

香港觀鳥會 The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society



bulletin

會員通訊



194

Winter 2004 ~ 冬



黑冠虎斑鶺，成鳥（上水丙岡）－ 孔思義  
Malayan Night Heron, *Adult* (Ping Kong, Sheung Shui) – John Holmes



黑冠虎斑鶺，幼鳥（上水丙岡）－ 柯嘉敏  
Malayan Night Heron, *Juvenile* (Ping Kong, Sheung Shui) – Or Ka Man Carmen





# The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Limited

(Approved Charitable Institution of a Public Character)

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# Chairman's message

HKBWS now have a new chairman, that is me. The chairman is a very exciting position to be in. Be there and you acquire the greatest power to steer the course of development of the society, and you have the greatest control over the day-to-day running of the society. All these may be very true. But at the same time, that also means you are the biggest volunteer of the society. There is a lot of burden on you. You have to set aside a lot of your time to work for the society, unpaid. Society members expect you to be able to do miracles. You are expected to match the greatest achievements of this society's former chairmen. Let me say that this is too much for one person to complete. Fortunately I can feel "the force" around me.

In my opinion, HKBWS is the best society in Hong Kong: it is run by a group of competent volunteers and staff, not just by the directors or Ex-co members. When Ex-co members have not done all that we wanted to do, other members and staff have come in. My ideal mode of operation of the society is for the management to maintain a platform whereby members of the society can contribute to the common causes of the society. With this philosophy, I would like to see more activities in the society, and from these our future leaders may be identified.

– Cheung Ho Fai 

## SOCIETY NEWS

– Carrie Ma, Henry Lui

### Annual General Meeting

The HKBWS AGM was held on 22 September. A new Board of Directors has been elected, directors include Cheung Ho Fai, Ada Chow, Mike Kilburn, C Y Lam, Ronley Lee, Henry Lui and Ng Cho Nam.

The new Executive Committee is:

Chairman: Cheung Ho Fai  
Vice Chairman: Ng Cho Nam, Mike Kilburn  
Hon. Secretary: Henry Lui  
Hon. Treasurer: Ada Chow  
Hon. Recorder: Richard Lewthwaite  
Members: Ronley Lee, Forrest Fong, Apache Lau,  
Alan Chan, Joanne Au and Llewellyn Young

Jimmy Chim, Robin Fung and Stanley Ng have stepped down. We thank for their support for the

smooth management of the Society over the last few years for the role of Hon. Secretary, Education and Publicity and Hon. Treasurer respectively.

C Y Lam was elected as the President. He has been Chairman of the Society for 7 years and Vice-chairman for 5 years. He has led the Society over the last 12 years, and a number of changes have been made. These include development of local bird watching activity; establishment of various sub-committees, research groups and working groups; encourage new idea from HKBWS members to facilitate information exchange; stabilizing and professionalizing the Society. Some members who are familiar with Mr Lam said that he worked for the



Society during our bird watching and leisure hours, and sometimes worked until mid-night. We thank him for his uncountable contribution to the Society.

The AGM has also raised the issue of membership fees. It is confirmed that the membership fee for "Individual Member" will be HK\$250 (instead of HK\$255), other categories will remain unchanged.

Certificates were issued to volunteers who have made out-standing contributions to the Society:

Puk Yuk Yin	Steve Burrows	Karin Chan
Winky Huen	Hung Wai Ming	John and Jemi Holmes
Lorraine Lee	Tam Yiu Leung	Mr and Mrs T P Luk
Simon Wong	Louis Cheung	Beta Yip
Karl Ng	Lee Kwok Shing	Sophia Wong
Anthony Lo	Chen Chi Po	Michelle and Peter Wong
Ho Man Fai	Gary Chow	Chu Chui Ping
Chu Cho Yan	Man Chup Ming	Jacky Yam
Etta Hui	Li Wai Ki	Chan Ming Ming
Wong Chak Cheung		

Certificates have been posted to absent members.

A "picture show" was organized by Michelle and Peter Wong and Wong Tin Wa. Many thanks to them.

## HKBWS Office

From 22 September, elements of "HKBWS Membership" was added to the daily operation. The HKBWS Project Office which has been renamed as "HKBWS Office". Stanley Ng has been recruited as Manager (Administration), responsible for handling accounting, membership affairs, membership recruitment and general administration. Members who wish to pay a visit to the Society, make enquiry regarding membership application and renewal, purchase books and pay fees, can get in touch with him at 2377 4387 or by e-mail: [membership@hkbws.org.hk](mailto:membership@hkbws.org.hk).



Li Hei has completed her contract as Assistant Project Officer in November. We thank her for her support for the Healthy Ageing project. We wish her a prosperous and successful future.

## Bird Shop

A "Bird Shop" page has been added to the HKBWS website. We hope this could enable members a interactive way, to get information on our latest products, books and premiums through the internet. The HKBWS Shop will be open at office hours, members who wish to visit could get in touch with Mr Ng at 2377 4387.

## Photo Guide

The publisher informed us that the "A Photographic Guide to the Birds of Hong Kong" is currently out of stock. It is great news to us as the book has been sold within two months since July. Our working group is trying to assist the publisher to review the information, in order to get it re-printed as soon as possible. If members have made an order though us, please be patient and we will inform you once the books are printed.




## Acknowledgement

Thank to Owen Chiang and Dominic Chan's support to solve computer problem and develop backup programme in the HKBWS Office.

## Stop Press:

Malayan Night Heron – members of the Society might have felt very excited about a new "tick" – Malayan Night Herons, which may have been breeding near Sheung Shui. It is the second known record in Hong Kong. The first one was discovered by Wildlife Conservation Society during a project period through the use of infra-red camera.



Members should always bear in mind that we should not made any disturbance to the birds. Please refer to Page 36 for detail information of bird watching rules. 



– Carrie Ma

## Research Projects

### 1. HKBWS Technical Report

Two reports were received and uploaded onto HKBWS Technical Report website for members' reference:



Kwok, H.K. 2004. Preliminary Investigation on the Potential Effect of Overhead Wires on Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta*, Chinese Pond Herons *Ardeola bacchus* and Great Egrets *Casmerodius albus*. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Technical Paper Series No. 1. Hong Kong.

Wong, C. L. C., W. Liang and J. Y. B. Wong. 2004. Ardeid nesting colony survey in Hainan, China 2004. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Technical Report Series No. 2, Hong Kong..

### 2. Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site Waterbird Monitoring

#### 2.1 Waterbird Count Training

We have organized a training workshop on 7 November 2004. Around 20 members participated in the event. The workshop facilitated members to build up their capacity on bird monitoring. Most importantly, result of the programme is important baseline information directly contribute to conservation management of the Ramsar Site.

#### 2.2 Project Reports

The following reports were published and uploaded onto HKBWS website:

- i) Summaries of Monthly Count
- ii) Monthly summary of Shorebird Count
- iii) 2004 Report of Summer Waterbird Count
- iv) 2003-04 Report of Shorebird Count
- v) 2004 Report of Egret Count

#### 2.3 Publication and Publicity

We are preparing to produce a leaflet on waterbird conservation and to organize a public seminar in March

2005. Members who wish to offer support could get in touch with Carrie Ma by e-mail [hkbws@hkbws.org.hk](mailto:hkbws@hkbws.org.hk).

### 3. Research Group Updates

#### 3.1 Tern Research Group

3.1.1 This July we obtained a permit from AFCD for radio tracking. Transmitters were placed on three Black-naped Tern chicks to collect information on their feeding site. Although the project was not successful, we did gain some valuable experience that would help to improve similar work in future.

3.1.2 Some e-mail exchanges were made among members and AFCD in July and August on how to reduce human disturbance to breeding terns. It was suggested that access to the core area by wardens and researchers should be better controlled, and the number of nest boxes could be reduced.

3.1.3 Mr Alan Chan has accepted the responsibility of Convenor of Tern Research Group. Members who wish to offer voluntary support on tern surveys during the breeding season may contact Alan at [twatch2004@yahoo.com.hk](mailto:twatch2004@yahoo.com.hk).

#### 3.2 Black-faced Spoonbill Research Group

Black-faced Spoonbill International Census will be organized on 21-23 January 2005. We thank LEICA (Schmidt Marketing (H.K.) Ltd) for supporting production, printing and mailing of report. For further information about the event and relevant counting guideline, please refer to the International Census website: <http://www.hkbws.org.hk/waterbird/world.html>.

Members who wish to offer support to the census could contact Yu Yat Tung at [bfspoonbill@hkbws.org.hk](mailto:bfspoonbill@hkbws.org.hk).

#### 3.3 Egret Research Group

3.3.1 3.3.1 The Hainan colony survey report was completed in September and is published in the HKBWS technical report series. A revised format of the report has been submitted to a journal (Waterbirds) for consideration.

3.3.2 3.3.2 Dr Kwok Hon Kai and Mr Benny Wong stepped down from ERG due to personal reasons. ERG appreciates their services in this group.

#### 3.4 Kite Research Group

3.4.1 Welcome to new members of Kite Research



Group: Lo Gar Yee, Law King Wai and Yeung Lee Ki

3.4.2 A big “Thank You” for the effort and contribution by Etta Hui and Shirley Lam in the last three years. Ms Hui has initiated the systematic Kite survey in Hong Kong. The result of Kite counts has become important baseline information for the conservation of Black Kites. She has also produced a website at <http://netta.cyberec.com/kite/> to increase public awareness on this species.

3.4.3 Karin Chan has accepted the responsibility of Convenor of Kite Research Group. Members who wish to offer help on monthly evening kite count, suggest new counting sites or provide kite information could contact Karin at [yankarin@graduate.hku.hk](mailto:yankarin@graduate.hku.hk);

3.4.4 The Research Group has completed the project for the Society and Bird Life International, funded by Japan Fund on Global Environment on bird-ecotourism. A promotion leaflet was produced. Members are welcome to collect a copy at the HKBWS Office. A public seminar and two evening kite counts have been conducted in November, promote kite watching in Hong Kong;



A promotion leaflet was produced. Members are welcome to collect a copy at the HKBWS Office. A public seminar and two evening kite counts have been conducted in November, promote kite watching in Hong Kong;

3.4.5 The Research Group has sent a letter on 6 September to the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau to express concern on destruction of Kite nest. Ming Pao Daily News reported the issue on 16 September. Representative of the Route 8 project responded that a relevant survey was conducted in May but no significant result was obtained. The Research Group will continue to follow up with the issue, in hope of the project not causing further disturbance and destruction to Kite habitat.

## 3.5 Swift and Swallow Research Group

3.5.1 The first round of Swift and Swallow survey was completed in July. The second round survey started in mid-August. Result of the survey will be reported to members of the Society. Thanks for members of the Research Group and volunteer

helpers including Vera Hung, Elisa Hui, Bill Man, Lawrence Lau and Lawman Law for the survey;

3.5.2 The issue of Dengue Fever was widely reported in June/July, some even suspect birds were a vector of the disease. The Research Group produced a press article on 10 July to bring out the message that diptera (flies and mosquitoes) is the main source of food for swift and swallows. It was reported in 3 newspapers. Some interesting discussion was generated.



## B. Education and Publicity

### 1. Education and Publicity Committee

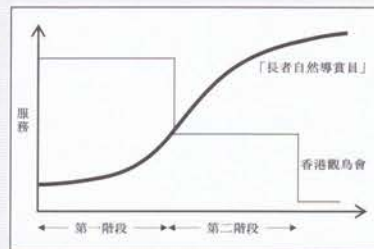
The new education and publicity committee was restructured:

Chairman : Apache Lau

Members : Robin Fung, Henry Lui, Chan Ming Ming, Hung Wai Ming and Chen Chi Po

### 2. Healthy Ageing

The 2nd stage “Elderly leading the elderly to watch bird” was started in October. The project has successfully conducted for 1 year, the “Elderly Nature Interpreters”



has provided technical support to 8,500 elderly from 93 organizations, it is about to achieve to our target 14,360 people from 125 organizations.

According to our project proposal, we expected the promotion of bird watching among the elderly to mature. HKBWS professional effort will be reduced gradually, in order to offer more area for the Elderly Nature Interpreters to support the elderly generation using the professional skills that they have learnt.

HKBWS has reduced the number of staff support from



1.5 staff (2001-2003 “Birdwatching – learn from the Nature”) to 1 staff (2003-2004, 1st stage “Elderly lead the elderly to watch birds”) to 0.5 staff at the 2nd stage to continue to manage, monitor and control the quality of the project. We asked participating organizations to offer support on coach fare and insurance. Hope this could achieve self-sustaining elderly bird watching activity after project completion. We expected the “Crested Bulbul Club” will become an important part of HKBWS in long-term. “Elderly Nature Interpreters” will continue to offer support to contact community centres, and these community centres would facilitate elderly birdwatching activity using their resource.

Starting from September, a new Elderly Bird Watching Committee was formed:

Chairman	: Leung Kwok Wa
Vice Chairman	: Wong Chu She
Secretary	: Cheng Kam Yuen
Liaison	: Lui Sau Fun

Chen Chi Po will continue be a member of the HKBWS Education and Publicity Committee, and act as a bridge between HKBWS and “Crested Bulbul Club”.

The Elderly Nature Interpreters have compiled a handbook to facilitate future interpretation. It is printed in Chinese. Members who wish to read the book could get in touch with Leung Kwok Wa.

### 3. Urban Park bird watching

Members of the “Crested Bulbul Club” have conducted a number of activities in urban parks:

**Kowloon Park** – Friday morning bird watching activities started in March, a total of 30 bird watching activities has been conducted, and a total of 364 participants were reached. This activity will be continue on Fridays from 7:30 - 9:30am, gathering location is at the entrance of McDonalds at the opposite side of the swimming pool. All are welcome.

**Hong Kong Park** – A total of 158 people from 6 organization were reached in August and September.

We thank Leisure and Cultural Services Department for provision of event venue.

### 4. World Wetland Day 2005

We are going to assist AFCD to organize a bird race for 50 secondary schools as a part of celebration events for the World Wetland Day. Training locations include



Tsim Bei Tsui and Hong Kong Wetland Park Phase II. We thank Hong Kong Tang King Po College for offering us a workshop venue. Schedule of the event is as follows:

Workshop	: 11 December and 8 January
Outdoor training	: 18 December and 15 January
Bird Race	: 23 January
Presentation Ceremony	: 30 January

Members who wish to offer support as trainers or as adjudicator could contact Carrie Ma at [hkbws@hkbws.org.hk](mailto:hkbws@hkbws.org.hk).

### 5. Assistance to HKU Environmental Life Science students

Good and warm news around us... HKBWS members who are graduates of HKU Department of Ecology and Biodiversity are supporting for current undergraduate students by equipping them with ornithological knowledge. The project runs from November 2004 to April 2005. It aims to promote awareness of birds and natural environment, to equip students’ professional development by helping them build up a capacity in bird watching, field identification, research, education and publicity affairs. The activity include monthly lectures and field study trip, students will be invited to join HKBWS activities. We thank for the voluntary support of Aukie Au, Karin Chan, Gary Chow, Mike Leven, Henry Lui, Carrie Ma, Samson So, Captain Wong and Yu Yat Tung.

### 6. “Hong Kong Bird Watching Map” – 2nd edition

The Hong Kong Tourism Board produced the 2nd edition of the HKBWS “Hong Kong Bird Watching Map”, it is available for distribution at Tourist Information Centres and Hong Kong International Airport. The 1st edition was sponsored by Swarovski Hong Kong Limited, we have small number of stock in the office for members collection.

Information of the Map is also uploaded onto the



HKBWS "Birding HK" website. We encourage members to introduce their friends to bird watching spots in Hong Kong. Members are also welcome to introduce their newly discovered birding sites. Please contact Carrie Ma for further information (e-mail: [hkbws@hkbws.org.hk](mailto:hkbws@hkbws.org.hk)).



## 7. Other outreach activities:

**1 July** – Tsim Bei Tsui wetland bird watching tour for The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups Jockey Club Tseung Kwan O Youth S.P.O.T

**1 August** – Guest and adjudicator for "Mini-bird race - 'looking for the Great Tit'" event for Caritas Community Centre -Ngau Tau Kok

**15 August** – Summer families bird watching activity for The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups Jockey Club Tseung Kwan O Youth S.P.O.T

**10 October** – Lecture for Ecotour Interpreters for Green Peng Chau Association

**Nov to Jan** – Bird Watching Course: "Bird watching in the wild" for HKU School of Professional And Continue Education

**8 and 12 Dec** – Training for nature interpreters (lecture and field trip) for The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups Jockey Club Tseung Kwan O Youth S.P.O.T

## C. China mainland and Overseas

### 1. China Bird Report

HKBWS assisted the Chinese Ornithological Society (COS) for the production of "China Bird Report 2003". Swarovska Hong Kong Limited has agreed to sponsor COS. The report is bilingual, it is produced in Chinese and English.

### 2. National Bird Watching Record Database

C Y Lam and Cheung Ho Fai donated HK\$6,000 to China Ornithological Society for the management of the "National Bird Watching Record Database".

The Database collects and records bird watching

information of bird watching organizations, individuals and research. Members who have conducted bird watching trips in China mainland are encouraged to submit records to Dr Zhang Zhenwang of Beijing Normal University by mail (Department of Life Sciences, Beijing Normal University, Postal Code: 100875) or by e-mail: [zzw@bnu.edu.cn](mailto:zzw@bnu.edu.cn). Please don't forget to include recorder's name, location and time. In case information of rare species, or species that are new to the bird watching site were submitted, please also provide a picture or detailed description for further reference.

### 3. Important Bird Area

The BirdLife Asia Division has launched "Asia Important Area" in November at the IUCN World Conservation Conference in Bangkok. This new publication includes overview information on about 2,300 IBAs in the Asia region, highlighting their international importance.



HKBWS provided information of Hong Kong's IBA in 2000 and 2003. Thanks for Carrie Ma, Geoff Carey, Yu Yat Tung, Lew Young, Ng Cho Nam, C Y Lam and Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department for providing information and comments. Please find below links of the Hong Kong IBAs for members' reference.

#### Inner Deep Bay and Shenzhen River Catchment:

[http://www.hkbws.org.hk/fileServer/Projectofficer/IBA/IBA\\_deepbay.pdf](http://www.hkbws.org.hk/fileServer/Projectofficer/IBA/IBA_deepbay.pdf)

#### Tai Po Kau, Shing Mun and Tai Mo Shan

[http://www.hkbws.org.hk/fileServer/Projectofficer/IBA/IBA\\_centralNT.pdf](http://www.hkbws.org.hk/fileServer/Projectofficer/IBA/IBA_centralNT.pdf)

### 4. School Bird Race at Futian, Shenzhen

Cheung Ho Fai, Apache Lau and Jemi Wong all assisted at the Shenzhen Bird Watching Society's School Bird Race at Futian, Shenzhen on 17 October.

### 5. Xinjiang Ground Jay at Taklimakan Desert

Kwok Hon Kai has assisted Prof. Ma Ming of Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography for a paper namely




“Records of Xinjiang Ground-jay *Podoces biddulphi*

in Taklimakan Desert, Xinjiang, China”. It is published at the journal “Foktail” Volume 20 of Oriental Bird Club. Please find below links of the pages for your reference:

[http://www.hkbws.org.hk/fileServer/Projectofficer/china/Ming-Xinjiang-final%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.hkbws.org.hk/fileServer/Projectofficer/china/Ming-Xinjiang-final%20(1).pdf)




## 6. Beijing Bird Watching Society

The HKBWS has offered support to active bird watchers in Beijing for the establishment of a Beijing Bird Watching Society. An initial structure was formed. It has attracted volunteers to participate in various planning. The proposed BBWS would be a Beijing-based organization focusing on promotion of bird watching activities. It will gradually establish relationship with relevant bird watching organization and green groups in China mainland, and become a society to handle external communication affairs for the bird watching communities in China, this includes a plan to build up connection with international organizations. We wish every success in the establishment of the BBWS. 

## Hong Kong Ringing Group

Only 47 birds were ringed in the hot summer months of July and August, 18 of them were Bridled Tern chicks (*Sterna anaethetus*) and 2 Black-naped Tern chicks (*Sterna sumatrana*). We flagged 15 Black-winged Stilt chicks between June and August. About 30 pairs of them bred, despite this being the second year of breeding in HK. Curiously, none of the flagged Stilts have been seen since fledging.

In September, we ringed a total of 369 birds, 143 of which were Oriental Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus orientalis*), 63 Japanese White-Eye (*Zosterops japonicus*) and 29 Black-browed Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*). There were also 16 Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella certhiola*) and 3 Manchurian Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus tangorum*), a species which is listed as Vulnerable. 





# Conservation News

## Winter 2004

– Mike Kilburn,  
*Chairman, Conservation Committee*

### **Saltwater Pumping of Shenzhen River dropped**

Good news! We reported in the Summer 2004 Bulletin (no. 192) on a proposal by the Shenzhen government to use saltwater from Mirs Bay to flush out domestic sewage from the Shenzhen River. In March the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology held a consultation to allow the Hong Kong public to comment on the proposal. Hong Kong's environmental NGOs were unanimous in their opposition to the proposal, particularly in regard to the potentially harmful impact to the ecosystem of Mai Po and the Inner Deep Bay Ramsar site.

It seems that good sense has prevailed and the Shenzhen Municipal Government is now studying plans to build more treatment works, so the waste is processed at its source - a much more responsible and sustainable solution.

HKBWS would like to congratulate the Shenzhen Municipal Government firstly for holding the consultation and gathering the views of Hong Kong's environmental NGOs, at the early stages of the project conception, and secondly for giving due respect to those views and reconsidering their plans with them in mind. This sets a fine example for future cross-border infrastructure projects, and indeed for future consultations on infrastructure planning in Hong Kong itself.

### **Route 8 Temporary Works Destroy Black Kite Nest on Stonecutter's Island**

In April this year the Black Kite Survey Group discovered that a Black Kite nest had been destroyed on the northern edge of Stonecutter's Island, an act in breach of the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (cap.170) - no birds, or their nests, or eggs can be

destroyed in Hong Kong without the express permission of AFCD. Working with the Conservation Committee the Black Kite Study Group wrote to the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau to raise our concerns.

Although the Bureau itself, has at the time of writing (and some 2 months after our letter was sent), failed to respond to the letter, HKBWS has met with representatives for the project proponent and their environmental consultants to offer further information to ensure that no more nests are destroyed and that there is no more adverse impact on the breeding birds of Stonecutter's Island.

Stonecutter's Island is the last remaining ecologically significant area in inner Victoria Harbour, and by far the most important site for birds. It has been known as a breeding site for Black Kites for several years. There is also an egretty located there and White-bellied Sea Eagle has bred on the island in recent years. Furthermore, it is an important roosting site for a large number of egrets, which forage in Victoria Harbour.

Visitors to the waterfront and Star Ferry passengers are often treated to the sight of groups of egrets flying back towards Stonecutter's Island in the late evening, while Black Kites can be seen over the harbour and gliding past the surrounding high rise buildings all day - they even use rubbish from the harbour in the construction of their nests!

So far the Hong Kong Government has done little to respect the value placed on the harbour by ordinary people, with transport infrastructure taking precedence over all other planning and considerations - an archaic and profoundly damaging approach to Hong Kong's premier tourist asset. While HKBWS does not believe this nest was deliberately destroyed, it has nonetheless been lost, probably because the site was not surveyed by a qualified ecologist. If Hong Kong's commitment to



sustainable development is to be anything more than empty words then the government must treat such incidents seriously.

This case once again highlights the important role played by the Society in monitoring Hong Kong's birds. Who would expect a nest situated inside a PLA base to be destroyed by a road construction project? For many, Black Kite is a common and rather unglamorous bird, yet the numbers found in Hong Kong are of regional significance. The dedication and vigilance of the Black Kite Research Group is to be commended.

We will report on further developments of this situation as they emerge.

## Drainage Services Department plans more channelisation

HKBWS has recently been invited by the Drainage Services Department to comment on several flood prevention works schemes across the New Territories. While the style and sincerity of the consultation has varied from one package of works to another, DSD is to be commended for conducting such early consultations. Under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance the public consultation is usually left to the very last moment of the process.

Several sites of ecological importance or which are popular with bird watchers are likely to be impacted by these projects. These include:

### Ma Tso Lung

A channel planned for this site has been greatly reduced even before consultation with the Environmental NGOs, but there are still plans for more works and dredging close to Ma Tso Lung Village.

### Ho Sheung Heung (close to Long Valley)

Currently a concrete channel large enough to be maintained by bulldozer is planned to cut through several fishponds, which are close to one of the largest egrettries for Chinese Pond Heron. However DSD's consultants are reviewing the possibility of collecting rainwater above the village and diverting it through an underground pipe into the existing drainage channel.

### Kam Tin Buffalo Fields

DSD currently plan to build a new concrete channel next to one that is already there! The value of the buffalo fields for Painted Snipe and Grey-Headed Lapwing in particular depends on the fact that they are seasonally flooded - it is a marshland! There is a definite need to conduct an ecological review of this site!

### Deep Bay fishponds

There are a number of DSD channels through the fishponds. So far DSD has already turned two of these into ugly ecologically bare 5- 10 metre wide channels. Plans for these must be carefully studied.


### Wun Yiu

Since a number of houses are actually built in the bed of the stream it is hardly surprising that the villagers are subjected to flooding in heavy rains! DSD plans to manage flooding by building a channel to concentrate the flow in the main watercourse. They will remove several concrete bridges that block the river, and replace them with less obstructive designs. They will use gabions (rocks in wire baskets) to build the channel banks, leaving the stream bed in its natural state, and following a request from HKBWS, are currently working to minimise the number of boulders which need to be removed from the stream bed.

### Lam Tsuen and She Shan Rivers

Both of these rivers have been channelised in the past, and despite the fact that there is no need to conduct an EIA study on Lam Tsuen River, DSD has decided to do so because of its high ecological importance - a responsible step indicating more openness to adopting sustainable solutions in works projects. Most, if not all, of the old concrete channelisations will be removed and replaced with gabion walls and the floor of the river will be left in its natural state.

Other works are planned in the Deep Bay area, but HKBWS has not had the manpower to attend these additional consultations. However, since these projects have not yet entered their final phase, there is still time for HKBWS to make its voice heard. If you have particular knowledge or interest in drainage works and how they are planned, please contact the Conservation Committee ([conservation@hkbws.org.hk](mailto:conservation@hkbws.org.hk)) or register your thoughts on the Conservation section on the HKBWS bulletin board.

Further drainage news will published in future bulletins. 



# Mai Po update

– Lew Young

## Pond 16/17 ('The Scrape')

Earthmoving work in gei wai 16/17 to dismantle the large island opposite Hide 7 (closest to the Closed Area Fence road) should have been finished by the time this newsletter is published. The aim of the work was because the island had been too large and tall, and was often covered by grasses, to be commonly used as a roosting site by waterbirds. As a result, a decision was made to take the soil off the top of the island to build a number of smaller and lower islands in front of Hide 7 which would be more attractive for waterbirds.

By taking the soil off its top, the work would also make the large island much lower and so, be flooded more frequently and hopefully, also be more attractive for waterbirds.

## Gei wai 24f and 24g

This winter, an AFCD funded experiment will be carried out in gei wai 24f and 24g to look the relative attractiveness of different aquatic plants for waterbirds, especially ducks. Three (10m x 10m) blocks of aquatic plants were planted out in the two ponds in autumn 2004 and then monitoring carried out of how ducks (and other waterbirds) use the different plants for foraging or roosting.

The plants used were *Paspalum distichum* (Knot grass), *Echinochloa crus-galli* (Barnyard millet), *Ipomoea reptans* (Water spinach) and *Leersia hexandra* (Rice grass). *P. distichum*, *E. crus-galli* and *L. hexandra* were planted in


Pond 24f and *P. distichum*, *E. crus-galli* and *I. reptans* planted in Pond 24g

If the experiment confirms the attractiveness of these plants for waterbirds, then a larger scale programme will be carried out in 2005 to plant out a number of the gei wai in the southern part of the reserve using the plants in this experiment.

## Update on the extension to the floating boardwalk

A first draft environmental profile has been completed for the project to build a fixed boardwalk extension and floating hide further out into Deep Bay, and informal comments are now being collected from relevant government departments. It is hoped that the final draft can be prepared by early 2005.

HK\$1 million for the project has already been promised by an anonymous donor and the remaining money will come from donations received through the Big Bird Race. It is hoped that the 2005 BBR will raise the remaining amount for the project so that once it has been approved by government, work can begin. We hope that hide can be ready for use by winter 2005/2006 if government approval and fundraising for the project goes as smoothly as intended.

We hope that HKBWS members can be involved in the 2005 BBR to help raise the remaining amounts needed for the boardwalk extension and hide. We will certainly keep you informed about the project and the 2005 BBR. 



# Obituary: Chow Po Shing (Preston)


On 29th November, 2004, Kadoorie Farm lost a dear friend and work colleague, Preston Chow.

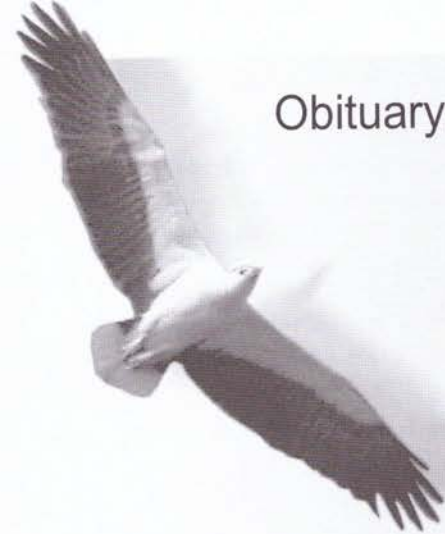
Preston was involved in a tragic car accident while undertaking his duties at KFBG.

He had a deep passion for birds of prey and since joining the centre in April 2004 was responsible for raptor rehabilitation work.

He cared for many birds from black kites to brown fish owls and brown hawk owls. Preston enjoyed the chance his work gave him to release raptors back to the wild.

We will remember Preston for his contribution to raptor conservation and his warm and compassionate nature. He was well liked by all that met him. We think of him every time a raptor soars over the Farm.

– Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden 



## China Bird Watch

China Bird Watch is a bi-weekly on-line magazine which introduces up-dates of bird watching activities in mainland China. Website : <http://www.wwfchina.org/chinabirdwatch/>



## Discovery of feeding sites of breeding Black-faced Spoonbill

A feeding site of Black-faced Spoonbill was discovered at a remote island off the Liaoning coast in June 2004. Prof. Zhou Haixiang of the Ecological Environment Research Centre of Shenyang Ligong University discovered the first foraging ground of Black-faced Spoonbill in China at a beach between Zhuanhegang and Gelidao, Dalian in Liaoning Province. On 27 June 2004, a total of six spoonbills were seen, three of them were observed feeding (Source of information: <http://www.wwfchina.org/list.shtm?id=6459>)



– Carrie Ma

*World Bird News*  
*World Bird News*  
*World Bird News*  
*World Bird News*

## Discovery of breeding Chinese Crested Tern at the coastal area of Zhejiang

Starting from last year, a “Zhoushan Qun Dao coastal resource research group” was formed jointly by Zhejiang Museum of Natural History and the National Museum of Natural Science. The group conducted systematic surveys at the northern part of the Zhejiang coast, in particular at Zhoushan Qun Dao, in the last two years. On the 1st of August 2004, Zhejiang Museum of Natural History was invited to conduct a survey at a coastal reserve at Jiushan Islands, and the survey discovered 10 Chinese Crested Terns breeding on one of the islands. This confirmed record of this globally “Critically Endangered” species is also the first known breeding record other than at the Matsuo Islands.





# A northern Xinjiang round trip for bustards – Carrie Ma

My impression of Xinjiang came from a birding friend's description: "Weiwuer", "desert", and "roast meat". This half-month trip started on 5th September 2004 and ended on the 19th. This article is taken from my diary. I hope it provides useful information for your future trips. I have also added GPS coordinates, sea level or road sign details for reference. A short summary is tabled at the end of this article.

## Urumuqi – 5 September

We flew from Shenzhen Airport, reaching Urumuqi (烏魯木齊) in the afternoon. It was rather difficult to find our "Xinjiang first bird" at the airport. Xinjiang is far to the west of Beijing, but there is one time zone in China. Therefore everything happens about three hours later, for example, offices start their afternoon business at 17:00. We visited Wuyi Road Nightmarket (五一路夜市) after check-in at the hotel. This is a place of food stalls, roast meat, rice cooked with mutton, carrots and raisins, and a variety of fruit.

## Asia's Centre – 6 September

At the eastern side of Urumuqi (700m), the famous Bogda Mountain (博格達峰) - 5,400m above sea level - is easily seen. We travelled along National Road No. 216 in the direction of Tianshan (天山) (it is called "iron-hill" in Weiwuer). Tianshan is one of the biggest mountain ranges in the world, running from east to west and dividing Xinjiang into north and south. It also features the largest glacier in China.

After passing Yaxin (亞心) which has been marked "The Centre of Asia", we stopped at nearby village Yongfeng Village (永豐鄉) (1533m, N43°33'09" / E87°19'52.6"). A flock of European Goldfinch and Linnet were seen in the farmland at the road side.

Travelling beside the Urumuqi River, we noticed that it appeared dried out. There were deep troughs at the bottom and both sides of the river. Our driver told us it was caused by changes in hydrology after farmers pumped water out. We saw some bee-farms, and nomads with flocks of sheep and goats hurrying downhill to their wintering place. There were not many birds along the road. We stopped at a few places and found Lesser Kestrels and a Pine Bunting.

We arrived at Hauxia (后峽) at noon, about 150 km from Urumuqi. On the way to Banfangou (板房溝), there are a number of steel and concrete factories. There were also trucks delivering iron ore. For strategic reasons, these factories were moved to Tianshan in the 1960s when China's relationship with the USSR worsened. In previous years, outsiders were not allowed access to the area. We passed a research center of Academia Sinica, which

looked like a worthwhile place to stay when we go there again. Road construction is going on at many places. We stopped and found a pair of Wallcreepers and a small flock of Himalayan Griffon Vultures (2392m, AN43°08'29.1" / S87°05'22.9").

We had lunch at a station at the bottom of the hill of the No. 1 Glacier (冰川) (3517m, AN43°06'47.8" / E86°50'34.8"). Outside the station, we found a pair of White-winged Redstart at the riverside. The Glacier is one of the most important water sources of Urumuqi. It covers all the area up to the top of the mountain. The whitish color matched well with the blue sky and green grassland. There was also serious soil erosion caused by melting snow. We finally reached the mountain top, the "Victory Pass" (勝利達板) (4029m, AN43°05'26.0" / E86°49'51.8") which is the watershed between northern and southern Xinjiang. At this snowy mountain, there was a Brant's Mountain Finch, Alpine Accentor and Northern Wheatear, as well as mammals like Marmots (*Marmota sp.*) and Ground Squirrels (*Citellus undulatus*).

We traveled along the valley downhill. Near Fuerla Reservoir (庫爾勒水庫), there were good views of White-throated Dippers, Golden Eagles, Common Swifts and Asian House Martins. Most interesting were three Ibex (*Capra ibex*) climbing the rocks. This was a fruitful day to learn the geography of the place. We stayed at a small hotel near the Ba Lun Tai (巴倫台) railway station in the evening.

## Urumuqi farm (烏魯木齊牧場) – 7 September

In the early morning, we walked around the Ba Lun Tai railway station and the observatory, and found small flocks of Tree Sparrows and Azure Tits, Black Redstarts and a hare (*Lepus capensis*).

After breakfast, we traveled along the National Road no. 218 (Ba Lun Tai 1803m, N42°45'32.9" / E86°48'57.4"), most of the places are located within the "Urumuqi farm", which is a huge plateau from the east to the western side of the access road in Tianshan. It covers a number of habitats including mountain valley, scrubland and plateau. Horned Larks were found on the ground at both sides of the



highway. We stopped at a scrubland at the hill side of "Camel's ditch" (駱駝溝) (2080m, N42°53'03.7" / E86°27'07.2") and there was a flock of Mongolian Finches and Grey-necked Bunting.

We reached Maiklor Pass. There there is a stone tower called "ao bao" (敖包), decorated with bamboo and hada, which is important to Mongolians for prayer. At the roadside, we saw groups of nomads with their families and herds of goat and sheep. The nomads put a large piece of stone and an offering of dead goat at the foot of the tower, then circled the structure three times to bring them luck and keep evil spirits away.

We had "fast food" at a village "Fanxou Bridge" (反修橋). The fast food is "ban noodle" mixed with beef, tomato and egg. There were several White-winged Snowfinches and Ravens at the open areas. The place was named during the Cultural Revolution, as an action against policy changes in USSR. This place is so huge, I wonder whether historical knowledge could pass to our next generation if the places were not named.

We arrived at Bayinbuluk (巴音布魯克) at 5:00pm. At the wet grassland adjacent to "Yi-san" (一山), there were Black Storks, Common Cranes, Northern Pintails, Common Teal and Black-headed Gulls. We spent some time there to watch a Long-legged Buzzard, trying to find the difference with common buzzard (2501m, N42°05'00.8" / E84°49'2.8").

### Swan Lake and Plateau – 8 September

We reached Bayinbuluke Swan Reserve at dawn. The entrance fee was RMB 12. "Buluke" means "underground water" water from rain and melting ice. This is one of the largest plateaus in mainland China, with a size slightly smaller than Inner Mongolia.

Visibility was a bit poor as a thick layer of cloud covered the water surface. We could hear distant calling swans. The cloud gradually disappeared at sunrise and we went to a higher viewpoint, finding 77 Common Crane, 337 Whooper Swans, a Golden Eagle and a Himalayan Griffon. We continued our trip after having lunch at Sanheung (三鄉) (2410m, N42°49'48.9" / E84°20'41.9").

The weather could change quickly:- it was rather chilly in the early morning, sunny and warm at noon, foggy in the afternoon. We drove in the fog, and as the fog disappeared, we reached Kunes Forest Reserve (鞏乃斯林

場). The scenery was really attractive there, green pine trees and grasslands, red and yellow leaves in some trees, and a bluish river beside the road.

We continued downhill, and there were good sightings of forest birds including Amur Falcon, White-throated Dipper, Mistle Thrush and several Nutcrackers. Some friendly Mongolians asked us whether we would like to try horse milk. They also allowed us to take photos of them and their horse. We were invited into one of the family houses and were served sour wine made of horse milk. This wine is a bit strong, but good for the digestive system. We stayed at Kunes Forest reserve that evening (2083m, AN43°14'21.6" / E84°39'18.3").

### No Snow Partridge and Hawk Owl – 9 September

We went to Eierken Pass (艾爾肯達板) (2690m, N43°12'27.5" / E84°49'39") which is the breeding ground of Snow Partridge. However, we could only find several flocks of Fired-fronted Serin, Rosy Pipit and Stock Pigeon. We tested our luck for Hawk Owl at the other "address", but there was only Hume's Warbler, Coal Tit, Goldcrest, Nutcrackers and Carrion Crow in half-a-day's search. Then we hurried to the next stop along National Road No. 218, passing Narat (那拉提) and continuing west. There were several European Rollers, Black Kite, Northern Skylark and Common Mynas on the way.

We spent too much time looking for birds in the early morning. This made us short of time to reach Tekes (特克斯) and Zhaosu (昭蘇), so we chose to stay at Gongliu (鞏留) (780m) in the evening. However, our driver told us that the road to Zhaosu was blocked. It was really frustrating.

### Great Bustard at Ili – 10 September

Ili was rather warm, and characterized by its large plateaus, such as Narat and Kunes (鞏乃斯). We tried to look for shrikes and bee-eaters. At a piece of farmland near Ili River (伊犁河), there was a Little Owl, a Eurasian Cuckoo, some Rufous-tailed Shrikes and some Fired-fronted Serins. We stopped at a small garden inside the Yemato Hotel (野馬度賓館) adjacent to Yemato Bridge (雅碼圖大橋). The garden is a piece of woodland at the riverside, there we met small flocks of Turkestan, Azure and Great Tits.

We drove along National Road No. 218 to



Chungyianchiang located at the junction in between Gongliu (鞏留), Nilka (尼勒克) and Xinyuan (新源). There is a piece of wetland, where some HKBWS members made the first Xinjiang record of Stone Curlew (789m, N43°35'30.5" / E82°31'52.5") last year. We couldn't find the curlew this time, but there were good views of a Hobby, two Great Reed Warblers, Rook, Ruddy Shelducks, Great and Little Egrets.

We fell asleep after looking for the birds for a whole day. Suddenly, our driver stopped the car. He found 18 Chukars and a Crested Lark at the roadside (from then on he become our bird guide!). After traveling for 2 km, we saw 5 "big creatures" on the grassland about 200m from us. "Great Bustard! Great Bustard!" all of us became crazy and full of excitement! Some hide behind the car, some pushed the car to a better position, and some tried to pretend "ducks" to approach them skillfully to take better pictures. Fortunately, the birds were not disturbed, they continue to stayed there after we have left the area (790m, AN43°6'26.1" / E82°24'47.1").

## Great Bustard Syndrome – no birds!?

### – 11 September

Our target birds were shrikes and woodland birds. Some of us get up early to look for Long-eared Owl at Ili Hotel (伊犁賓館) but in vain. We went to nearby Jikuai Nature Park (吉快自然風景區) adjacent to the Ili River in Qapqal (察布查爾) (940m). There were several Rufous-tailed Shrikes, a Common Kingfisher and over a hundred Common Starlings.

Not many birds could be found on the way, except several Eurasian Collared Doves and European Rollers. We passed Huocheng (霍城), Qingshuihe (清水河鎮) and reached Guozigou (果子溝度假村) (940m), a forest valley with some resorts for tourists. Only a few birds such as Marsh Tit, Coal Tit, Nutcracker and Hume's Warbler could be found.

We reach the largest lake at noon - Sailim Lake (賽里木湖) (2,055m) ("Sailim" means "blessed"). The lake appeared blue, contrasting with the green color of the mountain and grasslands surrounding it. There were 20 Black-necked Grebes, 15 Whooper Swans, 30 Yellow-legged Gull and several Pintail Duck and Eurasian Wigeon. After 150km more we reached Jinghe (精河) in the evening.

## Wetlands and Oil field – 12 September

Jinghe in Bortala Mongol Autonomus Prefecture (博爾塔拉蒙古自治州) is the place with the lowest altitude in northern Xinjiang. It is a plain surrounded by mountains on three sides, with a number of maize and cotton fields. We went to Ebinur Wetland Reserve at the south-eastern side of Ebinur Lake. The entrance of the reserve is at National Road No. 312, towards the direction of Usu (烏蘇), where a sign points toward a salt lake. The ground near the lake is mainly covered by salt and white crystals (sodium sulphate). We could only find a few Desert Wheatears, a Rufous-tailed Shrike, a Gazelle and two lizards (*Phrynocephalus forsythii*).

Our next stop was the Desert Park at road sign 4545 to 4546km at National Road 312. This is an oasis in the desert. We had a great time in the park and got good pictures of a Rosy Starling, several Spotted Flycatchers and Dark-throated Thrushes. We also tried to find one more nearby woodland area near Tuotuo Village, however except for some naked kids playing in a small ditch, there was only a Common Kingfisher to be found.

After a quick lunch, we went to Karamay (克拉瑪依), it means "black oil" in Weiwuer. This is one of the four largest oilfields in China. The car turned left to a well-maintained highway; - National Road No. 217, but the tradeoff for a comfortable road was, the chance for watching birds was much lower. We stopped at a piece of small woodland at "130 Workforce" (130團隊) and "Wuwu New Town" (五五新鎮). There were Barn Swallows, a Desert Warbler and a Corn Bunting. To save time for travelling, we stayed at Baijiantan that evening.

## Windy Desert – 13 September

At the western edge of Junggar Basin (准噶爾盆地), we stopped at a small dense scrubland. There were good chances for birds plus lots of mosquitoes with painful bites. We saw Desert Warblers, Cetti's Bush Warblers, Lesser Whitethroats and Common Redstarts within an hour. There were also hares (*Lepus capensis*) and lizards (*Phrynocephalus sp.*).

We entered the irregular landscapes of Urho (烏爾禾) (it means "wind city" or "ghost city"). A long time ago, this place was a freshwater lake, but the lake disappeared after natural earthcrust changes together with wind erosion. We found a small trail in the desert which led to Alik Lake (艾克



里湖)。On the way, there were Little Owls searching for “food” - Ground Squirrels (*Citellus erythrogenys*). At the edge of the lake, fishermen were rather busy drying the fishes and nets. This attracted a large number of Common Terns and Yellow-legged Gulls. We also found Crested Grebes, a Rufous-tailed Shrike and Lesser Whitethroats there.

We continued our way to the northern part of the Gobi desert. It is a huge, flat plain. However, there was road construction at a number of places along the road. We also met strong sandstorms which made us spend 6 hours traveling instead of 2 hours as expected. We had to postpone our trip to Ulungur Lake.

We stayed in one or two places on the way to take a rest. We were lucky to find more than 200 Twites (the western Xinjiang sub-species). A Lesser Kestrel suddenly flew by, but it was mobbed by the Twites. Adaptation to the environment and struggle for living seems the only way for survival.

Most of the area was covered by stones in the northern Gobi. We finally reached the Ertix River (額爾齊斯河) which marks the borderline of Altai mountain range. The river showed reddish orange reflection under the evening sunlight. We arrived at Burqin (布爾津) and stayed at Huajin Hotel (華鑫酒店). Our rooms on the 5th floor, it was an effort for us to walk up the stairs with our heavy luggage.

### At the border of Kazakhstan

— 17 September

We spent the early morning at a park adjacent to the Ertix River (500m) with a birch forest (河濱公園) near the bridge across the river at Burqin. We saw found a pair of White-backed Woodpeckers at the entrance. In the park, there were also Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers, Common Chaffinches and Fieldfares. The source of the Ertix River is the Altai Mountains, and it is the only river in China flowing (via Russia's Lena River) to the Arctic Ocean. It is said that if the geographical shape of China resembles a rooster, the Ertix River is its tail feather.

We traveled about 50km to Habe He (哈巴河) (650m) to another birch forest named Baihualin Park (白樺林公園) adjacent to the river. There saw Common Mergansers, White-backed Woodpeckers, Common Redstarts and Great Tits.

We went to the northern part of the ancient Altai Mountains eroded smooth by wind and various natural

forces. The road to Baihaba (白哈巴) is quite rough and not easy for driving. There were also many groups of nomads passing the area. “Sheep congestion” cost us 5 hours for a 120km trip. The road in the mountain stretches the horizon, we were at the edge of China, with Kazakhstan (哈薩克斯坦) to the West, Russia to the north, and Mongolia to the east.

We planned to stay at the hostel above the mountain, so that we could watch forest birds the next morning. However, there was road construction that prevented us finding access. We reached the Kazakhstan Border Post. Luckily a soldier pointed us in the right direction. We stayed at Baihaba Village, a village of Tu-va (圖瓦) people, said by some to be descended from old soldiers of Genghis Khan who stayed there after the western wars. Another story is that they originated from a race in Russia. The huts there are mostly with western-style pointed roofs, possibly to prevent accumulation of snow. Although Baihaba is developing into a tourism spot, there is no electricity at night. We spent 2 hours waiting for our dinners in a Mongolian yurt.

### Search for wetlands in a desert

— 15 September

Mountains in the Altai Prefecture are relatively lower. It is the area where cold and wet air from Siberia mixes with the warm inter-continental air in Xinjiang. This environment is characterized by numerous rivers, damp climate, in particular birch and larch forest (白樺林及落葉松) at the Kanas Lake (喀納斯湖) area (1,400 m). In addition to farming as the main economic source, this place is gradually developing into a tourist spot as part of a general trend. However this has added lots of pressure to the environment - tree cutting and lots of visitors. We decided to leave as we couldn't find any special species except two Eurasian Nuthatch and some Hume's Leaf Warblers. On our way, one of our group mates showed us a picture of a Little Crake which stood on a piece of rock at the edge of the lake.

We left Kanas Lake and drove in the direction of Altai City to look for Little Gull. At Burqin River (布爾津河) there were over 40 Red-crested Pochards and some Black-necked Grebes. We traveled along National Road No. 216 to look for a place called “Hudegou” (阿拉哈克) (“butterfly ditch”), however we could only find a reedbed adjacent to a drained Salt Lake. Possibly the wrong place! (con't on page 21)





● 黑尾地鴉  
Mongolian  
Ground Jay

● 準噶爾盤地東緣  
Eastern side of  
Jungar Basin

● 17 - 9 - 2004

● 朱詠兒  
Doris Chu

● Nikon 90X  
● Nikkor 400mm f5.6 IFED + 2X TC - 301  
● Fuji Provia 400 slide



● 灰藍山雀  
Azure Tit

● 青河白樺林公園  
Qinhe Baihualin Park

● 17 - 9 - 2004

● 林志榮  
C W Lam

● Canon New F1  
● 300mm f2.8 + 2X  
● Fuji Provia 400 slide





大天鵝  
Whooper Swan

巴音布魯克  
Bayinbuluk

8-9-2004

馬嘉慧  
Carrie Ma

Nikon Coolpix 4500



長尾雀  
Long-tailed Rosefinch

清河白樺林公園  
Qinhe Baihualin Park

17-9-2004

何禮高  
Lego Ho

Canon EOS 1V  
Canon EF 600mm f4 +  
2X adaptor





波斑鴉  
McQueen's  
Bustard

準噶爾盆地南緣  
Southern edge of  
Jungar Basin

18 - 9 - 2004

盧嘉孟  
Lo Kar Man

Nikon F5  
Nikkor 500mm f4D IFED II +  
1.4X TC-14E  
Kodak E200 slide



大鴉  
Great Bustard

伊犁與新源之間  
Near Ili and Xinyuan

10 - 9 - 2004

林鳳兒  
Shirley Lam

Leica telescope +  
Nikon Coolpix 990





黃鷓  
Yellowhammer

清河白樺林公園  
Qinhe Baihualin  
Park

17-9-2004

盧嘉孟  
Lo Kar Man

Nikon F5  
Nikkor 500mm f4D IFED +  
1.4X TC - 14E  
Kodak E200 slide



姬田雞  
Little Crake

新疆哈納斯湖  
Xinjiang Kanas Lake

15-9-2004

何禮高  
Lego Ho

Canon EOS 10D  
Canon 100-400m f5.6IS



## A northern Xinjiang round trip for bustards (con't)

(con't from page 16)

We continued to travel along National Road 216 from Altai City towards the direction of Beitun (北屯鎮). At road sign 23km, a Ruddy Shelduck flew above us, towards a lake on our left. Inside the lake, there were lots of gulls and cormorants. At the edge of the lake, there were Pallas's Gulls, Yellow-legged Gulls, Black-headed Gulls, Common Mergansers. We also found our target bird - a small flock of Little Gulls, notably small, with pointed heads, and dark underwings. It was just before sunset, and we were glad we hadn't given up.

### Along the country border

— 16 September

We had Soyabean milk and dough fritters for breakfast. One of the bird watching spot of that day was Fuhai (福海) (600m) 50km to the southwest. Fuhai is one of the biggest lakes in China, it comprising Jiuli Hu (吉力湖) and Ulungur Lake (烏倫古湖). We found access to the lake blocked by shops and restaurants. We finally found a small trail behind a restaurant called "Haihui Fishery Village" (海匯魚村) leading to the lake where we found a White Pelican, some Common Cranes, Red-crested Pochards, a Eurasian Marsh Harrier and a Temminck's Stint. To look for more birds, we went to Ulungur Lake which is about 7km from Jiuli Hu. However, only a Sand Martin and a few Citrine Wagtails were found.

It was a long way (380 km) to our next spot Beitun (北屯) along National Road 216, and we were getting short of time. There was also road construction at a number of places, so the chance for finding birds seemed lower.

We turn to National Road 320 at Dulai (都拉特). At this frontier area, most of the places we passed were desolate, with scarcely distributed huts and trees. Before the 90s', when China stand against USSR, Altai faced lots of external pressure. Today, the pressure relieved, the border re-opened, however, this place continues to be a silent and backward place. Towards the mountains, altitude increases. There was a snowy range in front of us, the border between China and Mongolia. Poor roads led us to Qinghe (青河) at 9:00pm.

### Mongolian Ground Jay at eastern Junggar — 17 September

Qinghe is a small town located in a valley of the Altai range near Mongolia. There are lots of trees at both sides of the Qingeli River (青格里河). We spent our early

morning at the birch forest and shrubland around Baihualin Park (800m, Province Road 228 at 1km road sign). There were good ticks of Yellowhammers, Rock Buntings, Pine Buntings, Plain Mountain Finches, Mongolian Finches, Chukars, as well as Common Chiffchaffs at shrubs near the river.

We traveled along Province Road 228 towards Mori (木壘), it's about 300 km from the eastern edge of the Jungar Basin. There were Mongolian Ground Jays at a number of places (roadsign 127-140km, 199km and 248km). In this desert between China and Mongolia, there were no people, we could only found Chukar, Corsac fox (*Vulpes corsac*), hare (*Lepus capensis*) and a few wild Bactrian Camels.

When we approach Mori, we saw a silver snowy mountain in front of us - we were at Tianshan again!

### McQueen's Bustard in Gobi desert

— 18 September

We traveled to the western direction toward Sanjiaoquanzi (三個泉子) along Province Road No. 303. We stopped at Baositan Village (博斯坦鄉) (1,145m), our "birdwatcher driver" showed the field guide with the page on bustards to the villagers. They pointed at the McQueen's Bustard picture and asked us seriously whether we are hunters. The warned us that we will be fined RMB10,000 for hunting. We were pleased that people there really care about the birds.

One of the villagers described the bird "...there are many...like the size of a chicken...near the location where people keep camels...". We followed these directions and turned left at a petrol station to the Gobi desert. Fortunately, we met a villager going in the same direction. We followed him for some 20 km. The villager pointed to the far away and said "there are lots of birds at the bottom of that mountain...". We wondered how we could find a bird in the big desert. We continue to drive for a short distance. All of a sudden, a big bird with contrasting black and white color on wing, flew in front of us to the left. It was really amazing, there were 5 McQueen's Bustards. All of them were very alert.

Other birds that day included Rock Bunting, Grey-necked Bunting, Montagu's Harrier, etc.

We passed Qitai (奇台), Faokhan (阜康) and finally returned to Urumuqi. This had been a trip around the Junggar basin and Altai mountain range. To celebrate



completion of the trip, we had a dinner at a famous chicken restaurant.

## After the “Bustards” – 19 September

We didn't need to hurry to the next spot for birds, but stayed in the hotel instead to enjoy our breakfast, and went shopping at the old market Erdaoqiao (二道橋). We returned to Hong Kong in the late afternoon.

## Acknowledgement

In this 4,108km-trip, we could only find 145 species, compared with a cumulative species list of over 200 by other birding friends. Still, we had lots of “good ticks”. We were really lucky to see Great Bustards and McQueen's Bustards within 200m, and to find the extremely rare (for China) White Pelicans. Common Cranes, Whooper Swans, Mongolian Ground Jays and Wallcreepers at very close distance were also memorable.

Below is a summary of the trip:

Date	Birding spot	Length of trip (km)	Interesting birds	Hotel / cost
5 Sept				Hetuan Ramada Hotel (河屯華美達酒店) (RMB450/night, double bed room)
6 Sept	Hauxia, No. 1 Glacier, Victory Pass, Fuerla Reservoir,	211	Golden Eagle, Common Swift Alpine Accentor, Brandt's Mountain Finch, Wallcreeper, Northern Wheatear, European Goldfinch, Linnet	Ba Lun Tai: Yiaolun Hotel (巴倫台：遊龍賓館) (RMB100/night, double bed room)
7 Sept	Bayinbuluke	218	Black-necked Crane, Common Crane, Himalayan Griffon	Bayinbuluke: Bayin Hotel (巴音布魯克：巴音酒店) (RMB140/night, double bed room)
8 Sept	Bayinbuluke, Kunes Forest Reserve	254	Whooper Swan, Common Crane, Golden Eagle, Long-legged Buzzard, Mistle Thrush, Mongolian Finch, Horned Lark	Kunes Forest Reserve: Kunes Hotel (羣乃斯林場：羣乃斯賓館) (RMB140night, double bed room)
9 Sept	Kunes Forest Reserve: Narat Plateau	358	European Roller, Northern Skylark	Gongliu: Gongliu Hotel (羣留：羣留賓館) (RMB140night, double bed room)
10 Sept	Ili: Yemato, Chongyianchiang	238	Great Bustard, Crested Lark, Chukar, Rook	Ili: Ili Hotel (伊犁：伊犁賓館) (RMB 140/night, double bed room)
11 Sept	Ili, Gozigou, Sailim Lake	332	Whooper Swan, Black-necked Grebes, Common Starlings, Rufous-tailed Shrike	Jinghe: Jinghe Hotel (精河：精河賓館) (RMB110/night, double bed room)
12 Sept	Bortala Mongol Autonomous Prefecture: Ebinur lake, Desert Park, western edge of Junggar Basin (Karamay)	375	Spotted Flycatcher, Dark-throated Thrush, Corn Bunting, Northern Wheatear, Rosy Starling	Bajiantan: Huayuen Hotel (白鹼灘：花園賓館) (RMB100/night, double bed room)

The combination of participants was also interesting - bird watchers and photographers supported each other on field identification, photography skills and cooperation. We thank Lo Kar-man for overall coordination, liaison, trip briefing, slideshows and being chair at our meetings; Doris Chu for various support; Lam Chi-wing for flight, hotel arrangement and follow-up activities; Lego Ho for computer recording and for bringing us lots of fun; Shirley for field identification and for being a good birding partner. We also must thank our drivers, Li-dong and Liu-yung.

Special thanks to Professor Ma Ming of Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography of Academy Sinica. His field experience, knowledge of habitat, history and local culture, attitude on science, as well as willing to share and promote awareness of nature, all of these impressed us a lot. Professor Ma could not join the later part of the trip for he had other commitments. He continued to offer us lots of support including birding information, and to give us calls during the rest of the trip. We express our sincere gratitude for his kind support.



Date	Birding spot	Length of trip (km)	Interesting birds	Hotel / cost
13 Sept	Western edge of Junggar Basin: Urho, Alik Lake	352	Desert Warbler, Cetti's Bush Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat	Burqin: Huajin Hotel (布爾津: 華鑫酒店) (RMB180/night, double bed room)
14 Sept	Altai Prefecture: Ertix River, Habe He	300	Common Merganser, White-backed Woodpecker, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Common Redstart	Baihaba: Baihaba Village Tu-va Hostel (白哈巴: 白哈巴村土瓦情山庄) (RMB60/bed, 3-4 beds/room)
15 Sept	Altai Prefecture: Kanas Lake, Burqin River	291	Little Crafe, Red-crested Pochard, Little Gull	Beitun: Hingba Hotel (北屯: 興巴賓館) (RMB100/night, double bed room)
16 Sept	Altai Prefecture: Beitun to Fuhai: Ulungur Lake, Jiuli Hu	400	White Pelican, Common Crane, Red-crested Pochard, Eurasian marsh Harrier, Sand Martin	Qinghe: Xinjiang Qinghe Hotel (清河: 新疆清河賓館) (RMB140/night, double bed room)
17 Sept	Altai Prefecture: Baihualin Park, eastern edge of Junggar Basin	388	Mongolian Ground Jay, Chukar, Common Chiffchaff, Yellowhammer	Mori: Yinhe Hotel (木壘: 銀河大酒店) (RMB80/night, double bed room)
18 Sept	Southern edge of Junggar Basin	391	McQueen's Bustard, Grey-necked Bunting, Montagu's Harrier	Urumuqi: Miramar Hotel (烏魯木齊: 美麗華酒店) (RMB380/night, double bed room)


## Tips to Xinjiang

**Clothes:** There is a big difference in day and night temperature. Some places have significant changes in weather or even "four seasons" in a day. It is wise to bring sufficient clothes, in particular hats and sun-lotion. The place is very dry, you could consider washing your own clothes, they will dry quickly.

**Food:** The main dishes are naan bread (饅), "Shou-char rice" (手抓飯), "ban noodles" (拌面) and "cuan tang" (滷湯). Naan bread is baked bread of 20cm in diameter, it can be stored for a month; "Shou-char rice" is rice mixed with red and yellow carrot, and mutton; "ban noodles" is noodles served with soy sauce and other ingredients; "cuan tang" is soup with carrot, onion, cabbage and mutton served with noodles or dumplings. Xinjiang people favour mutton, there are a wide variety of dishes including mutton soup, baked mutton, etc.

**Living:** Accommodation is reasonably priced. Most of the hotels provide hot water and independent washrooms. The cost is about RMB 80 to 150 per night.

**Traveling:** There is no need to apply for entry permit if you are holding a Home Return Permit (回鄉證). Xinjiang is a big place, most of the birding spots are far away from each other. Some roads are in very bad condition. It is recommended to hire a jeep, the cost is about HK\$3 per km or lower.

**Medicine:** Food in Xinjiang is spicy. Medicine for sore throat would be helpful. Some places are at high altitude and it's easy to get symptoms of mountain sickness. It is wise to prepare some medicine for headache. In the deserts, there are lots of mosquitoes in the early morning or before sunset, don't forget insect repellent. 



Scorched in the summer heat, the land of Jiangxi struck me as a hazy expanse of typical suburban Chinese farmland at first glance. Little did we expect that, in the intense heat of mid-July, we would soon be rewarded with the sight of an exciting array of Southern Chinese birds that brave the heat and human disturbance to live around the dusty towns and relatively fragmented forests in the lowlands.

We started from Nan Chang, the provincial capital, due north from mid-morning in the first day. As our van skirted the jagged coast of Poyang Lake and bypassed the proverbially scenic city of Jiu Jiang, we were pleased to see smooth green farmland covering most of the landscape with farm houses studded modestly amongst the neat borders of paddyfields. Power lines lining the highway offered an excellent chance, with perching birds seen three times more frequently than in Hong Kong; despite the roaring traffic and squealing horns, birds visited the highways and flew over in leisure. The Eagle-eyed guide, Mr Lam, pointed out dozens of common species during the 6-hour ride to Wu Yuan. Long-tailed Shrikes proved particularly abundant, proudly scanning the fields for prey; Black Bitterns grazed low roofs with slow flaps of their broad wings, Pied Kingfishers hovered about wide channels in eye-catching mottled dress. Red-rumped Swallows flocked wherever village sheds stood, Egrets waded wherever crops were planted on marshy soil. 3 Grey-headed Lapwing, outrageously patterned black, white and grey, crossed the highway just before the Poyang Bridge. Mr Lam recorded the two Marsh Terns - Whiskered and White-winged Black - at noon, pointing them out to us whilst driving. After a light lunch from KFC we spotted a Chinese Goshawk watching intently for frogs in the face of a lush hillock, her ruddy breast gleaming like a piece of evening cloud. The government office at Zhong Yun, honoured earlier by the breeding troop of Yellow-throated Laughing-thrushes, was empty by this time of the year; we could but marvel at the close proximity to humans these legendary birds have been proved to tolerate even when their young are at their most vulnerable stage!

Accurately at four in the afternoon we turned into a rugged path beyond the town of Wu Yuan that led to the local Botanical Gardens. The acute heat waves began to subside as soon as Apache and Ho Fenqi, the coauthor of “A Field Guide to the Birds of China” joined us, and we set out for the Falconets in Qiao Qi without losing much time. In a narrow valley there, Lam pointed out a pair of fearless, panda-faced Falconets. Pumping their heads and spreading their wings, they showed quirks that were almost comical. In flight the “minute sparrowhawk silhouette” was striking -





the birds were barely sparrow-sized! The call, a shrill collection of high-pitched notes, was piercing for a raptor. In the farmland we noted a pair of Ashy Drongos romping on a powerline.

Towards nightfall we drove to the point near the bank to which the Yellow-throated Laughing-thrush, previously trapped and attached with a radio signal chip, was traced, and we attempted to relocate the bird. Near the site a Dollarbird circled a field in pursuit of insects; a Collared Scops Owl hooted when it turned pitch-dark, while several Chinese Bamboo Partridges gave us a sermon, telling us to pray; soon a White-breasted Crake joined in the evening "chorus". The first day ended with a late meal in a local restaurant that served nice dishes with meshed Tofu at the luscious forefront.

Flooded with golden rays, Wu Kou Bridge was blessed with the presence of a handful of bird species. Chinese Goshawk and Black-naped Green Woodpecker shared the same tree; above the river, Crested Kingfishers, Pied Kingfishers and Blue-throated Bee-eaters kept watch on the wires, the Bee-eaters lashing out to seize huge dragonflies for breakfast; a Large Hawk Cuckoo called in the canopy of a huge tree across the river, whilst Collared Finchbills joined other Bulbuls in their chattering cheerful songs. Past the bridge we visited the valley where we detected the Yellow-throated Laughing-thrush the previous day, and successfully found the elusive bird, jumping about the bamboos, showing off the red and white rings round the feet, whilst more than 5 Black-naped Orioles transfigured into white angels and bounced away towards the sun like automatically powered golden toy planes. More to the surprise of the team was the discovery of 7 post-breeding Yellow-throated Laughing-thrushes that chose to stay in a forest at Shi Men, jumping around the mid-canopy searching for insects - these birds have yet to reveal their winter homes to us, and was apparently quite unique to the immediate region in the "close company" of men, and the BWS radio-tracking work has revealed some promising patterns as to where these birds may travel to and stay over the winter. In the same forest we saw more Black-naped Green Woodpeckers, a flock of Black-winged Cuckoo-shrikes and 4 immature Crested Goshawks exercising their wings in the shade, ready to claim dominance upon the rest of the birds around.

A long journey took the 5 of us to the foot of Wu Yi Shan, near the Fujian border. The borderless expanse of farmlands gave way to rolling slopes just as the wide expressways led up to stony mountain roads, and we gained altitude without getting very far from Plumbeous

Redstarts, which sprang up wherever we saw streams, fanning the ruddy tail under the sun. We traversed narrow strips of farmland adjacent to clear streams that brought mineral water from the heights. The roads were meandering, and sheer cliffs always dropped on either side, but the guide drove as well as his eyes worked, picking out distant Bee-eaters, Dollarbirds, Bulbuls and the like along the way. During the ascent, we were greeted by a pair of Black Bazas, whose handsome, glossy suits and chic crown plumes more than impressed the group; a Crested Serpent Eagle that soared overhead caused a brief commotion, and a Common Sandpiper at about 1000m above sea level was worth mentioning.

The Huang Gang Shan hostels were in the submontane zone. We set out at four and birded at leisure in the van; at the bamboo belt just above the hostels, a wave contained a Rufous-faced Warbler, muted by the cicadas; Chestnut Bulbuls called without showing. Further up from Tung Mu Pass (to Fujian) we gained altitude, reaching past 1400m and more. The scenery of Wu Yi Shan was staggering; slopes dropping at seventy degrees descended a full thousand metres at yards from our wheels, shades of green and black shifted as the foggy mountaintops vanished and reappeared as time passed. A flock of Striated and Black-chinned Yuhinas chirped across the road, picking little black berries along with them. Past a bare rocky cliff overhead we witnessed outpours of as many as 800 Asian House Martins at a time, swooping back and forth in the void above us in tens and hundreds. We carried on towards the summit, keeping an eye out for Cabot's Tragopans that remained ghosts in the low branches. We reached past the tree line, and the shrubs packed the hillsides like sentries. Strong-footed Bush Warblers flew across the road, Brown Bullfinches to the opposite direction, even more secretive in the light fog than the former. Pekin Robins took the role of Silver-eared Mesias as seen in Tai Po Kau. Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrushes were ubiquitous, the long tail striking in silhouette; the female fit snugly into the frame of Chinese Blackbird, but the little new moon earring on her ear told. The descent was protracted and enjoyable, and a good night's sleep prepared us for early birding the next day.

A shaft of blue was just piercing the stellar curtain when our van cracked the silence of the morning and stealthily crept towards the summit. On the way the flock of Yellow-browed Tits and Black-throated Tits, both numbering over 50 individuals, not only cheered us up for the rest of the morning with their lovely acrobatics and chirps and chirrups but brought along other gems as well - a Grey-



capped Woodpecker foraging on a horizontal branch, the frosted back quite different from the Great Spotted Woodpecker that fled in her face, a juvenile Yellow-cheeked Tit that denied all claims of being yellow, several Fire-breasted Flowerpeckers including a lipsticked juvenile that shook its downy body in front of the mother for food, Blyth's Leaf Warblers that crept like Nuthatches and called like Tits, indeed a real Eurasian Nuthatch in a hurry, and finally a Spectacled Warbler in fresh plumage, with two yellow wingbars and a white eyering. Blue Shortwing and Vinous-throated Parrotbills poked their heads out of the shrubbery as well. A Chestnut-crowned Warbler, beautiful with a reddish tiara, had a worm in its beak all the time; Small Niltavas called "Three Blind Mice" rather meaninglessly but mellifluously. The valley was filled with the plaintive calls of White-necklaced Hill Partridges, the call easily imitated but the bird impossible to lure out into view. Barred Cuckoo Doves unobtrusively moored all the way through as we drove up.

Just above 2100m, in bright sunlight, we witnessed the rare summit of Wu Yi Shan on a clear morning. On the slopes we found a Common Rosefinch and a pair of Stonechats from afar, distorted in the heat. Chains of staccato calls brought a whole hillock of small brown birds to our attention - a close inspection revealed Brown Bush Warblers holding territories all over the place, and with the wings and tails chopped short they all looked like fledglings, but weren't. Where are the Upland Pipits and Rosy Pipits that Lam said would follow vehicles on the rocky road? The 30 vehicles that transported an army of tourists to the summit seemed to provide a reasonable answer. At the highest point of the Wu Yi Shan range at 2158m, derelict hovels supported a further 1500 Martins all around. We thought it was time to descend when the tourist cars packed the available space full, and subsequently stayed for lunch at the only residents' along the mountain road. Around that little farm in the montane forest, where they had bee-boxes, poultry and pumpkin scaffoldings, we watched 3 Rusty Laughing-thrushes at close range, and saw through their blue spectacles as their cheerful fluty calls rang in my ears. Excellent potatoes cooked as in local cuisine and full flavour chicken soup, to name a few dishes, were served as lunch.

On the way down we had 2 Black Bulbuls mewing, a Russet Bush Warbler in a bird wave that brought Small Niltavas and Pekin Robins (not a single Parrotbill?!), and another Spectacled Warbler that called with food in its beak like anxious parent to its children: "di dee didi dee". A brief detour to Fujian allowed us to see 4 Dollarbirds that chose to crowd on the same exposed perch. We ascended for the evening again to find a Great Spotted Eagle escaping like mad from our van






ten yards away, a pair of Small Niltavas calling in the shade, two Orange-bellied Leafbirds, and to everyone's delight, a Black Eagle that almost dropped onto the road, close as it was. A Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler baffled us with its call though it sounded a few metres away only but, mysteriously, was out of sight. We even bumped into two Tufted Deer towards the end as we returned, but no Tragopans turned up after all - perhaps they were eager to remain mysterious, yet their vivid image thrived in our imagination all the way through as night fell.

Highlights during the last day included Crested Buntings near a ferociously-staring young Black-winged Kite, a frightened Jay that kept its head down in the pine needles, oversized Hwamei and Black-capped Kingfishers in the

foothills, a pair of Grey-capped Greenfinches by the road, and 4 pairs of Jacanas amidst a suburban setting not far from the provincial capital. It was over 200 km from the mountains to Nan Chang, but every second our eyes were focused beyond the window in expectation - not bad to find a Yellow Bittern circling just above our van. All in all it was an excellent trip both by design and fortune, with a total trip count of 113 species, more than a kitty treat in this summer heat that would otherwise have burnt us down whole.

Many thanks to Apache and Mr. Lam Kim Sing for arranging the wonderful trip; hope you have all enjoyed this brief account and found it worthwhile both to try it out in Jiangxi, and support the forthcoming follow-up work on the Yellow-throated Laughing-thrushes. 

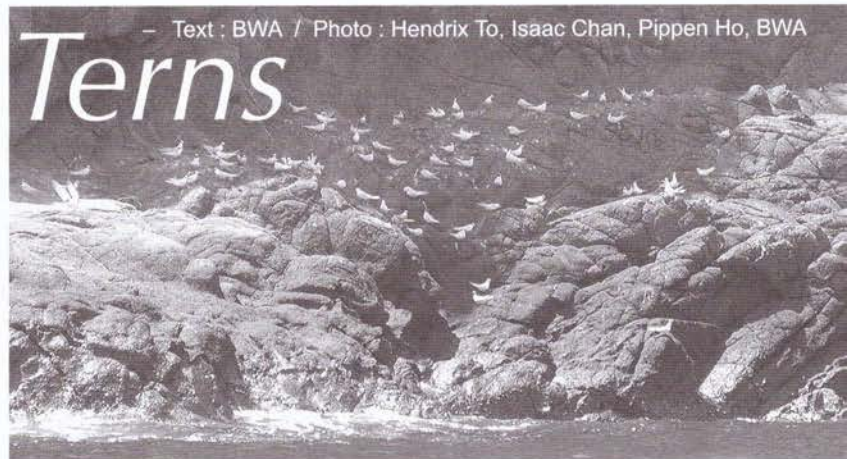
## Return of the Terns



Terns returned to breed in Hong Kong as usual between May and September this year. While the Tern Research Group continued previous efforts on studies and conservation, events in the 2004 breeding season have triggered a review on the purpose and approach of further work.

### Findings

The breeding success of Roseate Terns made the news headline on Sunday Mingpao last year. To our disappointment, the record was not repeated in summer. The first Roseate Tern was sighted on 10 May. The counts increased gradually to a peak of



70 on 30 May at Tap Mun and Kung Chau. Due to some unknown reasons however, the birds did not stay long - none were left by the end of June.

The first Black-naped Terns appeared as early as 24 April this year. The counts increased steadily to a peak of 274 by the end of July. Tern Island has been an important breeding site for Black-naped Terns for many years. Although 30 birds were seen there in mid May, none was left toward the end of the month. It appeared that the birds have moved to neighboring Kung Chau, probably because something on Tern Island forced them to find an alternative site.

Black-naped Terns at Kung Chau used to leave





in early August after breeding, but many downy chicks were still found there in mid August this year. Nesting spots not used in previous years were occupied.



The last Black-naped did not leave until early September. It is thought that two waves of chicks were produced this year. Birds that arrived late have to wait until nesting spots are vacated by the early comers.

Bridled Terns first arrived in late April this year. The counts generally declined after a peak of 450 recorded in mid May. The birds appeared to be very nervous: they stay high in the air most of the time and were reluctant to land. When they did land, they took off again after a short while, sometimes less than one minute. The cause of such behaviour was thought to be excessive disturbance on the island. Nevertheless, some chicks were still found to be under parental care in rock crevices in mid August, suggesting that at least some birds have fledged successfully at the site. All Bridled departed in early September, which is about 2 weeks earlier than previous years.

Other than Tap Mun and Tern Island, a few surveys were carried out at small islands to the east of Crooked Island as well as those in eastern and southeastern waters. About 30 Black-naped Terns were found around Crooked Island but there was none to the east of Sai Kung. As for southeastern waters, both Black-naped and Bridled Terns were recorded during the first two surveys in early May and early June. In mid August a few Bridleds were still seen at Cape D'Aguiar during the passage of tropical storm Kompas, but none was found in our last visit just two weeks later. In view of the limited observations, we cannot say too much about the breeding success at these sites.

## Return of the Terns (con't)



## Increased Disturbance

With AFCD's enhanced conservation measures and our publicity efforts last year, hiking groups and commercial ecotour operators now understand fairly clearly why they should not land on islands with breeding tern colonies.

AFCD continued their work this year, notifying tour organizations about relevant codes and posting wardens on Tern Island on Sundays and public holidays. As far as we understand, no tour group has landed on the island this year, but the amount of disturbance has nevertheless worsened. The number of fishermen has increased, up to 14 on one count. The reef around the island has become a favorite diving location, with up to 4 boats within 20m of the island. From time to time, researchers entered the core area on the island where the terns nested for various studies, including nest boxes inspections, ringing, radio tracking and continuous observation. Finally, the number of Peregrine Falcon sightings at the island has also increased. Every time the raptor was around, the terns were scared into the air and did not land for long periods. Working together, all these disturbances must have to some extent contributed to the departure of Black-naped and Roseates early in the season and the nervous behaviour of their Bridled cousins.

Research activities on the island inevitably disturb the birds. No one can really say for sure what acceptable limits for the number or duration of such visits are. The issue was discussed among ourselves and also with AFCD. It was agreed that every effort must be made to reduce the number of landings and to shorten the period of stay on the island. Starting from the next breeding season, all



research work on the island will be kept in a common log to improve communication and coordination among different parties. AFCD will also review their arrangements for patrols and nest box studies.

## Conservation

Our conservation work this year was focused on publicity and education. Voluntary interpretation service was given to two commercial ecotour outings to Mirs Bay. The aim was to improve the public's understanding of the ecology and conservation of terns in the area. By maintaining a presence in such activities, we could also appreciate how such tours were conducted. Although tern watching tour had once appeared on the list of gifts for a certain credit card, most people do not understand what it's about. Coupled with a moderate price tag, two further tours were eventually cancelled because of too few customers.

Good relations with the press enabled us to release news about terns from time to time to promote conservation. A report titled "Don't Disturb, It's Tern Breeding Season Again" appeared on Ming Pao in early May. It described AFCD's nest box programme and reminded people not to disturb the breeding birds.

In mid May, the Apple Daily published a full-page feature on the spectacular sights at Tern Island. Both the name and location of the island were given, and marked on a somewhat inaccurate map. Although the article did include a note on conservation and relevant laws, it also provided a contact where people can arrange for private visits to the island. We were concerned that this might attract visitors who would land on the island. Such worry became a fact during the Dragon Boat Festival holiday - 13 visitors on small boats attempted to get onto the island. The act was witnessed and reported by members of Tai Po

Environmental Association, who happened to be around on a tern watching tour. Fortunately, the terns were saved because the visitors were turned back by AFCD wardens. The incident highlights the vulnerability of the breeding colony - had the tourists gone on a weekday where no one was around the consequences would have been disastrous.

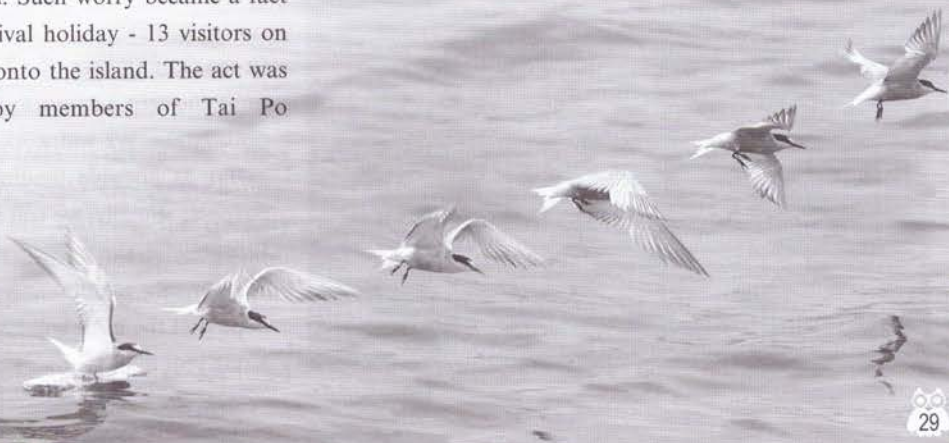
Further news stories appeared in mid July and early August, reporting respectively on disturbance to terns at

Tern Island and our radio tracking study.

In addition to newspapers, two local television stations approached us with plans for programmes on Tern Island. After the lesson with Apple Daily, we would only

cooperate under the conditions that there would be no landing on the island and no reference to its exact location. A message on conservation has also to be incorporated. The programmes were never produced however for various reasons. We have mixed feelings for such outcome: on the positive side Tern Island was spared from a potential rush of sight-seeing tours, while on the negative side we lose a great opportunity to publicize the conservation message.

Recent advances in digital photography technology have attracted an increasing group of amateurs specializing in bird photos. Many exciting shots were made this year by photographers who joined our surveys. A hit was created when Black-naped Terns began chasing boats towards the end of July. For two weeks, the ferry between Ma Liu Shui and Tap Mun carried some extra passengers armed with telephoto lenses. Every one or two days new pictures of terns were posted on the Society's BBS.





## Research

The weekly surveys at Mirs Bay continued this year despite the absence of external funding. The work lasted for 20 weeks starting from late April. Other research on terns included the following:

- Radio tags were placed on three Bridled chicks to study their activities after fledging. The attempt however had limited success due to some technical problems. Another study is planned next year.
- Some Bridled chicks on Tern Island were ringed in early July.
- Full-day observations were made on 31 July on Tern Island and Kung Chau to study the feeding, foraging and night roosting of the terns. The ground temperature on Tern Island was measured.
- AFCD tested some new nest box designs on Tern Island.

Findings from our studies will be detailed in a separate report.

## Wrap Up for the Season

The report on Apple Daily and the plans of television stations once again highlight a dilemma with conservation: the public has to be fairly well-informed before they would support tern conservation, but too much publicity may overwhelm Tern Island with sightseeing visitors. The highest risk comes from those who want to explore the place on their own outside public holidays. The Chinese White Dolphin is a good




precedent where too much ecotourism threatens the very species to be protected.

The way out of the dilemma is to have publicity and protection going hand in hand - the former cannot proceed ahead of the latter. Before protection measures on Tern Island are strengthened to deter any casual visitors, we must continue to keep a low profile, not releasing the location and conditions of the site to the public.

For many years we have been asking AFCD to close Tern Island during the breeding season. However, this is rejected because the Government does not want to have a law for such a remote location where enforcement is difficult. On the other hand, we heard lately that our request to designate the island a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) would soon be answered. We look forward to the favourable outcome. The idea of a webcam on the island was also proposed to AFCD recently. As the device can provide remote monitoring of



the site at all times, it may help to identify other sources of disturbance outside Sundays and public holidays. If implemented, this would be a first in local conservation efforts.

In the coming year, the Tern Research Group will continue the tern surveys to monitor breeding success and disturbance. We will work closely with AFCD to reduce as far as possible landing on the island for research purposes. Finally, we will also make use of opportunities to publicize the conservation message in a controlled manner. By **maintaining these** few breeding sites, we hope that the **terns will keep returning** to breed in Hong Kong year after year. 



- Henry Lui & Carrie Ma

Information such as population numbers, gender ratios and health status can be gathered through birdwatching activity. However, further details of feeding, habitat and roosting environment have to be gathered with the aid of technology.

Technological advancements are leading to improvements in ornithological research. Radio tracking equipment is simple, basically, a radio transmitter on the bird and an antenna receiver in the hand of the researcher.

The advantage of this kind of equipment is that we no longer have to maintain line-of-sight observation. In other words, information can be gathered with minimal disturbance. In addition, this technology fill in the gap of inadequacies of normal field observation in areas like remote mountainous regions, woodland, grassland and the open ocean. With a radio transmitter, individual birds are easy to locate.

This technology could also enable us to discover roosting areas, patterns of daytime activity and movement. The role of individuals within a bird community can also be estimated. In addition, large amount of data that can also be gathered in a short period provides reliable evidence for conservation purposes.

In summer 2004, experienced birders from HKBWS conducted two research programmes which included the use of radio tracking, the first one being a survey of Yellow-throated Laughingthrush in Wuyuan county, Jiangxi province whilst the other was an ecological monitoring of the terns in Sai Kung.

## 1. Mountain Region Case Study: Yellow-throated Laughingthrush

Many researchers from the Society joined their counterparts from the China Academy of Science in Beijing for research on the species in Wuyuan county of Jiangxi Province. The survey was carried out in a small local village where the researchers had the birds weighed, ringed and fitted with a tracking device. The birds were released after recording of details.

With a weight of 0.9g, the tracking device makes up a hundredth of a birds' body weight. During the natural replacement (moult) of tail feathers, the tracking device will fall off the bird in a matter of months. Researchers tracked locations of the birds with the signals emitted by the tracking device.

Yellow-throated Laughingthrush has aroused

worldwide concern recently, mainly due to its small, isolated and tiny population. (See Oriental Bird Club Bulletin Number 38, Ed.) It is restricted to North-East India, the southern part of Yunnan province and southeast China (Jiangxi). Little is known of overall numbers and migration patterns. The species was recently (2000) re-discovered in Jiangxi Province where a wild population of only 150 known individuals was found. Apart from several breeding sites, we know little about the ecology of this species, including its wintering location. The objective of this research was to explore the route of the birds after their departure from the breeding sites by radio tracking. It is supposed that the species is near threatened in view of its narrow distribution.

Useful information was collected from the signals, it is known that the species roost in the mountains during night time and feed in the forest during daytime. They demonstrated unusual behaviour a few days before migration. They stayed in the mountains for several days with limited movements before effectively disappearing on their long-distance migration.

## 2. Marine Case Study: Terns


The Tern Research Group of HKBWS put radio tracking devices on several fledglings of Black-naped Terns in July. By following the signals, we could obtain the location of the terns dead or alive.

As the boundary of this study was restricted to 2 km, it was to be expected that the flight of the birds might exceed this limit. Nevertheless, there existed no need for long-distance tracking as the study concentrated on the feeding location of fledglings. Old-fashioned tracking devices used to be tied on the back of the bird like a backpack, but it would not tear off after a long time. The birds, therefore, might have to wear the device for their entire life. In this summer's research, the transmitters were simply glued to the feathers of the young terns. The device is designed to detach automatically when the birds moult. When the birds return to the ocean in September, their daily lives would not be affected by the device any more.



Unfortunately, the research turned out to be unsuccessful due to the transmitters not working. We will learn from the experience so that more useful information can be gathered in our future studies.

## Looking forward

There have been previous studies of Black-faced Spoonbill and Painted Snipe with the aid of radio tracking. Although use of this technology is a new thing locally, it is believed that it can greatly strengthen our ability to gather information in the field. For broader conservation purposes, bird study is no longer restricted to just bird identification and number counts. The in-depth recording of information on behavior, habitat requirements and migration patterns also contributes to our overall knowledge. 

## Book Recommendation

– Samson So



### Birds of Fraser's Hill

## Birds of Fraser's Hill


Fraser's Hill, predominately covered by montane forest, is situated 100 km north of Kuala Lumpur, with its summit 1,310 metres above the sea level. With over 247 species recorded there and perfect infrastructure for the travellers, the site is known to the world as a famous bird watching site. It is no wonder that Fraser Hill is renowned as one of the finest bird watching destinations in Southeast Asia. It is also an ideal outdoor classroom for those who would like to learn about birds in the Oriental region. The annual international bird watching competition draws birdwatchers worldwide, providing a valuable exchange opportunity among bird lovers and ornithologists alike.


“Birds of Fraser's Hill” is the work of Morten Strange, well-known birdwatcher and bird photographer. It provides a photographic guide to 95 species of more easily seen birds in the Fraser's Hill region, plus practical information including a checklist of the birds there, an introduction to various bird watching routes, accommodation,

transport and contact information of related agencies. With 120 pages, the book (ISBN 981-04-9930-2) is pocket sized and printed in full colour on magazine paper. It is published by Nature's Niche Ltd of Singapore. Please visit the website [www.naturesniche.com](http://www.naturesniche.com) for further details.

## Dancing Butterflies

## and Birds of Fung Yuen



Following the gradual increase in popularity of bird watching activity, the ecological value of many little known bird watching spots in the past has received more attention recently. Some of these sites are also under closer scrutiny in respect of other conservation issues. Compiled by Tai Po Environmental Association and printed by Wan Li Book Co. Ltd., “Dancing Butterflies and Birds of Fung Yuen” is a publication dedicated to introducing Fung Yuen, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) near Tai Po. Among the 65 bird species recorded in the area, almost half of them are illustrated with vivid photographs. The book is also a very practical guide for bird watchers as it includes a list of birds found in the area. In the 168 pages of the book, the author not only introduces birds, but also thoroughly describes its culture, history, butterflies, plants and conservation status. It is one of the most detailed references published about an SSSI. Unfortunately, only a Chinese Language Version is available. The book is sold locally at a price of \$78 (ISBN: 962-14-2843-2). 



These are unchecked records. Members are reminded of the importance of submitting all records on cards or electronically.

## July

An Asian Dowitcher and Far Eastern Curlew at Mai Po on 6th were the only significant reports received during the month.

## August

Migration of waterbirds was well under way on 8th, when two Oriental Pratincoles were among 1500 shorebirds at Mai Po, and the onset of passerine migration was noted from 14th, when an Arctic Warbler was seen at Tai Po Kau.

A juvenile Drongo Cuckoo, only the third for Hong Kong and a thrill for those who found it (P&MW) as much as for those who managed to twitch it, was at Tai Po Kau from 21st to at least 24th. Within a week and also at Tai Po Kau, the finders of this bird had photographed a flycatcher, thought to be a Brown-chested Flycatcher and potentially only the second for Hong Kong.

Other noteworthy landbirds at this time were a Stonechat at Lut Chau on 25th, the earliest ever in autumn by one day, and three Mountain Tailorbirds at Ng Tung Chai (EMSK).

Peak tern counts in this month were 12 Black-naped and 40 Bridled in Mirs Bay on 21st and 20 Aleutians in the West Lamma Channel on 27th (EMSK, PA, JSRE). A juvenile Sooty Tern was seen near Shek Ngau Chau on 28th (CHF).

## September

Less than two years ago, Malayan Night Heron was not known to occur in Hong Kong or even Guangdong. In April 2003 two adults were photographed by a night-time camera-trap in a remote part of Lantau (and seen by no-one). It was therefore against all expectation that a family of these superb herons would be found near Fanling Golf Course in September 2004 and seen by many observers. Following the discovery of one or two birds on 3rd at a young *fung shui* wood beside a small village (CCK), there were sightings of up to two adults and two fledged young to the end of the month and a nest was found.

Also reported in the first half of the month were five Mountain Tailorbirds at Ng Tung Chai on 2nd (EMSK), a new high count, a Slaty-backed Forktail at Tai Po Kau and Black-winged Stilt at Lamma (JS), apparently the first for the island, both on 5th, three Grey-headed Lapwings at Kam Tin on 6th, 40 Aleutian Terns near Po Toi and two flocks of Chinese Starlings totalling 115 on Po Toi on 12th (MT), the latter a new high count.

From mid month to at least the third week of October, a fine and dry autumn ensued, with many days when birding was good. Among the best covered sites were Deep Bay, Ng Tung Chai, Tai Po Kau, Penfold Park and Lamma.

Reports during the latter half of the month included single Black-winged Kites at Mai Po from 17th, (SLT), a total of four Manchurian Reed Warblers during 18th-27th at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau (PJL, YYT), another Brown-chested Flycatcher at Tai Po Kau, this time on 19th (JA), a Baillon's Crake at Long Valley on 19th (GT), up to 14 Dollarbirds (a new autumn high count) at Ng Tung Chai during 20th- 24th (EMSK), single Crested Honey Buzzards at Ng Tung Chai and Palm Springs on 22nd and 29th (EMSK, PJL), up to three Siberian Blue Robins at Ng Tung Chai, Dong Ping Chau and Tai O during 22nd-26th, three juvenile Sooty Flycatchers (EMSK, RWL) and the first Lesser Shortwing of the autumn at Ng Tung Chai on 24th, nine Black-naped Orioles at Lamma on 25th (JS), a Watercock and Slaty-breasted Rail at Long Valley on 26th (GT), seven Blue-tailed Bee-eaters at Mai Po on 27th (YYT), the earliest ever autumn date, 70 Richard's Pipits at Chek Lap Kok on 29th (GJC) and a Pied Harrier at Mai Po on 28th.

## October (first 3 weeks)

A cool, dry continental airflow prevailed for at least the first three weeks of the month. Birds noted on 1st included a Black Bittern, Black-winged Kite, Pied Harrier, Oriental Cuckoo, six Blue-tailed Bee-eaters and 58 Collared Crows, the highest count for some years, all at Mai Po (YYT), and a Yellow-browed Bunting at Long Valley (TYL), the earliest ever in autumn. The latter individual or another was seen intermittently there until at least mid month.

The following day there were sightings of a Grey Nightjar and Chestnut Bulbul at Lamma (JS), a Pheasant-tailed Jacana at a canalised stream at Tai Wai (DAD) and a Eurasian Hobby at Mai Po.

On 3rd, three Lesser Shortwings, a Pygmy Wren Babbler and five Mountain Tailorbirds, a new high, were present at Ng Tung Chai (EMSK) and a Crested Honey Buzzard, Pied Harrier and two Eurasian Hobbies as well as four unidentified Bee-eaters were noted during a raptor-watch at Kadoorie FBG (CHF). Further raptors in the form of a Japanese Sparrowhawk and Eurasian Hobby (GJC) were seen at Sai Kung and a mystery flycatcher was at Tai Po Kau (DT).

Other reports during the first week of the month included a Pied Harrier, Pheasant-tailed Jacana and 37 Blue-tailed Bee-eaters at Lok Ma Chau on 5th (PJL), a male Siberian Thrush at Tai Po Kau (GH) and a Eurasian Woodcock at Cloudy Hill (J&JH), both on 6th, and two Forest Wagtails at Stanley, a Lanceolated Warbler at Kadoorie FBG, and an Amur Falcon, six Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, a Forest Wagtail and Greenish Warbler at Mai Po on 7th (PJL).




In a fine autumn for migrating raptors, further Amur Falcons were seen at Mai Po on 9th, 14th and 17th including a total of 21 at dusk on the latter date (GT), by far the highest ever count. A male was photographed the same day at Tsim Bei Tsui (FF). Single Black-winged Kites were noted throughout the period from Mai Po, Fung Lok Wai, Tsim Bei Tsui and Long Valley, and Crested Honey Buzzards and Pied Harriers were reported with unusual frequency, including three of the latter, a new high count, at Palm Springs on 18th.

A warbler seen and photographed in Tai Po Kau on 9th (P&MW) was thought to be a Plain-tailed Warbler *Seicercus soror*, a potential addition to the Hong Kong list.


Other migrants found during the second week of the month included an Oriental Scops Owl taken into care at Kadoorie FBG on 8th, 13 Blue-tailed Bee-eaters at Mai Po on 9th, 75 Chinese Starlings in the Mai Po-Lok Ma Chau area and six Blue Rock Thrushes and a Grey

Nightjar at Lamma, all on 10th, an early Verditer Flycatcher at Shuen Wan on 12th, two Siberian Thrushes at Kadoorie FBG during 12th-16th, an Eastern Grass Owl at Mai Po on 13th, and a Schrenck's Bittern and 35 Chinese Grosbeaks at Kam Tin on 14th.

In addition to the raptors, highlights of the third week were a Pheasant-tailed Jacana at Lok Ma Chau on 15th, a Radde's Warbler at Mai Po on 16th and a Blunt-winged Warbler there the next day, an Orange-headed Ground Thrush at Ng Tung Chai and an unusually early Olive-backed Pipit at Lamma (JS), both on 18th. A Ruddy Crake at Long Valley (GT) and a Brown Hawk Owl at Wo Hop Sek (J&JH) on 19th, and a Citrine Wagtail and two Daurian Starlings at Kam Tin on 20th (JA), the latter surprisingly the only reports of the autumn.

In mid month, Eurasian Collared Dove was found at two new sites, Long Valley and Beas River (MLC, MRL). 

## Coming Activities

Date	Leader / Speaker	Activity / Gathering location	Time	Difficulty
6 Feb (Wed)	Chen Chi Po Ng Yan Nar Crested Bulbul Club Leader	<b>Tai Po Kau – Wun Yiu</b> ** 08:00 #70 bus stop, Garden Restaurant (Yau Ma Tei MTR Station Exit C)	08:00 – 15:00	XXX
16 Feb (Wed)	Speaker to be announced	<b>Indoor meeting &lt;Hong Kong Bird Index&gt;</b> Room 1112, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon (Member \$10, Non-member \$30)	19:00 – 20:30	X
19 Feb (Sat) & 20 Feb (Sun)	Au Chun Yan Apache Lau	<b>Records 198 - Bird Watching Competition 2005</b>	24 hours	
26 Feb (Sat)	Wong Lai Yee Tsang Wa Crested Bulbul Club Leader	<b>Tsim Bei Tsui</b> ** 08:30 Hang Heung Cake Shop, Yuen Long (near LRT Tai Road Station)	08:00 – 13:00	XX
27 Feb (Sun)	Alan Chan Apache Lau Chan Yung	<b>Mai Po</b> 08:00 Kowloon Tong MTR  Station (Kent Road exit) <b>or</b> 09:00 Mai Po carpark, coach leaves at 15:00 and back to Kowloon Tong at 16:00	08:00 – 16:00	XX
5 Mar (Sat)	Simon Wong Cheung Ho Fai	<b>Lunar New Year Gathering and Indoor Meeting &lt;China / Overseas Trip Reports&gt;</b> 2/F Staff Recreation Room, HK Observatory (Member only)	15:00 – 18:00	
6 Mar (Sun)	Hung Wai Ming	<b>Sham Chung to Yung Shue O</b> 08:30 Ferry from Ma Liu Shiu to Sham Chung	08:30 – 15:00	XX
13 Mar (Sun)	Ho Man Fai Au Chun Yan	<b>Shing Mun</b> 08:00 Tsuen Wan MTR Station Hang Seng Bank	08:00 – 13:00	XX
19 Mar (Sat)	Hon So Wong Chiu Shu Crested Bulbul Club Leader	<b>Luk Keng</b> ** 08:30 Fanling Train Station Maxim's Fast Food Shop	08:30 – 13:00	X




Transportation  
arrangement





Please fill in the booking slip  
and return




# Coming Activities

Date	Leader / Speaker	Activity / Gathering location	Time	Difficulty
20 Mar (Sun)	Tai Sheung Lai Tam Yiu Leung	<b>Tai Mo Shan</b> 08:00 Tsuen Wan MTR Station Hang Seng Bank	08:00 – 13:00	XXX
27 Mar (Sun)	Luk Tsun Pun Yu Yat Tung Ying Hak King	<b>Mai Po</b> 08:00 Kowloon Tong MTR Station   (Kent Road exit) <b>or</b> 09:00 Mai Po carpark, coach leaves at 15:00 and back to Kowloon Tong at 16:00	08:00 – 16:00	XX
3 Apr (Sun)	Or Wai Hung Forrest Fong	<b>Tsim Bei Tsui</b> 08:00 Hang Heung Cake Shop (near LRT Tai Tong Rd Station, Yuen Long)	08:00 – 15:00	XX
9 Apr (Sat)	Hung Lai Yung  Chek Yau Wing  Crested Bulbul Club Leader	<b>Mai Po</b> ** 08:30 Hang Heung Cake Shop, Yuen Long	08:30 – 15:00	XX
10 Apr (Sun)	Shirley Lam Henry Lui Stanley Ng	<b>Mai Po</b> 08:00 Kowloon Tong MTR Station   (Kent Road exit) <b>or</b> 09:00 Mai Po carpark, coach leaves at 15:00 and back to Kowloon Tong at 16:00	08:00 – 16:00	XX
17 Apr (Sun)	Peter Wong Michelle Kong	<b>Boat Trip: Po Toi, Lamma Channel</b> 08:00 Aberdeen Public Pier (near Ocean Court) 16:00 back to Aberdeen Public Pier   (Member \$150, Non-member \$200)	08:00 – 16:00	XXX
24 Apr (Sun)	Louis Cheung William Wong	<b>Kadoorie Farm</b> 08:30 Tai Wo KCR station Taxi station	08:30 – 12:00	XX

## Bird Watching Class 2005 (Member \$300, Non-member \$400)

Date	Activity / Gathering location	Time
23 Feb (Wed)	<b>Bird Watching Class (Lecture 1)</b> Room 1112, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon	19:00 – 20:30
27 Feb (Sun)	<b>Bird Watching Class (Kowloon Park)</b> 08:00 Tsim Sha Tsui MTR Kowloon Park exit	08:00 – 11:00
2 Mar (Wed)	<b>Bird Watching Class (Lecture 2)</b> Room 1112, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon	19:00 – 20:30
6 Mar (Sun)	<b>Bird Watching Class (Tai Po Kau, Long Valley)</b> 08:00 Kowloon Tong MTR Station (Kent Road exit)  16:00 Back to Kowloon Tong	08:00 – 16:00
9 Mar (Wed)	<b>Bird Watching Class (Lecture 3)</b> Room 1112, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon	19:00 – 20:30
13 Mar (Sun)	<b>Bird Watching Class (Mai Po)</b> 08:00 Kowloon Tong MTR Station (Kent Road exit)  or 09:00 Mai Po carpark, coach leaves at 15:00 and back to Kowloon Tong at 16:00	09:00 – 15:00

## Elementary Class in Identification of water birds Spring 2005 (Member \$100, Non-member \$130)

Date	Activity / Gathering location	Time
25 Mar (Fri)	<b>Indoor Lecture</b> Room 1112, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon	19:00 – 20:00
27 Mar (Sun)	<b>Outdoor Practice</b> 	08:00 – 13:00

## Tree and Bird (Member \$20, Non-member \$40)

Date	Activity / Gathering location	Time
20 April (Wed)	<b>Indoor Lecture</b> Room 1112, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon	19:00 – 20:00
24 Apr (Sun)	<b>Outdoor Practice</b>	08:00 – 12:00

\*\* Crested Bulbul Club Activity –

These activities are lead by elderly nature interpreters, members are welcome to join with elderly members of the family.



# Booking Note

**Note! Priority is given to members of the Society.** Please contact the leader several days before the meeting to confirm attendance, otherwise you may miss out on changes in timing. The 'X' rating conveys the degree of difficulty in each outing in terms of seeing the birds; Members are of course more than welcome to attend any event.

- \* Members who use the Society coach to Mai Po must confirm their attendance by returning the booking slip with payment. Those using their own transport please also send in their booking slips, the Mai Po tour coordinator – this is important because the maximum number of members who can attend the outing is 50, as set by the AFCD permit. Failure to do so may result in being refused access to the reserve.
- + According to the requirement of the Hong Kong Police and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, participants for the Mai Po activities should provide their full name and Hong Kong ID No. to register for the access to the Frontier Close Area and Mai Po Marshes.
- \* If their applications for joining Mai Po/boat trips are not accepted, applicants will be notified by phone or by e-mail at least one week before the outing.

**Non-members joining Mai Po trips will have to pay the coach fare irrespective of whether they make use of the coach.**

Payment to the Society may be made in two ways: by returning the attendance slip with a cheque in English made out to the "Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Ltd"

For all outdoor activities please bring drink and food, appropriate clothing for the location, and sun cream and mosquito lotion if needed!

## Activity Booking Slip

### ► Mai Po Trip

I wish to reserve places for \_\_\_\_\_ members and \_\_\_\_\_ non-members for the following Mai Po tour :

\*  27 Feb (Sun)                       27 Mar (Sun)                       10 Apr (Sun)

The number of person(s) using the coach is \_\_\_\_\_.

\* Coach fare:  \_\_\_\_\_ x HK\$40/Member     \_\_\_\_\_ x HK\$20/Student member     \_\_\_\_\_ x HK\$60/Non-member#

# *Non-members joining Mai Po trips will have to pay the coach fare irrespective of whether they make use of the coach.  
Members not using the coach do not need to pay coach fare*

+ Attendance full name \_\_\_\_\_ HK I.D. No. \_\_\_\_\_

*(If more than one attendance, please add paper to fill in the information of the other attendances)*

### ► Boat Trip

I wish to reserve places for \_\_\_\_\_ members and \_\_\_\_\_ non-members for the following boat trip :

\*  17 Apr (Sun) : Po Toi, Lamma Channel (HK\$150/member, HK\$200/non-members)

### ► Bird Watching Class

I wish to reserve places for \_\_\_\_\_ members and \_\_\_\_\_ non-members for the "Bird Watching Class".

(3 indoor meetings on 23 Feb, 2 Mar & 9 Mar at Room 112, Hong Kong Scout Centre, 8 Austin Rd, Kowloon and 3 outings)  
(HK\$300/member, HK\$400/non-members)

### ► Elementary Class in Identification of water birds Spring 2005

I wish to reserve places for \_\_\_\_\_ members and \_\_\_\_\_ non-members for the "Elementary Class in Identification of water birds".

(1 indoor meeting and 1 outing) (HK\$100/member, HK\$130/non-members)

### ► Tree and Bird

I wish to reserve places for \_\_\_\_\_ members and \_\_\_\_\_ non-members for the "Tree and Bird" Class.

(1 indoor meeting and 1 outing) (HK\$20/member, HK\$40/non-members)

Cheque for HK\$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Payable to The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Ltd)

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Contact No. : \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_ Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: Please send this application together with crossed cheque by mail to The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Ltd, Rm 1612 Beverley Commercial Centre, 87-105 Chatham Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong (member activity)*

*Application should be made at least 10 days before the date of the outing. Late application will only be accepted if places are available. Members are of course more than welcome to attend any event.*

\* Please  as appropriate



黃喉噪鷲 (中國江西婺源) – 方健華

Yellow-throated Laughingthrush (Wuyuan, Jiangxi, China) – Forrest Fong



灰背椋鳥 (米埔) – 何志剛

White-shouldered Starling (Mai Po) – Pippen Ho



阿穆爾隼，幼鳥（尖鼻咀）

— 江敏兒、黃理沛

Amur Falcon, *Juvenile* (Tsim Bei Tsui)

— Michelle and Peter Wong



黑鶴（米埔）— 黃卓研

Black Stork (Mai Po) — Cherry Wong