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HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 2001-02

香港鳥類報告

# The Hong Kong Bird Report 香港觀鳥會



2001-02



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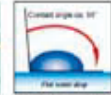
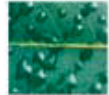


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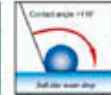
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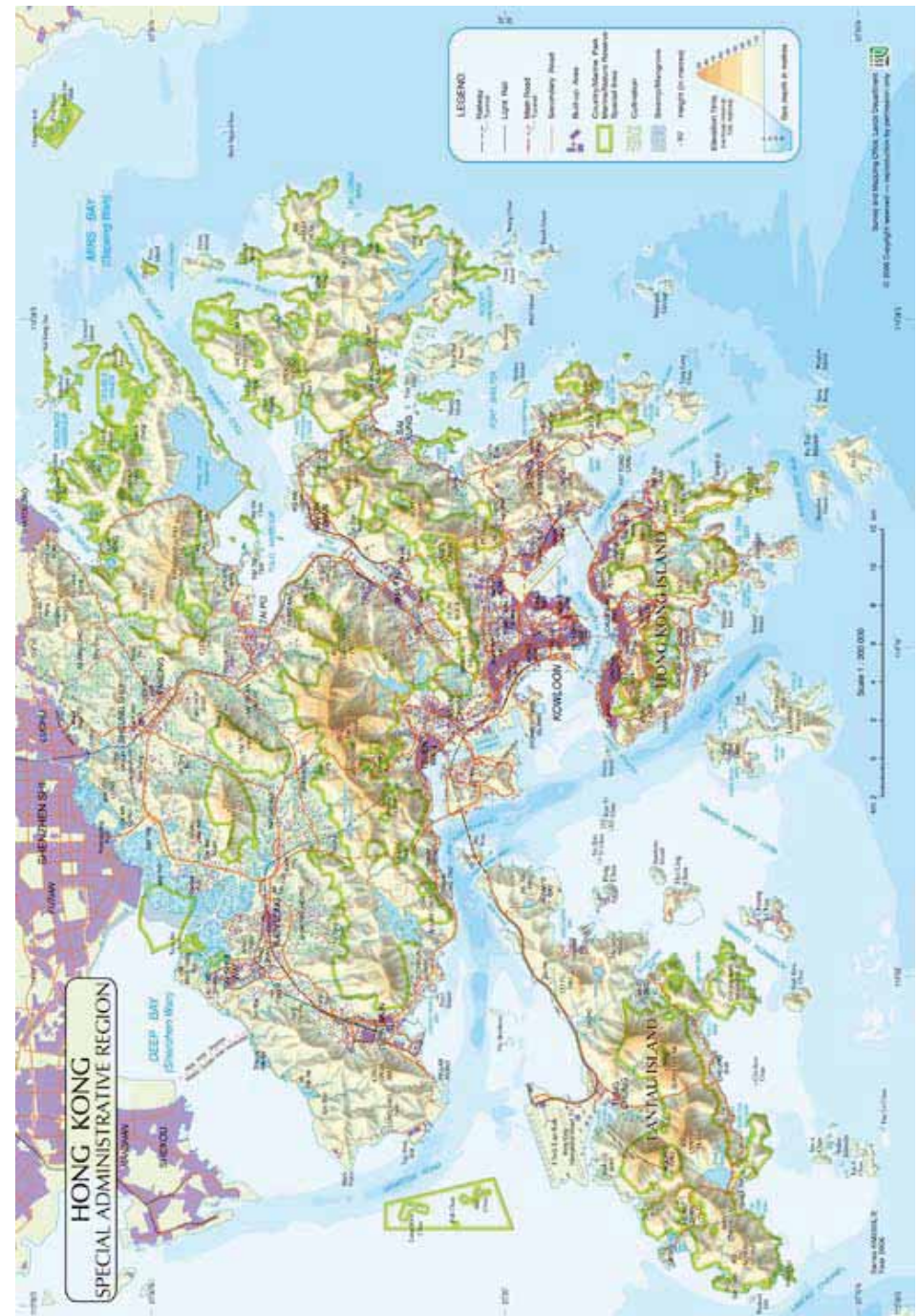
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*Editors: Michael Turnbull, Geoff J. Carey and Helen Lockey*

**Front Cover:**

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* 紅嘴鷗  
Nam Sang Wai, Hong Kong, 15 January 2006  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong



# The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

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## Editor's Preface

In addition to the efforts of the authors of individual papers and contributors to the Systematic List, this issue has been prepared by three editors. Michael Turnbull did much of the work, but could not find the time to complete it. Fortunately, Helen Lockey stepped in to take over the production side, while I filled the editorial breach left by Mike. Assisted by Alan Chan, who has provided the Chinese text, and Ho Fai Cheung, who generally encouraged people and chivvied them along where necessary, we have finally completed this, the 2001-02 edition. The format remains similar to previous Reports, while the inclusion of two years possibly suggests a way around the difficulties of identifying people with sufficient time to produce them annually. Perhaps the other main difference from a few years ago is the ease with which it is possible to source consistently high quality photographs, which makes the product all the more attractive.

The usefulness of the Report in large part depends on the number of records that are submitted to the Society. The Records Committee would like to encourage the growing number of observers and photographers in Hong Kong to submit bird records utilizing the forms available on the website. Membership has burgeoned greatly in recent years, and it would be great to see the number of records submitted also increasing significantly.

**Geoff J. Carey**





## 編者序

除了各篇文章的作者和參與編訂雀鳥分類名錄的人之外，這份報告還有三位編輯。Michael Turnbull 做了大部份的工作，但是未能抽空完成，幸好 Helen Lockey 接手管製作，而我則填補Mike 留下的編輯空缺。加上陳慶麟提供中文翻譯，張浩輝鼓勵和催促各人，我們終於完成了這份 2001-02 年度鳥類報告。報告的編排和過去相同，然而將兩年的報告合併在一起，可以解決人手不足的問題。除此之外，高質素的照片現在比較易找，為報告增添了更多趣味。

本會收到的觀鳥記錄愈多，這份報告就愈有用。在香港觀鳥和拍攝鳥類照片的人日漸增多，紀錄委員會鼓勵他們從網上下載表格，提交觀鳥記錄，希望記錄的數量能夠像近年的會員人數一樣大幅增長。

賈知行



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# Records Committee Report 2001-02

## Report on the Birds 2001-02

*Geoff J. Carey*

*Asia Ecological Consultants Ltd., 127 Commercial Centre,  
Palm Springs, Yuen Long, New Territories, Hong Kong*

Continuing the process of bringing production of the Hong Kong Bird Report back up to date, we have produced a combined report for 2001 and 2002. It is also intended the same be done for 2003 and 2004.

During 2001 the number of species recorded in Categories A to D was 326; the equivalent figure for 2002 was also 326. These figures compare with between 342 and 370 for the years 1993-98, and 333 and 317 in 1999 and 2000 respectively.

New additions to the Hong Kong List are listed below. Readers seeking further information on the definition of each of the categories should consult Carey *et al.* (2001). As of the end of 2002, the Hong Kong List stood at 461 in Categories A-D.

### Additions to Category A

#### **Red-throated Loon** *Gavia stellata* 紅喉潛鳥

One at Starling Inlet on 18 February 2002 was picked up stained with oil, and after treatment was returned to the water, but not seen subsequently (Tsim, 2002).

#### **Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus* 大天鵝

An adult was at Mai Po on 13 March 2001.

#### **Siberian Crane** *Grus leucogeranus* 白鶴

A juvenile was at Mai Po on 11 and 12 December 2002.

#### **Blyth's Pipit** *Anthus godlewskii* 布氏鵲

Kam Tin, 8 to at least 10 October 2002.

#### **Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus cristatus* 紅尾伯勞

First-winter birds of the nominate subspecies *L. c. cristatus* were trapped and photographed at Mai Po on 11 September 1999, at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 2 October 2000 and at Mai Po 27 September 2003.

#### **Mountain Tailorbird** *Orthotomus cuculatus* 栗頭縫葉鶯

One at Tai Po Kau on 8 and 7 October 1999 was followed by a series of records in subsequent winters at widespread localities in the northern and eastern New Territories.

**Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* 白喉林鶯**

One was seen and photographed at Yin Kong, Long Valley on the afternoon of 9 October 2002.

**Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui* 褐胸鷓**

One was at Tai Po Kau from 28 November 2001 to at least 21 January 2002.

## **Addition to Category B**

**Mountain Bulbul *Hypsipetes mccllellandii* 綠翅短腳鶇**

Up to four birds were in Tai Po Kau during winter 2001-02, with the first sighting made on 7 December 2001.

## **Additions to Category E**

**Great White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus* 白鵜鷗**

One was at Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay from 15 December 2002 to at least 22 February 2003.

**Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* 白額雁**

One found at night at Discovery Bay on approximately 16 October 1999 and taken into care at KFBG on 20<sup>th</sup>, was subsequently released at the Mai Po Nature Reserve on 22 November 1999, where it remained for some time.

**Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* 灰斑鳩**

An adult of the nominate form was seen near Mai Po on 27 April 1999; many further records occurred during 1999–2003, including records of several birds together and birds that were photographed.

**Bearded Reedling *Panurus biarmicus* 文鬚雀**

A male was trapped at Mai Po on 22 December 2002.

## **Taxonomic Changes**

In addition to the placing of new species on the Hong Kong List, a number of taxonomic changes were accepted by the Records Committee.

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

It was agreed to follow King (2002a), who recommends treating the four taxa *hyperythrus*, *pectoralis*, *nisicolor* and *fugax* as separate species based on vocalizations and morphology. Vocalizations of birds in Hong Kong have so far related only to *H. nisicolor*, which occurs from east Nepal to south China. *H. hyperythrus*, which breeds from the southern Amur region to Hebei in northeastern China, could occur as a passage migrant. The English name of *H. nisicolor* remains Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo, while that of *H. hyperythrus* is Northern Hawk Cuckoo. Observers are encouraged to closely observe and, if possible, photograph these birds.



### **Oriental Cuckoo 中杜鵑**

It was agreed to follow Payne (1997) with regard to separation into Horsfield's Cuckoo *Cuculus horsfieldi* and Himalayan Cuckoo *C. saturatus*, based on vocalizations. The three birds trapped in Hong Kong have been *C. horsfieldi*; all other Hong Kong records are at present treated as *horsfieldi/saturatus*.

### **Grass Owl 草鴞**

Following König *et al.* (1999), this is now split into *Tyto longimembris*, which occurs in Asia and Australasia, and *T. capensis*, which occurs in Africa. The taxon occurring in Hong Kong is *T. l. chinensis*. The English name becomes Eastern Grass Owl.

### **Collared Scops Owl *Otus lettia* 領角鴞**

Following the taxonomic treatment of König *et al.* (1999), the taxon previously regarded as *O. bakkamoena* is now considered to comprise four species: *O. lettia*, *O. lempiji*, *O. semitorques* and *O. bakkamoena*. The species occurring in Hong Kong and south China is *O. lettia*, which retains the English name Collared Scops Owl. The taxon occurring in Hong Kong is *O. l. erythrocampe*.

### **Northern Boobook *Ninox japonica* 鷹鴞**

The split of this into three species (*N. scutulata*, *N. japonica* and *N. randi*) based on vocalizations and biometrics proposed by King (2002b) is accepted. Although there are no records of vocalizing or trapped birds in Hong Kong, the overwhelming evidence, based on distribution and their occurrence as a passage migrant, is that birds occurring here are of the taxon *N. j. japonica*, which breeds in Ussuriland, Korea and Japan west to central Sichuan and including Fujian. The English name needs to be changed; the only already proposed option is Northern Boobook.

### **Syke's Warbler *Hippolais rama* 賽氏籬鶯**

Following the treatment of *H. rama* as a species separate from Booted Warbler *H. caligata* (*Ibis* 144: 707-710), this treatment is now adopted. Both Hong Kong records refer to the former, Syke's Warbler. However, it is noted that Booted Warbler is a potential future addition to the Hong Kong List.

### **Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava thunbergi* and *M.f. macronyx* 黃鵲鴝**

Alström and Mild (2003) state that it is not possible to separate these two taxa in the field. However, based on the published ranges of the two, we continue to regard birds occurring in Hong Kong as being of the taxon *macronyx*.

### **Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava tschutschensis* 黃鵲鴝**

Alström and Mild (2003) do not recognize *M. f. simillima*, and include it within *M.f. tschutschensis*. We also adopt this treatment.

### ***Phylloscopus reguloides goodsoni* 冠紋柳鶯**

This taxon is accepted onto the Hong Kong List. All previous records of Sulphur-breasted Warbler *P. ricketti* are now considered to refer to *goodsoni*. A paper detailing this decision is under preparation.

## Spectacled Warblers 眼眶鶉鶯

The addition of White-spectacled Warbler to the Hong Kong List means that unidentified individuals of this complex should be referred to as 'spectacled warbler sp.'

Records Committee membership remained unchanged up to the end of 2002, comprising Geoff J. Carey (Chairman), Ho-fai Cheung, Paul J. Leader, Michael R. Leven and Richard W. Lewthwaite.

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

*J. A. Allcock, L. Bull, I. Callender, G. J. Carey, Alan H. L. Chan, S. Chan, H. F. Cheung, I. C. Choi/AFCD, G. Chow/AFCD, H. A. Cockerel, F. Fong, M. Hale, P. and H. Harris, G. Ho, H. W. Ho, J. G. and J. Holmes, J. Howard, Y. S. Huynh, K. Ko, P. J. Leader, R. Lee, V. Lee/AFCD, W. H. Lee/AFCD, M. R. Leven, R. W. Lewthwaite, E. Liu/AFCD, W. M. Lo, D. S. Melville, S. Nicholson, N. Osborne, J. N. Pearse, S. H. So, Y. L. Tam, S. T. Tsim/AFCD, M. Turnbull, C. A. Viney, G. Webster, M. Williams, L. C. Wong, T. Woodward, J. Wong, S. Wong, H. K. Ying, L. Young and Y. T. Yu.*

# 2001及2002年香港鳥類報告

## 2001-2002 紀錄委員會報告

爲了繼續追補脫期的香港鳥類報告，我們將2001和2002年的紀錄合併，而2003和2004年的報告亦會同樣處理。

2001年本港共錄得326種A類至D類雀鳥，而在2002年亦同樣錄得326種。1993至1998年的紀錄介乎342和370種之間，而1999和2000年則分別有333和317種。

下面列出本港新增鳥種，有關各類鳥種 (Category) 的定義，可參考 Carey et al. (2001)。截至2002年終，本港的A類到D類雀鳥共有461種。

### 新增的 A 類鳥種

#### 紅喉潛鳥 *Gavia stellata*

2002年2月18日在沙頭角海撿得1隻，沾了油污，經護理後放回水中，不再復見(Tsim 2002)。

#### 大天鵝 *Cygnus cygnus*

2001年3月13日在米埔錄得1隻。

#### 白鶴 *Grus leucogeranus*

2002年12月11及12日在米埔錄得1隻未成年鳥。

#### 布氏鵲 *Anthus godlewskii*

2002年10月8日至最少10日在錦田錄得。

#### 紅尾伯勞 *Lanius cristatus cristatus*

指名亞種 *L. c. cristatus* 第1年冬羽，分別於1999年9月11日在米埔、2000年10月2日在嘉道理農場研究中心、以及2003年9月27日在米埔捕得及照相。

#### 栗頭縫葉鶯 *Orthotomus cucullatus*

1999年10月7日及8日在大埔濬錄得1隻，之後冬季在新界北部及東部多處地點有一連串紀錄。

#### 白喉林鶯 *Sylvia curruca*

2002年10月9日在燕崗見1隻，並拍得照片。

#### 褐胸鵲 *Muscicapa muttui*

2001年11月28日到最少2002年1月21日在大埔濬錄得1隻。

## 新增的 B 類鳥種

### 綠短腳鵝 *Hypsipetes mcclllandii*

2001年12月7日首次發現，2001-02年冬季大埔滘有多達4隻。

## 新增的 E 類鳥種

### 白鵜鷗 *Pelecanus onocrotalus*

2002年12月15日到最少2003年2月22日在米埔及內后海灣錄得1隻。

### 白額雁 *Anser albifrons*

1999年大約在10月16日晚上在愉景灣發現1隻，於27日送到嘉道理農場暨植物園護理，1999年11月22日在米埔自然保護區放飛，之後在當地逗留了一段日子。

### 灰斑鳩 *Streptopelia decaocto*

1999年4月27日在米埔發現1隻指名亞種成鳥，之後1999至2003年有很多紀錄，包括多只在一起的和一些照片。

### 文鬚雀 *Panurus biarmicus*

2002年12月22日在米埔捕得1隻雄鳥。

## 分類學上的修訂

除了新增鳥種之外，紀錄委員會亦接納了多個分類學上的修訂。

### 中杜鵑

依 Payne (1997) 建議根據鳴聲分為 *Cuculus horsfieldi* 和 *C. saturatus* 兩種。以前在本港捕得的3隻皆為 *C. horsfieldi*，而所有其他本港紀錄暫時作 *horsfieldi/saturatus* 論。

### 草鴞

依 König *et al.* (1999) 建議分為亞洲及澳大利西亞的 *Tyto longimembris* 和非洲的 *T. capensis* 兩種。在香港出現的是 *T. l. chinensis*。英文名稱改為 Eastern Grass Owl。

### 領角鴞

依 König *et al.* (1999) 的分類處理分為 *O. lettia*、*O. lempiji*、*O. semitorques*、*O. bakkamoena* 4 種。在香港和華南出現的是 *O. lettia*，英文名稱仍是 Collared Scops Owl。在香港出現的是 *O. l. erythrocampe* 亞種。

### 鷹鴞

接受 King (2002b) 的建議根據鳴聲和生物測量數據分為 *N. scutulata*、*N. japonica*、*N. randi* 3種。雖然本港沒有鳴聲和捕捉的紀錄，但是有見於這鳥在本港是遷徙過境鳥，同時根據地域分佈在 Ussuriland、韓國、日本西部以至四川中部 (包括福建) 繁殖，有力支持在本港出現的應該是 *N. j. japonica*。這鳥的英文名稱需要更改，目前唯一的建議是 Northern Boobook。

### 賽氏籬鶯

依 Ibis (Ibis 144: 707-710) 將 *H. rama* 從靴籬鶯 *H. caligata* 分辨出來。本港兩個紀錄都是賽氏籬鶯，不過靴籬鶯將來有可能會加入本港鳥類名錄。

### 黃鵲鴝 *Motacilla flava thunbergi* 和 *M.f. macronyx*

Alström and Mild (2003) 稱在野外不可能分辨這兩個亞種，不過考慮到文獻所載這兩種鳥的分佈範圍，我們繼續將本港的黃鵲鴝當作 *macronyx* 亞種。

### 黃鵲鴝 *Motacilla flava tschutschensis*

Alström and Mild (2003) 不承認有 *M. f. simillima*，將其歸在 *M. f. tschutschensis* 之內，我們亦按此處理。

### 冠紋柳鶯 *Phylloscopus reguloides goodsoni*

這鳥種已歸入本港鳥類名錄，所有以前的黑眉柳鶯 *P. ricketti* 紀錄現都作 *goodsoni* 論，一篇詳述這個改變的文章正在草擬中。

### 眼眶鵲鶯 Spectacled Warblers

由於白眼鵲鶯已加入本港鳥類名錄，這分類複合體中未曾確認的鳥都應稱為「眼眶鵲鶯」。

紀錄委員會成員到2002年終仍保持不變，包括 Geoff J. Carey (主席)、張浩輝、Paul J. Leader、Michael R. Leven 和 Richard W. Lewthwaite。

這兩年的分類名錄由 Geoff J. Carey、Richard W. Lewthwaite、Michael Turnbull 和余日東編訂，我們要多謝提交相關鳥類紀錄的鳥友。

### 棕腹杜鵑

依 King (2002a) 建議根據鳴聲和形態差異分為 *hyperythrus*, *pectoralis*, *nisicolor* 及 *fugax* 4 種。在本港聽到的叫聲目前只有 *H. nisicolor* 1 種，分佈於尼泊爾東部到中國南部。*H. hyperythrus* 在 Amur 南部到中國東北河北省繁殖，可能會經本港遷徙。*H. nisicolor* 的英文名稱仍叫 Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo，而 *H. hyperythrus* 則為 Northern Hawk Cuckoo。我們鼓勵鳥友細心觀察，如果可以的話請拍下照片。

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# Monthly Summaries

2001-02

## *Michael Turnbull*

*(with weather reports supplied by C. Y. Lam, and based partly on quarterly Bulletin articles by Richard W. Lewthwaite)*

Other than in certain cases, duly indicated, and where formal acceptance of a potentially very significant record is still pending, these summaries are based entirely on the data included in the Systematic List. Further, they are merely intended to give a chronologically ordered impression of ornithological events in the years in question, allowing for possible indications of how 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.

## January 2001

January 2001 was warmer than normal. Two cold fronts crossed Hong Kong, one on 9<sup>th</sup> and the other on 25<sup>th</sup>. The latter brought the temperature down to 9.8 degrees on 28<sup>th</sup>. The second gave rise to thunderstorm – early for the season – on 26<sup>th</sup>.

Two Asian House Martins on 2<sup>nd</sup> turned out to be the only ones reported for the entire year. Predictably in the mild conditions, lower than usual numbers of winter visitors, especially thrushes and Red-flanked Bluetails, appeared to be present, and there was evidence of some earlier than usual departures. There were also some unusual cases of overwintering. One example of this was Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler, of which no fewer than five were seen at different locations in the north-west New Territories during the month. In Deep Bay the wintering flock of Dalmatian Pelicans peaked at 16 on 3<sup>rd</sup> and a Northern Lapwing was noted at Mai Po from 4<sup>th</sup>, but counts of ducks and gulls were generally lower than in many years. However, the count of 6,705 Eurasian Wigeon in the waterbird count on 14<sup>th</sup> was a new high for Hong Kong and a count of 967 Tufted Duck at Tsim Bei Tsui on 23<sup>rd</sup> was the second highest ever. There was also a good selection of scarcer wildfowl at Mai Po in the middle of the month, including a male Baikal Teal, seen from 12<sup>th</sup>, a Ruddy Shelduck, seen from 13<sup>th</sup>, a Falcated Duck, seen from 14<sup>th</sup>, 15 Mallard on 14<sup>th</sup>, a Common Pochard, seen from 14<sup>th</sup>, and six Greater Scaup, seen from 15<sup>th</sup>, while two Baer's Pochard remained from late 2000. Several of these birds were to linger until March, and even early April in the case of the Baikal Teal, which had an injured leg. A first-winter Mew Gull of the taxon *kamschatschensis*, the only record of the year, was also seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 14<sup>th</sup>, and an adult Brown-headed Gull was seen on 15<sup>th</sup>. The only other report of real interest was of a male Black-headed Bunting at Long Valley on 18<sup>th</sup>, though at the very end of the month a Grey-capped Greenfinch was seen at Nam Sang Wai on 29<sup>th</sup>, the only Black-shouldered Kite of the early part of the year was seen at Wo Shang Wai on 30<sup>th</sup>, and six Mallard were reported from Tsim Bei Tsui on 31<sup>st</sup>.

## February 2001

February 2001 was also warmer than normal, though a replenishment of the winter monsoon brought cool weather on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, and a cold front arrived on 7<sup>th</sup>,

followed by another on 13<sup>th</sup>, the latter bringing the temperature down to 10.5 degrees. A long, fine spell followed until the third cold front of the month came overnight on 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>, accompanied by strong northerlies. Northerlies freshened again on 28<sup>th</sup>.

The continued mild weather led to what was judged to be an unspectacular gull passage during the month. It may also have played a part in Grey Nightjars being noted at two locations in the north-east NT as early as 18<sup>th</sup>, over four weeks earlier than any previous record. Rare or scarce birds reported during the month included a Grey-capped Greenfinch at Long Valley on 6<sup>th</sup>, a Common Reed Bunting at Mai Po on 7<sup>th</sup>, a frigatebird, unidentified as to species, near Discovery Bay on 8<sup>th</sup>, a Common Starling at Kam Tin on 9<sup>th</sup>, a male and a female Chestnut-breasted Rock Thrush at KFBG between 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, an Oriental Skylark at Fung Lok Wai on 21<sup>st</sup> and a Yellow-bellied Tit – the first since 1997 – at Plover Cove on 23<sup>rd</sup>. A Terek Sandpiper seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 27<sup>th</sup> represented just the second wintering record, and may have been the same bird that was seen there in December 2000. Also at Mai Po, a Northern Lapwing was again noted on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, and at Nam Sang Wai on 14<sup>th</sup> a Baer's Pochard was seen; this may well have been one of the two otherwise present at Mai Po throughout this time

### March 2001

March 2001 was the fourth warmest since records began in 1884. Two significant cold fronts crossed Hong Kong on 7<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, the latter bringing thunder and heavy rain. Replenishments of the winter monsoon or weak cold fronts arrived on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>.

The month began with an apparent influx of Falcated Ducks, with six on 1<sup>st</sup>, rising to ten on 3<sup>rd</sup>. The first few days of the month also produced four Oriental Skylarks at Tsim Bei Tsui, a flock of 30 Striated Yuhinas at Shing Mun on 3<sup>rd</sup>, a Siberian Thrush at Tai Po Kau on 4<sup>th</sup>, a Long-billed Dowitcher and a first-winter Glaucous Gull in Deep Bay also on 4<sup>th</sup>, when six Slaty-backed Gulls, the highest count of the winter, were present, as well as a first-winter Brown-headed Gull. On 6<sup>th</sup> two Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers were heard in song at San Tin, a rare record at this time of year, but perhaps less surprising than it might have been in view of the presence of locally wintering birds discovered in January. A Northern Lapwing was seen in the Shenzhen River area on 9<sup>th</sup>, an adult Brown-headed Gull was again reported in Deep Bay on 11<sup>th</sup>, and on 16<sup>th</sup> a Lesser Frigatebird was seen there; the following day it was seen harrying a petrel, certainly one of the larger members of the genus *Pterodroma*, but which remains at the current time unidentified to species, though it, like the frigatebird, was photographed, albeit at some distance. From around this time there was evidence of spring passage commencing, with four Silver-backed Needletails and a Grey-faced Buzzard at Ho Chung on 18<sup>th</sup> and the first of up to five Oriental Plovers at Chek Lap Kok from 19<sup>th</sup>. A lone bird of the same species was seen on 25<sup>th</sup> at Mai Po, where it is only very rarely noted, and the first Nordmann's Greenshanks (two) were seen there on 27<sup>th</sup>.

### April 2001

April 2001 was warmer than normal. Three cold front passages were recorded, viz. 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Weak replenishments of the winter monsoon arrived on 1<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. Weather was particularly unsettled between 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, being humid, foggy and rainy. Hail fell on 9<sup>th</sup>.

The unsettled weather during the first part of the month clearly had an effect on the movements of some species during this busy time for migration, though there were rather mystifyingly no reports of significant falls of migrant passerines; the relatively few reports of flycatchers – albeit of ten different species in the month as a whole – mainly came from outlying islands, buntings were scarce and there were no great concentrations of hirundines (or swifts, for that matter, amongst the near-passerines). Interesting passerine records did, however, include at least four Ferruginous Flycatchers between 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, the only Narcissus Flycatcher of the year at Mai Po on 4<sup>th</sup>, three Chestnut-eared Buntings between 10<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, a Citrine Wagtail at Lok Ma Chau on 12<sup>th</sup>, two Styan's Grasshopper Warblers in song by the Mai Po boardwalk on 13<sup>th</sup>, the only Japanese Paradise Flycatcher of the spring also on 13<sup>th</sup> at Tai Po Kau, the first of just two Japanese Yellow Buntings at Long Valley, also on 13<sup>th</sup>. Scarce near-passerines included a Himalayan Swiftlet at Tsim Bei Tsui in 7<sup>th</sup>, nine Blue-tailed Bee-eaters at Mai Po on 12<sup>th</sup>, a Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo at Tai Po Kau on 21<sup>st</sup>, and a further 12 Blue-tailed Bee-eaters at Long Valley on 24<sup>th</sup>. Amongst non-passerines, which passed through in good numbers, were Grey-faced Buzzards, of which at least 150 were noted, including 100 at Mai Po on 13<sup>th</sup>. Numbers of Chinese Goshawks, on the other hand, were low, with barely more than ten reported during the month, following the first on 6<sup>th</sup>, the earliest ever in spring, though only by one day. The highest count of Nordmann's Greenshanks for some time was made when 17 were counted on 6<sup>th</sup>, and a record count of Great Knot was made on 8<sup>th</sup>, when 560 were counted. A further all-time record count was made on 12<sup>th</sup>, in this case of Gull-billed Terns, of which 415 were present at Mai Po. Highlights of the spring wader passage included two Spoon-billed Sandpipers present from 20<sup>th</sup>, and a Little Stint present from 21<sup>st</sup>.

## May 2001

May 2001 was warmer than normal, with only half the average rainfall for the month. The most significant event was the trough of low pressure on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, which ended a warm spell, with thunder and cooler air from the north, ideal for keeping migrants in Hong Kong. Thundery weather in trough conditions was recorded also on 1<sup>st</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>–22<sup>nd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.

At the start of the month a Swinhoe's Egret lingered at Mai Po until 7<sup>th</sup>, and other scarce birds at Mai Po were a Little Stint, also lingering from April, but only on 1<sup>st</sup>, up to 12 Nordmann's Greenshanks (peaking on 9<sup>th</sup>), a Watercock on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, and a drake Mallard on 22<sup>nd</sup>. Elsewhere, a Swinhoe's Egret was at Shuen Wan for four days from 7<sup>th</sup>, a Baillon's Crake was at Chek Lap Kok on 12<sup>th</sup> and an Ancient Murrelet was seen near Po Toi on 13<sup>th</sup>. Also, single Pechora Pipits were recorded at both Long Valley and San Tin on 15<sup>th</sup>. Perhaps as many as 21 Dollarbirds were seen at five different locations in the central and eastern NT between 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, and there were three reports of Black Bazas, all from the Sai Kung area. The month also saw the only Northern Hobby of the spring, at Chau Tau on 7<sup>th</sup> and another Watercock at Long Valley on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

## June 2001

June 2001 saw three times the normal amount of rainfall, a new record for the month. Persistent heavy rain and squally thunderstorms occurred as troughs of low pressure affected Hong Kong on repeated occasions. Typhoon Chebi crossed the Taiwan Strait on 23<sup>rd</sup>, giving rise to very hot weather in Hong Kong.

In a very quiet month, occasional reports of terns included a report of five Roseate, 30 Black-naped and ten Bridled at Tap Mun on 3<sup>rd</sup>. There were also Black Bitterns at Palm Springs, near Mai Po, on 11<sup>th</sup> and at Fung Lok Wai on 15<sup>th</sup>. Two rather unusual records for this month involved a Red Turtle Dove at Tap Mun on 3<sup>rd</sup> and an Oriental Pratincole at Chek Lap Kok on 12<sup>th</sup>. A juvenile Oriental Skylark at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17<sup>th</sup> suggested that breeding might have occurred locally, and an Oriental Reed Warbler was heard singing at Mai Po on 27<sup>th</sup> and again in July.

## July 2001

July 2001 was cooler than normal and more than double the normal amount of rainfall was recorded. Severe Tropical Storm Durian brought strong easterly winds and squally thunderstorms on 1<sup>st</sup>. Typhoon Utor skirted Hong Kong 100 km to the north, necessitating the issuance of the No. 8 signal on 5<sup>th</sup>. Typhoon Yutu skirted Hong Kong 180 km to the south and the No. 8 signal was issued on 25<sup>th</sup>. Weather was generally unsettled between 15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> under the influence of troughs of low pressure.

The highlights of a typically quiet mid-summer month were a Wedge-tailed Shearwater seen from Cape D'Aguilar on 6<sup>th</sup> during the passage of Typhoon Utor. Then, on 10<sup>th</sup> the presence of Lesser Shortwing as a breeding bird on the upper slopes of Tai Mo Shan, which had been suspected in 2000, was confirmed when a juvenile male was seen. A few days later on 13<sup>th</sup>, two adult males were present, and one of them was trapped. Also, on the same day at the same location, there was another first confirmed breeding record for Hong Kong, when a juvenile Russet Bush Warbler was seen. The month also saw the earliest ever Ruff in autumn, at Mai Po on 27<sup>th</sup>.

## August 2001

August 2001 was the fourth hottest on record. Fine weather prevailed most of the time. A trough of low pressure brought thunderstorms on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Winds strengthened on 10<sup>th</sup> as Tropical Depression Usagi developed near Hainan Island. Tropical Depression Fitow coupled with an unseasonable "northeast monsoon" brought windy and rainy conditions during 27<sup>th</sup>–30<sup>th</sup>.

Apart from the wader passage, already well underway at the beginning of the month for several species, the only notable record in the early part of the month involved a Crested Kingfisher at Cove Bay on 6<sup>th</sup>. Much later, on 25<sup>th</sup>, perhaps as a result of the imminent arrival of the unseasonable north-east wind, the earliest ever Grey-headed Lapwing to be seen in autumn was at Kam Tin. The following day, perhaps also associated with the wind direction, the first of just three Yellow-rumped Flycatchers and four Eastern Crowned Warblers for the entire autumn were both noted at Kap Lung.

## September 2001

September 2001 was the fifth hottest on record. Rainfall amount ranked the ninth highest, most of which occurred in the first eight days of the month under the influence of a trough of low pressure. An exceptional feature of the month was the prevalence of northeasterlies over eastern and southern China from 9<sup>th</sup> onwards, as Typhoon Nari loitered in the East China Sea (up to 20<sup>th</sup>) and as Typhoon Lekima approached and crossed Taiwan (23<sup>rd</sup>–30<sup>th</sup>).

A rather quiet month produced few special birds. Passage of Yellow-rumped Flycatchers and Eastern Crowned Warblers could only be described as feeble – two and one respectively during the month - and there were just two Siberian Blue Robins, both on 9<sup>th</sup> at Tai Mo Shan and Tsim Bei Tsui. There were also just three reports of Asian Paradise Flycatchers and only one Japanese Paradise Flycatcher. The 11<sup>th</sup> saw the start of passage of Dark-sided Flycatchers through Hong Kong – 15 bird-days were subsequently recorded to the end of the month. Pechora Pipits are particularly scarce in autumn, but one was at Long Valley on 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. In between those dates the earliest ever Red-throated Flycatcher was recorded at Mount Austin on 14<sup>th</sup>. A Black Bittern was seen at the rather unusual location of Tai Mei Tuk Catchment on 18<sup>th</sup>. On 20<sup>th</sup>, 92 Great Knots at Mai Po represented the highest ever count in autumn, while on 27<sup>th</sup> two Oriental Plovers were seen at Chek Lap Kok. On 28<sup>th</sup> the first Purple-backed Starling of the autumn was seen at Kam Tin.

### **October 2001**

October 2001 was the fourth warmest on record. Weak cold fronts or replenishments of the northeast monsoon arrived on 4<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. Dry continental air prevailed and the rainfall amount was only 7% of the average.

Another Purple-backed Starling was recorded on 2<sup>nd</sup>, this time at Mai Po. The period from 4<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> saw the heaviest passage of Oriental Reed, Black-browed Reed and Dusky Warblers. High counts of Oriental Reed Warbler included 130 at Lok Ma Chau on 13<sup>th</sup> and 150 at Mai Po on 15<sup>th</sup>, while 120 Black-browed Reed Warblers were at Mai Po on 13<sup>th</sup>, with 38 of them trapped. On 9<sup>th</sup> a Watercock was seen at Fung Lok Wai, two Chestnut-cheeked Starlings were at Lok Ma Chau and no fewer than 38 Blue-tailed Bee-eaters were seen at Mai Po; eighteen were also seen there two days later. On 10<sup>th</sup> a Chestnut-eared Bunting was seen at Chek Lap Kok, during a period of heavy passage of Yellow-breasted Buntings – 150 were at Long Valley the same day - while at Nim Wan the earliest ever presumed migrant Russet Bush Warbler was seen; one at Pat Sin Leng on 20<sup>th</sup> was in fact also earlier than the previous earliest in autumn, though of course now the species is known to breed in Hong Kong it is difficult to be sure of the precise status of any individual bird. On 11<sup>th</sup> a Pheasant-tailed Jacana was seen at Mai Po, while the following day at Kam Tin two more Purple-backed Starlings were seen. A Pied Harrier was seen at Mai Po on 13<sup>th</sup> and a Thick-billed Warbler was trapped, while on 14<sup>th</sup> a Lesser Whistling Duck was first noted there; it remained until 17<sup>th</sup> November. The 14<sup>th</sup> was also the first date on which the only Nordmann's Greenshank of the autumn passage period was seen; it remained until 2<sup>nd</sup> November. On 16<sup>th</sup> a Yellow-legged Buttonquail was found dead at the Hong Kong Observatory in Tsim Sha Tsui and a rather early Radde's Warbler was seen at KFBG. Few unusual birds were reported in the second half of the month, but a Dusky Warbler was heard at Mai Po on 28<sup>th</sup> and the only Common Starling of the later part of the year was seen at Kam Tin on 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **November 2001**

November 2001 was another dry month, the rainfall being about one tenth of the average. Steady northeast monsoon prevailed, with replenishments occurring on 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. The lowest temperature, 13.1 degrees, was recorded on 15<sup>th</sup>.

A typically busy month produced a first for Hong Kong, a Brown-breasted Flycatcher at Tai Po Kau on 28<sup>th</sup>. Some highlights of the early part of the month were



two Pheasant-tailed Jacanas at Mai Po on 4<sup>th</sup>, a female or immature Black-headed Bunting at San Tin on 8<sup>th</sup>, a Chestnut-flanked White-eye at Tai Po Kau on 9<sup>th</sup> and a Northern Lapwing at Kam Tin on 10<sup>th</sup>. A Pied Harrier was at Lok Ma Chau on 13<sup>th</sup>, and another Pheasant-tailed Jacana was seen at the same location on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. On 17<sup>th</sup> a Black Stork was seen over Mai Po; what may have been the same bird was also seen at Sham Chung on the same day, and the same observer was fortunate enough to also see a Yellow-throated Bunting at the same location, just the third record for Hong Kong considered to have been probably wild. Four Sanderlings at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21<sup>st</sup> was an interesting record, for this species is very scarce indeed in autumn. Also on 21<sup>st</sup> a Common Rosefinch and a Dusky Thrush were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui, and the highest ever single site count of Japanese Bush Warblers – 49 – was made at Lok Ma Chau. Two days later, on 23<sup>rd</sup>, the first Mallard of the autumn was seen at Mai Po, and three Mugimaki Flycatchers were seen at Twisk Nature Trail; sadly this represented 75% of the entire autumn passage of this species. Two Forest Wagtails at Tai Po Kau on 27<sup>th</sup> were unusually late, yet one lingered into December. More typical of the time of year were a White-throated Rock Thrush at Tai Po Kau on 29<sup>th</sup>, the only Eurasian Skylark of the year at Mai Po on 30<sup>th</sup> and a flock of 35 Striated Yuhinas seen at Cheung Chau on the same day.

## December 2001

December 2001 was warmer than normal. Three surges of the winter monsoon with significant temperature drops were recorded, arriving on 5<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. The last surge brought the temperature down to 8.9 degrees on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Following the report from Cheung Chau on the last day of November, what was presumably a different flock of Striated Yuhinas, numbering 25, was reported from Ma On Shan village on 1<sup>st</sup>, while on 2<sup>nd</sup> a Crested Kingfisher was seen at Pak Tam Chung. A Mountain Bulbul, another potential colonist from South China, for which there have in fact been earlier claims, was seen at Tai Po Kau on 7<sup>th</sup>; when seen again on 31<sup>st</sup>, three were present. Following the breeding record at Tai Mo Shan earlier in the year, two reports of Lesser Shortwings, apparently wintering at lower elevations, were received; one at Shek Kong Catchwater on 9<sup>th</sup> and one at Fan Shui Au, near Plover Cove, on 14<sup>th</sup>. A Carrion Crow was seen at Mai Po on 21<sup>st</sup> and seven Common Rosefinches were seen at Tong Hang, near Fanling on 22<sup>nd</sup>. The month drew to a close with a Grey Bushchat at Pat Sin Leng on 28<sup>th</sup>, and flocks of about 20 Striated Yuhinas seen at both Tai Po Kau and at Bride's Pool on 30<sup>th</sup>. Reports from the north-west NT were few, as many observers began work on the Winter Atlas survey, but included two female or immature Greater Scaup at Lok Ma Chau on 12<sup>th</sup> December and four females at Mai Po on 17<sup>th</sup> December.

## January 2002

January 2002 was warmer than normal. Two sustained surges of the winter monsoon were recorded viz. 17<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>–27<sup>th</sup>. The first push took the temperature down to 9.5 degrees on 21<sup>st</sup>. Overall, this was a rather quiet month and the sustained monsoon surges referred to above, did not, on the basis of the records submitted, appear to result in major influxes of birds.

Throughout the month there were continued sightings of up to three Mountain Buleuls at Tai Po Kau, and the Brown-breasted Flycatcher remained there until 21<sup>st</sup>. From 6<sup>th</sup> 16 Dalmatian Pelicans were present in Deep Bay, and on 6<sup>th</sup> itself two Red-



breasted Mergansers were seen at Mai Po. On 7<sup>th</sup> a second-winter Pallas's Gull was first seen from the Mai Po boardwalk. On 8<sup>th</sup> a Crested Kingfisher was seen at Chung Mei, near Bride's Pool. From 15<sup>th</sup> there were reports of one or two Mallards at Mai Po, while from 19<sup>th</sup> two Carrion Crows were regularly reported there. A Common Starling was seen at Kam Tin on 19<sup>th</sup> too; this was the only report during the early part of the year. The January waterbird count, held on 20<sup>th</sup>, produced the highest ever total for Great Egrets (1,232) and the joint highest ever figure for Spotted Redshanks (2,500). On 26<sup>th</sup> the only Buff-bellied Pipit of the year was seen at Mai Po and on 27<sup>th</sup> a Water Rail was seen at Sha Tau Kok. Two Common Rosefinches were seen at Shuen Wan on 29<sup>th</sup> and a male Baikal Teal was first seen at Mai Po on 30<sup>th</sup>.

## February 2002

February 2002 was the fifth warmest on record (since 1884) and exceptionally fine. Two weak cold fronts crossed Hong Kong on 1<sup>st</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. A surge of the monsoon arrived on 18<sup>th</sup>. Ornithologically, this was another rather uneventful month, predictably so in view of the warmer than usual weather.

The month began with a Gadwall at Mai Po on 1<sup>st</sup> and a male Baer's Pochard at Mai Po on 2<sup>nd</sup>. On 14<sup>th</sup> the only Grey Bushchat reported during the year was seen at Wu Kau Tang, while on 16<sup>th</sup> the only Chestnut-eared Bunting of the year was seen at Mai Po and, perhaps more in line with the exceptionally mild conditions, a Black Baza was seen at Man Kei Toi, beside Hebe Haven in Sai Kung; this was the first record of this species in winter in Hong Kong and two months earlier than the previous earliest. Six Slaty-backed Gulls at the Mai Po boardwalk on 20<sup>th</sup> included the first ever adult recorded in Hong Kong. On 23<sup>rd</sup> four Falcated Ducks were seen at the same location, and elsewhere on the same day a Water Rail was seen at Tin Shui Wai and a Daurian Jackdaw was seen near Yuen Long. On 24<sup>th</sup> a Mew Gull of the taxon *kamschatschensis* was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk, from where three Red-breasted Mergansers were seen from 26<sup>th</sup> up to the last day of the month.

## March 2002

March 2002 was the warmest on record while rainfall was triple the average. Two cold fronts crossed Hong Kong on 5<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> with little inclement weather. Another two, arriving on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, brought thunderstorms and unsettled weather, ideal for keeping migrants in Hong Kong. However, there does not appear to have been very heavy passage under way at the time for these storms to have interfered with.

The month began with a Long-billed Dowitcher at Mai Po, while the following day a Lesser Whistling Duck was again reported; it was subsequently reported intermittently up to 24<sup>th</sup> April and, since there had been no report since 17<sup>th</sup> November of the bird found in late 2001, could have been a different individual. Also on 2<sup>nd</sup> a female Baikal Teal was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk. Gulls seen at the same location on 7<sup>th</sup> included an adult Pallas's Gull. On 17<sup>th</sup> the monthly waterbird count featured a record count of Avocets (2,500). On 23<sup>rd</sup> a Long-billed Dowitcher was again seen at Mai Po and towards the end of the month, as wader passage began to gather momentum, the first Nordmann's Greenshank (two) were noted on 30<sup>th</sup>, and three Long-billed Dowitchers were also reported.

## April 2002

April 2002 was the third warmest on record and was also sunnier and drier than usual. A trough of low pressure brought thunderstorms on 6<sup>th</sup>. Three cold fronts arrived on 10<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, though none had great impact.

Presumably as a result of the dry, sunny weather which predominated throughout the month, passerine passage, in particular, was extremely unspectacular. A Pectoral Sandpiper was seen in the Shenzhen River area on 1<sup>st</sup>; this was the earliest ever recorded on spring passage in Hong Kong and was the first of an interesting set of records of this species during the first few days of the month. Two were noted at Lok Ma Chau 3<sup>rd</sup> and one at Mai Po on 5<sup>th</sup>. On 11<sup>th</sup> another very scarce, though rather more regular passage wader was first reported at Mai Po, in the form of a Little Stint; five bird-days in total were recorded for this species, with two birds present on 15<sup>th</sup>. On 12<sup>th</sup> the first Swinhoe's Egret of the spring passage period was reported; passage peaked at three on 18<sup>th</sup>. On 17<sup>th</sup> a Little Curlew, a species that seems to be becoming of less and less frequent occurrence in Hong Kong, was seen at Mai Po. The 18<sup>th</sup> saw 18 Blue-tailed Bee-eaters at Lok Ma Chau, and on 20<sup>th</sup> a Siberian Blue Robin was seen at Mai Po. On 21<sup>st</sup> a Mallard was reported from Mai Po and towards end of the month the first Spoon-billed Sandpiper of the spring passage was finally seen on 28<sup>th</sup>.

## May 2002

May 2002 was the sixth warmest on record. Successive troughs of low pressure brought a long spell of unsettled weather between 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. The month ended with another trough of low pressure with rain in Hong Kong on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.

The month started with two Little Stints present at Mai Po on 1<sup>st</sup>; a total of six bird-days were recorded up to 16<sup>th</sup>, the latest ever in spring. Also on 1<sup>st</sup> an Ancient Murrelet was seen at Fung Wong Wat; this was the third consecutive year in which one had been recorded in May. A Long-billed Dowitcher, which was present at Mai Po from 4<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>, became the latest ever in spring. On 5<sup>th</sup> an Oriental Cuckoo trapped at Mai Po turned out to be of the taxon *horsfieldi*. Just the second Spoon-billed Sandpiper of the spring passage period was present at Mai Po from 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>, and during the period from 14<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> up to five Pheasant-tailed Jacanas were present there. Also on 19<sup>th</sup> the only Pechora Pipit of the year was recorded at Mai Po. The 22<sup>nd</sup> began a period of six days which saw a number of records of bittern species, perhaps the result of the unsettled weather around that time. This began with a Cinnamon Bittern at Lok Ma Chau and a Schrenk's Bittern at Long Valley on 22<sup>nd</sup> itself. Up to three Schrenk's Bitterns were in fact recorded at Long Valley up to 28<sup>th</sup>, on which date two Cinnamon Bitterns were also present. On 24<sup>th</sup> a Black Bittern was seen at Mai Po, and two were present there the next day. Also on 24<sup>th</sup>, and more surprisingly, a Great Bittern was seen at Mai Po; this was a new late date in spring for this species by eight days. Also during this period a Watercock was seen at Long Valley on 23<sup>rd</sup>. A Black-browed Reed Warbler at Mai Po on 25<sup>th</sup> was also the latest ever, in this case by two days.

## June 2002

June 2002 was the second warmest on record. A tropical depression was located in the northern part of the South China Sea near Hong Kong on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. The southwest monsoon prevailed from 10<sup>th</sup> onwards.

June is typically very quiet indeed, and this one was unexceptional. The only reports of interest involved a Watercock at Lok Ma Chau on 16<sup>th</sup>, rare midsummer records of two Coots at Mai Po on 23<sup>rd</sup> and of a Black Bulbul nearby at Tam Kon Chau on 27<sup>th</sup>, and sightings of Oriental Turtle Doves at Lok Ma Chau from 27<sup>th</sup>, which suggested breeding might have occurred in the vicinity.

## July 2002

July 2002 was close to the established meteorological norms overall. The summer monsoon was broken by a spell of northerlies between 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, during which time a trough of low pressure evolved into a tropical storm south of Hong Kong. Another trough of low pressure brought unsettled weather between 25<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.

There were again typically few reports of interest. Two reports, both on 18<sup>th</sup> and both from Lok Ma Chau, involved very scarce possible breeding species. A summer plumage Pheasant-tailed Jacana suggested that breeding by this former breeding species could be attempted again in the not-too-distant future, while a sighting of a juvenile Oriental Turtle Dove further suggested breeding by this species could have already occurred locally. As southward-bound passage of waders got underway during the last ten days or so of the month, the earliest ever returning Nordmann's Greenshank was seen on 21<sup>st</sup>, while a Ruff was seen on 27<sup>th</sup> equalled the earliest ever date for this passage period, which had been set in 2001.

## August 2002

August 2002 was again close to the established meteorological norms overall. Severe Tropical Storm Kammuri landed about 150 km to the east of Hong Kong on 5<sup>th</sup>. A trough of low pressure brought heavy rain on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. Severe Tropical Storm Vongfong landed near Zhanjiang on 19<sup>th</sup> and gave Hong Kong three days of rain on 18<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup>.

Although autumn wader passage was at its peak as usual, and although there was some very light passage of passerines in the final few days, this was a typically very quiet month. Two records of some interest involved the earliest ever record of Red-rumped Swallow in autumn, reported from Wu Kau Tang on 20<sup>th</sup>, and the earliest ever Eurasian Wryneck, seen at Chek Lap Kok on 28<sup>th</sup>.

## September 2002

September 2002 saw the fourth highest rainfall on record. Severe Tropical Storm Hagupit brought gales on 11<sup>th</sup>. Its remnant returned later and gave rise to almost 450mm of rain on 15<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup>.

Two Cinnamon Bitterns seen at Mai Po on 1<sup>st</sup> were the first of four during the month. The approach of Severe Tropical Storm Hagupit resulted in two Aleutian Terns being seen at Shuen Wan, with another nearby elsewhere in Tolo Harbour; the following day as the storm reached its height two Greater Crested Terns were seen at Cape D'Aguilar. Four Oriental Plovers were also seen at Mai Po on 11<sup>th</sup>. Passage of passerines was unremarkable at best, but did include Forest Wagtails at Tai Po Kau on 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> and a Siberian Blue Robin at Kap Lung on 19<sup>th</sup>. It also included the earliest ever Little Bunting, seen at San Tin on 26<sup>th</sup>; another, seen at Sai Kung on 28<sup>th</sup>, was also

earlier than previous records. Scarce waders recorded included a Pectoral Sandpiper at Mai Po on 20<sup>th</sup> and ten Oriental Plovers at Chek Lap Kok on 30<sup>th</sup>.

## October 2002

October 2002 was much cloudier than usual and rainfall was some forty percent above normal. A cold front arrived on 6<sup>th</sup>. An unseasonal moist airstream brought a late rainstorm on 17<sup>th</sup>. A cold front arriving on 21<sup>st</sup> brought a spell of heavy rain. An easterly surge arrived on 27<sup>th</sup> and was followed by another rain-bearing front on 30<sup>th</sup>.

An exciting month opened with nine Blue-tailed Bee-eaters at Mai Po on 1<sup>st</sup>. From 2<sup>nd</sup>, Long Valley was the scene of spectacular passage of scarce starling species; up to 40 Purple-backed Starlings were present there up to 6<sup>th</sup>, with up to two Chestnut-cheeked Starlings and a juvenile Rose-coloured Starling, just the fourth record for Hong Kong and present on 5<sup>th</sup>. There was also a Swinhoe's Minivet there on 4<sup>th</sup>. On 2<sup>nd</sup> the first of probably three Pheasant-tailed Jacanas seen at various localities in the north-west NT during the month was reported. Another excellent bird seen during month was a Blue-throated Bee-eater, just the third for Hong Kong and present at Tsim Bei Tsui on 6<sup>th</sup>. On 8<sup>th</sup> a Black Bittern was seen at Palm Springs, near Mai Po, ten Oriental Plovers were again seen at Chek Lap Kok, another two Chestnut-cheeked Starlings were seen at Kam Tin, and the earliest ever Siberian Rubythroat in autumn was reported from Long Valley. Three Oriental Plovers were still present at Chek Lap Kok on 9<sup>th</sup>, but the most exciting news that day was of the discovery of Hong Kong's long-awaited first Blyth's Pipit, seen and trapped at Kam Tin, and also present on 10<sup>th</sup>, and the first Lesser Whitethroat for Hong Kong, at Yin Kong Two juvenile Pied Harriers were also present at Mai Po from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>, and another was at Lok Ma Chau from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>. A Barred Buttonquail was at Kam Tin on 11<sup>th</sup>. A Long-billed Dowitcher was found at Mai Po on 18<sup>th</sup> and on 20<sup>th</sup> the only Ruddy-breasted Crake of the year was seen on the access road there. A relatively quiet closing ten days to the month did include a report of two Eurasian Skylarks at Long Valley on 28<sup>th</sup>.

## November 2002

November 2002 was drier than usual. A spell of the northeast monsoon on 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> was followed by another push on 9<sup>th</sup>. The only significant cold front arrived on 15<sup>th</sup>. A replenishment of the monsoon arrived on 24<sup>th</sup>.

The monsoon winds that prevailed in the early part of the month appeared, predictably to favour movement of migrants through the region. On 2<sup>nd</sup> a Crested Honey Buzzard was seen passing over Mt. Austin and another Eurasian Skylark was seen at Long Valley. On 3<sup>rd</sup> two Blue-and-white Flycatchers were seen at KFBG, while three were at Tai Po Kau on 5<sup>th</sup>, relatively heavy passage for a species which is generally scarce in autumn. Another juvenile Pied Harrier was seen at Palm Springs, near Mai Po on 6<sup>th</sup>, when a Long-billed Dowitcher was again seen at Mai Po itself. On 9<sup>th</sup> 50 Eye-browed Thrushes were seen at KFBG – only two others were reported in the entire year – and there were also two Mugimaki Flycatchers there and one was at Sha Lo Tung on 10<sup>th</sup>. On 10<sup>th</sup>, also at Sha Lo Tung a Rustic Bunting was found; this bird was considered, in terms of date and location, to be probably wild, just the third such instance for Hong Kong. From around this time birds associated with winter proper started to appear; a Mallard was at Mai Po from 10<sup>th</sup> and a Northern Lapwing was seen at Lok Ma Chau on 12<sup>th</sup>. Also on 10<sup>th</sup>, and again on 15<sup>th</sup>, the only reports of a Bright-capped Cisticola for the year were received from its favoured locality of Sha Lo Tung.

Another Eurasian Skylark was seen at Long Valley on 14<sup>th</sup>, while on 17<sup>th</sup> a Bull-headed Shrike was seen at Mai Po. On 22<sup>nd</sup> a further Northern Lapwing was seen, this time at Mai Po, and on 27<sup>th</sup> a Red-breasted Merganser was seen at the rather unusual location of Lok Ma Chau. The month ended with a report of a Common Starling at Kam Tin on 29<sup>th</sup>.

## December 2002

December 2002 was cloudier than usual and the rainfall was more than double the usual amount. The cold front on 8<sup>th</sup> caused a drop of more than ten degrees. Another cold front brought exceptional winter thunderstorms on 19<sup>th</sup>. An intense surge of the winter monsoon arrived on 25<sup>th</sup>, taking the temperature down to 6.8 degrees on 27<sup>th</sup>.

An adult male White Wagtail at Chek Lap Kok on 10<sup>th</sup> showed characters of the taxon *lugens*. A Cinnamon Bittern at Shuen Wan on 16<sup>th</sup> was an unusual record for the time of year; much more in keeping with the time of year, though nonetheless scarce, were a male Falcated Duck and two Common Pochards at Lok Ma Chau on the same day. A count of 1,156 Tufted Ducks was the highest on record for the Deep Bay area, but did include 25 at Futian, Shenzhen, so was the second highest ever for Hong Kong. Another Falcated Duck, this time a female, was at Lok Ma Chau on 25<sup>th</sup>, while two days later on 27<sup>th</sup>, the first returning Dalmatian Pelicans, two, were seen in Deep Bay. The year ended with a report of a female Pied Harrier at Lok Ma Chau on 31<sup>st</sup>.

# Systematic List

2001-02

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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), and updated where necessary in line with subsequent changes, is indicated by the use of the following abbreviations after the scientific name:

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
KFBG	Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden
NT	New Territories
SI	Starling Inlet
SW	Shuen Wan

The order, categorization and nomenclature used in this Systematic List, follow Carey *et al.* (2001), with certain corrections to scientific names.

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

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
2001	14 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	nc	19 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>
2002	20 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	nc	20 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>

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, usually due to extreme weather conditions.

## CATEGORIES A-D

### 000.9A Red-throated Loon *Gavia stellata* 紅喉潛鳥

**2002:** An oiled adult was picked up at Luk Keng on 18 February, and after cleaning and care was released at Pak Nai on the 19<sup>th</sup> (AFCD). This is the first record for Hong Kong.

### 002A Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* 小鵝鶯

**2001:** A total of 132 in the March waterbird count was the highest count in the first winter period, while the highest count in the second part of the year was only 112 in the December waterbird count. Away from Deep Bay, in the first winter period up to four were at Ho Pui Reservoir on 26 February. Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	118	95	132	87	58	55	nc	70	89	107	87	112
SW	6	3	3	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	2
SI	2	0	1	0	nc	nc	nc	0	0	2	nc	3

**2002:** As usual most records were from the Deep Bay area and its hinterland, with the only other records coming from Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan. The highest monthly waterbird count during the first half of the year was 141 in the January count, while in the second half of the year the highest count was 155, in the December count. Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet throughout the year as a whole were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	141	86	100	108	52	69	49	72	nc	93	107	155
SW	0	nc	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	1	0
SI	7	7	2	3	0	0	0	0	nc	0	5	nc

### 003A Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* 鳳頭鵝鶯

**2001:** In the Deep Bay area, a count of 66 in the March waterbird count was the highest in the first winter period. In the second winter period, the only report was the count of 12 made in the December waterbird count. All records were from the Deep Bay area, where monthly counts were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	30	53	66	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	12

**2002:** The peak count was of 197 birds on 26 February and the last record was of a single bird seen during the April waterbird count. Elsewhere, one moulting into breeding plumage was seen at Shuen Wan on 7 March. In the second winter period, the only report received was once again the count figure from the December waterbird



count. The monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area during the year as a whole were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	62	26	28	1	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	163

#### 007A Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus* 卷羽鵜鶘 CD

**2001:** In the first winter period numbers in Deep Bay peaked at 16, present from 3 January to 4 March. Unusually, there were no confirmed reports in the second winter period.

**2002:** In the early part of the year, 15 were present in Deep Bay from 6 January. This number increased to 16, the same peak as the previous winter, on 17 February. The final report during the early part of the year was of 13 on 24 February. In the second part of the year, two were again present in Deep Bay from 27 December.



**Plate 1.** Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus* 卷羽鵜鶘  
Lut Chau, Hong Kong, 6 March 2005  
Pippen Ho

#### 010A Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* 鸕鶿

**2001:** The highest count in the first winter period was 7,142 in the January waterbird count. An adult at Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 May was the last record in the first part of the year. In the second part of year, the first returning bird was at Mai Po on 2 October. Away from the Deep Bay area, about 20 were seen in waters north of Lantau on 22 January, and nine were present at Shuen Wan on 3 February, the peak count of the winter at this site. Additionally, totals of 15 and 50 passed over Pat Sin Leng CP on

23 February and 9 December respectively, and a flock of 59 was seen at Plover Cove on 12 December. Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	7,142	2,299	3,715	1	0	1	nc	0	0	45	4,950	4,391
SW	4	9	3	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	1	1
SI	483	377	554	0	nc	nc	nc	0	0	0	nc	252

**2002:** During the first winter period the count of 6,230 made in the January waterbird count, when a further 194 were recorded at Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan, proved to be the peak count of the winter of 2001-2002. Five seen at Plover Cove on 17 April represented the final sighting of the first part of the year. In the second winter period, four at Mai Po on 24 September were the first returning birds, and the November count provided the peak count of the autumn and early winter, with 6,534 in Deep Bay itself, and an additional 182 at Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan. Monthly waterbird count figures during the year as a whole were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	6,230	4,307	451	0	0	0	0	0	nc	633	6,534	5,767
SW	5	nc	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	1	3
SI	189	137	41	0	0	0	0	0	nc	26	181	nc

#### 013A Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel* 白斑軍艦鳥

**2001:** A first-stage juvenile, first reported on 16 March, was photographed on 17<sup>th</sup> (JH). A photograph of this bird was published in *The Hong Kong Bird Report, 1998* (Plate 25, p. 130).

#### Frigatebird *Fregata sp.* 軍艦鳥

**2001:** Singles were at Discovery Bay on 8 February (HG) and at Stonecutters on 22 April (WLC).

#### 014A Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* 蒼鷺

**2001:** The highest count in the first winter period was 1,086 in the February waterbird count, while in the second winter period numbers rose to 1,066 in the November waterbird count. Away from the Deep Bay area, birds were reported from Kam Tin (ten on 19 July), Lamma (one on 16 December), Long Valley (up to 15 on several dates) and Po Toi (one on 15 April). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	898	1,086	811	98	7	27	nc	44	122	691	1,066	903
SW	27	23	21	3	3	0	nc	0	5	9	23	21
SI	99	110	76	19	0	0	nc	2	32	54	nc	77

**2002:** The peak monthly Deep Bay count (1,297 in January) was significantly higher than any count during the previous winter, though those for the final three months of the year were remarkably similar to those made in the corresponding months in 2001.

All records were from the Deep Bay area and wetlands of the northeast NT, except for six at Aberdeen Reservoir on 10 February. Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	1,297	649	776	135	25	4	2	13	nc	691	1,087	837
SW	28	nc	nc	2	0	0	1	0	nc	8	19	17
SI	78	92	36	8	0	0	1	4	nc	57	94	nc

#### 015A Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* 草鷺



Plate 2. Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* 草鷺  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 6 November 2005  
Pippen Ho

**2001:** In the first winter period, the maximum count was six at Mai Po on 2 January, though none of these were noted in the monthly waterbird count a few days later. An immature at Mai Po on 15 May was the final record of spring. As usual, there was evidence of autumn passage, with five in the September waterbird count and four at Mai Po on 7 October. All records were from the Deep Bay area, where monthly counts were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	0	2	1	1	1	0	nc	3	5	1	1	2

**2002:** All records were from Mai Po, except for singles along the Shenzhen River on 10 April, at Kam Tin on 6 October and at Nam Sang Wai on 8 October. An immature at Mai Po on 23 June was the sole mid-summer record. The peak count was of five, at Mai Po on 12 October and also in the December waterbird count. Monthly counts from the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	0	1	3	3	0	0	0	3	nc	4	0	5

### 016A Great Egret *Egretta alba* 大白鷺

2001: The peak count in the first winter period was 931 in the January waterbird count and the highest count in the second winter period was 813 in the December waterbird count. Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Long Valley, Ma Liu Shui, Mui Wo, Plover Cove, Sham Tseng, Tap Mun and Wong Shek pier. Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po village (12 nests), Tai Po Market (three nests), Centre Island (15 nests) and A Chau (52 nests). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	931	621	362	274	230	534	nc	513	316	655	704	813
SW	95	53	22	8	14	15	nc	24	58	65	147	158
SI	206	166	189	179	nc	nc	nc	109	125	246	nc	184

2002: The peak count of 1,232 in the January waterbird count was a new high count for Deep Bay, exceeding the previous highest count at all locations. An interesting record of birds feeding on dragonflies of the species Wandering Glider *Pantala flavescens* with Little and Cattle Egrets was reported from Mai Po scrape on 5 September. Away from the Deep Bay area, up to 95 birds in the Tolo Harbour area and 36 birds at Tap Mun were noted during the summer months. Singles were at Chek Lap Kok on 1 October, Tai O on 13 January, and Tung Chung on 28 August, and two were at Long Valley on 15 September. Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po village (15 nests), Tai Po Market (five nests), Centre Island (20 nests), A Chau (70 nests) and To Kau Wan (one nest). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	1,239	641	488	376	457	629	496	755	nc	843	1,051	1,157
SW	52	nc	nc	20	11	3	25	41	nc	47	28	23
SI	90	173	171	167	239	138	192	209	nc	312	286	nc

### 017A Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia* 中白鷺

2001: In addition to the monthly waterbird count figures given below, 15 were noted at Mai Po on 10 April.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	15	2	8	5	10	4	nc	4	4	8	18	3
SW	1	2	1	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0
SI	8	2	12	6	nc	nc	nc	3	4	1	nc	0

2002: In addition to the monthly waterbird count figures given below, one was also recorded at Kam Tin on 1 October and two were seen there on 27 October.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	2	0	2	3	4	0	0	1	nc	14	18	1
SW	0	nc	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	5	0	0
SI	4	4	8	2	7	0	2	0	nc	2	1	nc

### 018A Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* 小白鷺

**2001:** The highest count in the first winter period was of 1,631 in the February waterbird count, while the summering population reached 1,726 in the June waterbird count and the peak count in the second part of year was 1,434 in the December waterbird count. Away from the Deep Bay area, notable counts included 40 at Ma Liu Shui on 6 May, 30 at Plover Cove on 26 May, and 30 at Mui Wo on 23 December. Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po village (50 nests), Pak Nai (47 nests), Ngau Hom Shek (one nest), Ho Sheung Heung (13 nests), Tai Po Market (24 nests), Centre Island (12 nests), Penfold Park (ten nests), A Chau (21 nests), Stonecutters (26 nests), Shui Mei (three nests), Tai O (12 nests), Ho Pui (two nests), Mai Po Lung Village (one nest), Small Traders New Village (six nests) and Shing Uk Tsuen (40 nests). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	1,077	1,631	930	671	914	1,726	nc	1,160	911	1,117	1,162	1,434
SW	52	22	14	6	11	26	nc	17	33	36	55	13
SI	113	96	99	106	nc	nc	nc	35	79	125	nc	115

**2002:** Away from the Deep Bay area recorded at Plover Cove, Kam Tin, Lei Yue Mun, Long Valley, Pak Sha, Po Toi, Sha Po, Tap Mun and Tung Chung. Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po village (37 nests), Pak Nai (45 nests), Ngau Hom Shek (five nests), Ho Sheung Heung (16 nests), Tai Po Market (15 nests), Centre Island (13 nests), Penfold Park (24 nests), A Chau (24 nests), Stonecutters (three nests), Lam Tsuen (three nests), Tai O (six nests), Ho Pui (two nests), Mai Po Lung Village (two nests), Small Traders New Village (27 nests), Shing Uk Tsuen (19 nests), To Kau Wan (25 nests) and Ha Che (three nests). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	1,375	1,256	664	799	750	781	675	1,219	nc	1,078	1,645	1,653
SW	9	nc	nc	8	14	21	13	27	nc	42	7	18
SI	61	66	96	95	89	75	116	114	nc	114	151	nc

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

**2001:** During spring passage, from 5 April to 7 May and again on 22 May, a total of nine individuals were recorded, mainly from the Mai Po boardwalk, with a maximum of three, recorded on both 22 and 23 April. In addition, one was at Shuen Wan from 7 to 11 May.

**2002:** A minimum of six individuals were recorded during spring passage between 12 April and 19 May. All records were from the Mai Po area and the peak count was three, seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 18 April.

**020A Pacific Reef Egret *Egretta sacra* 岩鷺**

**2001:** Reported from Aberdeen, Cape D'Aguilar, Chek Lap Kok, Deep Water Bay, Kung Chau, Mui Wo, Po Toi, Shek Ngau Chau, Stanley, Steep Island, Tap Mun and Tung Chung pier; the highest count was of five birds at Tap Mun on 30 June.

**2002:** Recorded at Chek Lap Kok, Ocean Park, Kat O, Kung Chau, Po Toi, Shek Ngau Chau, Island Road, Tap Mun and Tung Chung, the peak count being 12 at Tap Mun on 21 November.

**021A Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* 牛背鷺**

**2001:** Away from Deep Bay, recorded at Chek Lap Kok during each passage period, with four on 6 April and two on 10 October, at Fanling Golf Course (at least ten on 9 July), Fung Kat Heung (at least 20 on 26 August), Kam Tin (peak count of 30 on 7 August), Long Valley (intermittently from 29 January to 14 October with a peak count of 28 on 10 April), Pat Sin Leng CP, Po Toi (seven on 15 April), Sham Tseng, Wu Kau Tang (from 7 May to 2 June with a peak count of 19 on 21 May) and Yung Shue O. Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po village (15 nests), Pak Nai (two nests), Ho Sheung Heung (one nest), A Chau (27 nests), Stonecutters (three nests), Ho Pui (five nests) and Shing Uk Tsuen (five nests). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	28	99	57	159	145	97	nc	43	42	129	42	83
SW	0	0	0	1	16	4	nc	0	2	0	0	0
SI	16	7	7	77	nc	nc	nc	9	10	26	nc	1

**2002:** A count of 180 recorded at Kam Tin on 1 October apparently comprised passage birds, with 100 still remaining in the vicinity on 6 October. Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Long Valley (five on 15 September), Sha Lo Wan (one on 9 April), Tap Mun (five on 21 July) and Wu Kau Tang (eight on 21 April). Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po village (12 nests), Pak Nai (three nests), Ho Sheung Heung (12 nests), Centre Island (one nest), A Chau (30 nests), Ho Pui (17 nests) and Shing Uk Tsuen (four nests). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	22	49	129	206	191	45	133	193	nc	71	52	118
SW	0	nc	nc	10	8	0	0	1	nc	0	0	0
SI	6	21	23	17	80	42	90	35	nc	5	13	nc

**022A Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus* 池鷺**

**2001:** Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Centre Island, Chek Lap Kok (one on 18 September), Fanling Golf Course, Fung Kat Heung, Kam Tin, Long Valley (peak count at 33 on 12 February), Mui Wo, Plover Cove, Po Toi, Sham Tseng, Tai Mei Tuk and Tap Mun. Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po village (seven nests), Tam Kon Chau (21 nests), Pak Nai (five nests), Ngau Hom Shek (six nests), Ho Sheung Heung (61 nests), Penfold Park (two nests), Stonecutters (two nests), Shui Mei



(11 nests), Lam Tsuen (15 nests), Ho Pui (two nests), Ma On Kong (five nests), Mai Po Lung village (43 nests), Small Traders New Village (three nests) and Shing Uk Tsuen (five nests). In addition, at least one nest was found at Shuen Wan. Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	250	223	202	180	176	290	nc	277	198	299	207	283
SW	12	8	8	6	4	9	nc	8	11	12	12	12
SI	6	3	4	8	nc	nc	nc	7	7	10	Nc	11

**2002:** Away from the Deep Bay area, Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet, recorded at Kam Tin, Long Valley, Ma Liu Shui (single on 31 August), Pak Sha, Sha Po and Tin Liu. Breeding was noted at the following egrettries: Mai Po village (14 nests), Tam Kon Chau (32 nests), Pak Nai (three nests), Ngau Hom Shek (eight nests), Ho Sheung Heung (90 nests), Tai Po Market (one nest), Penfold Park (two nests), Stonecutters (one nest), Lam Tsuen (17 nests), Ho Pui (one nest), Ma On Kong (12 nests), Mai Po Lung village (45 nests), Small Traders New Village (five nests), Shing Uk Tsuen (4 nests) and Ha Che (27 nests). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	212	146	114	148	163	196	216	282	nc	341	284	226
SW	12	nc	nc	6	0	6	6	8	nc	8	8	6
SI	4	8	2	3	1	3	3	3	nc	14	7	nc

### 023A Striated Heron *Butorides striatus* 綠鷺

**2001:** In the Deep Bay area, recorded between 12 April and 7 October, with the highest count being five in both the May and June waterbird counts. Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at the rather unusual location of Tai Mo Shan (two on 22 September), Wu Kau Tang (one at 24 September) and Tai Po Kau (an immature on 30 December). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	0	0	0	0	5	5	nc	3	2	0	0	0
SW	1	1	1	0	1	1	nc	1	1	0	0	1
SI	0	0	0	0	nc	nc	nc	0	2	1	nc	0

**2002:** In the Deep Bay area, recorded between 13 March and 30 September, with a good peak count of 15 in the July waterbird count and other notable counts of eight on 19 May and seven on 19 August, both from Mai Po. A wintering individual was recorded intermittently at Shuen Wan between 3 January and 22 February. Other records of single birds came from Chung Mei (28 February), Tap Mun (6 July), Po Toi (8 September), Hok Tau (25 October) and Hebe Haven (26 December). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	0	1	0	0	6	11	15	6	nc	4	0	0
SW	1	nc	nc	0	0	0	0	1	nc	1	0	1
SI	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc



**024A Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* 夜鷺**

**2001:** Away from Deep Bay, recorded at Aberdeen, Kam Tin, Kowloon Park, Ma Liu Shui, Mau Ping New Village (Sai Kung), Tap Mun and Wu Kau Tang. The peak count at Shuen Wan was of 20 on 22 February. Breeding was noted at the following egretries: Mai Po village (25 nests), Tai Po Market (nine nests), Centre Island (six nests), A Chau (157 nests), Stonecutters (18 nests) and Tai O (seven nests). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	208	727	241	38	123	275	nc	64	18	42	14	88
SW	1	1	3	8	6	11	nc	2	2	1	1	2
SI	113	50	209	449	nc	nc	nc	24	14	1	nc	1

**2002:** Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Aberdeen Reservoir (seven on 10 February), Kam Tin (two on 27 October), Sha Po (one on 19 January). A maximum of 14 were recorded in the Tolo Harbour area during the summer months. Breeding was noted at the following egretries: Mai Po village (nine nests), Tai Po Market (nine nests), Centre Island (20 nests), Penfold Park (five nests), A Chau (177 nests), Stonecutters (20 nests), Tai O (five nests) and To Kau Wan (five nests). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	66	73	46	18	31	48	65	97	nc	84	74	72
SW	50	nc	nc	3	4	6	3	4	nc	2	3	3
SI	23	84	321	385	381	123	131	44	nc	9	1	nc

**026A Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis* 黃葦鶉**

**2001:** In addition to the records from the monthly waterbird counts given below, five were at Fung Lok Wai on 17 August, two at Nim Wan on 10 October and three at Mai Po on 13 October.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	0	0	2	0	3	7	nc	6	3	0	1	0
SW	0	0	0	0	0	2	nc	0	0	0	0	0
SI	0	0	0	0	nc	nc	nc	0	0	0	nc	0

**2002:** A single adult was recorded at Nam Chung on 6 February and another bird was at Mai Po on 10 and 12 February. Not reported again till 29 March when one was at Mai Po. The peak count during spring passage was six at Mai Po on 19 May, while the peak count during autumn was ten, also at Mai Po, on 21 September. The final record of the year came from Mai Po on 23 November. Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Long Valley (two on 28 May and one on 15 September), Kam Tin (singles on 30 May and 3 October) and Shuen Wan (a female on 23 May). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan and at Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	5	nc	4	2	0
SW	0	nc	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0
SI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc

**027A Schrenck's Bittern *Ixobrychus eurhythmus* 紫背葦鶉**

**2002:** In spring recorded only at Long Valley in May, with a female on 22<sup>nd</sup>, a female and two males on 23<sup>rd</sup> and a female on 28<sup>th</sup>. In autumn there was just a single record of a juvenile at Shui Mei on 8 October.

**028A Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* 栗葦鶉**

**2001:** There were only three records: during spring, single males were seen at Long Valley on 22 April, and at Shui Mei on 22 May, while in autumn, a juvenile was seen at Long Valley on 10 September.

**2002:** There were again only two records in spring: one at Lok Ma Chau on 22 May and two at Long Valley on 28 May. In autumn, rather more numerous, with two at Mai Po on 1 September, singles at Lok Ma Chau on 9 September (a male) and 17 September (a female/immature), and also one at San Tin on 2 October. Finally, a male was at Shuen Wan on 16 December.

**029A Black Bittern *Dupetor flavicollis* 黑鶉**

**2001:** Singles were reported from Palm Springs on 11 June, Fung Lok Wai on 15 June and Tai Mei Tuk catchment on 18 September.

**2002:** A female was at Mai Po on 24 May and a pair was seen there on 25 May. There was also one at Palm Springs on 8 October.

**030A Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* 大麻鶉**

**2001:** All records were from Mai Po, except for one at Lok Ma Chau on 21 November. In the first winter period, peak counts were of only two birds on both 14 January and 3 March. The latter was also the date of the final spring record. In the second part of the year, the first record was of two birds on 18 November and the peak count was of eight on 3 December.

**2002:** During the early part of the year, the peak count was four on 25 January and the final record was on 16 March. An exceptional record of one on 24 May provides a new late date for this species, by some eight days (GJC). In the second part of the year, the first record was on 20 October and the peak count was four on 30 November. All records were from Mai Po.

**031A Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* 黑鶴**

**2001:** A juvenile was seen at Mai Po on 17 November and what may have been the same bird (though age details were not provided by the observer) was seen on the same day at Sham Chung, where it was harried by a White-bellied Sea Eagle.

**035A Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* 白琵鷺**

**2001:** During the first winter period up to four were recorded in the Deep Bay area, mainly at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau. During April only singles were recorded, with the final record of the spring on 15 April. In the second part of the year, the first record was of three on 11 November, and these birds were reported again on 2 December.

**2002:** All records were from the Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau areas. As in previous winters, the maximum count was four, at Lok Ma Chau on 2 April. The last record of the spring involved one at Mai Po on 15 April. The first record in the autumn was one seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 2 November. Thereafter, the maximum count was only two, seen at Mai Po on 12 November and 27 December.



**Plate 3.** Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* 黑鸛 juvenile  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 24 October 2004  
Pippen Ho

**036A Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor* 黑臉琵鷺 EN**

**2001:** The highest count in the first winter period was 197 in the March waterbird count. Numbers decreased to 93 in the April waterbird count, 49 on 29 April, and three on 22 May, the final record in the spring, though over-summering individuals were recorded at Mai Po in both the June and August waterbird counts. In the second part of the year, the first returning birds were three at Mai Po on 7 October. Number rose to 19 on 2 November and the peak count was of 192 on 16 November. Records came from fishponds near Fairview Park, Lok Ma Chau, Shenzhen River, San Tin, Mai Po

fishponds, Mai Po, Nam Sang Wai, Tsim Bei Tsui, Lau Fau Shan and Pak Nai. Monthly counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	178	179	197	93	0	2	nc	1	0	10	185	126

**2002:** A total of 179 birds were counted during the International Black-faced Spoonbill Census on 26 January and the peak count in the first winter period of 183 was made during the January waterbird count. Numbers decreased thereafter, though 108 were still present at Mai Po on 29 March. The final record in the spring was 22 at Mai Po on 1 May, and there were no summer records. In the second part of the year, the first record was of an adult, present at Mai Po on 20 October, and two were there on 22 October. Subsequently, numbers increased rapidly to 109 on 5 November, reaching a peak of 234 in the December waterbird count. Most of the records were from Mai Po and its immediate environs, such as the fishponds north of Fairview Park, and the Lok Ma Chau, Shenzhen River and Wo Sang Wai areas. Monthly counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	183	44	101	35	9	0	0	0	nc	1	196	234

#### **037A Lesser Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna javanica* 栗樹鴨**

**2001:** One was recorded at Mai Po on four dates: 14 October and 11, 12 and 17 November. Although seen in the Waterfowl Collection at Pond 15, these records are considered to concern wild birds as there have not been any captive birds of this species present since the early 1990s (L. Young, pers. comm.).

**2002:** One was at Mai Po on 2 and 14 March and 24 April. Although seen on Pond 15, this bird (or birds) is considered to be wild for the reason given above. The Waterfowl Collection at Pond 15 was closed and the remaining birds removed at the end of 2001.

#### **037.3A Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* 大天鵝**

**2001:** An adult was at Mai Po on 13 March (EMSK). This is the first record for Hong Kong.

#### **039A Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea* 赤麻鴨**

**2001:** One was recorded at Mai Po on 13 January, 10, 11 and 28 February. One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 31 January was almost certainly the same individual.

#### **040A Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* 翹鼻麻鴨**

**2001:** All records were from the Deep Bay intertidal area. The peak count was of 373 birds in the February count, which is only 30% and 28% of the peak counts in 1999 and 2000 respectively. A total of 128 was recorded in March waterbird count, and represented the final record in the first winter period. In the second part of the year,

the first record was of 25 birds from the Mai Po boardwalk on 30 November. Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	279	373	128	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	89

**2002:** The peak count was 268 birds in the January waterbird count, continuing the decline in numbers. In the second part of the year, this species was extremely scarce, with a maximum of just nine birds, recorded during the December waterbird count. Comparing peak counts for 1999-2000 with those for 2001-2002, the wintering population of this species has suffered a significant decrease of 75%. However, numbers if this species have, historically, been highly variable. Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	268	250	15	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	6	9

#### 043A Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope* 赤頸鴨

**1999:** A hybrid male Eurasian x American Wigeon *A. penelope* x *A. americana* was at Mai Po on 15 December (MRL).

**2001:** The peak count of 6,705 during the January waterbird count was a new high for Hong Kong. Four at Mai Po on 22 May was the final record of the spring. A total of 436 counted in the October waterbird count represented the first record in the second part of the year. Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded only from Starling Inlet in the January (six birds) and February (five birds) waterbird counts. Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	6,705	2,945	2,219	35	1	0	nc	0	0	436	1,756	4,572

**2002:** The peak count in the first winter period was of 3,797 in the January waterbird count. The last spring record was a single female at Mai Po on 1 May. In the second winter period, a flock of 50, recorded from the Mai Po boardwalk on 8 October, was the first record. Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	3,797	1,459	974	17	0	0	0	0	nc	145	2,467	1,340

#### 044A Falcated Duck *Anas falcata* 羅紋鴨

**2001:** All records were from Mai Po during the first winter period: one was noted on 14 and 30 January, and a small influx occurred in early March, when six were seen on 1<sup>st</sup> and ten (two males and eight females) on 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**2002:** A total of four birds were seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 23 February. A single male was at the KCRC ponds at Lok Ma Chau on 16 December and a female was also present at Lok Ma Chau on 25 December. This species has become very scarce in recent winters.

**045A Gadwall *Anas strepera* 赤膀鴨**

**2002:** Single birds were at Mai Po on 1 and 7 February.

**046A Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* 花臉鴨 VU**

**2001:** A male with a broken right leg was recorded at Mai Po intermittently from 12 January to 8 April. There were no reports in the second part of the year.

**2002:** A male was at Mai Po from 30 January to 7 February. In addition, a female was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 2 March.

**047A Common Teal *Anas crecca* 綠翅鴨**

**2001:** The highest count in the first winter period was 2,509 in the January waterbird count. Numbers dropped subsequently to ten birds on 28 April, the final record of the spring. Two birds noted during the August waterbird count were the first of the second part of the year. Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Long Valley (nine on 29 January) and Luk Keng (30 on 3 April). Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	2,509	764	2,125	10	0	0	nc	2	68	430	334	557
SW	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0
SI	48	91	0	0	nc	nc	nc	0	0	9	nc	1

**2002:** The highest count of the year was 3,147 birds in the January waterbird count. Number decreased to four birds during the April waterbird count, the final record in the first half of the year. The first returning bird was recorded during the August waterbird count. Monthly waterbird counts in the Deep Bay area, Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	3,147	745	707	4	0	0	0	1	nc	203	1,136	1,251
SW	0	nc	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0
SI	17	10	9	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	11	nc

**049A Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* 綠頭鴨**

**2001:** The highest count in the first winter period was of 15 at Mai Po during the January waterbird count. Six, one male and five females, were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 31 January, and one was at Lok Ma Chau on 28 February and 7 March. Two spring records at Mai Po involved one on 22 April and a male on 22 May. In the second part of the year, there was only one report, a male at Mai Po on 23 November.

**2002:** Records in the first winter period involved up to two birds at Mai Po on 15 and 20 January, and on 1, 5 and 20 February, and the last spring record was a single on 21 April. In the second winter period, a female was at Mai Po on 10 and 13 November.



050A Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha* 斑嘴鴨

2001

*A.p. zonorhyncha*

All records were from the Deep Bay area. Numbers continued to show a decreasing trend. Monthly counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	32	0	59	0	0	2	nc	3	0	2	5	2

In addition, 40 were present at Tsim Bei Tsui on 10 January. The highest count in the second part of the year was eight at Mai Po on 22 October.



Plate 4. Spot-billed Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha haringtoni* 斑嘴鴨 female  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 29 July 2003  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong

*A.p. haringtoni*

All records were from Mai Po: two on 22 and 29 April, 1 July, 13 October and 23 November, and three on 14 October.

There were also reports of birds unassigned to either taxon from Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau and Tsim Bei Tsui. Monthly peak counts of these were 20 in February, three in April, four in May, one in July, four in September, one in October, 20 in November and 35 in



December. Monthly counts in Deep Bay of unassigned birds during the year were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	2	3	2	0	2	0	nc	0	0	3	4	0

2002

*A.p. zonorhyncha*

At Mai Po the highest counts in the first winter period were 68 on 15 January and 57 on 20 February. Also four were present in the Shenzhen River area on 17 March. There were no further reports during the summer. During the latter part of the year at Mai Po 13 were noted on 25 October and 29 on 12 November. Monthly counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	5	37	41

*A.p. haringtoni*

There were only three records, all involving single birds at Mai Po: on 15 January, 20 February and 18 April.

Monthly counts in Deep Bay of birds unassigned as to taxon during the year were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	80	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	4

Records of Spot-billed Ducks unassigned to either taxon fell between 6 January to 29 September, including a peak count of 81 birds on 7 February. All records were from Mai Po.

Observers are strongly encouraged to submit more records of these taxa.

**051A Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* 針尾鴨**

**2001:** All records were from the Deep Bay area, except for six at Starling Inlet during the January waterbird count. The highest count in the first winter period was 3,435 in Deep Bay, also during the January waterbird count. Numbers decreased rapidly to one at Mai Po on 15 April, the final record of the spring. In the second part of the year, noted from 30 September, when two were at Mai Po, with a total of 4,207 present at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21 November. Monthly counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	3,435	1,829	322	0	0	0	nc	0	0	227	1,035	1,966

**2002:** The last spring record was a single at Mai Po on 23 April. In the second half of the year, the first returning bird was also at Mai Po on 6 September. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	2,609	776	1	0	0	0	0	0	nc	239	1,552	2,209

#### 052A Garganey *Anas querquedula* 白眉鴨

2001: The peak count in the first winter period was 212 in the March waterbird count. Numbers then decreased to 20 on 28 April, the final record of the spring. In the second part of the year, the peak count was of 450 at Mai Po on 13 October. Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Chek Lap Kok (one on 17 April), Kam Tin (up to four on 15 and 16 October) and Long Valley (two on 4 October). Monthly counts in the Deep Bay area during the year were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	17	0	212	84	0	0	nc	0	77	4	66	58

2002: All records were from Deep Bay. A record of 16 at Mai Po on 18 April was the last of the spring. The first of the autumn was a flock of 30 at Mai Po on 5 September. Monthly counts in the Deep Bay area during the year were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	28	35	70	0	0	0	0	0	nc	67	27	37

#### 053A Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* 琵嘴鴨

2001: All records were from the Deep Bay area. Numbers present showed a steep decline from the peak count of 6,414 in the January waterbird count to only 96 in the March waterbird count. Thereafter there were only a couple of records at Mai Po: five on 8 April and one on 15 May, the final spring record. The first record in the second part of the year was of eight in the September waterbird count, and the peak count was of 2,516 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21 November. Monthly counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	6,414	2,930	96	0	0	0	nc	0	8	645	663	1,670

2002: All records were from the Deep Bay area. A male and two females, present at Mai Po on 1 May, represented the last spring record. Monthly counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	1,630	778	1,722	0	0	0	0	0	nc	461	2,576	1,936

#### 054A Common Pochard *Aythya ferina* 紅頭潛鴨

2001: One was at Mai Po on 14 January.

2002: Two were at the KCRC ponds at Lok Ma Chau on 16 December.

#### 055A Baer's Pochard *Aythya baeri* 青頭潛鴨 VU

2001: Two were at Mai Po on 15 January and on 7 February, with one on 11 February. Also a female was at Nam Sang Wai on 14 February, and two were at Mai Po

again on 28 February and 1 March. Finally, one was seen there on 3 March. It is possible that all these records involved just two birds. There were no reports in the second part of the year.

2002: There was only one record: a male at Mai Po on 2 February.

#### 057A Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* 鳳頭潛鴨

2001: All records were from the Deep Bay area. The peak count in the first winter period was of 967 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 23 January, and the final record in the spring was of one at Mai Po on 29 March. Five birds noted during the October waterbird count represented the first record in the second part of the year. Monthly counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	409	265	832	0	0	0	nc	0	0	5	631	739

2002: All records were from the Deep Bay area. A female at Mai Po on 5 May was the last spring record in the first winter period. In the second winter period, the first record was of a female at Mai Po on 5 November. A new high count of 1,156 was made in the December waterbird count, albeit including 25 birds at Futian Nature Reserve, Shenzhen. The previous high count was 1,140 in February 1999. Monthly counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	103	10	4	0	1	0	0	0	nc	0	260	1,156

#### 058A Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* 斑背潛鴨

2001: Six females were at Mai Po scrape on 15 January and one was still present at Mai Po on 28 January. In the second part of the year, two females or immatures were at Lok Ma Chau on 12 December and four females were at Mai Po on 17 December.

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

2002: A pair was at Mai Po on 6 January and three were in Deep Bay on 26 and 28 February. In the second winter period, a female was at Lok Ma Chau on 27 November and another female was seen near Ma Tso Lung Police post on 12 December.

#### 063A Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* 鶚(魚鷹)

2001: As usual, most reports were from Deep Bay where, due to the presence of at least one over-summering individual, birds were noted in all months, with 14 logged during the co-ordinated counts of 11 February and 14 October, the highest counts of the year. Away from Deep Bay, winter reports were received from Shuen Wan (early January to 18 March, with a peak of three on 8 March, and again from 14 October to the end of the year), Starling Inlet (14 January to 11 March and 16 September to 18 November), Mau Ping New Village (22 February and 19 November, including two on the latter date) and Sham Tseng (17 November). In addition, up to two potentially

over-summering individuals were noted at Shuen Wan on 8 May and Tolo Channel on 1 June. Peak counts in each month in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	7	14	4	3	1	1	1	1	2	14	6	7

2002: Though again noted in all months in the Deep Bay area, it was recorded in slightly lower numbers than in 2001, and the highest count being ten on 17 February during a co-ordinated count. Away from Deep Bay, singles were reported at Starling Inlet (13 January to 20 February, and 20 October to 17 November), Shuen Wan (17 January to 8 March, 4 June, and 7 December), Plover Cove Reservoir (21 April), Lai Chi Chong (1 and 9 June), Kam Tin (9 October), Double Haven (22 December) and Hebe Haven (26 December). Peak counts in each month in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	9	10	7	7	5	1	1	2	1	5	9	6

#### 064A Black Baza *Aviceda leuphotes* 黑冠鵝隼(鳳頭鵝隼)

2001: Three at Pun Shan Chau near Tai Po Kau on 19 April were the first of the year. Subsequently there were sightings of up to two at Ho Chung on 30 April and 12 May and singles at Mau Ping New Village on 6 May and Pat Sin Leng CP on 29 May. The only further record involved a single bird at Pun Shan Chau on 27 July.

2002: One at Man Kei Toi (Sai Kung) on 16 February (MT) was the first of the year and, by almost eight weeks, the earliest ever. There were no further reports until 25 June when one was seen soaring near Ta Ku Ling. The only other records concerned two adults at Kam Tsin Village on 28 July and four birds passing over Long Valley on 20 September.

#### 065A Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhyncus* 鳳頭蜂鷹

1999: One at Tai Po Kau on 14 December (RWL) was the only record for that year.

2000: One was at Pun Shan Chau on the north side of Tai Po Kau on 1 January (GJC). This may be the same individual that was seen nearby on 14 December 1999. There was only one other record in 2000, previously published, on 12 September at Shing Mun.

2002: One was at Mt. Austin on 2 November (MT).

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

2001: One at Wo Shang Wai on 30 January was the only report during the first half of the year. In the second half of the year, one was at Mai Po on 13 and 19 August and single adults were noted at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau between 4<sup>th</sup> and 17 October.

2002: Following singles at Fung Hang (Starling Inlet) and Mai Po on 2 February and Mai Po again on 8 March, there were no further reports until the late summer when an adult was noted at Lok Ma Chau on four dates between 18 July and 14 August. One was also seen there on 6 September. Following a sighting on 13 August, an adult was

regularly noted at Mai Po between 6 September and 27 October, and finally a first-winter was seen there on 6 December.



**Plate 5.** Black Baza *Ariceda leuphotes* 黑冠鵟隼鳳頭鵟隼 adult  
Sai Kung, Hong Kong, 2 July 2005  
Pippen Ho

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

**2001:** In Deep Bay, peak counts were 159 in the first winter period and 156 in the second winter period. Elsewhere, the highest count reported was 96 at Shek Kong Catchment on 26 February, and the next highest 25 at Kam Tin on 7 February. One nesting record was received: a chick thought to be about 5 weeks old was at a nest on Tap Mun on 6 May. Results of the monthly Deep Bay counts were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	152	159	57	27	39	5	-	11	8	44	156	81

**2002:** The peak winter count in Deep Bay was 108 on 18 November, somewhat lower than in 2001. Elsewhere, 80 at Aberdeen Reservoir on 10 February was the only double-figure count received. One at Kennedy Road, Hong Kong Island on 1 April was seen carrying a Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*, a prey item not listed in Carey *et al.* (2001). Results of monthly Deep Bay counts were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	81	83	42	76	40	20	19	28	nc	63	108	73

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

**2001:** Reported this year from the following areas: Shuen Wan-Plover Cove (an adult and a sub-adult from January to June), Cheung Chau-East Lamma Channel-Green Island (up to two in February, April and December), Stanley-Repulse Bay-Shouson Hill (singles in April, September and December, including an adult at a nest at Stanley on 1 April), Starling Inlet (April), Sham Chung-Tolo Channel (April to November, including one or two adults attending two juveniles at Sham Chung between 15 April and 8 July and a pair nest-building there on 17 November), Sai Kung (up to two adults, June to December), Po Toi (up to two sub-adults, September and October), and Mai Po (an adult, a first-winter and a second- or third-winter separately on three dates in October and November).

**2002:** In a year when reporting of this species was unusually good, breeding was confirmed at three sites and suspected at seven others. At Yeung Chau (Sai Kung) a pair was regularly sighted at a nest from mid July to the end of the year, with stick-carrying observed on 28 September and 26 October and incubation first noted on 21 December. Nesting was also confirmed at Stonecutters Island and Tsim Chau (Tai Long Wan) and possibly occurred at Sham Chung, Tai Ngau Hau (Hebe Haven), Tai Tam, Wong Ma Kok (Stanley), Green Island, Chi Ma Wan, Penny's Bay and Pa Tau Kwu (Lantau). In addition, there were frequent sightings, mainly in the second half of the year, at High Island Reservoir (including four juveniles on 29 December), the Shuen Wan-inner Tolo Harbour area (including an adult and immature in a successful kleptoparasitic attack on a Black Kite on 2 October), Kowloon Reservoir (up to three individuals) and the Deep Bay area. There were also occasional reports from Tai Lam Chung Reservoir, Nam Chung, Tai O, Lamma and Po Toi.

#### 071A Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela* 蛇鵟

**2001:** Another very good year following the record totals of the previous year. As usual, most reports were of one or two birds soaring and calling over traditional sites around the Tai Mo Shan massif, especially Tai Po Kau and Lam Tsuen, and in the hills of the eastern NT, but there were also frequent reports, mainly of single birds in February-April and September-November, from the northern NT at Fung Lok Wai, the Mong Tseng hills, Mai Po, Hang Tau and the border hills. In addition, three were present at Mau Ping New Village on 8 July and 27 October. Vocalizations were noted during February-May, July and October-November, but there were no reports this year of aerial displays. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	2	7	13	11	7	-	5	3	5	8	3	3

**2002:** Recorded in all months of the year except August, with Tai Po Kau, KFBG, Shuen Wan, Ho Pui, and Ma Tso Lung accounting for more than half of records. Sightings were also reported on single dates at Chung Pui, Ngau Tam Mei, Palm Springs, Pun Shan Chau, Shek Kong, Shing Mun, Tai Mo Shan, Nam Wai Po, Sham Chung, Fung Yuen and Chinese University. All records were of one or two birds. Vocalizations were noted in January-March, June and December, and aerial display was reported once, at Pun Shan Chau on 16 February. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	2	7	1	4	2	2	1	-	2	2	3	4

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

**2001:** Following one at Ho Chung on 18 March, there were no further records until 1 April when 45 were counted flying north past Cheung Chau. One at Tai Po Kau the next day was followed by up to six at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui during 5-8 April. The only further record was of 100 at Mai Po on 13 April (YTY), the first ever three-figure count of this species in April and in fact only the third ever, following counts of 147 at Mai Po on 22 March 1993 and 106 at Cheung Chau on 24 March 1996. These good numbers in 2001 made the complete absence of records in 2002 all the more striking.

#### 073A Pied Harrier *Circus melanoleucos* 鵟鵒

**2001:** There were two records of single birds, both in autumn: at Mai Po on 13 October and Lok Ma Chau (a juvenile) on 15 November.

**2002:** All records occurred during the last three months of the year. These comprised two juveniles at Mai Po during 10-12 October, single juveniles at Lok Ma Chau during 15-17 October and at Palm Springs on 6 November, and an adult female at Lok Ma Chau on 31 December.

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

**2001:** Recorded up to 23 April and from 15 September, with all reports from Deep Bay. Most counts were of one to three birds, apart from totals of six in a co-ordinated Deep Bay count on 11 March and nine at Mai Po on 24 February (PJL). The latter is the highest count since 7 January 1989, when 11 were present at Mai Po. The only male reported was an immature from the Mai Po boardwalk on 14 February. Based on results of co-ordinated monthly counts and other reports, peak counts in Deep Bay in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	5	9	6	1	-	-	-	-	3	3	3	2

**2002:** Recorded only up to 5 April (rather earlier than usual) and from 21 September, with all reports once again from Deep Bay. Most counts were of one to three birds, apart from in the co-ordinated Deep Bay counts in January, November and



December when four or five were logged. Based on results of co-ordinated monthly counts and other reports, peak counts in Deep Bay in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	5	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	3	3	5	4



**Plate 6.** Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus* 白腹鷂(澤鷂)  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 19 November 2005  
Pippen Ho

#### 075A Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* 鳳頭鷹

**2001:** Recorded from widespread localities in most months of the year outside of the midsummer months, when there were no reports. Apart from three at Fei Ngo Shan on 27 May and three at Tai Po Kau on 16 September, all other reports referred to one or two birds. As usual, most sightings were from woodland around the Tai Mo Shan massif, especially Tai Po Kau, and from Pat Sin Leng. Elsewhere, there were reports from Mong Tseng, Mai Po, Cheung Chau, Mui Wo, Tai Ho and Ng Yuen (southwest Lantau). Aerial display flights were noted in January-March, May and October-December. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	2	2	3	1	3	-	-	-	5	3	-	6

**2002:** Perhaps as a result of the systematic survey work carried out for the Winter Atlas, the first two months of the year accounted for more than half of all records, though most reports were as usual from the Tai Mo Shan massif (especially Tai Po Kau) and Pat Sin Leng. Aerial display flights were noted at Tai Po Kau (including

during cold weather), KFBG, Shuen Wan, Chung Mei, Mid Levels, Shui Hau (Lantau) and Po Toi, all between January and May. A female, which may have been attempting to nest at Chung Mei, was noted on several dates in February giving a long drawn-out hiss with a plaintive quality somewhat reminiscent of the 'uist' call of a Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*. Elsewhere there were reports from Kowloon Tsai Park, Tsim Bei Tsui, Man Kei Toi (one picked up having been seen to collide with a vehicle on Hiram's Highway), Aberdeen Reservoir and Tai Tam CP. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	9	9	4	3	3	1	-	-	1	2	1	1

#### 076A Chinese Goshawk *Accipiter soloensis* 赤腹鷹

2001: One at Mai Po on 6 April (YTY) was the earliest ever in spring by one day. Passage thereafter, however, was very weak, the only reports being up to five at Po Toi on 12, 15, 21 and 22 April, one at Kam Tin on 25 April and one at Chek Lap Kok on 11 May. There was just one autumn record: one at Tseung Kwan O Cemetery on 16 September (YTY), equalling the earliest autumn date.

#### 077A Japanese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter gularis* 日本松雀鷹

2001: Single birds were recorded on seven dates between 7 January and 2 March, and on five dates between 21 October and 1 December. All individuals were sexed or aged: in the first half of the year, records involved females at Mai Po on 7 January, Fung Lok Wai on 10 and 19 January and Tsim Bei on 2 March, and males at Lok Ma Chau and Fung Lok Wai on 12 and 23 January respectively, and Mai Po on 8 February, while in the second half of the year females were at Tai Ho on 21 October and in the Mai Po area on 23 and 27 November and the sole record of a male was at Sha Lo Tung on 21 October. The only juvenile was at Tai Po Kau on 1 December, a somewhat unusual forest record of this species.

2002: A total of ten birds were recorded this year, all single birds on dates between 15 October and 14 November, as follows: Palm Springs on 15 October, Lok Ma Chau on 25 October (male) and 13-14 November (adult male and female), KFBG on 26 October and 3rd (adult male) and 9 November, Mai Po on 26 October (male) and 12 November (juvenile), and Long Valley on 2 November (juvenile female).

#### 078A Besra *Accipiter virgatus* 松雀鷹

2001: Sightings of one or two birds were made from widespread areas of the NT throughout the year, apart from July, when there were no records. The Deep Bay area, especially Fung Lok Wai and Mai Po, accounted for more than half of all records. Of the remaining records, most were from the Pat Sin Leng hills, Shuen Wan and the Tai Mo Shan massif, with occasional sightings at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen and Ho Chung. Aerial displays were noted in February and March at Tai Po Kau and Mai Po, and subsequently nesting was suspected in the Mai Po mangroves in mid May. A male at Pat Sin Leng CP was observed pursuing a Blue Whistling Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus*. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	3	9	7	2	4	1	-	4	3	3	2	2

**2002:** Though, unusually, there were no reports in March, this species was noted in all other months. All reports referred to one or two birds, with the Deep Bay area, especially Mai Po, and the Tai Mo Shan massif accounting for the bulk of records. There were also sightings in the February-June period at Shuen Wan, including an adult male entering or leaving a possible nest site in a *fung shui* wood on three dates between 7 and 24 June. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	3	3	-	7	2	5	1	2	6	7	1	2

### Sparrowhawk sp. *Accipiter sp* 雀鷹

**2001:** Unidentified accipiters were recorded in ones and twos from widespread areas in all seasons, though mainly in autumn. The number of such birds reported in each month was as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	3	2	4	-

**2002:** Unidentified accipiters were recorded from widespread areas in most months. The number of such birds reported in each month was as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	-	3	0	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	1

### 080A Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo* 普通鵟

**2001:** Recorded up to 15 April and from 14 October. Most reports were from Deep Bay and adjacent areas such as Sha Po, Lok Ma Chau and Long Valley. The peak count was eight during a co-ordinated Deep Bay count on 11 February. Elsewhere, up to two were present in both winter periods at Shuen Wan and there were occasional reports of one or two at Shek Kong, KFBG, Mau Ping New Village, Kwu Ling Chau and eastern Lantau. There were two records from the urban areas: Kowloon Park (two) on 11 January and Pok Fu Lam on 22 March. Based on results of co-ordinated monthly counts and other reports, peak counts in Deep Bay in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	7	8	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	2

**2002:** Recorded up to 31 March and from 20 October. Most reports were from Deep Bay and adjacent areas such as Kam Tin, Sha Po and Long Valley, and the peak count was seven during co-ordinated Deep Bay counts on 17 November and 21 December. Records elsewhere in the NT were of single birds at Shuen Wan from 8 January to 9 February and again from 30 October to the end of the year, Tai Po Kau Headland on 19 February, and Chek Lap Kok on 29 October. Records from more urbanized locations (singles except as indicated) came from Kowloon Walled City Park on 9 February, Bowen Road (two) on 19 February, Jardine's Lookout and So Kon Po, both on 19 November, and Nam Fung Road on 28 December. Based on results of co-ordinated

monthly counts and other reports, peak counts in Deep Bay in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	6	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	7	7

### 081A Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga* 烏鵲 VU

2001: Though this species was regularly recorded until 19 March, with a further record on 29 March, and again from 10 October to the end of the year, the highest count in each winter period was just three (at Nam Sang Wai on 29 January and in a co-ordinated Deep Bay count on 21 December). All records were from the Deep Bay area where birds were reported at Fung Lok Wai, Tsim Bei Tsui, Nam Sang Wai, Lut Chau, Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau, San Tin, Ma Tso Lung and Long Valley. Peak counts in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3

2002: This species continues to decline. Recorded up to 13 March and from 26 October, with all reports from the Deep Bay area, especially Mai Po. The highest count was three in a co-ordinated Deep Bay count on 17 November. It is possible that an adult and third-winter bird in the first winter period and an adult, a second- or third-winter and a juvenile in the second winter period accounted for all records. Peak counts in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	2	1	1	0	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	1

### 082A Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* 白肩鵲 VU

2001: Recorded up to 19 March and from 20 October. All records were from the Deep Bay area, including Kam Tin and Long Valley. The peak count was six on 14 January and 20 October. An unusually pale individual was noted at Mai Po on 23 November. Peak counts in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	6	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	3	2

2002: Recorded up to 17 March and from 6 November, with all records from the Deep Bay area, especially Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau. The decline in numbers noted since the winter of 1996-97 continues, the peak count this year being no more than four birds on 17 November. Peak counts in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1

### 083A Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraetus fasciatus* 白腹山鵲

2001: Reported throughout the year, with more than half of all records from Mai Po, where an adult and first-winter were noted in April and where there were frequent sightings, between 13 October and 3 December, of at least three different individuals

(an adult, a second- or third-winter, and a juvenile). Elsewhere in the northern NT, single birds were noted at Ma Tso Lung in January and December, Kam Tin in early March, and Palm Springs (a juvenile) in late August. The only other reports concerned single adults at Ng Yuen (southwest Lantau) on 29 January and Sham Chung on 17 November, and two birds at Turret Hill (Ma On Shan) on 17 November.

**2002:** Reports at Mai Po included single adults on 25 February and 16 May and an immature there on 1 March. Elsewhere in the Deep Bay area, up to two, including an adult and immature, were reported at Lok Ma Chau on 16 June, 14 July and 17 November and Sha Po on 8 October, and a pair was sighted at Palm Springs on 21 June. Outside of the northern NT, records comprised a second-year at Shuen Wan on 9 February and single adults at Luk Keng on 1 March, Shek Kong on 16 March and Tolo Channel on 18 May.

#### 085A Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* 紅隼

**2001:** Recorded from widespread locations up to 11 April and from 25 September, with Chek Lap Kok and the Deep Bay area (especially Long Valley) together accounting for over 80% of records. All reports referred to one or two birds except at Chek Lap Kok, where three were noted on four dates in September and October. The generally high numbers once again recorded in October indicate passage. Away from Deep Bay and Chek Lap Kok, there were occasional reports from Lam Tsuen, Tai Mo Shan, Wu Kau Tang, Cheung Sheung, Fei Ngo Shan, Mau Ping New Village, Kai Tak, Tai Ho and Po Toi. The only food item reported was a grasshopper caught at Tai Mo Shan on 24 December. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	9	5	8	1	-	-	-	-	6	19	9	6

**2002:** Recorded from widespread localities between 11 January and 28 February, with a further record on 20 April, and from 5 September to the end of the year. Most reports were of one or two birds, but there were sightings of three at Mui Wo on 29 September and four at Chek Lap Kok on 28 October and 13 November and also nine there on 9 October. This is the highest count since 6 November 1968 when ten were present at Lau Fau Shan. Once again Chek Lap Kok and the Deep Bay area together accounted for over 80% of reports. In addition to the localities already mentioned, there were occasional reports from Tai Mo Shan, Shuen Wan, Sai Kung, Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen and Kowloon Park. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	4	5	-	1	-	-	-	-	9	23	7	3

#### 086A Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo* 燕隼

**2001:** One at Chau Tau on 7 May was the only spring report. In late summer, single birds were at Kam Tin on 19 July (an adult) and 21 August, and at Fung Lok Wai on 27 August. Autumn records spanned the period from 22 September to 15 November and involved single birds, except as indicated: in September, at Pat Sin Leng on 22<sup>nd</sup>, Pun Shan Chau on 29<sup>th</sup> and Tai Mo Shan (two) on 30<sup>th</sup> and in October, at Mai Po on 11<sup>th</sup>, Lok Ma Chau on 14<sup>th</sup> and Mt. Austin on 19<sup>th</sup>. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	4	3	-	-

**2002:** A poor spring and summer, in which singles at Mai Po on 23 April and Nam Sang Wai on 25 June were the only reports, was followed somewhat unexpectedly by a good autumn, with records spanning the period 11 September-28 October. These comprised one or two birds at Mai Po on 11 and 28 September, 1, 12 and 25 October, at sea near Chek Lap Kok on 30 September, KFBG on 5 and 26 October, and at Ping Kong on 13<sup>th</sup>, Palm Springs on 16<sup>th</sup>, Wu Kau Tang on 19<sup>th</sup> and Long Valley on 28 October. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	4	14	-	-

### 087A Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* 遊隼

**2001:** In Deep Bay, up to four different individuals were noted from the beginning of the year up to 22 April and again from 7 October to the end of the year. In both winter periods, a pale adult was again noted frequenting the southern end of Mai Po. Away from Deep Bay, single birds were sighted at Ting Kok on 12 February (an adult carrying a Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus*), Plover Cove on 23 February, Chek Lap Kok on 19 March, Shuen Wan on 5 May and 12 December, Shek Ngau Chau on 29 July (an adult female feeding on a freshly caught Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus*), Tai Mo Shan on 9 September and Stanley on 30 September. In addition, two were at Silverstrand on 30 November. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	4	8	9	2	1	-	1	-	2	2	7	1

**2002:** Reported in Deep Bay from 13 January to 27 April, with a minimum of four individuals involved, and following one at Lok Ma Chau on 18 July, from 5 September to the end of the year, again with at least four individuals involved. Reports in the first winter period included a pale adult at the southern end of Mai Po. This is thought to be the individual noted each winter since 1997-98. Elsewhere, singles were reported at Starling Inlet on 5 January, Chek Lap Kok on 16 January, 9 and 25 April, and 28 and 29 October, Shuen Wan on 21 April, Shek Ngau Chau on 3 and 10 August (with predation of Bridled Terns *Sterna anaethetus* noted on both dates), KFBG on 7 September and 26 October, and finally Jardine's Lookout on 19 November. Totals reported in each month were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	6	6	4	7	-	-	1	1	2	4	8	5

### 088A Chinese Francolin *Francolinus pintadeanus* 鸕鶿

**2001:** All reports were from the NT, from Sai Kung, Pat Sin Leng, Sha Lo Tung, Wu Kau Tang, Chau Tau, Fei Ngo Shan, Lo Wu and Tai Mo Shan. Five was the highest count at any one site; these reports came from Pat Sin Leng and Sha Lo Tung.

**2002:** All records fell between 14 April and 6 June, and came from Ma Tso Lung, Chau Tau, Fung Lok Wai, Tai Mo Shan, Trio Beach (Sai Kung) and Lamma.

**089A Japanese Quail *Coturnix japonica* 鶉**

**2001:** There were six reports during the year: singles at Long Valley on 10 and 29 January, 24 February and 14 October, two at Ma Tso Lung on 28 February and one at Sha Lo Tung on 21 October.

**2002:** The only record in the first part of the year was of one at Long Valley on 29 April. Recorded in the second part of the year from 6 October, when one was at Shuen Wan. Subsequently, one was at Sha Lo Tung on 10 November and one or two birds were seen on four dates at Lok Ma Chau between 26 November and 31 December.

**090A Yellow-legged Button-quail *Turnix tanki* 黃腳三趾鶉**

**2001:** A freshly dead bird was picked up at the Hong Kong Observatory, Tsim Sha Tsui on 16 October (CYL).

**091A Barred Buttonquail *Turnix suscitator* 棕三趾鶉**

**2002:** One was at Shui Mei, Kam Tin on 11 October (JAA).

**092.3A Siberian Crane *Grus leucogeranus* 白鶴**

**2002:** A juvenile was at Mai Po on 11 December (XJW *et al.*). This is the first record for Hong Kong.

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

**2001:** The only report away from Deep Bay was of one at Long Valley on 10 January.

**2002:** Single birds of this secretive species were recorded during the monthly waterbird count in January (one at Deep Bay and another at Starling Inlet), November and December. The only reports away from Deep Bay were of one at Long Valley on 28 February, two at Shuen Wan on 23 May and one at Hebe Haven on 20 April.

**094A Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* 普通秧雞**

**2002:** Singles were at Sha Tau Kok on 27 January (WLC) and Tin Shui Wai on 23 February (RWL).

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

**2001:** Reports of the distinctive double note call were received from 20 March (the earliest such record in Hong Kong) to 13 May, from Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen, Pat Sin Leng CP, Wu Kau Tang, Kowloon Peak, Nam Chung, Cloudy Hill, Sha Lo Tung/Hok Tau, Tai Po Kau, Shuen Wan and Ting Kok. Most of these records were made as part of the Nightbird Survey.



2002: The only reports were of singles calling at Hebe Haven on 20 April and at Sha Lo Tung on 22 April. This paucity of reports must be due to a lack of observer reporting rather than actual scarcity.

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

2001: One was at Chek Lap Kok on 12 May.

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

2002: One was seen on a fishpond along the Mai Po access road on 20 October.



Plate 7. Slaty-legged Crake *Rallina eurizonoides* 白喉斑秧雞  
Kowloon Park, Hong Kong, 12 February 2004  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong

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

2001: Away from the Deep Bay area, the highest count was of eleven birds on 3 May at Long Valley. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	15	12	41	13	17	35	21	27	31	30	11	30

2002: Breeding was proven at Tam Kon Chau (one adult with six chicks, 18 April), Mai Po (a chick on 25 April) and Shui Mei (a downy chick on 4 October). Monthly waterbird count figures in Deep Bay, Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	10	6	23	30	23	31	18	36	nc	25	12	8
SW	0	nc	nc	0	1	0	2	1	nc	0	0	0
SI	7	8	7	3	2	1	0	1	nc	5	0	nc

#### 102A Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea* 董雞

2001: Single females were at Mai Po on 12 and 13 May, at Long Valley on 23 May and at Fung Lok Wai on 9 October.

2002: Single females were at Long Valley on 23 May and Lok Ma Chau on 16 June.

#### 103A Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* 黑水雞

2001: All reports were from Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau (where the highest count was 30) and Long Valley (where the highest count was four). Apart from counts made as part of the Waterbird Monitoring Programme, all reports received were for the period up to 3 May. Monthly waterbird counts figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	68	69	97	24	11	9	4	7	2	25	90	93

2002: During the monthly waterbird count, up to 156 were recorded in the Deep Bay area. Away from the Deep Bay area, recorded at Wu Kau Tang and Shuen Wan. Monthly waterbird counts figures at Deep Bay, Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	34	52	54	97	10	2	6	11	nc	69	69	156
SW	0	nc	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0
SI	10	4	6	8	0	0	0	0	nc	1	4	nc

#### 104A Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra* 白骨頂

2001: Two chicks were reported from Mai Po on 12 May; this is only the fourth confirmed breeding record, the last having occurred in 1977. The peak count was made in the January waterbird count. Monthly figures from those counts were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	534	25	38	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	64	50

2002: During the monthly waterbird count in Deep Bay, a maximum of 179 were in the March count. However, this peak number represents a sharp decline of over 70% compared to peak numbers in 1999 and 2000. There was a mid-summer record of two

birds at Mai Po on 23 June. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	54	18	179	0	4	2	0	0	nc	2	15	64

#### 105A Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* 水雉

2001: One was at Mai Po on 11 October, two were there on 4 November and one was at Lok Ma Chau on 14 and 15 November.

2002: In spring, singles in moult into breeding plumage were present on a pond beside the Mai Po access road on 14 May and from the Mai Po boardwalk on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17 May. Also, three were at Mai Po on 19 May. In addition, there was also a mid-summer record, involving an adult in breeding plumage at San Tin on 18 July. In autumn, singles were recorded at Lok Ma Chau on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3 October, Ma Tso Lung on 20 October, and at Shui Mei on 28 October and - thought to be the same bird - on 2 November. A good year for this species.

#### 106A Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* 彩鶺

2001: As usual, the primary sites for this species were Kam Tin and Long Valley. At Kam Tin up to 12 were recorded in the first winter period and ten were present in spring; in the second part of the year up to 15 were recorded (on 16 October). At Long Valley the only winter record was of one on 11 February. In spring all records were of one or two birds, apart from eight on 22 May, while there were no summer records. In autumn the highest count was of six birds on 4 October, with the final record of the year occurring on 14<sup>th</sup>. Away from these sites, four were at Sha Po on 30 January, four were at Luk Keng on 29 May and two were Fung Kat Heung on 19 and 26 August.

2002: There were reports in all months except March, June, July and December. The peak count was 15 at Long Valley on 15 September. At Kam Tin, a maximum of 14 birds were recorded, that record coming on 2 October. Away from these traditional sites, up to three birds, including a female, were noted on a newly created freshwater pond at Mai Po on 23 and 26 April, 19 May, and finally, with two juveniles, on 11 September, indicating that breeding may well have occurred there. Elsewhere, a male or immature was seen on 10 November at Sha Lo Tung, a new locality for this species.

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

2001: The only report in the first winter period was of 78 birds at Lok Ma Chau on 2 January, though a count of 180 on abandoned fish ponds at Wo Shang Wai suggests a larger wintering population was present. Spring numbers peaked at 55, during the April Deep Bay waterbird count, while 54 were counted on 1 May. A summering population of up to 37 birds was noted in June. Return passage saw peak counts of 31 in August, 172 in September and 240 in October. The November and December waterbird counts each recorded just one bird, suggesting the wintering population was elsewhere in the fish pond area. Away from the Deep Bay area, three were at Shuen Wan on 1 September, four were at Kam Tin on 4 September, three were at Chek Lap Kok on 7 September, one was at Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma on 6 October (the first record

from this island) and up to eight were at Long Valley between 1 and 14 October. Monthly waterbird count figures from sites within the Waterbird Monitoring Programme recording area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	0	0	55	0	25	0	31	172	240	1	1

**2002:** In the first winter period, the highest count was 273 at Mai Po on 1 April. Only very few records were submitted outside the monthly waterbird count and shorebird monitoring programme. Two at Tin Shui Wai on 24 June was the sole mid-summer record. The first returning birds were 18 at Mai Po on 19 August and the number present reached a peak of 200 during the October waterbird count. In addition, one bird was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 2 November, an unusual location given this species' preference for freshwater habitats. Away from Mai Po and the immediate surrounding area, records came from Long Valley (six on 15 September and eight on 13 October), Ma Tso Lung (four on 12 December) and Starling Inlet (five in the May waterbird count). Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	0	0	19	61	5	15	41	nc	200	4	6

#### 108A Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* 反嘴鷸

**2001:** The highest count of the first winter period was of 2,000 on 4 March, which is only slightly below the highest ever count of 2,045 on 26 January 1998. A total of 955 remained at the end of March, numbers subsequently falling to 182 on 21 April, ten on 30 April and seven, the last count of the spring, on 15 May. Two at Mai Po on 27 July represented the earliest autumn record since one was seen there on 21 July 1981; these birds remained until at least the end of September. Numbers increased from early October, reaching 84 by the end of the month and 111 on 2 November. Counts of 507 and 1,277 were made in the November and December waterbird counts, respectively. Most records were from the intertidal areas of Deep Bay, including the Kam Tin River at Nam Sang Wai, and Mai Po; in addition, one was on a fish pond at Lok Ma Chau on 9 January. Full monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	1,438	1,926	1,296	162	0	0	0	0	0	6	507	1,277

**2002:** The highest count, and the highest ever for this species in Hong Kong, was of 2,500 during the March waterbird count. Numbers subsequently declined to 289 on 18 April and the last spring record was of eight at Mai Po on 1 June. Two at Mai Po from 27 July were the first returning birds, being first noted on the same early date on which birds had been noted the previous year. The peak count in the second winter period was 2156 during the November waterbird count. All records were from the Deep Bay intertidal area and the Mai Po Nature Reserve, except for one at Starling Inlet in the November waterbird count. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	1,391	1,957	2,500	289	31	0	0	2	nc	67	2,156	2,079



Plate 8. Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* 彩鹬 female  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 11 June 2005  
Cherry Wong

#### 109A Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum* 普通燕行鳥

**2001:** First recorded on 28 February, and subsequently recorded on seven dates in March (with the highest count being 20 on 20th) and eleven dates in April (highest seven on 13<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>). There was one May record, a single on 9<sup>th</sup>. The only autumn record was of two during the October waterbird count. Most records were in the Deep Bay-Long Valley area, with the exceptions being ten at Chek Lap Kok on 29 March, four at Luk Keng on 3 April and one at Chek Lap Kok on 12 June.

**2002:** The first record of the year involved four at Mai Po on 1 March. This was followed by five at Mai Po Village on 7 March and two at Chap Lap Kok on 18 March. The main passage period was from 3 April to 1 May, during which time the peak count was 15 at Lok Ma Chau on 6 April. The last spring record was one at Mai Po on 25



May. In autumn, there were only two records of single birds at Chek Lap Kok on 1 October and at Lok Ma Chau on 12 November.

**110A Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* 鳳頭麥雞**

**2001:** Singles were at Mai Po on 4 January and on 10 and 11 February, over fish ponds along the Shenzhen River on 9 March and at Kam Tin on 10 November.

**2002:** Singles were at Lok Ma Chau on 12 November and at Mai Po on 22 November.

**111A Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus* 灰頭麥雞**

**2001:** At Kam Tin up to seven were recorded in the first winter period up to 19 April, while in the second part of the year one reported on 25 August (MRL) represented the earliest autumn record. Subsequently, one was noted there on 28 September and up to ten were present on 11 and 15 November. Away from this stronghold, five were recorded at Long Valley on 26 February and one was Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 October.

**2002:** During the first half of the year, there was only one record of five birds at Kam Tin on 1 March. The first returning bird was a juvenile at Mai Po on 11 September. This was followed by another single there on 28 and 29 September and by three on 5 October. At Kam Tin, the first record was of one on 28 September. Numbers increased to five on 6 October and then to a peak count of nine on 3 November. Finally, one flew over Mai Po on 13 November.

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

**2001:** The highest count in the first winter period was 140 during the January waterbird count. Northward passage peaked at 491 on 15 April; numbers subsequently fell to 300 on 28 April, after which date a rapid departure occurred, with only 27 remaining on 3 May. The final record of northward passage was of a single bird on 16 May. Return passage was recorded from 6 August, though a double-figure count was not made until 8 September, when 45 were recorded. Numbers further increased from the last week of September, with 120 counted in the first half of October, 115 on 2 November and 174 in the December waterbird count. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	120	127	66	491	6	0	0	13	33	11	13	174

**2002:** A total of 152 from the Mai Po boardwalk on 1 February exceeded the January count and proved the presence of this species during that month, when it went unrecorded on the monthly waterbird count, though a similar number must, it is safe to assume, have been present at that time. During the spring passage period, the peak count was of 212 at Mai Po on 23 March. Subsequently, notable counts involved only 120 at Mai Po on 18 and 20 April, and 107 on 1 May. The last spring record was of two birds on 4 May. In autumn, a single was first recorded at Mai Po from 6 to 12 August and a small influx of 45 birds was noted on 8 September. The peak count during autumn passage was 120 on 5 and 8 October. The arrival of wintering birds in

November and on into December was reflected in the numbers recorded during the November and December waterbird counts. Away from Mai Po, recorded at Chek Lap Kok (four on 18 March and a single on 22 April), San Tin (a single on 24 October), and Shuen Wan, where a large flock of approximately 200 was recorded on 10 September. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	94	0	160	0	0	0	0	0	nc	2	186	230

### 113A Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* 灰斑鵲

**2001:** The highest count of the first winter period was 366, which, unusually, occurred during the March waterbird count. As usual, the second half of that month saw the departure of most birds, and in April the highest count was 39 on 8<sup>th</sup>. Indeed, after 10 April, no more than six birds were recorded, the latest being one seen on 25 June. In autumn no more than four birds were recorded until 28 October, when 34 were present. The wintering flock grew to 121 and 271 by the time of the November and December waterbird counts respectively. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	312	300	366	2	1	0	0	6	0	0	121	271

**2002:** The peak count in the first winter period was 394 in the February waterbird count. Numbers decreased to 28 on 23 March and then three on 23 June, the final spring record. The first bird in autumn was a single on 6 August, with the main arrival occurring between the October and November waterbird counts. Away from the Deep Bay area, also recorded during the monthly waterbird counts in Starling Inlet in January (14 birds), February (seven birds) and November (four birds). Full waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	280	394	80	0	5	2	0	1	nc	34	150	164

### 116A Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* 金眶鵲

**2001:** Numbers in the first winter period were relatively low, with the peak count being 72 in the February waterbird count in Deep Bay; within that, the highest single site count was at Lok Ma Chau, where 48 were counted. Evidence of passage was apparent by the March count, when 104 were recorded. No confirmed reports of breeding were received. The August and September waterbird counts recorded 34 and 31 birds respectively, after which the wintering population increased to a peak of 128 during the November count. Away from the Deep Bay area records were received from Long Valley, Kam Tin, Shuen Wan and Chek Lap Kok, with the highest count being 12 at Shuen Wan on 30 November. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	46	72	104	29	5	2	0	34	31	99	128	116

**2002:** The peak count of the year was of 243 in the Deep Bay area during the January waterbird count. Breeding occurred at Lok Ma Chau, with one chick being seen on 31 March and two on 5 April. Away from Deep Bay and its immediate vicinity,



records came from Chek Lap Kok (up to four birds), Kam Tin (peak count of 41 on 3 November), Long Valley (18 on 2 November) and Shuen Wan (up to five birds). Monthly waterbird count figures at Deep Bay, Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	243	86	85	47	16	13	14	32	nc	101	56	98
SW	0	nc	nc	5	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0
SI	7	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc

#### 117A Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* 環頸鷸

**2001:** The difficulties in recent years of making accurate counts of the small wader flock wintering in Deep Bay were again apparent in 2001. The seemingly inexorable rise in the height of the mudflat means that the boardwalk hides at Mai Po are, on average, ever further from the tide line at times of counts. As a result, there are fewer occasions on which accurate counts are possible. The peak count in both first and second winter periods was 960, recorded in the February and November waterbird counts. While this is not considered to reflect accurately the real numbers present, the fact is we cannot now be sure that there has not been a decline in the size of the wintering flock in recent years. Away from the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan up to 18 were present in the first winter period (on 10 March) and nine were noted in the second (on 30 November), at Chek Lap Kok 47 were counted on 2 March and one was present on 27 September, and at Tung Chung 15 were present on 30 November. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	602	960	0	10	0	0	0	0	15	48	960	480

**2002:** In the Deep Bay area, the highest count in the first half of the year was only 63 during the February waterbird count. Numbers declined further to 31 on 23 March and finally two on 5 April. The problems related to the silting up of Deep Bay referred to above must be at least partly responsible. In the second half of the year, the first birds were two on 24 August and numbers only slowly increased to 48 on 19 October. Subsequently, 811 birds were present during 22-28 October and 1,543 were counted on 2 November, the peak count of the year, and just over 60% higher than the peak in 2001. Away from Deep Bay, records came from Chek Lap Kok on seven dates between 30 September and 12 November, with a maximum of 15 on 8 October. At Shuen Wan, three birds were seen on 29 September, five on 8 November and two on 11 December. Finally, birds were also present during waterbird counts at Starling Inlet in January (six), August (two) and November (two). Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	63	0	0	1	0	0	0	nc	5	378	0

#### 118A Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus* 蒙古沙鷸

**2001:** The peak count in the first winter period was six birds in the January waterbird count. Passage birds were noted with certainty from 3 April, and numbers of northward-bound migrants peaked at 41 on 20 April. This was the lowest peak spring

count since 1981, but included two of the taxon *atrifrons* (GJC). The last spring record was of three birds on 23 May. As usual, autumn records were few, with one on 8 August followed by another on 16<sup>th</sup> and 19 September; the second half of October saw up to 12 birds present, perhaps indicating the arrival of the wintering flock, though subsequent counts did not exceed three. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

**2002:** In the Deep Bay area, no wintering birds were noted in the first winter period, while the first spring passage birds were two individuals noted on 30 March. Numbers remained low until mid-April, though an influx then boosted numbers to 73 on 25 April, and the peak count during the northward migration was 103 on 8 May. In the May waterbird count 25 birds were still present and the final spring record came on 28 May. In autumn, the first report was of a single on 27 July. Numbers recorded were low during the southward migration and the peak count was three on 13 September. The last autumn record was one on 20 September. None was reported in the winter months. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

### **119A Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* 鐵嘴沙鴉**

**2001:** The first record during the northward passage period came on 23 March when 40 were noted. Subsequently numbers peaked on 8 April at 410, which is about 40% of the typical peak count at this time. A second influx appears to have occurred in the third week of that month, when 290 were present on 20<sup>th</sup>. At least ten birds appear to have remained for the summer, with this number on 25 June followed on 8 July by a count of 150, a rather high figure for so early in the autumn. As of 16 August a total of 34 birds remained, but subsequently numbers declined to 11 on 1 September and one on 28 October, the final record of southward passage. Away from Deep Bay, at Chek Lap Kok up to eight were present on 6 and 7 April and two were there on 12 May.

**2002:** In the Deep Bay area, the first record during the spring passage period was of 56 on 23 March. Numbers then increased to a peak count of 600 on 11 April, again significantly lower than peak spring counts in recent years. It should be noted that few were seen at the high tide roost on Pond 16/17 at Mai Po, yet greater numbers appeared during the subsequent falling tide from the Mai Po boardwalk hides, indicating that birds must have been utilizing alternative roost sites. After 11 April, numbers fell to 110 on 25 April and then to 13 on 1 May, but a further influx led to 133 being counted during the May waterbird count. The last spring record was of 15 on 28 May. The first bird recorded during the southward migration period was a single on 16 July. Subsequently numbers present rose to 69 on 19 August, then 72 on 27 August, reaching a peak of 76 on 20 September. Away from the Deep Bay area, at Chek Lap Kok one was present on 30 July, up to 10 birds were there on 30 September and 1 October, and finally three on 9 October. Also, one was present at Shuen Wan on 19 and 27 August, flocks of 51 and 20 were recorded at Starling Inlet during the September and October waterbird counts respectively, and six were at Long Valley was on 20 October. This was the final record of the year and an unusual site for this species.

### **120A Oriental Plover *Charadrius veredus* 紅胸鴉**

**2001:** At Chek Lap Kok, the stronghold for this species in recent years, a female was seen on 19 March, one male and four females were present on 30 March, and a female was present on 6 and 7 April. At Mai Po one was present on 25 March. In autumn, two were present at Chek Lap Kok on 27 September.

**2002:** All records were in autumn: at Mai Po, four (two adults and two juveniles) on 11 September, and at Chek Lap Kok ten on 30 September and 1 October, one on 8 October, and three on 9 October.

### 121A Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* 黑尾膝鶉

**2001:** The highest count in the first winter period was of 299 on 17 January. The first significant influx in spring occurred at the end of March, with 102 recorded on 29<sup>th</sup>; subsequently, numbers on northward passage peaked at 1,003 on 15 April. The final record of the spring involved three birds on 23 May. The first record of the autumn occurred on 27 July when ten were recorded; subsequently, numbers remained lower than this for a month, until an influx at the end of August saw 76 present on 7 September. Numbers during the autumn peaked at 450, noted on both 22 and 28 October, the highest count on record for the second half of the year. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	224	250	161	1,003	2	0	0	10	181	312	296	215

**2002:** A count of 320 made in the January waterbird count was the highest of the first winter period. Spring migration peaked at 572 on 30 March and numbers then steadily dropped to just one by 23 June. Thereafter numbers grew to eight on 14 July, suggesting that the first migrants had returned to Hong Kong. Numbers increased to 60 on 27 August, 244 on 24 September, 318 on 8 October, and finally to 440 in the November waterbird count, this being the peak count in the second half of the year. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	320	140	160	290	6	1	36	10	nc	385	440	150

### 122A Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* 斑尾膝鶉

**2001:** The highest count of the first winter period was of five birds, noted on 5 March. Birds on northward passage were apparent from at least 29 March, and numbers peaked at 30 on 15 April. During May no more than three birds were recorded, and one seen on 31 May was the final record at this time. The first record on southward passage occurred on 1 September, and four birds were present during the first week of that month. Subsequently, no more than three were recorded until 28 October, when eight were present. Although four remained during the November waterbird count, one on 1 December represented the final record of the year. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	4	3	30	2	1	0	0	0	1	4	0

**2002:** The first record of the year was two in the January waterbird count. Two again, presumably the same birds, were noted on 1 February and during the February waterbird count. Numbers increased to three on 7 March and four on 27 March. The peak count in the spring migration was 85 on 11 April, declining to just four on 16 May, the final spring record. The first returning bird was a single on 19 August and the peak count for the autumn passage period was only four in the August waterbird

count and on 20 September. One on 17 November was the last record of the autumn. Away from the Deep Bay, one was seen at Cape D'Aguilar during the approach of Severe Tropical Storm Hagupit on 11 September. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	2	2	0	16	1	0	2	4	nc	0	1	0

**123A Little Curlew *Numenius minutus* 小杓鹬**

**2002:** One was at Mai Po on 17 April.



**Plate 9.** Little Curlew *Numenius minutus* 小杓鹬  
Kam Tin, Hong Kong, 23 April 2005  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong

**109A Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum* 普通燕(行鳥)**

**2001:** First recorded on 28 February, and subsequently recorded on seven dates in March (with the highest count being 20 on 20<sup>th</sup>) and eleven dates in April (highest seven on 13<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>). There was one May record, a single on 9<sup>th</sup>. The only autumn record was of two during the October waterbird count. Most records were in the Deep Bay-Long Valley area, with the exceptions being ten at Chek Lap Kok on 29 March, four at Luk Keng on 3 April and one at Chek Lap Kok on 12 June.

**2002:** The first record of the year involved four at Mai Po on 1 March. This was followed by five at Mai Po Village on 7 March and two at Chap Lap Kok on 18 March. The main passage period was from 3 April to 1 May, during which time the peak count was 15 at Lok Ma Chau on 6 April. The last spring record was one at Mai Po on 25

May. In autumn, there were only two records of single birds at Chek Lap Kok on 1 October and at Lok Ma Chau on 12 November.

#### 124A Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* 中杓鹬

2001: Up to two were reported during the first winter period, up to at least 3 March. The first migrants were probably present on 25 March, and certainly by 1 April, though numbers remained below ten until 15 April, when an influx saw 47 present; this proved to be the highest count of the northward passage period. Up to 21 birds were present after 1 May, with seven remaining on 25 June, indicating that at least some birds over-summered. Up to ten birds were present in July, with numbers increasing from early August onwards to a peak count of 120 birds on 23 August. After a count of 97 on 19 September, numbers declined sharply to 13 on 18 October and three on 2 November. Two on 4 November represented the final record of the year. The only records away from the Deep Bay area involved one at Shuen Wan on three dates between 25 August and 14 September, and one at Chek Lap Kok on 18 September. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	1	1	0	47	18	0	0	81	40	24	0	0

2002: One was recorded during the January and March waterbird counts. Northward passage was noted from 14 April, when five were recorded. Numbers then increased rapidly to a peak count of 53 on 21 April, and the last spring record was of 12 on 23 June. Southward migration was first noted from 27 July, when two were seen, and it peaked at 135 on 13 September. The final record of the year involved a single seen on 17 November. There were several records away from Deep Bay: up to 33 were seen at Shuen Wan on eight dates between 25 August and 8 September, and there were also three there on 4 October. Seven were seen at Sai Kung on 31 August, and eight flew over Hoi Ha on 7 September. Also, during the approach of Severe Tropical Storm Hagupit on 11 September, a total of 18 were seen at Cape D'Aguilar. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	1	0	1	5	8	0	0	33	nc	0	1	0

#### 125A Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* 白腰杓鹬

2001: The highest count of the first winter period was 810 on 11 February, and 586 remained at the time of the March waterbird count. Numbers subsequently declined to 64 on 23 March, 36 by the middle of April, 27 a month later and 21 on 23 June. That this was the approximate size of the summering population was confirmed by a count of 23 on 8 July. Subsequently, the highest monthly counts were 35 in July, 32 in August, 49 in September and 61 in October. The November and December waterbird counts produced 167 and 234 respectively. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	426	810	586	36	25	2	0	53	66	39	167	234

2002: The highest count of the year was of 849 from the Mai Po boardwalk on 1 February. Numbers then decreased to 260 in the March waterbird count, 57 on 28



March, 21 in the April waterbird count and only three in the May waterbird count. However, 12 were present in the June waterbird count, presumably overwintering individuals. The second half of the year saw counts of 24 in the July waterbird count, 39 on 5 September, 51 in the October waterbird count, 126 in the November waterbird count and finally a total of 433 in the December waterbird count. All of the above records were from the Deep Bay area and elsewhere there was just one record, of one at Starling Inlet during the November waterbird count. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	539	558	260	21	3	12	24	23	nc	51	126	433

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

**2001:** In the first winter period one was present, while northward passage was evident from at least 29 March. From that date up to three birds were noted until 20 April, when 14 were counted; subsequently, up to eight birds were recorded up to 3 May, and one was present on 22 and 23 May. Southward passage was evident from 19 September to 2 November, though no more than two birds were recorded on any one date. In addition, one was present during the November waterbird count. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

**2002:** The first record of the year was a single from the Mai Po boardwalk on 7 March. Subsequently, as the northward migration period began, there were records between between 28 March to 28 April, with high counts of just three on 11 and 14 April and four on 18 April, this being the peak for the year. There were only two records in autumn: single birds on 20 September and 1 October. All records were from Deep Bay.

### 127A Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* 鶴鹬

**2001:** The peak count of the first winter period was 1310 on 11 February. Numbers on northward passage peaked at 1051 on 15 April and 1107 on 1 May, with an intervening low of 513 on 26 April. The last record of the spring involved 42 on 16 May. Return passage was noted from 16 August, though counts did not exceed 31 until the end of September. The peak count in October was 93, and the December waterbird count produced a total of 151. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	512	122	898	1,050	182	0	0	50	7	93	62	151

**2002:** The peak count of 2,500 in the January waterbird count was the highest in the year, and also equalled the highest ever count for Hong Kong. Spring passage peaked at 1,108 in the April waterbird count, though there followed an unusually high count in May with 1,086 on 12<sup>th</sup>, strongly suggesting a second major wave of passage at that time. Numbers then declined sharply to 278 on 16 May, the last date of occurrence in spring. The first returning bird was noted on 27 July and numbers grew to five on 27 August, 17 on 8 September, 34 on 5 October, 151 on 2 November and finally to 601 in the November waterbird count. Away from Mai Po, singles were seen at Kam Tin on

11 October and San Tin on 24 October. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	2,500	9	1,032	1,108	1,086	0	0	0	nc	12	601	4

### 128A Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* 紅腳鵞

2001: In the first winter period the highest count was 175 on 4 January. Northward passage was evident by the time of the March waterbird count, when 253 were present. Thereafter, numbers increased significantly to peak at 1,536 on 10 April and 1980 on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Up to 320 were recorded during the first half of May, and up to 77 in the second half, but from that time on numbers fell away sharply, to just one on 25 June, suggesting very few, if any, actually overwintered. Numbers on return passage peaked at 390 on 27 July; subsequently, 100-200 birds were present until early November, followed by 87 and 75 in the November and December waterbird counts respectively. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	91	170	253	1,795	146	193	0	329	363	194	87	75

2002: The peak count in the first winter period was 69 in the January waterbird count. Spring passage birds were first apparent in the March waterbird count, when 410 were counted. A count of 1,620 in Deep Bay on 25 April was the highest of the spring, and the last spring record was of 31 on 28 May. Southward passage was noted from 14 July, when 376 were counted, and peaked at 680 on 27 July. Subsequent peak counts for August, September and October were 602, 388 and 84 respectively. The presence of 105 in the December waterbird count would suggest that the arrival of wintering individuals had occurred at some time during the previous month. The only record away from the Deep Bay area involved five birds at Sai Kung on 31 August. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	69	21	410	1,661*	268	0	291	391	nc	51	63	105

\* This figure includes 832 birds at Futian, Shenzhen and 823 at Mai Po.

### 129A Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* 澤鵞

2001: The highest count in the first winter period was of 1,171 birds during the February waterbird count. Numbers in spring peaked at 1,529 on 3 April, and, as usual, fell away abruptly after the middle of the month. The last record of the spring was of four on 13 May. Return passage was noted from 27 July, though single figures only were recorded until 1 September, when 200 were present. Further influxes saw 569 counted on 19 September and 856 on 18 October, and the highest count of the second half of the year was 910 on 2 November. The only record away from the Deep Bay area was of one at Kam Tin on 19 April. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:



	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	13	1171	1050	639	4	0	0	11	507	379	749	0

**2002:** A relatively low, and probably unrepresentative, count of 153, made in the January waterbird count on a very low high-tide, was nonetheless the highest in the first winter period. A count of 1,495 in the March waterbird count would certainly have included spring passage individuals. The peak count in spring was 2,125 on 30 March. Subsequently, numbers dropped to 1,226 on 14 April, only 73 on 28 April, three on 16 May, and one on 1 June, which was the last spring record. Southward migration was first noted on 14 July when a single was seen. Numbers then increased to 32 on 27 August, 1,176 on 24 September, and 1,376 on 5 October, before dropping to 1,011 on 22 October. Later, arrivals of wintering birds saw the November waterbird count rise to 1,467. All records were from the Deep Bay, except for three at Shuen Wan in the April waterbird count. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	153	0	1,495	1,226	22	0	0	1	nc	647	1,467	4

### 130A Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* 青腳鷸

**2001:** The highest count in the first winter period was 290 during the January waterbird count. Northward passage was evident from at least 11 March, with numbers building up to an initial peak of 570 birds at the end of March. During the first three weeks of April up to 498 birds were recorded, after which numbers increased, to peak at 1,230 on 7 May. A midsummer population of at least 28 birds was present in the latter half of June and first half of July. Return passage was recorded from the third week of July, and numbers built up to an initial peak of 737 on 16 August, followed by a second peak of 710 on 7 September and a third of 702 on 18 October. Subsequently, numbers declined to 620 in early November and 500 during the November waterbird count. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	290	42	571	490	247	13	0	737	669	572	500	34

**2002:** The peak count in the first winter period was of 376 in the January waterbird count. The first definite evidence of northward passage birds came on 23 March, when 580 were counted. Subsequently, numbers fluctuated in April, with two peaks of 591 and 596 noted on 11<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> respectively. A clear influx was noted on 4 May when 942, the highest count of the spring, were counted. Up to 816 were still present on 12 May. Numbers then dropped drastically to just 170 on 16 May, 68 on 24 May and 34 on 23 June, this latter count presumed to involve summering individuals. Southward passage was first noted on 14 July, when 86 were counted. Numbers increased to 172 on 27 July, 679 on 19 August, and 1,189 on 20 September, this being the highest count of the autumn. Thereafter, numbers fell to 646 on 5 October and 548 in the November waterbird count. Away from the Deep Bay area, two were at Shuen Wan in both the May and October waterbird counts, and one was at Starling Inlet in the November waterbird count. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	376	2	352	205	822	15	40	678	nc	351	548	31

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

**2001:** Two on 27 March marked the beginning of northward passage. Subsequently, numbers increased to 17, reported on both 6 and 8 April, followed by a decline to the end of the month, as the initial passage of adults weakened. A second peak of 12 on 9 May marked the peak count of first-summer birds, and the final record at this time was of seven birds on 23 May. In autumn there were four reports of what is presumed to have been the same individual, between 14 October and 2 November. All records were from Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay.



**Plate 10.** Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer* 小青腳鵞 adult moulting into breeding plumage  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 19 April 2004  
Jemi and John Holmes

**2002:** The first record for the year was a single at Mai Po on 6 February, presumed to be an over-wintering individual, and presumed to be the same as was also reported on 8 March. During the spring passage period, the first definite passage was noted on 30 March, when two were recorded. A peak of only four birds, a relatively low figure, was recorded during the first passage period from 30 March to 17 April. The second influx occurred in May when a total of 11 were noted on 12 May. The last spring record was one on 1 June. One present from 21 July to 6 August was the earliest record of this species on southward migration in Hong Kong. There were also reports of singles recorded on 6 and 8 September, 5-9 October and 6 November. All records were from Deep Bay.

### 133A Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* 白腰草鷸

**2001:** The final record in the first winter period was of one at Lok Ma Chau on 8 May, while the first of the autumn was of three at Kam Tin on 19 July. A count of 28 birds at Ma Tso Lung on 29 August was unusually high for the site and date. Records were received from various sites in the northern NT, as well as Mui Wo on Lantau. Monthly waterbird count figures for this species were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	31	17	39	15	0	5	0	15	11	39	33	53

**2002:** In the first winter period the peak count of 44 was made in both the January and March waterbird counts, while the peak count for the later part of the year was of 37 in the October count. Away from Deep Bay, records were also from Long Valley and Kam Tin. Monthly waterbird count figures in Deep Bay, Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	44	30	44	36	3	0	4	1	nc	37	34	32
SW	0	nc	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0
SI	3	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	nc	0	1	nc

### 134A Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* 林鷸

**2001:** Numbers reported in the first winter period were relatively low, with the highest counts at the two main sites being 28 at Long Valley and 19 at Lok Ma Chau. Passage was noted from mid March, and the highest counts were 55 at Long Valley on 18 April, 16 at Lok Ma Chau on 19 April, 29 at Mai Po on 12 April and 18 flying north at Kam Tin on 23 April. In addition, one was at Chek Lap Kok on 17 April and two were at Shuen Wan on 19 April. A count of 91 was made in the April waterbird count. Although 40 were still present at Long Valley on 28 April, numbers declined markedly after the end of the month, with only two records at Mai Po in the first week of the month followed by one there on 8 June. The first autumn record was of 70 at Kam Tin on 19 July. Subsequent passage at Mai Po peaked at 330 birds on 16 August, while 406 were recorded in Deep Bay in the September waterbird count. The only record away from the northern NT was of 58 at Chek Lap Kok on 7 September. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	18	17	8	91	2	0	0	332	406	370	25	18

**2002:** The count of 762 recorded in the April waterbird count was a new high in spring and was comprised of 450 at Mai Po and 160 in the Shenzhen River area. The summer records in the June and July waterbird counts were from Mai Po and Lut Chau respectively. In autumn the count of 106 in the November waterbird count was the highest of that passage period. Away from Deep Bay, records came from Chek Lap Kok (one on 30 September), Kam Tin (up to 50 on 14 October), Long Valley (peaking at 25 on September), Shuen Wan (one on 12 April) and Starling Inlet (one in the March waterbird count). Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	21	15	39	762	5	1	6	34	nc	48	106	13

### 135A Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* 翹嘴鵞

**2001:** A record of one seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 27 February is only the second wintering record, and is presumably the same individual as was seen on 10 December 2000. Northward passage was noted from 25 March, though only single figures were recorded until an influx saw 72 present on 8 April and 120 four days later. Numbers peaked at 367 on 23 April and 368 on 1 May. A decline to mid month was followed by a further influx that saw 158 counted on 23 May. The summering population appears to have numbered 116 birds, which were counted on 25 June. This population seems to have departed in the last week of June or first week of July, as no more than one bird was recorded from 8 July to 8 August. A subsequent count of 45 birds on 16 August remained the highest of this year's southward passage, and the final record concerned six on 20 September. The only record away from the Deep Bay area was of one at Shuen Wan on 1 September. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	0	0	40	26	0	0	45	1	2	0	0

**2002:** Two noted on 23 March represented the first record of the year, but numbers remained low in early April, with only a maximum of 23 reported. A small influx on 21 April resulted in a count of 117, increasing to 134 on 25 April. A second influx appeared to occur in the second half of May and the highest count of the year, 481 birds, was made on 28 May. A total of 473 were still present on 1 June but there were no subsequent records until what were presumably the first southward passage birds (three) were seen on 27 July. Numbers grew to 132 on 19 August, but then declined sharply to only 42 on 27 August. Two on 2 November were the last of the year. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	0	0	19	215	0	0	6	nc	0	0	0

### 136A Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* 磯鵞

**2001:** This species was recorded from a variety of lowland sites throughout the NT, with highest counts of 32 at Lok Ma Chau on 26 April, 15 at Long Valley on both 22 and 28 April, 12 at Nim Wan on 12 September, four at Shuen Wan on 14 September and nine at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17 September. Peak numbers occurred during the final four months of the year. As usual, a small number of birds remained throughout the summer. Monthly waterbird count figures for this species were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	70	50	79	79	18	5	21	67	89	89	81	92

**2002:** The peak monthly waterbird count (154) noted in April indicated northward passage at that time, while the October count of 98 similarly indicated the period of heaviest southward passage. The seven birds recorded in the June waterbird count were presumably over-summering individuals. Away from Deep Bay, records were from Kam Tin, Long Valley, Luk Keng, Po Toi, Sha Po, Shuen Wan (the last spring

record on 17 May and the earliest autumn record on 30 June) and Tin Liu (near Yuen Long). Monthly waterbird count figures in Deep Bay, Shuen Wan and Starling Inlet were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
DB	66	69	86	154	54	7	21	59	nc	98	92	82
SW	1	nc	nc	2	2	0	1	0	nc	0	1	1
SI	4	3	3	5	0	0	0	1	nc	1	1	nc

### 137A Grey-tailed Tattler *Heteroscelus brevipes* 灰尾漂鵲

**2001:** First recorded in the Deep Bay area on northward passage on 8 April, though no more than 15 were subsequently recorded during the month. In May numbers increased to 21 on 7<sup>th</sup>, and 62 on both 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. In June, 15 were still present on 25<sup>th</sup>, with eight of these remaining to 8 July. There were no further records until 8 August, when two were recorded. The highest count on southward passage was six on 19 September, with the latest being a single the following day. Away from the Deep Bay area, at Shuen Wan up to 15 were present during 6-10 May, and up to eight were noted on 31 August and 1 September.

**2002:** The first record of the year was two from Mai Po boardwalk on 9 April, soon followed by one at Shuen Wan on 10<sup>th</sup> and three at Mai Po on 11<sup>th</sup>. In the second half of April only up to 14 were present at Mai Po. A significant influx was noted from 10 May, when a total of 64 were counted, which turned out to be the peak count of the year. Numbers gradually decreased to 47 on 12 May, 36 on 16 May, ten on 24 May and finally two on 28 May. What were presumably the first returning birds (eight) were seen on 8 July. There were no further reports until two on 8 August and the southward passage period extended to 19 September, with six on this date being the peak count during this period. At Shuen Wan, up to five birds were present on seven dates between 25 April and 23 May, and again on 25 and 27 August. Also, three were at Starling Inlet in the May waterbird count and one was noted at Sai Kung on 31 August.

### 138A Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* 翻石鵲

**2001:** The first record of northward passage occurred on 1 April when two birds were noted. Up to the middle of the month no more than 14 birds were recorded, but then an influx brought 102 on 20<sup>th</sup>. Numbers declined to 57 on 7 May, and thereafter no more than eight were present. The final record of the spring occurred on 16 May. The only record on southward passage was of one on 19 and 20 September. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

**2002:** The first record in the northward passage period was a single on 7 April, followed by three on both 9 and 11 April. The first major influx noted involved 61 present on 25 April. Numbers then declined until a second influx on 10 May when a total of 76 were recorded, the peak count of the year. Subsequently, 64 were noted on 12 May and 58 on 16 May, the final spring record. Always more scarce in autumn, it was recorded on just three dates in that season: singles in the August waterbird count, on 5 September and 19 September. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	0	0	0	65	0	0	1	nc	0	0	0

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

**2001:** Recorded on northward passage between 15 April and 16 May at Mai Po, Kam Tin and Long Valley. The highest count at this time was of 32 at Mai Po on 15 April, with 31 there on 3 May. Also recorded on three dates in autumn: singles at Ma Tso Lung on 29 August and at Long Valley on 9 September, and 70 in southern waters near Po Toi on 22 September. A relatively poor year for this species.

**2002:** The first record was a single at Deep Bay on 21 April. Subsequently, a flock of 22 birds were present on 8 May, with an additional single on 16 May. Elsewhere, a total of 367 were counted in Mirs Bay on 11 May. There was only one autumn record: 125 at Cape D'Aguiar during the approach of Severe Tropical Storm Hagupit on 11 September.

### 141A Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* 丘鷓

**2001:** In the first winter period two were at Chau Tau on 2 January and singles were at Pat Sin Leng CP on 11 January and Lead Mine Pass on 5 March. The first record in the second winter period occurred on 2 October at Cloudy Hill; subsequently at this location singles were recorded on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 18 October. Elsewhere, one was at Mt. Austin on 12 October, three were at Tai Po Kau-Shing Mun on 24 October, with singles there on 31 October and 2 November, and one was at Pat Sin Leng on 25 October.

**2002:** There were only three records during the year: singles at Kam Tin on 8 January, Wu Kau Tang on 1 March and Sha Lo Tung on 10 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 & 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. Further work on vocalizations is required before apparent differences in call can be confirmed.

**2001:** The highest count in the first winter period was of 20 birds at Sha Po on 30 January. Evidence from previously trapped birds suggests that these were probably Pintail Snipe. Northward passage was noted between 8 and 22 April, with the highest count being 15 at Long Valley on 11<sup>th</sup>. In autumn, southward passage was noted from 4 September, and the highest count was 50 at Long Valley on 9 September, with 25 there on 15<sup>th</sup>. The only record in the second winter period was of two at Lok Ma Chau on 14 December. Away from the northern NT, one was at Chek Lap Kok on 30 March.

**2002:** There were only three reports in the first half of the year, including six at Starling Inlet in the January waterbird count, and singles at Kam Tin on 22 January and Lok Ma Chau on 10 April. The first record in the second half of the year was of a single at Long Valley on 14 August. Numbers at this site increased to 26 on 22 August, 50 on both 6<sup>th</sup> and 15 September and 60, the peak count of the year, on 18 September. At Kam Tin, up to three birds were present between 2 and 9 October. Four were also noted at



Lok Ma Chau on 24 September. At Mai Po, five were recorded on 1 September and up to ten were noted between 21 September and 1 October.

#### 142A Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura* 針尾沙錐

2001: Trapping enabled the following to be identified with certainty: two at Kam Tin on 11 April, 31 at Long Valley on 10 September, with eight there on 26 September, two at Kam Tin on 4 October and one there on 8 October.

2002: All records involved trapped individuals at Mai Po: three on 7 April, one on 21 September and two on 28 September.

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

2001: Trapping enabled the following to be identified with certainty: nine at Long Valley on 10 September and six there on 26 September.

2002: There was only one certain record through trapping: two at Long Valley on 15 September.

#### 144A Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* 扇尾沙錐

2001: The highest count in the first winter period was of 40 birds on 30 January at Sha Po, with ten at Long Valley on 5 January the next highest. In spring, the highest count was of 30 at Long Valley on 11 April, and the final record of northward passage occurred on 28 April. Noted in the second part of the year from 13 September, the highest counts in the first part of the autumn being ten at Long Valley and Kam Tin on 10<sup>th</sup> and 12 October respectively. Subsequently, up to 13 were at Kam Tin during November. Away from the northern NT, also noted at Shuen Wan, where one was present on 5 April. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	3	7	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	4	0

2002: The peak count in the first winter period was of ten at Kam Tin on 22 January. Small numbers present in the northward migration period were noted in the Deep Bay area and Shuen Wan during the April waterbird count. The last spring record was of two at Long Valley on 29 April. A single at Shuen Wan in the August waterbird count was the first returning bird in the second half of the year, followed by three at Long Valley on 6 September. Influxes during the autumn passage period were noted at Long Valley, where there were 70 on 20 October and 80, the peak count of the year, on 2 November. Monthly waterbird count figures in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	8	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	nc	5	1	14

#### 145A Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* 長嘴半蹼鶉

2001: One was at Mai Po on 4 March (IC). It should be noted that records of dowitcher sp. are presumed to be the species that is known to occur, rather than the much less likely alternative.



**2002:** The first record of the year was a single on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2 March, followed by another on 23 March. Up to three were present from 30 March to 14 April. One was noted again from 4<sup>th</sup> to 12 May, the latter representing a new spring late date for Hong Kong. In autumn, singles were seen at Mai Po on 18 October and 6 November. All records were from Deep Bay.

**146A Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus* 半蹼鷗 N**

**2001:** Birds on northward passage were recorded from 6 April to 13 May, with the highest numbers during the second half of April, when the peak count was 49 on 29 April. After 2 May there were only three records of up to two birds, the latest occurring on 13 May. As in spring, numbers on southward passage were also relatively low, with only up to four birds recorded between 16 August and 15 September. All records were from Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay.

**2002:** Two seen on 9 April were the first of the year, with seven present by 11<sup>th</sup>. The first sizeable influx involved 30 on 20 April, with a subsequent one involving 36 on 28 April; this was the peak count of the year. Subsequently, numbers gradually decreased to two on 1 June, the last spring record. Southward passage was noted between 11 August and 15 September, with a peak count of seven on the former date. All records were from Deep Bay.

**147A Red Knot *Calidris canutus* 紅腹濱鷗**

**2001:** The first winter period saw up to four birds reported up to 11 February. The first northward-bound migrant was recorded on 6 April, though no more than six were recorded until 29 April, when 31 were present. This was the highest spring count; numbers subsequently declined to 11 on 3 May, and the final record at this time was of seven on 31 May. Southward-bound migrants were recorded from 19 September to 14 October, with no more than two birds counted. What is presumed to be the first of the small wintering flock was recorded on 3 November, when two were present; up to four birds were subsequently recorded during the same month, and one was counted in the December waterbird count. All records were from Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	4	1	1	13	0	0	0	0	1	2	1

**2002:** The first record of the year involved a single individual, presumably wintering, seen on 17 February. The first northward passage bird was noted on 5 April. Numbers remained low until a small influx of nine noted on 28 April. A further influx on 4 May boosted the number present to 21 and a peak count of 94 was made on 10 May. The last spring record was a single on 24 May. Southward migration was noted between 5 September and 2 November. Three were noted on 5 September, but all subsequent records involved just one or two birds. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	0	0	2	15	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0

#### 148A Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris* 大濱鷸

**2001:** In the first winter period up to seven birds were recorded until 11 March. Northward-bound migrants were recorded from 23 March, when 17 were present, and numbers increased in early April to 340 on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 560 on 8<sup>th</sup> (GJC), and the highest on record in Hong Kong. Although 255 remained on 12<sup>th</sup>, by 15<sup>th</sup> fewer than 50 were present; numbers then declined slowly until a second influx in early May began, bringing 24 on 9 May and an unusually high count of 85 as late as 31 May. The first record of the autumn occurred within the August waterbird count, when one was present. Subsequently, numbers increased to 28 on 7 September and 92 on 20 September (RWL); the latter represents the highest autumn count for Hong Kong, though by just one bird. Most of these migrants appear to have departed by mid October, and by mid November the wintering flock appears to have arrived, with ten birds noted on 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, and nine present in the December waterbird count. All records were from Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	3	7	4	47	0	0	0	1	37	4	10	9

**2002:** Up to 12 birds were present in the first winter period. Subsequently, numbers gradually increased and a significant influx of 91 birds was noted on 4 April, which in fact was also the peak count of the year, massively below the record peak count recorded in 2001. Numbers dropped to 35 on 14 April and 21 on 20 April. A second influx of 85 birds was recorded on 8 May, and 23 still remained on 1 June. Two on 23 August were the first birds noted on southward passage. Numbers rose to 28 on 7 September and 52, the peak count in autumn, on 19 September. Smaller counts of up to four birds were made on several dates in October, and finally seven were counted in the November waterbird count; these may have represented the wintering population though none at all were recorded in the December waterbird count. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	5	12	17	35	5	0	0	0	nc	3	7	0

#### 149A Sanderling *Calidris alba* 三趾濱鷸

**2001:** Recorded on northward passage from 1 April to 23 May, with a peak count of six, recorded on 2 April and from 23 April to 7 May. None were recorded after 9 May, apart from one on 23<sup>rd</sup>. The sole autumn record was of four at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21 November, which is a typical date for the relatively few autumn records. All records were from Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay.

**2002:** Six from Mai Po boardwalk on 9 April was the first record on northward migration. In what emerged as the main passage period from 20 April to 19 May, a maximum of nine was recorded, on 28 April. There were no reports in the autumn. All records were from Deep Bay.

### 150A Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* 紅胸濱鷸

2001: The peak count in the first winter period was of five birds. Northward-bound migrants were noted from 23 March, and subsequent influxes brought peaks of 230 in mid-April, 800 on 23 April and 540 on 9 May. Numbers declined to 58 at the end of May, with no more than two present in June. First recorded in the autumn on 8 August (one); subsequently, the highest count in that month was four, and in September and October, eight and 22 respectively. A count of 17 on 30 November may have represented the wintering flock. Away from Deep Bay, the only records were of singles at Chek Lap Kok on 17 and 26 April, with four there on 12 May and six on 7 September, and one at Long Valley on 23 April. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	3	2	0	71	334	0	0	4	8	0	0	0

2002: Four birds noted in the March waterbird count were the first of the year. A total of 35 on 23 March was the first clear indication of the northward migration. Numbers slowly increased to 250 on 9 April. Thereafter, the first clear influx (705 birds) was noted on 1 May, and a major influx of 2,575 birds was recorded on 12 May; this represented a new high for Hong Kong. After that, numbers present fell to 1,087 on 16 May and just six on 24 May, the last spring record. One on 8 August was the first bird of the southward migration and it was followed by four on 16 August. A minimum of 50 birds present on 19 September was the peak count in autumn. Up to 19 were reported on 28 October, and eight on 17 November were the last of the year. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	15	0	4	23	2,893*	0	0	33	nc	0	8	0

\*Count made up of 2,552 at Mai Po, 318 at Futian and 23 at Tsim Bei Tsui.

### 151A Little Stint *Calidris minutus* 小濱鷸

2001: A bird in breeding plumage was present at Mai Po from 21 April to 1 May.

2002: There were seven records during northward migration. All records were of single birds unless stated: 11 April, 15 April (two), 21 and 22 April, 1 May (two), 10 May, 12 May (two) and 16 May. The last date was the latest spring record in Hong Kong. All records were from Mai Po.

### 152A Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii* 青腳濱鷸

2001: Winter records of this species came from fish pond areas at Ma Tso Lung, Lok Ma Chau and Tsim Bei Tsui; all records were of up to four birds, apart from 15 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 17 January. In addition, 24 were recorded during the March waterbird count. Spring passage was noted on 6-7 April at Tsim Bei Tsui, when up to 20 birds were recorded, at Mai Po on 22 April (one bird) and Lok Ma Chau on 26 April, when four were present. The only records in the second winter period were of one on a fish pond near Mai Po on 14 October and of 12 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 16 December. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	12	13	24	6	0	0	0	0	0	16	1	0

**2002:** The highest count in the first half of the year was of 35 in the January waterbird count. Fourteen in the April waterbird count indicated that northward passage was occurring at that time. One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 18 April was the final spring record. The first returning bird was noted at San Tin on 27 August. Up to five were noted in the fishponds areas near Mai Po and at Lok Ma Chau in October and November. The only other record in the second winter period was of 14 in the December waterbird count. Away from the Deep Bay area, three were noted at Kam Tin on 3 November. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	35	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	14



**Plate 11.** Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii* 青脚濱鷸  
Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong, 4 December 2004  
Jemi and John Holmes

### 153A Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* 長趾濱鷸

**2001:** Recorded in spring between 6 April and 10 May, with the highest counts being 19 in the April waterbird count, and ten on 6 April. In autumn, recorded between 16 August and 30 September, with the peak count being four on the first date. All records were from the Deep Bay area, apart from one at Long Valley on 23 April and two there on 9 September.

**2002:** The first record of the year was of a single, presumably on northward passage, in the Shenzhen River area on 31 March. Seven were noted in the same area on 3 April and up to 29 were present on 15 April. At Mai Po, 12 were noted on 18 April, five on 1 May, seven on 12 May and one on 16 May, the last spring record. The status of six at Lut Chau on 14 July during the July waterbird count was uncertain; they may have been over-summering or early autumn arrivals. Later, four were at Mai Po on 5 September and three on 11 September. A count of 49 made at a drained fishpond at San Tin on 18 September was a new high count for the southward passage period in Hong Kong. Finally, one was at Lok Ma Chau on 28 December. Away from the Deep Bay, two were at Shuen Wan on 10 April.

**154A Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos* 斑胸濱鷸**

**2002:** One was in the Shenzhen River area on 1 April, a new early date for Hong Kong (RWL). Subsequently, two were at Lok Ma Chau on 3 April and a single was again at Mai Po on 5 April (GJC). It is, of course, possible that only two birds were involved in all these records. Finally one was at Mai Po on 20 September (RWL).

**155A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata* 尖尾濱鷸**

**2001:** Recorded on northward passage from 1 April to 23 May, though only single figure counts were made until 26 April, when 16 were present. Main passage occurred from this date until 9 May, with the highest count being 65 on 3 May. Recorded on southward passage between 27 July and 16 August, when up to two birds were recorded, and again during 19-20 September, when one bird was present. All reports were from Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay.

**2002:** First recorded - a single - on 30 March, followed by three on 1 April and ten on 5 April. Numbers then rose to 42 on 14 April, 61 on 20 April and 92 on 28 April. A significant influx of 246 birds was noted on 10 May, providing the highest count on record for Hong Kong. These birds seem to have lingered for at least six days as 241 were still present on 16 May. However, there was no further report until 1 June (three birds). In the southward passage period, two were noted on 27 July, 2 and 8 August, and one on 16 August and 5 September. The last autumn record was of eight on 19 September. All records were from Deep Bay.

**156A Dunlin *Calidris alpina* 黑腹濱鷸**

**2001:** The peak count in the first winter period was 3,100, made on 11 February. The wintering flock had all but disappeared by the final week of March, and thereafter only single birds were recorded on northward passage until 23 April, with two present on 7 May. One on 16 August was the first of the autumn; this may have been the sole passage migrant, as the wintering flock appears to have begun building up from 15 September, to reach 1,100 by the last week of October. Subsequent counts, however, did not exceed the 150 recorded in the December waterbird count. All records were from Inner Deep Bay and Mai Po. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	2,500	3,100	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	0	2	150

**2002:** Following on from the difficulties in establishing the whereabouts and the precise size of the wintering flock experienced towards the end of 2001, a very low count of just 50 was made in the January waterbird count. The low level of the tides on which counts had to be made must have played a part in this. Only two birds were noted on northward migration: one on 30 March and another on 28 April. The first bird noted on southward migration was on 16 August, as in the previous year, and again there were no further reports until 15 September when eight were noted. Numbers increased to 11 on 19 September and 28 on 30 September. An influx of presumed wintering birds was noted on 18 October when 400 were counted. Subsequently, numbers rose to 1,100 by 28 October, and 1,200 by 2 November. A count of 1,430 in the November waterbird count was the peak count of the year. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	50	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	1,430	0

### 157A Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* 彎嘴濱鷸

**2001:** First recorded on 1 March, by the end of that month numbers had increased to 269. A large influx in the early April brought 2,840 on 8<sup>th</sup>, and further influxes saw 4,460 counted on 15<sup>th</sup> and 5,770 on 26<sup>th</sup>; the latter was the highest count of the spring. A further influx appears to have occurred at the very end of April, as 4,636 were present on 1 May. Numbers declined to 30 by the middle of May, and there were no records between 8 June and 8 July, when two were recorded. Numbers on northward passage peaked at 69 on 27 July, declining during August to 28 on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Subsequently, single figure counts were made until the final record on 18 October. The only record away from the Deep Bay area was of nine at Chek Lap Kok on 7 April. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	0	0	4,460	180	0	0	30	2	1	0	0

**2002:** Five from Mai Po boardwalk on 2 March were the first of the year, followed by eight there on 8 March. While records as early as that could possibly involve wintering birds, a total of 170 counted on 23 March were clearly on northward passage. The first significant influx, involving a count of 2,290, was noted on 5 April and a further influx of 4,490 was recorded on 21 April; this was the peak count of the year. Numbers declined to 1,960 on 1 May, 356 on 4 May and 200 on 8 May. An influx of first summer birds resulted in an increase to 506 on 10 May. Thirteen on 1 June were the last of the spring. Two on 14 July were the first of the autumn passage, the highest count of which was made on 28 July (69). Subsequently, numbers gradually decreased to three on 30 September and two on 18 October. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	0	26	2,284	218	0	0	30	nc	1	0	0



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

**2001:** Up to two birds were present at Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay during 20-23 April. These were the only reports received in this poor year for the species.

**2002:** There were only two records of single birds at Mai Po on 28 April and 12 to 16 May. Another poor year for perhaps our most charismatic bird.

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

**2001:** Up to six birds were recorded in the first winter period, while northward-bound migrants were noted from at least 3 April. Numbers increased significantly in the second half of the month, with 140, present on 23 April, being the highest count of the spring. After a count of 133 on 1 May, numbers declined to 23 on 13 May and one on 23 May, the final record of the spring. Southward passage was first noted on 16 August, when three birds were counted. Subsequently, two were noted on 15 September and one on 30<sup>th</sup>, three were present on 4 October and up to 11 were counted in the latter half of that month. The final record of the year concerned two on 30 November. All records were from Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	2	4	0	54	23	0	0	3	0	0	0	0

**2002:** Two on 23 March were the first of the year, and numbers slowly increased to 15 on 11 April. An influx of 41 was noted on 28 April and a total of 60 were present on 1 May; this was the peak count of the year. The final spring record involved 36 on 16 May. Southward migration was first noted on 16 August, when three were counted, followed by 15 on 5 September, 40 on 19 September and 13 on 3 October. Sightings of six on 18 October and 11 on 28 October could have marked the arrival of wintering birds. All records were from Deep Bay. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	0	0	2	30	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0

**160A Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* 流蘇鷸**

**2001:** A male was present from 14 February, and was joined by another male and a female from 2 to 9 March. A single male was present from 23 March to 2 April, and the final spring record was of one on 26 April. One on 27 July (GJC) is the earliest autumn arrival on record in Hong Kong; it was followed by up to three birds from 16 to 30 September, with one also on 11 October. The only record away from the Deep Bay area was of a juvenile male at Chek Lap Kok on 7 September; this is only the fourth record away from Deep Bay.

**2002:** One on 7 March was the first of the year, and there was also one from 23 March to 12 April. One on 27 July equalled the earliest autumn arrival. The only subsequent record in autumn was a single on 30 September. All records were from Mai Po.



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

**2001:** The peak count in the first winter period was of 24 birds, mostly first-years, from the Mai Po boardwalk on 14 February. Up to 15 birds remained in Deep Bay until 17 March, but thereafter only up to six were counted until the final record of the spring on 15 May. These are relatively high counts and a relatively late date of departure for Deep Bay, where this species is irregular in its occurrence. In addition, 20 were seen between Aberdeen and Po Toi on 25 February. In the second winter period, a first-winter bird was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk from 2 to 18 November.

**2002:** There were rather fewer reports than in 2001, and all records fell within the period 1 February to 7 March. The peak count was of 11 birds on 20 February, comprising nine first-winters and two second-winters. All records were from Deep Bay.

**164A Mew Gull *Larus canus* 海鷗**

**2001:** A first-winter bird of the taxon *kamschatschensis* was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 14 January (GJC).

**2002:** A first-winter bird of the taxon *kamschatschensis* was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 24 February (GJC).

**165A Heuglin's Gull *Larus heuglini* 休氏銀鷗 (烏灰銀鷗)**

**2001:** The peak count in the first-winter period was 474 on 11 February; numbers declined to 130 a month later. The final records involved two second calendar year birds seen on 2 April, with one seen again on 15 April. In the second winter period the peak count was of 40 birds, nearly all adults, from the Mai Po boardwalk on 30 November. Away from the Deep Bay area, 55 were in north Lantau waters on 22 January and five were seen between Aberdeen and Po Toi on 25 February. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	188	474	241	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	140

**2002:** The highest count in the first winter period was of 780 on 22 February. A count of 530 was made on 7 March, followed by 150 in the waterbird count of that month. Subsequently, a rapid departure appears to have occurred, as this was the final record of the spring. Eight on 17 November were the first of the second winter period; numbers then increased to 68 by the time of the December waterbird count. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	290	230	150	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	8	68

**166A Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans* 黃腿鷗 (黃腳銀鷗)**

**2001:** All records occurred in Deep Bay during the first winter period, with a peak count of 14 on 27 February. Subsequent to 11 March counts did not exceed four, and the final record was of a single second-calendar year bird on 8 April.

**2002:** Up to seven first-winter birds, one second-winter and six adults were recorded in the first winter period, with the highest day count being 13, counted on both 20 and 24 February. The final record was of an adult on 1 April. There were no records in the second winter period. All records came from Inner Deep Bay.

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

**2001:** Recorded in the first winter period until 29 March, with the peak count being six birds on 4 March; this group comprised five first-winters and one second-winter.

**2002:** Recorded in the first winter period until 7 March, with the highest count being six on 20 February; this group comprised five first-years and one adult (GJC), the first to be recorded in Hong Kong. All records were from Inner Deep Bay.

**169A Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus* 北極鷗**

**2001:** A first-winter was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 4 and 10 March (GJC).

**170A Pallas's Gull *Larus ichthyaetus* 漁鷗**

**2001:** At least four birds were recorded in the first-winter period: a first-winter, a second-winter and two adults. The peak day count was of two birds, and the final sighting was on 17 March.

**2002:** A second-winter was seen on 7 January and 6 February, and an adult was seen on 7 March.

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

**2001:** Single adults were recorded on 15 January and 11 March, and a first-winter was present on 4 March.

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

**2001:** The peak count in the first winter period was 13,500 on 13 January. After a count of 3,772 made during the March waterbird count, the next record was of three birds on 4 April. Subsequently, one or two birds were recorded until the final record on 23 April. In the second winter period, first noted on 5 October. Few birds appear to have been present in the first half of that month, but numbers increased to 200 by 4 November, 1,190 in the November waterbird count and 5,743 in the December count. All records received were from the Deep Bay area. Submissions of counts from other areas are encouraged. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	13,500	4,740	3,772	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,190	5,743

**2002:** The highest count in the first winter period was of 13,000 birds during the January waterbird count, with 7,546 remaining at the time of the February count; however, departure of the wintering population appears to have occurred unusually early, with none recorded during the March count. The latest record of the spring was

of one on 9 April. Arrival in the second winter period was first noted on 26 October, and numbers increased to 4,154 by the time of the November waterbird count and 9,433 in the December count. A count of 323 was made on 28 December at the KCRC fish ponds at Lok Ma Chau. All records were from the Deep Bay area. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	13,000	7,546	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	4,154	9,433



Plate 12. Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus* 棕头鷗 adult non-breeding  
Mai Po Nature Reserve, Hong Kong, 25 January 2006  
Cheung Chun Kwok

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

**2001:** The highest count in the first winter period was 50 on 17 February. Subsequently, no more than five birds were noted until 11 March, after which a single second calendar year bird was seen on 29 March, and on 10 and 12 April. Recorded in the second winter period from 2 November, with the highest counts being 24 on 16 November and 30 in the December waterbird count. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	31	43	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	30

**2002:** The peak count in the first winter period was of 61 birds, made on 20 February and comprising at least 38 adults and 14 first-years. Although 20 were

present on 1 March, subsequent records only involved single figures. After two on 28 March, a first-year lingered until 20 April. In the second winter period, first recorded on 2 November, with the highest count being 28 on 17 November. Monthly waterbird count figures were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	0	60	14	1	0	0	0	0	nc	0	28	0

#### 178A Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus* 鬚浮鷗

**2001:** Recorded on northward passage between 4 April and 24 April and between 12 and 15 May. The highest count was of 12, made on both 10 and 22 April and on 15 May, all at Mai Po. The only record away from Deep Bay at this time was of 11 in southern waters on 13 May. Autumn records were much more scattered; there were singles at Shuen Wan on 22 August, Fung Lok Wai on 27 August, San Tin on 4 October and Lok Ma Chau on 6 December, two at Tsim Bei Tsui on 19 October and 47 at Mai Po on 28 August.

**2002:** Northward passage was noted between 9 April and 9 June. Up to 11 birds were noted in an initial influx of migrants up to 14 April, while a second influx from 21 April saw a peak count of 50 on 26 April. All these records, plus four on 1 May, occurred at Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay. The final record of the spring was of one at Tap Mun on 9 June. Return passage was noted chiefly between 24 August and 24 September with the highest count being seven on 19 September, though there were also two on 17 November. All records at this time were from the Deep Bay area, apart from one at Shuen Wan on 10 September.

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

**2001:** The following records were received for the year: up to six at Mai Po boardwalk during 22-23 April, ten at Mai Po on 9 May, 84 in southern waters and 35 at Mai Po on 13 May, at least 60, and possibly 110, off the Mai Po boardwalk on 15 May and 30 at Tap Mun on 3 June.

**2002:** In a poor year for this species, only three records were received: 31 at Mai Po on 10 May, one in Mirs Bay on 11 May and a juvenile at Mai Po on 5 September.

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

**2001:** First recorded on 29 March, followed by an influx beginning at the end of the first week of April which saw a new high of 415 counted on 12<sup>th</sup> (GJC); the previous highest count was 341 and occurred in 2000. Numbers declined to 118 on 23 April, 40 on 28 April, 16 on 5 May, with just single figure counts thereafter, until the last record of the spring, six on 22 May. One at Mai Po on 20 September represented the only autumn record. All records were from Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay.

**2002:** Recorded in spring between 28 March and 10 May, the highest count being 67 on 12 April, a marked contrast to the record numbers of the previous two years. There was only one autumn record, a single seen at Shuen Wan on 20 August. All records, apart from the sole autumn record, were from the Deep Bay area.

**181A Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia* 紅嘴巨鷗**

**2001:** The only record in the first winter period was of one on 29 January. Northward passage was noted between 25 March and 12 May. Although the peak spring count of 32 on 7 April was higher than the previous two years, it is still very low historically. Only single figure counts were made after 12 April. After the summer one was seen on 23 August, and then in November three on 16<sup>th</sup>, one on 18<sup>th</sup> and five on 30<sup>th</sup>. All records were from Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay.

**2002:** A higher than usual number of birds were recorded in the first winter period, with regular counts of up to five birds until 7 March, and one count of 13 on 26 February; the latter is the highest winter count since 1988. Recorded on northward passage from 21 March to 12 April, although the fact that there were no records after the latter date must be due to failure to report them, not actual absence of birds. The peak was just 19 on 11 April, continuing the low numbers of recent years. All records were from Deep Bay and Mai Po.

**182A Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* 普通燕鷗**

**2001:** Only one record was received for the whole year, one in southern waters on 13 May. The year 2000 was nearly as poor, with only four records.

**2002:** Only five records were received for the year: singles at Hoi Ha on 18 August and in Mirs Bay on 31 August, two in Mirs Bay on 7 September, one at Shuen Wan on 10 September and 50 off Cape D'Aguilar on 11 September. This run of poor years may be simply the result of observers undertaking fewer boat trips to offshore waters during migration seasons.

**183A Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* 粉紅燕鷗**

**2001:** Seven were seen in southern waters on 13 May and five were present at Tap Mun on 3 June.

**2002:** During the Tern Survey, carried out in the Tolo Harbour and Shek Ngau Chau areas, the highest count was of eight birds on 18 May, with further records of three on 25 May, two on 22 June, one on 30 June and one on 25 August.

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

**2001:** Five records were received: 57 in southern waters on 13 May, 30 at Tap Mun on 3 June, 20 from Cape D'Aguilar on 7 July, 30 at Shek Ngau Chau on 29 July and 15 there on 12 August.

**2002:** During the Tern Survey, carried out in the Tolo Harbour and Shek Ngau Chau areas, this species was recorded between 27 April and 25 August, with the highest count being 107 on 28 July.

**185A Aleutian Tern *Sterna aleutica* 白腰燕鷗**

**2002:** On 10 September, during the close approach of Severe Tropical Storm Hagupit, two adults were seen in Shuen Wan bay and one was seen in Tolo Harbour.

**186A Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus* 褐翅燕鷗**

**2001:** At the breeding site of Shek Ngau Chau the peak count was 400 birds on 29 July, when 12 eggs and 30 chicks were also noted. Elsewhere, ten were at Tap Mun on 3 June, five were seen between the Ninepins and Tung Lung on 17 June and 12 were at Cape D'Aguilar on 7 July.

**2002:** During the Tern Survey, carried out in the Tolo Harbour and Shek Ngau Chau areas, recorded between 11 May and 7 September, with the highest count being 451 birds on 30 June. In addition, 130 were seen from Cape D'Aguilar on 11 September during the close approach of Severe Tropical Storm Hagupit.



**Plate 13.** Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* 粉红燕鷗 adult  
Tap Mun, Hong Kong, 14 May 2005  
Pippen Ho

**188A Little Tern *Sterna albifrons* 白額燕鷗**

**2001:** Recorded in spring between 3 April and 15 May, with the higher counts being 16 on 15 April, nine on 20 April and six on 15 May, all at Mai Po. Away from Deep Bay, the only records were of one over southern waters and one at Po Toi, both on 13 May.

**2002:** Only three records were received: one on 11 April, six during 18-19 April and one on 19 May. All records were from the Deep Bay area.



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

**2002:** Two adults were seen at Cape D'Aguilar on 11 September, during the close approach of STS Hagupit.

**190A Ancient Murrelet *Synthliboramphus antiquus* 扁嘴海雀**

**2001:** One was seen off Po Toi on 13 May; this is the second latest spring record in Hong Kong, and follows a record on 6 May 2000. The latest on record occurred on 18 May 1975.

**2002:** One was seen off at Fung Wong Wat on 1 May; there have now been May records in the last three years.



**Plate 14.** Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus* 褐翅燕鷗 adult  
Tap Mun, Hong Kong, 28 May 2005  
Pippen Ho

**191D Rock Dove *Columba livia* 原鴿**

**2001 & 2002:** No significant reports.

**192A Oriental Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis* 山斑鳩**

**2001:** In another poor year, no counts higher than five were received on any date in January or February. Following 15 at Pat Sin Leng CP on 1st and 20 at Mai Po on 29 March, 48 were logged at Kam Tin on 28 April, the highest count of the period. This

was followed by two at Mai Po on 28 April and one there on 15 May, the final record of the spring. Thus, unusually, in the first half of the year, the peak count occurred in spring rather than winter. One at Ma Tso Lung on 16 September was the first of the autumn. Subsequently, although there were occasional reports from the northern and eastern NT and once from Lantau (four at Mui Wo on 2 December), there were only two double-figure counts: ten at Mai Po on 13 October and 12 at She Shan on 23 November.

**2002:** The highest count of the first winter period was 250 birds at Mai Po on 14 January, with the next highest being 36 at Lok Ma Chau on 25 April, these latter birds presumably being spring migrants. Between 27 June and 28 August this site saw further records of single birds including, interestingly, a juvenile on 18 July. It seems likely that breeding occurred at or near the KCRC mitigation ponds at Lok Ma Chau. Returning winter visitors were in evidence from the beginning of October, although the first double figure count did not occur until 4 November when 12 were at Long Valley. This remained the highest count of the second winter period. This species is probably not being reported as much as it might, and observers are encouraged to submit records of birds in significant numbers (roost counts in particular) and those away from typical sites such as the Deep Bay area and Tai Mo Shan massif.

#### **193A Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica* 火斑鳩**

**2001:** None were reported until March, when up to five were noted at Mong Tseng during 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>. There were four further records in the first half of the year - two from the Mai Po boardwalk, an unusual locality, on 27 March and singles at Ho Sheung Heung on 17 April, Mai Po on 15 May and Tap Mun on 3 June (YTY). The latter was by a day the latest ever spring record. Two at Mai Po on 16 September, the first of the autumn, were followed by occasional sightings of up to six at Chek Lap Kok, Tsim Bei Tsui, Long Valley, Mai Po and Tai Lun Experimental Farm up to 18 October, and also of 11 at the Shenzhen River on 13 October, the highest count of the year. Subsequently, there were three further reports - singles at Chek Lap Kok and Mai Po on 14 and 17 November and ten at Tsim Bei Tsui on 16 December. The pig farm near Mong Tseng, which in previous years regularly hosted 50 or more birds, was found to be abandoned and overgrown in October, and no birds of this species were recorded there.

**2002:** Only four reports were received for the first half of the year: singles at Mong Tseng on 1 March, Lok Ma Chau on 25 April and Shuen Wan on 15 May, and six at Mai Po on 25 May. One at Mai Po on 5 September was the first of the autumn. Subsequently at this site, up to ten were noted until 1 November. Elsewhere, there were reports of up to seven at Chek Lap Kok, Kam Tin and Shuen Wan between 30 September and 8 October, 16 at the Shenzhen River on 18 October, the highest count of the year, and finally one at Chek Lap Kok again on 13 November.

#### **194A Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis* 珠頸斑鳩**

**2001:** The only sizeable gatherings noted involved up to 38 at Pond 15a at Mai Po in January and February, feeding on grain put down for the waterfowl there, and 23 at Mui Wo in December.

**2002:** No significant reports.

**196A Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica* 綠背金鳩**

**2001:** Singles were reported at Tai Po Kau (January-May), Mong Tseng (February, March), Kei Ling Ha (April), Pat Sin Leng CP (May, June), Wu Kau Tang (May, December), Nim Wan, Sha Lo Tung and near the Lok Ma Chau Lookout (all September).

**2002:** Singles were reported at Tai Po Kau, Wu Kau Tang, Aberdeen Reservoir, Shek Kong, Chung Mei, Lok Ma Chau, Ting Kok, Sha Lo Tung, Tap Mun and KFBG.

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

**2001 & 2002:** No significant reports.

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

**2001 & 2002:** No significant reports.

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

**2001:** Vocalizing birds accounted for nearly all reports, including the first on 12 April and the last on 8 July. With the exception of singles at Mai Po (calling) on 12 April and Wong Nei Chung Gap on 3 June, all records were from shrubland sites in the central and eastern NT. Following the first report on 12<sup>th</sup> one or two were noted at Mau Ping New Village, Sha Lo Tung, Leadmine Pass, Ng Tung Chai and the lower slopes of Pat Sin Leng CP during 13-16 April. Birds were subsequently reported at these sites throughout May and into early June, indicating over-summering. As in some previous years, an influx was apparent in late April with at least four at Yung Shue O on 29<sup>th</sup> and five at Mau Ping New Village on 30<sup>th</sup>. One at Ho Chung on 8 July was the last report of the year.

**2002:** Recorded between 6 April and 14 August, mainly from the central and eastern NT, with vocalizing birds accounting for all records up to 28 June. Most reports were in April, when there were singles at Sha Lo Tung on 6<sup>th</sup>, Pun Shan Chau on 15<sup>th</sup>, Tai Po Kau Headland on 16<sup>th</sup>, Sai Kung on 20<sup>th</sup>, Sha Lo Tung again on 22<sup>nd</sup> and Shuen Wan on 28<sup>th</sup>, and also two at Wu Kau Tang and three at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 21<sup>st</sup>. The latter remained through May and into the middle of June. The only subsequent records were of singles at Kowloon Peak on 28 June and Lok Ma Chau on 14 August.

**202A Large Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparverii* 鷹鵯**

**2001:** Singing birds were noted between 23 February (at Wu Kau Tang and Pun Shan Chau) and 23 June (at Shuen Wan). Birds were regularly recorded, including at night, in widespread areas of shrubland and forest in the NT and once on Hong Kong Island (at Pok Fu Lam on 29 March). Most records were of one to four birds, but ten, a new high count, were logged in mixed shrubland beside a 7 km stretch of Bride's Pool in the hour after dusk on 22 March (RWL). Totals reported in each month were two in February, 28 in March, 54 in April, 17 in May and five in June.

**2002:** Apart from one at Long Valley on 25 June, all records were from traditional shrubland or forest sites in the NT on dates between 1 March (at Pat Sin Leng CP) and 19 June (at Shuen Wan). As a result of shrubland sites receiving less coverage than in the previous two years when the Nightbird Survey was conducted, there were fewer reported in 2002. Totals reported in each month were 12 in March, 23 in April, six in May and four in June.

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

**1995:** One of the taxon *nisicolor* was at Tai Po Kau on 3 April (GP, J&BM). This was the one of two records that year, the other being on Cheung Chau on 7 April (Carey *et al.* 2001), and at the time would have constituted just the fourth record for Hong Kong.

**2001:** One of the taxon *nisicolor* was calling at Tai Po Kau on 21 April (RWL), and one was photographed at the same locality on 17 May (MH).

**2002:** One was calling at Tai Po Kau on 27 March and on 10 and 17 April, with two calling there on 8 April (RWL). All were of the taxon *nisicolor*. A further record of a bird not ascribed to any taxon came from the same locality on 6 May (MH).

### **204A Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* 四聲杜鵑**

**2001:** Recorded between 3 April and 19 June, with almost all reports referring to singing birds. All records were from the NT apart from singles at Po Toi on 15 April and Ocean Park on 22 April. Birds were regularly reported at Luk Keng, Mai Po, Wu Kau Tang, Mau Ping New Village, Pat Sin Leng, Nam Chung, Shuen Wan, Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen and Yung Shue O, and occasionally during this period at Kam Tin, Mong Tseng, Fung Lok Wai and Long Valley. Apart from four at Mai Po and three at Mong Tseng on 12 May, all other reports referred to one or two birds. Reports in each month totalled 18 in both April and May, and three in June.

**2002:** All records were from the NT on dates between 14 April and 18 June. Birds were reported regularly only from Shuen Wan, while there were sporadic reports from Ma Tso Lung, Nam Sang Wai, Sai Kung, Wu Kau Tang, Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau and Kam Tin. Reports in each month totalled nine in April, six in May, and five in June.

### **205A Horsfield's/Himalayan Cuckoo *Cuculus horsfieldi/saturatus* 中杜鵑**

**2001:** There were five spring and four autumn records, between 12 April and 7 May and between 12 September and 9 October, all involving singles: in April at Mai Po and Po Toi on 12<sup>th</sup>, Tai Po Kau Headland on 16<sup>th</sup> and Po Toi on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, in May at Ho Sheung Heung on 7<sup>th</sup>, in September at Nim Wan on 12<sup>th</sup>, Mai Po on 16<sup>th</sup>, and Po Toi on 22<sup>nd</sup>, and in October at Lok Ma Chau (a juvenile) on 4<sup>th</sup>.

**2002:** There were only two records, both in spring: one seen at Tai Po Kau Headland on 16 April and one *horsfieldi* trapped at Mai Po on 5 May (PJL), only the third such record.

**207A Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus* 八聲杜鵑**

**2001:** Recorded between 12 January and 22 May and from 27 August to 26 November, with birds noted singing between 23 January and 22 May. Apart from three at Mai Po on 6 April, three at Long Valley on 28 April and four there on 4 October, all records were of one or two birds, and all were from the vicinity of farmland or fishponds in the NT, one excepting at Chung Mei on 22 March and 19 April. The pattern noted in previous years was again apparent, with birds found in widespread parts of the NT in spring, but only in the northern NT at other times. A rufous individual was noted at Mai Po on 6 April and 12 May. Totals reported in each month were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	2	3	4	15	3	0	0	1	2	5	2	0

**2002:** Apart from two at Lok Ma Chau on 25 October, all reports were of single birds on dates between 11 January and 15 November. Singing birds were noted between 16 February and 1 June. The NT accounted for all records, with Kam Tin, Fung Lok Wai, Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau and Long Valley being especially favoured. These were also the only localities at which birds were found in autumn and winter. There were records from two new localities for this species - Tai Po Kau Tsuen and Tai Po Industrial Estate, both in spring. A rufous bird was noted at Sha Po on 9 October. Totals reported in each month were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	4	3	3	5	5	2	1	3	2	8	1	0

**208A Common Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea* 噪鵲**

**2001:** Recorded in all months except August and September, with the earliest singing birds noted at Cheung Chau on 7 January and the latest near Mai Po on 12 December. In spring and summer, birds were reported from widespread parts of the NT, from Cheung Chau and once from urban Kowloon (Kai Tak on 6 June), but all reports outside of this period were from Cheung Chau, Shuen Wan, Ma Tso Lung and Mai Po. Most records were of one to three birds, and the only higher counts concerned four heard at Hebe Haven on 4 May and five seen in a tree together at Cheung Chau on 9 December. Totals reported in each month were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	4	5	3	16	17	7	1	0	0	3	5	6

**2002:** Recorded between 15 January and 24 November, with singing noted on both the earliest and latest dates. Unusually, the months which accounted for most reports were February and September, rather than April. The February total was boosted by a welcome series of reports from Kowloon and Hong Kong Island (Aberdeen, King's Park, Kowloon Walled City, Kowloon Tsai and Morse Park during on 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, including at least four males and a female at the last named site) and eight logged in the Mong Tseng hills area on 28<sup>th</sup>. In April, although six singing males were logged at Mai Po on 25<sup>th</sup>, relatively few records were received from elsewhere. In September both adults and juveniles were conspicuous at Mai Po and Shuen Wan. A leucistic female

was noted at Lok Ma Chau on several dates between 25 April and 18 July. Totals reported in each month were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	2	24	13	11	8	3	1	1	20	2	2	0



Plate 15. Common Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea* 噪鵲 adult female  
Kwai Chung, Hong Kong, 5 March 2005  
Pippen Ho

**209A Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis* 褐翅鴉鵂**

2001 & 2002: No significant reports.

**210A Lesser Coucal *Centropus benghalensis* 小鴉鵂**

2001 & 2002: No significant reports.

**213A Collared Scops Owl *Otus lettia* 領角鴞**

2001: Recorded throughout the year in forest, shrubland and gardens at widespread localities, all in the NT. A total of 11, the highest on record, were logged beside Bride's Pool on 16 April (see paper on Nightbird Survey). One observed on the ground in a garden at Hang Tau for more than three minutes on 7 August was thought to be either sun-bathing or ant-bathing.



**2002:** With the Nightbird Survey having concluded in 2001, very few reports were received in 2002. One heard at Shui Hau, Lantau on 12 January was the only significant record.



**Plate 16.** Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis* 褐翅鴉鵂  
Lamma Island, Hong Kong, 5 March 2005  
Pippen Ho

**214A Eurasian Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo* 鵂鴞**

**2001:** Single birds were noted at Mong Tseng on 13 January and 2 March (RWL, MT) and Chau Tau on 14 March and 15 April (J&JH).

**2002:** Singles were noted at Robin's Nest on 30 January (WLC) and Shek Kong on 16 March (YHK).

**2000:** One, either a Eurasian Eagle Owl or Brown Fish Owl, was seen at Sha Lo Tung on 5 May (MT).

**216A Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides* 斑頭鴞**

**2001:** In the best ever year, this species was recorded in all seasons from widespread areas of forest, shrubland and farmland, all in the NT. Five at Shing Mun on 3 March (MT) and six there on 11 May (MH) are the highest counts on record. All other reports referred to one or two birds. Whereas the central and eastern NT usually account for nearly all records, this year was exceptional in the number of records from

the northern NT, especially the Deep Bay hinterland, with reports from Kam Tin, Tsim Bei Tsui, Nam Sang Wai, Fung Lok Wai, Chau Tau, Ma Tso Lung, Ho Sheung Heung, Hang Tau and Long Valley.

**2002:** Noted this year between January and June and in November and December. All reports were of single birds. Away from traditional sites in the central and eastern NT, there were reports from Mong Tseng (February), Chau Tau and Kam Tin (March), Kowloon Peak (June) and Mai Po village (December).



**Plate 17.** Asian Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides* 斑頭鵂鶯  
Sheung Shui, Hong Kong, 12 January 2005  
Cheung Chun Kwok

**217A Brown Boobook *Ninox japonica* 鷹鴞**

**2000:** One was at Tai Po Kau on 24 October (RWL). This constituted the third autumn record at the time.

**219A Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* 普通夜鷹**

**1999:** Singles were at Cloudy Hill on 26 September and 28 November (J&JH).

**2000:** One was in Clear Water Bay CP on 24 and 30 September (MT).

**2001:** Except for a male seen over Sha Po on 26 August, all records occurred during two periods: 18 February to 3 June and 20 October to 1 November. The first period

includes records from the Nightbird Survey which concluded in May. In this period, apart from one over forest at Shing Mun on 5 April, all reports were of birds apparently on territory at the following four shrubland sites in the eastern NT: Wu Kau Tang (up to five, 18 February-8 May) the lower slopes of Pat Sin Leng CP (up to three, 19 February-3 June), the Sha Lo Tung-Hok Tau area (up to three, 16 March-13 May) and Yung Shue O (up to two, 20 March-17 April). The count of five at Wu Kau Tang on 8 May is the highest ever, and the records on 18 and 19 February, the earliest ever. The winter of 2000/2001 was exceptionally mild and it is possible that over-wintering occurred. In the second period, single birds were noted at Cloudy Hill on 20 October (eating ants), Sha Lo Tung on 21 October, and Pat Sin Leng on 1 November.

**2002:** Night-time coverage of suitable sites was greatly reduced following the completion of the Nightbird Survey in 2001. One individual heard at Wu Kau Tang on 1 March was the only record received.

#### **220A Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis* 林夜鷹**

**2001:** Recorded between 12 January and 10 November, with most records between February and April and none at all between mid-May and mid-August. As in the previous year, unprecedentedly high numbers were logged at Kau Sai Chau golf course, including 19 on 9 February and 15 on 9 March. Elsewhere there were reports on more than one date of up to three individuals over grassland or low shrubland at Pat Sin Leng CP, Wu Kau Tang, Sha Lo Tung, Chau Tau, Cloudy Hill, Mong Tseng and Yung Shue O. Singles at Po Toi on 25 February and Shek Ngau Chau on 12 August were the first from these islands, and there were also reports on single dates from Lok Ma Chau, Hang Tau and Wo Hop Shek.

**2002:** As with the previous species, night-time coverage of suitable sites was greatly reduced following completion of the Nightbird Survey. Nevertheless, interesting records were received from three localities: up to two were seen near Mai Po village on 11 March and 12 December and at Mai Po Nature Reserve on 10 October, singles were heard at Long Valley on 25 June and 9 July, and one was seen at Lok Ma Chau on 11 November.

#### **221A Himalayan Swiftlet *Collocalia brevirostris* 短嘴金絲燕**

**2001:** One was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 7 April (RWL).

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

**2001:** In the poorest year since 1985 when this species was first found in Hong Kong, there was only one record – four at Ho Chung on 18 March.

#### **225A Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus* 白腰雨燕**

**2001:** Spring passage was again very weak. Following one at Lok Ma Chau on 31 January, the first of the year, there were no further records until April, when there were intermittent reports of no more than eight in the Deep Bay area between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, and the only double-figure count was of 20 at Tai Hang Tun (Clearwater Bay) on 21<sup>st</sup>. In May, only four individuals were noted, at Black's Link and Robin's Nest. In

summer, there were sightings of 70 at the Ninepins, a potential breeding site, on 17 June and five at Tai Po Kau on 2 July. Finally, one at Mai Po on 18 October, a rare autumn record, was the last of the year.

**2002:** Spring passage was even weaker than in 2001, with only four records. In February one was at Mai Po on 7<sup>th</sup>, another at Shek Kong on 8<sup>th</sup>, and five near Cape D'Aguilar on 13<sup>th</sup>, and there were 12 at Chek Lap Kok on 23 April. There were just three further records: two at Lai Chi Chong on 30 June, seven at Cape D'Aguilar on 11 September and one at Ma Tso Lung on 18 December.

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

**2001:** In a better spring than either of the two previous years, peak passage of up to 1,000 was noted near Mai Po during 10-12 April. There were several significant counts of likely migrants in January, including 250 at Lok Ma Chau on 10<sup>th</sup>, 200 at Nam Chung on 15<sup>th</sup>, 200 at Ma Tso Lung on 29<sup>th</sup> and 800 at Lok Ma Chau 30<sup>th</sup>, and there were also reports of 300 at Lok Ma Chau on 10 March, and 600 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 6 April. In autumn, 100 at Shuen Wan on 10 November was the only sizeable flock noted. No records were received regarding local resident populations.

**2002:** Counts of 500 at Lok Ma Chau and 300 near Mai Po, both on 1 February, were the only three-figure counts of the year in Deep Bay. At least 300 birds and 150 active nests were counted at the Chinese University of Hong Kong colony in May.

**227A Crested Kingfisher *Ceryle lugubris* 冠魚狗**

**2001:** Singles at Cove Bay on 6 August and Pak Tam Chung on 2 December were the only reports of the year.

**2002:** One was present at Chung Mei on 8 January.

**228A Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* 斑魚狗**

**2001:** Recorded throughout the year at Deep Bay, Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan, and also occasionally at Kam Tin and Tai Lam Chung. As in previous years, the largest totals were logged in co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay. This year's counts of 24 on 16 September and 17 on 14 October are the highest on record (the previous highest being 14 on 15 October 2000). The fact that only one individual was detected during the count in March suggests that birds were nesting at this time. Outside of Deep Bay, five at Tai Lam Chung on 24 December was the highest count. Results of co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	7	7	1	8	13	9	8	13	24	17	5	9

**2002:** Recorded throughout the year from Deep Bay, Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan. Results of co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:



	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	2	2	1	5	10	12	6	7	nc	16	10	12

## 229A Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* 普通翠鳥

**2001:** Recorded throughout the year at Deep Bay, Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan. A total of 55, the highest count of the year, was logged during a co-ordinated count in Deep Bay on 15 October. At Lok Ma Chau, which was regularly covered during January-May, counts of 10-12 birds were made in January, February and March, the figure falling to 5-6 in April and May. Elsewhere, singles were noted at Fanling Golf Course on 9 July, Po Toi on 21-22 September and Lai Chi Wo on 15 December, and there were three at Mui Wo on 2 December. Results of co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	29	43	33	23	11	21	13	34	20	55	34	49

**2002:** Recorded throughout the year at Deep Bay, Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan. The only other reports were from Kam Tin where up to two were noted in October. As usual, highest numbers were logged during co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay, including 59 on 20 October and 53 on 17 November. Results of co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	46	16	33	29	22	20	24	36	nc	59	53	44

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

**2001:** Recorded in all months. As usual, most reports were from Deep Bay, Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan, and largest numbers were recorded during co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay, including 30 on 11 February and 31 on 19 August. During the breeding season, trilling adults were noted at Mong Tseng, Nam Chung and Shuen Wan and a juvenile was present at the latter site on 5 June. Elsewhere, singles were reported at Pok Fu Lam in late March, Tap Mun in early June and Lai Chi Wo and Tseung Kwan O in December. Results of co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	17	30	18	7	4	5	6	31	14	24	20	27

**2002:** As usual most reports were from Deep Bay, Starling Inlet and Shuen Wan, and highest numbers were recorded during co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay, including 44 on 20 October. Trilling birds were noted at Shuen Wan from 11 March to 21 May, and single juveniles were at Nam Wai Po on 25 June and Ho Chung on 14 July. In autumn, singles were noted at Chek Lap Kok on 30 July and 30 September, Po Toi on 8 September, and Kam Tin on 1 and 27 October. Results of co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	17	6	13	5	1	12	24	33	nc	44	19	28

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

**2001:** Though found in all months this year, numbers were much lower in Deep Bay in autumn than in either of the two previous years. Away from Deep Bay, singles were noted at Shuen Wan in all months except June and July and at Starling Inlet in most winter months. There were also isolated reports of singles at Po Toi on 22 April and 21 September and at Chek Lap Kok on 17 September. Results from co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	8	8	4	1	2	1	2	5	8	6	5	6

**2002:** Recorded in all months apart from May, with most reports as usual from Deep Bay, including 17 logged in a co-ordinated count on 20 October. Elsewhere, up to two were noted at Shuen Wan from early January to 29 April and again from 20 September to the end of the year, and up to two were logged at Starling Inlet in the winter months. The only other reports were in autumn and concerned singles at Chung Mei on 8 September, Chek Lap Kok on 10 October and Kam Tin on 27 October. Results from co-ordinated counts in Deep Bay were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total	4	4	2	2	0	1	1	1	nc	17	3	12

**233A Blue-throated Bee-eater *Merops viridis* 栗頭蜂虎**

**2002:** One was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 6 October (KK). This is the third Hong Kong record, and the first since 1992.

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

**2001:** In spring, nine at Mai Po on 12 April were followed by three there the next day and 12 at Long Valley on 24 April. In autumn, 54 were at Mai Po on 9 October (MDW), the highest ever count, and 18 were present there two days later. The previous highest count was an aggregate of 51 individuals at three separate sites on 15 October 1995.

**2002:** Six at Lok Ma Chau on 18 April and three there the next day were the only spring records. Nine at Mai Po on 1 October was the only autumn record.

**235A Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis* 三寶鳥**

**2001:** One at Lam Tsuen on 14 April, the first of the year, was followed by one at Kam Tin on 23 April. All subsequent spring records occurred during 5-12 May, comprising up to eight at Ho Chung, three at Mau Ping New Village, up to four on the lower slopes of Pat Sin Leng CP, one at Tai Po Kau and five at Wu Kau Tang. Three at Po Toi on 21 September was the only autumn record.

**2002:** In an unusually poor year, there were no spring records and just three autumn records, all in September: Po Toi on 8<sup>th</sup> (two), Tai Po Kau on 13<sup>th</sup> and Ho Chung on 14<sup>th</sup>.





Plate 18. Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis* 三寶鳥 juvenile  
Po Toi, Hong Kong, 3 October 2005  
Pippen Ho

**236A Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops* 戴勝**

**2001:** In the first winter period, singles were noted at Tsim Bei Tsui on five dates between 10 January and 2 March, and one was at Kam Tin on 6 February. In the second winter period, singles were noted at Lok Ma Chau on 14 October, Kam Tin on 17 October and Tai Sang Wai on 19 November.

**2002:** In the first winter period, singles were noted at Kam Tin on 3, 14 and 22 January, Tsim Bei Tsui on 19 January, San Tin on 2 February, Mai Po on 5 February, and near Lok Ma Chau on 20 March. As in 2001, there were no summer records. In the second winter period, singles were noted at Lok Ma Chau on six dates between 3 September and 25 December, at San Tin on 18 September and 8 November, and at Mai Po on 12, 17 and 20 October. Also, two were present at Fung Lok Wai on 1 November.

**237A Great Barbet *Megalaima virens* 大擬鴉(大擬啄木鳥)**

**2001:** Up to four were recorded at Tai Po Kau and Shing Mun, both traditional sites. The only other report was of four at Mau Ping New Village on 23 June.

**2002:** One was heard at Chung Mei on 1 March. There is some suggestion that this species is declining in Hong Kong. More reports would be welcome.



Plate 19. Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops* 戴勝  
Long Valley, Hong Kong, 4 December 2005  
Pippen Ho

### 238A Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* 蟻鴲

**2001:** Singles at Long Valley on 18 January and Mai Po on 22 April were the first and last of the first winter period. All other records in this period occurred in February and involved single birds, as follows: San Tin on 9<sup>th</sup> Long Valley on 12<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, Lok Ma Chau on 13<sup>th</sup>, Fung Lok Wai on 21<sup>st</sup>, Tsim Bei Tsui on 22<sup>nd</sup> and Kam Tin on 28<sup>th</sup>. Records in the second winter period occurred between 25 September, when one was at Nim Wan, and 23 November, when two were at Pak Nai. In between these dates, up to two were at at Lok Ma Chau between 3 October and 7 November and singles were noted at Long Valley on 4 October, at Ma Tso Lung and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21 October, at Chek Lap Kok on 13 November, and at Mai Po on 21 November.

**2002:** In the first winter period, singles were noted at Shui Hau (Lantau) on 12 January, at Kam Tin on 14 and 22 January, Shuen Wan on 2 February, and Lok Ma Chau on five dates between 13 March and 19 April. In the second winter period, one at Chek Lap Kok on 28 August (GJC) was the earliest in autumn by ten days. Subsequently two were there on 1 October. All other records were from the northern NT, notably Lok Ma Chau, where there were regularly sightings of up to two between 3 October and 23 December, and in the Mai Po area, where at least three different individuals were noted between 29 September and 7 December. Elsewhere, singles were reported at Kam Tin on 6 and 11 October and 2 November, Long Valley on 13 October and Palm Springs on 27 October.

**247A Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis* 雲雀**

**2001:** One at Mai Po on 30 November was the only record.

**2002:** Two at Long Valley on 28 October were followed by one there on 2 November and one at Lok Ma Chau on 14 November.

**248A Oriental Skylark *Alauda gulgula* 小雲雀**

**2001:** In the first half of the year, all reports were from the northwest NT: one was singing at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21 February, four were at Tin Shui Wai on 1 March, one was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 6 April and a juvenile was present there on 17 June. There was only one further record – two at Mai Po on 16 December.

**2002:** Records continued into the early months of the year at Mai Po with one there on 14 January and two on 2 February. Three at Long Valley on 1 March were followed by one there on 12 April. One at Mount Davis on 24 March is the first record of this species on Hong Kong Island. One at Mai Po on 1 October was the only subsequent record.

**250A Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* 灰沙燕**

**2001:** Following six at Ma Tso Lung on 2 January and one at Nam Chung on 10 March, all further records in the first half of the year occurred in April, as follows: one at Luk Keng on 3<sup>rd</sup>, up to nine in the Mai Po area during 6<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 7<sup>th</sup>, three at San Tin on 13<sup>th</sup>, and singles at Shuen Wan on 18<sup>th</sup>, Tai Hung Tun on 21<sup>st</sup> and Lok Ma Chau on 22<sup>nd</sup>. Records in the second half of the year comprised up to 20 at Mai Po during 9-18 October, singles at Ma Tso Lung and Tsim Bei Tsui on 14<sup>th</sup> and 19 October, and up to five at San Tin on 24 October, 13 November and 6 December.

**2002:** Singles at Mai Po on 10 and 20 April were the only records of the first half of the year. One at Mai Po on 30 September was the first record of the second half of the year. All subsequent reports, apart from two at Chek Lap Kok on 29 October and one at Ma Tso Lung on 17 November, were from Mai Po, San Tin and Lok Ma Chau. October accounted for the majority of records, including 310 at Mai Po on 20<sup>th</sup>, by far the largest count of the year, 40 there on 9<sup>th</sup>, 10 at San Tin on 24<sup>th</sup> and 10 at Lok Ma Chau on 31<sup>st</sup>. Reports became gradually less frequent in November, when 10 at San Tin on 28<sup>th</sup> was the highest count. All reports in December were from the Mai Po area, where four on 27<sup>th</sup> was the largest count and final record.

**251A Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* 家燕**

**2001:** Following 116 at Ma Tso Lung on 2 January and 100 at Nam Chung on 10 March, the only subsequent counts of note in an unspectacular spring occurred during 6-12 April, when there were up to 200 at Tsim Bei Tsui and up to 500 near Mai Po. There were no significant summer records. In autumn, 150 at Mai Po on 11 October was the first sizeable count reported and peak passage occurred during 18-22 October when flocks of 300-400 were present at Mai Po. Four at Mai Po on 21 November was the final record of the year.



**Plate 20.** Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* 家燕 adult female  
Lut Chau, Hong Kong, 19 March 2005  
Pippen Ho

**2002:** Fewer reports of this species were received this year than usual. No sizeable flocks were reported in Deep Bay in the first three months of the year. Spring passage appeared to be even weaker than in the previous year, a flock of 100 near Mai Po on 10 April being the peak count. In autumn, 80 at Mai Po on 30 September was the peak count, and the final report of the year was of 25 near Mai Po on 27 December.

#### **252A Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica* 金腰燕**

**2001:** Recorded between 2 January and 23 April and again between 18 November and 17 December, with highest numbers in December. Following seven at Ma Tso Lung on 2 January, up to four at Mai Po on 7 and 26 January, and one at San Tin on 9 February, there were no further records until April when there were reports of singles at Lok Ma Chau, Long Valley, Fung Lok Wai and Po Toi during 12<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, two at Tai Hung Tun on 21<sup>st</sup> and finally three at Kam Tin on 23<sup>rd</sup>. In autumn, one at Mai Po on 18 November was the first record, after which up to three were noted at Tsim Bei Tsui, Turret Hill and Mai Po during 21-26 November and five were at San Tin on the latter date. In December, there were reports of up to 10 in the Mai Po area on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 20 at San Tin on 13<sup>th</sup> and finally 58 at Lut Chau on 17<sup>th</sup>.

**2002:** There were only two records in the first half of the year – two at Ma Tso Lung on 11 January and 10 at Mai Po on 24 March. The first in autumn was one at Wu Kau Tang on 20 August (RWL), the earliest autumn record to date. Subsequently, birds were intermittently recorded between 8 September and 27 December, with most reports from the Mai Po area where the peak counts in each month were two in September, 12 in October, five in November and five in December. Elsewhere, there

were reports of up to four at Lok Ma Chau between 4 October and 3 December, up to two at Ma Tso Lung on 4 and 19 December, and 30 at San Tin on 28 November, the highest count of the year.

#### **253A Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus* 煙腹毛腳燕**

**2001:** One at Ma Tso Lung on 2 January was the only record.

**2002:** There were only five records during the year - one at Mai Po on 24 March, 10 at Mt. Austin on 12 April, two at Lok Ma Chau on 25 November and up to two in the Mai Po area on 11 and 27 December.

#### **254A Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus* 林鵲鶇**

**2001:** The first of the year was seen at Tai Po Kau on 24, 26 and 27 September, and another was seen there on the unusually late date of 27 October. However, a probable two, seen there on both 27 and 28 November, with a single on 2 December, were exceptionally late and join just six other previous such records during the period from November to the middle of March.

**2002:** For the fifth consecutive year there were no spring records, and in a poor year for this species there were only two reports: singles at Tai Po Kau on 13 and 27 September.

#### **255A Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* 黃鵲鶇**

**2001:** During the first two months of the year, Yellow Wagtails were reported from six sites in the northern and northwest NT; the highest single-site count was 40, of the taxon *M.f. taivana*, at Lut Chau on 31 January, though similar counts were also made at that location on 4 January and at Long Valley on four dates between 5 January and 24 February. The majority of reports did not indicate which taxon was involved; while this may be, and has been, presumed to be *taivana*, observers are requested to confirm this wherever possible when submitting records. Records of *M. f. macronyx* during this period came from Lut Chau on 4 January and from Fung Lok Wai on 28 January and 24 February, while at the same location an individual of the taxon *M. f. tschutschensis* was also present on 28 January. During March there was little real evidence of any passage, and only during early April did the total numbers reported from the usual sites in the northern and northwest NT suggest passage was underway; during the period 3-6 April, for example, a total of 149 birds were reported from four sites. All were *taivana*, apart from eight *macronyx* at Tsim Bei Tsui on 6th. During the rest of April a further 276 bird-days were recorded, the highest individual count being 60 at Mai Po on 28<sup>th</sup> (all *taivana*). Birds of the taxon *tschutschensis* were recorded at Long Valley on 22<sup>nd</sup> (four), 28<sup>th</sup> (ten) and 30<sup>th</sup> (one), and at Mai Po on 30<sup>th</sup> (ten). Passage continued up to 15 May, with a total of 91 bird-days recorded during that month. Unfortunately none of these were identified as to taxon, with the exception of 12 *macronyx* seen at Chek Lap Kok on 12<sup>th</sup>; these birds were also the only ones seen away from the northern and northwest NT during the early part of the year. The species was present again from 27 August when one was seen at Fung Lok Wai. Passage was soon in full swing, with 115 noted at San Tin on 5 September, and 200 at Long Valley on 10 October. At least 83 were still present at the same location on 14 October (three *macronyx*, the rest *taivana*),



with 100 estimated to be present on 18<sup>th</sup>. Thereafter there were only four more records, with none after 30 November, when a bird of the taxon *macronyx* was noted feeding amongst Kentish Plovers *Charadrius alexandrinus* from the Mai Po boardwalk. Away from its more regular haunts, during the autumn passage period, it was also noted at Nim Wan on 12 and 25 September, at Po Toi on 22 September, and at Chek Lap Kok on 18 September, 10 October and 13 November.

**2002:** The highest and only count of significance in the first winter period was of 500 birds going to roost at Mai Po on 21 February. In spring the highest count was of 200 at Mai Po on 18 April, and the final record at this time was of one *tschutschensis* on 1 May. The first record in the second part of the year was of ten *tschutschensis* at Mai Po on 24 August, and subsequently the highest autumn counts were of 60 at Long Valley on 20 October, with 50 there on 2 October, and 50 at Chek Lap Kok on 5 September; these records were not ascribed to taxon. The highest count of the second winter period was of 3,000 birds going to roost in Pond 8 at Mai Po on 23 November; this is the highest winter count and the highest single-site count on record in Hong Kong. Records of the two less common taxa, other than those mentioned above, were as follows: *macronyx* (singles unless stated): 18 February, 10 April (two), 11 April, 3 October (two), 15 October (two), 17 October and 2 November (two); *tschutschensis* – 30 on 5 September and 12 on 2 November. All records were from the northern and central NT, and Chek Lap Kok. Observers are strongly encouraged to submit more records of observations of this species, especially for the midwinter period, and, in particular, to indicate which taxon was involved. 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**

**2001:** In the spring, a male was seen at Lok Ma Chau on 12 April. In the autumn a first-winter bird was seen at Long Valley on 14 October, and what was presumably just one lingering individual was reported by the same observer from San Tin on five dates between 8 November and 13 December.

**2002:** Singles were present at San Tin on 24 January and 21 February, Long Valley on 9 February, 1 March (a female) and 23 April (a male), and Lok Ma Chau from 23 to 28 December (a female).

#### **257A Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* 灰鵲**

**2001:** Recorded up to 23 April and again from 1 September at Tai Po Kau, Mai Po, Long Valley, Kam Tin, Shuen Wan, Nim Wan, Mui Wo, Wong Chuk Hang, and Aberdeen CP. Although this is a common and widespread species, a total of just 13 records submitted does not allow for more than a fragmentary picture to be drawn of its distribution.

**2002:** The latest record in the first winter period was of two on 10 February at Aberdeen Reservoir, though this is almost certainly due to a lack of reporting, not the actual absence of this species during March and April at least. The first record in the second part of the year occurred on 28 August, and the highest count was of nine at Mai Po on 15 October. Reported from the northern and central NT, Aberdeen Reservoir, Po Toi, Ho Chung and So Kon Po. The movements and current status of this



species in the region are not fully understood and observers are strongly encouraged to submit more records.

#### 258A White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* 白鵲鷗

**2001:** Birds of the taxon *M.a. leucopsis* were recorded in all months except June and August, though once again they may be safely assumed to have been present during those months. The highest count in the first winter period was 92 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 15 February, while breeding was reported from Mai Po and Shuen Wan in April, from the Shenzhen River area in May, and from Plover Cove and Kam Tin in July. In the second part of the year the highest count was of 200 birds (not ascribed to either of the two commonly occurring taxa), at Sheung Shui KCR station on 13 November. This count was made somewhat later than the peak autumn passage, which according to data in Carey *et al.* (2001) is around 9 to 31 October, and it is possible that this was a winter roost flock forming. In the first winter period, *M. a. ocularis* was recorded between 4 January and 3 April, with the highest count being on the latter date, when 32 were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui. There were only three reports in the second winter period, all at Tsim Bei Tsui: on 19 October (one), on 13 November (three) and on 16 December (one). Increased record submission to the Society of both these taxa is again strongly urged. In addition, a bird showing characters of the taxon *lugens* (so-called 'Black-backed Wagtail') was at Kam Tin on 1 October (YHK).

**2002:** The highest count in the first winter period was 20 at Sha Po and Cheung Chun San Tsuen on 19 January, while the only record of breeding *leucopsis* occurred on 31 March, when an adult feeding a juvenile was reported at Shan Tong Road above Tai Po Market. No reports were received from 1 May to 29 August, when one was at Shuen Wan. Subsequently, the highest counts were of 30 at Chek Lap Kok on 9 October and 26 at Kam Tin on 27 October. No records of the taxon *ocularis* were received, though this is certainly due to poor reporting. Increased record submission of *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 still needs to be fully established. An adult male showing characters of the taxon *lugens* (so-called 'Black-backed Wagtail') was at Chek Lap Kok on 10 December (GJC).

#### 259A Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* 田鸚

**2001:** In the early part of the year records of the migrant taxon *A. r. richardi*, involving counts of up to 30, were received up to 18 May, though the taxon of birds seen at Tai Mo Shan on 12 May and Robin's Nest on the latter date was not indicated by the observers; in view of the locations, it is likely that they were the locally breeding taxon *A.r. sinensis*, which was noted breeding at two locations in the Fei Ngo Shan area in June and July, and which was also present in good numbers (up to about ten) on Tai Mo Shan in July. In the autumn, the migrant taxon was again present from 17 September, when 30 were noted at Chek Lap Kok. The same site, which has predictably emerged as a major one for high counts of this species, held 42 on 30 October, approximately the same date when passage was noted as peaking at the former Kai Tak International Airport during 1974-1979 (see Carey *et al.*, 2001). Interestingly, 40 were also present there on 1 December, during the period when the same data from Kai Tak also indicated that a further influx regularly occurred.

**2002:** In the first winter period records of the migrant taxon *A.r. richardi* were received until 22 April. The highest counts of wintering birds were 28 at Chek Lap Kok on 26 February, while presumed northbound migrants peaked at 34 at the same locality on 19 March. In the summer, *A.r. sinensis* was reported from Tai Mo Shan and Fei Ngo Shan. Records of migrants appear to occur as early as late July, and this year one was at Chek Lap Kok on 29<sup>th</sup>, with nine there the following day. Numbers at this site peaked at 32 on 9 October, and at 34 on 13 November. Elsewhere, the highest counts were of 20 at Kam Tin on 9 October, 60 at Long Valley on 20 October and 20 at Mai Po on the same date. Most records of the migrant taxon *richardi* were from low-lying areas of the NT and from Chek Lap Kok, but there were two at Po Toi on 8 September.

#### **259.2A Blyth's Pipit *Anthus godlewski* 布氏鷓**

**2002:** One was at Kam Tin on 9 and 10 October (PJL *et al.*); this is the first record for Hong Kong.

#### **260A Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* 樹鷓**

**2001:** Recorded up to 4 May and again from 13 October. This was a fairly early date for autumn arrival and involved three birds seen to drop down onto the upper slopes of Fei Ngo Shan from the east, calling constantly. During the early part of the year regular counts at a roost site in Pat Sing Leng CP peaked at 47 on 22 February, and there was also evidence that passage continued rather later than it has in recent years: for example there were at least ten at Long Valley as late as 22 April, and four at Po Toi on the same date.

**2002:** The highest count, by far, in the first winter period was of 71 birds at Mai Po on 19 January. The latest spring record occurred on 23 April, when one was at Chek Lap Kok. In the second part of the year the first record occurred on the very early date of 1 October, when one was at Mai Po. Subsequent higher counts were 25 at Mai Po on 20 October and 18 at Long Valley on 17 November. Records were received from widespread parts of Hong Kong.

#### **261A Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* 紅喉鷓**

**2001:** During the first two months of the year the highest count was of 30 at Lut Chau on 31 January. As with other species which winter in some numbers but also migrate through the region, it is difficult to interpret whether reports during the month of March refer to migrants or not, but 33 were counted at San Tin on 14<sup>th</sup>. Thereafter spring passage as reported was light, with only one count reaching ten, and the final report coming on 24 April. The first of the autumn were four passing over Mai Po on 2 October and shortly thereafter the highest counts of the autumn, 60 and 50 on 10 and 14 October respectively, were made at Long Valley. During the rest of the year there were only four further records, though these included 12 at Lok Ma Chau on 7 November and at least 15 at Long Valley on 27 December. Overall this species appears to have been somewhat under-recorded during both passage periods and during the second winter period in particular. As usual, all records were from the northern and northwest NT.

2002: Only five reports were received for the first winter period, with the highest count being 20 at Kam Tin on 22 January. The latest record was of one at Mai Po on 16 April. Noted in the second winter period from 2 October, the highest counts being of 50 at Long Valley on 20 October and 64 at Chek Lap Kok on 12 November. The latest report was of two at Long Valley five days later on 17th. Most records were from the wet agricultural area of Long Valley and from Chek Lap Kok, with others from other low-lying areas of the NT.

**262A Pechora Pipit *Anthus gustavi* 北鷓**

2001: In the spring three were at Long Valley on 15 May and one was at San Tin the following day (YTY). Autumn records are rare indeed, and one at Long Valley on 13 and 15 September (GJC) was just the eighth such record for Hong Kong.

2002: One was at Mai Po on 19 May.

**263A Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens* 黃腹鷓**

2000: One was at Long Valley on 26 March.

2002: One was at Mai Po on 26 January.



Plate 21. Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens* 黃腹鷓  
Tsim Bei Tsui, Hong Kong, 24 February 2006  
Kwan Po Kuen

**263.5A Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* 水鷓**

**2000:** One was at San Tin on 7<sup>th</sup> and 13-15 December (PJL, YTY *et al.*), though it was not identified until the 13<sup>th</sup>. This is the first record for Hong Kong.

**264A Upland Pipit *Anthus sylvanus* 山鷓**

**2001:** Records came from Tai Mo Shan on 12 May (one), Robin's Nest on 18 May and Lin Fa Shan on 23 December.

**2002:** Reported from two sites, all records involving single birds: on Tai Mo Shan on 20 April and 12 July, and Fei Ngo Shan on 9, 15, 21 and 28 June.



Plate 22. Upland Pipit *Anthus sylvanus* 山鷓  
Tai Mo Shan, Hong Kong, 5 May 2005  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong

**265A Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike *Coracina melaschistos* 暗灰鶇鶇**

**2001:** In the early part of the year there were rather fewer reports than usual, with just singles noted at Tai Po Kau on 14 February and 2 March. Also rather scarce in the autumn, with singles at Mt. Austin on 14 September and 30 November, at Long Valley on 4 October, and at Mau Ping, Sai Kung on 13 October and 25 November, and a rather unusual report of three at Deep Water Bay on 3 November.

**2002:** In the first winter period singles were reported at Tai Po Kau on 20 January and 2 February, and at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 11 February. Return passage was noted from 5 October, when one was at KFBG, with singles subsequently at Mai Po on

18 October, Ma Tso Lung on 20 October, Sha Lo Tung on 25 October, Kam Tin on 5 November and again at Sha Lo Tung on 15 November.

**266A Swinhoe's Minivet *Pericrocotus cantonensis* 小灰山椒鳥**

**2002:** One was at Long Valley on 4 October, with two other minivets that may have been this species (RWL).

**267A Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus* 灰山椒鳥**

**2002:** There were only two reports during the year, following no reports at all in 2001: singles at Tai Po Kau Lookout on 16 April and Kam Tin on 27 October. In addition, single Ashy or Swinhoe's Minivets were recorded at Mai Po on 11 April and 12 October.

**268A Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris* 灰喉山椒鳥**

**2001:** The only records received for the early part of the year and the summer months merely indicated the presence of this species in flocks of up to 15 birds at both Tai Po Kau and Ng Tung Chai, and also its presence at the former site in July. In August a flock of 80 was noted at Kap Lung, and flocks of between 30 and 50 were reported from Tai Po Kau between 25 October and 27 November. There were also reports in the autumn and early winter of flocks of up to 15 at KFBG, Shing Mun and Kowloon Hills Catchwater, while two at A Ma Wat in the northeast NT on 14 December were interesting, as this species is only rarely recorded away from the central NT.

**2002:** Rather under-reported, with the highest count in the first winter period being 10 at Tai Po Kau on 21 January, and in the second winter period 60 on 24 September. Reports of higher counts, as well as records away from Tai Po Kau are particularly welcomed.

**269A Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus* 赤紅山椒鳥**

**2001:** Once again regrettably few records were submitted. Those that were submitted indicated the presence of up to five at Ng Tung Chai and Tai Po Kau during February and March, the probability of breeding at or near Tai Po Kau (four there on 3 August included a juvenile), and the presence of at least ten at Tai Po Kau in November.

**2002:** One to five birds were reported from Tai Po Kau during the year, with five also at Shek Kong catchment. This has become an under-reported species, and all records, but especially those from localities away from the Tai Mo Shan massif, are welcomed.

**270A Red-whiskered Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus* 紅耳鶇**

**2001:** Flocks of up to 70 were reported from widespread areas. Records of feeding involved berries of Lantana *Lantana camara* and the fruit of Superb Fig *Ficus superba*.



2002: The highest count received was of 100 at Shek Kong on 17 October.



Plate 23. Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus* 灰山椒鳥  
Po Toi, Hong Kong, 3 October 2005  
Pippen Ho

#### 271A Chinese Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis* 白頭鸚

2001: Reported from widespread areas, with a highest flock count of 230 at Chek Lap Kok on 30 October, further suggesting that passage or influxes occur around this time. Feeding was noted on Chinese Banyan *Ficus microcarpa*, Superb Fig *Ficus superba*, Mountain Tallow *Sapium discolor* and Chinese Hackberry *Celtis sinensis*. It was also noted that this species continues to be seen deep in the forest at Tai Po Kau, despite the growth in the numbers of Chestnut Bulbuls *Hypsipetes castanonotus* present at that location.



**2002:** Large flocks were reported as follows: 150 over Lei Yue Mun on 18 January, 120 at Chek Lap Kok on 13 November and 100 at Tai Po Waterfront Park on 26 September and at Sha Lo Tung on 15 November. Late autumn migrant flocks are a regular feature for this species.

**272A Sooty-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster* 白喉紅臀鵯**

**2001:** Reported from Long Valley, Nim Wan, Tsim Bei Tsui, Luk Tei Tong, Mui Wo, Chek Lap Kok and Tung Yeung Shan, near Fei Ngo Shan. Its presence at the latter site, on 13 October, was interesting, as it had not been noted there on many previous visits. The report from Chek Lap Kok, where it was only noted on 30 November, similarly appears to confirm that at least some local movement occurs.

**2002:** No significant reports.

**273A Chestnut Bulbul *Hypsipetes castanonotus* 栗背短腳鵯**

**2001:** Reports of this species further confirmed that increasing numbers were present in its core area in the woodlands of the central NT and that it continued to be increasingly noted slightly further afield, including Ma On Shan CP, Sai Kung (West) CP, Pat Sin Leng CP, and Aberdeen CP (four on 3 June suggesting the possibility for the first time of breeding on HK Island), as well as in the Bride's Pool-Wu Kau Tang area, and at Mui Wo. Records at Kam Tin (two on 11 April), Tsim Bei Tsui (15 on 17 November, with one Black Bulbul *H. leucocephalus*, and 35 on 21 November), Pak Nai (24 on 23 November), Mai Po (singles on 18 and 30 November) and Mt. Austin (three on 23 November and one on 30 November) were strongly suggestive of dispersive movements around these times.

**2002:** The only significant report was of 127 birds at KFBG on 9 November (PJL), the highest count on record in Hong Kong. Also recorded at Tai Lam CP, Tai Po Kau, Ngau Tam Mei, Shuen Wan, Aberdeen Reservoir, Tai Po Kau, Fung Yuen, Sha Lo Tung, Chinese University, Tap Mun, Mai Po, Ma Tso Lung Police Post and north Lantau.

**274A Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes leucocephalus* 黑短腳鵯**

**2001:** In the early part of the year up to three were present at Tai Po Kau on 14 and 15 February, and one was also seen nearby on 16 April. Four at Pun Shan Chau on 25 October were over a month earlier than any recorded before 2000 (the unusual records in late-spring and summer of 1997 excepting) and lend some credence to the possibility that those recorded on 30 September of that year may have been of wild provenance. A flock of 80 at KFBG on 17 November, one in a flock of Chestnut Bulbuls *H. castanonotus* at Tsim Bei Tsui on the same date, two at Mai Po village on 20 November and 23 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 23 November were all in fact earlier than the earliest date of certain wild occurrence indicated in Carey *et al.* (2001), which is 29 November, and together these records suggest that it is quite plausible that influxes of small numbers of wild birds might occur at least as early as late October. The only other record after 23 November involved five at Mong Tseng on 15 December.

**2002:** The highest counts were of 60 Wong Chuk Yeung, Sai Kung on 10 February and 20 at Kai Ham, near Ho Chung on 13 February, 11 at Sha Lo Tung on 10 November

and three at Magazine Gap Road on 6 November; in addition, singles were at Mau Ping New Village on 20 January, Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 11 February, Tai Po Kau Lookout on 16 April, Shuen Wan on 30 May (though this bird had obvious tail damage), Tam Kon Chau on 27 June, and Shuen Wan on 5 July.

#### **272.8B Mountain Bulbul *Hypsipetes mccllellandii* 綠翅短腳鵯**

**2001:** One was seen on 7 December (COW *et al.*); subsequently, up to four birds were reported during the winter until at least 16 February 2002 (PKK *et al.*). This is the first record for Hong Kong.

**2002:** At Tai Po Kau in January reported as follows: 5<sup>th</sup> (two), 6<sup>th</sup> (two), 7<sup>th</sup> (two) 23<sup>rd</sup> (three), 26<sup>th</sup> (three), and 29<sup>th</sup> (one). At the same location in February, four were seen on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, with singles on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.

#### **275A Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii* 橙腹葉鵯**

**2001:** Records in the early part of the year indicated its presence at Tai Po Kau, KFBG and Ho Chung, while in the later part of the year it was again noted at Tai Po Kau, as well as at Mui Tsz Lam and Mau Ping New Village, Sai Kung, where up to two were present in late December. Mimicry noted at Tai Po Kau during late January and February included that of Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela*, Large Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparveroides*, Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*, Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus*, and Ashy and Hair-crested Drongos *Dicrurus leucophaeus* and *D. hottentotus*.

**2002:** In the first winter period up to two birds were recorded in Tai Po Kau, the latest on 16 April, and one was at Aberdeen Reservoir on 10 February. In the second part of the year the only record was of one at Tai Po Kau on 5 November.

#### **277A Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus* 牛頭伯勞**

**2002:** One was one at Mai Po on 17 November.

#### **278A Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus cristatus* 紅尾伯勞**

**2001:** First reported in the spring on 22 April, when three at Po Toi appeared freshly arrived. Passage then continued until 16 May, and featured a total of 74 bird-days and two apparent peaks. The first of these included a count of 40 at Chek Lap Kok on 26 April, which was not matched by any other count around that time, and a further count of 15 at Chek Lap Kok on 11 May. In addition to the sites already referred to, spring records came from Kam Tin, Lok Ma Chau, San Tin, Fung Yuen, and Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen and Mau Ping in Sai Kung. Autumn passage took place over a more protracted period, commencing on 7 September, when three were present at Chek Lap Kok, and terminating on 8 November, when one was seen at San Tin. During the autumn as a whole, a total of 18 bird-days were recorded, from Tai Mo Shan, Mt. Austin, Sha Lo Tung, Ma Tso Lung, Long Valley, Lok Ma Chau and Po Toi, in addition to the sites previously mentioned. Overall, this was a very typical set of records for this species.

2002: Spring migrants were noted between 12 April and 10 May, though only four reports were received, all of singles, at Mt. Austin, Mong Tseng, Mai Po and Mai Po village. Autumn migrants were recorded between 28 August and 17 October, with the highest counts being seven at Chek Lap Kok on 5 September and six there on 1 October. All records were from low-lying areas of the NT, including outlying islands.

*L. c. cristatus*: single individuals of the nominate subspecies were trapped at Mai Po on 11 September 1999, at KARC on 2 October 2000 and Mai Po on 27 September 2003 (PJL). These are the first records for Hong Kong.



Plate 24. Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii* 橙腹葉鵯  
Tai Mo Shan, Hong Kong, 24 January 2005  
Jemi and John Holmes

**279A Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach* 棕背伯勞**

**2001:** The only record referring to breeding came from Mai Po, where a juvenile was observed being fed by an adult on 22 May. All other records similarly came from open country areas in the mainland NT and on Lantau. Carey *et al.* (2001) documented the decline of this species on HK Island and records from there and other urban or semi-urban areas would now certainly be of interest. A record of one mimicking a Large Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparverioides* on 15 January highlights the need for caution if a species is judged to be present unseasonally early merely on the basis of vocalisation.

**2002:** No significant reports.



**Plate 25.** Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach* 棕背伯勞  
Long Valley, Hong Kong, 12 May 2005  
Pippen Ho

**280A Japanese Waxwing *Bombycilla japonica* 小太平鳥**

**2002:** One was Yin Kong, Long Valley, on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5 October (MH, GJC). However, obvious plumage damage indicated this bird was very probably ex-captive, and thus it is not considered to have arrived naturally. There thus remain just three records of birds considered to be of wild origin, the most recent of which was in fact at this location, being of three birds on 20 April 1997.



**280.5A Lesser Shortwing *Brachypteryx leucophrys* 白喉短翅鸚**

**2001:** Found to be breeding on Tai Mo Shan, this having been suspected in 2000: in July, a juvenile male was seen on 10<sup>th</sup>, with two adult males present on 13<sup>th</sup>, one of which was just heard singing, while the other was trapped and ringed (MH, PJL). Also during the second winter period, one was at Shek Kong, near the bottom of the Kap Lung Trail, on 9 December (RWL, MRL) and another was heard singing at Fan Shui Au, in Plover Cove CP on 14<sup>th</sup> (RWL). These records follow the first for Hong Kong, involving two trapped at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 14 November 1998.

**282A Rufous-tailed Robin *Luscinia sibilans* 紅尾歌鵲**

**2001:** In the spring, three were noted in song at Cheung Chau on both 27 March and 1 April, while towards the end of the year singles were seen at Tai Po Kau on 23 November and at Fan Shui Au in Plover Cove CP on 14 December. A rather poor year for this species.

**2002:** In another poor year for this species, there were only two records of single birds: at Bowen Road, Wanchai on 19 February and Kap Lung on 17 November.



**Plate 26.** Rufous-tailed Robin *Luscinia sibilans* 紅尾歌鵲  
Lamma Island, Hong Kong, 3 April 2005  
Cherry Wong

**283A Siberian Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope* 紅喉歌鵪(紅點頰)**

**2001:** Recorded up to 20 April and again from 19 October. Most records throughout the year were of no more than three birds at any one location, the only double-figure count involving 13 trapped at Mai Po on 18 March, by which time passage was presumably underway. Recorded from low-lying, generally damper sites at Long Valley, Nam Chung, San Tin, Fung Lok Wai, Ma Tso Lung, Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau, Kam Tin and Pak Nai, as well as from generally drier, more upland areas in the Pat Sin Leng CP area, including Sha Lo Tung, Ping Shan Chai and Cloudy Hill, at Wu Kau Tang, near Tai Lam Chung Reservoir and at Pun Shan Chau. Also recorded at Po Toi.

**2002:** The highest counts in the first winter period were ten between Shui Hau and Tai O, Lantau on 12 and 13 January, six at Mai Po on 10 and 12 February and five at Ngau Tam Mei on 14 January. One at Mai Po on 20 April was the latest spring record, while one at Long Valley on 8 October (YHK) was the first record in the second part of the year, equalling the earliest ever. There were no further reports until 1 November, and the main arrival appears to have occurred during the third week of November, including a count of 40 at Mai Po on 23<sup>rd</sup>. All records were from low-lying areas of the NT and offshore islands.

**284A Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane* 藍歌鵪**

**2001:** There were two records, both on 9 September: a male at Tai Mo Shan and a juvenile at Tsim Bei Tsui.

**2002:** One was at Mai Po on 20 April and a first-winter female was at Kap Lung on 19 September.

**285A Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* 藍喉歌鵪(藍點頰)**

**2001:** All records were from those sites in the northern and northwest NT at which it has been regularly recorded in recent times, the only slightly unusual record in terms of location involving a single bird seen at Pak Nai on 23 November. During the spring, it was seen up to 7 March, with regular reports of up to three at Long Valley and two at San Tin. In the autumn it was again noted from 4 October, a rather early date, though no more than two were reported from any one location, both those instances being at San Tin, on 26 November and 6 December.

**2002:** In the first winter period up to two birds were again reported from San Tin, one was at Mai Po and up to three were at Long Valley, the final record occurring on 26 March. In the second winter period singles were reported from 30 November at Long Valley, Mai Po San Tsuen, San Tin and Lok Ma Chau.

**286A Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus* 紅脇藍尾鵪**

**2001:** Recorded in the first winter period up to 3 March with, for the third year running, no evidence of any marked influx at this time; no more than two were reported from any one site and a total of just 16 bird-days were reported, all from sites in the central and northern NT. In the autumn the first record came from Mt. Austin on



14 November, when six were present. Further records during late November were of three at Twisk Nature Trail on 23<sup>rd</sup>, one at Mui Tsz Lam on 24<sup>th</sup>, and three at Mt. Austin on 30<sup>th</sup>, while four were counted at Tai Po Kau on 1 December. Numbers recorded then fell away quite sharply during early December, until 14<sup>th</sup>, when 12 were counted in the Wu Kau Tang-Lai Chi Wo area. The remainder of the month saw a total of a further 27 bird-days recorded. These reports included a count of ten during a survey of the lower slopes of the Pat Sin Leng on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**2002:** In the first winter period, up to three birds were recorded at widespread sites, mainly in the central NT, with the final record occurring on the relatively early date of 22 February. However, reports did suggest that more birds were present than during the same period in 2001. The first report of the second winter period occurred on 9 November, when five were trapped at KFBG. Subsequently, up to three birds were noted in the central NT and at Tai Tam CP.

### **287A Oriental Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis* 鵲鵯**

**2001:** A further reminder of the powers of mimicry of this species involved one noted very convincingly imitating a Chestnut Bulbul *Hypsipetes castanonotus* at Shuen Wan on 24 May. Concerning breeding, a female was noted collecting nesting material at Hang Tau on 4 April and an adult was noted feeding a recently fledged juvenile at Fung Lok Wai on 12 May.

**2002:** No significant reports.

### **289A Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus aureus* 北紅尾鵯**

**2001:** In the early part of the year, recorded at nine different sites in the NT up to 19 March, all records involving singles, apart from two at Kam Tin on 25 February. Present again from 14 November, when one was at Chek Lap Kok and four were at Mt. Austin; these, together with two in the Mui Wo area on 2 December, were the only records of the year not from the mainland NT. The remainder of November saw a further 29 bird-days recorded, including counts of four (believed to involve 12 different birds) in the Ma On Shan area on 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. In December a total of twenty were recorded, including four in the Wu Kau Tang-Lai Chi Wo area on 14<sup>th</sup> and five in a single 1 km square in the Pat Sin Leng area on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**2002:** In what was considered by one observer to be an exceptionally good first winter period for this species, apart from ten in the Luk Keng-Kuk Po area on 11 January, up to three birds were reported from the northern NT, Hong Kong Island and Tseung Kwan O up to 24 March. In the second winter period between one and six birds were recorded at widespread sites from 29 October; the highest count, however, was of ten birds seen on 10 November at Sha Lo Tung.

### **292A Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* 黑喉石(即鳥)**

**2001:** A count of 50 at Ma Tso Lung on 2 January was unusually high for the time of year – indeed it appears to be the highest mid-winter count ever made at one location in Hong Kong - but good numbers were also present at Long Valley during the early part of that month (counts of 16 on 5<sup>th</sup> and 19 on 10<sup>th</sup>), and 15 were present at Ma Tso Lung on 29<sup>th</sup>. Fourteen were still present at Long Valley on 14 February, but numbers

declined in late February and March, before rising again to ten on 4 April. Patterns of occurrence at Lok Ma Chau were broadly similar to those at Long Valley, though numbers involved were slightly smaller. The last record of the spring came from Long Valley on 28 April, while three at Po Toi on 22 April further confirmed that passage continued into the second half of that month. In the autumn recorded again from the fairly typical date of 12 September, with numbers reported increasing steadily throughout the rest of the month, before increasing much more sharply during 4-12 October, when a total of 115 were recorded, mostly at favoured sites such as Long Valley, Lok Ma Chau and Kam Tin, but also at Mt. Austin, where it is exclusively noted on passage. Thereafter there were only a handful of reports and it was probably significantly under-recorded.

**2002:** There were too few reports in the first part of the year to provide a fair picture of its distribution. The first report in the second part of the year was of one at Long Valley on 15 September. Only single figure counts were made until 4 October, when 15 were noted at Long Valley, and 15 were also recorded at Kam Tin on 8<sup>th</sup>. Passage weakened after the middle of the month, and one to five birds were recorded at several sites in the northern NT until early December.

**293A Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea* 灰林(即鳥)**

**2001:** An immature male was seen along the ridge-top of the Pat Sin Leng on 28 December.

**2002:** A male was at Wu Kau Tang on 14 February.

**295A White-throated Rock Thrush *Monticola gularis* 藍頭磯鶇**

**2001:** A female or immature was at Tai Po Kau on 29 November (RWL).

**296A Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush *Monticola rufiventris* 栗腹磯鶇**

**2001:** A male and a female were seen and photographed at KFBG on 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 21 February (MH).

**297A Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* 藍磯鶇**

**2001:** There were just four records, involving six birds, during the early part of the year: two at Chek Lap Kok on 20 January, two at Tai Mo Shan on 3 March, a female at Po Toi on 15 April and one at Kam Tin on 23 April. In the autumn the first record was at Po Toi on 21 September, when two present included a juvenile. Thereafter, a total of 29 were reported, with no really marked evidence of any passage period, and from a typical range of both mountain and coastal sites. These records included one of a male of the form *pandoo*, seen at Deep Water Bay on 24 December.

**2002:** Four records were received in the first part of the year: singles at Chek Lap Kok on 15 January and at Lamma the following day, two at Chek Lap Kok on 19 March and five at Mai Po on 20 April. One at Chek Lap Kok on 30 July was the first in the second half of the year, and subsequently up to three birds were noted at this site until 12 November. The highest count, however, was of seven, including two male

*philippensis* and two male *pandoo*, at Plover Cove dam on 17 December. Noted at low-lying areas of the NT, as well as offshore islands such as Po Toi and Shek Ngau Chau.

**298A Blue Whistling Thrush *Myophonus caeruleus* 紫嘯鶇**

2001 & 2002: No significant reports.

**300A Siberian Thrush *Zoothera sibirica* 白眉地鶇**

2001: A female was at Tai Po Kau on 4 March.

**301A Scaly Thrush *Zoothera dauma* 虎斑地鶇**

2001: There were only four reports in the early part of the year: one at Chung Pui on both 23 February and 1 March, one at Tai Po Kau on 5 March and one trapped at KFBG on 7 April. In the second winter period, there were just five reports: one at Mai Po on 17 November, one at Chung Mei on 29 November and 12 and 13 December, and one nearby at Bride's Pool on 18 December. A rather poor year for this species.

2002: There were only four reports in the whole year, indicating this was an even worse year for this species than the previous one. All involved singles, at Tai Po Kau on 2 and 7 January, at Tai Lam CP on 5 January and at KFBG on 9 November.

**302A Japanese Thrush *Turdus cardis* 烏灰鶇**

2001: In the early part of the year reported up to only 16 February, from Tai Po Kau (four on 30 January), Nam Chung, Sha Lo Tung and KFBG; the complete absence of reports during the spring passage period is unusual. Reported again towards the end of the year from 11 November, when an immature male was at Mai Po; all other records were of up to two birds, from Mt. Austin, Tai Po Kau and Mui Wo, apart from ten at KFBG on 17 November.

2002: Four records in the first winter period involved singles at Kowloon Park on 8 and 10 February, at Tai Po Kau Lookout on 19 February and at Tam Kon Chau on 17 March. In the second winter period two were at Shek Kong catchment on 15 November, one was at Ma Tso Lung Police Post on 6 December, two were in Tai Po Kau on 12 December and one was at Tai Tam CP the following day.

**303A Common Blackbird *Turdus merula* 烏鶇**

2001: Reported up to 15 March and again from 17 October. Most reports throughout the year were of singles or small parties of up to eight, but larger groups noted included 22 at Hong Kong Park on 1 January, and 21 at Shuen Wan on 17 November. Recorded at a typical range of widespread urban, semi-urban and rural locations.



Plate 27. Common Blackbird *Turdus merula* 烏鶇  
Kowloon Park, Hong Kong, 24 January 2005  
Pippen Ho

**2002:** Recorded in the first winter period until 23 March, with the highest count being eight at Shuen Wan on 9 March. Recorded in the second winter period from 10 October, with the highest counts being 40 at Long Valley on 4 November and 30 there on 30 November. Most counts were of one to six birds, and most records were from the central and northern NT.

### **305A Grey-backed Thrush *Turdus hortulorum* 灰背鶇**

**2001:** Recorded up to 29 March and again from 16 November, when two were at Mt. Austin. This latter site hosted the highest site-count of the year, five on 30 November. As with Japanese Thrush *T. cardis*, the lack of any passage in late March or early April, apart from the bird of 29 March, is most unusual. Those records that were received came from a typically widespread range of locations.

**2002:** In the first part of the year recorded up to 17 March, the highest count being four at Shui Hau, Lantau on 12 January and at Mai Po on 14 February. In the second part of the year recorded from 13 November, though only five records were received, concerning up to six birds. Records were received from widespread areas of the NT and HK Island.

### **306A Pale Thrush *Turdus pallidus* 白腹鶇**

**2002:** Only one record was received, that of one at Yuen Long on 11 January.

**307A Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus* 白眉鶇**

**2001:** Typically scarce during the first winter period, with one at Pat Sin Leng CP on 8 January, and singles at Tai Po Kau on 14 January and 13 February. Spring passage featured just two records: six at Tai Po Kau on 20 April and one there on 3 May. In the autumn, one was seen at Cloudy Hill on 17 October, a flock of 20 were at KFBG on 3 November, two were at Mt. Austin on both 16 and 23 November, and singles were at Tai Po Kau on 23 November and at Mt. Austin on 30 November. The final reports of the year were of two at Tai Po Kau village on 14 December and two at Tai Po Kau itself on 30 December.

**2002:** In a very poor year for this species, only three reports were received: singles at Tai Po Kau lookout on 19 February and at Kowloon Park on 26 February, and 50 at KFBG on 9 November.

**308A Dusky Thrush *Turdus naumanni* 斑鶇**

**2001:** Only two records were received: singles were heard at Mai Po on 28 October and seen at Tsim Bei Tsui in 21 November. A rather poor year for this species.

**2002:** All records occurred in the period to 7 March and involved singles, apart from two at Kam Tin on 28 January. Also recorded at Tai Lam CP, Pak Hok Chau, Mai Po, San Tin and Shuen Wan landfill. All birds ascribed to taxon were *eunomus*.

**309C Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis* 棕頸鈎嘴鶇**

**2001:** Now very well established in the central and eastern NT and on Hong Kong Island, with reports throughout the year from these areas.

**2002:** Away from the stronghold in the Tai Mo Shan massif, also recorded in Pat Sin Leng CP, at Jardine's Lookout and at Tai Tam CP.

**309.5A Pygmy Wren Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla* 小鱗胸鶇鶇**

**2002:** One was at Tai Po Kau on 2, 8 and 13 January, 27 March and 10 April (RWL, MRL). Also, one was seen at Kau Tam Tso, Wu Kau Tang on 1 May, when it behaved in a manner suggesting it was near a nest (GTR). This is the first indication that this species might be breeding in Hong Kong.

**310C Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps* 紅頭穗鶇**

**2001:** Recorded on many dates throughout the year at several sites where it has previously been noted, such as Tai Po Kau, Leadmine Pass, Pun Shan Chau, the Chinese University, Shing Mun, and in the Pat Sin Leng-Bride's Pool area. New sites at which it does not appear to have been recorded previously were Kowloon Hills Catchwater and Mui Tsz Lam.

**2002:** Away from the shrubland and forest of the Tai Mo Shan massif, which continued to provide the majority of records, also recorded at Aberdeen Reservoir and Tai Tam CP. Numbers appear to be on the increase.





Plate 28. Pygmy Wren Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla* 小鱗胸鷓鴣  
 Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 27 September 2004  
 Michelle Kong and Peter Wong

**311C Chinese Babax *Babax lanceolatus* 矛紋草鷓**

2001: This species appears to be maintaining its very precarious foothold on the upper slopes of Tai Mo Shan, where two were seen on 12 May.

2002: The only report received was of one at Tai Mo Shan on 8 June.

**312A Masked Laughingthrush *Garrulax perspicillatus* 黑臉噪鷓**

2001: Counts of over 30 in an abandoned vegetable field at Tong Kung Lang on 28 July and of 39 at Mui Wo on 2 December were easily the highest amongst those received.

2002: No significant reports.

**313C Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax pectoralis* 黑領噪鷓**

2001: Most reports were of groups of between two and twelve birds from the central, eastern and northern NT, but there were also three reports from Hong Kong Island: two at Stubbs Road on 9 November, three at Lady Clementi's Ride on 16 November and six there on 24 December. These were the first reports from Hong Kong Island since early 1998, *contra* Carey *et al.* (2001), which suggests that none have been seen there since 1997. As previously requested, in order to understand the possible pattern of spread of a species such as this it is important that observers attempt to



confirm the racial identity of the birds involved in such reports. An interesting record was of a flock of ten at Sha Lo Tung on 13 May, which had two Chestnut-winged Cuckoos *Clamator coromandus* in attendance nearby.

**2002:** Flocks of up to 25 were noted at Tai Po Kau, up to 17 at Chung Mei and up to 13 at Tai Mei Tuk. Elsewhere, also recorded at Nam Chung, Wu Kau Tang and Aberdeen Reservoir.

### **314C Black-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax chinensis* 黑喉噪鵲**

**2001:** Records received confirm that it is now well established in the central NT (Tai Po Kau, Pun Shan Chau, and KFBG) and slightly further east at Ho Chung, and also certainly still present on HK Island (Bowen Road and Aberdeen CP). A series of observations at Mau Ping New Village, Sai Kung also confirm that it is well established in country adjoining the east of Ma On Shan CP, if not, in fact, further east. A record of one at Kam Tin on 11 April was unusual, however.

**2002:** Once again very few reports were received: one at Tai Po Lookout on 19 February, two at Shek Kong Catchment on 17 April and at Tai Po Kau on 25 October, and three at Shek Kong Catchment on 14 November. No reports at all were received from Hong Kong Island; observers are encouraged to submit more records to confirm its continued presence in established strongholds.

### **315A Hwamei *Garrulax canorus* 畫眉**

**2001:** Interesting observations included one at Tai Po Kau on 20 April which included mimicry of Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx fugax* in its repertoire, and one singing in the reedbeds at Mai Po on 2 October. The latter probably refers to an ex-captive individual, however.

**2002:** No significant reports.

### **316C White-browed Laughingthrush *Garrulax sannio* 白頰噪鵲**

**2001:** There were just three reports, all from Pun Shan Chau, where four were present on 3 May, four on 6 May and one (heard) on 9 June.

**2002:** The only report was of two at Chau Tau on 1 March, and continued presence at Pun Shan Chau during the year.

### **317C Silver-eared Mesia *Leiothrix argenteauris* 銀耳相思鳥**

**2001:** All reports received were from Tai Po Kau, where it was present in all seasons, with a count of at least 30 on 8 July being the highest of the year.

**2002:** Only six reports were received, all from Tai Po Kau where up to 20 birds were recorded. This paucity of records is not thought to denote a decline in numbers.

**318C Red-billed Leiothrix *Leiothrix lutea* 紅嘴相思鳥**

**2001:** The only reports were from Tai Po Kau, where it was present in midsummer (at least ten on 8 July), as well as during both winter periods, and from Tai Mo Shan, where up to 15 were noted during July.

**2002:** Reported from Wu Kau Tang, Tai Po Kau and Tai Mo Shan.

**319C Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera* 藍翅希鵲**

**2001:** The only reports received confirmed that it was present year round at Tai Po Kau, with at least 20 there on 8 July.

**2002:** Only seven reports were received, though this is not thought to indicate any sudden change in status. Apart from one at Kap Lung Trail, all reports were from Tai Po Kau.

**320C White-bellied Yuhina *Yuhina zantholeuca* 白腹鳳鵲**



**Plate 29.** White-bellied Yuhina *Yuhina zantholeuca* 白腹鳳鵲  
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 18 April 2004  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong

**2001:** Up to two were noted at Tai Po Kau during March and April and also November and December. Elsewhere two were at Ho Chung on 17 July, and two were at Chung Pui on 13 December .

**2002:** Singles were reported from Tai Po Kau in January, February and March, while three were there on 14 December.

**321C Striated Yuhina *Yuhina castaniceps* 栗頭鳳鵡**

**2001:** Birds presumably from the influx noted in late 2000 continued to be noted at Tai Po Kau, where two were seen on 26 January and at least six were present on 2 March. However, there was evidence that most of the flock of 35 noted on 29 December 2000 may have moved to Shing Mun, where a flock of at least 30 was seen on 3 March. One was also seen at Mai Po village on 13 March and six were seen near Ng Tung Chai village on the rather late date of 15 April. A further influx occurred in November and December when, after two were seen at Tai Po Kau on 10 November, flocks of 25 were encountered at Cheung Chau on 30 November and at Ma On Shan village on 1 December. Later in December one was seen at Wanchai Gap Road on 24 December and flocks of at least 20 were encountered at both Bride's Pool and Tai Po Kau on 30 December.

**2002:** Five reports were received for the year: 40 in the Wu Kau Tang area on 3 January, one at Tai Po Kau on 12 January, 30 at Pat Sin Leng CP on 23 January, 40 at Tai Po Kau on 2 March and 15 at Kap Lung on 3 November.

**322C Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus* 棕頭鴉雀**

**2001:** At Tai Mo Shan noted between 12 May and 9 September, frequently in flocks of combined family parties numbering up to 12, with one record of a larger group of up to 20 on the latter date.

**2002:** At Tai Mo Shan five were noted 20 April, 25 were present on 11 May, four on 8 June, ten on 12 July and two on 29 August.

**323A Asian Stubtail Warbler *Urosphena squameiceps* 鱗頭樹鶯**

**2001:** Recorded up to 4 March and again from 27 October. During the first winter period a total of 14 bird-days were recorded, all from sites in the central and northern NT, but including one at Mai Po on 25 February, apparently only the second record from that location. During the second winter period a total of 72 bird-days was recorded, with 60 of these occurring in the period between 2 November and 2 December, and a highest single-site count of 13 at Tai Po Kau on 1 December. Records during this period were again mostly from the central, northern and eastern NT, but also included five at Mt. Austin on 16 November and three at Lady Clementi's ride on 24 December.

**2002:** In the first winter period up to seven birds were recorded at Tai Po Kau, while singles were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui, Bride's Pool, Mai Po and Bowen Road, Wanchai; the latest occurred on 19 February. Noted in the second winter period from 9 November at KFBG, Tai Po Kau, Sha Lo Tung and north Lantau; the highest count was of five birds on 11 December.



**Plate 30.** Striated Yuhina *Yuhina castaniceps* 栗頭鳳鶯  
Sha Tin Pass, Hong Kong, 1 July 2004  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong

**325A Japanese Bush Warbler *Cettia diphone* 日本樹鶯**

**2001:** During the early part of the year reports were received up to 13 March, involving a maximum of just 14 birds, noted at Fung Lok Wai, Ma Tso Lung, San Tin, Long Valley, Pat Sin Leng and Sha Lo Tung, where three were present on 25 February. The first report in the autumn came on 11 November when one was present at Mai Po. Thereafter, no more than two were reported from various locations, including Po Toi and the Mui Wo area, apart from an exceptional count of 49 at Lok Ma Chau on 21 November (YHK); the previous highest single-site count was 40 at Mai Po on 15 November 1992.

**2002:** Reported from Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau, Ma Tso Lung, Shuen Wan, Sha Lo Tung and Mt. Austin, with singles involved in all records bar that of two on 15 November. The latest date in spring was 5 May, and the earliest in autumn was 10 November.

**326A Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler *Cettia fortipes* 強腳樹鶯**

**2001:** In January, two at Ma Tso Lung on 2<sup>nd</sup> and one trapped at Mai Po on 7<sup>th</sup> were unusual as this species generally shows a preference for drier, sub-montane areas in Hong Kong. A record of one in song on the hillside above Fung Lok Wai on 19<sup>th</sup> and 23

January, though close to Deep Bay, fitted with this habitat preference. Another was noted singing at Pun Shan Chau on 18 January, one was seen at Po Toi on 25 February and one was trapped at KFBG on 7 April. Noted again from 24 November, when two were seen at Mui Tsz Lam. The following day, three were seen at Pak Tam Chung, and December produced six records involving seven birds: singles on the Brown Walk at Tai Po Kau on 1<sup>st</sup>, Mui Wo and nearby Wo Tin on 2<sup>nd</sup>, Luk Tei Tong and Nam Shan (both near Mui Wo) on 23<sup>rd</sup> and two in Sai Kung East CP on 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**2002:** Recorded up to 26 March at Tsim Bei Tsui, Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau and Wu Kau Tang. In addition, one was in song at 790 m on Tai Mo Shan on 11 May.

### **329A Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus mandelli* 高山短翅鶯**

**2001:** Records in the early part of the year came from Ma Tso Lung, Fung Lok Wai, Kam Tin, Sha Lo Tung and High Junk Peak Trail (Clear Water Bay CP), from where the final record of an apparently wintering bird came on 4 March. A sighting of a juvenile at Tai Mo Shan on 13 July (PJL) provided the first confirmed breeding record for Hong Kong. In the autumn, noted again from 10 October when one was at Nim Wan (MRL); both this record and one of a bird in song at Pat Sin Leng on 20 October (RWL) are earlier than any previous earliest autumn records. The only subsequent records were of three at Sha Lo Tung on 16 November and one in the Clear Water Bay area on 10 December.

**2002:** Six records were received for the year: two at Sha Lo Tung on 1 January, one near Tai Long Wan on 12<sup>th</sup>, two at Wu Kau Tang on 15 January, one in song at 820 m on Tai Mo Shan on 11 May, nine at Sha Lo Tung on 10 November and two there on 13 December.

### **330A Large Grass Warbler *Graminicola benghalensis* 大草鶯**

**2002:** Singles were at Tai Lo Au, Fei Ngo Shan on 8 and 21 June, Tai Mo Shan on 7 September and Fung Yuen on 13 December.

### **331A Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata* 矛紋蝗鶯**

**2002:** There were seven reports between 21 September and 13 November, all involving singles, apart from a record of two on 20 October. Recorded at Mai Po, Long Valley, Kam Tin and Chek Lap Kok.

### **332A Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola* 小蝗鶯**

**2001:** A series of records at various locations in the northwest NT in January was unprecedented, as previously this species has been reported no later than 2 December and no earlier than 25 February. These records came from Ma Tso Lung on 2<sup>nd</sup>, Mai Po on 4<sup>th</sup>, San Tin on 10<sup>th</sup>, Nam Sang Wai on 29<sup>th</sup> and Lut Chau on 31<sup>st</sup> (all PJL, GJC). A record of two in song at San Tin on 6 March was just the sixth during late February and March. Autumn passage involved just 20 bird-days, all recorded at favoured sites in the northwest NT, between 4 September, when three were at Long Valley, and 13 October, when one was at Mai Po.



**2002:** All records were in autumn, between 3 September and 17 October, involving a total of 55 bird-days, only two of which were in September. Records were received from Mai Po San Tsuen, San Tin, Long Valley, Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau and Chek Lap Kok, and the highest count was of 20 at Mai Po on 1 October.

**334A Styian's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella pleskei* 史氏蝗鶯 VU**

**2001:** Two were in song at the Mai Po boardwalk on 12 April (GJC).

**335A Black-browed Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps* 黑眉葦鶯**

**2001:** There were eight records during January, February and the first week of March. All were of singles at Ma Tso Lung (2 January), Mai Po (4 January), Long Valley (6 February) and Lok Ma Chau-San Tin (six dates between 9 January and 7 March). Spring passage would appear to have first been noted on 18 March and three were at Lok Ma Chau on 21 March. Migrants continued to be noted up to 8 May and, altogether, 15 bird-days were recorded, rather more than in recent years. Autumn passage was noted from 12 September, when singles were at both Nim Wan and San Tin, and up to 14 November, and was heavier than in recent years. Typically focussed almost exclusively on the northwest NT, albeit in the broader sense of that term, to extend from Nim Wan across to Long Valley, it involved 243 bird-days. Passage was heaviest during the period from 4<sup>th</sup> to 14 October, during which time there were counts of 10 at Long Valley on 4<sup>th</sup>, 40 at Lok Ma Chau on 9<sup>th</sup>, 25 at Long Valley on 10<sup>th</sup> and 12 there on 14<sup>th</sup>, and 120, including 38 trapped, at Mai Po on 13<sup>th</sup> (PJL); this is the highest ever single-site count in Hong Kong, surpassing the counts of 50 made there on 12 October 1975 and 25 April 1992. This period also produced the only record away from the northwest NT, when one was seen at Shuen Wan on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

**2002:** The only winter record was of two birds at Mai Po on 10<sup>th</sup> and 12 February. Records relating to spring migration were few, with singles on three dates between 23 April and 25 May, and ten on 5 May. The 25 May record (MRL) is a new late date by two days. Return passage was noted from 28 September and was strongest during 10-20 October, when the highest count of 75 was recorded on both 12<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. The last record of the year was of ten birds on 6 November. All records were from the northern NT.

**340A Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis* 東方大葦鶯**

**2001:** For the first time since 1998, there were several reports in advance of the main spring passage period: singles, in song, at Fung Lok Wai on 21 February, at Mai Po on 1 March and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 2 March. Spring passage occurred between 30 March and 15 May, and involved a total of 11 bird-days; it thus followed the pattern of very weak spring passage which has emerged since 1997. Autumn passage was noted from 4 September, and, as with Black-browed Reed Warbler *A. bistrigiceps*, peaked during the period of 4-14 October; thirty were at San Tin on 4<sup>th</sup>, 130 at Lok Ma Chau on 9<sup>th</sup> and 150 at Mai Po on 13<sup>th</sup>. The latter count is the joint second highest ever reported in Hong Kong, and this period also saw one of only two records of this species away from the northwest NT during the year, when two were seen at Shuen Wan on 6 October. After 14 October, there were, in fact, just two further records, involving one at Mai Po on 18 November and one near Wanchai Gap Road on 7 December. During the final four



months of the year a total of 430 bird-days were recorded, with 82 in September and 346 in October, and one each in November and December.

**2002:** There were three records in the first winter period: singles at Mai Po on 20 and 29 January and on 14 February. Spring passage was evident between 1 April and 26 May, with the highest count being ten on 5 May. Unusual summer records occurred at Mai Po on 27 June and 21 July, when single singing birds were noted. Return passage was noted from 22 August to 27 October, with the highest counts being 100 on 21 September and 1 October, dates that mark the main passage period. Apart from one at Chek Lap Kok on 9 October, all records were from the northern NT, in particular Mai Po.

**341A Thick-billed Warbler *Acrocephalus aedon* 厚嘴葦鶯(蘆鶯)**

**2001:** One was trapped at Mai Po on 13 October (PJL).

**343A Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* 棕扇尾鶯**

**2001:** As in previous years, Long Valley held significant numbers at the beginning of the year, counts of 10-20 being made there on nine occasions between 5 January and 4 April. Much smaller numbers were also regularly reported from Lok Ma Chau, and the isolated presence of 25 at San Tin on 7 March may indicate passage at that time. One at Mai Po on 13 May could have been a migrant, but another at Fung Lok Wai on 19 June was presumably breeding at that locality. Records in autumn commenced on 26 August, when one was at Lok Ma Chau, with three, again perhaps birds which had in fact bred locally, at Fung Lok Wai on 27<sup>th</sup>. During September, numbers again grew at Long Valley, reaching 20 on 9<sup>th</sup>, and there were also 11 at Ma Tso Lung on 11<sup>th</sup>, six at Chek Lap Kok on 18<sup>th</sup> and two at Po Toi on 22<sup>nd</sup>. That month produced a total of 39 bird-days, while October produced just 18. As in previous years, November saw few – in this case, none – recorded, until a major influx, presumably of locally wintering birds, which occurred on 26<sup>th</sup>, when 45 were recorded at San Tin.

**2002:** There were three reports in the early part of the year: one at Chek Lap Kok on 15 January, one at Shuen Wan on 16 March and three at Chek Lap Kok two days later. Return passage was noted from 29 July, when one was at Chek Lap Kok, though there was only one more record until early September. Subsequently, the highest count was 34 at Mai Po on 1 October. All records were from the northern NT and Chek Lap Kok.

**344A Bright-capped Cisticola *Cisticola exilis* 黃頭扇尾鶯**

**2001:** A typical set of records in autumn and early winter involved one on the trail between Po Lin Monastery and Tung Chung on 11 November, two at Sha Lo Tung on 16 November and one at Lin Fa Shan on 23 December.

**2002:** Only two reports were received: two at Sha Lo Tung on 10 November and one there on 15 November.

**345A Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris* 灰頭鷓鴣**

**2001 & 2002:** No significant reports.

**346A Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata* 褐頭鷦鷯**

2001 & 2002: No significant reports.

**346.9A Mountain Tailorbird *Orthotomus cuculatus* 栗頭縫葉鶯**

1999: One was at Tai Po Kau on 8-9 October (RWL). This is the first record for Hong Kong.

2001: One was at Tai Po Kau on 19 November (RWL).

**347A Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius* 長尾縫葉鶯**

2001 & 2002: No significant reports.

**349A Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* 褐柳鶯**

2001: Present until 2 May and again from 12 September. Twenty at Ma Tso Lung on 2 January was the highest single-site count during the early part of the year, and other records at this time came from Fung Lok Wai, Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau, Ho Sheung Heung and Po Toi, where three on 15 April were presumably migrants. Passage in the autumn was heaviest during 9-14 October; of a total of 166 bird-days recorded for the months of September, October and November, 121 (73%) occurred during this six-day period, including counts of 35 at Lok Ma Chau on 9<sup>th</sup> and 40 at Mai Po on 14<sup>th</sup>, as well six at Mt. Austin on 12<sup>th</sup>. This peak in passage is a little earlier than the one in the second half of October highlighted in Carey *et al.* (2001). December records came from Mui Wo, Lai Chi Wo and Luk Tei Tong, as well as the Deep Bay area.

2002: Recorded up to 5 May, when one was trapped at Mai Po. Records included singles at city parks such as those at Quarry Bay and Kowloon Walled City. Autumn passage was first reported from Po Toi on 8 September, which is just two days later than the previous earliest. Relatively few birds were reported in September, though passage appears to have picked up in the first week of October. The highest count was of 60 birds at Mai Po on 20 October. It will be interesting to see a rather fuller picture of the wintering distribution of species such as this one when the Winter Survey data is published.

**351A Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi* 巨嘴柳鶯**

2001: One at KFBG on 16 October was the second earliest ever in autumn, the earliest being on 8 October 1994.

**352A Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus* 黃腰柳鶯**

2001: Recorded up to 4 March and from 9 November. The latest date in spring is much earlier than usual and the complete absence of reports during the main spring passage period in late March and early April is odd. However, since the highest count during early part of the year was of 30 at Tai Po Kau on 2 March, it is possible that its exodus from Hong Kong did indeed occur rather early in 2001. Counts of 12 made at

Tai Po Kau on 24 November and 1 December were the highest of the autumn/early winter period, and there was no suggestion of any major influx. With the exception of two at Po Toi on 25 February and two at Mt. Austin on 14 November – in both cases, almost certainly migrants – all records were from the mainland NT and Lantau.

**2002:** Appears to have been at least averagely numerous in the first two months of the year, with counts of 12 from Tai Po Kau and other records from widespread sites. The latest record occurred on 15 March, which is relatively early. It was first recorded in autumn on 9 November, and the highest count from Tai Po Kau during the later part of the year was 20 on 10 December. All reports were from wooded areas of the NT and HK Island.

### **354A Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* 黃眉柳鶯**

**2001:** Recorded up to 22 April and again from 19 September. In the early part of the year reports included counts of at least 10 at Mai Po on 25 February and at Tai Po Kau on 4 March. In the autumn, after one was heard at Borrett Road on 19 September, other records soon followed with singles at Po Toi on 22<sup>nd</sup>, Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 23<sup>rd</sup> and KFBG on 24<sup>th</sup>, but there was typically no marked period of heavier passage, nor subsequently any very marked influx of wintering birds, with a count of 28 on a 5 km stretch of the Wu Kau Tang-Lai Chi Wo circuit being the only double-figure report.

**2002:** Recorded up to 19 April and again from 10 October, the latter date being relatively late for the first autumn report. In the first part of the year only single figure counts were received, reflecting its late winter decline in abundance. The highest counts in autumn were of up to 12 at Sha Lo Tung on 10 and 15 November. Reported from widespread sites, mainly in the NT.

### **356A Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* 極北柳鶯**

**2001:** There were just four spring records: two at Cheung Chau on 23 April, and singles at Mai Po on 28 April, Tai Hang Tun (Clear Water Bay CP) on 29 April, and again at Mai Po on 5 May. Autumn passage occurred between 9 September and 14 October, with high counts of 25 and 16, both at Nim Wan, on 12 and 25 September respectively. During the autumn passage period a total of 94 bird-days were recorded, with reports also from Mai Po, Tsim Bei Tsui, Shek Kong, Kam Tin, Long Valley in the lowlands of the northwest NT, Tai Po Kau, Kap Lung, Tai Mo Shan and KFBG in the central NT, as well as from Mt. Austin, Wong Chuk Hang, Po Toi, Hok Tau, and Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen.

**2002:** There were no records in spring. Most autumn records fell between 31 August and 6 October, though a further bird was noted on 6 November. During the autumn as a whole, 23 bird-days were recorded, which represents relatively weak passage. Main passage appears to have occurred between 5 and 19 September, and the highest count was of four birds on 31 August, and 8 and 19 September. Reported from the central and northern NT and Po Toi.

**358A Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes* 灰腳樹鶯 or**

**359A Sakhalin Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus borealoides* 庫頁島柳鶯**

Since reliable criteria for the separation in the field 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 2001 and 2002 are given in the separate species entries below.

**2001:** There was one winter record: one at Shek Kong Catchment on 26 February. Spring passage occurred between 1 and 22 April and involved seven birds: singles at Po Toi on 1 and 12 April, at Cheung Chau on 6 and 11 April and two (heard) at Po Toi on 22 April. In the autumn, passage was noted between 9 September and 16 October. Only 36 bird-days were involved, all but three in the period 9 September to 1 October, and passage certainly appeared somewhat lighter than in most years. Records during this season were from Kap Lung, KFBG, Nim Wan, Hok Tau, Tai Po Kau, Mai Po, Mt. Austin, Cheung Chau and Po Toi.

**2002:** Recorded from 31 August to 5 October, with the highest count being of six at KFBG on 19 September. Other records were from central and northern NT.

**358A Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes* 灰腳樹鶯**

**2002:** Singles were trapped at KFBG on 19 September and 26 October.

**360A Eastern Crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus coronatus* 冕柳鶯**

**2001:** One at Kowloon Park on 6 April was the only record in the spring. In the autumn there were just four records, making this a poor year for this species: singles were at Kap Lung on 26 August and 15 September, at Tai Po Kau on 9 October and at Mt. Austin on 19 October.

**361A Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides* 冠紋柳鶯**

**2001:** There were three records of birds presumed to be of the form *P.r. fokiensis* in the early part of the year: one at Tai Po Kau on 8 January, two there on 2 March and one at Wu Kau Tang on 8 March. Towards the end of the year such birds, albeit with signs of individual variation in head pattern, were seen again from 22 November, at Chung Pui, Bride's Pool and Tai Po Kau. The only record of the taxon *P.r. goodsoni* came from Mui Tsz Lam on 24 November.

**2002:** Birds presumed to be of the form *P.r. fokiensis* were reported from Tai Po Kau, where up to two were reported, Tsim Bei Tsui and TWISK Nature Trail until 26 February. In autumn singles were recorded from 6 November at Bride's Pool and Tai Po Kau. Single birds of the taxon *P.r. goodsoni* were recorded as follows: at Tai Po Kau on 7 January, 26 February and 14 December, at Kap Lung on 3 November and at Bride's Pool on 6 November.

### **Spectacled Warbler *Seicercus sp.* 眼眶鶲鶯**

2001: One was at Tai Po Kau on 11 January.

2002: One was at Tai Po Kau on 12 December.

It should be noted that while records of *Seicercus sp.* do not require substantiation to be submitted, a detailed description may allow identification in the future. Records of warblers *Seicercus* identified to species level will be assessed by the Records Committee and, thus, details should be provided.

### **365.5A Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* 白喉林鶯**

2002: One was at Yin Kong on 7 October (HKY *et al.*). This is the first record for Hong Kong.

### **367A Grey-streaked Flycatcher *Muscicapa griseisticta* 斑胸鶲**

2001: The only records were in the spring, between 16 April and 6 May. A total of fourteen bird-days were involved and records came from Kam Tin, Po Toi, Sha Lo Tung, Mau Ping New Village (Sai Kung) and from Chuk Kok (Sai Kung), where a group of six were observed moving across a hillside together in the late afternoon, following a day of heavy showers. The complete absence of records in autumn is extremely unusual, although there have been years with as few as one record during that season.

2002: There were only two records during the year: two at Tai Mo Shan on 11 May and one at Lin Ma Hang on 29 September.

### **368A Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica* 烏鶲**

2001: All records were in the period 11-30 September, a rather more restricted period of passage than has been observed in recent years. A total of 15 bird-days were involved, but there was reason to believe as few as five individual birds could have been responsible for all these records, as there were single juveniles at Mai Po on 11 and 16 September, single birds reported at Po Toi on 21 and 22 September (the latter aged as a first winter), one at KFBG on 24 September, and two seen at the same location at Tai Po Kau on five occasions between 24 and 30 September.

2002: The five records occurred in the period 29 August-5 October, a relatively poor showing (though the 29 August record is only one day later than the earliest on record). All records were of singles, apart from two at Tai Po Kau on 1 October; also noted at Tai Mo Shan, Kap Lung, Wu Kau Tang and KFBG.

### **369A Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica* 北灰鶲**

2001: In the early part of the year, a fairly typical set of ten records involved exclusively singles, recorded at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen, Tai Po Kau, Lok Ma Chau, Palm Springs, Mai Po, Kam Tin and Kowloon Park. The individuals recorded at the latter two locations, on 28 March and 6 April respectively, were over three weeks later than other records at this time, and were presumably migrants; one at Mai Po on 19 April

was clearly so. The first record in the autumn came on 14 September from Mt. Austin, where it is surprisingly rather scarce. Thereafter it was regularly recorded at widespread locations in small numbers until the end of the year, with a total of 51 bird-days logged. However, the only counts exceeding two were of three at Nim Wan on 25 September, four at Kam Tin on 12 October and three at Mau Ping New Village (Sai Kung) on 13 October.

**2002:** In the first winter period, there were three reports, concerning singles at Palm Springs on 7 January, Chung Pui on 22 January and Kowloon Park on 28 February. Unusually, there were no spring reports at all. Southward passage was noted from 5 September, with the highest count being three on Po Toi on 8 September. October was the peak month, with over 50% of records in the second part of the year. There were four November records, and one on 13 December was the final record of the year. Records came from the central and northern NT, as well as Po Toi.

### 369.5A Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui* 褐胸鶇

**2001:** One was at Tai Po Kau from 28 November until the end of the year (COW, SLT *et al.*); this is the first record in Hong Kong.

**2002:** The bird at Tai Po Kau, found on 28 November 2001, was present until 21 January.



**Plate 31.** Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui* 褐胸鶇 first winter  
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 25 December 2001  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong



**370A Ferruginous Flycatcher *Muscicapa ferruginea* 紅褐鶇**

**2001:** After a completely blank year in 2000 - the second in three years - there were five reports involving a minimum of four birds: one at Po Toi on 1 April, two at Tai Po Kau on 2 April, with singles there on both 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, and one at Cheung Chau on 5<sup>th</sup>.

**371A Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassina* 銅藍鶇**

**2001:** The only reports involved a male and a female at separate locations at Tai Po Kau on 2 December, presumably the same female seen there again on 9 December, and an unsexed individual, also at Tai Po Kau on 27 December. On the evidence of this and the previous two years, this always scarce species is becoming increasingly so.

**2002:** In the first winter period a female was seen at Tai Po Kau on 1, 12 and 20 January. In the second part of the year, singles were seen on 15 November at Fung Yuen, 16 November at Tai Po Kau, 17 November at Kap Lung and 14 December at Tai Po Kau.

**372A Yellow-rumped Flycatcher *Ficedula zanthopygia* 白眉姬鶇**



**Plate 32.** Yellow-rumped Flycatcher *Ficedula zanthopygia* 白眉姬鶇 first-winter male  
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 12 September 2004  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong

**2001:** As with some other species which mainly occur on early autumn passage, such as the members of the Pale-legged/Sakhalin Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes*/

*borealoides* species pair, and Eastern Crowned Warbler *P. coronatus*, this was a poor year for this species, with just three records: singles at Kap Lung on 26 August, at Nim Wan on 12 September and at Shek Kong on 23 September.

**373A Narcissus Flycatcher *Ficedula narcissina* 黃眉姬鶲**

**2001:** The only record involved a male at Mai Po on 4 April.

**375A Mugimaki Flycatcher *Ficedula mugimaki* 鷓姬鶲**

**2001:** A female or immature male at Cheung Chau on 11 April was the only record of the spring. In the autumn the only records were of one on the trail from Po Lin Monastery to Tung Chung on 11 November, and three, including an adult male, at Twisk Nature Trail on 23 November. The latter date is a very typical one for the peak of autumn passage of this species, but this poor set of records appears to continue to document the sad decline of this very attractive species.

**2002:** There were two reports during the year: two at KFBG on 9 November and one at Sha Lo Tung the following day.

**377A Red-throated Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla* 紅喉姬鶲**

**2001:** At the beginning of the year, records of birds presumably holding wintering territories came from Mai Po and Nam Sang Wai on 2 January, from Fung Lok Wai on 23 January and from San Tin on 22 February, while those seen at Mai Po on 6 April and Po Toi on 21 April (both males) were presumably migrants. An immature seen at Mt. Austin on 14 September (MT) became the earliest ever in autumn, supplanting that recorded at Kowloon Park on 16 September 2000. Another early migrant was seen at Mai Po on 16 September, thus becoming the joint second earliest ever, but there were no further records until 12 October, when another immature was seen at Mt. Austin. October produced a total of four records, all single immatures, the others being seen at KFBG on 16<sup>th</sup>, Lok Ma Chau on 23<sup>rd</sup> and San Tin on 24<sup>th</sup>. November produced just two - one in a garden at Hang Tau from 1<sup>st</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>, and another at Mai Po on 17<sup>th</sup> - as did December, when one was seen at Mai Po on 25<sup>th</sup> and a male and a female were seen at Shek Kong on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**2002:** In the first part of the year the only record was of one near Wu Kau Tang on 3 and 4 January. In the second part of the year, first recorded on 2 October, with passage continuing until 27 October. Apart from two on 5 October at Mai Po, all eight records received involved singles. In addition, one was at Tai Po Kau on 12 December and one was seen at Fung Yuen on 13<sup>th</sup> and 30 December. All records were from low-lying areas of the northern and eastern NT.

**378A Blue-and-white Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana* 白腹鶲**

**2001:** Spring passage occurred between 1<sup>st</sup> and 8 April and involved eight bird-days and a probable seven individuals, all males except for a female at Cheung Chau on 5<sup>th</sup> and two unsexed individuals at Tai Po Kau on 2<sup>nd</sup>. Other sites at which it was recorded during this season were Po Toi, Cheung Chau, Kowloon Park, Ho Chung and Tai Hang Tun (Clear Water Bay CP). In the autumn, singles were recorded at Tai Po Kau

on 10 November and at Mai Po (an immature male) on 19 November. These were both rather late; only the bird seen at Mai Po on 22 November 2000 has been recorded later than the second of these.

**2002:** Only two records were received: a male and female at KFBG on 3 November and three males at Tai Po Kau on 5 November. Another relatively poor year for this species.

### **380A Hainan Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis hainanus* 海南藍鶇**

**2001:** First noted in the spring on 8 April at Tai Po Kau, when a male was seen and heard singing. Reports of up to three singing males at Tai Po Kau continued up to 12 May, and one was also heard singing near Wu Kau Tang on 16 April. On 8 July successful breeding at Tai Po Kau was confirmed when a report of three included one juvenile, and there was one report in the autumn, of a male at Kap Lung on 9 September.

**2002:** First noted in spring on 1 April at Tai Po Kau, where up to two singing males were reported to 25 April. Elsewhere, three were at Shing Mun on 8 April and one was at Mai Po on 19 April. There were two autumn records, involving single males at Kap Lung on 31 August and at Tai Po Kau on 25 October.

### **383A Grey-headed Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis* 方尾鶇**

**2001:** Recorded up to 4 March and again from 19 October. At the beginning of the year, with the exception of one seen at Cheung Chau on 3 February and two at Shing Mun on 3 March, all records were of single birds at Tai Po Kau. One seen at Mt. Austin on 19 October was unusually early, and it was not recorded again until 9 November, when one was heard at Tai Po Kau. During the rest of the year up to two were recorded on many dates, mainly at Tai Po Kau, but also at Shing Mun, on the trail from Po Lin Monastery to Tung Chung (one on 11 November), on Bowen Road (two on 7 December), Lady Clementi's Ride (one on 7 December), and in the Chung Pui-Bride's Pool-Wu Kau Tang area (a total of four at different locations on 18 December).

**2002:** Recorded up to 23 February and again from 5 November. Up to two birds were recorded at Tai Po Kau and Chung Mei during the first winter period, when other records came from Bride's Pool, Aberdeen Reservoir, Kowloon Park, Shing Mun and Tai Po Kau Lookout. In the second part of the year up to two were at Tai Po Kau from 5 November, while one was at Bride's Pool on 6 November and one was at Shuen Wan on 30 December.

### **384A Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea* 黑枕王鶇**

**2001:** There was one record in each of the first three months of the year: singles at Tsim Bei Tsui on 31 January (heard), Cheung Chau on 24 February and Yung Shue O (an immature male) on 20 March. The autumn produced five records, involving four birds: at Tai Po Kau on 18 October, at Tsim Bei Tsui on 25 November (a female), at Bride's Pool on 18 and 30 December (also a female), and at Cheung Chau on 27 December.

**2002:** In the first winter period singles were seen at Ho Sheung Heung on 19 January, Shuen Wan landfill on 29 January and Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 17 March. In the second part of the year one at Tai Po Kau on 3 November and a female was at Ma Tso Lung Police Post during 4-6 December.

**385A Asian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradise* 壽帶鳥**

**2001:** One seen at Mai Po on 14 April was the first record in spring since 1998. However, this was another species predominantly recorded as an autumn migrant in Hong Kong for which 2001 was a very poor year. The only records at this season were singles at Mai Po on 12<sup>th</sup> and 15 August and on 16 September.

**2002:** There were again no reports in spring. Five autumn records were received: one at Kap Lung on 31 August, two at Tai Mo Shan on 3 September, one at Tai Po Kau on 24 September and singles at Mai Po on 30 September and 5 October.

**386A Japanese Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone atrocaudata* 紫壽帶鳥 N**

**2001:** One at Tai Po Kau on 13 April was the only spring record. Autumn passage of this species was almost as weak as that of *T. paradisi*, with singles at Fung Lok Wai on 26 September, at Mai Po on 6 October, and at KFBG on 7 October, and at least two at Tai Po Kau on 9 October.

**2002:** There were three records during the year, but none in spring, which is unusual. One at Tai Mo Shan on 3 September was followed by singles at Po Toi on 8 September and at Nam Sang Wai on 8 October.

**387A Chinese Penduline Tit *Remiz consobrinus* 攀雀**

**2001:** For the first time since 1998, there were records of this species during January and February: in January, one at Ma Tso Lung on 2<sup>nd</sup>, one at Long Valley on 18<sup>th</sup>, and at least two over Ma Tso Lung on 29<sup>th</sup>, and in February, 25 at Mai Po on 11<sup>th</sup>, seven over Lok Ma Chau on 22<sup>nd</sup> and three at Nam Sang Wai on 27<sup>th</sup>. March saw a total of 73 bird-days recorded, all at Mai Po or in the Lok Ma Chau-San Tin area, and with a high count of 50 at Mai Po on 18<sup>th</sup>. There were two further spring records: one at Long Valley on 10 April and two at Mai Po on 9 May. Towards the end of the year ten were at Pak Nai on 23 November and two (a male and a female) were at Mai Po on 25 December.

**2002:** A count of 15 at Mai Po on 22 January was quite high for the midwinter period, and a count of 50 at the same location on 12 February was exceptionally so, suggesting that passage may have already been under way by that date. There were four further records up to 1 May; with the exception of two at Ma Tso Lung on 14 April, these were all from Mai Po, the highest count amongst them being nine on 20 April. Reports resumed from 6 November, when four were noted at Palm Springs, near Mai Po. The subsequent six reports received for the remainder of November (to 29<sup>th</sup>) were divided equally between Mai Po (56 bird-days, with a maximum count of 26 on 12<sup>th</sup>) and Lok Ma Chau (30 bird-days, with a maximum count of 20 on 13<sup>th</sup>).

**388A Yellow-bellied Tit *Parus venustulus* 黃腹山雀**

**2001:** One was seen feeding in a Litsea tree at Chung Pui on 23 February.



**Plate 33.** Yellow-bellied Tit *Parus venustulus* 黃腹山雀 female  
Lam Tsuen Valley, Hong Kong, 14 January 2006  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong

**389A Great Tit *Parus major* 大山雀**

**2001:** No significant reports.

**2002:** A bird with a green-toned mantle and creamy underparts was seen at Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen on 12 February.

**390C Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus* 黃頰山雀**

**2001:** Although only reported from Tai Po Kau during the months of January to May and again in November and December, it was no doubt present throughout the year, with a pair observed collecting nesting material on 28 March. There were only two reports from other locations: one at Shing Mun on 3 March and one at KFBG on 3 November.

**2002:** All reports received were from Tai Po Kau and, with the exception of a count of three made on 1 January, involved just one or two birds. Also, records were only received for the periods from January to March and from October to December. As mentioned in the previous report, with this and other species breeding in relatively



small numbers in the central NT, observers are particularly encouraged to submit any records confirming breeding, or simply the species' presence during the breeding season.



Plate 34. Yellow-bellied Tit *Parus venustulus* 黃腹山雀 male  
Lam Tsuen Valley, Hong Kong, 14 January 2006  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong

**391D Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis* 絨額鶇**

**2001:** Only reported from Tai Po Kau, where it was present throughout the year and where dependent juveniles were observed on 16 May.

**2002:** A typical set of records indicated the presence of up to ten birds at Tai Po Kau, during both winter periods, though it was undoubtedly present in similar numbers throughout the summer too. The only report from elsewhere concerned two at Shek Kong catchwater on 11 March.

**393A Buff-bellied Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus* 紅胸啄花鳥**

**2001:** Up to six were recorded at Tai Po Kau during February and March, and it continued to be reported from that area during July and August, albeit in smaller numbers, suggesting that it may have attempted to breed there. The only other breeding season record was from Wu Kau Tang on 31 May, and other sites at which it was seen were Shing Mun (single males on 3 March and 24 November), Lady Clementi's Ride (one on 16 November) and Sai Kung (two on 2 December).



2002: All records were from Tai Po Kau, apart from that of a single bird at Yuen Long Park on 11 January. There were two reports of birds in song at Tai Po Kau in April: eight on 7<sup>th</sup> and five on 19<sup>th</sup>.

**394A Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum* 朱背啄花鳥**

2001: Reported from Long Valley, Pat Sin Leng, Yung Shue O, Tai Po Kau village, Pak Nai, Mui Wo and Sai Kung. The observation at Mui Wo on 2 December appears to be only the second record from Lantau.

2002: Reported only from Tai Po Kau, Kam Tin and Long Valley, though undoubtedly much more widespread than this would suggest.

**395A Fork-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga christinae* 叉尾太陽鳥**

2001 & 2002: No significant reports.

**396A Chestnut-flanked White-eye *Zosterops erythropleurus* 紅脇繡眼鳥**

2001: One was seen at Tai Po Kau on 9 November.

**397A Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonicus* 暗綠繡眼鳥**

2001: Counts reported involved at least 100 at Mai Po on 17 and 25 February, and at Tai Po Kau on 4 March, at least 60 at Wu Kau Tang on 15 November, 81 at Mui Wo on 2 December, with 96 there on 23 December, and a total of 123 counted while walking a 5km stretch of the Wu Kau Tang-Lai Chi Wo circuit on 14 December. Observers are requested to match this level of precision when giving the details relevant to a count of a species such as this, and particularly to specify whether a figure refers to a single flock or represents an aggregate total.

2002: No significant reports.

**400A Tristram's Bunting *Emberiza tristrami* 白眉鵪**

2001: The apparent decline in numbers of this species wintering in Hong Kong continued. The only records in the early months of the year involved three at Tai Po Kau on 15 February, one at Ng Tung Chai on 2 March and two at Pat Sin Leng CP on 6 March. Combining these records with those in late 2000 produces a bird-day total of just ten for the winter of 2000-2001, even more disappointing than the 35 recorded for 1999-2000. December produced just four records: two at Tai Po Kau on 1<sup>st</sup>, four at A Ma Wat on 14<sup>th</sup>, one at Pat Sin Leng on 20<sup>th</sup> and one at Tai Po Kau on 23<sup>rd</sup>. It seems plausible that the succession of relatively mild winters is the cause of the reduction in numbers coming to Hong Kong in winter.

2002: Apart from a record of one at Bride's Pool on 5 January, all records were from Tai Po Kau, where up to ten were reported on nine dates between 1 January and 26 March. There were, rather worryingly, no records at all during the second winter period.

#### 401A Chestnut-eared Bunting *Emberiza fucata* 栗耳鵪 (赤胸鵪)

2001: A good spring for this scarce species produced singles at Long Valley on 10 and 11 April (a male), at San Tin on 13 April and Tam Kon Chau on 15 April (also a male). In the autumn one was at Chek Lap Kok on 10 October (GJC) and another was at Kam Tin on 15 November. The Chek Lap Kok bird becomes the earliest ever in autumn, supplanting that seen at Long Valley on 14 October 2000.

2002: The only report received involved one seen at Mai Po on 16 April.

#### 402A Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla* 小鵪

2001: During January and February, up to 16 were regularly reported from Long Valley, though there were no double-figure counts from there or anywhere else after 24 February. Records continued up to 3 May with a total of 134 bird-days for the early part of the year, a considerable increase on the 69 recorded during the early part of 2000, but most likely simply the product of assiduous reporting of those present at Long Valley. Away from the northwest NT, there were very few records, those that were reported being seen at Po Toi (three on 1 April, one on 15 April and 3 on 22 April), Cheung Chau (one on 15 April) and Shuen Wan (one on 25 April). In the autumn it was again present at Long Valley on 10 October, but typically that and a record from the same location on 14<sup>th</sup> were the only October records. Indeed, significant numbers were not recorded until 21 November, when 20 were seen at Mai Po and 40 passed over Tsim Bei Tsui. These two reports accounted for no fewer than 87% of the 69 bird-days recorded during the autumn. The complete absence of records during December was odd.

2002: A rather paltry set of records was received, leading to continued concern about the apparent decline in numbers of this species occurring in Hong Kong. During January and February the only reports received were of three at the rather unusual location of Tai Po Kau on 3 January (noted feeding on seeds on sacking covering a collapsed bank on the forest road), and six, reported on both 19<sup>th</sup> and 26 February, at Long Valley. The month of March, which historically has seen the beginnings of marked passage through Hong Kong, produced just three records, involving four at Long Valley on 1<sup>st</sup>, two at KFBG on 7<sup>th</sup> and two at San Tin also on 7<sup>th</sup>. In fact, given the earliness of these records, spring passage through Hong Kong in 2002 can be said to have been totally non-existent, on the basis of records received. Numbers reported in the autumn were equally unimpressive, but did include the two earliest ever autumn records: singles at San Tin on 24 September (YTY) and at Sai Kung on 28 September (RWL). The only counts of ten or more in the later part of the year came from Sha Lo Tung on 10 November (ten) and from Long Valley on 17 November (12).

#### 404B Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica* 田鵪

1991: One was at Tai Long Wan on 18 April (JD). The date of this record strongly suggests this was an ex-captive individual, and it has not therefore been included in the record of those which are believed to have occurred naturally.

2002: A female or immature seen at Sha Lo Tung on 10 November (MT) is considered to have been probably wild. This is the third such record, the previous two

having both occurred in 1997, on 27 January at Lok Ma Chau and 22 November at Sha Lo Tung.

#### **405B Yellow-throated Bunting *Emberiza elegans* 黃喉鵯**

**2001:** A male was at Sham Chung on 17 November (CAV). Unlike in several previous records of this species, this bird is considered to have been probably wild, and as such constitutes the third record for Hong Kong, all of these having been in the eastern NT.

#### **406A Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureol* 黃胸鵯 N**

**2001:** In January there were three reports involving up to three birds at San Tin, and five were seen there on 7 February. A further record of a wintering bird came from Fung Lok Wai, where a female was seen on 28 January. A male seen at Tin Shui Wai on 1 March could have been either a wintering bird or an early migrant, but there were no further records until 25 March, when one was seen at Mai Po. Spring passage then continued up to 3 May and involved a total of 102 bird-days, significantly more than in both the two preceding years. Highest counts during this period were of 20 on the Mai Po access road on both 6 and 10 April, 15 at Mai Po on 14 April and 26 at San Tin on 27 April. It was first noted in the autumn on 29 August, when one was seen at Ma Tso Lung, but in fact September produced just two records, involving a total of three birds. October saw easily the heaviest passage of autumn, with a total of 283 bird-days, of which 222 occurred during the period of 10-14 October alone. This included 150 at Long Valley on 10 October. Steady, if weaker passage continued during November, which produced a total of 52 bird-days, including counts of 22 at San Tin on 20 November and 18 at Fung Lok Wai on 23 November. The overall total of 339 bird-days recorded from the beginning of the autumn period to the end of November was significantly higher than either of the preceding two years. During December there were just three reports of singles at San Tin. All records came from the northern and western NT, in an arc between Nim Wan and Long Valley.

**2002:** Apart from singles at Long Valley on 19 February and in the Shenzhen River area on 25 April (the final record of the spring), all reports in the early part of the year were from San Tin, where up to three were recorded on five dates between 10 January and 11 April, with slightly higher counts of ten on 21 February and seven on 7 March, suggesting that some passage may have occurred around that time. In the autumn it was recorded from the fairly early date of 3 September, when one was seen at San Tin. There was also one at Chek Lap Kok on 4<sup>th</sup>, and this bird and another seen there on 28 October were the only records away from the northern and northwest NT during the year. September produced a total of just ten bird-days, but as usual numbers increased in October. Passage was particularly heavy on 20<sup>th</sup>, when one observer estimated 300 to be present at Mai Po and 100 to be present at Long Valley. However, excluding these figures, a total of only 44 bird-days was recorded for the month as whole. November produced a further 18 bird-days, while in December the only reports, of five and two on 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> respectively, again came from San Tin.

**407A Chestnut Bunting *Emberiza rutila* 栗鵪**

**2001:** Rather more were seen in spring than has been the case in recent years: in April there were two at Mai Po on 14<sup>th</sup>, two at Po Toi on 15<sup>th</sup>, two at Long Valley on 18<sup>th</sup>, three at Po Toi on 21<sup>st</sup>, with one on 22<sup>nd</sup>, and nine at Chek Lap Kok on 26<sup>th</sup>. Conversely in autumn very few indeed were reported: in October, three at Kap Lung on 24<sup>th</sup> and one at Pun Shan Chau on 25<sup>th</sup>, and in November one on the Po Lin Monastery to Tung Chung trail on 11<sup>th</sup>. This poor set of records in autumn suggests either that it was genuinely a very poor year for it, or perhaps more likely, that quite a few went undetected or unreported.

**2002:** All records were in the period 26 October to 15 November; counts of 17 and ten were made at KFBG on the former date and on 3 November respectively, 11 were at Lok Ma Chau on 14 November and four were at Sha Lo Tung on 15 November.

**408A Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala* 黑頭鵪**

**2001:** One male at Long Valley on 18 January (MRL), was the first record of a male in Hong Kong. A bird which may have been this species or Red-headed Bunting *E. bruniceps* was seen at Long Valley on 10 October, making it by two days the earliest ever recorded in Hong Kong (PJL). Finally a female/immature was at San Tin on 8 November (YHK).

**409A Japanese Yellow Bunting *Emberiza sulphurata* 硫黃鵪 VU**

**2001:** After possibly as few as two birds, and certainly no more than four, in 1999, and an entirely blank year in 2000, this was another poor year for this species. Just two were recorded: singles at Long Valley on 13 April and at Mai Po on 28 April.

**410A Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala* 灰頭鵪**

**2001:** Recorded in the early part of the year up to 28 April, rather higher than usual counts on 6 April at Mai Po (eight) and at Tsim Bei Tsui (12) suggesting that spring passage may have been heaviest around that time, though there were also in fact ten at Mai Po on 28 April, the final date in spring for which a record was received. Two at Mai Po on 4 November were the first of the autumn, but only a further 24 were recorded up to the end of the year. The findings of the Winter Survey should give us a less fragmentary picture of its current distribution and numbers.

**2002:** One observer noted that this species was very hard to find at Mai Po during the winter of 2001-2002, and this was borne out by other records submitted for that period, only three of which were of more than two birds at any location. These records were of 13 at Ngau Tam Mei on 14 January, four at San Tin on 22 March and ten at Shuen Wan on 28 March. The final record of the spring involved one at Tai Mo Shan on 20 April. Reported again in the autumn from the rather early date of 12 October, when two were at Mai Po.

**413A Common Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* 蘆鷀**

2001: A male was at Mai Po on 7 February (PJL).

**415A Grey-capped Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica* 金翅雀**

2001: Unlike in recent years there were no reports from Fo Tan, the only reports coming from Nam Sang Wai on 29 January and from Long Valley on 6 February.

2002: Six reports of single birds made this the best year for this species in Hong Kong for several years. The reports came from Aberdeen Reservoir (10 February), Shuen Wan (10 March), Lok Ma Chau (12 April), Mai Po (14 April and 10 May) and Palm Springs, near Mai Po (8 October).

**417A Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus* 朱雀**

2001: One was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21 November and seven (two males and five females) were at Tong Hang on 22 December.

2002: Two were at Shuen Wan on 29 January.

**418A Yellow-billed Grosbeak *Eophona migratoria* 黑尾蠟嘴雀**

2001: Recorded up to 29 May and again from 19 August, though there were no further records thereafter until 19 October, and previously records in late May have been regarded as escapes. During the early part of the year favoured sites were the Ho Sheung Heung-Long Valley area, Ma Tso Lung, San Tin and Lok Ma Chau (records from these quite plausibly involving the same birds ranging over this area), Nam Sang Wai and Fung Lok Wai (where the flocks of 40 and 41 recorded on 1 February by different observers were presumably the same birds), and Kam Tin (where birds from Nam Sang Wai-Fung Lok Wai could have roamed). There were also records of up to three birds at Mai Po on three dates, and from Lam Tsuen Valley, where eight were seen on 23 January and ten on 2 March. Apart from the flock of 40/41 mentioned already, no count exceeded 13, and after 14 March only one report was of more than two birds: three at Mai Po on 19 March. Birds recorded at Long Valley on 3 May, and in the Kam Tin area on 21, 22 and 29 May, all fall during the period regarded by Carey *et al.* (2001) as either "problematic" (early May) or as "clearly relating to escapees or released birds" (mid-May onwards). However, birds of both sexes were involved, and these records could form part of emerging changes in the pattern of occurrence of this species in the region. The record of three at Tam Kon Chau on 19 August was almost a month earlier than any previous record considered to possibly involve wild birds, but unlike in 1999, when several were recorded in late September and very early October, there were no further records apparently associated with this one; previous such records in August have been regarded as clearly relating to escapees (Carey *et al.* 2001). A bird seen at Kam Tin on 19 October was itself rather early; according to Carey *et al.* (2001) few reach Hong Kong before the first week of November, but a pattern of slightly earlier occurrence appears to have emerged since 1999, at the same time as numbers having increased again after a period of comparative scarcity during 1996-

1998. The only flocks reported towards the end of year were 11 at Fung Lok Wai on 27 November and eight at Wang Tai Shan on 23 December.

**2002:** Apart from one in Kowloon Park on 10 February and a flock of 15 at She Shan in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 7 December, all reports were from the northern and northwest NT. Most unusually, these reports included records (of singles unless stated) from Mai Po on 10 May, Kam Tin on 30 May, Nam Sang Wai on 17 June, Lok Ma Chau on 11 July (five), Ma Tso Lung on 14 July (two, and the only report to make reference to any apparent feather damage), and Lok Ma Chau on 31 July (three). Previous records in the period between mid-May and August have been considered to “clearly relate to escapees or released birds”, but that on 10 May would be amongst those considered merely “problematic” (Carey *et al.*, 2001). In addition, it should be noted that one recorded at Au Tau on 29 April was also later than any bird previously regarded as likely to be of wild origin. Apart from the flock of 15 at She Shan referred to earlier, the only flocks in excess of ten birds were those reported from Kam Tin on 8 January (16), Mai Po on 26 January (18), and from Ma Tso Lung Police Post, where up to 12 were present between 6 and 19 December, while the first record in the autumn came from Kam Tin, where five were seen on 9 October.

**420A White-rumped Munia *Lonchura striata* 白腰文鳥**

**2001:** The only record of note involved two at Po Toi on 21 September. The submission of such records of otherwise common, widespread species from outlying islands is encouraged, as it could prove invaluable in the study of population changes.

**2002:** No significant reports.

**421A Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata* 斑文鳥**

**2001:** The largest flocks recorded were 69 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 3 April and 80 at Mai Po on 15 May, when a second flock of 20 was also noted.

**2002:** No significant reports.

**424A Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* 樹麻雀**

**2001 & 2002:** No significant reports.

**425D Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus* 黃胸織布鳥**

**2001:** Up to ten were reported at Mai Po between 28 April and 16 September.

**2002:** The only report received was of at least three present at Mai Po on 1 May

**426B Chestnut-tailed Starling *Sturnus malabaricus* 灰頭椋鳥**

**2002:** Singles birds were seen at Kowloon Park on 10 February and 4 May. Such urban records have previously been considered to refer to ex-captive rather than wild birds.



#### 427A Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericeus* 絲光椋鳥

**2001:** Reports during the first winter period suggested that there were probably three main wintering groups in the northwest NT, each consisting of between 500 and 1,000 birds, and located in the Ma Tso Lung/Lok Ma Chau/San Tin area, the Mai Po/Lut Chau area and in the Tsim Bei Tsui area, although it is possible that there was some movement between these groups. Maximum counts at each of the main locations were 1000 at Ma Tso Lung on 8 January, 500 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 13 January, and 1,000 at Lut Chau on 31 January. Also on 31 January a count of 500 was made in the Lok Ma Chau/SanTin area, suggesting that the wintering population in the north-west NT was at least 1,500 birds, though in all probability it was at least twice that figure. After these high counts in January there was a clear, steady decline in numbers, though this was not very marked in February; for example 800 were present at Lok Ma Chau on 22nd. Indeed in early March, 469 were reported at San Tin on 7<sup>th</sup>. However, there was only one further three figure count in that month (112 at San Tin on 14<sup>th</sup>), and none were noted after 24 April. The first returning birds noted were six at Kam Tin on 12 October. Thereafter there was a typical pattern of steadily increasing counts, including 250 at Shuen Wan on 12 November and around 300 there on 30 November, and culminating in a count of 1,000 at Lok Ma Chau on 7 December; such a date is typical for the first four figure count of the winter (Carey *et al.*, 2001). In addition to the sites mentioned it was also reported from Long Valley – possibly birds from the concentration in the Ma Tso Lung/Lok Ma Chau/San Tin area – with peak counts of 72 on 19 March and 100 on 11 November.

**2002:** In the early part of the year, it was reported regularly from various parts of the NT up to 17 April, the one really significant count being 2,610 seen going to roost at Mai Po in flocks of up to 1,000 birds on 6 February. There were two reports outside the normal period of occurrence, both of which may thus have involved ex-captive birds: one in the Shenzhen River area on 10 May (MRL), which was in fact just 12 days later than the date of latest natural occurrence proposed in Carey *et al.* (2001), and two at Lok Ma Chau on 31 July (HKY). In the autumn, it was first noted at Shuen Wan on 4 October (RWL), with quite widespread reports in the NT of small numbers over subsequent days, suggesting that there was a definite influx during 4<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>. The report on 4<sup>th</sup> is one day earlier than the previous earliest accepted autumn arrival in Hong Kong, which occurred on 5 October 1978 (Carey *et al.* 2001), though in 1999 three were present at Long Valley from 1 October, and given the closeness of that date to when autumn migrants are known to arrive, these birds should now be regarded as the earliest on record. During late October numbers increased, with the first double-figure count (30 at Mai Po) being made on 20<sup>th</sup>. The next clear increase in numbers occurred from just after the middle of November, with the first three-figure count being made at Shuen Wan on 22 November (100). By 7 December this flock had grown to at least 500 birds, and on the same date at Mai Po 2000 were estimated to be present. Most reports were from typical rural locations, but up to 25 were noted at Kai Tak on two dates in mid November, and a flock of up to 100 were regularly reported from road side trees in Tai Po between 16 November and 12 December.

#### 428A Chestnut-cheeked Starling *Sturnus philippensis* 紫背椋鳥

**2001:** Two, a male and a female, were at Lok Ma Chau on 9 October.

**2002:** Up to two were at Long Valley between 2 and 5 October. Also, an adult male and an adult female were at Kam Tin on 8 October.

**429A Purple-backed Starling *Sturnus sturninus* 北椋鳥**

**2001:** Autumn passage of this species featured one at Kam Tin on 28 September, one at Mai Po on 2 October and two at Kam Tin on 12 October.

**2002:** Exceptionally good autumn passage of this scarce species involved four at Mai Po on 1 October, up to at least 40 at Long Valley between 2 and 6 October, with at least four also present at Kam Tin on the latter date. Finally, five were seen at Palm Springs, near Mai Po, on 27 October. The count at Long Valley exceeded the previous highest count for Hong Kong, which was one of 35 at Mai Po on 25 September 1977.

**430A Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus* 粉紅椋鳥**

**2002:** A juvenile was at Long Valley on 5 October (GJC, RWL). This was only the fourth record, and the first since 31 December 1996.

**431A Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* 紫翅椋鳥**

**2001:** There was just one record in each winter period, both at Kam Tin: one on 9 February and one on 29 November.

**2002:** There was again just one record in each winter period, both at Kam Tin: singles at Kam Tin on 19 January and on 27 and 28 October. It must be possible that just one regularly returning individual was involved in the records for this year and the previous year.

**432A White-cheeked Starling *Sturnus cineraceus* 灰椋鳥**

**2001:** Recorded in the early part of the year up until 10 April, with all records in this period coming from the sites in the area extending from Long Valley to Lut Chau. All three-figure counts were made during January: 200 at Lut Chau on 4<sup>th</sup>, 160 at Mai Po on 26<sup>th</sup> and 101 at San Tin on 31<sup>st</sup>. Thereafter numbers declined somewhat during February, though 84 were counted at Lok Ma Chau on 28<sup>th</sup>. In March there was only one double-figure count, of 30 near Mai Po as early as 5<sup>th</sup>, and very few indeed were reported after that date. In the later part of the year, single birds (possibly the same individual) were noted at Lok Ma Chau on 28 August and at Ma Tso Lung on 29 August and 4 September (HKY); this was a month earlier than the earliest previous record of probably wild birds (ten at Tsim Bei Tsui on 26 September 2000) and should be at least provisionally regarded as relating to an ex-captive individual or individuals. The next record – ten at Kam Tin – came on 12 October, itself a rather early arrival date, and there was just one other record during October, of two at Long Valley on 14<sup>th</sup>. In fact, towards the end of the year this species was either massively under-reported or unusually scarce; in November, 50 at Mai Po on 17<sup>th</sup> was the only report received, and in December there were just three reports, all in the northwest NT and none involving more than 13 birds.

**2002:** Recorded up to 29 March and again from 1 October. In the early part of the year records came from Kam Tin, Mai Po and the Shenzhen River area, with the highest counts being of 140 at Mai Po on 7 February and of 100 at the Shenzhen River on 20 March. In the later part of the year it was again reported from the Kam Tin area and from Mai Po, and also from Long Valley. Highest counts at that time were of 140 at Kam Tin on 27 October and of 323 flying over Mai Po on 10 November. There was a clear influx of birds during the first week of October, with 12 at Kam Tin on 1st, one at Long Valley on 4th, and seven at Kam Tin on 5th; all these records were in advance of the earliest date of autumn arrival given in Carey *et al.* (2001), though in 2000 ten were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui as early as 26 September.

**433A Black-collared Starling *Sturnus nigricollis* 黑領椋鳥**

**2001:** A flock of at least 100 was seen at Fung Kat Heung on 26 August.

**2002:** No significant reports.

**434A White-shouldered Starling *Sturnus sinensis* 灰背椋鳥**



**Plate 35.** White-shouldered Starling *Sturnus sinensis* 灰背椋鳥 adult male  
Kam Tin, Hong Kong, 12 May 2004  
Martin Hale

**2001:** Unlike in the two previous years, during January and February there were regular reports of up to ten at Ma Tso Lung, Lok Ma Chau, and San Tin, with isolated reports from Mai Po and the Shenzhen River area. These observations presumably involved some of the 37 noted at San Tin on 20 December 2000. After 28 February there were no further reports until 27 March, when one was seen at Cheung Chau. This bird and those recorded to at least the middle of April were presumably spring

migrants; high counts at this time were 16 at Nam Chung on 4 April, 60 at Lok Ma Chau on 12 April and 14 near Mai Po on 13 April. Thereafter, until 26 August, no count exceeded five, and records came from Ho Sheung Heung, Po Toi, Kam Tin, Lok Ma Chau, Long Valley, Shuen Wan, Fung Lok Wai and Mai Po. There were, however, no confirmed breeding records. A count of 56 at Nim Wan on 12 September suggested that birds noted around this time, such as 16 seen at Tseung Kwan O cemetery on 16th, may well have been migrants, and singles were also noted at Po Toi and Chek Lap Kok in late September. After 12 October, there were no further records until 20 December, when a flock, this time numbering 32, was again found at San Tin.

**2002:** Typically very small numbers were present during the first winter period, a count of five at San Tin on 2 February being the highest, until ten appeared at Shuen Wan on 28 March, by which time spring passage was underway. Twenty at Mai Po on 4 April was the highest count of the spring passage period. During the summer (mid-May to the end of July) records came from Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau, Ma Tso Lung, San Tin, Kam Tin and Shuen Wan. A count of 50 at Po Toi on 8 September probably consisted of migrants, though the possibility of breeding at that location cannot be excluded. Thereafter small numbers were reported from all the above locations, as well as Long Valley and the Shenzhen River area, with double figure counts at Mai Po on 21 September (20), Lok Ma Chau on 24 September (35), San Tin on 2 October (17), Long Valley on 4 October (12), Sha Po, near Kam Tin on 6 October (14), and Palm Springs, near Mai Po on 27 October (12). The final record of the year was of two in the Shenzhen River area on 1 November.

#### **435D Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* 家八哥**

**2001:** All records again came from the northwest NT, with two at Kam Tin on 14 January, two at San Tin on 5 February, singles at Mai Po on 22 April and 12 May, and three at Long Valley on 27 December.

**2002:** Once again the only reports came from the northwest NT: four at San Tin on 27 February, a pair feeding chicks in Mai Po village on 3 October, and 15 at Long Valley on 13 October.

#### **436A Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus* 八哥**

**2001 & 2002:** No significant reports.

#### **437A Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis* 黑枕黃鸝**

**2001:** After two years with only one spring record between them, a total of five were recorded during that season: singles at Mai Po on 7<sup>th</sup> and 22 April, and 13 May, with two there on 16 May, and one at Po Toi on 15 April. One at Cheung Chau on 8 July was unusual, and may have been an exceptionally early migrant. Autumn passage occurred between 28 August and 13 October and involved at least 22 bird-days. These records came from Lok Ma Chau, Ma Tso Lung, Mai Po, Long Valley, Nim Wan, Pat Sin Leng CP, Po Toi and Mt. Austin. Most involved singles, but there were two at Po Toi on 22 September, four at Mai Po on 2 October, three at Lok Ma Chau on 3 October, two at Long Valley on 4 October and also two at Mai Po on 13 October.

**2002:** Recorded in spring from Lok Ma Chau, where a male was seen on 18 April, being joined by another on 19th, and from Mai Po, where singles were reported on 20th, 21st and 22 April. There was a further record, of two, from Mai Po on 16 May, while the presence of a female at Lok Ma Chau on 5 July suggested that breeding may have been at least attempted there; breeding was in fact confirmed nearby in both 1994 and 1996. The next record also came from Lok Ma Chau, when one was seen there on 23 August. Thereafter, reports in September involved a total of 11 bird-days and, with the exception of two at Po Toi on 8th, were all again from Mai Po or Lok Ma Chau. October produced a total of 23 bird-days, and records included reports of up to four at Kam Tin between 1st and 6th, and also two in Kowloon Park on 2nd. The final report was of a single at Long Valley on 28 October.

#### **438A Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus* 黑卷尾**

**2001:** Following on from the rather unusual presence of possibly as many as 16 birds in the northwest NT towards the end of the previous year, during January and February and at the very beginning of March, at least 11 birds, and possibly as many as 26, were again noted in that area; these records included two at Ma Tso Lung on 8 January, 11 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 10 January, and eight at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 March. There was in fact a complete absence of reports between 2 March and 15 April, and during the spring passage period there were just two records: eight at Po Toi on 22 April and at least ten at Long Valley on 28 April. During May, June and July, there were only isolated reports of very small numbers, though two were from outside the regular wetland sites in the northwest NT, being at Shuen Wan on 5 June (one) and at Fanling Golf Course on 8 July (two). Autumn passage picked up steadily during September, and towards the end of the month up to 30 were present at Po Toi on 22nd. Typically, however, passage would appear to have peaked during the first few days of October, when 39 were seen migrating over Mai Po on 2nd and 60 were noted at Long Valley on 4th. Records of smaller numbers continued up to 14 October, when six were noted at Long Valley, but there was then a complete absence of reports until 16 November. After that date, up to three were seen on several occasions in the Shenzhen River area, at Tsim Bei Tsui and near Mai Po, with the final record received on 15 December. The emerging pattern of occurrence for this species, with a break of over one month either side of the records of wintering birds, suggests that currently there is an entirely discrete population utilizing the Deep Bay marshes in winter, and that otherwise this is a locally declining species; indeed, records submitted suggest that the statement in Carey *et al.* (2001) that this is a "common summer visitor" is hardly tenable at the current time, and that the decline hinted at there is certainly now apparent and can be attributed to increasing urbanization, which appears to have almost entirely destroyed optimum breeding habitat for this species. This is, however, an analysis worthy of much more careful investigation and observers are encouraged to submit all observations of this species.

**2002:** Numbers reported during the first eight months of the year were very low; reports of ones or twos at Mai Po, Tsim Bei Tsui and San Tin in January and February were typical, but there was no real increase in the numbers reported during the spring and summer. Nonetheless, the presence of birds at Wu Kau Tang (one on 21 April) and Shuen Wan (two on 29 April) suggests that some passage occurred during late April, and three were reported from Mai Po on 1 May. There were records of two at Chek Lap Kok on 30 July and 28 August, and there were three there on 5 September. Indeed, between this latter date and 18 October were recorded no fewer than 82% of the bird-



days recorded during the year as a whole, with the highest individual site counts being at least 20 in the Shenzhen River area on 6 September, eleven at Mai Po on 1 October, ten in the Shenzhen River area on 3 October, with at least 20 there the following day, 12 at Long Valley also on 4 October, and ten in the Shenzhen River area on 18 October. None were reported after 1 November.

#### **439A Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus* 灰卷尾**

**2001:** At the beginning of the year reported from Tai Po Kau, where two appear to have been continuously present from the beginning of the year up to 2 March, from the rather unusual location of Fung Lok Wai, where one was seen on 1 February, and from Shing Mun, where one was seen on 3 March. The only remarks submitted on the plumage type of any of these birds indicated that one of the birds present at Tai Po Kau had white cheeks. During the spring, and after a gap of 26 days with no records at that location, up to two were again reported from Tai Po Kau between 28 March and 8 April; these may have been the individuals present earlier, but in any event represented the first records since 1997 of this species in Hong Kong during early April, a time when in previous years records were frequent. In the autumn the first record was of a grey-cheeked bird at Mt. Austin on 12 October, but there were no further records until 3 November when one was at KFBG. From 10 November to 8 December there were regular reports of one white-cheeked bird at Tai Po Kau, with two seen on 27 November. Other reports at this time came from Shek Kong catchwater, where a white-cheeked bird was seen on 13 November, and from Shing Mun, where another white-cheeked bird was seen on 24 November, while on 23 December three, of which at least two were grey-cheeked, were seen at Mui Wo.

**2002:** There were regular reports of a single white-cheeked bird at Tai Po Kau from 3 January until 1 March, and there was one further report of another white-cheeked bird at Shek Kong catchwater on 5 March. Also two white-cheeked birds were seen at Bethanie, Pokfulam on 13 February. In the later part of the year, a bird not able to be assigned to a plumage type was seen at Tai Po Kau on 10 October, one with clearly dark cheeks was seen at Shek Kong catchwater on 17 October, and another indeterminate bird was seen at Tai Po Kau on 11 December.

#### **440A Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus* 髮冠卷尾**

**2001:** Reported in all months except January, when it was nevertheless no doubt present. During the first winter period the only reports were from Lam Tsuen Valley (up to four), Shek Kong catchwater (three) and Deep Water Bay (three), all these counts being made during the first three days in March. Spring migrants were noted on 22 April at Long Valley (one) and at Po Toi (two). During May to July, records came from Mau Ping New Village, Sai Kung (up to 16 on many dates), Wu Kau Tang, lowlands near Robin's Nest, Shuen Wan, Ting Kok, Fanling Golf Course and Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen, with dependent juveniles noted at Shuen Wan and Ta Ku Ling San Tsuen. Autumn passage was clearly underway in September, when eight were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 9<sup>th</sup> and 11 were seen at Nim Wan on 12<sup>th</sup>. In October, one was at Mai Po on 2<sup>nd</sup>, six were at Mt. Austin on 12<sup>th</sup> and three were noted at KFBG on 16<sup>th</sup>. In addition, it continued to be present at Mau Ping New Village, Sai Kung, albeit in smaller numbers, up to 24<sup>th</sup>, and a flock of 17 were noted at Tai Po Kau on 25<sup>th</sup>. Other



significant counts subsequent to this were of 34 at Shek Kong on 13 November, and of 42 at Shouson Hill on 31 December.

**2002:** Recorded in all months of the year, mostly from sites in the central, northern and eastern NT, but also from Kam Tin (four on 6 October) and Nam Fung Road on HK Island (three on 28 December). The only double-figure counts came from Tai Po Kau headland (15 on 16 April) and Shek Kong Catchment (12 on 14 November and 18 on 15 November)..

**441A Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* 松鴉**

**2002:** The only record was of one at Mai Po on 14 February. The origins of this bird are, perhaps, open to question.

**442A Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha* 紅嘴藍鵲**

**2001 & 2002:** No significant reports

**443A Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae* 灰樹鵲**

**2001:** Reported throughout the year and from widespread locations, including Pat Sin Leng and Chung Mei, Ho Chung (nine on 17 July), Kap Lung, KFBG, Mai Po (one coming in over the mangrove on 11 November), Tsim Bei Tsui, Lam Tsuen, Mui Tsz Lam and Sai Kung. For the second year running there were no reports from the western end of HK Island, where it was regularly recorded during the 1980s and 1990s.

**2002:** Only seven reports were received, and all those from just two observers. These reports attested to its continued presence in the north-east NT (specifically in the Bride's Pool/Pat Sin Leng CP area, though all records there fell in one or other of the two winter periods), in the western part of HK Island (based on a single seen at Mt. Austin on 12 April), and in the Ho Chung area (where the presence of 13 on 4 July suggested local breeding).

**444A Common Magpie *Pica pica* 喜鵲**

**2001:** There were no significant reports, with no reports of the roost flocks of 50-80 seen at Mai Po in recent years.

**2002:** In the continued absence of any large counts of birds going to roost at Mai Po, which have been a feature of recent years, once again no significant counts were received.

**445A Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauuricus* 達烏里寒鴉**

**2002:** One was at Yuen Long on 23 February (RWL).

**446A Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* 小嘴烏鴉**

**2001:** An adult was at Mai Po on 21<sup>st</sup> and 25 December (MRL).

2002: Up to two were seen at Mai Po from 19 January to 8 March (RWL, MRL).

**447A Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos* 大嘴烏鴉**

2001: A flock of at least 50 at Black's Link on 9 November was the largest reported.

2002: No significant reports.

**448A Collared Crow *Corvus torquatus* 白頸鴉**

2001: As in previous years, outside the Deep Bay area only reported from Shuen Wan and Tai Po, with highest counts at the former location of 17 on 8 May and 19 on 1 September. Although it was regularly reported from the area between Tsim Bei Tsui and Long Valley, the only count there which exceeded those at Shuen Wan was of 45 flying to a roost near Pond 16/17 at Mai Po on 3 April.

2002: Away from the northwest NT, where the species was quite regularly recorded in small numbers at various times in the year, there were again regular reports from Shuen Wan, where counts of up to 16 birds were made in October and where 13 were also present on 7 December, suggesting a fairly stable non-breeding season population in that area.

## CATEGORY E

### 700.5E Great White Pelican *Pelecanus oncorotalus* 白鵜鶘

2002: One was at Mai Po from 15 December to at least the end of the year (SCYW *et al.*). This is the first record for Hong Kong.

### 701.5E Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* 白額雁

1999: One was picked up at Discovery Bay on 16 October and taken into care at KFBG four days later; it was subsequently released at Mai Po on 22 November 1999, where it remained through much of the winter period, though the exact dates are unknown (AH). This is the first record for Hong Kong.

### 707E Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* 環頸雉

2001: Tame birds were seen at Turret Hill, Ma On Shan on 24 November and at Peel Rise, Pok Fu Lam on 29 November.

2002: A male was seen at Nam Fung Road, HK Island on 25 August.

### 708.5E Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* 灰斑鳩

1999: One was at Mai Po on 29 April and at Ma Tso Lung on 14 May (PJL *et al.*). These are the first records for Hong Kong.

2001: One was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 9 October (GJC).

### 721E Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria* 亞歷山大鸚鵡

2001: One was at Mai Po on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 13 January and 20 February.

2002: Two were at Mai Po on 27 February and one was at Pak Nai on 29 December.

### 728E Blue-throated Barbet *Megalaima asiatica* 藍喉擬啄木鳥

2001: One was heard calling at Tai Po Kau on 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> and 23 February, 3 March and 10<sup>th</sup> and 20 April (RWL).

2002: One was heard calling at Tai Po Kau on 27 February, 27 March and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 17 April (RWL).

### 739E Bohemian Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus* 太平鳥

2001: One with damage to the tail was at Mai Po on 25 February (JAA).

**744E Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata* 白斑黑石(即鳥)**

2002: One was at Kam Tin on 15 December.

**755E Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia* 灰眶雀鵂**

2001: One was at Tai Po Kau on 1 December.

2002: Up to three birds were recorded at Tai Po Kau on 12 January, 26 February, 1<sup>st</sup> and 4 March and 14 December, with eight there on 25 October. In addition, one was at Mai Po on 19 April.

**756.5E Bearded Reedling *Panurus biarmicus* 文鬚雀**

2002: A male was trapped at Mai Po on 22 December (PJL). This is the first record for Hong Kong.

**764E Black-throated Tit *Aegithalos concinnus* 紅頭長尾山雀**

2002: Singles were at Tai Po Kau on 5 November and 14 December.

**776E Yellow-fronted Canary *Serinus mozambicus* 黃額絲雀**

2001: One was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 25 November.

**800E Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyanus* 灰喜鵲**

2001: One was at Lok Ma Chau on 21 December.

2002: An upsurge of records occurred this year due to the establishment of a flock at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau that appears to have roamed as far as Ma Tso Lung, Ho Sheung Heung and Palm Springs. Records occurred in most months of the year, with the highest count being eight at Lok Ma Chau on 3 September.

**801E House Crow *Corvus splendens* 家鴉**

2001: One was at Kwai Chung on 12 May.

2002: Although recent entries in the HKBR do not indicate this, there has been a substantial increase in the numbers of this species occurring with, in particular, a flock of 100-200 birds establishing itself in central urban Kowloon. The four records for 2002 received are from Kowloon Walled City Park, Kowloon Tsai Park, Mong Kok Stadium and Yau Yat Chuen, with the highest count being 100 at the latter locality. Given the potential for this species to both become a pest and to have a serious negative impact on breeding birds (in particular the Deep Bay area and other egretries), it is important that observers submit all records of this species in order that numbers and distribution can be monitored.

## Records judged by the Records Committee to be not proven

### 1999

**Black Bittern** *Dupetor flavicollis* Mai Po, 15 May; **Crested Honey Buzzard**, Mt Austin, 21 October; **Purple Swampphen**, Mai Po, 30 August; **Barn Owl**, Kwu Tung, 28 October.

### 2000

**Barred Button-quail** *Turnix suscitator* Long Valley, 29 September (accepted as Button-quail sp.), **Small Niltava** *Niltava macgrigoriae* female, Tai Po Kau, 27 February, **Pallas's Reed Bunting** *Emberiza pallasii*, Long Valley, 31 October.

### 2001

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena* Yan Chau Tong Marine Park, 16 November, **Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis* two, Mai Po, 11 November, **Great Frigatebird** *Fregata minor* Stonecutters, 22 April, **Schrenck's Bittern** *Ixobrychus eurhythmus*, San Tin, 26 November, **Pale Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis unicolor* Mau Ping, Sai Kung, 31 December, Tai Po Kau, 3 February, **Blue-throated Flycatcher** *Cyornis rubeculoides*, Tai Mo Shan, 5 December.

### 2002

**Chinese Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus yunnanensis* Tsim Bei Tsui, 1 March, **Masked Finfoot** *Heliopais personata* Mai Po, 18 July.

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# Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site Waterbird Monitoring Programme

Winter 2001-02 Report

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## 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. Monthly counts of waterbirds form one part of this programme, the other components being counts of migrant shorebirds utilizing the area and surveys of ardeid nesting colonies.

This report concerns the waterbird monitoring component for the winter period from October 2001 to March 2002.

Coordinated mid-monthly counts of wintering waterbirds in Hong Kong were carried out by members of the HKBWS on 14 October 2001, 18 November 2001, 16 December 2001, 20 January 2002, 17 February 2002 and 17 March 2002. The January count was carried out to coincide with the Asian Waterfowl Census organized 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 were dropped from the list of sites counted last winter. 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. For other sites in the Deep Bay Area as a whole, the following shortfalls occurred: November and December at San Tin, and in February and March at Shenzhen River B (Ma Tso Lung) and San Tin.

The results of the five counts are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Deep Bay Area Waterbird Counts Winter 2001-02: totals by group and area**

Group	Site	Oct	Nov*	Dec	Jan	Feb#	Mar#
Cormorants	Ramsar Site	4	4,524	3,486	6,230	4,202	164
	Deep Bay Area	45	4,950	4,391	6,230	4,307	451
	SI/SW	29	1	253	194	137	41
Ardeids	Ramsar Site	1,359	1,570	2,124	2,660	1,951	1,539
	Deep Bay Area	3,023	3,404	3,736	4,400	2,860	2,374
	SI/SW	587	238	596	418	448	658
Ducks and grebes	Ramsar Site	852	6,785	10,160	7,102	6,241	3,735
	Deep Bay Area	1,859	11,092	18,987	16,964	11,014	3,933
	SI/SW	11	0	6	24	18	11
Rails, Coot, etc.	Ramsar Site	34	128	100	110	57	125
	Deep Bay Area	55	168	175	195	76	256
	SI/SW	1	3	7	19	12	13
Waders	Ramsar Site	614	3,144	4,305	9,845	3,477	6,635
	Deep Bay Area	2,563	3,758	5,251	10,242	3,511	6,758
	SI/SW	34	10	15	80	17	6
Gulls and terns	Ramsar Site	14	1,229	4,954	13,302	7,825	185
	Deep Bay Area	14	1,229	5,917	13,302	7,864	185
	SI/SW	0	0	66	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	Ramsar Site	2,877	17,380	25,129	39,249	23,753	12,383
	Deep Bay Area	7,559	24,601	38,457	51,333	29,632	13,957
	SI/SW	661	252	943	735	632	729

\* Starling Inlet not counted

# Shuen Wan not counted

Peak waterbird numbers in Deep Bay usually occur in January, and this winter a total of 51,333 waterbirds of 52 species were recorded in the Deep Bay Area; for the Ramsar Site alone this figure is 39,249. Table 1 illustrates the totals for all January counts since the first, in 1979, both for the Deep Bay area and for the intertidal areas of Deep Bay. It can be seen that this year's January total lies within the range of the previous four years (49,708–55,132), and probably indicates no significant change in overall numbers. The overall pattern since January 1998 is one of stabilization after a relatively sharp fall in numbers between January 1996 and January 1998.

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, and to counteract stochastic biases

occurring 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. This winter the December to February total was 54,720 birds of 58 species, an increase over the January count of 3,387, or approximately 6.6%. The January count thus comprises 93.8% of the total winter count, which is in line with most previous winter periods since 1992-93.

### **Species of conservation significance**

A number of species that occur in the Deep Bay Area are of conservation significance due to their being listed as threatened in BirdLife International (2000), or because they are species for which Deep Bay supports, or may support, at least 1% of the regional or flyway population, as used for implementing the Ramsar Convention criterion 3c. In this report, the 1% threshold level has been calculated with reference to Rose and Scott (1997), and the figures quoted below are from that work. Species relevant to the 1% threshold, which derive from Carey & Young (1999), are listed below, with the addition of Great Crested Grebe. Comparisons are generally made with the trend from 1992-93, when counts for the whole winter period were first carried out.

#### **Great Cormorant**

The peak winter count of 6,230 constitutes nearly 1% of the northern hemisphere population and about 6% of the flyway population. If the southern hemisphere taxa are regarded as separate species, Deep Bay supports over 1% of the world population.

#### **Dalmatian Pelican**

A total of 16 were present, the same figure as last winter. This appears to be at least 15% of the regional, East Asian population (Carey & Young, 1999).

#### **Chinese Pond Heron**

Numbers of this species trended downward from a peak in the early 1990s until winter 1999-00, and the peak count last winter of 297 reversed that trend. This winter's peak count of 283 is very similar. However, it is still only approximately 52% of the peak count of 545 obtained in 1990. This decline is of concern because the population of Chinese Pond Heron, unlike those of other ardeids, appears to depend largely on the area of fish ponds (specifically the accumulated perimeter of fish pond bunds). They are not recorded in numbers on the intertidal mudflats or at drained down ponds where they give way to larger ardeids.

#### **Little Egret**

The peak winter count was 1,434, which is 300 above the previous five-winter mean; this probably constitutes 1% of the regional population.

### **Great Egret**

The peak winter count was 1,239, which is the highest on record in Hong Kong, and is even higher than the relatively high numbers recorded last winter.

### **Grey Heron**

The peak winter count was 1,297, which is slightly higher than the recent five-year mean; this may constitute 1% of the regional population.

### **Black-faced Spoonbill**

A total of 183 was present in December, approximately 25% of the world population.

### **Common Shelduck**

The peak winter count of 268 is relatively low, and over 1,000 below the recent five-year mean. This continues the low numbers recorded last year. Historically, Common Shelduck numbers have been very variable, and this may be part of that phenomenon.

### **Eurasian Wigeon**

The peak winter count of 4,752, recorded in January, while relatively high, is approximately 2,000 below the record high made the previous winter. Approximately 70% of these were recorded on the Fu Tian side of the bay.

### **Common Teal**

With a peak winter count of 3,147, numbers of this species have fallen from the high levels seen in recent years. This figure is a little over 1,000 below the recent five-year mean.

### **Northern Pintail and Northern Shoveler**

Due to viewing conditions on the day of each count, no count considered to be truly representative of either species was made during the course of the winter. However, the total number of Anatidae peaked at 18,987 in December.

### **Eurasian Coot**

The peak winter count of 54 is extremely low, approximately 90% lower than last year's count, and even more below the recent five-year mean of 824. Although numbers of this species have generally fallen each winter since 1995-96, it remains to be seen whether this particularly low figure is an accurate indication of the numbers of Eurasian Coot using the bay this winter, or was instead a one-off count. .

### **Pied Avocet**

The peak winter count of 1,957 is slightly higher than that recorded last winter, and numbers of this species are again approaching the very high levels recorded in the mid 1990s. This winter's peak count constitutes a minimum of 6.7% of the regional east Asian population.

### **Kentish Plover**

No representative count of this species was made during the course of the winter. A total count of 4,000 Kentish Plovers and Dunlin was made, however. The five-year mean of 2,418 constitutes from 0.24% to 2.4% of the regional population.

### **Grey Plover**

The peak winter count of 294 is slightly lower than that of last winter, and continues the largely downward trend in totals since winter 1995-96. The recent five-year mean is 405. This winter's peak count constitutes 0.3% to 1.2% of the regional population.

### **Dunlin**

No representative count of this species was made during the course of the winter. A total count of 4,000 Kentish Plovers and Dunlin was made, however. The recent five-year mean peak winter count of 2,968 constitutes from 0.31% to 12.4% of the regional population.

### **Black-tailed Godwit**

The peak winter count of 320 is very similar to the peak count last winter, and constitutes approximately 0.2% of the flyway population. The five-year mean is 298.

### **Eurasian Curlew**

The peak winter count of 558 is somewhat lower than the recent five-year mean of 666, and constitutes from 0.55% to 5.5% of the regional population.

### **Spotted Redshank**

The peak winter count of 2,500 equals the highest count for Hong Kong, and is higher than the previous winter high of 1,730, made in January 1995. The recent five-year mean is 746.

### **Marsh Sandpiper**

The peak winter count of 153 is very low, and almost certainly is not representative of the true numbers present. The recent five-year mean is 875.

### **Common Greenshank**

The peak winter count of 376 is slightly higher than the recent five-year mean of 303.

### **Saunders' Gulls**

The peak winter count was 60 in February. Peak winter numbers since 1992-93 are as follows:

1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
107	172	131	113	127	91	73	58	43	60

It can be seen that there has been a general decline in the peak winter count since the peak of 172 in 1993-94.

## **Black-headed Gull**

The peak winter count of 13,009 is slightly lower than that obtained last year, but similar to the recent five-year mean of 13,601. This constitutes approximately 1.4% to 13.6% of the regional population.

## **Other notable counts**

### **Falcated Duck**

For the second winter running, no Falcated Ducks were recorded during waterbird counts. 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.

## **Other observations**

### **Mudskipper collectors**

Illegal mudskipper collectors continued to be seen operating on the mudflats on the Hong Kong side of Deep Bay in February and March. Their presence causes significant disturbance to foraging and roosting waterbirds.

## **Other disturbances**

The number of birds present on the Fu Tian side of the bay continues to remain higher than it was formerly. 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 enforcement action (Wang Yong Jun pers. comm.). Such controls are warmly welcomed and contrast with the situation in Hong Kong.

## **Conclusion**

As of winter 2000-01, the total number of waterbirds utilizing Deep Bay for at least some part of the winter appeared to have stabilized in the range 57,000 to 64,500 (mean 60,633), after a fall from the high of 77,227 in winter 1995-96. This winter's count of 54,720 lies slightly below that range, and about 6,000 below the mean for that period. However, it remains to be seen whether this is evidence of a further decline, or whether it is simply natural variation. However, there have been recent declines in the numbers of two species that may be a cause for concern; these are Falcated Duck and Saunders's Gull.

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## 米埔內后海灣國際重要濕地水鳥監察 2001-2002 年度報告

本會自 1998 年 3 月起得到漁農自然護理署資助，開始長期監察米埔內后海灣國際重要濕地內的水鳥，作為當地生態環境狀況的一個指標，本文總結 2001 年 10 月至 2002 年 3 月每月點算水鳥數目所得結果。

后海灣的水鳥通常在 1 月最多，今年冬天共錄得 52 種共 51,333 隻，和過去四年的數目（49,708 – 55,132 隻）相若。1995-96 年度冬季有 77,227 隻水鳥在后海灣越冬，之後數目減少，至 2000-01 年度為止大致穩定在 57,000 到 64,500 隻（平均值 60,633 隻）之間。今年有 54,720 隻，少於之前的水平，也比同期的平均值減少了約 6,000 隻，目前還未能確定這是出於自然波動還是再度下滑。黑嘴鷗的冬季峰值自 1993-94 年度的 172 隻跌至今年 2 月的 60 隻；花臉鴨數目更從 1990-91 年度的 237 隻大幅下降，已經連續兩年沒有錄得，實在值得關注。



## Red-throated Loon *Gavia stellata* at Starling Inlet

### The First Hong Kong Record

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On the morning of 18 February 2002, a Red-throated Loon *Gavia stellata* stained with oil on its abdomen was found at Luk Keng mudflat, Starling Inlet by Mr. Yip-fat Wan of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department during his regular patrol. The diver was taken into care and carefully cleaned by detergent, and then fed small fish. After two days of care, the diver was released at Pak Nai.

It was identified as a diver on the basis of the thick neck, streamlined body and legs set far back on the body, an adaption for diving and catching fish underwater. With its slender slightly uptilted bill, comparatively small size (57 cm), greenish-black upperparts with white spots, and white underparts extending to the chin, sides of neck and the face, it was identified as an adult Red-throated Loon in winter plumage.



Plate 36. Red-throated Loon *Gavia stellata* 紅喉潛鳥  
Pak Nai, Hong Kong, 19 February 2002  
I. C. Choi

Loons are true aquatic birds, always found on or near water, breeding mainly in freshwater areas in the far northern hemisphere, even to the high Arctic. However, it winters on sea coasts in temperate areas. It occurs in the Arctic in the summer and mainly along the northern coasts of the Atlantic and Pacific in winter. Red-throated Loon is the smallest and lightest among the five diver species of the world. They are still numerous and not globally threatened. It feeds mainly on small fishes and occasionally on crustaceans, molluscs, frogs, insects and sometimes plant matter (del Hoyo *et al.*, 1992).

Red-throated Loons occur on migration and in the winter along the east coast of China, including northern Taiwan, south to Hainan (Cheng 1987). At Beidaihe it occurs in November on autumn migration (Williams 2000).

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## 本港第一個紅喉潛鳥紀錄

2002年2月18日早上，漁農自然護理署尹業法先生在鹿頸泥灘發現一隻胸部沾有油污的紅喉潛鳥，這鳥得到小心照顧，用清潔液清理後用小魚餵養，兩天後在白泥放飛。

鳥的頸粗壯，身體呈流線形，腿長在身體極後方，適合潛水捕魚，據此辨認為潛鳥。嘴細長而微向上，體型較小（57cm），上體黑中帶綠，有白點。下體白色伸延至面頰、頸側和臉部，據此判定是披冬羽的紅喉潛鳥成鳥。

由於有照片記錄，逸鳥的可能性又不大，紀錄委員會很快就接納了這個紀錄，歸入A類。這鳥放飛之後就再沒有見到，不過2004-05年度有一隻逗留得比較久。

## Records Committee Comment

*Acceptance of this record to Category A of the Hong Kong List was straightforward, due to its being documented by photographs and there being little chance that it was an escape from captivity. Although not seen after its release, another individual occurred in winter 2004-05 that proved far more obliging.*

# Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* at Mai Po

## The First Hong Kong Record

*Michael Kilburn*

*KFBG, Lam Kam Road, Tai Po, New Territories, Hong Kong*

Following the arrival in Hong Kong of a cold front in mid-March, I spent the afternoon of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2001 at the Mai Po boardwalk, enjoying a productive session of gull and wader watching on the falling tide. As I was leaving the reserve via the road along the border fence around 4:30pm, I passed the pond often used by loafing Black-faced Spoonbills at the northwest corner of the reserve. I was astonished to see a huge, long-necked white bird swimming amongst them. Immediately identifying it as an adult of either Whooper or Bewick's Swan *Cygnus cygnus*/*C. columbianus*, both potential first records for Hong Kong, my initial shock gave way to the fear that it would fly away before I could establish which it was. Fortunately, the bird remained no more than 80 metres away for the fifteen minutes I was present, allowing unobstructed views from every angle as it swam amongst the spoonbills and stood briefly on the edge of the water, although it was not seen in flight. Following this brief sighting, the bird was subsequently searched for that evening and the next day, but was not seen again.

Having had previous experience of both species together at Poyang Lake National Nature Reserve in Jiangxi Province in December 1999, I was aware of the need to ascertain, if possible, the bird's size and the precise structure of the head and bill. Careful checking of the extent of the yellow sheath on the bill allowed me to safely determine it was a Whooper Swan. The following description was compiled from field notes and rudimentary sketches.

### Description

#### Size and structure

Massive – bulk four to five times that of the Black-faced Spoonbills present, but difficult to estimate accurately. When swimming, the body appeared to be the same height as the backs of the standing spoonbills, which had two thirds of their leg length above the water's surface.

The neck was held upright (rather than curved) and the wings held closed against the body helped to discount Mute Swan *C. olor* (although the good views of the bill made structural separation unnecessary).

The bill was long and sloped smoothly into the forecrown of the elongated head, but the yellow bill sheath gave the impression of a slightly convex bump. There was a slight nail at the bill tip.

## Bare parts

Upper mandible: Bright yellow and black. Yellow sheath covered the basal half of the upper mandible, tapering to a point on the lower edge, further towards the tip of the bill on the right side. However, on the left the tapered tip was foreshortened as if broken off, and a thickness to the yellow sheath could be seen at the point of the break. The yellow sheath on the left side also appeared gnarled and pitted. There was a black cutting edge to the upper mandible extending to the base of the bill.

Lower Mandible: This was black with a yellow centre tapering to a point about 2/3 of the distance from the base. This feature was only seen briefly when the bird dipped its head to the water while facing away.

## Eyes

Black

## Legs and feet

Black

## Plumage

Body, wings, neck: White, neck with progressively more pale rusty discoloration towards the head, although never more than a tinge to the basically white plumage.

## Head

Rusty-coloured tinge to white colour, but slightly darker (presumably caused by staining from frequent feeding with head submerged). The feathers immediately around the eye were pure white, and there was a pale "parting" in the feathers on the crown and forecrown.

## Discussion

### *Separation from other species of swan*

Mute and Bewick's Swans also occur in China, but Mute, which breeds in very small numbers in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region and Mongolia (Cheng, 1987), is immediately discounted by its orange bill with a black knob above the upper mandible, and structurally by the tendency to hold its neck arched and wings partly opened (Svensson *et al.*, 1999).

Bewick's Swan winters in large numbers in the Yangtze Basin, including a recent count of 30,925 (Barter *et al.*, 2004), and has been recorded as far south as Shantou in eastern Guangdong (La Touche, 1931-34). With good views, separation of Whooper and Bewick's Swans is generally considered relatively straightforward. However, it should be noted that there is considerable variation in bill pattern amongst Bewick's Swans, and in China there is a disputed record of the taxon *jankowskii*. Indeed, the previous Hong Kong record of fourteen swans, seen distantly in Deep Bay on 16 November 1992, could not be safely identified to species (Carey *et al.*, 2001).

Separation from the smaller Bewick's Swan, is dependent on size, and the precise structure and colouring of the head and bill (Svensson *et al.*, 1999). Since assessing the

size of a single bird is far from easy – even when Whooper (body 140-160 cm, wing length 562-635 mm) can be as much as 20% larger than Bewick's (115-127 cm wing length 469-548 mm) – and without the opportunity for direct comparison, an accurate description of the head and bill is crucial. On Whooper the crown, forecrown and bill form a single straight (sometimes slightly convex) line from bill tip to the top of the crown, while Bewick's typically, but not always, shows a shorter bill, a more rounded head, and a convex profile from the crown to the tip of the bill (Svensson *et al.*, 1999, Madge & Burn, 1988).

In addition, the yellow sheath on the bill of Whooper covers more than half the length of the upper mandible, and extends beyond the nostrils, tapering to a point at the cutting edge on either side of the bill (Svensson, 1991). This typically gives Whooper a rather long-faced, slightly aloof facial expression. Even on those Bewick's showing the greatest proportion of the bill covered by this yellow sheath, it still does not extend beyond the nostrils, allowing for safe separation of the two species, provided adequate views of the bill are obtained.

#### *Distribution of Whooper Swan*

Whooper Swan is a monotypic species that breeds across northern Eurasia from Iceland and Scandinavia east to Mongolia and north-east Siberia (del Hoyo, 1997). In China it breeds at Qiqihar in Heilongjiang Province, Hulun Nur in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, and at Bayanbuluke in the Tian Shan Mountains of Xinjiang Autonomous Region (Cheng, 1987). The eastern populations of 5,075 to 7,374 individuals (Li & Mundkur, 2004) winter in Japan, Korea and on the east coast of China (del Hoyo, 1997) in Shandong, and at the mouth of the Yellow River (Birdlife International, 2004). There is one record from Fujian (Fok, 1937). It is a very rare visitor south to the Yangtze River Basin (Cheng, 1987, *pers. obs.* 1999, Barter, 2004), approximately 600 km to the north of Hong Kong.

Information on the timing of passage migrants is rather scant. Whooper was the only swan species recorded in Jiangsu and Anhui during 1921-22 by Kolthoff (1932). He collected an adult male near Zhenjiang on 25 February and noted flocks passing north or northwest over the same area in December and February, one individual at Shanghai on 14 January, at least 500 in fields near Nanjing on 14 March, and a flock migrating near Chuzhou on 18 March. In light of the current understanding of the winter distribution of Whooper Swan, these records are somewhat curious, suggesting that Whooper Swan formerly wintered or at least passed through the lower Yangtze Basin.

In what is now known as Hebei, David and Oustalet (1877) recorded passage "in great numbers" in April and October, while Wilder and Hubbard noted spring passage over Beijing between 26 February and 20 April, with peak passage in March, and in autumn in late October and November "sometimes in their thousands" (La Touche, 1931-34).

Vagrancy of Whooper Swan is well established, with records of overshooting birds appearing well to the south of their established wintering grounds. Vagrants have been recorded in California, Pakistan (del Hoyo, 1997), Dubai and Oman (Anon., 2003), Cyprus, Egypt and northwest Africa (Hollom *et al.*, 1988). This strongly suggests that vagrancy to Hong Kong from either the Yangtze Basin or even coastal Shandong Province, while possibly the most southerly record ever, is well within the capabilities of this species.



Other large waterbirds that typically winter in the Yangtze Basin, and which have been recorded as vagrants or irregular winter visitors in Hong Kong include Siberian Crane (Wen & Cheung, 2006), Oriental White Stork (Carey *et al.*, 2001), and Greylag Goose (Carey *et al.*, 2001). Yet the rather late arrival of an adult bird at a site some 100km inside the tropics in mid-March is curious; most overshoots occur in early winter or following exceptionally cold weather on the traditional wintering sites, and are usually inexperienced young birds making their first migrations.

However, in Hong Kong, mid-March is typically a transitional period between winter and spring, when the majority of wintering waterfowl depart for their more northerly breeding grounds. Although this bird appeared during cooler weather associated with a resurgence of the northeast monsoon, it seems more likely that it wintered somewhere to the south of Hong Kong and was temporarily held up on its northwards migration by inclement weather associated with the cold front. Wilder and Hubbard noted northerly migration of Bewick's and Whooper Swans was observed "near Peking" between February 26 and 20 April (La Touche, 1931-34) – dates that comfortably fit with this individual.

## Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Richard W. Lewthwaite for commenting on an earlier draft, and in particular for strengthening the text on the winter distribution of Whooper Swan in China.

## 在米埔發現本港首個大天鵝紀錄

2001年3月中有寒流到港，3月13日下午潮退時我到米埔浮橋觀鳥，見到不少鷗和涉禽，收穫甚豐。約4時30分沿邊界鐵網回程，途經保護區西北角一個時常有黑臉琵鷺休息的塘，驚見一隻有長頸的大鳥在琵鷺之間游泳，馬上認出那不是大天鵝便是小天鵝，兩者都會是本港首個紀錄。驚魂甫定，又怕那鳥在我未能清楚分辨之前便飛走！幸好在我觀察的15分鐘期間牠都保持在80米以內，在琵鷺間穿插游泳，還曾經在水邊站了一會，讓我可以直接從不同角度看個清楚，不過就沒有見到牠飛行。在我短暫觀察之後，當日傍晚和翌日都有人搜尋，但是已經再找不到了。

1999年12月我曾在江西省鄱陽湖國家保護區見過大、小天鵝同時出現，知道要成功分辨兩種鳥，需要清楚確定鳥的大小、以及頭和嘴的外型細節。經過小心檢視鳥嘴上黃色外膜的大小之後，可以肯定是一隻大天鵝。以下的描述歸納了當時做的筆記和一些草圖。

## 描述

### 大小

體形非當巨大，體積約相當於現場黑臉琵鷺的4到5倍，但是很難準確估計。游泳時身體和黑臉琵鷺（腳的1/3在水中）背部同高。

### 外形

頸豎直（並非彎曲），翼收起貼近身體，排除了疣鼻天鵝的可能（雖然單是看嘴部已可判定）。



## 頭／嘴的外形

嘴長，和前額平順接合，但嘴上的黃色外膜顯得有小許隆起，嘴尖有小甲，頭形較長。

## 裸露部份

### 嘴

#### 上嘴

鮮黃和黑色，黃色外膜覆蓋上嘴上半部，朝上嘴邊緣漸收至一點。右邊外膜的尖端距嘴尖較近，而左邊的外膜尖端則較短，好像脫落了，在脫落的地方可見到外膜截面。左邊外膜看來還有節紋和小坑。上嘴緣有黑邊伸延至嘴角。

#### 下嘴

黑色，中央黃色向基部漸漸收細，約離嘴基2/3處收至一點，這特徵只在鳥背向我將頭沒入水中時才短暫見到。

## 眼

黑色

## 腿和腳

黑色

## 羽色

### 身體、翼和頸

白色，頸部沾淡赭色，朝頭漸漸加重，不過整體來說非常輕微。

## 頭

白色中沾小許赭色，稍深（相信是因為時常探入水中覓食沾污所致）。眼週圍羽毛純白，頭頂和前額羽毛有淡色「分界」。

紀錄委員會將大天鵝歸入 A 類。

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### ***Records Committee Comment***

*Advice from international experts was sought regarding this record because of the damage to the bill and due to its being a lone adult occurring in early spring.*

*Mark Brazil (MB) (author of The Whooper Swan, published in 2003) commented that he had never seen damage to the extent described, but had seen various cuts and scrapes to the skin sheath, and even lesions and serious abrasions. Malcolm Ogilvie (MO) commented that the usual damage that waterfowl incur from being kept in cages or pens is scarring across the upper mandible where the bird has repeatedly poked its bill through the mesh. To have cage damage only on one side as in this bird was, in his opinion, unlikely.*

*While unable to comment on the timing of this record, MB commented that he would not consider a single adult to be evidence against a wild bird, while MO commented that the fact it remained for only one day is significant, and in favour of its being a wild bird.*

*MB also commented that the rusty staining of the head and neck were good indications of it being a wild bird. Whooper Swans moult the feathers of their head and neck during autumn and early winter. The rusty staining is picked up while feeding in iron rich waters and so would have been picked up post moult on the wintering grounds; it is common to see this kind of staining in Japan.*

*As regards the vagrancy potential, both pointed out that there are records from areas well outside the normal wintering range, such as India, Pakistan, North Africa, Taiwan, and from the Nansei Shoto in southwest Japan, as well as from the Ogasawara Islands. MO commented that an adult is more likely to survive the winter than a juvenile, and so the fact that most vagrant birds are immature should not necessarily count against this record.*

*In light of the above comments, the conclusive detail in the description of the bird and its behaviour, the Records Committee placed this species in Category A of the Hong Kong List.*

## Siberian Crane *Grus leucogeranus* at Mai Po

### The First Hong Kong Record

*Xianji Wen, Moon-cheun Cheung*

*WWF Hong Kong, Mai Po Nature Reserve, Yuen Long, New Territories, Hong Kong*

The morning of 11 December 2002 was as cold as the day before due to the recent surge of the winter monsoon, and MCC carried out his routine check of the birdwatching hides as usual. When he opened one of the windows in the tower hide, he saw a very large and unusual bird standing at the edge of a small island in Pond 8, that he immediately recognized as a crane. He called the Mai Po Nature Reserve office to communicate this discovery, and three of the office staff (Xianji Wen, Samson So and Matthew Chong) rushed out with binoculars and telescopes to the tower hide, and immediately identified it as a juvenile Siberian Crane *Grus leucogeranus* due to its red bare skin on the forehead and around the eyes, yellowish-brown tone to the upperparts, including the neck and tail, and reddish bill and legs.



Plate 37. Siberian Crane *Grus leucogeranus* 白鶴 juvenile  
Mai Po Nature Reserve, Hong Kong, 12 December 2002  
Martin Hale



Meanwhile, the news of the discovery was telephoned to the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, Asia Ecological Consultants Ltd. and KFBG. Many people came to Mai Po to watch and photograph this bird. The bird just stayed at Mai Po for two days, was last seen mid morning the following day.

The crane looked like quite healthy, and walked around normally, occasionally preening and searching for food in the shallow water.

Three different regional populations of Siberian Crane are recognized: Eastern, Central and Western Populations (BirdLife International, 2003). The estimated Central and Western Populations are two and three individuals respectively, while the total number of the Eastern Population is around 3,000 (Wetlands International, 2002).



Plate 38. Siberian Crane *Grus leucogeranus* 白鶴 juvenile  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 12 December 2002  
Jemi and John Holmes

The eastern population breeds between the Kolyma and Yana rivers south to the Morma mountains, in northeast Siberia, Russia. Non-breeding birds spend their summer in Dauria, which lies in the border area between Russia, Mongolia and China. The middle to lower reaches of the Yangtze River, especially Poyang Lake, China, is its major wintering ground (Birdlife International, 2003).

Hong Kong is about 800 km south of its major wintering site, Poyang Lake. Its unusual occurrence at Mai Po may be due to the arrival of the cold winter monsoon in southern China a few days earlier.

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## 米埔的本港首個白鶴紀錄

2002年12月11日早上，天氣因冬季季候風影響持續寒冷，張滿泉 在例行巡視三層觀鳥屋的時候見到一隻大鳥停在8號塘中小島的水邊，馬上認出是一隻鶴，三位米埔保護區職員（文賢繼、蘇毅雄、莊偉傑）收到消息後立即攜著望遠鏡趕來。

鳥的前額及眼眶露出紅色皮膚、上體以至頸和尾略帶黃褐色、嘴和腳紅色，可以判定是白鶴。鳥只逗留了兩天，最後一次是在翌日早上見到。

這鳥看來健康良好，正常走動，不時理羽及在淺水中覓食。

已知白鶴有東部、中部和西部三個種群，中部和西部分別估計有兩隻及三隻，而東部種群則約有3,000隻。東部種群在俄羅斯西伯利亞Morma 山以南Kolyma 和Yana 河繁殖，非繁殖鳥在中國蒙古和俄羅斯間的邊界 Dauria 度過夏季。主要越冬地點在長江中、下游，特別是鄱陽湖。香港離鄱陽湖約 800公里，這鳥可能隨著數天前南下的寒流來港。

由於有多人目睹，又有照片記錄，而且逸鳥的可能性極小，紀錄委員會很快便將紀錄歸入A類。白鶴全球數目不多，能夠發現這鳥而並非較常見的灰鶴（本港有一個紀錄）著實令人感到意外。

## Records Committee Comment

*Acceptance of this record to Category A of the Hong Kong List was straightforward, due to its being a multi-observer sighting documented by photographs, and there being almost no chance that it was an escape from captivity. Given the small world population of this species, it is very surprising that it was Siberian Crane that occurred, rather than the far more numerous Common Crane G. grus, for which there is one previous Hong Kong record.*



# Amur Falcon *F. amurensis* at Mai Po Nature Reserve

## The First Hong Kong Record

*Paul J. Leader*

*c/o Asia Ecological Consultants Ltd., 127 Commercial Centre,  
Palm Springs, Yuen Long, New Territories, Hong Kong*

At about 0800h on 24 October 1999, whilst standing near the Education Centre at Mai Po Nature Reserve, I noticed a falcon flying towards me. When I first noticed it was about 300 m away, and given its small size and the date, my immediate assumption was that it was a migrant Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*. As it got closer I noticed that the ear covert patch looked odd for that species in being strikingly white, and as it suddenly banked the structure was also patently wrong in that it had a clearly blunter wing tip (although quite like a recently fledged juvenile Eurasian Hobby) and a proportionately shorter tail, which, somewhat confusingly, imparted a jizz more reminiscent of Peregrine Falcon *F. peregrinus*.

It flew low past the line of trees between Ponds 14 and 16/17, and then landed next to a Common Magpie *Pica pica*, and in doing so confirming its small size and also revealing a distinctively contrasting underwing pattern. Suddenly, it all fitted into place: it was an Amur Falcon *F. amurensis*. I shouted to Ho-fai Cheung, Michael Leven and Yat-tung Yu who were nearby and they also saw it. The following description and sketches were made:

### Size and structure

A small, slender falcon with a similar structure to Eurasian Hobby. Wings long and narrow, but notably blunt-tipped, and tail proportionately shorter than Eurasian Hobby; the overall structure (but not the size) was reminiscent of Peregrine Falcon.

### Plumage

There was a blackish mask around the eye extending back to the rear of the ear-coverts, a narrow moustachial stripe extending down from the base of the bill that was quite obvious, especially head-on, (but less so when perched and ending below the level of the bill). The forecrown was off-white and extended back above the black mask to form a short supercilium; the crown was dark grey, paler than the mask. The ear coverts were white and extended onto the sides of the neck to form a large, conspicuously pale area (the most distinctive aspect of the head pattern).

The underparts were off-white with narrow black streaks, while the undertail coverts were pale orange-buff. The underwing showed a dark trailing edge formed by the distal half of the primaries and secondaries being blackish; this contrasted with the rest of the underwing, which was off-white, and although the border was rather diffuse and nothing like that of an adult male of the species, the underwing appeared distinctly two-toned. The upperparts were poorly seen but were a dull cold brown



white underparts are extremely rare (pers. obs.). An additional feature which favours Amur Falcon is the underwing pattern, which comprised a dark trailing edge on an otherwise rather pale underwing. These features can be seen in Plates 39 & 40, which illustrate a juvenile Amur Falcon of unknown origins that was taken into care at KFBG in autumn 2001.



Plate 39. Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis* 紅腳隼  
KFBG, Hong Kong, Autumn 2001  
Paul J. Leader

## Distribution

Amur Falcon breeds across Transbaikalia and north-east Mongolia to Amurland, south to north and east China and North Korea. It winters in south Africa, mainly from Malawi to Transvaal. This species has a massive migration (about 11,000 km), leaving the breeding grounds in the second half of September, and is thought to fly over the Indian Ocean and arrive on the wintering grounds in late November and early December (del Hoyo *et al.*, 1994).

There is some suggestion that this species is becoming both more common and more widespread in China. It appears to be benefiting from the widespread planting of poplars *Populus spp.* as shelterbelts in north China, where they increasingly nest in abandoned Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica* nests (J. Hornskov pers. comm. to M. R. Leven), and in July 2006 a copulating pair was seen at Gonghe in Qinghai Province (pers. obs), which appears to be a the first breeding record for Qinghai, although Cheng (1987) does record it in summer for western Gansu. Cheng (1987) also notes that it winters rarely in Hebei and Fujian Provinces, although these are presumably in error or based on records of late autumn migrants.



Plate 40. Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis* 紅腳隼  
KFBG, Hong Kong, Autumn 2001  
Paul J. Leader

### Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Rupert Griffiths and KFBG for permitting me to examine and photograph the juvenile Amur Falcon cared for in 2001.

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# Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* near San Tin

## The First Hong Kong Record

*Paul J. Leader*

*c/o Asia Ecological Consultants Ltd., 127 Commercial Centre,  
Palm Springs, Yuen Long, New Territories, Hong Kong*

On the morning of 13 December 2000, I was cycling around some fishponds near San Tin when I flushed a pipit *Anthus* from about 10m. As it flew it called and then dropped down nearby; based on the call and especially the fact that one had been reported in the general area a week before, I was expecting it to be a Buff-bellied Pipit *A. rubescens*. However, when I looked at it through binoculars, I was rather shocked to see that it was in fact a Water Pipit *A. spinoletta* – a new species for Hong Kong. Fortunately I had my telescope with me, and it was very obliging giving excellent views down to 15 m. I telephoned several others, and then took the following description and sketches.

### Size and structure

A smallish pipit with the same size and structure as Buff-bellied Pipit, but with a bill that was perhaps slightly longer than that species.

### Head

The crown was cold olive-grey with diffuse darker streaks reaching to the forecrown. There were a pale and quite well defined supercilium and a darker but diffuse loreal line, generally appearing very indistinct but clearly apparent when the bird was looking directly at the observer. The ear coverts were concolorous with the crown but lacked any streaking. The malar 'patch' was dull grey-brown and rather diffuse forming a rough triangle. The thin pale orbital ring was slightly broken at the rear.

### Underparts

The underparts were off-white except that the breast had a peachy wash at the sides and the lower flanks were washed pale buff, with the undertail coverts slightly paler. There were diffuse, thin brownish-grey streaks across the breast, extending half way down the flanks, while the rest of the underparts were unstreaked.

### Upperparts

The upperparts were cold greyish-brown, except for the rump which was distinctly paler and warmer. The mantle had indistinct pale tramlines. The tertials and



greater coverts were darker than the mantle and narrowly fringed pale grey. The median coverts were blackish fringed white and the scapulars had narrow dark shaft streaks.

The outer tail feathers appeared pure white, with small white tip to the second outermost.

### Bill and legs

The upper mandible was dark with a pale cutting edge, while the lower mandible was pale with a dark tip. The legs were dark plumbeous.

### Vocalizations

The call was similar to that of Buff-bellied Pipit and was transcribed as 'tzip, tzip' and 'dzip'

The bird was photographed (Plate 41).



Plate 41. Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* 水鵲  
San Tin, Hong Kong, 13 December 2000  
Paul J. Leader



## Identification

The poorly marked cold greyish-brown mantle and dark legs eliminate all of the regularly occurring pipits in Hong Kong with the exception of Buff-bellied Pipit. Likewise the call could only be confused with of Buff-bellied Pipit.

Separation of Water and Buff-bellied Pipits in winter plumage is actually quite straightforward. Buff-bellied has larger, blacker and better defined streaks below, while those on Water Pipit are a somewhat diffuse dark grey-brown, and are usually medium large to large in size, but sometimes, especially on the flanks, thin. In addition the upperparts are darker and greyer (less brown), and the streaking on the crown and mantle is less distinct in Buff-bellied (Alström and Mild 2003).

Overall, Water Pipit is more poorly marked below, and browner and more streaked above than Buff-bellied Pipit.

Rosy Pipit *A. roseus*, which could occur in Hong Kong given that it breeds as close as Wuyi Shan, Fujian Province (pers. obs), winters as close as Yunnan and has straggled to Hainan (Cheng 1987) and Hebei (G. J. Carey pers. comm.), is eliminated by its more heavily streaked mantle, and longer, usually distinctively pale supercilium.

Of the three subspecies of Water Pipit only *blakistoni* is likely to occur in Hong Kong. Although it is often inseparable from *coutellii* in the field, the poorly marked underparts of the Lok Ma Chau bird favour *blakistoni* (Alström and Mild 2003). and given the distribution of the two (see below) it seems reasonable to assume that this record refers to *blakistoni*.

An examination of photographs taken by Yu Yat Tung of the 'Buff-bellied Pipit' reported nearby on 7 December 2000 showed that it was in fact the same bird, a Water Pipit, and had been in the area for at least six days prior to it being identified on the 13 December.

## Distribution

Water Pipit breeds in mountainous areas from southern and central Europe to Transbaikalia. It winters in western and south Europe, Arabia, south-west Asia and southern China. The nominate race breeds only in southern and central Europe, while *coutellii* breeds in Turkey and winters in Asia Minor, the Middle East, Arabia and north-east Africa. The eastern subspecies *blakistoni*, breeds in eastern Central Asia, southern Russia and northwest China (Xinjiang and Qinghai Provinces). It winters in Pakistan, northwest India and southern China, mainly south of the Yangtze River (Alström and Mild 2003, Cheng 1987).

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### ***Records Committee Comment***

*Prior to taxonomic changes Buff-bellied Pipits occurring in Hong Kong were named Water Pipit. However, after wide acceptance in the 1990s of the split of that species, and based on plumage characters of birds occurring in Hong Kong, these were re-assigned as Buff-bellied Pipit. Despite this, Water Pipit has long been considered distinctly possible as an addition to the Hong Kong avifauna. This multi-observer record was documented by detailed description and photographs, and the species is very rarely encountered in captivity. Consequently, acceptance to Category A of the Hong Kong List was straightforward.*

# Blyth's Pipit *A. godlewskii* at Kam Tin

## The First Hong Kong Record

*Paul J. Leader*

*c/o Asia Ecological Consultants Ltd., 127 Commercial Centre,  
Palm Springs, Yuen Long, New Territories, Hong Kong*

Whilst undertaking fieldwork at Kam Tin in the late afternoon of 8 October 2002 with John Allcock, we flushed a pipit *Anthus* which gave a call that I was unfamiliar with. It was large, approaching Richard's Pipit *A. richardi* in size, but it was skulking and initially almost impossible to observe on the ground. After hearing it call several times, I was convinced that it was a Blyth's Pipit *A. godlewskii*. Having seen a similar bird at Long Valley in October 1998 that had refused to show itself on the ground, I had an overwhelming sense of *déjà vu*. However, unlike the Long Valley bird, which was highly mobile, this bird remained in a relatively small area and, in time, showed itself fully and at quite close range. I watched it for about an hour on the 8<sup>th</sup>, when it was also seen by John Allcock and Graham Talbot, and returned the following morning with several other observers when the bird was successfully trapped and ringed. Detailed measurements subsequently confirmed the identification.

### Description

It appeared a diminutive version of Richard's Pipit, with a more rounded head and a more upright stance. The bill was clearly shorter, about 75% of the length of those of the many Richard's Pipits present, but deeply-based and pointed, and thus more triangular in profile. The legs were long, not obviously shorter than those of the Richard's Pipits nearby.

The crown, nape and mantle were boldly streaked black, more obviously so than Richard's Pipit. The greater and median coverts were broadly tipped very pale buff, forming very distinct pale wing bars. The supercilium was short, and the lores were pale; there were well-pronounced black malar stripes and malar patches. The sides of the upper breast were boldly streaked with short black streaks, while the rest of the underparts were uniform buff, although on some side-on views the central belly appeared slightly, but obviously, paler.

Despite its skulking behaviour, it was approachable, and spent much of the time creeping around in short vegetation in a manner more like an Olive-backed Pipit *A. hodgsoni*, and very unlike a Richard's Pipit.

The call was a very distinctive short, quite harsh *chut* or *chirt*, often given as a repeated call *chut...chut...chut*. It always called when flushed and was heard to call about 40 times over the two days. It was never heard to give any other call.



Plate 42. Blyth's Pipit *Anthus godlewskii* 布氏鵲  
Kam Tin, Hong Kong, 9 October 2002  
Paul J. Leader

The following biometrics were taken:

Wing	93mm
Tail	71 mm
Weight	23.6 g
Bill (width)	4.68 mm
Bill (skull)	17.0 mm
Bill (depth)	4.48 mm
Tarsus	27.7 mm
Hind claw	12.4 mm

### Identification

Making distinctions between Blyth's Pipit from Richard's Pipit is notoriously difficult. However, well-watched birds, and especially those that call, are subtly, but distinctly different to Richard's Pipit. Blyth's Pipit is typically browner and more distinctly streaked above, is deeper buff below, especially on the flanks, has a more distinctly streaked breast, a more distinct blackish malar stripe and malar patch, unmarked lores and narrower pale edges to the tertials (Lewington *et al.*, 1991). The pattern of the median coverts is also a good feature, with the dark centres being more square (less pointed) than in Richard's Pipit.

The call of this bird was typical of Blyth's Pipit, albeit transcribed slightly differently here to others e.g. *chep* (Lewington *et al.*, 1991), *chep* or *chip* (Alström and Mild, 2003), and distinctly different to the explosive *shreep* of Richards Pipit.

In the hand, the hind claw length eliminated all populations of Richard's Pipit apart from the south China taxon *A. r. sinensis* (8.8-15.4 in Blyth's, 11.2-15.5 in *sinensis*). However, *sinensis* can be easily eliminated on tail length (61-75 in Blyth's, 58-81.5 in Richard's, 62-67 in *sinensis*). In addition, the pattern of white on the second outer most tail feather was much reduced and typical of Blyth's (see Plates 42 & 43).



Plate 43. Blyth's Pipit *Anthus godlewskii* 布氏鵲  
Kam Tin, Hong Kong, 9 October 2002  
Paul J. Leader

## Distribution

Blyth's Pipit breeds across much of Mongolia, in southern Russia south of Lake Baikal and in northern Nei Mongol Province, China, and winters primarily in India (Alström and Mild, 2003). Cheng (1987) also includes it as a breeding species in Qinghai, and others consider it to breed across Tibet (e.g. Vaurie, 1959); however, this is not generally accepted by recent authors, notably Alström and Mild (2003), who could find no evidence for it breeding south of Nei Mongol, China.

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### ***Records Committee Comment***

*Blyth's Pipit is a long-distance migrant that has occurred as a vagrant to areas as far away as western Europe. Thus, its credentials as a candidate addition to the Hong Kong List are excellent. Although field identification is difficult, with care by paying attention to vocalisations, it is by no means impossible. This trapping of this bird confirmed its identity beyond all doubt. Pipits are rarely kept in captivity as they are relatively dull and plain, and fare poorly. Consequently, addition of this species to Category A was straightforward.*



# Mountain Bulbul *Hypsipetes mccllellandii* at Tai Po Kau

## The First Hong Kong Record

*Po-kuen Kwan and Choi-on Wong*  
c/o HKBWS, GPO Box 12460, Hong Kong

### Introduction

On 7 December of 2001, WCO informed KPK that he had seen a Mountain Bulbul *Hypsipetes mccllellandii* at Tai Po Kau. However, during the course of KPK's visits there in the next two or three weeks, he was not able to find it. On 31 December, however, he started his morning birding accompanied by WCO. As the *Rhodoleia* trees were flowering, we decided we should wait there to see what birds arrived to forage. At around 1000h, we heard some unfamiliar calls and began looking for the source. It proved to be a Mountain Bulbul. This first sighting lasted around three minutes and there were a total of three birds seen.

During subsequent visits in January and February 2002 to Tai Po Kau, KPK sighted Mountain Bulbul on the following dates:

January: 5<sup>th</sup> (two birds); 6<sup>th</sup> (two birds); 23<sup>rd</sup> (three birds); 26<sup>th</sup> (three birds).

February: 1<sup>st</sup> (four birds); 2<sup>nd</sup> (four birds), 3<sup>rd</sup> (one bird); 16<sup>th</sup> (one bird).

The next joint sighting of Mountain Bulbul occurred on 7 January 2003.

Most of the sightings were in the area around the grove of flowering *Rhodoleia* trees, with the birds seen feeding on the nectar of the flowers.

### Description

The bird appeared large, larger than a Chestnut Bulbul *H. castanonotus* which is commonly seen in Tai Po Kau, and approximately 9 to 10 inches in length. The overall plumage had a yellow-green appearance. The upperparts were brownish green, the wings were yellowish green and the tail was long and also yellowish green in colour.

The head had a brown spiked crest. The face was also brown but lighter in colour than the crest. The bill appeared long and dark in colour. The bird had a white throat that was also spiky in appearance. The underparts including the vent were mainly brownish; the breast was a little darker and showed some fine streaks and the vent was a little brighter. Plate 44 illustrates one of the birds present in winter 2001-02.

## 大埔滘首個本港綠短腳鵯紀錄

2001年12月7日黃才安先生在大埔滘見到綠短腳鵯，之後他和關寶權先生在12月31日早上同時見到三隻。其後關先生在2002年1月到2月間亦再見到數次，最多一次達四隻，通常在開花的紅苞木附近出沒，吃著花蜜。

這鳥比大埔滘常見的栗背短腳鵯要大，長約9到10英吋，全身看來黃綠色，上體綠中帶褐，翼和尾黃綠色，尾長。頭有褐色冠，臉為較淡的褐色，嘴長深色，喉白色，羽毛成刺狀。下體及包括肛部主要呈褐色，胸部色較深而有細紋，肛部色較鮮明。

紀錄委員會認為，由於綠短腳鵯在廣東山區樹林頗為常見，在本港理應更早出現。不過資料顯示這鳥最多只會垂直遷徙，加上本港有大量籠鳥買賣，委員會認為要緊慎處理，將其歸入 B 類，即可能是野生的鳥種，但未能完全排除經非自然途徑來港的可能。



Plate 44. Mountain Bulbul *Hypsipetes mcclllandii* 綠翅短腳鵯  
Tai Po Kau, Winter 2001-02  
Martin Hale

### *Records Committee Comment*

*The occurrence of Mountain Bulbul is long-awaited, as it occurs fairly commonly in hill forest in Guangdong. However, in view of the fact that it is not known to be anything more than an altitudinal migrant, and due to the large captive bird trade through Hong Kong, the Records Committee has adopted a cautious approach and placed this species in Category B, for species considered to be probably wild, but for which the possibility of non-natural occurrence cannot be satisfactorily ruled out.*

## The First Records of the Nominate Race of Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus cristatus* in Hong Kong

*Paul J. Leader*

*c/o Asia Ecological Consultants Ltd., 127 Commercial Centre,  
Palm Springs, Yuen Long, New Territories, Hong Kong*

On 2 October 2000, Michael Leven and I were mist-netting at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre when we caught a first-winter Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus cristatus*. The rich brown upperparts were typical of nominate *cristatus*, lacking any grey tones to the forehead and crown, which would be shown by *L. c. lucionensis*, and it was not sufficiently rufous above to be *L. c. superciliosus*. Photos of the bird were sent to Tim Worfolk, an authority on shrikes who concurred with the identification (pers. comm.); photos of this bird, labeled as first-winter *cristatus* were published in Worfolk (2000).

I reviewed my photos of previous Brown Shrikes trapped for ringing and discovered that an earlier bird trapped at Mai Po on 11 September 1999 was also *L. c. cristatus*. Subsequently, a bird trapped at Mai Po on 27 September 2003 has also been accepted as a first-winter *L. c. cristatus*. Plate 45 shows the October 2000 individual.

*L. c. cristatus* breeds in eastern Siberia, eastwards through northern and eastern Mongolia to the Pacific, and winters from India to Thailand and Malaysia (Lefranc and Worfolk, 1997, Worfolk, 2000).

Carey *et al.* (2001) state that only *lucionensis* is on the Hong Kong list and that although birds of a subspecies other than *lucionensis* have occurred, no other subspecies is formally admitted to the Hong Kong list. It is likely that all three subspecies occur in Hong Kong; indeed, Cheng (1987) records *cristatus*, *lucionensis* and *superciliosus* from Guangdong Province. He does not record '*confusus*' from south China; however, that taxon is generally currently treated as a hybrid between *lucionensis* and *cristatus* (Worfolk, 2000).

Whilst it may well be that *lucionensis* is the commonest Brown Shrike occurring in spring, at this stage it would seem that *cristatus* is more common in autumn than previously thought. It also very possible that *superciliosus* occurs.



Plate 45. Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus cristatus* 紅尾伯勞  
KARC, Hong Kong, 2 October 2000  
Paul J. Leader

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# Mountain Tailorbird *Orthotomus cuculatus* at Tai Po Kau

## The First Hong Kong Record

*Richard W. Lewthwaite*

*2 Villa Paloma, Shuen Wan, Ting Kok Road, Tai Po, New Territories, Hong Kong*

In late afternoon of 8 October 1999, I was walking along the forest trail in Tai Po Kau towards the main picnic area, where I had seen an Orange-headed Thrush *Zoothera citrina* the previous day, when I heard a strange call coming from close by. I stopped and started pishing, and located a small bird flitting around in a tangle of creepers about 20 metres away. Though mostly keeping out of sight behind the creepers, it came fully but briefly into view on about four or five occasions during the next fifteen minutes, including once within about eight metres of me. The light was a little gloomy, but I was able to identify it confidently as a Mountain Tailorbird *Orthotomus cuculatus*, a bird that I was familiar with from visits to Ba Bao Shan and Dinghu Shan, and which I knew had not previously been recorded in Hong Kong. At about 1645h I left to alert others, but by the time I returned, the light was fading and there was no sign of the bird. It was still present in the same area the next morning, though it again gave brief, intermittent views. Subsequently, though I looked for it several times in the course of the next ten days and also tried playing back recordings of the species' song, it was not seen again.

### Description

Best views of the bird on these two days were from below. It was a small passerine whose belly and vent were bright yellow and contrasted strongly with the breast, which was grey, the line of demarcation between the two colours being very sharp. The face was also grey and contrasted with the forecrown, which was bright chestnut. A well-marked whitish supercilium ran from in front of the eye to the rear of the ear-coverts. There was no prominent eye-ring. The rest of the upperparts appeared to be olive green and lacked any obvious areas of contrast on the closed wing, rump or tail. The bill was quite long and fine (appearing proportionately similar in length to that of a Common Tailorbird *O. sutorius*) and seemed to be slightly decurved. The tail was also quite long, recalling a Common Tailorbird, but squarer. Though the wings were short, the bird's flight was direct and swift, recalling a warbler *Phylloscopus*. It was found in a gulley with large trees and a mass of hanging creepers at 175 m altitude, near the point where the Red Walk intersects with the Nature Trail.

The call seemed to me a quiet but agitated, dry rattle, which I transcribed as *prrrr!* It was uttered 6-8 times on the first date and at least once on the second date. Also, on the second date the bird uttered a thin ascending trill and, once, gave a snatch of its distinctive song. In my experience the song at Ba Bao Shan (northern Guangdong) typically consists of 5-6 thin-whistled notes which ascend the scale, followed by a pause and then a further 3-4 notes in which the high note is reached. The last note is at

least an octave higher than the first - *duh duh da did-lee-dee ..... dee lee lee-dee!* To my ears, a rather comical sounding song and very distinctive.

The bird was aged as an adult following Robson (2000), who stated that the forecrown colour is golden-rufous on adults and dull green on juveniles. Two plumage features described by Robson (2000) were not noted, presumably due to the unfavourable light conditions and restricted angle of view: a dark eye-stripe, and greyish hindcrown and nape.

## Identification

Chestnut-crowned Warbler *Seicercus castaneiceps* is the only other small passerine in southeast China showing a chestnut cap and a bright yellow belly and vent sharply demarcated from a grey breast, but birds of this species have bright yellow wing bars and a very obvious bright yellow rump, and are also short-billed and lack a supercilium. Further afield, the Broad-billed Warbler *Tickellia hodgsoni* of southwest China, which has not been recorded in Guangdong, has the same combination of colours on the breast, belly and crown as Mountain Tailorbird, but can readily be separated by its much shorter bill.

## Distribution

There is evidence that Mountain Tailorbird is expanding its range in China. Reviewing records up to the late 1970s, Cheng (1987) noted it as occurring only in parts of Yunnan and eastern Guangxi. Recently, Lewthwaite (1996) documented a range extension east through Guangdong to northwestern Fujian. It is significant that it was not recorded in Guangdong by Vaughan and Jones (1913), who gave extensive coverage to localities along the West River including Dinghu Shan ('Howlik') and Deqing ('Tak Hing'), from where there are recent records, nor by Mell (1922), who collected widely in forests in the north, including the Shaoguan area and the hills bordering Hunan and Jiangxi, or Yen (1932), who reported on a collection of birds made in 1930 from the Ba Bao Shan area.

The first Guangdong records were noted in June and July 1987 (Viney, 1987, Kennerley, 1987) when it was found to be common in the summit area of Ba Bao Shan (now part of Nanling National Nature Reserve). Lewthwaite (1996) noted day-counts of up to 35 at 1200-1800 m at Ba Bao Shan between 8 April and 11 July and up to two in winter at Dinghu Shan, western Guangdong, with ten there, presumed to be migrants, at 250 m on 3 March. Also in western Guangdong, up to six were found in May and November 2004 at 200 m at Panlongxia in the Deqing area (Lewthwaite *et al.*, 2004). Elsewhere, there are reports from southwest Guangdong, including two in spring at 100-150 m at Qixingkeng NR (KFBG, 2002) and up to four in spring and summer at 1000-1700 m at Dawuling Nature Reserve, (Fellows and Hau, 1997, KFBG, 2004). Finally, in central Guangdong, up to three were noted at Gu Tian Nature Reserve on 10 November 2002, Guan Yin Shan on 12 July 2003 and Luofu Shan on 22 October 2005 (Woodward, 2005). In brief, whereas there are no historical records for Guangdong, the species now seems to be well established, especially in the western half of the province with records in all seasons and at all altitudes.



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## Records Committee Comment

*This record was followed by a number of others in scattered areas of Hong Kong in typical shrubland or woodland habitat, but also in atypical habitat such as residential estates. For this reason, there was some initial doubt that the species was occurring naturally. However, ensuing years saw this species establish itself as a regular winter visitor to closed-canopy shrubland and woodland edge, particularly in the New Territories. For this reason, the placement of Mountain Tailorbird in Category A did not prove problematic.*

*As is described in the text, a significant range expansion of this species has occurred, apparently some time after 1932 and before 1987. This range expansion was not, however, noted until after the later 1970s, suggesting that in Guangdong at least, it is one of relatively recent occurrence.*

## Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* at Yin Kong

The First Hong Kong Record

*Michael R. Leven and Hak-king Ying*

*c/o Asia Ecological Consultants Ltd., 127 Commercial Centre,  
Palm Springs, Yuen Long, New Territories, Hong Kong*

At 1430h on 9 October 2002 YHK visited Yin Kong, a village just to the south of Long Valley, to look for a flock of Purple-backed Starlings *Sturnus sturninus* which had been reported feeding in a large banyan *Ficus virens*. Whilst looking for the starlings he observed a small passerine feeding in the tree, which he identified as a Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*.



Plate 46. Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* 白喉林鶯  
Yin Kong, Hong Kong, 9 October 2002  
Y. T. Yu

## Description

The following description is based on Hak-king Ying's notes:

Size similar to a Great Tit but with longer wings and a longer tail. Upperparts grey-brown except for the forecrown, which was grey. No wing bars. Ear coverts slightly darker grey, though contrast with the crown was not very obvious. Throat pure white, breast and belly sullied white with pale brown flanks and pure white vent. The centre of the uppertail appeared blackish and some white was visible on the outer tail feathers, though the extent was not clear. The upper mandible was black and the lower mandible grey. The legs were dark grey.

The bird was active and close views showed no indications of any feather or bare part damage that would indicate it had been kept in captivity.

YHK immediately contacted other observers and the bird was watched by MRL, John Allcock, Geoff J. Carey, Paul J. Leader (PJL) and Yat Tung Yu (YYT) from around 16.00 until dusk. Throughout this time it moved actively in the banyan and also occasionally dropped to the ground where it was seen to peck at banyan fruit, though it was not clear if these were swallowed. It was heard to call only once, when it gave 'a short sharp "chack" or "tchak" reminiscent of a Dusky Warbler' (PJL). Photographs were obtained by YYT, one of which is shown here (Plate 46). An attempt was then made to trap the bird using a mist net but this was unsuccessful. Though it was searched for on the following day, it was not seen again.

## Taxonomy

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* has an extensive breeding range in the Palearctic Region from northwest Europe to northeast Asia east of Lake Baikal, and is a medium to long-distance migrant wintering in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and India (Shirihai *et al.*, 2001, Dickinson, 2003). In China, it breeds in Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu and Nei Mongol Provinces (Cheng, 1987). Though it does not normally occur in south China or southeast Asia, vagrants have occurred east and south of the breeding range in Japan, Korea and the coast of east China (Duckworth, 2004) and Thailand (Robson, 2002).

The taxonomy of Lesser Whitethroat is complex and, at present, there is no consensus as to whether the various taxa within the 'Lesser Whitethroat' group should be treated as one, or several, species. The most conservative approach, followed by for example, Williamson (1964), Cramp (1992) and Beaman (1994), is to unite all the taxa in one species. Alternatively, the morphologically and vocally rather distinct form *althaea* has been split as Mountain Lesser Whitethroat and the remaining forms treated as races of Lesser Whitethroat *S. curruca* (Dickinson 2001). Martens and Steil (1997) took this a stage further by also separating, largely on the basis of differing vocalizations, Desert Lesser Whitethroat *S. minula* from *S. curruca*, whilst Shirihai *et al.* (2001) suggested tentatively that the complex could be treated as four allospecies: *althaea*, *minula*, *margelanica* and *curruca*, with the latter having two subspecies *c. curruca* and *c. halimodendri*.

Of the taxa recognized by Shirihai *et al.* (2001), *minula*, *margelanica* and *halimodendri* occur in China; all are long-distance migrants and so all could potentially occur in Hong Kong.

## Taxon of the Hong Kong record

From the plumage description, *althaea*, which is the most unlikely form in Hong Kong in any case, can be ruled out as this taxon has a much darker upperparts and no contrast between the ear coverts and the crown (Cramp, 1992, Shirihai *et al.*, 2001); in addition *margelanica* can be eliminated as this form shows a very dark and well-defined ear covert patch, at least in autumn (Cramp, 1992, P. J. Leader, pers. comm.) The absence of buff tones on the upperparts (shown to some extent by most *minula* and *halimodendri*) are suggestive of its being *curruca* (Williamson, 1964, Shirihai *et al.*, 2001) whilst the absence of yellowish or buff tones on the underparts, which are a feature of some *minula*, together with the bill being of moderate size, are again indicative of its not being the small-billed *minula* (Williamson, 1964, Baker, 1997, Shirihai *et al.*, 2001). A further feature pointing towards *curruca* is the apparent limited extent of white in the tail (Williamson, 1964, Shirihai *et al.*, 2001).

However, it appears that, whilst the absence of buff tones on the upperparts is a feature of typical *curruca*, this feature can be shown by both *halimodendri* and *minula* and is not diagnostic (Shirihai *et al.*, 2001). In addition, though it falls within the range of *curruca*, the rather weak facial mask is perhaps more typical of these taxa (Shirihai *et al.*, 2001). Size and relative and absolute size of the bill is again apparently not diagnostic of a particular taxon (Shirihai *et al.*, 2001). Finally, though some vocalizations may be diagnostic of particular taxon (Martens & Steil, 1997, Shirihai *et al.*, 2001), this is not the case for the single call heard from the Hong Kong individual.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Geoff J. Carey and Paul J. Leader both for their comments on the first draft of this paper and their input on taxonomic and identification issues and Yat Tung Yu for permission to publish his photograph.

## 在燕崗發現白喉林鶯首個紀錄

2002年10月7日下午2時30分英克勁先生在燕崗尋找據報在一棵大葉榕上進食的北椋鳥，發現一隻白喉林鶯在樹上。

鳥如大山雀般大小，但翼和尾都較長。頭頂前端灰色，上體其餘部分灰褐色，沒有翼斑。耳羽上的灰色較深，但和頭頂對比不明顯。喉純白色，胸及腹灰白色，脇淡褐色，尾純白色。上體尾羽中央沾黑，外側尾羽有白色。上嘴黑色，下嘴灰色，腳深灰色。

這鳥活動如常，羽毛和裸露部份近看之下也沒有發現缺損，沒有曾經被籠養的跡象。

英先生馬上通知其他鳥友，John Allcock、Geoff J. Carey、Paul Leader 和余日東從下午4時觀察至黃昏。鳥一直在榕樹上活動，有時會落到地上啄榕果，但是不肯定有沒有吞下。曾聽牠叫過一次，Paul Leader 形容為像褐柳鶯的「chack」或「tchak」。余日東拍了一些照片，其中一張在此刊出。曾試過用網捕捉，不過未能成功。翌日有人再去搜尋，但已不復見。

紀錄委員會按照 Beaman (1994) 的分類法，將鳥作為多型鳥種看待。白喉林鶯會長途遷徙，發現的鳥沒有曾被籠養的跡象，而出現的時間亦正值遷徙旺季（同期發現一隻布萊氏鵝和一隻可能源自相近地區的粉紅椋鳥），紀錄委員會據此將白喉林鶯歸入 A 類（沒有經過人為干預而在本港自然出現的鳥種）。由於白喉林鶯的分類仍在積極研究

中，預期分類處理和各分類單位的野外辨認特徵可能會有大幅的修訂，到時本港的紀錄當重新審訂。

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## Records Committee Comment

*The Hong Kong record cannot be ascribed to a particular taxon. However, in the absence of a consensus on the correct taxonomic treatment of the Lesser Whitethroat group, the Records Committee has taken an approach consistent with The Avifauna of Hong Kong (Carey et al., 2001) and has followed the taxonomic treatment adopted by Beaman (1994), which treats the group as one polytypic species.*

*Accordingly Lesser Whitethroat Sylvia curruca has been accepted on to the Hong Kong list. Since the species is a long distance migrant, the individual showed no indications of having been in captivity, and occurred at a time of heavy migration in Hong Kong (including observations of a Blyth's Pipit Anthus godlewskii and a Rose-coloured Starling Sturnus roseus which may have had a similar origin), it has been placed on Category A (a species considered to have occurred in Hong Kong in a wild state without and direct human intervention).*

*The Records Committee understands that the Lesser Whitethroat group is currently the subject of active research and it seems likely that the both the taxonomic treatment and the field characters of the various taxa will be subject to further, perhaps extensive, revision. No doubt the Hong Kong record will then be reassessed.*



## Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui* at Tai Po Kau

### The First Hong Kong Record

*Sheung-lai Tai and Choi-on Wong*

*c/o HKBWS, GPO Box 12460, Hong Kong*

On the afternoon of 3 December 2001 we had been birding at Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve and parted at about 1630h near the dam. Soon after, however, COW returned to inform SLT that he had seen a bird that he thought was probably a Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui* [Plates 31 & 47]. He had actually seen the bird some days prior on 28 November, at the same location, near the stream close to the AFCD office and quarters. We soon relocated the bird, which was observed for about ten minutes. Written notes were taken by SLT on the spot and on two more occasions, and consultation of various field guides confirmed the identification. The observations were made in good sunlight from a distance of about six to 18 metres with the aid of a pair of 10x42 binoculars.



Plate 47. Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui* 褐胸鶇  
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, 25 December 2001  
Michelle Kong and Peter Wong



The bird was subsequently seen on many occasions by numerous observers at a number of locations along the stream between the original sighting location all the way up to the Rhodoleia grove, near where the red and blue walks bifurcate. It was last seen on 21 January 2002.

## **Description**

### **General appearance**

It was a brown flycatcher with pale brown breast and flanks, slightly larger than Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica* in size. When facing the observer the extensively pale lores were prominent, and contrasted with the dark upper mandible, distinctive wide and pale submoustachial stripes bordered by brown malar stripes, a whitish chin and throat that was well demarcated from the light greyish-brown breast. Perching sideways, the upperparts were greyish-brown, becoming rich brown towards the rump and tail. Rictal bristles were clearly visible.

### **Head**

Large and round. The crown, which was the darkest part of the upperparts, was dark greyish brown. The eyes were dark, surrounded by a white orbital ring wider behind eye. The chin and throat were unmarked.

### **Upperparts**

The nape, mantle, back and rump were lighter than the crown, and were greyish-brown changing gradually into rich brown on the rump and uppertail coverts.

### **Wings and tail**

The folded wings were greyish-brown in general, reaching about one-third down the length of tail. The greater coverts, tertials and secondaries were fringed rufous, and there was a distinctive wing bar formed by paler tips to the greater coverts. The primaries were darker. The tail was brown, slightly darker distally, with rufous edges to some tail feathers.

### **Underparts**

The breast was light greyish-brown on the breast with a rufous wash to the side. The lower breast was off-white in the centre; the belly was off-white while the vent and undertail-coverts were slightly whiter. The lower flanks were pale greyish-brown.

### **Bare parts**

The bill, obviously larger than that of the Asian Brown Flycatcher, was straight, long and broad-based with a dark upper mandible and a dull yellowish-orange lower mandible. The tarsus was pale, varying from pinkish to yellowish-orange, depending on the angle of light.

## Habitat and Behaviour

The bird was found at different locations adjacent to or along the rocky stream that flows from the dam into the forest. Excellent views were possible if the few observers present were quiet and slow in movement. Though it favoured mid-storey tree branches, it was seen on occasions perching on rocks alongside the stream or on almost-bare ground, and it was twice seen catching a moth resting on the ground. At other times it was found in low vegetation. It was once seen hovering to find food on the trunk of a tree like a Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*. On all occasions it appeared solitary, typical of flycatchers belonging to the Muscicapidae family.

## Range and Status

Regionally, Robson (2000) states the Brown-breasted Flycatcher breeds in north-eastern India, southwestern, western and southern China, and is a scarce breeding visitor to western Tonkin, and a scarce to uncommon passage migrant to parts of Myanmar, and northwestern Thailand. In China, Cheng (1987) states that it breeds as near to Hong Kong as Yao Shan in Guangxi Province, which is echoed by Lewthwaite (1996). It is described as rare and migrates to southern parts of Yunnan. Mackinnon (2000) adds that the bird is found in subtropical forests. While staying in the hills during the summer, it moves to the lowlands in the winter.

Globally, according to Collar *et al.* (1994), Brown-breasted Flycatcher is regarded as near-threatened in status.

Thus, it can be safely concluded that some Brown-breasted Flycatchers breed and migrate to winter within China. However, the bird under discussion was the first that has been recorded as far southeast as Hong Kong. This record was followed by a second record in the 2002-03 winter.

## References

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- Lewthwaite, R. W. (1996). Forest Birds of South-east China: Observations during 1984-1996. *Hong Kong Bird Report 1995*: 150-203, Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, Hong Kong
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- Robson, C. (2000). *A Field Guide to the Birds of South-east Asia*. New Holland, UK.

## 在大埔滘發現本港首個褐胸鵪紀錄

2001年12月3日戴尚禮和黃才安在大埔滘觀鳥，黃才安在漁護署辦事處和宿舍附近的小溪首先發現一隻似是褐胸鵪的鳥，兩人觀察了約10分鐘，戴即場及之後兩次都做了筆記，查閱圖鑑後確認是褐胸鵪。事後不少鳥友都在當地及紅苞木樹叢（紅藍路分叉處）之間見到這鳥，最後的記錄在2002年1月21日。

## 對鳥的描述

### 整體

棕色鵪，胸和脇淡棕色，比北灰鵪稍大，從正面望去有大片明顯的淡色眼先，和深色的上嘴成明顯對比。淡色頰下紋寬且明顯，邊有棕色顎紋。頰和喉沾白色，和淺灰褐色胸部清楚區分。從側面看上體灰褐色，至腰及尾褐色變濃。有明顯嘴鬚。

### 頭

頭大而圓，冠深灰褐色，為上體最深色部份。眼深色，白色眼眶在眼後較寬，頰和喉沒有斑紋。

### 上體

枕部、上背、背及腰羽色比冠淺，由灰褐漸變至腰及尾上覆羽的濃褐色。

### 翼和尾

翼收起時大致灰褐色，長及尾羽的三分之一。大覆羽，次級和三級飛羽有棕色邊，大覆羽末端淡色，形成翼斑，初級飛羽顏色較深。尾褐色，尾端色稍深，部份尾羽末端棕色。

### 下體

胸淺灰褐色，兩邊沾棕色，胸部下方中央灰白，腹灰白色，肛和尾下覆羽較白，脇下方淺灰褐色。

### 裸露部分

嘴明顯比北灰鵪大，長而直，基部寬闊，上嘴深色，下嘴暗黃橙色。跗蹠色淡，呈粉紅到黃橙色，因光線角度而異。

## 生境和行爲觀察

這鳥在由水壩流向樹林的石溪附近出沒，如果能夠保持安靜和將動作放慢，是可以看得非常清楚的。雖然比較喜歡中層的樹枝，但有時也會停在溪邊石上或者差不多沒有植物的地上。曾見過兩次捕捉停在地上的蛾，也有在不高的植被上出現。亦有一次見過牠像黃腰柳鶯般定在樹幹上空覓食。所有時間都是獨行，就如其他鵪科鳥類一樣。

由於褐胸鵪近至廣西也有出沒，紀錄委員會認為在香港出現是意料中事。考慮到已有證據顯示這鳥不單只會垂直遷徙，而且鳥的外觀並不特出，很少會有人買賣，因此歸入A類。

### ***Records Committee Comment***

*The occurrence of Brown-breasted Flycatcher is not unexpected, as it occurs as near as Guangxi. Evidence of migratory movements that appear to be more than simply altitudinal, and the likelihood that this species occurs only rarely in the bird trade due to its unremarkable appearance, meant that the Records Committee was able to add this species to Category A of the Hong Kong List.*

## Great White Pelican *Pelecanus oncrotalus* at Mai Po

An Addition to Category E of the Hong Kong List

*Simon C. Y. Wong*

*c/o HKBWS, GPO Box 12460, Hong Kong*

On 15 December 2002, "Nightjar Team" members and I were at Mai Po from 1500hr to 1700hr as part of our efforts for the WWF-organized Big Bird Race. At about 1530hr, while we were at Pond 20, I noticed through my 12x50 binoculars a pelican on the middle isle of the *gei-wei*. My initial impression was that it was a Dalmatian Pelican, but certain of its characters and structural features indicated that it was not this species. After careful consideration, I suspected that it was an adult Great White Pelican *Pelecanus oncrotalus*, and this was confirmed in subsequent observations through my telescope. My team members - Y. L. Tam, Ronley Lee, and Anthony Lo - agreed with my identification. Then we saw the distinctive black flight features (above and below) offsetting the whitish wing-coverts when the pelican was in flight. (Plate 48.)



Plate 48. Great White Pelican *Pelecanus oncrotalus* 白鵜鷗  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, February 2003  
(Photographer Unknown)

## Description

### Size and structure

Size similar to Dalmatian Pelican, but overall colouration whiter, with a less tufted head and neck, grey bill with pinkish cutting edge, plain yellowish pouch, pale lores and pale pinkish legs and feet. In flight, it showed mostly black flight feathers (above and below) and contrasting whitish wing-coverts.

### Distribution and status

Breeds Eastern Europe to Western Mongolia, and winters in Africa, Middle East and India; resident at single site in Vietnam.

### References

Robson, C. (2000). *A Field Guide to the Birds of South-east Asia*. New Holland Publishers, UK

Gooders, J. (1998). *Birds of British & Europe*. Harper Collins Publishers, UK

Newman, K. (1983). *Newman's Birds of Southern Africa*. Macmillan South Africa (Publishers) (Pty) Ltd

Kanouchi, T., Naoya, ABE & Hideo, UEDA (1998). *Wild Birds of Japan*. Yama-Kei Publishers Co. Ltd., Tokyo

### 米埔錄得白鵝鵝

2002年12月15日我和夜鷹隊隊員參加香港觀鳥會的觀鳥大賽，下午約3:30在米埔用雙筒望遠鏡發現20號塘中小島上有一隻鵝鵝，起初以為是卷羽鵝鵝，不過又有點不像，細心考量之後懷疑是白鵝鵝成鳥，再用單筒望遠鏡確認。隊員譚耀良、李慧珠和盧嘉孟亦同意這看法。之後這鳥飛起，可以見到飛羽上下兩面黑色，和白色的覆羽成明顯對比。

鳥的體形如卷羽鵝鵝，但色較白，頭及頸毛簇較少。嘴灰色，嘴邊緣粉紅色，喉囊淡黃色，眼先色淡，腿及腳淡粉紅色。飛行時可見飛羽上下兩面皆黑，和白色覆羽成對比。

紀錄委員會認為這鳥飛行時可見初級及二級飛羽失去不少，極可能曾經被人囚養，同時，香港公園在2002年12月初曾報稱走失了一隻非洲鵝鵝，可能就是之後在米埔出現的這一隻。紀錄委員會曾檢查過藏於英國自然歷史博物館一隻1868年12月在福建取得的標本，La Touche (1931-34) 提過1895年12月26日福州曾有一隻，而 Rickett's collection 也有來自福建的另外一隻。儘管有這些野鳥紀錄，2002年這隻在香港出現的卻毫無疑問是一隻逸鳥。



### ***Records Committee Comment***

*In flight, it was possible to see that this bird had a large number of missing remiges (primaries and secondaries), which is strongly indicative of captive origin. In addition, an 'African Pelican' was reported missing from Hong Kong Park in early December 2002, and it is likely that it was this bird that subsequently occurred in Deep Bay.*

*The Records Committee has examined a specimen in the British Museum Natural History collected in Fujian in December 1868. In addition, La Touche (1931-34) refers to one at Fuzhou on 26 December 1895 and another in Rickett's collection, which is from eastern Fujian. Despite the existence of these (there are no known records since), there is little doubt that the bird in Hong Kong was of captive origin.*

# Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* at Discovery Bay

An Addition to Category E of the Hong Kong List

*Amanda Haig*

*Fauna Conservation Officer, KFBG, Lam Kam Road, Tai Po,  
New Territories, Hong Kong*

On the evening of Saturday 16 October 1999, Island Vet Services Clinic in Discovery Bay received a large stray goose that had been picked up by a local security guard who had witnessed the bird landing on a grassy area to the right of the ferry pier. This area is now a shopping complex.

On 20 October the bird was transferred to KFBG's Wild Animal Rescue Centre for identification and care.

Upon arrival the bird was photographed (Plates 49 & 50), identified as a Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* and its body condition examined. Overall its condition was good. Its pectoral muscles were lean, but its feather and skin condition were excellent and the bird had good flight ability, unlike most geese kept in a captive environment.



Plate 49. Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* 白額雁  
KFBG, Hong Kong, October 1999  
Paul J. Leader



Plate 50. Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* 白額雁  
KFBG, Hong Kong, October 1999  
Paul J. Leader

Due to the lack of observations of this species both in the wild and in captivity in HK, the bird was placed under quarantine as per normal protocols for birds of unknown origin.

Local ornithologists were invited to confirm the species identification and to assist in assessing the potential release of the bird. It was decided that given the bird's condition and temperament at that time, it was suitable for release.

On 22 November 1999 the bird was taken to Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve for release and was fitted with a ring. The bird was frequently seen at Mai Po during the winter period, although the exact departure date is unknown. Unfortunately, because of the general perception that this was an ex-captive individual that had arrived by non-natural means, few records during its stay were submitted.

During the early part of October 1999 there were periods of high winds and tropical storms present in the Asia Pacific region.

The Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* breeds across the Arctic areas of Asia and Europe and winters in scattered populations from south eastern Europe to southern China. It is at present one of the most endangered goose species in the Western Palearctic. It is listed as vulnerable by BirdLife International and is on Appendix I & II of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animal (BirdLife International, 2000).

## References

BirdLife International. (2000). *Threatened birds of the world*. Lynx Edicions and BirdLife International, Barcelona and Cambridge.

### *Records Committee Comment*

*During the early part of October 1999 there were periods of high winds and tropical storms in the Asia Pacific region, and there must be at least a possibility that this bird arrived naturally. However, as an adult of a species that is commonly caught in the wild in China, and one that subsequently seemed entirely at home with other captive geese at Mai Po Nature Reserve, the Records Committee felt there was insufficient evidence to warrant placement in Category A or B.*

# Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* at Mai Po and Ma Tso Lung

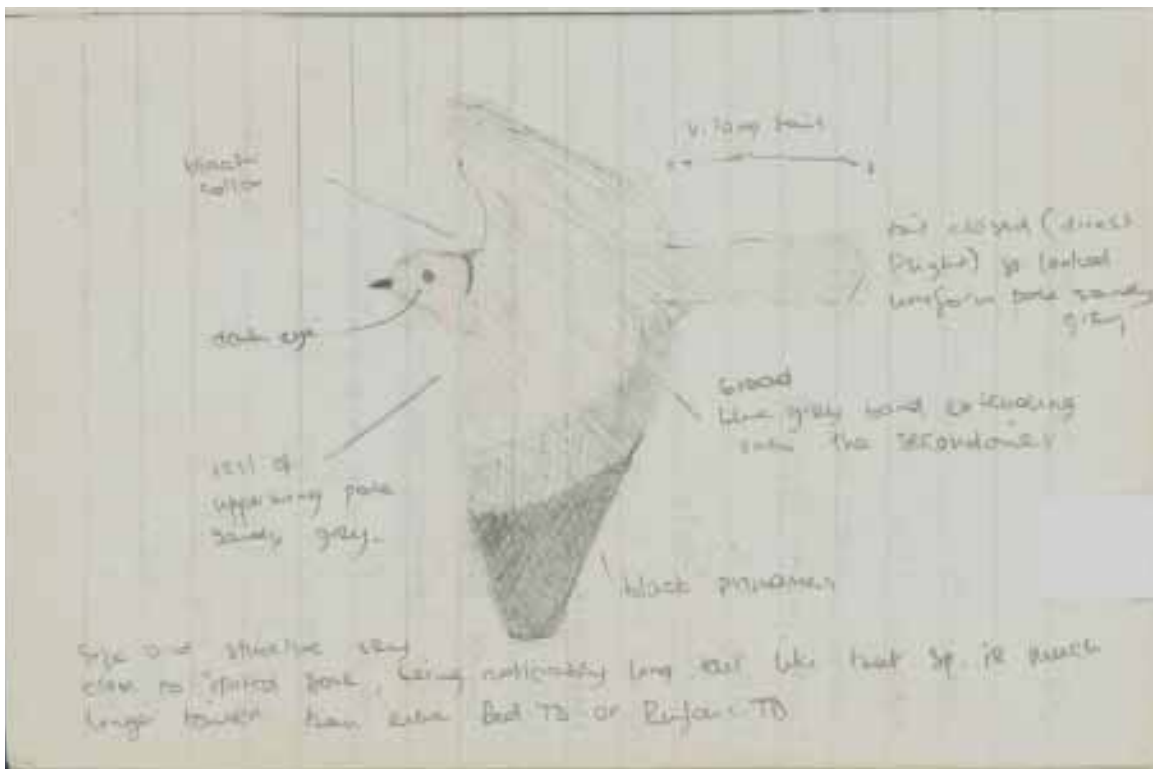
An Addition to Category E of the Hong Kong List

**Paul J. Leader**

c/o Asia Ecological Consultants Ltd., 127 Commercial Centre,  
Palm Springs, Yuen Long, New Territories, Hong Kong

On 29 April and 14 May 1999 I saw single Eurasian Collared Doves at Mai Po and Ma Tso Lung respectively. Mike Leven also saw the first of these birds.

The sketch below shows the bird seen on 29 April. This bird flew towards Mai Po along the Mai Po access road as if heading to roost. Although seen briefly, it was immediately clear that it was a Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*. Views were inadequate, however, to note anything other than very obvious feather damage, of which there was none.



On 14 May, I was cycling around Ma Tso Lung when I noticed a Collared Dove perched on wires about 250 m away. This bird was watched for about fifteen minutes, during which I walked to within 80 m of it before it flew (I paced this out once it had flown). It was in excellent condition, with slight abrasion to the primaries and tail, and no damage to the bare parts. The following description was taken.

## Description

A large dove, it was similar in size to Spotted Dove but clearly longer-tailed. Overall, it was a striking pale sandy colour. The primaries were blackish, and the tail had broad white tips. There was a narrow black collar on the side of the neck, with an even narrower white line below that. The eye and bill were blackish.

## Distribution

Although Eurasian Collared Dove breeds across much of north China from Xinjiang east to Hubei (Cheng 1987), there are only a handful of records south of there. In Fujian and Anhui Province the distinct subspecies *xanthocyclus* is reported by Cheng (1987) to occur; this taxon, however, is distinctly darker above than the Hong Kong records, which fit nominate *decaocto*.

## References

Cheng, T. H. 1987. *A Synopsis of the Avifauna of China*. Science Press, Beijing.

### *Records Committee Comment*

*Although Eurasian Collared Dove occurs widely across northern China, there is no evidence of any spread through south China toward Hong Kong. Consequently, the Records Committee considers that these and subsequent records of this species are derived from birds of captive origin and the species has been placed in Category E of the Hong Kong list.*



## Bearded Reedling *Panurus biarmicus* at Mai Po

An Addition to Category E of the Hong Kong List

*Paul J. Leader, John Allcock and Paul Collins*

*c/o Asia Ecological Consultants Ltd., 127 Commercial Centre,  
Palm Springs, Yuen Long, New Territories, Hong Kong*

On 22 December 2002, a male Bearded Reedling was trapped during a constant effort ringing session in the reedbed in *gei-wai* 8 at Mai Po Nature Reserve. Although the bird was in excellent condition, the closest records of wild birds are from Liaoning and Hebei Provinces (Cheng, 1987); as such the bird was considered to be an escape from captivity and placed in Category E of the Hong Kong list.

The following description, measurements and photograph (Plate 51) were taken:



Plate 51. Bearded Reedling *Panurus biarmicus* 文鬚雀  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 22 December 2002  
Paul J. Leader

A small long-tailed passerine, the tail being almost as long as the body. Brown overall, except grey head, bold black moustache, off-white scapulars and inner web to tertials, black centres to greater coverts and outer web of tertials, primaries edged white, tips to outer tail white. Bill yellow, iris orange-pink, legs black.

Wing 61.5 mm, tail 85 mm, tail difference 45.9 mm, bill (to feathering) 11.4 mm, weight 12.9 g.

### 米埔錄得文鬚雀

2002年12月22日在米埔8號基圍做環誌工作時用網捕得一隻文鬚雀，雖然這鳥狀態甚佳，但是最接近的野鳥紀錄也遠在遼寧和河北兩省，因此當逸鳥論，歸入E類。

尾幾與身體等長，除頭灰色外全身褐色，有深黑頰紋，肩羽和三級飛羽內羽片淡白色，大覆羽中部及三級覆羽外羽片黑色，初級飛羽緣及尾外側末端白色，嘴黃色，虹膜橙粉紅色，腳黑色。

### Reference

Cheng, T. H. (1987). *A Synopsis of the Avifauna of China*. Science Press, Beijing.

**Short Notes:**  
**A Breeding Record of Pygmy Wren Babbler**  
*Pnoepyga pusilla*  
**in Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve, Hong Kong**

*Dion Hobcroft*

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On the 11 May 2004 whilst birding in Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve I observed a recently fledged chick of the Pygmy Wren Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla*. The chick was a dark morph, like the adult observed in the same territory. The flight and tail feathers were very short. A scattering of down was obvious through the rather scruffy feathering. It had an orange gape. The chick was producing a high pitched insect-like squibbing call by which it was initially found.

It was barely capable of flight fluttering hopelessly from one low bush to another. The song of the adult was sound recorded. It was the typical "see-su" similar to populations in the eastern Himalayas. The adult birds were heard on both 11-12 May but the chick was not observed on the 12<sup>th</sup>. This observation is the first to confirm breeding of this species in Hong Kong. One was seen at Kau Tam Tso, Wu Kau Tang on 1 May 2002, when it behaved in a manner suggesting it was near a nest, though no other evidence was observed.

I wish to thank Geoff J. Carey for assistance in preparing this note.

### 小鱗胸鷓鴣在大埔滘繁殖

2004年5月11日在大埔滘觀鳥時發現一隻離巢不久的小鱗胸鷓鴣，和在當地見到的成鳥一樣同是黑色型。飛羽及尾羽甚短，羽毛頗為邋遢，明顯夾雜著一些絨羽，嘴角黃色，發出高音短促如蟲的叫聲，得因此得以發現牠。這鳥還未懂飛，在矮樹叢中跌跌撞撞的撲來撲去。已錄下成鳥的叫聲，為典型的「see-su」叫聲，和喜瑪拉雅山東部種群的相似。5月11及12日已聽到成鳥的叫聲，但是要到12日才見到雛鳥，是首次確認這種鳥在本港繁殖。2002年5月1日在九担租、烏蛟騰曾見過一隻，行為舉動令人懷疑牠在附近營巢，不過沒在進一步證據。

# Hong Kong Nightbird Survey

2000-01

*Richard W. Lewthwaite and Yat-tung Yu*

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During the preparation of *The Avifauna of Hong Kong* (Carey *et al.*, 2001), which takes into account records up to 1998, it became apparent that Hong Kong's owls and nightjars were comparatively poorly known. Unlike other groups such as waterbirds and diurnal breeding species, they had not been systematically surveyed and their status could only be guessed at on the basis of casual records. In an attempt to learn more, preliminary surveys were carried out at several localities in the eastern NT in the spring of 1999. Slaty-legged Crane, whose distinctive call uttered at night had only recently been recognized in Hong Kong, was also targeted. The results were promising and generated considerable interest amongst HKBWS members. At the same time, papers on nightjars (Chalmers, 1998, Hale, 2002) and small owls *Otus* and *Glaucidium* (Holmes, 2002a & 2002b) were being published or prepared. Against this background the Hong Kong Nightbird Survey was launched in March 2000 with the overall aim of generating baseline data on the distribution, seasonality, abundance and habitat preferences of Hong Kong's nightbirds. Though originally scheduled to run for 12 months to the end of February 2001, the survey was extended by a further three months to the end of May 2001, in part because unusually heavy rain had hampered surveying in April 2000, and also so that a second spring could be sampled. Main target species are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1. Main target species of the Hong Kong Nightbird Survey 2000-01**

Slaty-legged Crane	<i>Rallina eurizonoides</i>
Chestnut-winged Cuckoo	<i>Clamator coromandus</i>
Large Hawk Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx sparveriioides</i>
Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx nasicolor</i>
Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>
Plaintive Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>
Common Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopacea</i>
Eastern Grass Owl	<i>Tyto longimembris</i>
Oriental Scops Owl	<i>Otus sunia</i>
Collared Scops Owl	<i>Otus lettia</i>
Eurasian Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo bubo</i>
Brown Fish Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>
Asian Barred Owlet	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>
Northern Boobok	<i>Ninox japonica</i>
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>
Grey Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus indicus</i>
Savanna Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>

Parasitic cuckoos were included since they are active and vocal at night in Hong Kong. Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*, though nocturnal in habits, was not targeted since its status in Hong Kong was already known through waterbird counts.

## Methods

Since it was expected that nearly all nightbirds would be detected through their vocalizations, an audiotape was provided for survey participants. This contained recordings of 13 of the target species and also of two frog species, Brown Tree Frog *Polypedates megacephalus* and Lesser Spiny Frog *Rana exilispinosa*, which were thought to be potentially confusable with Asian Barred Owl and Grey Nightjar respectively. The tape did not include recordings of Eastern Grass Owl, Oriental Scops Owl, Northern Boobook or Short-eared Owl since it was thought extremely unlikely that these species would be vocalizing in Hong Kong (wrongly so in the case of Oriental Scops Owl). The tape was provided strictly for reference purposes only, and participants in the survey were given clear instructions not to play any sound recordings or make noises which might elicit a response in the field.

The sites were surveyed by HKBWS members grouped into small teams, each responsible for a single site. Teams were asked to visit their site once a month for the duration of the survey, choosing a route which was likely to achieve good results and consistently repeating the same route each month. Each visit was to start at dusk and last for a maximum of two hours. Surveyors were instructed to mark nightbirds on a map as detected and fill in a survey form for each visit.

The survey maps were based on the metric grid and marked with 1km squares, matching those used in the Hong Kong Breeding Bird Survey 1992-1996 and the HKBWS Winter Atlas 2001-2004. Whilst each site received equal time coverage, this was not the case for individual 1km squares within a site, the sites being of unequal size. Nevertheless, at the end of the survey, it was found that a total of 115 1 km squares had provided positive data (at least one individual of one target species) and that data at the 1km level was valuable in assessing density and habitat preferences of some species. Some individual 1km squares are discussed in further detail below.

Surveys were completed at the 19 sites listed in Table 2, which summarizes the main habitat types, size in terms of number of 1 km squares, and listening conditions at each site. Regarding their geographical location, two of the sites are located on Hong Kong Island (Mt. Austin and Tai Tam), one is at the flat northern end of an inshore island (Kau Sai Chau) and the rest are spread across the NT, covering all parts except for the extreme west. For reasons of access and manpower, it was not possible to survey any sites on Lantau Island or any of the smaller offshore islands.

As already noted, the survey sites varied considerably in terms of number of 1 km squares and can be divided into two size groups: nine larger (seven to ten 1 km squares) and ten smaller (two to six 1 km squares), Sai Kung, Bride's Pool Road and Mong Tseng being the three largest sites and Cloudy Hill, Mt. Austin and Wu Kau Tang the three smallest. Shrubland of various ages was a major habitat component at all sites apart from Chau Tau (grassland), Kau Sai Chau (a golf course), Tai Po Kau and Shing Mun (both forest). The presence of steep hillsides characterized all sites except Kau Sai Chau, where the surveyed area is flat, and Mong Tseng, where there are low, rather flat hills. The highest elevations covered were 600 m at KFBG, 580 m at Fei Ngo

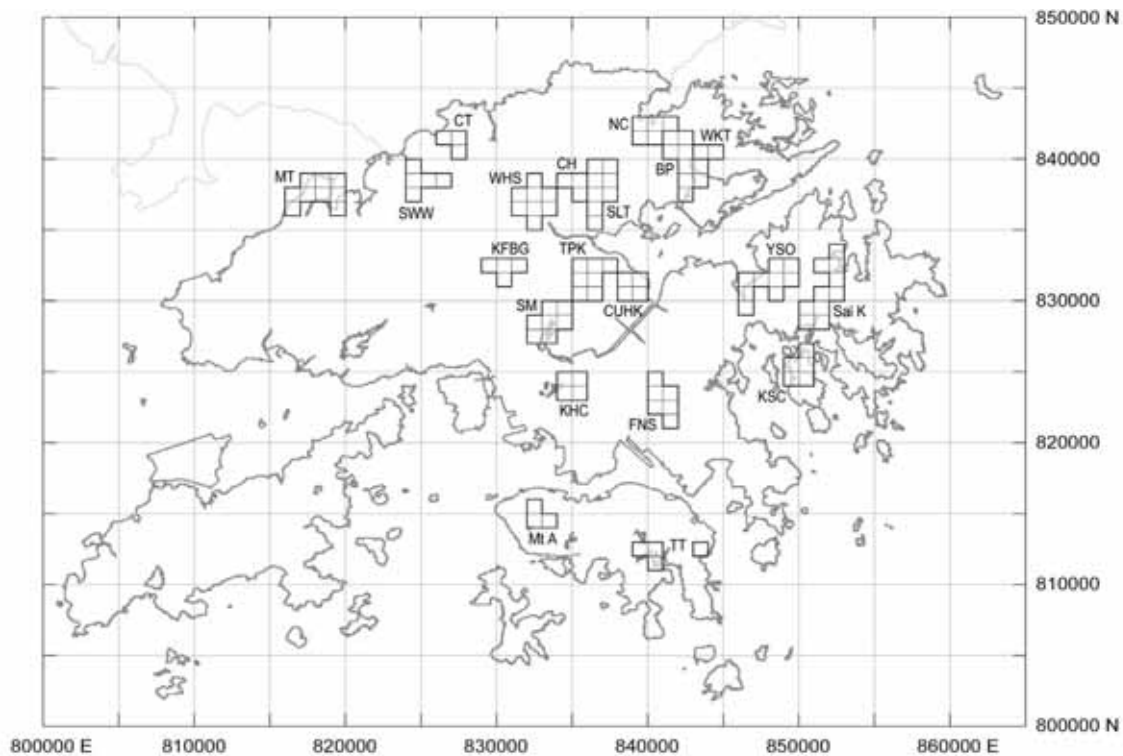
Shan, 550 m at Mt. Austin, 440 m at Cloudy Hill and 420 m at Tai Po Kau. Altitudes covered elsewhere did not exceed 300 m.

Three of the NT sites sampled in the survey (Bride's Pool Road, Nam Chung and Sha Lo Tung) had been successfully piloted in 1999. A number of other sites were piloted in 1999 and 2000 and found to be unsuitable for the survey for various reasons. These included Mai Po and Dong Ping Chau (no nightbirds detected, despite very good listening conditions) and the Peak Tram-Barker Road area of Hong Kong Island (high levels of traffic noise). It was regrettable that the latter locality had to be dropped since Collared Scops Owls were regularly recorded there in the 1950s and 1960s. Some survey sites are discussed in further detail below.

**Table 2. Sites covered during the Nightbird Survey**

Site acronym and name		Main habitat	1km squares	Listening conditions
BP	Bride's Pool Road	Mixed shrubland	9	Good
CT	Chau Tau & Shek Wu Wai	Grassland	8	poor (trucks and highway)
CH	Cloudy Hill	Shrubland	3	Good
CUHK	CUHK campus	Parkland, shrubland	4	fair (some traffic noise)
FNS	Fei Ngo Shan	Grassland, shrubland	6	poor (urban edge)
KFBG	Kadoorie Farm & BG	Shrubland, parkland	4	Good
KHC	Kowloon Hills catchwater	Shrubland	4	Good
KSC	Kau Sai Chau	Open lawns	5	Good
MT	Mong Tseng	Grassland, shrubland	9	Good
Mt A	Mt. Austin	Shrubland, parkland	3	fair (urban edge)
NC	Nam Chung-Luk Keng	Shrubland, grassland	5	good (except when frogs singing!)
Sai K	Sai Kung	Shrubland	10	Good
SLT	Sha Lo Tung-Hok Tau	Shrubland, grassland	8	Good
SMR	Shing Mun Reservoir	Forest	7	good (except planes some nights)
TPK	Tai Po Kau	Forest	7	good (except planes some nights)
TT	Tai Tam	Shrubland	4	Good
WHS	Wo Hop Shek	Parkland, shrubland	8	fair (some traffic noise)
WKT	Wu Kau Tang	Shrubland, grassland	2	Good
YSO	Yung Shue O	Shrubland, grassland	9	Good





Map 1. All survey sites

## Coverage

Against a potential maximum of 285 site-visits (19 sites x 15 months), actual coverage of 255 site-visits (89.5%) was achieved during the survey (see Table 3). Bad weather (especially in April 2000) and late starts at some sites led to coverage being lowest (79%) in March-April 2000. Coverage then rose to 84% in May-August 2000 and 94% during the remaining months of the survey. Although it was hoped to concentrate surveys into a single part of each month, the desired period being that of the full moon, when owls and nightjars are known to be more active (del Hoyo *et al.*, 1999, Cleere and Nurney 1998), this proved impossible given the size of the survey team. In any case, it was found that even on the few nights when the moon rose high enough in early evening to shine over the steep-sided terrain typical of many parts of Hong Kong, its light was often then weakened by the reflection of city lights. Dates of coverage at each site and of the full moon in each month are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Coverage of the 19 sites during the survey**

Month	Date of full moon	Period of survey	Sites covered (see Table 2 for acronyms)
March 2000	20 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup> -31 <sup>st</sup>	All except FNS, SMR, TT, WKT
April	19 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup> -28 <sup>th</sup>	All except FNS, SLT, TT, WKT
May	18 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> -28 <sup>th</sup>	All except FNS, KSC, TT
June	17 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup> -30 <sup>th</sup>	All except CH, KHC, SaiK
July	16 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup> -26 <sup>th</sup>	All except KSC, WHS, YSO
August	15 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup>	All except KHC, TT, WKT
September	14 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup>	All except KHC, WKT
October	13 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup> -30 <sup>th</sup>	All except SaiK
November	12 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> -22 <sup>nd</sup>	All
December	11 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup> -30 <sup>th</sup>	All except CH, YSO
January 2001	10 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup>	All
February	8 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> -28 <sup>th</sup>	All sites except MtA
March	10 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup>	All sites except KHC, WHS
April	8 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> -27 <sup>th</sup>	All sites except CU, SaiK
May	7 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> -31 <sup>st</sup>	All

## Results

A total of 1,279 nightbirds of 14 species were detected during the survey (see Table 4). As expected, nearly all individuals detected were heard and not seen. Collared Scops Owl, with 553 detections (43% of the total), was by a large margin the most frequently recorded nightbird. This small owl and the three next most frequently detected species, Savanna Nightjar, Large Hawk Cuckoo and Slaty-legged Crake together accounted for 84% of the total. Next came Asian Barred Owlet and Grey Nightjar, together accounting for almost 10% of detections, and finally the five other cuckoo species and four other owl species. The most widespread species, all found at 18 out of the 19 sites, were Collared Scops Owl (detected in 77 squares), Large Hawk Cuckoo (69 squares) and Slaty-legged Crake (49 squares). Three target species (Eastern Grass Owl, Brown Fish Owl and Short-eared Owl) were not detected at all during the survey.

The period spanning March-June produced the best results, with a peak of 170 detections in April 2001 and peak diversity of 12 species in May 2000. Other months were much less productive, with troughs evident in July (only 37 detections) and September, November and January (only three species detected). Whereas Collared Scops Owl, Asian Barred Owlet and Savanna Nightjar were recorded throughout the year, Slaty-legged Crake, the cuckoos and Grey Nightjar were detected mainly during March-June, indicating their seasonality. The higher totals recorded in the second spring (March-May 2001) compared to the first (March-May 2000) can be attributed to calmer weather, better site coverage (54 site-visits completed as against 46 in the first spring), and increased competence and efficiency on the part of the survey team.

Table 4. Overview of survey results

Species	Detections	(% of total)	Sites (max 19)	1km squares (max 117)	Peak density in single 1km square
Slaty-legged Crane	146	(11.4%)	18	49	7
Chestnut-winged Cuckoo	21	(1.6%)	9	17	2
Large Hawk Cuckoo	164	(12.8%)	18	69	3
Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo	1	(0.1%)	1	1	1
Indian Cuckoo	13	(1.0%)	5	11	1
Plaintive Cuckoo	17	(1.3%)	5	12	1
Common Koel	22	(1.7%)	11	15	2
Oriental Scops Owl	3	(0.2%)	1	1	1
Collared Scops Owl	553	(43.2%)	18	77	5
Eurasian Eagle Owl	6	(0.5%)	5	6	1
Asian Barred Owllet	75	(5.9%)	9	22	4
Northern Boobok	1	(0.1%)	1	1	1
Grey Nightjar	44	(3.4%)	5	17	3
Savanna Nightjar	213	(16.6%)	10	29	21
All species	1,279	(100%)	-	-	-

## Species accounts

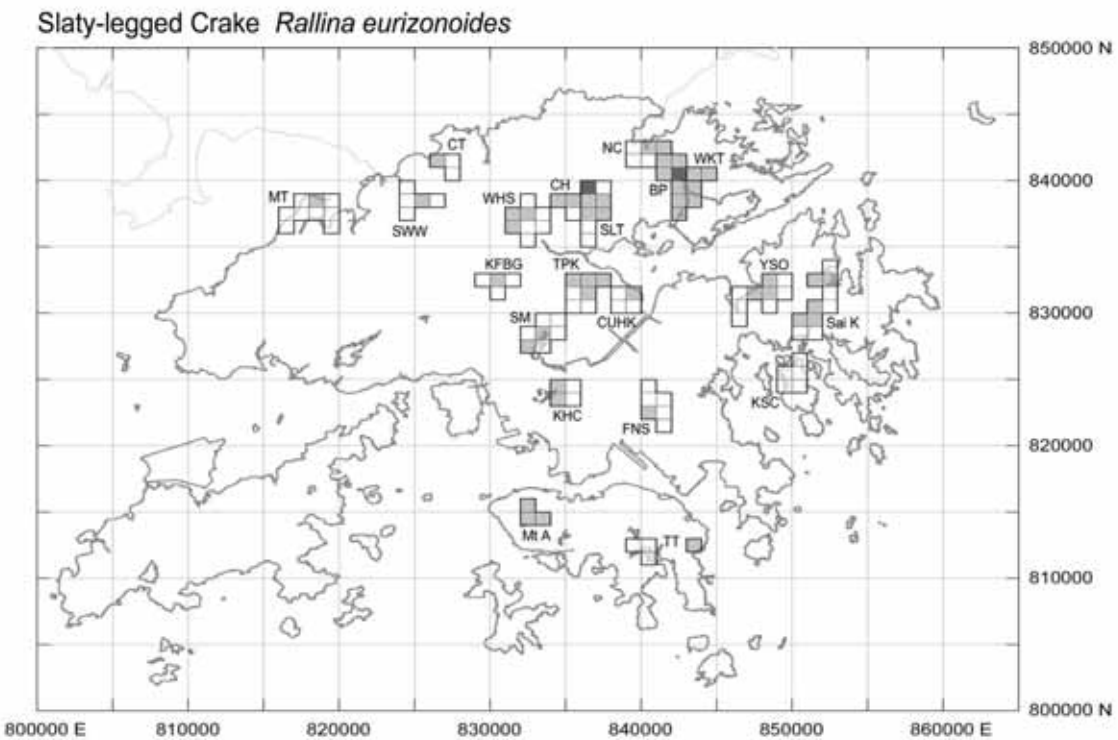
In the accounts which follow, all discussion, statements and data, except as otherwise indicated, refer solely to the 255 site visits which constituted the survey and which are summarized in Table 3. All 1 km squares in which a species was recorded during the survey are mapped, including a large number which are new compared to those mapped in *The Avifauna of Hong Kong* (Carey *et al.*, 2001). Peak density refers to the largest number of individuals logged in a single 1km square on one visit. Estimates of the distances at which the various species can be heard were mainly made from Bride's Pool Road and typically involved birds calling across the water at the tapering northern end of Plover Cove Reservoir where their distance from the observer could be judged with a fair degree of confidence.

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

This secretive and rarely-seen crane proved to be the fourth most numerous nightbird of the survey, with 146 detections (11.4% of the total), all involving vocalizing birds giving the distinctive two-note call, which on calm nights was audible at distances of a kilometre or more. All individuals were logged between 21 March and 14 July. The number of birds detected rose from a small base in March to peak sharply in April, then declined in May and again in June, with only two individuals in July. Such a pattern, taken with the detection of two individuals in atypical habitat at Chau Tau on 19 April 2000, indicates that this crane occurs in Hong Kong both as a spring migrant and summer visitor.



Plate 52. Slaty-legged Crake *Rallina eurizonoides* 白喉斑秧鸡  
Kowloon Park, Hong Kong, 12 February 2004  
Michelle and Peter Wong



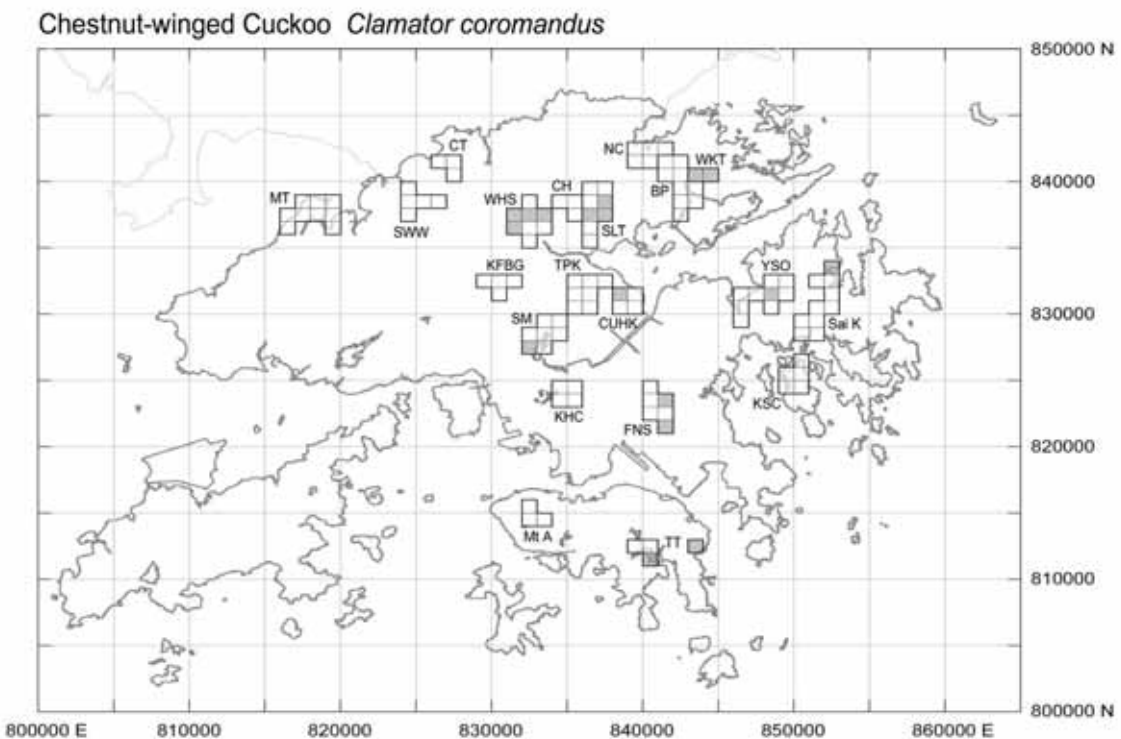
Map 2. Slaty-legged Crake *Rallina eurizonoides* 白喉斑秧鸡  
Detected in 49 squares.  
Squares in which peak densities of 6-7 birds were found in a single visit are highlighted in black.



Though found in 49 squares and at all sites except Kau Sai Chau (see Map 2), indicating a tolerance for a wide range of shrubland and forest habitats, peak counts and peak densities of this species were in fact noted in areas of rich, mixed shrubland with permanent streams. The two highest counts were 17 at Bride's Pool Road on 17 April 2001, a record at a single site in Hong Kong, and ten at Sha Lo Tung three days earlier. Peak densities were also recorded at these sites on the same dates: seven in square 11W at Bride's Pool Road and six individuals in square 20 B at Sha Lo Tung. Smaller numbers were detected in forest at Tai Po Kau and Shing Mun in April, May and June, with not more than three individuals logged on any one visit. With regard to altitude, all records were below 300 m except at Mt. Austin where birds were detected in shrubland at 400-500 m asl.

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

A total of 21 individuals were logged on dates between 12 April and 9 July, with records from 17 squares at nine sites (see Map 3), mainly in shrubland, but also in forest. The pattern of records, with peak numbers in April and May, smaller numbers in March, June and July, and none in the other months, matches that described for the species in Carey *et al.* (2001). All birds found in the survey were singles apart from two at Wo Hop Shek, the best site, on 7 May 2001, and all were detected through their vocalizations, which in optimum conditions could be heard at a distance of 400-500 m. However, since birds were noted on at least four visits to Bride's Pool Road and Tai Po Kau in the hour before sunset but not after dusk (and therefore were not counted), their distribution and abundance within the survey sites was only partly revealed.

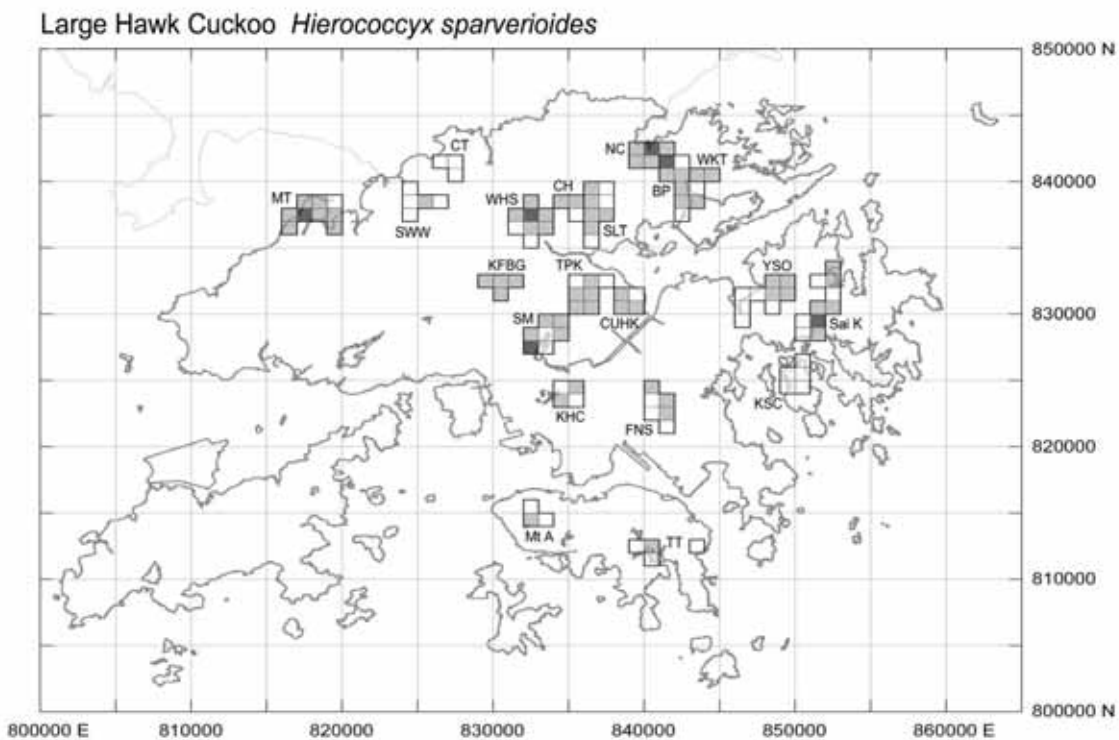


**Map 3. Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus* 紅翅鳳頭鵙**  
Detected in 17 squares.

## 202A Large Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparverioides* 鷹鵂

This was the third most numerous and second most widespread nightbird, and also by far the most frequently detected cuckoo of the survey, with a total of 164 detections from 69 squares at all sites except Kau Sai Chau on dates between 2 March and 21 June, which are typical for the species, and with all detections involving vocalizing birds. At several sites, it was noticed that this cuckoo was more vocal after dusk than before. It also appeared to be undeterred from singing at night either by wind or rain, and its frequently-uttered song could be heard at distances of 2 km or more.

Three or more individuals were recorded at nearly all of the larger sites on most visits during March-May, the peak count being seven at Mong Tseng on 19 April 2000, the highest on record. Mong Tseng also accounted for the highest site total (20), a surprising result given that this cuckoo had been mapped in only one square there during the Breeding Bird Survey of 1992-1996. Nevertheless, this site, Bride's Pool Road and the Sha Lo Tung-Hok Tau area together accounted for almost 33% of the total, and although up to six were logged in the forest and plantations at Shing Mun (on 11 May 2001), the generally larger numbers recorded in shrubland indicate that this, rather than forest, is its preferred habitat in Hong Kong. A peak density of three in a single 1 km square was found at six squares, five shrubland and one forest. These are highlighted on Map 4.



**Map 4.** Large Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparverioides* 鷹鵂

Detected in 69 squares.

Squares in which peak densities of 3 birds were found in a single visit are highlighted in black.



Although no host species is known for this parasitic cuckoo in Hong Kong, one strong possibility is the Hwamei *Garrulax canorus*, which is described in (Carey *et al.*, 2001) as occurring at high densities in both open and closed-canopy shrubland.

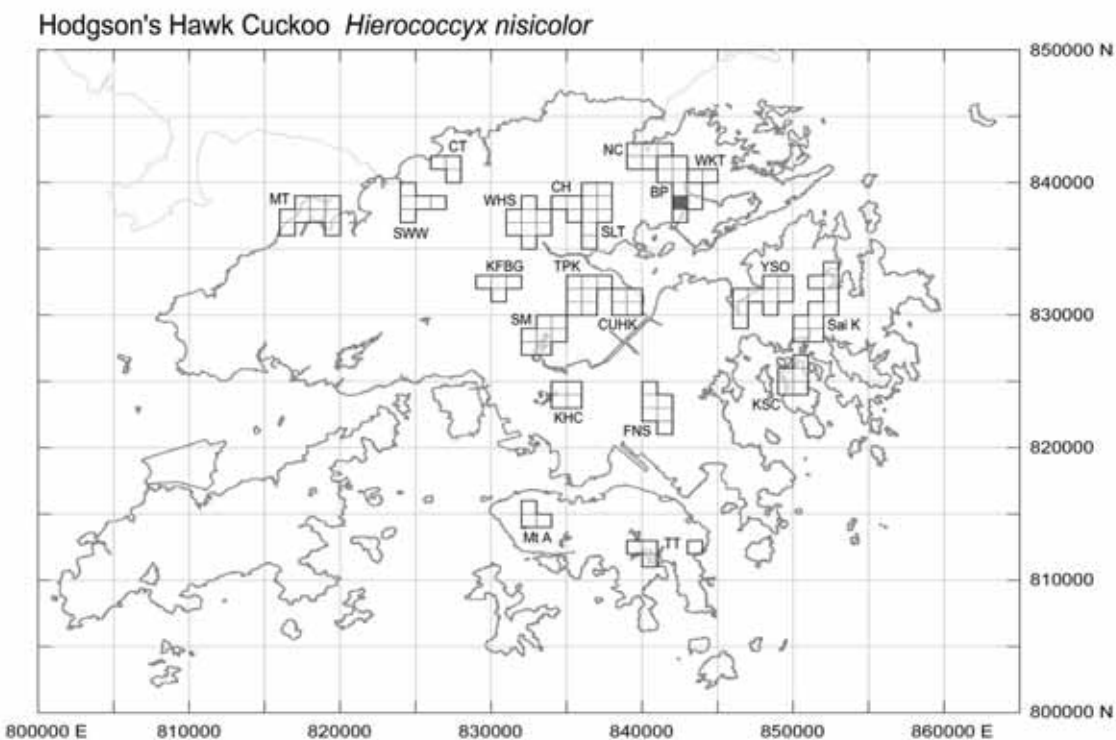
**203A Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx nisicolor* 棕腹杜鵑**

[Treated as a full species following King (2002a)].

One singing at 100 m asl in mature shrubland at Bride's Pool Road (see Map 5) on 18 April 2000 was the only detection of the survey.

During casual visits in the same year, single singing birds were noted at the latter site (same square) on 3 May, Tai Po Kau on nine dates between 1 April and 11 May, Ng Tung Chai on 15 April and Shing Mun on 30 April. That nearly all were detected at or after dusk, rather than in other parts of day when the sites were also visited, suggests that this species shares with its congener, Large Hawk Cuckoo, a greater tendency to be vocal at night than other cuckoos in Hong Kong.

Based on the above records, those in April-May 1999 and in Carey *et al.* (2001), this species should now be regarded as a scarce and local summer visitor to areas of forest and mature shrubland, as well as a rare passage migrant.

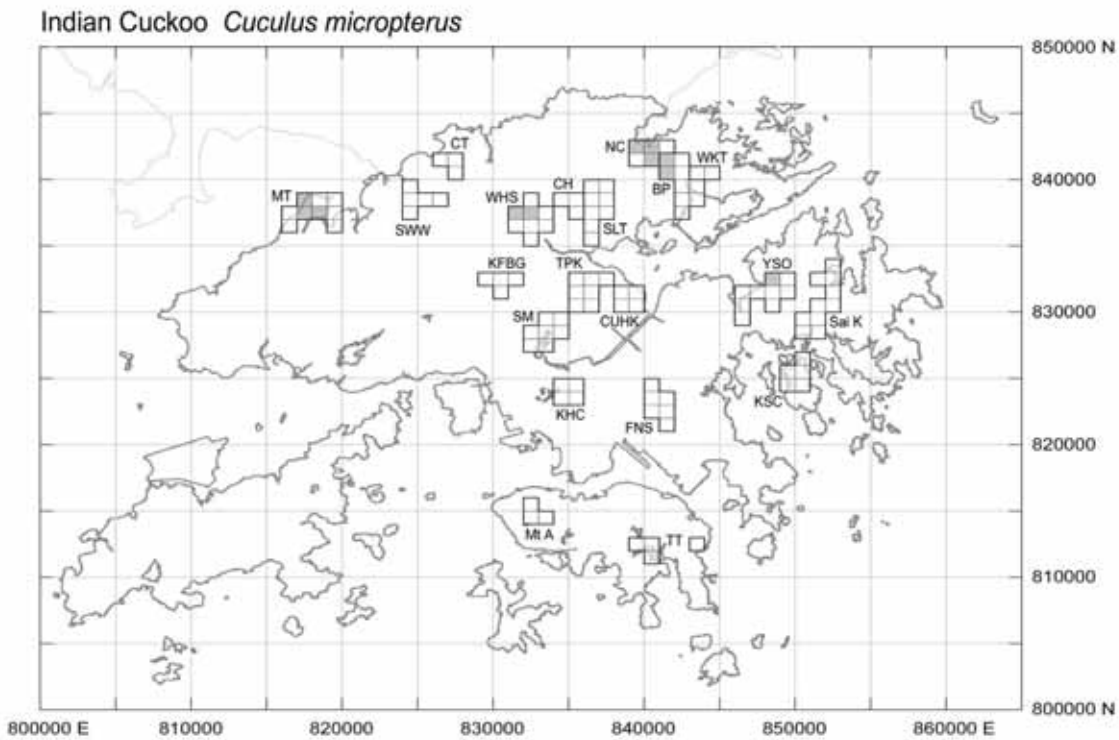


**Map 5. Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx nisicolor* 棕腹杜鵑**  
Detected in 1 square.

**204A Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* 四聲杜鵑**

Only 13 detections were made from 11 squares at five sites (see Map 6), all involving vocalizing individuals between 13 April and 15 June, which are typical dates for the

species. Given that a number of traditional sites were covered in the survey, the total recorded is lower than might be expected for a cuckoo known to sing at night and described as locally common in Carey *et al.* (2001). However, since larger numbers were detected on casual day-time visits to two sites (Mong Tseng and Nam Chung) than were found there at night during the survey, the low total may simply reflect that this species is less vocal at night than *Hierococyx* cuckoos.



**Map 6.** Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* 四聲杜鵑  
Detected in 11 squares.

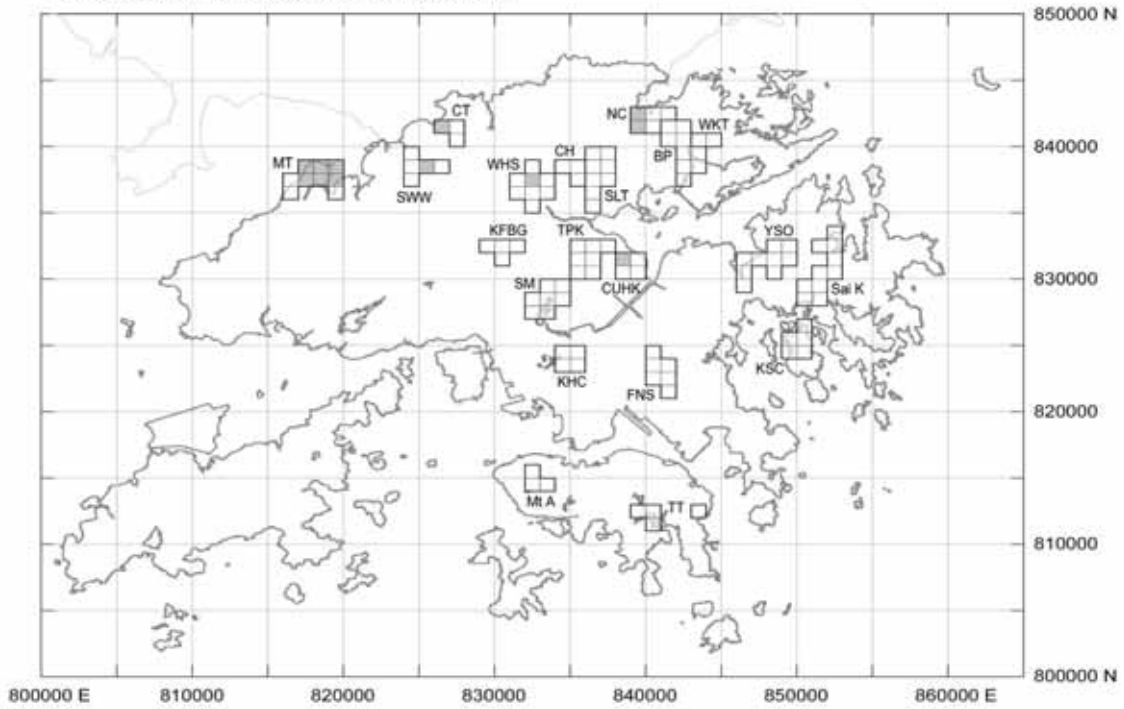
**207A** Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus* 八聲杜鵑

A total of 17 detections were made from 12 lowland squares at five sites (see Map 7), all involving vocalizing individuals between 21 March and 18 May. Mong Tseng was the best site and accounted for almost half all records.

**208A** Common Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea* 噪鵲

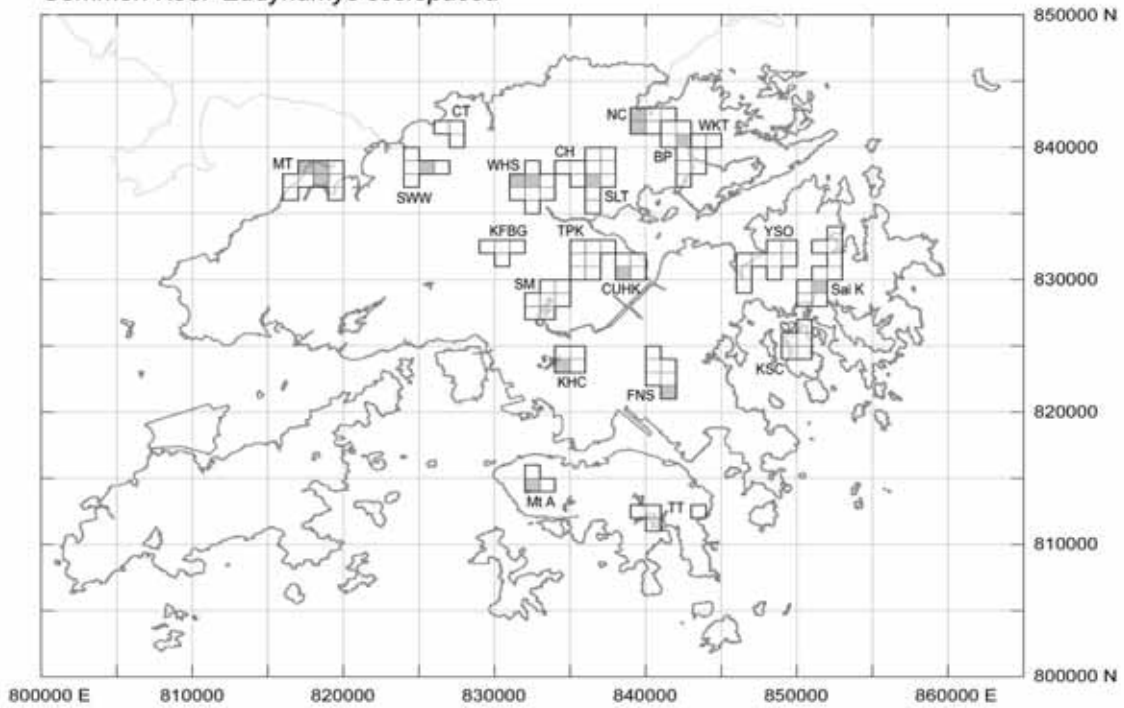
This species was recorded as singing at night and described as abundant in summer, though not often found far from human habitation (Carey *et al.*, 2001). Since most of the sites covered during the survey are remote from human habitation, it is not surprising that only 22 detections were made. These involved vocalizing individuals from 15 squares at 11 sites (see Map 8) on dates between 2 March and 21 June.

Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus*



Map 7. Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus* 八聲杜鵑  
Detected in 11 squares.

Common Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea*

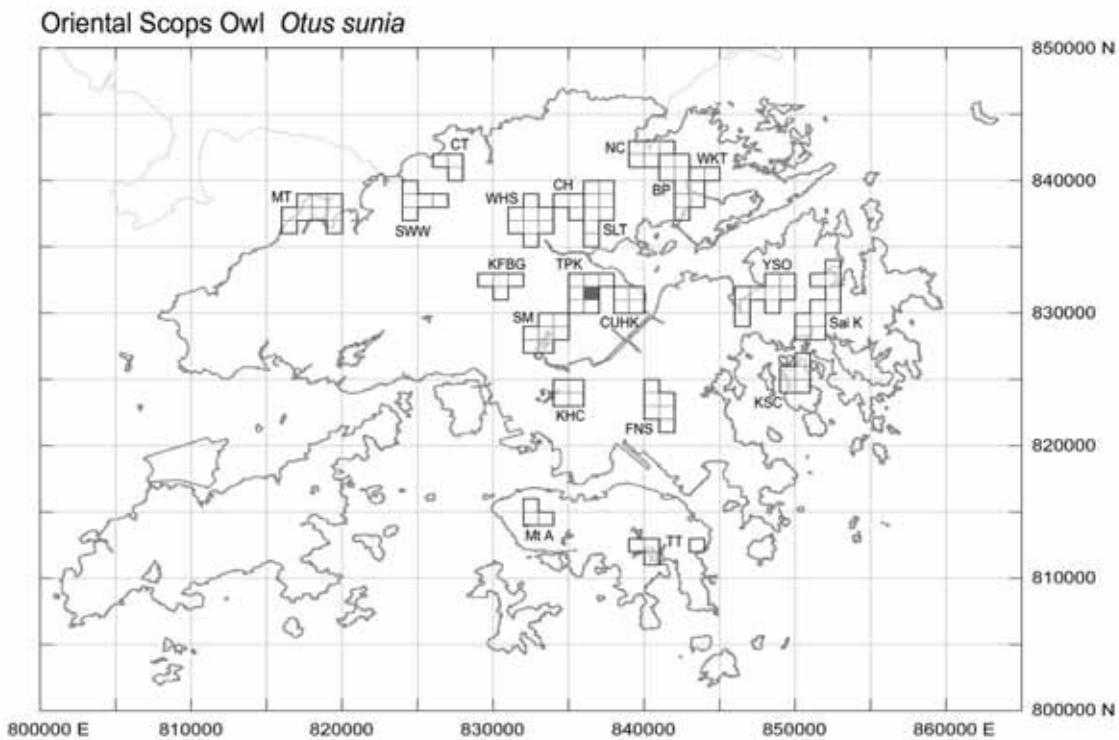


Map 8. Common Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea* 噪鵲  
Detected in 15 squares.

## 212A Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia* 紅角鴞

One singing in forest at 200 m asl at Tai Po Kau on 19 April, 17 May and 13 June 2000 was the only individual detected during the survey and represents the first ever summer record in Hong Kong. The song was a vigorous, rhythmic 3-note *Toit ta-toit!* clearly audible at a distance of about 500m and uttered for long periods at c 35 phrases per minute. A sound-recording taken on 20 April matches that described in König *et al.* (1999) for the taxon *O. s. malayanus*, which occurs in southern China, though the assignment of this individual to subspecies is still under consideration by the HKBWS Records Committee.

Carey *et al.* (2001) listed ten previous records of single birds on passage, all found in shrubland on dates between 11 October and 18 December, apart from one on 11 April (See Map 9). Measurements of four individuals which had been trapped matched those of the taxon *O. s. stictonotus*, which breeds in northern China and winters to southeastern coastal provinces.



Map 9. Oriental Scops Owl *Otus sunia* 紅角鴞  
Detected in 1 square.

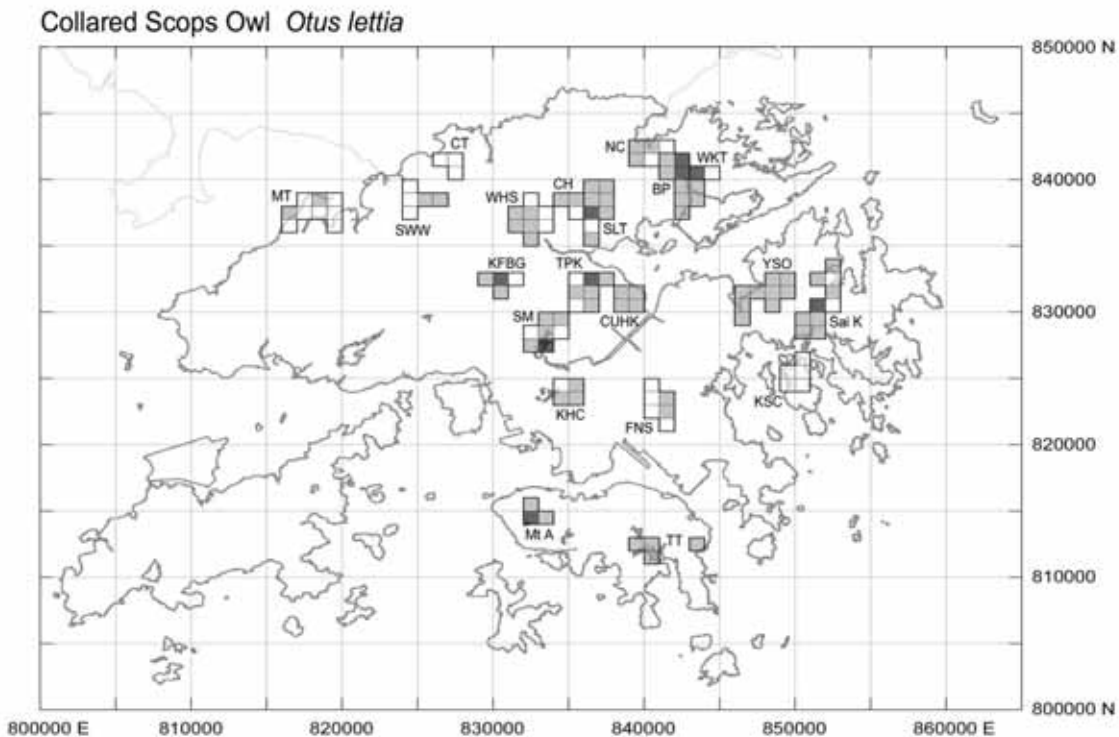
## 213A Collared Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena* 領角鴞

Recorded in all months, this was by far the commonest nightbird of the survey with 553 detections (43% of the nightbird total and more than the combined total of the three next most common species) and also the most widespread species, with records from 77 squares at 18 sites (see Map 10).

Though forest was previously thought to be the preferred habitat of this owl in Hong Kong, shrubland accounted for the highest number of detections and peak densities during the survey. The highest counts of the survey and the highest on record were 11

at Bride's Pool Road on 17 April 2001 and ten there on 14 June and 6 February, whilst up to eight were logged throughout the year on visits to the Sha Lo Tung-Hok Tau area and Yung Shue O. These three sites, all characterized by the presence of permanent streams and rich, mixed shrubland, accounted for almost 40% of the total. Peak densities of five birds in a single 1km square were found at KFBG in March 2000, Sha Lo Tung in November and Mt. Austin in March 2001. Squares with peak densities of 4-5 birds are highlighted on the map. Good numbers were also detected in forest, though the combined number of detections at the two forest sites, Tai Po Kau and Shing Mun, (75) was fewer than the number detected at the single best shrubland site, Bride's Pool (86). The highest altitude at which this owl was recorded was 500 m at Mt. Austin.

The pattern of monthly records both overall and at individual sites clearly indicates that this is a resident species. Numbers of birds detected were highest during February-June, which broadly coincides with the known nesting period in Hong Kong, then dropped sharply in July and August and remained relatively low in other months, with the exception of September and October when a sudden, rather curious increase is evident. A possible explanation of this is that young birds are dispersing at this time, stimulating adults whose territories are invaded to call more frequently.



**Map 10. Collared Scops Owl *Otus lettia* 領角鴞**

Detected in 77 squares.

Squares in which peak densities of 4-5 birds were found in a single visit are highlighted in black.

All but ten of the 553 birds logged in the survey were detected through their calls, which were audible in very calm conditions from as far away as 500 metres. However, on nights of wind or rain birds either tended to become silent or their calls simply became inaudible. This was shown on visits to Bride's Pool Road on three nights during 7-17 April 2001: none were heard in steady drizzle on 7<sup>th</sup>, just two on a windy night on 10<sup>th</sup>, but as many as 11 on a calm night on 17<sup>th</sup>. Apart from an exceptional record of one calling on a sunny afternoon in January at Nam Chung, calling in most

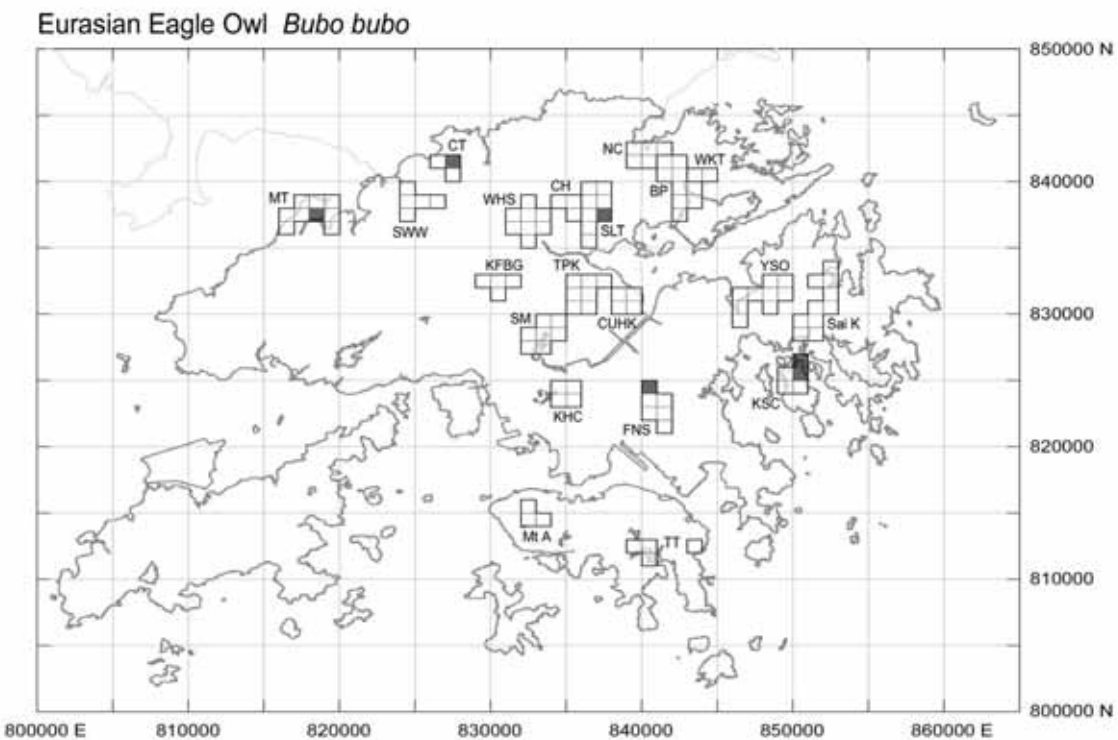


months commenced around dusk and could still be heard two hours later when the visit ended. However, in November and December it was noticed that birds tended to be vocal for only a short period after dusk.

**214A Eurasian Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo* 鵞鴞**

This is listed as a species of Regional Concern in Fellowes *et al.* (2002).

Single birds were detected on six dates at five sites, an unsurprising tally for a species described as infrequently reported but fairly widespread (Carey *et al.*, 2001). Individuals were found at two traditional sites, Chau Tau and Mong Tseng, and there were first records at Sha Lo Tung in May 2000, Kau Sai Chau in August and October 2000 and Fei Ngo Shan (550 m asl) in February 2001 (see Map 11). Given the presence of large areas of suitable habitat in the form of boulder-strewn hillsides at Sha Lo Tung and Fei Ngo Shan, records from these sites were not unexpected. The records from Kau Sai Chau, however, are the first from a golf course in Hong Kong. Rodents are scarce at this site, and it is possible that the owl was attracted by the presence of Savanna Nightjars and Black-crowned Night Herons, which were numerous in early evening at this time (T. Dahmer pers. comm.).



**Map 11. Eurasian Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo* 鵞鴞**  
Detected in 6 squares.

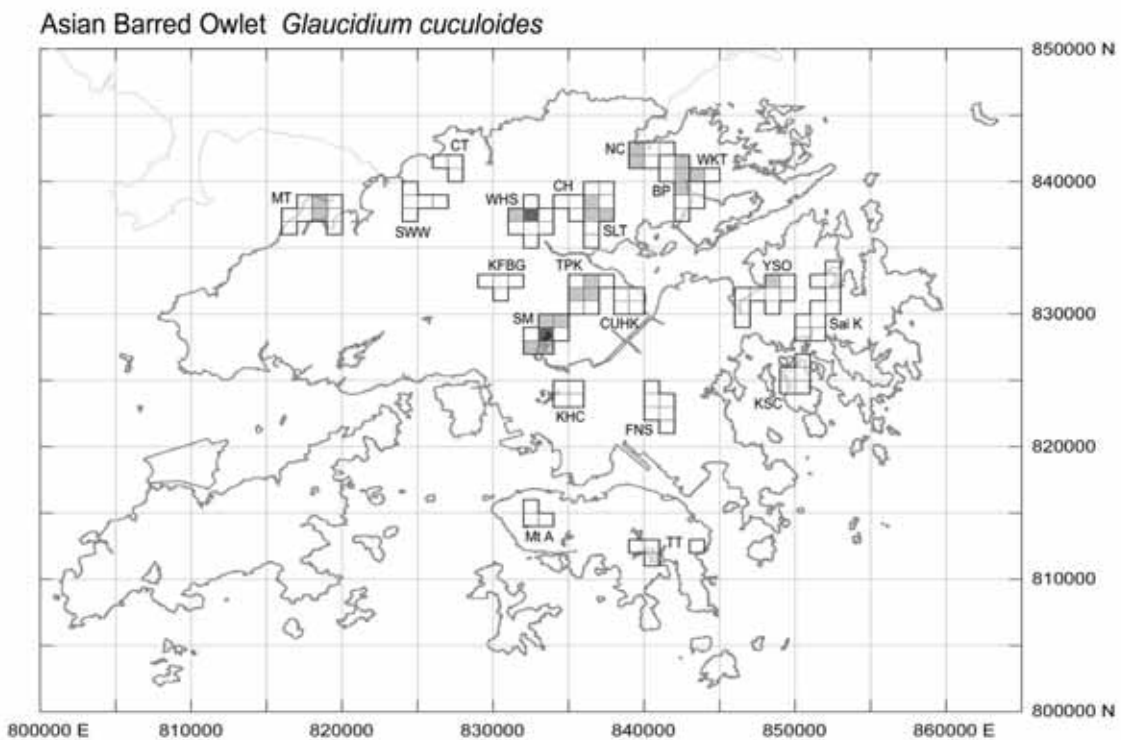
Only one of the six birds logged was heard (Mong Tseng on 14 January). The others were seen. It is puzzling that this owl is so infrequently heard in Hong Kong. Kolthoff (1932) reported that in the hills of southern Jiangsu it could be heard at all seasons and nearly every night.



**216A Asian Barred Owllet *Glaucidium cuculoides* 斑頭鸺鹠**

Having inexplicably avoided detection in April and June 2000, this was nevertheless recorded in all other months of the survey, confirming its status as a resident species. With a total of 75 detections, it proved to be the second most numerous owl of the survey, though much less common than Collared Scops Owl, and was found in 22 squares at nine sites (see Map 12), four of which (Shing Mun, Tai Po Kau, Wo Hop Shek and Sha Lo Tung) accounted for 76% detections.

Though individuals were found in a variety of wooded habitats below 400 m asl, including forest, shrubland, *fung shui* woodland and parkland, the two forest sites accounted for peak counts, peak densities and almost 47% detections. Counts of six at Shing Mun on 11 May 2001 and three at Tai Po Kau on 9 September are the highest on record. The count at Shing Mun included four in a single square in which the forest is enriched by an ancient and diverse *fung shui* wood (42 I). This square and another in parkland at Wo Hop Shek (19 M) which accounted for 11 detections during the survey are highlighted on the map.



**Map 12. Asian Barred Owllet *Glaucidium cuculoides* 斑頭鸺鹠**

Detected in 22 squares.

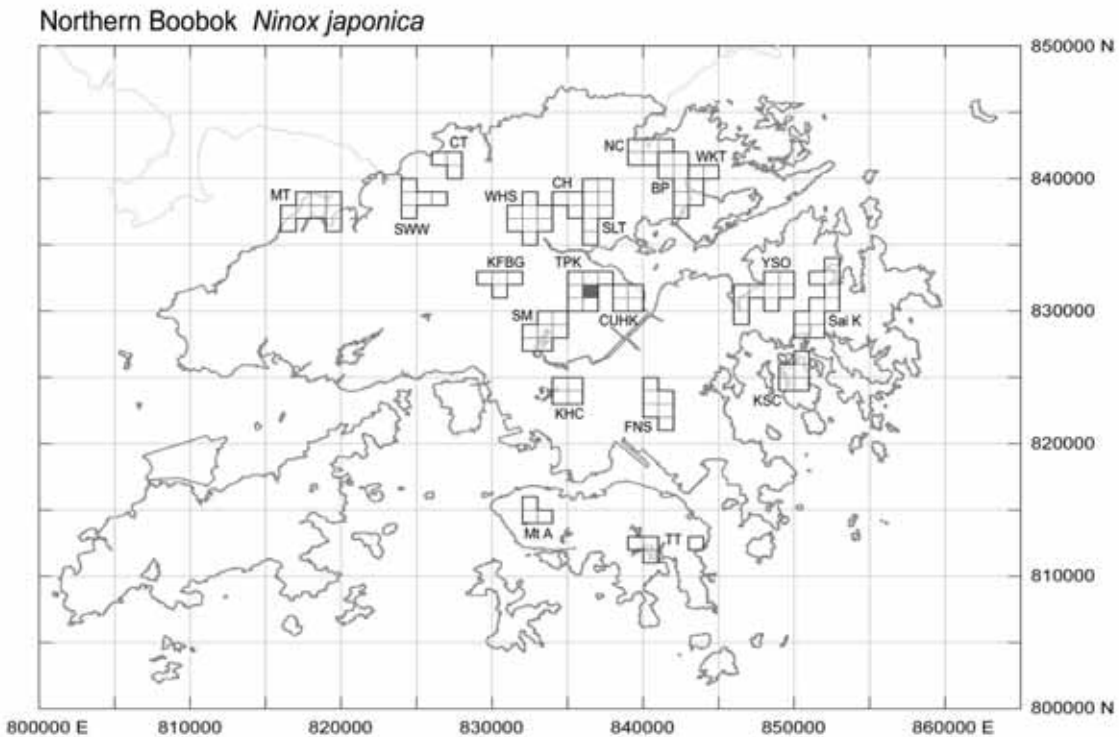
The square at Shing Mun Reservoir in which a peak density of 4 birds was found in a single visit is highlighted in black. Also highlighted is a square at Wo Hop Shek which accounted for 11 detections.

Further to the notes on breeding given in Carey *et al.* (2001), this species has been found nesting in Hong Kong in a disused kitchen in a village house (Holmes, 2002b) and breeding successfully in nest-boxes (Lock and Hui, 2003).

## 217A Northern Boobok *Ninox japonica* 鷹鴞

[Treated as a full species following King (2002b)].

One seen in forest at 300 m asl at Tai Po Kau (square 32 Q, see Map 13) on 24 October 2000 was the sole record of the survey and only the third autumn record of this scarce passage migrant.



Map 13. Northern Boobok *Ninox japonica* 鷹鴞  
Detected in 1 square.

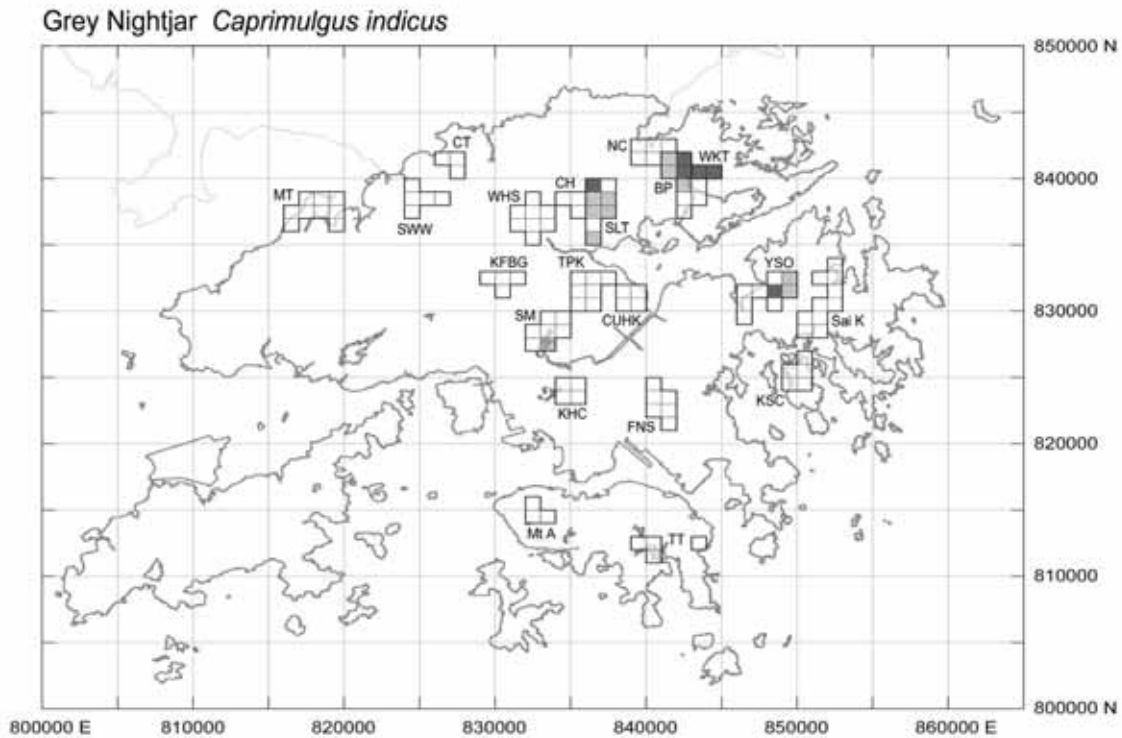
## 219A Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* 普通夜鷹

This is listed as a species of Local Concern in Fellowes *et al.* (2002).

The survey found this nightjar to occur mainly as a localized summer visitor in small numbers, possibly not more than 6-10 pairs in all, with nearly all records at four sites in the eastern NT (Bride's Pool Road, Sha Lo Tung-Hok Tau, Wu Kau Tang and Yung Shue O, see Map 14). These sites are all characterised by the presence of permanent, unpolluted streams and hillsides of mixed shrubland up to 300 m asl. Previously, Yung Shue O was the only site for which recent summer records were known (Carey *et al.* 2001).

Except for one at Sha Lo Tung on 22 October 2000 (a typical locality and date for an autumn migrant), all individuals were detected between 18 February and 22 June (see chart). Up to three were found at Bride's Pool Road, the Sha Lo Tung-Hok Tau area and Yung Shue O between March and June, and five, the highest count of the survey and the highest on record, were at Wu Kau Tang on 8 May 2001. One singing at the latter site on 18 February 2001 is the earliest ever record. The winter of 2000-01 was

exceptionally mild, and it is possible that this individual had over-wintered. Elsewhere, one was at Shing Mun on 5 April 2001. With regard to peak density, three were detected in single 1 km squares at Wu Kau Tang (11 Y) and at Bride's Pool Road (11 R).



**Map 14. Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* 普通夜鷹**

Detected in 17 squares.

Squares in which peak densities of 2-3 birds were found in a single visit are highlighted in black.

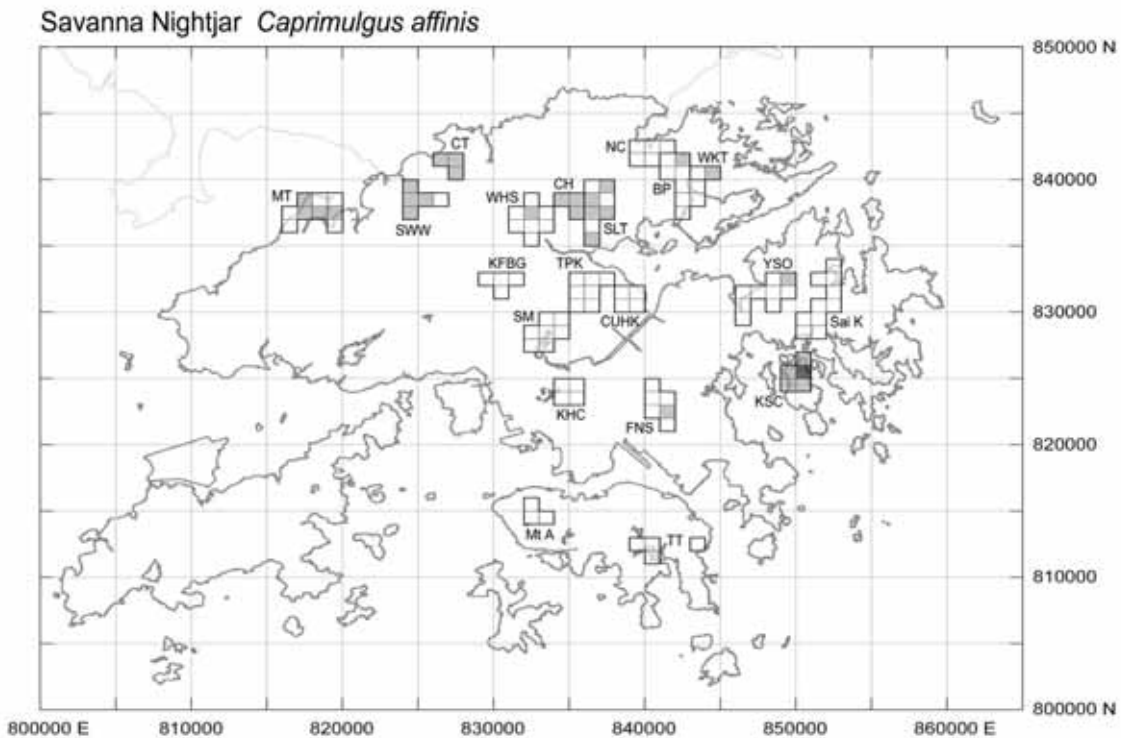
All individuals at the four main sites were singing and thought to be on territory. Singing birds were found to be audible at distances of up to 400 or 500 m in very calm conditions, but only at much closer distances on windy or rainy nights. A tree-stump about 8 m tall in a stand of trees bordering open shrubland at Bride's Pool Road was regularly used as a song-perch during March-May 2001.

#### **220A Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis* 林夜鷹**

This was the second most numerous and fourth most widespread nightbird of the survey. Vocalizing birds were only noted during January-June, and all records during July-December were of birds seen (See Map 15).

A remarkable 76% of the total were logged at a public golf course at the low northern end of Kau Sai Chau island, where birds were frequently observed resting on concrete paths and occasionally also on the fairways and greens. The area surveyed was unlit at night and contained large open areas of short grass bordered by low shrubs. Kau Sai Chau is the only golf course in Hong Kong at which this species has been recorded. There are no records from Fanling Golf Course which received regular coverage both by day and after dusk during the mid 1990s (V. B. Picken pers. comm.). It may be significant that the latter is criss-crossed by tall stands of trees.

Compared to counts of up to six mentioned in Carey *et al.* (2001), numbers detected at Kau Sai Chau were unprecedented, the peak count being 22 on 8 October 2000, including 21 in a single 1 km square. This was both the largest single site count and the highest density detected for any species during the survey. Though surveys could not be carried out there in May and July 2000, results in other months, including 21 on 25 September and 19 on 9 February, show a marked increase occurring in autumn and winter above a spring and summer base. In view of the numbers concerned, Kau Sai Chau appears to be a locally important wintering site (in addition to attracting a summering population).



**Map 15. Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis* 林夜鷹**  
 Detected in 29 squares.  
 The square in which the peak density of 21 birds was found in a single visit is highlighted in black.

All other detections were from grassland or open-canopy shrubland up to 300 m asl. Apart from singles at Cloudy Hill in October and Fei Ngo Shan in November, all occurred during the period February-July and mainly concerned singing birds, peak counts being six at Mong Tseng in March and four at Chau Tau also in March. The latter site, which lies in the poorly-vegetated Border Hills and was formerly regarded as the stronghold of this species, accounted for 10% of the species total, more than any other site except Kau Sai Chau.

### Discussion of results

The nightbird survey confirmed that a high degree of nightbird diversity exists in Hong Kong and provided baseline data on the distribution, abundance, seasonality and habitat preferences of 14 species (one crane, six cuckoos, five owls and two nightjars). Calm nights were found to be best for detecting individuals of a number of species.

At species level, the main findings of the survey were the abundance in widespread areas of Slaty-legged Crake in spring, the much greater tendency of Large Hawk Cuckoo and Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo to be vocal at night than other cuckoos, the habitat preference for shrubland rather than forest shown by Large Hawk Cuckoo and Collared Scops Owl, the confirmation that Collared Scops Owl is the most common and widespread owl, the first summer records of Oriental Scops Owl, the third autumn record of Northern Boobook, the new sites occupied in the breeding season by Grey Nightjars, and the occurrence of large numbers of Savanna Nightjars in autumn and winter at Kau Sai Chau.

Not found, however, were three owl species listed in Carey *et al.* (2001). Whilst neither Easter Grass Owl nor Short-eared Owl were found, this was unsurprising since both are rare non-breeding visitors to Hong Kong. Of concern is the absence of records of Brown Fish Owl despite coverage in the survey including Yung Shue O and other localities in the Sai Kung area where there were multiple sightings and a breeding record in the 1990s. Carey *et al.* (2001) noted the feeding areas of this species as undisturbed, unpolluted lowland streams and tidal creeks. Such areas are increasingly being destroyed by development and canalisation or being disturbed by fishermen. Brown Fish Owl is listed as of Regional Concern in Fellowes *et al.* (2002).

**Table 5. Nightbird survey 2000-01: nightbird detections by species and site (see Table 2 for a list of site names and acronyms)**

	BP	CT	CH	CU	FNS	KF	KHC	KSC	MT	MVA	NC	SaiK	SLT	SMR	TPK	TT	WHS	WKT	YSO
Slaty-legged Crake	41	2	4	1	1	1	7		1	4	5	11	16	3	12	1	21	5	10
Chestnut-winged Cuckoo				1	2							1	3	2		2	7	2	1
Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo	1																		
Large Hawk Cuckoo	18	3	2	8	6	8	4		20	2	14	12	16	12	10	1	14	4	10
Plaintive Cuckoo		3		2					8		3						1		
Indian Cuckoo	2								4		4						2		1
Common Koel	2	1		1	1		1		5	1	5	1	1				3		
Collared Scops Owl	86	2	11	11	7	37	14		13	25	33	45	70	32	43	19	35	16	55
Oriental Scops Owl															3				
Eurasian Eagle Owl		1			1			2	1				1						
Asian Barred Owlet	4								3		6		10	23	12		12	4	1
Northern Boobook															1				
Grey Nightjar	12										2		14	1				10	8
Savanna Nightjar	2	22	4		1			161	10				9				1	2	1
All species	168	34	21	24	19	46	26	163	65	32	72	70	140	73	81	23	96	43	87

As Table 5 indicates, the number of nightbirds detected at individual sites during the survey varied between 26 (Kowloon Hills Catchment) and 168 (Bride's Pool Road). The latter together with Kau Sai Chau (163) and Sha Lo Tung (140) were the only sites with more than 100 detections. Species diversity at individual sites varied between 2 (Kau Sai Chau) and 9 species (Bride's Pool Road, the Sha Lo Tung-Hok Tau area and Wo Hop Shek). Thus, strangely, Kau Sai Chau had the second highest nightbird total and the lowest species diversity. By far the best sites in terms of total numbers and species diversity were Bride's Pool Road and the Sha Lo Tung-Hok Tau area. Both are characterised by the presence of permanent streams, *fung shui* woods and extensive areas of both open and closed-canopy shrubland, some of which is very mature.



Whereas nearly all of the area surveyed at Bride's Pool is protected within the Country Park system, large areas at Sha Lo Tung are outside the Country Park system and unprotected. Similarly, large areas of Wu Kau Tang, where peak numbers of Grey Nightjars were logged, are also unprotected and threatened by development.

At the two forest sites, only four of the eight species recorded were common to both sites. At Tai Po Kau, where native trees predominate, the only Oriental Scops Owl of the survey was logged and numbers of Collared Scops Owls were higher than at Shing Mun, where in addition to mixed native forest and an ancient *fung shui* wood favoured by Asian Barred Owlets, there are extensive stands of exotic trees. A Grey Nightjar there in April was the only record away from shrubland.

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## 2000-2001

### 香港夜行鳥類調查

在編寫《香港鳥類名錄》(收錄近至1998年的鳥類紀錄)的時候，我們發現大家對本港貓頭鷹和夜鷹所知的實在不多。和已經做過有系統調查的水鳥和晝行雀鳥相比，貓頭鷹和夜鷹的現況只可以從偶然的紀錄中猜度出來。爲了提高這方面的認識，我們於1999年春在新界東部數處地點做了一些初步調查，當時白喉斑秧雞在夜間獨特的叫聲初爲人知，因此也成爲了調查的目標。調查的結果顯示研究甚有可爲，也引起了一些會員的興趣，同時一些關於夜鷹 (Chalmers 1998, Hale 2002) 和 *Otus* 和 *Glaucidium* 小鴞 (Holmes 2002 a,b) 的文章正在草擬或已經發表。在這個背景之下，我們在2000年3月正式開始進行香港夜行鳥類調查，目的是要收集香港夜行雀鳥的分佈、季節變化、數目和對生環的偏好等基線數據。調查原計劃歷時12個月，至2001年2月終止，但是最後延長了3個月到2001年5月，一方面是由於2000年4月的調查被反常的大雨影響，一方面是要多包含一個春季。主要的目標鳥種如下：

表1 香港夜行鳥類調查2000-2001 的主要目標鳥種

白喉斑秧雞	<i>Rallina eurizonoides</i>
紅翅鳳頭鵯	<i>Clamator coromandus</i>
鷹鵯	<i>Hierococcyx sparverioides</i>
棕腹杜鵑	<i>Hierococcyx nasicolor</i>
四聲杜鵑	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>
八聲杜鵑	<i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>
噪鵯	<i>Eudynamis scolopacea</i>
草鴞	<i>Tyto longimembris</i>
紅角鴞	<i>Otus sunia</i>
領角鴞	<i>Otus lettia</i>
雕鴞	<i>Bubo bubo</i>
褐漁鴞	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>
斑頭鵯鵡	<i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>
鷹鴞	<i>Ninox japonica</i>
短耳鴞	<i>Asio flammeus</i>
普通夜鷹	<i>Caprimulgus indicus</i>
林夜鷹	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>

由於香港的寄生性杜鵑在晚上也出來活動和鳴叫，因此也包括在查之內。雖然夜鷺 *Nycticorax nycticorax* 也是夜行，但是由於已經通過水鳥調查了解現況，故沒有包括在這次調查之內。

#### 調查方法

我們預期大部分的夜行雀鳥都要憑叫聲找出來，因此給每位調查員一盒錄音帶，帶中收錄了13種目標鳥種和兩種蛙的叫聲，兩種蛙是斑腿泛樹蛙 *Polypedates megacephalus* 和小棘蛙 *Rana exilispinosa*，因爲牠們的叫聲可能會分別和斑頭鵯鵡和短耳鴞的叫聲混淆。由於當初以爲草鴞、紅角鴞、鷹鴞和短耳鴞極不可能會在香港鳴叫，因此錄音帶沒

有收錄牠們的叫聲（不過事實證明紅角鴉真的會叫！）。錄音帶只供參考，我們給調查員明確的指示，不要在野外播放錄音或發出可能令雀鳥起反應的聲音。

參與調查的會員分為幾個小組，每組只負責一個地點。在調查期間，每組每月要到場做一次調查。小組要選定一條可以得到較佳結果的路徑，每次調查需重覆穿越。調查在傍晚時分開始，歷時最多兩小時。發現鳥時要在地圖上標出地點並填寫紀錄表格。

調查用的地圖劃為1公里丁方小格，與1992-1996香港繁殖鳥類調查和2001-2004香港冬季鳥類調查所用的相同。雖然對每個調查地點所用的時間相同，但是由於各地點面積有別，投放到區內個別1公里方格的調查強度便不一樣了。雖然如此，調查完成後共有115個1公里方格有發現（最少找到1隻目標雀鳥），而這些資料有助評估個別鳥種的分佈密度和生境偏好。

表2夜行鳥類調查覆蓋的地點

調查地點	主要生境	1公里方格	聽聲條件
新娘潭路	混生灌叢	9	良好
洲頭及石湖圍	草地	8	差（有貨車，近幹線公路）
九龍坑山	灌叢	3	良好
中文大學校園	公園、灌叢	4	中等（有汽車噪音）
飛鵝山	草地、灌叢	6	差（市區邊沿）
嘉道理農場暨植物園	灌叢、公園	4	良好
九龍山引水道	灌叢	4	良好
滘西洲	開放草坪	5	良好
輞井	草地、灌叢	9	良好
太平山	灌叢、公園	3	中等（市區邊沿）
南涌－鹿頸	灌叢、草地	5	良好（有蛙鳴時除外！）
西貢	灌叢	10	良好
沙螺洞－鶴藪	灌叢、草地	8	良好
城門水塘	樹林	7	良好（有飛機經過的晚上除外）
大埔滘	樹林	7	良好（有飛機經過的晚上除外）
大潭	灌叢	4	良好
和合石	公園、灌叢	8	中等（有汽車噪音）
烏蛟騰	灌叢、草地	2	良好
榕樹澳	灌叢、草地	9	良好

## 結果

這次調查共錄得夜行鳥類14種共1,279鳥次（見表4）。一如所料，全部都是聽到而並非目睹。其中領角鴉有553鳥次（佔總數43%），遠多於其他鳥種，是最常錄得的夜行鳥類。其次是林夜鷹、鷹鵝和白喉斑秧雞。以上4種鳥加起來佔總數的84%。再來是斑頭鵯和普普通夜鷹，佔總數差不多10%。最後是餘下的其他5種杜鵑和4種貓頭鷹。分佈最廣的鳥種（在19個地點中有18處錄得）是領角鴉（在77個1公里方格內錄得），鷹鵝（69方格）以及白喉斑秧雞（49方格）。有3個目標鳥種－草鴉、褐漁鴉、頭耳鴉－完全沒有在調查中發現。

鳥種	錄得鳥次（總數的百分比）	出現地點（最多19）	出現方格（最多117）	1公里方格內最高密度
白喉斑秧雞	146 (11.4%)	18	49	7
紅翅鳳頭鵙	21 (1.6%)	9	17	2
鷹鵙	164 (12.8%)	18	69	3
棕腹杜鵑	1 (0.1%)	1	1	1
四聲杜鵑	13 (1.0%)	5	11	1
八聲杜鵑	17 (1.3%)	5	12	1
噪鵙	22 (1.7%)	11	15	2
紅角鴉	3 (0.2%)	1	1	1
領角鴉	553 (43.2%)	18	77	5
雕鴉	6 (0.5%)	5	6	1
斑頭鸚鵡	75 (5.9%)	9	22	4
Northern Boobook	1 (0.1%)	1	1	1
普通夜鷹	44 (3.4%)	5	17	3
林夜鷹	213 (16.6%)	10	29	21
總計	1,279 (100%)			

如表5所示，3月至6月間的紀錄最佳，高峰值分別是2001年4月的170鳥次和2000年5月的12個鳥種。其他月份的結果相對較少，明顯的低谷期為7月（只有27鳥次）以及9、11及1月（只有3個鳥種）。領角鴉、斑頭鸚鵡和林夜鷹全年都有紀錄，而白喉斑秧雞、各種杜鵑和普通夜鷹則主要在3月到6月間錄得，顯示有季節性。調查期間第2個春季（2001年3月到5月）錄得總數比第1個春季（2000年3月到5月）要多，這是因為第2個春季天氣比較平靜無風、調查比較全面（第2個春季有54次，第1個春季只有46次），以及調查小組的能力和效率都有了進步。

## 討論

調查結果肯定本港夜行鳥類的密度甚高，為14種鳥類（1種秧雞、6種杜鵑、5種鴉和2種夜鷹）的分佈、數目、季節性和生境偏好提供了基線數據。無風的晚上是尋找某些鳥種的最佳時機。

以鳥種來說，主要的結果有：

- 白喉斑秧雞春季數目頗多，分佈範圍亦廣
- 鷹鵙和棕腹杜鵑在晚上叫得比其他杜鵑多
- 鷹鵙和領角鴉喜歡灌叢多於樹林
- 確定領角鴉是本港最常見和分佈最廣的貓頭鷹
- 首次在夏天發現紅角鴉，有多個紀錄
- 錄得第三個鷹鵙的秋季紀錄
- 繁殖季節時有普通夜鷹的地點
- 秋冬兩季滯西洲有大量林夜鷹

可是調查沒有發現 Carey et al. (2001)文中提到的3種鴉。找不到草鴉和短耳鴉並不出奇，因為牠們並非在本港繁殖，亦相當罕見。但是找不到褐漁鴉卻值得關注，儘管調查範圍已包括榕樹澳和西貢的一些地點，1990年代那裡曾經有多個紀錄，包括一個繁殖紀錄。Carey et al. (2001)指這鳥在未受干擾或污染的低地溪流和潮間小灣間覓食，愈來愈多這些地方被發展和排水溝破壞，又或者被漁民干擾。Fellowes et al. (2002)將褐漁鴉列為區內值得關注的鳥種。

如表6所示，在個別地點找到的夜行鳥類介乎26隻（九龍山引水道）到68隻（新娘潭）之間，調查中錄得超過100鳥次的地點只有新娘潭、滘西洲（163）和沙螺洞（140）3處。各地點的鳥種數目為2（滘西洲）到9種（新娘潭路、沙螺洞－鶴藪一帶、和合石）之間。滘西洲鳥次的數目居第二位，但是鳥種卻最少。新娘潭路和沙螺洞－鶴藪一帶是鳥次最多、鳥種最豐富的地點，兩處都有流水不斷的溪流，風水林和大片（有開放或密閉樹冠的）灌叢，有些樹叢已非常成熟。位於新娘潭的調查地點差不多都是受保護的郊野公園，但是沙螺洞卻有大片地方不受類似保護，錄得普通夜鷹峰值的烏蛟騰亦因為缺乏保護而面臨發展威脅。

在林地中錄得的8種鳥只有4種同在兩地出現。大埔滘有是次調查中唯一的紅角鴉紀錄，領角鴉的數目也比城門多，當地大部份都是原生樹種，而城門則由原生混交林、一個（受斑頭鵲偏愛的）古老風水林和大片的外來種樹林組成。4月在當地錄得一隻普通夜鷹，是唯一一次在灌叢以外找到這鳥的紀錄。

# Identification and Status of Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura* and Swinhoe's Snipe *G. megala* in Hong Kong

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## Introduction

This paper reviews the identification of Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*, and Swinhoe's Snipe *G. megala*, based on experience gained from birds trapped for ringing during the period 1999-2001 in Hong Kong, and on an examination of skins. Data are presented that illustrate the extreme difficulties that observers face when trying to separate Pintail Snipe and Swinhoe's Snipe in the field. Differences between the two are considered to have been overstated in past literature.

This paper is based largely upon Leader & Carey (2003).

## Methods

During the period 1999-2001, 68 Pintail Snipe and 19 Swinhoe's Snipe were trapped. Biometrics from birds trapped in Hong Kong prior to this are included where possible, giving a total sample of 93 Pintail Snipe and 33 Swinhoe's Snipe.

Attempts were made to record calls of individuals of known species, by either taping birds upon release or when flushed into mist nets. Unfortunately, all such attempts proved unsuccessful, and there remains room to expand knowledge in this area.

## Identification

An observer familiar with Common Snipe *G. gallinago* will have little trouble in identifying a Swinhoe's Snipe/Pintail Snipe. In flight, they can be readily separated by the lack of a clear-cut white trailing edge to the secondaries, the uniform underwing, the more rounded wings, the heavier, more compact body and a quite different call. On the ground, Swinhoe's Snipe/Pintail Snipe show a more bulging supercilium, typically darker upperparts (although plumage variation in Common Snipe is often understated in the literature (Leader, 1999), usually a shorter and deeper based bill, and a shorter tail.

## Size and Structure

Many authors have noted differences in size and structure between Pintail Snipe and Swinhoe's Snipe, and have indicated that most birds can be separated on a combination of these features. Overall there has been agreement that Swinhoe's is



larger with longer wings, tail, bill and legs (Hayman *et al.*, 1986), Cramp and Simmons (1983), Wallace (1989), Carey (1993), Carey and Olsson (1995), Robson (2000), Higgins and Davies (1996), and Beaman and Madge (1998).

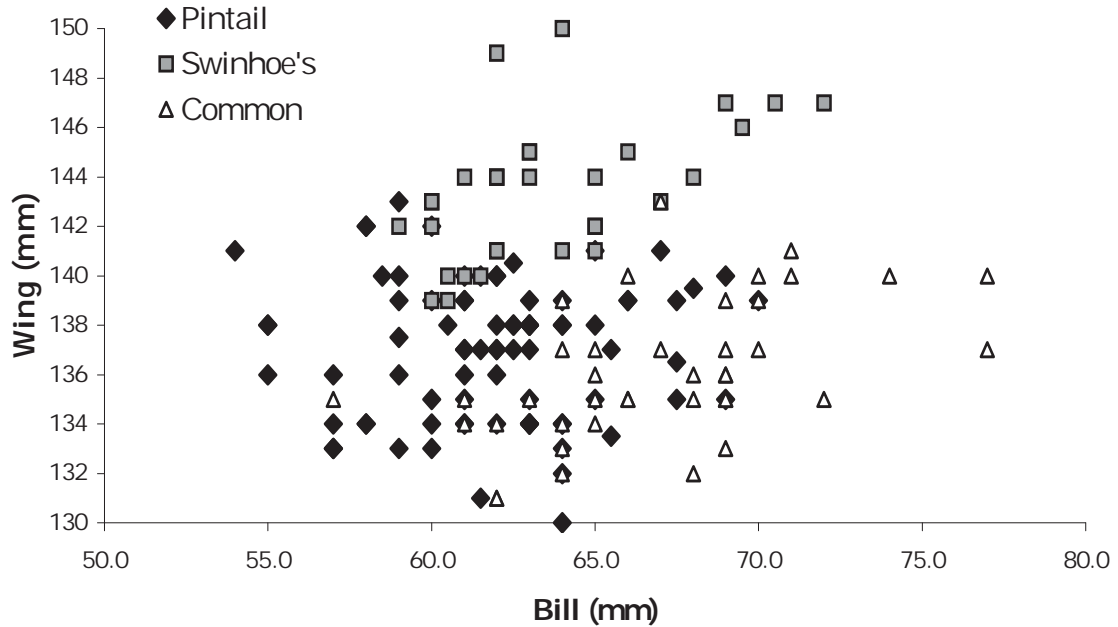
Based upon birds trapped in Hong Kong, Swinhoe's Snipe is on average larger, although the extent of this has been over-stated in the literature; furthermore, size and structure are extremely variable, with extensive overlap between Pintail Snipe and Swinhoe's Snipe on all standard measurements (Table 1).

**Table 1. Summary of biometrics of Common Snipe, Pintail Snipe and Swinhoe's Snipe trapped in Hong Kong (in mm)**

		Wing	Bill	Tail	Weight
<b>Common Snipe</b>	Minimum	131.0	57.0	51.0	71.0
	Maximum	145.0	77.0	62.0	117.0
	Mean	136.4	66.6	58.7	96.4
	n.	48	47	7	44
<b>Pintail Snipe</b>	Minimum	130.0	54.0	43.0	90.0
	Maximum	143.0	70.0	50.0	182.0
	Mean	136.9	62.0	46.0	117.0
	n.	91	85	50	84
<b>Swinhoe's Snipe</b>	Minimum	139.0	59.0	48.0	108.0
	Maximum	150.0	72.0	56.5	181.0
	Mean	143.4	63.6	51.8	140.8
	n.	32	33	22	33

The similarities in biometrics (see also Figure 1), in particular for wing and bill measurements, are such that they do not represent consistent structural differences discernible in the field.

Figure 1. Bill and wing lengths of Common Snipe, Pintail Snipe and Swinhoe's Snipe trapped in Hong Kong.



There is a greater difference in tail length, with Swinhoe's Snipe having on average a 5.8 mm (10%) longer tail. However, in terms of relative structure, this is largely negated by the difference in wing length between the two species, which averages 6.5mm longer on Swinhoe's. This results in a very similar wing/tail ratio for the two species, averaging 2.98 for Pintail Snipe and 2.80 for Swinhoe's Snipe (Table 2 and Figure 2).

In terms of making an assessment of structure, these differences are further confused by the considerable variation in weights of the two species. This is especially evident in the sample of Pintail Snipe, with the lightest bird being 50% of the weight of the heaviest. Furthermore, although on average Swinhoe's Snipe was 23.8 gm heavier than Pintail Snipe, the heaviest Pintail Snipe was 1 gm heavier than the heaviest Swinhoe's Snipe (Table 1 and Figure 3).

Table 2. Wing/tail and wing/bill ratios of Common Snipe, Pintail Snipe and Swinhoe's Snipe trapped in Hong Kong.

		Wing/tail	Wing/bill
Common Snipe	Minimum	2.20	1.78
	Maximum	2.60	2.37
	Mean	2.40	2.06
	n.	7	47
Pintail Snipe	Minimum	2.76	2.00
	Maximum	3.23	2.51
	Mean	2.98	2.21
	n.	84	75
Swinhoe's Snipe	Minimum	2.51	2.04
	Maximum	2.98	2.41
	Mean	2.80	2.27
	n.	22	32

Figure 2. Wing and tail measurements of Pintail Snipe, Swinhoe's Snipe and Common Snipe trapped in Hong Kong.

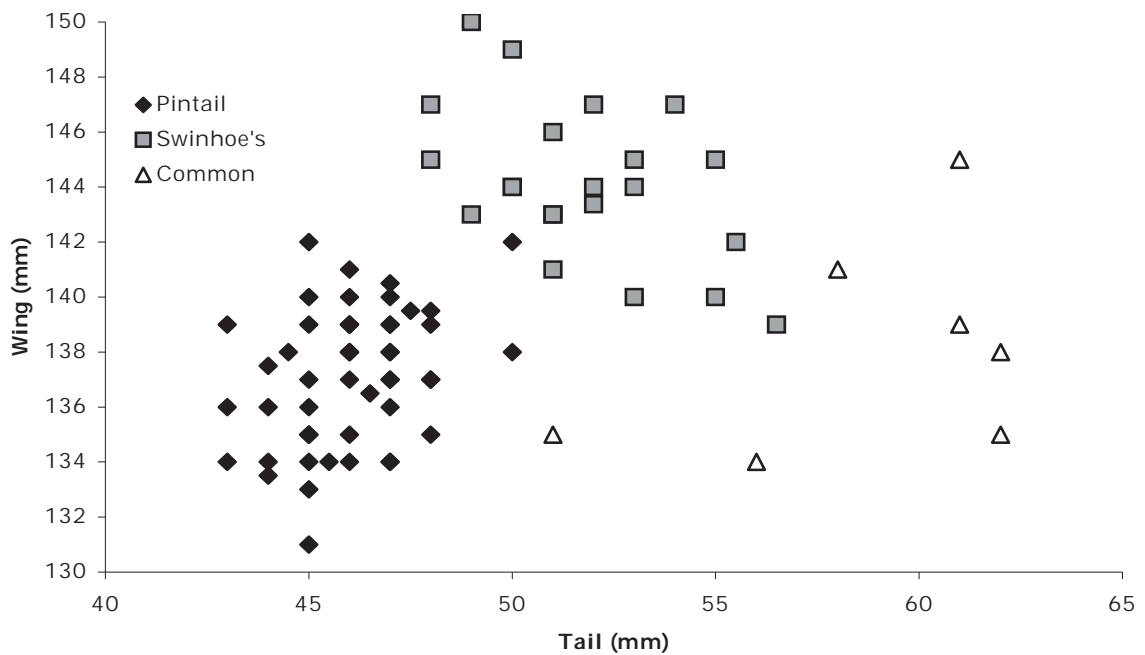
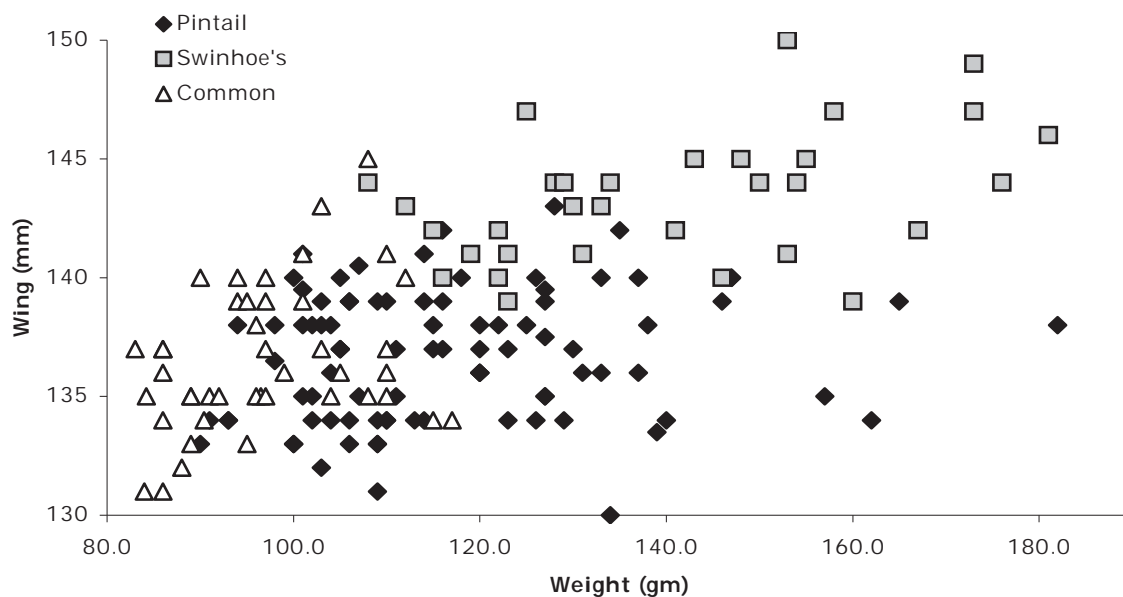


Figure 3. Wing and weight measurements of Pintail Snipe, Swinhoe's Snipe and Common Snipe trapped in Hong Kong



Accordingly, the separation of the two species based on size and structure, even if both are together for direct comparison, is in all practical cases not possible in the field (unless the outer tail feathers are clearly observed - see below).

Primary projection beyond the longest tertial has been considered a useful structural difference. Hayman *et al.* (1986), and Higgins and Davies (1996) stated that it is short in Pintail Snipe, and long in Swinhoe's Snipe. The data from Hong Kong contradict this; Pintail Snipe is particularly variable, perhaps due to the larger sample size, sometimes exhibiting a longer primary projection than Swinhoe's Snipe. About half of all Pintail Snipe and Swinhoe's Snipe exhibit no primary projection.

Pintail Snipe tends to have a more rounded head profile and a steeper forehead, whereas Swinhoe's Snipe tends to exhibit a more shallowly sloping forehead and has a more angular head profile. There is, however, much variation in both. Foot projection beyond the tail tip in flight has been considered an important feature, with Swinhoe's Snipe purportedly lacking the obvious toe extension of Pintail Snipe. Under normal field conditions it is often difficult to determine the extent of foot projection on individual snipe; however, observations of released birds (i.e. birds of known species) do indicate that this may be a useful feature. However, this is based on only a small sample of Swinhoe's Snipe and the validity of this feature is best treated as tentative pending further research.

An exception to the lack of distinctive structural differences concerns the shape of the outer tail feathers. The outer tail feathers of both are distinctly narrow when compared with those of Common Snipe. In Pintail Snipe the outer eight (sometimes six to nine) pairs of tail feathers are less than 2 mm wide, while on Swinhoe's Snipe the outermost pair are very narrow (2-4 mm wide 20 mm from the tip - Hayman *et al.* 1986), the next 1-4 pairs are all slightly broader, and the rest increasingly so towards the central pair. Pintail Snipe has 24-28 (typically 26) tail feathers whereas Swinhoe's Snipe has 18-26 (typically 20), and Common Snipe 12-18 (typically 14 in nominate

*gallinago* and *faeroeensis* and 16 in *delicata*) (Tuck 1972). However, this is extremely difficult to observe under normal field conditions, and is generally seen only exceptionally.

Swinhoe's Snipe tends to have thicker legs than Pintail Snipe (such that they usually require different ring sizes), and although this is frequently difficult to assess in the field, a bird with much thicker legs than a Common Snipe is probably Swinhoe's. However, as some Swinhoe's Snipe have thinner legs, like those of Pintail Snipe (and require the same ring size), this is a 'one-way character'.

## Plumage variation

The loreal stripe on both species is variable, with complete overlap in shape, colour and definition on both species; those of Swinhoe's Snipe are generally as described for Pintail Snipe in Carey and Olsson (1995) i.e. rather narrow, at times almost disappearing in front of the eye. Carey and Olsson (1995) also state that for Pintail Snipe the median crown stripe sometimes reaches the bill base, but that this hardly ever happens on Swinhoe's Snipe. However, in Hong Kong the median crown stripe reaches the bill base on about 30% of Swinhoe's Snipe and 40% of Pintail Snipe.

There is extensive overlap in the pattern of the upperparts, including the scapulars and tertials, and no consistent differences in the pattern or colour of the underparts. The juvenile-type scapulars of both species can exhibit a paler and broader fringe to the outer web. For Pintail Snipe, almost all juvenile birds exhibit an outer web to the scapulars that is either slightly or clearly paler than the inner web, and only very rarely are they concolorous. About two-thirds of Swinhoe's Snipes have an outer web that is slightly paler than, obviously paler than, or concolorous with the inner web. Thus, a higher percentage of juvenile Swinhoe's Snipe show concolorous fringes to the scapulars than Pintail Snipe. This accords with the findings of Shirihai (1988), although this is not diagnostic, and applies only to juvenile scapulars, and not all birds as implied by that author. The width of the fringes is variable in both species, with no consistent differences, *contra* Shirihai (1988) who considered the fringes to be broader in Swinhoe's Snipe.

The relative broadness of the inner and outer webs on both species varies to similar degrees, being slightly broader on about 50% of birds, much broader on about 25%, and equal on about 25%.

The pattern of the greater coverts as described by Granit *et al.* (1999) for Pintail Snipe is within the variation of both species.

Although Swinhoe's Snipe generally shows more white in the tail than Pintail Snipe, implications in the literature that this is a good field character (Shirihai, 1988) do not take into account the variation in tail pattern of Swinhoe's Snipe. Tail pattern is relatively consistent in Pintail Snipe but not so in Swinhoe's Snipe. Pintail Snipe typically shows white tips and inner webs to the narrow outer tail feathers, and, if present, the pale tips to the central tail feathers are buffish, and only very rarely as whitish as the illustration in Hayman *et al.* (1986). Swinhoe's Snipe regularly has white tips to the outer tail feathers, though these may also be rich buff or pale ginger, a variation that does not appear to be shown by Pintail Snipe. The central tail feathers of Swinhoe's Snipe may also be conspicuously tipped pale, and these tips are often white. Swinhoe's Snipe, however, has more barred or chequered outer tail feathers; such a pattern is only exceptionally shown by Pintail Snipe. Whilst some Swinhoe's Snipe lack

this, and may therefore appear extremely similar to most Pintail Snipe, a bird with white tips to the central tail feathers *and* chequered/banded outer tail feathers is most probably Swinhoe's Snipe. Plates 53-56 illustrate typical tails of the species. (All photographs taken at Long Valley, Hong Kong by Paul J. Leader.)



Plate 53. Swinhoe's Snipe *G. megala* adult  
10 September 2001



Plate 54. Swinhoe's Snipe *G. megala* juvenile  
4 September 2000



Plate 55. Common Snipe *G. megala* juvenile  
4 September 2000



Plate 56. Pintail Snipe *G. stenura* adult  
26 September 2001

There are no differences in underwing pattern or the pattern of the underparts of birds trapped in Hong Kong.

## Vocalizations

Carey (1993) stated that differences existed between the normal flight calls of the two species. Pintail Snipe was stated to have a more slurred, throaty and nasal call that sometimes resembled the *quack* of a duck. The call of Swinhoe's Snipe, however, was described as similar in pitch, though at times rather flat and low. In addition, Swinhoe's Snipe was stated to call noticeably less than Pintail Snipe, and a silent, flushed snipe was said to be most likely to be the former.

Given that identification in the field is impossible in most cases, attempts were made to record the flight vocalisations of known birds, but without success. However, vocalisations of flushed migrant snipe in Hong Kong known to be either one or the other species fall into two distinct types that broadly agree with what was stated in Carey (1993).



The first call-type (tentatively attributed to Pintail Snipe) is higher pitched, more nasal and slightly more urgent; it does, indeed, resemble a duck's *quack*, though startled birds can occasionally give a short, high-pitched call lacking nearly all throatiness and slur. The second call-type (tentatively attributed to Swinhoe's Snipe) is lower pitched and flatter, with a more throaty quality. The second call-type was heard (though not recorded) from a Swinhoe's Snipe released from the hand. The latter call is much less often heard among migrant snipe in Hong Kong, certainly proportionately less than the relative numbers of the two species trapped. If this call is diagnostic of Swinhoe's Snipe, it would indeed appear to be the case that Swinhoe's Snipe calls more reluctantly than Pintail Snipe.

It is believed that these differences in normal flight call may well correspond to specific differences. However, given the difficulties of field identification, more research is needed to be certain of this. It should be stressed that the two calls are sufficiently similar to each other and different from the call of Common Snipe to be confusing to those unfamiliar with the calls of Pintail Snipe or Swinhoe's Snipe, and that some, poorly heard, calls can be confusingly ambiguous, even to experienced ears.

### **Status in Hong Kong**

Carey *et al.* (2001) consider Pintail Snipe to be a common passage migrant, with highest numbers during autumn, and an uncommon winter visitor, while Swinhoe's Snipe is stated to be an uncommon passage migrant, commoner in autumn and rare in winter. The peak counts for Pintail of 100 on 21 September 1996 and 60 on 23 September 1994 are notably higher than the peaks of Swinhoe's, these being 16 on 7 October 1989 and 15 on both 5 October 1992 and 15 September 1995. However, as suggested by Carey *et al.* (2001), the results presented here indicate that numbers of Swinhoe's Snipe may have been underestimated. Indeed, for trapped birds, Pintail Snipe outnumbers Swinhoe's Snipe by a ratio of only 3.5:1. Thus, while the overall pattern as presented in Carey *et al.* (2001) remains valid, caution must be applied to the peak counts of Pintail Snipe (too high) and Swinhoe's Snipe (too low).

### **Conclusions**

Based on birds trapped for ringing in Hong Kong and an examination of skins, it can be stated with confidence that the identification of Pintail Snipe and Swinhoe's Snipe has been oversimplified in the literature, and that most birds are not safely identifiable in the field due to the overlap in size, structure and plumage. Whilst birds showing a combination of features can be considered to be probably one or other of the two species, if the structure of the outer tail feathers is not seen or the bird not trapped, it will generally not be possible to confirm identification. Recording vocalizations of any such bird is recommended, although further research into the variation in the calls of the two species is warranted.

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# 針尾沙錐和大沙錐的分辨和在香港的現況

## 引子

本文討論針尾沙錐和大沙錐的辨認特徵，資料來自1999-2001年間在本港做的環誌工作，以檢視標本所得的結果。資料顯示兩種沙錐在野外不容易區分，而舊有文獻誇大了兩者間的差別。

## 研究方法

1999到2001年間我們共捕得68隻針尾和19隻大沙錐，加上相關的舊生物測量數據，共有93隻針尾和33隻大沙錐的樣本可用。我們亦曾嘗試記錄鳥的叫聲，可惜未能成功。

## 辨認要點

熟悉扇尾沙錐的鳥友很容易便可以認出大／針尾沙錐，後者飛行時次級飛羽沒有白邊，翼底顏色均勻而看來較圓，體型顯得較重較細小，叫聲亦不同。在地上的大／針尾沙錐眉線比較粗，上體顏色一般較深（不過文獻中的描述時常沒有充分反映扇尾沙錐個體間的羽色差異），嘴基較粗大，嘴較短，尾也較短。

## 大小和外形

很多作者都會解釋針尾和大沙錐體形和大小的差別，並指出可以對這些特徵作綜合分析，分辨出大多數的鳥。總結來說，大家都認為大沙錐較大，翼、尾、嘴和腿都較長。從在香港捕得的鳥來看，大沙錐平均較大，不過文獻將差異誇大了，而且體形和大小變化很大，在各項標準尺寸上都有很大重疊，尤其是翼和嘴的長度，因此體型上的差異未能足以讓人在野外區分這兩種鳥。

相比之下，尾長度的差異就比較大，大沙錐的尾平均較針尾沙錐長5.8mm（10%），不過大沙錐的翼同時又平均比針尾沙錐長6.5mm，以致翼和尾的比例相差不大，平均只有2.80和2.98之別。

說到體形，兩種鳥也混淆不清，最輕的針尾沙錐體重只有最重個體的一半，雖然大沙錐平均比針尾沙錐重23.8g，最重的針尾沙錐卻比最重的大沙錐重1g。

因此，就算兩種鳥同時出現供人比較，單憑體形和大小，實在不可能在野外將兩者分辨出來（除非可以清楚見到外側尾羽——見下文）。

有說初級飛羽超出最長三級飛羽的長度有助判別，較短的是針尾沙錐，較長的是大沙錐。在本港測量的結果與此說法不符，在針尾沙錐上的差異尤甚，有些更比大沙錐的還要長，或許這是因為取樣數目較大之故。半數針尾和大沙錐初級飛羽沒有超出三級飛羽。

針尾沙錐頭部較圓，前額比較陡，而大沙錐的前額看來比較平緩，頭的輪廓沒有那麼渾圓，不過兩種都有很大的個體差異。有說飛行時腳超出尾的長度是重要特徵，據稱針尾沙錐腳趾明顯超出尾的端，而大沙錐沒有。在一般情況下，很難在野外看清一隻沙錐的腳超出尾多少。根據放飛已辨出的鳥時觀察所得，這可能是有用的特徵，不過只有數量很少的大沙錐作為依據，因此最好還是暫時存疑，有待進一步研究。

兩種鳥的外側尾羽都顯得比扇尾沙錐的狹窄，針尾沙錐的八對（有時六到九對）外側尾羽寬度都小於2mm；而大沙錐的最外一對尾羽則十分狹窄（離末端20mm處只有2-4mm

寬)，相鄰的一到四對都比較寬，餘下的尾羽寬度漸次向中央增加。針尾沙錐有24-28（通常是26）根尾羽，而大沙錐則有 18-26 根（通常20根），扇尾沙錐有12-18 根（指名亞種*gallinago*和*faeroensis*通常有14根，*delicata*有16根）。不過這個特徵在一般野外環境下極難看清楚。

大沙錐腿比針尾沙錐的要粗一點點（因此通常要用大小不同的環誌），雖然這一點通常很難在野外分辨，如果見到腿比扇尾沙錐粗得多，很可能就是大沙錐。不過，有些大沙錐的腿會比較細，像針尾的一樣（可以同大小相同的環誌），因此這個特徵是「單向」的。

### 羽色上的差異

兩種鳥眼先上的紋外形、顏色和清晰程度都互相重疊，大沙錐和針尾沙錐眼先大致都頗為狹窄，有時差不多在眼前方消失。有說針尾沙錐頭頂中央的紋有時伸延到嘴基，而在大沙錐上甚少出現，不過在香港這特徵卻可以在約 30% 的大沙錐和 40% 的針尾沙錐見到。

上體的花紋也有很大的重疊，這包括肩羽和三級飛羽，下體的花紋和顏色也沒有一致的差異，未成年的針尾沙錐肩羽外側邊緣顏色有時較淡和較寬。差不多所有針尾沙錐未成年鳥肩羽外側比內側稍微或明顯淡色，甚少相同。約三分之二的大沙錐肩羽外側比內側稍微或明顯淡色，又或與內側同色。因此和未成年的針尾沙錐相比，較多未成年大沙錐有內外側同色肩羽羽緣。兩種鳥羽緣的寬度都各有差異，沒有一致的分別。

兩種鳥的內羽片和外羽片的寬度比例亦有類似情況，內稍寬於外的約佔50%，內遠寬於外的約佔 25%，而內外寬度相等的約有25%。

Granit et al. (1999) 對針尾沙錐大覆羽花紋的說法其實在兩種鳥身上都可能出現。

雖然大沙錐尾部白色部份一般比針尾沙錐大，有文獻指這是有用的野外辨認特徵，不過卻沒有考慮到大沙錐尾部花紋的變化。針尾沙錐尾部花紋大致相同，但大沙錐卻不然。針尾沙錐的尾末端白色，較窄的外側尾羽內羽片也是白色；如果中央尾羽末端顏色較淡則會是淡皮黃色，甚少如 Hayman et al. (1986) 圖中所示的那麼白。大沙錐外側尾羽末端大多白色，不過有時會是濃皮黃色或淡薑黃色，似乎是針尾所沒有的。大沙錐中央尾羽末端亦可能明顯淡色，同時多為白色。大沙錐外側尾羽橫紋或格子花較多，在針尾沙錐則甚少出現。雖然有些大沙錐因沒有這些特徵而看和針尾沙錐非常相似，如果見到中央尾羽末端白色，**同時**外側尾羽又有橫紋或格子花的話，則大沙錐的可能性極大。

在本港捕得的兩種鳥翼底和上體花紋沒有分別。

### 鳴聲

Carey (1993) 說兩種鳥飛行時叫聲有分別，謂針尾沙錐叫聲較模糊、喉和鼻音較重，有時像鴨叫；而大沙錐的叫聲音高相若，但有時較平緩而低沉。同時，文中還指大沙錐明顯比針尾沙錐少鳴叫，因此嚇飛時默不作聲的大多是大沙錐。

由於在野外很難辨別兩種鳥，因此我們嘗試錄下已經確認的鳥飛行時的叫聲，不過沒有成功。雖然如此，在香港過境的沙錐（已知鳥種）被嚇飛時叫聲明顯可分為兩種，和 Carey (1993) 的說法大體相符。

第一種（暫時當是針尾沙錐的）音調較高，鼻音較重而較急促，確實似鴨叫，不過被嚇飛的鳥有時會發出一下短促、高音的叫聲，差不多沒有喉音，也並非模糊不清。第二種叫聲（暫時當是大沙錐的）音調較低沉而平緩，喉音較重。我們放飛一隻大沙錐時

也聽到（不過沒有錄下）第二種叫聲。在香港過境的鳥甚少有第二種叫聲，而且肯定少於兩種鳥捕獲的相對比例。如果這叫聲真的是大沙錐獨有，那麼大沙錐就似乎真的不喜歡叫了。

我們相信這些正常飛行時發出的不同叫聲可能確實來自不同鳥種，不過由於在野外很難分辨鳥種，需要更多研究才可以肯定。我們強調，對不熟悉的人來說這兩種叫聲非常相近，和扇尾沙錐明顯不同，而有些未能聽清楚的叫聲就算連老手也難以分辨。

## 在香港的分佈

Carey et al. (2001) 認為針尾沙錐是常見的過境鳥，秋季最多，很少在本港渡冬。又指大沙錐是少見的過境鳥，秋季較多而冬季較少。針尾沙錐高峰值 1996年9月21日有100隻，1994年9月23日有60隻。而大沙錐的高峰值相對較小，1989年10月7日有16隻，1992年10月5日和1995年9月15日各有15隻。可是就如同文中也指出，我們的研究顯示大沙錐的數目可能是給低估了。的確，捕獲的針尾沙錐和大沙錐數目只有 3.5:1之比，因此雖然該文章所述的情況大致正確，我們還是要小心對待針尾沙錐（過高）和大沙錐（過低）的高峰值。

## 結論

根據檢視在本港做環誌時捕得的鳥以及雀鳥標本所得，可以肯定以往的文獻對如何分辨大沙錐和針尾沙錐的討論是過於簡化了。由於兩種鳥在體型大小、外形和羽色都有重疊，很難在野外分辨開來。儘管我們可以本著某些特徵組合判斷哪一種鳥可能性較大，但是如果看不到外側尾羽的形態，或者未能將鳥捕捉，一般都不可能確認鳥種。雖然錄下叫聲會有用，不過兩種鳥在叫聲上的差異還有待深入研究。

## 鳴謝

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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 research can be based regarding 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 common and widespread species that are recorded in appropriate habitat in typical numbers. 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 compilation and 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* or issues of the *Hong Kong Bird Report* published since), date, place, number of birds, notes and observer name. Observations can then be entered, using one row for each record. A sample file is available at [www.hkbws.org.hk](http://www.hkbws.org.hk).

In addition, also available are 152x106 mm 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. Although acceptable, they are not preferred.

### 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. In addition, field identification techniques for some species still require refinement. For these reasons 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 adequate substantiation in the form of a written description, photograph, video, audio recording or some combination of these is, nevertheless, required if the record is to be considered valid and to be published. A standard recording form for unusual records is available



from the Society website, Society office or from the Recorder. Ideally, field notes supporting an observation of a 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 projection, 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 vocalizations. Try to indicate the quality of the sound (e.g. 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 vocalizations, 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.

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 List 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 details, 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	
000.9	Red-throated Loon	<i>Gavia stellata</i>
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 birds only)	<i>Egretta sacra</i>
025	Japanese Night Heron	<i>Gorsachius goisagi</i>
025.5	Malayan Night Heron	<i>Gorsachius melanolophus</i>
034	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
038	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
041	Cotton Pygmy-goose	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>
	Hybrid Eurasian x American Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope x Americana</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>
085.5	Amur Falcon	<i>Falco amurensis</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>
092.3	Siberian Crane	<i>Grus leucogeranus</i>
094	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>
096	Band-bellied Crake	<i>Porzana paykullii</i>
097	White-browed Crake	<i>Porzana cinerea</i>
106.5	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Himantopus ostralegus</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 fulicaria</i>
161	Pomarine Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>
161.5	Parasitic Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>
162	Long-tailed Jaeger (autumn records only)	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</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>
207.5	Drongo Cuckoo	<i>Surniculus lugubris</i>
211	Grass Owl	<i>Tyto capensis</i>
215	Brown Fish Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>
217	Brown Boobook	<i>Ninox japonica</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 nympa</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 and M.a. personata</i>
259.2	Blyth's Pipit	<i>Anthus godlewskii</i>
263.5	Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</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	Syke's Warbler	<i>Hippolais rama</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>
363.5	White-spectacled Warbler	<i>Seicercus affinis</i>
364	Chestnut-crowned Warbler	<i>Seicercus castaniceps</i>
365	Rufous-faced Warbler	<i>Abroscopus albogularis</i>
365.5	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>
366	Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher	<i>Rhinomyias brunneata</i>
374	Green-backed Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula elisae</i>
376	Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula strophciata</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 venustulus</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	Carrion 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 minimize 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 for a permit and when applying for renewal of permit:

### Mai Po Marshes Entry Permit

To apply for an annual permit to enter the Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve, write to:

### Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department  
7/F Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices  
303 Cheung Sha Wan Road  
Kowloon  
Hong Kong

An application letter to become an HKBWS member is downloadable from:

<http://www.hkbws.org.hk/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 at AFCD at 2150 6921.