

# HK BWS



bulletin

會員通訊



196

Summer 2005 - 夏



翻石鹬 - 陳志光 (米埔)

Ruddy Turnstone - Daniel CK Chan (Mai Po)

27/04/2005

EOS1DII, EF600IS/4, EF1.4II, 1/1600 sec, f/6.3, ISO: 320

Expo Mode: Manual

AF mode: AI Servo AF

Drive: Continuous

紅腰杓鹬 - 杜霄炯 (米埔)

Australian Curlew - Hendrix To (Mai Po)

30/04/2005

Nikon D2X, AFS600/4 +1.4x, f8, 1/800s, ISO 250





# The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Limited

(Approved Charitable Institution of a Public Character)

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## Chairman's word

HKBWS has undergone several rapid changes.

- (1) There are now wide and close exchange of views among society members, in addition to the sharing of beautiful photos every day. This has been brought about by the uses of the society webpage.
- (2) We have completely new paid staff working for the society. At present Mr. LO Wai-yan is our project manager, and he actually takes the lead in most office matters. Mr. Stanley Ng takes care of our society financial matters and also works on membership affairs.
- (3) The Crested Bulbul Club is the main pool of mature volunteers who have participated very actively in society activities.
- (4) The five research groups have developed well in recent years. They have participated actively and deeply into research and conservation, in a way that seem unimaginable just several years ago.

To face future challenges, we would need to deepen the participation of our members. Here I would like to call on our members to step out and work with us. Looking at it this way, our activities actually provide excellent training opportunities to learn a very wide range of skills. Be our outing leader, and you will learn personal skills. Be our editor, and you can participate in publishing newsletter and books. Be a bird counter, and you learn more about bird behaviour. Join the conservation committee, and you may learn how to influence attitudes in Hong Kong society. If you feel that there are some personal areas that you want to improve, be bold enough to step forward. I am sure that both individual members and the HKBWS as a whole will benefit from such close participation.

- HF Cheung 

### New Record of Membership Number

Great news: according to our records on 15 June 2005, there were 755 members. This number is greater than the total of 746 members in 2004, and it is also a new record for HKBWS! We hope that there will be more people to join us.

### Office Equipment and Stationery

To maintain a sustainable future for the office, we are looking for donations of the following second-hand equipment and stationery.

## A. Research Groups

### Kite Research Group

A Black Kite nest in Tsim Sha Tsui has been found by a member of the Society. Under the moderation of the group with the relevant government department, the nest is now under minimum attention from the general public. Two chicks have hatched in late April but it is believed that only one survived after two weeks.

In the Stonecutters Island breeding survey carried out on March 13, three new nests were found by our group members. One nest active last year is still in use this year during the survey.

Equipment: laser printer, scanner, fax machine, LCD monitor, notebook computer, electric fan, and digital camera

Stationery: single side A4 paper, box file

Please contact Mr Lo at 2377 4387 if you have any information or items you wish to donate. All contributions will be gratefully accepted!

### Lease of the Office

Although there is still one year left of the current office lease, we have started to search for a more convenient office with lower rent. Please call Mr Lo if you have good news.

### Volunteer in Office

A brilliant youngster of the birdwatching field, Jose Alberto Cheung Mok (Kwok Jai) has contributed

his leisure time to serve the office recently. Besides the regular office work, he also helps us to carry out bird surveys. We thank Kwok Jai for his contributions to the Society.

### HKBWS Website

The HKBWS Website was intruded by hackers in early April. Some of the website data was damaged and could not be recovered. Thanks to the efforts of our IT Group, the BBS was soon re-opened. The IT Group is going to update the website content and review the ISP service & its security provision so as to avoid such intrusions in future. If you have any suggestions or can provide any volunteer technical support to us, please kindly contact Mr Forrest Fong through email ([forrest\\_fong@yahoo.com.hk](mailto:forrest_fong@yahoo.com.hk)).

## HKBWS PROJECTS

The result for the kite count as below:

Date	Stonecutters Island <i>(maximum value of snapshot count of the day)</i>	Magazine Gap
20/3	26	95
3/4	52	95
1/5	91	35

### Tern Research Group

– Alan Chan

As usual, with the arrival of Black-naped and Bridled Terns at Mirs Bay, this year's tern breeding season has already begun at the end of April. The Tern Research Group will continue with the weekly surveys and monitor the amount of disturbance in the area. A number of activities related to terns will also be open to members between June and July.

At the same time, we are organizing a Tap Mun Tern Festival between mid June and early July to let the public know the birds and understand the need for conservation. The programme includes a tern

webpage, a tern booklet, public and school seminars, road shows at train stations and Tap Mun, as well as a few tern-watching tours. Volunteers are badly needed. If you would like to help, please contact us by email at: [twatch2004@yahoo.com.hk](mailto:twatch2004@yahoo.com.hk) or telephone the Project Office 2377 4387.

## B. Education & Publicity

### "The Elderly lead the elderly to watch birds" (Healthy Ageing project)

– Leung Kwok Wah

The Seminars and outdoor bird watching activities for the 2004/5 "season" are coming to an end, but see next item. The programme will resume in the autumn, when elderly volunteers of the Crested Bulbul Club will resume their bird watching promotions and co-ordinate activities with homes for the elderly and the public at large. From January to March 2005, 387 persons took part in our indoor seminars and 394 persons participated in our outdoor bird watching trips.

## Meeting Point for Early Morning Bird-Watchers at Kowloon Park and Hong Kong Park

- From January to June 2005, 159 persons attended the bird watching activity at Kowloon Park.
- From March to June 2005, 128 persons went along for the bird watching activity at Hong Kong Park.
- Arrangement of early morning bird watching at Hong Kong Park
  - Date & Time: 8 a.m. – 10 a.m. / March – August 2005 (Every Wednesday)
  - Gathering Point: Green House of Hong Kong Park
  - Free of Charge
- Arrangement of Weekly Guided Morning Bird Watching at Kowloon Park :
  - Date & Time: 7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. (Every Friday)
  - Gathering Point: Arcade of Kowloon Park (entrance of McDonalds inside Kowloon Park)
  - Free of Charge

## The 4th Training Course for Elderly Nature Tour Guides



This was held from 2 – 25 March. It included 4 outdoor field visits (1 at Kowloon Park, 2 at Mai Po Nature Reserve and 1 assessment) and 3 indoor lectures (at

Room 1114, Scout Association of Hong Kong). This big event was all planned and organized by the Crested Bulbul Club with tremendous support from other members. There were 46 elderly who registered for this training. 39 of them received a certificate after a month's hard work. These new high-calibre graduates will certainly add much value to the Crested Bulbul Club.

## House Swallow and Pacific Swift Count

On the 23rd January 2005, members of the Crested Bulbul Club were instructed in bird counting and surveying methods by experienced bird-watchers, TSIM Siu-tai and LAU Wai-man. Currently over 10 members of the Crested Bulbul Club have been actively participating in this project. We all know that the swallow is nature's "mosquito killer". We believe that allowing more swallows to breed is a good way to prevent the spread of Dengue Fever and other insect-borne diseases. Therefore, we call upon the Hong Kong public to treasure and preserve swallows so as to allow them to breed throughout Hong Kong. We should also support the bird count which will provide the first-hand and scientific statistics for ourselves and the government to facilitate more preservation work to be done. We hope that members of Crested Bulbul Club will continue to support this important count.

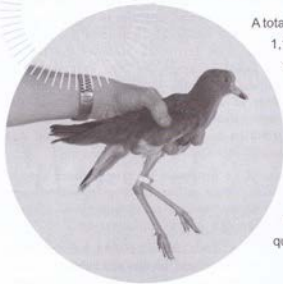
## Donation of "A Photographic Guide to the Birds of Hong Kong"

The President of the Society, C.Y. Lam, facilitated the donation of 62 copies of "A Photographic Guide to the Birds of Hong Kong" to Hong Kong Correctional Services Department by Rotary Club of Happy Valley. The donation ceremony was carried out in Boys Home at Cape Colinson on 7th May. The vice-chairman, C.N. Ng, represented the Society to attend the ceremony. 🐦



# Bird Ringing January – March 2005

– Hong Kong Ringing Group



A total of 1,471 birds were ringed in the first three months of this year, 1,118 of which were starling species (916 Red-billed Starling *Sturnus sericius*, 164 White-cheeked Starling *Sturnus cineraceus* and 38 White-shouldered Starling *Sturnus sinensis*).

Other interesting records include a male Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* in a duck trapping session, and a female Purple-backed Starling *Sturnus sturninus*, the first and second ringed in Hong Kong. A Grey-headed Lapwing picked up sick at Kam Tin was ringed and flagged after being rehabilitated at KFBG. It was released back at Kam Tin. Otherwise, ringing has been rather quiet in these few months. 🐦



## Conservation News Summer 2005

– Mike Kilburn,  
Chairman, Conservation Committee

### Long Valley dryer, but still full of birds

In recent weeks there has been increased talk that Long Valley is drying out and much discussion of what the causes might be. There have been suggestions that KCRC's Spur Line Tunnel is the reason. However, KCRC, responding to HKBWS concerns about the potential for the tunnel to affect the water table took great care to ensure a constant flow of water during the construction of the tunnel and provided the Spur Line Environmental Committee (HKBWS is a member, along with WWF (HK), Conservancy Association, Friends of the Earth, and HKUST Civil Engineering Department) with the data from their monitoring of the water table. This data showed that the air pressure balance technique employed by KCRC successfully avoided impacting the water table.

The real cause of the problem is the two drainage channels running on either side of the valley, compounded by two very dry winters in succession. These channels lie well below the level of the wet

agricultural fields of Long Valley, and are designed to improve the drainage efficiency of the area.

There is evidence of drying out in the valley itself - several farmers have switched from growing wet agricultural crops such as water cress (sai yeung choi) and water spinach (tong choi) to growing lettuces and others dry agriculture crops. However a diversity of microhabitats remains, including the highly productive marsh (in just one day Baillon's and two Ruddy Crakes, Water Rail, White-breasted Waterhen, Common Moorhen, Wood Sandpiper, Green Sandpiper, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Greater Painted Snipe, Common Snipe and "Swintail" Snipe were all recorded here!) and lotus fields near the centre of the Valley, good areas of wet agriculture, overgrown grasslands and bloodworm ponds.

In addition, the meanders of the old Beas River, which were left as mitigation when the drainage channels were created are now being managed by AFCD. After a couple of years of experimentation it seems that AFCD have hit upon the right mix of

open water of the correct depth, muddy fringes for feeding and suitable vegetation to attract some of the water birds for which Long Valley is so important. A visit in late February revealed five Greater Painted Snipe and over 20 *gallinago* snipe in the meander next to the footbridge to Ho Sheung Heung.

Another encouraging sign - the deposition of silt in the drainage channels provides feeding opportunities for a number of waders, egrets and herons. Many more Grey Herons and Great Egrets now visit than they did formerly, doubtless attracted by the fish which come in along the tidal channels. Other good birds found here include a pair of Collared Crows which favoured the channels last winter, Black-winged Stilt, Greenshank and Little Ringed Plovers, which may have bred on the shingle banks.

### Mudskipper collectors still in business at Mai Po

Thank you to all members who have been documenting their sightings of mudskipper collectors seen from the boardwalk. Please keep it up! The more evidence we provide and publicise the more pressure we put on the Administration to carry out effective enforcement. There is no question that the mudskipper collectors are illegally entering the Ramsar site and Frontier Closed Area, and probably entering from Shenzhen. This means that once caught it is easy to prosecute them.

The great frustration appears to be that birders seem to see the mudskipper collectors, but when they do the AFCD and police patrols are not around to catch them - even when the same people are involved day after day.

It may be time to formally organize a joint operation in which HKBWS members, AFCD, WWF staff and the police jointly visit the boardwalk at the appropriate time so that the findings of HKBWS members can be used to make the enforcement efforts more effective.

### Ecotourism Consultation Depressing

The Tourism Authority recently held a consultation exercise on developing ecotourism in the Northeast New Territories. Unfortunately. The Tourism Authority (TA) still appears to have no understanding of what ecotourism actually is!

Increasing numbers of Hong Kong people are looking to the countryside for recreation and leisure. Recognising this growing demand and responding to

encouragement from Sarah Liao, Secretary for Environment, Transport and Works, the TA has proposed a number of measures to improve tourist facilities in the ecologically important and sensitive North-east New Territories. However the TA has totally failed to grasp the core requirement of ecotourism - that the tourists pay more for the privilege of visiting sites of high ecological and heritage value in order that they can make a contribution to the protection, preservation and enhancement of these sites.

Instead TA's proposals have been based around providing better jetties, more public toilets and better transport links so that low cost mass tourism can be increased to these sensitive areas!

So poor is TA's understanding of the basic requirement to protect the sites and habitats in order to maintain the attraction that they have refused to even try to establish the carrying capacity and impact of the current levels of tourism, let alone try to assess the potential impact of increasing visitor numbers and the corresponding increases in disturbance and pollution. They have claimed that it is too difficult to make these assessments, although the practice is widespread in other countries.

In contrast the HKBWS Tern Group has been working hard to improve the understanding and practice of ecotourism amongst tour operators, boat owners and the general public in respect of breeding tern colonies on outlying islands. These colonies are extremely susceptible to disturbance, and in the past boatloads of tourists have landed in the colonies to enjoy the spectacle of hundreds of terns taking to the air, while their eggs and chicks bake unprotected in the sun. HKBWS have developed a code of practice for tour operators and boat owners, offer specialist tours to view the terns, and even provide guiding services to commercial tours who agree not to land on the islands. As a result more people are enjoying the terns without causing disturbance to the birds. It's not rocket science - really!

### Sham Chung: pier shelved, golf course begins illegal operation

We reported last year on the proposed construction of a new HK\$26 million pier to serve the population of less than 10 residents living in Sham Chung. The Finance Committee of the Administration decided that this was too much of a waste of public money and cancelled the project, which may have caused



disturbance to a breeding pair of White-bellied Sea Eagles.

However local newspapers also reported that villagers have begun hiring golf clubs to people to play on the course, which was built on ecologically rich marshland at Sham Chung, home to the endemic Hong Kong Paradise Fish.

# Mai Po

- Lew Young

## update

### WWF Big Bird Race 2005

WWF's 2005 Big Bird Race was held between 11 – 12 March and raised nearly HK\$1.2 million. Whilst 90% of this money will go towards the general management and conservation works carried out by WWF at Mai Po, the other 10% will go towards the construction of an extension to the existing boardwalk and a new floating hide further out in Deep Bay.

For the boardwalk extension and floating hide, this means that the project has now raised some HK\$1.4 million which is sufficient to buy the materials to build the boardwalk extension and new hide. However, an Environmental Permit is still required from the Environmental Protection Department before the project can begin. As a result, work is in progress to draft an environmental profile to apply for an 'EP' for the project. It is hoped that the proposal can be finalised this year and approved by government.

### Breeding Black-winged Stilts in the Waterfowl Collection (Pond 15a and 15b)

Now that the wintering ducks have departed northwards for their breeding ground, the Waterfowl Collection has been drained so that it can be refilled with clean rainwater before the ducks return again this October. The low water levels in these two ponds have made them attractive for Black-winged Stilts and a number are nesting on the islands particularly in Pond 15a. Please do not enter the Collection and disturb the breeding birds and their young.

### Vegetation management in Pond 20 and 24 – Regular cutting of the grass along the bunds of the

It is likely that both activities are related to property developer Sun Hung Kai (SHK) seeking to push forward their plans for developing the area. With the jetty development foiled it will be much harder for SHK to realise their vision of a lucrative golf course in this ecologically sensitive area, although the renting of clubs by local villagers suggests that the battle is far from over. Watch this space for further updates. 🐦

southern ponds and gei wai (20 – 24) in the summer and autumn of 2004 meant that when the ducks returned to Mai Po last winter, there were certain bunds (particularly in Pond 20) that had a thick cover of short grasses that were particularly attractive for grazing Wigeon. As a result, monthly cutting of the grasses along the bunds of Ponds 20 and 24 has begun again and will continue until October/November again this year to create the short grass that Wigeon enjoy.

### Draining of Pond 20b

With the large numbers of ducks roosting in Pond 20 over the winter, the water in a number of the ponds has deteriorated. These ponds need to be drained so that their floor can be air-dried before they are refilled using clean rain water. Pond 20b is currently being drained and this will also allow cutting of some of the excessive growth of grasses on the island in the central part of the ponds to be cut.

### Feral dogs in Mai Po

Feral dogs have recently come to the media's attention as another of the many threats facing Mai Po. Without any fences around the reserve, it is easy for dogs to enter Mai Po and WWF staff have seen these animals chasing the wildlife in the reserve and sometimes killing them, such as Javan Mongooses. Using automatic cameras, the Wildlife Conservation Fund in Hong Kong has found that feral dogs are now more common at Mai Po than rare mammals such as Leopard cats and Otters.

Under license from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), WWF has been operating three baited traps at different locations at Mai Po to catch these feral dogs. In one year, the reserve catches around 20 to 30 such animals and then passes them onto AFCD to deal with. However, some of the dogs have become shy of these traps and certain individuals are very difficult to catch. However, we will continue to trap as many of these dogs as possible. 🐶

# "Records 198" – Funniest Event this Winter

– Aukie Au and Chen Kwai Pa

In the past, people may have got the impression that a birdwatching competition is a "competition" where teams compete against each other. The Society's annual competition, instead, is a 'fun game' where teams of birdwatchers compete against each other in sighting, identifying and recording the most number of bird species within 24 hours. (An important aspect of "Records 198" is to encourage people to submit the records of their sightings – Ed.)

This birdwatching competition has become an important annual get-together function amongst bird watchers and members since it was first held in 2002. Our first birdwatching competition was held in December in 2002, the second was held in January 2004, and this year, we organized our third competition in February. Hmm...have you noticed that the month of holding our birdwatching competition is shifting month-by-month? Perhaps the next competition will be in March!

Following the success of last year's competition (with a record of 198 bird species in 24 hours), our "Records 198–Bird Watching Competition 2005" was held on 19 February (Sat) & 20 February (Sun) 2005.

I was pleased that the number of participants is increasing. Over 200 members, ranging from students, housewives and the elderly formed thirty teams including a team formed by Shenzhen birdwatchers. The Shenzhen team was specially given permission to record their birds on their side on the first day. They started the competition at 1630 as we did, and then travelled a long distance to Hong Kong and continued their race before dawn the next day.





## STRATEGIES

We, members of the Crested Bulbul Club, had a chance to take part in the first birdwatching competition when we were still learners in 2002. I remember that we hardly spotted any birds in the dense forest in Tai Po Kau in that first year. Time has flown, and with more practice and more experience exchanged with other birders, we have become more skillful in identifying birds in dense woodland by either recognizing calls or actually finding the birds.

We were delighted to have a third opportunity to participate the Birdwatching Competition – “Records 198” this year. Fifteen members of us formed three different teams, namely Crested Bulbul Teams A, B & C. With limitations in transportation and short time available, we were only able to visit some key areas such as Mai Po, Kam Tin, Long Valley and Kowloon Park and hence, did not manage to see many species. In the end our teams recorded a total of 85, 77 & 62 species respectively. Despite our smaller totals, all of us had a great time in this event and enjoyed every bird we saw.

## GETTING STARTED

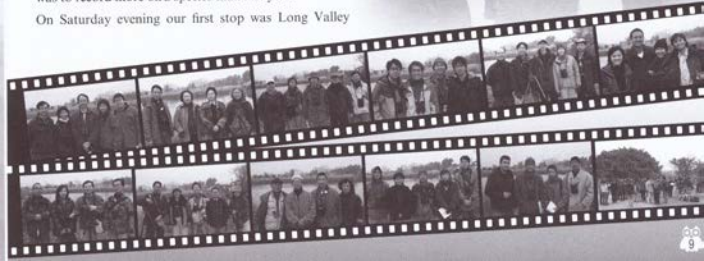
With years of birdwatching experience, we know the birds and their whereabouts with precise familiarity. Right before “Records 198...”, we visited the popular birdwatching sites to practice our skills, and recorded what and where the bird species were spotted. Our goal was to record more bird species than last year.

On Saturday evening our first stop was Long Valley

and we reached there an hour early. We scanned the farmland and found some pipits and wagtails. Then we headed to the ponds near Sheung Shui Slaughter House to see if there were other bird species. It was already 1630 when we reached the ponds. We quickly spotted our first countable bird, the Common Sandpiper, with our binoculars and telescope. It was walking along a bund with a Yellow wagtail in a field nearby. Minutes later, we found more starlings perching on electric wires with a White-throated Kingfisher. We kept walking and searching, trying to put more birds on our list. Since we do not have a car, our strategy was to stay at Long Valley as long as we could (until after dark) and not visit other places for night birds such as nightjars and owls.

Next morning we arrived early at Tai Po Kau. When we got off the taxi at Chung Tsai Yuen, we first heard the calls of Chinese Bulbul. Then we looked up and found a Haired Crested Drongo. We knew that a bird wave was coming and held our breath, focused our eyes on the trees and waited. Then they came! Among the flock, we found Great Tit, Yellow-cheeked Tit, Japanese White-eye, Blue-winged Minla, Yellow-browed Warbler, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch and Chestnut Bulbul. As we walked up the steep road to the warden’s post we heard the calls of Great Barbet, Large-billed Crow and saw Spotted Dove. We later saw Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker and Fork-tailed Sunbird.

We did not stay long at Tai Po Kau and then it was time





for us to head for our next stop – Kam Tin. We were very happy that Mr. Apache Lau had booked a coach for us and other teams without vehicles. It saved us much time. At Kam Tin, we managed to see more starlings, Wood Sandpiper, Chinese Pond Heron and a Common Buzzard. To our surprise, we got a good view of a flock of Yellow-billed Grosbeaks feeding on the ground. Time was running short and we could only swallow our sandwiches on our way to Mai Po. At Mai Po, we spotted more waders including the Egrets, Black-winged Stilt, Teal, Eurasian Wigeon and so on.

### Full house at night

It was not too late when we reached the Guest House at Chinese University for dinner, however, the seats were already filled up by other team members. However, thanks to Apache, we soon found places to sit and the dinner reception began.

Our honorary President (Ex-Chairman of HKBWS), Mr. LAM Chiu-ying, first made a warm welcome note to all participants by appreciating our involvement in the competition despite the chilly weather. He was followed by an introduction from our new Chairman, Dr. CHEUNG Ho-fai., "I am sure our new Chairman will be able to keep on fostering nature conservation in Hong Kong as well as promoting birdwatching as a hobby to a wider community."

A big thanks to our adjudicators, Mr. Richard Lewthwaite and Mr. YING Hak-king. They sacrificed their dining time to check our records. The winners were eventually revealed: They were as follows:

### The HKBWS Record Award

- Rufous-capped Babbler Team (recorded 120 bird Species in 24 hours)
- The Best Record Award
- Freedom Team (recorded the Red-throated Diver) at Sam A Tsuen

The energetic kids in the Freedom Team are so enthusiastic about birds. I was not surprised to learn that they devoted more than 3 hours to go to Sam A Tsuen to see the rare Red-throated Diver. We felt very proud of their courage and determination, they deserved their Best Record Award!

### Acknowledgement

We would like to first send our heartfelt thanks to our biggest sponsor, Swarovski, for their generosity in giving out crystal key-rings and crystal pins as prizes for our event.

Thanks again to the adjudicators, Mr. Richard Lewthwaite (who also arranged the dinner venue) and Mr. HK YING, for spending time on checking our records. Thanks also to Transport Department and AFCD for their preparing the permits for us, and Forrest Fong for his innovative ideas and constructive advice. Mr. Apache Lau arranged luxury transportation for members and gave his time freely in sharing co-ordination work with Aukie. Lastly, to our dear & irreplaceable members, thanks again for your continuous support and effort in making this event happen. 🐦

# 白額鷓



白額鷓 Streaked Shearwater

— 方健華 Forrest Fong

Canon 1D Mark II, Canon EF 400mm f/5.6



# STREAKED SHEARWATER

# 賊鷗

## 中賊鷗 Pomarine Skua

— 江敏兒、黃理沛 Michelle & Peter Wong

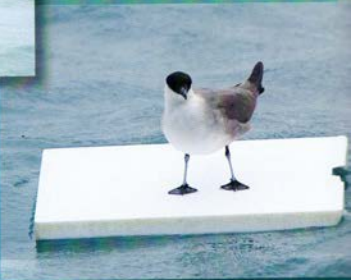
Canon 20D, Canon EF 400mm f/5.6



## 短尾賊鷗 Arctic Skua

— 何志剛 Phippen Ho

Canon 1D Mark II, Canon EF 400mm f/5.6+1.4x



## 長尾賊鷗 Long Tailed Skua

— 何志剛 Phippen Ho

Canon 1D Mark II, Canon EF 400mm f/5.6+1.4x



### 中賊鷗 Pomarine Skua

— 方健華 Forrest Fong

Canon 1D Mark II, Canon EF 400mm f/5.6

### 長尾賊鷗 Long Tailed Skua

— 何志剛 Pippen Ho

Canon 1D Mark II, Canon EF 400mm f/5.6+1.4x



### 長尾賊鷗 Long Tailed Skua

— 江敏兒、黃理沛 Michelle & Peter Wong

Canon 20D, Canon EF 400mm f/5.6

# SKUA

今頁睇真D:

# 柳鶯



柳柳鶯 — 盧嘉孟 (錦田)  
Dusky Warbler —  
Lo Kar Man (Kam Tin)

栗柳鶯 — 江敏兒、黃理沛 (大埔滘)  
Eastern Crowned Warbler —  
Michelle & Peter Wong (Tai Po Kau)



灰腳柳鶯 — 江敏兒、黃理沛 (米埔)  
Pale-legged Leaf Warbler —  
Michelle & Peter Wong (Mai Po)



黃眉柳鶯 — 江敏兒、黃理沛 (碗窰)  
Yellow-browed Warbler —  
Michelle & Peter Wong (Wun Yiu)



Take a closer look :

# Leaf Warblers



Leaf-warblers are a headache to beginning birdwatchers. (And to more experienced ones, too! – Ed.) That is because try to look for differences in the eyebrows. In fact all Leaf Warblers have pale eyebrows that are very similar to each other. Therefore the eyebrows do not really give much information. To help in the identification of Leaf Warblers, a good idea is to follow Lekagul and Round (Birds of Thailand) and separate them into four groups.

**Group A** consists of Dusky Warbler, Radde's Warbler, and Yellow - streaked Warbler. They have no wing bars, and are generally brown in colour. (Photo 1: Dusky Warbler)

**Group B** consists of Eastern Crowned Warbler and Blyth's Leaf Warbler. They have clear crown stripe, yellow lower mandible and are on average larger in size than birds on the other group. (Photo 2: Eastern Crowned Warbler)

**Group C** consists of Arctic Warbler, Greenish Warbler, and Pale-legged Leaf Warbler. They have no clear crown stripe and also no pale edge to tertials. (Photo 3: Pale legged/Sakhalin Leaf Warbler)

**Group D** consists of Yellow-browed Warbler and Pallas's Warbler. They have clear pale edge to the tertials. (Photo 4: Yellow-browed Warbler)

Group	Wing bars	Crown stripe	Pale edge to tertials	Example
A	X			Dusky, Radde's, Yellow-streaked
B	yes	yes	X	Eastern Crowned, Blyths
C	yes	X	X	Arctic, Greenish, Pale-legged
D	yes		yes	Yellow-browed, Pallas's

Take a closer look :

# Leaf Warblers

# Drinking Water Action of *Little Swift*

– Bad Egg No.1

In mid-June 2004, the “Secretary for Education and Publicity” of the Society, Apache, invited many bird photographers to attend a gathering. We went to Fanling Wai to take photos of swallows and swifts, and also help RTHK (Radio Television Hong Kong) to make a television programme. I had informed my relatives and friends to watch the programmes later. However, only the interviews of smart gents and pretty ladies were broadcast, but not me! Nevertheless, it was a happy experience to interflow with other bird photographers and take some special bird photos on that day.

Besides taking photos of Barn Swallow nests under the eaves, another target on that day was the drinking water action of Little Swift. There is a large pond at Fanling Wai village facing North District Park where Little Swifts like to fly along the water surface and drink. Since their speed is very fast and the flying path is wide, many bird photographers tried their best to capture the very short moment (I roughly estimate 1/100 second!) of the drinking action on that day. The focusing speed of my medium-grade DSLR (digital single-lens reflex) camera is not too good. The shutter lag is quite long. With such capacities, I of course took nothing with my camera. Near the end of the gathering, I simply turned the lens to manual mode. I tried to use my “feeling” to capture the drinking water moment! Lastly and luckily, I got a picture of swift just before touching the water. From the photo, I found that Little Swift will open its mouth widely when drinking water. It is very wide in contrast to the usual closed thin and small bill. Although the photo is a little bit out-of-focus, it is within acceptable range.

In mid-June this year, I planed to visit Fanling Wai again. My target was the drinking water moment, but not only the one before touching water. Actually I had a pre-trip in early June and found out how to get there by public transport. However that was a cloudy day and no swifts were seen drinking water. There were quite a number of rainy days in mid-June this year. I could only gamble to take a half-day annual leave and went to Fanling Wai in the afternoon. I was so lucky that it was sunny in the afternoon though it was cloudy in the morning! I stayed beside the pond to shoot for more than 3 hours with my love-and-hate Canxx Number Ten camera and a 400mm/f5.6 lens. To get photos of the drinking water action of Little Swift, I reached several conclusions:

**Manual focus –** Since the swift is small and it's difficult to follow the flying path, auto-focus usually results with focus on the background.

**Pre-focus –** The speed of manual focus will not be high. Therefore, we need to predict where the swift will go and approximately pre-focus at that position.

**Keep a distance –** The shorter the distance, the more the need for focusing accuracy. The longer the distance, the wider the acceptable range of mis-focusing and thus the greater chance for success. It's difficult to make the choice as no one wants to have a tiny image. I was at a distance of more than ten metres away from the swifts.

**Press the shutter release button beforehand –** It wholly depends on the capacity of your camera. I am not satisfied with the shutter lag of my camera. If I press the shutter just when I saw the drinking water moment, I could only capture the leaving moment or the bird was even out of the scene after the long response time of the camera. Therefore, you need to be familiar with the shutter lag time before you know how early to press the shutter.

**High shutter speed –** For my distance away the swift (>10m) and the use of 400mm/f5.6 lens, at least 1/800s or fast shutter speed was needed. Sometimes we need to sacrifice image quality by using a higher ISO number. Besides, taking photos on a sunny day is recommended.

**Crazily shooting –** The great advantage of a digital camera! Otherwise I may waste many rolls of film! Actually I'll not try such topic if there is no digital camera. According to my informal statistics, I could get one acceptable photo per 50 shots if I am “lucky” (i.e. The swift goes to the suitable position and the swift was seen before it drink.). Note that the acceptable photos include “before touching water moment” and “just after drinking water moment”. For “at the drinking moment” photo, I still couldn't get a good one after shooting a thousand! Another note is that the “per 50 shots” is not continuous shots. My camera can shoot about 3 shots per second. The drinking water action of swift last only 1/100 second. I can only get one shot for one action. Therefore, I could have just one acceptable shot per 50 drinking water actions!



◀ The "before touching water moment" photo taken in June 2004



If the swift is in a unsuitable position ▶ (back side facing me), it is not a good photo even it is "at drinking water moment".

As mentioned before, the amazing low success rate is in the time if I am lucky. Why? After taking half-day of photos, I found that all the "at the drinking moment" photos are mis-focused. Only one of them is marginally acceptable. It was a sunny day in the weekend afterwards, so I went Fanling Wai again in the afternoon for having a sharp "at the drinking moment" photo. However, the swifts always drank in the unsuitable positions (i.e., back side facing me, too near or too far away). I had shot hundreds of photos but no one is acceptable (including before and after drinking water moments)! So horrible!

Besides the six points above, there is the seventh point. This point is "Take care of your health". While taking the photos, I didn't feel uncomfortable due to too much excitement. However, later I discovered that my eyes were quite painful after staring for hours. Together with the hot weather, I felt quite uncomfortable.

I am not sure whether it would be easier to get good photos with the top models of camera and lens available at this moment. It is surely helpful for shorter shutter lag and faster continuous shooting. However, there is no end in chasing "better" equipment. My set of cameras is actually not cheap. Trying to photograph the swifts has also been an interesting exercise in better handling of my own camera! 🐦

### Outing Report:

— Hung Wai Ming

## Sham Chung to Yung Shue O



The 6th of March with fine weather, bright sunshine and temperature of 13 degrees was a Sunday, ideal for bird watching and hiking, unlike much of the weather in previous months.

At Ma Liu Shui Pier, the Little Egret and the Chinese Pond Heron were as always there to see us off. Our team of fourteen members of all ages (four ladies and ten gentlemen) boarded the ferry to Sham Chung to try our luck for bird watching. Could we see the White-bellied Sea Eagle, the Crested Serpent Eagle, the Crested Kingfisher and the Owl stationed in Sham Chung?

Our luck came soon after disembarking from the ferry. Half way up the hill opposite to the pier, there was an eye-catching white dot. No mistake, it was the White-bellied Sea Eagle! One after another, we held our binoculars and set up our telescopes to watch the bird's robust upright standing posture. After that, we took photographs of the bird with our digital cameras attached to the telescopes. How enjoyable it was! Not long after we had watched enough and started to go, the bird flew up. We were all amazed by its hovering posture until it flew behind the hill.


## Sham Chung to Yung Shue O (con't)

When we were in the bushes alongside the shore trying to trace birds from the sounds they made, the White-bellied Sea Eagle came back again. This time it had caught a big white fish. In a leisurely fashion, it found a tree as its dining table and enjoyed its breakfast. We watched how it ate to its fill and took some snapshots of it again without bothering to have a look at the Great Tit, the Chinese Bulbul, the Red-whiskered Bulbul and the Japanese White-eye nearby.

Walking not far ahead, we saw the golf course. There was a pair of White Wagtails on the grass. They were strolling and flirting with each other. When they saw us, they flew away hurriedly. At the far side, there were five or six Richard's Pipits that seemed to be engaging in a food-searching walking race. We did not dare to disturb them and just lifted our binoculars to have a look at them and then went around the side of the golf course to see if there were other birds in this habitat. We could only see the Rufous-backed Shrike, the Olive-backed Pipit and the Common Blackbird. Our experienced birder, Brother Wong, sighed that the transformation of farmland to golf course had driven the birds away. When we were leaving in disappointment, Brother Wong discovered the Black-capped Kingfisher. This inspired us and filled our sinking hearts with joy. Once again, we chased the beautiful shadow of the Black-capped Kingfisher.



At about 11 a.m., we took the coastal footpath to Yung Shue O. It was a rare opportunity to have a female Daurian Redstart accompanying us along a section of the way to see us off. This surprised and delighted us all. On a trail with the hill at the back and the sea in front, we saw an Osprey standing on a float far out to sea. It was not frightened by a speedboat with a beautiful lady water-skiing by. We also saw an immature Crested Serpent Eagle wheeling in the sky over the hilltop and a Little Swift flying by like a flash. On our way, we passed by a spot where a hill fire had taken place. Five Chestnut Bunbuls hastily flew away and hid themselves in the charcoal-black burnt shrubs.

Under the bright sunshine, we had walked for about an hour before finally reaching Yung Shue O. We could no longer withstand the heat and we all took off our thick clothes, looking a bit tired. At the entrance of the village, we could only see the Barn Swallow and the Common Tailorbird. Brother Wong went to the Fung Shui woods behind the village to take a look but could not find any trace of birds either. After eating noodles with eggs and luncheon meat and having a rest at a small tea-house, we left and walked along the water catchment towards Sai Sha Road. Since there were lots of vehicles travelling to and fro coupled with many sightseers, it was difficult to find any birds. We only saw a Grey Wagtail shuttling and playing along the catchment, yet we duly appreciated the scenery of Kei Ling Ha Bay. At 2:15 p.m., we finally reached Sai Sha Road. In the car park, there were mini-buses going to University Railway Station and passing by Wu Kai Sha. Public transport from here is certainly more convenient than before. In total, 28 species of birds were recorded. 

Please note that these are unchecked records; - members are reminded of the importance of submitting all records on cards or electronically

## January

Though occasionally cold, the weather continued to be very dry. Bluetails and thrushes were unusually scarce.

In the second half of the month, the flock of Dalmatian Pelicans in Deep Bay increased to 15 and there were reports of 491 Black-tailed Godwits at Mai Po (RWL); the highest ever winter count, and a Nordmann's Greenshank and Baikal Teal at Tsim Bei Tsui (PH, EMSK).

The highlight of the month for about a dozen lucky HKBWS members was a Short-eared Owl at Mai Po on 30th (CHF), only about the third or fourth Hong Kong record.

Elsewhere in the Deep Bay area, there were sightings of a female Daurian Starling at Lok Ma Chau on 22nd (JA), the first ever in winter, a Blyth's Reed Warbler at Nam Sang Wai on 25th (EMSK), a Citrine Wagtail beside the Mai Po access road on the same day (RWL), and 76 Chinese Grosbeaks and a Eurasian Eagle Owl at Kam Tin two days later (JA). The same observer also found a Japanese Grosbeak in the Sha Tau Kok Road area at this time.

In the final ten days of the month, Tai Po Kau hosted a Forest Wagtail, a Chestnut-crowned Warbler and up to two Mrs Gould's Sunbirds of unknown origins (THK), and there were occasional sightings of up to two unidentified Spectacled Warblers at Ng Tung Chai and Shing Mun.

## February

Highlights of the month came from two far-flung quarters of Hong Kong. First, a Red-throated Diver, only the second record, was found in late afternoon at Sam A Tsuen, a remote coastal site in the northeast NT, on 19th (JSRE, RC) and seen the next day by about 20 members. It then disappeared only to be relocated three weeks later at Starling Inlet. Hot on its heels came the discovery of a Collared Kingfisher, thought to be the third record for Hong Kong and only the fourth for China. This was found at the westernmost end of Lantau at the Tai O salt pans on 24th (LW). Though it could be frustratingly elusive, it was seen intermittently over the next two weeks in this area.

Meanwhile, monthly counts in Deep Bay saw record tallies for two species - 11,424 Great Cormorants on 4th and 1282 Eurasian Curlews on 13th (YYT).

Also noted in the Deep Bay area were two Common Pochards and a Falcatid Duck at Ma Tso Lung on 13th, whilst a drake Baikal Teal, up to two Ferruginous Duck, a Nordmann's Greenshank and two Long-billed Dowitchers were all intermittently reported at Mai Po throughout the month. A Daurian Jackdaw was noted at Lut Chau on 20th and the over-wintering Daurian Starling appeared again at Lok Ma Chau on 23rd. Other interesting reports involved 14 Grey-headed Lapwings, a Northern Lapwing and six Common Starlings at Kam Tin on 25th (JA) and a Himalayan Swiftlet at Fung Lok Wai on 28th (KJ).

The Winter Atlas survey concluded this month after four winters. Four species that were either unknown or major rarities at the start of the survey now appear to have become established at least locally in Hong Kong. These are Eurasian Collared Dove (up to six at Tsim Bei Tsui reported this month), Pygmy Wren Babbler (up to two at Tai Po Kau, Ng Tung Chai and So Lo Pun), Mountain Tailorbird (up to five at Tai Po Kau, Ng Tung Chai and Kuk Po) and Lesser Shortwing (none this month, but up to three at Ng Tung Chai and Tai Po Kau earlier in the winter). In addition, Mountain Bulbul (up to two at Tai Po Kau and Ng Tung Chai throughout the month) may be in the process of becoming established.

Noteworthy reports of woodland or shrubland birds included 24 Hair-crested Drongos at Lamma (GS), a Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush, a Mugimaki Flycatcher and a Hainan Blue Flycatcher at Sha Tin Pass (GH), all on 8th, a Chestnut-crowned Warbler and Black Bulbul at Tai Po on 19th (RB) and a Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush at Kadoorie FBG on 20th.

A Grey Bushchat beside Sha Tau Kok Road was the third report this winter of a now irregularly occurring species.

## March

In a generally good month for birds, temperatures were generally cool and a very strong cold front came through with rain on 12th.

The first week of the month saw a fine range of birds present, including the Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush at Kadoorie FBG, the Himalayan Swiftlet at Fung Lok Wai until 2nd, the Collared Kingfisher at Tai O until 8th and a pair of Brown Fish Owls at Tai Lam Chung from 7th (YYT). The latter continued to be reported intermittently throughout the month.

The origins of a Rustic Bunting found on the Buffalo

Fields at Kam Tin on 6th (JA) and remaining there over the next two days generated a lot of discussion until the question was settled by a combination of digital photography (GT) and experienced feather-reading (PJJ). Magnified photos revealed irregular moult of the tail feathers, which was not at all obvious on the bird in the field. This moult pattern is thought to indicate captive origins.

Sightings on 8th-9th included a White's Thrush at Wu Kau Tang, an Orange-headed Thrush at Lamma (GS), the latter remaining until at least 20th, single Mountain and Black Bulbuls, a Chestnut-crowned Warbler and an unidentified Spectacled Warbler, all at Tai Po Kau, and a singing Brown Bush Warbler at Sha Lo Tung (RWL). The first for several years, it remained at Sha Lo Tung until at least 18th.

Best birds of the annual WWF HK Big Bird Race, held on 11th-12th, were the Red-throated Diver, re-discovered at Starling Inlet (MT), the Brown Fish Owls at Tai Lam Cheung (LC) and the Ferruginous Duck at Mai Po (EMSK). A wide variety of shorebirds were present in Deep Bay, including the first Broad-billed Sandpipers of the year, a Nordmann's Greenshank and two Long-billed Dowitchers. Also noted were two Oriental Pratincoles (KB) and an early inland Red-necked Phalarope at San Tin.

The arrival of an intense front on 12th led to sightings of a Brown-headed Thrush and three Blyth's Leaf Warblers at Wu Kau Tang (GH), an Oriental Plover in Deep Bay (YYT) and 30 Japanese Grosbeaks, record numbers, in a large tree below Ng Tung Chai village (DT), all on 13th, three Siberian Thrushes at Ma On Shan (GC), the first Blue-and-white Flycatcher of the spring at Ng Tung Chai and, bizarrely, an adult Sooty Tern seen from the Mai Po boardwalk coming in with the gulls (EMSK), all on 14th.

In a quiet period that ensued, the only significant reports were four Oriental Greenfishes at Penfold Park and a Mountain Tailorbird at Chung Mei on 16th, a Radde's Warbler at Sha Lo Tung on 18th and one or two Asian House Martins mainly at Mai Po, whilst a trip to Po Toi on 19th turned up at least three Red-flanked Bluetails, possibly the highest count of a very poor winter for this chat, a White's Thrush and several Japanese and Grey-backed Thrushes. On the same date, the first Grey-faced Buzzard of the spring was seen at Lei Yue Mun and there were reports of a Black-winged Kite at Mai Po (DAD) and a singing Lesser Shortwing and Hainan Blue Flycatcher at Tai Po Kau (GJC, RWL).

Evidence of passage during 22nd-23rd was provided by reports of a Pale Thrush at Penfold Park, two Oriental Plovers at Chek Lap Kok (GJC), a Japanese Sparrowhawk near Tai Po Kau and an Oriental Cuckoo,

a Ruddy Sparrow and a Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler at Lok Ma Chau.

High tides at the end of the month created ideal conditions for gull-watching in Deep Bay, and a Little Gull was found in front of the Mai Po boardwalk on 24th (YYT), only the second ever for Hong Kong. Three days later, an adult Vega Gull and two other gulls, thought to be Steppe Gulls, potentially the first for Hong Kong, were present (MLC).

Following sightings of 30 Grey-faced Buzzards off North Lantau and a Blyth's Leaf Warbler at Tai O on 25th and a Ferruginous Flycatcher at Po Toi the next day, the final noteworthy reports of the month were all from the Sai Kung area on 27th and included a Siberian Thrush and Black-naped Monarch at Yung Shue O and a Brown-headed Thrush and Brown Fish Owl near Pak Sha O (JA).

## April

Though somewhat drier and hotter than usual, the month was full of interest and produced two periods, 2nd-5th and 15th-17th, when birding possibilities seemed almost unlimited. Among the highlights were a Temminck's Cormorant at Po Toi, potentially a Hong Kong first, unprecedentedly large numbers of Spoon-billed Sandpipers and Streaked Shearwaters, three species of skua off Po Toi and a fine passage of flycatchers, especially at Po Toi and Ng Tung Chai.

The month opened with a Silver-backed Needletail at Mai Po and a Siberian Blue Robin (YYT), the first of at least three, and a Ferruginous Flycatcher at Kowloon Park.

Birds noted at Po Toi on 2nd included a Crested Honey Buzzard, three Grey-faced Buzzards, a Siberian Blue Robin (often an indicator of good migration), a female Green-backed Flycatcher, potentially only the third Hong Kong record, a Brown-breasted Flycatcher, also a potential third record, and single Ferruginous, Mugimaki and Narcissus Flycatchers (KJ, GH). Reports elsewhere included a singing Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo (subsequently noted throughout the month) at Ng Tung Chai (EMSK), a Grey-faced Buzzard at Mong Tseng, a late Greater Spotted Eagle and a Saunders's Gull bearing a Liaoning leg-flag at Mai Po and two singing Red-tailed Robins, two Blue-and-white Flycatchers and a Japanese Flycatcher at Tai Po Kau.

A return visit to Po Toi on 3rd found most of the birds of the previous day, most notably the Green-backed Flycatcher, and also two Brown Hawk Owls (GT, P&MW). Meanwhile at Mai Po, no fewer than 13 Spoon-billed Sandpipers were counted on the scrape (YYT).

compared to a previous highest count of five, Malayan Night Herons were again noted near Fanling Golf Course, and five Ashy Minivets and three Red-tailed Cobins were present at Lamma (GS).

The 4th brought reports of a Narcissus Flycatcher at Lamma and a Grey-faced Buzzard, a Red-tailed Robin, four Pale Thrushes and a White's Thrush at Mount Austin.

On 5th, coverage of Ng Tung Chai turned up a fine series of passerines, including single Siberian Blue and Red-tailed Robins, a singing Lesser Shortwing, a male Siberian Thrush, three Blue-and-white Flycatchers, single Narcissus, Ferruginous and Hainan Blue Flycatchers and a Chestnut Bunting (EMSK, RWL), all in the lower section between the village and the first waterfall, whilst, in a repeat of events in mid March, a flock of 30 Japanese Grosbeaks was again seen in a large tree below the village (DT). Elsewhere, there were reports of single Blue-and-white and Narcissus Flycatchers at Tai Po Kau and Ngonng Ping, and also a Chinese Blue Flycatcher at the latter site, a White's Thrush at Tai Po Kau Headland, 10 Grey-faced Buzzards and a Japanese Flycatcher at Dong Ping Chau and an estimated 1500 Red-necked Phalaropes from the ferry (MDW), two late Bright-capped Cisticolas at Kuk Po and a Blue-throated Barbet (Cat E) at Mui Tsz Lam (JA).

Ashy Minivets, robins, thrushes, warblers and flycatchers continued to be reported from widespread sites until about mid month, albeit intermittently and in small numbers. Passerine migrants were hard to find at Po Toi on 9th, though a Slaty-breasted Rail was a surprise there. At Mai Po, up to three Spoon-billed Sandpipers, and seven Nordmann's Greenshanks were noted during the same period, and a Pectoral Sandpiper was seen during 10th-16th (YYT) and possibly a second individual on 26th.

The first Indian Cuckoo of the year was noted at Lamma on 7th (GS) and a Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo was heard at Tai Po Kau on 8th (MDW). At Ma Tso Lung, the first Chestnut Bittern and first Japanese Yellow Bunting of the spring were found on 10th (YYT), with further reports of the latter at Kam Tin on 13th and near Mai Po on 16th. Two Bright-capped Cisticolas at Sha Lo Tung on 10th were the latest ever. Following a Himalayan Swiftlet at Kam Tin on 13th (JA), a Chestnut-cheeked Starling was seen near Mai Po the next day.

On 15th, a Water Rail was found at Long Valley sharing a pond with a Baillon's and two Ruddy-breasted Crakes (JA, SL, YHK) and there were reports of four Chinese Goshawks and a Japanese Sparrowhawk at Po Toi and an Oriental Cuckoo at Ping Kong (KJ).

Reports on 16th included a Lesser Shortwing, two

Siberian Thrushes, seven Mountain Tailorbirds (a new high count), a Hainan Blue Flycatcher and two rather late Japanese Paradise Flycatchers at Ng Tung Chai (EMSK), a White's Thrush and single Narcissus, Mugimaki and Hainan Blue Flycatchers at Po Toi (GJC) and the first Blue-tailed Bee-eaters of the spring.

April 17th is a day that will live long in the memory of a lucky group of HKBWS members who found themselves on a charter d boat to Po Toi. A good swell after several days of easterlies saw at least 50 Streaked Shearwaters sitting on the sea in scattered rafts of five to eight birds. Nearly all previous records of this rarity have been typhoon-related and involved just one or two birds. Also present were three skuas species - 20 Long-tailed, two Pomarine, both species rare, and three Arctic, only the second record for Hong Kong. On rocks in Po Toi's small harbour was an odd-looking cormorant, which photographs indicated were a Temminck's Cormorant - an unexpected addition to the Hong Kong list that remained until 22nd. On Po Toi itself were eight species of flycatcher - Asian Brown, Ferruginous, Narcissus, Mugimaki, Blue-and-white, Hainan Blue, Asian Paradise and Japanese Paradise.

Elsewhere on 17th, a Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo, the third of the spring, was heard at Pak Sha O and a Little Whimbrel seen at Mai Po. The latter remained until 25th. Subsequent reports comprised two at Kam Tin during 19th-23rd, four at Chek Lap Kok on 26th and one at Penfold Park during 26th-28th.

Further boat trips to Po Toi turned up a Ferruginous Flycatcher on 21st and 22nd, the latest ever by about a week, six Greater Crested Terns on 21st, another Long-tailed Skua on 23rd, an unidentified Red headed / Black-headed Bunting on 24th and 30 Chinese Goshawks on 27th.

In a very good passage of Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, the first of the spring were 24 at Palm Springs (just west of Mai Po) and a further five at Luk Keng on 16th. Subsequently, there were 10 at Mai Po on 17th, 24 there on 19th, 16 at Ping Kong on 26th, 18 at Po Toi on 27th, six at Mai Po on 28th and finally two there on 30th. The counts of 24 on both 16th and 19th suggest that the same flock remained in the Mai Po area over several days.

Other notable reports included 250 Chinese Bulbuls at Lamma on 18th (GS), a Pechora Pipit of the taxon *menzbieri* trapped at Mai Po on 19th (P JL), a Siberian Thrush at Ng Tung Chai on 20th and a Black Bittern at Mai Po on 27th.

Finally, a recently-fledged Rufous-capped Babbler was seen at Ng Tung Chai on 30th, indicating the relatively early nesting of this babbler. ♀

# Coming Activities

Date	Leader / Speaker	Activity / Details	Time	Difficulty
6 Aug (Sat)	CHEN Chi Po NG Yan Nar Crested Bulbul Club Leader	<b>Hong Kong Zoology &amp; Botanical Gardens</b> ** 08:30 Hong Kong Bank Main Branch (at Lion exit)	08:30 – 11:00	X
10 Aug (Wed)	Forrest FONG	<b>Indoor Meeting &lt;Outing Leader Training Workshop&gt;</b> Room 1101, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon <i>(Limited to Outing Leader, Free of Charge)</i>	19:00 – 20:30	
17 Aug (Wed)	Forrest FONG	<b>Indoor Meeting &lt;China &amp; Oversea Bird Watching Trip Reports&gt;</b> Room 902, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon <i>(HKS10 member, HKS30 non-member)</i>	19:00 – 20:30	
21 Aug (Sun)	Forrest FONG	<b>Small Group Activities: Mai Po (Boardwalk)</b> <i>(Limited to 6 members only. Members should have Mai Po Marsh Entry Permit &amp; FCA Permit. Please reserve place by email to membership@hkbws.org.hk)</i>	07:30 – 12:00	XX
24 Aug (Wed)	NG Cho Nam	<b>Indoor Meeting &lt;Habitats and Conservation Work in Hong Kong&gt;</b> Room 1101, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon <i>(HKS10 member, HKS30 non-member)</i>	19:00 – 20:30	
4 Sept (Sun)	Gary CHOW Robin FUNG	<b>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	08:00 – 16:00	XX
7 Sept (Wed)	CHEUNG Ho Fai	<b>Indoor Meeting &lt;The Autumn Migrant in Hong Kong&gt;</b> Room 1113, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon <i>(Member \$10, Non-member \$30)</i>	19:00 – 20:30	
10 Sept (Sat)	HON So WONG Chiu Shu Crested Bulbul Club Leader	<b>Aberdeen Reservoir</b> ** 08:00 MTR Central Station Exit B (Hang Seng Bank)	08:00 – 12:00	XX
11 Sept (Sun)	Mike TURNBULL Aukie AU	<b>Boat Trip: Po Toi &amp; Lamma Channel</b> 08:00 Aberdeen Public Pier (near Ocean Court) 16:00 back to Aberdeen Public Pier <i>(Member \$150, Non-member \$200)</i>	08:00 – 16:00	XXX
24 Sept (Sat)	LI Wai Ki	<b>Small Group Activities: Tai Po Kau</b> <i>(Limited to 4 members only. Please reserve place by email to membership@hkbws.org.hk)</i>	08:00 – 12:00	XX
25 Sept (Sun)	CHEUNG Ho Fai	<b>Tai Mo Shan</b> 08:00 Tsuen Wan MTR Station 'Hang Seng Bank	08:00 – 12:00	XX



# Coming Activities

Date	Leader / Speaker	Activity / Details	Time	Difficulty
28 Sept (Wed)	YU Yat Tung	<b>Indoor Meeting &lt;ID of Birds (1): Raptor&gt;</b> Room 1113, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon <i>(HKS10 member, HK\$30 non-member)</i>	19:00 – 20:30	
8 Oct (Sat)	HO Wai Chun	<b>Small Group Activities: Fung Yuen &amp; Sha Lo Tung</b> <i>(Limited to 8 members only. Please reserve place by email to membership@hkbws.org.hk)</i>	08:00 – 13:00	
	WONG Lai Yee CHAN Man Cheung Crested Bulbul Club Leader	<b>Tsim Bei Tsui</b> ** 08:30 Yuen Long Hang Heung Cake Shop (near LRT Tai Tong Road Station)	08:30 – 13:00	XX
9 Oct (Sun)	Peter WONG Michelle KONG	<b>Boat Trip: Po Toi &amp; Lamma Channel</b> 08:00 Aberdeen Public Pier (near Ocean Court) 16:00 back to Aberdeen Public Pier   <i>(Member \$150, Non-member \$200)</i>	08:00 – 16:00	XXX
15 Oct (Sat)	Mike KILBURN Jose Alberto CHEUNG	<b>Small Group Activities: Ng Tung Chai</b> <i>(Limited to 4 members only. Please reserve place by email to membership@hkbws.org.hk)</i>	07:30 – 12:00	XX
16 Oct (Sun)	Forrest FONG	<b>Small Group Activities: Mai Po</b> <i>(Limited to 6 members only. Members should have Mai Po Marsh Entry Permit &amp; FCA Permit. Please reserve place by email to membership@hkbws.org.hk)</i>	07:30 – 12:00	XX
19 Oct (Wed)	Forrest FONG	<b>Indoor Meeting &lt;China &amp; Oversea Bird Watching Trip Reports&gt;</b> Room 1113, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon <i>(HKS10 member, HK\$30 non-member)</i>	19:00 – 20:30	
22 Oct (Sat)	Apache LAU	<b>Small Group Activities: Mt. Davis</b> <i>(Limited to 8 members only. Please reserve place by email to membership@hkbws.org.hk)</i>	15:00 – 17:00	X
23 Oct (Sun)	WONG Hok Sze Forrest FONG	<b>Nam Sang Wai &amp; Sha Po</b> 08:00 West Rail Yuen Long Station (7-11 Convenience Store)	08:00 – 13:00	XXX
29 Oct (Sat)	HO Wai Chun	<b>Small Group Activities: Sha Tin Pass</b> <i>(Limited to 4 members only. Please reserve place by email to membership@hkbws.org.hk)</i>	07:00 – 11:00	XX
30 Oct (Sun)	TAM Yiu Leung LUK Chun Pun	<b>Long Valley</b> 07:45 KCR Sheung Shui Station Taxi stand	08:00 – 12:00	X

\*\* Crested Bulbul Club Activity –

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



Transportation arrangement



Please fill in the booking slip and return

## Booking Note

**Note! Priority is given to members of the Society.** 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. **Please show your membership card when joining the activities.**

- \* 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 to 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 names and Hong Kong ID No. to register for access to the Frontier Closed 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 "The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Ltd"

For all outdoor activities please bring food and drinks, 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:

- \*  4 Sept (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.*

*Please indicate whether the participant(s) have the following permits and bring them along with you during attending the Mai Po Outing.*

Mai Po Marshes Entry Permit:  Yes  No                      Frontier Closed Area Permit:  Yes  No

+ 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 the following boat trip (HK\$150/member, HK\$200/non-members):

- \*  11 Sept (Sun): Poi Toi and Lamma Channel (\_\_\_\_\_ members and \_\_\_\_\_ non-members)
- \*  9 Oct (Sun): Poi Toi and Lamma Channel (\_\_\_\_\_ members and \_\_\_\_\_ 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, 1612 Beverley Commercial Centre, 87-105 Chatham Road South, TST, Kowloon, Hong Kong***

*Application should be made at least two weeks before the date of the outing. Late applications will only be accepted if places are available. Member are of course more than welcome to attend any event.*

\* Please  as appropriate

<Please email this reply slip to [membership@hkbws.org.hk](mailto:membership@hkbws.org.hk) > \_\_\_\_\_

#### Small Group Activities (For members only)

I wish to reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places for members for the Small Group Activities to be held on \_\_\_\_\_

at \_\_\_\_\_ Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Membership No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact No (Mobile): \_\_\_\_\_



黃頰山雀 - 李玉瑩  
Yellow-cheeked Tit - Lee Yuk Ying

Yellow - cheeked Tit .



暗綠繡眼鳥 - 葉海堅 (京士柏)  
Japanese White-eye - Joe Yip ( King's Park)  
30/04/2005  
Canon 300D 400mm + 12mm Extension tube ISO800

小白腰雨燕 - 壞蛋 1 號 (粉嶺圍)  
Little Swift - Bad Egg No. 1  
(Fanling Wai)

08/06/2005  
Canon EOS 10D, Canon EF 400mm  
f/5.6L USM

