



bulletin 204

會員通訊

Summer 2007 - 夏



香港觀鳥會
50th Anniversary
1957-2007



綠背金鳩

Emerald Dove

攝影：謝繼超

地點：葵涌

Photographer: Wallace

Location: Kwai Chung

9/6/2007

DSLR Camera, 300mm lens + 2x teleconverter



紅胸田雞

Ruddy-breasted Crake

攝影：黃卓研

地點：壟原

Photographer: Cherry Wong

Location: Long Valley

5/4/2007

DSLR Camera, 300mm F4 lens + 2x teleconverter



黑枕燕鷗

Black-naped Tern

攝影：陳慶麟

地點：塔門

Photographer: Alan Chan

Location: Tap Mun

19/5/2007

Compact Digital Camera, f6.5, 1/1000s, ISO100



The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Limited

(Approved Charitable Institution of a Public Character)

Bulletin 204

Contents

Chairman's Word – Cheung Ho Fai	02
Society News & Projects – Alan Chan / Lo Wai Yan	03
50th Anniversary:	
HKBWS Honorary Members – Clive Viney	08
Birdwatching in Hong Kong 1947-1957 – A. St. G. Walton	09
Early Days – F. Walker	11
Early Birdwatching in Hong Kong – Brian Wilson	12
About the author - Brian Wilson – Clive Viney	14
The Bulletin 50 Years On - part 1 – Clive Viney	15
Qinghai: A birding trip to the Tang-Tibet Ancient Trail – Carrie Ma	18
Mai Po Update – Lew Young	24
China Conservation News - Mike Kilburn	25
"Bird survey in Linan County, Zhejiang (plus 3 twitches for SE China specialities)" – Mike Kilburn	26
Hong Kong Bird News – Richard Lewthwaite	30
In memoriam: Judith Fruin-Ball – Mike Kilburn	34
Coming Activities / Code of Conduct for Birdwatching	35
Cuckoos II / Photographic diary – Swing	36

HKBWS Bulletin is published quarterly by The HKBWS Ltd.

Postal address :

G.P.O. Box 12460, Hong Kong

Project Office :

1612 Beverley Commercial Centre,
87-105 Chatham Road South,
Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Telephone : (852) 2377 4387

Facsimile : (852) 2314 9687

Birdline :

(852) 2465 6690 (Chinese)

(852) 2667 4537 (English)

Website :

www.hkbws.org.hk



Copyright reserved. No part of the contents and texts may be reproduced without prior approval.

Co-ordinator :

Ronley Lee (bulletin@hkbws.org.hk)

Editor :

John Holmes

Contributors :

Cheung Ho Fai, Alan Chan, Lo Wai Yan,
Vicky Yeung, Kite Research Group, Lew Young,
Mike Kilburn, Clive Viney, A St. G. Walton,
Frank Walker, Brian Wilson, Carrie Ma, Swing,
CY Lam, Luk Tsun Pun, Eugene Yeung

Photo :

Law Kam Man, Wallace, Cherry Wong, Alan Chan,
Martin Hale, Peter Wong & Michelle Kong,
Matthew Kwan, Swing, Andrew Hardacre,
John Holmes, Lau Kai Yeung, Jemi Wong,
Doris Chu, Lego Ho, Elisa Hui, Lam Chi Wing,
Lo Kar Man

Front cover :

Colours on Wings
- Hong Kong Wild Birds Photo Contest 2006
The highest votes of "Online Public Election" /
Author: Law Kam Man / Title: Japanese White-eye

Design : Ky Design

Printing : Contemporary Development Company

Printed on 100% recycled paper

Honorary President Mr. Lam Chu Ying

Executive Committee

Chairman	Dr. Cheung Ho Fai
Vice-Chairman	Dr. Ng Cho Nam Mr. Mike Kilburn
Hon. Secretary	Mr. Chan Hing Luen, Alan
Hon. Treasurer	Ms. Chow Chae Leung, Ada
Hon. Recorder	Mr. Richard Lewthwaite
Committee members	Mr. Fong Kin Wa, Forrest Ms. Lee Wei Chi, Ronley Ms. Au Chun Yan, Joanne Dr. Llewellyn Young Mr. Lau Wai Man, Apache Mr. So Ngai Hung, Gamsron Mr. Leung Kwok Wa - Crested Bulbul Club's Chairman

Representative in UK

Mr. Richard Stott email@hkbwsuk@aol.com

Hon. Auditor

John Wu & Co

Membership Affairs Committee

Chairman	Ms. Lee Wei Chi, Ronley
Committee members	Mr. Chow Chien Leung, Ada Ms. Chen Yuk Ming, Jimmy Mr. Chan Hing Luen, Alan Mr. Yip Tai Wai

Records Committee

Chairman	Mr. Geoff Caray
Committee members	Mr. Paul Leader Dr. Cheung Ho Fai Dr. Mike Leven Mr. Richard Lewthwaite Mr. Yu Yat Tung

Conservation Committee

Chairman	Mr. Mike Kilburn
Committee members	Dr. Ng Cho Nam Mr. John Holmes Mr. Fong Kin Wa, Forrest Dr. Yip Chi Lap, Beta

Education and Publicity Committee

Chairman	Mr. Lau Wai Man, Apache
Committee members	Mr. Lui Tai Hong, Henry Mr. Hung Wai Ming Ms. Au Chun Yan, Joanne Mr. Chan Ming Ming Mr. Chen Chi Po Mr. Fung Po Kei, Robin Mr. Jacob Lo Mr. Dominic Chan Ms. Miranda Chan Mr. Yam Wing Yu Mr. Dickson Wong

Crested Bulbul Club

Chairman	Mr. Leung Kwok Wa
Vice-Chairman	Mr. Wong Chi Shu
Secretary	Mr. Cheng Kam Yuen
Member	Mr. Choi Chung Pak Mr. Chan Chi Po

HKBWS China Conservation Fund Committee

Chairman	Dr. Cheung Ho Fai
Committee members	Mr. Richard Lewthwaite Dr. Llewellyn Young Mr. Yu Yat Tung

Webmaster

Mr. Lee Kwok Shing

Annual Report Editor

Mr. Geoff Caray Ms. Helen Lockey

Staff

China Project Officer	Ms. Cheung Ka Wing
China Project Officer (Yunan)	Ms. Dong Jang Tian
Manager (Projects and Communication)	Mr. Lo Yik Yan
Project Officer	Ms. Young Lee Ki
Bird Surveyor	Mr. George W C Ho



Chairman's word - Cheung Ho Fai

A workshop on future development of HKBWS was organized on July 21. About 60 members attended. Opinions and feedback from this workshop are extremely useful. After this workshop, the executive committee has started working out the details of this plan, in particular on ways to implement this plan. I call for all of you to study this plan in detail, and be one of the major forces behind the changes of HKBWS in the next 5-10 years.

When I was preparing for plan for the next 5-10 years, I was astonished by the fact that HKBWS has become so diversified. There were so many activities that we have not and can not do ten years ago. For the society to develop continually, the effort of staff members and volunteers is crucial. It comes clearly to me that raising the capacity of HKBWS staffs and members will be very important in the next several years. To that end, I would like to see more training within the society. For example, training in inter-personal skills, project supervision and accounting procedures are very relevant and will be immediately useful.

Annual General Meeting

51 members attended the Annual General Meeting of the Society on 19 September 07 at the Hong Kong Observatory. The Chairman summarized the work and achievements of the Society in 2006/07. The report is posted at the Society's Forum (<http://www.hkbws.org/hk/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?p=6841#6841>). Board members CY Lam, Mike Kilburn, Ada Chow and Ronley Lee stepped down and were re-elected at the meeting. Comments and suggestions on future development were raised by members in the subsequent discussion session.

Special Offer for HKBWS members

We have the generous offer from Schmidt Marketing (H.K.) Ltd again to our member for buying 3 models of binoculars at a particularly lower price. This special offer will be extended to 30 November 2007. Please visit our website for more details. You can use the previous order form for placing order. Special offer is as follows:

Code No.	Description	List Price (HK\$)	Normal Offer (HK\$)	EXTRA SPECIAL OFFER (HK\$)
62147	MINOX BL 8x42 BR	4,290	3,343	HK\$2,807 Up to 35% OFF
62148	MINOX BL 10x42 BR	4,720	3,678	HK\$3,089 Up to 35% OFF
62149	MINOX BL 8x32 BR	3,730	2,908	HK\$2,440 Up to 35% OFF

Against the use of "Land on Tern Island" Logos

Recently logos that suggested landing on tern islands appeared on some tern photographs on the web. (A perverse response to the society's "No landing on Tern Islands" campaign and logo - Ed.) From relevant discussions on-line, these logos apparently promote landing on tern breeding colonies for photography. The issue was discussed at the last HKBWS Executive Committee meeting. The Committee objects to the use of such logos as they give a message that is clearly against the objectives of the Society. The Society will not work with anyone who uses or supports the use of these logos unless the situation is improved to the satisfaction of the Committee.

New member of staff

In order to strengthen our work on bird survey and website updating, especially in the project "Bird Index", we have recruited Mr George W C Ho as the "Bird Surveyor" since mid-October.

HKBWS Projects

- Lo Wai Yan

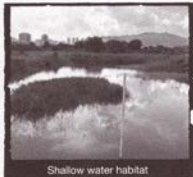
"Birds and Humans in Harmony - A Sustainable Management Scheme in Long Valley" (2005-2007)

- Vicky Yeung

Though the Long Valley project will be completed in several months, we continue the habitat management and prepare for the autumn migration. Paddy rice planted in May produced seeds in early July and attracted large groups of munias. Besides, Water Chestnut and Chinese Arrow-head grow well and provide shelter for birds. We are planning to organize volunteer activities in the coming autumn. Further information will be announced by email and put on the discussion forum.



Paddy Rice, Chinese Arrow-head and Water Chestnut grow well in summer.



Shallow water habitat

Logo for the 50th Anniversary

We would like to thank Ms Siu Ka Bo for designing the logo for the 50th Anniversary.



Crested Bulbul Club

1. Early Morning Bird Watchers at Kowloon Park & HK Park

No. of participants in Hong Kong Park from May to August 2007: 228

No. of participants in Kowloon Park from Apr to August 2007: 446

2. Bird watching interpretation in Hong Kong Wetland Park

A total of 134 person-times participation in this service from May to June and September 2007.

3. Bird watching services and activities 21/7, 22/7, 28/7, 29/7

Members have kept up the task of promoting the conservation of terns in Tap Mun, including delivering leaflets, displaying exhibition boards and explanations to visitors. Many thanks to all involved volunteers !

Research Group Update

Tern Research Group - by Alan Chan

The group continued the survey on breeding terns in Hong Kong. In addition to regular visits to Mirs Bay, two other major colonies at Sai Kung and near Po Toi were also monitored. The last site is a new colony and is the most successful one in this season, with sightings of chicks of all three breeding species.

The Black-naped colony at Mirs Bay recovered slightly from the zero count last year. However the number of Bridled Terns at the traditional colony continued to decline, from the average of over 350 birds in 2003 to 100 this year.

A "No landing on Tern Islands" campaign was launched early in the breeding season to remind the public, especially photographers, not to disturb tern colonies. A public lecture on breeding terns was given at the Hong Kong Wetland Park in July. A public exhibition on terns manned by members of the Crested Bulbul Club was held on 4 Saturdays / Sundays at Tap Mun. Our heartiest thanks to CBC members for their contribution.

Kite Research Group

The monthly counts results are as follows:

	Stonecutters Island	Magazine Gap
June	70	44
July		63
August	153	139
September	62	76

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Karin Chin for the effort and contribution in the past years. Vicky Yeung has accepted the responsibility of Convenor of the Research Group. Karin Chin is still one of the members of the Kite Research Group and continues the monthly counts. Furthermore, Karin gave birth to a baby boy in early October. The Research Group is very excited and welcomes this potential group member. Congratulations to Karin and her family.



Strength

Professionalism:

- Long history with 50-year bird data
- Many bird experts
- The success of the Long Valley Project
- Many activities

Manpower:

- Many members come from different backgrounds
- Lots of volunteers (esp. from the Crested Bulbul Club); active, committed and in high quality
- Competent staff
- Enough manpower
- Members with knowledge
- A creative Chairman

Nature:

- Independence
- Good relationship with the Government
- Get the trust and respect from BirdLife International
- The most cost-effective green group in Hong Kong
- Help in the development of bird watching societies in China and have a good relationship with them
- Bird watching activities are popular
- Good public image

Others:

- Enough money, a healthy financial balance

Weakness

Internal problems:

- Lack of communication within members
- Weak communication between members and the Society
- Loose membership
- Research teams work on their own, lack coordination and communication between them

Performance:

- Slow progress/ react slowly (e.g. bird report)
- Lack of hands-on conservation experience
- Researches not systematic enough
- Sometimes researches are not professional or the reports lack details

Manpower & resources:

- Lack of active volunteers
- Executive Committee members are too busy
- Members are not united enough
- Lack of leadership
- Not enough manpower in the office. Staffs are too busy. Volunteers can't support long-term projects
- Office is too small
- Lack of facilities (Library and exhibition)

Promotion:

- Not enough public promotion
- Need to be generalize

Others:

- No fund-raising
- Unstable income
- Not enough information about birds in China
- Fixed scope limits the development of other aspects
- No future development direction/ unclear

Opportunities

Trend:

- Bird-watching becomes a trend so more people become interested

Work:

- Hold more activities at school to attract the young people
- Strengthen the China Programme; can try to cooperate with bird watching societies or NGOs in China
- Increase more bird watching activities in China
- Po Toi observatory
- Based on the success of the Long Valley project, HKBS can try to manage other sites (e.g. Luk Keng)
- Attract the public via photography and the website
- Publish bird reports and regular publications

Manpower:

- Invite professionals to provide advices, e.g. marketing agents or counselors
- Can try to attract those young retired people to become volunteers
- The large group of members can help in collecting bird data

Public image:

- The high appearance frequency in the newspaper can help to promote HKBS

External factors:

- The Government and some 私人機構 would like to allocate more resources in environmental conservation

Threats

Government:

- Some officers misunderstand the meaning of ecological conservation

Competitors:

- Compete with other green groups (they also hold bird watching activities)
- * Watching wildlife is more attractive than watching birds
- The Government publishes more books to talk about wildlife

Development and environment protection:

- Urban development, esp. in N.T. and Lantau Island, affects habitats of birds and decreases the number of places for bird watching
- Life of birds = Life of HKBS

Participation of the public:

- Bird flu makes people scared of birds
- Hong Kong people have busy lives
- Photo-taking activities adversely affect birds

Internal operation:

- The annual publication of Hong Kong Bird Reports lacks punctuality
- Staff's future is unclear, they may not stay in HKBS for long-term
- With more members, organization becomes more difficult

Summary of the Strategic Development Workshop for HKBWS Date: 21 July 2007 (con't)

Conclusion and suggestions

HKBWS's long history, professionalism and good public image form a platform for solid future development. In order to keep these strengths, HKBWS should increase manpower and hold suitable activities for further development. Comments from participants were as follows:

About human disturbance to birds:

The Executive Committee should set up a special group to follow up incidents of disturbance to Terns.

About bird surveys:

HKBWS should train more members for helping in bird surveys; A supervising group should be set up to supervise the quality of research projects.

About attracting young people:

HKBWS might promote bird watching through the Scout Association; HKBWS can help to organize joint school wildlife clubs in secondary schools.

HKBWS should:

1. Continue the good work in ecological management as it is a good chance for HKBWS to develop its' role in Hong Kong;
2. Have more communication with birders in China;
3. Publish the annual Hong Kong Bird Reports as punctually as possible. Otherwise other organizations (including the Government) would take this job.



1. Continue building up HKBWS membership

- At present we have about 1000 members. At 7% increase annually, we can expect to have 2000 members in 10 years time
- We should continue to have a broad membership base
- Training workshops for present and future Executive Committee members
- It may be useful to have an advisory board consisting of academics
- Increase welfare offers to our members, by exercising group bargaining power

Member's comment:

- Some said that we need to address the behaviour that is unfavourable to bird's survival
- How to attract more active members in our volunteer work?

2. Continue being the authority on HK birds

- Improve the bird recording system, e.g. web-based
- Update the Hong Kong bird list annually
- General systematic surveys such as the HK Breeding Bird Survey, HK Winter Atlas and HK Bird Index

Member's comment:

- How to guarantee the publication of the "Hong Kong Bird Report" on time? How to tackle the Bird Report from 2003-05 which are failed to come out on time seriously?
- Set up a "Survey and Research Committee" to push up the research work.

3. Actively involve in habitat management

- We have been working on the Long Valley project for 1.5 years
- We like to expand our work also to other areas
- We need to build up our knowledge on habitat management, for future use in HK and China

Member's comment:

- Some members feel that this is not the key business for HKBWS

4. Strengthen wildlife education in secondary schools

- At present we have not invested much on secondary school wildlife education. I would like to see a wildlife society jointly organized by HK secondary schools.

Member's comment:

- Some members think it is better for HKBWS to focus on bird watching alone in school education.

5. Increase support from staff members

- At present we have 4 full-time staff members
- We need a bigger office and foresee that staff numbers will rise to 6-8 in the next few years
- We need a policy to retain our staff permanently, by having a long salary ladder and chance of promotion
- We need suitable training for our staff from time to time

Member's comment:

- Strengthen the capacity of the HKBWS office, such as set up the post of a director or CEO.

6. Remain actively involved in the promotion of bird watching, bird surveying and conservation work in Mainland China

- Work with the China Ornithological Society to publish the China bird list annually. Help publish the China Bird Report
- Participate in the Federation of China Bird Watching Societies to help to build bird watching societies in China
- Promote wildlife watching and education in China
- Support and assist the organizing of bird surveys, such as the coastal waterbird survey in Mainland China

Member's comment:

- This is a good time for promoting bird watching in Mainland China since economic conditions continue to be good
- There are signs that bird watching organizations in China will be up to standard for a long time, HKBWS needs to step up efforts to carry out some aspects of bird watching promotion

7. Cooperate more with Birdlife International, establish Hong Kong as one of the leading birding centers in Asia

- As the Taiwan relationship with Birdlife Int'l may be resolved soon, Hong Kong should decide to become a "Partner" of Birdlife International
- Hong Kong can take a more active role in Asia

Member's comment:

- It is possible that HKBWS can play an important role in Asia division of BirdLife International if we become a Partner of BirdLife International (right now we are an Affiliated Member)
- If HKBWS can co-ordinate the collection of more bird information of China through surveys and research, we can perform a more useful role in the Asia region.

8. Fundraising

Member's comment:

- This point is raised during the meeting. Some feel that it is worthwhile and not difficult.

The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

Honorary Members

- by Clive Viney

Mr Clive Briffett

Clive Briffett was Honorary Secretary of HKBWS in the early nineteen-seventies. He was very active and helped transform the Society from a small nucleus of expatriates into a more responsible body with a commitment to the community. Among other things, he promoted the Society's participation in the AFD's Agricultural Show at Sok Kong in 1972 and the production of colourful bilingual charts of Common Hong Kong Birds for use in schools.

Sir John Chapple

Sir John Chapple was and still is a very enthusiastic birdwatcher. During his long and distinguished military career he held the post of Commander British Forces in Hong Kong. One of his duties as CBF was overseeing the construction of the restricted area fence. Due to his passionate interest in what was going on at Mai Po he made sure during the construction of the fence that the sluice gates to the gai-wai were maintained. In this way he ensured the future integrity of the reserve. He was also a confidant of the Governor, Sir Edward Youde, another enthusiastic birdwatcher, and in that capacity ensured that there was appropriate environmental awareness at the very highest level.

Mr F O P Hechtel

Fred Hechtel was Chairman of HKBWS from 1970 to 1975 and oversaw and helped put into practice the reforms proposed by Clive Briffett. Fred worked tirelessly with Mike Webster to try and secure a viable future for Mai Po at a time when the views of developers held sway in the highest levels of the administration. It was thanks to Fred's outspokenness that the public became aware of the value of Mai Po and that was long before the word "environment" became fashionable.

Lt Col A M Macfarlane

Lt Col A M Macfarlane was a very active founder member of HKBWS and was responsible for the production of the first Hong Kong Bird Reports. In 1960, with A D Macdonald he co-authored An Annotated Check-List of the Birds of Hong Kong published by the South China Morning Post - this was Hong Kong's first checklist of birds. In 1966 he co-authored the second edition of the Check-List, this time published by the Society.

Dr D G Robertson

David Robertson was a committee member of the HKBWS in the nineteen-sixties holding various posts and with Clive Briffett was instrumental in producing the bilingual educational posters of Common Hong Kong Birds for schools.

Mr Francis J Walker

Frank Walker was instrumental in the formation of the HKBWS and fifty years on still takes a great interest in the Society's activities and development. During his posting to Hong Kong with the Royal Air Force in the late nineteen-fifties he conducted much pioneering fieldwork without the benefit of anything resembling a modern field guide. His lists and observations provided the foundation for the checklists that followed.

Mr. M Webster

From the mid nineteen-sixties until nineteen-ninety, Mike Webster's name was synonymous with birdwatching in Hong Kong. He was Chairman of HKBWS from 1975 to 1982. Mike was an outspoken critic of the Hong Kong Government's lack of environmental awareness and today we have much to thank him for. He was a great communicator and gave regular lectures on birdwatching, published many articles and co-authored Hong Kong's first modern format field guide to birds.

Birdwatching in Hong Kong 1947-1957

REPRODUCED FROM THE 1967 HONG KONG BIRD REPORT

- A. St. G. Walton

BIRD-WATCHING IN HONG KONG 1947-1957

The publication of Herklot's 'Field Note Book' in November 1946 was the foundation stone of bird-watching in Hong Kong. It then became possible for the first time for anyone interested in birds to start identifying them with the aid of a book giving field descriptions. Articles and pictures in the pre-war numbers of *The Hong Kong Naturalist* (edited by G.A.C. Herklot and G.S.P. Heywood) were a help but the number of species described was very small. Even after the publication of the 'Field Note Book' there was still no way of finding other bird-watchers with whom to exchange notes and from whom to learn in the field. Herklot had unfortunately left Hong Kong soon after the publication of his book and it was not until late in 1954 that I met another bird-watcher. This was J.C.E. Britt, an experienced ornithologist, who had been in Hong Kong, unknown to me, since 1945. I finally met him through J.D. Rosser who had founded the Hong Kong Biological Circle about 1950.

The next event of any note was the publication of 'Field Notes on Local Birds' by the Biological Circle in February 1953. These notes were by Dove and Goodhart who later published a much fuller version in 'Ibis'. In April of that year came the publication of Herklot's 'Hong Kong Birds' which gave more details of the best bird-watching areas.

Britt's departure for Vancouver early in 1955 was a great loss, not made good until the arrival of F.J. Walker and J.H. Sergeant whom I met in 1956 through membership of the Biological Circle. After several walks in the New Territories with them Frank Walker proposed that we should start a bird-watching society of which he would be the Secretary. It was through his enthusiasm and determination that a meeting was called in August 1957. This was held in the British Council Library in Gloucester Building and the 15 persons present decided then and there to start a society. There had, however, been a serious setback to our plans as shortly before the meeting Walker was told by the R.A.F. that he was to be posted to Singapore. J.H. Sergeant was therefore elected in his place. Soon afterwards the Army moved him, and it was not until Jim Humphreys arrived that the Society really got going.

These are the bare bones of the years before the Society was started. My own recollections of bird-watching in the field during that period may perhaps help to put some flesh on the

skeleton and will, I hope, be of some interest to members who were not in Hong Kong before 1957.

By the end of 1946, with no book to help, I had identified a total of only 22 species. I was on leave for most of 1947 but from 1948 onwards my wife and I spent nearly all our Sundays in the New Territories, and by the end of 1953 our total of species identified was up to 82, which was not very rapid progress. The list did, however, include some rarities or semi-rarities such as the Green Woodpecker, Osprey, Wren, Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker, Plumbeous Water Redstart, Peregrine, Ashy Minivet, Asiatic Cuckoo, Forest Wagtail, and Roller.

By the start of 1954 we had become a bit more expert and in the course of that year added 38 new species to our list. There were also several rather inadequate descriptions of birds we could not identify. The new birds that that exciting year included the Pied Kingfisher, Pied Harrier, a Grey Starling at Mong Tsang, and two Black-tailed Godwits on Deep Bay marshes (the first ever recorded, I think). There were also a group of eight Great Crested Grebes in Starling Inlet, a flock of about 20 Chestnut Bunting near Sha Lo Tung, a Bull-headed Shrike perched on a roadside wire (another first) between Fan Ling and Lok Ma Chau, and 5 or 6 female Scarlet Minivets in a wood on the south side of the entrance to the Lam Tuen Valley. No road existed there in those days. We saw a Verditer Flycatcher by the edge of what used to be the best wood in the same valley, on the way to Tai On Shan Village, and other birds seen in or near it included the Roller and Serpent Eagle.

1955 began splendidly with a walk on the 2nd January with J.C.E. Britt during which 5 species new to me were identified. These included four Red-necked Grebes in Starling Inlet. Then I went on leave and saw exciting birds in Kashmir.

By 1956 I had met Frank Walker and went with him to the newly discovered egretty wet of Yuen Long where Pond Herons, Cattle Egrets, Little Egrets, and Swinhoe's Egrets were all breeding. We suspected some of being Lesser Egrets but this was never proved. Walker also introduced me to the shallow mud pans beyond the Mai Po police post where many waders new to me were seen. In all there were 31 new species added that year.

The first five months of 1957 produced 24 more, many of which were on walks with Frank Walker. The first was a



Birdwatching in Hong Kong 1947-1957

(cont)



party of Rose Finches as we were eating our lunch near the entrance to the Lam Tsuen Valley on New Year's Day—a very good start to the year. Ferruginous Flycatcher, White-headed Black Bulbul, Red Turtle Dove and White-checked Drongo were others seen by the end of April. May saw my introduction to eight new species of Wader, and to the Caspian and White-winged Black Tern.

To conclude, it might be of some interest to mention the birds seen from the top floor of the Albany Flats (just above the Botanical Gardens) in 1954-56, and from a house in Severn Road, 403, The Peak, in 1956-59, though some of the latter period is outside that covered by this article. The Albany Flats had a large flower-pot nursery immediately below which added variety to the habitat. 47 species seen from the verandah included the Hair-crested Drongo, Barbet, Oriole and Rose-ringed Parakeet. All of these were often seen on the mid-levels in those days. I remember an Oriole, sitting in a tree within twenty feet of a desk in the old Secretariat Building. Unusual species in this area, even for those days, included the White-breasted Kingfisher, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Pond Heron, Ashy Minivet, Sparrowhawk, Red-throated Pipit, Grey Thrush and Chinese Starling. Two young Peregrines were seen in July 1954 doing aerobatics over the harbour.

Severn Road was a very good place for Thrushes though they were often difficult to find except by the sound of their scratching among the leaves in dark scrub woodland. The eight species seen were Blackbird, Orange-headed Ground Thrush, White's, Grey, Eye-browed, Pale, Grey-backed and Violet Whistling Thrush. The White's Thrush (formerly known as the Golden Mountain Thrush, a more exciting name) seemed to prefer well-kept lawns where one was able to watch it at close quarters and in a good light for long periods. The Orange-headed Ground Thrush was seen on four occasions between 29th November 1956 and 14th April 1957. White's was seen nearly every day from 9th January to 14th February 1960.

Warblers included the Arctic, Yellow-browed and Pale-legged. The most disturbing bird was the Large Hawk-Cuckoo which made its piercing call for 7 nights running from 9th to 15th April 1957. The greatest rarity was a Frigate Bird seen over the harbour on 25th September 1956.

The total number of species at Severn Road was 53 against 47 at the Albany. Many were common to both but there were

interesting differences. Birds seen only at Severn Road (1200 feet) were seven species of Thrush, three species of Warbler, Ferruginous Flycatcher, Robin Flycatcher, White-backed Munia, Tree Pipit, Fire-breasted Flower-pecker, the two species of Crow Pheasant, House Swift, Rufous-backed Shrike, Roller, Large Hawk-Cuckoo and Frigate Bird. Birds on the Albany list only were Philippine Brown Shrike, Chinese Starling, Java Sparrow, Greenfinch, Red-throated Pipit, Koel, Kestrel, Sparrowhawk, Spotted Dove, Rufous Turtle-Dove, Pond Heron, Parakeet, White-faced Wagtail and Yellow Wagtail. The differences in the lists were probably due more to the differences in the habitats than to the differences in height above sea-level. Both houses had extensive views over the harbour.

The founding of the Society in 1957 made my last three years the most interesting of all. Bird-watching then became an activity shared with other enthusiasts and I have many happy memories of society outings in the New Territories. It also acquired a more definite purpose and scientific value. In the last 20 years I have watched birds in many parts of Europe, Morocco and India but never have I found any places with quite the same fascination as the Ping Shan—Mai Po marshes with their hilly (rings), and the lung shui woods behind the villages in the New Territories.

Since I left Hong Kong at the end of 1960 it has been a great pleasure to read the Annual Reports which seem to me to get better and better. Then there have been the second edition of the Check List and the start of scientific ringing. I should like therefore to conclude by congratulating most warmly all those who have contributed to this noteworthy progress. Without doubt they have done a job of permanent value.

A. St. G. Walton

Early Days

REPRODUCED FROM
- F Walker THE 1967 HONG KONG BIRD REPORT

EARLY DAYS

My posting to Hong Kong in 1955 was my first real overseas tour. I had a fair amount of experience of U.K. birds and, after purchasing a copy of Herklot's "Birds of Hong Kong", felt fit to do battle with the fauna of the area.

Once at Sek Kong, in June, I ventured forth with notebook in hand, glasses strung round my neck and plunged literally into the surrounding padi to try my luck. It was a great awakening—I knew nothing about birds! Bulbuls were fairly easy; small warblers falling off their tails difficult, and the minute birds flitting about in the canopy of the "lung shui" woods impossible. In the autumn a typhoon left a debris of birds on the Ping Shan marshes, but numbers and variety confused me. I decided I needed help.

My initial introduction to J.D. Romer opened to me the beginning of a wonderful period of bird watching. I made several trips with him whilst he collected snakes and various reptiles, and after a while he introduced me to Miss Maura Benham. Later that autumn I met Jeremy Sergeant, and we teamed up to cover the Moeng Tseng peninsula and the Mai Po marshes. We started discovering birds that Herklot had not mentioned, nor Dove and Goodhart for that matter, but group expeditions with Maura Benham, Toby Woodhams and others started to pay off, and with the arrival of Roland de la Mousse, we all began to understand just how much could be done to improve ornithology in the Colony.

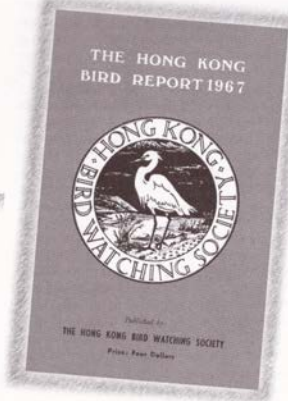
Many pleasant days were spent together in the Mai Po marshes and Lam Tsuen valley and slowly I began to identify birds with the help of the resident bird watchers. Mutual interest between the bird watchers of the Colony began to take a firmer shape, and in the steaming quiet of parts of the New Territories it was agreed that the time had come to co-ordinate all our activities and publish annual reports—in short to form a bird watching society.

After further discussion, a letter was drafted and despatched to all known interested parties in Hong Kong, and a meeting called. It was a most pleasant surprise to see the numbers

who turned up at the inaugural meeting, and after preliminary introductions, we got down to business, with Mr. Walton in the chair. I nervously suggested "Hong Kong Ornithological Society" as the title for the proposed society, but after further discussion we settled for the "Hong Kong Bird Watching Society" and then we were in business.

No individual can really claim credit for the formation of the Society. It was an amalgamation of ideas, many of which had been simmering in the minds of bird watchers of Hong Kong for years. The final result was the joint hard work and co-operation of many people. In my time, 1955 to 1957, many names come to mind—Maura Benham, Roland de la Mousse, Jeremy Sergeant, Arthur Walton, Edgar Webb and Toby Woodhams are but a few. The results of their hard work, and the efforts of the members who followed have shown the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society to be a serious, hard-working ornithological organisation that can claim parity with many such societies overseas.

On this tenth anniversary may I thank friends and members of the Society for their unstinting help and guidance during my short visits to the Colony and express my best wishes for the future.



Early Birdwatching in Hong Kong

— Brian Wilson

I must have started birdwatching in HK in about the 1960's (i.e. some 10 years after the formation of the HKBWS) and finished in 1983 when I retired from HK. As a complete beginner in those days, I benefited enormously from the friendly and patient guidance of Fred Hechtel (chairman) and Mike Webster, both of whom sported the initials MBOU (Member of the British Ornithological Union) after their names, indicating that in the UK they had passed the field examination in the identification of British birds. This qualification seems to have now ceased. As all my records were handed over some time ago to Ruy Barretto, I'm relying on memory of events that took place some 20 or more years ago.

The HKBWS was apparently founded by an RAF man who had served in Signals in the NT where he was well placed for birdwatching. But he had left HK before I joined the group. However, we met some years later at a meeting in Perth of the West Australian Group of Birds Australia where he told me of the Society's formation. When I joined the HKBWS there were about 20 members, all of them expatriates and most fairly active. Ten or more regulars would appear at outings, which were almost all in the NT: Tai Po Kau forestry reserve, Mai Po marshes, Lau Fau Shan, San Tin, Shek Kong woods, Lam Tsuen valley, and other localities. There might sometimes be overseas visitors or potential members wanting to discover whether birdwatching was the sort of hobby they could enjoy. By and large, outings consisted of a hardcore of stalwarts spending half or whole days birdwatching, either driving their own vehicle or sharing. There were also occasional meetings with a speaker. Once Sir Peter Scott (visiting HK) spoke about his wildlife refuge at Slimbridge in England.

We were a mixed bunch of men and women from different backgrounds; business, Government, military, professional. At one period, Lt General Sir John Chapple (Commander, British Forces, HK) used to join us on outings. There were even several enthusiastic and knowledgeable youngsters accompanying a parent in the field.

In those days, members from HK on outings to the NT had to catch an early morning vehicular ferry. There were no crossharbour tunnels till the 1970's, nor were there highspeed motorways criss-crossing the NT. So it took longer to reach birding spots than it probably does now. On the other hand, traffic was not so heavy, particularly in the early mornings, nor were there so many hikers and picnickers spread across the countryside, causing disturbance. Villages had not been depopulated, meaning that there were always plenty of fierce village dogs that had to be avoided. For the most part, we went round villages rather than through them. Villagers tended at first to be puzzled and suspicious by the sight of a bunch of expatriates standing at the edge of a paddy field staring into the distance. But, when similar bunches kept appearing in some localities, villagers began to drop their suspicions. This was helped by explanations from those of us who spoke Cantonese. Even so, I can remember an occasion when a leftwing villager near the border mistook binoculars for a camera and flung stones and clods of mud to deter me, until I pointed out his error. (For some reason, leftwing sympathisers in those days declined to be photographed). On another occasion, when I was peering at a bird in a Fung Shui wood beside Shek Kong village, a village woman wanted to know what I was doing. When I explained that I was birdwatching, she said "But you haven't got a gun or a camera!" It used to be a common saying then that villagers had only two interests in birds: either to eat them or to put them in a cage. Happily this view is now fading.

Binoculars were comparatively easy to obtain in HK, although they may not have been as sophisticated as they tend to be now. Certainly they were not gas-filled and waterproof; you had to be careful to keep them dry in wet weather and to prevent condensation under the lenses. Most birdwatching took place in the winter when the weather was kinder and also when far more species of birds were to be seen on spring and autumn migration. There were few outings in summer when the most numerous migrants were Yellow Bitterns. But it was hardly worth braving the summer heat and humidity to see them. By contrast, winter brought warblers, buntings, flycatchers, waders, waterbirds, raptors, and others.

Early birdbooks for identification were not always helpful. We tended at first to rely on * HK Birds * by G.A.C. Herklotz, a fine naturalist . My copy (2nd edition) is dated January 1967, with much detail about each species but line drawings and a few coloured illustrations. It was necessary to accompany experts to learn identification and birdcalls in the field. In 1976 Mike Webster produced * A New Guide to the Birds of HK * with black and white illustrations by Karen Phillipps. It was superseded in the following year 1977 by * New Colour Guide to HK Birds * by Clive Viney with colour illustrations, again by Karen Phillipps. Incidentally, her brother Hugo Phillipps was the publicity officer for the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union (now Birds Australia) when I was a member of the BA Council in the 1980's. Clive's book appears now to be the definitive HK field guide.

Clive was a leading light of the HKBWS for many years, with a wealth of ornithological knowledge. Walking to my office along Lower Albert Road in HK, I was delighted to see a Peregrine Falcon flying towards me. It alighted on a windowsill of the PWD building in Garden Road, peered in through a window, realised that it was not the Buildings Ordinance Office where Clive worked, and flew on round the building.

So much of birdwatching seems to be a matter of luck; of being in the right place at the right time.

From 1949 - 51, I was District Officer, Tai Po, working in Island House and surrounded by pine trees at the top of the hill. Throughout the summer, the liquid calls of Black-naped Orioles floated in through the open windows (no airconditioning in those days). In 1953 - 55, I was D.O. Yuen Long. This time it was the sound of Black-collared Starlings coming through the windows. In the vicinity of Wu Kau Tang, on two occasions, my wife and I saw a Brown Crane creeping in and out of vegetation.

But this remote locality became a favourite camping area at weekends, meaning that there was too much disturbance later on. Looking through the woods near St. Stephen's school, Stanley, my daughter and I came across a Brown Hawk Owl, a diurnal owl with bright yellow eyes and very shy. This was only the second sighting in HK.

Newspapers reported that villagers near So Kwu Wan, Lamma Island, were reluctant to use a particular hillside path after dark for fear of attacks by a huge owl that made loud hooting noises. I went there with the late Alan Bristow, a keen birder, and hung about till dark when an Eagle Owl was clearly outlined on the top of a rock, hooting loudly. Walking on Lantau Island, I disturbed a nightjar from the ground and followed it up - probably a Savanna Nightjar. On another occasion, near Lau Fau Shan, I saw a nightjar sitting lengthwise (not across) a branch of a pine tree.

A Chinese doctor who liked shooting on the Mai Po marshes used to call on me in my office in Yuen Long, leaving me with a couple of dead snipe. (This was long before the days of the ICAC and injunctions against receiving gifts). Full of shot that did one's teeth no good, these snipe resolved me never to eat shot birds in future. Generally there was no conflict in those days between hunters and birdwatchers. There were so few hunters and they caused so little disturbance that no serious issue arose. In any event, the Mai Po marshes were soon declared a Closed Area with a massive border fence to keep out illegal immigrants. (Border Security Fence was completed in 1981-Ed.) The legal ban on shooting wildlife helped things. But birdwatching outings to the marshes required the issue of a permit on each occasion. Before this happened, Pheasant-tailed Jacanas and Watercock were often seen on the marshes. In later years, I recall seeing Oriental White Stork, spoonbills, Asian Dowitchers, and munias. Red Avadavat and a small flock of Baya Weavers were probably escapes. Flocks of Blackbirds appeared in winter from time to time. I once attended a commemorative service at the Commonwealth War Graves cemetery in Sai Wan Bay where a migrating flock of Blackbirds arrived during the two minutes' silence, giving the impression of the spirits of the dead.

At one stage, there was an irruption of Yellow-bellied Tits, seen quite often. Once I misjudged my timing and, driving from the Peak via the vehicular ferry, arrived at the Tai Po Kau forestry reserve whilst it was still dark. This was awkward as an unfamiliar twittering in some trees intrigued



About the author

Brian Wilson

- by Clive Viney, ex-chairman, HKBWS

me and I had to wait some time in chilly weather before it was light enough to identify Black Bulbuls, some with white heads. In a grove of *Rhodoleia championi* in the reserve, you could be fairly sure of seeing a few Tristram's Bunting foraging on the ground. Feeding higher up on the rose-coloured flowers of the *Rhodoleia* would be Japanese White-eyes with red heads, caused by contact with pollen on the flowers. Elsewhere in the reserve, Scarlet Minivets might be seen, sometimes a Grey-throated Minivet.

In those days there were a few streams in the NT where a Plumbeous Water Redstart might be seen. At Bride's Pool in the NT, a male White-capped Water Redstart turned up for a fortnight before it realised that it was in the wrong country. I saw Grey Bushchat a few times in winter. In the marshy area near Lo Wu railway station, Northern Lapwing were to be seen, but I can't remember whether there were also Grey-headed ones. In this same valley were the Black Vulture, once low over my head. White-bellied Sea Eagles could often be seen over the waters on either side of the NT.

In Deep Bay, a number of times birds far out in the water were identified to me (by those better qualified) as Great Northern Divers. But this species is not listed in Clive Viney's book. On several other occasions in Deep Bay, there were flocks of Dalmatian Pelicans.

The establishment of nature reserves and country parks has been a step in the right direction as far as preservation of habitat and birdwatching are concerned. Even so, the continuing spread of development has caused disturbance and makes it even more important to hang on to what remains.

Making the public and the younger generation aware of nature and birds is a welcome feature, in particular by the HKBWS and the WWF.

In Hong Kong, Brian Wilson was a senior and much respected civil servant. I remember him mostly as a dedicated and articulate Director of Urban Services. In particular, I recall that he gave a series of witty early morning talks on Radio Hong Kong concerning the work of the Urban Service Department - everything from rat-catching, running the abattoir to managing the Zoological and Botanical Gardens. In many ways in those distant days, he was the closest person Hong Kong had to a mayor.

Brian is a keen birdwatcher and when I knew him he lived on The Peak. I emphasise the word birdwatcher as Brian is an observer first and is as interested in what birds do as what they are called. The Peak was then a garden suburb amid verdant mountain vegetation and he much enjoyed discovering the birds that lived there and wrote articles about the Blue Magpies he daily fed and the crepuscular habits of Blue Whistling Thrushes. These were among the first articles published in the HKBWS Bulletin. It is also little known that Brian was the first person to identify Plain Flowerpeckers in Hong Kong but despite showing them to observers that mattered he could not convince anybody that such drab birds were a new Hong Kong species.

Early one morning he telephoned me at Mount Nicholson to say that he had found an unusual heron with a broken bill in his garden. For me as a non-ringer, birds in the hand are often a problem but nevertheless I confidently identified the heron as an immature Schrenk's Bittern. Brian took the still alive bird to the Honorary Curator of the ZBG, Dr Ken Searle who re-identified the bird as a Yellow Bittern. Unfortunately because of its broken bill, the heron could not be saved and was dispatched and put in a freezer. Months later our erstwhile chairman Fred Hechtel confidently labelled the bird as a Cinnamon Bittern because of its diagnostic chestnut tail! The Peak was very much Brian's patch but as his article informs he travelled much more widely to enjoy birds.

The Bulletin 50 Years On

by Clive Viney - Part 1

When I closed the front door of my Mount Nicholson home for the last time in 1996, the copious notes made on the birds of Hong Kong had already gone to my new home in Portugal. I thought optimistically that one day I would have time to sort them out and write my memoirs. With them was a box file of Bulletins that somehow managed to survive the sifting process that must precede such a move. Ten years later my friend CY emailed and asked if I could write a short history of the Bulletin for the Society's fiftieth anniversary. I accepted the challenge but said that necessarily I would concentrate on my years in Hong Kong and the English version of the Bulletin. I blew off the dust and began to reread a fascinating accumulation of information. What I unearthed was not dry but a history of the Society during its middle years. Sometimes serious, sometimes flippant but always mesmerizing. It was like suddenly meeting an old flame and remembering the good times and, of course, the bad times. In those days birdwatchers were a close-knit community and although we came from different walks of life we had a common passion - birds.

I arrived in Hong Kong during the troubled year of 1967 and spent the next three and a half years in the rural surroundings of the Clear Water Bay Peninsula. I was preoccupied with making a mark in a new job and enjoying my young family. Birdwatching at best was casual and ancillary to exploring the countryside. There was only one bird book, Geoffrey Herklots' *Hong Kong Birds* published by the South China Morning Post. Delightfully anecdotal and still has pride of place on my

bookshelf but hardly a field guide. I had a notion that a birdwatching society existed but only once saw birdwatchers. I was at the entrance to the Three Walks, as we used to call the Tai Po Kau woodland, armed with a butterfly net. A group of mature Europeans dressed in tweeds and anoraks were peering into a treetop with binoculars. I enquired as to what they were watching and received only a mumbled response. My daughter Claire was also curious but by now the group ignored us, so we left them to it and trudged up the road to seek butterflies.

In 1970 a young recruit, Clive Briffett, was assigned to me for training. A budding birdwatcher, he always had binoculars handy on our site visits to the New Territories and before long such inspections stretched to a bit of birding. I was hooked. When in late 1971 I returned from six months leave Briffett had not only joined the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society but was the secretary. He presented me with a form and the next Bulletin announced my membership.

Early days

The first Bulletin no doubt announced the formation of the Society on 7th August 1957. All that we are sure of is that Bulletin No. 3 is dated April 1958. Here several thousand miles away and almost 50 years after the birth of the Society, I have no record of what was contained in the first 61 Bulletins, but am sure that I know that birdwatching societies were an offshoot of colonial life. Birdwatching was an acceptable gentlemanly hobby as it implied healthy outdoor breaks away from the temptations of idleness. Members were drawn from

the upper echelons of the civil service, police officers, the military (rank was always included in membership lists), the medical, university and teaching fraternities and occasionally the business sector. Most businessmen and private professionals professed to be too busy for such an ethereal pursuit. Little attempt was made to recruit locals and the lingua franca was English.

Bulletin No. 62 issued on 14th July 1971 is a poorly produced roneed document containing society news and announcements, a list of officers, membership changes, additions to the library, forthcoming outings and a note from the Honorary Recorder of interesting birds recorded during the past six months. I have no doubt that this followed an established format. The notes on the birds and submitted record cards were consolidated early in the New Year and the more polished Hong Kong Bird Report published soon afterwards. These annual reports included a meaty systematic list and a confection of notes and articles ranging from identification criteria, overseas trip reports, reminiscences from members now returned home and even the Chairman's poems. Reports also contained photographs and advertisements that helped defray costs.

New blood

With the introduction of Briffett the Society began to take on a contemporary and more ambitious look. Young people, me included, were co-opted onto the committee and through the enlightened chairmanship of Fred Hechtel their energies were harnessed.

The Bulletin 50 Years On (cont')

in 1972, the Society participated in AFD's Agricultural Show in Shek Kong with, for the first time, translation of birdwatching information into Chinese. Colourful bird charts depicting common birds were produced in English and Chinese and distributed to schools; This was a positive shift in direction; the Society was becoming involved with education and moving beyond the tight expatriate community. Bulletins announced and reflected these policy moves but retained their shabby format.

Although Peterson provided tick lists in his pioneering field guides, life lists, trip lists, year lists and even day lists were a new concept. The word "twitching" was yet to be coined. Briffett loved games and in Bulletin No. 65 (March 1972) he threw out a challenge. Herklots had written in *The Hong Kong Countryside* that on 14th April 1941 he recorded 69 species in the Ping Shan district and now we were told that Mike Webster, Robin Weeks and Tim Garland had broken this record with a day total of 80. Briffett asked whether this new record could be broken and birdwatchers prepared to break sweat.

No doubt to encourage would be record breakers, a checklist in booklet form prepared by Webster was given away free with Bulletin No. 67 (November 1972). In this Bulletin disturbing environmental news about Mai Po was imparted to members and for the first time government policy was challenged by the Society, albeit meekly.

In an effort to get a worthwhile project off the ground, I spent countless hours preparing a breeding bird survey of Hong Kong. Members were given details and in Bulletin No. 68

(December 1972) invited to participate. This comprehensive scheme came too soon and misjudged the number of willing workers that a small membership could produce and was doomed to failure. Another innovation was indoor meetings, but these met with similar apathy. Membership reached a low ebb in 1973 and stood at a mere 80 with 27 of these living abroad. Out of 27 people present at the 1973 AGM only one bore a Chinese name.

Bulletins were the vehicle for recording what was said at AGMs. At the AGM on 8th April 1975, Hechtel and Webster woke everyone up with a vitriolic condemnation of the Fairview Park housing proposal, which threatened to gobble up what was left of Mai Po. Hechtel resigned and Webster took up the reins. The Society that was once the refuge of senior civil servants challenged the establishment and even hinted at corruption in the highest corridors of power.

Articles

Bulletin No. 78 (November 1975) contained the first article written by a non-committee member. Brian Wilson was the Director of Urban Services and was the closest person to a mayor that Hong Kong had in those distant days. He gave a witty series of talks on early morning radio on the most unlikely of subjects, such as abattoirs and rat catching. As a high-ranking civil servant he lived on Victoria Peak. A keen birdwatcher, he was more of a patch man than a rover. His article *Early Morning Birds on the Peak* related the shenanigans of the Blue Magpies that he daily fed with raisins and his next article *Early Bird* focused on Blue Whistling

Thrushes and their crepuscular habits.

A birding information revolution occurred in 1976 with the publication of Ben King's *Field Guide to the Birds of South East Asia* and Mike Webster's *A New Guide to the Birds of Hong Kong*. Suddenly everyone wanted to write books and articles.

Early in 1976 I took over editorship of the Bulletin and the Annual Report and made a concerted effort to improve contents. I wrote that I wanted the Bulletin to be a document to preserve rather than a list of dates and agendas. I had just returned from China with the Hong Kong Institute of Architects and surprisingly had been allowed to sport my binoculars in a countryside still thick with Red Guards. My *Vanishing Birds of Southern China* was rejected by the South China Morning Post but nothing lost I published it in the Bulletin - the first of many China reports. An earlier recorder once wrote that there were no birds in the New Territories east of the railway line; he might more accurately have written that there were no birdwatchers east of the railway line. I pioneered the first Society outing to Tai Long Wan and the efforts of the participants were amply rewarded with an impressive list of seldom recorded birds - raptors were especially impressive and Slaty-breasted Rails were proved to breed in Hong Kong for the first time. We cruised through Tolo Harbour, climbed Sharp Peak, Hong Kong's mini Matterhorn, and fossicked through the still used paddyfields of Ham Tin. I wrote it up in the Bulletin - the first of many outing reports.

Gavin Cooper took up the writing challenge and his *Week in November or the Power of P's* remains a

classic and deserved a much wider audience. Brian Wilson completed his trilogy with *Rapt and Unwrapped*, which related his discovery of Greater Necklaced Laughingthrushes and his confrontation with a strange accipiter in Tai Po Kau.

Departed members who had performed exceptional service for the Society were elected Honorary Life Members. This rarely bestowed honour was in Bulletin No. 83 (February 1977) extended to Lt. Col. A. M. Macfarlane who was the moving spirit behind the first two editions of the *Checklist*, Dr. D. G. Robertson (bird charts) and Clive Briffett (renaissance). Also in this Bulletin was Brigadier J. C. Chapple's account of his visit to Kosi Barrage in Nepal - the first of many overseas reports. John Chapple was soon to become Commander British Forces and in that capacity was responsible during the construction of the Closed Area Fence for the saving of the gel-wai sluice gates, which in turn maintained Mai Po's viability as a nature reserve. This was indeed a fruitful Bulletin for it also contained an invitation for experienced birdwatchers to join the Royal Geographical Society's Mulu (Sarawak) Expedition. In the spirit I had hoped for, Dave Bradford wrote a mouth-watering account of a winter visit to Japan. Encouragingly, a young member, Clive Harris aged 11, wrote about a visit to the Seychelles.

Ton-up by Gavin Cooper reported in detail how Derek Scott, an internationally recognised ornithologist had in his company scored 101 species in a day. Articles on patch birding were appearing and the Pokfulam area, Herklots' old stomping ground, seemed to have more than its fair share of devotees.

At the end of 1977 the first edition of my *Colour Guide* to Hong Kong Birds amply illustrated with birds and rural vignettes by Karen Phillipps appeared and I decided to take a break and step down as Honorary Recorder and publications editor. Bird recording duties were jointly taken up by Mike Chalmers and Gavin Cooper and in the first Bulletin of 1978 detailed their new approach to gathering field data. For the first time a Bulletin contained a book review section. David Melville, government's ornithologist investigating birdstrike wrote the insensitively titled *A Final Solution to Gull Problems*.

Bulletin No. 91 (October 1978) marked the dawn of a new era when it announced that Albert Cheung would organise a number of Chinese speaking outings. The following Bulletin promoted the first Society outing to Lantau and would use minibuses. Overseas trip reports and notes on local birdwatching appeared regularly but occasionally something especially caught the imagination. In Bulletin No. 95 (December 1979) Mike Chalmers told of his observations from the coast at Ting Kau as the eye of Typhoon Hope passed over Hong Kong. This was the first report of oceanic terns in Hong Kong and raised adrenalin levels and spawned the dangerous pursuit of seawatching during typhoons. An article by Albert Cheung drew attention to the ornithological gems of Kowloon Park. How had we overlooked such an oasis in our midst? *My Raptorial Feast* about an extraordinary trip to Tai Long Wan when a spiral of hundreds of raptors over Tap Mun and many other passage birds were seen should have inspired others to pioneer.

China was opening up more and more and the few birdwatchers that were getting in wrote reports in the Bulletins. These peeps through the Bamboo Curtain excited many. David Melville's *Notes on Two Visits to Zhongshan and Zhuhai Counties in Guangdong* in Bulletin No. 98 (August 1980) detailed what was happening just across the border. How different from the Shenzhen of today? The article begins: 'The country is predominantly alluvial plains with eroded granite hills typical of parts of the New Territories. One visitor has described the countryside as being similar to the Yuen Long Plain of 20 years ago. The alluvial areas are principally used for rice. In January the paddy had been ploughed and was barren dry earth, in May it contained well grown rice.....'

Bulletin No. 100 was published in March 1981 almost 24 years after the founding of the Society and since Bulletin No. 200 was published in 2006, some 25 years later it follows that Bulletins have appeared with a steady frequency. In Bulletin No. 100 Mike Chalmers put the wheels in motion for a second attempt at getting members involved in obtaining breeding data. He also wrote a *Ticker's Shopping List* of 52 birds predicted to occur in Hong Kong. In the following 25 years 80% of these predictions materialised. To everyone's surprise and delight the first recovery in China of a bird ringed in Hong Kong was reported and the charming letter in Chinese script was reproduced with a translation.

to be continued



Qinghai: A birding trip to the Tang -Tibet Ancient Trail



(29.7 - 12.8.2007)

- Carrie Ma

About 1,300 years ago, Princess Wencheng of the Tang Dynasty travelled from Changan (Today's Xian city of Shanxi Province) to Lhasa for an arranged marriage for peaceful purposes. Most of her trip covered the southeastern part of Qinghai, this is the famous "Tang-Tibet Ancient Trail". The trail has been an important route from the mainland to Qinghai, Xizang, Nepal and India. It was also important for trading of tea leaves, salt, cloth, herbs and poultry. This was a trail with many difficulties - numerous people died because of the harsh environment.

The route of "Tang-Tibet Ancient Trail" (Today's National Highway 214) covers Xining (西寧), Huangyuan (湟源), Riyue Shan (日月山), Daotang He (倒淌河), the source of the Yellow River, Gyaring Lake and Ngoring Lake (扎陵湖 - 鄂陵湖), Bayankala Pass (巴顏喀拉山), and Nangqian (黃謙).

The writer spent two weeks from the end of July to mid-August travelling along this route with birding friends. We also tried a new route from Yushu to the northwest across an "uninhabited area" towards the Golmud-Lhasa road. We aimed to see some mammals as well as bird species.

30 July: Look for birds at Valleys

At Xining Hotel, Plain Laughingthrush and Brown Shrike fed actively in the early morning.

After we bought necessary food and drinks at Xining, we started our journey to Gonghe (共和). At about 50 km along the new highway (214) we turned right at Huangyuan Town. We backtracked down the old road (109) to km point 2005. We stopped at one of the small valleys, and walked up the trail. We got some good sighting of Grey-headed Woodpecker, breeding White-winged Redstart, Hodgson's Redstart, Black Redstart, Wallcreeper and Godlewski's Bunting as well as Grey-headed Bullfinch.

In the afternoon, we continued to drive along the National Highway 214 towards Riyue Shan. Before we reached the pass there is a small village called Riyue Village (日月村). We went through the village and reached a river valley where there were good numbers of Hume's

Groundpecker (now commonly accepted as Ground-Tit), White-capped Redstart, Tibetan Lark, Rosy Pipit and White-throated Dipper. The lower part of the valley was covered by pieces of farmland with yellowish rape flower, together with some fascinating purple and blue wild flowers.

Riyue (Sun/Moon Pass) is the watershed between the agricultural lowland and the Tibetan highland, as well as a traditional divide between settled farmers and nomads. Here we found Humes Groundpecker again and Rufous-necked Snowfinch. After the mountain pass, we saw a large piece of grassland and Daotang River (倒淌河) adjacent to it. A highlight of the area is the big statue of Princess Wencheng located in the middle of Daotang He Town (倒淌河鎮). We went further to stay in Gonghe in that evening.

31 July: Gonghe to Maduo

The trip to Gonghe is approximately 400 km, which covered different types of habitat.

We left in the early morning, drove along National Highway 214. Habitat from Gonghe (共和) to Santala (三塔拉) is mainly desert and sparse shrub. We stopped at waymark 193km, to look for sandgrouse, but we found only Plain-backed Snowfinch and Horned Lark.

From Santala to Heka Pass (何卡山口), the altitude rose to 3900m at the mountain pass. White-rumped Snowfinch appeared tame and we got a good chance again for pictures.

After Daheba (大河壩), we had a good view of Er La Shan (鄂拉山) which was covered by snow. The habitat there was mainly tundra swamp with melting snow, but the weather was not so stable, it was rainy and windy near the mountain top. We stopped at the mountain pass (4,700m), some of us turned left to walk towards the flat mountain top for some 500m and got good views of Tibetan Rosefinch, Rufous-necked Snowfinch, Brandt's Mountain Finch and White-capped Redstart.

South of the pass the habitat is mainly grassland with streams flowing along the valley. Further south the scenery was more open, with flocks of domestic goat and yak scattered on the summer pastures. Between



朱鵲

Pink-tailed Bunting

- John Holmes 孔恩義
- Xiangpi Shan, Heimahe, Qinghai
黑馬河 橡皮山, 青海
- 14/8/2007
- DSLR Camera
- Lens: 400mm f4+1.4x



沙鵲 (幼鳥)

Isabelline Wheatear (juvenile)

- Lau Kai Yeung 劉啟揚
- Dong Xia, Qinghai 東峽, 青海
- 30/7/2007
- DSLR Camera
- Lens : 80 - 400 mm f5.6



藏雀

Tibetan Rosefinch

- Jemi Wong 黃亞萍
- Erla Shan, Qinghai
鄂拉山口, 青海
- 31/7/2007
- DSLR Camera
- Lens: 300mm f4+1.4x



鶯嘴鷗

Ibisbill

- Doris Chu 朱詠兒
- Near Yushu, Qinghai
玉樹附近, 青海
- 1/8/2007
- SLR Camera
- Lens: 800mm f5.6 2x
- Film: Fuji Provia 400X



- Lego Ho 何禮高
- Longbao Reserve,
Qinghai
隆寶自然保護區, 青海
- 6/8/2007
- DSLR Camera
- Lens: 600mm f4+1.4x+2x

黑頸鶴

Black-necked Crane



- Elisa Hui 許美如
- Near Jiangxi
Forrest Reserve, Qinghai
江西林場附近, 青海
- 4/8/2007
- DSLR Camera
- Lens: 300mm f4+1.4x

高原山鶉

Tibetan Partridge (family)



白眉朱雀 (雌)

White-browed Rosefinch
(female)


- Lam Chi Wing 林志榮
- Ga'er Lamasery, Qinghai
尕尔寺, 青海
- 3/8/2007
- SLR Camera
- Lens: 300mm f2.8+2x
- Film: Fuji Provia 400



棕草鵯

Koslov's Babax
Tibetan Babax

- Lo Kar Man 盧善孟
- Baizha, Qinghai
白扎林場, 青海
- 4/8/2007
- SLR Camera
- Lens: 500mm f4+2x
- Film: Fuji Provia 400X



Qinghai: A birding trip to the Tang -Tibet Ancient Trail (con't)

Zuimatan (醉馬灘) and Huashixia (花石砭), we had chance to see Tibetan Gazelle and Asiatic Ass; and between Huashixia and Maduo (瑪多), there were also good numbers of Mongolian Gazelle, a single wolf and Black-necked Crane. Here the altitude is 4,400m, and we all got some symptoms of mountain sickness.

Maduo is a place with poor facilities, there were no places to shower or even for meals at the simple guesthouse that we stayed.

1 August: At the source of Yellow River and Yangtze River

We all had symptoms of altitude sickness and didn't sleep well.

After the breakfast at Huanghe Yuan, we continued to travel along National Highway 214 for 330 km from Maduo to Yushu.

Maduo is a Tibetan town near the source of the Yellow River and the northern part of the Bayankala Mountain. Around the town, there are a number of lakes and swamps, the most famous are the Gyaring Lake and Ngoring Lake (扎陵湖-鄂陵湖). This place is also rather humid, thick layers of fog covered the area in the early morning.

We spent some time to look for birds at the "Sea of Stars" (星星海), a breeding ground for Black-necked Crane, Pallas's Gull, Common Merganser, Bar-headed Goose, Great Bustard (which we didn't see), Crested Grebe, Rufous-necked Snowfinch, Hume's Groundpecker and Sand Martin. Most of the places are tundra swamp, without trees and shrubs, and the soil is mostly covered by moss, short grass and tiny plants with thick leaves. The ground of the tundra swamp was covered by water and melted snow which forms a place for breeding insects, as well as being an important food and water source for breeding birds.

After the scarcely populated tundra swamp, we reached one of the highest points of the trip, the Bayankala Pass (巴顏喀拉山口) (4,824m). It is a watershed between the sources of the Yellow River and the Yangtze River. The other side of the mountain is grassland, with flocks of goat, sheep and yak. There were also wolf, fox and jackal waiting there for their meals.

We had a quick lunch at Qingshui He Town (清水河鎮) and continued our southward trip. On a rocky riverbank we found several Ibisbills near Zhewu Town (歇武).

In the early evening we visited a Tibetan lamasery and saw pilgrims walking and praying around the lamasery in a clockwise direction. Near Yushu is the famous Jiegu Lamasery (結古寺) located in the middle part of the mountain.

We stayed at Yushu in the evening and brought some food and necessities for the next few days.

2 August: Yushu to Nanqian

We travelled 170km southwest to Nanqian (囊謙). From the trip report of Hofland (2006), it mentions the location of Tibetan Bunting at Kanda Shan (坎達山), that encouraged us to try our luck.

Our driver told us that there are over 100 monasteries in Yushu, and the most practical way after the death is sky burial which would attract a number of Himalayan Griffon Vultures. At this moment, three vultures perched on a rock adjacent to the car, this gave us a surprise. On the way, we stopped briefly at the rocky desert to look for some birds including Golden Eagle, White-capped Redstart, Chestnut Thrush and Robin Accentor.

After climbing up several mountains (between 3,800 m and 4,300 m), we reached Kanda Shan (坎達山). At waymark 970 km (Kanda Bridge (坎達大橋)), we turned left for 5 km, and then went into the valley namely "Kanrong Xia enclosed area for forest regeneration (坎榮峽封山育林區, 3630m) which leads to Mao Zhuang (毛莊). At the entrance of the valley, there were busy road construction works. We decided to go back to the direction of Nanqian (囊謙) with a long drive ahead to get to Ga'er Lamasery (尕爾寺) before dusk.

At waymark 1024, the car turned left to a trail leading to Beizha forest. A 25km dirt trail led to a flat piece of plateau with a village (Bamai Village 巴麥鄉) and a salt pit at Baizha (白扎鹽場), and at the end of the trail we reached Baizha Forest. Then we travelled further along the river valley for another 20km to reach Ga'er Lamasery.

We learned some simple Tibetan language from our drivers for communication with the monks. Inside the lamasery, there were two foreign teachers teaching English there ("The Hope of Ga'er Lamasery Primary School"), and a traveller from Germany who was staying there for one evening. We learnt from the head of the lamasery that there were altogether 1,500 monks. One of the teachers told us that some of the children wanted to become woodcutters in the future, it seems there was a lack of environmental education there.



We stayed at a big resting room in the lamasery for 2 nights. The most interesting thing was the brightness of the stars at night.

3 August: Birding around Ga'er Lamasery

We didn't sleep well because of the high altitude (above 4000m), but this did not affect our excitement for exploring the place for birds.

Walking near the cliff, along the small lake and streams near the lamasery was quite productive. We got Eurasian Treecreeper, Eagle Owl, White-browed Rosefinch, Beautiful Rosefinch, Common Rosefinch, Lemon-rumped Warbler, Chinese Leaf Warbler, Greenish Warbler and Grey-crested Tit. When it became hot in the afternoon, birds appeared not so active as that in the morning.

The lamasery and living place of monks of Ga'er Lamasery is spread over the upper part of the mountain.

Near the top is the living place of a "Living Buddha" and a nesting place for Lammergeiers. Some members of our party were received by the living buddha and had a chance to take a look at the "prayer wheel" — a gift from Princess Wencheng over 1,000 years ago.

4 August: Baizha Forest Reserve and Jiangxi Forest Reserve

We left Ga'er Lamasery at 6:00am, on the way to Beizha, there was a nesting area of Lammergeiers in the valley. At 8:40, we reached Beizha Forest Reserve and started birding immediately in different directions. Beizha had changed a lot since my 1998 visit. The trees from the stream near the headquarters up to the middle part of the mountain had been felled and replaced by shrubs. Near the top of the mountain there were some remaining pine trees with moss covered stones where there were White-eared Pheasant, Crested Tit Warbler and Grey-crested Tit. Some of us searched at the lower part of the mountain, and saw Tibetan Babax and Blood Pheasant.

After noodles at Nianqian, we took a longer (100km) but flat and stable route to Jiangxi Forest Reserve from Lower Rila Pass (下日拉盤口) near Xiaolaxu (下拉秀), instead of going through the mountain pass at Kanda Shan.

Jiangxi Forest Reserve (3,450m) has similar pine forest habitat to that of Beizha Forest. It has less human disturbance, and is better protected and maintained.

We stayed at the Forest Police station of the forest reserve in the evening. Facilities there were very simple, we needed to bring our own dinner.

5 August: A visit to Tibet

There was heavy rainfall overnight, the muddy road conditions added further difficulties for driving back the 180km to Yushu. Fortunately, staff of the Forest Reserve suggested us to try the new road (Y507) to Tibet in the south, via Batang (巴塘), Boya (博雅), Mianda (面達), back to the north in Qinghai to Xiaosumang (小蘇莽), and back to the highway to Yushu via Gula Pass (格拉山口).

We travelled along the Dzachu River (扎曲) which is the source of Lancang River. There are a good number of birding spots at Jiangxi Forest Reserve. We have chosen to look for birds at the forest area and valleys between the Forest Police Station and Jiujiu Seedbed (吉佳苗圃). At about 3km from the station, there were a pair of White-eared Pheasants with two chicks feeding at the opposite side of the river. This forest is well protected (undeveloped), the pine trees distributed from the river edge to the top of the mountain. However, there were several woodcutters from Xining who were doing small-scale wood collection.

We stopped for a while for taking picture at Batang (苗園 Tibet), then stopped for an hour at Boya to observe a religious activity with the visit of senior monks.

The Dzachu River separates Qinghai and Tibet provinces, its rocky shores are a favourable habitat for Ibisbill. We turned to the north at Mianda. About 60 kms south of Yushu we reached the highest point of the trip — the rocky Gula Pass (4,883m). At this windy mountain, there were two Rufous-necked Snowfinches flying around.

The 160km journey from Jiangxi Forest Reserve to Xiaosumang took us nearly 7 hours, and we reached Yushu in the evening before 8:00. That day was one of the most fruitful days for us, we had chance to reach an undisturbed pine forest, get in touch with local Tibetan people and monks, and travel through the source of Lancang River at Tibet.

6 August 2007: A chance to see sky burial

From Yushu to Qumalai (曲麻萊), the distance is about 230km, the road condition is quite good and we could reach there within 5 hours along the province highway



(S308). That means, we could stay in Yushu for more time.

Before we left the Tang-Tibet Ancient Trail, we visited the Princess Wencheng Temple at 10km near Yushu, had a look at the Buddha built on the cliff when she passed through Balagou (白納溝) a thousand years ago. We then visited the Batang sky burial site (巴塘天葬場). When we reached there, a sky burial was taking place. Human body was cutted into pieces, the bones were hacked or broken into small pieces with heavy stone, and tossed into the feeding area. This attracted over 50 Himalayan Griffon Vultures to feed, and some were flying overhead. For Tibetan people, sky burial has deep religious significance.

After lunch we reached Longbao Black-necked Crane Reserve (隆寶黑頸鶴自然保護區) 80km northwest of Yushu along S308. The reserve is a small lake, where we found breeding Black-necked Crane, Ruddy Shelduck, Ferruginous Duck, Bar-headed Goose and Common Redshank.

We passed the alpine meadow and climbed up to Haxiu Shan Pass (哈秀山亞口) at 4,797m, to the desert steppe. There we reached Qumalai. This is a rural village with simple facilities. Most of the accommodation was fully booked because of a horse race festival. Luckily our drivers helped us to find a place to settle down for that evening.

7 August: Reached the edge of Kekexili

We left Qumalai in the early morning, and went into the so-called "no-people area" and the abandoned old town of Qumalai. We found the Qubu Highway (曲不公路) was under construction. Along the road, we found White-rumped Snowfinch, Saker Falcon, and Himalayan Griffon Vulture.

Near the area of Kekexili (可可西里) after Quma He (曲麻河), there were good numbers of Asiatic Ass, Tibetan Gazelle and Mongolian Gazelle. Our driver told us we might have had a chance to see Tibetan Antelope if the road was not under construction.

It took us about 10 hours to reach Budongquan, including the time for car repairing or tyre replacement.

At the end of the road is the Budongquan Station of the Kekexili Nature Reserve, and Kunlun Shan Pass (昆崙山口). There is a memorial shrine for Sonandajie (索南·達傑), who had served in a volunteer brigade against illegal

poaching of Tibetan Antelope, but died at the hands of poachers. Here is also a place to look for antelope, the Qinghai-Xizang Railway blocks the movement of wild animals but the viaduct provides a corridor for wildlife to go through the area. Around the Kunlun Shan Pass, habitat is mainly tundra swamp and desert steppe, and bird diversity is rather simple.

8 August: Ground-jays at the Golmud desert

We travelled along National Highway 109 from Golmud (格爾木) to Dulan (都蘭) for 330km. Habitat on both sides of the highway is mainly semi-desert. We tried to search the roadside carefully, at waymark 2625 km to 2613 km and 2501 km to 2480 km, there were altogether 18 Mongolian Ground Jays. They used to perch on the sand hills or at other higher areas to look for food including lizard and other insects in the Gobi desert.

On one side of the road is the Kunlun mountain range, with some natural resources including gold mines and copper mines. Having stayed together for about 10 days, our drivers get used to our way and helped us to look for birds. On the way, we saw Pied Wheatear, Isabelline Wheatear, Desert Wheatear, Common Cuckoo and Black Redstart. We stopped at the "oasis" of Lomuhong (諾木洪) to watch birds. We bought some Wolfberry Fruit during lunch hour. There we met an old lady from Guangdong, and learned that she had been in that farmland in the desert for 50 years, originally for a period of "re-education".

Eventually we reached Dulan (都蘭), peopled by Mongolians. The roadsigns shows 3 types of languages: Chinese, Tibetan and Mongolian. This place was once a Kingdom of the famous Tuyuhun (吐谷渾) from the northeast in the Tang Dynasty, but was destroyed after 350 years.

9 August 2007:

A day for endemics in Qaidam Basin

We left Dulan towards Qinghai Hu (青海湖) in the early morning, to look for Great Bustard at the grassland at Xiariha Town (夏日哈鎮). We settled for a Daurian Partridge instead.

Target of the day was Pallas's Sandgrouse and some special endemics. At Chaka Salt Lake, our driver spoke to a local farmer and learnt that Sandgrouse and Great Bustard is more common and active at waterbodies in Chaka in April.



We also followed trip reports from Hoffland (2006) and Wagner (2005) and stopped at waymark 2238 km. We walked into the desert for 500m and a Pallas's Sandgrouse was found. This encouraged us to walk further for about 1km but there was no new discovery. On our way back, we saw another 3 sandgrouse.

We had a quick lunch at Dashiuiqiao (大水溝) and then straight to waymark 2189.5 km (3,400m) after Xiangpi Shan Pass (橡皮山口 / Rubber Mountain Pass). At the waymark there was a large wall painted with big red Chinese characters. On the opposite side was a small mountain valley. We walked there for about 2 km, and found three Chinese endemics: White-browed Tit, Pink-tailed Bunting, and Ala Shan Redstart. Also present were Red-breasted Rosefinch, Streaked Rosefinch, Lammergeier and Tickell's Leaf Warbler.

At the evening, we looked for waterbirds at the western side of Qinghai Hu. There were over 3,000 Red-crested Pochard, Bar-headed Goose, Crested Grebe, Mongolian Plover, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Rufous-necked Stint, Pallas's Gull and Brown-headed Gull.

10 August: Waterbirds on Qinghai Hu

Like most visitors, we purchased entry tickets at the Niao Dao Hotel (RMB 60/person) for Qinghai National Nature Reserve. Inside, we took the shuttle bus to the breeding site of Great Cormorant, Brown-headed Gull and Pallas's Gull. After leaving bird island, we took a short visit to the Wild Animal Rescue Centre, and had a chance to see Przewalski's Gazelle, Tibetan Antelope and Tibetan Gazelle.

Later on we went to the eastern side of the lake and had good sightings of breeding Black-necked Crane, Whooper Swan, Black-necked Grebe and Coot.

11 August 2007: Xining - Ta'er Monastery

We spent our morning at Ta'er Monastery (Kumbum Monastery) (塔爾寺) 25 km from Xining. This is the religious activity centre of both monks and followers of the yellow hat sect (Gelugga sect) of a branch of Tibetan Buddhism. The Ta'er Monastery is a group of fine buildings in a combination of both the Han and Tibetan styles of architecture on the mountain slopes.

We went back to Xining for shopping in the market or bookstores. In the evening, most of us took the flight back to Guangzhou.

A short note...

We travelled a total of 3,400km in Qinghai and Tibet. About half of the trip (from Xining to Nianqian) covered the Tang-Tibet Ancient Trail. A total of 155 bird species were recorded from a variety of habitats including pine forests, lakes, rivers and streams, cliffs, grassland, mountain steppe, tundra swamp as well as desert.

Apart from watching birds, the trip also brought us lots of chances of visiting places that haven't been reached by birdwatchers, including undisturbed pine forest, and experience the life of Tibetan people.

Special thanks to Prof. Li Laixing of Northwest Plateau Institute of Biology Site, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (lee58@msn.com). Prof. Li spent a whole evening to provide us valuable information on habitat conditions, potential areas for bird surveys, as well as to help us to fix our birding route. Although he didn't join us for the trip because of other commitments, his experience was indeed valuable to us. We also give thanks to our drivers, Mr. Pang Xiangdong, Mr. Guan Wentao and Mr. Zhang Pinghong, who worked hard to give us support communicating with local people and with looking for accommodation.

Thanks to Mr. Anthony Lo for coordinating the trip, Mr. C.W. Lam to arrange the air-tickets and transportation and to birding companions Doris Chu, Jemi and John Holmes, Elisa Hui, Lego Ho and K.Y. Lau.

References:

- George Wagner. 2005. Tibet (Xizang and Qinghai Provinces) - China, 29 May-27 June 2005. Internet trip report.
Remco Hoffland (2006). Qinghai and Xizang (Tibet), with W Sichuan, China, July 16-August 14, 2006. Internet trip report.

Birding Huanggang Shan, Jiangxi Province

- by John Holmes

At 2158m, Huanggang Shan is the highest peak of the area known as Wuyi Shan, which straddles the northern parts of the boundary between Fujian and Jiangxi Provinces. There is a map of the area in Tim Woodward's comprehensive "Birding South-east China".

Joint HKBWS/WWF HK visits (led by Clive Viney and Mary Ho Tung Ketterer) were made to Wuyi Shan in June and November 1986. As a newish birder in those days I went along on the November 1986 trip. We sailed from HK to Xiamen, then got an overnight train inland to the northwest of Fujian.

Our up-to-date literature included "Birds of China" by Rodolphe Meyer de Schauensee, a 1976 Chinese edition of CHENG Tso-hsin's synopsis (Maps are maps and bird names in latin) and - in French- two volumes of "Les Oiseaux de Chine" by Etchecopar and Hue. Stewart Smith took these; - my French ends at "Nidification: inconnu." Ben King's "Birds of South East Asia" was by far the most practical guide.



Hosted "officially", we stayed at the very rustic Wuyi Reserve HQs. We birded the Guadun area where LaTouche had done some of his research in the 1920s and Pere Armand David had lived half a century earlier.

The unpaved road north from Wuyi HQs led to a pass on the Jiangxi border where we turned right towards the summit of Huanggang Shan, 15kms further on. The highlight of the trip for me was a brief view of a female Cabot's Tragopan below the road, but I never saw a male. A female pheasant is really only half a "tick" so Cabot's Tragopan remained unfinished business for me.

These days Wuyi Shan has an airport and there are direct flights from Hong Kong and Shenzhen. There are many hotels, but the touristy scenic area is a long way from the best birding areas in the nature reserve itself.

In 2001 Chris Campion and Graham Talbot braved Wuyi to bird the Huanggang Shan road. Their trip report is online at http://www.surfbirds.com/trip_report.php?id=292

In the last few years an ex-hunting resident of Jiangxi's capital, Nanchang, Mr LIN Jian-sheng, has established himself as a specialist birding guide and driver. His mobile phone number is 13807001872 (He doesn't speak English, unfortunately.) Many new mainland birders and some Hong Kong groups have used his services. He knows what birders want, and expects to get up early. In September this year, Jemi and I spent a week birding on Huanggang Shan with Ruy and Karen Barretto, led by Mr LIN, who had sorted out the appropriate Nature Reserve permissions on the Jiangxi side.

We spent five nights at Reserve HQs (in Jiangxi) and four-and-a-half days driving along the track to the top of the mountain. A nostalgic drive into Fujian Province was, apparently, out of the question for we foreigners; - a dispute between provincial officials was blamed.

Things change quickly in China, so I was worried the route to the summit

would be unrecognisable. Luckily, once we got past the Wuyi turnoff the track was much as I remembered it.



It had been raining and Mr LIN predicted correctly that wet undergrowth would cause the pheasants to come out onto the road. Our first two birds were females, but the third, scuttling along the track in front of us, was a fine adult male, allowing me to complete my Cabot's "tick" after a mere 21 years!

Birding from Mr LIN's van at dawn and dusk every day we eventually saw more than a dozen Cabot's Tragopans on the road including five superb males. Bonus birds included Elliot's Pheasant and Buffy Laughingthrush. We had 116 species for the trip, including those in the lowlands we drove through from Nanchang. A further advantage of the Jiangxi side is that Wuyuan, home of the Blue-crowned Laughingthrush and Pied Falconet is only a day's drive away, and a winter visit can include the cranes and waterfowl at Poyang Lake. At least one British tour company is already combining Poyang and Huanggang Shan in late autumn.

Hiring Mr LIN is not cheap, but it's much easier to make use of his expertise than to try to sort it all out yourself in the face of official indifference and *non-specialist* local travel agents. (And I've not been promised discount on my next trip for the free mention, honestly!)



1. De-silting works

Members will be familiar with the fact that many of the *gei wai* at Mai Po are suffering from siltation due to the mud that is brought into the pond each time that water is exchanged with that in Deep Bay. If this silt is not removed, then the reserve will slowly turn into dry land. As a result, this silt has to be removed so that we can keep the pond wet and maintain the reserve as a wetland. This summer, we will be dredging out the perimeters channels in *gei wai* 23 (at the southern end of the reserve), and the cross channels that run through the large reedbed at the back of the pond. The work of clearing out the cross channels will be especially interesting because it will increase the length of edge in the reedbed which should make the site more attractive for bitterns, egrets and herons. WWF will be monitoring the results of these works to see if the number of these birds will increase afterwards.

Another pond which we will be de-silting is Pond 17b, at the back of the Education Centre. Work to remove the reeds and grasses began in July. This project will be completed by the end of October before the return of the wintering birds. The money for carrying out this work came from the funds raised through this year's Big Bird Race.

2. Improved ventilation in the Tower Hide and Hide 1

In recent years, we have received a number of comments from visitors that the birdwatching hides at Mai Po are hot and uncomfortable during the summertime. As a result, we have set aside another sum of money from this year's Big Bird Race to improve the ventilation in the Tower Hide and Hide 1. This will be done by putting small windows in low down at the back of these two hides, similar to those in Hide 8 (the hide beside *Gei wai* 11).

This work will be carried out this summer and we would like to apologise in advance for any inconvenience to visitors.

3. New boardwalk and floating hide

All the necessary permissions, permits and land licenses from the Hong Kong Government has finally been obtained and work on the boardwalk extension and new floating hide began in early July.

The project will involve building a 600 meter long fixed boardwalk as an extension to the existing floating boardwalk outside the Closed Area Fence at Mai Po, and will run through the inter-tidal mangroves to a new floating hide that will have a capacity for some 30 people. The boardwalk will be built by WWF field staff based at Mai Po.

On the other hand, the floating hide is being built by the same contractor who built the previous hide at a dockyard in Ap Lei Chau. On completion of the hide in early October, a tug boat company called Hong Kong Salvage and Towage will voluntarily help to tow the hide (very gently!), to the mouth of Outer Deep Bay where the Marine Police will pick up the hide, and tow it through the shallow waters to be temporarily moored at Tsim Bei Tsui. Then on one of the evening at the end of October, the Marine Police again will use their motorized rubber dinghies and again volunteer their services to tow the hide to its final resting position at the end of the new boardwalk.

As the new hide is a floating structure, there need to be concrete anchors placed around the hide to which the hide will be moored by metal chains. These anchors weigh some two tonnes each and will be built at the southern helicopter pad at Mai Po from where the helicopters of the Government Flying Service will hoist them out to the mudflat and place them in the right positions before the hide arrives.

As you can see, many government departments and private companies will be kindly donating their services to the project. Then the bulk of the money for the project has come from an anonymous donor whilst contributions also came from Cheung Kong (Holdings) Ltd., and from the funds raised through WWF's annual Big Bird Race.

4. Enquiries about the new Boardwalk extension and Floating Hide

By the time you read this, we hope to have started work on the new boardwalk extension and floating hide outside the Closed Area Fence. Please feel free to talk to any of the staff about the progress of this exciting project.

For comments about any other works that are being carried out at Mai Po, please contact us by telephone (2471-6306) or by e-mail (yjyoung@wwf.org.hk).

New highway **SMASHES** through Wuyuan in Jiangxi

There is sad news from Wuyuan County in Jiangxi, where a new four-lane highway is nearing completion. This highway runs for more than thirty kilometres through the valley which holds the world's entire breeding population of the critically endangered Blue-crowned Laughingthrush (recently split from the Yellow-throated Laughingthrush of Burma and India), important numbers of wintering Chinese Merganser (Endangered) and several pairs of Pied Falconet - another very rare bird in China.

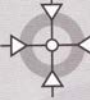
It appears that the highway has not directly impacted three of the known breeding sites of the laughingthrush, which were visited on a short visit in late May, but lies within 500m of all of them. More disturbing is that the highway has been built right through a village with large *fung shui* trees where Pied Falconet bred successfully.

This development is made more depressing by the fact that Wuyuan is marketing itself as one of the most beautiful counties in China. It certainly was before, but the addition of the highway has undoubtedly tarnished this beauty, and Wuyuan is sadly beginning to look like many parts of rural China that have been degraded in the name of economic development.

Also of potential concern is the increasing number of weirs that have been built along the river along which the laughingthrushes breed and where up to 50 Chinese Mergansers have wintered. While the impact of this is not yet clear, the fact that a once fast-running and rather shallow river with banks of pebbles has become a series of deep, still stretches of water. This must be having an influence on the ecology of the river. Although the visit in May was very brief no sign could be found of breeding Mandarin or Long-billed Plovers at old sites.

While both the laughingthrush and the falconet were seen at known breeding sites on this recent visit, and other important species such as Black Eagle and Swinhoe's Minivet were also seen, visiting Wuyuan is no longer the enchanting experience it once was. It is greatly to be hoped that any future development plans are considered with a view to preserving the beauty and birds of this important site.





Bird survey in Linan County, Zhejiang (plus 3 twitches for SE China specialities)

1-7 October 2006 and 6-16 May 2007

By Mike Kilburn

From 1-7 October and 6-16 May I assisted in a Zhejiang University survey of the birds of Linan County followed (in May) by flying post-survey visits to Thousand Islands Lake to look for White-eared Night Heron and Wuyuan in NW Jiangxi for Brown Wood Owl, Blue-crowned Laughingthrush (as Yellow-throated Laughingthrush is now called) and Pied Falconet. A pre-survey visit was made to Dongtan NNR near Shanghai to search for Reed Parrotbills before the first survey.

The Linan Survey

As with many systematic surveys a good deal of time was spent in rather unproductive habitats, so this short report will only include an overview of species seen plus highlights rather than a blow-by-blow account. The survey is itself of great significance as the first time I have heard of a municipal authority in China (Hangzhou) paying for a baseline ornithological assessment of the counties under its control. If such a survey could be rolled out across China, a huge amount of data could be collected.

Linan County

With the exception of Linan City in the eastern corner, Linan County is distinctly rural. It is dotted by low steep hills covered usually in regenerating shrubs and conifers, and with extensive stands of commercial bamboo plantations. Agriculture is dominated by rapeseed, rice and bizarrely many fields are given over to bamboo - I think for harvesting of bamboo shoots (for which Linan is apparently famous). Rivers run mainly north to south and flow into two larger rivers that run west to east in the centre of the county.

The north and west are greatly enhanced by Tianmu Shan National Nature Reserve - a world heritage site famous for its huge ginkgo trees, and several less well-known sites in the west rising to about 1800 metres. These include Damingshan and Longtan Shan.

Survey Summary

This survey was a much more enjoyable follow-up to a rather quiet initial survey in October last year. With spring migration still apparent and good numbers of birds already breeding, there was greater diversity of birds and much more reward for covering lots of rather similar and previously unproductive habitat.

Resident species here include **Little Grebe**, **Great, Little, Intermediate** and **Cattle Egrets**, **Chinese Pond Heron** and **Black-crowned Night Heron**. Typical raptors are **Besra**, **Crested Goshawk** and **Crested Serpent Eagle**.

The spectacular **White-crowned Forktail**, **Blue Whistling Thrush**, **Plumbeous Redstart**, **Grey Wagtail** and **Brown Dipper**, **Common, Crested** and **Pied Kingfishers** are found along many of the rivers. **Striated Heron** was also noted on a few occasions.

Typical farmland/bamboo/regenerating shrubland species included **Chinese Bamboo Partridge** and **Common Pheasant**, **White-breasted Waterhen**, **Chinese, Brown-breasted, Black, Mountain** and **Chestnut Bulbuls** and the closely related **Collared Finchbill**. Other common residents included **Spotted Dove**, **Oriental Turtle Dove**, **White Wagtail**, **Chinese Blackbird**, **Oriental Magpie Robin**, **Rufous-capped Babbler**, **Streak-breasted** and **Spot-breasted Scimitar Babblers**, **Hwamei**, **Masked, Greater Necklaced**, and **Moustached Laughingthrush**, **Crested Myna**, **Long-tailed Shrike**. **Red-billed Blue Magpie** is widespread, while **Grey Treepie** is scarcer and was generally found higher up, or in more mature



woodlands. **Jay** was scarcer still. Common smaller passerines included **Rufous-faced Warbler** (aka "Telephone Bird" due to its call), Great and **Black-throated Tit**, **Vinous-throated Parrotbill** and **Tree Sparrow**.

Typical summer visitors included **Black Baza**, **Chinese Goshawk** and **Dollarbird**, all of which were seen daily, **Barn** and **Red-rumped Swallows** (with **Asian House Martins** at a number of upland sites), **Black-capped** and **White-breasted Kingfishers**, while **Large Hawk**, **Chestnut-winged**, **Indian Cuckoo** and **Koel** were unsurprisingly heard more often than they were seen. **Black** and **Ashy Drongos** could have been either migrants or summer visitors. In the higher and better quality woodland **Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush** (including my personal bird of the trip - a superbly marked female carrying food) and wing-lifting **Blyth's Leaf Warblers** were obviously breeding birds.

A number of birds that I assume are residents were either much commoner or simply more visible in the spring. These included **Barred Owlet**, **Silky Starling**, **Russet Sparrow**, **Plain Prinia**, **Hair-crested Drongo**, **Grey-cheeked Fulvetta**, **Mountain Bush Warbler**, and **Grey-capped Greenfinch**.

Genuine migrants included **Common Greenshank**, **Green and Common Sandpiper** (including, bizarrely, three on an artificial lake 1000 metres up Daming Shan), **Gallinago snipe sp.**, **Olive-backed Pipit**, **Lanceolated, Arctic**, **Yellow-browed**, **Pale-legged Leaf**, **Eastern Crowned**, and **Black-browed Reed Warblers**, **Asian Brown**, **Grey-streaked** and **Mugimaki Flycatchers**, **Yellow-breasted**, **Yellow-Browed**, **Chestnut** and **Little Buntings**, and good numbers of **Brown Shrike**.

Thousand Islands Lake

Despite having a location for a nest discovered by researchers in April, we failed to see any **White-eared Night Herons**, but did, very sadly, find an abandoned nest with egg shells and the skeletons of two chicks, which I estimate to have been about two weeks old. A major disappointment. A pair of **Chinese Spotbills**,

a **Silver Pheasant** feather and a small flock of **fokiensis Pale Martins** offered little in the way of compensation.

Highlights of the survey

Asian Black Eagle. Noted at one site in the west of Linan. Presumed resident whose known range is expanding in SE China due to wider coverage of suitable habitats.

Mountain Hawk Eagle. Noted in two transects. Scarce resident.

Brown Crake. Seen on small streams in three or four transects.

Long-billed Plover. Three birds were noted on a stony river degraded by gravel extraction during the October survey.

Collared Owlet. Heard on a couple of occasions on both surveys.

Ashy Minivet. A flock of about ten, with two **Swinhoe's** at Daming Shan in October.

Swinhoe's Minivet. This endemic breeding species was found breeding at a number of sites, mostly in roadside trees near villages (and in similar habitat to those in Wuyuan).

Rufous-tailed Robin. Heard singing at two sites in May.

Blue Rock Thrush. One seen, distantly, atop a transmission tower.

Dusky Thrush. One seen south of Linan City on May 8th. A rather late migrant.

Chestnut-crowned Warbler. Three or four responded well to pushing at Daming Shan.

Chinese Leaf Warbler. One seen by George Ho in May.

Striated Yuhina. A flock seen in the western foothills of Tian Mu Shan was very close to the north-easternmost limit of this species' range.



Pygmy Wren-babbler. One singing at Damingshan was also close to its northern limit.

Short-tailed Parrotbill. Substantially north of its known range. Found in at least six transects in groups of one to six birds, in the east and centre of the county. Previous E China records are from mountain reserves including Wuyi Shan in Fujian (where the type specimen was taken by Père David) and Ba Bao Shan in N Guangdong. Most records came from regenerating scrub/farmland edge, and bamboo plantations. About half the records were of birds associating with Vinous-throated Parrotbill flocks.

Rusty Laughingthrush. Four birds at approx 1000m on Damingshan and four birds seen at another site were likely this species.

Yellow-bellied Tit. Noted on one occasion on both October and May surveys.

Bull-headed Shrike. One seen by John Holmes during the October count.

Daurian Starling. A small flock seen by John Holmes during the October count.

Crested Bunting. A female on upland paddy in the far west of Linan on one date in May.

Finally, warmest thanks are due to Chris Wood of Zhejiang University for organizing the survey and driving me to Wuyuan and Thousand Islands Lake, to John Holmes and George Ho from HKBWS who joined me in October and May respectively, and from Zhejiang University, Xiao Li, Xiao Huang and Xiao Jiang, and Mr Li and to Todd Wood who participated in the May survey.

Wuyuan

After a four-hour drive from Hangzhou with my non-birding mate Chris we arrived at Jiang Wan in the East of Wuyuan County, and found in the dark a hotel that turned out to overlook a lovely stretch of river and farmland. Highlights here included **Chinese Goshawk**, **Hobby**, **White-throated**, **Black-capped** and **Common Kingfishers**, a fall of **Brown Shrikes**, plus **Silky** and

Black-necked Starlings, **Chinese Blackbird**, **Oriental Magpie Robin**, **Plumbeous Redstart**, **Grey** and **White Wagtails**, the piercing song of **Mountain Bush Warbler**, a couple of **White-winged Terns** hawking along the edges of the river and brief views of **Yellow** and **Black Bitterns**.

I dipped on the Brown Wood Owl at Shaoqi in Wuyuan, possibly owing to the poor weather. However, both **Black Eagle** and **Pied Falconet** were simultaneously in view at one point. Other birds here included a **Striated Prinia** - a rare bird in China, three **Barred Owlets** and a couple of **Great Barbets**, and the delightful sight of a flock of 25 **Silky Starlings** following an old man ploughing his fields behind a Water Buffalo.

We found about 10 **Blue-crowned Laughingthrush** in one of the traditional breeding sites near Wuyuan City, along with a fine supporting cast of **Swinhoe's Minivet**, **Ashy** and **Hair-crested Drongo**, **Jay** and **Black-naped Oriole**. We just spent a few minutes here and were not able to find Mandarin, but it's likely they're still present.

However, more disturbing than the lost WENH chicks was the new highway through a key valley for the laughingthrush. Wuyuan used to stand out in China for the beauty of its scenery, but this highway is a major blight. It has even smashed straight through the village where a pair of Pied Falconet raised three chicks a few years ago.

Japanese Marsh Warbler breeding at Poyang

Another piece of interesting news was hearing about the first breeding record of Japanese Marsh Warblers at Poyang. A friend (Mr Lin) I called to get directions to the owl was watching the first nest of this species - complete with three chicks - to be found in Central China as he spoke to me! It may be that birds have given up trying to breed on their traditional Manchurian breeding grounds following several years of drought, and are trying out the potential of their wintering grounds.

Reed Parrotbills at Dongtan NNR, Chongming, Shanghai

Taking advantage of the fact that we travelled to Hangzhou via Shanghai, John Holmes and I made a lightning twitch to Dongtan for Reed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis heudi*, found only in reedbed habitats in Eastern China, Mongolia and Ussuriland in eastern Russia. It has been recorded from Liaoning, Hebei, Tianjin, Shandong, Jiangsu, Shanghai. There are also recent records from up the Yangzi at Nanjing, and south to Hangzhou Bay in Zhejiang. Dongtan is probably the most reliable and accessible place to see this species.

The inland records from Inner Mongolia and Heilongjiang and Ussuriland (Siberia) and Mongolia and refer to the subspecies *poliovanus*, which may well be a full species, and possibly a seriously threatened one, owing to the several years of drought that have had such an impact on the wetlands of Manchuria.

Logistically our twitch worked very well:

- Through train: Hong Kong-Shanghai (\$1039/psn in 2 bed cabin) arr: 1530 (25hrs)
- Taxi to Bao Yang Pier from underground taxi rank (1 hour, CNY 83)
- Ferry to Chongming Island (80 minutes, 30 minute boats also available)
- Taxi 40 mins to Dongtan town Inn (CNY65) arriving after dark.
- Dongtan Inn is basic (shared washing facilities), but clean: (CNY70 per night)
- Local minibus taxi - CNY20 each way from the reserve entrance
- A permit is required to walk into the reedbeds beyond the bund (not obtained, and no need to do so to see the parrotbills)

We were greatly helped in these arrangements by Professor Ma, Ms Gan Xiaojing and Jimmy Choi of Fudan University, which has a research station in Dongtan. On the morning of our visit we were met at

6am by Ms Gan with local van driver, Mr Yin, and arrived at the reserve about ten minutes later.

There was lots of noise coming from the reeds and we immediately heard several Reed Parrotbills singing, but it was 30-40 minutes before we found one singing from the top of a reed stem about 50m away. It looks superficially similar to Grey-headed Parrotbill - grey head, strong black supercilium, large dark eye, but with a bigger, stronger-looking yellow bill. This individual showed rufous flanks, meeting on the lower belly, while the rest of the underparts, from chin to undertail, was a light buffy-white. The back and wings were a rich chestnut brown, contrasting strongly with the grey head. The tail was also longer, slimmer and darker than Grey-headed Parrotbill.

Later we saw a group of scruffy, straggle-tailed juveniles staggering clumsily about a nearby stand of reeds, taking short, unconvincing flights on desperately whirring wings. John also saw another individual land on top of a reed, and immediately slide down it as if it were a fireman's pole.

Other birds of interest in the reeds included a showy male Siberian Rubythroat, Oriental Reed Warbler, several flatulent-sounding Water Rails, several Long-tailed and a single Brown Shrike and a couple of Dusky Warblers. A flock of about 200 Barn Swallows and a Sand Martin went south, while other obvious migrants included a Wryneck, 20 Black-winged Stilts and a group of unidentified marsh terns. As we had to be in Hangzhou by the end of the day we were finished by 0630 and caught the 0915 ferry back to Shanghai.



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

February 07

Among rarities which had been found earlier in the winter, the following continued to be reported in this month: two Lesser White-fronted Geese at Lok Ma Chau (and occasionally Mai Po), a Bull-headed Shrike at Tai Po Kau, a Speckled Piculet, Sulphur-breasted Warbler and White-throated Fantail at Ng Tung Chai, and a Lesser Tree Duck, Ferruginous Duck, Carrion Crow and Daurian Jackdaw, all at Mai Po.

It continued to be a good winter for thrushes, with Grey-backed and Japanese being fairly widespread in this month and Brown-headed and Dusky regularly sighted at Airfield Road (Sek Kong) and Long Valley and occasionally elsewhere, whilst there were two Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrushes once again at Kadoorie FBG.

Single Asian Paradise Flycatchers, the first in winter for a number of years, were found at three different localities - Kam Tin, Ping Long (near Ng Tung Chai) and Tai Po Kau.

These apart, highlights of the first week of the month were a Northern Lapwing, a Common Reed Bunting and five Bull-bellied Plovers at Mai Po (BS, P.JL) and a Goodson's Leaf Warbler, "Blyth's Leaf Warbler"-type and unidentified Spectacled Warbler at Ho Chung (MT). In the second week, an arrival of Black Bulbuls was noted, with up to 15 at Tai Po Kau Head and, Tai Po Kau and Ng Tung Chai (RB, EMSK), and there were reports of a Chestnut-crowned

Warbler at Ping Long (EMSK), an Ancient Murrelet at Sai Kung, single Slaty-backed and Kamchatka Gulls from the boardwalk (MLC), a Ruddy Crake at Pui O (PS), a drake Baikal Teal at Mai Po (KL) and a record count of 8000 Pied Avocets in Deep Bay (YYT). The third and fourth weeks brought reports of up to six Common Rosefinches at Mong Tseng, Kam Tin and Airfield Road (MLC, JAA, EMSK). Rare wintering warblers in the form of a Paddyfield Warbler and a Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler were found at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau, respectively (P.JL). On 21st, there were reports of a White-spectacled Warbler at Ng Tung Chai (KPK) and the first Pale Martins Riparia (diluta) fohkienensis of the year at Mai Po. As the month ended, a Japanese Grosbeak and Black-naped Oriole were found at Ng Tung Chai (EMSK), the latter also being seen in the first few days of March.

March 07

The two Lesser White-fronted Geese, the major birds of the winter, were regularly reported at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau up to 28th, having spent almost five months in the Deep Bay area. Other rarities which continued to be reported in this month were the Bull-headed Shrike at Tai Po Kau (up to 24th), the Speckled Piculet at Ng Tung Chai and the Lesser Tree Duck, Carrion Crow and Daurian Jackdaw at Mai Po, the latter three species all remaining into April. A good variety of thrushes were reported throughout the month, most notably at Airfield Road.

A Russet Bush Warbler found at Po

Toi on 5th (GW) may have been a migrant, but unequivocal signs of spring migration were noted in the Mai Po-Lok Ma Chau area on 6th when 50 Asian House Martins were present. The arrival of a Ruddy Turnstone, a Nordmann's Greenshank and 10 Curlew Sandpipers at Mai Po on 12th was the first clear sign of shorebird passage there. Only a rather weak gull passage, however, was detected in Deep Bay.

A single Grey-faced Buzzard at Lin Ma Hang on 14th (JAA) was followed by ten more at Po Toi the next day, when two Silver-backed Needletails were also seen (GW), whilst a Ferruginous Flycatcher at Ng Tung Chai on 20th (EMSK) was the first sign of spring flycatcher passage.

Sea-watching from Po Toi and from boats in nearby waters led to sightings of one Streaked Shearwater, up to five Ancient Murrelets, 94 Heuglin's Gulls and up to 10 Pomarine Skuas, all during 10th-18th, and two Streaked Shearwaters, two Ancient Murrelets, two Pomarine and three Long-tailed Skuas on 26th (YYT, GT).

In Tai Po Kau, an Asian Paradise Flycatcher, presumably the individual found in February, was reported on 17th and a Mrs Gould's Sunbird was present during 19th-23rd (MRL). Numbers of Black Bulbuls reached a peak of about 30 at this time.

Up to four Bright-capped Cisticolas were present in the Lin Ma Hang-Ta Kwu Ling area on 14th and 22nd (JAA) and a Brown Bush Warbler was heard at Sha Lo Tung on 20th and 24th (KB). A Forest Wagtail was seen at Cheung



Chau on 21st and 22nd (MDW). A report of a singing Eastern Crowned Warbler, at Ng Tung Chai on 25th (EMSK), was unusual.

In the last few days of the month, flycatchers became fairly widespread and there were sightings of a Daurian Starling at Po Toi on 27th (GW), an unusual spring record, single Ashy Minivets at Po Toi and Cheung Chau, a flock of 14 Oriental Pratincoles beside the Mai Po access road, and 50 unidentified grey minivets (Ashy and/or Swinhoe's) and 200 Chestnut Bulbuls at Tai Po Kau Headland on 31st (RB).

April 07

Whilst not being a classic, this was a month of sustained interest with two potential firsts (Common Cuckoo and Red-breasted Flycatcher, both at Po Toi) and a good passage of shorebirds in Deep Bay marked by record numbers of Curlew Sandpipers.

The month opened with a series of reports from the central NT, including 205 Chestnut Bulbuls at Tai Po Kau Headland on 1st (KB), a new high count, single Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoos singing at Ng Tung Chai and Tai Po Kau, also on 1st (EMSK, RWL), a first-summer male Ultramarine Flycatcher at Kadoorie Farm on 3rd (RWL), possibly the individual photographed there in early January, and single Mugimaki, Ferruginous, Narcissus, Hainan Blue, Asian Brown and Asian Paradise Flycatchers, a good variety, all at Tai Po Kau on 3rd (KPK), with 30 Black Bulbuls there the next day (MDW). A smattering of thrushes were found, mainly at Ng Tung Chai, including a

Japanese and two Pale Thrushes on 8th (EMSK). Visits to Tai Mo Shan on 13th-14th turned up two Upland Piptits, a Blue Rock Thrush, a Large Grass Warbler, two singing Russet Bush Warblers and four singing Brownish-flanked Bush Warblers. A Crested Honey Buzzard was noted at Tai Po Kau Headland on 14th (MLC).

Mai Po and Po Toi, however, were the two sites generating most interest. Throughout the first half of the month the fishponds beside the Mai Po access road attracted up to 22 Oriental Pratincoles and good numbers of House Swifts and hirundines including up to 50 Pale Martins *lokienensis* on 3rd (PJL). An Oriental Plover was briefly present on one drained pond on 7th (EMSK). Among shorebirds noted on the reserve or from the boardwalk at this time were Bar-tailed Godwits in record spring numbers, with 94 on 4th rising to 114 on 9th, and very good numbers of Nordmann's Greenshanks, the peak count being 46 on 9th. Numbers of Curlew Sandpipers, in contrast, were much lower than usual until a record influx later in the month. An odd "rufous-morph" Kentish Plover was noted from 6th (PRK). The first Spoon-billed Sandpiper of the year was found on 10th and at least five were present on 13th, when there were also seven Asian Dowitchers. The over-wintering Lesser Tree Duck, Daurian Jackdaw and Carrion Crow all remained into the first week or longer. The first Swinhoe's Egrets of the year were noted on 9th and a rather late Ruddy Shelduck was found on 14th (PRK), remaining until at least 25th. A Brambling was present on 15th, the day after one was found at Kam Tin. Elsewhere in the Deep Bay

area, there were reports of single Chestnut-eared Buntings at Lok Ma Chau, Long Valley and near Mai Po during 3rd-10th, a Ruddy Crake at Long Valley on 5th and 9th, 15 Ashy Minivets at Lok Ma Chau on 8th and 28 Grey-faced Buzzards and a Daurian Starling at Ma Tso Lung, also on 8th.

Po Toi, which has proved to be a magnet for rarities in recent years, hosted two potential Hong Kong firsts in the space of four days - a Common Cuckoo photographed on 4th (GW) and a Red-breasted Flycatcher photographed on 7th (P&MW) and also present on 11th. The island also attracted a wide variety of flycatchers during 3rd-11th including up to three Narcissus, three Ferruginous and 12 Blue-and-white Flycatchers. Among other reports from this island and nearby waters in the first half of the month were a Streaked Shearwater, up to 27 Grey-faced Buzzards, five Chinese Goshawks, two Great Crested Terns, four Aleutian Terns, three Long-tailed Skuas, a possible Asian Lesser Cuckoo, single Northern Boobooks (almost daily), a very early Dollarbird (on 3rd), two Swinhoe's Minivets, 21 Ashy Minivets, a Pechora Pipit, a Siberian Blue Robin, a rather late White's Thrush (on 15th), a Dusky Thrush, a Two-barred Greenish Warbler, single Chestnut-cheeked Starlings (on 3rd and 10th) and up to two Japanese Yellow Buntings (GW, YYT, GJC, P&MW, etc).

Coverage of other islands also turned up records of interest. Highlights at Dong Ping Chau were a Himalayan Swiftlet on 5th (JAA), 30 Ashy and three Swinhoe's Minivets on 6th (CM), a Slaty-legged Crake, five Swinhoe's



Minivets, seven Red-tailed Robins, a Black-naped Monarch and four Blue-and-white and two Narcissus Flycatchers, all on 7th (JAA). Passage of Ashy Minivets was noted at Lamma from 5th to 9th with a peak of 31 on the first date (GS), whilst an Indian Cuckoo at Cheung Chau on 9th was the first of the year (MDW).

Elsewhere during the first half of the month, there were reports of a Narcissus Flycatcher at Ap Lei Chau on 5th (DS), four Blue-tailed Bee-eaters at Clearwater Bay on 7th-8th (AH), a rather late Chinese Blackbird at Mui Wo on 10th (PA) and a variety of shorebirds at Shui Hau (Lantau) on 14th including a Grey-headed Lapwing, a Ruddy Turnstone and a Grey-tailed Tattler (PS).

Mai Po was a little quieter in the second half of the month, though a Drongo Cuckoo on 16th (JAA) was a nice surprise and a count of 10,982 Curlew Sandpipers on 17th (YYT), a record by almost 5000 birds, was all the more unexpected in view of the relatively low numbers earlier in the month. Other notable reports included up to four Spoon-billed Sandpipers during 17th-29th, single Pied Harriers on 17th and 23rd, up to 16 Blue-tailed Bee-eaters during 16th-26th (BS, KL, MH), a total of 75 Black-faced Spoonbills on 23rd, a good number for the time of year, and 24 Little Terns on 30th. Elsewhere in the Deep Bay area, 20 Long-toed and two Temminck's Stints were at Fung Lok Wai on 20th and, in a poor spring for Black Bazas, two were seen at Ta Kwu Ling on 26th and one at Kam Tin on 27th.

The recent run of rare cuckoo

sightings at Po Toi continued with a Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo on 16th and a Drongo Cuckoo on 19th. As an indication of the range of spring migrants occurring on the island in the second half of April, birds seen on the island or flying by during 19th-25th included a Malayan Night Heron, three Chinese Goshawks, a Japanese Sparrowhawk, two Grey-faced Buzzards, two Northern Boobys, an Arctic Skua, five Pomarine Skuas, two Great Crested Terns, 21 Aleutian Terns, an Eyebrowed Thrush, a Grey-streaked Flycatcher, a Ferruginous Flycatcher, two Blue-and-white Flycatchers, a Daurian Starling, two Tristram's Buntlings and two Black-naped Orioles (GW, KJ et al). The Ferruginous Flycatcher was also present on 26th, making it the latest ever in spring by 10 days. Four fly-by Short-tailed Shearwaters were seen on 30th (GW).

The greatest rarity reported from other islands was an adult male Christmas Island Frigatebird off Dong Ping Chau on 21st (MDW). At Lamma, up to four Ashy Minivets were present during 24th-27th, and flocks of Chinese Goshawks totalling 58 on 28th and 126 on 30th were noted (GS). A boat trip into eastern and southern waters on 30th turned up a Short-tailed and two Streaked Shearwaters (YYT).

Chief amongst reports from the NT in the second half of the month were a singing Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo, a singing Orange-headed Thrush and a Mountain Bulbul, all at Tai Po Kau on 18th (MDW, KPK), a Eurasian Jay (now very hard to find in Hong Kong) there on 22nd, two Chinese Grosbeaks at Lam Tsuen on 18th, a singing Two-barred Greenish Warbler, at Sha Lo

Tung on 18th (MDW) and singing Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoos at the latter site on 23rd and at Sek Kong Catchment on 26th (RWL), seven Dollarbirds at Ho Chung on 22nd (MT), and a Black Baza and Chinese Goshawk at Fung Yuen on 28th. Finally, at Mui Wo five Dollarbirds and three Black-winged Cuckoo-shrikes were present on 25th-26th (PS).

The only significant breeding reports received were from Ng Tung Chai on 20th where a young Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler and three young Striated Yuhinas were seen (EMSK).

May 07

As in April, Po Toi and Mai Po were the two best sites. If their identification is accepted, a possible Japanese Murrelet and a possible Bulwer's Petrel are both potential first records for Hong Kong.

Apart from a late Silky Starling on 19th and up to 18 Blue-tailed Bee-eaters on 9th and 13th and three there on 22nd, the latest in spring by 2 days (JAA), all significant reports from Mai Po were of waterbirds. Single Spoon-billed Sandpipers, up to two Little Stints and up to three Nordmann's Greenshanks were noted on several dates between 1st and 18th, and there were also reports of a Grey-headed Lapwing on 15th (BS) and a Dunlin on 19th (JAA), both quite late, as well as an Oriental Pratincole on 22nd (YYT, BS, JAA). Counts of 120 Asian Dowitchers, 144 Red Knots, 2200 Red-necked Stints, all during 1st-9th (YYT), were the highest of the month. A search for ducks on 10th found a Lesser Tree Duck, four Eurasian Wigeon, two Common Teal and a Northern Shoveler (BS), and two late



Tufted Duck were on Pond 20 on 20th (BS, KL).

Elsewhere in the Deep Bay area, a Bailion's Crane was at Lok Ma Chau on 10th (PJL) and a Cinnamon Bittern, four Chestnut-winged Cuckoos and, most surprisingly, two Large Grass Warblers (at low altitude in late spring/early summer) were found in the Frontier Closed Area near Lin Ma Hang on 14th (JAA). A period of heavy rain brought reports of eight Yellow Bitterns at Mai Po, a Cinnamon Bittern at Ta Kwu Ling and a Schrenck's Bittern at Kam Tin, all on 22nd-23rd (JAA).

Po Tai attracted a variety of migrants including six species on dates later than those given in The Avifauna of Hong Kong. These were an Eastern Crowned Warbler on 1st (the latest in spring by 16 days), a Yellow-browed Bunting also on 1st (latest by 5 days), a Thick-billed Warbler on 17th (first ever in spring), a Swinhoe's Minivet on 21st (latest by 18 days), a Lancolated Warbler on 22nd (rare in spring and the latest by 4 days) and a Black-faced Bunting on 29th (latest by 10 days) (GW). A possible Bulwer's Petrel, a long-awaited addition to the Hong Kong list, was photographed from the island on 14th (GW). Among rarities or other unusual reports from the island were eight Blue-tailed Bee-eaters on 1st, a Northern Boobook on 5th, a Daurian Starling and a Silky Starling on 6th, up to 15 Short-tailed Shearwaters, a White-breasted Waterhen, a Grey-headed Lapwing and a White-cheeked Starling, all on 13th-14th (GW). Following heavy rain associated with a trough of low pressure, an influx of small bitterns was noted on 21st-22nd, peak counts

being one Cinnamon, two Schrenck's, two Black and 17 Yellow Bitterns (GW).

A boat trip into eastern and southern waters on 5th created excitement. First, a strange small auk was found. It was in rather poor condition and its identification is uncertain at the time of writing, but the possibility remains that it was a Japanese Murrelet, a potential first for Hong Kong. Secondly, at least four and possibly as many as seven Grey Nighthjars were seen over open sea in the afternoon session of this trip. Though islands were in view, it seemed that the nighthjars were not making for them, but were instead staying over open sea, flying strongly in various directions, sometimes straight and very low over the water and sometimes slightly higher and in broad arcs. These are the first reports away from land and the latest involving spring migrants. Among other birds seen were single Short-tailed and Streaked Shearwaters, two Arctic Skuas, one Bridled, 15 Common, 10 Aleutian, two Gull-billed, 28 Whiskered and 750 White-winged Terns (J&JH, CC, GT, MT, P&MW, YYT, et al).

Passage of Chinese Goshawks was light even at the beginning of the month, and the peak count at Lamma this month was five on 1st (GS). Also noted at Lamma were two Red Turtle Doves on 8th (GS) and a Northern Boobook on 9th (JAA). At Cheung Chau, twelve Arctic Warblers were present on 13th and two Bridled, two Roseate, 20 Black-naped and 11 White-winged Terns were noted in nearby waters during the wet weather of 22nd (MDW).

Migrants or summer visitors noted elsewhere included an Orange-headed Thrush and a Brown-headed Thrush at Mount Austin on 6th (HL, WT), the latter the latest spring record by 19 days, a Siberian Thrush and an Asian Paradise Flycatcher at Ng Tung Chai also on 6th (PS), a singing Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo at Tai Po Kau on 12th (RWL), a possible White-bellied Green Pigeon at Shing Mun on 15th (CHF), and a Grey-headed Lapwing at Pui O (PS) and three Silky Starlings at Tai Mei Tuk (RWL), all on 20th.

Successful breeding was noted for Mountain Tailorbird (a recently fledged young attended by an adult at Tai Po Kau on 2nd, HKBWS web-site photos), Asian Barred Owlet (three recently fledged young at Kam Tin on 5th, HKBWS web-site photos), Red-rumped Swallow (four juveniles at San Tin on 23rd, JAA) and Black-winged Stilt (a record 31 pairs at Mai Po in late May, including some already with chicks, BS). Also, a juvenile Orange-headed Thrush was reported at Ho Chung on 11th and 12th (KKC) and a White-cheeked Starling was seen carrying food at Kam Tin on 22nd (JAA). However, concern was expressed on the HKBWS web-site pages over an apparently serious decline in the number of herons and egrets nesting this year in Hong Kong.



In memory of Judith Fruin-Ball

Mike Kilburn



Judith Fruin-Ball passed away in March this year after a characteristically determined battle against a long illness.

Before they left Hong Kong for Australia and New Zealand Judith and her husband Lawrence were keen birders, strong supporters of HKBWS, and

fellow members of the Eagles Bird Race team.

Judith's principal contribution to conservation in Hong Kong was as a key member of the group that led the Long Valley Campaign for HKBWS. She brought many years of experience as a litigation lawyer to bear on drafting the Society's objection to the Spur Line EIA. For the first time HKBWS was able to make the best use of the Society's bird data and knowledge. By combining it with Judith's ability to compare an EIA report with the legal requirements of the EIA Ordinance we were for the first time able to mount a challenge based on BOTH ecological data AND on sound legal arguments. We all know that ultimately the Environmental Protection Department agreed with Judith and HKBWS, rejected the Spur Line EIA and Long Valley is, at least in part, now under HKBWS management, while the trains will zip safely by in a tunnel underneath.

However Judith's influence went far beyond this. Since Long Valley, HKBWS continues to use the same technique. Now, we challenge environmentally harmful developments by assessing the proposals of developers against the appropriate legislation. A good example of this can be seen in the article about wind farms and White-bellied Sea Eagles in Bulletin 202. In a growing number of cases our challenges are upheld. And because developers understand that HKBWS has learned how to use the law to make viable challenges, they increasingly take the trouble to consult with HKBWS and other environmental NGOs early in the planning process, and to adapt their projects to avoid harming sensitive species or habitats. Some legacy!

Judith was also an enthusiastic and adventurous birder, and I had the great pleasure of guiding for her and Lawrence in Yunnan (where we saw Sclater's Monal - one of China's rarest and least seen birds), Jiangxi, North Sichuan, Qinghai and Xinjiang. After leaving Hong Kong Judith moved to Australia to study for a Master's Degree in Environmental Management at Macquarie University from which she graduated with High Distinction and the Vice-Chancellor's Prize. She then went on to start a PhD which examined the ethics of species recovery programmes asked some of the deeper philosophical questions about what makes people care about the environment.

Sadly Judith's illness meant she was not able to complete her studies and she moved from Australia to the Bay of Islands in New Zealand where she remained deeply interested in conservation. She even joined a local Maori and his dogs in tracking and killing a Wild Pig (a pest species in New Zealand) and helped to carry it out of the forest, gaining her great face in the local community! However even in her last couple of weeks Judith's interest in birding remained strong and it was a great pleasure to enjoy wonderful close views of a party of Brown Teals with her and Lawrence - a rare and rather shy endemic, and new bird for all of us - during a brief visit in March.

Over and above her passion for birding and conservation Judith loved a party. She had the wonderful gift of being able to relate to and bring together people from all walks of life. No one who was there will forget the wonderful peacock costume in which she presided over a terrific fancy dress party she and Lawrence gave shortly before leaving Hong Kong.

A closing memory that absolutely typifies Judith's humour, passion and relentless determination in the cause of conservation. Just a couple of weeks before she died Judith announced that when she was finally gone she was determined not to go quietly, but would gather together the ghosts of the great conservationists of the past and get them to haunt George Bush and other world-class desecrators of the environment until they mended their ways! Bearing this in mind "Rest in peace" seems (a) unlikely (b) not particularly worthwhile, and (c) not nearly so much fun!

Date / Duration	Time and site	Target species
3 Nov (Sat) 08:00 - 13:00	Tsim Bei Tsui (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) 08:00 Tin Chak Estate Shopping Centre, Tin Shui Wai	
4 Nov (Sun) 08:00 - 12:30	Tai Po Kau 08:00 carpark, end 12:30	Bull-headed Shrike
11 Nov (Sun) 08:00 - 17:00	Lai Chi Wo 08:00 Tai Po Market KCR station, end 17:00 Luk Keng (long hiking to this rarely visited area)	
21 Nov (Wed) 19:00 - 20:30	Monthly Gathering - [Project Management] Venue: Rm 1101, Scout Association of Hong Kong, Austin Rd, Kowloon Speakers: Mr. Lam Chiu Ying (Member \$10, non-member \$30)	
25 Nov (Sun) 08:00 - 12:30	Sha Lo Tung 08:00 Tai Po Market KCR station, end 12:30 Fung Yuen	Bright-capped Cisticola
1 Dec (Sat) 08:00 - 13:00	Nam Sang Wai (Crested Bulbul Club Activity) 08:00 Hang Heung Cake Shop	
9 Dec (Sun) 08:00 - 17:00	Sai Kung Tai Long Wan 08:00 Sai Kung minibus terminal, end 17:00 Pak Tam Au	the most scenic hiking trail in HK
23 Dec (Sun) 08:00 - 12:30	Nam Sang Wai 08:00 Yuen Long West Rail Station, end 12:30	Waterfowls
31 Dec (Sun) 08:00 - 12:30	Tai Po Kau 08:00 carpark, end 12:30	Forest birds



Further details or change(s) of outings/indoor meetings will be announced in the HKBWS Website www.hkbws.org.hk

Code of Conduct for Birdwatching and Bird Photography

The objective of HKBWS is to promote the study, appreciation and conservation of birds in Hong Kong. In addition, the Society also facilitates the exchange of experience and information related to birdwatching. In recent years, more and more people in Hong Kong become interested in birdwatching and bird photography. Since birds are sensitive to disturbance, special care is required to avoid bringing disturbance to their lives. In order to provide a model for good practices in birdwatching and bird photography, the Society's Executive Committee has drawn up the following code. It is intended to be a reference and guide to both HKBWS members and the general public.

1. The Welfare of Birds Comes First

Birdwatching and bird photography should be carried out with minimum interference to the birds. Disturbance must be avoided as far as possible.

- Stop if the birds appear disturbed, begin to move away or exhibit other abnormal reaction
- Exercise additional precautions when the activity is undertaken with a large group of people
- Do not attempt to influence the behaviour of birds, e.g. by flushing, chasing or baiting
- Use flash only sparingly
- Do not damage the natural environment

2. Protect Sensitive Sites

Sites such as nests, seabird colonies and the roost of rarities are particularly vulnerable. Take extra care to minimize disturbance.

- Keep a suitable distance to avoid stressing the birds
- Do not land on islands with breeding colonies
- Do not disturb nests and their surrounding vegetation, or the nest could be abandoned or become exposed to predators
- Share information about the sites with discretion and do not reveal it casually in public. Explain clearly to those who may not understand the Code, to avoid bringing disturbance to the site
- Beware that your actions may attract unwanted attention and hence disturbance to the site

3. Report Disturbances

If you find people disturbing or causing harm to birds, advise against the act when it is safe to do so. If they cannot be stopped, take photos and report to the AFCED as soon as possible. Post a report at the Society's online Forum.

4. Respect Others

- Share the fun - avoid disturbing other birdwatchers or photographers on site.
- Take care not to damage facilities or crops at the site.

Cuckoos II

In this issue, we are again posting some photos of the cuckoos found in Hong Kong. Birder "Swing" shares with us his experience in taking pictures of the cuckoo baby and its foster mother!



Photographic diary

- Swing

One day, when I was walking at Ho Chung, I noted some movement at the bushes on the opposite bank of the catchwater. Oh! It was a koel baby, flapping its wings in the bushes!

Suddenly, a Black-necked Starling flew by, and the young bird moved even more vigorously. I thought they were fighting initially but then I noted that the starling was actually feeding the young koel. Then it all became clear to me... the Black-necked Starling was cheated and she was its "wet nurse"!



鳥種：中杜鵑 / 成鳥
攝影：黃理沛 / 江敏兒
地點：安樂村

Species: Oriental Cuckoo / Adult
Photographers: Peter Wong & Michele Kong
Location: On Po Tsuen

Date: 5/9/2004
Equipment detail:
DSLR Camera, 400mm f5.6 lens, with flash

鳥種：小杜鵑 / 幼鳥
攝影：黃理沛 / 江敏兒
地點：蒲台

Species: Asian Lesser Cuckoo / Juvenile
Photographers: Peter Wong & Michelle Kong
Location: Po Toi

Date: 17/9/2006
Equipment detail:
DSLR Camera, 400mm f4 lens



鳥種：棕腹杜鵑 / 成鳥

攝影：Martin Hale

地點：大塘灣

Species: Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo / Adult

Photographer: Martin Hale

Location: Tai Po Kau

Date: 17/5/2001

Equipment detail:

SLR Camera, 600mm f4 lens + 2x converter, 1/8, ISO 100 slide
(pushed one stop), crop



鳥種：棕腹杜鵑 / 成鳥

攝影：Martin Hale

地點：大塘灣

Species: Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo / Adult

Photographer: Martin Hale

Location: Tai Po Kau

Date: 17/5/2001

Equipment detail:

SLR Camera, 600mm f4 lens + 2x converter, 1/8, ISO 100 slide
(pushed one stop), crop