong Nai Chung Road on 13th, Pak Tam Chung on 17th and Nam Chung on 21st. The earliest record of the spring came from Mai Po on 4 April; numbers there peaked at four on 4 May, while four were also seen at Tam Kon Chau fishponds on 2 May. The highest summer count in Deep Bay was of 14 during the July waterbird count, with nine noted in the August count. Subsequently, the highest count was of four birds at Mai Po on 11 September and during the October waterbird count. Elsewhere, one was at Big Wave Bay (HK Island) on 18 September, and one was at Tai Po Kau village on 28 October and 2 December. Monthly counts in Deep Bay during the year were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	1	1	6	14	9	1	4	0	0

2000: In the Deep Bay area, recorded between 28 January and 26 September, with the great majority of records from Mai Po and a highest count of four there on 4 August. Away from Deep Bay, single birds were at Tai Po Kau Tsuen on 13 January, KFBG on 22 February, Nam Chung on 12 March and 15 November, Shui Hau Wan (Lantau) on 7 May, Long Valley on 1 and 10 September, Pak Sha Wan (Sai Kung) on 3 and 30 September, and Po Toi on 10 September. In addition, one bird was present at Shuen Wan from 8 January to 4 March, another individual from 16 to 21 June, and an immature from 16 July to 3 November.

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	1	0	2	11	nc	6	6	3	5	0	0



3 Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*
Wun Yiu, Hong Kong, 8 February 2003

Marcus Ho



4 Striated Heron *Butorides striatus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 22 October 1999

Kar-man Lo

024A Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* 夜鷺
1999: Away from Deep Bay, recorded at Aberdeen CP, Cape D' Aguilar, Tolo Harbour, Kowloon Park, Lai Chi Wo, Long Valley, Po Toi, Starling Inlet

(where 436 on 18 April was the highest count of the year), Tap Mun, Wu Kau Tang and Yung Shue O. Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po Village (26 nests), Tai Po Market (one nest), Centre Island (18 nests), Tai O (13 nests), A Chau (234 nests) and Stonecutters (three nests). Due to the species' nocturnal habits, the monthly counts in Deep Bay are almost certainly a significant underestimate of the true numbers present, and the peak in July probably reflects its greater visibility at this time due to daytime foraging by juveniles. The figures from those counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
21	17	13	5	21	20	72	39	35	17	40	6

2000: Away from Deep Bay, recorded at Shuen Wan throughout the year (maximum 20 on 23 September), Siu Lam (one on 16 September), and Wong Chuk Hang (13 on 17 September). Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: A Chau (155 nests), Mai Po Village (40 nests), Stonecutters (30 nests), Centre Island (23 nests) and Tai Po Market KCR (six nests). Monthly waterbird counts at Deep Bay and Starling Inlet were as follows:

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
DB	60	29	2	30	60	nc	19	66	103	94	53	31
SI	3	nc	252	312	nc	nc	nc	nc	41	28	4	88



5 Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong, 5 June 2002

Hok-fei Lee

026A Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*

黃葦鶉

1999: Up to two birds were present at Mai Po in January and February. Spring numbers were rather low, with the only April report involving one seen during that month's waterbird count. One was seen at Cape D'Aguilar on 2 May during the passage of Typhoon Leo, and up to three were noted at Mai Po during the summer months. Elsewhere at this time, singles were at Tung Ping Chau on 8 May, Long Valley on 13 May and Sha Tau Kok on 13 June, while two immatures flushed from a freshwater marsh area at Pak Lap, High Island on 19 June indicated possible breeding in that area. Autumn numbers at Mai Po were generally below five, apart from 11 on 19 September; in addition, single juveniles were at Long Valley on 21 September and Chek Lap Kok on 29 October (the latter being the final record of the year). Although probably partly a consequence of poor reporting, numbers of this species appear to have been low this year. Monthly counts in Deep Bay during the year were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	2	0	1	2	5	2	1	3	2	1	1

2000: Not reported until 18 April, when one was seen at Palm Springs. Subsequently, one or two birds were recorded on twenty dates between 21 May and 26 October in the Deep Bay area, the only count exceeding this being of 20 at Mai Po on 22 October. Singles at Mai Po on 21 November and 11 December are presumed to be wintering birds. Away from the immediate vicinity of Deep Bay, singles were reported at Long Valley (on 3 May and 4 October), Luk Keng (16 September) and Man Kam To (12 September). Monthly counts in Deep Bay during the year were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	0	12	nc	5	8	16	5	2	1

027A Schrenck's Bittern *Ixobrychus eurhythmus*

紫背葦鶉

1999: There were three records: at Mai Po single juveniles on 29 August and 3 October, and at Long Valley two adult males on 4 October. It is unusual for all records to be in autumn.

028A Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*

栗葦鶉

1999: There were two spring records: a female at Wo Shang Wai on 12 April and a male at Mai Po on 3 May. In autumn birds were recorded on seven dates between 4 August and 1 October. Singles were at Mai Po on 4 and 24 August, and on 9 and 19 September, and also at Long Valley on 18 and 24 September, and on 1 October.

2000: Singles were at Mai Po on 29 April, at Lok Ma Chau on 22 May and at Yau Mei San Tsuen on 19 August, and also at Long Valley on 3 May, 27 August, 19 September and 14 October.

029A Black Bittern *Dupetor flavicollis*

黑鶉

1999: There was one spring record, a male at Mai Po on 15 May. In autumn, 11 birds were noted at Cape D'Aguilar on 16 September during the passage of Typhoon York (PJL,MRL); this is the highest count on record in Hong Kong. Subsequently, singles were recorded at Mai Po on 17 and 19 September, and two juveniles were present there on 25 September.

2000: A male and a female were at Ham Tin on 1 May and one was at Mai Po on 9 September.

030A Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

大麻鶉

1999: Singles were noted at Mai Po up to 2 March, but four were present on 10 January. Passage birds were again noted at the end of March, with 14 birds present at dusk on 25 March (PJL,GJC), the highest count yet made in Hong Kong. In the second part of the year, one to three birds were noted on nine dates from 18 October to 25 November, with the highest count occurring on 29 October.

2000: All records were from Mai Po, with one present between 4 January and 19 February, five on 13 March and four on 16 and 21 March. In the second part of the year, one was present on 28 and 30 December.

031A Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

黑鶴

1999: A first-winter was at Mai Po on 14 December.

2000: A first-winter was at Mai Po on 28 December.

032A Oriental Stork *Ciconia boyciana*

東方白鶴

1999: The sole record of the year concerned a first-winter bird, bearing a yellow ring marked with the numerals 042, seen at Mai Po on 31 December. This bird had been ringed as a chick on 6 July 1999 at Bolon Lake, Khabarovsk, Russia (49°17'36N, 135°33'62E).

2000: The colour-ringed immature first recorded in 31 December 1999 continued to be seen in the Mai Po/Tsim Bei Tsui area until 11 March.

033A Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus* N

白鶯

1999: There were two records during the year, both at Mai Po: single adults on 25 October and 27 November.

035A Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

白琵鷺

1999: Three individuals, two adults and an immature, were recorded in the first winter period in the Deep Bay area, mainly at Mai Po and nearby on fishponds at Wo Shang Wai. Only singles were noted in April, with the last record of the spring on 17 April. In the second part of the year, singles were recorded on seven dates between 24 October and 27 December.

2000: Two were at Nam Sang Wai on 29 January and singles were recorded at Mai Po on several dates between 11 February and 10 May. In the second part of the year, the first record came on 28 October, when one was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk. Numbers at Mai Po increased to three on 9 and 10 November, and then four on 24 November.

036A Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor* EN

黑臉琵鷺

1999: The highest count in the first winter period was 130 on 30 January. On 25 March, 94 birds were still present, with 13 of these recorded flying northeast in the early evening. Numbers fell to 62 on 6 April, 30 on 2 May and two on 29 May and 3 June, the final record of the spring. The first record in the second winter period occurred on 17 October. Numbers subsequently built up to 164 on 24 November (YTY), the highest count on record in Hong Kong. All records were from the Deep Bay area, including up to 60 birds feeding in an unmanaged fishpond at Wo Shang Wai from 2 January to 14 March. Monthly counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
110	86	105	46	16	0	1	0	0	0	164	129

2000: High counts of 151 and 160 were made on 14 January and 13 February; the latter was the highest ever in the early part of the year. Of these, 127 remained on 26 March, but numbers declined thereafter, with 65 present on 8 April. Twenty-six were still present on 1 May and the final report of a flock came on 14 May, when 14 were noted. However, one was seen in Deep Bay on 6 August and at Mai Po on 26 August, having apparently over-summered. There were no further reports till 2 October, on which date one immature flew over Pond 20, Mai Po. Numbers subsequently increased to four on 16 October, 27 on 26 October, 88 on 29 October, 173 on 10 November — a new high count for Hong Kong — and 252 on 24 November (RWL), a further new high for Hong Kong. Finally, 198 were still present on 10 December and 171 on 18 December. Records came from both Inner and Outer Deep Bay areas, including Lok Ma Chau, Shenzhen River, San Tin, Mai Po fishponds, Wo Shang Wai, Nam Sang Wai, Tai Sang Wai, Tsim Bei Tsui, Lau Fau Shan, Sha Kong, Sheung Pak Nai and Ha Pak Nai. Monthly counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
162	118	136	9	0	nc	0	0	0	3	173	162

039A Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

赤麻鴨

2000: One flew over fishponds near Mai Po on 18 January. There were also reports of one at Mai Po on 23 and 24 February.

040A Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

翹鼻麻鴨

1999: All records were from the Deep Bay area. Following the March count, numbers subsequently declined to one, present from 31 March to 4 April. In the second part of the year, noted from 22 October when four were at the Mai Po boardwalk. Monthly counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1230	1250	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	24

2000: The highest count of the year was that of 1320 recorded during the January waterbird count. A total of 1032 was recorded in February, and 633 remained on March. Numbers declined to 22 on 7 April and finally, three on 9 April. There were no reports in the second part of the year. All records were from the intertidal areas of Deep Bay. Monthly counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1320	1032	633	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0	0

042A Mandarin Aix *galericulata*

鴛鴦

1999: A pair of free-flying birds was noted at Pond 19, Mai Po on 22 April. Given the continued existence of free-flying birds in the waterfowl collection at Mai Po in 1999, these birds are not considered to have been wild.]

043A Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*

赤頸鴨

1999: All records were from the Deep Bay area. Subsequent to the April waterbird count on 18th, when 41 were recorded, numbers further declined to 30 by 29 April. Noted in the second part of the year from 23 September, when one was at Mai Po. Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
2338	1953	602	41	3	3	0	0	0	38	1074	2923

A hybrid male Eurasian x American Wigeon *A.penelope* x *A.americana* was seen at Mai Po NR on 23 January (GJC).

2000: In the first part of the year, 1658 were recorded in the January waterbird count, with 2324 in the February count. Numbers actually increased to a total of 2557 still present during the March count, but fell thereafter, to 146 on 16 April, 20 on 2 May, six on 21 May and finally, two on 8 June. The first record in the second part of the year concerned two on 8 August, with numbers increasing to 416 in the October waterbird count, 1917 in the November count and 3143 in the December count. Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1658	2324	2557	29	6	nc	0	0	0	416	1917	3143

A male hybrid *A.penelope* x *A.americana* was present at Mai Po in the waterfowl collection on 17 January (GJC). As the pattern of occurrence of these birds is now well-established (see Carey *et al.*, 2001) the Records Committee will

no longer, as a matter of course, assess these records. Records of such birds outside of the known pattern, or records of pure American Wigeon, will be assessed, however.

044A Falcated Duck *Anas falcate* 羅紋鴨

1999: In addition to birds noted during monthly waterbird counts, eight - a male and seven females - were seen near Mai Po on 11 March. In the second part of the year noted from 18 November when four were seen at Mai Po. There was also one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 11 December and six - five males and one female - at Mai Po on 16 December. This species is clearly continuing its decline in Hong Kong. Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

2000: In the first part of the year, a maximum of 20 were recorded on a fishpond near Mai Po from January to March. Ten were still present at Mai Po on 26 March. There were no reports in the second half of the year. Although numbers were higher than in 1999, this species still shows a downward trend in numbers. Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
14	11	1	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0	0

045A Gadwall *Anas strepera* 赤膀鴨

1999: In addition to birds noted during monthly waterbird counts, at Mai Po a female was seen on 7 November, eight, including three males, were seen on 18 November, 16 on 25 November, 11 on 11 December, seven on 14 December and, finally, two on 16 December. The November count figure would therefore appear to represent the maximum number present during the early part of the winter of 1999-2000. Monthly counts in Deep Bay during the year were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	0

2000: In the first part of the year, 26 were recorded in the January waterbird count, with 17 in the February count and 16 in the March count. Numbers declined to three (one male, two females) on 11 April. The first record in the second half of the year was of one from the Mai Po boardwalk on 10 November, with numbers increasing to seven in the December waterbird count. Monthly counts in Deep Bay during the year were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
26	17	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7	0

046A Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* VU 花臉鴨

1999: There were two records, both from Mai Po: a female from 1 to 11 April, and a male on 31 October.

2000: A female was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 12 March.

047A Common Teal *Anas crecca* 綠翅鴨

1999: The count of 5411 in January represented a new high for Hong Kong. Subsequent to the March count numbers declined rapidly, and ten at Mai Po on 22 April were the last recorded in the spring, with the exception of one at Mai Po on 5 June. Away from Deep Bay, seven were at Starling Inlet on 21 March and up to three at Shuen Wan from 24 to 27 March. In the second part of the year, the first record came from Cape D'Aguiar, during the passage of Typhoon York on 16 September. Present again in Deep Bay from 21 September, when 13 were noted at Mai Po. Numbers increased thereafter, reaching 100 at Mai Po on 16 October and over 300 on 18 October. Other reports during autumn and the second winter period came from Shuen Wan (two on 14 October, nine on 20 November and 13 on 11 December), Kam Tin (20 on both 17 October and 30 December) and Long Valley (eight on 24 December). Deep Bay area monthly counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
5411	4013	1260	1	0	0	0	0	0	230	1074	1473

2000: The latest spring record was of one near Mai Po on 4 April, and the earliest in autumn was of 186 on 26 September. Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Kam Tin (three on 12 January, five on 21 October), Long Valley (20 on 17 October, 19 on 19 October) and Shuen Wan (nine on 22 February, three on 23 December). Deep Bay area monthly counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
4099	2655	1269	0	0	nc	0	0	45	682	668	685

049A Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* 綠頭鴨

1999: The only records during monthly waterbird counts were of six in January and three in November. In addition, at Mai Po there were five (two males and three females) on 23 January, six on 24 January and five again on 6 February, a female on 26 March and finally a male in the waterfowl collection at Mai Po on 16 April. In the second part of the year four (one male and three females) were at Mai Po on 17 and 18 October, and seven were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 31 October, with five still present on 4 December.

2000: In the first part of the year, two were recorded in the January waterbird count, with six in the February count. Number increased to eight on 9

March, but by the time of the March waterbird count only one was noted. In the second half of the year, two males were present at Mai Po on 2, 16 and 18 December.

050A Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha*

斑嘴鴨

1999:

A.p. zonorhyncha

Monthly counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
55	93	10	0	0	0	5	0	4	2	72	23

A slightly higher mid-summer peak was noted on 12 July, when seven were present at Mai Po, and 18 were present there on 18 October, just after the October count. Almost all records were from Mai Po, but 12 were noted at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20 February and three were seen there on 11 December.

A.p. haringtoni

Present in relatively constant numbers throughout the year. Monthly peak counts were: three in January, one in April, four in June, five in July, two in August and September, three in October, two in November and one in December. All records were from Mai Po, except for two at nearby Wo Shang Wai on 18 November. Monthly counts in Deep Bay of this form were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	0	2	0	2	2	4	0	2	0	0	0

2000:

A.p. zonorhyncha

Recorded in the Deep Bay area waterbird counts as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
20	14	81	0	0	nc	0	0	0	10	34	12

The first record in the second half of the year was of a pair on 9 September. Numbers have decreased since 1998 and this downward trend continued in 2000. Away from the Deep Bay area, one was at Long Valley on 21 October.

A.p. haringtoni

All records were from Mai Po. No more than three birds were recorded on any one date until 21 November when four (two pairs) were present. Except for singles at Mai Po on 16 and 20 April, all records fell between 9 September and 2 December. There were no records of this subspecies from the monthly waterbird counts.

In October, November and December the Deep Bay area waterbird counts included, in addition to the records of *A.p. zonorhyncha*, records of Spot-billed Ducks unassigned to either taxon, these being counts of 4, 16 and 27 respectively. Also, ten such birds were at Lok Ma Chau on 28 August.

051A Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

針尾鴨

1999: Subsequent to the March waterbird count, a pair was seen at Mai

Po on 20 April and a male was there on 22 April. During the second part of the year noted from 21 September, when five were at Mai Po. Although only five were noted during the October waterbird count on 10th, by 16th 300 were present at the Mai Po boardwalk. All records were from the immediate vicinity of Deep Bay, apart from five at Kam Tin on 30 December. Monthly counts in Deep Bay during the year were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
5043	5646	22	0	0	5	0	0	0	5	2473	3648

2000: The peak count in the first winter period was 8086 birds during the January waterbird counts, the second highest on record in Hong Kong. In the second part of the year, the first record was a female at Mai Po on 13 September. Numbers increased slightly to five on 14 October and then rose rapidly to 1296 in the November waterbird count. Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Kam Tin (15 on 29 November), Long Valley (five on 14 September) and Starling Inlet (four on 18 December). Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
8086	4805	782	0	0	nc	0	0	0	95	1296	1784

052A Garganey *Anas querquedula*

白眉鴨

1999: Subsequent to the March count, there were reports of five at Ma Tso Lung on 21 March, about 80 at Mai Po on 4 April and finally eight (three males and five females) at Mai Po on 22 April. Noted in autumn from 21 September, when one was at Long Valley and 20 were at Mai Po. Numbers rapidly built up - 208 at Mai Po on 25 September, 326 on Pond 16/17 on 7 October, 200 still present at Mai Po on 16 October, 100 on 21 October, and the October waterbird count produced a total of 608 in the Deep Bay area. At Long Valley, there were up to two on 23 and 24 September, seven on 4 October and four on 6 October. One was at Kam Tin on 30 December. Monthly counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
11	34	129	8	0	0	0	0	12	608	23	18

2000: In the first part of the year, 60 were recorded on 15 January. The latest spring record was four at Nam Sang Wai on 2 April. The first record from the second part of the year was 15 at Mai Po on 9 September. Numbers subsequently rose to a maximum of 540 on 2 October. Finally, three joined the ducks in the waterfowl collection at Mai Po on 24 December. Away from the Deep Bay area, two were at Kam Tin on 21 October. Deep Bay area waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
16	57	114	5	0	nc	0	0	251	147	76	0

053A Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

琵嘴鴨

1999: Good counts of 6725 and 7027 in the January and February counts respectively were followed by a steep decline in numbers to 676 in the March count on 21st. Thereafter numbers further declined to about 20, seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 2 April, with the final report being of a female at Mai Po on 22 April. Noted in the second part of the year from 21 September when 10 were at Mai Po. In the October waterbird count, 203 were counted on 15th, but numbers then increased dramatically to about 2000 counted from the Mai Po boardwalk on 22 October. However, the November and December waterbird counts produced respective counts of just 404 and 824. Elsewhere, two were at Shuen Wan on 20 November and one on 11 December, and ten were at Nam Sang Wai on 19 December. Monthly counts in Deep Bay during the year were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
6725	7027	676	1	0	8	0	0	0	203	404	824

2000: In the first part of the year, 3000 were recorded in the January waterbird count, with 2122 in the February count and 898 in the March count. Numbers declined to three in both the April and May counts. One was recorded in the July count, apparently an over-summering individual. In the second part of the year, numbers increased gradually from two in August and 21 in September, to a maximum of 3231 in the December waterbird count. All records were from the Deep Bay area, where monthly counts during the year were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3000	2122	898	3	3	nc	1	2	21	185	1468	3231

054A Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

紅頭潛鴨

1999: Four were noted at Mai Po during both the January and February waterbird counts. In the second winter period a female was recorded at Mai Po on 22 and 25 October, and also on 3, 7, 9 and 28 November.

2000: At Mai Po an unsexed individual was reported on 12 January, with two females on 12 February and one female on 9 March. As few as two birds were thus possibly involved.

055A Baer's Pochard *Aythya baeri* VU

青頭潛鴨

1999: All reports came during January and February. At Mai Po there was a male on 11 January, with a pair the following day. Later in the same month three (two males and one female) were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 26th, while the next day three were also seen at Mai Po, though this time the party consisted of a male and two females. Further reports were of a single at Mai Po on 20 and 21 February, two on 22 February and finally three (one male and two females) on 28 February.

2000: A female at Mai Po on 8 January was the only record in the first part of the year. In the second part of the year, single females were seen at Mai Po on 14 and 22 October and on 18 December, a pair was there seen on 23 December, and a female was still present on 24 December. Records in the period October-December, thus possibly involved as few as two birds. The record on 14 October represented a new early date in autumn, the previous earliest having been on 22 October 1986.

056A Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca* N

白眼潛鴨

1999: The four birds first reported in late 1998 were again seen on 14 January and 20 February (PJJ,MT).

057A Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

鳳頭潛鴨

1999: The February count of 1140, made at Tsim Bei Tsui, represented a new high count. Noted in the second part of the year from 22 October, when 32 were seen from the Mai Po boardwalk, increasing to 90 by 25 October. In November, two were present on Pond 20 at Mai Po on 7th and 79 were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 26 November. In December, 70 were reported from Tsim Bei Tsui on 8th, with the same number at Mai Po on 16th, and 210 there on 19th, and also 190 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 24 December. All records came from the Deep Bay area. Monthly counts in Deep Bay during the year were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
363	1140	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	29

2000: In the first part of the year, 665 were recorded in the January waterbird count, and 193 were still present at Mai Po on 27 February. The latest spring records were a pair at Mai Po on 2 April, with the male still present on 8 April. In the second part of the year, the first record was of one on 24 October, followed by 23 on 9 November, 240 in the November waterbird count, and a maximum of 378 on 18 December. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly counts in Deep Bay during the year were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
665	9	7	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	240	64

058A Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* 斑背潛鴨

1999: A male was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 January and a female was on Pond 20 at Mai Po on 25 October; the latter record was the earliest ever in autumn the previous earliest being on 4 November 1991.

2000: A female was at Mai Po on 18 December.

062A Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* 紅胸秋沙鴨

1999: A female was at Ma Tso Lung on 21 March and four (one male and three females) were seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 21 and 22 March. Also a female or immature was seen at from Shuen Wan on 15 November. Such records away from Deep Bay are very rare indeed.

063A Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* 鵟 (魚鷹)

1999: As usual, most reports were from Deep Bay, where up to five were noted from the beginning of January to 21 April and from 23 September to the end of December, one on 11 July being the only summer report. Away from Deep Bay, there were regular reports of one in the Starling Inlet area between 21 February and 15 May and of up to two there and at Shuen Wan, Plover Cove Reservoir and adjacent waters from 27 September to the end of the year. The only other reports were of singles at The Brothers on 18 February, Cheung Chau on 1 May (presumably a migrant affected by the passage of Typhoon Leo) and Tai Lam Chung Reservoir on 29 September and 2 October. Results of co-ordinated monthly counts indicate that the decline in wintering numbers in Deep Bay noted in Carey et al. (2001) has continued. This year's high count of just five compares to counts of 13-16 during 1993-1995. Peak counts in each month in Deep Bay were:



6 Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*
Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong, 22 June 2002

Hok-fei Lee

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
4	5	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	5	4	4

2000: In the Deep Bay area, regularly recorded until 13 April and from 13 September. There were also singles on six dates between 2 May and 2 September. The total included 11 during a co-ordinated count on 10 December, which was the highest count of the year and also the first double-figure count since January 1997, possibly heralding a return to the higher numbers of the early 1990s. Away from Deep Bay, the only reports received were from Shuen Wan and Plover Cove, where singles were regularly sighted between 8 January and 21 March, and from 19 October to the end of the year. Peak counts in each month in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
8	6	1	1	1	-	1	1	2	3	4	11

064A Black Baza *Aviceda leucophotes* 黑冠鵟隼 (鳳頭鵟隼)

1999: Following sightings of flocks of 11 at Tai Po Kau and five in the Fanling area on 20 and 24 April, spring passage petered out and the only subsequent spring and summer reports involved one at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 25 April, two at Tai Po Kau village on 12 May, one at Shing Mun on 15 May, one near Fanling Golf Course on 14 June and one or two at Sha Lo Tung on 12 and 13 July. In a good autumn, there were singles at Mai Po village on 28 July and at Queen's Hill camp on 3 August, and three at Nam Chung on 8 August and at Hang Tau Tsuen on 27 August and 11 September; these were followed by a series of sightings from the Fanling Golf Course area, comprising six on 17 September, then, in October, ten on 4th, 19 on 7th, two on 12th and finally one on 13th. Elsewhere in October, there were six at Mong Tseng on 9th, four at Nam Chung on 10th and two at Kap Lung on 17th, the last of the autumn. In previous years, most reports of this species have come from the central and eastern NT. The predominance of records this year from the northern NT is noteworthy.

2000: A record of three flying northeast past Ta Kwu Ling on 18 April was the sole spring sighting. The only summer reports were from Hang Tau Tsuen where there were two on 28 June and one on 23 July. In autumn, one was seen soaring with a Besra *Accipiter virgatus* at Mong Tseng on 15 September, and finally 33 were seen at Ho Sheung Heung on 11 October. This was only the fourth ever flock of 30 or more.

065A Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus* 鳳頭蜂鷹

2000: One was at Shing Mun on 12 September (YHK).

066A Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* 黑翅鳶

1999: The only report in the first half of the year was of one moving north at Cheung Chau on 1 May during the passage of Typhoon Leo. In the second half of the year, all reports were from Mai Po, where a juvenile was present on 29

August and one was noted on eight dates between 19 September and 24 October.

2000: One at Long Valley on 3, 4 and 14 November was the only record.

067A Black Kite *Milvus migrans* 黑鳶 (麻鷹)

1999: Results of monthly counts in Deep Bay, which for the first time were made throughout the year and not just in winter, were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
109	96	22	11	7	10	9	60	25	43	32	60

The peak of 109 on 24 January is the second lowest winter total in Deep Bay in the period since 1992-93, when winter counts were started, the mean for the period being 151 and the range 72-186. Also, the relatively large number of birds counted in Deep Bay in August (on 15th) is surprising given that this seems too early for wintering birds to arrive and Deep Bay is not a site traditionally favoured by over-summering birds. As usual this species was recorded from widespread areas, 40 at Ma Wan on 2 October being the largest gathering noted outside Deep Bay.

2000: The only notable individual report, outside the context of the monthly Deep Bay count, was of 30 at Ma Wan on 2 February. Results of the monthly Deep Bay counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
131	75	41	66	2	nc	3	24	14	136	46	130

069A White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* 白腹海鷗

1999: Recorded as usual throughout the year. Apart from four sightings of three birds together, including three immatures at Lai Chi Wo on 30 January and three adults at Shuen Wan on 20 November, all reports referred to one or two birds. Most sightings were from the coast and islands of the eastern NT, notably Sham Chung, Shuen Wan, Double Haven, High Island and Round Island. Elsewhere, there were reports from Deep Bay, Fo Tan, Kam Tin, Pa Tau Kwu, Chek Lap Kok, Cheung Chau, the Cape Collinson and Cape D'Aguiar areas, Tai Tam, Po Toi and Green Island. A nest containing a three-week old chick was found at Green Island on 27 January, two adults were nest-building at Round Island on 11 October, and two adults roosted at a nest at Pa Tau Kwu, Lantau on 10 December. An immature in Deep Bay on 22 November was observed chasing a Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris*.

2000: Recorded in ones or twos in all months of the year. Apart from two adults at Tai Lam Chung on 3 September and a juvenile at Kam Tin on 9 November, all reports were from coastal sites such as Sha Chau, Chek Lap Kok, Siu Lam, Mai Po, Sham Chung, Shuen Wan, Plover Cove, Tolo Channel, Tap Mun, Sai Wan, Sai Kung, Lamma, Stanley and Po Toi. Nesting behaviour was noted at Sham Chung and Lo Fu Ngam.

071A Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela* 蛇鵟

1999: As usual all records were from the NT, with peak numbers in spring and autumn, though unusually there were no reports in May. Apart from a sighting of four together at Tai Mo Shan on 25 April, all records referred to one or two birds. Increases in numbers recorded in April and September-October, though suggesting the occurrence of migrants, mainly involved birds at traditional sites in the central NT, such as Tai Po Kau, Lam Tsuen, Tai Mo Shan and Shing Mun. The exceptions to this were one calling and displaying at Kop Tong on 14 February, two adults in the hills near the SAR boundary on 25 March, single calling birds at Mai Po on three dates between 1 and 21 April (possibly the same birds), two calling at Hang Tau Tsuen on 18 September and an immature at Kam Tin on 3 October. The summer sightings were from Sha Lo Tung, the Chinese University campus and the hills around Starling Inlet, and those in winter from Nam Chung, Mai Po (an immature on 28 December), Lai Chi Wo, Tai Po Kau, Fanling Golf Course, Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen and Yung Shue O. Vocalizations were noted this year during February-April and September-October and also once in July, and aerial displays were observed on three dates in February. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	7	3	15	3	2	2	2	5	6	1	1

2000: This year saw the highest ever annual total, though unusually only one was recorded in February and none in January. As usual, most reports were of one or two adults at sites in the central and eastern NT, especially Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun, Lam Tsuen, Kap Lung, Sha Lo Tung, and Ho Chung and adjacent



7 Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela*
Wun Yiu, Hong Kong, 27 October 2002

Marcus Ho

areas. The only higher counts were of four at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 19 March and at Lam Tsuen on 4 May, and three at Ta Kwu Ling on 18 April. The latter were flying northeast and thought to be migrating. Elsewhere, there were reports from Tuen Mun on 23 March, the Ho Sheung Heung-Ma Tso Lung area on 3 October (two), 27 November and 11 December, Mai Po on 9 November (a juvenile), Lai Chi Wo on 20 December and Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 December, all involving single adults or unaged birds, except as indicated. Vocalizations were noted this year in all months except January, whilst aerial display flights were observed on 19 March and 6 April at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen and Lam Tsuen respectively. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
-	1	8	11	8	1	3	5	11	9	12	7

072A Grey-faced Buzzard *Butastur indicus* 灰臉鵟鷹

1999: In the poorest year since 1992, reported on just three dates; in spring, four were flying north at Mai Po on 3 April and one was there the next day, and in autumn, one was near Fanling Golf Course on 7 November.

2000: One at Po Toi on 2 April was the only report, making this the poorest year since 1986, when there was also only one bird recorded.

073A Pied Harrier *Circus melanoleucos* 鵟鵒

1999: A juvenile was at Mai Po on 24 September (PJJ), an adult male was seen between Kam Tin and Sha Po on 10 October (J&JH), a juvenile was at Mai Po on 16 and 18 October (PJJ), and a juvenile female was at Mai Po on 4 November (PJJ).

074A Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus* 白腹鵟 (澤鵟)

1999: Recorded up to 15 April and from 19 September, with all reports from Deep Bay, except for an immature male at Plover Cove on 27 September. As usual, most reports referred to females, but at least two different males were reported in each winter period. Most counts were of one to three birds, but six (including five at Mai Po) were logged in the monthly count on 24 January and six were present at Mai Po on 5 November. Though not matching those made in the latter half of the 1980s, counts this year compare favourably with all made since winter 1992-93. Based on results of co-ordinated monthly counts and other reports, peak counts in Deep Bay in each month were as follows:

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

2000: In the first winter period, recorded regularly up to 12 March, then sporadically from 29 March to 16 April; in the second winter period, recorded on

15 and 18 September, then regularly from 27 September to the end of the year. All records were from the Deep Bay area, except for three juveniles over Kadoorie FBG on 8 October and a further juvenile at Chek Lap Kok on 24 October. As usual, most reports referred to females, but a sub-adult male was present at Fung Lok Wai on 30 November. One at Mai Po on 1 December was observed scavenging on the remains of a Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*. Peak counts in Deep Bay in each month were as follows:

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

075A Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* 鳳頭鷹

1999: Recorded from widespread localities in most months throughout the year, though unusually not in May or June. Apart from three at Ho Pui on 5 October, all other reports referred to one or two birds. Most sightings were from woodland around the Tai Mo Shan massif, especially Tai Po Kau, but there were also regular reports for the second successive year from the Fanling Golf Course area. Other localities where sightings were made, albeit irregularly, were Mong Tseng, Mai Po, Long Valley, Sha Lo Tung/Hok Tau, Nam Chung, Lai Chi Wo, Sai Sha, Silverstrand, Mt. Austin, Chai Wan catchment, Cape D'Aguiar, Cheung Chau and near Ngong Ping. Aerial display flights were noted for the first time in July. In an interaction with two Besras *A. virgatus* at Tai Po Kau on 8 November, a soaring bird was mobbed and apparently driven off. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	6	2	7	-	-	3	1	9	6	5	2

2000: Recorded from widespread localities in all months except June. Apart from four at Siu Lam on 17 September and three at Lam Tsuen on 4 May and Kadoorie FBG on 8 October, all reports referred to one or two birds. Once again, most sightings were from woodland around the Tai Mo Shan massif, especially Tai Po Kau and Lam Tsuen, where aerial display flights were noted during April-May and September-October. Displaying birds were also observed in these months at Ng Tung Chai, Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen, Ho Chung and Mt. Austin, as well as in March over Tai Po and in December at A Ma Wat. Elsewhere, single birds at Po Toi on 15 April and 5 November were the first recorded on that island, and there were again records from Tsim Bei Tsui, Mai Po, Long Valley, Ma Tso Lung, Sha Lo Tung and Fei Ngo Shan. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	1	4	7	4	-	1	3	11	10	7	3



8 Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 2 November 2002

Marcus Ho



9 Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*
Zoological and Botanical Garden, Hong Kong, June 2002

Samson So

076A Chinese Goshawk *Accipiter soloensis*

赤腹鷹

1999: Spring passage was very good, with a total of 246 birds recorded between 20 April and 10 May. The highest count was 195 at Green Island on 30 April (P JL), only the fifth ever three-figure count and the first away from the Mong Tseng hills. Other reports in April comprised one bird at Kadoorie FBG on

20th, three at Tsim Bei Tsui on 25th, four between Yung Shue O and Hoi Ha Wan on 26th, one at Mai Po on 29th and nine in the Mai Po area on 30th. In May, there were 18 at Mai Po on 1st, four there on 2nd, with two at Cape D'Aguilar and one at Cheung Chau on the same day, one at Tung Ping Chau on 8th, six at Po Toi on 9th and one at Fo Tan on 10th. In autumn, when this species is typically very scarce, singles at Mt. Austin and Po Toi on 30 September were the only confirmed reports.

2000: Overall, a poor year for this species with just 16 individuals reported. However, both spring and autumn saw the earliest ever records in those seasons with five at Mai Po on 7 April (YTY), and three southeast over Kadoorie FBG on 16 September (P JL, GJC), as well as one at Siu Lam on 20 September (JC, WT), the previous early dates being 10 April and 23 September. Other records in spring were of single birds in April at Cheung Chau on 11th, Cape D'Aguilar, Kadoorie FBG and Mai Po on 15th and 16th, and Po Toi on 15th and 30th, and in autumn at Kadoorie FBG on 2 October.



10 Chinese Goshawk *Accipiter soloensis*
Po Toi, Hong Kong, 22 April 2001

Ho-fai Cheung

077A Japanese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter gularis*

日本松雀鷹

1999: In the best year to date, 29 birds were recorded between 9 February and 14 April and between 10 October and 5 December. Apart from two at Mai Po on 8 April and 4 November, and three there two days later (at least two of which were different individuals), all other reports referred to single birds. Once again, the vast majority of records were from Mai Po, the sole exceptions being single birds at Green Island on 24 March, Po Toi on 11 October, Tai Po Kau on 7

November and Kadoorie FBG on 19 November. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
-	2	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	10	9	1

2000: A total of 15 individuals was recorded, all in the last four months of the year. A young male at Shuen Wan on 29 September (RWL) was by two days the earliest ever autumn record. In October records came from Mai Po on 4th and 26th and Long Valley on 31st, while in November there were further reports from Kam Tin on 2nd and 3rd, Kadoorie FBG on 5th and 6th (two), Mai Po on 13th, Yau Mei San Tsuen on 27th and Long Valley on 28th. Finally, December produced three records: at Tsim Bei Tsui on 3rd, Lut Chau on 7th and A Ma Wat on 20th. Except where indicated, all sightings were of single birds. Of those sexed, seven were males and four were females.

078A Besra *Accipiter virgatus*

松雀鷹

1999: As with Japanese Sparrowhawk, the best year yet for this species, with a total of 57 birds recorded. Except for four at Mai Po on 8 October, all reports were of one or two birds, and all were from the mainland NT, apart from singles at Cheung Chau on 5 June, Tai Tam CP on 9 August and Kowloon Park on 7 November. Localities with multiple reports were Mai Po (which accounted for almost half of all records throughout the year), Shuen Wan and Tai Po Kau. Nesting very likely occurred at Shuen Wan; a male and (less frequently) a female were regularly seen flying in or out of the same *fung shui* wood or hunting nearby between 25 May and 19 June, and on six occasions during this period one was seen carrying prey (unidentified small birds) towards the *fung shui* wood. Aerial display flights were noted on four dates at Tai Po Kau and once at Lai Chi Chung, all in April. Also, in an interaction with a soaring Crested Goshawk *A. trivirgatus* at Tai Po Kau on 8 November, a male and female Besra mobbed and apparently drove off the larger bird. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	-	5	7	3	5	8	4	8	9	4	1

2000: Though unusually there were no June or July reports, birds were reported in all other months, with September, October and November accounting for over 50% of records. Apart from three at Tai Po Kau on 19 January, all reports referred to one or two birds and, with the exception of one at Chek Lap Kok on 20 April, all were from the mainland NT. More than half of all records were from two sites: Tai Po Kau and Mai Po. Elsewhere, there were multiple sightings at Kadoorie FBG, Long Valley, Mong Tseng and Sha Lo Tung, and single reports from Crest Hill, Lok Ma Chau, Kam Tin, Kap Lung, Lam Tsuen, Pun Shan Chau,

Wu Kau Tang and Sai Kung. Aerial display flights this year were noted in January and May at Tai Po Kau and in February at Mai Po. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	6	3	3	3	-	-	1	8	9	8	2

079A Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

雀鷹

1999: One was at Long Valley on 31 October (RWL).

Sparrowhawk sp. *Accipiter sp.*

1999: Unidentified accipiters were recorded from widespread areas in all seasons, though mainly in autumn. Except for four at Hoi Ha Wan on 14 November, all these reports referred to one or two birds. The number of such birds reported in each month was as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	-	-	4	-	1	-	-	4	9	9	-

2000: There were in all 24 reports of unidentified accipiters, seen in ones or twos from widespread areas in most months, though mainly in March-April (ten records) and September (six records).

080A Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

普通鵟

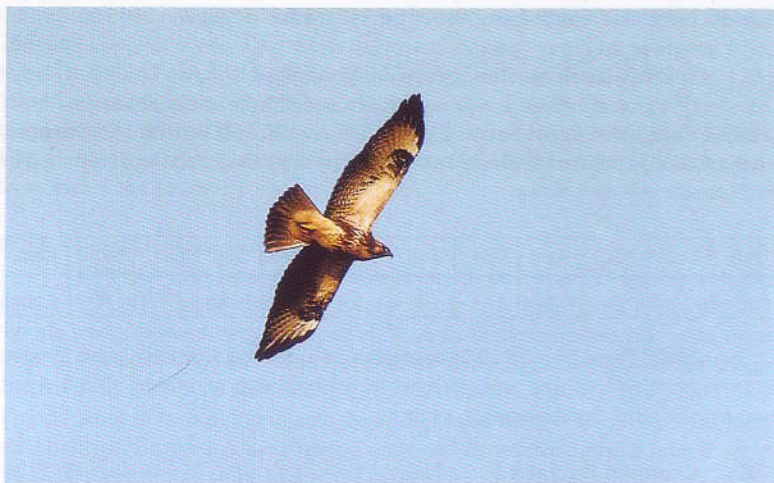
1999: Recorded up to 3 April and from 17 October. In the first winter period, reported regularly from widespread sites, mainly in the NT, in January and February, but on only two dates each in March and April. In the second winter period, though mainly reported from Deep Bay in October, it subsequently became very widespread in November and December. Among the more unusual localities with sightings were Penfold Park, Chek Lap Kok, Chai Wan catchment and Green Island. Based on results of co-ordinated monthly counts and other reports, peak counts in Deep Bay in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
4	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	5	3

2000: Recorded up to 16 April and from 22 October. Apart from single birds at Shuen Wan on four dates between 8 January and 5 March, all reports in the first winter period were from the Deep Bay area and hinterland. A total of nine logged in that area during a co-ordinated count on 13 February is a new high count, the previous highest being eight at Mai Po on 16 February 1998. Sightings in the second winter period, though mainly from Mai Po, Kam Tin, Palm Springs, Long Valley, San Tin, Ma Tso Lung and other sites in or bordering Deep Bay,

were also made from widespread parts of the NT, including Siu Lam, Kap Lung, Kadoorie FBG, Pun Shan Chau, Shuen Wan, Lai Chi Wo, High Island and once — on 25 December - from Choi Hung on the urban edge of Kowloon. Peak counts in Deep Bay in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	9	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	5



11 Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 2 November 2002

Marcus Ho



12 Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 2 November 2002

Marcus Ho

081A Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga* VU

鳥鵟

1999: Though regularly recorded in the Deep Bay area until 9 March and from 23 October, fewer birds were reported than usual, three at Mai Po on 21 February being the highest count. Most reports were from the Mai Po area, but birds were also noted at Tsim Bei Tsui, Nam Sang Wai and Kam Tin. Peak counts in each month were as follows:

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

2000: In the first winter period, an adult (or sub-adult) and a juvenile were regularly recorded at Mai Po until 25 February. The only subsequent sightings involved two adults at Mai Po on 7 March, an unaged bird there on 12 March, and a juvenile at Nam Sang Wai on 2 April. In the second winter period, following a sighting of an adult at Mai Po on 31 October, there were regular reports until the end of the year, mainly at Mai Po, but also at Tsim Bei Tsui, Nam Sang Wai, Lut Chau and Ma Tso Lung, of single adults and single juveniles, occasionally together. This species has clearly declined since the 1990s when up to six together were recorded. All records were from Deep Bay and peak counts in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
2	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2

082A Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* VU

白肩鵟

1999: Recorded only from Deep Bay and adjacent areas up to 3 April and from 24 October. The peak count was just five in Deep Bay on 9 February. Peak counts in each month were as follows:



13 Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*, juvenile
Crest Hill, Hong Kong, December 1998

John Holmes

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

2000: Recorded up to 23 March and from 26 October, though with most records in January-February and November-December. All records were from Deep Bay and adjacent areas. In the first winter period, at least two adults, a sub-adult, two second- or third-year birds and a juvenile were noted. Records in the second winter period involved at least two adults, one or two third- or fourth-years, a second-year and two juveniles. The highest single count was of five during a co-ordinated Deep Bay count on 13 February. Peak counts in each month were as follows:

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

As can be seen from a comparison of peak counts in each winter since winter 1996/7, a sharp decline of this globally endangered species has occurred since the mid 1990s, very likely linked to a decline in the number of duck farms in Deep Bay from this time:

1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
7	9	11	9	14	6	6	5

083A Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus* 白腹山鷲

1999: Reported throughout the year from widespread areas. Pairs were noted at Tai Tam CP, Chi Fu, and in the hills along the SAR boundary, and an adult was seen displaying to a sub-adult at Ta Kwu Ling on 17 October. At Mai Po, up to three, including a sub-adult, were reported in October-November. Elsewhere, one or two were noted at Long Valley, Tai Po Kau, Shek Kong catchment, Lai Chi Wo, Victoria Peak and near Ngong Ping.

2000: Whereas this eagle is usually reported from widespread areas of the NT, all records this year were from Deep Bay. One near Mai Po on 25 February, the only report in the first half of the year, was followed an immature at Yau Mei San Tsuen on 19 August, two at Crest Hill on 16 September, single juveniles at Mai Po on five dates between 2 October and 13 December, and one or two adults at Ma Tso Lung on 11 and 18 December.

085A Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* 紅隼

1999: Recorded from widespread localities between 3 February and 3 April and from 25 September to the end of the year; most records, as usual, were in autumn and the absence of records in January was unusual. In a series of autumn reports from Chek Lap Kok, up to five were noted between 12 October and 26

November. Reports elsewhere referred to one or two birds. Away from traditional sites in Deep Bay and the surrounding plains, recorded at High Island, Cloudy Hill, Robin's Nest, Kadoorie FBG, Lai Chi Wo, Clear Water Bay CP, Mt. Austin, Pottinger Peak, Po Toi and Penny's Bay. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
-	5	8	1	-	-	-	-	2	25	18	7

2000: In a very good year, regularly recorded from widespread localities between 14 January and 31 March and from 27 September to the end of the year, with most records as usual in October-November, indicating passage during this period. Outside of these dates, there were single birds on 11 April, 27 July - an immature male, the first adequately documented summer record (GJC) - and 14 September, all at Chek Lap Kok, and on 16 September at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen. All reports referred to single birds, except at Tsim Bei Tsui, where there were two on 15 January, and Chek Lap Kok, where there were three on 17 February and up to five throughout October. Chek Lap Kok and the Deep Bay area and hinterland, especially Long Valley, together accounted for almost 90% of records. Elsewhere, there were sightings at Hong Lok Yuen (January), Fei Ngo Shan, Tseung Kwan O and Crescent Island (March), Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen (September), Po Toi, Sha Lo Tung, Ho Chung, King's Park and Chinese University (November) and High Island Reservoir (December). Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
9	7	7	1	-	-	1	-	4	25	15	4

085.5A Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis* 亞穆爾隼

1999: A juvenile, possibly male, was seen at Mai Po on 24 October (PJJ, MRL). This is the first accepted record for Hong Kong, although a bird at Mai Po on 22 October 1997 has been accepted as a juvenile of either Amur Falcon or Red-footed Falcon *F. vespertinus*. Once the outcome of further investigations into the separation of those two forms is known, and every possibility of resolving the identity of the 1997 bird has been explored, a paper documenting the addition of this species to the Hong Kong List will be published.

086A Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo* 燕隼

1999: In a fairly typical year, recorded in ones and twos between 8 April and 24 October. All reports in April and May were in the area bordered by Fairview Park, Sha Po, Mai Po and Chau Tau. A pair was seen at a nest on a pylon at the latter site on 24 April (VBP). Following a period from 8 May to 10 July when none were recorded, single birds were sighted at Mai Po on 11 July, Sha Lo Tung on 19 July and Palm Springs on 17 August. In autumn, when, as usual, most records occurred, birds were again noted, mainly in the northern NT, but also at widespread localities elsewhere, including Cheung Chau and Tai Po Kau in

September, and Chek Lap Kok, Mt. Austin, Shan Tong and Ta Kwu Ling in October. Successful predation was noted on two occasions - two small bats were taken at Wo Shang Wai on 22 April, and a Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* at Mai Po on 10 September. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
-	-	-	6	2	-	2	1	8	11	-	-

2000: Recorded between 13 April and 5 November. There were six spring and summer records, all in the northern NT: at Nam Sang Wai on 13 April, Chau Tau on 23 April (three), Mai Po fishponds on 17 May, Long Valley on 5 July (a juvenile) and 26 July, and Hang Tau Tsuen on 25 July. Following one at Long Valley on 4 September, autumn passage mainly occurred between 13 September and 23 October, when two sites, Long Valley and Chau Tau, accounted for almost half of records. There were also reports during this period from Mai Po, Chek Lap Kok, Tai Po Kau, Lok Ma Chau, Shek Kong Catchment, Siu Lam and Kam Tin. All sightings were of one or two birds. The only subsequent record concerned two at Kam Tin on 5 November (YTY), by three days the latest ever documented record for the species, though Carey *et al.* (2001) refer to an undocumented record of one at Pok Fu Lam on 6 November 1941. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
-	-	-	4	1	-	3	-	8	12	2	-

087A Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* 遊隼

1999: From the start of the year until 3 May and from 24 October to the end of the year, up to two were regularly reported in the Deep Bay area, mainly at Mai Po, and occasionally at Chau Tau, Robin's Nest, Starling Inlet, Sham Chung, Central District, Chai Wan catchment, Lung Fu Shan, Cape D' Aguilar, Chek Lap Kok and Cheung Chau. The only reports outside of this period concerned single birds at Leadmine Pass, Chai Wan catchment and the Shuen Wan-Plover Cove area (on four dates), and three at Tai O on 3 October. As in 1998, a pale adult was noted roosting at the southern end of Mai Po on several dates in both winter periods. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
2	5	6	12	4	-	2	-	2	4	3	4

2000: In Deep Bay, up to two (including an adult and an immature) were regularly recorded between 9 January and 10 March, mainly at Mai Po, but also occasionally at Tai Sang Wai and Tsim Bei Tsui. Following sightings of an adult at Mai Po between 2 and 9 April, there were no further reports until late summer

when single juveniles were seen at Mai Po on 12 and 26 August. Thereafter, none were seen until 15 October when one was at Mai Po. This was followed by regular reports of single birds in the Deep Bay area to the end of the year. Again, Mai Po accounted for most reports, but there were also sightings in this period from Long Valley, Lok Ma Chau, Kam Tin, Tsim Bei Tsui, Nam Sang Wai and Tai Sang Wai. Outside of Deep Bay and adjacent areas, there were just three records of single birds: at Shuen Wan on 8 March (an adult), Kowloon Tong on 10 March and Chek Lap Kok on 31 October.

088A Chinese Francolin *Francolinus pintadeanus* 鸕鶿

1999: Recorded mainly between 25 March and 18 June, with additional records in September, October and December, from Fanling, Sai Kung, Chau Tau, Hok Tau, Crest Hill, Yung Shue O, High Junk Peak, Penny's Bay and Shek Wu Wai.

2000: All records fell between 17 April and 6 August, and came from Wu Kau Tang, Nam Chung, Luk Keng, Sha Lo Tung, Pak Sha Tau, High Junk Peak, Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen, Tai Mo Shan, Siu Lam, Hang Tau and Crest Hill.

089A Japanese Quail *Coturnix japonica* 鸕鶿

1999: There were just two reports in the earlier part of the year: singles at Long Valley on 9 January, and at Wong Chuk Yeung on 25 April. Between 17 October and 18 December a total of 22 birds was recorded. Of these, 18 were at Long Valley, of which nine were in the period 28 October to 7 November, suggesting an increase in the numbers passing through at this time. In addition, the only record from Chek Lap Kok came on 29 October. However, a report of three at Sha Lo Tung on 18 December was the joint highest single-site count during the year, and suggests that the accessibility of the habitat at Long Valley,



14 Ruddy-breasted Crake *Porzana fusca*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, September 2002

Samson So

together with the greater frequency with which it is visited, may be tending to over-emphasise the degree to which this species favours it.

2000: There were again just two records in the earlier part of the year: three at Long Valley on 26 February and one there on 4 April. In the autumn it was not reported until 29 October when one was at Long Valley, but all but two, of a total of fourteen recorded up to 11 December, were seen before 10 November, again suggesting peak passage occurred in early November. All records were from Long Valley, apart from singles at Kam Tin on 6 November and Ma Tso Lung on 11 December. The pattern of records in both 1999 and 2000, with the preponderance in autumn and significantly fewer in spring, is the direct opposite of the historical pattern (see Carey *et al.*, 2001), and could indicate population instability in at least some part of its range.

093A Slaty-breasted Rail *Gallirallus striatus* 藍胸秧雞

1999: As usual this species was under-recorded, with only two records of single birds during the Deep Bay monthly waterbird counts of March and November. In addition, two were reported along the boardwalk at Mai Po in January. Away from Deep Bay, two juveniles were seen at Long Valley on 21 September and one bird was recorded at Mui Wo on 27 December.

2000: Up to two birds were recorded in the mangroves at Mai Po in most months of the year. The sole higher count was of four during the October waterbird count. There were no reports from elsewhere.

095A Slaty-legged Crane *Rallina eurizonoides* 白喉斑秧雞

1999: This species is now known to be a widespread, if localised summer visitor to closed-canopy shrubland throughout much of Hong Kong, and its distinctive vocalisations were noted at the following sites: Chau Tau (16-24 April), KARC (16 April), Yung Shue O (16-25 April) and Wong Chuk Yeung (25 April). From 1999 onwards, the Records Committee has ceased routine assessment of records of this species.

2000: The first record of the year concerned two calling birds at Sha Lo Tung on 22 March, which is the earliest date for such a record. Subsequently, calling birds were noted from 11 April to 20 May, during 12-15 June and on 13 July. These records were from the following sites: Luk Keng, Wu Kau Tang, Bride's Pool, Plover Cove, Tai Mei Tuk, Shuen Wan, Sha Lo Tung, Hok Tau, Cloudy Hill, Tai Po Kau, Pun Shan Chau (north of Tai Po Kau), Shing Mun, Yung Shue O, Jacob's Ladder (near Cheung Sheung, Sai Kung), Shek Kong, Chung Pui and Tsim Bei Tsui. It is clear that this species is a locally common summer visitor to areas of closed-canopy shrubland in the NT. There is no reason to suppose that it is not equally common in areas of suitable habitat on the islands of Hong Kong and Lantau, though records from these areas are few. In addition, a bird was taken into captivity at KFBG on 5 November.

098A Baillon's Crane *Porzana pusilla* 小田雞

1999: One was present at Long Valley on 1 October, a typical date for this species.

099A Ruddy-breasted Crane *Porzana fusca* 紅胸田雞

1999: Seven records of a bird at Long Valley between 3 January and 3 March are presumed to relate to the same individual; one was also present there on 5 May. In addition during the first winter period, one was at Mai Po on 23 February. In the second part of the year, there were further records of singles at Long Valley on 16 November and at Mai Po on 5 December.

100A Brown Crane *Amaurornis akool* 紅腳苦惡鳥

1999: One was seen at Nam Chung on 31 October.

101A White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus* 白胸苦惡鳥

1999: The only reports of interest were of birds apparently breeding at Hong Kong Park (undated) and at Big Wave Bay, HK Island on 1 August. Monthly waterbird count figures for this species were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
24	40	44	30	41	32	36	11	19	33	23	36

2000: During the monthly Deep Bay waterbird counts generally up to 37 birds were recorded in the Deep Bay area, though the highest count was of 63 in November. The highest single site count was of 12 birds at Long Valley on 29 September. No other significant reports were received. Monthly waterbird count figures for this species were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
7	13	25	15	23	nc	31	33	30	37	63	30

102A Watercock *Gallixrex cinerea* 董雞

1999: There were two records during the year: a male at Mai Po from 29 April to 3 May, and a female there on 16 June.

103A Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* 黑水雞

1999: The highest numbers were recorded at Mai Po, Tam Kon Chau and Tai Sang Wai. Away from the Deep Bay area, up to four were noted at Long Valley, and up to 13 were present at Starling Inlet (though none were recorded there from May to September). The count of 166 in December was the highest count on record. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
66	119	87	39	12	2	2	3	3	41	73	166

2000: During the monthly Deep Bay waterbird counts, up to 93 birds were recorded in the first winter period and up to 85 were noted in the second winter period. The only midsummer record was of two during the August waterbird

count. All records occurred in the northern NT. The only report of successful breeding involved a sighting of three juveniles on 22 May at Lok Ma Chau. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
74	76	93	30	15	nc	0	2	7	23	83	85

104A Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra* 白骨頂

1999: The peak count in the first part of the year was of 679 during the February waterbird count. Towards the end of the year the monthly count figures were exceeded by counts of 290 on 23 November and 370 on 8 December. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
556	679	48	0	1	0	1	2	0	1	45	115

2000: The peak counts in the two winter periods were 654 in January and 315 in December. Three birds were recorded in the May waterbird count, but there were no further records until the October count. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
654	146	94	1	3	nc	0	0	0	1	42	315

105A Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* 水雉

1999: One was at Mai Po on 10 June, while up to two were noted there between 11 and 17 October. In addition, one was at San Tin on 15 November.

2000: Singles were recorded at Mai Po on 7 October, San Tin on 25 October and Kam Tin from 31 October to 5 November. This was a typical series of dates.

106A Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* 彩鶉

1999: Recorded at three sites during the year. At Kam Tin up to eight were present during 4-6 February, six were noted on 9 April and singles were present on 3 October and 30 December. At Long Valley up to 12 (on 4 February) were noted in the first winter period, up to five (on 15 April) were recorded in spring, up to four (on 18 September) were present in autumn, and one bird was noted in autumn, on 7 and 13 November. At a small area of wet agricultural land north of Sheung Shui, six were present on 29 January with eight there on 12 November.

2000: Recorded from five localities, all in the northwest NT. At Kam Tin the peak count was 40 on 24 October (MRL), equalling the previous highest count. At Long Valley five were noted in spring, up to five were noted in the summer (confirmed breeding records at this time comprising two chicks on 16 July and

one egg on 21 July), up to nine birds (on 11 October, including one chick) were recorded in autumn, and the sole second winter period record was of one on 19 December. At Man Kam To three were seen on 12 September, and at Yau Mei San Tsuen one was seen on 19 August. At Ho Sheung Heung four were present on 11 October.

106.5A Eurasian Oystercatcher *Himantopus ostralegus* 蠣鶉

2000: One was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 9 and 10 December (WKC.YTY). This is the first record for Hong Kong.

107A Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* 黑翅長腳鶉

1999: The peak Deep Bay count in the first winter period was of 358 at Wo Shang Wai on 22 February (PJL); this was, at the time, the highest winter count in Hong Kong. Substantial numbers were regularly recorded on an abandoned fishpond at that location from the beginning of the year to 2 March. Spring numbers were rather low, with four noted during the April waterbird count and nine present on 3 May. The first autumn record was of one on 15 July. Subsequently, numbers gradually increased, with up to 38 birds present from 15 August to 11 September, 69 on 12 September, 210 on 23 September and 504 on 21 October (GJC), a new high. The number of birds in Deep Bay subsequently declined to 301 on 25 October and 30 at Wo Shang Wai on 18 November. Away from the Deep Bay area, at Cape D'Aguilar four were seen on 16 September, with 11 there on 26th; at Chek Lap Kok up to five were noted on 21 and 22 September; at Cheung Chau 36 were seen on 15 September; at Kam Tin 30 were present on 30 October; at Long Valley between 10 and 60 birds were recorded from 4 September to 2 October, with the highest counts made on 17 and 24 September, and one was seen on 22 October. In addition, singles were seen at Po Toi on 5 September, and over Tseung Kwan O on 17 September, in the immediate wake of Typhoon York. Some of the other September records, some of which involved relatively high counts for sites away from Deep Bay, were also probably at least partly related to the passage of tropical storms at this time. Monthly waterbird count figures from sites within the Waterbird Monitoring Programme recording area were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	4	38	0	1	38	69	57	0	1

2000: The first significant count of the year was of 560 at an abandoned fishpond at Wo Shang Wai on 15 February (PJL); this is the highest count on record in Hong Kong, and highlights this species' preference for inactive or abandoned fishponds during the winter months. Unfortunately, as this area is not part of the Waterbird Monitoring Programme recording area, this count is not reflected in that dataset. Spring numbers peaked at 185 on 25 April, followed by a gradual decline to the final record of the spring, 25 on 8 June. The first record of southward passage concerned ten on 15 July. Counts remained at 20 or fewer until 9 September, and subsequently up to 180 until 15 October when an influx

brought a count of 389, the highest of the autumn. A count of 266 was made on 20 December. Away from Deep Bay, at Long Valley, apart from 120 on 10 October, up to 13 birds were recorded from 29 August to 11 October, and at Man Kam To, 19 were present on 12 September. Monthly waterbird count figures for sites within the Waterbird Monitoring Programme recording area were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	158	56	nc	10	5	180	389	5	21

108A Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

反嘴鹬

1999: Numbers in the first winter period peaked at 1295 during the February waterbird count. In spring, 600 remained on 25 March, 201 were noted on 6 April and 79 were present on 22 April; numbers subsequently fell to 13 on 26 April, although 27 were present on 2 and 3 May, perhaps indicating an unusual



15 Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 24 March 2001

Ho-fai Cheung

late spring influx of migrants. The first record in the second part of the year was of 23 birds on 21 October. Numbers subsequently increased to 59 on 4 November, 389 in the November waterbird count, and 941 in the December count. Full monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
850	1295	760	95	0	0	0	0	0	0	389	941

2000: The highest count of the first winter period was of 1758 on 15 January. Numbers slowly declined to 1506 in mid-February, 1220 in mid-March, 465 at the beginning of April, 114 on 19 April, six on 1 May and, finally, one on 21 May. The first record of the autumn was of one on 23 September; no more than five were then recorded until 29 October, when 18 were present. The November waterbird count recorded 672, and 1569 were present on 10 December. An unusual record concerned up to 13 on fishponds at Lok Ma Chau from 29 November to 20 December. Away from Deep Bay, one was at Kam Tin on 26 and 29 November; this is only the second record away from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1758	1506	1220	55	1	nc	0	0	0	1	672	1569

109A Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*

普通燕鷗

1999: The first record of the year involved three at Chek Lap Kok on 26 February; this was followed by up to seven there on 19 and 20 March and two at Mai Po on 23 March. The main period of spring passage occurred from 1 April to 6 May, when the highest counts were of 14 at Cape D' Aguilar on 2 May, during the passage of Typhoon Leo, and ten at Mai Po on 6 May. Subsequent spring records involved up to four at Mai Po on 11 and 13 May. The only autumn records were of two at Mai Po on 21 October and one at Chek Lap Kok two days later.

2000: The first record of the spring involved one at Tai Sang Wai on 4 March. Subsequent higher counts were 23 at Chek Lap Kok on 16 March (with nine there on 23rd) and 22 at Mai Po on 13 April, the final record of the spring. Apart from these, other records were of three birds or fewer. The only autumn records involved two at Mai Po on 14 October and one at Kam Tin on 21 October.

110A Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

鳳頭麥雞

1999: There were four records during the year: one at Mai Po seen on 8 and 18 January (presumed to be the same bird), six at Long Valley on 16 November (with one present on 20th) and seven at Mai Po on 17 November.

2000: In the first part of the year one was at Ma Tso Lung on 4 and 10 February. In the second part, a juvenile was at Mai Po on 22 November, singles were reported from both Lok Ma Chau and Tsim Bei Tsui on 6 December, with what were perhaps these two birds together at Mai Po on 16 and 17 December. Away from Deep Bay, the only record was of two at Shuen Wan on 6 December.

111A Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus*

灰頭麥雞

1999: In the Kam Tin and Sha Po area, five were recorded on 22 January, six were present on 25 September and 10 October, eight on 17 October and 14 on 7 November. At Long Valley, one was present on 22 February, with another seen there from 24 September to 8 October, and on 20 November; at Ma Tso Lung one was noted on 21 November; at Mai Po singles were present on 20 April, 17 October and 13 November, with five present on 17 September; and at Tsim Bei Tsui one was present on 27 December.

2000: The site of crucial importance for the continued presence of a wintering population in Hong Kong remains Kam Tin. Up to 15 birds were reported in the first winter period up to 29 February, and in the second winter period from 9 October, the peak count being ten. In the Deep Bay area singles were at Lok Ma Chau on 15 October, at Mai Po and between Lok Ma Chau and Ma Tso Lung on 20 February (presumed same), at Mai Po on 13 November, and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 January and 3 February, with two there on 3 December. A juvenile at Chek Lap Kok on 30 October was the only other record.

112A Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* 太平洋金斑鴉

1999: The highest count in Deep Bay in the first winter period was of 69 birds in the February waterbird count, a notably low total compared to previous counts at this time of year. Spring migrants were noted from at least 25 March, when 91 were present; numbers subsequently increased to 137 on 30 March, 165 on 7 April and 306 on 14 April. A minor influx in late April saw 48 present on 30th, and 23 were still present on 3 May. The first record of the autumn involved two on 8 August; numbers subsequently increased to 56 on 12 September, 85 on 7 October and 93 on 4 November. Away from Deep Bay, one was present at Chek Lap Kok on 3 April, with three there on 28 April, seven were at Cheung Chau on 29 April, with one remaining on 1 May (both during the passage of Typhoon Leo), and five were at Long Valley on 27 September, with two there on 1 and 2 October. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
68	69	51	306	3	0	0	6	56	38	87	59

2000: The relatively low numbers of this species recorded in recent years continued with a peak count in the first and second winter periods of 69 and 87 respectively. Northward-bound migrants were noted from 24 March when 102 were present; numbers subsequently increased to peak at 320 on 7 April. A sharp decline occurred in the last ten days of April, with 42 on 27th being the last record until 10 May, which saw the beginning of a small influx of five birds. The final record of the spring was of four on 21 May. The first record of southward passage occurred on 12 August, with an initial influx that brought 45 on 19 August. Numbers declined somewhat, before a second influx brought 209 on 12 October. The wintering population appeared to be somewhat lower however (see above). Away from the Deep Bay area, one was at Long Valley from 1 September to 23 October, with four there on 21 October. At Kai Sai Chau eight were on the golf course on 20 October, and at Shuen Wan one was present on 2 May. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
67	64	65	116	0	nc	0	1	37	81	193	0

113A Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* 灰斑鴉

1999: The highest count in the first winter period was of 347 in the February waterbird count. Numbers in Deep Bay subsequently declined to 35 on 23 March, 12 in early April, six by the middle of the month, five at the end of the month and three in early May, further declining to two, present from 6 to 16 May. The first Deep Bay record of the autumn was of one on 26 August. No more than ten were recorded until 21 October, when 15 were present. Numbers then gradually rose to 32 on 4 November, 234 during the November waterbird count and 243 in the December count. Away from Deep Bay, up to eight birds were counted at Sha Tau Kok in the waterbird counts to March, while up seven were present in the November and December waterbird counts. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
262	347	10	6	2	0	0	0	2	7	234	243

2000: The peak of the first winter period was 309 during the February waterbird count. Numbers declined to 150 by the time of the March count. Counts remained in the 30s for much of April, before a decline began on 27th, seeing numbers fall to four by 28 May, the final record of the spring. The first autumn record occurred on 2 September, and numbers gradually increased to 23 by 29 October. An influx in the first half of November saw 96 recorded in the November waterbird count, while 170 were present in the December count. All records occurred in Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
200	309	150	33	4	nc	0	0	2	14	96	170

114A Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* 劍鴉

1999: One was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 23 October (RWL).

2000: One was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 17 and 21 January, 22, 24 and 25 February and 9 March, and on a fishpond at Tsim Bei Tsui on 25 February (GJC, YTY, MT), and also on 27 and 29 October (RWL, GJC).

115A Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus* 長嘴鴉

1999: An adult was seen on a drained fishpond near Mai Po village on 5 December (GJC). This is the third record for Hong Kong.

116A Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* 金眶鴉

1999: The count of 224 made during the January waterbird count was the highest count in the Deep Bay area during the first winter period. Numbers declined to eight during April and May, while a slight increase to 13 and 18 during the following two months presumably reflected the presence of the local post-breeding population. The November waterbird count total of 119 was the highest of the

second winter period. Away from the Deep Bay area, reports were received from Chek Lap Kok (up to ten birds, including recently-fledged juveniles), the Kam Tin-Sha Po area, Long Valley (peak count of 53 on 13 November), Po Toi (one bird on 5 September) and Starling Inlet (peak count of ten on 23 January). Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
224	152	94	8	8	13	18	4	7	79	119	116

2000: In the first winter period the highest Deep Bay count was of 213 on fishponds at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20 February. A count of 245 in October perhaps indicates the presence of passage migrants, while the December waterbird count recorded 247 birds. Away from the Deep Bay area, birds were reported from Chek Lap Kok (where breeding occurred), Kam Tin (maximum count 28), Long Valley (maximum count 34 on 13 October) and Shuen Wan (maximum count 24 on 5 March). Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
118	23	172	2	0	nc	8	13	71	245	129	247

117A Kentish Plover *Charadrius dubius*

環頸鷸

1999: The only significant count for the first winter period was of 2475 birds during the January waterbird count. Approximately 1000 birds remained as late as 21 March, but only up to 14 birds were recorded in April, with the latest Deep Bay record of the spring involving four on 26 April. The first record of the autumn was of three birds on 21 September. Numbers gradually increased to 592 on 25 October, 801 on 4 November and 2110 in the December waterbird count. Away from the Deep Bay area, at Chek Lap Kok up to 120 were recorded in the first winter period, the final record of the spring there occurring on 12 April, the first record of the autumn on 21 September, and numbers in the later part of the year peaking at 104 on 25 November. At Pak Shek (Tolo Harbour) 20 were present on 18 November, while at Sha Tau Kok up to 11 were noted in the first winter period and one remained as late as 15 May. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
2475	3	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	477	2110

2000: The highest count in the first winter period was of 3000 birds during the January waterbird count. By the end of March the great bulk of the wintering flock had departed, leaving up to 14 in the first week of April. Up to four birds were subsequently recorded in spring, until the final record of one on 23 April. The first Deep Bay record of southward passage occurred on 26 August when three were present. Subsequent counts remained below this figure until the

beginning of the influx of wintering birds, in early October. By the end of October at least 950 were present, and by the time of the December waterbird count the number had reached 2372. Away from the Deep Bay area, this species was noted at Chek Lap Kok (highest counts: 87 on 18 February and 68 on 24 November), Long Valley (one on 3 and 4 November) and Shuen Wan (up to 22 in the first winter period up to the end of March). Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3000	1750	48	1	0	nc	0	0	0	569	1009	2372



16 Kentish Plover *Charadrius dubius*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, November 2001

Wing-yea Chu

118A Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*

蒙古沙鷸

1999: Up to 21 were present in Deep Bay in the first winter period. Spring numbers there increased from 12 in early April to 52 by the middle of the month and a peak count of 110 on 21st. Although 55 remained on 30 April, during May no more than six birds were recorded and the last record was on 13 May. First recorded in the autumn on 3 August; for the remainder of the southward migration period, however, only one or two birds were noted on five dates, with the latest on 23 September. Wintering birds appear to have been present from 21 October, numbers peaking at 18 in the December waterbird count. Away from the Deep Bay area, one was noted at Chek Lap Kok on 27 April; at Sha Tau Kok up to 36 were counted in the first winter period, 46 were counted on 27 April and four were present on 15 May, and the presence of a wintering flock was noted from 10

October, when 28 birds were counted, the highest of the second winter period. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
21	0	0	110	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	18

2000: All records were from Deep Bay. Up to five wintering birds were noted in the first part of the year, while northward bound migrants were present from at least 29 March. Spring numbers peaked at 74 on 17 April, and the final record was of two on 28 May. The first record of southward passage occurred on 29 July when six were present; subsequently, up to four were noted until 26-29 October when five were present. The November waterbird count saw six birds present, but there were no further records in the year. A bird in breeding plumage seen on 3 May showed characters of the taxon *C.m. atrifrons* (RWL); it has recently been proposed that this taxon, of which there are three previous records for Hong Kong, including two also in May, should be regarded as part of a separate species *C. atrifrons* (Garner *et al.* 2003), rather than just as part of an "incipient species" (Hirschfeld *et al.*, 2000). Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	0	2	74	3	nc	0	1	4	5	6	0

119A Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* 鐵嘴沙鵲

1999: First recorded in Deep Bay on 10 March, when four were seen. Spring numbers subsequently increased to 240 at the end of March and 1300 on 3 April, the highest count of the northward passage period, before declining to 450 by the middle of the month and 249 on 21 April; after this date, however, there appears to have been a more significant withdrawal, with only 41 present by 30 April, up to nine during the first half of May and one in the second half of the month, the final record being on 29 May. An adult on 29 July was the first record of the southward passage. Numbers subsequently increased to 350 on 3 August (GJC,MRL), a new autumn high in Hong Kong, which occurred three weeks before the normal peak in autumn passage, which is during the final week in August. Although 53 remained on 9 September, no more than 12 birds were recorded subsequently, and the latest record was of two on 4 November. Away from the Deep Bay area, up to eight birds were present at Chek Lap Kok in April, with one there on 22 September; at Pak Shek (Tolo Harbour) one was noted on 18 November. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	440	9	0	0	201	1	8	0	0

2000: Unusually, a wintering bird was present in Deep Bay in January and February. Northward passage was noted from 11 March, and numbers increased to the rather low figure of 450 birds on 29 March. A significant departure occurred after 19 April, followed by a further small influx of birds beginning in early May that peaked at 89 on 21 May. The final record of the spring involved 18 on 28 May. Southward passage was first noted on 15 July, and peaked at 316 on 29 July. Numbers declined to 97 on 26 August, 36 on 2 September, three records of singles during the rest of that month and, in October, nine on 1st followed by singles until 29th, the final record of the year. All records, apart from singles at Chek Lap Kok on 17 March and 20 April and at Shui Hau Wan, Lantau on 7 May, were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	7	11	89	nc	2	200	8	1	0	0

120A Oriental Plover *Charadrius veredus* 紅胸鵲

1999: There were three records during the year: a male and a female at Chek Lap Kok on 2 April, one in winter plumage at Mai Po on 11 April and a juvenile at Chek Lap Kok on 21 September.

2000: All records were from Chek Lap Kok: two males and two females on 16 and 17 March, 18 on 22 March with a female present the following day, and three on 28 September.

121A Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* 黑尾塍鵲

1999: A count of 250 made on 23 January was the highest of the first winter period. Northbound migrants were noted from 18 March, and numbers subsequently increased to 212 by 1 April and peaked at 662 on 7 April, before declining to 41 by the end of April, and then to 26 by 10 May and five on 29 May. Up to four overwintering birds were noted in late June and early July, while southbound migrants were noted from at least 3 August. Numbers then grew to 22 on 15 August, 53 on 12 September, 207 on 21 September, 235 on 21 October and 262 on 4 November. The November waterbird count recorded 318 birds, the highest count of the second winter period. A record of two at Long Valley on 22 October was just the seventh away from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
235	0	58	650	25	0	4	22	53	173	318	0

2000: Numbers in the first winter period peaked during the January waterbird count at 454, the highest winter count in Hong Kong. Numbers on northward passage peaked at 760 on 16 April, subsequently falling to 163 on 1 May; this was followed by a departure which saw just 31 present by 5 May. Two

on 21 May was the final spring record. In autumn the first record was on 15 July, following which there was the usual very gradual increase in numbers that saw 81 present on 2 September, 130 on 17 September, 229 on 12 October and 311 on 25 October. The November waterbird count saw 366 recorded, while 317 were noted during the December count. All records occurred in Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
454	300	90	346	2	nc	1	13	130	259	366	317



17 Oriental Plover *Charadrius veredus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 14 April 2003

Michelle & Peter Wong

122A Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* 斑尾塍鹬

1999: One bird was present in Deep Bay in the first winter period, while two were noted from 6 March to 4 April. Spring numbers peaked at 14 on 7 April, and numbers subsequently declined to three on 3 May. Singles noted in May on 16th, 21st and 29th were the only subsequent spring records. There were seven autumn records between 26 August and 10 October, with the highest count being nine during 21-23 September. A presumed wintering bird was noted on 22 and 23 November. There were no records away from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	1	2	9	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0

2000: The sole record of the first winter period concerned one on 23 February. Passage birds were certainly present from 29 March, and the highest spring counts were of 17 on 20 April, and 16 on 12 and 23 April. During May up to two birds were noted, with the latest occurring on 21 May. Noted on southward passage from 9 September when 12 birds were recorded; numbers subsequently peaked at 24 on 23 September. Thereafter, numbers declined, with only singles recorded after 15 October, apart from three on 10 December. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	17	2	nc	0	0	14	4	0	0

123A Little Curlew *Numenius minutus* 小杓鹬

1999: There were two records, both at Mai Po in spring: singles on 17 April and on 15 and 16 May.

2000: The sole record of the year was of one at Mai Po on 9 and 10 April. This equals the earliest previous record away from the former airport at Kai Tak.



18 Little Curlew *Numenius minutus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 4 May 2003

Yiu-leung Tam

124A Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* 中杓鹬

1999: A single wintering bird was present in Deep Bay until the end of March, and, although passage was presumably under way from early April, no

more than three birds were recorded before 20th; the main spring passage period lasted from 29 April to 6 May, the peak count at this time being 103 birds. No more than seven birds were recorded after 10 May, and the last spring record occurred on 29 May. Southward passage was noted from 15 July, though no more than eight birds were recorded until 12 August, when 16 were present. Main autumn passage occurred from 31 August to 27 September, with the peak count during this time being 159 on 12 September. After 62 birds were recorded on 10 October, numbers dropped sharply, with two on 25 October apparently the latest record of migrants. A presumed wintering bird was recorded from 4 November to the end of the year. Away from the Deep Bay area, at Cape D'Aguilar two were recorded on 1 May during the passage of Typhoon Leo, with 20 there the next day; at Sha Tau Kok one was noted on 10 October; at Shek Ngau Chau three were seen on 21 August; and at Yung Shue O one was noted on 18 September. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	1	0	13	7	0	4	32	159	62	1	1

2000: One was recorded in the first part of the year until 24 February, when two were noted. Northward passage was noted from at least 27 March, and numbers increased gradually until a small influx brought 25 birds around the middle of April. A further influx at the end of April brought the highest count of the spring: 84 on 1 May. The only spring record after 21 May was of six on 8 June. Southward passage was noted from 22 July, and numbers peaked at 95 in the September waterbird count. The latest record of definite southward-bound migrants was of 28 on 15 October, while a single was noted from 25 October to 11 November. All records were from the Deep Bay area, apart from one at Shuen Wan on 31 August and up to seven at Chek Lap Kok on 13 and 14 September. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	1	2	23	12	nc	0	29	95	28	1	0

125A Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* 白腰杓鹬

1999: The highest count in the first winter period was 413 on 26 January. Numbers in spring declined from 56 on 23 March to 17 on 31st, and 12 on 6 April, and up to six birds through the summer. The first returning migrants were noted on 29 July when 17 were present, and numbers very gradually increased to 64 on 10 October. By the time of the November waterbird count a total of 269 was counted, the highest count of the second winter period. There were no records away from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
413	396	77	9	6	6	5	22	34	64	269	95

2000: The peak count of the first winter period was 755 during the February waterbird count. Although 600 were still present during the March count, by 24th only 64 were recorded. Subsequent spring counts fell gradually, with the ten birds present on 28 May apparently remaining through the summer. The first autumn arrivals were noted on 15 July, and numbers gradually increased to 25 by the end of August, 62 by the beginning of October and 89 at the end of that month. The November waterbird count resulted in a count of 117 birds, while 161 were counted in the December count. One at Chek Lap Kok on 13 and 14 September was the only record away from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
600	755	600	11	10	nc	17	25	49	68	117	161

126A Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis* N 紅腰杓鹬

1999: The first record of the spring was of up to seven birds from 30 March to 1 April. Subsequently during April, four were present on 7th, three on 11th, one on 14th and three on 16th. No further birds were recorded until 2 May, from which date up to three were present until 29 May. There were no autumn records, and no records from anywhere except Deep Bay.

2000: The first record of the year was on 26 March. Subsequently, up to five were present in the first half of April (the highest count being on 9th), one was noted from 16 to 23 April, and the final record of the spring was of two on 5 May. Return passage was noted from 15 October, the highest count being three on 26 and 29 October. Up to two were noted during 11-13 November and one was present on 10 December. All records were from Deep Bay.

127A Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* 鶴鹬

1999: A count of 1023 made during the February waterbird count was the highest of the first winter period. The similarity between this figure and that recorded in the latter part of March suggests that the bulk of birds present during the early part of the spring may in fact be the same birds that have wintered. Up to 1090 birds were recorded up to 16 April, after which numbers fell to 901 at the end of the month, 314 on 10 May, 46 on 13 May and two on 15 June. The earliest record during southward passage came on 12 August, though numbers remained at no more than nine until 23 September, when 91 were present. There were 123 on 21 October, while the November waterbird count of 866 was the highest count of the second winter period. The record of one at Long Valley on 1 October was only the twelfth away from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
825	1023	725	1090	315	2	0	2	9	32	866	156

2000: The first winter period saw up to 970 birds recorded. Spring numbers peaked at 938 on 19 April, again suggesting that these were perhaps largely the same birds which had been present in winter. In early May a significant decline occurred, and after 10th the only record was of nine, on 14th. The first record of the autumn came on 4 August, though numbers remained at seven or less until 17 September when 21 were recorded. A larger influx brought 82 birds on 12 October, and subsequently numbers increased to 140 on 29 October and 304 during the November waterbird count. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
900	970	286	938	0	nc	0	0	21	95	304	17

128A Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

紅腳鵞

1999: The peak Deep Bay count in the first winter period was 145, made during the January waterbird count. The first significant spring influx was noticed on 1 April, and numbers increased to 999 on 9 April and 1335 on 20 April, the highest count of the spring. Numbers then declined to 134 by 10 May, 75 on 16 May and one on 28 June. Southward passage was evident by 15 July, when 315 birds were recorded; numbers subsequently increased to 635 on 29 July, the highest count of the autumn. A further influx of birds occurred in mid August, with the peak count at this time being 472 on 31 August. Between mid September and the November waterbird count, from 78 to 212 were present. Away from Deep Bay, the only reports received were of singles at Long Valley (four dates) and Tap Mun (one date) between 4 and 17 September, with a further single at Long Valley on 1 October. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
145	28	17	1335	134	30	68	456	436	110	191	10

2000: The highest count in the first winter period was of 152 during the January waterbird count. The count of 243 made in the equivalent March count thus indicated that northward bound migrants were already present, and subsequent influxes brought counts of 1011 on 4 April and 1820 on 12 April, the latter being the highest count of the spring. The subsequent decline in numbers became more marked in early May, and the final spring record was of 13 on 28 May. Southward bound migrants were recorded from 15 July when 354 were present; subsequent numbers peaked at 799 on 29 July. A second influx appears to have occurred during September, bringing a count of 263 on 26th. The November waterbird count produced a total of 208. The only record away from the Deep Bay area was of one at Shuen Wan on 19 April. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
152	25	243	1497	68	nc	354	296	186	205	208	3

129A Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

澤鵞

1999: The February waterbird count of 900 was the peak Deep Bay count of the first winter period. The first definite spring migrants were noted in Deep Bay on 31 March when 1240 birds were counted; this remained the highest count of northward passage. After 900 on 7 April, numbers fell to 450 on 15 April, 200 on 22 April and 71 two days later. The final record of the spring was of two birds on 16 May. Southward passage was noted from 8 August, though only single figure totals were recorded until the end of that month. Less than 200 were present for most of September, until an influx saw 833 present on 27th; the highest Deep Bay count of the second part of the year was of 862 on 25 October. Away from Deep Bay, at Cape D' Aguilar one was seen on 16 September during the passage of Typhoon York, while at Long Valley up to nine were noted from 10 September to 6 October, one was present on 31 October and up to two birds were recorded on 13 and 14 November. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
420	900	665	450	3	0	0	4	193	708	591	31

2000: The peak count of the first winter period, 1165 during the February waterbird count, is the highest on record at this time. Slightly lower numbers at the beginning of April increased to a peak of 1460 on 7 April. The usual marked departure occurred in the third week of April, and by 1 May only 53 remained. The final record of the spring was of 15 on 21 May. The first of the autumn occurred on 22 July; a gradual increase ensued, bringing 58 on 2 September, followed by significant influxes that brought 485 birds a week later on 9th, 910 on 1 October and 1165 on 25 October. The November and December waterbird counts, produced totals of 999 and 1008 respectively. One at Shuen Wan on 19 April was only record away from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1110	1165	670	199	15	nc	0	4	501	999	1008	13

130A Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

青腳鵞

1999: The January waterbird count of 338 was the peak Deep Bay count of the first winter period. The first definite spring influx was noted at the end of March when 390 birds were counted; the middle of April brought a further increase to 544 on 14th, while the end of the month saw 750 present on 30th, the highest count of the northward passage period. Numbers declined gradually during May, with 44 present at the end of the month, declining further to 19 at the end of June. Southward passage was evident from mid July, and numbers subsequently increased to 262 by 29 July, 466 on 8 August, 677 on 9 September and 716 on 23 September, the highest count of the autumn. Although 449 remained on 4 November, numbers appear to have declined in the final part of the year, with

only 234 recorded in Deep Bay during the November waterbird count. Away from Deep Bay, an exhausted bird was at Green Island on 30 April, during the passage of Typhoon Leo, three were at Cape D'Aguiar on 16 September, during the passage of Typhoon York, up to two birds were noted at Long Valley from 4 to 21 September, with another bird there on 22 October, and singles were noted at Starling Inlet on 21 February and 23 November. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
338	334	257	556	430	0	47	340	610	522	234	25

2000: The highest count in the first winter period was 247 during the February waterbird count. Numbers subsequently increased to 713 in the March count, while between 726 and 778 birds were recorded during the period from 23 April to 5 May. A moderate decline ensued, followed by a sharper decline after 10 May, leaving 104 present on 14th and 50 on 21st. Up to 11 birds appear to have remained during the summer, while the first southward bound migrants were noted on 15 July. Numbers increased to an initial peak of 576 on 12 August, followed by a second of 978 on 25 October. During the December waterbird count, 784 were recorded. Away from the Deep Bay area, the only records were of two at Long Valley on 1 September, one at Man Kam To on 12 September, one over Kadoorie FBG on 17 September and one at Nam Wai, Sai Kung on 18 November. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
88	247	713	825	50	nc	24	576	560	796	784	44

131A Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer* EN 小青腳鷸

1999: The first migrant on northward passage was noted on 29 March. One or two birds were subsequently noted until 4 April when 18, the highest count of the spring, were recorded. Thereafter, up to eight birds were recorded before the middle of the month, followed by ones and twos, until an influx of first-summer birds saw six present on 29th. Nine on 6 May was the highest count of this second influx, with two of these remaining until 29 May. In the autumn, one was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 17 October. All birds were recorded in Deep Bay.

2000: Birds on northward passage were noted from 26 March to 28 May. Counts increased to an initial peak of 26 during 10-12 April, while a smaller than usual second peak of first-summer birds brought seven on 21 May. Up to two birds were recorded in autumn from 26 October to 12 November. All records were from Deep Bay.

133A Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* 白腰草鷸

1999: Away from Deep Bay, reports were received from low-lying areas of the central and northern NT, including Starling Inlet. Monthly waterbird count figures for this species were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
47	54	37	16	0	0	4	9	15	25	31	33

2000: The highest counts in the first and second winter periods were 26 and 46 respectively, while the highest of the year was 65 during the October count, presumably indicating passage of southward-bound migrants at this time. Away from the Deep Bay area, birds were recorded at Ho Sheung Heung, at Kam Tin and at Long Valley; at the latter a maximum of six birds were noted on 29 August. Records of up to three birds at Kam Tin and Long Valley during 5-10 July suggested the presence of over-summering birds. Totals recorded in the Deep Bay monthly waterbird counts were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
26	24	15	3	0	nc	3	12	25	65	33	46

134A Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* 林鷸

1999: The February and March waterbird totals of 24 were the highest Deep Bay counts of the first winter period, while the highest count on northward passage was of 115 in the April waterbird count. After a report of 19 birds on 3 May, the only subsequent spring records were of singles on 21 and 29 May. The first Deep Bay record of the southward passage was of 14 on 29 July; however, numbers subsequently remained below this figure until the end of August, before rising to 63 on 12 September and 65 on 25 October. The highest count of the second winter period was of 129 in the December waterbird count. At Long Valley, up to 20 were recorded up to 26 April, while in autumn the species was again noted there from 4 September, counts peaking at 60 on 18 September, but declining to 30 by mid November. Away from these sites, one was present at Cape D'Aguiar on 16 September during the passage of Typhoon Leo, five were noted at Chek Lap Kok on 27 April, and 20 were recorded at Kam Tin on 17 October. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
19	24	24	115	0	0	0	62	65	24	24	129

2000: Reports during the first winter period were few. The monthly Deep Bay waterbird counts produced a peak count of 27 in the first winter period, while 15 were noted at Long Valley on 12 February. The peak count of birds on northward passage was of 112 birds on 24 March at Mai Po. Summer records occurred at Long Valley, where five birds were noted on 10 July and 14 were present on 13 July. Subsequent autumn numbers here peaked at 80 on 1 September, while the peak autumn Deep Bay waterbird count total was 283 in September. Away from the Deep Bay area and Long Valley, records came from Chek Lap Kok, Ho Sheung

Heung, Man Kam To and Shuen Wan, all during spring or autumn passage. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
27	11	22	65	1	nc	3	55	283	194	58	41

135A Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* 翹嘴鷸

1999: The first record of the northward passage period occurred on 22 March, only two days later than the earliest ever. The first significant influx was noted on 5 April when 25 birds were present, and numbers subsequently increased to 106 on 19 April, 150 on 24 April and 376, the highest count of the northward passage, on 2 May. As usual, a further influx, presumed to involve first-winter birds, occurred toward the end of May; this peaked at 243 on 29th. Few, if any, birds appear to have oversummered, with records of 17 on 15 June and of one on 18 July. Autumn numbers reached 144 on 31 August, subsequently declining to 80 on 12 September, and from four to 22 birds until the final record of the year on 25 October. All records were from Deep Bay, apart from singles at Chek Lap Kok on 28 April, at Cape D' Aguilar on 1 May during the passage of Typhoon Leo, and at Long Valley on 17 September. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	150	212	17	0	61	80	22	0	0

2000: The first record of the year again occurred on 22 March, three days earlier than the average since 1990. Numbers increased slowly until 10 April, after which a more rapid increase saw 256 present on 16 April and the first migratory peak of 400 on 23 April. A smaller second peak, presumed to comprise birds in their second calendar year and also constituting the final record of the spring, occurred on 28 May, when 240 birds were present. The first record on southward passage occurred on 15 July, and numbers reached peaks of 21 on 29 July and 17 on 26 August. The final records of the autumn were of six birds on 6 October, followed later in the month by up to three on 26th and 28th, and singles on 10 November and 10 December (RWL). There have only been five previous November records, and this is the first December record. It suggests one may have spent the winter with the small wader flock in Deep Bay, which would be only the second time this has been recorded. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	400	102	nc	1	5	1	0	1	1

136A Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* 磯鷸

1999: Monthly waterbird count figures for this species were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
92	115	74	82	35	9	27	60	53	74	68	85

2000: The monthly Deep Bay waterbird counts recorded a midwinter count of 67 in January, peak passage counts of 87 in April and 90 in September, and a second period peak winter count of 127 in December. The latest spring record was of one at Lok Ma Chau on 22 May, while one was reported there on 22 June; records at Lok Ma Chau on 9 July and Long Valley on 10 July may have concerned returning migrants or summering individuals. Away from Deep Bay, reports were received from Shuen Wan (maximum of ten on 3 May), Chek Lap Kok, Long Valley and Tai Lam Chung. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
67	51	69	87	15	nc	28	83	90	44	66	127

137A Grey-tailed Tattler *Heteroscelus brevipes* 灰尾鷸

1999: The first record of the northward passage period, one in Deep Bay on 2 April (YTY), was the earliest on record in Hong Kong, the previous earliest having been on 5 April 1987. There were then, however, no further records until



19 Grey-tailed Tattler *Heteroscelus brevipes*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 20 April 2000

Karl Ng

13 April, a more typical arrival date. No more than two birds were recorded until 29 April, when 17 were present. Numbers subsequently increased gradually to 82 in the May waterbird count, the highest count of the spring. The last record was of 43 on 29 May. The southward passage period extended from 3 August to 9 September, apart from one recorded during the October waterbird count, and the peak count was 15 on 15 August. Away from Deep Bay, reports were received from Sha Tau Kok, Cape D'Aguiar, Cheung Chau and Tai Long Wan. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	1	82	0	0	15	0	1	0	0

2000: Two at Mai Po on 2 April (GJC) became the joint earliest on record in Hong Kong, along with that recorded in 1999. However, no significant influx occurred until 19 April when 26 were recorded. Numbers subsequently increased to 57 on 1 May, 162 on 10 May and a spring peak of 207 on 14th. The latest Deep Bay record at this time concerned 37 birds on 21 May. Away from Deep Bay, three were at Shui Hau Wan, Lantau on 7 May, five were at Shuen Wan on 12th and 19 May and one was there on 2 June. Southward passage was noted from 4 August to 9 September in Deep Bay, with a further bird at Shuen Wan on 5 October. The highest count at this time was four on 4 August. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	26	37	nc	0	3	0	0	0	0

138A Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* 翻石鹬

1999: The first record of the northward passage period occurred on 31 March. Numbers subsequently increased gradually to ten on 13 April and 30 on 21 April, the highest count of the spring. Up to 14 birds were then recorded to 8 May, followed by three birds on 13 and 16 May. Southward passage saw only one Deep Bay record, of three birds on 31 August. Elsewhere, one was at Cape D'Aguiar on 1 May and two were at Po Toi from 30 September to 11 October.

2000: Recorded on northward passage from 3 April to 21 May, with the peak count being a fairly typical 64 on 19 April. The only autumn records were of three on 13 August and one on 27 September. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	64	2	nc	0	3	0	0	0	0

139A Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* 紅頸瓣蹼鹬

1999: First recorded on 18 March when three were at the Mai Po boardwalk; subsequently, up to 14 birds were recorded in Deep Bay until 13 May. Elsewhere, reports were received between 22 March and 15 May and between 16 September and 3 October from Cape D'Aguiar - including 1194 on 1 May during the passage of Typhoon Leo - Chek Lap Kok, Cheung Chau, East Lamma Channel, Green Island, Victoria Harbour, Lok Ma Chau, Long Valley, Po Toi, Starling Inlet and Tolo Harbour.

2000: The earliest record of northward passage occurred on 24 March when 20 were seen in the Tolo Channel. The only subsequent higher count was 150 between HK Island and Po Toi on 15 April. Up to five birds were seen in Deep Bay from 31 March to 3 April. On southward passage up to 134 were recorded in southern waters on 29 and 30 August, over 100 were seen from Cape D'Aguiar on 3 September and up to eight were seen near Lamma on 10 and 17 September.

141A Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* 丘鹬

1999: Reported in the first winter period up to 28 February and in the second winter period from 6 October. Most records came from Cloudy Hill, where regular coverage recorded counts of four birds from 18 to 21 November and seven birds on 17 December, equalling the highest Hong Kong count, which occurred at the same site from late November to late December 1998. Also reported from Kam Tin, Ngong Ping, Tai Po Kau and Silverstrand.

2000: There were only three records during the year: singles at Chau Tau on 27 February, Lok Ma Chau on 15 October and Tsim Bei Tsui on 22 November.

142A/143A Pintail/Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago stenura/megala* 針尾沙錐 / 大沙錐

In view of the extreme difficulty of field identification described in Leader and Carey (2003), for the time being records of these two species will be combined, unless the diagnostic structure of the outer tail feathers is noted (see below for such records in 1999 and 2000). Further work on vocalisations is required before apparent differences in call can be confirmed.

1999: Reports in the first winter period came from Long Valley, Sheung Shui north and Kam Tin, with five at the latter site being the highest count. The northward passage period occurred from 15 March to 2 May, when up to eight birds were recorded at Tai Lam Chung, Long Valley and Mai Po, apart from 27 at Mai Po on 25 April. Reported on northward passage from 4 September, all records being from Long Valley, where the highest count was 120 on 21 September. The main passage period continued to 4 October, with singles noted on three dates in November and December.

2000: Birds identified as either one or other of these species were first recorded on 1 March; however, subsequent spring records were very few, with only three more records until 2 May. The first ever record of an apparently overwintering individual occurred on 5 July at Long Valley (GJC), while what was presumably southward passage was noted from 26 July, also at Long Valley. The peak count of the autumn was of 40 birds on 1 September, also at Long Valley, with 20 remaining there until 12th, and ten until 23 September. Only single

figure counts were subsequently made during the rest of the year. Most records came from the wet agricultural area at Long Valley, with records also from Man Kam To, San Tin, Mai Po, Yau Mei San Tsuen, Sha Po, Kam Tin and, unusually, Chek Lap Kok and Mt. Austin.

142A Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura* 針尾沙錐

1999: Eight birds were identified with certainty through being trapped for ringing, all at Long Valley on 24 September.

2000: The only certain records were of birds trapped at Long Valley as follows: one on 3 September, 12 on 4 September, and one on 6 October.

143A Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megala* 大沙錐

1999: Eight birds of this species were identified with certainty through being trapped for ringing, all at Long Valley: four on 24 September and four on 1 October.

2000: The only record of birds caught for ringing involved five trapped at Long Valley on 4 September.



20 Pintail / Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago stenura / megala*
Long Valley, Hong Kong, 19 October 2002

Marcus Ho

144A Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* 扇尾沙錐

1999: The highest Deep Bay count in the first winter period was only 11 birds, a far cry from the late 1980s and early 1990s when 100 to 200 were recorded during January waterbird counts. This is due to habitat degradation at Chau Tau (previously referred to in surveys as Lok Ma Chau), where the wet agricultural fields are now disturbed and reduced in area. The prime area for snipe *Gallinago*

is now Long Valley, although the seasonal drying out of this wetland meant that no more than 30 birds were recorded during the first winter period. In addition, up to 40 were at Kam Tin on 3 February. The first migrants on northward passage appear to have been noted at Long Valley on 22 March, when 35 were present; this remained the highest count of the season. The only subsequent reports at this time all came from Long Valley and involved 3-6 birds on three dates to 26 April, followed by a single on 2 May. Return passage was noted from 4 September when one was present at Long Valley; subsequent numbers at this site reached 50 on 27 September and 4 October. A count of 48 was made as late as 13 November; at the end of the year, however, only up to 15 were noted. Away from the two sites mentioned, also recorded at Chek Lap Kok (one on 29 October) and Mai Po (one on 21 November). Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
11	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	8	5



21 Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
San Tin, Hong Kong, 30 November 2002

Dickson Wong

2000: The degradation of the wet agricultural fields at Chau Tau village, referred to above, resulted in no Common Snipe being recorded in the January Deep Bay waterbird count. Subsequent numbers recorded each month remained at two or less until April, followed by none during the months of May to August. The December waterbird count recorded 17 birds. Away from the Deep Bay area,

reported from Kam Tin, Sha Po, Long Valley (the main site, with up to ten birds recorded), Shuen Wan and Chek Lap Kok. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	2	1	1	0	nc	0	0	5	9	9	17

Long-/Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus/griseus*

長嘴/短嘴半蹼鶯

2000: Up to three birds, were recorded at Mai Po and Deep Bay from 15 January to 8 April, and up to two were present from 27 October to 11 November (RWL,GJC). These birds are presumed to have been Long-billed, rather than Short-billed, Dowitcher, which has not been recorded in Hong Kong.

146A Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus* N

半蹼鶯

1999: The earliest record of the spring came on 14 April when eight were present; this was a rather late date for a first arrival. Numbers subsequently increased to 32 on 24 April, 62 on 30 April, and 202, the highest count of the spring, on 3 May. By 10 May 94 birds were still present, though the final record came as early as 16th. Records of birds on southward passage occurred from 29 July to 12 September, with the highest count involving 24 birds on 28 August (DP); this is the highest autumn count on record in Hong Kong. On most days, however, no more than seven birds were noted. As usual, all records came from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	32	94	0	0	7	4	0	0	0

2000: Recorded on northward passage from 7 April to 10 May, with a single also present on 21 May. Numbers peaked at 57 on 27 April, somewhat lower than recent years. Southward passage was evident from 4 August, when nine were present; the same number was noted on 2 September, and this was the highest count of the autumn. Two birds remained to 12 October, and one was subsequently present to 13 November (YHK), the latest on record for Hong Kong. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	13	1	nc	0	8	1	1	1	0

147A Red Knot *Calidris canutus*

紅腹濱鶯

1999: There were no records during the first winter period, the first record of the year falling on 9 April. No more than seven were recorded until 24 April, when 15 were present, but numbers subsequently increased to 76 on 3 May and

79, the highest count of northward migration, on 16 May. The latest record at this time was of six birds on 29 May. Southward migration was noted from 31 August and peaked at 11 birds on both 23 and 27 September. After a record of three birds on 25 October, the only subsequent report was of two on 27 November. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	15	79	0	0	0	4	2	0	0

2000: A single wintering bird was recorded on 22 January and 12 March. Northward passage was evident from 4 April, and numbers increased to 26 on 23 April and 138, the highest count of the spring, on 10 May. A second influx appears to have occurred later in the month, with 42 present on 21 May, while two on 28 May was the last record. Southward passage was recorded from 19 August, numbers peaking at 13 on 23 September. Four remained on 9 November, and this was followed by up to two, presumably wintering, birds on 10 and 12 December. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	26	42	nc	0	0	5	2	6	0

148A Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*

大濱鶯

1999: Up to three birds were recorded in Deep Bay during the first winter period. The first certain migrants were recorded on 29 March when eight were present; numbers subsequently increased to 288 on 7 April, a slightly higher spring peak than in recent years. A sharp decrease occurred during the second week of April, though there appears to have been a second influx that saw 111 birds present on 20 April. Numbers subsequently declined to 14 by the end of the month, 13 on 10 May and three on 15 June. Southward migration was noted from 15 August and involved up to seven birds until early September, up to 19 birds during the rest of that month and up to two birds during October and November. Two were recorded during the December waterbird count. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	3	2	111	13	3	0	2	14	2	3	2

2000: Up to four birds were recorded in the first winter period. The first suggestion of northward passage came on 14 March, when six birds were noted. No more than this number was recorded until 29 March, when 90 birds were seen, and spring passage was clearly under way. Numbers subsequently increased to 250 on 3 April, followed by a decline to 139 on 16 April and no more than 40 during the rest of the month. A small influx in May saw 13 present on both 8 and

10 May, and the final record at this time was of seven on 21 May. Southward passage was evident from 2 September, and numbers peaked at 30 on 27 September. During the rest of the year the wintering population increased to ten birds in December. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	4	2	40	7	nc	0	1	20	4	8	10

149A Sanderling *Calidris alba*

三趾濱鷸

1999: Recorded in Deep Bay on northward migration from 5 April to 6 May, with up to two birds noted, apart from four on 21 April and six on 6 May. The only autumn record was of a juvenile at Chek Lap Kok on 28 September, though one was in fact reported from Fu Tian, on the Shenzhen side of Deep Bay, during the August waterbird count.

2000: Northward passage was evident from 26 March, and subsequently up to two birds were recorded until 9 April, followed by one on 17 April, four on 27 April, up to four during 8-17 May and one on 21 May. The sole autumn record was of one on a drained fishpond near Mai Po on 14 October. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

150A Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*

紅胸濱鷸

1999: During the first winter period seven birds were noted in Deep Bay on 24 January. The first record of the northward migration involved 60 on 21 March. Subsequently, counts of 900 or more were made between 3 and 15 April, followed by 1250 on 21 April, the highest count of the spring. Following a count of 230 on 6 May, numbers declined sharply to 18 on 16 May, the final record of northward passage. The only autumn records concerned 16 at Mai Po on 13 August and seven at Long Valley on 17 September. Subsequently, two were noted in Deep Bay on 20 November and four were recorded there during the December waterbird count. Away from these sites, up to four birds were at Chek Lap Kok on 27 and 28 April and three were at the sewage farm on Cheung Chau on 1 May; this was the first record for the island and came during the passage of Typhoon Leo. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
7	0	0	1250	39	0	0	16	0	0	0	4

2000: Up to two birds were recorded in the first winter period. Northward passage was evident from 23 March, when 210 were present. Numbers subsequently increased to 600 on 4 April, followed by further influxes that brought 790 on 19 April, 1100 on 2 May and 1052 on 14 May. The final spring record was of one bird on 28 May. Southward passage was evident from 12 August, with

peak counts of six in August, three in September and 17 in October. The December waterbird count recorded 25. Away from Deep Bay, the sole record was of three at Shui Hau Wan (Lantau) on 7 May. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	790	416	nc	0	6	0	17	4	25

151A Little Stint *Calidris minutus*

小濱鷸

1999: There were four records, all during northward migration: singles were at Mai Po on 8 and 26 April, and on 1 and 3 May.



22 Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*
Fung Lok Wai, Hong Kong, 23 February 2000

Forrest Fong

152A Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

青腳濱鷸

1999: During the first winter period up to 30 birds were recorded in Deep Bay. Apparent migrants were present at Lok Ma Chau on 25 March (three birds), Mai Po on 8 April (one bird) and Tsim Bei Tsui on 16 April (three birds). On southward migration singles were at Long Valley on 18 September and at Lut Chau on 10 October, while presumed wintering birds comprised four in the November waterbird count and one on a fishpond near Mai Po Village on 5 December.

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
30	0	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0

2000: The highest count in the first winter period was of 48 on 20 February. After a count of 19 during the March waterbird count, the only report was of one on 3 April. Noted in autumn from 27 September when one was at Mai Po. No more than three were subsequently recorded until 15 October, when 36 were present at Lok Ma Chau (outside the Waterbird Monitoring Programme recording area). This remained the highest count of the second winter period, the next highest being 19 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 December. The sole record away from the Deep Bay area was of one at Long Valley on 24 October. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
7	8	19	0	0	nc	0	0	0	9	10	5

153A Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta*

長趾濱鷸

1999: There were no reports in the first winter period. Recorded on northward migration from 3 April to 6 May, most reports coming from Mai Po, where the peak count was ten on 16 April; in addition, eight were present there on 3 May. Elsewhere, one was at Starling Inlet on 18 April one was at Chek Lap Kok on 27 April, two were at a sewage farm on Cheung Chau on 1 May - the first record for the island and during the passage of Typhoon Leo — and two were at Long Valley on 5 May. Most reports during southward migration came from Long Valley, where up to two birds were recorded from 10 September to 1 October. At Mai Po the only record was of two on 15 July. The only records in the second winter period concerned two at Cheung Shu Tan on 2 December and three at Ping Che on 6 December. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	10	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0

2000: The highest count in the first winter period was of 36 from the Mai Po boardwalk on 16 January, an unusual locality for such a large number of birds. Northward passage was evident in a relatively high count of 71 made at fishponds near Mai Po on 24 April; this was the final record of the spring. Southward passage was noted from 30 August, when a bird was seen at Long Valley; it remained until 4 September. Up to seven were noted at Mai Po on 17 and 26 September, after which date up to three birds were noted on fishponds at Lok Ma Chau and Mai Po in the first half of October. The final record of the year concerned one at Lok Ma Chau on 10 November. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	0	0	3	0	nc	0	1	7	2	6	0

155A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*

尖尾濱鷸

1999: All spring passage records were in the period from 4 April to 29 May. No more than six birds were recorded until 30 April, when there commenced an increase in numbers that brought a peak count on 3 May of 27, a rather low figure. After 21 birds were seen on 16 May, there were only two further records, of singles on 21 and 29 May. The only record during autumn migration was of one bird from 9 to 23 September. All records were from Deep Bay.

2000: Northward passage was noted from 26 March, but no more than two birds were recorded until 12 April when 15 were present. Numbers subsequently remained at 20 or fewer until 8 May when 40, the highest count of the spring, were noted. The final spring record was of seven on 21 May. There were two autumn records: one at Long Valley on 31 August - the sole record away from the Deep Bay area — and three at Mai Po on 17 September.

156A Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

黑腹濱鷸

1999: The sole significant count of the first winter period was of 2351 in the January waterbird count. Up to three birds on northward migration were noted from 22 March to 3 May. The only records of apparent southbound migrants concerned singles at Mai Po on 12 August and at Chek Lap Kok on 12 October. The wintering population appears to have begun arriving on 27 September, and numbers subsequently increased to 101 on 25 October, 1680 during the November waterbird count and 2088 in the December waterbird count. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:



23 Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta*
Shuen Wan, 16 April 2002

Martin Hale

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
2351	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1680	2088

2000: The highest count in the first winter period was 2980 during the January waterbird count. Apart from 20 on 3rd, April counts were of two or less, with the final record on 19th. Arrival in the second winter period was evident from 2 September, and numbers gradually increased to 44 at the end of September, 800 by the end of October and 2280 by 10 December. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
2980	575	0	0	0	nc	0	0	21	15	1174	2280

157A Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* 彎嘴濱鷸

1999: The first record of the year involved 24 birds on 10 March. Up to 690 were recorded to 1 April, with 1140 present on 4th, increasing to 3559 on 16 April. Thereafter, numbers declined to the end of the month, but there was then a further influx which brought 2740 on 3 May. The final record involving northward migration concerned 12 on 21 May. Recorded on southward migration from 29 July to 25 October, with up to 37 birds (no juveniles) present to mid August, up to 32 noted from 31 August to 12 September and no more than 12 subsequently (maximum of 11 juveniles). Away from Deep Bay, 55 were seen at Cape D'Agular and one was at a sewage farm on Cheung Chau, both during the close approach of Typhoon Leo on 1 and 2 May. In addition, two were at Long Valley on 18 and 24 September; this is just the fifth autumn record away from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	3	3559	712	0	0	30	32	2	0	0

2000: The first record of the year concerned a single bird on 24 February; wintering birds are occasionally recorded, though this bird may have been an early migrant. Northward passage was first noted for certain on 8 March, and numbers increased to 310 by the end of that month. An influx at the beginning of April saw 1100 present on 2nd, and further influxes brought counts of 3800 on 16 April and 3590 on 25 April. Numbers subsequently declined to 1740 on 1 May, 559 on 8 May and 11 on 28 May, the final record of the spring. Southward bound migrants were first recorded on 23 September, and numbers peaked at 40 on 12 October. The final record occurred on 29 October. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	18	3590	47	nc	0	40	3	40	0	0

158A Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus* VU 勺嘴鷸

1999: Between four and eight birds were recorded at Mai Po during the period from 4 April to 13 May, though all but two of these occurred up to 17 April. The only other record of the year was of one on 22 November.

2000: Recorded in spring between 31 March and 10 April and between 8 and 21 May. Up to three birds were noted in the first of these periods, and one bird in the second. All records were from the Mai Po boardwalk.

159A Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus* 闊嘴鷸

1999: First recorded on 10 March. Thirty were recorded on 22 March, though a higher count did not come until 7 April, after which date numbers increased to 46 on 9 April, 86 on 26 April and 315 on 6 May, the highest count of the spring and only five short of the highest count for Hong Kong. The first record of the southward migration occurred on 8 August. Subsequently, up to ten were present in August, a peak of 21 were counted on 12 September, up to 16 were noted until 10 October, and the final record of a migrant appears to have occurred on 25 October. Presumed wintering birds were noted between 20 November, when five were present, and 5 December. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	0	0	42	51	0	0	10	21	10	0	5

2000: Up to six birds were noted in the first winter period, possibly remaining until 26 March. The first certain evidence of northward passage came on 4 April, when 63 were present, with a further influx bringing a count of 85 on 17 April; numbers declined to 31 by 5 May, but another influx saw 72 present on 10th. The final record of the spring was of six birds on 21 May. Southward passage was noted from 12 August when five were present; numbers subsequently remained at nine or less until the third week of September, when an influx saw 39 present on 23 September. Although 16 were recorded up to 29 October, numbers in the second winter period were similar to those in the first, with up to seven noted. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
5	0	2	85	6	nc	0	5	23	14	7	6

160A Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* 流蘇鷸

1999: There were three records on northward migration, all singles at Mai Po, on 22 March, and 17 (a male) and 20 April. The first record of the autumn was on 12 October, and numbers subsequently increased to ten on 25 October (GJC, PJJ), a new high count for Hong Kong, the previous highest being seven on 13 September 1981. After this date, the only record was of one on 19 November.

2000: Up to three birds were noted in the first winter period, while the presence of four on 23 March indicates the commencement of northward passage. Subsequently up to three birds were present until 16 April. Return passage was noted between 19 August and 16 November, a record of two on 13 November being the only one involving other than single birds.

161A Pomarine Jaeger *Stercorarius pomarinus* 中賊鷗

1999: Fourteen were seen from Cape D'Aguiar on 2 May (PJL).

161.5A Parasitic Jaeger *Stercorarius parasiticus* 短尾賊鷗

1999: During the exceptional sea-watching from Cape D'Aguiar produced by the close approach of Typhoon Leo, two adults were seen on 1 May and at least 16 birds were seen on 2 May (MT *et al.*). These comprise the first records of this species in Hong Kong.

162A Long-tailed Jaeger *Stercorarius longicaudus* 長尾賊鷗

1999: From Cape D'Aguiar during the exceptional sea-watching produced by the close approach of Typhoon Leo, at least 50, and possibly as many as 80, were seen on 1 May, while at least 35 were recorded on 2 May (MT, MRL).

163A Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris* 黑尾鷗

1999: During the first part of the year, up to six first-winters were seen from the Mai Po boardwalk. The count of six was made on 6 February, and the final bird remained to the relatively late date of 25 April. In addition, an adult was seen at Cape D'Aguiar on 2 May in the aftermath of Typhoon Leo. The earliest record in the second part of the year concerned a first-winter in front of the boardwalk on 19 November; this bird remained until the 22nd, and it or another was present on 24 and 27 December.

2000: Up to 16 first-winter birds, one second-year and two adults were recorded in the first winter period until 29 March, with the peak day count being 17 birds on 13 March. The sole record in the second winter period was of two first-winter birds on 1 December. All records were from Deep Bay.

164A Mew Gull *Larus canus* 海鷗

1999: Single first-winters were seen from the boardwalk at Mai Po on 8 and 9 March, and on 21 March (GJC). Two birds were involved.

2000: First-years were noted at the boardwalk on 27 January, 30 January (two birds) and 13 March (GJC). At least three individuals were involved.

165A Heuglin's Gull *Larus heuglini* 烏灰銀鷗

1999: The highest count in the first winter period was 280 on 13 March. A count of 172 was made on 23 March, but numbers declined rapidly thereafter to 22 on 25th, and 14 on 30th, with the final record of one on 31 March. In the

second part of the year, the earliest record was of ten birds seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 20 November. Numbers increased to 228 on 19 December. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
69	97	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	129

2000: The highest count in the first winter period was of 865 on 28 January (GJC), the highest count so far made in Hong Kong. Of that number 650 were first year birds, a much higher proportion than usual. This relatively high number appears to have remained for some time, with 710 noted on 27 February and 690 on 14 March. The main departure occurred shortly after that date, however, with only 95 present on 21 March; the latest record of this first winter period was of a first year bird on 17 April. The earliest record in the second winter period was of an adult on 10 November; numbers then increased to 86, recorded on 1 December. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
272	315	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	1	45

166A Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans* 黃腳銀鷗

1999: The highest count in the first winter period was eight birds on 11 March. Numbers declined during the rest of the month, with final record occurring on 3 April. In the second part of the year three first years were seen on 28 November (GJC); this is the earliest on record in Hong Kong. All birds were seen in Deep Bay.

2000: Up to 19 first-winter birds, two second-winters, one third-winter and 11 adults were recorded in the first winter period, with the highest day counts being 23 on 29 January and 25 on 13 March. The final record was of a first-winter that remained until 17 April (GJC), the latest on record in Hong Kong. All records came from Deep Bay.

167A Slaty-backed Gull *Larus schistisagus* 灰背鷗

1999: Up to four first-years were recorded in Deep Bay, mainly from the Mai Po boardwalk, between 23 January and 23 March. The peak period of occurrence was from 10 to 18 March when day counts were all of three or four individuals. In the second part of the year the only record was of a first-year seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 26 and 27 November (RWL, JB); this is the earliest on record in Hong Kong.

2000: Recorded in the first winter period until 29 March, with the highest count being seven on 25 January (GJC), the highest so far in Hong Kong. All records concern first-winter birds seen in Deep Bay.

168A Glaucous-winged Gull *Larus glaucescens* 灰翅鷗

2000: Two first-winter birds were seen, one on 13 January from the Mai Po boardwalk and Tsim Bei Tsui Police Pier (PJL, YTY, GJC) and the second on 30 January from the Mai Po Boardwalk (GJC). These are the third and fourth Hong Kong records. Field observations of this species in Japan and Korea have clarified considerably its identification characters.

169A Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus* 北極鷗

1999: A second-winter bird was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 22 March (PJL). This is the sixth record for Hong Kong, and the first since February 1994.

170A Pallas's Gull *Larus ichthyaetus* 魚鷗

2000: One adult, one second-winter and one first-winter were recorded up to 22 March. The second-winter was last reported on 27 February, the first year on 16 March and the adult on 9 March. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

171A Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus* 棕頭鷗

1999: A first-winter was present on 20 March, and a second-winter was seen during 20-22 March.

2000: An adult that moulted into breeding plumage remained in Deep Bay and was regularly seen from the boardwalk from 15 January to 8 April when two adults were recorded. These continued to be seen until 1 May (GJC), the latest date on record in Hong Kong. In addition, a first-year was seen on 7 and 10 March.

173A Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* 紅嘴鷗

1999: The highest count in the first part of the year was of 16947 during the February waterbird count. The final spring record concerned one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 19 April. In the second part of the year the earliest record was on 8 October, when a first-winter was seen at Mai Po. Numbers increased to 4461 during the November waterbird count and 7961 in the December waterbird count. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
11331	16947	1075	16	2	1	0	0	0	1	4461	7961

2000: The highest count in the first winter period was of 11,100 birds during the January waterbird count, with 10,426 remaining at the time of the February count and 8536 in the March count. The latest record of the spring was of 50 birds on 16 April. Arrival in the second winter period was first noted on 25 October, and numbers increased to 1400 by the time of the November waterbird

count and 12,582 in the December count. Up to 80 birds were also recorded at Shuen Wan in the first winter period. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
11100	10426	8536	2	0	nc	0	0	0	0	1400	12582



24 Pallas's Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 9 March 2000

Karl Ng



25 Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 9 March 2000

Karl Ng

176A Saunders's Gull *Larus saundersi* VU 黑嘴鷗

1999: The highest counts in the first part of the year were 72 on 21 February and 80 on 13 March. As usual, late departing first-years remained into April, with the latest record on 17 April. The first record in the second part of the year was on 4 November, and the highest count was 42 on 25 November. All records were from Deep Bay and Mai Po. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
70	73	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	50

2000: The peak count in the first winter period was of 58 birds, comprising 50 adults and eight first-years, on 19 February. This continues the decline in peak winter counts that has generally occurred since the winter of 1993-94, when the highest count for Hong Kong of 172 was made. A significant decline to 11 birds occurred in the first week of March, and subsequently up to three birds were recorded to 10 April, followed by a single bird to 19 April. In the second winter period, first recorded on 9 November, with the highest count of 43 adults on 10 December. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
43	56	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	3	43

177A Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* 三趾鷗

2000: A first-year was seen in Deep Bay from Tsim Bei Tsui Police Pier on 13 January (YTY). This is the sixth Hong Kong record, and is the earliest by one day.

178A Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus* 鬚浮鷗

1999: The first record of the year was an adult seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 10 March (GJC,PJL); this is the earliest ever and only the fourth March record. It was next recorded on 5 April, and numbers in Deep Bay subsequently peaked at ten, noted on both 18 and 21 April. Elsewhere, 93, a new high for Hong Kong, were seen from Cape D'Aguilar on 1 May (PJL), and 19 were seen there the following day, while 56 and 72 were recorded at Cheung Chau on 29 and 30 April respectively; all these records came during the passage of Typhoon Leo. Four at Mai Po on 4 May was the last record of the spring. In the autumn passage was noted from 22 August, when one was present during the passage of Tropical Storm Sam; this was followed by ten at Mai Po on 6 September. Typhoon York brought up to 60 to Cape D'Aguilar on both 15 and 16 September, a new autumn high, before yet another new high site-count in Hong Kong, 110 at Long Valley on 17th, and then 33 at Shuen Wan on 16th. Smaller numbers were

subsequently recorded in the second half of September at Cheung Chau, Three Fathoms Cove, Tap Mun, Tseung Kwan O, Mai Po and the mouth of the Kam Tin River. The final record was of eight on 7 October at Mai Po. Due to the occurrence of tropical storms during the main periods of spring and autumn passage, this was a very good year for this species.

2000: Northward passage was noted from 7 April to 17 June, though the numbers involved were very low. Singles were noted on 7 and 17 April at Mai Po, seven were noted in the Tolo Channel on 9 June and two were at Tap Mun on 17th. Return passage was more marked and was noted from 3 September to 13 November, with the highest count made during the October waterbird count, when 17 birds were recorded. Records at this time were from the Deep Bay area, West Lamma Channel, Lok Ma Chau and southern waters.

179A White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* 白翅浮鷗

1999: As with the preceding species, the passage of Typhoon Leo at the beginning of May brought an influx of birds, the highest counts being 70 at Cape D'Aguilar on 2nd, 16 there the previous day, and 14 at Cheung Chau on 1st. Subsequent spring records, all in May, comprised 66 from the Mai Po boardwalk on 6th, 78 from the Lamma Island ferry on 9th, 26 at the Mai Po boardwalk and one at Cape D'Aguilar on 10th, and 51 and 40 at Sha Tau Kok on 15th and 20th respectively. Autumn passage was noted from 14 September, but only one or two birds were recorded until ten were seen from Cape D'Aguilar on 26 September during the close approach of Tropical Storm Cam. The final records of the year concerned a juvenile at Long Valley on 1 October and one at Mai Po on 6 and 7 October.

2000: Recorded on northward passage from 10 May, when 13 were at Mai Po. Subsequent records comprised 52 there on 14 May, one at Luk Keng on 15th, 93 at Mai Po on 21 May and, at Tap Mun, three on 10 and 17 June. Return passage was noted from 22 July when two juveniles were seen at Tap Mun; subsequently, three were in the East Lamma Channel on 13 September and a juvenile was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 October.

180A Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* 鷗嘴噪鷗

1999: Northward passage was first noted on 25 March, when four were at Mai Po. Numbers subsequently increased to 74 on 13 April, a relatively low spring high compared to counts made during the 1990s. An influx to Deep Bay also occurred at this time, with 20 present on 3rd, and the final record of the spring was of one at the Mai Po boardwalk on 29 May. The only records away from Deep Bay occurred during the close approach of Typhoon Leo when one or two birds were seen at Cheung Chau and Cape D'Aguilar on 1 and 2 May. The sole autumn record was of eight from the boardwalk on 16 October.

2000: Recorded in spring between 31 March and 21 May, the highest being 341 on 16 April (GJC), a new high for Hong Kong. A sharp decline then

occurred as only six were recorded during the rest of the month. There were three May records of up to ten birds. There were two autumn records: two on 29 July and two on 28 August. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

181A Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia* 紅嘴巨鷗

1999: Recorded between 30 March and 10 May, with a peak of only 20 at Mai Po on 5 April, the lowest spring high since 1969. The only records away from Deep Bay occurred during the close approach of Typhoon Leo when three were seen from Cape D'Aguilar on both 1 and 2 May. Up to four were also recorded in Deep Bay on four dates between 20 November and 8 December.

2000: The sole winter record was of one bird on 13 January. Recorded in spring between 31 March and 2 May, but passage was even weaker than it had been in 1999, with a peak of just 18 on 16 April, and apart from that no count exceeding nine. The only subsequent records were of one on 13 November and two on 1 December. All records were from Deep Bay and Mai Po.

182A Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* 普通燕鷗

1999: The first record during northward passage occurred on 29 April when 39 were at Cheung Chau as Typhoon Leo approached. Up to 100 birds were recorded in the Cheung Chau to Victoria Harbour area over the following three days. At Cape D'Aguilar 742 were counted on 1 May and 2100 were noted there on 2nd (PJL *et al.*); the previous highest count in Hong Kong at any time of year was 400, while the record spring count was only 196 on 10 May 1987. There were no subsequent records until the autumn; two were seen at Cape D'Aguilar on 22 August during the close approach of Tropical Storm Sam. There were again no further records until 14 September, when 19 were seen south of HK Island. Typhoon York brought ten to Cape D'Aguilar on 16th, while up to 100 were estimated to be present at Tap Mun two days later. A further 40 were seen at Cape D'Aguilar during the close approach of Tropical Storm Cam, with one or two birds seen at other coastal areas on 11th proving the final records of the autumn.

2000: In a very poor year for this species, there were only four records: one at Tung Ping Chau on 8 April, three in southern waters on 30 August, and two there on 10 and 17 September.

183A Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* 粉紅燕鷗

1999: Spring records were concentrated in the period of the close approach of Typhoon Leo, when five to seven birds were recorded off Cheung Chau from 29 April to 1 May, and one was seen from the Cheung Chau ferry on 2nd. The breeding population at Kung Chau numbered 25 individuals on 18 June, while at Shek Ngau Chau the peak count was 80 on 11 July. In addition, 120 birds were at Tap Mun on 9 July (CHF); this is one of the highest counts ever made in Hong Kong. The final record of the year concerned 60 at Shek Ngau Chau on 15 August.

2000: As usual, the only records were from the breeding area near Tap Mun, where up to 75 birds were recorded between 6 May and 22 July.

184A Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana* 黑枕燕鷗

1999: Six at Cheung Chau on 29 April, in advance of Typhoon Leo, were the first of the year. During the close approach of Leo, however, numbers remained low, with no more than seven birds on any day at any one site. One seen from the Lamma ferry on 9 May was the only other May record. Summer counts at the breeding sites peaked at 40 at Kung Chau on 11 July, and 140 at Shek Ngau Chau on 1 July. All autumn records were in September: a juvenile south of HK Island on 14th, one at Cape D'Aguilar on 16th, five at Tap Mun on 18th and five at Cheung Chau on 25th.

2000: Most records were from the breeding areas near Tap Mun between 6 May and 22 July, the highest count being of 125 birds on 9 June. In addition, 21 birds were seen in southern waters on 30 August, and up to 40 were there on 10 and 17 September.

185A Aleutian Tern *Sterna aleutica* 白腰燕鷗

1999: The close approach of the exceptionally early Typhoon Leo brought unprecedented numbers to Hong Kong waters. At Cape D'Aguilar 618 were recorded on 1 May and 865 were noted on 2nd (PJL *et al.*). The previous highest counts in Hong Kong were 190 in autumn and 23 in spring. Elsewhere, at Cheung Chau day totals of 21, 104 and 36 were recorded from 29 April to 1 May respectively, with another 30 seen from the island's ferry on 2nd. There were no other spring records. In autumn the first record was of 18 birds at Po Toi on 5 September. Prior to and during the close approach of Typhoon York, between 14 and 16 September, 36 were seen south of HK Island and up to five were recorded



26 Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*
Tap Mun, Hong Kong, May 2001

Wing-yiu Yam

at Cape D'Aguilar. Later the same month, during the close approach of Tropical Storm Cam, 39 were seen from Cheung Chau on 25th and 35 were at Cape D'Aguilar on 26th. Subsequently, two birds were seen in southern waters on 11 October; October records are few.

2000: A count of 27 was made in southern waters on 30 August, while 15 were noted there on 10 September and 45 on 17 September.

186A Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus* 褐翅燕鷗

1999: The only spring records occurred during the close approach of Typhoon Leo, when seven were seen from Cape D'Aguilar on 1 May (PJL *et al.*); these are the earliest on record in Hong Kong. There were also 28 at Cape D'Aguilar on 2nd. The highest counts at the breeding sites were three at Kung Chau on 11 July and 500-600 at Shek Ngau Chau on 28 August. During the close approach of Tropical Storm Sam on 22 August, 20 birds were seen from Cape D'Aguilar. Subsequently, in advance of and during the close approach of Typhoon York between 14 and 16 September, seven were seen south of HK Island, approximately 50 were seen at Cape D'Aguilar over two days and 32 were noted at Cheung Chau. Twelve birds remained at Shek Ngau Chau on 18 September, and the same number was seen at Cheung Chau on 25th. The final record of the autumn was of approximately 90 at Cape D'Aguilar on 26 September.

2000: All records were from the vicinity of the breeding area near Tap Mun. A count of 150 was made as early as 6 May, but the highest count was of 300 on 22 July. The final record was of two in the Tolo Channel on 31 August.

187A Sooty Tern *Sterna fuscata* 烏燕鷗

1999: During the close approach of Typhoon York, a juvenile was seen in the eye of the typhoon on 16 September (PJL,RWL). This is the fourth record for Hong Kong.

188A Little Tern *Sterna albifrons* 白額燕鷗

1999: Recorded in spring between 25 March and 13 May. In April numbers in Deep Bay peaked at nine on 2nd. The close approach of Typhoon Leo brought record numbers to Hong Kong, with 400 at Cape D'Aguilar on 2 May (PJL) a new high. A count of 136 had been made there on 1 May, and at Cheung Chau 14 were noted. Numbers in Deep Bay were also high, with 85 at Mai Po on 3rd. Subsequent May numbers returned to a more normal pattern, with the highest count being nine on 10th, and the latest spring record occurring on 13th. In the autumn, one was at Mai Po on 9 September, two at Shuen Wan on 15th, one at Cape D'Aguilar on 16th (these latter two records during the close approach of Tropical Storm York) and, during the close approach of Tropical Storm Cam, three at Cape D'Aguilar on 26 September and one at Plover Cove on 27th.

2000: Recorded in spring between 3 April and 11 May, with the peak count being six on 11 April, and all later records involving three birds or fewer. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

189A Greater Crested Tern *Sterna bergii* 大鳳頭燕鷗

1999: A total of 24, a new high for Hong Kong, were recorded at Cape D'Aguilar on 2 May (PJL *et al.*) during the close approach of Typhoon Leo. On 14 September, in advance of the passage of Typhoon York, two were seen off Cheung Chau and three were seen south of HK Island.

190A Ancient Murrelet *Synthliboramphus antiquus* 扁嘴海雀

2000: One was seen near Tap Mun on 6 May. This is the second latest on record in Hong Kong, the latest also being the first, on 18 May 1975

191D Rock Dove *Columba livia* 原鴿

1999: A flock of 60 were noted in Kowloon Park on 7 November.

2000: No significant reports.

192A Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis* 山斑鳩

1999: In what was generally a very poor year for this common winter visitor, it was recorded until 10 May and from 15 October, apart from one at Mai Po on 26 June (YTY), the latest ever in spring, and two there on 19 September. Birds were very scarce in March at Mai Po, where they are usually numerous, and were noted at fewer localities than usual, the only reports away from the NT being one at Green Island on 27 January and 12 at Mt. Austin on 4 November. The highest counts in each winter period were 58 at a pre-roost gathering at Nam Chung on 19 March and 50 at Mai Po on 6 November.

2000: In another poor year, 56 at a pre-roost at Shek Kong Catchment on 22 February was the highest count. The only other reports in the first half of the year were of 12 at Nam Sang Wai on 2 April and one at Tai Po Kau on 29 April. One at Lok Ma Chau on 28 August, a rather early date in autumn, was followed by singles there and at Ho Sheung Heung on 17 and 19 September. The remaining reports all came in the period from 26 October to 20 December; the highest counts were 20 at Long Valley on 30 October, 30 at Sha Lo Tung on 10 November, and 50 at Lai Chi Wo on 20 December.

193A Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica* 火斑鳩

1999: As with the preceding species, a poor year for this species, with records in the periods from 6 February to 27 April and from 21 September to 28 November. In the first period, up to five were reported on just eight dates at Tsim Bei Tsui, Mai Po and Lin Barn Tsuen. In the second period, birds were reported on 12 dates from Mong Tseng, Mai Po, Long Valley, Shuen Wan and the High Island area, the peak count being 30 at Mong Tseng on 28 November.

2000: In the first half of the year, the sole reports concerned up to four at Tsim Bei Tsui between 15 January and 25 February, singles at Wo Shang Wai and Palm Springs on 16 and 19 March, and two at Po Toi on 30 April. One at Mai Po on 9 September was the first of the autumn. Birds were then reported from fairly widespread areas of the NT until 4 November, double-figure counts at this time being 21 on 15 September and 43 on 23 September, both at Mong Tseng, and 15 near Lok Ma Chau on 26 October. Subsequently, following a gap of almost a

month, there were 23 at Mai Po on 22 November and 69 at Lok Ma Chau on 7 December (MRL), the highest count ever recorded in winter.

194A Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis* 珠頸斑鳩

1999: At least 30 were at Penfold Park on 25 October, and unusually for a species that shuns forest, up to two were seen on the upper section of the Red Walk at Tai Po Kau on 17 and 24 November.

2000: No significant reports.



27 Ancient Murrelet *Synthliboramphus antiquus*
Mirs Bay, Hong Kong, 6 May 2000

Yat-Tung Yu



28 Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*
Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong, 22 February 2002

Martin Hale

196A Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica* 綠背金鳩

1999: Reported at Kap Lung Forest Trail on 10 January (two), Tai Po Kau on 2 and 12 April, Hong Lok Yuen (found dead) on 16 May, Ho Chung on 23 May, Luk Keng on 16 June, Lau Shui Heung on 17 August, Wu Kau Tang on 29 August, Pok Fu Lam CP on 1 October and Sha Lo Tung on 4 November. All these records refer to singles, unless indicated.

2000: Recorded in all months except February, March and September, with no more than two records in any month apart from June, when there were five. With the exception of two at Tai Po Kau on 13 June and two at Hok Tau reservoir on 7 October, all records were of single birds. Slightly more than half of the total were from Tai Po Kau, and the rest from locations in the eastern NT, such as Cloudy Hill, Tai Mei Tuk, Hok Tau Reservoir, Nam Chung, Sam A Tsuen, Sai Kung and Clear Water Bay.

199D Yellow-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua sulphurea* CR 小葵花鳳頭鸚鵡

1999&2000: No significant reports received. The size of the local feral population of this critically endangered species seems to have been fairly stable in the period covered by this report.

200D Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* 紅領綠鸚鵡

1999&2000: No significant reports received, though the feral population of this species appears to be continuing its decline.

201A Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus* 紅翅鳳頭鸚

1999: In a poor year, single birds were recorded irregularly between 27 March and 20 June at Tai Po Kau, Nam Chung, Sha Lo Tung, Ho Chung, Pak Sha O, Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen, Hok Tau, Luk Keng, Nam Chung and the Fanling Golf Course area. March and June each produced just one report each, while April and May produced five and six respectively.

2000: Recorded in ones and twos, occasionally three together, between 4 April and 18 June, including an eight-day period from 29 April to 6 May with almost 40% of records. Nearly all reports referred to singing birds, and totals reported in April, May and June were 16, 22 and 2 respectively. Apart from one seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 4 April and one which flew west past the Tam Kon Chau fishponds the next day, all were at typical sites in the central and eastern NT, the localities with most reports being Tai Po Kau (4 April-4 May), Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen (8 April to late May), Shing Mun Reservoir (21 April-17 May), Sha Lo Tung (30 April-25 May) and Nam Chung (3 May-18 June).

202A Large Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparveroides* 鷹鵒

1999: Apart from single birds heard at Sam A Chung on 27 February and Kadoorie FBG on 28 July, all records fell between 7 March and 26 June. Nearly all reports referred to singing birds. Up to three individuals were noted regularly at Sha Lo Tung, Shuen Wan, the hills near Luk Keng and the Fanling Golf Course area and occasionally at other very widespread localities in the central, northern

and eastern NT. The highest count was seven logged between Yung Shue O and Hoi Ha on 26 April. The only HK Island records were from Chai Wan catchment and Stanley on 24 and 25 April. Occasional sightings of single birds at Chau Tau, Shek Wu Wai and the Hong Kong Sports Institute (Sha Tin) during 15-24 April, all unusual localities for the species, probably involved migrants. Totals reported in March, April, May and June were, respectively, 22, 73, 21 and nine.

2000: Recorded in ones or twos, occasionally three or four together, between 11 March and 15 June. As usual, almost all reports referred to singing birds. Totals reported in March, April, May and June were, respectively, 30, 59, 51 and 18. Birds were regularly noted throughout the period at traditional sites in the central and eastern NT, such as Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun Reservoir, Sha Lo Tung, Shuen Wan, the lower slopes of Pat Sin Leng and Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen. Elsewhere, there were unusual reports of single singing birds near the Mai Po boardwalk on 31 March, at Cheung Chau on 9 April and Nam Sang Wai on 13 April, whilst one at Shui Hau Wan on 7 May was the only report from Lantau.

203A Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx fugax* 棕腹杜鵑

1999: Single calling birds were at Tai Po Kau on 4, 12, 13, 16 and 21 April (RWL, MRL), and at Shing Mun on 17 April (RWL).

2000: Singing males were recorded at Tai Po Kau on 1, 5, 7, 8, 11, 20 and 30 April, and on 4 and 11 May, at Ng Tung Chai on 15 April, at Chung Pui (Pat Sin Leng CP) on 18 April and 3 May, and at Shing Mun on 30 April (RWL).

204A Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* 四聲杜鵑

1999: Singing individuals were noted regularly between 11 April and 23 June at Mong Tseng, Mai Po, Shuen Wan and the Fanling Golf Course area, and occasionally during this period at Fung Lok Wai, Chau Tau, Shing Mun, Luk Keng, Wu Kau Tang, Sai Kung and Po Toi. Apart from four logged between Yung Shue O and Hoi Ha on 26 April, all other reports referred to one or two birds. Totals reported in April, May and June were, respectively, 21, nine and four.

2000: Recorded between 3 April and 18 June, with almost all reports referring to singing birds. Totals reported in April, May and June were, respectively, 16, 11 and 10. Birds were regularly noted at Mai Po (11 April-28 May), Shuen Wan (15 April-25 May), Luk Keng (17 April-18 June) and Wu Kau Tang (2 May-15 June). Other reports were from widespread areas of the northern, central and eastern NT, Cheung Chau and Po Toi. Apart from two unusually singing in mangrove at Mai Po on 23 April, two at Long Valley on 3 June, three at Shui Hau Wan (Lantau) on 7 May and three at Luk Keng on 18 June, all reports were of single birds.

205A Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus* 中杜鵑

1999: Sightings in spring involved singles at Mai Po on 20 and 21 April, and five at Po Toi on 9 May (YTY); this is the highest-ever single-site count of this species in Hong Kong. The only definite autumn record was a juvenile at Long Valley on 18 September.

2000: In the poorest year since 1990, there were only two records, both in autumn: singles at Lau Fau Shan on 16 September and at Mt. Austin on 5 October.

207A Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus* 八聲杜鵑

1999: Widespread in the NT between 25 March and 28 June, but only recorded from the northern NT at other times. Except for one heard on 1 April at Cheung Chau, where it is very rare, all other records were from the mainland NT, with the Fanling Golf Course area and Mai Po accounting for the bulk of records. Reports mainly referred to singing birds, usually one, occasionally two, and once three (at Nam Chung on 1 April). Totals reported in each month were:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	2	10	22	6	6	1	-	4	-	1	1

2000: Recorded between 20 January and 27 August and also between 11 and 27 October. Singing was noted between 19 February and 5 August, being most frequent in April and May. All reports were of one or two birds, except for three at Long Valley on 25 October. Whereas birds were found in widespread parts of the northern, central and eastern NT between April and May, all reports outside of these months, with the sole exception of one at Chek Lap Kok on 19 February, were from the northern NT, especially the Deep Bay area and hinterland. In autumn, a rufous bird was at Mai Po on 11 and 15 October. Totals reported in each month were:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	2	2	18	8	1	2	2	-	5	-	-

207.5A Drongo Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris* 烏鵲

1999: One was seen at Po Toi on 9 May (HFC *et al.*). It was the first record for Hong Kong and occurred just after a spell of fresh northeast monsoon winds between 6th and 8th, which brought rainy and unseasonably cool weather. It was accompanied by a record five Oriental Cuckoos *Cuculus saturatus*, and record numbers of Brown Shrikes *Lanius cristatus* were also present in Hong Kong on 8th and 9th.

208A Common Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea* 噪鵲

1999: As in previous years, vocalizations were reported in all months of the year, with earliest bouts of intense singing noted this year from late January. Birds were recorded in all months at Shuen Wan and Fanling Golf Course, and during the winter (November-January) period and occasionally in other months at Tsim Bei Tsui, Palm Springs, Mai Po, Hang Tau Tsuen, Lam Tsuen, Kowloon Tong and Kowloon Park. The sudden appearance of persistently singing birds in late March at localities such as Ting Kok, Tai Po Industrial estate and the Chinese University campus, all of which had been visited regularly in the preceding months

without any Common Koels being detected, is thought to indicate that either local dispersal or arrival from wintering grounds elsewhere occurs at this time. Peak counts in spring were eight at Fanling Golf Course on 1 March and nine, including seven males, at Mong Tseng on 14 April. Totals reported in each month were:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
17	33	56	75	25	17	14	2	16	9	4	2

2000: Following one singing at Cheung Chau on 11 January, up to four were recorded in widespread areas of the northern, central and eastern NT between 8 February and 20 June, almost all of which were noted singing. Subsequently, following one at Siu Lam on 3 and 16 September and up to five at Mai Po on 18 September and 2 October, one near Mai Po on 27 November was the final record of the year. A female at Queen's Hill on 12 May was seen with an egg in her mouth. Totals reported in each month were:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	10	5	26	20	10	-	-	4	5	1	-



29 Common Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 22 September 2002

Ho-fai Cheung

209A Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*
1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

褐翅鴉鵂

210A Lesser Coucal *Centropus benghalensis* 小鴉鵂
1999: Fourteen were heard between Yung Shue O and Hoi Ha on 26 April.
2000: No significant reports.

212A Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia* 紅角鴉
1999: At Cloudy Hill this species was recorded on the following dates (all single birds and all J&JH, unless otherwise stated): 15, 16, 22 and 25 October, 7, 12 (two), 13, 18 and 20 November, 2 (MH,MRL) and 4 December. It is difficult to say how many individuals were involved, but there seem to have been at least seven birds. This series of records suggests that Oriental Scops Owl is a regular migrant in small numbers, and that the paucity of records up to now is due to the difficulty of recording it.

213A Collared Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena* 領角鴉
1999: Noted throughout the year at widespread localities in the central and eastern NT, and also on HK Island. As usual most reports referred to calling birds, but at Cloudy Hill, and to a lesser extent, at Robin's Nest and at Sha Lo Tung, birds were also seen on a number of occasions.

2000: Noted throughout the year at widespread localities in the NT and also on HK Island.

214A Eurasian Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo* 鵂鴞
1999: One at Lam Tei Reservoir, Tuen Mun on 27 September was the only report.

2000: One was at Chau Tau on 27 February. Also noted at Sha Lo Tung on 6 May, at Kau Sai Chau on 25 August and 8 October, and at Chau Tau on 18 December during the Nightbird Survey, full details of which will be published in the HKBR 2001-2002.

216A Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides* 斑頭鴉鵂
1999: Recorded in all months except August and at widespread sites in the NT, with most reports from Hang Tau Tsuen, the Fanling Golf Course area, Sha Lo Tung and Tai Po Kau. Apart from two at Sha Lo Tung and Shing Mun in April, all other reports referred to single birds.

2000: Noted throughout the year at scattered sites in the central and eastern NT, including Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun, Ting Kok, Hang Tau Tsuen, Chau Tau, Kap Lung, Nam Chung, Sha Lo Tung, Shek Kong Catchment, Chung Mei and Tsim Bei Tsui

217A Brown Hawk Owl *Ninox scutulata* 鷹鴞
1999: One was at Sha Lo Tung on 31 October (RWL).

218A Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* 短耳鴞
2000: One was at Chek Lap Kok on 24 November (GJC). This is the second record for Hong Kong, the first having occurred on 13 November 1988.

219A Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* 普通夜鷹

1999: Up to two singing birds were noted at Sha Lo Tung on 15 and 25 April, beside Luk Keng Road on 18 April and 24 May, and at Ping Shan Chai on 25 April. These are the first records in recent years of singing birds away from the one known summering site at Yung Shue O. In autumn, single birds were at Cloudy Hill on 25th and 26 September and 28 November, Sha Lo Tung on 31 October and 16 November, and Mai Po on 25 November.

2000: Between 20 March and 15 June, noted in the Sha Lo Tung-Hok Tau Reservoir area and at Bride's Pool, Wu Kau Tang and Yung Shue O. In autumn, singles were reported at High Junk Peak Trail on 24 and 30 September, Sha Lo Tung on 21 and 23 October, and Cloudy Hill on 4 and 18 November.

220A Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis* 林夜鷹

1999: Recorded during January-April and August-December, with singing noted during February-April. All reports were from the northern NT and referred to single birds except for two at Chau Tau on 31 January and 2 October and three there on 18 October. Most reports were from Cloudy Hill and Chau Tau. Other localities were Hang Tau Tsuen, Mai Po, Palm Springs, Robins Nest (twice), Tin Shui Wai (twice) and the Lok Ma Chau area.

2000: Unprecedented numbers were logged at Kau Sai Chau, especially in autumn, the peak count being 22 on 8 October 2000. Elsewhere, singing birds were present at widespread sites in the northern and eastern NT between 9 February and 15 June, and single birds were sighted until 2 December in the northern NT, all at traditional sites except for at Lok Ma Chau on 9 July, Long Valley on 10 October and Kam Tin on 2 December.

222A White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus* 白喉針尾雨燕

1999: Following one at KFBG on 20 April, there were no further reports until early May when Typhoon Leo brought 23 to Cape D'Aguilar and one to Tam Kon Chau on 2nd and 20 to Mt. Austin on 4th.

223A Silver-backed Needletail *Hirundapus cochinchinensis* 灰喉針尾雨燕

1999: In the poorest year since 1985, just five birds were recorded. These were at Lin Barn Tsuen on 14 March, Ho Chung on 20 March (two), KFBG on 20 April and flying off the sea at Cheung Chau during the approach of Typhoon Leo on 1 May.

2000: An even poorer year than 1999; one at Cheung Chau on 3 May was the only report.

225A Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus* 白腰雨燕

1999: Reports received suggested that spring passage was the weakest since 1988. Following two at Mai Po on 26 January and one at Ho Chung on 20 March, the only reports during the usual period of peak passage were of 20 at Mai Po on 23 March and 10 at Chek Lap Kok on 12 April. Subsequently in April, there were 40 at Shek O Quarry on 24th (thought to be prospecting for nest-sites but not

seen there on subsequent visits), eight at Lai Chi Chung on 26th and one near Mai Po on 30th. In May, following one at Cheung Chau and ten at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 1st and 2nd during Typhoon Leo, there were five at Mai Po on 6th, 20 at Ho Chung on 9th and one at Tai Po Kau on 29th. There were no reports from June to August. Autumn records are generally infrequent. This year the only reports were from islands in September - 40 at Po Toi on 5th and 15 at Cheung Chau on 15th.

2000: In an exceptionally poor spring, one at Nam Sang Wai on 29 January was followed by up to five in Deep Bay on eight dates between 8 March and 11 April, one at Nam Chung on 1 April and two at Cape D'Aguilar on 15 April. Up to 20 over High Junk Peak Trail between 10 and 21 May were possibly summer visitors. The only subsequent sightings were also from this locality and concerned one on 9 September and ten on 24 September. It seems possible that this species may be being under-reported.

226A Little Swift *Apus affinis* 小白腰雨燕

1999: As with the previous two species, 1999 was a very poor year, certainly with regard to spring when the only significant counts were 100 at Fung Lok Wai on 20 February, 300 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 27 March and 200 at Tam Kon Chau fishponds on 30 April. In the second half of the year, weather-related reports which may have involved migrants rather than the local resident population involved seven at Cape D'Aguilar on 22 August (Tropical Storm Sam), up to three there and eight at Cheung Chau on 15 and 16 September (Typhoon York), and 100 at Shuen Wan on 18 December following the arrival of a cold front.

2000: Flocks of 500 were noted at Mai Po on 18 March and beside the Mai Po access road on 6 April. Elsewhere, a flock of 200 at Nam Chung on 1 April was the only notable count.

227A Crested Kingfisher *Ceryle lugubris* 冠魚狗

1999: Singles were reported at Lai Chi Wo and at Plover Cove on 30 January, and again at Plover Cove on 12 October.

228A Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* 斑魚狗

1999: Recorded throughout the year at Deep Bay, Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan, and also occasionally at Kam Tin, Long Valley, Tai Lam Chung, between Lai Chi Wo and Luk Keng, and at Plover Cove, where two were noted near a nesting-hole in the bank of the reservoir on 30 October. Up to five were noted in the Starling Inlet area, but not more than two were at any other site outside Deep Bay. The total of 11 logged in a co-ordinated count in Deep Bay on 16 May is the highest on record, the previous highest being nine there on 20 December 1998. Full results of co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
4	4	3	4	11	4	7	5	6	9	3	5

2000: Recorded throughout the year from Deep Bay, Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan, and also occasionally at Shui Hau Wan (Lantau), Tai Lam Chung and Lai Chi Wo. The total of 14 in a co-ordinated count in Deep Bay on 15 October is the highest on record, the previous highest being 11 on 16 May 1999 (see above). Full results of the co-ordinated counts conducted in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	3	3	4	7	nc	11	6	10	14	5	7

229A Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* 普通翠鳥

1999: Recorded in Deep Bay and Starling Inlet throughout the year, at Shuen Wan in most months, and at widespread sites elsewhere mainly in April and September–October. A total of 52 was logged in the co-ordinated count in Deep Bay on 21 November; this was at the time the highest on record, the previous highest being 50 there on 16 August 1998. The highest count elsewhere was nine at Starling Inlet on both 10 October and 23 November. Though the pattern described in Carey *et al.* (2001) is for peak numbers to occur in late summer and early autumn, this year's counts show peak numbers occurring during the winter months. Unusual localities where this species was recorded included Cape D'Aguilar and Tap Mun (September), Po Toi (September and October), Chek Lap Kok and Tai Po Kau (October), and Hong Kong Park (November). Full results of the co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
26	42	27	11	23	15	30	39	31	27	52	42

2000: The co-ordinated counts conducted in Deep Bay, produced totals of 67 on 13 August, 53 on 15 October and 57 on 10 December, which are all higher than the previous highest on record, that being the count of 52 recorded in the co-ordinated Deep Bay count of November 1999. Elsewhere, except for one at Chek Lap Kok on 25 January and up to six in the winter months at Starling Inlet, all other records involved no more than two birds from sites on the mainland NT, localities being Siu Lam, Tai Lam Chung, Shuen Wan, Plover Cove, Nam Chung, Lai Chi Wo, Sam A Tsuen and High Island. Full results of the co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
35	14	30	12	9	nc	21	67	49	53	48	57

230A White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis* 白胸翡翠

1999: Recorded in all months, though mainly in January–February and August–December. Most reports were from Deep Bay, Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan. Unusual localities were Green Island, Hong Kong Sports Institute and Tap

Mun. Among very few breeding season records was one of a dependent juvenile at Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 June. This was the first year in which co-ordinated counts have been carried out in Deep Bay in all months for this species, and the results are generally in line with the pattern of occurrence described in Carey *et al.* (2001). The total of 30 logged in the count of 10 October became the highest on record, though those of February, July, August, November and December all exceeded the previous highest count, which was 19 in Deep Bay on 20 December 1998. Full results of the co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
16	26	7	4	1	4	28	26	16	30	22	24

2000: Recorded throughout the year, apart from during a two-month period between 19 April and 18 June when unusually there were no sightings at all. This is only the second full year in which this species has been included in co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay, and a longer dataset will be needed before monthly and seasonal variations are understood and this species' current status is revealed. The numbers logged during August–December were even higher than in 1999 and included 46 on 15 October — now the highest on record — and 37 on 10 December, the previous highest count being 30 recorded in the co-ordinated count of October 1999. Elsewhere, the sites with most records were Starling Inlet (up to four in most winter months), Long Valley (up to three between 10 July and 19 December) and Shuen Wan (singles in most winter months and also between 18 June–27 July). There were also sporadic reports in August and September from Siu Lam, Tai Lam Chung and Po Toi. Full results of the co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
15	5	19	-	-	nc	7	24	30	46	21	37

231A Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata* 藍翡翠

1999: Recorded until 26 April and from 23 September, with the exception of one at Mai Po on 31 August. Most reports were from Deep Bay, Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan. Results from co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay, which for the first time were carried out in all months for this species, were much as expected, except that peak numbers occurred in November, rather than October, and relatively few individuals were logged in January. Up to eight were noted in both winter periods at Starling Inlet and up to two at Shuen Wan. Elsewhere, apart from two at Po Toi on 30 September, single birds were noted occasionally at Tai Po Kau village, Yung Shue O and High Island, and also on the coast of northeast Lantau. Full results of the co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
2	6	1	0	-	nc	-	1	3	11	13	9

2000: Recorded until 25 April and from 9 September, with the exception of one at Mai Po on 22 and 29 August. Elsewhere, up to three were regularly reported in the winter months at Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet, with five at the latter site on 10 December, and single birds were noted at Tai Po Kau Tsuen on 1 March, Siu Lam on 17 September, Tai Lam Chung on 5 November and Ho Chung on 18 November. Results from co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	3	5	-	-	nc	2	1	1	11	12	7

234A Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus* 栗喉蜂虎

1999: In the best spring ever, four were at Mai Po on 17 April, and a flock of 18 at Wo Shang Wai on 22 April was followed by flocks of three, 14 and three on 5, 6 and 8 May respectively. In autumn, six were at Mai Po on 19 and 21 October.

2000: Seven at Mai Po on 16 April was the only spring record, and a flock of 16 there on 5 October, one of which caught and devoured a dragonfly, was the only autumn record.

235A Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis* 三寶鳥

1999: A below average spring was followed by the best ever autumn. Spring reports comprised up to three at Wu Kau Tang on 18 and 23 April and singles at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 18 April, Hoi Ha on 26 April and Cheung Chau on 2 May. Although there were no exceptionally large counts and no reports at all after 11 October, the total recorded in autumn was the highest to date. In September, reports comprised three at Cape D'Aguilar on 16th, up to two at Cheung Chau during 16th-24th, two at Yung Shue O on 18th, five at Clear Water Bay, four at Wong Chuk Yeung and one at Tai Po Kau on 19th, singles at Lam Tei and Shing Mun Reservoirs on 27th and 28th, and six at Po Toi on 30th. In October, one at High Island on 1st was followed by two at Tai Lam on 2nd, two at Po Toi and one at Lamma on 3rd, six at Shan Tong (Tai Po) on 4th, singles at Mai Po village on 7th and 10th, and finally one at Po Toi on 11th.

2000: Spring records this year were concentrated in the period between 13 and 24 April, with six at Wu Kau Tang on 23rd, the highest count. There were also singles at Cheung Chau on 13th and 23rd and at Shuen Wan and Tai Po Kau on 24th. Autumn records spanned a longer period, between 16 September and 24 October. Following three at Pak Nai on the first date, singles were at Wu Kau Tang on 20 September, Pak Nai again on 25 September, Lam Tsuen on 5 October and Sha Lo Tung on 7 October. Most reports, though, were from Siu Lam, where up to six were regularly sighted between 17 September and 24 October.

236A Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops* 戴勝

1999: Single birds at Mai Po on 15 August, Long Valley on 3 November and Tsim Bei Tsui on 4 December were the only reports.

2000: In the early part of the year, single birds were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 January, King's Park on 16 January, Mai Po on 31 January, Tsim Bei Tsui again on 3 February, and Po Toi on 2 April. There were no summer records, but subsequently there were singles at Kam Tin on 5 November, Tsim Bei Tsui on 10 December, and Mai Po on 11 November and 29 December.

237A Great Barbet *Megalaima virens* 大擬啄木鳥

1999: Up to four were noted at Tai Po Kau between February and September. The only other report concerned four heard at Kadoorie FBG on 20 April.

2000: Up to four were noted singing or duetting at Tai Po Kau between January and March and in September and December. Elsewhere, the only other reports were of up to three at Kap Lung, Tai Mo Shan and Kadoorie FBG, all in September, and two at Shing Mun in December.

238A Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* 蟻鴛

1999: In the first part of the year, singles at Mai Po on 2 April and Long Valley on 8 April were the only reports. In the later part of the year, up to two were at Mai Po on 23 September and 21 November, and singles were at Ho Chung on 2 December and Sha Lo Tung on 11 December.

2000: In a better than average year, recorded from 21 January to 16 April and from 13 September to 11 December. In the first part of the year, up to two were noted in the Mai Po area on seven dates between 21 January and 16 April, and there were singles at Tsim Bei Tsui on four dates between 3 and 27 February, at Sha Lo Tung on 5 February, and at Nam Sang Wai on 3 and 4 April. The first of the autumn were singles at Tsim Bei Tsui on 13 September and at Yau Mei San Tsuen on 30 September, after which there were no further reports until 17 October when one was at Long Valley, the first of six sightings there up to 3 December. Between 15 and 28 November, singles were occasionally noted at Mai Po, Kam Tin and Sha Po, and two were at Chek Lap Kok on 24th. One at Ma Tso Lung on 11 December was the last of the year.

244A Fairy Pitta *Pitta nympha* VU 藍翅八色鸚

2000: One was at Kap Lung on 9 September (MT), the earliest autumn record in Hong Kong by five days.

247A Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis* 雲雀

1999: Two were at Long Valley on 20 November (MT).

248A Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula* 小雲雀

1999: Up to four were noted at Long Valley on six dates between 30 October and 8 December.

2000: All records fell into three periods: between 20 and 29 February, between 10 and 31 October and on 24 November. In February, up to six birds were at Tsim Bei Tsui between 20th and 29th, whilst two were at Long Valley on

25th and 26th, and in October, up to two were at Long Valley between 10th and 18th, followed by one at Mai Po on 29th and up to ten at Chek Lap Kok on 30th and 31st. Five at the latter location on 24 November were the last of the year.



30 Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*
Fung Lok Wai, Hong Kong, November 2002

John Holmes



31 Great Barbet *Megalaima virens*
Shing Mun, Hong Kong, 27 April 2003

Elisa Hui

250A Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* 灰沙燕

1999: Recorded between 27 April and 15 May and between 10 October and 18 November. The majority of reports were from Mai Po, so only the exceptions to that are indicated below. In April, following two on 27th and ten on 29th, there were at least 80 on 3 May, up to 30 during 4th-6th, 15 on 10th and three on 11th. The final record of the spring came from Long Valley on 15 May. In autumn, 12 on 10 October were followed by 10 on 16th (at Lin Barn Tsuen) and up to six during 18th-21st, then in November by nine on 1st, one on 14th (at Long Valley), two on 15th and finally 10 on 18th.

2000: Recorded between 2 April and 4 May, with record numbers in early May, and between 2 October and 27 November. Between 2 and 16 April, up to 10 were regularly sighted at or near Mai Po, six were at San Tin on 4th and one was at sea near Po Toi on 15th. The only subsequent April record concerned 15 at Ma Tso Lung on 23rd. In May, following 200 at Mai Po on 2nd, numbers there suddenly built up to 3000 on 3rd (PJL), then declined to 100 the next day. There were no other reports apart from a flock of 200 at Long Valley on 3rd. This is only the second ever year in which four-figure counts have been made, and the count of 3000 is the highest ever, the previous highest being 1370 on 5 May 1994, also at Mai Po. As happened in 1994, a record spring was followed by a very good autumn. Most reports were from the Mai Po area, where birds were noted on sixteen dates between 2 October and 27 November, with peak numbers in November including 55 on 4th, 34 on 12th, 20 on 20th and 15 on 22nd. Elsewhere, there were up to six at Long Valley on eight dates between 3 October and 10 November, up to ten at Tai Sang Wai on 15 October and 22 November, two at Pak Nai on 21 November and two at Kam Tin the next day.



32 Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 2 April 2000

Kar-man Lo

251A Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

家燕

1999: Recorded between 5 February and 14 November. Spring passage was unremarkable, highest counts being 80 at Nam Sang Wai on 20 February, 150 at Tam Kon Chau and 70 at Green Island on 30 April. There were no significant summer records. In autumn, weather-related observations at Cape D'Agular involved six on 22 August during the passage of Tropical Storm Sam, and up to 20 on 15 and 16 September during the passage of Typhoon York. Passage was also evident at Mai Po in October, with 100 on 2nd and 150 on 22nd, and in November, with 250 on 2nd and 600 on 6th. Subsequently, no more than 35 were noted there up to 14 November, after which there no further records.

2000: In January, birds were recorded on only four dates, one near Mai Po on 16th being the first of the year, and 60 at Crest Hill on 25th the sole double-figure count. There were no further reports until 20 February when 1000, the highest count of the year, were at Tsim Bei Tsui. The next reports were both from Mai Po and concerned flocks of 250 on 18 March and 150 on 2 April. Between 2 and 16 April, flocks of up to 250 were regularly reported over fishponds in various parts of Deep Bay and there was one count of 400 near Mai Po on 9th. The first fledged young of the year were seen on 14th and single 'rufous' birds were noted on 9th and 16th, all at Mai Po. The only further count of any note in spring was of 200 near Mai Po on 2 May, though this presumably contained a core of local breeders and their offspring. There were no further reports until 3 July, when 80 were counted resting on wires at Ting Kok, and none after that until 15 September when 30 were noted at Tsim Bei Tsui, with six at Po Toi two days later. Subsequently, all records were from the northern NT, where birds were regularly reported between 23 September and 13 November, higher counts at Mai Po in this period being 110 on 23 September, 100 on 11 October, 210 on 4 November and 200 on 12 November. High counts elsewhere were 50 at Long Valley on 23 September and 24 October, 120 over fishponds bordering the Shenzhen River on 11 October, and 40 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 27 October. The final reports of the year were all from Mai Po where 25 were present on 27 November, 12 on 2 December and one on 24 December.

252A Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*

金腰燕

1999: Recorded from 13 March to 12 April and from 2 October to 5 December. In spring, singles at Mai Po and Long Valley on 13 and 14 March were followed by four at Ho Chung on 20th and 20 at Ma Tso Lung on 21st, the highest count of the year, then by one at Mai Po on 2 April and two at Chek Lap Kok on 12th. In autumn, up to three were at Long Valley on 2 and 18 October and 13 November, at Mai Po on 18 October, and at Tsim Bei Tsui and Ngong Ping on 23 November, and finally nine were at Mai Po on 5 December.

2000: Recorded in small numbers between 18 January and 9 April and from 1 September to 30 November. Records in the first four months of the year were from San Tin on 18 January, Tai Sang Wai on 23 January and the Mai Po area on 1 and 14 March and 9 April. Except on the first date when there were two birds, all records were of singles. In autumn, almost half of all records were from

Long Valley, where following two on 1 September (PJJ), by two weeks the earliest ever in autumn, up to five were reported on twelve dates between 19 September and 24 October. Elsewhere in September, eight were at Chek Lap Kok on 13th and seven flew over Mai Po on the same date. In October, the sole record away from Long Valley was of one at Yung Shue Wan (Lamma) on 2nd. In November, following two at Mai Po on 13th and two at Lok Ma Chau on 16th, there was a small flurry of sightings between 21st and 30th. This involved six at Pak Nai and four at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21st, up to two at Mai Po on 22nd and 27th, up to six at Kam Tin on 22nd, 26th and 29th, two at Long Valley and two at Sha Po on 28th, and eight at Lut Chau on 30th, the last record of the year.

253A Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus*

煙腹毛腳燕

1999: Only recorded in March, when 20 at Mai Po on 13th, the highest count of the year were followed by two at Long Valley and two at Lin Barn Tsuen on 14th, one at Mai Po on 15th and finally two there on 20th.

2000: Recorded between 20 and 26 February and 12 and 26 November. Records in February concerned two birds at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20th, ten at Sha Po on 22nd, two at San Tin on 25th and one at Mai Po on 26th. Those in November were from more widespread areas of the NT. Four at Mai Po and five at Tai Sang Wai on 12th were the first of the autumn, while 14 at Kadoorie FBG and one at Kam Tin on 26th were the last. Highest counts were 35 at Ho Chung on 18th and 30 at Kam Tin on 22nd. In addition, up to three were noted on single dates within the period at Kap Lung, Long Valley, Nam Chung, Lok Ma Chau and Tsim Bei Tsui.

254A Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus*

林鵲鶯

1999: Another poor year, with no spring records. All reports involved single birds seen in the peak passage month of September: at Tai Po Kau on 3rd and on 12th and 13th, near Fanling Golf Course on 26th, and at Clear Water Bay on 28th.

2000: Once again there were no spring records. However, in what was a relatively strong autumn passage of this species, singles were recorded in September as follows: at Tai Hang Tun (Clear Water Bay CP) on 2nd, at Kap Lung on 9th and 13th, Twisk Nature Trail on 14th, Leadmine Pass and Tai Po Kau on 16th (possibly the same bird) and again at Tai Po Kau on 19th, and at Long Valley on 19th.

255A Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

黃鵲鶯

1999: All three regularly recorded taxa, *M.f. taivana*, *M.f. simillima* and *M.f. macronyx*, were reported, predominantly from lowland localities in the northern NT, although passage was also noted from seawatching points on HK Island and Cheung Chau during typhoons in both spring and early autumn. There were few significant records during the winter months in the early part of the year, with just two counts reaching double figures, both from Long Valley, of 50 and 20 on 9 and 17 January respectively. The presence of 800 at Mai Po on 25th March marked the beginning of spring passage, though numbers fell away

thereafter, until late April, when significant movements were noted, coinciding with the exceptionally early passage of Typhoon Leo. At Mai Po, 500 were recorded on 27th and 400 on 29th, while passage was also noted from Chek Lap Kok (45 on 27th), Cheung Chau (45 on 29th and 265 on 30th), Green Island (160 on 30th) and Tam Kon Chau (135 on 30th). A total of 3033 birds (including 3018 in less than 2 hours) flew north over Cheung Chau and 129 were reported from Cape D'Aguilar on 1 May. A further 75 birds passed Cape D'Aguilar on 2nd, while 800 were at Tam Kon Chau Fishponds, and 250 at Long Valley on the same day. At Mai Po, 3500 were counted at a roost on 3rd and a new high count of 3840 (PIL) was reported on 4th. None of these were attributed to a specific taxon, although when counts of a similar magnitude were made in April 1997 they comprised *simillima*. Other spring records attributed to a specific taxon were 10 *taivana* and 40 *simillima* at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 April, a single *simillima* at the Hong Kong Sports Institute on 15 April and 10 *taivana* at Long Valley on 24 April. The last spring record was of 30 *simillima* from Shuen Wan on 15 May. Autumn passage commenced with the arrival of 15 birds at Long Valley on 4 September. Six *taivana* were noted at Cape D'Aguilar during Typhoon York on 15 September. Autumn records of all three taxa at Long Valley were as follows:

	23 Sept.	22 Oct.	3 Nov.	16 Nov.
<i>taivana</i>	20	30	150	50
<i>simillima</i>	-	15	40	3
<i>macronyx</i>	-	5	40	15

Notable records of birds not attributed to a specific taxon included 60 on 16 October at Lin Barn Tsuen, 100 at Mai Po on 23 and 1000 on 29 October. Forty at Long Valley on 12 December was the final record of the year.

2000: *M.f. taivana* was reported in the first winter period from 12 January to 12 February, with the peak count being 35 at Long Valley on 12 February. There were no further reports until the period from 1 September to 4 November; the peak count being 45 on 24 October. *M.f. simillima* was only reported in autumn between 1 September and 31 October, with all but two of the eleven reports occurring in September. The highest count was of 30 at Long Valley on 21 September. *M.f. macronyx* was reported once in the first winter period, on 19 February at Sha Po. There were no reports of it in spring, while in autumn reports were received between 20 August and 31 October, though the majority were in October and there were only three records in August and September. The peak count was 30 at Long Valley on 14 October. In spring a count of 250 at Long Valley on 3 May was not ascribed to any taxon, but falls within the main passage period of *M.f. simillima*. Observers are strongly encouraged to submit more records of the separate taxa, especially for the midwinter period. Such submissions will contribute immensely to our understanding of the movements of the clearly different populations to which Hong Kong plays host at various times of the year.

256A Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*

黃頭鵲

1999: A breeding plumage male was at Long Valley on 15 April. More unusual was one recorded at Cheung Chau Sewage Farm on 1 May during the passage of Typhoon Leo. In the autumn Long Valley played host to two birds: a first-winter on 6 October, and a female on 3 November.

2000: A female was present at Long Valley on 2 and 3 May, and a first-winter was there on 12 October; these are fairly typical dates for this species.

257A Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

灰鵲

1999: Up to two birds were reported from widespread traditional wintering localities until early April, when 40 were noted at Mai Po on 11th, representing the first significant influx. Elsewhere, six were at Palm Springs and 25 were on Green Island on 30 April, while records of 40 at Mai Po on 3 May and 10 there the next day marked the end of significant passage. A record of one at Tai Mo Shan on 28 July supports the belief that this species may breed in Hong Kong, while two at Chi Fu on 21 August were the first autumn migrants reported. Approximately 200 seen going to roost in mangroves at Mai Po on 16 October were the only sign of major passage before the familiar pattern of low numbers of widely scattered wintering birds was resumed.

2000: The latest report in the spring was on 4 May at Tai Po Kau, while the earliest in autumn occurred on 18 August at Long Valley. One to two birds were also reported from Siu Lam, Po Toi, Leadmine Pass, Mai Po and Pun Shan Chau. The movements and current status of this species in the region are not fully understood and observers are strongly encouraged to submit more records to the Society.

258A White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

白鵲

1999: There were no large gatherings of the taxon *M.a. leucopsis* in the first part of the year. Despite being recorded from widely scattered localities, including Chek Lap Kok, Po Toi and HK Island, the majority of records came from the northern NT. Records of juvenile birds, indicating successful breeding, came from Mai Po on 15 April and 3 May, Long Valley on 2 May and Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 June. The highest count in the latter half of the year was of just fifty birds at Long Valley on 16 November. There were just five records of the under-reported taxon *M.a. ocularis*: two at Shuen Wan on 25 March, 20 at the Hong Kong Sports Institute on 15 April, a single male at Lin Barn Tsuen on 16 October, and ten at Long Valley on both 2 and 22 October. There were two reports of the taxon *M.a. lugens*: an adult male at Long Valley on 10 October (PIL) was the earliest on record, and an adult female was at Kam Tin on 30 December (MRL).

2000: Birds of the taxon *M.a. leucopsis* were recorded in all months except May, though it was undoubtedly present in that month. The highest count in the first winter period was 20 at Nam Sang Wai on 9 March, while breeding was reported from Chek Lap Kok on 28 April and Man Kam To on 8 June. In the second part of the year the highest counts were of 20 birds, at Chek Lap Kok on 30 October and at Long Valley the following day. In the first winter period *M.a.*

ocularis was recorded between 13 January and 12 April, with the highest count being eight at Mai Po on 10 March. There were only three reports in the second winter period, all involving singles: on 24 and 30 October, and on 24 November. Increased record submission to the Society of both these taxa, in particular *M.a. ocularis* at all times of year, and in the breeding season for *M.a. leucopsis*, is strongly urged. The numbers of *ocularis* occurring remain unclear, while the current breeding distribution of *leucopsis* within Hong Kong needs to be fully established.

1998: A male of the taxon *M.a. lugens* was at Fung Lok Wai on 25 November (EMSK).

259A Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* 田鸚

1999: Peak passage occurred between 26 February and 27 March, when up to 30 were recorded at Chek Lap Kok, and between 11 October and 20 November, when up to 35 were recorded at Chek Lap Kok, Long Valley and at several sites around Deep Bay. Away from these sites, up to four were recorded at Fanling Golf Course on six dates between 8 January and 1 March, four were at Queen's Hill camp on 17 January and up to two were noted at Po Toi on both 5 and 30 September. No record of birds specifically ascribed to the locally breeding taxon *A.r. sinensis* were submitted. Observers are requested to indicate which taxon they believe to be involved when submitting records.

2000: In the first winter period records of the migrant taxon *A.r. richardi* were received until 28 April. The highest counts of wintering birds were 35 at Chek Lap Kok on 25 February, while presumed northbound migrants peaked at 40 at the same locality on 30 March. In the summer, a juvenile *A.r. sinensis* was present at Long Valley on 13 July, while an individual possibly of this taxon was at Ma Tso Lung three days later, and an adult was seen feeding young at Tai Mo Shan on 11 August. Records of two at Chek Lap Kok on 26 July and at Nam Sang Wai on 6 August may have been either taxon, though *A.r. richardi* had certainly appeared by 13 September when eight were at Chek Lap Kok. During the rest of the passage period, the highest counts were 58 at Chek Lap Kok on 28 September and 40 at Long Valley on 11 October, while subsequently the highest count was 20 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 December. Away from Tai Mo Shan, recorded mainly in low-lying areas of the NT, with most records from Long Valley and Chek Lap Kok.

260A Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* 樹鸚

1999: The highest counts of the first winter period were all in February: 18 at Kam Tin on 5th, 19 at Fanling Golf Course on 15th and 25 there on 22nd. There were no records suggesting significant spring passage, and the final record was of four over Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 April. The first returning birds reported were four at Mai Po on 18 October, with subsequent counts of 20 at Long Valley on 3 November, 20 at Mai Po on 15 November, 25 at Long Valley on 12 December and 30 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 22 December.

2000: The highest count in the first winter period was of 20 birds at Tai Po Kau on 24 February. The highest spring count was also 20, at Nam Sang Wai on 2 April, while the latest record at this time occurred on 15 April when three were at Po Toi. In the second part of the year the first record occurred on 5 October when two were at Mt. Austin. Subsequent higher counts were 12 at Clear Water Bay on 14 October, a combined count of 57 at Long Valley, Mai Po and Sha Lo Tung on 4 November, indicating a significant arrival at this time, and 28 at Twisk Nature Trail on 7 December.

261A Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* 紅喉鸚

1999: All reports were from Long Valley, Chek Lap Kok and the Deep Bay area. The highest counts during the first part of the year were of 50 at Long Valley on 9 January, and 45 and 40 at Chek Lap Kok on 26 and 27 March respectively. The final record of the spring was of three at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 April. One at Mai Po on 21 September was the first of the autumn, although numbers remained in single figures until early October when ten were at Mai Po on 3rd and 20 at Long Valley on 6th. Large passage counts later in October included a minimum of 100 at Long Valley on 18th and 200 there on 30th. Thereafter numbers stabilised with no count exceeding 50 during the remainder of the year.

2000: The highest count in the first winter period was of 95 birds at Long Valley on 12 February, with 80 present there two weeks later on 25th. Spring reports were few, with 16 at Chek Lap Kok being the highest count; two at the same site on 21 April were the last reported in spring. In the second part of the year the earliest record was on 3 October, while a significant arrival occurred from 10th, with 40-60 birds recorded at Long Valley in the week following this date, followed by 120 on 24th. Subsequently, numbers declined, and the highest count of birds presumed to be wintering was 13 at Long Valley on 19 December. Most records were from the wet agricultural area of Long Valley, with others from other low-lying areas of the NT and from Chek Lap Kok.

262A Pechora Pipit *Anthus gustavi* 北鸚

1999: An extraordinary year for this species, with many reports from coastal watchpoints and record numbers in Deep Bay and the northern NT occurring under the influence of an unusually early tropical storm in Typhoon Leo; these record numbers coincided with the new high counts of Yellow Wagtails *M. flava*. The first was of a single over Green Island on 30 April. The next day eight were seen at Cape D'Aguilar, with 22 (the first double figure record) there the following day. This was totally eclipsed by an exceptional record of 103 birds (P.J.L.) going to roost at Mai Po on 3 May, two having been seen earlier at Mai Po fishponds. The next day just four remained at Mai Po, though two were still present at the fishponds. Finally four were trapped at Mai Po on 8 May. These reports amount to a total of 146 bird-days recorded; reports of a further 32 individuals during the period 30 April to 5 May were received from widespread locations, but, in the absence of supporting details, they have not been included in this analysis. Where observers showed experience of the distinctive flight call, identifying this species,



33 Pechora Pipit *Anthus gustavi*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 18 May 2002

Dickson Wong

and subsequent acceptance of the record by the Records Committee, was made significantly easier.

2000: One was at Long Valley on 12 September (PJL,GJC), the earliest autumn HK record by 15 days. The complete absence of spring records, in sharp contrast to the previous year, illustrates the impact unusual weather events can have on late spring migrants in the region.

263A Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens* 黄腹鹪

2000: One was at Long Valley on 29 and 30 October (GJC). This bird is illustrated in Plate 23 of Carey *et al.* (2001).

264A Upland Pipit *Anthus sylvanus* 山鹪

1999: Two birds were heard singing on Tai Mo Shan on 23 May, while on Lantau singles were heard at Lantau Peak and Kwun Yam Shan on 1 June and at Nei Lak Shan on 13 July.

2000: Four reports were received during the year, all from Tai Mo Shan: two on 9 April and singles on 28 May, and on 2 and 23 July.

265A Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike *Coracina melaschistos* 暗灰鹧鸪

1999: Recorded up to 16 April and again from 30 September. Reports in the early part of the year included a count of four birds at Tai Po Kau on 20 February, followed by one at Shing Mun on 13 March, two at Tai Po Kau on 20

March, another there on 2 April, a male in Lam Tsuen Valley on 6 April, and a final single at Tai Po Kau on 16 April. The first returning birds were two reported from Po Toi on 30 September, with further records of up to two birds from the same site on 3 and 11 October. Other reports included singles at High Island on 1 October, Mai Po on 3 October, Kap Lung on 5 October and Tai Po Kau on 6 October and 17 November. The latter site also held three on 18 November and two on 21 November. The final record of the year was of two birds at Shing Mun on 19 December.

2000: Recorded up to 6 April and again from 10 September. Reports in the first winter period were received from Tai Po Kau and Shing Mun, at both of which up to three were recorded. One at Po Toi on 10 September was the first record of the second part of the year; there were also up to three at Mai Po on 2 and 4 October. Elsewhere, singles were at KFBG on 17 September, at Mt. Butler on 2 November, at Sha Lo Tung on 4 and 5 November and at Tai Po Kau on 14 November.



34 Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens*
Long Valley, Hong Kong, 29 October 2000

Ho-fai Cheung

266A Swinhoe's Minivet *Pericrocotus cantonensis* 小灰山椒鳥

1999: One was recorded at Mai Po on 9 and 10 October (RWL,GJC)

2000: One was at Po Toi on 2 April (MT).

267A Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus* 灰山椒鳥

1999: In the spring, one was on Cheung Chau from 31 March to 2 April, one flew over the Mai Po boardwalk on 4 April and at least two were there on 17 April. Just one was recorded in autumn, over Po Toi on 30 September.

2000: There were four spring reports, all in April: four at Po Toi on 2nd, and singles at Cheung Chau on 13th and 28th, and at Po Toi on 15th. In autumn singles were at Kadoorie FBG on 2 October and 26 November, and at Cheung Chau on 6 October. To avoid misidentifications, observers are reminded to be aware of the possibility of Swinhoe's Minivet *P. cantonensis* occurring in both migration seasons.

268A Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris* 灰喉山椒鳥

1999: Rather under-reported, with all records, none of which were of more than 30 birds, coming from just two sites: Tai Po Kau and Shing Mun.

2000: Only three reports were received for the whole year: at Tai Po Kau, one on 1 April and two juveniles on 13 June, and at Kap Lung up to ten in September. This species is a relatively recent colonist of Hong Kong's woodlands and the Society strongly encourages observers to submit more records, to allow any changes in its status to be monitored.

269A Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus* 赤紅山椒鳥

1999: As with the previous species, rather under-reported, with all records but one, of six at Shing Mun on 31 October, coming from Tai Po Kau.

2000: As with Grey-throated Minivet, only three records were received, in February, April and May. This species is also a relatively recent colonist of Hong Kong's woodlands and the Society strongly encourages observers to submit more records, in order to better define its distribution, breeding season and peak winter numbers.

270A Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus* 紅耳鸲

1999: Records submitted included one of a newly fledged juvenile at Palm Springs on 20 April, and further observations of juveniles at Leadmine Pass and Long Valley on 4 September. The highest count of the year was of 100 birds in Sai Kung Country Park on 19 February. At Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen a pair bred in a large pot plant located in a small courtyard area, surrounded on every side by walls 12 m in height.

2000: The only report of a juvenile was on 14 May at Shuen Wan. Members of the general public not infrequently report cases of this species breeding in situations similar to that referred to in the 1999 account, and any records that would help our understanding of its breeding ecology are welcomed.

271A Chinese Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis* 白頭鸲

1999: There were records relating to breeding between 16 April, when a fledged juvenile was at Tai Po Kau, and 4 September, when a juvenile was at Leadmine Pass. The highest count of the year was of 72 birds at Fanling Golf Course on 8 January.

2000: Reports of migrant flocks were received from Chek Lap Kok (100 on 31 October), Pun Shan Chau (120 on 6 November) and Tsim Bei Tsui (50 on 21 November). The first juvenile was reported on 12 May. Migrant flocks are

frequently seen in early November and records of these and others that would help to better describe breeding ecology are welcomed by the Society.

272A Sooty-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster* 白喉紅臀鸲

1999: The only significant report was of a family party of ten birds noted at Hok Tau on 9 May.

2000: No significant reports. Although regularly encountered at certain locations, being conspicuous, this is neither a numerous nor a widespread species in Hong Kong, and observers are requested to submit records of all sightings of it.

273A Chestnut Bulbul *Hypsipetes castanonotus* 栗背短腳鸲

1999: Widely reported in the first winter period, both from traditional woodland sites in the NT and from sites on HK Island and outlying islands, indicating further expansion of the major influx first noted in November and December 1998. The peak count in the central NT was 80 at Tai Po Kau on 20 March. Elsewhere, reports of up to 12 birds came from Pak Sha O, Sai Wan, Luk Wu, Pak Tam Chung and Lai Chi Chong, all in Sai Kung, as well as from the Chinese University, the Wu Kau Tang-Lai Chi Wo Circuit, and from Ho Sheung Heung. Up to 40 birds were at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen between January and April, and a single bird was heard at Mai Po on 8 April. Further afield, 100 birds reached Tai Tam Country Park, HK Island (PA) on 14 February, a new high count. There were three reports on Lantau, of five birds at Ma Pong Prison on 6 February, six on the Ngong Ping - Tung Chung trail on 28 February and six more at Tung Chung the same day. Single birds were noted on Cheung Chau on five dates between 14 March and 3 May. During the summer months 20 were reported from Tai Po Kau on 31 July and again on 4 September. Up to six were at Sha Lo Tung from 11 to 13 July, at least three were at Leadmine Pass on 30 August, and at least five were at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen throughout May and June. Two were at Tai Fung Au, Tai Tam Country Park on 28 August; there have been no previous summer records for HK Island. There were no real signs of any particular influx in the second winter period.

2000: The only significant report in the first part of the year was an apparently migrating flock of eight birds at Tai Hang Tun, on the headland at the very tip of Clear Water Bay peninsula, on 30 April. Evidence of breeding was noted at Tai Po Kau, including a flock of 20 birds that were largely juveniles on 6 August. Also recorded at Kap Lung, Yung Shue O, Plover Cove Reservoir, Hok Tau Reservoir, Tsim Bei Tsui (four flying east on 21 November) and Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen, where numbers were considered to not be as high as the previous winter.

274A Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus* 黑短腳鸲

1999: All records in the first winter period were from Tai Po Kau: in January, 14 on 25th and seven on 29th; in February five on 6th, two on 18th, 12 on 20th (including four white-headed birds), and six on 27th (including two white-headed birds); and in March four on 5th and finally five on 20th. The sole record in the second winter period was of two at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 24 December.

2000: There were two reports during the year: one at Po Toi on 30 April, and two adults on the south side of Leadmine Pass on 30 September. Excepting the unusual records in late-spring and summer of 1997, these dates are respectively three days later and almost two months earlier than previous latest and earliest dates for this irruptive winter visitor, though because they were so far outside the previous pattern of records the origins of the birds seen on 30 September cannot be treated as certain.



35 Sooty-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster*
Cheung Chau, Hong Kong, 11 April 2003

Henry Lui



36 Chestnut Bulbul *Hypsipetes castanonotus*
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 17 November 2002

Marcus Ho



37 Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 14 April 2002

Ho-fai Cheung



38 Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*, male
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 17 November 2002

Marcus Ho

275A Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii* 橙腹葉鶇

1999: All records were from Tai Po Kau, apart from one at Shing Mun on 16 April and one at Mt. Austin on 17 April.

2000: In the first winter period, all records from Tai Po Kau were of singles, apart from one on 11 March, 6 April and 5 May, the final record of the spring. In the second part of the year two were present on 26 September, and singles were recorded on 20 October, 21 November and 2 December. Elsewhere, up to two birds were at Kap Lung from 11 September to 8 December, and one was at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 19 November.

277A Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus* 牛頭伯勞

1999: The individual which had been first recorded in the orchard area at Tai Po Kau on 13 December 1997, and which had returned on 23 November 1998, remained there until 27 February.

278A Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* 紅尾伯勞

1999: Spring passage commenced on 12 April, and singles were noted at Mai Po, Kowloon Park, Green Island and Cheung Chau between that date and 1 May. As Typhoon Leo remained close to Hong Kong, a small influx arrived on 2 May, when three were at Long Valley and Cheung Chau, and four were at Cape D'Aguiar. Seven were at Mai Po the next day and one was there on 4 May. The period from 8 to 10 May was one of record passage. On 8 May, following a day of heavy rain and easterly winds, 53 were recorded at Tai Hang Tun on Clear Water Bay peninsula in late afternoon (MT), and a single bird was at Mai Po. On 9th, 79 birds were recorded, including a new record single site count of 61 from Po Toi, (YTY), as well as seven at Ho Chung, seven more around Yung Shue Wan, Lamma and four at Hok Tau. On 10th 18 were reported in the Mai Po area, eight of which were on the Mai Po reserve. Autumn passage was more sedate, with no more than four birds reported from any one site, between 5 September and 21 October. Passage peaked on 30 September, when four were at Po Toi and two were at Mt. Austin.

2000: Spring migrants were noted from 24 April to 21 May, with the highest counts being 11 at Tung Ping Chau on the first of these dates, and ten at Po Toi on 30 April. Most records were in the period 29 April to 5 May. Autumn migrants were recorded from 28 August to 14 October, with all reports involving singles, apart from three at Po Toi on 10 September. All records were from low-lying areas of the NT, including outlying islands.

279A Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach* 棕背伯勞

1999: Two fledged juveniles were noted at Palm Springs, Deep Bay on 30 April and an adult with three juveniles was seen at Ho Chung on 9 May.

2000: No significant reports. Being predators, the fortunes of species such as shrikes *Lanius* can be a powerful indicator of the general health of the ecosystem they form part of, and so, since they are particularly conspicuous, observers are requested to submit more records, particularly of breeding, but also of birds seen away from the northwest NT.

[280.5A Lesser Shortwing *Brachypteryx leucophrys* 白喉短翅鶇

1998: Two birds, a male and a female, were trapped at Kadoorie ARC on 14 November (DC). This is the first record for Hong Kong.]

282A Rufous-tailed Robin *Luscinia sibilans* 紅尾歌鶇

1999: In the first part of the year records of single birds were received from the central NT, Green Island, Cheung Chau, Tung Ping Chau and Clear Water Bay on seven dates up to 10 April. All involved singles, apart from three birds at Tai Po Kau on 27 March. In the second winter period birds were recorded from 13 November at KFBG, Sha Lo Tung, Ho Chung, northeast Lantau, Tai Po Kau and Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen. These records also all involved singles, apart from two at Sha Lo Tung on 13 November.

2000: In the first part of the year records of single birds were received from the central NT and Clear Water Bay on nine dates up to 8 March. Higher counts of up to three birds in song were subsequently made at Tai Po Kau and Tung Ping Chau up to 8 April, presumably indicating northward passage or perhaps reflecting ease of recording due to birds vocalising. In the second winter period one to three birds were recorded from 4 to 22 November at Mai Po, Kadoorie FBG, Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen and Kap Lung.

283A Siberian Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope* 紅喉歌鶇(紅點類)

1999: There were only two reports in the first winter period, singles at Kam Tin and Mai Po in February. Four reports at the end of March and in early April reflected the greater visibility of the species at this time due to the tendency for some birds to vocalise more frequently. The latest report was of four at Mai Po on 12 April. The first report of the second winter period occurred on 22 October. Subsequently, the highest counts were of ten at Mai Po on both 4 and 6 November. Reports were received from shrubland and low-lying areas of the NT and also from Mt. Austin. This species appears to be under-reported; more reports, in the first part of the year in particular, would be very welcome and would allow for better definition of its distribution and status.

2000: Once again this species was almost certainly under-reported in the early part of the year, the only reports being of one at Mai Po on 26 March and two at Tung Ping Chau on 24 April. This is presumed not to be an accurate reflection of its distribution and abundance in this period. The first report of the second winter period occurred on 23 October. Subsequently, the highest counts were of 20 at Sai Kung East CP on 25 November and ten at Mai Po two days later; these records may reflect the main arrival. Reports were received from shrubland and low-lying areas of the NT.

284A Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane* 藍歌鶇

2000: One was at Kap Lung on 11 September and an immature male was at Ho Chung on 1 October.

285A Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* 藍喉歌鶇(藍點類)

1999: Between the beginning of the year and 26 March up to five birds

were reported from Long Valley, with singles noted at Mai Po and Ma Tso Lung; subsequently, one was at Long Valley on 15 April, with two present on 17th. In the second winter period one to three birds were recorded at Long Valley between 30 October and 24 December.

2000: One or two birds were reported in the first winter period up to 26 March; in addition, a female was at Ma Tso Lung on 23 April. In the second winter period one or two birds were reported from 3 November. Most records were from Long Valley and Ma Tso Lung, with the only other area being Lok Ma Chau-San Tin.

286A Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus* 紅脇藍尾鶇

1999: Recorded in the first winter period up to 22 March, though reports were only received from six sites, perhaps indicating that no large influx occurred. However, at both Fanling Golf Course on 8 January and at Kap Lung on 10 January, five birds were recorded, suggesting some increase in numbers around that time. Elsewhere, two were at Chai Wan catchment, and singles were at Ming Tak Court (Sheung Shui), Tai Po Kau and Tung Lung Chau. In contrast, there were only three reports in the second part of the year: two at Mt. Austin on 4 November, five there on 25 November, and one in northeast Lantau on 13 December.

2000: Only three reports were received for the first winter period, indicating that there was no significant late winter influx: singles at Shing Mun on 19 January, Tai Po Kau on 2 February and Mt. Austin on 26 February. The first record in the second winter period occurred on 4 November, and most records occurred in that month. The highest count was of 17 birds at KFBG on 26 November, while ten were at Twisk Nature Trail on 7 December. Records at this time were received from other parts of the NT, including Sai Kung and Po Toi, and also from Mt. Austin.



39 Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*
Long Valley, Hong Kong, January 1998

Stanley Fok

287A Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis* 鵲鶇

1999: The earliest report of a fledged juvenile occurred on 28 April. Observers are encouraged to submit more reports related to the breeding of this species.

2000: The only significant - and salutary - report was of a bird giving a loud imitation of a Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx fugax* at Tai Po Kau on 5 May.

289A Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus auroreus* 北紅尾鶇

1999: Singles were reported at only five sites up to the relatively early final date of 7 March, indicating that few were present in the late winter period. In the second winter period singles were recorded on nine dates at widespread sites from 6 November, though two were at Mai Po on 23 December.

2000: One or two birds were reported from the northern NT and Tung Ping Chau in the first winter period up to 19 March. In the second winter period one to four birds were recorded at widespread sites from 1 November; the highest count, however, was of 18 birds seen on 25 and 26 November in Sai Kung East CP.

291A Slaty-backed Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus* 灰背燕尾

1999: One was seen on the stream above and below the dam at Tai Po Kau from 10 to 31 January, and on 3 September and 2 December.

2000: One frequented the stream below the dam at Tai Po Kau from 18 January to 1 March. In addition, one was at Shing Mun on 8 February.

292A Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* 黑喉石鶇

1999: In the first winter period up to six birds were reported from the northern NT, with highest numbers recorded at Long Valley and Kam Tin. The latest report received was of one at Kam Tin on 9 April. The first report in the second part of the year concerned one at Mai Po on 21 September. Counts during the rest of that month were all of five or fewer, though the tempo of passage increased in October, the highest count being 20 at Long Valley on 4th. Up to 15 were also present at Long Valley in early November, while no more than nine were recorded at other sites during the remainder of the year.

2000: There were too few reports in the first part of the year to provide a fair picture of its distribution, though it was present up to 12 April, when two were at Chek Lap Kok. The first report in the second part of the year was of two at Long Valley on 12 September. Counts during the rest of that month were of up to 13, though as usual heaviest passage occurred in October when the highest count was 30 at Long Valley on 10th. Up to 15 were also recorded there in November, and up to 12 in December.

293A Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea* 灰林鶇

1999: A female was at Mong Tseng on 28 November.

2000: An adult male was at Mt. Austin on 14 September (MT). This is the earliest ever in autumn, the previous earliest being on 23 September 1978 (Carey *et al.* 2001).

296A Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush *Monticola rufiventris* 栗腹磯鶇

1999: A male and a female were at KFBG on 16 January (DP), with the male seen again on 26 January (RWL). This is the fifth Hong Kong record.

297A Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* 藍磯鶇

1999: Only three records were received for the first part of the year: singles at Star Ferry Central Pier on 15 March, Chek Lap Kok on 27 March and Green Island on 30 April. Recorded in the second winter period from 5 September at Po Toi, Cape D'Aguilar, Long Valley, Wu Kau Tang, Chek Lap Kok, Pak Shek (near Ma On Shan) and Penny's Bay, with the highest count being of eight birds at Po Toi on 30 September. Only six birds were ascribed to subspecies: five male *philippensis* and one male *pandoo*, the latter at Pak Shek on 18 November.

2000: Reported from Chek Lap Kok, Plover Cove, Po Toi and Mai Po village in the first part of the year up to 30 April, with records generally involving one or two birds, apart from three at Chek Lap Kok on 24 January. A male showing characters of the form *philippensis* was at Tai Mo Shan on 23 July. Recorded in the second winter period from 14 September at Mt. Austin, Chek Lap Kok, Long Valley, Sha Po and Po Toi, with the highest count being of three birds at Chek Lap Kok. All birds ascribed to subspecies were male *philippensis*.

298A Blue Whistling Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus* 紫嘯鶇

1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

300A Siberian Thrush *Zoothera sibirica* 白眉地鶇

1999: A female was at Mt. Austin on 14 October.

2000: A male was at Tai Po Kau on 4 April.

301A Scaly Thrush *Zoothera dauma* 虎斑地鶇

1999: Although there were many reports in the first part of the year, most of these were as a result of regular observations at two sites: Fanling Golf Course, where up to four birds were present to 29 March, and Ming Tak Court (Sheung Shui), where one was present until 28 March. Elsewhere, five were at KFBG on 16 January, while singles were seen between Ngong Ping and Tung Chung, and at Ho Chung, Shek Kong, Tai Mong Tsai and Tsim Bei Tsui, with two at Tai Po Kau. In the second winter period singles were seen at Queen's Hill on 29 November and in northeast Lantau on 14 December.

2000: There were only two reports in the first part of the year, both from Shing Mun: two on 8 February and one on 2 March. In the second winter period singles were recorded between 4 November and 14 December at Fung Yuen, Tai Po Kau, Kap Lung, Mt. Austin, Shek Kong, Twisk Nature Trail and Tsim Bei Tsui.

302A Japanese Thrush *Turdus cardis* 烏灰鶇

1999: The only records in the first winter period were of singles at Aberdeen Reservoir on 30 January and Ho Chung on 6 February. Spring passage was weak, with only two records, both involving singles at Tai Po Kau, on 27 March and 10 April. In the second part of the year there were only three records: a female at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 25 and 27 December, and another at Trio Beach on 27 December.

2000: The only records in the first winter period were of singles at Tai Po Kau on 27 January and Kap Lung on 17 February. Spring passage was recorded between 4 and 15 April mainly at Tai Po Kau, with one record from Kap Lung. The highest count was of four birds on 6th and 7th. In the second part of the year recorded between 5 November and 16 December, with most records in the earlier month. The peak counts occurred on 22 November, when five were at Tsim Bei Tsui and four were at Kap Lung.

303A Common Blackbird *Turdus merula* 烏鶇

1999: Ten reports were received for the first part of the year, all between 29 January and 11 March, with the highest counts being 12 at Sheung Shui on 29 January and ten at Kam Tin three days later. The only report away from the northern NT, and also the latest record at this time, was of one on Cheung Chau. In the second winter period recorded from 24 October, but only on six occasions, the highest count being 25 near Tai Po on 2 November. This species appears to be under-reported; more reports would be very welcome and would allow for better definition of its distribution and status.

2000: Only four reports were received for the first part of the year, all involving singles, and falling between 9 February and 31 March. In the second winter period recorded from 15 October when two were at Mai Po. Subsequent numbers remained low until early November when 16 were at Mai Po on 4th and 15 were at Ho Chung on 5th. Peak numbers, however, occurred between 13 and 30 November, with the highest counts being 43 at Long Valley on 13th, up to 42 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21st and 22nd, and 49 at Long Valley on 28 November. The peak count in December was 20 at Lai Chi Wo on 20th.

305A Grey-backed Thrush *Turdus hortulorum* 灰背鶇

1999: Over 50 reports were received for the period up to 3 April, with the highest counts being 25 at KFBG on 16 January and 24 at Mai Po on 25 January. In the second part of the year recorded from 18 November, although subsequent numbers were rather low, with the highest count being of eight birds. Records were received mainly from widespread areas of the NT, with a few from Green Island, Mt. Austin and northeast Lantau.

2000: In the first part of the year recorded up to 7 April, the highest count being ten at Tai Po Kau on 25 February. In the second part of the year recorded from 4 November, with peak numbers occurring in the period from 17 to 22 November, when up to 50 were at Tsim Bei Tsui and ten were at KFBG. Records were received from widespread areas of the NT, although not from elsewhere.



40 Scaly Thrush *Zosterops dauma*
Lamma Island, Hong Kong, 2000

Tin-wa Wong



41 Japanese Thrush *Turdus cardis*, male
Tai Au Mun, Clear Water Bay, Hong Kong, 1 February 2003

Lo Kar Man

306A Pale Thrush *Turdus pallidus*

白腹鸫

1999: A good first part of the year for this species with many reports received, mainly in January and February, from a number of sites in the NT, including Cheung Chau and Tung Lung Chau, but also from Green Island. Peak counts of six and seven birds were recorded at KFBG, Mai Po and Green Island, and the latest record was of two at Tung Ping Chau on 10 April. In contrast, there was only one report in the second winter period: one in northeast Lantau on 16 December.



42 Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*, female
Wun Yiu, Hong Kong, 25 January 2003

Henry Lui



43 Grey-backed Thrush *Turdus hortulorum*, male
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 25 January 2003

Marcus Ho

2000: Five records were received for the year: five at Kap Lung on 17 February, two at Chek Lap Kok on 19 February, singles at Tai Po Kau on 24 February and 3 March and one at Twisk Nature Trail on 7 December.

307A Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus* 白眉鶇

1999: There was only one report in the first winter period - one at Kadoorie FBG on 16 January — while in the spring there was also just one record: two birds at Kap Lung on 17 April. In the second part of the year only three reports were received, all involving singles: at KFBG on 13 November, Shing Mun on 28 November and Mt. Austin on 2 December. These reports suggest that this was a poor year for this species.

2000: There was only one report in the first winter period - five at Cheung Chau on 15 February - while in the spring there were three records, all in April: singles at Tai Po Kau on 6th and Tung Ping Chau on 24th, and approximately 25 birds at Tai Po Kau on 29th. In the second part of the year the first record was of 90 at Kadoorie FBG on 6 November; this, and a count of 132 on 26 November at the same locality, were the highest counts of the year. Up to 40 were recorded at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21 and 22 November, while other counts were of six birds or fewer, the latest occurring on 7 December.

308A Dusky Thrush *Turdus naumanni* 斑鶇

1999: At Mai Po up to two birds were recorded between 2 and 25 January, while singles were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 26 January and at Kam Tin on 5 February. In the second winter period one was seen at Long Valley on 13, 16 and 28 November.

2000: There were three records during the year, involving singles at Long Valley on 25 February, Mt. Austin on 23 November and Tsim Bei Tsui on 6 December.

309C Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis* 棕頸鈎嘴鶇

1999: Shrubland and forest of the Tai Mo Shan massif continue to provide the majority of records of this species, with reports from Shing Mun, Tai Po Kau and Pun Shan Chau. A winter count of ten at Shing Mun on 19 December was the highest of the year. In addition, one was at Mt. Austin on 23 September, and up to four birds were recorded at Tai Tam CP in August, September and November.

2000: Most reports were from Kap Lung, KFBG, Ng Tung Chai, Leadmine Pass, Shing Mun, Tai Po Kau and Pun Shan Chau. Winter counts of ten at Shing Mun on 19 January and 13 at Tai Po Kau on 4 February were the highest. In addition, two were at Ho Chung on 5 October.

309.5A Pygmy Wren Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla* 小鷓鶇

2000: One first heard at Tai Po Kau on 25 February (TW) was subsequently seen on 13 and 15 March (MDW,RWL). This is the first record of this species for Hong Kong. Previously it was placed in Category F of the Hong Kong List by Carey *et al.* (2001).

310C Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps* 紅頭德鶇

1999: As with the previous species, shrubland and forest of the Tai Mo Shan massif continue to provide the majority of records, with reports from Shing Mun, Tai Po Kau and Pun Shan Chau. The highest counts were of five at Shing Mun in both March and October.

2000: Most reports were from the Chinese University, Kap Lung, Leadmine Pass, Shing Mun, Tai Po Kau and Pun Shan Chau. However, there is evidence of local increase in numbers, for example in the Pun Shan Chau area (north of Tai Po Kau). The highest counts were of eight at Shing Mun, five at Pun Shan Chau and four at Tai Po Kau.

311C Chinese Babax *Babax lanceolatus* 矛紋草鶇

1999: Two birds were seen at Tai Mo Shan on 25 April and 23 May.

2000: The only report received was of four birds at Tai Mo Shan on 14 May.

312A Masked Laughingthrush *Garrulax perspicillatus* 黑臉噪鶇

1999: The largest flock reported was of 26 birds at Fanling Golf Course on 22 February.

2000: No significant reports.

313C Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax pectoralis* 黑領噪鶇

1999: More widespread than the other babbler of presumed non-natural occurrence. Reports, with highest counts in brackets, were received from Pak Tam Chung (19), Clear Water Bay (five), Cloudy Hill (five), Lai Chi Wo (ten), Ngong Ping to Tung Chung (two), Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen (seven) and Tai Po Kau (eight).

2000: Once again, there were widespread reports. Highest counts were received from Bride's Pool (nine), Fung Yuen (Tai Po) (11), Ho Chung (ten), Hok Tau (six), Kap Lung (ten), KFBG (two), Leadmine Pass (four), Lions Nature Park (20), Ng Tung Chai (six), Sha Lo Tung (three), Shing Mun (four), Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen (six), Tai Mei Tuk (17), Tai Po Kau (20), Tai Tong (ten), Twisk Nature Trail (three) and Wu Kau Tang (three).

314C Black-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax chinensis* 黑喉噪鶇

1999: Only seven reports were received: singles at Chai Wan catchment on 16 January, Ho Chung on 11 April, and near Quarry Bay on 30 May, two near Tai Po and at Shing Mun, both on 31 October, and four on 7 December at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen, with three there on 1 March. Only two reports received were from HK Island, the traditional stronghold of this species, though this is considered to reflect observer reporting rather than any decline.

2000: Once again very few reports were received: singles at Cheung Chau on 14 April, Nam Chung on 17 April, and Shing Mun on 17 May, four in the early part of the year at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen, and at Tai Po Kau two on 18 January and one on 4 April. No reports at all were received from HK Island; observers are

encouraged to submit more records to confirm its continued presence in established strongholds.

315A Hwamei *Garrulax canorus* 畫眉
1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

316C White-browed Laughingthrush *Garrulax sannio* 白頰噪鵲
1999: There were reports from six localities: singles in Aberdeen CP on 4 November, above Pok Fu Lam on 11 December and at Ho Chung on 9 May, two at ZBG on 17 April and at Chau Tau on 24 April, and four at Tate's Cairn on 31 May. Present at more sites than usual.
2000: The only report was of four at Chau Tau on 16 September.

317C Silver-eared Mesia *Leiothrix argenteauris* 銀耳相思鳥
1999: Only four reports were received, all from Tai Po Kau where up to three birds were recorded in February. This paucity of records is not thought to denote a decline in numbers.
2000: Most reports were from Tai Po Kau, where up to ten birds were recorded in the first eight months of the year. The only report from elsewhere was of ten at Kap Lung on 9 September.

318C Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea* 紅嘴相思鳥
1999: No significant reports.
2000: As with the previous species, most reports were from Tai Po Kau, where up to 20 birds were reported in the winter periods, as well as four in September. The only report away from there was of one at Cheung Chau on 24 April.

319C Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera* 藍翅希鶇
1999: Although most records were from Tai Po Kau, where up to 50 birds (on 18 September) were reported, this species was also recorded at Ho Chung (five), Kowloon Hill catchment (one) and Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen (one).
2000: Although most records were from Tai Po Kau, where up to 20 birds were reported, this species was also recorded at Ho Chung, Kap Lung, Kadoorie FBG (where 15 was the highest count) and Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen.

320C White-bellied Yuhina *Yuhina zantholeuca* 白腹鳳鶇
1999: Reported from Tai Po Kau in February, March, and September, with the highest count being three on 20 February. In addition, two were at Shing Mun on 31 October and one was there on 19 December.
2000: Singles were reported from Tai Po Kau in March, August, October and December, with two present on 25 February. In addition, one was at Kap Lung on 13 September and two begging juveniles were seen at Wu Kau Tang on 19 May.

321C Striated Yuhina *Yuhina castaniceps* 栗頭鳳鶇
1999: A flock of 20 was seen at Tai Po Kau on 6 and 17 February.
2000: At KFBG up to 15 were present on 16 and 17 September, though the origin of these birds is uncertain. Twelve were seen at Wo Hop Shek on 23 November and a flock of 35 was seen at Tai Po Kau on 29 December.

322C Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus* 棕頭鸚雀
1999: At Tai Mo Shan two were noted on 18 February and seven were there on 23 May.
2000: At Tai Mo Shan two were noted on 14 and 31 May, one was present on 2 July and three were there on 1 November.

323A Asian Stubtail Warbler *Urosphena squameiceps* 鱗頭樹鶯
1999: In the early part of the year there were only seven records, none of more than two birds, with the last being on the very early date of 19 February. In autumn, the first record was of one at Mt. Austin on 28 October. Following the next record on 8 November it was widely reported from the central NT, with the exception of one northeast Lantau on 9 December. The maximum at any one site was five at Tai Po Kau on both 16 November and 12 December.
2000: Up to six regularly reported from widespread locations in the central and eastern NT throughout January and February, with two further records in March, involving one in song at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 16 and 17 March and



44 Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera*
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 21 April 2002

Peter Wong

three at Tai Po Kau on 20th. In all, 51 bird-days were recorded during the first winter period. In autumn, first reported from KFBG, where three were present on 23 October. Thereafter the distribution of records was similar to that in the earlier part of the year, with the exception of four at Mt. Austin on 23 November, which coincides closely with the peak passage period of the last week in November (Carey *et al.* 2001). The maximum recorded at any one site during the autumn and early winter was five at Tai Po Kau on 14 November, and the total number of bird-days during that time was 32.

325A Japanese Bush Warbler *Cettia diphone* 日本樹鶯

1999: Records during the first half of the year came from widespread locations, but with no more than four individuals recorded from any one site. The latest record in spring was a female at Palm Springs on 14 April. Following two at Sha Lo Tung on 13 November, recorded in small numbers, with a peak of only three at Sha Lo Tung on 20 November.

2000: Almost certainly under-reported during the early part of the year, the only records being two at Tung Ping Chau on 16 January, one at Shing Mun on 19 January and two at Mai Po on 23 March. Recorded again from 5 November, when two were present at Sha Lo Tung. Thereafter, mere singles were reported from a further six locations in the northern and eastern NT, and although ten were reported from Sai Kung East CP on 25 and 26 November, this was from a 20 km walk, spread over both days; the suggestion that the early part of the winter of 2000-2001 was a poor one for this species, which was made by one observer, seems justified.

326A Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler *Cettia fortipes* 強腳樹鶯

1999: Singles were recorded at Ping Che on 29 January, Fanling Golf Course on 15 February, and Tai Mo Shan on 17 April. The latter two birds were singing males; the bird at Tai Mo Shan was in suitable breeding habitat and is the latest record by ten days. In the second half of the year one was recorded in a small patch of suitable habitat at the otherwise rather unlikely location of Tai Po Kau on both 19 November and 12 December.

2000: What was presumably the same bird seen in late 1998 by the bamboo clump on the Red Walk at Tai Po Kau was again seen on 1 February, and between 3 and 24 February one was regularly heard in song at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen. In the autumn, singles were recorded at Hok Tau Reservoir on 4 November, Cheung Chau and Pak Tam Au on 25 November, the Luk Wu Trail in Sai Kung East CP on 26 November and Shuen Wan on 15 December.

328A Brown Bush Warbler *Bradypterus luteoventris* 棕褐短翅鶯

1999: One was seen at Sha Lo Tung on 11 December (MT). This is the sixth record for Hong Kong.

329A Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus mandelli* 高山短翅鶯

1999: In the first part of the year recorded at widespread locations in the northern NT, but with no more than two at any one site. The last record was on 1 March, except for a singing male on 17 April at Tai Mo Shan, where a small breeding population may exist. One at Sha Lo Tung on 19 November was the first in the second part of the year; between then and 31 December it was recorded from only two other sites, both in Sai Kung.

2000: Records up to 25 February amounted to a total of nine bird-days, though since these were all singles, and since it was recorded on four separate dates at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen and on two at Shuen Wan, as few as five birds may have been involved. There was one mid-summer record, on 2 July (HKY); as with the only previous mid-summer record this was from Tai Mo Shan. The next report came on 1 November, and the final two months of the year saw a total of 20 bird-days recorded, no fewer than 65% of which occurred at Sha Lo Tung during November. Apart from the sites already mentioned it was also recorded from Chek Lap Kok, Ng Tung Chai, Palm Springs, Chek Keng, Pak Tam Au, Sai Wan and Pat Sin Leng CP.

330A Large Grass Warbler *Graminicola benghalensis* N 大草鶯

1999: One at Wu Kau Tang on 6 February was the only winter record. In summer recorded from Tai Mo Shan on 9 June and 11 September (two), Nei Lak Shan, Lantau on 13 July, and Leadmine Pass on 16 July and 4 September.

2000: The only reports were from Tai Mo Shan on 31 May (three) and 2 July (two) and from Tung Yeung Shan, near Fei Ngo Shan, where one was seen on 7 October.

331A Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata* 矛紋蝗鶯

1999: Recorded from 4 October to 11 December at Mai Po, Long Valley, Tsim Bei Tsui and Sha Lo Tung. Most records were from Long Valley, with up to three there on both 4 October and 21 November. Four at Sha Lo Tung on 11 December was the highest count of the year and only the second record from that month. The total of seventeen bird-days is in stark contrast with just one in 1998, and is the third highest on record.

2000: Five reports, all of singles; at Long Valley on 16 and 21 October, at Sha Lo Tung on 4 and 5 November, and at Ma Tso Lung on 27 November.

332A Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola* 小蝗鶯

1999: One at Yung Shue O on 15 May (MT) represents just the fourth spring record, the previous three all being in the period from 15 to 17 May. In autumn recorded from 10 September to 6 October, mainly from Long Valley but also from San Tin, from an area to the north of Sheung Shui, and from Mai Po, with a peak of thirteen at Long Valley on 13 September.

2000: All records were in autumn, between 1 September and 17 October, involving a total of 20 bird-days, 17 of which were in September. Also, no fewer than 16 were from Long Valley, underlining the importance of that kind of habitat

for species such as this, while they are on migration through the region. The highest day count was six at Long Valley on 4 September, and other sites at which it was recorded were Man Kam To, Lok Ma Chau, Shuen Wan and Lut Chau. A fairly typical year for this species.

334A Styan's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella pleskei* VU 史氏蝗鶯

1999: One was heard at Mai Po on 19 April.

2000: At the Mai Po boardwalk, two were in song on 8 March, one was present on 12 March, with three on 14th, and one was in song on 4 April.

335A Black-browed Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps* 黑眉葦鶯

1999: As in 1998, there was only one winter record, a single at Mai Po on 21 February. Records relating to spring migration were also very few; four were noted at Mai Po on 12 April, and one was in song at Shuen Wan on 15 May. In the autumn, it was first recorded on 19 September, when one was at Mai Po. October saw a total of 60 bird-days recorded, all at either Long Valley or at Mai Po, both of which had peak counts of 12, recorded on 1st and 25th respectively. Passage remained quite strong in early November, with ten at Mai Po on 1st and also at Long Valley on 3rd. Smaller numbers continued to be recorded at both sites until 20 November, but there were no further records. One at Shan Tong Road, Tai Po on 3 November was rather unusual, as this species is very rarely recorded away from genuine wetlands.

2000: The only reports in the spring were of three at Mai Po on 24 March and one at Ma Tso Lung on 23 April. Recorded again from 23 September, when one was at Long Valley. There was just one further report in September — one at Lok Ma Chau on 28th — but October saw a total of 44 bird-days recorded, the highest single count being 14 at Lok Ma Chau on 24th. In November, there were also counts of ten at Mai Po on 11th and nine at Lok Ma Chau on 29th, though there was only one further record after that date, a single at Lut Chau on 30th. All records were from the area between Long Valley and Lut Chau.

340A Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis* 東方大葦鶯

1999: Rather unusually, none at all were reported during the first three months of the year, the first record coming on 12 April, when ten were present at Mai Po. The only other spring record involved a bird singing in reeds at Shuen Wan on 15 May. Autumn passage was first noted from 4 September and continued until 21 November; a total of 200 bird-days were recorded in the period as a whole, the breakdown across the three calendar months being 46:115:39. In fact, 105 bird-days were recorded in the twenty-day period between 19 September, when 20 were at Mai Po, and 8 October, confirming that, as usual, this was the heaviest passage period (Carey *et al.* 2001). However, there were still five separate double-figure at either Mai Po or Long Valley in the second half of October and first week of November, with 75 bird-days recorded in that period.

2000: As in 1999, there were no records until mid-April, when one was seen at Mai Po on 13th and 14th, with ten noted there on 23rd. The only other spring record was of one at Lok Ma Chau on 21 May. As Carey *et al.* (2001) have shown, the cumulative trapping data for this species for 1958-1998 suggest a parity of weight of passage in spring and autumn, but this is certainly no longer borne out by field observations. In the autumn the first record was from Lut Chau on the rather early date of 13 August (HKY); previous midsummer records have raised the possibility of local breeding, which this record could relate to, since trapping records suggest passage does not usually commence until the last week of August. The next record in fact came on 29 August when one was seen at Long Valley, and the first double-figure count of the autumn came from Mai Po on 13 September. Other high counts in that month came from Lok Ma Chau on 17th (25) and 28th (16); in total the month saw 85 bird-days recorded. As usual this rate of passage increased in October, this year to 147 bird-days, with high counts of 23 at Lok Ma Chau and 30 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14th, ten at Tai Sang Wai on 15th, 50 at Mai Po on 22nd and 13 at Lok Ma Chau on 24th. There was only one further record after the end of October: two at Mai Po on 4 November. In addition to the sites already referred to, recorded from KFBG, where three were present on 17 September.

341A Thick-billed Warbler *Acrocephalus aedon* 厚嘴葦鶯(蘆鶯)

1999: One was trapped at Mai Po on 19 September (PJL, MRL).

2000: One was at Mai Po on 9 September (PJL).

343A Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* 棕扇尾鶯

1999: A count of 100 at Long Valley on 9 January (VBP) equalled the previous highest single site count, also at Long Valley on 5 December 1997. Counts of between 15 and 33 continued to be made at that site up to 26 March, though there was only one report anywhere in spring after that date, of three at Long Valley on 24 April. There were no summer records and its presence in the autumn was first reported on 4 September, when five were seen at Long Valley. The first double-figure count of the autumn came on 21 September when ten were at Mai Po, and between that date and 3 October, 205 bird-days were recorded, approximately 68% of the total recorded between the commencement of autumn passage and the end of the year. Significant passage overhead was noted at Long Valley on 25 September (25), and at Mai Po on the same day (39) and also on 3 October (25). Over the year as whole, no fewer than 72% of bird-days recorded for this species came from Long Valley, which, even allowing for bias towards a frequently visited site, indicates the importance of that type of habitat for this species. In addition to being recorded at Mai Po, it was also recorded, mostly in very small numbers, at Ping Che, Shuen Wan, Tseung Kwan O Industrial Estate, Po Toi, Chai Wan Catchment, Chek Lap Kok, Ho Chung, Sha Lo Tung, and Tsim Bei Tsui and beside Yuen Long Creek.

2000: There were very few reports in the early part of the year: 15 at Long Valley on 21 January, three at Sha Lo Tung on 5 February, one at Kowloon Peak on 5 March, and one at Lok Ma Chau on 22 May. Autumn records began on 18

August, when four were present at Long Valley, while ten were at Chek Lap Kok on 28 August. Reports became regular from the middle of September, and 35 bird-days were recorded between 12th and 30th. Almost as many as that - 30 - were seen at Long Valley on 4 October alone, but after 13th the rate of passage fell away somewhat and the mid-October to mid-November period saw just 25 bird-days recorded. However, as in previous years there was evidence that from late November onwards the wintering population started to swell, particularly at Long Valley, where 17 were recorded on both 23 November and 5 December, with 16 on 19 December, and at San Tin, where 36 were present on 6 December and 20 on 19th.

344A Bright-capped Cisticola *Cisticola exilis* 黃頭扇尾鶯

1999: At the start of the year two were at Ping Che on 29 January. Later in the year up to at least three were present at Sha Lo Tung on 21 November and on 11 and 24 December, and one was at Lai Chi Wo on 5 December.

2000: One at Sha Lo Tung on 5 February was the only report in the early part of the year. In the autumn, first recorded from 9 September, when two were seen on the High Junk Peak Trail in Clear Water Bay CP (MT); these are the earliest ever in Hong Kong in autumn, by almost a month. One seen at Sha Lo Tung on 30 September (RWL) was also earlier than any previous records, but the next record was not until the much more typical date of 4 November, when three were seen at Sha Lo Tung; two were also noted the next day. By 18th at least five were present at the same site, and on 26th one was seen on the Luk Wu Trail in Sai Kung East CP, a new site, but also a very little visited one, at which the species may be regular. Finally, two were at Ma Tso Lung on 11 December; such lowland records are unusual, though not unheard of.

345A Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris* 灰頭鷓鴣
1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

346A Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata* 褐頭鷓鴣
1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

347A Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius* 火尾縫葉鶯
1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

349A Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* 褐柳鶯
1999: Noted in small numbers at various locations in the NT up to 15 May, when one was heard at Shuen Wan, though as usual the majority of late spring records came from the mangrove at Mai Po. Present again from 24 September, with six noted at Mai Po the following day, and ten on 3 October. However, as usual, numbers passing through increased sharply in the second half of October; at Long Valley, there were counts of 15 on 18th and 20 on 22nd, and at Mai Po around 25 were estimated to be present on 23rd, with that figure also reported on 2 November. Double-figure site counts continued to be reported until

21 November, though thereafter none exceeded five. The majority of birds occurring outside the midwinter period (January-February and December) are presumably migrants, but those noted at Mt. Austin on 21 (three) and 28 October (two), and on 4 and 25 November were undoubtedly so.

2000: In the early part of the year, there were no records after 15 April, when three were seen at Po Toi; one on Cheung Chau the previous day was also considered to be a migrant. However, there was a total of just six bird-days for January and February and none for March. Observers are requested to submit more records, especially regular 'patch' observations; numbers and patterns of distribution of species such as this seem to fluctuate during the winter period, and also as autumn passage weakens and then as spring passage picks up again, and these fluctuations, and the factors which might be behind them, are worthy of detailed study. Autumn passage was first reported from Mt. Austin on 14 September, when two were present. Rather light passage then continued until 22 October, when ten were seen at Mai Po. Overall this was not an autumn in which many high counts of this species were received, the highest in fact being 25 at Lok Ma Chau on 29 November, an unusually late date for a highest count, though not perhaps itself such a high count.

351A Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi* 巨嘴柳鶯
1999: One was at KFBG on 19 November.

2000: All records were in November: one was seen at Sha Lo Tung on 4th, one was trapped at KFBG on 5th, two were present there on 6th, another was trapped at KFBG on 17th and one was seen at Lok Ma Chau on 27th. Lowland records, such as the latter, are very unusual; there have, for example, only ever been two recorded at Mai Po, despite the extensive trapping programme conducted there over many years (Carey *et al.*, 2001).

352A Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus* 黃腰柳鶯
1999: Reported up to 16 April, from widespread locations and generally in small numbers, though a slight increase in numbers in the last few days in February suggests that passage may have occurred at that time. The seven noted on Cheung Chau on 14 March were similarly presumably migrants. It was recorded again on 17 November, after which numbers grew slightly and steadily, with no real evidence of any marked influx.

2000: Recorded up to 28 March and from 17 November. In the early part of the year, records became less frequent in March, though the presence of ten at Tai Po Kau on 20th suggests that numbers passing through may have actually increased around that date. Counts of 15 at Tai Po Kau on 3 December and of 20 at Shing Mun on 4th similarly suggested an influx, or perhaps an increase in passage, since the pattern of records in previous years suggests that the wintering population may arrive a little later than this (Carey *et al.* 2001). The vast majority of records were from Tai Po Kau and other areas of the Tai Mo Shan massif, but it was also recorded from several sites in and around the Pat Sin Leng area, as well as from Wo Shang Wai/Palm Springs and A Ma Wat. It is anticipated that the

Winter Atlas currently under way will confirm that it is in fact rather more widespread in its distribution than this account suggests.



45 Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 1 December 2002

Michelle and Peter Wong

354A Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* 黄眉柳莺

1999: In the early part of the year counts made as part of regular observations at Fanling Golf Course that began in autumn 1998 (VBP) were as follows:

8 Jan.	1 Feb.	8 Feb.	15 Feb.	22 Feb.	1 Mar.	8 Mar.	22 Mar.	29 Mar.
10	17	20	17	15	14	7	11	9

After the end of March, up to two were reported from various sites up to 17 April and there was one further record, with one seen at Po Toi on 9 May (YTY), by nine days the latest ever recorded in Hong Kong. In the autumn, present again from 21 September, and reported thereafter from widespread locations in unremarkable numbers, an estimated 30 at Tai Po Kau on 18 November being the highest count.

2000: Recorded up to 30 April and again from 15 September. In the early part of the year, almost all records were from the central NT, with the overwhelming majority from Tai Po Kau, and with regular records from Shing Mun, and one or two from Kap Lung and Ng Tung Chai; the only other records were from Ta Ku

Ling San Tsuen (up to three present in January), Sha Lo Tung (a single on 8 February) and from Po Toi (four on 15 April). This picture seems, even more so than in the case of Pallas's Leaf Warbler *P. proregulus*, to represent a distortion of



46 Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 9 January 2003

Marcus Ho



47 Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*
Kam Tin, Hong Kong, 1 October 2002

Kar-man Lo

its true winter distribution in Hong Kong, reflecting much more where a few assiduous observers go in search of genuine woodland species, and Society members are strongly urged to submit many more records, from many more locations. Interestingly, in the autumn and early winter, the same limited number of observers reported it from much more widespread locations, including Mong Tseng, Pak Nai, Mt. Austin, Kam Tin, Hok Tau and Lai Chi Wo and A Ma Wat; it is plausible that is indeed more widespread during passage periods, but a broader sampling would allow for more confident assessment.

356A Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* 極北柳鶯

1999: In spring, in the wake of Typhoon Leo and in the extended period of unsettled weather which followed, the total of number of bird-days recorded was 34; these records fell between 2 May, when nine were present on Cheung Chau, and 20 May, when one was seen there, the peak count (15) having been made at Mai Po on 10th. In the autumn, most records came between 5 September and 11 October, with the highest numbers recorded between 25 September and 11 October. Overall, however, the figures do not indicate that heavy passage occurred. In the second half of October, just three singles were reported, including one trapped at Mai Po on 31st.

2000: There were just three records in spring: singles were at Tung Ping Chau on 24 April, and at Tai Po Kau on 3 May, and two were at High Junk Peak Trail, Clear Water Bay CP on 10 May. Autumn records all fell between 3 September and 15 October. During the autumn as a whole, 173 bird-days were recorded, with main passage appearing to have occurred between 9 September and 2 October; just over 90% of records fell in this period, including all counts of more than two. However, no fewer than 50 were recorded on 16 and 17 September alone, indicating that passage actually peaked around this time. Reports were from all areas of Hong Kong, and from a wide range of habitats and elevations.

358A/359A Pale-legged Leaf Warbler/Sakhalin Leaf Warbler
Phylloscopus tenellipes/borealoides 灰腳樹鶯 / 庫頁島柳鶯

Since reliable criteria for the separation in the field of these two recently split species remain to be established, for the time being records of these two species will be combined, unless birds are trapped, allowing for known differences in wing formula to be used. Such instances in 1999 and 2000 are given in the separate species entries below.

1999: The only record in the early part of the year was of one seen above Pak Tam Chung on 5 January; non-core woodlands in areas such as Sai Kung appear to be favoured by the very small numbers of this species pair which winter in Hong Kong, though of course it would be very interesting to know whether both species are in fact involved in such midwinter records. Somewhat surprisingly, there were no spring records at all, and also in the autumn numbers reported were on the low side, with a total of 39 bird-days during September and the first two weeks of October. There was not quite the sudden dramatic drop in records thereafter that is often seen, and a further 12 bird-days were recorded between 17

October and 3 November. The only count exceeding three during the entire passage period was one of 14 at Tai Po Kau on 18 September. In December, two were present at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 5th, with one also seen on 26th.

2000: In the early part of the year one was heard on 20 February at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen, where birds had been present in December 1999, suggesting wintering in the vicinity. Spring migration was stronger than usual with a total of 22 bird-days recorded between 8 and 24 April. Most records were of singles, and sites at which birds were seen at this time were Tai Mo Shan, Mai Po, Tung Ping Chau, where there were two on 8 April. Cheung Chau, which held three on 15 April, and Po Toi, where no fewer than seven were seen on the same date. In the autumn, records came from widespread locations, though counts of five or more all came from the Kap Lung area, Mt. Austin, Tai Po Kau, Po Toi, Mong Tseng, or Kadoorie FBG. The great majority of the records were between the beginning of September and the middle of October. Of these most (58 bird-days) were recorded between 3 and 15 September, with rather fewer during the second half of September (38), and fewer still (16) during the first 12 days of October. The only records after 12 October were singles at Mai Po on 22 October, at Mong Tseng on 27 October, at KFBG on 6 November and at Shek Kong Catchment on 25 November.

358A Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes* 灰腳樹鶯

1999: One was trapped at Kadoorie FBG on 29 October.

2000: All accepted records were of birds trapped: three at Mai Po on 13 September, seven at KFBG on 16 September, four at the same location on 17 September, and a further two there on 2 October, and one at Mai Po on 22 October.

359A Sakhalin Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus borealoides* 庫頁島柳鶯

2000: Singles were trapped at KFBG on 2 October, at Mai Po on 22 October and again at Kadoorie FBG on 6 November.

360A Eastern Crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus coronatus* 冕柳鶯

1999: There were only two records. As this species is scarce in spring, the sole report of one at Tung Ping Chau on 10 April is not surprising; indeed Carey *et al.* (2001) consider one record in this season to be the norm. However, that only one should be recorded during autumn passage — at Tai Po Kau on 18 September — is surprising, and made 1999 the poorest year for autumn records of this species since 1988.

2000: The only spring record was on the very typical date of 11 April, at Cheung Chau. All autumn reports were in the period from 3 September to 5 October, and all were of singles, apart from two at Twisk Nature Trail on 14 September. A total of 17 bird-days was recorded during the period, with all but two reports coming from sites on the slopes of the Tai Mo Shan massif, such as Kap Lung, Twisk Nature Trail, Kadoorie FBG and Tai Po Kau, the exceptions being at Mt. Austin on 7 September and Ho Chung on 1 October. This latter bird was in an interesting mixed flock including several Arctic Warblers *P. borealis*, a Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica* and a warbler *Seicercus sp.*, while other birds

were seen in flocks containing both Paradise Flycatchers *Terpsiphone atrocaudata paradisi*.

361A Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides* 冠紋柳鶯

1999: There were only two records, both of birds presumed to be of the form *P.r. fokiensis*: singles at Lai Chi Wo on 5 December and at Tai Po Kau on 16 December.

2000: Birds presumed to be of the form *P.r. fokiensis* were reported from the wooded areas of the central NT up to 18 March. The great majority of records were from Tai Po Kau, where up to three were reported, with the generally much less-visited Shing Mun also producing regular records of singles. The only autumn record was of the form *P.r. goodsoni*: one was trapped at Kadoorie FBG on 23 October (PJJ), the earliest on record for the autumn, by just over a week.

'Spectacled' Warbler *Seicercus* sp.

1999: Singles were seen at Ho Chung on 16 January and at Tai Po Kau on 13 and 20 February, and again at Tai Po Kau on 17 October.

2000: Singles were seen at Tai Po Kau on 4 February and at Ho Chung on 1 October.

367A Grey-streaked Flycatcher *Muscicapa griseisticta* 斑胸鶯

1999: Two were seen on Hatton Road, near Lung Fu Shan, on 22 April. Seven seen at Green Island on 30 April, as Typhoon Leo approached Hong Kong, was a good count, but one which was to be completely eclipsed during the sustained wet and unstable weather which followed during early May. The period from 1 May, when the typhoon struck, to 13 May saw a total of 103 bird-days recorded, with a minimum of 50 present at Mai Po on 8th, representing a highest ever site count by a factor of over four (JSRE). Thirty-two were also counted there on 10th (YTY). Indeed a feature of the distribution of records during this influx was that the preponderance occurred at Mai Po; interestingly between the two high counts at Mai Po on 8th and 10th, just one was recorded at Po Toi on 9th. It is also worth adding that it was predictable that this, along with Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* would be a species that would be particularly affected by the unusual weather conditions which prevailed in early May 1999, since the first week in May is established as its peak spring passage period (Carey *et al.* 2001). Autumn passage was more typical of previous years, commencing with one at Po Toi on 30 September, but involving no more than seven bird-days, including a bird that was present at Long Valley from 30 October to 3 November.

2000: There were seven records in spring, all between 14 April and 4 May, and involving a total of 16 bird-days. The three records up to 24 April were all of singles; subsequently, three were present both at Po Toi on 30 April and at Cheung Chau on 2 May, five were at Tai Po Kau on 3 May and two were at Mai Po on 4 May. In autumn singles were at Po Toi on 10 September and Tai Po Kau on 5 October.

368A Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica* 烏鶯

1999: All records came between 18 September and 18 November, and involved a total of 16 birds. The first was at Big Wave Bay on HK Island on 18 September. Subsequent records came from Cape D'Aguiar during Tropical Storm Cam on 26th September, Mt. Austin and Po Toi on 30 September, Clear Water Bay on 1 October, Chi Fu and Mai Po (three) on 3 October, Po Toi on 11 October, Kap Lung and Mai Po on 17 October, Tai Po Kau on 18 October, Plover Cove on 19 October and finally Tai Po Kau, where two were present on the rather late date of 18 November.

2000: All records were in the period from 10 September to 22 November, with approximately half occurring between 26 September and 9 October. Singles were reported on most dates, apart from two at Twisk Nature Trail on 21 September and three at Shing Mun on 19 November. Records were from widespread localities in the NT, including Sai Kung and Po Toi. A total of 20 bird-days was recorded.

369A Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica* 北灰鶯

1999: In the early part of the year, recorded exclusively in singles; in January there was one report, in February three, in March five, in April seven and in May one. In the autumn, records began on 5 September, when two were seen on Po Toi; records continued thereafter to the end of the year, again all in singles, apart from two at Mai Po on 25 September, five on Po Toi on 30 September, six there on 11 October, three at Mai Po on 25 October, two at Ping Che on 6 December and two at Tai Po Kau on 12 December.

2000: In the first winter period, there were five reports, between 19 January and 1 March. Northward passage appears to have been first noted on 22 March and to have continued to 30 April during which time a further five birds were



48 Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica*
Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong, 13 September 2000

Ho-fai Cheung

reported. Southward passage was noted from 7 September, with the highest counts both occurring at Po Toi: eight on 10 September and five on 17 September. September was the peak month, with over 50% of records in the second part of the year occurring then. There were three November records, and one on 5 December was the final record of the year. Records came from widespread areas of the NT, including Po Toi and Tung Ping Chau, as well as from Mt. Austin.

370A Ferruginous Flycatcher *Muscicapa ferruginea* 紅褐鶇

1999: The only record of the year came from Mai Po on 12 April (YTY). An improvement on the complete absence of reports in 1998, but still below the numbers recorded in 1994-97, which saw annual bird-day totals of seven, eight, three and three respectively

371A Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassina* 銅藍鶇

1999: Just three different individuals were recorded during the year: one at Tai Po Kau on 17 January (perhaps the same bird recorded there on several dates in late 1998), a male, again at Tai Po Kau on 14, 18, 19 and 28 November, and 5 December, and a female/immature at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 23 December.

2000: In the first winter period a male and a female were seen at Tai Po Kau on four dates between 7 January and 20 February. In the second part of the year, a male was at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 27 December.

372A Yellow-rumped Flycatcher *Ficedula zanthopygia* 白眉姬鶇

1999: There were just three records, all in the period from 11 September to 25 September and all from Mai Po. Passage was thus even weaker than that recorded in 1998. A female seen at Mai Po on 5 December was considered to be an obvious escape.

2000: As usual, all records were in the autumn, with a total of 11 records, involving 30 bird-days, between 3 and 18 September. Ten birds were ringed at Mai Po on 9 September (PJJ), the highest single site count of this species in Hong Kong. All other records were of one to three birds, apart from five trapped at KFBG on 17 September. Reports were received from Mai Po, the central NT, Po Toi and Mt. Austin.

373A Narcissus Flycatcher *Ficedula narcissina* 黃眉姬鶇

1999: Two males were seen at Mai Po on 12 April.

2000: There were three records, all in April, and all from outlying islands: single males at Tung Ping Chau on 8th, Cheung Chau on 14th and Po Toi on 15th.

375A Mugimaki Flycatcher *Ficedula mugimaki* 鶇姬鶇

1999: In the spring the only record was of one on Cheung Chau on 2 May (MDW), the latest ever in spring, the previous latest being on 26 April 1976. In the autumn there were two records in November, at KFBG on 13th and Tai Po Kau on 27th (three), and two further sightings of singles — possibly the same bird — at Tai Po Kau on 2 and 5 December. There were also two males, an adult and an immature, at Shek Kong catchment on 22 December, over a week after patterns of

occurrence in previous years suggest that passage has ceased (Carey *et al.* 2001).

2000: In the first winter period singles were at Tai Po Kau on 17 and 26 February, Shing Mun on 2 March, Mai Po on 2 April and Cheung Chau on 14 April. In the second part of the year there were eight records, all during the period from 1 to 26 November, and involving a total of 14 bird-days. All reports in November were of singles, apart from four at Hok Tau on 24th, three at KFBG on 17th and two there on 6th.

377A Red-throated Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla* 紅喉姬鶇

1999: At least ten birds were reported from widespread locations in the NT between 8 January and 22 March, the majority in the north and northwest, but also with reports from the Sai Kung area and Tung Chung. In the autumn the first record came on the rather late date of 29 October; this bird, seen at Mai Po, was a male which retained some throat colour. Further records, all of singles, came from near Fanling Golf Course on 16 November, Kam Tin on 10 December, Shek Kong catchment on 22 December, and Long Valley on 24 December.

2000: In the first part of the year there were four records of single birds. Two were wintering birds, at Mai Po on 30 January and Nam Sang Wai on 3 March, while the remaining two were migrants at Po Toi on 2 and 15 April. In the second part of the year the first record was of one at Kowloon Park on 16 September (SHS), which equals the earliest autumn date on record in Hong Kong, the previous one having been in 1979. Subsequently, one or two birds were recorded on seven dates between 22 October and 29 November at Mai Po, Kam Tin, Ho Chung, Shek Kong and Lok Ma Chau.

378A Blue-and-white Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana* 白腹鶇

1999: The only record was of a female, seen at Mai Po, on 22 April. An even worse year for this species than 1998.

2000: Particularly in comparison to the two previous years, a relatively strong spring passage was recorded between 4 and 16 April. A total of 13 bird-days was recorded, all reports involving up to three birds, except for four at Tai Po Kau on 6th. Other records at this time were from Yi O (Lantau), Tung Ping Chau, Cheung Chau, Po Toi and Mai Po. In the autumn, singles were at Kap Lung on 2 October, and at Mai Po on 11 and 22 November.

380A Hainan Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis hainanus* 海南藍鶇

1999: All records were from Tai Po Kau, Leadmine Pass, Shing Mun, and Kap Lung. In the spring, singing males were noted at Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun and Kap Lung from 10 April, with at least four at Tai Po Kau, five at Shing Mun and five in the Kap Lung area. Occasional reports of birds in song continued to 29 July, when a male was seen alarming near an unidentified fledged cuckoo at Tai Po Kau, while shortly before, on 16 July, a female had been observed feeding a fledged juvenile at 450 m asl near Leadmine Pass. There was one further report of one at Kap Lung on 5 October.

2000: First noted in spring on 12 April at Tai Po Kau, where up to three birds were reported to 13 June. One observer estimated there to be up to ten widely

spaced territories at Tai Po Kau during the breeding season. Elsewhere, one was at Cheung Chau on 15 April, singles were at Shing Mun on 19 and 21 April and on 17 May, one was at Bride's Pool on 2 May, and one was at Kap Lung on 27 May.



49 Ferruginous Flycatcher *Muscicapa ferruginea*
Po Toi, Hong Kong, 1 April 2001

Ho-fai Cheung



50 Red-throated Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla*
Wun Yiu, Hong Kong, 7 February 2003

Yiu-leung Tam

There was one autumn record, involving a male at Kap Lung on 3 September.

383A Grey-headed Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis* 方尾鶲

1999: Recorded up to 20 March and again from 31 October. The vast majority of reports were from Tai Po Kau, with up to three at the beginning of the year and up to four in the later part of the year. Other sites at which it was recorded were Shing Mun and Fung Yuen.

2000: Recorded up to 20 March and again from 14 November. Tai Po Kau, the favoured site, held up to four birds during the first winter period. Elsewhere, a high count of eight was made on 19 January at Shing Mun, where there were up to four on three other dates, and one was at Chung Mei on 5 March. In the second part of the year up to three were at Tai Po Kau from 14 November and one was at Shing Mun on 19 November.

384A Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea* 黑枕王鶲

1999: In late January one was at Ping Che on 29th and another at Bride's Pool on 30th. In the autumn one was reported from Tai Po Kau on 17 and 18 October and another was trapped at Mai Po on 24 October. The final record of the year came on 5 December, when one was reported from Aberdeen Reservoir.

2000: In the first winter period one was seen on three dates at Shing Mun between 19 January and 5 March, and one was at Cheung Chau on 19 March and 11 April. In the second part of the year one was noted in the Wo Shang Wai/Palm



51 Grey-headed Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*
Kowloon Park, Hong Kong, 19 February 2002

Peter Wong

Springs area from 28 October to 6 December, and one was at Shing Mun on 4 December.

385A Asian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradise* 壽帶鳥

1999: All reports came between 3 September and 18 October, and involved a total of 17 bird-days. No reports were of more than two birds, and sites at which it was noted were Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen, Tai Po Kau (seven bird-days), Clear Water Bay, Mai Po, Shing Mun, Fanling, Chi Fu and Ho Pui.

2000: There were again no reports in spring. One at Tai Po Kau on 6 August (MT) is the earliest autumn record in Hong Kong. Subsequently, there were two more reports in August, eleven reports in September, two in October and one in November, on 18th. Apart from seven at Kap Lung on 9 September, all reports were of one or two birds, and a total of 26 bird-days was recorded. In addition to the localities mentioned, reports were received from Shing Mun, Mai Po, Siu Lam and Mt. Austin.

386A Japanese Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone atrocaudata* N 紫壽帶鳥

1999: The only record in the spring was of one at Mai Po on 12 April. In the autumn there were reports involving a total of 11 bird-days, between 12 September and 3 October: three were at Tai Po Kau on the former date, one was at Cape D'Aguilar during the passage of Typhoon York on 16 September, up to two were noted at Tai Po Kau on 18 and 19 September, one was at Mai Po on 25 September, and two were at Mai Po on 3 October, one of which was trapped.

2000: There were four spring records, all in April: at Cheung Chau on 11th, 13th and 14th, and at Po Toi on 15th. In autumn, it was recorded between 3 September and 23 October, with all records being of singles, apart from three on 9 September, and with a total of 11 bird-days involved. Records in autumn came from Kap Lung, Mai Po, Mt. Austin, Tai Po Kau and KFBG.

387A Chinese Penduline Tit *Remiz consobrinus* 攀雀

1999: The only reports received for the early part of the year involved single birds heard at Ma Tso Lung on 21 March and at Mai Po on 4 May, and 11 seen at Mai Po on the rather late date of 10 May. Two were noted at Mai Po on 6 November and 90 were present on 23 November. Only five records were received for the year; since this is a species whose status in the region appears to have changed rapidly and whose movements remain little understood (Carey *et al.* 2001), observers are strongly encouraged to submit more records.

2000: There were six reports between 12 March and 4 April, the biggest single flock being six at Long Valley on 26 March. Not recorded again until 4 November, with a further ten reports between that date and 5 December, the highest count being 43 at Mai Po on 27 November. All records throughout the year were from the northwest NT, and in 2000 as in 1999, there were no records in either mid-winter period (up to late February and from mid-December to the end of the year).

389A Great Tit *Parus major* 大山雀

1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

390C Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus sibilans* 黃頰山雀

1999: All reports were from Tai Po Kau and Shing Mun. Although there were no reports between 13 March and 12 September, it may safely be assumed to have been present in those months. With this and other species breeding in relatively small numbers in the central NT and often recently established as breeding species, observers are particularly encouraged to submit any records of confirming breeding, or simply of the species' presence during the breeding season.

2000: Only reported from Tai Po Kau, apart from one heard at nearby Pun Shan Chau on 1 January. No report involved more than six birds and there were records in all months except July, September and December.

391D Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis* 絨額鵓

1999: All reports were from Tai Po Kau and Shing Mun. In a similar way to the preceding species, although there were no reports between 27 February and 12 September, it may safely be assumed to have been present in those months.

2000: Only reported from Tai Po Kau, where up to six were reported during the first four months of the year. What were presumably family parties, including up to two juveniles, were noted there on three dates between 8 and 23 May.

393A Buff-bellied Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus* 紅胸啄花鳥

1999: The only records received were of two males at A Ma Wat on 14 February and of a single male at Tai Po Kau on 17 October. Although this is generally a scarce species in Hong Kong, just two records must represent a considerable degree of under-recording.

2000: Six out of seven records received related to possible breeding activity at Tai Po Kau between 6 April and 23 May, when males in song were noted as follows: 6 April (two), 7 April (one), 12 April (two), 15 April (four), 12 May (two) and 23 May (one). The only other report was of a single male at the same location on 4 December.

394A Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum* 朱背啄花鳥

1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

395A Fork-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga christinae* 叉尾太陽鳥

1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

396A Chestnut-flanked White-eye *Zosterops erythropleurus* 紅脇繡眼鳥

1999: One was present at KFBG on 19 November.

2000: One was present at Tai Po Kau on 4 February. In the autumn, there were three reports from Tai Po Kau (singles on 14 and 21 November, and seven on 22 November), and one from Shing Mun (three on 19 November). This was a better-than-average year for this species, but the pattern of the records conforms very much with that established for this species, i.e. the suggestion of passage in



52 Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus sibilonotus*
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 31 January 2003

Peter Wong

mid and late November and much smaller numbers present in the mid-winter period.

397A Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonicus* 暗綠繡眼鳥
1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

398A Crested Bunting *Melophus lathami* 鳳頭鷄
2000: Males were noted at San Tin Fishponds on 14 March (JA) and in song at Tai Mo Shan on 2 July (HKY). There were no reports in 1998 or 1999, the previous records being from Tai Mo Shan in July 1997.

400A Tristram's Bunting *Emberiza tristrami* 白眉鷄
1999: In the early part of the year one was on Tung Lung Chau on 20 January and at least five were present at Tai Po Kau on 27 March. The only report in the later part of the year involved four at Pun Shan Chau, north of Tai Po Kau, on 30 November.

2000: Apart from a record of six at Kap Lung on 19 January, all records in the early part of the year were from Tai Po Kau, where up to eight were reported on six dates between 19 January and 25 February. The winter of 1999-2000 was thus a rather poor one for this species with just 35 bird-days recorded. There were also just three records towards the end of the year: two at Kap Lung on 22 November, one heard at KFBG on 26 November and one at Tai Po Kau on 14 December.

401A Chestnut-eared Bunting *Emberiza fucata* 栗耳鷄(赤胸鷄)
1999: The only reports were of singles at Long Valley on 17 April and 13 November.

2000: The only record in the spring was of one at Long Valley on 4 April. In the autumn, singles were noted at Long Valley on 14 October (MT), at Kam Tin on 2 and 3 November and at Sha Lo Tung on 4 November. The Long Valley record is the earliest ever in autumn by three days. A slightly better year for a species that remains much scarcer than it once was.

402A Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla* 小鷄

1999: During January and February only very small numbers were reported, mainly from the northwest NT, but also from Tung Chung, Lantau. There were no reports at all for the month of March, though the later part of that month is usually the period of peak spring passage, and the only report during April came from Long Valley, where four were present on 15 April. In the autumn small numbers were reported from 26 October, the only count exceeding six being one of 30 at Ho Chung on 22 December.

2000: Reported from various locations, mostly in northwest NT, up to 2 May, and again from 12 October. Total numbers of bird-days recorded (69 and 63 in each winter period) were rather low compared to the historical data available, and counts of 25 at Kam Tin on 29 February and 30 at Sha Lo Tung on 4 November — both dates suggesting possible passage — were the highest reported from single sites. Although this has in recent years come to be regarded as a fairly numerous winter visitor and passage migrant in Hong Kong, observers are requested to submit more records, to allow its status to be more accurately monitored.



53 Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola*
Long Valley, Hong Kong, 17 November 2002

Marcus Ho

406A Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola* 黃胸鷄

1999: At the beginning of the year, the only records came from Long Valley in January: four on 9th and six on 17th. Two at Mai Po on 7 March may have been early migrants, and records of undoubted migrants came from Mai Po and Long Valley between 17 April and 16 May, the peak count being ten at Mai Po on 3 May. A total of 19 bird-days was reported during this spring passage period. Autumn passage was reported from 18 September, when four juveniles were present at Mai Po. With the exception of one at Mt. Austin on 23 September, all remaining records were from Long Valley and Mai Po, and involved single figure counts, until 18 October when ten were noted flying over Mai Po. Thereafter, up to 20 were present at Long Valley between 30 October and 13 November, and flocks of 20, 30 and 50 were noted passing over Mai Po on 4, 6 and 17 November respectively. Eighty out of a total of 142 bird-days in autumn were thus recorded in early and mid November. This is later than the pattern established over previous years, but fits an apparently emerging trend whereby (i) total numbers passing through are considerably reduced and (ii) the peak is increasingly later, this pattern itself suggesting a major population reduction in probably all, but perhaps in particular, in part of its breeding range. Of course, the reasons for this decline may not actually lie in its breeding areas, but in the regions it migrates through and in which it spends the winter.

2000: Records of two and three at San Tin on 25 February and 1 March respectively may have been wintering birds, in which case the first of the spring passage was a single at Long Valley on 26 March. From that date on, 39 bird-days were logged up to 23 May, when a female was seen at Long Valley (YTY), representing the latest record ever, by two days. In the autumn, recorded again from the fairly early date of 2 September. That month saw a total of 26 bird-days recorded, which in October leapt to 347, boosted by counts of 60, 30, 60 again and 87 at Long Valley on 10th, 12th, 13th and 25th respectively. In November 86 bird-days were recorded, the only high count being 43 at Mai Po on 4th. The only December records came from San Tin, where one on 6th and two on 20 December were presumably wintering birds. All records throughout the year were from the lowland areas of the northwest NT, apart from singles at Chek Lap Kok on 21 April and at Ho Chung on 28 October, and counts of two, five and two again at KFBG on 5, 6 and 26 November respectively. The difference between the pattern of records this year and that in 1999 demonstrates how several years of quality data are required to judge precise changes in the status of this and similar species apparently affected by population decline.

407A Chestnut Bunting *Emberiza rutila* 栗鷄

1999: There were no reports at all during the first winter period or the spring passage period. The first report in the autumn came from Pun Shan Chau, Tai Po, on 1 November, and the highest count at one site was 15 at Sha Lo Tung on 20 and 21 November. Six there on 11 December represented the final record for the year. Like 1997 and 1998, this was a poor year for records of this species.

2000: One at Mai Po on 29 April was the only spring record. Autumn

records all fell between 23 October and 26 November, and included a count of 200 at KFBG on 6 November (PJJ), a new high, surpassing the 150 which passed over the same location on 7 November 1992. Other sites at which it was recorded were Pun San Chau, Sha Lo Tung, and Tsim Bei Tsui.

Black/Red-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala/bruniceps* 黑頭鷄

2000: One was seen at Ma Tso Lung on 4 December (YTY).

409A Japanese Yellow Bunting *Emberiza sulphurata* VU 硫黃鷄

1999: Singles were reported from Long Valley on 8, 10 and 15 April, with another at Mai Po on 8 May. This paltry set of records continued the run of rather poor years for this species, which began in 1997. There were no records at all in 2000, which was the first entirely blank year for this species since 1986. Numbers have in the past been very variable, however; 1993 was the best ever with just over 40, while 1994 produced just one.

410A Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala* 灰頭鷄

1999: Recorded in small numbers at scattered locations from the beginning of the year up to 13 May, when a female showing characters of the race *sordida* was seen at the Mai Po boardwalk. Prior to that there had been evidence of passage during April and early May: thirty were at Mai Po on 12 April and there were counts of eight at Mai Po on 27 April and 3 May and at Green Island on 30 April. Reported again from 25 October, again in small numbers and at scattered locations.

2000: Once again recorded in small numbers at scattered locations from the beginning of the year up to 2 May. Reported again from 4 November.

415A Grey-capped Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica* 金翅雀

1999: Two were seen at Fo Tan on 14 April.

2000: One was again seen at Fo Tan, on 19 February and one was seen at Mai Po on 25 February. This was the first record from outside the Shatin area since 7 January 1997.

417A Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus* 朱雀

2000: Two (females or immatures) were seen at Palm Springs on 2 March, while four were noted at Sha Lo Tung on 5 November and at KFBG on 6 November. The former were also reported to be all females or immatures. These were the first records since 1997.

418A Yellow-billed Grosbeak *Eophona migratoria* 黑尾蠟嘴雀

1999: As in 1998 there were just three reports of flocks of more than ten birds during the early part of the year: flocks of 12 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17 January, 17 at Mai Po on 23 January and 18 at Ping Che on 29 January. Up to ten were noted at Mai Po between 4 and 17 April. In the autumn, assuming it was a wild bird, one at Mai Po on 17 September was as early an autumn record as there has been in Hong Kong (Carey *et al.* 2001). In fact, another was seen near Sheung

Shui on 28 September, and the largest flock of the autumn (14 birds) was seen at Yin Kong as early as 2 October, suggesting that there may indeed have been an exceptionally early influx into Hong Kong in 1999. After 2 October, just 15 birds in total were reported. All records came from locations in the northwest NT.

2000: Recorded up to 13 April and again from 19 October. At the beginning of the year Nam Sang Wai held 25 on 29 January, ten on 15 March and at least 30, including a male in song, on 13 April. The only other sites at which it was recorded at this time were Shek Wu Wai and Tsim Bei Tsui. In the second half of the year, all records were again from the northwest NT, the only count exceeding 12 again coming from Nam Sang Wai, where 35 were recorded on 4 December. These may have been late migrants (Carey *et al.* 2001).

420A White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata* 白腰文鳥
1999&2000: No significant reports.

421A Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata* 斑文鳥
1999: There were no reports of any flocks larger than 30 birds. Three were seen feeding on fire-disturbed grassland at 300m asl on the slopes of Mt. Cameron on 4 November; such records from upland grasslands are rare (Carey *et al.* 2001).

2000: One at Sha Lo Tung on 1 November (RWL) was unusual as, perhaps rather surprisingly, there appear to be few, if any, previous records at that site.

423A Russet Sparrow *Passer rutilans* 山麻雀
2000: One was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 15 January (MT). Observers of this species are urged to examine critically plumage condition, and report on it in any submission to the Records Committee.

424A Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* 樹麻雀
1999&2000: No significant reports.

425D Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus* 黃胸織布鳥
1999: The highest count received for the Mai Po breeding population was 36 nests, counted on 5 June.
2000: No significant reports.

427A Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus* 絲光椋鳥
1999: In January, flocks numbering one hundred or more birds were reported from Nam Chung on 23rd (about 140 birds), and Ping Che on 29th (100). A separate flock of 80 birds was also noted nearby at Sheung Shui on the latter date, 59 were seen feeding on the mudflats at Nam Chung on 23rd and 73 were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 24th. In early February the only sizeable flock recorded was one of 40 birds at Kat Hing Wai on 10th, but from 18th of that month there was evidence of passage; about 300 were noted at Mai Po on that date, and 1500 were seen there on 20th, while on 21st 100 were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui. There were also 92 at Mai

Po on 7 March, but only very small numbers anywhere thereafter, the final record being of a single at Mai Po on 16 April. Two first seen at Long Valley on 4 September and apparently present there until at least 4 October were the first of the autumn, but were believed to be of captive origin. However, a single was also seen at San Tin on 12 September and three were in fact present at Long Valley from 1 October. All of this activity pre-dates the previous earliest accepted autumn arrival in Hong Kong, which occurred on 5 October 1978 (Carey *et al.* 2001). Although some wild birds may thus have been present from early October, only very small numbers were involved until early November, when 600 were noted at Mai Po on 4th. During the rest of that month flocks of between 20 and 80 were seen on several dates at Long Valley and up to 100 were recorded at Mai Po. A flock of around 700 were seen at the fishponds near Mai Po on 5 December, and large flocks were also noted at Sha Tau Kok 16th (100 birds), at Mai Po on 23rd (150 birds) and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 27th (250 birds). The only report during the whole year away from Starling Inlet and the northwest NT came from Cheung Shue Tan on 2 December, when 38 were seen.

2000: In January, significant counts of up to 105 were made at Shuen Wan on three dates. However, much higher counts of 400 were made at Mai Po and Tai Sang Wai, also on three dates, with 1000 present at the former location on 23rd. This figure rose to 1500 by 9 February, and 800 were still present on 10 March. Sixty were reported from Nam Chung on 8 February and records at Shuen Wan continued to the rather late date of 24 April. A juvenile at Long Valley on 18 August was an escape as was a male there on 19 September, and the first of the autumn were nine at Kam Tin on the rather early date of 11 October. Relatively small numbers were recorded thereafter, until eighty were noted at Shuen Wan on 27 October and 200 at Long Valley on 30 October. Strong evidence that passage through the region was underway at this time came in the form of records of 50 over Chek Lap Kok on 31 October, seven at Po Toi on 5 November, and between 20 and 90 at Siu Lam between 8 and 11 November. Later in November, records included 316 over Mai Po on 22nd, 210 at Siu Lam on 25th, and one at Sai Wan, near High Island on 26th. Numbers at Shuen Wan increased to at least 500 on 25 November and several records of large flocks in the Lok Ma Chau/San Tin area culminated in a record of 3000 at Lok Ma Chau on 7 December (MRL). This equalled the previous highest count, made on 3 December 1994 at Tsim Bei Tsui.

429A Purple-backed Starling *Sturnus sturninus* 北椋鳥
1999: A male and a female were present on Po Toi on 30 September, and 12 were seen at Mai Po on 18 October.

2000: Nine were at Kam Tin on 9 October, one was at Long Valley on 13 October and one was at Kam Tin on 1 November.

431A Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* 紫翅椋鳥
1999: There was just one record in each winter period: one at Kam Tin on 22 January (which may have been the same individual seen there in December

1998), and three at the same location on 7 November.

2000: Two were at Kam Tin on 25 and 26 November, and on 2 December. One was also at Tsim Bei Tsui on 6 December. This species remains a very scarce winter visitor to Hong Kong, with no sign of a return to the rather greater numbers which were recorded during the 1970s, and occasionally during the 1980s.

432A White-cheeked Starling *Sturnus cineraceus* 灰棕鳥

1999: In the early part of the year, recorded up to 26 March, almost exclusively at Mai Po, where flocks exceeding 100 birds were noted on five dates up to 7 March. The only record from outside the northwest NT during this period came from Tung Chung, where a single was present on 28 February. The first returning bird was seen at Mai Po on 18 October, and by 4 December a flock of 270 was present there. Fifteen at Sha Lo Tung on 29 December were somewhat unusual at that location.

2000: Probably rather under-reported in the early part of the year; during January there were reports of 15 at Kam Tin on 12th and 50 at Tai Sang Wai on 20th, as well as four reports from Mai Po of flocks of between 50 and 150, while there was a total absence of reports, if not presumably of birds, in February, and just one for March, when 30 were noted at Mai Po on 10th. Thereafter, one was seen near the Shenzhen River on the rather late date of 23 April, while two near Fo Tan on 9 June were extremely unusual; they must be assumed to have been in captivity at some point. Records resumed from 26 September, when at least ten were present near Tsim Bei Tsui (JGH); assuming these to be genuinely wild birds this would be the earliest ever autumn arrival noted, the previous earliest being 7 October 1996. There were in fact only two reports in October, one at Pak Nai on 14th, and two at Long Valley on 30th. The first major arrival was thus noted on the very typical date of 1 November, when 60 were counted at Kam Tin. Thereafter, there were regular records from northwest NT, though most were of single figure flocks, and the only counts of 100 or more came from Kam Tin on 7 November and Nam Sang Wai on 27 November.

433A Black-collared Starling *Sturnus nigricollis* 黑領棕鳥

1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

434A White-shouldered Starling *Sturnus sinensis* 灰背棕鳥

1999: The only report suggesting wintering birds in the early part of the year was of two at Fanling Golf Course on 1 February, while during the spring passage period up to eight were present on Cheung Chau between 11 April and 3 May, and during the same period flocks of 35 (at Mai Po on 11 April) and 40 (at Tsim Bei Tsui on 16 April) were also recorded. In the later part of the year, all records fell between 5 September and 11 October; up to seven were noted on Po Toi on four dates, and there were also records from Palm Springs and Long Valley, the latter site providing the highest count, 15 on 18 September. There were no records suggesting breeding, and overall this species seems to have been under-reported in 1999. Since it is a species which clearly changed in status quite dramatically in Hong Kong during the second half of the twentieth century (Carey

et al. 2001), all records of it are of considerable interest and worth submitting.

2000: During January, three were noted at Ma Tso Lung on 15th and 20 were seen at Mai Po on 30th. The next report, involving two seen at Shuen Wan on 14 March, probably indicated the beginning of movement into and through the region, and in the period up to 15 April there were a further eight reports, all from either the northwest NT or from islands, specifically Cheung Chau and Po Toi. These spring reports included counts of 37 at Long Valley on 4 April, up to 35 in the Mai Po access road area on 9 and 10 April, and 20 at Nam Sang Wai on 13 April. There were no further records until 6 August, when one was seen near Mai Po. Thirty-five were seen at Lok Ma Chau on 28 August, and this was one of several sites in the northwest NT at which the species was noted repeatedly up to 20 December. Other sites were Mai Po, Long Valley, Tsim Bei Tsui, Ho Sheung Heung, Kam Tin, San Tin and Ma Tso Lung, and most reports were of between one and three, though 37 were seen at San Tin on 20 December. However, the largest group seen during the later part of the year was the only one reported from a site outside the northwest NT: a flock of 45 at Tai Mei Tuk on 9 September.

435D Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* 家八哥

1999: The only reports received were from sites in the NT: Tsim Bei Tsui on 16 May, Kam Tin on 17 October and Long Valley on 4 December. A record of two in Kowloon Tsai Park on 18 June suggests that urban releases of this species continue to occur.

2000: All records came from the northwest NT, specifically the Mai Po area, Long Valley, Nam Sang Wai and the Kam Tin/Sha Po area, where twelve were noted at Kam Tin on 30 October.

436A Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus* 八哥

1999: The roosting flock at Chep Lap Kok numbered 200 on 27 February. In the autumn, it grew from 85 on 22 September to 400 on 6 November and to 480 on 26 November.

2000: No significant reports.

437A Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis* 黑枕黃鸝

1999: Two at Ma Tso Lung on 18 April represented the only spring record. Singles seen near Fanling Golf Course on 7 June and in the Lok Ma Chau area on 13 June suggest that birds seeking to breed may have been present; the former location is considered to have been this species' last breeding stronghold (Carey *et al.* 2001), and it was confirmed as breeding at the latter location in both 1994 and 1996. In the autumn it was recorded between 5 September and 11 October, with counts of up to four on four dates at Po Toi during that period, and singles at Mai Po on 25 September and Mt. Austin on 26 September.

2000: None were recorded in the spring. In September there were six records from 9th onwards, all, with one exception - five at Po Toi on 17th - involving singles: at Mai Po (three dates), Ho Sheung Heung and Wu Kau Tang (a juvenile). In October, there were a further seven records: two immatures at Mai Po on 5th, a

single immature at Tsim Bei Tsui on the same date, two further singles at Kam Tin and Lok Ma Chau on 14th and three at Nim Wan on the same date, a female at Mai Po on 16th and four (unaged) there on 22nd. Finally, one was at Mai Po on 1 November.



54 White-shouldered Starling *Sturnus sinensis*
Mong Tseng, Hong Kong, 13 April 2003

Yiu-leung Tam

438A Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*

黑卷尾

1999: The only winter record at either end of the year involved nine birds seen near Aberdeen on 9 January. There were very few reports during the breeding season, the only ones coming during June, from the Lok Ma Chau/Ma Tso Lung area, from Tap Mun and from Po Toi, where a group of six, including young birds, were seen on 20th. Up to five seen at Long Valley also included a juvenile, though this may not have been a locally bred bird. Following the passage of Typhoon York around 50 were noted around Tseung Kwan O Industrial Estate on 17 September, with a similar figure noted at Po Toi on 30 September. About 20 were present at Long Valley on 2 October, but thereafter only very small numbers were recorded, the final record being of a single at Mai Po on 25 October.

2000: During the first winter period regular observations in suitable habitat at Ma Tso Lung, by the Shenzhen River, at San Tin and also at Tsim Bei Tsui suggested that a total of up to 14 could be wintering at those sites. There was evidence of passage in April with records including four heading north at Mai Po on 14th and three at Po Toi on 30th. Five at Tsiu Hang, Sai Kung on 7 May could have been either migrants or local breeders, but records at this time were very few and one observer noted that the species was particularly scarce in mid-summer.

The only record between early June and early September involved three at Mai Po on 12 August, but from 10 September to 18 October there were regular records of migrant flocks at widespread locations. The largest of these flocks occurred in the middle of that period, with 40 at Mai Po on 2 October and 40 at Long Valley on 4 October. Unlike in 1999, there were regular reports of up to six throughout November and into early December. By this time all records were from the northwest NT, indicating the preferred habitat for birds lingering into winter, and interestingly, the sum of the two flocks noted in the second half of December, at Mai Po on 16th (12) and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29th (four), closely matches the number which appeared to be present in the previous winter.

439A Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*

灰卷尾

1999: The only reports during the first winter period came from Tai Po Kau and Shing Mun. At the former site up to two white-cheeked birds were noted up to 20 February, while at the latter site a grey-cheeked bird was noted on 13 March. There were no further reports until 25 September, when a white-cheeked bird was seen at Mai Po. Thereafter up to three were reported from Shing Mun and Tai Po Kau, with one report from Kap Lung on 5 October. Over the year as a whole, reports of white-cheeked birds outnumbered those of grey-cheeked birds by seven to one.

2000: Recorded at the beginning of the year up to 5 March, when two were at Shing Mun. Two had also been seen at Tai Po Kau on 25 February; all other reports at that time were of singles and all from Tai Po Kau and Shing Mun. Interestingly in neither 2000, nor 1999 (nor in fact in 1998) were there any reports during early or mid-April, a time when in previous years, significant numbers have been noted (Carey *et al.*, 2001). In autumn, the species was first recorded at both Mt. Austin and Tai Po Kau on 5 October. Thereafter one or two were regularly reported from Tai Po Kau and Shing Mun, with two reports of up to two at Shek Kong catchment in late November. The majority of records were attributed to the form *leucogenis*; no other form was reported.

440A Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*

髮冠卷尾

1999: Once again recorded in every month of the year and from quite widespread locations, including several sites in the northern NT and in the Sai Kung peninsula, and also from Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun, and Kap Lung. The largest flocks recorded were at Ping Kong on 9 January (20) and near Fanling Golf Course on 11 March (28) and 4 November (18). Undoubted migrants were reported from Mt. Austin on 30 September (two), Po Toi on 11 October (eight), and Cheung Chau on 25 October (eight). At both Mt. Austin and Cheung Chau this species is considered by regular observers to be scarce.

2000: Recorded in all months except March and December, though presumably present in those months. Many records were from the central and eastern NT, with evidence of breeding at Tai Mei Tuk in late June and July and at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen in August. Thirty noted as being present at Siu Lam throughout August and September may have included local breeding birds too,

but the only other double figure count of the year, ten at Mt. Austin on 5 October, were undoubtedly migrants: the species is regularly observed at that site on only one or two dates each October.

441A Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* 松鴉

1999: Only two reports were received: ten were noted in the Tai Mo Shan/Kap Lung area on 10 January and one was seen flying across fields near Yin Kong on 15 May.

2000: Flocks of three and seven were noted at Kap Lung on 9 and 12 September respectively, and one was seen at Tai Tong on 5 November.

442A Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha* 紅嘴藍鵲

1999 & 2000: No significant reports.

443A Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae* 灰樹鵲

1999: Very few reports were received. There was just one report from the western end of HK Island - one at High West on 14 May — and just two from the central NT - singles at Twisk Camp Site on 11 September and at Pun Shan Chau, near Tai Po, on 3 November. There were however, four reports from the Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen/Ho Chung area, involving up to three birds, during January, February, April and November.

2000: The few reports received indicated the species' probable presence throughout the year in the Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen area, and there were isolated reports from Plover Cove, Kap Lung, Sha Lo Tung and Lok Ma Chau.

444A Common Magpie *Pica pica* 喜鵲

1999: As in previous years the highest flock counts involved birds going to roost near the SAR boundary fence at Mai Po; at least 70 were seen in the Pond 12 area just before sunset 23 October and 80 were counted near the fence on 28 November. These counts both exceed the previous highest flock size noted (Carey *et al.* 2001). Also, up to 15 were regularly seen at Fanling Golf Course during the first three months of the year.

2000: At least 50 were noted on the Mai Po security fence at dusk on 1 December.

445A Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauuricus* 達烏里寒鴉

2000: A first-winter bird was at Mai Po on 21 and 22 March, and at Nam Sang Wai on 3 and 14 April (JA *et al.*). This is the third HK record, the previous two having occurred in November 1986 and September 1987.

447A Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos* 大嘴烏鴉

1999: The largest flocks reported were at Tai Mo Shan on 18 February (150 birds — the joint largest ever reported), at Aberdeen CP on 4 November (35) and Tai Tam CP on 8 December (50).

2000: The only large flock reported was of 80 above Shek Pik Reservoir, Lantau on 3 June.

448A Collared Crow *Corvus torquatus* 白頸鴉

1999: Reported from Tai Po Kau Village, Mai Po, Mong Tseng-Tsim Bei Tsui and Fanling Golf Course. The highest count was of 70 roosting in trees on Pond 16/17 at Mai Po on 8 April, and there were also counts of 21 going to roost in the same area on 10 March and of 35 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 18 April. The flock of 70 is the largest noted during the 1990s, the previous highest being 62 at the former Shuen Wan refuse disposal site on 2 July 1993.

2000: Away from the northwest NT, where the species was regularly recorded in small numbers throughout the year, there were regular reports from Shuen Wan. At least 40 were counted on the Mai Po security fence on 13 November, perhaps giving a more accurate picture of the total non-breeding population in that area.

CATEGORY E

702.5E Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina* 赤嘴潛鴨

1999: A male in its second or subsequent calendar year was at Mai Po NR on 11 July (YTY). This is the first Hong Kong record, but because of the date, and the fact that its age precludes the possibility of post-juvenile dispersal, this species has been placed in Category E.

708E Purple Swamp-hen *Porphyrio porphyrio* 紫水雞

1999: One was at Mai Po NR on 23 February (JH). This appears to be the last report of this individual, which on certain occasions in 1997 was seen together with a second.

727E Barn Owl *Tyto alba* 倉鴉

1999: One was at Long Valley on 27th and 28 February (J and JH *et al.*). Asymmetric feather loss and damage to flight feathers indicated that this bird had previously been captive. This is the second HK record.

733E Collared Finchbill *Spizixos semitorques* 綠鸚嘴鵲

2000: One was at Tai Po Kau on 16 April (RWL).

739E Bohemian Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus* 太平鳥

2000: One was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20 March (JA). Damage to the plumage indicated that this bird was an escape from captivity.

758.5E Ultramarine Flycatcher *Ficedula superciliaris* 白眉藍姬鵲

1999: A first-winter male was present at Kadoorie FBG on at least 16 and 17 January (RWL). This is the first record in Hong Kong. Although reported to be present before this date, no records were received. The Records Committee welcomes submission of records from other dates.

759E Small Niltava *Niltava macgrigoriae* 小仙鵲

1999: A first-winter male was at Ho Chung on 23 January (DP). This bird was previously reported as having occurred in 1998 (HKBR 1998: 94).



55 Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauuicus*, first-winter
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 22 March 2000

Martin Hale



56 Collared Crow *Corvus torquatus*
Kam Tin, Hong Kong, 1 October 2000

Ho-fai Cheung

Records judged by the Records Committee to be not proven

1998

Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*, Kadoorie FBG, 27 June;
Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*, Mai Po, 28 November.

1999

Shearwater sp., Cape D'Aguilar, 2 May; **Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*, Kwu Tung,
28 October.

2000

Grass Owl *Tyto capensis*, Mai Po, 15 March; **Brown-chested Flycatcher**
Rhynomias brunneata, Kap Lung, 2 October.

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EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER IN DEEP BAY:
THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Y.T. Yu and W.K. Cheng

On entering Mai Po to carry out fieldwork on the afternoon on 9 December 2000, Y.T. Yu noticed the words 'Oystercatcher from Mai Po boardwalk' on the notice board by the Peter Scott Field Study Centre. After immediately phoning P.J. Leader, YTY then accompanied him to Tsim Bei Tsui to search for the bird; however, they failed to find it on the mudflat at low tide. Yet, that evening, pictures of the bird captured from video film were posted on the bulletin board on the website of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society by the original finder, W.K.Cheng. These pictures appeared to confirm this as the first adequately supported record of a Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* in Hong Kong. Carey *et al* (2001) listed this species in Category F ("species for which all published records must be regarded as doubtful because of the possibility of mistaken identification"), based on a record, also in Deep Bay, on 10 December 1958, for which there is no supporting documentation (Chalmers 1986).

The next day, P.J.L and YTY undertook the monthly waterbird count at the Mai Po boardwalk. At about 0815h, YTY relocated the Eurasian Oystercatcher feeding along the water's edge, at a distance of about 200 m. The bird stayed on the mudflat throughout the morning and many other birdwatchers, including about 50 HKBWS members on a Society outing, could also observe it. A description of the bird was made during the observation and is provided below. Despite the bird remaining at a considerable distance from the boardwalk hide, it was photographed (see Plate 58).

Description

Size: Clearly larger in size than the Grey Plovers *Pluvialis squatarola* also present in the vicinity.

Structure: Compared to other waders, the Eurasian Oystercatcher had a larger head, with a long straight bill. The neck was shorter but thicker. The body was chunkier and the legs were relatively short.

Plumage: The head, neck and mantle were black, while the sides of the breast, the belly and some parts of the wings were white.

Soft Parts: The bill and legs were red and distinctive.

The distance the bird remained at made it impossible to discern whether it had the white throat band, which, though only present in immature and non-breeding plumages, is absolutely diagnostic of Eurasian Oystercatcher, distinguishing the taxa *ostralegus*, *longipes* and *osculans* from all other

Oystercatcher taxa (Hayman *et al.* 1986). However, the amount of white visible on the closed wing suggested that it was of the taxon *osculans*, which would be the one expected to occur along the coast of southern China.

Distribution

The taxonomic relationships of the various members of the Eurasian Oystercatcher group are much disputed. The species is widely distributed in both Europe and Asia, and while the taxon *finschii*, occurring only in New Zealand and thus isolated from all other taxa by at least 9000 km, is sometimes considered conspecific, it is also frequently regarded as a separate species or as a form of Australian Pied Oystercatcher *H. longirostris*, itself occasionally treated as part of the *ostralegus* group (del Hoyo *et al.* 1996). In China, except in Xinjiang in the extreme northwest, where the species is a summer migrant (Ma 2001) and where the taxon *longipes* is presumably involved - based on the subspecific range information included in del Hoyo *et al.* (1996) - all previous records have been from the coast between Dalian and Shantou, and are rather few in number. All these coastal records can be presumed to involve the taxon *osculans*, in its breeding range geographically isolated from other forms by at least around 3000 km. This form breeds from Kamchatka to the western coast of the Korean Peninsula and winters south to southern China, and may deserve treatment as a separate species (del Hoyo *et al.* 1996). First described by Swinhoe (1871), during the nineteenth century it was recorded in winter at Xiamen and Fuzhou in Fujian and at Shantou in eastern Guangdong (Swinhoe 1860, 1862, 1871), in summer at Dalian Bay, Liaoning (Swinhoe 1861) and nesting - in May - at Yantai, Shandong (Swinhoe 1874-75). Subsequently, La Touche (1892) described it as "not uncommon" in winter at Fuzhou and Shantou, occasional specimens were collected at Shanghai (Sowerby 1943) and at Zhoushan Dao, Zhejiang (Shaw 1934), and Wang *et al.* (1991) listed it as a vagrant to Taiwan. The Shandong breeding record remained the most southerly for China until Caldwell (1932, 1935) found up to four pairs nesting on small islands in the Haitan Dao group off the coast of Fujian in 1931 and in May 1935. Currently, Eurasian Oystercatcher is known to be present in summer along the east coast of China, in Liaoning province (Ding *et al.* 2000), at Yancheng, Jiangsu (G.J. Carey pers. obs.) and in the Matzu archipelago off the Fujian coast (Y.T. Yu pers. obs.). It was also recorded at Xuan Thuy Nature Reserve, Red River Delta, Vietnam in December 1999 (Y.T. Yu and C. Swennen pers. obs.), so its occurrence in Hong Kong is not unexpected.

As a result of this record, this species has been moved from Category F to Category A by the Records Committee of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. It should be noted that it was only the complete absence of any supporting notes made at the time of the sighting which necessitated the removal of the 1958 record from Category A of the Hong Kong List, during the wide-ranging review of historical records involved in the preparation of Carey *et al.* (2001).

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Richard Lewthwaite for supplying information on the current and historical status of this species in China, and to Geoff Carey and Mike Turnbull for comments on and additions to earlier drafts.

二〇〇一年十二月九日，余日東先生在米埔鳥類紀錄板上留意到有鳥友曾於當日於浮橋對開泥灘發現蠣鶻。由鳥友 W.K.Cheng 提供的照片判斷，本發現為香港首次有足夠證據支持的蠣鶻紀錄(上一次存疑的F類記錄遠在一九五八年十二月十日)。翌日於水鳥普查時余先生在早上八時許重新找該鳥於距離觀鳥亭約二百米處覓食。Martin Hale 的圖片顯示，這蠣鶻 *Haematopus ostralegus* 比周圍的灰斑鴉 *Pluvialis squatarola* 為大，背黑腹白，喙、腿均粗壯，為鮮紅色，足以判定種類。專家由翅上白斑大小斷定該個體為東亞亞種 *osculans*。是次發現將蠣鶻在本港的記錄狀況提升至 A 類。



57 Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 10 December 2000

Martin Hale

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PARASITIC JAEGERS PAST CAPE D'AGUILAR DURING TYPHOON LEO: THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Michael Turnbull

Saturday 1 May 1999 saw the beginning of the protracted close approach to Hong Kong of the exceptionally early Typhoon Leo, which the day before had necessitated the raising of the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal no. 3 for the first time ever during the month of April (Hong Kong Observatory 2003). In the early morning of 1 May it was centred approximately 250 km SSE of Hong Kong (CY Lam, pers. comm.). Since it has emerged that mid to late April may be the peak time for the northward passage of jaegers *Stercorarius* through the South China Sea, (Carey *et al.* 2001, Lamont 1990, Lamont 1994) it was with considerable anticipation that several birdwatchers made their way to Cape D'Aguilar that morning. They were not to be disappointed.

In the very buffeting east/north-east winds and in the rough seas that resulted, keeping accurate counts of birds passing was difficult. However, it soon became clear that, in terms of numbers, the main species caught up in the storm were Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus*, of which approximately 500 were noted passing west between 0555h and 1430h, terns *Sterna* and *Chlidonias*, especially Common *S. hirundo* and Aleutian *S. aleutica*, and jaegers, almost all of which appeared to be Long-tailed *S. longicaudus*, and several of which were clearly so, being adults.

However, at approximately 0720h, I noticed, at a range of around 1000m, one jaeger, a pale morph adult, which looked to be both clearly larger and of sturdier build than the bird it was accompanying; this second bird appeared to be an adult Long-tailed, and this was confirmed as it approached. Despite the considerable initial range and the difficult viewing conditions, the difference in size and structure was immediately clear to other experienced observers present, including G.J. Carey, M.L. Chalmers, P.J. Leader, M.R. Leven and R.W. Lewthwaite. As both birds approached the shore, they were joined by two other jaegers, which were essentially identical in size, shape and flight pattern to the adult Long-tailed.

At it approached, the bird which had attracted my attention through its different size and structure could be seen to be also darker and more uniform above (in terms of covert/flight-feather contrast) and more extensively pale below than adult Long-tailed Jaeger. It also showed clear white flashes on the underside of the primaries, and a more restricted white area on the upperwing (Long-tailed shows prominent white wing patches neither on the upperwing nor the underwing: Svensson *et al.* 1999). When close to the Cape (at about 300 m) it broke away from the group of Long-taileds and came in further still, though never closer than about 250m, chasing a tern *Sterna*. At this point it towered in rapid pursuit of the

tern and spread its tail, revealing a typical Parasitic Jaeger *Stercorarius parasiticus* tail shape, with the two central tail feathers being pointed and about 50% longer than the rest.

Notes taken on the day also record that, while it was clearly bigger and more powerful than the Long-taileds, it did not show the bulk and structure expected of Pomarine Jaeger (which was also seen during the passage of the storm), nor did it show the more prominent white upperwing flash or the more extensive dark cap usually seen on that species. It also had a limited indistinct breast band, eliminating Long-tailed completely, and not matching the dark, coarse breast band usually seen on Pomarine (Svensson *et al.*, 1999).

Some time later, P.J. Leader picked up another bird, also a pale adult. This bird did not come in as close as the first bird, but was again clearly heavier in build than the Long-taileds, up to 80 of which were seen that day. It was also more uniform above than Long-tailed, and showed more white in the wings than Long-tailed would be expected to show. It was also identified as a Parasitic Jaeger.

The following day, as the typhoon continued to rage, a minimum of 16 adult Parasitic Jaegers were noted, between 1000h and 1200h, with identification essentially based on direct comparison with Long-taileds. In fact, of 80 jaegers seen during this seawatch, at least half appeared to be Parasitic (though some may have been Pomarine), and of these more than half were immatures or dark morph birds. Separation was again based on size and structure, with these birds being somewhat heavier in build, and broader-winged, on the presence of relatively prominent white flashes on the upperwing, as well as the underwing, on the otherwise uniform dark-brown nature of the upperparts, on the more extensively pale underparts, extending to the undertail covert area effectively, and on the rather more extensive cap than would be shown by Long-tailed.

Viewing on both days was through a 30x75 tripod mounted telescope, and it is worth emphasising that at the time of observation I personally already had almost 30 years' experience of viewing jaegers, having seen many thousands of Parasitics, in particular, and in excess of a thousand Pominines, as well as a few hundred Long-taileds. The other observers present had, in a number of cases, similarly extensive experience of these species.

Parasitic Jaeger has a circumpolar distribution, breeding in coastal tundra, mainly between the latitudes of 57° and 80° North, and wintering in the oceans of the southern hemisphere, especially around the coasts of South America, southern Africa, southern Australia and New Zealand. It has a rapid migration northward in April and May (del Hoyo *et al.* 1996). In Japan, Brazil (1991) described it as "an uncommon pelagic migrant off the Pacific coasts of Hokkaido and Honshu", which is "...far less frequently encountered than the Pomarine Skua".

Records in China are few, perhaps predictably in view of its status in Japan: Hopkin (1990) observed two on 5 and 6 May 1989 in the Taiwan Strait, Williams (2000) lists one record for Beidaihe, Hebei, a first-winter on 3 October 1990, and Tang (2002) described a female obtained at Chang Dong Airport, Fujian on 15 April 2001. Also, on 29 April, 2001, I observed a pale phase adult from the M/S *Star Pisces* approximately 50 km southeast of Hong Kong, but outside of its territorial waters. Finally, a juvenile flew south past Beidaihe, Hebei on 24 September 2001 (Paul Holt *in litt.* to G.J. Carey).

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude to Geoff Carey for his assistance in supplying information concerning the status of this species in China and Japan.

一九九九年五月一日，期間正值颱風里奧影響，香港天文台發出三號熱帶氣旋警告訊號，Michael Turnbull先生與多位鳥友在鶴咀觀鳥。於早上七時二十分，發現一隻淡色型短尾賊鷗 *Stercorarius parasiticus*，該鳥的初級飛羽底部呈閃亮白色、外型較粗壯、胸部有不明顯胸帶，當飛近至三百米時，突然離開身後的長尾賊鷗，追向一群燕鷗，期間展開尾羽，可清楚看見兩條中間尾羽較尖長，比其他尾羽長一半。過了一會，Paul Leader先生亦發現另一隻較淡色的成鳥。翌日他們再次於鶴咀錄得短尾賊鷗。該兩天共錄得約八十隻賊鷗之中，相信至少有一半是短尾賊鷗，其中超過一半是未成年或紳色型。全部均以粗壯的體型、寬闊的翼和翼下白斑來辨別。短尾賊鷗在北緯五十七至八十度之間的極地海岸苔原繁殖，於南半球包括南美洲、非洲和澳、紐南面沿岸越冬，四至五月期間快速向北方遷徙。中國方面，過去只有少量紀錄，於四、五月和九、十月期間在台灣海峽、北戴河、福建以及香港東南五十公里外的水域錄得。

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DRONGO CUCKOO AT PO TOI: THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

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At about 1100h on 9 May 1999 I was at the main village on Po Toi Island watching, amongst other migrant birds present, Oriental Cuckoos *Cuculus saturatus*, of which a total of five were present, the highest-ever single-site count of this species in Hong Kong. Suddenly I saw a smaller bird similar to a drongo *Dicrurus* coming to a small tree. After some difficulties in viewing the bird, I was able to get sufficient details to identify it as a Drongo Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris*. Later I met Y.T. Yu, K.S. Lee, M.F. Ho, H.K. Ying, F.K.W. Fong and S. Lam, all of whom subsequently saw the bird, and I was able to record some video footage. The following description is based on notes taken on the site and from viewing the video footage later.

Description

Size and Shape: It was a small, black bird, about 22 cm in length. It had a rounded head, thin decurved bill, slim body, long wings, and long, deeply forked tail. The outer two tail feathers were shorter, reaching only three-fifths of the way down the tail, and pointing outward from the side of the tail. The main tail feathers were longer to the left side. The bird was slightly smaller than a Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*. Its overall shape was very similar to a Black Drongo, although the bill appeared thinner and more decurved, the wings appeared longer, the tail appeared shorter and was less deeply forked.

Plumage: The bird was black overall. The whole head was black, and appeared to be the blackest part of the bird from most directions. At some angles the head appeared slightly glossy black. The upper wing and back were concolorous, being black, tinted glossy bluish-green. The alula was dull brown. The underwing was sooty black, with a thin white line on the centre running parallel to the wing. There was also a white spot under the outermost primary of each wing. The breast and belly were black tinted brown, and both were slightly duller than the head. The vent/undertail-covert area was dirty black, with about five fine, creamy bars. The rump, uppertail and undertail were dull black, tinted brown. The outer two tail feathers had roughly seven thin creamy-white bars. The eyes and legs were black and the bill was shiny black.

Discussion

It appeared that wing moult had basically been completed and body moult mostly so. However, the alula was clearly unmoulted, and other unmoulted areas were on the breast and belly, making these areas appear brownish. The tail feathers were clearly untidy. Some tail feathers were clearly either moulting or missing since the tail was not symmetrical. Based on the brown colour of the unmoulted feathers, I believe this was a first summer bird. The tail pattern was not useful for determining its age because there was insufficient information available in

published works. According to MacKinnon and Phillips (2000), males have brown irides, while females have yellow irides; this bird was thus presumably a male since its irides appeared to be black.

Range

According to del Hoyo *et al.* (1997), the range of Drongo Cuckoo extends from northwestern India, through southeastern Asia and across southern China, and throughout the Indonesian archipelago as far as Halmahera. There is also a separate population in southern India. It is apparently resident in many areas, though also known to be seasonally migratory and nomadic, arriving with monsoon rains. In China, it is recorded from Sichuan, Yunnan and Hainan east through Guangxi and Guangdong to Fujian (Cheng 1987). It appears to be a rare and localized summer visitor east of Guangxi. In Guangdong, two were collected in hills in the north of the province on 28 April 1916 and 7 May 1917 (Mell 1922); in recent years there have been regular reports of up to three at Nanling NNR (Ba Bao Shan) between 26 April and 27 June and occasional reports of up to three at Dinghu Shan in the second half of April and at Che Ba Ling between 13 April and 16 May, with a further sighting there on 16 August (Lewthwaite 1996, RWL unpublished data). A total of three specimens taken in central Fujian in April 1908 and on 20 April 1909 (La Touche 1913) are the only records known for that province.

Two previous claims of this species in Hong Kong, in February 1935 and May 1971, were considered doubtful by Chalmers (1986) and it remained in Category F following publication of Carey *et al.* (2001). However, as a result of this record it has now been accepted into Category A of the Hong Kong List.

一九九九年五月九日張浩輝先生在蒲台島錄得五隻烏鵲 *Cuculus saturatus*，並即時作詳細紀錄以及利用攝錄機拍攝其中一鳥。該鳥通體黑色纖細，上體微帶綠輝，尾長呈叉狀，外彎的外側尾羽只有尾部五分之三的長度。外型像黑卷尾，不過體型較小、翼較長、嘴較幼而向下彎、尾較短和較小開叉。下體顏色較淡，腰部沾褐，尾下覆羽和外側尾羽帶有淡幼紋。從顏色、換羽狀況、以及深色的虹膜顯示，這鳥是一隻首年夏天的雄鳥。烏鵲分佈於印度西北、亞洲東南至中國南部、印尼群島至哈馬赫拉島，印度南面有一個小種群。除了是多個地區的留鳥以外，這鳥亦會隨季候風遷移，在中國四川、雲南、海南以至東面的廣西、廣東和福建曾於過去四至六月期間錄得。香港曾於一九三五年二月及一九七一年五月錄得此鳥，但由於對當時記錄方面有懷疑，故一直被列為F類。這次發現具有足夠確認資料，被納為香港的首次紀錄，歸入A類。



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Plate 58-61 *Drongo Cuckoo* *Surniculus lugubris*
Po Toi, Hong Kong, 9 May 1999

Ho-fai Cheung

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LESSER SHORTWING AT KADOORIE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTRE: THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

David Carthy

On 14th November 1998 I was ringing birds in shrubland above the University of Hong Kong's Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, adjoining Kadoorie FBG. This particular day was an exceptionally good one for migrants, with over a dozen different species trapped.



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63

Plate 62-63 *Lesser Shortwing* *Brachypteryx leucophrys*
Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, Hong Kong, 14 November 1998

David Carthy

At about 0730h I found a small thrush in the bottom shelf of one of the mist-nets located in dense mature scrub close to the stream. On examination, it proved to be a Lesser Shortwing *Brachypteryx leucophrys*. A little later, a second bird of the same species was found in another net, also in thick tall scrub about 80 m away from the first.

Description

The birds were generally about the size of a Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus* and were uniform rich brown in colour. They had long strong legs - befitting leaf litter feeders - and also short wings and very short tails. A description was taken of the first bird. Due to the need to process the considerable number of other birds caught that day, the second was not fully described, though it was photographed. The photographs taken at the time (Plate 62 and Plate 63) show the principal identifying features. The varying visibility of the supercilium should be noted. The paler bird on the right in Plate 62 and the bird in Plate 63 is the one described. It was thought to be a female and the measurements subsequently tended to confirm this.

Head: No supercilium was noted initially but a clear white one was discovered when the feathers above the eye were parted. The eye-ring was buffish brown. The cheeks and lores were greyish-brown. The crown feathers were brown with grey centres.

Upperparts: The back and uppertail coverts were strong rufous brown. The primaries and secondaries were strong rufous brown on the outer webs, but black on the inner. The primary coverts were black, fringed brown distally. The greater coverts were similar but with broader rufous brown fringes. The median and lesser coverts had very broad rufous fringes. The rectrices were strong rufous brown above and grey-brown below. They only extended 8mm beyond the undertail coverts.

Underparts: The chin was greyish white whilst the lower throat and upper breast had a strong brown wash. The belly was white. The undertail coverts were brownish white and the flanks, strong greyish brown. The underwing coverts were grey, though brown near carpal joint.

Bare parts: The upper mandible was blackish and the lower dark brown, greyish at the base. The bill shape was that of a small thrush. The mouth was bluish pink, the irides dark brown and the tarsi bluish brown. The toes were as the tarsi, but grey beneath.

Measurements

Wing (max. chord)	59.5mm	Bill (to skull)	16.3mm
Tail	30.3mm	Total Head	35.5mm
Weight	12.5gm	Tarsus	27.4mm

Wing formula (primaries numbered ascendantly)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
-23.5	-9.5	-4	-1	Longest	-1	-4	-5.5	-7	-9

Primary 1 was also measured at 12mm longer than the longest primary covert. Primaries 3 to 6 were lightly emarginated.

Fat deposition was judged to be 3 on a scale 1 to 4, which is indicative of possible migratory condition. Fat levels above 1 have not been found in escaped cage birds at KARC (pers. obs.). There was no sign of damage to either plumage or bare parts caused by being in captivity.

Discussion

The tail and wing measurements noted on the Kadoorie bird match La Touche's (1925-1930) for female Lesser Shortwing of the race *carolinae* and are too small for male *carolinae* and also for either sex of *sinensis*, the small subspecies of White-browed Shortwing *Brachypteryx montana* which occurs in southeast China and which is the only realistic confusion species. Below is a comparison of measurements (mm) of the first Kadoorie bird with those in La Touche (1925-30) for *carolinae* and *sinensis*:

	Wing	Tail	Tarsus
Kadoorie bird	59.5	30.3	27.4
<i>B. l. carolinae</i>			
male	63.5	39	27
female	59.5	35	26
<i>B. m. sinensis</i>			
male	65 - 69	49 - 55	26.5 - 28 (both sexes)
female	63 - 66	46 - 50	

Lesser Shortwing ranges widely from Nepal across southern China to Fujian, and also through Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and peninsular Malaysia, as well as Java, Sumatra, Bali, and the Lesser Sundas (Robson 2000). According to Cheng (1987), the race *carolinae* occurs in southern China - specifically in western and southeastern Yunnan, Guangxi, Hunan and northwestern Fujian; elsewhere, in western Yunnan and central Sichuan, the race *nipalensis* occurs. There are recent records, presumably all concerning *carolinae*, from eastern, central and southern Guangxi (Lewthwaite 1996, R. W. Lewthwaite unpublished data, KFBG 2003a,c,d), southern Jiangxi (KFBG 2003b), southern Hunan, northern and central Guangdong, and northwestern Fujian (Lewthwaite 1996, R. W. Lewthwaite unpublished data). In northern Guangdong it has been reported at Ba Bao Shan (day-counts of up to 12 mostly at 1100-1450m, occasionally at slightly lower altitudes, between 26 April and 19 August, (mainly unseen, singing birds), and in central Guangdong at Nan Kun Shan (one singing male seen on 27 and 28 May 1989, altitude not noted but probably at around 900m) (Lewthwaite 1996, R. W. Lewthwaite unpublished data).

This is according to King *et al.* (1975) a "non-migratory skulker in forest", and the species' short wings and tail clearly restrict its scope for long distance migration. However, its skulking habits and preference for evergreen forests near streams in upland areas also limit the chances of its being observed (Etchecopar and Hue 1980). In fact, the closely related White-browed Shortwing *Brachypteryx montana* is stated in to be at least a partial migrant by de Schauensee (1984) and by MacKinnon and Phillipps (2000).

In addition, it should be noted that on 9 July and 9 August 2001 a first-year male Lesser Shortwing was seen and heard in song near the summit of Tai Mo Shan by Martin Hale. This bird was trapped and photographed by Paul Leader. Furthermore, during the previous summer, on 18 and 19 August 2000, what was probably the same species had been recorded in the same area, also by Martin Hale. The latter record included a sighting of a juvenile bird, and, taken together, these records strongly indicate that breeding occurred at this location.

In the absence of any indication that either of these birds had been in captivity Lesser Shortwing has been placed in Category A of the Hong Kong List.

Acknowledgement

I am particularly indebted to David Melville, Richard Lewthwaite and Mike Turnbull for their invaluable assistance.

一九九八年十一月十四日早上，David Carthy先生在嘉道理農業研究所網獲兩隻白喉短翅鵯 *Brachypteryx leucophrys*。該鳥通體濃褐色，眉紋有時不明顯，翼和尾部皆短小，其腿部長而碩壯為活躍於下層叢林的鳥類之特徵。Carthy先生為其中一雌鳥作詳細紀錄。從其較小之體型判斷，雖然兩者皆於華南山區有所分佈，是次所捕兩鳥應不為近緣種藍短翅鵯 *Brachypteryx montana*。白喉短翅鵯廣泛分佈於華南至緬甸至印尼諸島，是行藏隱蔽的山區樹林留鳥。除首次於香港在嘉道理農業研究所錄得外，二〇〇一年夏季在大帽山頂亦有網獲幼鳥，顯示本種在香港有繁殖活動。由於錄得的個體均無曾被籠養的跡象，這發現被納為白喉短翅鵯的首次香港紀錄，歸入A類。

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PYGMY WREN BABBLER AT TAI PO KAU: THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Tim Woodward, Richard Lewthwaite and Martin Williams.

On the morning of 25 February 2000, Tim Woodward (TJW) was birdwatching at Tai Po Kau with Andrew Young and Gavin Cooper. Shortly after crossing the stream at the top of the Blue Walk, he heard a constantly repeated two-note call, with a long drawn-out high note followed by a falling note. He immediately recognized it as the song of a Pygmy Wren Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla*, a species he was very well-acquainted with from many visits to other parts of southern China, where it is common in suitable habitat. He recorded the song on a mini-disc, but had no playback option and was unable to entice the bird out or get a view at any point, despite following it up through the bushes on the left hand side of the stream. He played the recording to Geoff Carey and Richard Lewthwaite (RWL) shortly afterwards, and they discussed possible confusion species including Small Niltava *Niltava macgrigoriae*, a bird with which TJW was not familiar, this being the only species whose song was felt to be at all confusable with Pygmy Wren Babbler. Even then, however, it was felt that the song of Small Niltava — described by Robson (2000) as “a very thin, high-pitched, rising and falling *swii-swii-ii-swii*, level *tsii* or descending *tsii-sii-swi*” — could only be confused with that of Pygmy Wren Babbler in the extreme west of the latter species' range in China, where it has a three-note song (Robson 2000). TJW subsequently travelled to eastern Guangdong, and the following week, at Yinna Shan, recorded the same two-note song that he had heard and recorded at Tai Po Kau on 25 February.

Martin Williams (MDW) subsequently heard what was presumably the same bird at the same location on 13 March. It was also taped, and was finally seen at the same location by both MDW and RWL on 15 March, when, using playback of recordings, they were able to entice the bird out for views as close as 3-4 m over a 30-minute period. It kept very low in a dense tangle of ferns and creepers beside a small stream with moss-covered stones.

The following description was taken by MDW and RWL, based on their observations on 15 March. Both observers were also very familiar with this species from frequent trips elsewhere, including Guangdong.

Description

Size and Appearance: A tiny songbird, with an upright posture, short wings and a tail so short that the bird appeared almost tail-less. It was rather dark brown above with a plain face and head and buffy, dark-spotted underparts, giving it an appearance somewhat reminiscent of a juvenile robin *Erithacus/Luscinia*. It frequently flicked its wings and skulked close to or on the ground.

Head: The face and head were grey-brown; the dark eye stood out in the mostly plain face. The crown was plain and there was no obvious supercilium.

Body and Wings: The two observers differed in their description of the upperparts. MDW described them as fairly uniform earthy brown, while RWL noted that they were “multi-spotted”. No barring was present on the wings or mantle. The bird appeared to be short-winged with some pale fringes to the tips of the greater, and possibly median coverts. The throat was whitish. The underparts appeared to be dark-spotted on a buffy background, producing a scalloped effect. The breast feathers were pale-centred with dark fringes.

Bare Parts: The short, slim, slightly decurved bill was dark. The legs were pale pink and appeared large in comparison with the rest of the body.

Vocalisation: A very thin but far carrying ‘si...siu’, with a distinct pause between the two notes. The full phrase was given at two to three second intervals, resulting in a rate of approximately 16 double notes per minute, the first note rising and the second descending, the two notes being separated by 1-2 seconds.

Discussion

From the description the bird was clearly a *Pnoepyga* babbler, and the song is quite diagnostic of Pygmy Wren Babbler. No other Wren Babbler species has been recorded in Guangdong. As noted earlier, in some parts of its range, including in southwestern China, it has a three-note song. However, birds in Guangdong have a two-note song and La Touche (1925-30) notes that the birds in Fujian also have a two-note song, described as being “a sibilant whistle consisting of two notes, the first ascending, the latter descending, constantly repeated”.

With regard to the body and wings La Touche (1925-30) describes the upperparts as being “rich golden brown, the feathers of the mantle with a sub-apical paler border and narrow dark final edging, the wing coverts, scapulars, tertiaries and lower back with small sub-apical fulvous spots”.

Pygmy Wren Babbler has a wide distribution in mainland Asia, extending from northern India into southern and central China, and south through Burma, Thailand, peninsular Malaysia and Indochina; also, in the Indonesian Archipelago, it is found on Sumatra, Java, Flores and Timor (Robson 2000). Within China, Cheng (1987) gives its distribution as reaching north to southern Shaanxi, and including parts of Sichuan, southeastern Tibet, Yunnan, Guizhou, Hubei, Anhui, Guangxi, Guangdong, Fujian and Taiwan. Historically, Pygmy Wren Babbler was known from only three places in southeastern China: Yao Shan in eastern Guangxi (Yen 1933-34), Wuyi Shan in northwestern Fujian (La Touche 1925-30) and Luofau Shan in central Guangdong (Mell 1922), where a single specimen (now in the collection of Zoological Museum, Berlin) was collected by Hugo Weigold in January 1917. The results of recent surveys have confirmed, mainly on the basis of its distinctive vocalizations, that it continues to occur commonly at Yao Shan and Wuyi Shan (Lewthwaite 1996, RWL unpublished data), and that it can still be found at Luofau Shan, which is less than 100 km north of Hong Kong (Fellowes and Hau 1997). Elsewhere in Guangdong, it has recently been found to be common in the north of the province at Nanling NNR, often referred to as Ba Bao Shan,

(Lewthwaite 1996, RWL unpublished data), where up to 20 a day have been detected at 1100-1800m asl in forest or forest edge habitats, often close to streams, with records in all seasons; it has also been found in small numbers at Guanyin Shan and Sanyue (Kadoorie FBG 2003, KS Lee in litt). Further south, it is much scarcer, with infrequent observations of one to three birds, mainly in late winter or spring, at altitudes down to 250m, at Dinghu Shan (Lewthwaite 1996) in the west, Dawuling NR (Fellowes and Hau 1997), Qixingkeng, Baiyong and Heweishan (Kadoorie FBG 2002a,b,c) in the southwest, and Gutian and Feixia Shan (TJW pers. obs.) in central parts of the province.

Since this species was first recorded in Hong Kong, it has been found at Tai Po Kau on a number of other occasions. It has also subsequently been reported from other sites in Hong Kong, including Kap Lung, upper Shing Mun, and Ng Tung Chai. Given that the species occurs widely in southern China in winter, its appearance in Hong Kong is not unexpected.

In view of this species' known occurrence in winter within 100 km of Hong Kong, and in view of the absence of any reason to believe that a release may have occurred, it is considered that this species has arrived in Hong Kong through natural means and it has been placed in Category A of the Hong Kong List.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Mike Turnbull for extensive comments on several earlier drafts of this paper.

二〇〇〇年二月廿五日早上，Tim Woodward先生在大埔潛觀鳥，在藍路聽到兩聲連續的鳥鳴聲，兩音時間相隔很短，前者較長，接者短促和變得低音。作者後來到廣東部，同樣錄得相同的鳴聲。Martin Williams和Richard Lewthwaite後來證實是小鷓鴣*Pnoepyga pusilla*並提供了詳細紀錄。該鳥通體深褐色，體型細小，站姿直立，頭部和面部顏色較淡，眼睛深色，沒有眉紋。翼和尾部皆短小，翼和上背為平淡褐色，翼上覆羽有淡色紋。喉部白色，胸部羽毛中間淡色，外緣深色，看來像有深色斑點。嘴深色，腳淡粉紅色。鳴聲每次維持兩、三秒，每分鐘約十六次。廣東地區大部份鳴聲為兩聲，中國西南面為三聲。小鷓鴣廣泛分佈於中國大陸，印度北面、中國中部和南部，南至泰國、印度支拿、馬來西亞和印尼諸島。香港多個地方都紀錄到這鳥種，包括甲龍、上城門和梧桐寨。由於這鳥種分佈於南中國，香港位於他們的分佈範圍，歸入A類。

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RED-CRESTED POCHARD AT MAI PO: AN ADDITION TO CATEGORY E OF THE HONG KONG LIST.

Y. T. Yu

On 11 July 1999 I was carrying out a waterbird count at Mai Po Nature Reserve. At about 1030h, while counting the birds on Pond 20, I noticed through my 10x42 binoculars a different shaped duck in a flock of eight Spot-billed Ducks *Anas poecilorhyncha*. My initial reaction was that it was a young Spot-billed Duck, but certain characters and structural features hinted that it might not be this species. On further consideration, I decided that it could be a female or immature Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*, and this was confirmed in subsequent observations through my telescope. Soon after, H. K. Ying arrived and agreed with my identification.

Description

Size: similar to Spot-billed Duck.

Structure: head rounder than accompanying Spot-billed Ducks of the taxon *zonorhyncha*, and body more compact, contributing to a structure that was that of a diving duck.

Plumage: the most distinctive field character was the whitish cheeks, which strongly contrasted with the dark crown. The dark crown extended below the eyes on both sides of the head. The neck, flanks and vent were mid brown, while the mantle was darker brown. In flight, the wing bars were broad, white and very conspicuous, while the underwings were mainly whitish.

Bare parts: the bill was orange-red and the iris was reddish. The feet were not observed as the bird was swimming. The colour of the bill and irides indicated that it was a male in eclipse plumage (Madge and Burn 1988).

Distribution and status

This species is widely distributed from western Europe to central Asia (Madge and Burn 1988, del Hoyo *et al.* 1992). In China, it breeds from Xinjiang through Qinghai to Inner Mongolia, and winters mainly in the southwestern provinces, while it is rare in southeastern China (Cheng 1987). There are also records from Japan, where Brazil (1991) considers it to be an accidental winter visitor; photographs of birds seen there in December 1987, December 1991, and November 1997 are featured in Kirihara *et al.* (2000). Therefore, it is entirely possible that this species might occur naturally in Hong Kong. However, the Records Committee of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society considered that given that this was a midsummer record, and that it was not a juvenile, then the possibility its being of captive origin was high. Accordingly, this species has been placed in Category E of the Hong Kong list. Should future records occur, a reassessment of its status will be carried out.

一九九九年七月十一日，余日東先生米埔自然護理區進行水鳥普查期間，發現一隻雄性赤嘴潛鴨 *Netta rufina*，該鳥外型像斑嘴鴨 *Anas poecilorhyncha* 亞種 *zonorhyncha*，不過較為結實。赤嘴潛鴨面頰白色，與紳褐色頭頂伸延至眼後兩側的顏色成強烈對比。頸、脇和尾下覆羽褐色，上背紳褐色。飛行時可見寬闊的白色翼斑，翼底白色。嘴部橙紅色，虹膜紅色。該鳥分佈於西歐至中亞，中國方面，在新疆、青海至內蒙古繁殖，在西南的省份越冬，中國東南則較為罕見。日本方面曾錄得數個紀錄，相信是偶見冬候鳥，會有機會在香港出現。紀錄委員會考慮該鳥是於夏天時錄得，加上不是幼鳥，不排除是逃逸紀錄。現時赤嘴潛鴨屬於E類，如再度錄得，紀錄委員會覆核該鳥種狀況。

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ULTRAMARINE FLYCATCHER AT KADOORIE FARM AND
BOTANIC GARDEN: AN ADDITION TO CATEGORY E OF THE
HONG KONG LIST

Richard W. Lewthwaite

A first-winter male Ultramarine Flycatcher *Ficedula superciliaris* was present at Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden on at least 16 and 17 January 1999. It was seen by several observers and was photographed (see plate 64).



64 Ultramarine Flycatcher *Ficedula superciliaris*
Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden, Hong Kong, 16-17 January 1999

Kwok-shing Lee

Description

It was a small, plain-faced flycatcher with the upperparts overall pale grey except for the rump and sides of the tail, which were shining cobalt blue, and the wing coverts, which were pale blue. The latter were marked by a long, broad and prominent white wingbar, and the tertials were also tipped and edged white. The primaries and primary coverts were blackish-blue, and the central tail feathers blackish. The underparts were greyish-white apart from the undertail coverts, which were white. There was a faint pale eye-ring, and the bill and legs were blackish.

It was a confiding bird, even approaching within a metre of one observer, and habitually cocked its tail. It frequented a stand of trees near the Animal House, flitting around in the lower branches or coming down to the ground to feed on mealworms put out by Kadoorie FBG staff.

Range

Ultramarine Flycatcher breeds from northern Pakistan across the Himalayas to southwest China; two subspecies are recognised, the nominate and *F.s. aestigma*, which occurs in the east of the range including China (Vaurie 1959, Robson 2000). Grimmett *et al.* (1998) describe it as a resident and short-range migrant in the Indian subcontinent, but map records in southern Karnataka and southern Andhra Pradesh, which are more than 1000 km south of the nearest breeding areas. Cheng (1987) describes it as rare in China, breeding in south and southeast Tibet and southwest Sichuan, and also occurring in northwest Yunnan in September and southern Yunnan in February. Since specimens have been collected in northwest Yunnan in April or May (Greenway 1933) and in June and July (Riley 1926), it seems likely that it has also bred there.

Taking the above into consideration, it seems conceivable that a disoriented migrant could reach Hong Kong. However, although there were no obvious signs of cage damage on this individual, its tameness suggested captive origins, and therefore its placement in Category E was deemed appropriate by the Records Committee. Category E is for species for which all records are considered likely to relate to birds which have escaped or been released from captivity.

一九九九年一月十六至十七期間，有一隻雄性首年越冬的白眉藍姬鶯 *Ficedula superciliaris* 在嘉道理農場暨植物園錄得。該鳥全身淡灰色，上體方面，腰和尾有鈷藍色光澤，翼上覆羽淡藍色，有明顯白色翼斑，三級飛羽末端和外緣白色，初級飛羽和覆羽純藍，中間尾羽純藍；下體淡灰，尾下覆羽白色。眼圈淡色，嘴和腳黑色。白眉藍姬鶯分佈於巴基斯坦以北、喜馬拉雅山脈至中國西南，印度亦留鳥及遷徙鳥紀錄。該鳥在中國屬罕見鳥種，在西藏南至東南、以及四川西南繁殖，有估計該鳥亦會於雲南繁殖。是次錄得的個體遠離分佈範圍，加上十分純化，雖然羽毛無曾被籠養而破損的跡象，但推測是曾被飼養但逃脫了的。因此紀錄委員會將該鳥種歸入 E 類。

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MAI PO INNER DEEP BAY RAMSAR SITE WATERBIRD
MONITORING PROGRAMME

WINTER 1999-2000 AND 2000-2001 REPORT

G.J. Carey

Introduction

Long-term monitoring of waterbirds in the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site is an important aspect of the management strategy for the Site, and provides an indication of the health of the Deep Bay ecosystem. This programme, which commenced in March 1998, is administered and executed by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS) under subvention from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department of the Hong Kong SAR Government. Monthly counts of waterbirds form one part of this programme, the other components being counts of migrant shorebirds utilising the area and surveys of ardeid nesting colonies. This report concerns the waterbird monitoring component for the winter periods from October 1999 to March 2000, and October 2000 to March 2001.

Table 1. Dates of coordinated mid-monthly counts of wintering waterbirds as part of the Ramsar Site Waterbird Monitoring Programme, 1999-2001.

Winter 1999-2000	Winter 2000-2001
October 1999	15 October 2000
21 November 1999	12 November 2000
12 December 1999	10 December 2000
15 January 2000	14 January 2001
13 February 2000	11 February 2001
12 March 2000	11 March 2001

Table 1 gives the dates on which the counts took place. Both January counts were carried out to coincide with the Asian Waterfowl Census organised by Wetlands International Asia-Pacific. Counts from November to March have been carried out each winter since 1992-93; counts in January were first carried out in 1979.

In accordance with guidelines provided by Wetlands International, other counts, if higher, are included from the one-week period either side of the coordinated count date. It should be noted that for the majority of species this means the single count must be higher than the total number provided by the coordinated count for it to be included. As in recent winters, the use of mobile phones at Tsim Bei Tsui and Mai Po boardwalk ensured that double-counting and, as far as possible, under-counting was avoided for birds in the intertidal areas on the Hong Kong side of Deep Bay ('Inner Deep Bay').

Due to habitat degradation and/or insufficient manpower, the areas of Nam Sang Wai, Tin Shui Wai and Chau Tau have now been dropped from the list of sites counted. These sites have only been counted irregularly in recent years, and due to habitat loss or degradation at Tin Shui Wai and Chau Tau the number of birds recorded was generally very low. It is considered more appropriate to devote manpower to sites that are regularly covered.

Results

Coverage of the Ramsar Site was complete in all months with the exception of Mai Po San Tsuen in October 2000. For other sites in the Deep Bay Area as a whole, the following shortfalls occurred:

1999-2000. October: Fu Tian, Shenzhen River B (Ma Tso Lung), San Tin; November: Nim Wan-Lau Fau Shan, Shenzhen River B (Ma Tso Lung), San Tin; December: San Tin, Shenzhen River B (Ma Tso Lung); February: Fu Tian; March — Fu Tian.

2000-2001. November: Nim Wan/Lau Fau Shan and San Tin; December — San Tin; February: Nim Wan/Lau Fau Shan; March: Nim Wan/Lau Fau Shan and San Tin.

The results of the counts are summarised in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. Deep Bay Area Waterbird Counts Winter 1999-2000: totals by group and site.

group	site	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
Cormorants	Ramsar Site	88	6146	4938	7467	7500	6000
	Deep Bay Area	88	7345	5306	7712	7500	6000
	SI/SW	0	0	273	367	260	176
Ardeids	Ramsar Site	1823	1809	1870	3195	1562	1556
	Deep Bay Area	2153	2501	2846	4207	1962	2251
	SI/SW	680	461	19	640	469	847
Ducks and Grebes	Ramsar Site	1146	2509	4498	19338	18039	6339
	Deep Bay Area	1158	9921	17914	19459	18199	8207
	SI/SW	2	14	19	6	20	5
Rails, Coot, Moorhen.	Ramsar Site	51	94	229	708	211	170
	Deep Bay Area	75	142	317	735	235	212
	SI/SW	4	5	11	7	3	4
Waders	Ramsar Site	1975	5224	5637	10911	7755	4498
	Deep Bay Area	2033	5947	6329	10969	7794	4616
	SI/SW	39	34	65	50	29	53
Gulls and Terns	Ramsar Site	30	4536	7922	11340	10633	8549
	Deep Bay Area	30	4536	8142	11430	10818	8493
	SI/SW	2	0	0	0	8	110
Totals	Ramsar Site	5113	20317	25094	52959	45700	27056
	Deep Bay Area	5535	30392	40854	54512	46508	29835
	SI/SW	729	514	1074	1070	622	1213

Table 3. Deep Bay Area Waterbird Counts Winter 2000-2001: totals by group and site.

group	site	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
Cormorants	Ramsar Site	174	2848	4771	6506	1811	2920
	Deep Bay Area	224	4256	5671	7142	2299	3715
	SI/SW	21	326	367	487	386	557
Ardeids	Ramsar Site	1656	1951	2767	2092	2984	1474
	Deep Bay Area	5301	3430	4040	3604	4589	2811
	SI/SW	711	712	681	750	544	666
Ducks and Grebes	Ramsar Site	2388	4341	10735	7442	5594	5643
	Deep Bay Area	3317	12686	22304	23667	14034	6439
	SI/SW	30	21	3	68	99	44
Rails, Coot, Moorhens.	Ramsar Site	35	151	160	577	42	87
	Deep Bay Area	65	188	430	617	108	176
	SI/SW	4	4	6	13	20	15
Waders	Ramsar Site	3911	6726	7110	6404	9043	5459
	Deep Bay Area	4170	7589	8022	6726	9183	5619
	SI/SW	46	85	49	52	33	34
Gulls and Terns	Ramsar Site	19	1404	11207	13721	4653	2764
	Deep Bay Area	20	1404	12670	13721	5264	4036
	SI/SW	2	72	0	0	23	0
Totals	Ramsar Site	8183	17411	36750	36742	24127	18347
	Deep Bay Area	13097	29553	53137	55477	35477	22796
	SI/SW	814	2120	1106	1370	1105	1316

Peak totals of 54,512 waterbirds of 64 species in winter 1999-2000 and 55,477 waterbirds of 59 species in winter 2000-01 were recorded in the Deep Bay Area; for the Ramsar Site alone these figures were 52,959 and 36,742 respectively.

In order to gain a more accurate picture of the number of waterbirds that depend on Deep Bay for at least some part of the winter than might be gained as a result of using the January count alone, the sum of peak species counts for the midwinter period (here defined as December to February) can be summed. In winter 1999-2000 the December to February count total was 57,227, while in winter 2000-01 it was 62,238 birds. These represent increases over the January counts of 4% and 14.3% respectively. The somewhat higher percentage difference in winter 2000-01 possibly reflects adverse count conditions on the day of the January count, which was borne out by the experience in the boardwalk hide, where birds were difficult to count due largely to their distance from the hide.

On the basis of aggregate peak winter counts for each species, in winter 2000-01 there was an 8.75% increase on the 57,227 obtained in winter 1999-2000, to 62,238. The latter figure is approximately 15,000 below the highest ever figure which occurred in winter 1995-96. However, it can also be seen that in broad terms there has been a stabilisation of the number of wintering waterbirds in Deep Bay.

Species of conservation significance

Monthly count figures for most species are given in their accounts in the Systematic List. However, a number of species warrant special comment here, since they occur in the Deep Bay Area in numbers which are of conservation significance due to their being listed as threatened in Birdlife International (2001), or because they are species for which Deep Bay supports, or may support, at least 1% of the regional or flyway population, the figure used in implementing the Ramsar Convention criterion 3c. The 1% threshold level has been calculated with reference to Wetlands International (2002), and the figures quoted below are from that work. Species relevant to the 1% threshold are listed below, and comparisons are generally made with the trend since 1992-93, when counts for the whole winter period were first carried out.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

The peak winter count of 413 obtained in winter 1999-2000 constitutes 1.7% of the regional non-breeding population. Only 67 birds were recorded in winter 2000-01.

Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus*

Totals of 21 in 1999-2000 and 16 in 2000-01 were present in the two winters, which constitute 16% and 12% respectively of the regional, East Asian population.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The peak winter counts were 7712 in winter 1999-2000 and 7142 in winter 2000-01. These constitute 7.7% and 7.1% of the regional population, and approximately 0.75% of the northern hemisphere population.

Great Egret *Egretta alba*

The peak winter counts were 632 in winter 1999-2000 and 1150 in winter 2000-01. The latter is the highest winter count on record, and is double most previous winter counts; it also constitutes 1.2% of the East Asian non-breeding population.

Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*

Counts of 162 in winter 1999-2000 and 179 in winter 2000-01 were present, approximately 16% and 18% respectively of the world population.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

The peak winter counts were 1320 in winter 1999-2000 and 373 in 2000-01. The former constitutes 1% of the regional, east Asian non-breeding population. The latter count is relatively low, and is over 1000 below the previous five-year mean. Historically, Common Shelduck numbers have been very variable, and this may be part of that phenomenon.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

The peak winter counts were 8086 in winter 1999-2000 and 3435 in winter 2000-01. The former constitutes over 1% of the regional east and southeast Asian non-breeding population. The latter relatively low figure possibly simply reflects the increasing difficulty of making accurate species counts of Anatidae in Deep Bay.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

The peak winter counts were 3000 in winter 1999-2000 and 6414 in winter 2000-01. The 1% population level is stated to be 7500 birds, which has been attained in the past.

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

The peak winter counts were 1758 in winter 1999-2000 and 1926 in winter 2000-01. Numbers of this species are again approaching the very high levels recorded in the mid 1990s. These counts constitute 1.8-1.9% of the east Asian regional population.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

The peak winter counts were 3000 in winter 1999-2000 and 2372 in winter 2000-01. These are in line with the recent five-year mean, and constitute from 2.4% to 3% of the regional population.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The peak winter counts were 755 in winter 1999-2000 and 810 in winter 2000-01. These are both higher than the recent five-year mean of 666, and constitute from 2.2% to 2.3% of the regional east and southeast Asian non-breeding population.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

The peak winter counts were 970 in winter 1999-2000 and 512 in winter 2000-01. In the five winter periods prior to 1999-2000 the five-year mean was 1118, which constitutes 1.1% of the regional east and southeast Asian non-breeding population. The later of the two counts in particular, may reflect adverse counting conditions rather than any real decline in wintering numbers.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

The peak winter counts were 1165 in winter 1999-2000 and 1171 in winter 2000-01. These counts constitute 1.3% of the regional east and southeast Asian and Oceania population. They also comprise the two highest winter counts of this species recorded in Hong Kong.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

The peak winter count in winter 1999-2000 was 700 and in winter 2000-01 it was 290. While the latter is very similar to the recent five-year mean of 303,

the former is significantly higher, and constitutes 1.3% of the regional Australian, east and southeast Asian non-breeding population.

Other notable counts**Eurasian Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

The peak winter count in winter 2000-01 was 6705 in January 2001. This is over 2000 higher than the previous highest species count for Deep Bay (4184 in winter 1995-96). Approximately 54% of these birds were recorded on the Fu Tian side of the bay. The 1% population level is stated by Waterbirds International (2002) to be 7500 birds.

Falcated Duck *Anas falcata*

The peak winter count of Falcated Ducks was 14 in winter 1999-2000, while no birds were recorded in winter 2000-01 (though there was a small number of records of less than ten birds). Average peak winter counts have declined greatly since winter 1990-91 when 237 were recorded, and the almost complete disappearance from Hong Kong in recent winters may be a cause for significant concern.

Saunders's Gull *Larus saundersi*

The peak winter counts were 58 in winter 1999-2000 and 43 in winter 2000-01. These counts continue the relatively low number of birds that have been recorded in recent years, and indicate a decline in the number of birds wintering in Hong Kong. The 1% threshold level is 85.

Other observations**Nets**

On the Fu Tian side of the Shenzhen River, bird-catching nets were present, though apparently not in such numbers as has been noted in recent winters.

Mudskipper collectors

Illegal mudskipper collectors continued to be seen operating on the mudflats on the Hong Kong side of Deep Bay. They are especially numerous in early spring.

Other disturbance

The number of birds present on the Fu Tian side of the bay was greater in winter 2000-01 than it has been in the past. This may be related to a decline in the number of people using the mudflats in front of Fu Tian National Nature Reserve as a result of preventive activities by the reserve staff there (Wang Yong Jun pers. comm.). Such controls are warmly welcomed.

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在一九九九年至二零零零年、以及二零零零年至二零零一年度，本會會員在每月中旬進行了有組織的水鳥同步普查，範圍覆蓋整個后海灣，尤其是國際重要濕地。以一月份為例，一九九九至二零零零年錄得64種總數54,512隻水鳥，而二零零零年至二零零一年錄得59種總數55,447隻水鳥。以整個冬天(十二月至二月)來說，前者最高錄得57,227隻，而後者最高錄得62,238隻。與一九九五年至九六年的高峰比較，近年的水鳥數量開始漸趨穩定。以國際層面來看，后海灣可找到14種全球超過1%的水鳥數量，其中黑臉琵鷺和卷羽鶉鴉的數字，更超過全球15%，這反映了后海灣的重要性。此外，部份水鳥如羅紋鴨和黑嘴鸕，數字正在下降中，其中羅紋鴨在過去十年，數量跌幅更超過十倍，情況值得關注。

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UTILIZATION OF WETLANDS BY WATERBIRDS AND KINGFISHERS IN STARLING INLET, HONG KONG: A COMPARISON WITH DEEP BAY

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In Hong Kong, waterbirds are mainly found in two estuaries: Deep Bay, which is a Ramsar Site, and Starling Inlet, which is of particular interest because it is surrounded by only small and fragmented wetlands but supports about half of the local nesting population of ardeids (Young and Cha 1995, Carey 1998). In Deep Bay, although no detailed description of habitat use by waterbirds exists, there is a wealth of data from monthly waterfowl counts since 1979 - see, for example, Carey (2002) - while Young 1998 described the habitat use pattern of ardeids there during the early 1990s. Previously no detailed study of waterbirds in Starling Inlet had been made, although it was included in a study of habitat use by Swinhoe's Egret *Egretta eulophotes* in the early 1970s (Murton 1972).

In this study, an attempt to identify the key habitat types for each species in Starling Inlet is made and the use of these habitats by waterbirds is compared with habitat use in the Deep Bay area, based on the data in Carey (1998).

Methodology

Study Area

Starling Inlet is a sheltered bay with a surface area of about 500 ha and is surrounded by hills, ranging from 121m to 492 m in height. This study focussed on five feeding habitat types in Starling Inlet: fishponds (non-intertidal, commercial fishponds, totally 15.5 ha), shallow coastal waters and mudflats (47.5 ha), mangroves (3.3 ha), the Nam Chung River (1.2 ha) and a freshwater marsh (19.0 ha). Mudflats which are covered by water of suitable depth for ardeids to wade are termed 'shallow coastal waters'. Since the proportions of exposed mudflats and shallow coastal waters varied during each census, these habitats were combined for quantitative analyses. Freshwater fishponds are 2-3 m deep and their surface areas vary between 0.3 and 2.0 ha. There are four patches of mangroves of 3 to 4 m in height. The Nam Chung River is the main freshwater input, but the water is organically polluted by a nearby pig farm. A permanent but seasonally fluctuating freshwater marsh, dominated by grasses and sedges, is regularly grazed by feral cattle. The surveyed and total areas of different habitats in Starling Inlet were calculated from 1998 aerial photographs and levels of coverage of each habitat are given in Table 1.

Field Methods

Ardeids, non-ardeid waterbirds and kingfishers were surveyed monthly on foot along a fixed 6 km route from August 1997 to August 1998. Three counts

at low tide (<1.2 m above Chart Datum) were made during each month, except for August, September and October 1997, when only two low tide counts were made. All observations were made between 0700h and 1100h. The following data were recorded on a 1:25000 map: (1) numbers of individuals, (2) their locations, and (3) the type of habitat where they were observed. Flying birds were not counted, unless they were seen to land, in order to avoid over-counting. For ardeids only, the study period was divided into the breeding and non-breeding seasons, which were different for different species. Great Egrets *Egretta alba* and Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta* bred from February to June, Black-crowned Night Herons *Nycticorax nycticorax* from February to August and Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis* from April to July. For other waterbirds and kingfishers, the study period was divided into winter, from October to March, and summer, from April to September. White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus* has been confirmed to breed in the inlet, and breeding by the Common Alcedo *Alcedo atthis*, White-throated Halcyon *Halcyon smyrnensis*, and Pied Kingfishers *Ceryle rudis* is strongly suspected. The breeding period of these species was probably between April and August. The findings with regard to ardeids have been published as a separate paper (Wong *et al.* 2001), but a summary is given in this paper. For the description of habitat use by waterbirds in Deep Bay, please refer to Wong (1999).

Results

A total of 36 censuses were made and a total of 54 bird species (waterbirds and kingfishers) were recorded, with a mean count of 524 individuals per census (S.E. = 26, range = 223 - 782, n = 36). Ardeids were the most abundant group and comprised 86% of the total count of individuals. Shorebirds were the second most common group, and cormorants were the third. The three most abundant species were Black-crowned Night Herons (32.0%), Great Egrets (27.8%) and Little Egrets (14.7%).

Diversity and abundance of ardeids in Starling Inlet

Nine species of ardeids, including two species of bitterns *Ixobrychus*, were recorded. Great Egrets, Little Egrets, Cattle Egrets, Black-crowned Night Herons and Chinese Pond Herons *Ardeola bacchus* are residents and breeders in the Inlet, while Intermediate Egrets *Egretta intermedia* and Grey Herons *Ardea cinerea* are winter visitors. Yellow Bitterns *Ixobrychus sinensis* are spring migrants and Chestnut Bitterns *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* are occasional visitors. Although Black-crowned Night Herons had the highest count, the majority of these counts were in the A Chau egretty during the breeding season, when they were engaged in nesting activity (Table 3).

In the non-breeding season, Great and Little Egrets and Grey Herons were the dominant species, with the peak abundance of Great Egrets in November 1997, of Little Egrets in November 1998 and January 1998, and of Grey Herons in January 1998. In the breeding season, Black-crowned Night Heron was the dominant species and the abundance of Cattle Egrets also rose, but Grey Herons were absent. The numbers of Little and Cattle Egrets and Black-crowned Night

Herons showed a sharp decrease after July. The monthly mean counts of Chinese Pond Herons remained below 20 birds, while those for both Intermediate Egrets and Striated Herons *Butorides striatus* were below 10 birds.

In general, shallow coastal waters and mudflats were the most important habitats at low tide for Great and Little Egrets, and Grey Herons, while fishponds were the most important for Black-crowned Night Herons. Fishponds were, however, also used by most ardeids. The freshwater marsh was used mainly by Cattle Egrets and Intermediate Egrets.

Non-ardeid waterbirds and kingfishers in Starling Inlet

A total of 28 species of non-ardeid waterbirds were recorded. Shorebirds were second to ardeids in abundance, comprising 4.6% of the total count and 35% of the total species (see Table 2). Sand Plovers *Charadrius leschenaultii/mongolus*, Kentish *Charadrius alexandrinus* and Grey Plovers *Pluvialis squatarola* were the main shorebirds found in winter, and singles individuals of migrant species, such as Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*, were recorded during the spring migration. Great Cormorants *Phalacrocorax carbo* were the third commonest group and were generally seen in winter, with none after March. Of the rails, White-breasted Waterhen was seen throughout the study period, while Common Moorhen was *Gallinula chloropus* a winter visitor.

Five species of kingfisher were recorded (see Table 4). They were more common during the autumn migration (from October to December) and fewer were seen in summer. Pied Kingfisher was the only species observed in every census, but Common and White-throated Kingfishers were regularly seen during the study. The locally rare Crested Kingfisher *Ceryle lugubris* was recorded once in September 1997. Black-capped Kingfishers *Halcyon pileata* were mainly winter visitors and only one, in August 1998, was seen after May.

Wetland utilization by non-ardeid waterbirds and kingfishers

Exposed mudflats were important habitats for shorebirds, which fed primarily on those at Sha Tau Kok. Common Moorhens and Little Grebes, *Tachybaptus ruficollis* were exclusively seen on fishponds, while Great Cormorants were commonly seen feeding in shallow coastal waters and roosting on A Chau or a nearby small rocky island in winter. The resident White-breasted Waterhen was recorded in all habitats, but fishponds and mangrove were the major habitats used. Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* were recorded only from the open waters of Starling Inlet.

Kingfishers exploited all wetland habitat types in Starling Inlet, but only White-throated Kingfishers exploited the freshwater marsh. Common, White-breasted and Pied Kingfishers utilized fishponds, mangroves and the Nam Chung River more than expected, while Black-capped Kingfishers used mangroves and the Nam Chung River more than expected. Table 4 gives further details concerning habitat use by different groups of non-ardeid waterbirds and kingfishers.

Discussion

Ardeids in Starling Inlet

The structure of the ardeids community in the Inlet was dynamic (Wong *et al.* 2001). The dominant ardeids in winter were Great and Little Egrets, and Grey Herons, while Black-crowned Night Herons and Cattle Egrets were dominant in summer. Cattle Egrets are summer breeders in the Inlet. Although Black-crowned Night Heron numbers were greatest in the breeding season, a flock of 400-500 birds was irregularly seen in the Inlet during the non-breeding season, suggesting that many overwintered somewhere in the vicinity. In addition, it is possible that after breeding adult and young Little Egrets, Cattle Egrets and Black-crowned Night Herons dispersed out of the Inlet, possibly outside Hong Kong, resulting in a sharp decrease in population after July.

During the 1998 breeding season, a comparison was made between the census and flight-line methods in evaluating ardeid habitat use. Both methods gave similar results for habitat use by Great and Little Egrets, but the survey method underestimated the use of mangrove habitats by Black-crowned Night Herons and missed the use of wet grassland habitats outside the Inlet by Cattle Egrets (Wong *et al.* 2001).

Non-ardeid waterbirds and kingfishers in Starling Inlet

Shorebirds preferred coastal flats, as elsewhere (Burger *et al.* 1997, Moreira 1997). All wetland habitat types at Starling Inlet were important to kingfishers. Common Moorhens and kingfishers made more frequent use of fishponds than ardeids, presumably because they can use the whole area while ardeids are largely restricted to the margins (Voisin 1991). Although Black-capped Kingfishers utilized the shallow coastal waters less than expected on the basis of area, they exploited this habitat from the margin by perching on coastal mangroves to search for larger food items, such as crabs and mudskippers, on the mudflats.

Although the freshwater marsh is under-exploited by other ardeids and kingfishers, many internationally and locally rare species of dragonflies have been found there (Wilson 1995, 1997) and it was regarded by one freshwater wetland survey as of the highest conservation value among freshwater wetlands in Hong Kong (Dudgeon and Chan 1996).

Comparison of waterbirds in Starling Inlet and Inner Deep Bay

Examination of the data for Inner Deep Bay in Carey (1998) allows a comparison to be made with Starling Inlet. Over the same period as the census of Starling Inlet reported here, a total of 75 waterbird species were recorded in Inner Deep Bay, as compared to 42 in Starling Inlet. Shorebirds, ducks and gulls were much more diverse in Inner Deep Bay than Starling Inlet, particularly in winter, but ardeid diversity was similar. The abundance of waterbirds in Inner Deep Bay, which is approximately 15 times larger than the Starling Inlet area, was also much higher in both winter and summer with a mean census of 36130 individuals (S.E. = 6280, range = 19098-55694, n = 5) in winter, and 2460 individuals (S.E. = 494,

range = 1159-3424, n = 4) in summer. In Inner Deep Bay, ducks were the most abundant group in winter (and in the adjacent Futian National Nature Reserve; Wang *et al.* 1998), while ardeids were dominant in Starling Inlet. Ardeids dominated both areas in the summer breeding season. Great Egrets and Black-crowned Night Herons were the dominant species in the non-breeding and the breeding seasons, respectively, in Starling Inlet, while in Inner Deep Bay, in contrast, Grey Herons and Little Egrets dominated in the non-breeding season and Little Egrets in the breeding season.

The relatively greater density of ardeids in the shallow coastal waters and mudflats of Starling Inlet, compared to those of Inner Deep Bay, may reflect differences in food availability, since the density of nereid worms and crabs on exposed mudflats in Starling Inlet is two to five times higher than in Inner Deep Bay (Wong *et al.* 2000). Also, ardeids in Starling Inlet could be maximizing resource use opportunistically; in Starling Inlet, Great and Little Egrets were seen to use the fly-and-catch method to collect pelagic fish disturbed by fast-moving boats, behaviour not commonly seen in Deep Bay. As well as in the shallow coastal waters and mudflats, the bird density on the fish ponds in Starling Inlet is also higher than in Deep Bay. This may be related to differences of fish farming practices, which would require further study. Fishponds are important mainly to Black-crowned Night Herons and Chinese Pond Herons in Starling Inlet, but are seasonally important feeding habitats for most ardeids in the Inner Deep Bay area.

Although the density of ardeids in Starling Inlet is higher than in Deep Bay, the overall lower diversity and abundance of waterbirds there may reflect the much smaller total area of wetland habitats as well as the absence of the active conservation management that occurs at Mai Po, and also the higher level of human disturbance at Starling Inlet.

Threats and conservation

Although the wetlands in Starling Inlet are under no immediate threats (Anon. 1998), they are vulnerable because one of the main routes for cross-border traffic to China runs along the northwest coast and requires substantial back-up facilities, such as places for container storage and vehicle-maintenance. The worst future scenario would be the reclamation of the whole of the Inlet for development. These wetlands are ideal places for building low-density housing estates and recreational facilities, such as the golf course proposed for the freshwater marsh at Luk Keng in the early 1990s (South China Morning Post, 18 August 1991).

All lowland wetlands in the Inlet should be protected by both legislation and active management. Shallow coastal waters and mudflats along the Inlet are important feeding sites for ardeids throughout year and the mudflats at Sha Tau Kok are of high value for shorebirds. Fishponds are important feeding and roosting sites for kingfishers and Common Moorhens in the Inlet. The freshwater marsh at Luk Keng is a very important feeding site for Cattle and Intermediate Egrets as well as being of high conservation value for freshwater macro-invertebrates. All

these major feeding habitats should be protected at least by zoning as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Conservation Areas under the Town Planning Ordinance. In addition, a better understanding of prey availability in the Inlet is needed for habitat management purposes.

In the Deep Bay area, habitat loss (Young 1998) and degradation of feeding habitats (Li and Lee 1998) are two major threats to the waterbirds. Although the core of the Deep Bay area has been designated as a Ramsar Site since 1995, several housing estate developments, constructed by filling fishponds adjacent to the Ramsar Site, have been submitted to the Town Planning Board for approval. A guideline for use of fishponds around the Ramsar Site may help protect these sites (Anon 1999). Apart from habitat loss, a decline in the epibenthos and macro-invertebrates on the Deep Bay mudflats has been reported (Wong *et al.* 2000). Long term monitoring of intertidal food items in both Deep Bay and Starling Inlet should be undertaken since this is the major feeding habitat of waterbirds.

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作者於一九九七年八月至一九九八年八月期間，在低潮汐時份，於沙頭角海沿固定路線進行水鳥和魚類的生境調查。該調查進行了36次，共錄得49種水鳥和5種魚類，每次調查平均總數為524隻(S.E. = 26, range = 223—782)，其中鷺鳥佔所有水鳥的86%。調查發現，冬季非繁殖期間的優勢種是大白鷺，夏季繁殖期間的優勢種是夜鷺；較多大白鷺、小白鷺、蒼鷺和水鳥使用近岸淺水區；較多夜鷺、黑水雞和斑魚狗使用魚塘；較多中白鷺和育雛期間的牛背鷺使用淡水沼澤。此外，透過重整及分析香港觀鳥會現有米埔內后海灣國際重要濕地水鳥普查的數據，發現沙頭角海在冬季時水鳥、鴨和鵝的種類較內后海灣少，而鷺鳥種類相若。不過，該地的近岸淺水區和魚塘的鷺鳥密度，大約是后海灣的三倍，這反映沙頭角海的食物供應量較充足。作者提出了保育沙頭角海濕地的建議，包括監察棲息於后海灣及沙頭角海潮間帶的水生生物。

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Table 1. Actual and censused habitat areas in Starling Inlet.

Feeding sites	Habitat	Actual Area (ha)	Censused Area (ha)	Percentage censused (%)
Sha Tau Kok	Fishponds	1.7	1.7	100
	Shallow coastal waters and mudflats	20.5	20.5	100
Yim Tso Ha	Mangrove	6.0	0.8	13
	Fishponds	3.7	2.2	60
	<i>Phragmites</i> reed bed	3.4	0.0	0
	Shallow coastal waters and mudflats	9.7	9.7	100
Nam Chung	Fishponds	14.7	9.1	62
	Mangrove	1.7	1.7	100
	Nam Chung River	2.1	1.2	57
	Shallow coastal waters and mudflats	10.6	10.6	100
Luk Keng	Brackish mangrove	2.5	0.8	32
	Fishponds	2.5	2.5	100
	Freshwater marsh	20.0	19.0	95
	Abandoned paddy fields	25.0	0.0	0
Total	Shallow coastal waters and mudflats	6.6	6.6	100
		130.7	86.4	66

Table 2. Abundance and diversity of waterbirds and kingfishers in Starling Inlet from August 1997 to August 1998.

Group	Total	Percentage of total	No. of species
Ardeids	16253	86.4	9
Rails	311	1.7	3
Cormorants	725	3.9	1
Shorebirds	867	4.6	19
Grebes	29	0.1	2
Ducks	30	0.1	2
Gulls	104	0.6	1
Kingfishers	498	2.6	5
Total	18817	100	42

Table 3. Frequencies, mean densities and total counts of ardeids by habitat in Starling Inlet, from August 1997 to August 1998.

	Frequency	Mean density (ha-1)	Fishponds	Shallow coastal waters/mudflat	Mangrove	Nam Chung River	Freshwater marsh	Dryland Vegetation (A Chau)	Total count
Great Egret	1.00	1.69	384	3361	266	139	155	943	5248
Little Egret	1.00	0.89	285	1742	171	89	135	347	2769
Grey Heron	0.71	0.50	297	854	45	139	2	77	1414
Black-crowned Night Heron, <i>immature</i>	1.00	0.69	520	264	257	46	7	1062	2156
Black-crowned Night Heron, <i>adult</i>	1.00	1.05	592	13	56	33	1	2578	3273
Chinese Pond Heron	1.00	0.12	166	59	88	39	16	14	382
Intermediate Egret	0.76	0.04	7	9			114		130
Cattle Egret	1.00	0.28	96	11	11		538	214	870
Striated Heron and bittern species	0.21		5		3	1			9
Total (%)			2352 (14)	6313 (39)	897 (6)	486 (3)	968 (6)	5235 (32)	16251 (100)

Table 4. Frequencies (F), mean densities and total counts of selected non-ardeid waterbirds by habitat in Starling Inlet from August 1997 to August 1998.

	Frequency	Mean density (ha-1)	Fishponds	Shallow coastal waters/mudflat	Mangrove	Nam Chung River	Freshwater marsh	Dryland Vegetation (A Chau)	Concrete Structures	Total count
Common Kingfisher	0.89	0.05	76	44	23	19				162
White-breasted Kingfisher	0.92	0.03	48	19	10	4	7		2	90
Black-capped Kingfisher	0.61	0.04	18	54	25	18		1	1	117
Pied Kingfisher	1.00	0.04	92	18	12	6				128
Crested Kingfisher	0.02		1							1
White-breasted Waterhen	0.92	0.05	70	10	53	3	8		2	146
Common Moorhen	0.47	0.11	150		11	1				162
Shorebirds	1.00	0.29	76	761	19	6	3	2		867
Great Cormorant	0.45	0.37	58	582				85		725
Total			589	1488	153	57	18	88	5	2398

Table 5. Densities of ardeids by habitat in Starling Inlet and Inner Deep Bay.

	Shallow coastal water and mudflats (ha-1 ± s.e.)	Fishponds (ha-1 ± s.e.)	Mangrove (ha-1 ± s.e.)	Nam Chung River (ha-1 ± s.e.)	Freshwater marsh (ha-1 ± s.e.)	<i>Gei wai</i> (ha-1 ± s.e.)
Starling Inlet, area (ha)	47.5	15.5	3.3	1.2	19.0	277.5
Mean density	3.69 ± 0.38	4.22 ± 0.44	7.56 ± 1.55	11.30 ± 1.22	1.42 ± 0.21	1.99 ± 0.53
Breeding season	1.91 ± 0.26	3.31 ± 0.43	5.03 ± 0.71	10.00 ± 1.77	2.52 ± 0.27	0.68 ± 0.08
Non-breeding season	4.96 ± 0.44	4.87 ± 0.67	9.37 ± 2.56	12.22 ± 7.61	0.62 ± 0.13	3.04 ± 0.47
Inner Deep Bay, area (ha)	Max: 852.2	Max: 515.0				
Mean density	Min: 722.4	Min: 163.6				
Breeding season	1.13 ± 0.20	1.17 ± 0.14				
Non-breeding season	1.10 ± 0.22	1.51 ± 0.05				
	1.16 ± 0.30	0.90 ± 0.17				

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THE INTERNATIONAL BLACK-FACED SPOONBILL CENSUS, 24-26 JANUARY 2003: A REPORT (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HONG KONG AND THE PEARL RIVER ESTUARY)

Y.T. Yu

Introduction

Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor* is a globally endangered species (BirdLife International 2000), which only occurs on the eastern fringe of Asia. Prior to the census reported on in this paper, its known world population was less than 1000 individuals (Dahmer and Felley, 2002).

Known wintering populations of the Black-faced Spoonbill have been assessed by a coordinated international census since 1993, with Tom Dahmer as the coordinator. This census was listed as a high priority recommendation in the *Action Plan for the Black-faced Spoonbill Platalea minor* (Severinghaus *et al.* 1995). At the International Black-faced Spoonbill Workshop held in Beijing in 1996, representatives from all countries within its range agreed to expand upon the previous censuses, in order to gain a wider coverage of the wintering grounds.

This new census proved to be an effective and practical means to provide information on the population and distribution of wintering Black-faced Spoonbills. The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, an affiliate of BirdLife International, accepted responsibility for coordinating the International Black-faced Spoonbill Census from 2003 onwards. This note reports on a survey undertaken at wintering sites during 24-26 January 2003.

Method

Censuses of Black-faced Spoonbills have always been in mid or late January because numbers at known wintering sites seem to be most stable at this time. Figure 1 shows locations at which the Census was carried out. These were areas where Black-faced Spoonbills had been reported before. Field counts were done in a synchronized manner, making use of binoculars and telescopes.

Counting relied on the voluntary efforts of experienced bird watchers, researchers and ornithologists. As in the last few years, Taiwanese birdwatchers assisted in the counts in Vietnam. The counts in Republic of Korea (South Korea), People's Republic of China and Thailand resulted in individuals sending in separate reports. The census results in Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, Vietnam and Japan were summarized by coordinators in each country or region. The information from counters in all participating countries and regions was collated by the present author, appointed Coordinator by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

During the counts, the numbers of the Black-faced Spoonbills and the time of counts at the specified sites were recorded. Some sites are close together, such as Mai Po (Hong Kong), Futian (Guangdong, PRC) and Taipa (Macao). As a

result, since birds could fly between these sites within a day, counts in sites such as these were highly synchronized.

Though previously observers were asked to report numbers of immature birds, this practice has been discontinued since it may not be easy at sites with many spoonbills (e.g. in Taiwan and Hong Kong) or where experienced observers are not available.

Results and discussion

Overview

A minimum of 1069 Black-faced Spoonbills were counted in the census this year (Table 1). This is the first time for the population count has exceeded 1,000.

The actual population of Black-faced Spoonbills may be larger than this because a count of twelve was received from Hainan Island (Table 2). However, the Hainan counts were not made during the specified period of the International Census and hence the number has not been included in the total figure. It is also worth noting that an outbreak of avian botulism in the Tsengwen estuary, Taiwan, killed a total of 73 Black-faced Spoonbills between December 2002 and February 2003. Otherwise the total number would have exceeded 1,100.

The 2003 figure is at least 10% higher than that of 2002. Based on these censuses, the known world population of Black-faced Spoonbill has been increasing for five consecutive years since 1998. Indeed, the number of the spoonbills has increased generally since the commencement of the International Census (Figure 2).

Hong Kong and Pearl River Estuary

In Hong Kong, the number of Black-faced Spoonbills present in winter has increased significantly since the 1980s, with annual peak numbers growing from 50 in 1989 (Kennerley 1990) to 258 on 31 December 2002 (P.J. Leader, pers. comm.). However, counts in fact only grew slowly during the first half of the 1990s; by winter 1995-96, the peak count was still only 99 (Carey *et al.* 1996) and there was virtually no increase the following winter; though 124 were present on 29 November 1996 (Carey *et al.* 1998), the highest count in early 1997 was still only 101 (Carey *et al.* 1999). However, from 1997-98 a more dramatic rate of increase began; during that winter, the peak count leapt to 134 — recorded on 30 December 1997 (Carey *et al.* 1999) — while on 22 December 1998, 152 were present (Carey *et al.* 2002), with 130 in January 1999. In the following winter, on 24 November 1999, 164 were recorded, with 151 still present in January 2000, and on 24 November 2000 a count of 252 was made (Turnbull *et al.* 2004). After this the rate of increase has slowed, as comparison with the count of 31 December 2002 referred to above shows. Overall, while increased census effort may be partly responsible for the sharp increase recorded between late 1997 and late 2000, which appears now to have stabilised, the numbers visiting Hong Kong must also have increased considerably.

The January 2003 Census was undertaken on a large scale in Hong Kong, covering the whole Deep Bay area, including Mai Po Nature Reserve, Lok Ma Chau, Tsim Bei Tsui (Inner Deep Bay) and the coastline from Lau Fau Shan to Nim Wan (Outer Deep Bay). As a result, 179 birds were recorded. Together with 24 counted in Futian (Shenzhen, PRC) and 46 birds counted in Macao, this gave a total of 249 birds in the Pearl River estuary. This total number is very close to the peak count of 258 birds recorded in Hong Kong during the winter of 2002-03. It seems possible that birds in Macao and Futian might belong to the same wintering group as those at the Mai Po Marshes and Inner Deep Bay Ramsar site. A sighting of colour-ringed Black-faced Spoonbills in Futian (author, pers. obs.) supports this speculation. However, the movement of Black-faced Spoonbills between Macao and Hong Kong still has to be proved.

Main Wintering Sites

The known numbers of Black-faced Spoonbills expressed as percentage figures relative to the total population for each country and region are shown in Figure 4. The Tsengwen estuary and the area near Tainan constituted the most important wintering site, with a total of 562 birds (52.6%) recorded. Deep Bay, including Mai Po, was the second most important, with 179 birds (16.7%) counted. Xuan Thuy in the Red River Delta of Vietnam with 65 birds (6.1%), was the third most important. In this census, a total of 75.4% of the known wintering population was recorded in these three sites.

In addition, numbers in the Tsengwen estuary area have been increasing dramatically since 1996-97, while numbers in Mai Po have only risen slowly. In the Red River Delta, numbers decreased from 1995-96 but appear to have stabilised in more recent years (Figure 5).

The survey in Japan is coordinated by the Japan Black-faced Spoonbill Network, formed in June 2002, and by the Wild Bird Society of Japan. Since 2000 the total number recorded in Japan has been fairly stable (slightly less than 100 birds). This year the number increased to 128 birds. This probably indicates a real increase in the number of birds wintering in Japan.

Surveys in South China

The South China coast was largely under-surveyed in the past due to its extensive area, lack of observers and baseline information, and difficulties in communication. In this census, observers were invited to survey several sites along the coast, including Chongming Dao (Shanghai), Quanzhou (Fujian), Panyu, Leizhou Peninsula and Zhanjiang (all Guangdong). However, the survey at Quanzhou had to be cancelled due to transportation difficulties. Surveys in Leizhou Peninsula and Zhanjiang did take place, but were carried out prior to the census period. When they did take place, no spoonbills were found.

Threats

The census showed strikingly that wintering Black-faced Spoonbills were concentrated in three sites. Thus the species is highly susceptible to individual catastrophic events at this small number of sites. Habitat deterioration and other threats might drastically reduce the number of birds present at them. One notable illustration of a potential catastrophe is the recent mass death of 73 Black-faced Spoonbills as a result of avian botulism in Taiwan. The greater the concentration of birds at individual sites, the greater the risk of sudden, catastrophic population loss. Thus, this species is still facing a high risk of extinction.

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黑臉琵鷺 *Platalea minor* 為全球性瀕危鳥種，分佈局限於東亞地區，全球數量一度不足一千隻。自一九九三年起，已有黑臉琵鷺普查進行，為保育本受脅鳥種提供重要的資料。本文為其二〇〇三年「黑臉琵鷺全球同步普查」度報告。普查於每年隆冬一月下旬間進行，以利用琵鷺穩守越冬地的時機，於香港后海灣、澳門、深圳福田、台灣曾文溪口、越南等主要越冬地進行同步數量統計。今年，儘管臺灣肉毒桿菌疫症已導致七十三隻琵鷺不幸死天，錄得之琵鷺數量達最少一千零六十九隻，承接多個冬季的趨勢，顯示越冬黑臉琵鷺數量正緩升中。其中后海灣及珠江口一帶多年錄得近二百隻琵鷺越冬，僅次於台灣的五百多隻；華南其他地區因缺乏具經驗觀鳥者提供資料，可能低估越冬琵鷺數量；日本近期亦錄得逾百隻的記錄。此外報告亦指出黑臉琵鷺面對的威脅為棲地破壞，以琵鷺多以大群形式越冬，易受疫症及天災影響；所以，本種仍然面對不少絕種威脅。

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Fig. 1: Locations of International Black-faced Spoonbill Census 2003.

Japan: 1) Fukoka, 2) Saga 3) Nagasaki 4) Kumamoto 5) Kagoshima 6) Miyazaki 7) Okinawa **South Korea:** 8) Jeju Island **China:** 9) Yenchang, Jiangsu 10) Chongming Dao, Shanghai 11) Ilan, Taiwan 12) Pa Chung River, Taiwan 13) Tsengwen Estuary, Taiwan 14) Szu-tsau, Taiwan 15) Mai Po/Inner Deep Bay, Hong Kong 16) Futian, (Shenzhen), Guangdong 17) Panyu, Guangdong 18) Taipa, Macao **Vietnam:** 19) Red River Delta **Thailand:** 20) Phentchaburi **Philippines:** 21) Batanes

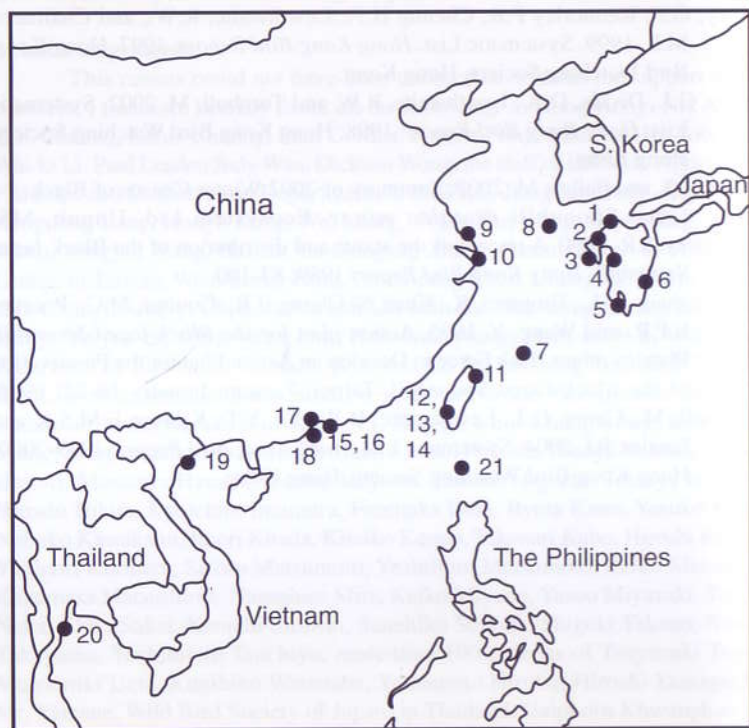


Fig. 2: Known wintering Black-faced Spoonbills, 1989-2003.

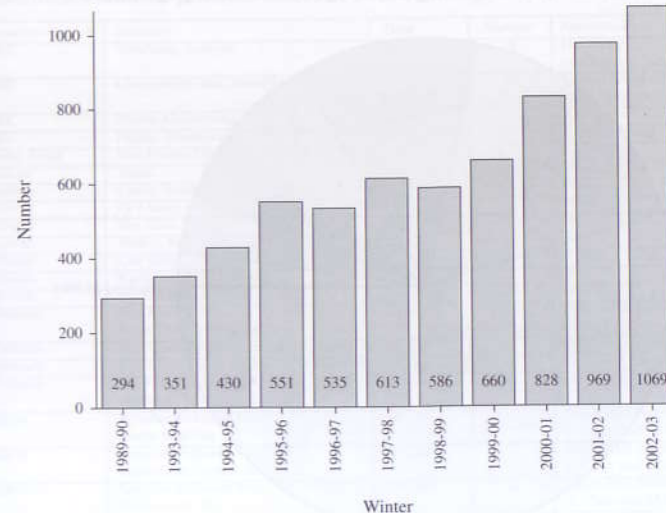


Fig. 3: Numbers of Black-faced Spoonbills in Hong Kong during the International Censuses.

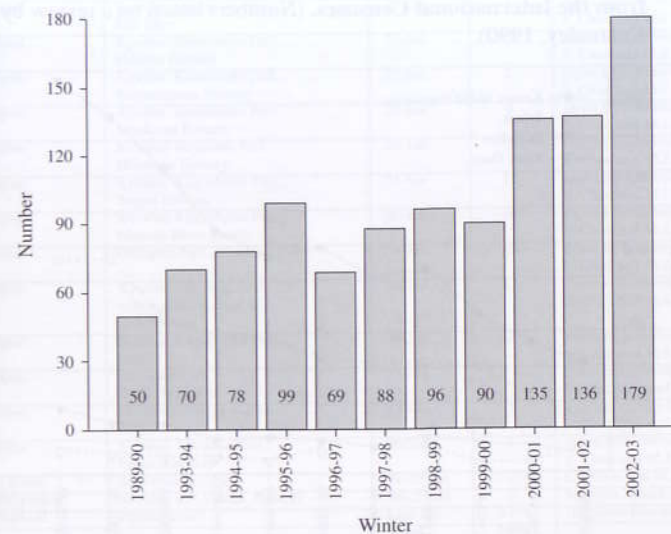


Fig. 4: Known numbers of Black-faced Spoonbills for each country and region expressed as a percentage of the total population

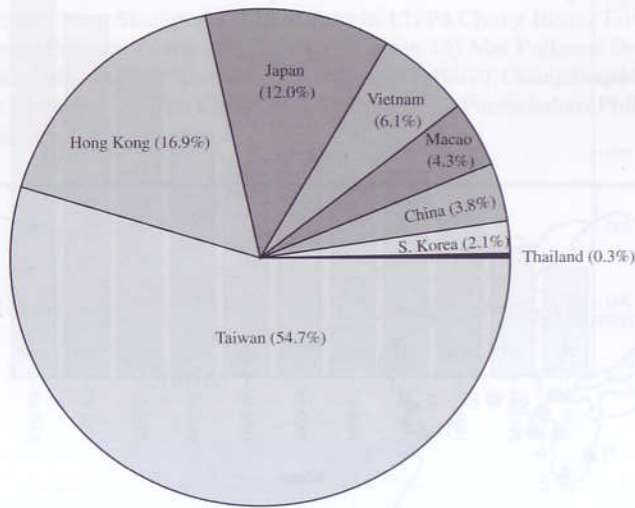


Fig. 5: Numbers and trends of Black-faced Spoonbills in the world, Tainan (Taiwan), Deep Bay (Hong Kong), Red River Delta (Vietnam) from the International Censuses. (Numbers based on a review by Kennerley, 1990).

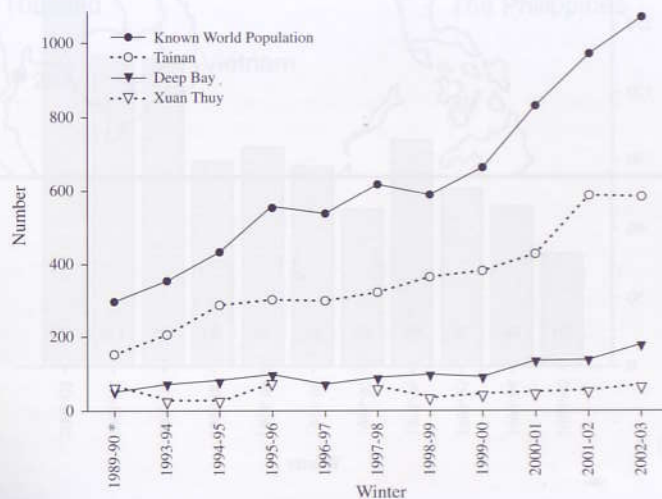


Table 1. Numbers of Black-faced Spoonbill at each location visited. (Numbers in parentheses indicate possible extent of over-counting)

Country/Region	Location	Date	Number	Reported by
PRC	Yenchang, Jiangsu	27 Jan	16	Hui Wang (via Simba Chan)
PRC	Chongming Dao, Shanghai	24-26 Jan	1	Tinhou Wang and Mark Barter via Hui Wang
PRC	Panyu, Guangdong	24-26 Jan	0	Yu Haiyin
PRC	Futian, Shenzhen	24-26 Jan	24	Yongjun Wang
Hong Kong	Mai Po and Deep Bay	24-26 Jan	179	HKBWS
Macao	Taipa	24-26 Jan	46	Va Leung
Taiwan	Chiku, Tainan	26 Jan	429	WBFT
Taiwan	Pa-Chang estuary, Tainan	26 Jan	7	WBFT
Taiwan	Szu-Tsao, Tainan	26 Jan	126	WBFT
Taiwan	Wen-ti, Ilan	25 Jan	3	WBFT
Taiwan	Lan-yang Estuary, Ilan	25 Jan	1	WBFT
Taiwan	Kang-nan, Hsinchu City	25 Jan	1	WBFT
Taiwan	Injured and sick individuals ¹	24-26 Jan	18	WBFT
Vietnam	Red River Delta, Xuan Thuy Nature Reserve	24 Jan	65	Fang Woei-hong (WBFT)
Vietnam	Red River Delta, Thai Binh Estuary	24 Jan	0	Nguyen Duc Tu (BIIP)
Vietnam	Red River Delta, Nghia Hung District	24 Jan	0	Le Trong Trau (BIIP)
Vietnam	Ha Nam Island, Quang Ninh province, Yen Hung District	24 Jan	0	Jack Tordoff (BIIP)
Japan	Kyushu: Fukuoka Pref., Imazu tidal flat	26-Jan	19	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Fukuoka Pref., Jinko-to reclaimed land	26-Jan	2	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Fukuoka Pref., Wajiro tidal flat	26-Jan	2	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Fukuoka Pref., Tataru estuary	26-Jan	4	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Fukuoka Pref., Tsuyazaki	26-Jan	1	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Fukuoka Pref., Sone tidal flat	25-Jan	1	Yamamoto Hiroko, Simba Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Saga Pref., Rokkaku Estuary	25-Jan	2	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Kumamoto Pref., Kumamoto new port	25-Jan	13	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Kumamoto Pref., Ezu lake	25-Jan	1	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Kumamoto Pref., Hikawa Estuary	25-Jan	12	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Kumamoto Pref., Kagamigawa Estuary	25-Jan	2	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Kumamoto Pref., Maekawa Estuary	25-Jan	6	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Miyazaki Pref., Hitotsuse Estuary	26-Jan	5	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Kagoshima Pref., Beppu Estuary	25-Jan	11	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Kagoshima Pref., Manose River mouth	26-Jan	16	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Okinawa Pref., Manko	24-Jan	2	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Nagasaki Pref., within embankment of Isahaya Bay	24-Jan	11	Yamamoto Hiroko, Simba Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Kagoshima Pref., Izumi	26-Jan	2	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Okinawa Pref., Gushi Tidal Flat	25-Jan	14	Yamamoto Hiroko, Simba Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Okinawa Pref., Tomishiro	25-Jan	1	Yamamoto Hiroko, Simba Chan and M.J. Ueta
Japan	Kyushu: Fukuoka Pref., Funakoshi Bay	26-Jan	1	Japan BFS Network, S. Chan and M.J. Ueta
S. Korea	Seongsampo, Jeju	24-25 Jan	22 (24)	CY Choi and W.B. Kim
Philippines	Savidig and Sabtan, Batanes	24-25 Jan	0	Marlynn Mendoza
Thailand	Phentchaburi	Late Jan	3 (6)	Uaiphorn Khwanphae
	Total		1069 (1074)	

¹ Injured and sick Black-faced Spoonbills in Taiwan recovered well after treatment and 17 were released on 18 February 2003.

Table 2. Additional counts from some sites in PRC in winter 2002-03

Location	Date	Number	Reported by
Dongzhai Gong, Hainan	10 Jan. 2003	1	Wei Liang
Xinying, Lingao, Hainan	10 Jan. 2003	11	Wei Liang
Yinggehai, Ledong, Hainan	Jan. 2003	0	Wei Liang
Leizhou Peninsula, Guangdong	23 Dec. 2002 to 13 Jan. 2003	0	Fasang Zhou
Ming Jiang Estuary, Fujian	1 Mar. 2003	2	M.J. Ueta and Guogang Zhang
Coasts of Zhejiang	Feb. 2003	0	M.J. Ueta and Guogang Zhang
TOTAL		14	

Appendix

Appendix 1. Counts of Black-faced Spoonbills in Hong Kong during the International Census, January 2003.

a) Counts on 24 January 2003

Place/Time	1400h	1500h	1600h
Mai Po Nature Reserve	85	127	58
Lok Ma Chau	0	0	0
Mai Po Boardwalk	4	0	0
Tsim Bei Tsui	0	0	0
'Outer' Deep Bay	NC	NC	NC
Total	89	127	58

b) Counts on 25 January 2003

Place/Time	1445h	1545h	1645h
Mai Po Nature Reserve	129	85	11
Lok Ma Chau	0	0	0
Mai Po Boardwalk	0	3	0
Tsim Bei Tsui	0	0	0
'Outer' Deep Bay	0	2	0
Total	129	90	11

c) Counts on 26 January 2003

Place/Time	1530h	1630h	1730h
Mai Po Nature Reserve	143	156	179
Lok Ma Chau	0	0	0
Mai Po Boardwalk	3	0	0
Tsim Bei Tsui	0	0	0
'Outer' Deep Bay	0	0	0
Total	146	156	179

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NOTES ON THE BREEDING BIOLOGY OF CHINESE POND HERONS IN HONG KONG

Llewellyn Young

In recent years, there has been interest in the use of eggshells, feathers and indices of ardeid breeding success (such as clutch size and hatching success rate) as indicators of pollution loading in the environment in Hong Kong, especially around the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site (Anon 1997, De Luca-Abbott 2001). Whilst there have been studies on the ecology and breeding success of Chinese Pond Herons *Ardeola bacchus* in other parts of China (Li and Liu 1964, Zhu 1986, Du 1987, Shen and Hu 1987, Yan 1987, Zhu and Yang 1988), baseline data on the breeding success of ardeids in Hong Kong for use in such studies are unfortunately currently lacking in the literature. This paper seeks to provide such data, based on a detailed study of the breeding biology of Chinese Pond Herons carried out at three of the three main egrettries around Deep Bay in 1989 and 1990.

Method

Three egrettries were visited during the study, two of these being close together at the same general location.

Study site 1: Mai Po Egrettry

This egrettry is situated in a small *fung shui* woodland on the western face of a hill opposite Mai Po village. It has been occupied intermittently for over 30 years and regularly since the mid-1970s (Young and Cha 1995). The main tree species are Chinese Banyans *Ficus microcarpa*, Pond Spice *Litsea glutinosa* and Chinese Red Pines *Pinus massoniana*. The colony is mixed, with breeding Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta*, Great Egrets *E. alba*, Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis*, and Black-crowned Night Herons *Nycticorax nycticorax*, in addition to its Chinese Pond Herons (Wong *et al.* 2000).

Study site 2: Tsim Bei Tsui Egrettries

In 1989, there were two mixed egrettries, some 600m apart in the mangroves at Tsim Bei Tsui. The average height of the mangroves in the first colony (TBT1) was 3.3 ± 0.1 m ($n = 88$), while in the second (TBT2) it was 5.8 ± 0.9 m ($n = 100$). Both had been occupied for two to three years previously (Young and Cha 1995).

Nest visits

In each colony, trees holding nests were marked with numbered coloured plastic tags so that individual nests could be identified. This tagging method did not appear to disturb breeding attempts. Most nests were more than four metres above the ground, so a mirror fixed at right angles to the tip of a 6 m long extendable pole was used to check nest contents. The pole was also used to estimate to the nearest 0.5 m the height of the trees and the nests at each site.

The first visit to the Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui colonies in 1989 was on 16 April, and in 1990 on 26 April. Subsequent visits each year were made every four days and lasted no more than one hour in order to minimise disturbance to the birds.

Estimation of laying dates

The first visits to the breeding colonies in 1989 and 1990 were made after egg laying had begun since birds are sensitive to disturbance during the early-laying period (Tremblay and Ellison 1979). As a result, the first laying dates for approximately 80% of the nests were not known, and had to be calculated from estimates of the hatching date and the incubation period of the eggs.

Laying period is defined as the time taken for the complete clutch of eggs in a nest to be laid; hatching interval is defined as the time taken for the complete clutch to hatch. Eggs which had not hatched following two consecutive colony visits (although the rest of the clutch had), were checked, where possible, to see if they were infertile or addled. The duration of incubation was taken to be the time from when the first egg was laid to the time when the first egg hatched. Estimates of laying and hatching intervals and the duration of the incubation period were based on the visits every two days to the TBT1 colony in early May 1989. From the estimates of these breeding parameters and the age of newly hatched chicks found in the nests, the date of the first egg laid could be estimated for each clutch.

Measurement of egg size and volume

The TBT1 colony was visited every two days in early May 1989 for a period of ten days, to investigate the effect of laying order on egg volume and size in four nests. An index of egg volume was calculated using the equation of Hoyt (1979), i.e.,

$$\text{Egg volume index} = 0.51 \times (\text{length} \times \text{breadth}^2)$$

Measurements of egg length and breadth were made using Vernier calipers to the nearest 0.1 mm. Of the four nests followed, three had a final clutch of four eggs and the remaining nest had three eggs.

Nest survival

Eggs were said to have been predated either if eggshell remains were found in the nest or if the eggs disappeared between two consecutive visits. If chicks disappeared, they were only said to have been predated if remains were found on the nest, since their death could have been caused by other factors, e.g. starvation and killing by their siblings, known as 'siblicide' (Mock 1984).

Some 12 to 14 days after hatching, the young Chinese Pond Herons were able to climb out of the nest and hide in the tree canopy, thus making measurements of nesting success difficult. Therefore, if the chicks reached 14 days of age, they

were said to have fledged. Fledgling group size was thus the number of chicks in a particular nest that survived to day 14. The time that the chicks need before they can fly and leave the nest completely, is, however, between 25 and 30 days (Hancock and Kushlan 1984, Du 1987, Shen and Hu 1987, Zhu and Yang 1988).

Daily nest-survival rates during incubation and chick rearing were measured separately using Mayfield's method (Mayfield 1961, 1975), and confidence limits were added following Johnson (1979) and Hensler and Nicholls (1981).

Chick diet

Chinese Pond Heron chicks would often regurgitate their crop contents when their nests were checked. These samples were preserved in 4% formalin on site, and their contents were later identified and measured. In cases where the nest was marked and nesting success had been followed, the age of the chick that produced the regurgitate could be estimated. These data were used to calculate the percentage occurrence of a food type in the diet of nestlings from a particular colony, by expressing the number of regurgitates containing a food item as a percentage of the total number of regurgitates collected from that colony.

Results

Estimation of laying, hatching interval and incubation period

Females took several days to lay a full clutch of eggs, but the spacing interval between each egg could not be accurately recorded. This was because such data could only be recorded by making daily checks on the nests but this would cause undue disturbance to the nests. From visits every two days to TBT1 in early May 1989, however, the interval between successive eggs being laid was estimated from five nests as being between one and 1.5 days.

Chinese Pond Herons laid a maximum of six eggs, with a mean of 3.8 ± 0.1 eggs per clutch ($n = 384$ clutches). The mean dimensions of the eggs were: length = 38.9 ± 0.4 mm ($n = 37$) and width = 29.5 ± 0.9 mm ($n = 37$), and the mean volume index was 17.9 ± 0.3 ($n = 37$).

Hatching interval could only be followed in two nests, and was estimated to have been 10 hours. The average incubation period was 22.8 ± 0.3 days ($n = 44$ clutches).

Laying dates and breeding season length

Histograms of the first egg dates for the Mai Po (Figure 1), TBT1 (Figure 2) and TBT2 (Figure 3) colonies, show an almost bi-modal distribution. As a result, clutches were classified as being either early (laid before 15 May and hatching before 8 June), or late (laid after 15 May and hatching after 8 June). In 1989, egg laying started (between 1 - 5 April) and ended (between 20 - 24 June) at a similar time at all three study sites. However, the rate at which nests were initiated

at Mai Po (in terms of the date when the first egg was laid), was faster than at both TBT1 or TBT2 (Figure 4). In 1990, egg laying was later and less synchronous, with the first eggs recorded as being laid at Mai Po and TBT1 between 6 - 10 April, and at TBT2 between 11 - 15 April. The last eggs laid in 1990 were earlier than in 1989, being between 11 - 15 May at TBT1, and between 10 - 14 June at TBT2. Sample sizes at Mai Po were too small to give an estimate of the last eggs laid.

One consequence of the difference in laying dates between years, was that the breeding season was longer at TBT1 and TBT2 in 1989 (85 days) than in 1990 (TBT1, 40 days; TBT2, 65 days). The length of the breeding season at Mai Po in 1990 could not be estimated because of the small number of nests ($n = 7$) that were followed.

Clutch size and nest initiation date

The date of nest initiation affected clutch size, with the mean size of early clutches being larger than that for late clutches in both 1989 (early clutch = 3.8 ± 0.1 eggs; late clutch = 3.5 ± 0.2 eggs) and in 1990 (early clutch = 3.7 ± 0.1 eggs; late clutch = 3.3 ± 0.1 eggs).

Chinese Pond Herons are double-brooded (Hancock and Kushlan 1984), and often lay again in the same nest after either the successful completion or failure of their first clutch. Of the 65 nests where a second clutch was recorded, 31 cases (47.7%) occurred after the successful completion of the first clutch, 28 cases (43.1%) occurred where the previous eggs or chicks had disappeared, and six cases (9.2%) occurred after the effects of Typhoon Brenda in May 1989.

Factors affecting nesting success

(i) Disturbance and predation

Hatching success at the Mai Po and TBT1 colonies in 1990, was severely affected by human disturbance. At Mai Po, construction of a drainage channel immediately under the tree where nests were studied in 1989 meant that the birds did not use the site until late in the 1990 season when work stopped. At TBT1 in 1990, people entered the colony and stole chicks from 36 (82%) of the nests. This caused the birds to abandon the colony such that no second clutches were laid. At the TBT2 colony which was not affected by either disturbance or predation, there was no difference in nesting success, either between the two years, or between the early and late clutches.

(ii) Chick survival

Typhoon Brenda (20 May 1989) had a marked effect on the survival rate of nests and chicks in the early clutches at Mai Po. The typhoon was responsible for 13 (52%) of the chick mortalities at Mai Po, and 13 (18.1%) at TBT2, whilst it had no effect on chick survival at TBT1. The typhoon also destroyed 31% (five) of the nests at Mai Po, 12% (eight) of the nests at TBT2 and 3% (two) of the nests

at TBT1. This suggests that the percentage of nests destroyed by the typhoon is related to nest height, and thus the exposure of nests to the strong winds. The nests that were destroyed by the typhoon were not rebuilt again.

(iii) Predation

Egg predation was greater at TBT1 than at Mai Po or TBT2. Fifty-one eggs were taken from 135 nests at TBT1, while no eggs were taken from any nest at either Mai Po (29 nests) or TBT2 (219 nests). Chick predation was also greater at TBT1 than at Mai Po or TBT2. At TBT1, 39 chicks were taken from 98 nests, three chicks from 31 nests at Mai Po, and eight chicks from 165 nests at TBT2. Overall, the probability of chick predation was greater than that of egg predation at both TBT1 and TBT2 (TBT1: $t = 2.96$, $df = 241$, $P < 0.01$; TBT2: $t = 2.67$, $df = 382$, $P < 0.01$).

TBT1 had a higher rate of predation on adults while they attended the nest, with a rate of 5.19 cases per 100 nests as compared with 0.91 cases per 100 nests at TBT2 and none at Mai Po. These would be minimum estimates of predation of adults on the nest since, in some cases, predators could have made off with the carcasses.

Chick diet

Chick regurgitates were collected from all three colonies in 1989 (Mai Po = 12; TBT1 = 63; TBT2 = 56). In 1990, however, regurgitates were only collected from TBT2 ($n = 54$) since there were few nests with chicks at Mai Po and TBT1 that year.

Chicks were fed on a variety of foods (Table 1) but mainly fish (recorded in 51.9% of all regurgitate samples), insects (35.7%) and shrimps (22.2%) (Table 2). The most important fish species were *Oreochromis mossambicus* (found in 20.5% of all regurgitates), *Liza* sp. (13.5%), *Cirrhinus molitorella* (6.5%) and *Gambusia affinis* (5.9%). The major insect groups were dipteran maggots (20.5%), adult calliphorid flies (7.0%) and Dermaptera (5.41%), while the main shrimp species was *Macrobrachium nipponense* (17.8%).

In 1989, there was no difference in the type of food fed to the chicks between colonies. However in 1990, the chicks at TBT2 were fed predominately insects (70.3%), as compared to mainly fish in 1989 (64.3%).

There was no evidence that food items changed in size with the age of the chicks. Also, there was no indication that the types of food fed to the chicks changed with age. One exception was with the dipteran larvae which were found in 27.3% of the regurgitates from 1 - 5 day-old chicks, but were absent in the samples from 21 - 25 day-old chicks.

Discussion

There were significant differences in the mortality rates of eggs, chicks and adult Chinese Pond Herons breeding at Mai Po and the two colonies at Tsim Bei Tsui, and these differences were primarily due to different levels of predation at the three sites. Breeding success was lowest and predation was highest at TBT1, while the reverse was true at Mai Po. Nests at Mai Po were, however, more prone to damage from strong winds and typhoons because of their height in the nesting trees.

Comparison of incubation period and clutch size

The recorded incubation period for Chinese Pond Herons in this study (22.8 ± 0.3 days) is similar to that reported by Hancock and Kushlan (1984; 18 - 22 days), Du (1987; 19 days) Yan (1987; 20 - 21 days), Shen and Hu (1987; 22 - 27 days), and Zhu and Yang (1988; 20 - 30 days). Similarly, the average clutch size of 3.8 ± 0.1 eggs corresponds with that found from other parts of China; 3.9 (Li and Liu 1963), 4 (Zhu 1986), 3.8 (Du 1987), 4.7 (Shen and Hu 1987), 4 - 7 (Yan 1987), 4.2 (Zhu and Yang 1988).

Factors affecting breeding success between colonies

(i) Egg and clutch size

Variations in the volume and size of Chinese Pond Heron eggs were found to be greater between nests than within nests. This could be because of genotypic variations between the laying females, but phenotypic factors may also play a part, such as female body condition (Galbraith 1988). Such variations in egg size would be expected to result in differences in chick survival, with chicks from larger eggs having a higher survival rate than those from smaller eggs because of a larger yolk and lipid store (Galbraith 1988).

(ii) Nest date and effect of re-nesting

Both clutch size and the number of young fledged per nest declines as the breeding season progresses (Lack 1966; Klomp 1970). This is especially true of ardeids (Jenni 1969; Wolford and Boag 1971; Siegfried 1972; Rodgers 1980; Custer *et al.* 1983; Pratt and Winkler 1985; Moser 1986a). Chinese Pond Herons in Hong Kong followed the same pattern, with clutches laid early in the season being larger and fledging more chicks than those laid later. Such a seasonal decline in breeding success has been attributed to several factors, including a decline in female condition after the first brood, which may reflect a decrease in food availability as the breeding season progresses (Lack 1966; Drent and Daan 1980; Galbraith 1988; Safina and Burger 1988). The energy intake of Chinese Pond Herons feeding around fish ponds, their preferred summer feeding habitat at Mai Po, however, declined only after a peak in June (Young 1998). Since all the nests studied were initiated before the end of June, it can be assumed that all breeding females were in the process of laying eggs at a time when food availability was still high. The decline in clutch size with date cannot, therefore, be attributed to a decline in food availability, but may be due to a decline in body condition of those females who

were laying either replacement or second clutches, and had suffered from the stress of egg-laying and chick-rearing from the first clutch (Drent and Daan 1980).

(iii) Predation

Predation has been regarded as the main cause of egg and chick mortality during breeding (Ricklefs 1969). For example, predation accounted for 66.9% of all nest failures in a study of 21 ciconiiform breeding colonies in Florida (Frederick and Collopy 1989a). In the present study, predation levels were calculated from the number of predated eggs and chicks found on the nest. This method may, however, underestimate the true predation pressure since predators can take eggs or chicks away from the nest to be eaten. Assuming that this source of error in estimating predation pressure is constant and small in all the colonies studied, then it is clear that the predation rate during incubation and chick rearing at TBT1 was significantly higher than at either Mai Po or TBT2. At TBT1 and TBT2, the predation rate during chick rearing was higher than that during incubation. Chick predation rate was highest at TBT1 and lowest (zero) at Mai Po. The difference in chick mortality rather than egg mortality between the three colonies is, therefore, a reflection of intercolony breeding success. This has been suggested previously for heron colonies in the Netherlands (van Vessem and Draulans 1986).

The high predation rates at TBT1 can be explained by the nests being built in low, branching, trees (mean height = 2.74 ± 0.05 m). This means that access to mammalian predators, e.g., mongooses *Herpestes* spp., leopard cats *Felis bengalensis* and feral cats *F. catus*, and people at low tide would be relatively easy. Footprints of these predators in the wet mud were proof of this. Avian predators such as Common Magpies *Pica pica* and Greater Coucals *Centropus sinensis*, were seen and heard in the colonies and are suspected of contributing to egg loss. This was evidenced by the numbers of damaged eggs with puncture marks in the shell found on the colony floor. However, no cases of nests being robbed were observed. In North America, rat snakes are known to predate on eggs and chicks of wading birds (Frederick and Collopy 1989a), but there was no evidence that the local Common Rat Snake *Pythas mucosus* or any other snake species, had a significant effect on nesting success in this study.

Predation on breeding adults was also highest at TBT1, where 5.2% of nests were destroyed. Predation by humans was especially obvious at TBT1 in 1990 where, in order to reach the contents, branches of the tree supporting the nest were broken. Human predation on Chinese Pond Heron nests in other parts of China is also a problem, although the scale of this has not been quantified (Zhu 1986; Yan 1987).

(iv) Adverse weather

Severe storms can have considerable effects on bird populations (Wunderle *et al.* 1992), such as being a major cause of mortality in heron colonies (Hafner 1980). In China, they are also an important source of damage to Chinese Pond

Heron nests (Zhu 1986; Du 1987; Yan 1987). The amount of damage caused by Typhoon Brenda in 1989 was related to the height of the nest, with the highest nests at Mai Po being most affected. Tropical storms and typhoons can form in the South China Sea at almost any time of the year, but 80% occur in the period from June to October (Chiu and So 1986). Typhoon Brenda which occurred in May 1989 can, therefore, be considered a rare event because the herons' breeding season would normally have finished and the chicks fledged by the time in late summer when the majority of typhoons arrive.

Chick diet

The food brought back by adult Chinese Pond Herons to feed their young was similar to that found for breeding Chinese Pond Herons studied in other parts of China, i.e., small fish, amphibians and insects (Li and Liu 1964; Zhu 1986; Du 1987; Yan 1987; Zhu and Yang 1988). One exception was that in Deep Bay, shrimps and prawns were an important component of the Chinese Pond Heron chicks' diet. This has not been recorded before in China and is probably related to the abundance of prawn and fishponds around Deep Bay.

One possible reason why chicks at TBT2 were fed more insects and fewer fish in 1990 than in the previous year was related to the draining of the fishponds adjacent to the TBT2 colony prior to the 1990 breeding season. This would have forced the breeding birds to forage in other habitats. Research on feeding habitat use by Chinese Pond Herons at TBT2 showed that they frequently foraged in flooded fields in 1990 but, unfortunately, no data were collected in 1989 to show whether or not the birds used more fish ponds at that time.

Evidence from ardeids, such as Grey Herons *Ardea cinerea* (Moser 1986b) and other birds, such as Ring-billed gulls *Larus delawarensis* (Kirkham and Morris 1979), showed that the size of prey items collected by parents for chicks increased with the age of the chick. This study gives some support for this, since dipteran larvae were only found in the regurgitates of young (1 - 5 days old) Chinese Pond Heron chicks.

Nesting habitats in Deep Bay

Chinese Pond Herons nesting at Mai Po had the highest breeding success out of the three colonies studied, mainly because of a significantly lower predation pressure. Many nests were, however, damaged by a typhoon in 1989 but this was probably a rare event. It is reasonable then to ask why more Chinese Pond Herons nest at Tsim Bei Tsui and not at Mai Po, where breeding success is greatest. This could be because of food availability, which has been cited as an important factor in determining the size and location of heron colonies (Lack 1954; Fasola and Barbieri 1978; Gibbs *et al.* 1987; Gibbs 1991). Prior to this study, Chinese Pond Herons had only been breeding at the two Tsim Bei Tsui sites for two to three years (K.M. Wong, WWF Hong Kong pers. comm.). This coincides, approximately, with the sequential draining of 400 ha of fish ponds at Tin Shui Wai, near Tsim

Bei Tsui, to make way for housing developments, a process which took five years to complete. Fish ponds undergoing drainage in this fashion provide ideal feeding habitat for herons because numerous fish are trapped in the small pools of water that remain. Herons can be expected to be attracted to the area to breed because of the abundant food supply, as long as there is also suitable nesting habitat available nearby. In 1991, when draining and filling of the fishponds at Tin Shui Wai was completed, Chinese Pond Herons did not return to the two Tsim Bei Tsui colonies to breed that year. This would have been because of the decrease in food supply (Dusi and Dusi 1968; Frederick and Collopy 1989b). In the case of the TBT1 colony, abandonment may have been a result of high nest predation which has also been recorded for other colonial birds (Hjertaas 1982; Rodgers 1987; Simpson *et al.* 1987). Mortality due to predation may not, however, be predictable at the time that the herons settle into the colony (Wittenberger 1981), and it is more likely that they select sites on the basis of the surrounding food supply.

Fish ponds are a predictable feeding habitat in summer (Young 1998), and the abundance of this habitat around the Mai Po egretty may make it easier for adults to collect food for their nestlings; reproductive success would thus be higher. However, without comparative data on the weight of food brought back to the nest by adults at the Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui sites, this cannot be proven (Hafner *et al.* 1993).

The colonies at Mai Po and at Tsim Bei Tsui were only 6 km apart, so Chinese Pond Herons prospecting for a nest site could have chosen from any of the three locations. If Mai Po were the better nesting habitat, it might be expected that Chinese Pond Herons would settle there preferentially (Fretwell and Lucas 1970). From the first laying dates at the three colonies in 1989, birds at Mai Po laid earlier and would, therefore, have settled there earlier. This would lend support to the idea that Mai Po was the better nesting habitat.

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楊路年博士於一九八九年至一九九零年間，於米埔村和尖鼻咀兩個鷺鳥林進行了池鷺生態及繁殖研究，取得產蛋日數、體積、鳥巢生態狀況、鷺鳥的食物等基線資料。研究發現雌性池鷺每次產蛋需時1至1.5日，孵蛋需時22.8±0.3日，每年產蛋兩窩，第二窩的蛋體積較小。鷺鳥主要以魚為主食，有時亦捕食昆蟲和蝦。米埔村的池鷺，由於築巢於較高的樹上，鳥蛋被捕食的機會較低，不過鳥巢卻容易受颱風破壞。

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Table 1. Prey items identified from the regurgitates of Chinese Pond Heron chicks. All prey items taken were adults except L = larvae and A, L = adult and larvae form.

OLIGOCHAETA sp.	MYRIAPODA
	Chilopoda
	<i>Lithobius</i> sp.
CRUSTACEA	OSTEICHTHYES
Decapoda	Cypriniformes
<i>Macrobrachium nipponense</i>	<i>Cirrhinus molitor</i> (Mud Carp)
<i>Coutierella tonkinensis</i>	<i>Cyprinus carpio</i> (Common Carp)
<i>Alpheus</i> sp. (Pistol Shrimp)	<i>Carassius auratus</i> (Goldfish)
<i>Metapenaeus ensis</i>	Siluriformes
<i>Exopalaemon styliferus</i>	<i>Clarius fuscus</i> (Cat-fish)
Grapsidae sp.	Cyprinodontiformes
<i>Parasesarma</i> sp.	<i>Gambusia affinis</i> (Mosquito Fish)
<i>Chiromantes</i> sp.	Beloniformes
	<i>Hyporhamphus quoyi</i>
INSECTA	Mugiliformes
Odonata	<i>Liza macrolepis</i>
<i>Anax</i> sp. (L)	<i>Eleutheronema</i> sp.
<i>Pantala flavescens</i> (L)	Perciformes
<i>Orthetrum</i> sp. (L)	<i>Oreochromis mossambicus</i> (Tilapia)
Orthoptera	<i>Bostrichthys sinensis</i>
<i>Gryllotalpa africana</i> (Mole Cricket)	<i>Ctenogobius giurinus</i>
Acrididae (Grasshopper)	<i>Ophecephalus maculatus</i> (Snakehead)
Dermaptera	
<i>Forficula</i> sp. (Earwig)	AMPHIBIA
Blattodea	Anura
<i>Pycnoscelus surinamensis</i>	Tadpole sp. indet.
(Black Litter Cockroach)	<i>Rana limnocharis</i> (L) (Paddy Frog)
<i>Periplaneta americana</i>	
(American Cockroach)	
Hemiptera	
Unknown sp.	
<i>Diplonychus rusticum</i>	
Lepidoptera	REPTILIA
Stratiomyidae (L) (Soldier Fly)	Squamata
<i>Eristalis</i> sp. (A, L) (Hover Fly)	<i>Hemidactylus bowringi</i> (Bowring's Gecko)
Sarcophagidae (A, L)	<i>Ateuchosaurus chinensis</i> (Chinese Forest Skink)
<i>Chrysomya megacephala</i> (A, L)	
(Bluebottle Fly)	
Hymenoptera	MAMMALIA
(Bee, wasp)	Insectivora
Coleoptera	<i>Suncus murinus</i> (Musk Shrew)
<i>Eretes sticticus</i> (Small Brown Water Beetle)	
<i>Sternolophus</i> sp. (Scavenging Water Beetle)	
ARACHNIDA	
Araneida	
<i>Lycosidae</i> sp.	

Table 2. Percentage occurrence of different types of food in the regurgitates of Chinese Pond Heron chicks at the three colonies in 1989 and 1990. n represents the number of regurgitates collected and the figure in brackets represents the number of nests from which regurgitates were taken.

	MP (1989)	TBT1 (1989)	TBT2 (1989)	TBT2 (1990)
Fish	58.3	50.8	76.8	46.3
Insects	33.3	27.2	28.6	66.7
Shrimps	16.7	30.2	10.7	20.4
Crabs	0	7.9	5.4	5.6
Others	0	9.5	10.7	18.5
n	12 (12)	63 (60)	56 (55)	56 (55)

Fig. 1 The first egg laying dates at the Mai Po egretty in 1989.

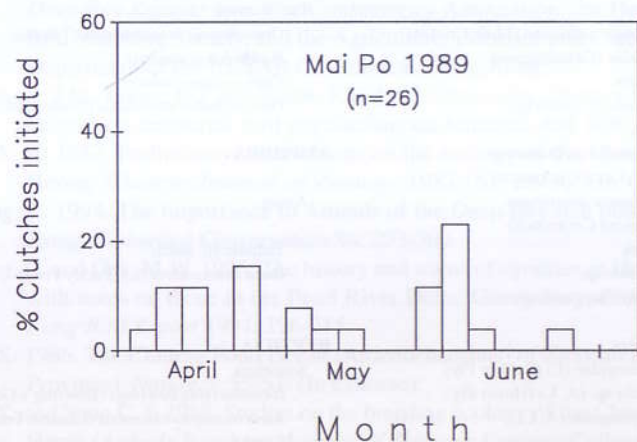


Fig. 2 The first egg laying dates at the Tsim Bei Tsui 1 (TBT1) egretty in 1989 and 1990.

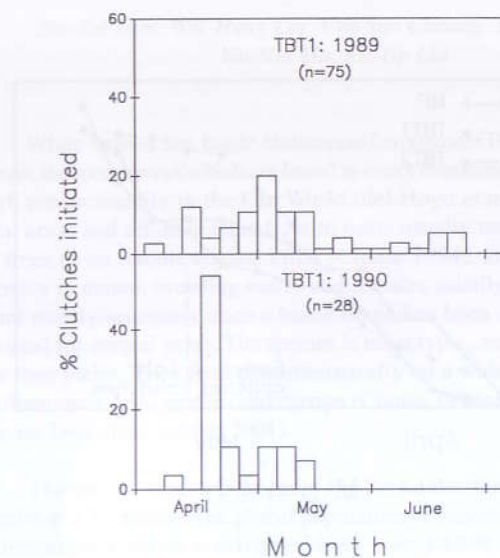


Fig. 3 The first egg laying dates at the Tsim Bei Tsui 2 (TBT2) egretty in 1989 and 1990.

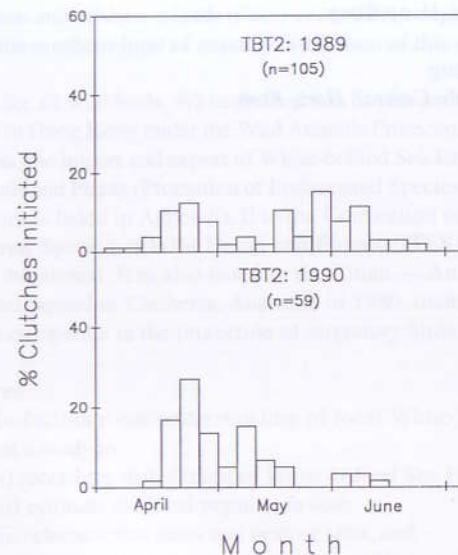
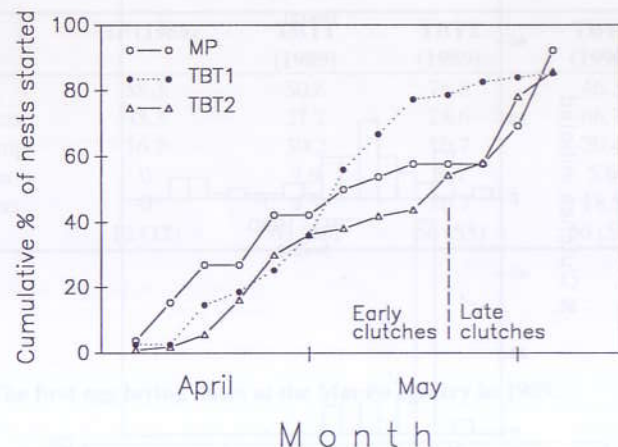


Fig. 4 Cumulative percentage of nests initiated at the Mai Po (MP), Tsim Bei Tsui 1 (TBT1) and Tsim Bei Tsui 2 (TBT2) egeries in 1989.



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POPULATION AND BREEDING ECOLOGY OF WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLES IN HONG KONG

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White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* is one of eight species in its genus, the members of which are found in every continent except South America, though predominantly in the Old World (del Hoyo *et al.* 1994). It is found in coastal areas and offshore islands, with nests usually near water, in tall live or dead trees or on remote coastal cliffs (Clunie 1994), and, while juveniles are dispersive in nature, breeding males and females usually form permanent pairs and are mostly sedentary once a home range has been established, with nests often used for several years. The species is monotypic, and females are generally larger than males. They feed opportunistically on a wide range of prey, mainly birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and carrion (Clunie, 1994; Zheng and Wang, 1998; Ferguson-Lees and Christie, 2001).

The species ranges from India and Sri Lanka, through southeast Asia, to Australia and Tasmania. The global population of breeding adults, non-breeders and immatures together is estimated to be over 10,000 (del Hoyo *et al.*, 1994; Ferguson-Lees and Christie, 2001). It is known as an uncommon resident in the coastal areas of southeastern China, including Guangdong, Fujian and Hainan, and is rare in Jiangsu and Taiwan (Zheng and Wang, 1998; MacKinnon and Phillipps, 2000). In Hong Kong, it is also described as an uncommon resident in coastal areas and offshore islands (Carey *et al.*, 2001), suggesting that southeastern China is the northern limit of natural distribution of this species.

Like all wild birds, White-bellied Sea Eagles and their eggs and nests are protected in Hong Kong under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170). In addition, the import and export of White-bellied Sea Eagles are regulated under the Animals and Plants (Protection of Endangered Species) Ordinance (Cap. 187). The species is listed in Appendix II to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), but is not considered globally threatened. It is also listed in the China — Australia Migratory Birds Agreement signed in Canberra, Australia in 1986, under which both countries agreed to co-operate in the protection of migratory birds and their environment.

Objectives

To facilitate our understanding of local White-bellied Sea Eagles, we carried out a study to:

- (i) record the distribution of White-bellied Sea Eagles in Hong Kong,
- (ii) estimate the local population size,
- (iii) characterize nests and nesting sites, and
- (iv) monitor the behaviour of breeding White-bellied Sea Eagles.

This paper describes the methodology used and presents the key findings of the study.

Methodology

The distribution and population size of White-bellied Sea Eagles in Hong Kong was studied by analysing sight records from November 2001 to May 2003. Both opportunistic sight records and records collected by active searching were used for analysis. The study area covered most of Hong Kong except for remote and inaccessible outlying islands. Various types of information, including date of records, stage and behaviour of birds, number of birds seen at the same time and place, and range of movement, as well as foraging distance, were used to analyse all the sight records and to estimate the total population present in Hong Kong.

To characterize nests and nesting sites, each known nest was visited at least once between December 2002 and April 2003. The Kite Research Group of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society supplied information on the nest at Stonecutters Island. Geographic and biological characteristics of each nest were recorded; these included land status of the location, orientation, dimensions, altitude, distance from the coastline, nesting tree species and number of chicks raised.

The behaviour of the breeding pairs at Yeung Chau and Tai Ngam Hau (both in Sai Kung) were monitored during the egg incubation and chick-rearing period respectively. The change from the Yeung Chau pair to the Tai Ngam Hau pair in the chick-rearing period was due to unsuccessful breeding by the Yeung Chau pair. These two pairs were selected because the vantage points at both sites were easily accessible and gave good viewing of the surrounding habitats. At least two surveyors used binoculars and telescopes to monitor the behaviour at a distance of 500 — 1,000 m from the nests in order to minimise disturbance. The duration of any type of behaviour observed was also recorded. Continuous monitoring was carried out in 12 six-hour sessions (i.e. 0700h to 1300h and 1300h to 1900h) for the Yeung Chau pair and three 12-hour sessions (i.e. 0700h to 1900h) for the Tai Ngam Hau pair. Results from both pairs were combined for analysis.

Key Findings

Distribution and Population in Hong Kong

More than 100 sight records were obtained between November 2001 and May 2003. After excluding any possible double counting of the same individual, it was estimated that, at the end of May 2003, there were a total of 39 White-bellied Sea Eagles in Hong Kong, including 23 adults, 12 immatures and four unfledged juveniles (Table 1). This is based on records of 23 individual sedentary adults, four unfledged juveniles still in nests, and four juveniles seen perching close to each other at the same place and time. The other sight records of juveniles were re-examined and considered to be eight different juveniles/immatures based on the date, time and place of the sightings.

In general, most of the population inhabits the eastern waters of Hong Kong (i.e. 20 birds or 51.3% local population) and the southern waters and Harbour areas (i.e. 14 birds or 35.9% local population), whereas the western waters support fewer (i.e. five birds or 12.8% local population). In addition, birds were frequently observed perching around, foraging in or bathing in five reservoirs, namely High Island, Plover Cove, Kowloon, Tai Lam Chung and Tai Tam.

A small gathering of four juveniles/immatures was observed at the shore of Wang Tau Tun in High Island Reservoir on 29 December 2002. This was the largest aggregation recorded in this study. Three were also recorded flying close to each other at three locations: Hung Shek Mun (26 July 2002), Stonecutters Island (28 July 2002) and Kowloon Reservoir (12 November 2002). Outside Hong Kong, gatherings of up to about 14 immatures have been observed (Ferguson-Lees and Christie, 2001).

Table 1. Distribution of White-bellied Sea Eagles in Hong Kong as at the end of May 2003

Location	Age	Number of birds	Zone ¹
Tai Ngam Hau, Sai Kung	Adult (paired)	2	E
Yeung Chau, Sai Kung	Adult (paired)	3	E
Tsim Chau, Tai Long Wan	Adult (paired)	2	E
Sham Chung, Sai Kung	Adult (paired)	2	E
Hung Shek Mun, Plover Cove	Adult	1	E
Chi Ma Wan, Lantau	Adult	2	S
Pa Tau Kwu, Lantau	Adult (paired)	2	S
Green Island	Adult (paired)	2	S
Stonecutters Island	Adult (paired)	2	S
Wong Ma Kok, Stanley Peninsula	Adult (paired)	2	S
Tai Tam Reservoir, Hong Kong	Adult	2	S
Tai O, Lantau	Adult	1	W
Sub-total of adults =		23	
Tai Ngam Hau, Sai Kung	Unfledged juvenile	2	E
High Island Reservoir, Sai Kung	Juvenile/immature	4	E
Tsim Chau, Tai Long Wan	Unfledged juvenile	1	E
Sham Chung, Sai Kung	Unfledged juvenile	1	E
Plover Cove Reservoir	Juvenile/immature	2	E
Stonecutters Island	Juvenile/immature	2	S
Tsim Bei Tsui/Fung Lok Wai area	Juvenile/immature	2	W
Tai Lam Chung Reservoir	Juvenile/immature	2	W
Sub-total of juveniles/immatures =		16	
Total population in HK =		39	

¹ Zone: E — Eastern Waters; S — Southern Waters and Harbour Area; W — Western Waters.

Number and density of nests in Hong Kong

Eight nests were confirmed to be present in Hong Kong during this study. The nests at Tai Ngam Hau (Sai Kung) and Tsim Chau were newly reported by AFCD, and that on Stonecutters Island was newly reported by the HKBWS Kite

Research Group in 2003. Based on the sight records, it is suspected that there may be at least two additional breeding pairs at Chi Ma Wan and Tai Tam, adding up to as many as ten breeding pairs of in Hong Kong. The number of breeding pairs (eight to ten) is comparable to previous findings in the mid-1990s (Carey *et al.*, 2001), implying a steady breeding population size in Hong Kong.

The shortest distance between nests ranged from 3.4 km to 14.4 km, with a mean distance of 8.9 km. Since the total length of Hong Kong's coastline is about 1100 km, there is between one pair of White-bellied Sea Eagles per 110 km (if ten breeding pairs) and one pair per 140 km (if eight breeding pairs) of coastline.

Characteristics of nests and nesting sites

At least five tree species, including both native and exotic species, were used for nest building. These were *Ficus variegata* var. *chlorocarpa*, *Ficus microcarpa*, *Acacia confusa*, *Machilus* sp. and *Cinnamomum camphora*. Among these, *Ficus* sp. seemed to be relatively more commonly utilized as a host tree. The pairs in Sham Chung and Tsim Chau utilized unidentified species of dead trees covered with climbers as host trees.

Of the eight characterized nests, the median diameter and depth was about one metre (range: 1 — 2 m) and 0.5 m (range: 0.3 — 1 m) respectively. The median altitude of nests was about 40 m above sea level (range: 8 — 80 m), while the median shortest distance of the nest to the coast was about 40 m (range: 5 — 350 m). All the eight known nests were located on government land and two of them (i.e. Sham Chung and Tai Ngam Hau) were inside Country Parks.

The orientation of the nests may be related to the prevailing wind direction during the breeding season. Wind data from Hong Kong Observatory in 1999-2002 show that easterly winds (NE - SE) occurred on more than half of the days during the breeding season (October to May), and indeed seven out of the eight characterized nests faced westward, which would give more protection to the nests and the nestlings during the chick-rearing period.

Number of chicks raised in 2002/2003

In 2002/03, four juveniles from three breeding pairs (two in Tai Ngam Hau, one in Sham Chung and one in Tsim Chau) fledged, but no successful breeding was recorded for the breeding pairs on Yeung Chau, Wong Ma Kok, Pa Tau Kwu and Green Island. There is no information on the breeding activities of the pair on Stonecutters Island. Thus, about half of the breeding pairs successfully raised chicks in Hong Kong in 2003. Further studies would be required to estimate the overall breeding success and to assess the local population trend.

Time allocation of breeding adults

Table 2 shows the average time allocation of each adult of the Yeung Chau and Tai Ngam Hau pairs during the monitoring period. It is considered that

time allocation of both sexes in terms of the four classified types of behaviour was similar, and so the rest of the analyses are based on combined data of both sexes.

Table 3 shows the time allocation of the breeding pairs during egg incubation and chick-rearing period. Data during chick-rearing period is presented in separate days since the time allocation varied with the stage of the chicks.

During the incubation period, both sexes shared the incubation responsibilities equally, each adult spending, on average, 46% of the surveyed time (i.e. daytime from 0700h to 1900h) incubating. The eggs were in fact incubated continuously during daytime. The adults also spent much time in guarding the nest from a nearby tree (25%) and guarding territory (22%). Foraging took up only 7% of daytime hours.

Table 2. Average time allocation of the adult female and male of the Yeung Chau pair (egg incubation period) and Tai Ngam Hau pair (chick-rearing period)

Behaviour	Yeung Chau pair (n = 6 days)			Tai Ngam Hau pair (n = 3 days)		
	Female	Male	Average	Female	Male	Average
Nest sitting ^a	51%	41%	46%	9%	4%	7%
Nest guarding ^b	26%	24%	25%	49%	38%	44%
Foraging ^c	4%	10%	7%	18%	20%	19%
Distant flight/territory guarding ^d	19%	25%	22%	23%	38%	31%

- Sitting in the nest and incubating the eggs during the incubation period; staying at the nest during the chick-rearing period.
- Staying in the nest but not incubating the eggs during the incubation period; staying on a tree branch next to the nest.
- Snatching food from sea surface or tree; robbing food from other birds; any trip after which the bird brought food back to nest.
- Flying far away from the nest but clearly not for foraging purposes; high soaring or fighting with other White-bellied Sea Eagles or raptors at a distance from the nest.

Table 3 Time allocation of adults during incubation and chick-rearing periods

Behaviour	Incubation Period (n = 6 days)	Chick-rearing Period		
		5th week (n = 1 day)	8th week (n = 1 day)	12th week (n = 1 day)
Nest sitting	46%	12%	3%	5%
Nest guarding	25%	32%	54%	45%
Foraging	7%	22%	25%	10%
Distant flight/ territory guarding	22%	34%	18%	40%

During the chick-rearing period, the adults spent less time at the nest, dropping from the 46% of the time recorded during the incubation period to 12%, 3% and 5% of daytime when the chicks were five, eight and 12 weeks old respectively (Table 3), as their role shifted from egg incubation to feeding chicks. However, the time spent on nest guarding increased from 25% in the incubation period to 54% in the chick-rearing period (Table 2). The greater time spent in the nest when the nestlings were young is explained by the need for more parental care and better protection against potential predators at that stage.

The time spent on foraging increased more than threefold from 7% of daytime activity in the incubation period to a peak at 25% of daytime activity in the 8th week of the chick-rearing period (Table 2). This is explained by the increase in food demand from the nestlings during their different development stages (see below). There was no change in time spent on distant flight and/or territory guarding during the egg incubation and chick-rearing periods, presumably since the need to guard the territory remained the same in various periods (Table 2).

Foraging behaviour of breeding adults

Foraging behaviour of the two breeding pairs on Yeung Chau (during the incubation period) and Tai Ngam Hau (during the chick-rearing period) was studied. A total of 26 and 22 examples of foraging behaviour were recorded from each of these pairs respectively. Although the behaviour of the male and female was recorded separately, there was no significant difference in terms of number and duration of foraging attempts. Table 4 summarises the foraging behaviour of both pairs. This behaviour mostly occurred between 0700h and 1100h, and between 1500h and 1900h, with the peak foraging time being from 1700h to 1900h.

Foraging methods used can generally be classified into three types: still hunting from perch; diving to snatch prey; and robbing. It seems that the selection between "still hunting" and "diving" methods depends on the nest location. Prey was usually taken back to a favoured perch and eaten. "Robbing" was seldom used by either pair, and only 5 - 8% of foraging attempts involved this method (Table 4). Where it did occur both pairs were found to rob or attempt to rob either raptors, such as Black-eared Kites *Milvus migrans* or Ospreys *Pandion haliaetus*, or waterbirds, such as Grey Herons *Ardea cinerea* and Black-tailed Gulls *Larus crassirostris*. The male of the Yeung Chau pair was also twice observed taking food back to nest and feeding it to the female while she was incubating the eggs, in what was interpreted as pair-bonding behaviour.

Table 4. Summary of the foraging behaviour of the nesting WBSEs during incubation period (Yeung Chau pair) and chick-rearing period (Tai Ngam Hau pair)

	Incubation period (6 monitoring days)	Chick-rearing period (3 monitoring days)
No. of foraging behaviour recorded	26	22
Foraging method		
Still hunting from perch	20 (77%)	2 (9%)
Dive to snatch	4 (15%)	5 (23%)
Rob	2 (8%)	1 (5%)
Unidentified	0 (0%)	14 (64%)
Duration of foraging		
Median	1 minute	11.5 minutes
Range	1 - 23 minutes	1 - 48 minutes
Foraging Distance		
Median	0.5 km	1 km
Range	0.05 - 2.0 km	0.3 - 1.7 km
Foraging habitat		
Open sea	17 (65%)	8 (36%)
Typhoon shelter	7 (27%)	0 (0%)
Aerial	2 (8%)	1 (5%)
Woodland	0 (0%)	1 (5%)
Unidentified	0 (0%)	12 (55%)
Prey type		
Fish	18 (70%)	9 (41%)
Cephalopods	1 (4%)	0 (0%)
Snake	0 (0%)	1 (5%)
Unidentified item	7 (27%)	12 (55%)
Estimated prey size		
Median	Small (about 15 cm)	Small (about 15 cm)
Range	About 15 — 90 cm	About 15 — 90 cm
Foraging period		
Morning (0700h — 1100h)	7 (27%)	9 (41%)
Mid-day (1100h — 1500h)	4 (15%)	2 (9%)
Afternoon (1500h — 1900h)	15 (58%)	11 (50%)
Late afternoon (1700h — 1900h)	11 (42%)	5 (23%)

Prey items of both pairs were mostly live and dead fish (45% - 70%), but cephalopods and snake species were also recorded (Table 4). As this species also feeds on carrion, the unidentified items in Table 4 may be accountable as such. Species of prey items of White-bellied Sea Eagle in Hong Kong are poorly described. From the picture taken by J.D. Bromhall in 1960 (in Anon., 1961), the prey item was identified as a Pearl-spotted Spinefoot *Siganus canaliculatus*, and a Hairtail *Trichiurus lepturus* has also been noted in a nest with chicks (Anon., 1961). With both pairs studied prey size was usually small (i.e. 15 cm. long), but the prey size could be as large as 1.2 m. long.

The median duration of each example of foraging behaviour varied between the two pairs, from one minute for the Yeung Chau pair to 11.5 minutes for the Tai Ngam Hau pair (Table 4). The range of duration of foraging behaviour also varied

between the two pairs, from a maximum of 23 minutes for the Yeung Chau pair to 48 minutes for the Tai Ngam Hau pair (Table 4). This variation of foraging time in each attempt may be partly related to the location of the nest, and the type of foraging method being used, as well as the quality of foraging ground and level of experience of the pair.

Common foraging habitats of both pairs were open sea and typhoon shelters. By "aerial foraging" is meant robbing other birds of food items. The Yeung Chau pair had a maximum foraging range of 2 km in radius, while that of the Tai Ngam Hau pair was 1.7 km (Table 4).

There were more foraging attempts per day during the chick-rearing period due to the need to feed the nestlings. The number of foraging attempts increased from 4.4 per day during incubation to seven per day during the initial chick-rearing period (5th week, 7 March 2003), reaching a maximum of 11 per day in the 8th week (25 March 2003), and then dropping to four per day in the 12th week (24 April 2003). Such variation of food demand by the nestlings could be explained by the postnatal growth patterns of birds described by Campbell and Lack (1985).

Home range of pairs and their interactions

The Yeung Chau pair was observed flying as far as east of Sharp Island and Tai Mong Tsai area, about 4 km away. The Tai Ngam Hau pair was observed flying close to the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, about 3 km away. The ranges of territory of these two breeding pairs were therefore estimated to be 3 — 4 km in radius during the breeding period.

The size of territory of these two pairs may be used with caution to extrapolate to other breeding pairs in Hong Kong. The sheltered environment with numerous islands in Inner Port Shelter and Port Shelter are almost certainly favourable to White-bellied Sea Eagles, allowing the nests to be just 3.4 km apart, which is at the lower end of the range in Hong Kong.

Extra-pair copulation behaviour of one of the pair on Yeung Chau

White-bellied Sea Eagles are usually described as monogamous, forming pairs and mating for life (Ferguson-Lees and Christie, 2001). During our observations of the pair breeding on Yeung Chau, the paired female shared the responsibility of nesting and egg incubation with the paired male. However, interactions between an intruding male and this pair were recorded on six of the 12 days of survey (Table 5), and the paired female was observed copulating with the intruding male on three occasions. In Ospreys, such extra-pair copulation has been related to the proximity to other males and frequency of territorial intrusions (Mougeot *et al.*, 2002). The same may be true for White-bellied Sea Eagles, implying that there could be more birds present in the Sai Kung area than is recorded in the current study.

Table 5. Interactions of an intruding male with the breeding pair of at Yeung Chau.

Behaviour of the intruding male	Number of Cases observed	Date of observations
A. Successful copulation or attempted copulation with the paired female	3 (2 successful cases and 1 attempted case)	30 Jan, 6 Feb and 11 Feb 2003
B. Approached or perched at Yeung Chau	11	26 Jan, 30 Jan, 6 Feb, 15 Feb and 16 Feb 2003
C. Flew away from Yeung Chau to other places together with the paired female	3	30 Jan, 6 Feb and 15 Feb 2003
D. Fought with the paired male near or outside Yeung Chau	4	30 Jan 2003

Influence of human activities

The amount of traffic in terms of the number of vessels and helicopters within 500m of the Yeung Chau nest was recorded to study the influence of human activities on their breeding behaviour. The amount of traffic during weekends was much higher than on weekdays. However, no difference in behaviour was observed in terms of the duration of incubating and foraging behaviour. In fact, the choice of nesting site on Yeung Chau proves that this species can tolerate a considerable amount of disturbance and still regard the area as safe for breeding.

Foraging in typhoon shelters and fish culture zones by both pairs (Table 4) demonstrates that the species tolerates, and may indeed be attracted to, certain types of human activities. Typhoon shelters or fish culture zones may be favourable for White-bellied Sea Eagles, in providing easy prey and carrion. In fact, 27% of foraging attempts by the Yeung Chau pair occurred in the typhoon shelter (Table 4).

Discussion

Current Status of White-bellied Sea Eagle in Hong Kong

According to Carey *et al.* (2001), among the 26 species of raptor recorded in Hong Kong, only nine, including White-bellied Sea Eagle, breed or have bred here. They also reported that the number of breeding pairs for this uncommon resident species had increased from three in the 1930s and 1960s to ten in the 1980s and 1990s. This study confirmed that there are at least eight, and probably up to ten, breeding pairs in Hong Kong. Together, a total of 39 individuals, including adults and juveniles/immatures, were recorded in Hong Kong.

The mean distance between known nests (i.e. 8.9 km) and the home range of the Yeung Chau and Tai Ngam Hau pairs (about 4km in radius) are comparable to the range of daily movement of immature White-bellied Sea Eagles recorded

by radio tracking in the Sai Kung and Plover Cove Country Parks area (Griffiths and Tsim, 2004). These results combined indicate that White-bellied Sea Eagle is perhaps not as uncommon in Hong Kong as previously believed. The mean distance between known nests in Hong Kong (i.e. 8.9 km) falls within the lower end of the range of distance between nests in Australia, i.e., 8-10 km (Ferguson-Lees and Christie, 2001). Ferguson-Lees and Christie (2001) reported about 500 breeding pairs on 60,000 km of coastline in Australia, that is, an average of one pair per 120 km of coastline, comparable to the one pair per 110-140 km of coastline in Hong Kong. Interestingly, White-bellied Sea Eagle is regarded as common in and near coastal areas in Australia, suggesting that the population in Hong Kong could in fact be close to its maximum possible density.

Distribution and Habitat Requirements

White-bellied Sea Eagles are restricted to particular habitats, such as coastal areas and offshore islands (Ferguson-Lees and Christie, 2001). In Hong Kong, all the surveyed nesting sites were located in coastal areas. The selection of nesting sites seems to be related to the orientation of the site (i.e. facing westward) and the availability of food (e.g. proximity to a typhoon shelter or fish culture zone), with a considerable level of disturbance acceptable. A variety of native and exotic tree species were utilized and so the availability of nesting trees should not be a limiting factor. However, the morphology of the nesting trees may need further study.

Our surveys also confirmed that White-bellied Sea Eagles were mainly distributed in the eastern and southern Hong Kong waters and in the Harbour area. Such a distribution pattern may be related to the better water quality in these marine areas and the supply of suitable prey items in fish culture zones and typhoon shelters there. A large number of sightings were also made in reservoirs, many involving juveniles/immatures. The reservoirs appear to provide alternative foraging grounds and shelter, particularly for juveniles/immatures, which may not be able to compete with the established adults in the coastal areas.

Utilization of Country Parks

An important portion (15 birds or 28.5% of local population) of the local population of White-bellied Sea Eagle is frequently sighted in seven of the Country Parks, i.e. Tai Tam, Tai Lam, Ma On Shan, Plover Cove, Kiu Tsui, Sai Kung West and Sai Kung East. The species was also recorded in Clear Water Bay, Lantau South and Lantau North Country Parks. Provision of roosting and nesting sites and the association with reservoirs make Country Parks, particularly those close to coastal areas, important areas for White-bellied Sea Eagles in Hong Kong.

Tolerance of human activities

The presence of nests on Stonecutters Island, Green Island and Yeung Chau suggests that White-bellied Sea Eagles tolerate a certain level of human activity, such as the marine traffic occurring in Victoria Harbour and Inner Port

Shelter. This is supported by the observation that the Yeung Chau pair successfully foraged in the busy typhoon shelter in Sai Kung and showed no sign of adverse response to human activities in the vicinity of the nest. Another adult was recorded perching for at least one hour on a tree at the roadside of Shum Wan Road (Aberdeen), while many double-decker buses were parking and passing nearby. This might also hint that this species can tolerate a certain level of terrestrial traffic as well, when attracted by a potential food source (i.e. the nearby Aberdeen typhoon shelter).

Potential impacts and mitigation measures

The main factors that have caused declines in raptor populations in other parts of the world have been habitat destruction, hunting and poisoning by agricultural pesticides (Newton, 1990). In Hong Kong, with the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) and the Pesticides Ordinance (Cap. 133), both hunting and poisoning are unlikely to have significant impacts on White-bellied Sea Eagles. Therefore, the major potential threat to this bird in Hong Kong remains the loss of coastal habitats due to development.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499) (EIAO), which came into operation in 1998, provides a statutory framework for the assessment of environmental impacts of so-called 'Designated Projects' (DPs). Although the EIAO does not specifically mention White-bellied Sea Eagle, all key ecological components, including the population and the breeding sites of this species, are assessed at the environmental impact assessment stage. Practicable measures should be implemented to prevent and/or mitigate any unacceptable impacts on the environment.

All nesting sites surveyed in this study were located in remote areas with little human disturbance apart from marine traffic. No irregularities were identified at these nesting sites during the survey. In addition, none of them are currently directly affected by any development proposals.

The findings of this study also provide some hints on the avoidance and minimization of potential impacts of development projects on White-bellied Sea Eagles. The distribution and characteristics of the sight records and nesting sites could be used to assess whether a proposed project might have an adverse impact on the species. If so, disturbance might be minimized by, for example, reducing or eliminating human activities within the main foraging areas (say the distance from the nest where 50% of foraging attempts occur) during the main foraging times within the breeding season, especially during the chick-rearing period.

Conservation Measures

Apart from routine law enforcement and EIA work, measures to enhance the conservation of White-bellied Sea Eagles in Hong Kong could include:

- regular monitoring of known nesting sites during the breeding season;
- further investigation of the ecology of the species (e.g. foraging distances in the non-breeding season, breeding success rates and preferred food items) through co-operation with interested parties such as green groups and universities;
- promotion of conservation education and publicity programmes;
- provision of rescue and rehabilitation services for any sick or injured birds found (e.g. the existing collaboration between the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and the Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden).

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漁農自護理署於二〇〇一年十一月至二〇〇三年五月期間進行香港白腹海鷗調查，記錄該鳥種的種群分佈、數目、地理狀況和行為，並選擇了西貢的洋洲及大岩口進行定點巢位觀察。是項調查錄得三十九隻白腹海鷗，大部份出沒於香港東面水域，其中近三成活躍於七個郊野公園，包括大潭、大欖、馬鞍山、船灣、橋咀、西貢東及西貢西。調查共錄得八個鳥巢，全部位於政府官地，其中紳涌及大岩口的兩個鳥巢則位於郊野公園範圍內。由於香港於冬季時受東風影響，大部份鳥巢都是築於隱蔽的內灣和面向西面。這個調查，推測香港約有十對繁殖鳥，這與香港觀鳥會曾經進行的分析結果相若，顯示香港有穩定的繁殖種群。行為方面，白腹海鷗在繁殖期間利用大部份時間看守和育雛；覓食方面，以魚類為主食，並於日出後及黃昏時最為活躍；繁殖方面，會受附近出現同類影響，而非雄雌配對；密度方面，香港已知的白腹海鷗巢距大約是八點九公里，而每對鳥佔海岸線一百一十至一百四十公里，與澳洲同類型研究相比，香港鳥巢密度相當高，顯示白腹海鷗並非不普遍鳥種。是項調查提供了該鳥種活動、覓食及繁殖的基礎資料，讓將來可能出現的發展項目作為參考，以期減低干擾。

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65 Juvenile. Hong Kong, 1 May 2001

Ho-fai Cheung



66 Immature.
Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong, 28 July 2002

Hok-fei Lee



67 Adult, Hong Kong
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Plate 65-67 White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

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POST RELEASE MONITORING OF REHABILITATED WHITE-
BELLIED SEA EAGLES IN HONG KONG

Rupert Griffiths and Siu-tai Tsim

On 17 August 2002, two immature White-bellied Sea Eagles *Haliaeetus leucogaster* were released at High Island Reservoir, Hong Kong, following their successful rehabilitation at Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden's Wild Animal Rescue Centre (WARC). A post-release monitoring study was then jointly conducted by KFBG and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) of the Hong Kong SAR Government. This was the first time rehabilitated White-bellied Sea Eagles had been released in Hong Kong and the first time any rehabilitated raptor had been radio-tracked in Hong Kong. The objectives of the radio tracking were fourfold:

- 1) To determine the success of the release of the rehabilitated White-bellied Sea Eagles.
- 2) To locate the position of the eagles for post-release observation and assistance if required.
- 3) To acquire data on the behaviour of White-bellied Sea Eagles post release.
- 4) To acquire data on the range and behaviour of White-bellied Sea Eagles once established in a territory, if possible.

The two eagles had been found trapped together in a water catchment drain on Lantau Island, Hong Kong on 4 November 2001. They were collected by AFCD Country Park Wardens and admitted to the WARC on 5 November. There they underwent a thorough examination by the veterinarian. Both birds were covered in a black substance, similar to machinery oil, resulting in the loss of flight ability. They were both second calendar year birds (approx. 18 to 23 months old). Their weight (2890gm and 2780gm) suggested that they were both females (Ferguson-Lees and Christie, 2001).

The birds underwent several washes to remove the grease from feathers and were given time for their natural plumage oils to replenish. Feather condition was a factor that delayed release for one of the eagles, while the other suffered from a bumblefoot infection that responded well to veterinary treatment, and by August 2002, both birds were ready for release back into the natural environment.

The birds' movements were studied between August and October 2002. The release site was located in the Sai Kung East Country Park, Hong Kong (22°20'N 114°20'E), on the western dam of High Island Reservoir, just north of Kau Sai Chau and Inner Port Shelter. This is a sheltered coastal area containing numerous bays and small islands. The vegetation is mainly grassland and shrubland with some secondary woodland. The area was considered prime habitat for White-

bellied Sea Eagles as recent observations had shown that at least three breeding pairs of White-bellied Sea Eagles and three immature White-bellied Sea Eagles were present in it (Tsim *et al.*, 2003). In addition to this, the area is served by a good network of roads and paths.

Methodology

Radio-tracking

Monitoring sites that had a good view of the area around them were identified and were numbered as checkpoints.

The eagles (WBSE1 and WBSE2) were fitted with 17gm VHF radio transmitters (frequency 173 MHz), which have a range of 15km (direct line of sight) and a battery life of one year. The transmitters were attached to the central rectrices of the eagles, following the practice outlined in Kenward (1978). WBSE1 had the transmitter attached onto an old feather due to be shed in early September 2002. WBSE2 had the transmitter attached onto a new feather due to be shed in August 2003.

Monitoring was carried out through observation with binoculars and by triangulating the direction of the radio-signal from suitable checkpoints. On days 1 to 14, monitoring was carried out during at least four sessions, between 0600h and 1900h (0600h—0800h; 0010h—1200h; 1300h—1600h; 1800h—1900h). On days 15—21 monitoring was carried out at least once per day and on days 22 to 30 the frequency of monitoring was reduced to once every four days. Monitoring was carried out for a few hours at night if no signal had been received at dusk, in an attempt to locate the roosting location.

Results

Detection of Radio Signal and Accuracy of Position Location

Signal detection was possible from 5km in most cases, although this was sometimes reduced to as little as 1 km due to the local mountainous terrain. The maximum range that a signal was received from was 10km. The position of the eagles could be located to within an area of 0.5km² or less, through triangulation. Visual observation was difficult to obtain even when very close to the target due to the contours of the land and heavy vegetation.

Movements of White-bellied Sea Eagle 1 (WBSE1)

After release on 17 August 2002, WBSE1 flew 1 km northwest and landed on the northern shore of High Island Reservoir. It remained immobile at this location for 48 hours. Bad weather conditions, caused by the proximity of a tropical cyclone, were recorded during this period.

From day 3 to day 12 WBSE1 made daily flights but returned to a roosting point within 5km of the release site every night to roost. Daily flight distances during this time varied from 3km to 15km (excluding one day without known

flight) with an average of 8.8km. Visual sightings were made on day 3 and 9, at which time the eagle was flying overhead at a height of approximately 100m. No movement from WBSE1 was detected between the afternoon of day 12 and the morning of day 15.

On day 15 a small motor boat was used to take a closer look at WBSE1, in order to obtain a rough assessment of its condition and to determine the need for post-release assistance; it was found to be in good health and exhibited strong flight ability. It was also noted that WBSE1 was initially perched less than 10m from a third immature White-bellied Sea Eagle (probably in its second calendar year).

On day 16 the signal was lost and it is presumed that the transmitter had been shed.

Roosting locations of WBSE1

WBSE 1 used two sites where other White-bellied Sea Eagles have been observed roosting (Tsim *et al.* 2003). In addition, seven of the eight sites used faced west, perhaps because trees on west facing slopes tend to be taller and to have denser foliage. The eighth site was a very protected and hidden one, surrounded by hills on all sides.

Movements of White-bellied Sea Eagle 2 (WBSE2)

After release WBSE2 flew 5 km west and landed on a small island where it roosted. It remained on this island for 68 hours, during the bad weather conditions referred to earlier.

From day 3 to day 10 it made daily flights averaging 9km, but returned to within 2 km of the initial roost site every night to roost. This habituation to a roost site in a recently released bird was interesting to note. A visual sighting was made on day 5 during which the eagle was observed soaring at a height of approximately 200m. On day 11 it flew 8 km north over the mountains to Tolo Channel. It remained in the vicinity of the Tolo Channel and Plover Cove Reservoir for the next 20 days, during which time it slowly moved further northwest towards Double Haven. Continued movement in a northwesterly direction put it out of the range of all easily accessible tracking checkpoints. The last recorded signal was on day 31. Unfortunately this relatively early loss of detection ruled out the possibility of long-term study of territory range.

Roosting locations of WBSE2

Roosting sites used included one where a breeding adult White-bellied Sea Eagle has also been observed roosting (Tsim *et al.*, 2003), and one regularly utilised by a breeding pair of White-bellied Sea Eagles.

Conclusion

Monitoring of rehabilitated White-bellied Sea Eagles proved to be viable and informative. As well as suggesting the importance of orientation in the selection of roosting sites by White-bellied Sea Eagles, it showed that the two birds were able to fly well and survive a critical period post-release. Although WBSE1 shed her transmitter only 16 days after release, due to expected feather moult, she was observed to be roosting with a third immature White-bellied Sea Eagle on day 15, suggesting she had successfully re-entered into social contact with other White-bellied Sea Eagles. The use of harness transmitters could resolve the problem of transmitter shedding during the moult period. However, the primary intention of this study was short-term monitoring and post release support, for which feather mounted transmitters were adequate.

Location and tracking of the eagles in the rugged mountainous and marine terrain was feasible due to the extensive road and path network, as well as the use of a motorboat. Indeed for long-term studies of White-bellied Sea Eagles in Hong Kong involving the tracking of birds, the regular use of a fast boat is essential. Due to the small size of the Hong Kong SAR it would be desirable if permission could be granted for research boats to move into Guangdong provincial waters. However, an alternative would be the use of satellite transmitters, which would also greatly reduce manpower required.

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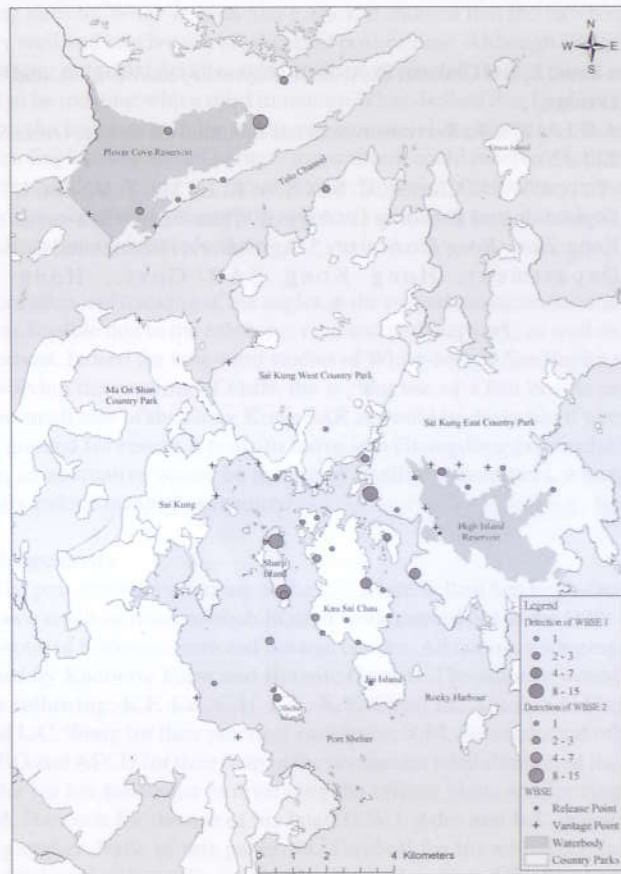
漁農自然護理署於二〇〇一年十一月於大嶼山一引水道檢獲兩隻被困的雌性的白腹海鵬幼鳥，發現時，兩隻鳥的羽毛都沾上了油污，其中一隻腳部更受細菌感染。經過嘉道理農場暨植物園猛禽治療中心治療後，漁護署與嘉道理於二〇〇二年八月在西貢東郊野公園將牠們放回野外，並合作進行了為期兩個月的無線電追蹤研究，目的在於跟進白腹海鵬放回野外後的康復進展，以及收集其活動範圍和行為資料。研究發現白腹海鵬逐漸適應野外環境，除了會選擇西面不當風的位置夜棲外，牠們會飛至較遠地方棲息，更有

紀錄顯示牠們與同類有社交接觸。是項無線電追蹤提供了康復野鳥的野外狀況、以及選擇夜棲地的資料。研究並建議以應船隻進行長期監察，如有需要，可將研究範圍伸展至廣東省水域、或以衛星追蹤方式進行。

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Fig. 1 All recorded positions of WBSE1 and WBSE2 during tracking study.



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KADOORIE FARM AND BOTANIC GARDEN BIRD SURVEY: REPORT FOR 2000, 2001 AND 2002

Rupert Griffiths

Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden (KFBG) is located on the steep northern slopes of Tai Mo Shan, Hong Kong's tallest mountain at 957 metres. It ranges in elevation from about 180m to about 600m above sea level and covers an area of 147 hectares. It consists of a wide range of habitats, including secondary woodland, shrubland, landscaped and planted garden, farmed terraces, pine plantation and grassland.

The KFBG Bird Survey formally commenced in October 1999. The purpose of the survey was to acquire data on the wild birds of the KFBG protected hillside. Four aspects that the survey would focus on were:

- 1) The determination of the number of birds, of different species, using different areas of the KFBG hillside.
- 2) The determination of the variation in the numbers of birds throughout the year and between successive years.
- 3) The determination of how the structure of the bird population on the KFBG hillside varied in terms of resident species, visitors and migrants throughout the year and between successive years.
- 4) The identification of the relative abundance of different species.

The results of the survey should provide a more comprehensive understanding of the use of the KFBG hillside by wild birds, which in turn should facilitate effective environmental enhancement measures and general management of the protected areas. This report presents the results of calendar years 2000, 2001 and 2002 of this on-going study.

Method

Field recording

The KFBG Bird Survey was designed to minimize manpower inputs, in the hope that this would ensure the long-term sustainability of the survey. Surveying techniques were chosen that would give the most accurate and comparable results in the shortest survey time. The point-count technique (Bibby *et al.*, 2000) was used to survey the number and species of birds on the KFBG hillside. The bird surveys were carried out once per month. Each survey set was carried out between 0800h and 0900h and consisted of point-count surveys of five-minute duration at six set points. This resulted in a total surveying time for each month of 30 minutes. Each point was located in a different part of the farm and surveyors moved between scanning points by car. Travel time between scanning points averaged five minutes. Binoculars were used as the main tool for observation. Species were recorded if seen or heard, and abundance was determined as accurately as possible by counting sighted individuals or making conservative estimates of the number of birds calling. Species vernacular names and status classification followed Carey *et al.* (2001).

Each point was located in a different habitat or elevation (Table 1). Points were selected that offered a good view of the surrounding habitat but there was unavoidable variation in the size of the area being surveyed due to differences in aspect and vegetation.

Table 1. Details of scanning points

Point Number	Name	Habitat	Elevation
1	Kwun Yum Garden	Cultivated fields, secondary woodland	180m
2	Great Falls	Secondary woodland	280m
3	Butterfly Garden	Secondary woodland, cultivated terraces	350m
4	Western face of Kwun Yum Shan	Shrubland	400m
5	Magnolia Falls	Secondary Woodland	460m
6	Upper Reservoirs	Grassland, shrubland, pine plantation	570m

Data analysis

Data analysis sheets were drafted that allowed for the calculation of the number of species and the number of birds recorded on each survey. Each species scored a frequency rating based on the number of surveys during which it was recorded. For example, if a species was recorded 36 times out of 36 surveys then its frequency was 100% and its frequency rating was 1, while a species seen on 18 out of 36 surveys had a frequency rating of 0.5. These frequency rating scores were then used, on the basis indicated in Table 2, to divide the species recorded into four categories: Very Common; Common; Uncommon; and Rare.

Table 2. Definition of frequency categories

Category	Frequency Rating
Very Common	0.5 — 1.000
Common	0.25 — 0.49
Uncommon	0.049 — 0.249
Rare	< 0.049

Results

Number of birds recorded

A total of 5432 birds were recorded over the three-year period. The total number of birds recorded at the six scanning points varied from 80 to 550. Point 1 (230m, mixed cultivated land, landscaped garden) produced the highest number of birds while point 5 (400m secondary woodland) produced the least. Figure 1 shows a comparison of the scanning points.

Monthly variation in number of birds recorded

The number of birds recorded on individual surveys varied from 50 to

320. The highest counts were recorded in the winter and migration periods, with a marked decline in the number of birds recorded in the summer months (Figure 2). The spring passage in 2000 was relatively poor with numbers of birds recorded being only slightly higher than in the summer months. In 2001, peak numbers of birds were recorded in February and November. In 2002, peaks were recorded in March, May and November (Figure 2).

Annual variation in number of birds and species recorded

A steady increase can be noted in the numbers of birds recorded in each of the survey years and there was a significant increase in the number of species recorded in 2002 (Table 3).

Table 3. Number of birds recorded in 2000 to 2002

	2000 to 2002	2000	2001	2002
No. of birds recorded	5432	1576	1887	1969
No. of species recorded	82	50	50	63

Proportion of resident species, winter visitors/passage migrants and summer visitors

Resident species were most numerous, followed by winter visitors/passage migrants, while summer visitors were only evident in very small numbers. The number and different category of species recorded is illustrated in Figure 3. Details of the monthly variation of these species for each year can be seen in Figures 4, 5 and 6.

Frequency of species

Of the 82 species recorded, 12% were classified as Very Common, 11% as Common, 43% as Uncommon and 34% as Rare. A list of all species recorded and their abundance ratings and category is given in Table 4.

Common species

During the period 2000 to 2002, numbers of individuals of the common species recorded varied from 11 individuals per year to 461 individuals per year (Table 5). The ten dominant species made up 78.6% of all birds recorded. The species with the highest number of individuals seen was Red-whiskered Bulbul with 1135 individuals recorded. Chinese Bulbul, Red-whiskered Bulbul and Japanese White-eye accounted for 75.3 % of the dominant species recorded and 59% of all birds recorded.

Table 4. Frequency and abundance of species recorded

Species	Freq. Rating	Abundance	Species	Freq. Rating	Abundance
Chinese Bulbul	1.00	Very Common	White-rumped Munia	0.08	Uncommon
Red-whiskered Bulbul	1.00	Very Common	Ashy Drongo	0.06	Uncommon
Japanese White-eye	1.00	Very Common	Common Blackbird	0.06	Uncommon
Great Tit	0.94	Very Common	Black-faced Bunting	0.06	Uncommon
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	0.89	Very Common	Asian Brown Flycatcher	0.06	Uncommon
Common Tailorbird	0.83	Very Common	Chestnut-winged Cuckoo	0.06	Uncommon
Spotted Dove	0.69	Very Common	Grey-chinned Minivet	0.06	Uncommon
Fork-tailed Sunbird	0.64	Very Common	Japanese Sparrowhawk	0.06	Uncommon
Yellow-bellied Prinia	0.58	Very Common	Large Hawk Cuckoo	0.06	Uncommon
Oriental Magpie Robin	0.50	Very Common	Rufous-tailed Robin	0.06	Uncommon
Common Magpie	0.47	Common	Siberian Rubythroat	0.06	Uncommon
Yellow-browed Warbler	0.47	Common	Rufous-capped Babbler	0.06	Uncommon
Chestnut Bulbul	0.36	Common	Asian Stubtail Warbler	0.06	Uncommon
Blue Whistling Thrush	0.33	Common	Besra	0.03	Rare
Crested Goshawk	0.31	Common	Black Bulbul	0.03	Rare
Great Barbet	0.25	Common	Yellow-billed Grosbeak	0.03	Rare
Grey Wagtail	0.25	Common	Blyth's Leaf Warbler	0.03	Rare
Hwamei	0.25	Common	Chestnut Bunting	0.03	Rare
Scarlet Minivet	0.25	Common	Common Kestrel	0.03	Rare
Orange-bellied Leafbird	0.22	Uncommon	Japanese Thrush	0.03	Rare
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	0.22	Uncommon	Grey-headed Flycatcher	0.03	Rare
Crested Serpent Eagle	0.19	Uncommon	Grey Treepie	0.03	Rare
Little Swift	0.19	Uncommon	Grey-backed Thrush	0.03	Rare
Large-billed Crow	0.19	Uncommon	Little Bunting	0.03	Rare
Olive-backed Pipit	0.17	Uncommon	Striated Heron	0.03	Rare
Oriental Turtle Dove	0.17	Uncommon	Little Egret	0.03	Rare
Black Kite	0.14	Uncommon	Mountain Bulbul**	0.03	Rare
Black-throated Laughingthrush	0.14	Uncommon	Pacific Swift	0.03	Rare
Common Buzzard	0.14	Uncommon	Pallas's Leaf Warbler	0.03	Rare
Hainan Blue Flycatcher	0.14	Uncommon	Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	0.03	Rare
Common Koel	0.14	Uncommon	Red-billed Leiothrix	0.03	Rare
Pale Thrush	0.14	Uncommon	Sooty-headed Bulbul	0.03	Rare
Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler	0.14	Uncommon	Richard's Pipit	0.03	Rare
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	0.14	Uncommon	Long-tailed Shrike	0.03	Rare
Blue Magpie	0.11	Uncommon	Russet Bush Warbler	0.03	Rare
Daurian Redstart	0.11	Uncommon	Scaly-breasted Munia	0.03	Rare
Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush	0.11	Uncommon	Striated Yuhina	0.03	Rare
Red-flanked Bluetail	0.08	Uncommon	Blyth's Leaf Warbler <i>goodsoni</i>	0.03	Rare
Blue-winged Minla	0.08	Uncommon	White Wagtail	0.03	Rare
Buff-bellied Flowerpecker	0.08	Uncommon	Yellow-cheeked Tit	0.03	Rare
Pale-legged Leaf Warbler*	0.08	Uncommon	Yellow Wagtail	0.03	Rare

* includes both Pale-legged and Sakhalin Leaf Warblers, currently considered indistinguishable in the field

** this record is still awaiting acceptance by the Records Committee of HKBWS

Table 5. Table showing number of individual birds recorded of the ten dominant species

Species	Number recorded in 2000	Number recorded in 2001	Number recorded in 2002	Total number recorded 2000-02	% of common sp. (00-02)	% of birds recorded (00-02)
Chinese Bulbul	337	353	404	1094	25.6	20.1
Common Tailorbird	102	67	54	223	5.2	4.1
Red-whiskered Bulbul	333	461	341	1135	26.6	20.9
Fork-tailed Sunbird	30	42	38	110	2.6	2.0
Great Tit	43	70	51	164	3.8	3.0
Japanese White-eye	296	427	261	984	23.1	18.1
Oriental Magpie Robin	11	16	37	64	1.5	1.2
Spotted Dove	35	21	55	111	2.6	2.0
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	86	122	120	328	7.7	6.0
Yellow-bellied Prinia	25	14	16	55	1.3	1.0
Total	1298	1593	1377	4268	100	78.6

Summary and Discussion

There is evidence here of both increasing bird populations and increasing species diversity. Scanning point 1 and scanning point 4 showed a consistent increase in the number of birds recorded, possibly an indication of improved habitat in those areas. However, the duration of the survey period thus far is too short to form any firm conclusions regarding bird recruitment on the KFBG hillside. Reports from future years will help to identify if these are long-term trends or not.

Scanning point 1 (low elevation cultivated fields and secondary woodland) produced the highest number of birds recorded while scanning point 5 (secondary woodland) produced the lowest. Variations in counts at different scanning points are highly dependent on the size of area that can be accurately scanned, as well as on the density of the vegetation. The data from these point surveys is insufficient to calculate bird densities accurately. If measurements of bird densities at KFBG are required, options include modifications to the point-count survey technique such as dividing the point-count period into intervals (Farnsworth *et al.*, 2002) and/or further studies that include transect surveys, coupled with the use of bird-density calculating software such as DISTANCE™.

More than 50% of the birds recorded were resident species and increases in the number of resident species were particularly evident in the spring months. This could be due to increased activity as a result of the breeding period and/or due to a subset of resident species actually showing migratory behaviour. Further study of the resident species, such as breeding bird surveys, would help determine this.

According to the abundance ratings given in the results, it can be seen that there is a small group of species in the Common and Very Common categories (19 out of 82 recorded). The ten 'Very Common' species accounted for 78% of all

birds recorded. Three species scored a perfect frequency rating of 1: Chinese Bulbul, Red-whiskered Bulbul and Japanese White-eye. These three species accounted for 59% of all birds recorded. Of the remaining 72 species recorded, 28 were categorised as Rare (frequency rating of less than 0.05%). This high number of rare species may be an indication of the short survey period (6 hours of survey time per year). Detailed bird survey work currently being carried out (mist netting) will help to establish a clearer picture of the abundance of these rare species.

The KFBG bird species list, a list of species recorded accumulated from many surveys and *ad hoc* sightings since 1994, stands at 164 species. During the bird surveys in this report 50% of all species on the KFBG bird species list were recorded. This is a high proportion considering the short survey time and shows that KFBG consistently supports a diverse range of bird species. The longer-term observations on which the bird species list is based tend to support the points noted in this report, such as increasing numbers and diversity of species, particularly forest species, recorded in recent years; this may be a reflection of the improving quality of the secondary forest on the Kwun Yum Shan slopes. Thus, coupled with detailed flora surveys of the different habitats, the findings of this survey should indeed help to determine plans for environmental enhancement and habitat management at KFBG.

Acknowledgments

This report is the result of an on-going Bird Survey Project being undertaken by the Fauna Conservation Department at KFBG. I would like to thank K.S. Lee for his vital role in all survey work, P.J. Leader and M.R. Leven for their input into the survey design, and also G.W.J. Ades and R.C. Kendrick for reviewing a draft of this paper. I would also like to thank the Executive Director of KFBG for allowing the publishing of this paper.

嘉道理農場暨植物園(KFBG)位處大帽山以北，佔地一百四十七畝，園地由海拔一百八十米延展至六百米之高，當中包含各式各樣的生境。嘉道理雀鳥調查於一九九九年十月正式開始，為期三年。本調查的主要目標為判定園內雀鳥的數目、鳥種、其季節性分佈、以及比較不同鳥種間的相對數量，以期制訂更有效的環境保護措施及辨出管理園地之方向。調查結果顯示，就季節來說，以夏季錄得雀鳥數量明顯較冬季及春、秋季來得少。在這三年期間，園中鳥種及數量都有顯著增加，其中以留鳥品種數量最多。接近六成有紀錄的個體均為三種優勢鳥種：紅耳鴨、白頭鴨及暗綠繡眼鳥。以嘉道理農場歷來有紀錄的一百六十四種野鳥計，本普查共錄得五成鳥種：林鳥品種的多樣化顯示園中次生林正日趨成熟，而普查資料正有助護林決策。網捕法的使用亦令調查人員更能了解稀有種的動向，為保育若干品種提供重要資料。

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Fig. 1. The total number of birds seen at each scanning point in 2000, 2001 and 2002

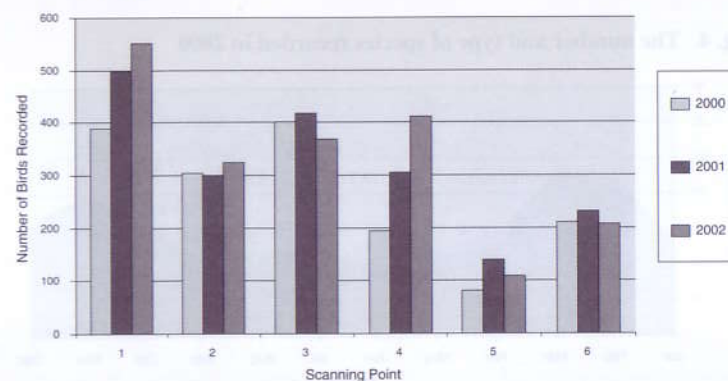


Fig. 2. The number of birds recorded on monthly surveys in 2000, 2001 and 2002

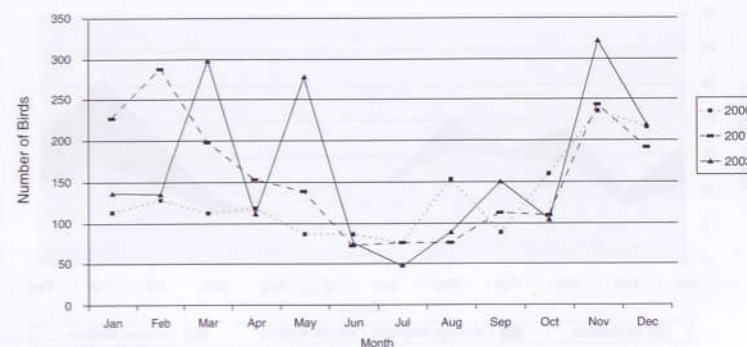


Fig. 3. Number of species type recorded in 2000, 2001 and 2002

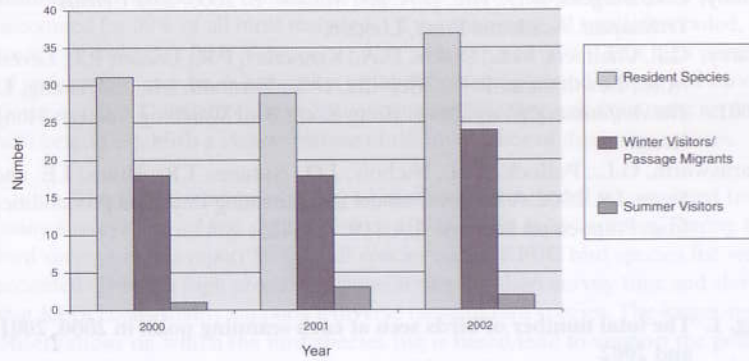


Fig. 4. The number and type of species recorded in 2000

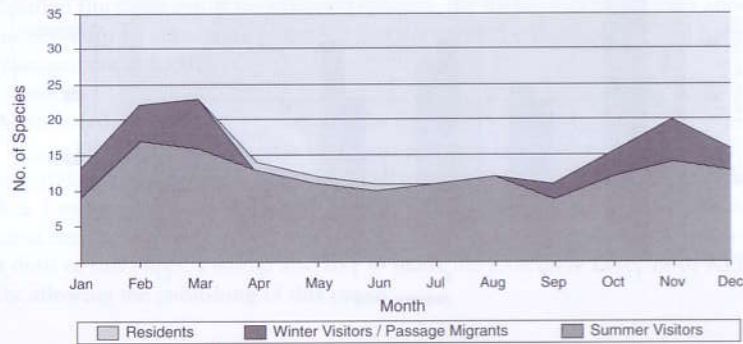


Fig. 5. The number and type of species recorded in 2001

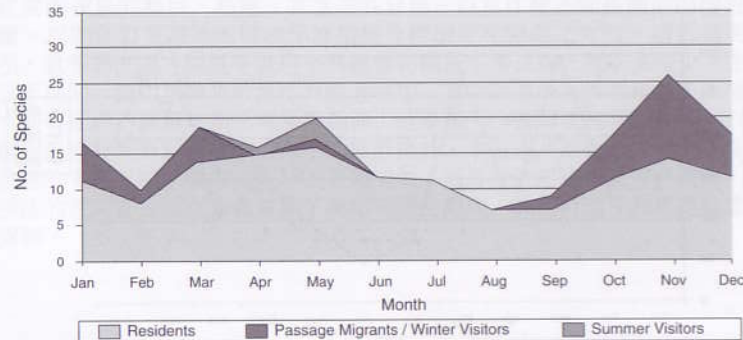
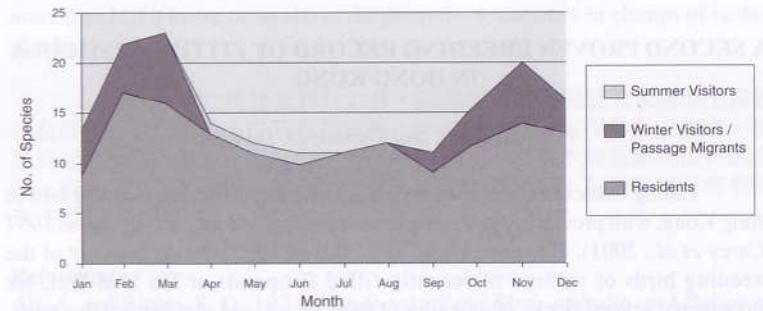


Fig. 6. The number and type of species recorded in 2002



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A SECOND PROVEN BREEDING RECORD OF ZITTING CISTICOLA IN HONG KONG

Hon-kai Kwok and Thomas D. Dahmer

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* is considered a scarce breeding bird in Hong Kong, with previously just one proven breeding record, as long ago as 1957 (Carey *et al.*, 2001). However, on 25 and 26 June 1997, during a survey of the breeding birds of an area of recently filled fishponds at Tin Shui Wai, we encountered several flocks of juveniles of this species, and also located five nests. The nests were in an area now occupied by residential development named Tin Yat Court and Tin Fuk Court, which were created by placing dredged marine sediments into the fishponds, replacing the mangrove and estuarine habitats formerly found on the site. The in-filling was completed in 1993, after which the Reserve Zone lay untouched until mid-1997, when construction on it began. During that time the large, unoccupied sand flats at the site were colonised by grasses dominated by *Brachiaria* sp., *Rhynchelytrum repens*, *Panicum maximum*, *Cynodon dactylon*, and *Neyraudia reynaudiana* (Anon.1997).

The juvenile birds were discovered when they were flushed from tall grass, and in most cases three or four birds were sighted at the same time, corresponding closely with the typical clutch size of 3-5 eggs reported by Ali and Ripley (1973). These birds had very short primaries and rectrices, indicating that they had not yet fledged. On two occasions adult birds were flushed with juveniles, enabling comparison of the paler juvenile plumage with the darker plumage of the adults.

The nests from which the birds were flushed were hidden among dense stands of grasses, and were woven from grass, in the shape of a bowl, with a canopy of standing grass. The bottom of the bowl was lined with fine vegetable material. The diameter ranged from 6-10cm. The nests were located at ground level, and were not suspended from standing grasses or other vegetation. They were in a relatively dry area of the Reserve Zone where rainwater did not accumulate; the nest site may not have been subject to seasonal flooding. The site had not been colonised by wetland vegetation, and supported only grasses and herbs. However, as mentioned earlier, the site was already under construction at the time of these observations and by the following year had been completely urbanised.

The bowl-shaped nest resembled the second of two nest descriptions provided by Ali and Ripley (1973) for four subspecies of *C. juncidis* found on the Indian Sub-Continent: "... a deepish oval pouch, the small end up with a large entrance at the top: felted inside with vegetable down. It is fastened to several

stems of grass which are incorporated with the nest materials, thus reinforcing the otherwise flimsy structure; usually hidden in the base of grass tufts and seldom more than half a metre or so above the ground—sometimes in clumps of rushes standing in water."

一九九七年六月廿五和廿六日，郭漢佳和戴名揚於天水圍填土區發現數群棕扇尾鶯幼鳥，以及五個鳥巢。鳥巢呈碗狀，直徑約6-10厘米。巢築於近地面的高度，而巢附近主要是草本植物，沒有水淹或濕地植物的痕跡。這是自1957年以來，香港第二個該認的繁殖紀錄。目前該地已經發展為住宅區。

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NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF THE SONGJIANG DISTRICT, SHANGHAI: AN UPDATE

Richard Stott

On 4 December 2001 I revisited the industrial estate in Songjiang, Shanghai, where I had made bird observations during 1996-1999, reported on in Stott (2002). The final visit in 1999 had been on 13 May of that year and during the intervening two-and-a-half year period much development had occurred, though about a third of the study area remained as the open fields and overgrown hedges which most of it had been in earlier years.

In overcast conditions with little wind and a temperature of about 14°C, I noted the continued presence of two Little Grebes on a roadside pool, as well as ten further species of resident and winter visitor which I had noted during the main study period. These included Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*, for which there was no evidence of any increase in abundance as a result of the land-use change. Indeed no species was recorded in numbers which differed markedly from those recorded during the earlier survey.

However, interestingly this casual visit of just one hour's duration produced two species not noted during the earlier study. These were Hoopoe *Upupa epops* and Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*. It would thus seem that the list of species noted in Stott (2002) could be a considerable under-estimate of the true diversity of species occurring in the area, despite its recent development.

Richard Stott 於二〇〇一年十二月前往上海松江的工業城市，這地是他於一九九六至一九九九年於上海工作期間的紀錄鳥類的地點，有關報告已刊登於《香港鳥類年報一九九八》。該次觀察錄得鳥種大部份與以往相若，新增鳥種有戴勝和紅脇藍尾鶇。作者估計以往的紀錄可能低估了當地的物種多樣性。

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GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF RECORDS

Recording and record submission

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, which includes a detailed summary of birds recorded each year, depends on members submitting records of their observations. The submission of records also provides the raw data on which the Society and other researchers can draw conclusions about such things as the importance of a particular site or habitat in Hong Kong, the rarity of a particular species, patterns of migration or habitat preferences. For these reasons, members are encouraged to submit records at the end of each year.

What kinds of records are required? The answer to this question is most kinds, except those relating to species that are common and widespread in appropriate habitat. In particular, we welcome records of all but the most common migrants and winter visitors, of scarce residents or records of common residents occurring in unusual numbers or habitat. A careful reading of *The Avifauna of Hong Kong* will provide a good guide as to which records might be of interest. If in doubt, however, it is best to submit the record.

The Society prefers to receive records entered into a simple Excel spreadsheet, as this facilitates analysis and allows easy extraction of records for both species and sites. This Excel file should contain seven columns containing the following data: species number, species name (both as contained in *The Avifauna of Hong Kong*), date, place, number of birds, notes and observer name. Observations can then be entered, using one row for each record. Those requiring a sample file can contact the Society office (hkbws@hkbws.org.hk).

In addition, the Society provides 152x106mm cards on which records can be submitted. These cards are stored in a species-indexed filing system; however, this system makes it more difficult to extract site information and requires greater storage space.

Rarities

While the birds of Hong Kong are better known than those of many parts of Asia, new species are regularly being added to the Hong Kong List, and the status of a number of other species remains uncertain. Further, field identification techniques for some species still require refinement. The Society has a Records Committee to assess records and ensure that a high standard of reporting is maintained. This quality control provides, in part, the Society with a reputable voice in relation to the birds of Hong Kong and the region.

While the Records Committee may examine any record submitted, close attention is generally only given to those of rarities. A list of rare species considered by the Records Committee is provided below. The list may seem rather long, but, nevertheless, adequate substantiation in the form of a written description, photograph, video, audio recording or some combination of these is required if the record is to be considered valid and published. A standard recording form for unusual records is available from the Society website, Society office or from the Recorder. Ideally, field notes of rarity should cover the following points:

1. Date, time, duration and location of sighting, number present and sex or age, if known.
2. Binoculars or telescopes used, distance of bird from observer, weather and light conditions.
3. Description of habitat and a record of other birds, if any, it was associating with.
4. Activity of bird (at rest, in flight, swimming etc).
5. General size, shape and structure compared with other more familiar species. Structural features that may be important should be detailed (e.g. bill length compared to length of head, relative position of wing tips to tail tip, primary projections, hind claw length etc).
6. The most detailed description possible of plumage and bare parts, and not just those considered helpful in identification. Try to organise the components of the description logically, for example: head, upperparts, upper- and underwings, upper- and undertail, underparts, bare parts (iris, bill, gape if seen, legs and feet)
7. Any vocalisations. Try to indicate the quality of the sound (harsh, piercing, rattling, hoarse, liquid etc), and compare it with calls of other species.
8. Previous experience with the species or similar species.
9. Names of other observers or photographers present.

A rough sketch or diagram is often very helpful, and photographs, of course, are invaluable. Try to get others to see the bird, as two descriptions are better than one, and make sure you take notes on the spot, as it is all too easy to imagine field marks after consulting a book! Records of species not on the Hong Kong List generally require more than usually detailed descriptions for acceptance.

With regard to species that have distinctive vocalisations, the Records Committee realises that in some cases call only records are acceptable. However, no matter how distinctive, the call should be described in as much detail as possible.

If you are able to take reasonable notes of a bird but still cannot identify it, send in the description as it may be possible for the Committee to identify it for you. The increasing number of field guides on the market often make positive identification appear straightforward, but it should be remembered that there are

still a number of species that are difficult to separate, and it is only by careful observations that some birds can be identified.

The following list of species for which substantiation is required has recently been revised based on the data collated in *The Avifauna of Hong Kong*. In addition, any record of a species not in Categories A-E of the Hong Kong also requires substantiation as a 'first' for Hong Kong. The Records Committee may also request substantiation of any record that is unusual in terms of the habitat, number of birds or time of year. If you make such an observation, please be prepared to supply written substantiation, preferably made at the time of observation. Records of species on this list that are submitted without substantiation cannot be considered.

Categories A to D

Species number	Species	
001	Pacific Loon	<i>Gavia pacifica</i>
004	Horned Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>
005	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>
006	Streaked Shearwater	<i>Calonectris leucomelas</i>
008	Red-footed Booby	<i>Sula sula</i>
009	Brown Booby	<i>Sula leucogaster</i>
011	Christmas Island Frigatebird	<i>Fregata andrewsi</i>
012	Great Frigatebird	<i>Fregata minor</i>
013	Lesser Frigatebird	<i>Fregata ariel</i>
020	Pacific Reef Egret (white-phase)	<i>Egretta sacra</i>
025	Japanese Night Heron	<i>Gorsachius goisagi</i>
034	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
038	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
041	Cotton Pygmy-goose	<i>Nettion coromandelianus</i>
048	Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas carolinensis</i>
056	Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>
059	Velvet Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>
060	Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>
061	Smew	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>
065	Crested Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>
068	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>
079	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
084	Mountain Hawk Eagle	<i>Spizaetus nipalensis</i>
090	Yellow-legged Button-quail	<i>Turnix tanki</i>
091	Barred Button-quail	<i>Turnix suscitator</i>
092	Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>
094	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>
096	Band-bellied Crake	<i>Porzana paykullii</i>
097	White-browed Crake	<i>Porzana cinerea</i>

100	Brown Crake	<i>Amauornis akool</i>
114	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
115	Long-billed Plover	<i>Charadrius placidus</i>
132	Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>
140	Red Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>
161	Pomarine Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>
162	Long-tailed Jaeger (autumn records)	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>
164	Mew Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>
168	Glaucous-winged Gull	<i>Larus glaucescens</i>
169	Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>
172	Relict Gull	<i>Larus relictus</i>
174	Slender-billed Gull	<i>Larus genei</i>
175	Little Gull	<i>Larus minutus</i>
177	Black-legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>
187	Sooty Tern	<i>Sterna fuscata</i>
195	Barred Cuckoo Dove	<i>Macropygia unchall</i>
197	Thick-billed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron curvirostra</i>
198	White-bellied Green Pigeon	<i>Treron sieboldii</i>
203	Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx fugax</i>
206	Asian Lesser Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus poliocephalus</i>
211	Grass Owl	<i>Tyto capensis</i>
215	Brown Fish Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>
217	Brown Hawk Owl	<i>Ninox scutulata</i>
218	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>
221	Himalayan Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia brevirostris</i>
224	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>
232	Collared Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon chloris</i>
233	Blue-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops viridis</i>
239	Speckled Piculet	<i>Picumnus innominatus</i>
240	Rufous-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos hyperythrus</i>
241	Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Celeus brachyurus</i>
242	Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>
243	Bay Woodpecker	<i>Blythipicus pyrrhotis</i>
244	Fairy Pitta	<i>Pitta nympha</i>
245	Blue-winged Pitta	<i>Pitta moluccensis</i>
246	Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>
249	Plain Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>
258	White Wagtail	<i>M.a. lugens</i> and <i>M.a. personata</i>
266	Swinhoe's Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cantonensis</i>
276	Tiger Shrike	<i>Lanius tigrinus</i>
280	Japanese Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla japonica</i>
281	Japanese Robin	<i>Erithacus akahige</i>
288	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>
294	Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>
295	White-throated Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola gularis</i>

296	Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola rufiventris</i>
324	Pale-footed Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia pallidipes</i>
327	Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia acanthizoides</i>
328	Brown Bush Warbler	<i>Bradypterus luteoventris</i>
333	Middendorff's Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella ochotensis</i>
334	Styan's Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella pleskei</i>
336	Manchurian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus tangorum</i>
337	Paddyfield Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>
338	Blunt-winged Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus concinens</i>
339	Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>
342	Booted Warbler	<i>Hippolais caligata</i>
348	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
350	Yellow-streaked Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus armandii</i>
353	Chinese Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sichuanensis</i>
355	Hume's Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus humei</i>
357	Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>
358	Pale-legged Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus tenellipes</i>
359	Sakhalin Leaf Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealoides</i>
362	Grey-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus tephrocephalus</i>
363	Bianchi's Warbler	<i>Seicercus valentini</i>
364	Chestnut-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus castaniceps</i>
365	Rufous-faced Warbler	<i>Abroscocopus albugularis</i>
366	Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher	<i>Rhinomyias brunneata</i>
374	Green-backed Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula elisae</i>
376	Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula strophliata</i>
379	Fujian Niltava	<i>Niltava davidi</i>
381	Pale Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis unicolor</i>
382	Blue-throated Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis rubeculoides</i>
388	Yellow-bellied Tit	<i>Parus venustus</i>
392	Plain Flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum concolor</i>
399	Grey-necked Bunting	<i>Emberiza buchanani</i>
403	Yellow-browed Bunting	<i>Emberiza chrysophrys</i>
404	Rustic Bunting	<i>Emberiza rustica</i>
405	Yellow-throated Bunting	<i>Emberiza elegans</i>
408	Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>
411	Japanese Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza yessoensis</i>
412	Pallas's Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza pallasi</i>
413	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>
414	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>
419	Japanese Grosbeak	<i>Eophona personata</i>
423	Russet Sparrow	<i>Passer rutilans</i>
426	Chestnut-tailed Starling	<i>Sturnus malabaricus</i>
430	Rose-coloured Starling	<i>Sturnus roseus</i>
445	Daurian Jackdaw	<i>Corvus dauuricus</i>
446	Carion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>

Category E

All species except Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*, Budgerigar *Melopsittacus undulatus*, Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria*, Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia*, Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*, White-vented Myna *Acridotheres cinereus*, Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa*, Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyanus* and House Crow *Corvus splendens*.

NOTES FOR APPLICANTS WISHING TO VISIT MAI PO MARSHES NATURE RESERVE

Members should note that entry to the Mai Po Nature Reserve is restricted in order to minimise disturbance to the wildlife. Applications for permits to enter the restricted area will not normally be entertained unless the applicants are experienced bird watchers, scientists conducting research or others with official duties to perform in the areas.

Members are advised to **state their reason(s) clearly** when initially applying and when applying for renewal of permit:

1. Mai Po Marshes Entry Permit

- An annual permit to enter the Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve

Write to: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices
303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Application letter for HKBWS member is available for download at the Society website: http://www.hkbws.org.hk/MP_permit.pdf. Please send photocopies of the following together with your application letter:

- HKID card or passport
- Hong Kong Bird Watching Society membership fees receipt
- Old "Mai Po Marsh Entry Permit" (if any)

Please mark "**Application for Annual Permit**" on the envelope. For enquiry, please contact Mr. C.L. Wong of AFCD at 2150 6921.

2. Frontier Closed Area Permit

- For access to the Boardwalk hides beyond the security fence at Mai Po, entry to which is strictly controlled by the Hong Kong Police Force

In accordance with the Permit Office's new policy on issue and renewal of Frontier Closed Area (FCA) Permits, **all applicants must sign a "Personal Data Declaration" Form**. As usual, WWF-HK will help to apply for permits on your behalf. The form is now available for download at the HKBWS website: http://www.hkbws.org.hk/FCA_form.pdf

To apply for or renew FCA permits, please submit your signed declaration form (with original signature) to:

The Mai Po Coordinator
Mai Po Nature Reserve
San Tin, Yuen Long, Hong Kong

together with photocopies of the following:

- HKID card or passport
- Hong Kong Bird Watching Society membership fees receipt
- WWF-HK Membership Card
- The most recent "Mai Po Marshes Entry Permit" (issued by AFCD, see (1))
- A donation cheque of HK\$100 payable to "World Wide Fund For Nature Hong Kong" (towards costs of maintaining bird watching hides)

Please note that all FCA permits expire on 4 March of each year.
Please renew your permit by submitting the above documents before 31 December every year.

For enquiry, please contact Ms. Silvia Yeung of WWF-HK at 2471 6306.

All permit holders are reminded that they are required to register at the Nature Warden Post every time they enter the Restricted Area.

HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION 香港特別行政區



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The latitude, longitude and the UTM Grid shown on this map are based on the WGS84 datum. They are superimposed on the Hong Kong 1980 Grid. 本圖所示之緯線度及 UTM 方格網以 WGS84 為準，並加標於香港 1980 方格網上。



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