

香港觀鳥會 Hong Kong Bird Watching Society



bulletin

會員通訊

201

Autumn 2006 - 秋

# 白胸翡翠

White-breasted Kingfisher

畫雀仔 [paintbird.com](http://paintbird.com)

• Lee Yuk Ying 李玉瑩



# 黑枕燕鷗

Black-naped Tern

- Phippen Ho 何志剛
- Tap Mun 塔門
- 21/05/2005
- DSLR Camera, 600mm/f4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter



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## Chairman's word - Cheung Ho Fai



The world is changing. HKBWS needs to change and to move forward. The Long Valley project is a new project to HKBWS. HKBWS is now actively managing an important conservation site in Hong Kong. Over the last 9 months, we have started to see our management actions slowly in place, and some of our actions have been producing very good results. Many of you who have visited Long Valley should have already noticed these changes. Here I thank our staff Vicky and Wai Yan to make this possible. I would also like to point out that the Long Valley project needs your participation to make it more successful. For example, good bird watching records are important to plan our future management action. Beautiful and interesting photos can help to promote interest in the site and facilitate education. Careful uses of the site can prevent excessive disturbances to the wildlife. Public guided tours will commence in October. Regular surveys are also going on. Some management work can also use volunteers. Your participation is welcome in all these efforts. If HKBWS can do a good job, that will strengthen our position when we try to gain support to continue the project in future years.



## Annual General Meeting

57 members attended the Annual General Meeting of the Society on 28 September 06 at the Hong Kong Observatory. The Chairman summarized the work and achievements of the Society in 2005/06. Comments and suggestions on future development were raised by members in the subsequent discussion session. Mr. Henry Lui stepped down from the post of Honary Secretary after serving for 2 years. We would like to thank Mr. Lui for his work in the position. Mr. Alan Chan was elected to take up the role.

## 2007 Membership Card

The design of the membership card for 2007 is completed. We thank Ms Puk Yuk Ying for doing the artwork and Mr. KK Hui for contributing a superb photo of a flying Roseate Tern for the design.

## Changes in the Membership Affairs Committee

We would like to express our thanks to Ms Puk Yuk Ying for designing the artwork and layout of the Bulletin for the last 5 years since issue no. 181. Her work will be taken up by Ky Design starting from this issue but she will continue to provide help in membership affairs.

We must also thank Mr. Simon Wong and Ms. Betty Hui, both long-serving members of the Membership Affairs Committee, for their contribution in the operation of the Society. They have left the Committee recently and Mr. Alan Chan has joined as replacement.

## Double Happiness

With October came double happiness: Mr Lo Wan Yan, Manager (Projects and Communication) and Mr Robin Fung, member of the Education and Publicity Committee were married to their other halves on the same day on 14 October 2006 afternoon at the Shatin Marriage Registry. The ceremonies were attended by many veteran members of the Society, filling up all seats and standing room in the small registration office. Congratulations to Lo and Robin.

## Special Offer to Members for buying binoculars or telescope

### Offer 1:

We are pleased to have the support of Schmidt Marketing (H.K.) Ltd for buying Minox binoculars or telescopes at a special price. The company will also make a donation of 10% of the purchase price to the Society. Details are as follows:

1. Models, price and donation can be found in our website.
2. The Special Offer only applies to members of the Society. Please send your order form and cheque to the Society office. Members are also required to collect the ordered equipment from our office.
3. Please attach the order form and a cheque payable to "The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society" and send to our office. You can also make an order at the office in person.

### Offer 2:

We are also supported by the "Canon Hongkong Company Limited" in the offer of a special price to buy a designated model of binoculars. Details are as follows:

1. Model and price can be found in our website.
2. The Special Offer only applies to members of the Society. Interested members please forward your personal information (name, membership number and contact number only) to our office through email, fax or by post. We will send your name and contact phone number to the staff of Canon after verifying your membership. You will be contacted by the staff of Canon later on.
3. Members are required to pay and collect the binoculars at the Hung Hom office of Canon.

## Binoculars and Telescopes Borrowing Scheme

We would like to express our gratitude to "Swarovski Hong Kong Limited" and "Schmidt Marketing (H.K.) Limited" for lending some of their high quality binoculars and telescopes to members of the Society for trying. The borrowing period is 2 weeks. It is free of charge but a deposit is required. Please call the office to reserve and pick up in our office at the agreed time.

## Acknowledgments:

1. Schmidt Marketing (H.K.) Ltd
2. Swarovski Hong Kong Ltd
3. Canon Hong Kong Company Limited



## Birds and Humans in Harmony - A Sustainable Management Scheme in Long Valley

(Dec 2005 - Nov 2007)

### Project Progress:

Currently there are 96,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of shallow water habitat, 20,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of dry agricultural land, 23,500 ft<sup>2</sup> of wet agricultural land and 252,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of farmland margin joined the management scheme. An addition 50,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of wet agricultural land was added during September to November.

### Shallow Water Habitat:

In July, we have removed weeds from a large piece of abandoned farmland in the east of Long Valley. Freshwater was then pumped in and turned the farmland into shallow water habitat. The creation of wetland attracts different kinds of birds, such as Black-winged Stilt, Wood Sandpiper, Snipes and also Common Teal.



The newly added shallow water habitat



Paddy rice

### Wet Agricultural Land:

Paddy rice was one of the main crops planted in Long Valley during the 60s and 70s. In August, we plant rice again here in Long Valley. Rice grains came out in September which attracts lots of munias. We are going to harvest part of the grains, if possible, for the seeds of rice planting next year.

### Wet Agricultural Land (during bird migration period):

During September to November, we planted Water Spinach on 50,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of farmland and controlled the height of crops so as to provide suitable habitats for migratory birds.

### Dry Agricultural Land:

The 3rd round of Flowering Chinese Cabbage (Choi Sum) was planted in September and flowered since October. The farmland with yellow flowers that member may seen during this period is the one under our management.

### Bird Monitoring Programme:

We have carried out a night bird survey in Long Valley in September. There were 4 Savanna Nightjars, several dozens of Black-winged Stilts and over a hundred Wood Sandpipers.

### Eco-tour guide training and Eco-tours at Long Valley

We have organized a tour guide training programme in July and August. The training included lectures, site visits and an assessment. Participants are mainly students, housewives and local residents. There are altogether 34 tour guides passed the training.

In September, a bird watching activity was organized for the tour guides in order to familiar them with birds in Long Valley under the guidance of experienced members.

Eco-tours were organized for the public starting from October. Participants showed interest in knowing the ecology of Long Valley and watching birds. They also appreciate the beauty of wild birds.



Interpreter introduced the characteristics of Long Valley to students



## Crested Bulbul Club

### 1. Early Morning Bird Watchers for overseas tourists

The Society is now working with Hong Kong Tourism Board to promote bird watching for overseas tourists in our urban parks. The Board will promote bird watching to tourist agents who will receive overseas tourist, and the Club will arrange qualified interpreters to conduct the guided visit. The activity has been launched since October 2006.



Overseas tourist enjoy bird watching in Urban Park.

No. of overseas tourist Oct 2006 A total of 6 times and about 25 people

Special thanks to Mr David Choi and Mr John Holmes

### 2. Bird watching interpretation in Hong Kong Wetland Park

Bird watching interpretation has been extended to Hong Kong Wetland Park since September by the members of the club. Volunteers will be arranged in each Saturday and Sunday in the hides inside the Park and using a telescope to show the beauty of birds to general public.

A total of 143 person-time have been participated in this service in Sept and Oct 2006.

### 3. Early Morning Bird Watchers at Kln Park & HK Park

No. of participants in Hong Kong Park from July to October 2006: 223

No. of participants in Kowloon Park from from July to October 2006: 424

#### Bird watching activities

22-23/7/2006 exhibition has been set up in the pier of Tap Mun to promote the conservation of terns.

8/10/2006 arrange volunteers in 4 parks to promote bird watching on Hong Kong Bird Watching Day

#### The 5<sup>th</sup> Bird Watching Interpreter Training Workshop for Elderly

The Club has organised the 5th training workshop in November to recruit more elderly volunteers for promote bird watching. A total of 4 lectures and 4 outings will be

arranged for participants. Those who pass the assessment are qualified to be the interpreter in future activities.

Special thanks to Kowloon Park for offering lecture venue.



Children also found bird watching interesting.

## Colours on Wings

### - Hong Kong Wild Birds Photo Contest 2006

#### Sponsor:

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust

To encourage more people participating in the contest and upgrade their technique, a lecture and five outdoor practices have been organised for general public and students. A total of 330 have been taken part the activities.

Date: 6 Aug, 12 Aug, 19 Aug, 26 Aug, 27 Aug and 14 Oct 2006

Venue: Kowloon Park, Long Valley, Tai Po Kau and Mai Po



Experienced photographers taught students how to take bird photos.

## Hong Kong Bird Watching Day 2006

In response to the World Bird Festival 2006 organised by BirdLife International and to promote the fun and advantage in bird watching, Hong Kong Bird Watching Society has organised the first "Hong Kong Bird Watching Day" on 8 Oct 2006 in the following places:

Tsim Bei Tsui, Nam Sun Wai, Long Valley, Hong Kong Wetland Park, Hong Kong Park, Kowloon Park, Tuen Mun Park.

### Special thanks to:

#### Equipment Supported:

Schmidt Marketing (H.K.) Ltd., Swarovski Hong Kong Ltd., Canon Hong Kong Company Limited.

#### Supporting Organizations:

WWF Hong Kong, Agriculture, Fisheries & Conservation Department, Hong Kong Wetland Park, Leisure and Cultural Services Department

#### Volunteers:

members of the Crested Bulbul Club, Alan Chan, Gary Chow, Cheung Ho-fai, Hung Wai-ming, M L Lau, P W Yu, Y N Chan, S Y Choi, H C Poon, Tony Hung, Y F Ng, George Lam, Alan Lam, M W Poon, M L Lee, C H Wu, T L Or, C P Wong, K K Lam, Y Kwok, Y T Szeto, W C Wong.



Residents of Tuen Mun found bird watching very interesting



Visitors were attracted by Common Kingfisher and Night Heron inside Tuen Park

## 2006 Definitive Stamps - First Day Cover of HKBWS

The Hong Kong Post is going to publish the 2006 Definitive Stamps using Hong Kong birds as the theme. To response this great event, the Society will produced 2 First Day Cover for members and public to purchase. One with the whole set of 16 stamps will be sold at HK\$250. Another set is attached with one or two low-value stamp(s) sold at HK\$12. You are welcome to place order to the office.





## Research Group update

### Egret Research Group by Captain Wong

#### 1. 2006 Hongkong Egretty Survey

A total of 1009 nests were recorded. The number of Great Egret nests reached a recent new high of 128 nests. However, Black-crowned Night Herons continued to decline (170 in 2005 but 121 in 2006). New nesting sites were found at Yeung Cheung (Plover Cove) and near Ngau Horn Shek (Outer Deep Bay). A report will be produced.

#### 2. Survey of Guizhou Province (China) nesting colonies (May 2006)

Acting upon an invitation by Prof Liang Wei of Hainan Normal University, members of ERG surveyed northeast and central Guizhou from 3rd to 7th May. A total of 1297 nests of 4 species (Little Egret, Cattle Egret, Black crowned Night Heron and Chinese Pond Heron) in 10 colonies were recorded. Little Egret was the dominant species (645 nests, 50%), while the least numerous was Cattle Egret (18 nests, 1%). A report will be produced.

### Kite Research Group

The seasonal pattern of the Black Kite population 2006 is matching with the previous 5 years. Winter migrants are back in Sept/Oct, so the population has a significant increase.

As the counting spot in Hampton place, Olympic, has closed for renovation, so we have been stop counting from this spot until further notice.

Our member Chan Tin Lok has studied aboard since Sept 06, but he will continue to support KRG as a guest researcher in his vocation in Hong Kong in the future.

We conducted the monthly kite count as usual. The result for the count as below:

Date	Stonecutters Island (Highest Snapshot Count)	Magazine Gap (Highest Snapshot Count)
Feb	133	129
Mar	71	132
Apr	38	/
May	33	32
Jun	38	42
Jul	163	65
Aug	71	205
Sep	51	165
Oct	140	320

### Tern Research Group by Alan Chan

Weekly surveys on breeding terns were continued at Mirs Bay. 2006 proved to be a very bad year for Black-naped in the area. The old colony off Tap Mun continued to be abandoned since late June 2005. No bird was seen around except for a few foraging individuals, probably from a small island further north. The number of Bridleds at "Tern Island" remained steady at around 150, a further decline from the 200+ of last year.

Surveys to southeastern waters were carried out on 11 June and 21 July. A small island to the east of Sai Kung became the largest tern breeding ground in Hong Kong this year. Over 200 birds of all three breeding species were found, with Black-naped being the majority. Up to 40 Roseates were recorded during the second visit when at least one chick was noted. During the same trip a Black-naped nest with chick was found at the Ninepins Group, and 23 Bridleds occupied an island further south.

Members of the Crested Bulbul Club staged a small exhibition on terns at Tap Mun on 4 weekends in July 06. We would like to express our greatest thanks to them for their volunteer work.



## AFCD Staff member **INJURED** in **Mudskipper Collector Arrest**

In issue 199 and in the HKBWS website we reported in rather strong language on the large numbers of illegal mudskipper collectors in Deep Bay, and the lack of cooperation offered to AFCD in conducting enforcement operations by the Marine Police.

Since these reports were published the situation has changed, with joint operations between the police and AFCD leading to the arrest of 8 mudskipper collectors on 20th July, and 18 arrested on 22nd September according to reports published on the website by WWF. It is also understood that these joint operations will continue.

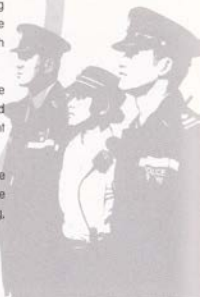
During the operation conducted on 20th July an AFCD officer was injured when the hovercraft overturned. Although he was admitted to hospital to receive treatment, he was subsequently released. It is a sobering reminder that such operations involve considerable difficulties, and must be carried out in a dangerous environment. The commitment of government officials involved in such actions is greatly appreciated.

We have also heard from WWF that a new problem is mainlanders crossing the border illegally to collect Razor Clams on the mud to the west of Tsim Bei Tsui, which is outside the Ramsar site. This area is also used by feeding shorebirds, which are scared away by the presence of the fishermen. While this issue falls outside the jurisdiction of AFCD, it remains the responsibility of Marine Police and Border Police.

As with mudskipper collectors these people can be reported to the police as illegal Border crossers. However, if possible try to find out if they have come from Shenzhen - local people also collect the shells - legally! The key is if you see a boat coming across Deep Bay from Shenzhen, or shellfish collectors, returning to a boat as the tide rises in order to Return to Shenzhen. Marine Police have very fast boats, which can easily catch the boats used by the fishermen.

In order to allow the police to respond as fast as possible WWF have placed the numbers of Marine Police in the Boardwalk hides. You can also simply call 999 and ask for marine police and report "illegal border crossers". Please also log the incident in the incident book left by WWF in the boardwalk hides.

When you get home, please post your sighting on the BBS, including what action the police took, if you are able to observe it, or what they said when you called in the problem, and report the incident by email to AFCD: [c\\_l\\_wong@afcd.gov.hk](mailto:c_l_wong@afcd.gov.hk), Lew Young, the Mai Po Manager at [lyoung@wwf.org.hk](mailto:lyoung@wwf.org.hk).



# Mai Po Update

- Lew Young



## Update on the new boardwalk and hide

Firstly, just a thank you to all of you who helped raise funds for the Big Bird Race over the past years for the construction of the new boardwalk and hide further out in Deep Bay. We now have the funds to do the work but unfortunately, we have been running through a series of government red-tape, needing to get permission under one ordinance or from another legal process. We never had to go through such a series of processes when we built the previous three floating hides so unfortunately, we now cannot start work on the hide until May 2007 so that it can be finished well in time for the autumn migration of shorebirds.

## Dredging in *gei wai* 3, 4 and 7

Society members would have read from this column in the past about the problem of the Mai Po *gei wai* silting up. This is because since the mid-1940's when they were built, silt has been brought into the pond each time that water exchange takes place and this silt then slowly accumulates on the floor of the pond. One way over this problem is to dredge the perimeter channels every 10 - 15 years, to stop the grasses around the edge of the pond growing into the central areas of open water. This summer, a contractor has dredged out the silt in the perimeter channels of *gei wai* 3 and 4, as well as in the channel of the landward side of *gei wai* 7.

## Earthmoving in *gei wai* 8

The silt that comes into the *gei wai* during water exchange does not only settle in the perimeter channels, but also settles in the middle part of the pond. In the case of *gei wai* 8, this means the silt has been accumulating in the central reedbeds and over time, the floor of the pond has been rising and the reedbed is drying out and is being invaded by grasses. If nothing is done, then the reedbed and its associated wildlife would be lost. As a result, we will be carrying out a trial this autumn of taking out a 25cm depth of silt from the reedbed in *gei wai* 8, to try and turn the reedbed into a wet reedbed again. This modification is expected to attract more reedbed dependent wildlife, e.g. warblers, Penduline Tits etc.

To carry out this work, *gei wai* 8 will have to be drained from mid-August until the end of October, before the wintering waterbirds return.

## Removing mangrove seedlings from the Deep Bay mudflats

Every autumn since the mid-1980s, the mangrove seedlings on the Deep Bay mudflats in front of the floating birdwatching hides have been removed. This work is so that we can maintain an open area of mudflat where the birds on the mudflat can roost and feed, and also allows visitors to the birdwatching hides unobstructed views of the birds on the mudflat.

This work, however, is getting harder each year with the mudflat accreting each year due to the silt that is settling on the top. This causes the mudflat to become higher and drier, making it more suitable for mangrove seedlings to establish as well as grasses to grow. If this work was not carried out, then the mudflat would quickly become covered by mangroves and the mudflat where the birds roost and feed would be lost.

This year, the work will be carried out from September and will be completed by the end of October before the arrival of the wintering waterbirds.

If you have any questions about these works, then please don't hesitate to ask any of the WWF staff at Mai Po. You can contact us by telephone (2471-6306) or by e-mail (lyoung@wwf.org.hk).

# Shandong trip, 6-12 August 2006

– Richard Lewthwaite

Shandong has quite an interesting birding literature dating back to the treaty port era. Its north coast was hailed for its healthy summer climate, "Chefoo" (Yantai) being known as the "Scarborough of China" to foreign residents of the 1870s, whilst "Weihaiwei" (Weihai) was later to be the site of a British naval hospital. Both Robert Swinhoe and Pere Armand David paid brief visits to Chefoo in 1868, recording amongst other birds Short-tailed Albatross and Streaked Shearwater. Swinhoe also spent the summer of 1873 convalescing there and wrote an *Ibis* paper with notes on over a hundred species. Kenneth H. Jones, who is best known for co-authoring with R.E. Vaughan an *Ibis* paper on the birds of Hong Kong, Macao and the West River, spent three summers in the vicinity of Weihaiwei in the early 1900s and wrote a fine paper, also published in the *Ibis*, with notes on 110 species. Jones introduced the area with these words:

"The Shantung Peninsula is peculiarly well suited for the reception of migrating birds as they pass from north to south in autumn or in the reverse direction during the spring. Korea is not much more than a hundred miles to the north and east, Port Arthur and the (Liaodong) Peninsular are still nearer and almost directly due north, and two hundred miles or so further north and west, across the Gulf of Pechili, lies Manchuria. From all these lands, and from the vast spaces of North-eastern Asia which lie behind them, there pours down in early autumn a flood of migrants, and right across the southward track of very many of them stretches the Peninsula of Shantung."

It'd long wanted to visit Shandong

and had the chance this summer, though I knew it was far too early for the flood of migrants described by Jones. Moyung Yuk Lin and I scheduled a trip so that we spent the first three days on the south coast based at Qingdao and the last four days on the north coast based mainly at Weihai. We made excursions to Lao Shan from Qingdao and to Penglai, Yantai, Kunyu Shan, Chengshantou and Tian E Hu (a coastal lagoon just south of Chengshantou which according to local people holds thousands of swans in winter), all from Weihai. A spectacular rocky promontory at Chengshantou marks the easternmost point of the province and of China.

In the course of the trip, I managed to get in a bit of light birding and recorded 33 species. The highlights were a flock of nine Crested Honey Buzzards coming in off the sea at Chengshantou on 10th, the only definite migrants of the trip, and two Oriental Storks at salt-pans near Tian E Hu the same morning. Since autumn migration of the latter has not been observed at Beidaihe until October, it seems likely that these two were over-summering.

I saw another Crested Honey Buzzard (an adult male giving a rolling aerial display culminating in a posture in which the wings were held up straight and high so that they almost seemed to touch) at a scenic valley of rock and pine at Kunyu Shan National Forest Park, inland of Weihai, where we spent two hours on the last morning. Also seen there were three Chinese Goshawks, six Oriental Turtle Doves and five Dollarbirds.

Chinese Bulbuls were present at Qingdao, Lao Shan, Penglai, Weihai (including juveniles) and near Kunyu Shan. I think these are the first records for the province. Also apparently new

for Shandong were Vinous-throated Parrotbill (three at Lao Shan and another in a city park at Qingdao) and Crested Myna (three at a city park in Qingdao). It's possible that the Crested Mynas were released or escaped birds - I saw four together kept as pets in Qingdao - but the species is common in parts of neighbouring Jiangsu and is now known in Beijing.

The most numerous birds of the trip were Black-tailed Gull (day-counts of 880 and 122, including about 150 juveniles, on the north coast on 10th and 11th), Barn Swallow (peak day-count of 400), Red-rumped Swallow (peak of 180 at Qingdao on 7th, possibly migrants), Tree Sparrow (100+ most days) and Common Magpie (widespread, peak of 40).

Other birds I especially enjoyed were Eastern Curlew (three at Qingdao Wan and 18 with a single Eurasian Curlew at Tian E Hu), Manchurian Bush Warbler (six singing at Lao Shan) and Meadow Bunting (up to five including singing males at Lao Shan, Weihai and Chengshantou).

I've prepared an Excel sheet showing all bird records from the trip and also a Shandong log showing all species I've been able to trace for the province in the literature. If anyone is interested in seeing either of these, feel free to contact me at [rwlethwaite@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:rwlethwaite@cuhk.edu.hk).

Finally, a practicality - when booking accommodation for the trip, we found we were able to get cheaper room rates compared to walk-in rates by pre-booking through [www.be88.com](http://www.be88.com). We didn't need to pay in advance, but simply paid up in the usual way at each hotel as we checked out.



# 白腹山鵟

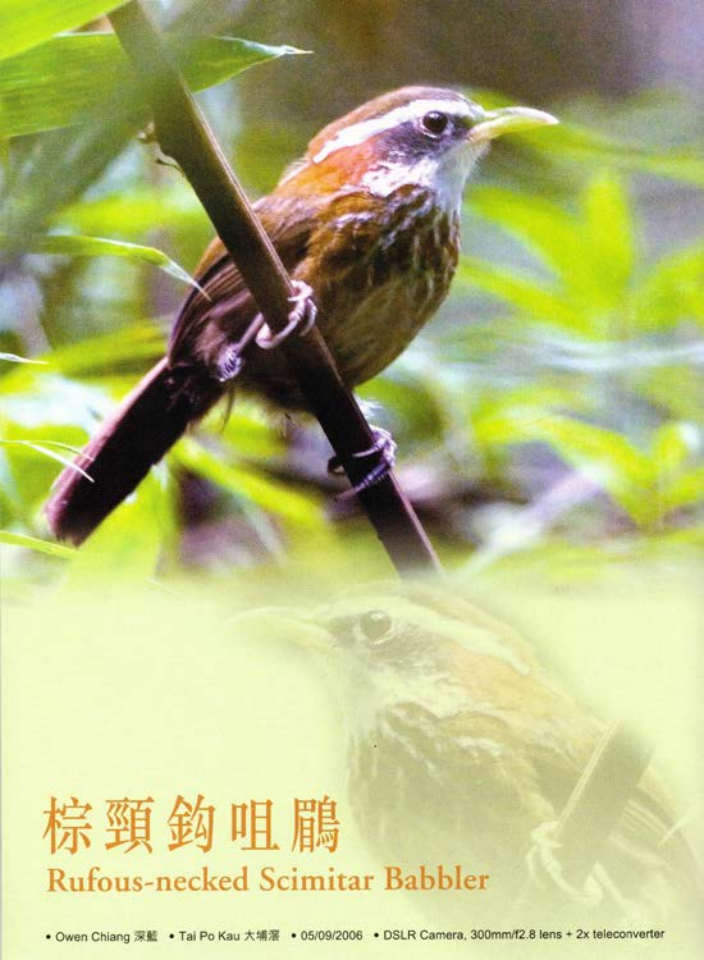
Bonelli's Eagle

# 夜鷺

Night Heron

- Ho Kin Yip Kinni 何建業
- Mai Po 米埔
- 18/06/2006
- DSLR Camera, 600mm/f4 lens + 1.4x teleconverter





# 棕頸鈎咀鶇

Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler



# 林鵲鴿

Forest Wagtail



# 雀鳥攝影

許光杰



Bird Photography

• KK Hui

# Bird Photography: The Basics (Part II)

KK Hui FRPS

## Introduction

This is the second part of Bird Photography - The Basics and will concentrate on *shooting technique* as well as advances in equipment technologies. Choices of tripods and Long Lens Techniques have already been covered in my previous article in HKBWS Bulletin #199.



## Auto-focus Advantage



The basic criterion of a good bird image is its sharpness. In fact this applies to any photo taking. In the days of manual focusing equipment, getting a sharp image on action shots such as birds in flight was an accomplishment in itself. With the advent of auto-focusing technology, attaining accurate focus is now routine, - if not totally foolproof.

Current SLR bodies from the major manufacturers offer a choice of two focusing modes for shooting static and moving subjects. For example, the Canon EOS auto-focusing system has what are known as One-Shot (Nikon's Single Servo) AF and AI Servo (Nikon's Continuous Servo) AF modes. Users just select the AF mode to suit the subject and situation.

## One-Shot AF

This is designed with shooting still subjects in mind. Pressing the shutter button halfway activates AF operation and achieves focus once. One can then recompose the shot and release the shutter by fully depressing the shutter button to take the shot.

Most cameras now offer multiple focusing points that are user-selectable. This avoids the need to "Center" a stationary bird. Focusing on the bird's eye is the recommended way in One-Shot mode. For hard-to-focus situations one might still resort to using manual focus.

## AI Servo AF

With moving subjects a different approach is required to achieve focus. A predictive focus mechanism is built into this focus mode. The camera can focus track a subject that steadily approaches or retreats from where the shooting occurs. It predicts the focusing distance and sets the exposure immediately before the picture is taken. A number of focusing points, (45 focusing points in the case of EOS-1D Mk II) cover a large area of the viewfinder to ensure a high success rate. As long as the subject is within the focusing points area, the camera will focus and track the subject automatically.

For the AI Servo to work, you must keep the active AF sensor on the moving bird as you continue to depress the

shutter button half way. When photographing a flying bird against a clean background such as the sky or smooth water surface the multi focus points AF system works well and focus on the subject is maintained. It's good practice to first acquire focus using the central sensor. The system will hold focus thereafter using the other sensors as long as the subject is within the focus area. If the background is featured or has lots of contrast, maintaining auto focus on the subject would be a difficult proposition at best. This is the time when you want to switch to a single focus point.

## Shooting Birds In Flight



Taking flight shots remains a tremendous photographic challenge even with the advent of AF technology. The skill of the photographer remains paramount. The ability to track rapidly moving subjects with precision requires lots of practice especially when using a super telephoto lens such as the 600/4 which has an view angle of just over 4 degrees and less so with digital DX format. Panning with the bird in flight is an essential skill one needs to quickly acquire. This can be achieved by practicing on large and slow-flying birds such as the Great Egret initially. Small birds such as Plovers and Sandpipers and birds that are fast and erratic flyers such as ducks and kingfishers require the most skill to capture them in flight. It's become a rule of thumb to use the fastest shutter speed permissible to stop the motion in flight photography. With precise panning I've found that a shutter speed of 1/1000s is sufficient to freeze a large bird in flight and a 1/1600s is the minimum for small birds such as Kingfishers.

## Image Design



When I talk about image design I'm actually referring to the artistic and aesthetic expression in a photograph and how you'd place your subject in the frame to achieve it.

## Composition

In the last article I talked about the rule of thirds and keeping the subject off-center leaving more space in front of the bird for a pleasing composition. This applies nicely with horizontal composition. The other choice you may want to explore is vertical composition. As a general rule, a bird standing tall fits better and more pleasingly in a vertical

frame. I'd recommend having extra space in reserve at the top in case the image makes it to become a cover shot of a book or magazine.

### **Background**

Choose the background and use a large aperture to yield a clean, and uncluttered backdrop in your image. An aperture of  $f/5.6$  or larger would provide the minimum depth of field and sufficient blurring of background. Also important is to avoid any highlight or bright spots behind the subject. Sometimes a simple change of shooting position, moving left or right, would eliminate any distracting elements in the background too.

Not all elements in the background are bad. Natural objects such as rocks, pebbles, leaves etc. can enhance the image tremendously. These objects could well be part of the bird's natural habitat. Some thought process is needed to better position them in the frame.

### **Perspective**

It's best practice to shoot birds at eye level. When photographing shorebirds ground level perspective is important. Getting down as low an angle as possible is the way to go and this is what I term as blending with your subject [Photo #1]. Clawing in the mud is fun and rewarding though not practical when shooting at Mai Po Nature Reserve where there are rules to be observed as well as restrictions unfortunately.



Last but not least, careful framing is vitally important. For example, a bird with its feet cut off in a full-length portrait would be a mistake hard to forgive. Always allow some room for minor cropping if necessary later on.

### **Getting Close**

Since wild birds are difficult to approach in the field, my advice for anyone wanting to shoot birds is to learn and acquire the knowledge of their behavior and their habitat. Armed with this knowledge and with good anticipation of what their next move might be you would be rewarded.

Getting close to your subject to fill-the-frame is a goal in achieving good images and the process always excites me. Birds are creatures of habit too. They would return to their same perch or roost site time and time again after they take flight. With careful observation and patience you can learn to get close to them. Make a very slow approach to your subject with low body profile, clawing on your belly is an

effective choice of approach, and stops at intervals shooting away quietly would allow the subject to get accustomed to your presence. Remember you do this without imposing undue stress to your subject when you're approaching them.

While it's fun to approach the subject in an open field this is not always possible particularly if you're shooting around the nature reserve. Shooting from hides and waiting for the birds to approach you would be an alternative. Picking the right place and time of the day are of paramount importance then.

### **Decisive Moments**

Interesting images of birds should include capturing their behavior. Pre-visualizing and pre-empting the action would lead to a successful shot [Photo #2]. Timing is everything and that's what I called the decisive moment. It is over in split of a second hence requires the utmost concentration of the photographer on the subject and react to it quickly.



Be ready for the unexpected. This is achieved by maintaining focus on the subject all the time. Having auto focus is a huge advantage here and so is the speedy frame-per-second capability of your camera. It pays to make lots of shots when capturing action!

### **Conclusion**



I've so far covered some of the basics on Bird Photography. As you progress you will learn and refine your shooting techniques. There are a number of key locations for shooting various species of birds here in Hong Kong. My favorites include, top of my list, Mai Po Nature Reserve and Nam Sang Wai which are renowned for their shore and wetland birds while Tai Po Kau is for woodland birds.

My final reminder is this. Always ensure you're totally familiar with your equipment and be ready to take the shot of a lifetime when the opportunity presents. Remember the best time to photograph birds is when the sun and wind are right behind you.

Best and Good Shooting to all!

- End -

Copyright (c) KK Hui, a NatureScapes.Net moderator in the BFDIS Forum, is a highly accomplished local bird photographer here in Hong Kong. He is a Fellow of The Royal Photographic Society and earned the highest Distinction in the Nature Category specializing in Avian Photography. For more information please visit his website at [www.geocities.com/kkhui\\_001](http://www.geocities.com/kkhui_001)

In response to the issue of the new 2006 Hong Kong Definitive Stamps on 31 Dec 2006 by Hong Kong Post featuring on birds of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS) will also publish our own First Day Cover named "Birds and People in Harmony, Nature Forever" to commemorate this special day. It is also one of the celebrating events of the Society's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2007. Members and friends of HKBWS are welcome to subscribe. Details are as follows:

1. 300 sets of Serviced First Day Cover affixed with full set of 16 stamps are published. Each set sold at HK\$250. An extra cost of HK\$20 will be charged for mail order.
2. Another set of Serviced First Day Cover affixed with 1 or 2 low-value stamps are also published. Each set sold at HK\$12. An extra cost of HK\$20 will be charged for mail order.
3. HKBWS should bear no responsibility if the product gets any kind of damage during the delivering process.
4. The Society has also produced a special stamp for stamping.
5. The size of the First Day Cover is 21 x 29 cm.
6. Interested parties please fill in the subscription form and send a cheque (payable to **"The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Limited"**) with the form to our office. Address: Room 1612, Beverley Commercial Centre, 87-105 Chatham Road, Kowloon. For inquiry: 2377 4387
7. Website: [www.hkbws.org.hk/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?f=819](http://www.hkbws.org.hk/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?f=819)





# Bird Watching in

# Langkawi

- So Sui Hei



Langkawi is a group of 99 islands just off the northwestern coast of peninsular Malaysia. It is very close to Thailand, so close that the most suitable guide book for birds is that for Thailand, until perhaps after the planned guide book for Langkawi is published. The largest and most populated island is also called Langkawi. I went there in August 2005, which is not the right season for migratory birds but nevertheless fit the summer vacation of my family.

Same as in Hong Kong, the common birds in Langkawi include Bulbuls, Tailorbirds and Flowerpeckers. The most common Bulbul there is the Red-eyed Bulbul. With light brown upperparts and paler but still brown underparts, the distinguishing feature is without doubt their red eyes. But wait a minute; some of them have black eyes. Later I found out that only male have red eyes while female have black eyes. The most common Tailorbird is the Dark-necked Tailorbird; the male's throat and two sides of the neck are black.. Orange-bellied

Flowerpecker is common. They can be found in trees as well as in scrubs close to the ground. The orange belly of the male is so outstanding that hearing and seeing a flowerpecker in Langkawi is far easier than in Hong Kong. Red-wattled Lapwing is common in the open fields of Langkawi.

A popular local tour is the Mangrove River Cruise. Tourists are taken to snake through the mangrove in the northern part of the island. One of the programs was eagle feeding. In a place where the river widens, several tourist boats grouped together and the boatman of the largest boat played a tape of eagle call and started throwing a few pieces of chicken skin to the river. About ten to fifteen Brahminy Kites, the most common bird of prey in Langkawi, appeared and seized the chicken skin floating on the water. A White-bellied Sea Eagle perched on a tree to wait for its turn. The boatman told me with a smile that they had been successful in training the kites. I found myself not really appreciating this program although it offered

excellent chances of watching the kites at a close distance. I would rather see them soaring in the sky. Another "must do" is to visit a bat cave where sleeping bats dot the ceiling in daytime. Just can't understand how the bats can still stay in the cave. Imagine when you are sleeping lines of tourists come and go, spraying beams of light to your bed. Near the bat cave I saw a Blue Whistling Thrush. However it had an orange bill.

The monogamous hornbills are usually seen in pairs, sometimes with the juvenile as well. The most common species in Langkawi is the Oriental Pied Hornbill. Male has a large black patch in its casque. They are not difficult to see in woodlands. One morning when I was in the Datal Beach area in the northwestern part of the island, I saw a pair of Great Hornbills. With a length of 120 cm, they can be easily distinguished from the Oriental Pied Hornbills which are about 70 cm in length. The Great Hornbill has a yellow neck and in flight displays an outstanding yellow wing bar



# 浮羅交怡 Langkawi



and white trailing edge in the wings. The most unforgettable experience with the Great Hornbill is that their flight can be heard as well as seen. As they flapped their wings, I heard a series of low pitch "woo-woo" that could carry a distance of several hundred metres. The pair finally settled down at the top of a tall tree. The male bent its neck and hooked back its large bill to search the underneath of the branch for lizards.

Gunung Raya (Gunung means mountain) is another good place for birding. There is a driveway leading to the top of the mountain where a number of wireless transmission towers stand. The local conservation group is planning to build a birding house at the mid-level of the mountain. More Great Hornbills were seen and heard there. Dollarbirds perched in outstanding positions, at 200 m intervals, along the road to guard their territories. Other birds seen included Thick-billed Green Pigeon, Great Slaty Woodpecker, Greater Racquet-tailed Drongo and Hill Myna.

Brown-winged Kingfisher is a target for every bird watcher in Langkawi. Its habitat is strictly limited to the coastal forests and estuaries of western peninsular Malaysia and Thailand, with Langkawi a well known site. However a search for it in an estuary produced a Collared Kingfisher instead.

The upperparts of the Blue-wing Pitta consist of a large piece of green on the back while the greater coverts and rump are blue in colour and primaries black with white patches. The colours, in particular the green region, depend on lighting conditions and the direction of view. I first saw this bird in the shade of a tree and got the impression that the entire upperparts were dull green. On the last morning of the trip I tried the same place again. After half an hour during which the Great Racquet-tailed Drongo, Hill Myna, Orange-bellied Flowerpecker, Dark-necked Tailorbird, Little Green Pigeon and Red-eyed Bulbul made their appearance in turn, finally something on the ground lured the

Blue-winged Pitta to come out from the security of the shrubs. It pecked a few times on the ground and immediately returned to the shelter. This time the lighting condition was fine, the entire upperparts shining in the sun with a cobalt blue so brilliant that is beyond description.

Further down the road I had very close views of another individual displaying a fulvous to orange breast and belly together with a red patch extending from the vent to the belly. After an unbelievable two to three minutes, it flew away, revealing the large white patches in the primaries. As the two-note "due-due" call faded away, I realized that I could not have found a better full stop to my journey.

These are unchecked records & members are reminded of the importance of submitting all records on cards or electronically

## April

The first day of the month brought exciting news of a Sulphur-breasted Warbler *Phylloscopus ricketti* photographed at Po Toi (MK, PW). Following the Owston's Flycatcher two days earlier and the Orange-breasted Green Pigeon found in February, this was the third of an astonishing series of five potential Hong Kong firsts found on the island between February and May. Elsewhere, a possible Blue-throated Flycatcher was seen at Dong Ping Chau (JA) and a Swinhoe's Minivet at Mai Po (KL, BS).

On 2nd, the first of at least six Northern Boobooks (recently split from the "Brown Hawk Owl" complex) of the spring was seen at Po Toi and the latest ever Eurasian Siskins were noted, with four at Po Toi and 38 at Sek Kong Catchment (GC).

During the first week, although only one Siberian Blue Robin was noted (at Ng Tung Chai) and passage of flycatchers was rather thin after the unusually strong passage noted in late March, there were reports of up to eight Red-tailed Robins at Dong Ping Chau and Ng Tung Chai and a late Grey Bushchat at Tai Mo Shan. A Black-winged Stilt at Tai O on 4th (PA) was possibly the first ever for Lantau Island, whilst a flock of 100 Chestnut Bulbuls at Tai Po Kau Headland the next day (KB) was unusually large for the time of year.

The HKBWS Seabird Survey, which had started in March, brought regular news of seabirds throughout the spring, augmented by reports on and near to Po Toi Island. Among peak day-counts in early April were five Streaked Shearwaters, 69 Long-tailed Skuas, two Pomarine Skuas and two Arctic Skuas (YYT et al), whilst sightings on 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> included the earliest ever Aleutian Tern (by 3 days), Roseate Tern (4 weeks) and Bridled Tern (5 weeks). Also notable was a count of 1025 Red-necked Phalaropes between North Point and Po Toi on 1<sup>st</sup> (KB).

At Mai Po NR, which was kept closed on

government orders until 13<sup>th</sup> supposedly in the interests of public health, a Pectoral Sandpiper was found on 4<sup>th</sup> (KL, BS), whilst on the nearby commercial fish ponds (which remained open and teemed with migratory birds) up to 10 Pale Martins *Piparia diluta* of the distinctive subspecies *fohkiensis* were present from 4<sup>th</sup> to at least 10<sup>th</sup>. It was not until 17<sup>th</sup> that the first Spoon-billed Sandpiper was reported.

In mid-month, a Daurian Starling, rare in spring, was at Long Valley on 13<sup>th</sup> and a Eurasian Hobby, now apparently becoming rare, and four Blue-tailed Bee-eaters were noted at Mai Po.

A strong northeast monsoon arrived on 15<sup>th</sup>, bringing five Black-winged Stilts to Tai Tam (BC) and the strongest ever passage of Chinese Goshawks. Numbers counted passing over Po Toi were 304 on 15<sup>th</sup> (R&KB, RWL) and 780 on 16<sup>th</sup> (GW), the highest ever. In addition, 131 passed Lamma on 17<sup>th</sup> (GS) and 20 were at Discovery Bay Golf Course on 19<sup>th</sup> (PJL). A Daurian Redstart at the latter site on the same date was the latest ever by two days (PJL).

Following the first Japanese Yellow Bunting of the spring at Po Toi on 4<sup>th</sup>, three were noted at Long Valley on 20<sup>th</sup> and one again at Po Toi the next day, when there was also a Common Rosefinch.

The seabird survey on 23<sup>rd</sup> brought sightings of three Short-tailed Shearwaters (potential 2<sup>nd</sup> records following one in Mrs Bai in May 2004) and nine Streaked Shearwaters.

Other reports on this and the next day included a Malayan Night Heron in the Fanling area, a Black Baza at Sha Kok Mei, a Ruddy Crake at Long Valley, a late White's Thrush at Po Toi and a Styan's Grasshopper Warbler in the Mai Po mangroves.

The final week of the month saw further arrivals. Among sightings at Po Toi (mainly GW) were a Brambling and Yellow-throated Bunting on 24<sup>th</sup>, a Blue-tailed Bee-eater, 50 Common Sandpipers and

83 Brown Shrikes on 25<sup>th</sup>, a Japanese Paradise Flycatcher and the Brambling again on 26<sup>th</sup>, a Red-tailed Robin and Mugimaki Flycatcher on 29<sup>th</sup> (the latter four all being the latest ever in spring), and a Yellow-rumped Flycatcher (only the 2<sup>nd</sup> ever spring record) also on 29<sup>th</sup>.

Elsewhere during this period, a Chinese Goshawk was observed eating a frog at Tai Po Kau (KR) and 70 Aleutian Terns were logged in the Seabird Survey, but the two birds generating most excitement were undoubtedly a Barred Cuckoo Dove at Tai Po Kau Headland on 25<sup>th</sup> (KB), only the 4<sup>th</sup> for Hong Kong, and a Fairy Pitta at Tai Po Kau on 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> (KPK), only about the eighth for Hong Kong.

## May

This was the best May in recent years, with three potential Hong Kong firsts in mid-month. It started with a Eurasian Hobby at Long Valley and a Red Turtle Dove at Lamma on 1<sup>st</sup>. The next day a Savanna Nightjar and a late White's Thrush were found at Po Toi. Reports on 3<sup>rd</sup> included a Lesser Frigatebird and Short-tailed Shearwater from Po Toi (GW), 710 Red-necked Phalaropes and 522 White-winged Terns from the Mai Po boardwalk (KL, BS) and a Watercock and eight Blue-tailed Bee-eaters beside the Mai Po access road. The Seabird Survey of 5<sup>th</sup> logged eight Short-tailed Shearwaters, 20 Streaked Shearwaters, 11 Long-tailed Skuas, six Arctic Skuas, two Pomarine Skuas, three Great Crested Terns and a Brown Boobook, whilst sightings during a seawatch from Po Toi included five Short-tailed Shearwaters, nine Streaked Shearwaters and 950 terns of nine species.

Following the sighting of a Yellow-browed Warbler at Po Toi on 4<sup>th</sup> (GW), the latest in spring by 3 days, an unusually varied spread of warblers for the time of year was noted on 7<sup>th</sup>, including a Lanceolated Warbler at Long Valley (SLT), a Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler at Mai Po, a Large Grass Warbler and three singing Mountain Bush Warblers at Tai Mo Shan (GT) and a singing Two-barred Greenish Warbler at Tai Po Kau (MDW), this the latest ever in spring by 3 weeks.

At Lai Chi Wo on 10<sup>th</sup>, a Bay Woodpecker and a Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo were heard (MDW). Further Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoos were noted this month at Shing Mun (LW) and Tai Po Kau (GT), and two sighting Asian Lesser Cuckoos were reported at Tai Po Kau on 13<sup>th</sup> (MLC).

Following the arrival of a strong surge of the northeast monsoon on 14<sup>th</sup>, which came through very dry and cool, with temperatures initially down to about 10 °C, a Rosy Pipit *Anthus roseatus* was found at Long Valley (KJ, GT), a potential first for Hong Kong and Guangdong which remained until 16<sup>th</sup>. Other sightings during this period included a Northern Boobook, 20 Arctic Warblers and Hong Kong's latest ever Siberian Rubythroat, Grey Bushchat and Mugimaki Flycatcher, all at Po Toi (GW), three Nordmann's Greenshanks, a Spoon-billed Sandpiper and a Little Stint at Mai Po, a Pheasant-tailed Jacana at Nam Chung and a Pechora Pipit at Long Valley.

As the monsoon fed into Typhoon Chanchu, two Brown Noddies *Anous stolidus* were seen off Po Toi on 17<sup>th</sup> together with 80 Streaked Shearwaters, an unidentified dark-rumped Storm Petrel and various other terns (GW). The Noddies are potentially the first for Hong Kong and Guangdong. The next day, the eighth potential addition to the Hong Kong list for the year, and the fifth from Po Toi, was found in the form of a Ruddy Kingfisher *Halcyon coromanda* (MH, KJ, GT). Though very shy and elusive, this was present on the island until 21<sup>st</sup>. Among other noteworthy reports during this period were a Pheasant-tailed Jacana in Victoria Harbour, a Schrenck's Bittern at Long Valley, three Swinhoe's Egrets, a Spoon-billed Sandpiper and five Nordmann's Greenshank at Mai Po and yet another Brown Boobook at Po Toi (KJ, GT, GW).

As the month entered its final week, there were further reports of single Short-tailed Shearwaters near the Ninepins and off Po Toi up to 25<sup>th</sup>.

The final week also brought several interesting breeding reports, notably involving several nesting pairs of Black-winged Stilts and a Spot-billed Duck of the taxon *haringtoni* with four chicks at

Mai Po, (though the latter unfortunately attracted the attention of a Bonelli's Eagle) and four juvenile Red-rumped Swallows at Kam Tin (JA).

At Mai Po, 94 Colared Crows were noted on 25<sup>th</sup> (KL, BS), an Emerald Dove seen on 26<sup>th</sup> was new for the reserve, and there were seven Black-faced Spoonbills the same day and 21 Oriental Pratincoles, including nine juveniles, the next day (YYT).

## June

Arrivals of passage migrants and potential summer visitors were noted at Kam Tin and Lok Ma Chau on 3<sup>rd</sup>, with both sites hosting at least eight Yellow Bitterns as well as single Chestnut Bitterns. Kam Tin also held a Ballon's Crike, the latter being the latest ever in spring by 12 days, whilst Lok Ma Chau attracted a Pheasant-tailed Jacana and three Watercocks. A late Grey Wagtail was at Po Toi on the same date.

The only departure reported concerned 30 Pied Avocets, the last of the large overwintering flock, leaving Mai Po on 19<sup>th</sup>.

Non-breeding over-summering birds noted at Mai Po NR during the month included 11 Black-faced Spoonbills, the largest number ever recorded in summer, a Garganey, a Eurasian Wigeon, two Nordmann's Greenshanks, up to 101 Terek Sandpipers and five Black-headed Gulls (KL, BS, YYT, RWL). Elsewhere, a Grey-headed Lapwing at Kam Tin on 27<sup>th</sup> was only the second mid-summer record (JA).

Among breeding reports received during the month were nesting Black-naped Orioles at Lok Ma Chau (GJC), family parties of Zitting Cisticolas and nesting Black-winged Stilts at Mai Po (KL, BS), where up to 15 chicks were noted on the scrape, and a Crested Goshawk nest at Tai Po Kau Headland which contained two downy young on 18<sup>th</sup> (RB).

A Swinhoe's Egret was found at Starling Inlet on 12<sup>th</sup> (WLC), giving hope that it may be beginning to re-colonise Hong Kong as a breeding species. Another individual was noted at Mai Po on 27<sup>th</sup>. There were also unusual summer reports of Silky Starlings, with four at Cheung Chau on 10<sup>th</sup> (MDW), thought to be the

first for the island, one at Tai Po Waterfront Park on 12<sup>th</sup> and up to six adults at Tai Mei Tuk on 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> (RWL). Two Oriental Reed Warblers were noted at Mai Po NR (KL, BS). A Pied Kingfisher at Pui O, Lantau on 4<sup>th</sup> (RP) was considered unusual there.

The HKBWS Breeding Tern Survey logged 174 Black-naped, 67 Bridled and 10 Roseate Terns on 11<sup>th</sup>. Of special interest was a Roseate Tern bearing a leg flag which was photographed at a possible nesting site off Sai Kung and thought to have been flagged about 6500 km away in Australia at Swain Reefs, Gladstone, Queensland in January of one of the past five years (HKBWS web-site posting by Clive Minton).

## July

Reports of non-breeders at Mai Po during the month included 11 Black-faced Spoonbills, a Eurasian Wigeon and Nordmann's Greenshank, as well as a Grey-headed Lapwing, possibly the individual from Kam Tin.

In mid-month there were reports of 52 White-shouldered Starlings at Mai Po and the number of pre-roosting Colared Crows on the reserve increased to 99 (KL, BS), the highest count since 1982. Colared Crows were also present in good numbers at the end of the month in the Shuen Wan-Sam Mun Chai area, with at least 56 at a pre-roost gathering (RWL).

Elsewhere a single Mountain Tailorbird and four Pygmy Wren Babblers were noted singing in Tai Po Kau (MDW), a Brown Crike was present at Mai Wo (PA), a juvenile Lesser Tree Duck was found at a pond near Yuen Long and family parties of Chinese Grosbeaks were noted near Yuen Long and at Lok Ma Chau (PJL).

As shorebird passage got underway towards the end of the month, 220 Wood Sandpipers and 10 Long-toed Stilts were noted at Lok Ma Chau and over 2000 waders were counted on the Mai Po scrape on 30<sup>th</sup> (YYT).


Also on 30<sup>th</sup>, a Yellow-rumped Flycatcher was photographed at Mai Po (TC), the earliest autumn record by 18 days.

# HKBWS Coming Activities

- Forrest Fong




Date / Time	Activity / Details	Leader	Difficulty
17 Jan (Wed) 19:00 - 20:30	<b>Monthly Gathering - China &amp; Oversea Bird Watching Trip Reports</b> Room 1101, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon (HK\$10 member, HK\$30 non-member)		
21 Jan (Sun) 08:00 - 14:00	<b>Tsim Bei Tsui</b> 08:00 Hang Heung Cake Shop (near LRT Tai Tong Rd Station, Yuen Long)		★★
3 Feb (Sat) 08:00 - 13:00	<b>Shing Mun Country Park **</b> 08:00 Tsuen Wan MTR, Hang Seng Bank	LOO Yew Thoe CHOW Hung Fai	
4 Feb (Sun) 16:00 - 18:00	<b>Kite Watching</b> To be confirmed		★
21 Feb (Wed) 19:00 - 20:30	<b>Monthly Gathering - ID of Birds (5): Seabird</b> Room 1101, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon (HK\$10 member, HK\$30 non-member)		
25 Feb (Sun) 07:30 - 12:00	<b>Kadoorie Farm</b> 07:30 Tai Wo KCR station Taxi station		★
3 - 4 Mar (Sat-Sun) 16:00 - 16:00 (24hrs)	<b>Records 215 - Bird Watching Competition 2007</b> Member only, detail to be announced soon.		
10 Mar (Sat) 15:00 - 17:30	<b>Long Valley</b> 15:00 Sheung Shui Station Taxi stand		★
18 Mar (Sun) 08:00 - 16:00	<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) <i>Note: This will be a long trip on open waters. The ride could be quite rough and some people may be seasick.</i>		★★★★
21 Mar (Wed) 19:00 - 20:30	<b>Monthly Gathering - China &amp; Oversea Bird Watching Trip Reports</b> Room 1101, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon (HK\$10 member, HK\$30 non-member)		
25 Mar (Sun) 08:00 - 16:30	<b>Tai Sang Wai to Mai Po</b> 08:00 Hang Heung Cake Shop (near LRT Tai Tong Rd Station, Yuen Long) Detail to be announced soon. For registration, please email to membership@hkbws.org.hk		★★
1 Apr (Sun) 08:00 - 16:00	<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) <i>Note: This will be a long trip on open waters. The ride could be quite rough and some people may be seasick.</i>		★★★★
14 Apr (Sat) 08:30 - 13:00	<b>Aberdeen Reservoir **</b> 08:00 Central MTR Exit B Hang Seng Bank	WONG Chiu Shu HON So	
8 Apr (Sun) 08:00 - 16:00	<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.  		

Date / Time	Activity / Details	Leader	Difficulty
18 Apr (Wed) 19:00 - 20:30	<b>Monthly Gathering - Brief update on recent development of bird watching activities in China</b> Room 1101, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon (HK\$10 member, HK\$30 non-member)		
22 Apr (Sun) 08:00 - 16:00	<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		★★
5 May (Sat) 08:30 - 13:00	<b>Tai Po Kau **</b> 08:30 Car Park Garden, Chung Tsai Yuen	CHOI Chung Pak CHOW Hung Fai	★★★
6 May (Sun) 08:00 - 16:00	<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		★★
16 May (Wed) 19:00 - 20:30	<b>Monthly Gathering - China &amp; Oversea Bird Watching Trip Reports</b> Room 1101, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon (HK\$10 member, HK\$30 non-member)		
20 May (Sun) 08:00 - 13:00	<b>Tai Mo Shan</b> 08:00 Tsuen Wan MTR Station Hang Seng Bank		★★★
2 Jun (Sat) 08:30 - 13:00	<b>Pokfulam Reservoir **</b> 0830 Queen's Ferry, City Hall, Central	HUNG Lai Yung TANG Wing Shing	★★
20 Jun (Wed) 19:00 - 20:30	<b>Monthly Gathering - Experience Sharing: Digital photography and post-processing workflow</b> Room 1101, Hong Kong Scout Centre, Scout Path, Austin Rd, Kowloon (HK\$10 member, HK\$30 non-member)		

 Further details or change(s) of outings/indoor meetings will be announced in the HKBWS Website (<http://www.hkbws.org.hk/active.html>) and BBS (<http://www.hkbws.org.hk/cgi-bin/yabb/YaBB.pl>).


### ▶▶▶ Booking Note ◀◀◀

**Priority is given to members of the Society.** The ★ 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 – 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.
-  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 Activity Booking Slip with a cheque payable to "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!

-  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 Close Area and Mai Po Marshes.



## ► Mai Po Trip

I wish to reserve places for \_\_\_\_\_ members and \_\_\_\_\_ non-members for the following Mai Po tour :  
 The number of person(s) using the coach is \_\_\_\_\_

8 Apr (Sun)     22 Apr (Sun)     6 May (Sun)    Membership no.: \_\_\_\_\_

\* 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 (Fare: HK\$150/member, HK\$200/non-members)

18 Mar (Sun) : Poi and Lamma Channel ( \_\_\_\_\_ member, \_\_\_\_\_ non-members)

1 Apr (Sun) : Poi and Lamma Channel ( \_\_\_\_\_ member, \_\_\_\_\_ non-members)

*\*Any early-bird reservation (two weeks before the boat trip outing) will entitle a 20% discount on the boat fare.*

*We will confirm the participants about 2 weeks before the outing whether their reservation application is accepted or not. Once the reservation is confirmed, we will not accept any withdrawal. All the registered participants are required to pay the prescribed fare, no matter they can attend the outing or not. If we cancel the outing due to inclement weather or special reason, the paid fare will be refunded to the participants.*

Enclosed please find a Cheque for HK\$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Payable to The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Ltd.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership No.: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong.**

*Application should be made at least 10 days before the date of the outing. Late applications will only be accepted if places are available.*

## Take a closer look

# Reed Warblers

- Cheung Ho Fai

There are three common Reed Warblers in Hong Kong. In the order of their abundance, they are (1) **Oriental Reed Warbler**, (2) **Black-browed Reed Warbler**, and (3) **Thick-billed Warbler**. Other Reed Warblers are rare. Black-browed Reed Warbler is easily separated from the other two, being much smaller, and with a clear black lateral crown stripe. The call of Black-browed Reed Warbler in HK is a single note "Chack". The other two Reed Warblers are not easily separable in the field. They have very similar colours, and almost the same size. Here we look at their differences.



Features	Oriental Reed	Thick-billed
Supercilium	yes	no
Call /song	a series of harsh notes "gip----"	seldom calls in HK
Tail length	medium	long



# 厚嘴葦鶯 Thick-billed Warbler



- Gary Chow 周家禮
- Mai Po 米埔
- 11/09/2005



- Choi Kai Yiu 蔡啟堯
- Heilongjiang 黑龍江
- 01/06/2006



## 東方大葦鶯 Oriental Reed Warbler

- Dong Jiantian 董江天
- Shenzhen 深圳
- 11/10/2004

# 藍胸秧雞

Banded Rail / Slaty-breasted Rail

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