THE HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1990

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Contents

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Records compiled by M.L. Chalmers, M.T. Turnbull and G.J. Carey
Report edited by V.B. Picken

Officers of the Society
(1990)

Chairman ..... G.C.H. Cooper

Secretary ..... S. O'Brien

Treasurer ..... R.D.E. Stott

Recorder ..... M.L. Chalmers

EDITORIAL NOTE

We have reverted to a full systematic list this year after several years of detailing only those birds of particular note. Significant breeding records are included in the systematic list rather than in a separate report.

No report of the Tai Po Kau Breeding Birds Survey appears as the event was cancelled due to torrential rain. However, a new feature which we hope will become regular is the Photospot article.

Category D is the half-way house for those birds which might well be wild but for which the possibility of escape or release cannot be ruled out. As such species are regularly (though not always) upgraded to Category A we have decided to include first sighting papers for Category D birds — there are four of these this year.

Jeremy Pearce's line drawings are a welcome addition. I am grateful to him and to the photographers whose slides add so much to this publication. Robert Lam Color, Shriro Hong Kong Ltd, the Nikon distributor, and Carl Zeiss Far East Co Ltd have once again generously sponsored the inclusion of colour photographs. I should also like to thank the many people who contribute to the Report, especially Mike Chalmers, Peter Kennerley and David Melville who give unstintingly of what little spare time they have. Paul Leader and Angus Lamont have helped in numerous ways and a number of members have assisted with proofreading and cross-referencing. Katherine Koo, Lolinda Lee and Selina Tam have typed manuscripts. All such help is very much appreciated — without it deadlines would never be met!

An ever-growing Report brings an increased workload to those involved in its publication and it has become necessary to draw up guidelines to streamline the production. Anyone wishing to contribute to next year's Report, whether submitting a long paper or a short note, is asked to contact me before preparing the article.

VERITY PICKEN

REPORT ON THE BIRDS 1990

M.L. Chalmers, M. Turnbull and *G.J. Carey*

1990 was an exceptional year for both the number of new species accepted and the variety of winter visitors. Together these accounted for the high total species count of 324 Category A plus nine Category D species. Comparable counts are not available for recent years as this is the first year since 1983 that a full systematic list has been published. However, the previous maximum of 276 in 1982 was easily surpassed.

This high total was most definitely not due to habitat improvements. As stated in last year's report, habitat in the New Territories continues to be degraded at a frightening pace. High totals are instead probably due to a combination of many active observers, the rigorous ringing programme spearheaded by David Melville, Tony Galsworthy and Paul Leader, which has also been particularly successful in revealing the true status of many difficult or skulking warbler species, and possible cyclical factors which appear to produce peaks every fourth year.

Eight new species were accepted to Category A of the Hong Kong List. These were made up of five first records in 1990, one from 1988 which had been under review, and two upgradings from Category D based on additional 1990 records. Two of these new firsts were passerines trapped for ringing.

The full list of Category A species in chronological order is as follows:

1. Plain Flowerpecker. A pair nest building at Ho Sheung Heung on 2 April 1988.

2. Slender-billed Gull. An adult first seen in Deep Bay on 10 February 1990 and subsequently seen at Starling Inlet on 25 and 26 February.

3. Pale-footed Bush Warbler. One trapped at the University of Hong Kong Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 6 October 1990, followed by another trapped at the same site on 11 November.

4. Collared Kingfisher. One at Mai Po boardwalk on 7 October 1990.

5. White-throated Rock Thrush. One trapped at the University of Hong Kong Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 11 November 1990 followed by a second in Tai Po Kau on 29 November, which stayed until early 1991, and a third seen only on 2 December.

6. Rufous-bellied Woodpecker. One regularly seen in Tai Po Kau from 13 November 1990 until April 1991.

7. Saker Falcon. An immature seen from Mai Po floating hide on 2 December 1990 was the third Hong Kong record and led to the species being upgraded from Category D.

8. Yellow-browed Bunting. Single birds seen at Mai Po between 8 March and 15 April 1990 and at Cheung Chau on 23 April were the fourth and fifth Hong Kong records, and resulted in the species being restored to Category A from Category D.

In addition at least two separate sightings of single swiftlets were reported within a few days of each other in early April. Specific identification was not possible but either Edible-nest or Himalayan Swiftlet was suspected. Two warbler species remain under review. One is a reed warbler trapped at Mai Po in January 1990 and showing characteristics of both Paddyfield and Blunt-winged Warbler, either of which would be a new species to Hong Kong. The other is the *Bradypterus* warbler with the 'zeebit' song, for which there have been widespread winter records and which will soon be resolved by the publication of an identification paper. The only other record still under review is a possible Upland Buzzard at Lantau in 1989.

Four new species were also added to Category D as follows:

1. Blue-winged Pitta. A single bird seen on Cheung Chau on 4 May 1989.

2. Brown-breasted Bulbul. A pair seen at Luk Keng from January to May 1990, and up to three there in September and October.

3. Grey-necked Bunting. A single seen at Mai Po on 17 March 1990.

4. Meadow Bunting. Following several sightings of obvious escapes, a single bird at Tung Chung, Lantau on 30 December 1990 appeared to be wild.

Finally the following new species were added to Category E (probable or definite escape): Coal Tit (from 1988), Crested Lark, White-tailed Robin, White-collared Yuhina, Green Jay, Jungle Mynah, Goldfinch and Pine Bunting.

The most memorable event of the year was the arrival of a flock of nearly 100 endangered Oriental White Storks at Mai Po at the end of November. The birds remained until March 1991 and the maximum count was 121. Before this there had only been four records of one or two birds.

The report which follows retains the popular monthly summaries and is followed by a full systematic list of all species seen. The former separate report on significant breeding records is discontinued as references to breeding are now included in the main list.

Thanks go to the other members of the Records Committee, Peter Kennerley, Paul Leader, David Melville and Clive Viney, for advice on

rarities. Special mention is also due to Mike Webster who retired from the Records Committee to leave Hong Kong after many years of support and advice as a member, and who before that had been the Society's Recorder before the Records Committee was even dreamed of.

The report is based on written records submitted by the following observers:

T.J. Ades, P. Aston, D.R. Bradshaw, B.A. Barnacle, M. Beaman, J.E. Burton, G.J. Carey, M.M. Chan, S. Chan, M.L. Chalmers, J.R. Coleman, G.C.H. Cooper, T.R. Costin, N.J.G. Croft, E.R. Easton, J.S.R. Edge, J.B. Evans, D. Ford, A.C. Galsworthy, J.H.C. Gerson, N.S. Grimshaw, M. Hale, J. Holmes, W. Hoogendoorn, J.P. Hunt, P.R. Kennerley, C.Y. Lam, F.R. Lambert, A.R. Lamont, M. Lau, P.J. Leader, M.R. and E.P. Leven, R.W. Lewthwaite, W.K. Li, K. Lo, D.S. Melville, G. Mitchell, M.R. Nunns, R.C. Nicoll, S. O'Brien, J.N. Pearse, K. Phillipps, V.B. Picken, S.E. Schaum, K.C. Searle, S.P. Smith, P.R. Stevens, R.D.E. Stott, A. Stratford, D. Thomas, R. Thorpe, R. Tindall, R.P. Tipper, A. Tse, M. Turnbull, I. Tyzzer, C.A. Viney, M.D. Williams, G. Walthew, A.G. and W.L. Young, J. Young, L. Young, G.J. Ziarno.

Some of the records included in these monthly summaries, whilst believed to be accurate, are not substantiated by written notes and should therefore not be quoted in publications elsewhere. See Systematic List for details of authenticated records.

January

A Blyth's Leaf Warbler was seen in Tai Po Kau on 1st. On 4th a Verditer Flycatcher and male Hainan Blue Flycatcher were reported there and throughout the month there were also regular reports of Orange-bellied Leafbirds, White-bellied Yuhinas, Red-headed and Yellow-cheeked Tits, Grey-headed Flycatchers and additional Blyth's Leaf Warblers. On 5th and 6th a Red-headed Tit was seen on Cheung Chau and on 5th a Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler and at least one Chestnut Bunting were found in Tai Po Kau.

Also on 6th 42 Black-faced Spoonbills, a Ruff and a Brown-headed Gull were reported at Mai Po while the next day four Penduline Tits were recorded there, and in Tai Po Kau a Velvet-fronted Nuthatch (Category E) and possibly two separate White-throated Fantails (Category E) were seen. The same day at Lok Ma Chau two Black Vultures were noted and a Hoopoe was found in Shek Kong Woods. By 9th the number of Dalmatian Pelicans in Deep Bay had increased to nine and on 11th six Penduline Tits were netted at Mai Po. A Ruddy Crake, found at the end of December 1989, was seen again at Tsim Bei Tsui on 12th and the next day a Sulphur-breasted Warbler was noted in Tai Po Kau. The Waterfowl Count on 14th showed that about 38,000 birds were present with new high counts for Cormorants (over 3,000) and several waders, but duck numbers were considerably reduced from

previous years. Other records the same day included a Hoopoe and up to seven Imperial and two Spotted Eagles at Ma Tso Lung, and a Water Pipit at Ha Tsuen. As usual both eagle species continued to be seen regularly throughout the winter in the Deep Bay and Border areas. On 20th a wintering Great Knot and Australian Curlew were observed from the boardwalk hide - they remained in the area for several weeks.

The next day a first-winter Common Gull was seen at Mai Po, a Brown Thrush and up to six Red-headed Tits were reported from Aberdeen Country Park, and two Grey Bushchats were found on Kat O Chau. On 22nd a Black-necked Grebe was observed on the pond in front of the Rocky Outcrop at Mai Po. It was presumed to be one of the birds found in December 1989 and was seen on several subsequent occasions. A Brown-breasted Bulbul was recorded at Luk Keng on 24th. On 26th an unidentified small *Acrocephalus* warbler was killed by a Dusky Shrike in a bird net at Mai Po and the following day the *humei* Yellow-browed Warbler first caught in December 1989 was retrapped at the University of Hong Kong Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre. Also on 26th two Brown-breasted Bulbuls were seen at Luk Keng, while a pair of Rufous-necked Scimitar Babblers continued to be heard and seen in the Aberdeen Country Park around this time. On 28th Dalmatian Pelican numbers rose to 13 in Deep Bay, and a Great Black-headed Gull and a flock of 26 Penduline Tits were observed at Mai Po. On 29th a female Pied Harrier and a male Marsh Harrier were seen there, and on 31st 350 Dunlin were counted.

February

The trees around the Police Post at Mai Po produced a surprise on 3rd in the form of a Chiffchaff, only the third for Hong Kong. Other records the same day included 13 Red-breasted Mergansers, 80 Tufted Duck and about 30 Red-rumped Swallows near Tsim Bei Tsui and a Brown Thrush in Tai Po Kau. Many of the species seen in January, including Red-headed Tits and a White-throated Fantail, continued to be recorded there. A Styan's Grasshopper Warbler was netted at Mai Po on 4th. Whilst looking for the Chiffchaff on 10th observers found a Thick-billed Warbler in the same trees. However, the biggest surprise that day was to come later with the finding of an adult Slender-billed Gull among the Black-headed Gulls off the boardwalk. It was a first for Hong Kong. The same day Dalmatian Pelican numbers rose to 19, and an Orange-headed Ground Thrush was seen in Tai Po Kau. On 11th a flock of Red-headed Tits was reported at Shek Kong Woods together with a Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher, while a record number of 143 Saunders' Gulls was counted in Deep Bay.

An adult Great Black-headed Gull was seen off the Mai Po boardwalk on 13th. On 17th a House Crow (Category E) was found near the Education Centre at Mai Po and two more Penduline Tits were trapped there. Up to this point 14 individuals had been caught with no retraps, indicating a probable passage of these former vagrants. On 19th 260 Grey Plover were counted in Deep Bay.

On 22nd a male Fukien Niltava was found on Cheung Chau where it remained until 1 April. A Red-headed Tit was also frequently seen there during this period. On 25th a flock of Black- tailed Gulls was found in Starling Inlet and the next day 43, including three adults, were counted. However, the big surprise that day was the finding of what appeared to be the same Slender-billed Gull at Starling Inlet two weeks after the first sighting at Mai Po. To complete the tally of rare gulls, a Brown-headed Gull was also found at Starling Inlet.

1. First-winter Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris*
Mai Po, March 1991 *(John Holmes)*

March

Amongst birds trapped at Mai Po on 3rd was a Styan's Grasshopper Warbler, while at the boardwalk an adult Black-tailed Gull was perhaps a lingerer from the influx noted the previous weekend. The casuarinas held a Brambling.

A Reed Bunting and a Wryneck were trapped at Mai Po on 4th and a Grey Bushchat was briefly seen at Nam Chung on 5th. During the days which followed, the grim weather of the preceding three weeks or so finally abated and increased raptor activity was noted, the highlight being frequent sightings at Lok Ma Chau of the two Black Vultures — up to at least 20th.

On 8th a Yellow-browed Bunting was seen and photographed in the casuarinas at Mai Po while a Crested Bunting, found there on 10th, remained until at least 18th. A pair of Baikal Teal was noted near the Rocky Outcrop on 16th and 17th. The 17th, in fact, produced several exciting discoveries: the

[The cost of reproduction of plate 1 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

Mai Po nets captured no less than three Styan's Grasshopper Warblers, much more unexpectedly a male Grey-necked Bunting was found in the reserve while a Hoopoe and at least six Chinese Greenfinches were observed at the Jubilee Sports Centre, Shatin. Around this time also, about five Black Bulbuls were reported near the dam in Tai Po Kau and, following an earlier unconfirmed report, a male Gould's Sunbird in poor condition was seen on 21st.

The number of waders at Mai Po began to grow rapidly around this period, a pleasant feature being the reappearance on the Marsh of the Black-winged Stilt flock. A Hobby was seen in Happy Valley on 25th. On 27th a second House Crow appeared at Kowloon Tong and a Yellow-browed Bunting was found at Mai Po. It was trapped and released on 29th and was to remain throughout most of April. On 28th a female Baikal Teal was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui. A report from Tai Po Kau of a Ferruginous Fly-catcher on 30th was a further indication of the beginning of spring passage. By 30th around 3,000 waders were already present at Mai Po and the first Nordmann's Greenshanks were found on that date with two at the Rocky Outcrop. Three were on the scrape on 31st, together with the first Little Stint of the year. A European Goldfinch (Category E) trapped at Mai Po on the same date was in post-breeding moult — abnormal for the time of year. Also on 31st a Blue and White Flycatcher was reported from Tai Po Kau. Chinese Francolins were heard calling at widespread locations in the New Territories around this time.

2. Chinese Francolin *Francolinus pintadeanus*
Chau Tau, March 1990 *(Martin Hale)*

[The cost of reproduction of plate 2 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

April

The month began with a Pine Bunting (Category E), unfortunately not in possession of a full tail, at the Fence, on 1st. A Lesser Yellowlegs at Mai Po on the same date left no doubts as to its identity, but was to go unseen for a further 13 days, before returning to the scrape until 16th. A Chestnut Bittern was seen in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 3rd. In fact, the first ten days in April and the period around the Bird Race did not 'buzz' as they had in the previous two years though a Narcissus Flycatcher was seen in Tai Po Kau on 6th. The greatest surprise of this period must however, have been the appearance of two swiftlets *Collocallia* sp. The first was seen at Shuen Wan on 5th and the second at Mount Davis on 8th. A single Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle was observed at Mai Po on 6th and there were also about ten reports of Hobbies during the month, mainly from Deep Bay. A Narcissus Flycatcher was noted at Mount Davis on 7th and 8th.

A burst of bright weather on 12th following heavy rain the previous day predictably resulted in an impressive list of migrants in Tai Po Kau, including Ferruginous, Blue and White, Japanese Paradise, Asian Paradise and Narcissus Flycatchers as well as the already well-established Hainan Blue Flycatchers, with Eye-browed, Grey and Grey-backed Thrushes present too. A Red-winged Crested Cuckoo was amongst the birds noted there on 12th.

The Mai Po Waterfowl Collection attracted a Pochard on 15th. On the same day a Verditer Flycatcher was reported singing in Tai Po Kau and a Narcissus Flycatcher was noted at Wah Shan near Fanling. Horsfield's Goshawks were reported in small numbers from around this time. A Forest Wagtail turned up at Mai Po on 16th and remained until 19th, while over 10,000 swifts and hirundines were noted there around this time. Sand Martins and Red-rumped Swallows were also present.

A Japanese Paradise Flycatcher was at Tai Po Kau on 18th, and on 19th at Mai Po a male Pied Harrier flew past the tower hide, which also provided splendid views of a Chestnut Bittern and a rare opportunity to study all three regular species of snipe at close quarters. Up to three Japanese Quail were also present at Mai Po that day, and a Japanese Paradise Flycatcher was at Chek Keng. Tai Mei Tuk Catchment proved a reliable hunting-ground for Red-winged Crested Cuckoos, with three there on 20th, and also for Black Bazas which were a frequent bonus there around this time. An outing to Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 21st returned with a surprisingly long list of wader species, including over 50 Greater Sand Plovers and 20 Sanderlings, as well as first records for that area of Curlew Sandpiper, Turnstone, Temminck's Stint and Terek Sandpiper. The paddies held three Chestnut Bitterns. The same day at Mai Po another Styan's Grasshopper Warbler was trapped along with four Penduline Tits, bringing the 1990 total to 67 with no retraps. A Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle was located on Mount Davis on 22nd and a female Great Spotted Woodpecker and two Black Bazas were reported there on 24th. A Little Whimbrel was found at Mai Po at the tower hide on 25th, on which date it was noticed that a male Baikal Teal had joined the Waterfowl Collection. A Black-shouldered Kite made a typically brief appearance at Mai Po on 26th when a Swinhoe's Egret was first seen.

Reports of Grey-streaked Flycatchers were first received around this time and increased towards the end of the month. Two Black Bazas and six Red-winged Crested Cuckoos were noted at Chek Keng on 28th. Another trip to Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung also on 28th produced several exciting finds including a Baillon's Crake and a Black Bittern. A Hoopoe was recorded at Shouson Hill on the same date with another at Mai Po the next day. Brown Shrike passage was heavy around this time and there were several reports of Broad-billed Rollers.

The high tide wader roost on gei-wai 16/17 provided the staggering spectacle we have come to expect, certainly until around 16th after which numbers of most species fell away quite sharply, the frequent presence of a Peregrine probably being one factor responsible. Curlew Sandpipers peaked at 6,000 on 10th when four Spoon-billed Sandpipers were also present. This species hit its regular peak of five individuals on 16th. On 11th 1,800 Marsh Sandpipers were present, with a similar number of Black-tailed Godwits and around 300 Great Knot. This date also held the maximum number of Nordmann's Greenshanks on any one day, 25 birds being present. A count of 150 Terek Sandpipers was also made. By 14th Spotted Redshanks (975) and Redshanks (800) had hit their peak, which Broad-billed Sandpipers achieved on 15th (190). One thousand Red-necked Stints were present on 17th. Numbers of Asiatic Golden Plovers grew around this time, reaching 260 on 18th when 1,500 Black-tailed Godwits were still present. Greenshanks peaked at 800 on 5th and 14th. Of the scarcer species, Turnstones peaked at ten on 5th, while single Red Knots were noted on six dates between 5th and 20th, and three Dunlin were seen on 15th. Five different Ruff were present between 5th and 19th. There were also several reports of up to two Little Stints, and Spoon-billed Sandpipers were frequently reported.

May

Small numbers of Nordmann's Greenshanks continued to be recorded at Mai Po with three on 1st, one on 2nd and two on 4th. A Horsfield's Goshawk was present in Tai Po Kau on 2nd and two or three Black Bazas were seen there on 2nd and 4th. The latter date also produced four Black Bazas at Tai Mei Tuk, a Pale-legged Leaf Warbler trapped on the Peak, and large numbers of hirundines at Tsim Bei Tsui — this flock certainly included both Sand Martin and Red-rumped Swallow. There were widespread reports of Arctic Warblers during the first half of the month and Grey-streaked Flycatchers were most numerous around 5th. Four White-collared Yuhinas (Category E) at Stubbs Road on 5th and 6th and fourteen there the next day, together with an unseasonal report of three Collared Sivas from Mount Nicholson on 7th pointed to a release of birds in the area. In fact many of the birds were reported to be in poor condition.

Tai Long Wan held a lone male von Schrenck's Little Bittern on 5th while two Little Whimbrels were found on the scrape at Mai Po the same day. On 6th a Watercock was seen on the Marsh. The Swinhoe's Egret which had turned up in April was still present until at least 8th by which time a passage of White-winged Black Terns, which peaked at over 100 around 10th, was well under way. That day a pair of Black Bazas was seen at Ho Chung, where a Red-winged Crested Cuckoo called throughout the month. A Pechora Pipit was trapped at Mai Po on 12th, with another individual finding its way into the nets the next day. A Japanese Quail was also noted at Mai Po on 13th and a male Pochard was amongst the captive stock where it remained until at least 28th. Two Spoon-billed Sandpipers were found on the Marsh on 13th and there were reports of singles there on several dates until 28th, when two were present. On 17th a Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler was seen beside gei-wai 19 and on 19th two Hobbies and four Nordmann's Greenshanks were present.

A Society outing to Luk Keng on 19th produced just one female von Schrenck's Little Bittern, but at Tai Long Wan three males and a female were noted. Members on the Society outing also heard a Watercock and saw a Banded Rail. Two Pekin Robins at Nam Chung indicated possible breeding in the area. A reconnaissance of Mirs Bay on 20th produced seven Black-naped Terns, five of which were briefly around Gau Tau. On 23rd an immature male Horsfield's Goshawk gave superb views at Coombe Road.

Two Watercocks were noted at Mai Po on 26th. A Grey-headed Lapwing was something of a surprise there on 27th, on which date (and two or three times subsequently before the end of the month) the Purple Gallinule was seen near the concrete path across the Marsh. Eight Nordmann's Greenshanks and over 100 White-winged Black Terns were reported on 28th while a Red-headed Tit was noted at Ho Chung also on 28th.

June

A Barred Owlet was seen at Shek Kong Catchwater on 1st while a group of Treepies was reported from near Sunset Peak, Lantau on 2nd. The immature male Watercock was still present at Mai Po on 3rd when three Spoon-billed Sandpipers and 22 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were also reported. A Velvet-fronted Nuthatch at Carolina Gardens, the Peak on 4th was the first record away from Tai Po Kau of this species. Also on 4th a Red-winged Crested Cuckoo was noted at Wu Kau Tang while a Barred Owlet was seen at Ho Chung, the latter site also holding a pair of Chestnut Bulbuls on 5th.

A male Watercock was reported at Luk Keng on 6th and an immature Lesser Frigatebird was seen over Hung Shing Yeh, Lamma on 7th. On 10th a Pheasant-tailed Jacana performed in front of the tower hide, Mai Po. Twenty White-winged Black Terns, together with three Caspian and three Gull-billed, were also on the Marsh that day. Reports of single Black Bazas came from Tai Mei Tuk on 18th, near Sha Tau Kok on 24th and Wu Kau Tang on 30th, this last bird being observed carrying prey. A Hoopoe was seen at Kadoorie

Farm on 21st. Peregrine Falcons were noted several times in urban parts of Hong Kong Island, a bird in Leighton Road on 25th giving particularly good views. On 28th a single Black-faced Spoonbill was seen at Mai Po.

July

A group of Yellow-cheeked Tits seen near Lady Clementi's Ride in the Aberdeen Country Park on 3rd seemed to be a family party. At Ho Chung a Plumbeous Water Redstart, which remained from 7th until the end of August, would appear to be the first summering record for Hong Kong. A visit to Mai Po on 8th produced ten species of heron including three Purple Herons and two Intermediate Egrets. Four Black-faced Spoonbills were present that day and were to remain throughout August. As well as 81 Yellow-nib Duck there were also a few waders present, the most numerous of which were Black-winged Stilts (26) and Redshanks (18). The only other report received this month concerned a pair of Banded Rails seen at Discovery Bay Golf Course on 12th.

August

A visit to Mai Po on 5th produced about 1,000 waders of 18 species including seven Asiatic Dowitchers (one adult and six juveniles), 600 Redshanks, many of which were juveniles, 260 Greenshanks, 12 adult Red-necked Stints and two Grey-rumped Sandpipers. Other interesting birds included two Chestnut Bitterns, a male Watercock, a Gull-billed Tern and two *leucopsis* White Wagtails. Around 12th early reports of Asian Paradise Flycatchers and Arctic Warblers began to be received from Hong Kong Island and Tai Po Kau. Large numbers of waders similar to those on 5th were again noted at Mai Po on 19th; they included five Asiatic Dowitchers. The two Chestnut Bitterns were also still present and in addition a Yellow Wagtail was heard and a female Peregrine Falcon seen. Two adult Bonelli's Eagles were noted at Lok Ma Chau.

A Forest Wagtail was seen at Tai Po Kau on 22nd and the 23rd brought the first Brown Shrike of the return passage at Tai Mei Tuk. Two Eastern Crowned Warblers were found near Sai Kung on 24th and the following day two Arctic Warblers and several Large White-rumped Swifts were reported at Mount Davis. On 26th a Forest Wagtail was seen near Lai Chi Wo, with a Bonelli's Eagle nearby, while at Shek O another Forest Wagtail was trapped. A further bird was noted on 27th in Tai Po Kau. A Tricolour Flycatcher was found in Tai Po Kau on 29th and the month closed with another Eastern Crowned Warbler trapped on the Peak.

September

Forest Wagtails were reported in good numbers throughout the month starting with a single at Mai Po on 2nd. There were frequent sightings of Asian Paradise Flycatchers in Tai Po Kau and also more records than usual there of Japanese Paradise Flycatchers. An immature Serpent Eagle over the scrape at Mai Po on 4th was an unusual sighting.

Trapping inevitably produced several interesting records during such a period of migration activity and the first such bird was a Siberian Blue Robin caught on the Peak early on 4th. Pale-legged Leaf Warblers were reported from Tai Po Kau and other locations from 5th while a Tricolour Flycatcher and a male Ruddy Sparrow were trapped on the Marsh on 8th. Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers have been scarce in recent years but when two were reported at Luk Keng on 8th it was perhaps not surprising when two also turned up in the Mai Po nets later the same day. In fact four were seen at Luk Keng the following day so there had clearly been something of an influx. Four Black Bazas were noted at Fanling Golf Course on 9th.

There were several interesting birds in Tai Po Kau during the month — the 9th produced a Forest Wagtail and at least one of both Asian and Japanese Paradise Flycatchers as well as an immature Tiger Shrike and an exceptionally early Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler. Several colonisers continued to be noted especially the now well-established White-bellied Yuhinas and Yellow-cheeked Tits, and the more recently arrived Velvet-fronted Nuthatches and Red-headed Tits. Reports of a single Broad-billed Roller, at least one Asian Paradise Flycatcher and one Tricolour Flycatcher were received from there on 13th, followed by one of two Ashy Minivets on 15th. On the same day a Tricolour Flycatcher was observed on Tai Mo Shan while the male Ruddy Sparrow was seen again at Mai Po on both 15th and 16th.

There were small numbers of Red-necked Phalaropes in the Deep Bay area around the middle of the month. A Tricolour Flycatcher was noted at Mai Po also on 16th. Eleven Black Bazas were seen in Tai Po Kau on 16th and 18th, when six were also reported over Tai Po Road near the Chinese University. A Broad-billed Roller was observed in Tai Po Kau on 18th. A flock of at least three Red-tailed Minlas (Category E) was seen on 23rd. Two Forest Wagtails were found in Tai Po Kau on 23rd and 25th, while flycatchers noted at this time, apart from widespread Brown, were two Tricolour, four Asian and two Japanese Paradise on 23rd, and a male Blue and White and two Japanese Paradise on 25th — all from Tai Po Kau. Fourteen Black Bazas were observed there on 23rd while three were noted at Ng Tung Chai on 27th. Further flycatcher records included three Tricolour at Mong Tseng on 28th, one at Mai Po on 29th and 30th, and another in Tai Po Kau on 30th, a Red-breasted in Tai Po Kau on 29th and a Black-naped Monarch, an Asian Paradise and a Grey-streaked on 30th. At least two Velvet-fronted Nuthatches and an Eastern Crowned Warbler were also found in Tai Po Kau on 29th, followed by a Forest Wagtail on 30th.

Rare or unusual birds were a Hoopoe at King's Park, an unidentified *Locustella* warbler at Tsim Bei Tsui and an Oriental Cuckoo at Mong Tseng on 28th and 20 Asian House Martins at Mai Po on 29th. An influx of Black-capped Kingfishers was noted on the same day. An immature von Schrenck's Little Bittern was caught at Mai Po on 29th while single Thick-billed Warblers were trapped there that day and the next. A female Ruddy Sparrow was seen in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 30th.

October

An Eastern Crowned Warbler was found in the Aberdeen Country Park on 4th, together with an Asian Paradise Flycatcher and a Grey-streaked Flycatcher, while at Tai Po Kau on the same day there was another Asian Paradise Flycatcher and a Forest Wagtail. A Hill Blue Flycatcher (Category E) was seen on several occasions around this period at the Royal Observatory. Black-capped Kingfishers and Great Reed Warblers continued to be recorded in large numbers during the first week of the month, sightings of both species on Lamma being considered noteworthy. Rufous Turtle Doves were also new arrivals noted there at this time, and the sight of a juvenile Bonelli's Eagle accompanying two adults near Mount Stenhouse suggested that successful breeding might have taken place in the area. This period also produced an immature male Grey Bushchat at Mai Po on 5th — this species has become very scarce in recent years. However, the most surprising discoveries during the early part of the month both represented first records for Hong Kong: a Pale-footed Bush Warbler trapped at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 6th and a Collared Kingfisher at Mai Po boardwalk on 7th. A Brown Shrike of the race *cristatus* was also seen at Mai Po that day and a Broad-billed Roller was observed at Tung Chung, Lantau. The passage of Pale-legged Leaf Warblers which had begun in September continued into October, probably peaking during the first week. One particularly interesting record involved the recapture at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 6th of an individual which had been caught in the early part of last winter at the same locality.

There was a rare autumn sighting of two Spoon-billed Sandpipers at Tsim Bei Tsui on 10th, with what could well have been one of those birds being trapped at Mai Po on 17th.

On 11th a Barred Button Quail was captured when it entered one of the buildings at Mai Po. Both Spotted and Imperial Eagles were present that day, as well as a Hobby. A flock of 20 small starlings near Lok Ma Chau also on 11th were either Purple-backed or Chestnut-cheeked. Another interesting raptor at Mai Po was an immature Brahminy Kite on 13th while seven Black Bazas were located at Cheung Uk near Hok Tau on the same day. A Pale-legged Leaf Warbler was reported at Pok Fu Lam Country Park on 14th.

Blackbirds started to arrive around the middle of the month, being noted at Mai Po, Lam Tsuen and in the Zoological and Botanical Gardens where there was also a Grey-headed Flycatcher on 15th, and at Leighton Road from about 23rd. Other interesting reports during this period included a rare autumn record of Nordmann's Greenshank on 19th, one or two Buzzards, a European Spoonbill, a White Ibis and far greater numbers of Cormorants, with over 500 on 19th.

On 20th a Forest Wagtail and two free-flying Mandarins were reported at Mai Po while the next day no less than 42 Dusky Warblers were trapped there, indicating a major arrival. A Bull-headed Shrike was seen and photo-

graphed at Tsim Bei Tsui on 24th.

A count of eight Reef Egrets at Repulse Bay on 27th was a high one for a species normally seen individually or in pairs, while three flocks of Chinese Starlings moving through Mai Po on the same day totalled 43 birds. A Society outing to Tai Long Wan, again on 27th, produced several interesting records: apart from the usual species, raptors included six Grey-faced Buzzard Eagles and two or three Kestrels, while amongst the waders noted were Grey-rumped Sandpiper, and Fantail, Pintail and Swinhoe's Snipe in the paddies. A Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher and a Lanceolated Warbler were also seen. All three snipe species including 100 Fantail were present at Lok Ma Chau on 27th and an Oriental Pratincole was trapped. An immature Pheasant-tailed Jacana was also observed. A Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler was recorded at Jardine's Lookout on 28th, and a Brown Shrike was noted on Lamma on 30th.

November

A further report of a Bull-headed Shrike, possibly the same bird as the one seen on 24 October, came from Tsim Bei Tsui on 2nd. There were also Yellow-breasted, Chestnut and Grey-headed Buntings there that day, while an early Great Crested Grebe was seen from the boardwalk hide. A Blyth's Reed Warbler was trapped at Mai Po on 3rd, an experience it must have enjoyed as it turned up again in the nets on two subsequent occasions. Four Rubythroats were also netted that day and throughout the month numbers of that species seemed higher than usual. A Red-breasted Flycatcher and a Black-naped Oriole were also seen at Mai Po on 3rd.

On 4th at least one Grey-headed Flycatcher was found in Tai Po Kau, and a Spotted Eagle was reported at Mai Po. Larger numbers than usual of Grey-headed Flycatchers were a feature of the arrival of a large and interesting array of passerines, mainly from about 10th onwards, in the face of a very marked cold front. From that time to the end of the month up to about 20 Grey-headed Flycatchers were regularly seen or heard on visits to Tai Po Kau.

Saunders' Gulls arrived at Mai Po during the early part of the month; not apparently present on 2nd, ten were seen on 5th and there were soon over 30. Twelve Tufted Duck, an Australian Curlew, small numbers of Broad-billed Sandpipers and four Imperial Eagles were observed on the Marsh that day, while the first sighting for some time of a Painted Snipe at Lok Ma Chau was also reported. A Chestnut Bunting was again seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 6th and this species was regularly recorded in small numbers in Tai Po Kau during the middle part of the month. A single was located at Mount Nicholson on 27th. Male Siberian Thrushes were seen in Tai Po Kau on 7th and 12th and a Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike was noted regularly there from 7th.

An exciting ringing session at Mai Po on 10th resulted in the capture of a juvenile Styan's Grasshopper Warbler, an Eye-browed Thrush, a Red-

breasted Flycatcher and a rather late Tricolour Flycatcher as well as the first recapture of the Blyth's Reed Warbler. However, an even more exciting day lay in store at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre the next day. By this time (and probably also because of the location) the effects of the cold front which had swept down across China during the preceding days were even more evident. A Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher, a Daurian Redstart, five Red-tailed Robins, a Japanese Sparrowhawk, a Chestnut-flanked White-eye and a Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler were amongst the birds trapped. However they also included Hong Kong's second Pale-footed Bush Warbler, a White-tailed Robin (Category E) and, most exciting of all, Hong Kong's first White-throated Rock Thrush — a pristine individual of a species whose appearance in the Territory had long been hoped-for and predicted.

A Robin Flycatcher, 11 Blackbirds and large numbers of other unidentified thrushes and buntings, mainly in flight overhead, were also noted on 11th. Six Siskins were seen at Stanley Mound the same day. A visit to Tai Po Kau on 12th produced at least two Grey Thrushes and a White's Thrush. A Blue and White Flycatcher was also present, with another reported on 13th. Also on 13th Hong Kong's first Rufous-bellied Woodpecker was discovered near the *Rhodoleia* stand in Tai Po Kau, in which area it remained until the end of the month. Several Yellow-bellied Tits were also recorded in Tai Po Kau from this date and there were reports of large numbers elsewhere, especially in the Lam Tsuen Valley. Another Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher was located in Tai Po Kau on 13th and Tristram's Buntings were noted there from 14th. On 16th a Ferruginous Flycatcher was seen there and on 17th the first of an influx of Sulphur-breasted Warblers was reported. At least three appeared to be present on 18th and up to eight on 22nd. A single was observed at Mount Nicholson on 28th. A considerable number of *Phylloscopus* warblers were present in Tai Po Kau and elsewhere at this time, not all of which were easily attributable to any of the commonly occurring species. Robin Flycatchers were regularly reported from the middle of the month, with up to four a day noted in Tai Po Kau.

A Water Pipit and two Red-breasted Mergansers were at Mai Po on 17th and a Black Stork was discovered there on 19th. On 23rd a visit to Chek Lap Kok yielded a Crested Bunting, three Red-tailed Robins and about 50 Chinese Greenfinches while a trip to Tai Long Wan on 24th produced a Chestnut Bittern. Also on 24th another flock of Siskins, initially numbering around 35 but later rising to 60 birds, was found near Shek Kong.

On 27th an intriguing report was received of six or maybe ten White Storks seen by workers on the scrape at Mai Po. This early report hardly lessened the shock the following day when it was confirmed that at least 43 storks were present, with rumours of 60 or even 100. In fact the maximum count up to the end of the year was 92 birds, surely one of the most remarkable ornithological events in Hong Kong's history. On 29th another White-throated Rock Thrush was seen in Tai Po Kau while on 30th, Grey, Grey-backed and Eye-browed Thrushes were noted there.

December

At the beginning of the month considerable excitement still surrounded the White Storks, with the one Black Stork also remaining throughout the month. The flock of Siskins at Shek Kong also continued to be seen, about 28 being noted on 1st. Other reports on 1st were of Ruddy Crake at Mai Po, and of three Pale-legged Leaf Warblers at Mount Davis and one at Mai Po. The following day proved a particularly memorable one, with two White-throated Rock Thrushes and a Two-barred Greenish Warbler in Tai Po Kau, and a Saker Falcon at Mai Po.

Tai Po Kau produced two Chestnut-flanked White-eyes on 4th, and a Pale-legged Leaf Warbler and two Red-headed Tits on 6th. On 8th a Radde's Warbler was found there, an Orange-headed Ground Thrush was reported in the Aberdeen Country Park, a Baer's Pochard was noted at Mai Po and a small unidentified auk was seen in Mirs Bay. An unidentified button quail was seen at Hok Tau on 9th.

Mallard were noted in small numbers at Mai Po around this time, with a leucistic Pintail also among them. A Black Vulture was found on the Marsh on 19th and seen there again on 27th when the sight of it soaring amongst the storks must have been impressive.

A Large Hawk Cuckoo in the ZBG on 15th was an unseasonal report. A Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler was seen in Tai Po Kau on 17th while on 21st two Mountain Bush Warblers were seen at Hebe Haven and a Northern Goshawk was noted in Tai Po Kau. There was another sighting of a Ruddy Crake at Mai Po on 22nd and three Grey-headed Lapwings were also there around this time. The first report of the winter of a Black-tailed Gull came on 29th — a first-winter bird at Tsim Bei Tsui.

In Tai Po Kau on 26th another Two-barred Greenish Warbler was seen. On 30th, from little-visited and much-threatened Tung Chung on Lantau, came reports of a Rustic Bunting, a Meadow Bunting and a Grey Bushchat. A Long-tailed Tit (Category E) was seen at Luk Keng on 30th. The year ended with a Mountain Bush Warbler trapped at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 31st.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

In the interests of brevity, species which are generally common and widespread throughout the year are listed in name only without notes.

CATEGORY A. SPECIES WHICH HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN AN APPARENTLY WILD STATE IN HONG KONG WITHIN THE LAST FIFTY YEARS

1 Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Sixty-six in the Deep Bay area during the Waterfowl Count on 13/14 January. Up to 33 at Mai Po until late February. Seen with young there on 31 March and also reported breeding from Shuen Wan, with four juveniles there in August.

2 Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Singles at Mai Po on 15 October and 2 November both preceded the previous earliest arrival date. Fifteen in the Deep Bay area on 14 January was the highest count reported.

3.1 Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

One on the pond next to the Rocky Outcrop at Mai Po between 22 January and 3 February (MT,PRK,MLC *et al.*) was assumed to be one of the two birds seen previously on 10 and 11 December 1989.

[Storm Petrel *Oceanodroma* sp.

Two small all-dark storm petrels seen near Round Island off Chung Hom Kok on 28 May were probably Swinhoe's Storm Petrel *Oceanodroma monorhis* (CAV).]

6 Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

A record count of 3,007 made during the mid-January Waterfowl Count represented an increase of 108 per cent on the 1989 count. The roost in the trees around the Waterfowl Collection enclosure at Mai Po which began in November 1989 continued into 1990, with a maximum of about 150 birds there until mid-March. The birds returned to the trees again in late October, with numbers reaching an estimated 300 by the end of the year. Previously all birds feeding in the Deep Bay area had roosted at Tree Island near Castle Peak. Also reported from the Outlying Islands and Plover Cove Reservoir.

7 Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus*

The regular wintering group in Deep Bay remained until 17 March and returned on 26 December. Maximum counts were 19 between 10 February and 10 March and 16 on 29 December.

9 Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*

An immature soaring over Hung Shing Yeh Wan, Lamma on 7 June.

10 Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Singles at Mai Po on seven dates between 13 January and 3 March, and on 2, 12 and 19 April. Also one on 28 November.

11 Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*

Noted in every month with up to two at Mai Po in January and singles near Lo Wu and Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 January. Up to 15 regularly seen at Mai Po in the summer months, with juveniles there in September.

12 von Schrenck's Little Bittern *Ixobrychus eurhythmus*

A male at Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 28 April and 5 May (MT). On 19 May a female at Luk Keng (RWL) and three males and a female at Tai Long Wan (GJC). An immature trapped and ringed at Mai Po on 29 September (DSM,PJL) was the first autumn record.

13 Chestnut Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*

In the spring, singles at Chau Tau on 3 March, in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 3 April, at Mai Po on 19 April, and at Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 28 April, with three at the latter location on 21 April. Two at Mai Po on 5 and 19 August, and on 23 September. Also singles at Mai Po on 25 August and 1 September, and at Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 24 November.

14 Black Bittern *Ixobrychus flavicollis*

A male at Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 28 April (MT).

16 Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

The largest colony was on the island of A Chau, near Yim Tso Ha, where 204 adults were counted on 5 April. There were also small but significant colonies on Stonecutters Island, where 47 nests were counted on 3 May, and at Hebe Haven. The majority of the Deep Bay wintering population (1,000 out of 1,179) were again found to be roosting at Fu Tien on the Chinese side of the Bay on 13/14 January.

17 Little Green Heron *Butorides striatus*

A nest, with two adults present, was found in the mangroves outside the Border Fence at Mai Po on 23 May. It was still there on 10 June but had gone by 22nd. A party of eight at Mai Po on 8 July included at least one partly downy young bird. Also singles at Bride's Pool in February and April, Hebe Haven in May and June, in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 10 March and Tai Po Kau on 29 September.

18 Chinese Pond Heron *Ardeola bacchus*

The largest breeding colony was in the mangroves at Tsim Bei Tsui, with a minimum of 150 nests. Five hundred and thirty-eight were counted in the Deep Bay area during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Groups of up to eight migrants were noted on Cheung Chau on three dates between 15 and 21 April.

19 Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

A total of 272 were counted at Yim Tso Ha egretry on 26 April,

making this the largest colony of this species in Hong Kong. Three hundred and sixty were in the Deep Bay area during the mid-January Waterfowl Count, all but four of these in the area between Mai Po and Lo Wu. This figure was more than twice that produced by any previous annual Waterfowl Count.

20 Swinhoe's Egret *Egretta eulophotes*

Single birds at Mai Po from 26 April to 30 May (WLY,FRL,RWL *et al.*) and at Nam Chung on 14 October (SPS). Two white egrets at Mai Po on 3 June (GJC) and one there on 28 June (RWL) were considered to be either this species or white-phase Reef Egrets *E. sacra*.

3. Swinhoe's Egret *Egretta eulophotes*
Mai Po, May 1990 *(Peter R. Kennerley)*

21 Reef Egret *Egretta sacra*

The highest count at any one location was eight in Repulse Bay on 27 October. Mating was observed at Castle Rock, near Po Toi on 13 May. Concern has been expressed that this species may be becoming scarcer, on the larger outlying islands at least, possibly due to the expansion of fish-farming and resulting human persecution.

[The cost of reproduction of plate 3 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

22 Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The largest colony was at Tsim Bei Tsui, where 293 individuals were counted on 26 April. A count of 1,966, made in the Deep Bay area during the mid-January Waterfowl Count, was rather higher than the previous two counts but did not exceed that of 1987.

23 Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*

Up to 20 at Mai Po in both January and April. Only six present there in late May, but 19 on 3 June. During July and August up to four noted, with five in September.

24 Great Egret *Egretta alba*

A count of 585 in the Deep Bay area during the mid-January Waterfowl Count was higher than the average over the last five counts.

25 Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

One thousand six hundred and seventy-one were counted in the Deep Bay area during the mid-January Waterfowl Count, continuing the steady 20-30 per cent annual increase in numbers wintering in recent years. The first recorded instance of breeding in Hong Kong occurred at A Chau, Starling Inlet, where two chicks, estimated to be about three weeks old, were seen on 27 April.

26 Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Apart from four at Mai Po on 14 January and three there on 27 February, a maximum of two was reported from Mai Po during the winter months. Up to four were present during the summer months. The spring passage peak was eight on 29 April, and six were seen on 30 September.

27 Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

An immature at Mai Po from 19 November to 27 December (ABL, WLY,SC *et al.*).

28 White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

A large flock of Oriental White Storks *C. c. boyciana* (often considered a separate species *C. boyciana*) at Mai Po and elsewhere in the Deep Bay area from 27 November stayed until March 1991 (SC,ML *et al.*). The maximum count in 1990 was 92 with unconfirmed reports of 97, over 100 and 111.

These sightings are only the fifth record for Hong Kong, and the first time more than two birds have been recorded (see separate paper in this Report).

30 White Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus*

Singles at Mai Po up to 19 April and on 14 and 19 October. The recent decline in the already small numbers wintering and the lack of any reports during the last two months of 1990 (and the early months of 1991 to date) suggest that the days of flocks of up to 25 of these birds in Hong Kong are almost certainly over.

31 European Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

One or two at Mai Po up to 13 May and one there from 19 October (PRK,RWL *et al.*).

32 Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*

A large wintering flock remained in the Deep Bay area up to April with a maximum count of 42 on 6 January (RWL). Records included 15 at the unusual locality of Lau Fau Shan on 11 April (MAB). Numbers then reduced to at least ten on 4 May (WLY) after which up to five immatures summered through from June to November. The number then increased to over 20 on 16 November (WLY) and over 25 on 17 November (PRK).

36 Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

One at Mai Po on 10 April (MB,RWL).

37 Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Numbers wintering in Deep Bay were much reduced over previous years, a count of 458 in Deep Bay during the mid-January Waterfowl Count representing less than 33 per cent of the 1989 total, itself a mere 35 per cent of the previous year's count. One which remained at Mai Po until 19 May was a late record.

39 Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A single free-flying female at the Mai Po Waterfowl Collection between 18 March and 17 April, and two there on 31 March and 20 October (MRL,PJL,MM *et al.*). Apparently several pairs of captive birds bred and 11 young hatched and were pinioned (SC).

40 Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Four hundred and sixty-five were counted within Hong Kong during the mid-January Waterfowl Count and 300 were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 December. Unlike Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, this is one species of wintering duck whose numbers appear to be holding steady.

41 Falcated Teal *Anas falcata*

Present at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui up to 26 April and from 12 October with maxima of 130 on 29 January and 260 on 8 December (PRK). The last spring record was three on 2 May (MAB).

42 Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Sixteen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 January, with eight at Mai Po and four in the Lok Ma Chau/San Tin area. Two amongst the captive ducks in the Waterfowl Collection at Mai Po on 7 April, with two females there on 25 November. Also two males on Pond 12 at Mai Po on 11 and 16 December, and one at Mai Po on 26 December.

43 Baikal Teal *Anas formosa*

A pair at Mai Po near the Rocky Outcrop on 16 and 17 March (RWL,WLY,SPS) and a female at Tsim Bei Tsui on 28 March (WLY). Also a

single free-flying male in the Mai Po Waterfowl Collection between 24 and 27 April (FRL,RWL,MH).

44 Teal *Anas crecca*

A count of 2,213 during the mid-January Waterfowl Count was typical of recent years. Late and early dates were 6 April and 21 September.

45 Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Forty-seven at Tsim Bei Tsui, with one at Mai Po, on 14 January considerably exceeded recent maxima. At least six at Mai Po in late January, with subsequently up to three seen regularly there until 26 April. One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20 October, two at Mai Po from 17 November and 20 at Tsim Bei Tsui from 20 December.

46 Yellow-nib Duck *Anas poecilorhyncha*

Two hundred and eighty-eight counted in Deep Bay and at Mai Po during the mid-January Waterfowl Count exceeded all previous mid-winter totals.

47 Pintail *Anas acuta*

The count of only 804 in the Hong Kong sector of the Deep Bay area during the mid-January Waterfowl Count represented less than 60 per cent of the 1989 figure, though the decline on the Chinese side was even steeper. Present in the Deep Bay area up to 4 May and from 9 October. A leucistic bird was present in the Deep Bay area from 11 December.

48 Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Numbers at Mai Po peaked at 70 on 21 September. Highest counts during the spring were of 30 at Mai Po on 27 March and 27 April. A bird over-summered amongst the captive birds at Mai Po, with a second bird also present until at least 3 June. Eight were at Luk Keng on 29 September and ten were in the Ma Tso Lung/Lo Wu area during the mid-January Waterfowl Count.

49 Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

The count for the Hong Kong sector of Deep Bay during the mid-January Waterfowl Count was 913 birds, representing just 56 per cent of the 1989 count. Present in Deep Bay until 7 April and again from 9 October.

50 Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

A male at Mai Po from 15 April to 28 May (SC,PJL) and up to two males and a female there or at Tsim Bei Tsui from 8 November (PJL,WLY,GCHC).

51 Baer's Pochard *Aythya baeri*

Up to one male and one female at Mai Po from 5 to 25 April (MH,ARL,MT *et al.*). A female at Mai Po from 10 November to 30 December (RWL,PJL *et al.*)

52 Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

In the early part of the year the highest count involved 80 at Tsim

Bei Tsui on 3 February, one bird remaining until 8 April. After two at Mai Po on 16 September — roughly five weeks earlier than the previous earliest recorded arrival — the next report came on 5 November, when 12 were at Mai Po. The maximum count in the latter part of the year involved 60 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 December, with eight at Mai Po the same day.

53 Scaup *Aythya marila*

One at Mai Po on 7 April (ARL) and seven including one male at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 December (PRK).

56 Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

A flock of 97 near Lau Fau Shan on 14 January was a new record count. Thirteen were nearby on 3 February. Also two seen from the board-walk on 17 November.

57 Black Baza *Aviceda leuphotes*

Between two and four at several sites in the New Territories from 20 April to 9 July. On 30 June a bird was seen carrying prey at Wu Kau Tang. Also at least one at Mai Po on 23 April and two at Mount Davis on 24 April. After one was seen near Fanling Golf Course on 30 August there were several reports of groups of up to 14 birds, mainly from the central New Territories, throughout September and up to 13 October, when seven were seen flying south at Hok Tau.

59 Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caerulens*

One in flight over Mai Po scrape on 26 April (GJC,WLY,FRL).

60 Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

The roost near Coombe Road in the Aberdeen Country Park contained over 200 birds on 18 September.

60.1 Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*

Single immatures at Mai Po on 3 January, 6 and 10 February, 4 March and 13 October (RWL,MLC).

61 White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

Up to three pairs may have attempted to breed, a recently fledged juvenile with two adults at one location on 13 May strongly suggesting success for at least one pair. Away from its more regular haunts, an immature was at Mai Po on 31 March, three adults were seen over Conduit Road on 22 September and an adult was at Mai Po on 1 December.

62 Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus*

Two regularly seen in the Lok Ma Chau area from 7 January to 20 March. Also singles at Mai Po from 19 to 27 December.

63 Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela*

A bird over the scrape at Mai Po on 4 September was unusual at this locality.

64 Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Males were seen at Mai Po on 13 and 29 January, and also on 10 March. This latter bird was felt by the observer to be of a type most susceptible to confusion with male Pied Harrier. 'In flight the bird looked identical to a male Pied Harrier from below (black head and throat with no streaking on the underparts). It was 'scoped at rest when it could be seen that the white "shoulders" were absent and the black throat looked "messy"'. In addition there was a regular turn-over of individuals at Mai Po up to 18 April, with as many as four different birds present at any one time. Present at Mai Po once more from 4 October, with up to three there from 6 October to the end of the year. A female found injured by the Border Fence on 22 February did not respond to treatment and died a few days later.

66 Pied Harrier *Circus melanoleucos*

A female at Mai Po on 29 January (GJC,VBP,PRK) and male there on 19 April (GJC). Other reports of single harriers at Mai Po between 19 January and 17 March may have been this species.

67 Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

One perched in a dead tree at Tai Po Kau on 21 December (RWL).

68 Japanese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter gularis*

Adult males at Mai Po on 12 January, 8, 12 and 13 April, and 20 October. Single females caught and ringed at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 11 November and another at Mai Po on 14 November which died after crashing into a window. Other reports of small accipiters, possibly this species, were singles at Mai Po on 29 March, 7 April and 17 November.

69 Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

One at Mai Po on 3 November and single females at Lamma on 1 and 27 November and 30 December. Other reports of single unidentified accipiters were at Lamma on 25 March, 19 April and 8 May, Tai Tam on 24 August, Island House on 4 November and Mai Po on 11 December.

70 Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*

Reported throughout the year from widespread locations. 'Fluttering' display reported from Tai Po Kau in January and from the Aberdeen Country Park in January and May.

71 Horsfield's Goshawk *Accipiter soloensis*

One at Wah Fu and five at Mount Davis on 16 April, and one nearby on 18 April (SPS). Single birds at Mount Austin and Mai Po on 27 April, Tai Po Kau on 2 May and the Aberdeen Country Park on 23 and 25 May (WLY,VBP,RWL). Other accipiters, possibly this species, were one at Ho Chung on 24 April and one at Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 27 October.

72 Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle *Butastur indicus*

One at Mai Po on 6 April (RWL), one at Mount Davis on 22 April (PRK) and six at Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 27 October (JSRE,VBP).

73 Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Up to three noted several times in the Deep Bay area from the beginning of the year to early March. There was some evidence of passage around 10 March, when four were noted in the Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau area, around which date birds were also reported from urban areas of Hong Kong Island. Seen until 1 April when one was in Long Valley. First arrivals of the autumn were two at Mai Po on 19 October. A total of five was seen in the Deep Bay area on 2 November and three were at Mai Po on 25 November. Also reported from Lamma, Cheung Chau, Hebe Haven, Luk Keng and the Aberdeen Country Park.

74 Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*

Up to two present in the Deep Bay area until 24 March and up to six there from 11 October.

75 Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*

Regular in the Deep Bay area up to 8 April and from 21 September with a maximum count of at least seven in both winters.

76 Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus*

Regularly seen throughout the year at several locations, mainly, though not exclusively, in the northern and eastern New Territories. A nest was found in the Sai Kung Peninsula on 13 April. Breeding was also very strongly suspected at another location, and a juvenile was seen accompanying two adults in early October. Another adult was in display over Starling Inlet on 24 April. A 'grounded' juvenile was discovered at Mai Po on 15 January, having eaten so much of a Grey Heron that it was unable to fly. It was captured and ringed. Another juvenile was regularly seen there from 19 October until at least 17 November.

77 Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Up to four regularly reported from the Deep Bay area until 28 April, when one was still present. Reports from Tai Mei Tuk on 7 May and Plover Cove on 29 September may possibly have involved a summering bird, or birds, though the species was again present in the Deep Bay area from 30 September. On 10 January one roosted in one of the casuarina trees around the Waterfowl Collection at Mai Po. Five in the Deep Bay area on 30 December, and one at Urn Island on 1 December.

78 Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Sixteen reports of singles from widespread locations up to 31 March, and two together on Lamma on 2 and 24 January, at Ting Kok on 28 February and at Chau Tau on 10 March. First reported in the autumn from Tsim Bei Tsui on 30 September, with another at Mai Po on 12 October and up to two on Lamma from this date to 19 October. Three at Tai Long

Wan, Sai Kung on 27 October and up to four on Lamma during the early part of November. However, apart from one at Mai Po on 11 November, the only other wintering reports were of one which remained on Lamma throughout November and December and of another at Mai Po on 30 December.

82 Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

One in Happy Valley on 25 March. During April there were regular reports of singles, mostly from the Deep Bay area. Also two at Mai Po on 5, 19 and 25 May. The only reports during the latter part of the year were of singles at Mai Po on 25 August, 15, 19, 22 and 23 September and 11 October.

82.1 Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*

An immature hunting over the mudflats in Deep Bay seen from Mai Po Boardwalk on 2 December (PRK,PJL).

This was the third record of this species, the other two also being in Deep Bay in October 1953 and January 1988. On the basis of these winter records of birds showing no signs of captivity, this species has been up-graded from Category D (700.1) to Category A.

83 Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Seen throughout the year in widespread areas, with several reports from urban areas, particularly Hong Kong Island, during the summer months. A pair at a coastal cliff site on 10 June were probably breeding.

84 Chinese Francolin *Francolinus pintadeanus*

Birds continued to be recorded at sites in the New Territories where this species remains relatively common and one was heard on 5 May at Mount Nicholson on Hong Kong Island, where it now appears to be extremely scarce.

85 Japanese Quail *Coturnix japonica*

One at Mong Tseng on 12 January. Singles at Lok Ma Chau on five dates between 24 March and 7 April, up to three at Mai Po on 18 April and one there on 13 May.

87 Barred Button Quail *Turnix suscitator*

A male flew into the Mai Po Education Centre on 11 October, was ringed and released next day (SC,DSM). Other single birds accepted as button quail species or small quail species were flushed at Heung Yeung Frontier Closed Area on 26 September (NJGC), Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 10 November, Mai Po on 14 November (PJL) and Hok Tau on 9 December (MLC).

[A male Barred Button Quail was found dead at Macau on 30 January and the specimen was sent to WWF for identification (ERE, DSM).]

4. Immature male Barred Button Quail *Turnix suscitator*
Mai Po, October 1990 *(Simba Chan)*

89 Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

One at Mai Po on 14 February.

90 Banded Rail *Rallus striatus*

Away from the Deep Bay area, where it is widespread, reported from Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 5 May, Discovery Bay, Lantau (a pair) on 12 July and from Luk Keng on 2 February, 19 May and 10 November. A juvenile was at Mai Po on 4 October.

91 Baillon's Crake *Porzana pusilla*

One seen at close quarters at Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 28 April (PRK,CAV,GJC *et al.*).

92 Ruddy Crake *Porzana fusca*

One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 January was considered to be the same bird as the one seen on 31 December 1989 (RWL). Single birds at Mai Po on 1 December in a creek near the village (JSRE, MRN), and on 22 December at gei-wai 19 (SC).

95 White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*

96 Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

[The cost of reproduction of plate 4 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

96.1 Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio*

One at Mai Po on 13 April, 27 and 30 May and 11 and 26 December (GJC,MH,RWL *et al.*) was presumed to be same individual as the one first seen in 1988.

97 Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea*

A male in summer plumage at Mai Po from 6 May until 5 August. Also an immature male there on 17 and 27 May. One heard at Luk Keng on 19 May and a male seen there on 6 June. Also an immature/female seen at Mai Po on 30 September.

98 Coot *Fulica atra*

The count of 867 within the Hong Kong sector of the Deep Bay area during the mid-January Waterfowl Count represented approximately 70 per cent of the number present at the time of each of the previous two corresponding counts. Reports of singles at Shuen Wan on 19 and 21 August and Mai Po on 19 August presumably related to summering birds.

100 Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*

An adult in breeding plumage was present at Mai Po on 10 and 11 June (PRK *et al.*) and a single was at Lok Ma Chau on 27 October.

101 Painted Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*

A pair at Lok Ma Chau on 12 April, a pair at Shek Kong on 29 April and one at Lok Ma Chau on 5 November.

103 Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

All records from Mai Po, beginning with 130 on 25 March and the highest spring count being 150 on 5 April. The final spring record was 20 on 28 May. Return passage noted from 8 July with numbers highest between late October and late December. About 250 birds were seen during November but the highest count was 320 on 30 December.

104 Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

The highest count during the first winter period was 260 on 29 January at Mai Po and the latest spring record was five at Tsim Bei Tsui on 7 April. The first record at the end of the year was 40 at Mai Po on 2 December rising to 471 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 December.

105 Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*

An unusual record of a single at Lok Ma Chau on 14 January was not followed until one at Mai Po on 31 March and 14 in the Deep Bay area the next day. The highest spring count was over 100 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 April and the latest spring record was three at Mai Po on 28 May. One trapped at Lok Ma Chau on 27 October.

106 Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Two hundred and sixty-seven were present during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. The highest spring count was 40 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 April while the highest autumn count was 80 on 20 October at Mai Po.

108 Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Five hundred at Mai Po on 10 March was the highest spring count and the latest spring record was three at Mai Po on 19 April. Autumn passage first noted on 15 September at Mai Po; the highest winter count was 1,000 there on 2 December.

109 Mongolian Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*

Three birds at Mai Po at the end of January was the only record of the first winter period. Numbers reached 20 at Mai Po during April on several dates but peaked at 70 on 13 May. Birds were recorded on a number of dates at Mai Po during the final four months of the year, the maximum being 20 on 2 December.

110 Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii*

Six were present during the mid-January Waterfowl Count and spring passage was first noted on 25 March when 27 were at Mai Po. Numbers increased rapidly thereafter. The maximum spring count was 600 on 5 April at Mai Po, 559 still being present on 15 April. Fifty birds were there at the end of May. Recorded between 5 August and 14 October during the autumn with a maximum of 15 on 15 September.

112 Asiatic Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*

Spring passage first noted on 3 February when 30 were present at Mai Po. The peak spring count was 260 there on 18 April and 52 were still present on 27 May, the final spring record. Autumn passage occurred from 19 August to 17 November and the maximum count was 40 on 30 September.

113 Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Two hundred and seventy-three were recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Apart from four birds at Mai Po on 27 and 28 May, the final spring record was of two at Mai Po on 17 April. Autumn passage noted from 5 August with numbers peaking at 15 on 14 October. Twenty birds were present at Mai Po on 30 December.

114 Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus*

Fourteen were present in Deep Bay during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. A single bird at Tsim Bei Tsui between 1 and 7 April and another at Mai Po on 27 May constituted the only spring records. Autumn passage consisted of two at Mai Po on 22 September, four there the next day, a single there on 30 September followed by three at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 October. The final record was of three at Mai Po on 21 December.

116 Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*

A single bird was present in Deep Bay during the latter half of January and first half of February, and spring passage was first noted on 29 March when 15 were at Mai Po, increasing to 50 by 31 March. The highest spring count was 300 on both 10 and 12 April and the final spring record was on 8 June. Autumn passage was noted between 31 August and 15 November with the maximum being 24 at Mai Po on 30 September.

117 Red Knot *Calidris canutus*

Singles were present on six dates between 5 and 20 April at Mai Po with two there on 26 April. Numbers subsequently rose with the highest spring count being 200 at Mai Po on 6 May. Autumn records occurred between 9 September and 14 October, the peak count being 20 on both 9 and 15 September.

118 Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Recorded on five dates in spring, all at Mai Po, between 31 March and 11 April, involving three or four individuals.

119 Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*

Spring passage noted between 25 March and 28 May. Numbers peaked at between 800 and 1,000 birds at Mai Po between 15 and 17 April. Autumn passage noted between 5 August and 14 October with the maximum count being 20 at Mai Po on 15 September. A juvenile with conspicuous red legs was seen at Mai Po on 15 September.

119.1 Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

One at Mai Po between 31 March and 18 April and two there on 15 and 17 April (PRK,MT,GJC *et al.*). Since the first sighting in 1986, this species has been recorded in each spring in small numbers.

120 Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Forty-two birds were present during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Spring passage was noted between 3 March and 16 April with the maximum count being 40 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 April.

121 Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta*

Twenty-one birds were present during the mid-January Waterfowl Count Spring passage was noted between 31 March and 27 May with the maximum count being 11 on both 7 and 13 April. Recorded on three dates in the autumn between 2 and 22 September at Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau. The only other record was of a single at Lok Ma Chau on 30 December.

122 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*

Recorded in spring between 1 April and 3 June at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui, with 50 at the latter locality on 4 April being the maximum count. Generally numbers involved between five and twenty individuals, apart from 22 at Mai Po on 3 June. Recorded in the autumn between 5 August and 30 September with eight birds at Mai Po from 9 to 15 September being the maximum count.

123 Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

A single bird noted in mid-January was the only winter record. Spring passage was noted between 25 March and 3 June with numbers peaking at approximately 6,000 birds on both 10 and 14 April at Mai Po. Autumn passage recorded from 5 August to 14 October with a maximum of ten on 15 September.

124 Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Sixty-four were present in Deep Bay during the mid-January Waterfowl Count but the highest first winter count was 1,000 at Mai Po on 3 March. Up to three were present on most days during April until the final record on 19 April. The first autumn record occurred on 9 September. The highest count of the year was 4,000 at Mai Po on 2 December.

125 Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus*

Recorded in spring from 31 March to 3 June involving at least 14 and possibly 17 individual birds. The maximum count was five. All records, details of which follow, emanated from Mai Po except where stated otherwise:

31 March	Two	13 April	Two
1 April	One	14 April	One
4 April	One at Tsim Bei Tsui	15 April	Three
5 April	One	16 April	Five
6 April	Two; one at Tsim Bei Tsui	17 April	One
7 April	One	18 April	Three
8 April	One	13 May	One
9 April	One	26 May	Two
10 April	Four	27 May	One
11 April	Four	28 May	Two
12 April	Three	3 June	Three

In the autumn, two were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 10 October and a juvenile was trapped at Mai Po on 17 October.

126 Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limnicola falcinellus*

First noted on 25 March when three birds were at Mai Po. The highest spring count was 190 at Mai Po on 15 April and the latest spring record was of one or two birds at Mai Po on 28 May. Autumn passage occurred between 2 September and 3 November with the highest count being 15 on 15 September at Mai Po.

127 Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

One or two birds were noted intermittently in each of the first three months of the year and regularly in April, including two males on 1 April, all at Mai Po. The sole autumn records consisted of a juvenile at Mai Po on 2 September and another bird there on 24 December.

129 Fantail Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

One hundred and fifty-one were recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Spring numbers reached over 50 at Lok Ma Chau on 10 March and the highest autumn count was 100 at the same locality on 27 October. Sixty were present here on 30 December.

130 Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*

Fifteen were recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Spring counts included 15 at Lok Ma Chau on 10 March and 20 at Mai Po on both 13 and 14 April. The earliest autumn migrants were recorded at Luk Keng on

9 September. The highest autumn count was 40 at Lok Ma Chau on 20 October.

131 Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megala*

In spring one or two seen at Lok Ma Chau, Mai Po, Luk Keng and Tai Long Wan between 10 March and 28 April, except for a high count of 15 at Lok Ma Chau on 24 March. The only autumn records were one at Luk Keng on 8 September and one at Lok Ma Chau on 27 October.

134 Asiatic Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*

Recorded in spring between 31 March and 27 May. Numbers built up to reach 270 on the 18 April and 304 on the 26 April, the latter constituting the second highest count in Hong Kong. Noted on only two dates in May. Autumn passage recorded between 5 August and 6 October, the highest count being eight on 15 September. Most autumn records concerned juveniles but at least one adult was present on 5 August and 22 September.

135 Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Singles were recorded at Sha To Lung on 18 January, Tai Po Kau on 22 January, Shek Kong on 26 February, Tai Po Kau on 21 October and Braemar Hill on 15 and 22 December. Two were at Shek Kong on 4 April.

136 Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

One hundred were recorded in Deep Bay during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Spring passage numbers had reached 900 at Mai Po by the end of March and the two highest counts were 1,800 on 11 April and 1,500 on 18 April. The latest spring record was of 31 at Mai Po on 28 May. On 8 July five non-breeding birds were seen there. The earliest autumn record occurred on 8 August and the highest count was 80 on 6 October. Two hundred and twenty were at Mai Po on 30 December.

137 Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The sole winter record was of a single in Deep Bay during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Spring passage first noted on 4 March with the highest count being 20 on both 6 and 11 April. Last noted on 17 April. Recorded during the autumn between 9 September and 6 October with a maximum of 19 on 22 September.

138 Little Whimbrel *Numenius minutus*

One in front of the tower hide at Mai Po on 25 April (RWL) and two there on 5 May (GJC).

139 Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Recorded in spring between 5 April and 3 June reaching a maximum of 30 on 5 May at Mai Po. Autumn passage occurred between 5 August and 14 October with 60-70 birds present during September at Mai Po.

140 Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The highest count of the year was 475 at Mai Po on 19 January. Thirty-one

birds were present there on 27 and 28 May with 3 on 3 June being the latest spring record. Noted first in the autumn on 5 August with the highest passage number being 40 at Mai Po during the final week of September.

141 Australian Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*

One or two birds were present in Deep Bay during the first winter period. Recorded in April at Mai Po with the highest count being seven on 18 April. Single birds were noted between 15 September and 30 December.

142 Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Six hundred and forty-four were recorded in Deep Bay during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. The highest spring counts, all at Mai Po, were 975 on 14 April, 900 on 5 April and 870 on 21 April. The final spring record was of 98 at Mai Po on 13 May. The earliest autumn record occurred on 19 August.

143 Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The first record of the year was of 40 birds at Mai Po on 3 February and the highest spring counts were 950 at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 April and 800 at Mai Po on 14 April. The final spring record was of 300 on 28 May at Mai Po. Autumn passage recorded from 8 July and the highest count was 600 on both 5 and 19 August when many juveniles were noted. Fifteen were present at Mai Po on 30 December.

144 Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

Forty-nine were noted in Deep Bay during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Spring numbers reached 2,500 on 9 April and 1,800 on 11th. The final spring record was of 70 at Mai Po on 13 May. Autumn passage noted from 5 August to 24 November with the highest count being 130 at Mai Po on 6 October.

145 Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

The highest count of the first winter period was 200 at Mai Po on 3 February. Spring passage reached a maximum of 800 on both 5 and 14 April. Non-breeding birds totalled 260 on 5 August. Autumn numbers peaked at 520 on 6 October and the highest count of the second winter period was 80 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 December.

146 Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer*

The first spring record was two at Mai Po on 30 March. Recorded throughout April and up to 19 May, the highest count being 25 on 11 April. Other records concerned eight on 28 May and two on 8 June. The only autumn record was of one on 19 October.

146.1 Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*

A single bird in breeding plumage on the Mai Po scrape on 1, 14, 15 and 16 April (MLC,GJC *et al.*) was only the second record for Hong Kong.

147 Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Forty-five were recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. The highest spring count received was of eight at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 April. Recorded in autumn from 5 August.

148 Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

One hundred and eleven were recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. Spring numbers did not exceed 75 except on 12 April when 450 were counted at an evening roost at Mai Po. Autumn passage noted from 5 August and the highest counts were 90 at Lok Ma Chau on 22 September and 150 at Mai Po on 13 October. Forty were present at Lok Ma Chau at the end of the year.

149 Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*

Spring passage recorded from 25 March to 28 May with the highest count being 150 at Mai Po on 11 April. Recorded in the autumn from 5 August to 14 October with the highest count being 50 on 9 September.

150 Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Sixty-four were recorded during the mid-January Waterfowl Count. The highest spring and autumn counts received were ten at Mai Po on 14 and 16 April and 12 at Mai Po on 19 August. Summering birds also noted on 8 July.

151 Grey-rumped Sandpiper *Heteroscelus brevipes*

Noted in spring from 10 April to 28 May with the latter date providing the maximum count of 100 at Mai Po. Recorded in the autumn from 5 August to 30 September with the highest count being six at Mai Po on 9 September.

152 Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Recorded in spring from 31 March to 28 May with the highest count being ten on 5 April. Two autumn records, both at Mai Po, were one on 19 August and two on 15 September.

153 Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

A poor year for this species with records on only four dates in the spring between 27 March and 4 May, the maximum being four on the earliest date. Autumn passage also recorded on only four dates between 8 and 16 September with six on 9 September.

Table 1. Numbers of selected wader species at Mai Po during 5-19 April 1990

Species	April														
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Mongolian Sand Plover	20	-	10	5	2	10	20	20	20	10	15	12	19	2	12
Greater Sand Plover	600	400	250	300	400	350	300	500	400	400	559	300	✓	6	60
Great Knot	100	40	100	180	200	300	200	300	✓	150	75	100	40	10	16
Red-necked Stint	120	300	200	300	250	450	400	350	✓	400	870	800	1000	20	150
Curlew Sandpiper	2000	2000	3000	4000	4000	6000	1500	1600	✓	6000	4000	4000	-	200	1000
Asiatic Dowitcher	10	34	2	40	25	80	40	99	105	69	110	111	-	270	213
Black-tailed Godwit	1200	500	300	750	700	500	1800	500	800	950	500	800	900	1500	800
Spotted Redshank	900	120	250	500	150	200	700	480	500	975	400	300	261	300	584
Redshank	950	-	75	70	300	350	200	100	560	800	200	250	344	100	109
Marsh Sandpiper	300	300	600	600	2500	750	1800	350	120	600	250	500	-	200	170
Greenshank	800	150	75	100	100	90	200	75	-	800	60	250	150	200	235
Nordmann's Greenshank	1	-	9	12	3	16	25	-	8	4	4	2	-	-	1
Terek Sandpiper	105	35	90	120	50	80	150	120	-	65	135	60	-	6	60

(Based on counts made by G. Carey, A. Stratford, R. Thorpe, J. Young)

✓ = present but not counted

\- = not recorded

156 Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*

A first-winter at Mai Po boardwalk on 28 and 29 January (PRK,PJL,VBP *et al.*) and an adult in breeding plumage there on 13 February (RWL).

157 Saunders' Gull *Larus saundersi*

Regular in Deep Bay up to 17 April and from 5 November. Maximum counts were 143 in winter on 11 February (GJC) and 57 in autumn on 1 December (CAV). It is encouraging to note that numbers appear to be rising each year, 143 being a new high count.

158 Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

The count of 15,279 during the mid-January Waterfowl Count was close to the figure produced by the three most recent mid-winter counts.

159 Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus*

Single adults seen at Mai Po boardwalk between 6 January and 25

March, and at Starling Inlet on 25 February (PRK,MT,GJC *et al.*). Two first-winter birds at Mai Po on 2 November (RWL).

159.1 Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei*

An adult seen from Mai Po boardwalk on 10 February was the first record for Hong Kong (PRK,MT,MLC *et al.*). What was presumed to be the same bird was subsequently seen at Starling Inlet on 25 and 26 February (WH *et al.*) (see separate paper in this Report).

160 Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris*

In the early part of the year up to three first-winter birds were regularly noted in Deep Bay until 1 April, when two were still present. On 25 February a flock of up to 43, all first-winter birds with the exception of three adults, was present at Starling Inlet. By 26 February only about 15 remained. Also, an adult at Mai Po on 3 March and two first-winter birds near Cheung Chau on 10 March. The only report during the latter part of the year involved a first-winter bird at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 December.

161 Common Gull *Larus canus*

A first-winter bird at Mai Po boardwalk on 21 January (MT,PJL).

162 Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

As with Black-headed Gull *L. ridibundus* the count of 363 during the mid-January Waterfowl count was very similar to the three previous mid-winter counts. A bird at Mai Po on the rather late date of 1 May was oiled.

[Gull *Larus* sp.

Single large first-winter birds with pale primaries were noted at Tsim Bei Tsui on 7 February (WLY) and Mai Po boardwalk on 26 December (MDW). Although showing characteristics of Glaucous-winged Gull *L. glaucescens*, the possibility of hybrids cannot be ruled out due to the presence of indistinct secondary bars and/or tail bands.]

167 Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*

Reported from Mai Po from 24 March, with 30 on 7 and 14 April. However, about 180 were at Nim Wan Ash Lagoons on 12 April, the largest group ever recorded in Hong Kong. Intermittently reported throughout May, with four at Mai Po on 8 June and three on 10 June. Also one there on 5 August.

168 Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*

Singles seen regularly from the boardwalk during January and February. Five present on 29 March, after which numbers grew rapidly, peaking at 115 on 12 April, with 58 still present on 14th. By 29th only three remained, though 15 were seen on 6 May. Also two at Nim Wan Ash Lagoons on 12 April. Seven at Mai Po on 3 June and three on 10 June. One at Mai Po on 25 August, two there on 21 September and three from 2 to 10 November.

170 Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana*

Forty-two at Tap Mun on 23 April (MAB). Two at Tap Mun and five at Gau Tau on 20 May.

175 Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Three at Mai Po on 8 April and one on 10th.

176 Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*

Up to two at Mai Po between 25 March and 12 May. Also two in Tolo Channel on 28 April. Thirty at Mai Po on 15 September, 12 on 22 September and singles on 7 October, 10 and 25 November and 2 December, this latter bird being an immature.

177 White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

Four at Mai Po on 25 April and one on 27 April. At least 100 at Mai Po on both 10 and 12 May, and again on 28 May, with lesser numbers on several intervening dates. Also 19 west of Beaufort Island on 13 May and up to 50 around the Soko Islands on 20 May. Twenty at Mai Po on 10 June, and one at Luk Keng on 8 September.

[Auk sp.

An unidentified small auk was seen flying close to the sea off Bate Head, Mirs Bay on 8 December (ARL). Insufficient details were noted for specific identification. All previous records in Hong Kong have been Ancient Auks *Synthliboramphus antiquus*.]

178 Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*

Up to 40 reported from the Deep Bay area in January, and up to 30 there in late September. Also a male at Tap Mun on 13 April, by which time reports from Deep Bay had ceased.

180 Rufous Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

A bird in Tai Po Kau on 28 May was a late record.

181 Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*

183 Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*

Regular reports from Tai Po Kau suggested that birds were probably present throughout the year. Also reported from Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 14 April (trapped) and 22 December, Mount Davis on 29 September, Hok Tau Reservoir on 13 October and Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma on 29 November.

185 Red-winged Crested Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus*

First reports were of singles heard at She Shan on 4 and 6 April, at Lok Ma Chau on 5 April and in Tai Po Kau on 12 April. Singles were then noted at widespread sites up to 4 June, and there were three at Tai Mei Tuk on 20 April and six near Chek Keng, Sai Kung on 28 April.

187 Large Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx sparverioides*

Reported from widespread areas between 20 March and 19 May. One in the ZBG on 15 December was the first mid-winter record.

189 Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus*

Winter reports were of singles at Mai Po on 12 January, at Luk Keng on 24 January, and at Ping Yeung, where one was heard on 24 January.

190 Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus*

First heard on 7 April at Beas River.

192 Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus*

Single birds at Mai Po on 9 and 19 May and Tsim Bei Tsui on 28 September (MH,RWL).

Other large cuckoos, probably this species, were seen in Tai Po Kau on 7 April (ARL), and Mai Po on 7 October (MT) and 10 November (KP).

193 Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea*

194 Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*

195 Lesser Coucal *Centropus benghalensis*

196 Collared Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena*

200 Barred Owlet *Glaucidium cuculoides*

Single birds seen or heard at Tai Po Kau on 7 and 18 March and 12 May (WLY,MT), Beas River on 7 April (GCHC), Tai Mei Tuk on 24 April (MAB), Shek Kong Catchwater on 1 and 21 June (MH,GCHC), Ho Chung on 4 June (MH) and Hebe Haven on 30 December (ARL).

205 Savannah Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis*

Up to two reported regularly from Chau Tau in late March and April. Also heard at Shek Kong on 8 April and seen near Yuen Long Industrial Estate on 20 June.

[**Swiftlet** *Collocalia* sp.

Unidentified single swiftlets were reported at Shuen Wan on 5 April (RPT) and Mount Davies on 8 April (PRK).

These are the first records of swiftlets for Hong Kong (see separate paper in this Report).]

206 White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus*

One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 15 April (PJL), at least two at Mai Po on 18 and 19 April (MT) and at least six there on 26 April (WLY), at least five at Mount Davis on 22 April and one there on 26 April (PRK).

207 White-vented Needletail *Hirundapus cochinchinensis*

A flock of 40 in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 5 April (MRL,PJL) with

at least five there on 7 April (WLY), and single birds at Mai Po and Ho Chung on 15 April (MRL,MH). A flock of 20 needletails at Luk Keng on 24 March was too high for specific identification (PRK).

208 Large White-rumped Swift *Apus pacificus*

Large groups reported included 80 near Mai Po on 31 March, but the most significant movements seemed to occur from 17 April when about 1,000 moved north at Mai Po, with 600 on 18 April, 100 on 19 April and 500 on 26 April.

209 House Swift *Apus affinus*

Even larger numbers of this species were involved in the movement of swifts referred to above. Approximately 10,000 moved north at Mai Po on 17 April, with 4,000 on 18 April, 500 on 19 April and 500 on 26 April.

210 White-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*

211 Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata*

A large arrival occurred during the last few days of September and continued into early October. Birds seen on Lamma at this time were considered unusual for the location.

211.1 Collared Kingfisher *Halcyon chloris*

One seen and photographed on the handrail of the Mai Po floating boardwalk on 7 October was the first record for Hong Kong (JSRE) (see separate paper in this Report).

212 Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

213 Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*

Up to four at Mai Po on many dates and also reported from the Starling Inlet area.

216 Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus orientalis*

In the spring groups of up to four reported from widespread areas between 8 April and 4 May. In the autumn up to two together at widespread locations between 9 September and 11 October.

217 Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Birds apparently wintering were up to three on Lamma from 1 January to 5 March and singles at Shek Kong on 7 January, Ma Tso Lung on 14 January and at the Jubilee Sports Centre, Shatin on 17 March. Singles were also seen at Mai Po on five dates in late January and early February and on 24 March, and at Shouson Hill on 28 April and Mai Po on 29 April. Others were noted at Kadoorie Farm on 21 and 22 May and 21 June, Bowen Path on 1 August, Chek Keng on 29 August and at King's Park, Kowloon from early July until mid-September.

218 Great Barbet *Megalaima virens*

219 Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Up to three reported on eleven dates from 7 January to 7 April, all from the Deep Bay area except for singles at Sha Lo Tung on 18 January and at Shek Kong on 18 March. In the autumn first reported from Mai Po on 15 September, with two birds there on 30 September, 24 November (trapped) and 8 December. Also singles at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20 October and Shek Kong on 28 November and 30 December.

222 Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

A female at Mount Davies on 24 April (RWL).

222.1 Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Picoides hyperythrus*

One first seen in Tai Po Kau on 13 November remained throughout the winter until April 1991 and was regularly seen around the Red Walk (RWL *et al.*).

This was the first record for Hong Kong (see separate paper in this Report).

[**Skylark** *Alauda* sp.

One singing at Yuen Long Industrial Estate on 12 April (DSM) was not specifically identified.]

226 Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Up to two recorded at Mai Po on 3 February, 2 March, 4, 5, 7, and 19 April, and 4 and 6 May. Also singles at Shuen Wan on 7 April and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 May and three at Mai Po on 17 November.

227 Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

On 5 April an estimated 3,000 at Mai Po, where about 300 moved south on 5 August. Breeding activity noted at Mai Po as early as 10 March.

228 Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*

About 30 near Tsim Bei Tsui on 3 February, one there on 24 February, and one at Mai Po on 18 March. A daily maximum of seven at both these locations between 1 and 7 April and then several reports of singles between 14 and 19 April. Also one in Long Valley on 7 April, up to two at Wah Fu between 15 and 28 April, and one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4 and 5 May. In the latter part of the year three at Mai Po on 4 October, one on 24 October, five on 17 November and two on 12 December.

229 Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus*

Three around the summit of Lantau Peak on 7 January. At least three at Ho Chung on 5 March, with six there the following day. One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 13 April and 15 at Mai Po the following day. Also 20 at Mai Po on 29 September.

230 Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*

231 Upland Pipit *Anthus sylvanus*

Reported from its regular sites at Tai Mo Shan and Lantau Peak.

232 Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*

Groups of up to 40 noted at widespread locations until mid-April and again from mid-October.

233 Pechora Pipit *Anthus gustavi*

Single birds trapped, ringed and photographed at Mai Po on 12 and 13 May (PJL,DSM,ACG *et al.*).

234 Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*

Groups of up to ten frequently reported, mainly from the Deep Bay area, until around 25 March, when passage produced greater numbers including 20 at Lok Ma Chau on that date and 30 at Mai Po on 31 March. Present in smaller numbers until at least 7 April. Groups of up to 20 seen again from 20 October.

235 Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Single birds at Ha Tsuen on 14 January and 5 November (MLC) and Mai Po on 14 and 17 November (PJL, MT).

236 Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus*

The only spring report was of one at Mai Po from 16 to 19 April. In the autumn, however, higher numbers than usual were recorded, with about a dozen between 22 August and 4 October, mainly from Tai Po Kau where two were present on 23 September, but also from Lai Chi Wo, Shek O and Mai Po. A late individual was at Mai Po on 20 October.

237 Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Highest counts were 100 at Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 5 May and 40 there on 28 April, all showing characters of the race *simillima*. Groups of up to 30 were occasionally reported from the Deep Bay area in January and from October, a group of 20 at Lok Ma Chau on 30 December appearing to hold birds showing characters of all three regularly occurring races, viz. *taivana*, *macronyx* and *simillima*. An early migrant was at Mai Po on 19 August.

239 Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

One at Shek O on 16 July was one day earlier than the previous earliest date.

240 White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Highest counts were 80 at Lok Ma Chau on 20 October, 60 at Mai Po on the same date and also on 10 February, and 55, again at Mai Po, on 16 April. Two birds, showing characters of the race *leucopsis*, at Mai Po on 5 August were early migrants.

242 Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike *Coracina melaschistos*

In the early part of the year singles were occasionally reported in Tai Po Kau until 19 April. There were also reports of singles from the Aberdeen Country Park on 2 February and both Lam Tsuen Valley and

Mai Po on 14 April. Apart from a bird at Cheung Uk, near Hok Tau on 13 October, this species was first noted in Tai Po Kau on 7 November, and then seen regularly there until the end of the year. Also one at Mount Nicholson on 18 November.

244 Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus*

In the spring singles reported from Cheung Chau on 1 and 15 April. Three at Tsim Bei Tsui on 7 April and four on 13 April. Two in Tai Po Kau on 15 September, one there on 4 October, and at least one heard on Cheung Chau on 5 October.

245 Grey-throated Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*

Reported throughout the year from Tai Po Kau, a family party being seen on 18 June. Flocks of at least 50 on both 9 January and 17 November exceeded the previous maximum count. Also seen at Shing Mun on 8 January.

246 Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus*

Reported throughout the year from Tai Po Kau, where a female was seen carrying food on 14 April, though counts did not exceed 30. Also seen at Shing Mun on 8 January and throughout the summer near the Chinese University, where it may have bred.

247 Crested Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*

248 Chinese Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis*

249 Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster*

250 Chestnut Bulbul *Hypsipetes castanonotus*

Reported throughout the year from Tai Po Kau and seen with young there on 26 August. Also one in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 21 February, a pair near Ho Chung on 5 June and four in woodland above Sai Kung on 4 October.

251 Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes madagascariensis*

Up to ten in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 21 February and about five in Tai Po Kau on several dates in late March, with one still present on 1 April.

251.1 Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*

Regularly seen in Tai Po Kau throughout the year with a maximum of four on 13 January (WLY) and at least one immature noted in January and November. Also one at Mount Austin on 19 February (WLY) and one on the Peak on 9 July (ACG).

255 Red-tailed Robin *Luscinia sibilans*

In Tai Po Kau two on 6 January and singles on 9 and 17 January, 10 and 13 March and 1 April. Five birds trapped at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 11 November were presumably amongst the influx of

birds which followed the arrival of a cold front two days before, and five were also trapped there on 25 November. One was noted in Tai Po Kau on 18 October and up to six were seen there from mid-November to the turn of the year. Three were at Chek Lap Kok on 23 November.

256 Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope*

Higher than usual numbers were reported by several observers in November, with at least eight at Violet Hill on Hong Kong Island on 11 November. Birds caught at Mai Po included a spring daily maximum of eight on 24 March and an autumn/winter maximum of ten on 8 December. Also trapped at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, ten on 25 November being the highest figure for one day. Reported up to 7 April and from 10 November.

257 Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

Up to two regularly at Lok Ma Chau until 7 April and at Mai Po until 8 April, apart from five there on 31 March. Also a maximum of two at Ha Tsuen up to 7 April. Singles at Mai Po on 12 December (a female) and at Lok Ma Chau on 25 December, and at least three at Ha Tsuen on 30 December.

258 Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane*

An immature female trapped and ringed on the Peak on 4 September (ACG,PJL).

259 Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

Ten in Tai Po Kau on 4 January and up to this number at widespread locations until 10 March. First noted in the latter part of the year in Tai Po Kau on 17 November, from which date up to ten regularly reported there. Also 14 trapped at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 25 November and 15 there on 23 December.

260 Daurian Redstart *Phoenicurus auroreus*

At least 15 birds from widespread locations up to 28 March, including a female at Mai Po from 28 January until 9 March. An adult female was trapped at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 11 November and two were at Mai Po on 14 November, one of which, a male, was trapped. Also, reports of singles, mainly from the northern New Territories, in November and December.

261 Plumbeous Water Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*

A pair in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 26 and 31 January and a male at Fo Tan on 28 April. Another male, first seen on 7 July and present until 27 August at Ho Chung, represented the first record of a bird summering in the Territory. Also a female in the Lam Tsuen Valley from 15 to 24 November.

262 Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis*

263 Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Recorded up to 28 April and again from 22 September.

264 Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea*

Two on Kat O Chau on 21 January, a male at Nam Chung on 5 March, an immature male at Mai Po on 5 October and a male at Tung Chung, Lantau on 30 December.

265.1 White-throated Rock Thrush *Monticola gularis*

One, probably adult female, trapped, ringed and photographed at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 11 November (PJL) was the first record for Hong Kong (see separate paper in this Report). Subsequently, an unringed immature or female was found in Tai Po Kau on 29 November (RWL) and remained in the same area well into 1991. Amazingly another similar bird was seen in a separate part of Tai Po Kau on 2 December (PJL, PRK, VBP *et al.*), within an hour of the second bird being seen again. Thus, altogether three separate birds were involved.

267 Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*

Reports of singles from widespread locations up to 22 April, the report on that date, from Jubilee Sports Centre, Shatin, coming well after the others, which ceased when a bird which had wintered at the Chinese University was not seen after 15 March. On 27 October seen both on Tap Mun and at Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung.

268 Violet Whistling Thrush *Myiophoneus caeruleus*

269 Orange-headed Ground Thrush *Zoothera citrina*

One in Tai Po Kau on 10 February (JSRE,VBP,WLY *et al.*) and one in the Aberdeen Country Park on 8 December (WLY).

270 White's Thrush *Zoothera dauma*

Up to two in Tai Po Kau until 3 February and again from 10 November, though at least five on 8 December. Also reported from Lamma on 24 January, Shek Kong on 11 February, Lok Ma Chau on 25 November and Mount Nicholson, where one over-wintered into 1991.

271 Siberian Thrush *Zoothera sibirica*

A single male in Tai Po Kau on 7 and 12 November (WLY,MT).

272 Grey Thrush *Turdus cardis*

During the early part of the year reports from widespread locations involving a maximum of ten individuals up to 15 April. Reported again from 12 November, with at least one male seen in Tai Po Kau until 30th. Also a male trapped at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 25 November and a female on 23 December.

273 Blackbird *Turdus merula*

A wintering flock of 25 to 30 at Leighton Hill up to 7 March was both the largest and the latest remaining group reported in the early part of the year. Arrivals were noted at Mai Po, Lam Tsuen and Hong Kong Island from 15 October, from which date groups of usually up to 20 were reported

from widespread areas. However, a group of 90 was at Hebe Haven on 13 November. This appears to be the largest single group ever reported in Hong Kong.

274 Brown Thrush *Turdus chrysolaus*

Single birds in the Aberdeen Country Park on 21 January (VBP), Tai Po Kau on 24 January (YYT) and 3 February (PRK, PJL) and Stonecutters Island on 30 December (TJA).

275 Grey-backed Thrush *Turdus hortulorum*

Present until 12 April and again from 14 November in widespread areas, the greatest concentration being about 20 in Tai Po Kau in early December.

276 Pale Thrush *Turdus pallidus*

In January and February up to two birds together from widespread areas, with five in the Aberdeen Country Park on 25 February and ten at the Jubilee Sports Centre, Shatin on 17 March. Last reported during the spring from Tai Mei Tuk on 28 March. Also one in Tai Po Kau on 12 December.

277 Eye-browed Thrush *Turdus obscurus*

Singles in Tai Po Kau on several dates during January and February. Also one at Tai Mei Tuk on 3 February, another at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 10 February and one on Cheung Chau on 14 March. Six in Tai Po Kau on 4 May and at least as many on 24 May. One was trapped at Mai Po on 10 November and up to two were seen in Tai Po Kau on three dates from 30 November.

278 Dusky Thrush *Turdus naumanni*

Singles reported from Ping Yeung (this bird showing characters of the race *eunomus)* on 24 January, from Lantau on 29 January and from Ha Tsuen on 10 February. Also one bird of the red-tailed race *naumanni* at Mai Po on 14 November. Although it is too early to be certain, it would appear that the recent large-scale destruction of its favoured swampy habitat in the northwestern New Territories has predictably had a marked effect on the numbers wintering in Hong Kong.

280 Short-tailed Bush Warbler *Cettia squameiceps*

A maximum of three reported from Tai Po Kau up to 10 February. Also seen in the Aberdeen Country Park up to 13 February and at Kadoorie Farm on 31 January. Reported again from 11 November in Tai Po Kau, with a maximum of seven seen there on 2 December.

280.1 Pale-footed Bush Warbler *Cettia pallidipes*

Single birds trapped, ringed and photographed at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 6 October (ACG,PJL,DSM *et al.*) and 11 November (PJL,ACG *et al.*).

These are the first two records of this species for Hong Kong (see separate paper in this Report).

281 Chinese Bush Warbler *Cettia diphone*

Reported from widespread areas up to 5 May and again from 11 November.

282 Mountain Bush Warbler *Cettia fortipes*

One trapped and ringed at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 28 January (PJL), two at Hok Tau on 9 March in diagnostic 'whiplash' song (RWL), two at Hebe Haven on 21 December (ARL) and another trapped and ringed at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 31 December. Increasing reports of this skulking species are possibly due to greater awareness by observers combined with birds trapped for ringing.

283 Fantail Warbler *Cisticola juncidis*

Maximum counts at individual locations were 15 at Ha Tsuen on 10 February and 25 at Lok Ma Chau on 30 December.

284 Brown Wren-warbler *Prinia subflava*

285 Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler *Prinia flaviventris*

286 Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola*

One at Mai Po on 17 May, the first spring record (WLY), one found dead on the road at Mai Po on 1 September (DSM), two at Luk Keng on 8 September (MRL,EPL,NJGC) and four there on 9 September (PJL,PRK), one adult and one first-winter trapped at Mai Po on 8 September (AJG,DSM), one seen there on 16 September (PJL) and one first-winter trapped there on 30 September (PJL,PRK).

Another streaked grasshopper warbler *Locustella* sp. was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 28 September (RWL). (See separate paper in this Report on variability of trapped birds and possible confusion with Lanceolated Warbler *L. lanceolata*).

287 Styan's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella pleskei*

Single birds trapped at Mai Po on 4 February, 3 March, 21 April and a first-winter on 10 November, and three trapped on 17 March (PJL,DSM,ACG). This species would not have been recorded without the intensive ringing programme undertaken at Mai Po.

288 Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata*

A first-winter seen at Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 21 October (VBP,JSRE) and another found dead at Yung Shu Long Tsuen, Lamma on 3 November (JNP).

289 von Schrenck's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*

Singles at Mai Po on many dates between 24 March and 17 May, with about 15 present on 29 April and 21 trapped on 6 May, when many more were seen and heard. Also, 16 trapped on both 8 and 16 May, though fewer on two intervening dates. Much scarcer there in the autumn, with up to two between 26 October and 1 December.

289.1 Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

A first-winter trapped and ringed at Mai Po on 3 November was retrapped on 10, 14 and 24 November during which time it commenced complete body and wing moult (PJL,ACG).

This is the second record in Hong Kong of this species which normally winters in India.

290 Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

One at Mai Po on 26 January. Subsequently recorded regularly there between 15 March and 17 May, about 40 being present on 29 April. Autumn passage occurred from 22 September, with over a hundred in the ringing area alone and 61 trapped on 29 September; birds were reported from widespread areas around this time of peak passage, including one at Black's Link on 4 October. Subsequently up to two reported regularly from Mai Po until 8 December.

291 Thick-billed Warbler *Acrocephalus aedon*

One at Mai Po Police Post on 10 and 11 February (PRK,MT,GJC) was the first winter record. Single birds trapped and ringed at Mai Po on 29 September (juvenile) and 30 September (first-winter) during a heavy passage period of Great Reed Warblers *A. arundinaceus* (PJL,DSM).

These represented the fourth, fifth and sixth records for Hong Kong.

292 Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler *Seicercus burkii*

Single birds regularly seen in Tai Po Kau up to 28 January and from 17 November except for an early record there on 9 September (MRL,EPL). Also one trapped and ringed at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 11 November (ACG,PJL).

5. Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler *Seicercus burkii*
HKU Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, 11 Nov 1990 *(Paul J. Leader)*

[The cost of reproduction of plate 5 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

295 Large Grass Warbler *Graminicola bengalensis*
At least two at Tai Mo Shan on 16 March (MLC) and 8 April (WLY).

296 Long-tailed Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius*

297 Sulphur-breasted Warbler *Phylloscopus ricketti*
Frequently seen in Tai Po Kau in small numbers up to 13 January and from 17 November with a maximum of between six and eight on 22 November (RWL). Also one at Mount Nicholson on 28 November (CAV).

298 Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*
Regular in Tai Po Kau up to 13 March and from 17 November, with a maximum of four in January (GJC). Also three in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 21 January and one there on 30 December (PJL,RWL,VBP), and one at Wu Kau Tang on 4 March (LWK,LKY,YYT).

299 Eastern Crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus coronatus*
One in Tai Po Kau on 7 April (PJL). Two near Sai Kung on 24 August (MH), a new early autumn date. Single birds trapped and ringed on the Peak on 31 August, 5 and 12 September (PJL,ACG), and seen on Cheung Chau on 1 September (MDW), in Tai Po Kau on 1, 9, 29 and 30 September (MRL,CYL,VBP), in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 27 September (RWL), at Pak Nai on 30 September (MLC) and in the Aberdeen Country Park (VBP) on 4 October. These records demonstrate an early autumn passage between late August and early October.

300 Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes*
Extreme dates were 5 April to 5 May and from 5 September to 14 October with isolated records between 1 and 11 December. Birds were trapped and ringed on the Peak on 5 May, 5 and 9 September, at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 6 October and Mai Po on 7 October (PJL,ACG,DSM).

The former confusion over the identification of this species is now dispelled with the realisation of olive-green (non-brown) backed birds as widespread passage migrants, especially in autumn, and occasional winter visitors. Other salient identification features are: a long broad whitish supercilium extending onto the nape, a broad dark eye-stripe and paler ear coverts, a greyish crown and nape, bill smaller than Arctic Warbler *P. borealis*, (upper mandible dark with small pale tip, lower mandible dull pink with darker tip), and thin wing bars; frequent tail-pumping; a tendency to keep low in the undergrowth; distinctive metallic 'chink' call.

6. Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes*
HKU Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, 6 Oct 1990 *(Paul J. Leader)*

300.2 Two-barred Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*
One at Tai Po Kau on 2 and 26 December (PRK,PJL,MDW).

1987: One at Mount Davis on 6 April (GJS,DMP). Two at Mount Nicholson on 4 November (CAV).
1989: One in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 7 January (RWL). One in Tai Po Kau on 11 February (PH).

Together with the first accepted record on 27 September 1989 and the others subsequently accepted for 1987/89 as above, the 1990 record represents the sixth record of this species in Hong Kong.

301 Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*
One on Cheung Chau on 22 February. Thereafter spring passage was, as usual, light, with five or six in both the Aberdeen Country Park and the Tai Long Wan/Chek Keng area on 28 April, up to two on Cheung Chau between 22 April and 1 May, and singles in Tai Po Kau on 1 April, at Mai Po on 29 April, Chek Nai Ping on 14 May and Ho Chung on 16 May. Autumn passage was noted from 16 August to 6 October, with up to ten in Tai Po Kau during September. Also a rather late bird at Mai Po on 14 November.

302 Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*
Reported from widespread areas up to 7 March and again from 18 November.

[The cost of reproduction of plate 6 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

303 Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Reported from widespread areas up to 28 April and from 28 September. At least twenty were in the small wood at Pak Nai on 29 December. The Hume's Yellow-browed Warbler *P. i. humei* first ringed in December 1989 was retrapped at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 27 January (PJL, ACG).

304 Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*

One in Tai Po Kau on 8 December (MT,CAV) was the sixth record for Hong Kong.

305 Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

Regularly seen at Mai Po and other areas up to 29 April, with one at Mai Po on 17 May. The presence of at least 20 at Mai Po on 20 January appeared to indicate a small arrival. Present again at Mai Po from 23 September. A considerable arrival occurred around 20 October when about 100 were noted at Mai Po and 42 were trapped there. A bird at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 11 November was in rather unusual habitat.

305.1 Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

A bird of the eastern race *P. c. tristis* seen at Mai Po Police Post between 3 and 25 February (PJL, PRK *et al.*) was the third record for Hong Kong.

306 Fukien Niltava *Niltava davidi*

A male on Cheung Chau between 22 February and 1 April (MDW *et al.*).

307 Hainan Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis hainana*

At least four birds regularly in song in Tai Po Kau from 31 March to 14 June. Also males in Tai Po Kau on 4 and 5 January and 30 September, and at Mount Davis on 29 September, and females in Tai Po Kau on 23 September and 24 November.

308 Blue and White Flycatcher *Muscicapa cyanomelana*

In the spring, single males noted in Tai Po Kau on 28 and 31 March, and 12 and 13 April. Another was in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 5 April, and up to two were seen on Cheung Chau between 15 and 25 April. In the autumn, males seen in Tai Po Kau on 25 September and 13 November, with an immature male on 12 November.

309 Verditer Flycatcher *Muscicapa thalassina*

A female in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 21 January, and other singles in Tai Po Kau on 4 January and, in song, on 15 April. Also males in Tai Po Kau on 1, 8 and 12 November and on Lamma on 11 November.

310 Ferruginous Flycatcher *Muscicapa rufilata*

Singles present in Tai Po Kau on 30 March, 12 April and 16 November.

311 Sooty Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica*

Single birds in Tai Po Kau on 30 September (CYL,MRL,EPL) and Mount Nicholson on 7 October (CAV).

312 Grey-streaked Flycatcher *Muscicapa griseisticta*

In the spring first reported on 18 April, when two were seen on Cheung Chau, peaking around 5 May. The only reports in the autumn were of singles in Tai Po Kau on 9 and 30 September and in the Aberdeen Country Park on 4 October.

313 Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa latirostris*

Reported from widespread areas up to 27 April and again from 26 August, autumn passage being as usual heaviest in late September and early October, with at least seven at Mai Po on 30 September.

314 Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

In the early part of the year singles at Luk Keng on 26 January, Tsim Bei Tsui on 4 February and at Mai Po from 10 February to 10 March. Also two trapped there on 17 March and another on 29 March. Later in the year singles reported from Tai Po Kau on 29 September, Mai Po between 30 September and 2 December, three of which were trapped, and from Shek Kong on 10 November, Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 December and Luk Keng on 30 December.

315 Robin Flycatcher *Ficedula mugimaki*

Singles on Lamma and at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 11 November, and up to four on several dates in Tai Po Kau during the second half of November and in early December.

316 Tricolour Flycatcher *Ficedula zanthopygia*

First reported from Wong Nai Chung Gap on 23 August, with another in Tai Po Kau on 29 August. Singles were then reported regularly there until 30 September, with two present on 23 September. Also singles at the Peak and Tsim Bei Tsui on 2 September, at Mai Po on 1 (trapped), 8 (trapped), 16, 29 and 30 September, and at Tai Mo Shan on 15 September, with three at Mong Tseng on 28 September. An immature male was trapped at Mai Po on the rather late date of 10 November.

317 Narcissus Flycatcher *Ficedula narcissina*

Singles in Tai Po Kau on 6 and 12 April, at Mount Davis on 7 and 8 April and at Fanling on 15 April, and three on Cheung Chau on 18 April, with one on 22 April.

318 Grey-headed Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*

Up to three in Tai Po Kau until 24 March and one in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 6 April. Also up to two in the Lam Tsuen Valley in late January and singles in the ZBG from 19 February to 17 March, at Hong Kong University on 8 February and Mai Po on 21 February. In the latter part of the year first reports were of singles in the ZBG on 23 October and in Tai Po Kau

on 4 November. After the major influx of winter visitors and passage migrants from around 8 November, up to 20 were present in Tai Po Kau until the end of the year, and there were several reports from other areas.

319 Asian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi*

In the spring one reported from Tai Po Kau on 12 and 13 April. Autumn passage noted at several locations from 12 August, at least a week earlier than in most years. Singles frequently reported, particularly from Tai Po Kau, up to 4 October, with three there on 2 September and four on 22 September.

320 Japanese Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone atrocaudata*

In the spring singles reported from Tai Po Kau on 1, 12 and 18 April and from Chek Keng on 19 April, with up to two seen on Cheung Chau on 15 April and singles on three occasions between 16 and 21 April. In the autumn reported mainly from Tai Po Kau, with singles there on 1, 2, 9, 16, 29 and 30 September and 4 October, and two or three birds present between 22 and 26 September. Also singles at Tai Mo Shan on 15 September and Hok Tau on 7 October.

321 Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher *Hypothymis azurea*

Singles on Cheung Chau from 17 January to 23 February, in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 21 January and at Shek Kong on 11 February. Also reported from Tai Po Kau on 30 September, from Hok Tau (a pair) on 13 October, from Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 27 October, from both Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre (trapped) and Lady Clementi's Ride on 11 November, from Tai Po Kau on 13 November, from Mai Po on 28 November and 1 December and from Tai Po Kau on 11 December.

322 Chinese Babax *Babax lanceolatus*

One at Tai Mo Shan on 24 April (MLC) and at least four there on 27 April (MAB).

323 Greater Necklaced Laughing Thrush *Garrulax pectoralis*

Seen throughout the year in Tai Po Kau, with food-carrying noted there on 14 April.

324 Black-throated Laughing Thrush *Garrulax chinensis*

Away from its regular sites on Hong Kong Island reported from Cheung Chau on several dates in February and March, with song heard there on 24 March, and from Tai Mei Tuk on 21 March.

325 Hwamei *Garrulax canorus*

326 White-cheeked Laughing Thrush *Garrulax sannio*

Away from its regular sites on Hong Kong Island frequently reported from Cheung Chau, and also from Lamma on 12 September.

327 Black-faced Laughing Thrush *Garrulax perspicillatus*

328 Pekin Robin *Leiothrix lutea*

Possible breeders were two near Nam Chung and another two at Tai Mo Shan, all on 19 May.

329 Collared Siva *Yuhina castaniceps*

Three at Mount Nicholson on the unusual date of 7 May may well have been of captive origin, as at least one had an abraded tail.

330 White-bellied Yuhina *Yuhina zantholeuca*

Reported throughout the year from Tai Po Kau, with at least 15 present on 2 September.

331 Red-headed Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*

Widespread reports of up to four in Tai Po Kau, on Cheung Chau, at Shek Kong Woods, Ho Chung and in the Aberdeen Country Park up to 28 May and from 6 December, except for one in Tai Po Kau on 7 September (NSG,IT). These records represent a significant increase in sightings of this distinctive species.

332 Yellow-bellied Tit *Parus venustulus*

The only report in the early part of the year involved one at Pak Nai on 14 January. An influx occurred from 6 November when one was first noted on Lamma. Groups of up to a dozen were then reported from widespread areas until the end of the year.

333 Great Tit *Parus major*

333.1 Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus*

Regularly reported throughout the year from Tai Po Kau with a pair collecting feathers on 13 March (MRL,EPL) and a maximum of four in December (MLC). Other records were one at Shing Mun on 4 January (GW), a male at Ng Tung Chuen, Lam Tsuen Valley on 4 March (MLC), one at the Peak Police Station on 23 June (ACG) and a family party near Lady Clementi's Ride on 3 July (JEB).

334 Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus*

An exceptional year for this species. Regular and numerous in the *Phragmites* beds at Mai Po from 7 January to 6 May, with a maximum of over 26 on 28 January and a total of 67 birds trapped and ringed during this period with no retraps (ACG,DSM,PJL *et al.*) (see separate paper in this Report). Also two at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 April (PJL), one there on 7 April (GJC) and two at Luk Keng on 5 April (RPT).

334.1 Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae*

A very tatty male in Tai Po Kau on 21 March was considered to be an obvious escape (GJC,WLY).

335 Fork-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga christinae*

336 Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*

A pair with two young in the Aberdeen Country Park on 7 May may have bred locally. Much commoner and more widespread from 1 November.

337 Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum*

Seen with young in Tai Po Kau on 13 September.

337.1 Plain Flowerpecker *Dicaeum concolor*

1988: A pair seen nest building at Ho Sheung Heung on 2 April 1988 was the first record accepted for Hong Kong (GCHC) (see separate paper in this Report). Also one in Tai Po Kau on 25 November 1988 (RWL).

338 Chestnut-flanked White-eye *Zosterops erythropleura*

One in Tai Po Kau on 2 January and at least two there from 21 November (RWL,WLY). Also one at Mount Butler on 4 February (NSG) and a female/immature trapped at Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre on 11 November (PJL *et al.*).

339 White-eye *Zosterops japonica*

340 Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*

One at Hebe Haven on 5 May. At Mai Po singles on 19 August (a juvenile), 8 and 16 September, and 3 November, with three on 7 October. Four at Mount Davis on 29 September and further singles at Pak Nai on 30 September and at Chek Keng on 27 October. Also present throughout the year at Island House where it probably bred.

341 Tiger Shrike *Lanius tigrinus*

An immature in Tai Po Kau on 9 September (WLY) was only the third record for Hong Kong.

341.1 Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus*

An immature seen and photographed at Tsim Bei Tsui on 24 October (MH) and probably the same bird there on 2 November (RWL).

This was the fourth record for Hong Kong.

342 Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*

Singles at Pok Fu Lam on 26 January and Mai Po on 9 March. Heaviest passage in the spring noted around 28 April, when at least ten were in the Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung area. A bird showing characters of the race *cristatus* was at Mai Po on 27 May. Autumn passage much lighter with singles at Tai Mei Tuk on 23 August, at Mai Po on 16 September, at Mai Po on 7 October, this bird also showing characters of the race *cristatus*, and on Lamma on 30 October.

343 Rufous-backed Shrike *Lanius schach*

345 Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*

346 Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*

Two in Tai Po Kau on 3 February and singles seen there regularly up to 14 April and again from 4 October.

347 Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*

Reported throughout the year from widespread areas, winter flocks rising to at least 17 in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 17 November. Also a pair with three young at Shek Kong on 21 June and at least three birds singing in the Kennedy Road area in May.

348 Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Several reports of up to three in the northern and eastern New Territories between 2 February and 5 May.

349 Blue Magpie *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*

An unusual report was of one in the trees at the Mai Po egretry and Pak Hok Chau Police Post between 6 April and 12 May.

350 Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae*

Up to two reported intermittently from Tai Po Kau and the Lam Tsuen Valley until 1 May and again at the former site from 26 August. Also noted at Queen Mary Hospital on 15 April, at Shek Kong Catchment on 18 May and near Sunset Peak, Lantau on several dates in late May and early June.

351 Magpie *Pica pica*

352 Jungle Crow *Corvus macrorhynchus*

Seventy-nine were counted in Tai Po Kau on 26 August.

353 Collared Crow *Corvus torquatus*

354 Silky Starling *Sturnus sericeus*

In the early part of the year flocks of up to 40 reported from widespread areas until 5 April. Reported again from 17 October, with flocks of about 200 at Ha Tsuen and 300 near Nam Chung both on 30 December.

[355 Purple-backed Starling *Sturnus sturninus*

A single bird at Lam Tsuen on 29 and 30 September was probably this species (RWL). A flock of 20 small starlings at Lok Ma Chau on 11 October were either Purple-backed or Chestnut-cheeked Starlings *S. sturninus/philippensis* (NJGC).]

357 Chinese Starling *Sturnus sinensis*

Winter flocks of this species seem to be a thing of the past and most reports were of migrants — flocks of up to 50, mainly in the Deep Bay area, between 31 March and 5 May, and again in the autumn, with at least 24 on Cheung Chau on 22 August and 43 moving through Mai Po on 27 October.

However, several pairs bred in the Siu Lam/Castle Peak area and a pair at Tung Chung, Lantau on 26 August may also have been local breeders.

360 Grey Starling *Sturnus cineraceus*

Reported from the Deep Bay area up to 18 April, the biggest single count being at least 50 at Mai Po on 17 March. Seemed scarcer than usual in the latter part of the year, with very small numbers occasionally reported from 10 November and 30 at Ha Tsuen on 30 December.

361 Black-necked Starling *Sturnus nigricollis*

362 Crested Mynah *Acridotheres cristatellus*

A roost of 130 birds was noted in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 1 November.

363 Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

364 White-backed Munia *Lonchura striata*

A flock of ten on Cheung Chau on 6 January was extremely unusual at that location.

365 Spotted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*

366.1 Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

A female at Mai Po on 3 March on a day of heavy bunting passage (PJL,MLC).

367 Chinese Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica*

Twelve on Cheung Chau on 4 March, singles on three dates from 28 March to 16 April and six on 18 April, song being noted on 16 April. Also, six at the Jubilee Sports Centre, Shatin on 13 March and two on 22 and 24 April, three at Wah Fu on 16 April and eight there on 22 April, singles at Mai Po also on 22 April, on Po Toi on 13 May and display-flighting at Fo Tan on 3 June. A sadly significant report was of a flock of about 50 on Chek Lap Kok on 23 November.

368 Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

The winter 1990/91 was exceptional for Siskins with widespread records of large flocks. The first report of this irruption was six birds at Stanley Mound on 11 November (JSRE). Subsequently a flock of at least 60 was found near Shek Kong airfield on 24 November (JH *et al.*) and remained in that area for several weeks. On 30 December a flock of 30 was seen at Siu Lam (MLC). The previous highest count was 30 in 1973.

369 Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

A flock of 15 at Chau Tau on 10 March included at least two males. Also a male in Tai Po Kau on 12 December.

370 Black-tailed Hawfinch *Coccothraustes migratorius*

Apart from a flock of at least 40 in the Lam Tsuen Valley on 1 March,

mainly recorded in small flocks of up to 14 birds, the last report from the early part of the year being of a female at Mai Po on 8 April. Reports were almost entirely lacking for the later part of the year, and though one bird was seen at Island House on 4 November — the first report of the winter in fact — the species did not roost there as it had during the winter of 1989/90.

371 Masked Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala*

Regularly reported from widespread areas up to 4 May, with heavy passage as usual during March and at least 50 at Mai Po on 31 March. Reported again from 10 November.

373 Grey-headed Bunting *Emberiza fucata*

One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 2 November.

373.1 Yellow-throated Bunting *Emberiza elegans*

A male at Plantation Road, the Peak, on 27 March (BAB) was the third record for Hong Kong.

373.2 Yellow-browed Bunting *Emberiza chrysophrys*

One at Mai Po on 8 March (MH). Probably the same bird, a female was seen on 28 March, trapped and ringed on 29 March and subsequently seen on several occasions up to 26 April (SC, ACG, PRK *et al.*). Also one on Cheung Chau on 23 April (MDW).

On the basis of these fourth and fifth records of apparently wild birds during passage periods, this species has been reinstated to Category A after a period of five years in Category D (717).

374 Tristram's Bunting *Emberiza tristrami*

Present in Tai Po Kau up to 1 April and from 14 November, with up to 17 in January. Also seen in January in the Lam Tsuen Valley and at Shing Mun, where at least ten were present on 8th.

375 Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica*

A female/immature at Tung Chung, Lantau on 30 December (DT).

376 Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

Rather scarce at the beginning of the year with indications of passage between 18 February and 26 April. Forty at Mai Po on 31 March and 15 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 April. Seen again from 8 December.

377 Chestnut Bunting *Emberiza rutila*

Up to three in Tai Po Kau in early January. During spring migration noted regularly at Mai Po around the middle of April, with a maximum of 11 on 14 April and the last report, of a single female, on 29 April. Also a female noted on Cheung Chau on 22 April. Two were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 2 November, with singles there on 6 and 11 November and at Luk Keng on 10 November, up to six in Tai Po Kau from 15 November to around the end of that month, and further singles at Mount Austin on 29 November

and at Mount Nicholson in a Tree Sparrow flock from 27 November into early December. Also at least 20 at Sha Lo Tung on 11 December.

378 Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola*

One at Ping Yeung and two at Luk Keng on 24 January. Evidence of passage between 29 March and 5 May, with reports of flocks of up to ten from widespread areas. Seen again from 8 September to 14 November, when 20 were at Mai Po, the highest count of the autumn.

379 Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

A female trapped and ringed at Mai Po on 4 March (ACG) was the sixth record for Hong Kong.

380 Crested Bunting *Melophus lathami*

Records of males at Mai Po on 10, 18 and 21 March may have involved a single bird. Also one at Chek Lap Kok on 23 November.

CATEGORY C. SPECIES WHICH ALTHOUGH ORIGINALLY INTRODUCED BY MAN, HAVE NOW ESTABLISHED A REGULAR FERAL BREEDING STOCK WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT BE SELF-SUPPORTING

601 Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

603 Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua sulphurea*

604 Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

605 Common Mynah *Acridotheres tristis*

One at Yuen Long on 5 April and two at Happy Valley Race Course on 12 November. Two at Mai Po on 12 April.

606 Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyana*

Smaller numbers than before recorded in the ZBG.

CATEGORY D. SPECIES WHICH HAVE OCCURRED IN AN APPARENTLY WILD STATE BUT FOR WHICH THE POSSIBILITY OF ESCAPE OR RELEASE FROM CAPTIVITY CANNOT BE SATISFACTORILY EXCLUDED

704 Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri*

One at Central Government Offices on 6 April (ARL).

704.1 Blue-winged Pitta *Pitta moluccensis*

1989: One on Cheung Chau on 4 May 1989 was the firs t record for Hong Kong (MDW) (see separate paper in this Report).

705.1 Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous*

Two first seen at Luk Keng on 24 January remained there until at least 13 May (GJC,WLY,PRK *et al.*). What were presumably the same two were seen there again on 9 September in wing moult (PJL,PRK) and again on 11 September (WLY) and three were recorded there on 26 October (CYL). The birds behaved as a pair in spring with much song from the presumed male and courtship chasing noted on 12 April (MAB). The three in autumn suggests that successful breeding may have occurred.

These are the first records for Hong Kong (see separate paper in this Report).

707 Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*

One or two seen or heard in the Aberdeen Country Park (especially the Morning Walkers' Garden) throughout the year (WLY,VBP *et al.*). Also regularly heard at Mount Nicholson (CAV,ARL), heard at Jardine's Lookout in October (JSRE) and in Tai Tam Country Park in December (JEB), and two or three seen near Mount Butler in December (JSRE). This species appears to be spreading across the higher ground of Hong Kong Island.

712.1 Ruddy Sparrow *Passer rutilans*

A male trapped and ringed at Mai Po on 8 September and subsequently seen on 15 and 16 September (PJL,ACG,PRK), and a female at Lam Tsuen on 30 September (RWL).

These were the second and third records for Hong Kong.

713 Red Avadavat *Amandava amandava*

Seen and trapped in the summer months at Mai Po including ten on 15 July (GCHC).

715.2 Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*

An obvious escaped/released male in poor plumage at Telegraph Bay on 15 April (CAV).

715.3 Meadow Bunting *Emberiza cioides*

A female/immature at Tung Chung on 30 December was accepted as the first record of a probably wild bird in Hong Kong (TRC,CYL) (see separate paper in this Report).

Other previous records considered to be escapes or releases because

of poor plumage condition were three at Sandy Bay on 14 April, one still there on 15 April and two still there on 7 May (SPS), six at Tai Mo Shan on 24 April (MAB) and one at Mai Po on 12 May (CAV). Another female/ immature bunting, probably this species, was noted at Sandy Bay on 30 December (RCN).

715.4 Grey-necked Bunting *Emberiza buchanani*

One at Mai Po on a bund behind the Education Centre on 17 March (MT) was the first record for Hong Kong (see separate paper in this Report).

CATEGORY E. SPECIES FOR WHICH ALL PUBLISHED RECORDS ARE SUSPECTED OF BEING BIRDS WHICH HAVE ESCAPED OR HAVE BEEN RELEASED FROM CAPTIVITY

810.06	**Crested Lark***	*Galerida cristata*
812	**Golden-fronted Leafbird**	*Chloropsis aurifrons*
812.2	**White-tailed Robin***	*Cinclidium leucurum*
814	**Hill Blue Flycatcher**	*Cyornis banyumas*
814.1	**White-throated Fantail**	*Rhipidura albicollis*
816	**Silver-eared Mesia**	*Leothrix argentauris*
816.02	**Red-tailed Minla**	*Minla ignotincta*
816.03	**White-collared Yuhina***	*Yuhina diademata*
816.04	**Long-tailed Tit**	*Aegithalos caudatus*
816.07	**Coal Tit*****	*Parus ater*
816.08	**Velvet-fronted Nuthatch**	*Sitta frontalis*
816.2	**Green Jay***	*Cyanocorax yncas*
817	**House Crow**	*Corvus splendens*
820.1	**Jungle Mynah****	*Acridotheres fuscus*
821	**White-vented Mynah**	*Acridotheres javanicus*
822	**Indian Grackle**	*Gracula religiosa*
833.05	**Goldfinch***	*Carduelis carduelis*
833.2	**Pine Bunting***	*Emberiza leucocephalos*

Silver-eared Mesias were noted in increasing numbers, up to 20, in Tai Po Kau and at Lead Mine Pass, and were also noted in Pok Fu Lam Country Park in May.

Velvet-fronted Nuthatches were reported in the Aberdeen Country Park for the first time and may have bred in Tai Po Kau, as juveniles were noted in the second half of the year.

First recorded in 1988***, 1989** and 1990*

THE FOLLOWING RECORDS WERE SUBMITTED BUT NOT ACCEPTED BY THE RECORDS COMMITTEE

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* Mai Po, 14 January and 21 December
Pied Harrier *Circus melanoleucos* Tsim Bei Tsui, 3 January
Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis* Tai Po Kau, 11 February; Kam Tin 7 April
Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer* Mai Po, 26 April
Slaty-backed Gull *Larus schistisagus* Mai Po, 14 December
Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* Tsim Bei Tsui, 3 January; Mai Po, 11 December
Mountain Bush Warbler *Cettia fortipes* Sam A Tsuen, 1 January
Eastern Crowned Warbler *Phylloscopus coronatus* Tai Po Kau, 3 December
Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes* Tai Po Kau, 29 and 30 September
Two-barred Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*
1985: Tai Po Kau, 5 January and 23 February
1987: Cheung Chau, 17 September; Tai Po Kau, 13 December
1988: Tai Po Kau, 17 and 24 February; Hong Kong Island, 14 to 27 December
1989: Pok Fu Lam, 3 January
Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi* Mai Po, 18 October; the Peak, 6 November
Yellow-browed Bunting *Emberiza chrysophrys* Mai Po, 11 October
Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica* Lok Ma Chau, 17 March
Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* Tsim Bei Tsui, 17 January
Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps* Tai Tam, 30 December
Grey-headed Parrotbill *Paradoxornis gularis* Tai Tam, 25 March
White-tailed Robin *Cinclidium leucurum* ZBG, 16 January
Black-chinned Yuhina *Yuhina nigrimenta* Chek Lap Kok, 15 August
White-browed Shrike Babbler *Pteruthius flaviscapis* Tai Po Kau, 6 November
Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala* Sandy Bay, spring
Lord Derby's Parakeet *Psittacula derbyana* Central Government Offices, 6 April

INTERNATIONAL WATERFOWL COUNT IN DEEP BAY, HONG KONG 1990

M. L. Chalmers

The eleventh annual co-ordinated waterfowl count organised by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society was held in the Deep Bay area in mid-January 1990. The main count was held on Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 January. For the first year, supplementary counts during the period of just over one week each side of the main count (i.e. 5 to 22 January 1990) have also been included, if totals were higher, to give a more complete picture of the mid-winter water bird population. This has led to nine species being added, bringing the total species count to a new high of 73.

The full results under each count area are given in Table 1. As before, counts for Deep Bay included the Mai Po boardwalk and Tsim Bei Tsui fence area, but excluded Fu Tien in the People's Republic of China on the north shore of the Bay, which is listed separately. Although most of the former wetland habitat at Ha Tsuen and Tin Shui Wai has been reclaimed, the remaining pockets were nevertheless covered this year; it is unlikely that these will last much longer. The remaining areas at San Tin, Lok Ma Chau, and Lo Wu were also included but because of disturbance and development contributed little to the overall totals.

The results showed that 37,891 water birds were present in the Deep Bay area in mid-January, divided into major groups as follows:

Group	Number	Species
Cormorants	3,407	1
Herons, egrets etc	6,753	13
Duck	5,730	16
Rails, Coot, Moorhen and others	1,136	8
Waders	5,120	28
Gulls and terns	15,745	7
Total	37,891	73

The overall total remains within the range of 36,454 to 38,947 which has been maintained over the last five years. However, this year the group totals for Cormorants and herons are both significantly higher than in previous years, although these have been compensated for by a marked drop in the number of duck, which in 1987 and 1988 exceeded 11,000.

On an individual species basis new high counts were established for the following species:

Cormorant (3,407), Night Heron (1,179), Chinese Pond Heron (684), Cattle Egret (360), Little Egret (2,121), Intermediate Egret (16), Great Egret (642), Grey Heron (1,699), Black-faced Spoonbill (42), Mallard (48), Yellow-nib Duck (302), Red-breasted Merganser (97), Grey Plover (276), Black-tailed Godwit (100), Curlew (457), Redshank (127), Greenshank (206), Green Sandpiper (57), Common Sandpiper (90) and Saunders' Gull (93). The counts for Black-faced Spoonbill and Saunders' Gull are especially noteworthy given the restricted wintering areas of these species. Also the following species were added to the count list for the first time: Black-necked Grebe (second record for Hong Kong), Mandarin and Ruddy Crake. The Mandarin, together with the Scaup and Common Pochard records, were for wild birds attracted to the Captive Waterfowl Collection at Mai Po, which was opened in the autumn of 1989.

On the negative side the most significant drop was for Shelduck, down from over 4,000 in 1988 to 463. Pintail and Shoveler also fell sharply from highs of over 2,500 and 3,000 respectively since 1987 to less than 1,000 each. Last year duck numbers were possibly affected by construction works in Deep Bay for the Tin Shui Wai new town project. This year most of the disturbing works have been completed yet duck numbers have continued to drop.

Another concern is the small numbers of wintering Dalmatian Pelicans, down to only nine this year. In recent years disturbance from newly established fish nets and fishermen has been a major problem. Despite these activities having been significantly curtailed on the Hong Kong side of Deep Bay, some disturbance continues and pelican numbers continue to drop, possibly due to persecution or pressure elsewhere.

Lastly, numbers of water birds at Fu Tien Reserve were disappointingly low due to hunting, which is obviously widespread despite this area having been declared a nature reserve.

The assistance of the Guangdong Forestry Bureau, for allowing access to Fu Tien, and the World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong is gratefully acknowledged. The following observers contributed records for the count:

G.J. Carey, M.L. Chalmers. S.K.F. Chan, N.J.G. Croft, J. Ede, J.S.R. Edge, J. Holmes, P.R. Kennerley, A.R. Lamont, M. Lau, P.J. Leader, R.W. Lewthwaite, D.S. Melville, C.M. and V.B. Picken, R.D.E. Stott, M. Turnbull, C.A. Viney, Y.F. Wan, F.K.O. Wong, H.K.C. Yau, L. Young.

一九九〇年水禽調查錄得鳥類73種，共37,891頭。總頭數在過去五年錄得的36,454至38,947範圍之內。今年鷸鷸和鷺類的數目比往年多得多，但鴨類頭數顯著下降，只有5,730頭。由於捕獵活動頻繁，后海灣北面中國境內福田保護區內的水鳥很少，令人失望。

TABLE 1. Summary of Waterfowl Count 1990

Species	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lok Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Tsim Bei Tsui	Total
Little Grebe	10	11	9	33	1	10	2	76
Great Crested Grebe	8				4		11	23
Black-necked Grebe				1				1
Cormorant	*	121	*	20	3,266			3,407
Dalmatian Pelican				*	9			9
Bittern				1				1
Yellow Bittern		1					1	2
Night Heron	1,000	150					29	1,179
Chinese Pond Heron	146	138	81	171	12	78	58	684
Cattle Egret		139	113	104	1	2	1	360
Little Egret	155	87	150	989	357	251	132	2,121
Intermediate Egret				11	5			16
Great Egret	57	92	38	268	152	5	30	642
Grey Heron	28	35	4	537	1,060	35		1,699
Purple Heron				4				4
White Ibis				1				1
European Spoonbill				1	1			2
Black-faced Spoonbill	*			42				42
Shelduck	5				458			463
Mandarin				2				2
Wigeon	19	2		85	226	15	137	484
Falcated Teal				127	27			154
Gadwall			4	8	16			28
Teal	95	600		201	1,302		20	2,218

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lok Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Tsim Bei Tsui	Total
Mallard				1	47			48
Yellow-nib Duck	14			153	135			302
Pintail	192			38	702		64	996
Garganey		10						10
Shoveler	16	50		10	841	2		919
Common Pochard		1		1				2
Baer's Pochard	1			1				2
Tufted Duck				4				4
Scaup				1				1
Red-breasted Merganser							97	97
Rail sp.	1							1
Ruddy Crake					1			1
White-breasted Waterhen	2	4	1	8	7	1	2	25
Moorhen		59	2	55	15	2		133
Coot		190	109	521	24	20	3	867
Avocet					233			233
Oriental Pratincole			1					1
Little Ringed Plover	1	66		4	56	140		267
Kentish Plover	644	6			63			713
Greater Sand Plover					6			6
Asiatic Golden Plover	2							2
Grey Plover	3				273			276
Grey-headed Lapwing		7			7			14
Great Knot					1			1

Continued ....

TABLE 1 continued

Species	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lok Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Tsim Bei Tsui	Total
Red-necked Stint	2							2
Temminck's Stint					22	20		42
Long-toed Stint			1		1	20		22
Curlew Sandpiper					1			1
Dunlin	21				64			85
Ruff				1				1
Fantail Snipe	61	22	80	5		44		212
Pintail Snipe			15					15
Black-tailed Godwit					100			100
Bar-tailed Godwit					1			1
Curlew	*				457			457
Australian Curlew					1			1
Spotted Redshank	30			41	603			674
Redshank	127							127
Marsh Sandpiper		4			45			49
Greenshank	46	2		5	151	1	1	206
Green Sandpiper	6	10	4	16	9	10	2	57
Wood Sandpiper	2	19	56	21	13	4		115
Common Sandpiper	13	24	3	24	11	9	6	90
Small wader sp.	50			300		1,000		1,350
Saunders' Gull	1				92			93
Black-headed Gull	*	5,000	75	20	9,300		884	15,279
Brown-headed Gull					1			1
Black-tailed Gull	1						1	2

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung Lo Wu	San Tin Lok Ma Chau	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Tsim Bei Tsui	Total
Common Gull					1			1
Herring Gull	1	3			340		20	364
Gull sp.		2						2
Caspian Tern					3			3

* Total deleted to avoid possible double count

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SUMMARY OF THE 1990 BIG BIRD RACE

J. S. R. Edge

The seventh annual Big Bird Race, held to raise funds for the Mai Po Marshes project of the World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong, was held on 6 and 7 April 1990. A major change from previous years was that this year the Race was held over 24 hours, from 1800h on 6 April to 1800h on 7 April, rather than for 20 hours on a single day, the idea being to enable teams to record Hong Kong Island species on the evening of 6 April, thus leaving them free to concentrate on the Deep Bay area on 7 April when the tide was lower than average. Fewer than half the teams followed this logic and those that chose to start at Mai Po on 6 April, to catch the evening high tide, generally finished the Race ahead of those who started on the Island, and with 15 teams competing this year, severe congestion in the hides at Mai Po was largely avoided. The total number of species recorded by all teams was 218, considerably down on the 1989 aggregate of 232; nine new species were added to the running total for all Races since 1984, increasing the overall list to 280. The Race was won by the Professionals, with 156 species, but a mere six species separated the first seven teams. Disregarding the score of the 15th team, who were all welcome newcomers to the Race and the first entirely foreign team to compete, the average number of species seen by the other 14 teams was 144 out of a total of 218, as against an average of 137 out of a total of 232 by 14 teams in 1989. These figures suggest greater efficiency on the part of competitors, but may result in part from the birds being confined to fewer sites owing to the relentless pace of development in Hong Kong.

The new species recorded included Scaup, Common Pochard and Mandarin, attracted by the new Captive Waterfowl Collection at Mai Po; Baer's Pochard, elsewhere on the marsh; Little Stint, again at Mai Po; Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler and Brown-breasted Bulbul, both Category D species; a Blyth's Pipit on the Fence at Tsim Bei Tsui which was accepted for the Race but subsequently, after consideration by the Records Committee of the Society, has not been accepted as a 'first' for Hong Kong; and lastly a Hoopoe at Shek Kong Airstrip which was adjudged to be the best bird seen during the Race. Table 1 below sets out all species recorded in the seven Races to date; it also indicates which species were recorded in 1990 and the number of years in which a species has been recorded.

One clear fact emerges from the table and from the comparatively low aggregate list of 218 species — that there were relatively few passerine migrants in Hong Kong during the Race period. In 1989, for instance, eight species of flycatcher were recorded, including five passage migrants; 1990 however produced only three species (Hainan Blue, Brown and Red-breasted), none of which is exclusively a passage migrant, Hainan Blue being known as a summer visitor but possibly resident, and the other two mainly winter visitors. 1989 saw a strong passage of birds of prey, with Japanese Sparrowhawk, Horsfield's Goshawk and Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle all being noted, but in 1990 all these were absent. Of the winter visitors, some had departed earlier than in previous years whereas others, which might normally depart early, remained — Red-tailed Robin, for example. Five species of thrush were seen, compared with an exceptional nine in 1988. The Deep Bay wintering flock of Dalmatian Pelicans, which has been shrinking steadily in recent years, had again left, due perhaps in part to disturbance, whereas this species was recorded quite regularly during the early years of the Race. Cuckoos, some of which are passage migrants and some summer visitors, were well represented, with Red-winged Crested, Large Hawk, Indian and Oriental Cuckoos all being recorded. Habitat loss most likely explains the absence of Painted Snipe and Dusky Thrush this year, their regular site at Ha Tsuen having been filled in.

As in previous years, however, birds associated with water were again central to all teams' lists, with ten species of heron, White Ibis, both Black-faced and European Spoonbills, 15 species of duck and 43 species of wader being recorded. Spoon-billed Sandpiper was missed this year, although known to be in Hong Kong, but the spread of waders again provided an impressive and challenging spectacle at Mai Po. The Race is run for the benefit of Mai Po and it is gratifying that the effort that has been put into it is reaping such exciting dividends. It is to be hoped that Deep Bay does not deteriorate to such an extent, whether due to pollution or development, that the relationship between it and the Mai Po Marshes is irredeemably altered.

White Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus* *(Jeremy Pearse)*

Table 1. Species recorded in all seven Big Bird Races between 1984 and 1990. The first column indicates whether the bird was seen in 1990 while the second column shows the number of years/Races in which the species has been recorded.

Little Grebe	•	7
Cormorant	•	7
Dalmatian Pelican		3
Lesser Frigatebird		1
Bittern		1
Yellow Bittern	•	6
Chestnut Bittern		2
Night Heron	•	7
Little Green Heron	•	7
Chinese Pond Heron	•	7
Cattle Egret	•	7
Swinhoe's Egret		4
Reef Egret		4
Little Egret	•	7
Intermediate Egret	•	7
Great Egret	•	7
Grey Heron	•	7
Purple Heron	•	7
White Ibis	•	7
European Spoonbill	•	6
Black-faced Spoonbill	•	7
Ruddy Shelduck		2
Shelduck	•	7
Mandarin	•	1
Wigeon	•	7
Falcated Teal	•	5
Gadwall	•	3
Teal	•	7
Mallard	•	4
Yellow-nib Duck	•	7
Pintail	•	6
Garganey	•	7
Shoveler	•	7
Common Pochard	•	1
Baer's Pochard	•	1
Tufted Duck	•	3
Scaup	•	1
Black Baza		2
Crested Honey Buzzard		2
Black Kite	•	7
Brahminy Kite		1
White-bellied Sea Eagle	•	3
Serpent Eagle	•	6
Marsh Harrier	•	7
Japanese Sparrowhawk		2
Sparrowhawk	•	3
Crested Goshawk	•	6
Horsfield's Goshawk		1
Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle		4
Buzzard	•	3
Spotted Eagle	•	4
Imperial Eagle	•	3
Bonelli's Eagle	•	5
Mountain Hawk Eagle		1
Osprey	•	7
Kestrel	•	4
Peregrine Falcon	•	5
Chinese Francolin	•	6
Japanese Quail	•	5
Water Rail		1
Banded Rail	•	5
White-breasted Waterhen	•	7
Moorhen	•	7
Watercock		2
Coot	•	7
Painted Snipe		3
Black-winged Stilt	•	6
Avocet	•	6
Oriental Pratincole	•	6
Little Ringed Plover	•	7
Kentish Plover	•	7
Mongolian Sand Plover	•	7
Greater Sand Plover	•	7
Oriental Plover		2
Asiatic Golden Plover	•	7
Grey Plover	•	7
Grey-headed Lapwing	•	5
Lapwing		1
Great Knot	•	7
Knot		6
Sanderling	•	6
Red-necked Stint	•	7
Little Stint	•	1
Temminck's Stint	•	7
Long-toed Stint	•	7
Pectoral Sandpiper		1
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	•	7
Curlew Sandpiper	•	7
Dunlin	•	5
Spoon-billed Sandpiper		4
Broad-billed Sandpiper	•	6
Ruff	•	4
Fantail Snipe	•	7
Pintail Snipe	•	7
Swinhoe's Snipe	•	5
Asiatic Dowitcher	•	6
Black-tailed Godwit	•	6
Bar-tailed Godwit	•	7
Little Whimbrel		1
Whimbrel	•	7
Curlew	•	7
Australian Curlew	•	6

Spotted Redshank	•	7
Redshank	•	7
Marsh Sandpiper	•	7
Greenshank	•	7
Nordmann's Greenshank	•	5
Green Sandpiper	•	7
Wood Sandpiper	•	7
Terek Sandpiper	•	7
Common Sandpiper	•	7
Grey-rumped Sandpiper	•	5
Turnstone	•	6
Red-necked Phalarope	•	5
Saunders' Gull	•	5
Black-headed Gull	•	7
Brown-headed Gull		1
Herring Gull	•	6
Gull-billed Tern	•	7
Caspian Tern	•	7
Common Tern		2
Little Tern		3
Whiskered Tern		1
Red Turtle Dove	•	6
Rufous Turtle Dove	•	7
Spotted Dove	•	7
Emerald Dove	•	6
Red-winged Crested Cuckoo	•	5
Large Hawk Cuckoo	•	7
Plaintive Cuckoo	•	7
Indian Cuckoo	•	5
Common Cuckoo		2
Oriental Cuckoo	•	4
Koel	•	7
Greater Coucal	•	7
Lesser Coucal	•	6
Collared Scops Owl	•	7
Barred Owlet	•	6
Brown Hawk Owl		1
Savannah Nightjar	•	6
White-throated Needletail		3
White-vented Needletail	•	3
Large White-rumped Swift	•	7
House Swift	•	7
White-breasted Kingfisher	•	7
Black-capped Kingfisher	•	7
Common Kingfisher	•	7
Pied Kingfisher	•	7
Broad-billed Roller	•	2
Hoopoe	•	1
Great Barbet	•	7
Wryneck	•	2
Small Skylark	•	2
Sand Martin	•	3
Swallow	•	7
Red-rumped Swallow	•	3
Asian House Martin		2
Richard's Pipit	•	7
Blyth's Pipit	•	1
Olive-backed Pipit	•	7
Red-throated Pipit	•	7
Water Pipit	•	3
Yellow Wagtail	•	7
Grey Wagtail	•	7
White Wagtail	•	7
Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike		2
Rosy Minivet		1
Ashy Minivet	•	5
Grey-throated Minivet	•	6
Scarlet Minivet	•	7
Crested Bulbul	•	7
Chinese Bulbul	•	7
Red-vented Bulbul	•	7
Chestnut Bulbul	•	4
Black Bulbul		3
Orange-bellied Leafbird	•	5
Red-tailed Robin	•	4
Rubythroat	•	7
Bluethroat	•	6
Daurian Redstart		2
Magpie Robin	•	7
Stonechat	•	7
Blue Rock Thrush	•	4
Violet Whistling Thrush	•	7
Orange-headed Ground Thrush		1
White's Thrush	•	3
Siberian Thrush		1
Grey Thrush	•	4
Blackbird	•	4
Brown Thrush		1
Grey-backed Thrush	•	6
Pale Thrush	•	4
Eye-browed Thrush		2
Dusky Thrush		3
Short-tailed Bush Warbler		2
Chinese Bush Warbler	•	7
Fantail Warbler	•	7
Brown Wren-warbler	•	7
Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler	•	7
von Schrenck's Reed Warbler	•	7
Great Reed Warbler	•	7
Long-tailed Tailorbird	•	7
Eastern Crowned Warbler	•	2
Pale-legged Leaf Warbler	•	3
Arctic Warbler		3
Pallas's Warbler		2
Yellow-browed Warbler	•	7
Dusky Warbler	•	7
Hainan Blue Flycatcher	•	6
Blue and White Flycatcher		4
Ferruginous Flycatcher		3
Grey-streaked Flycatcher		1

Brown Flycatcher	•	7	Collared Crow	•	7
Red-breasted Flycatcher	•	3	Silky Starling	•	7
Robin Flycatcher		2	Chinese Starling	•	6
Narcissus Flycatcher		3	Rosy Starling		1
Asian Paradise Flycatcher		4	Grey Starling	•	6
Japanese Paradise Flycatcher		3	Black-necked Starling	•	7
Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher		1	Crested Mynah	•	7
			Tree Sparrow	•	7
Greater Necklaced Laughing Thrush	•	7	White-backed Munia	•	6
			Spotted Munia	•	7
Black-throated Laughing Thrush	•	6	Chestnut Munia	•	2
			Brambling		2
Hwamei	•	7	Chinese Greenfinch		3
White-cheeked Laughing Thrush	•	7	Common Rosefinch		4
			Black-tailed Hawfinch	•	4
Black-faced Laughing Thrush	•	7	Masked Bunting	•	7
			Japanese Yellow Bunting		2
Pekin Robin	•	4	Grey-headed Bunting	•	3
White-bellied Yuhina	•	2	Tristram's Bunting	•	6
Yellow-bellied Tit		2	Little Bunting	•	7
Great Tit	•	7	Chestnut Bunting	•	4
Penduline Tit	•	2	Yellow-breasted Bunting	•	7
Fork-tailed Sunbird	•	7	Reed Bunting		1
Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	•	3	Crested Bunting		3
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	•	7	Ring-necked Pheasant	•	2
White-eye	•	7	Feral Pigeon	•	7
Black-naped Oriole		5	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	•	7
Brown Shrike	•	5	Rose-ringed Parakeet	•	7
Rufous-backed Shrike	•	7	Common Mynah	•	6
Black Drongo	•	7	Azure-winged Magpie	•	7
Ashy Drongo	•	5	Red-breasted Parakeet	•	6
Hair-crested Drongo	•	6	Red Avadavat		2
Jay		3	Yellow-cheeked Tit	•	2
Blue Magpie	•	7	Rufous-necked Scimitar Babbler	•	1
Treepie	•	4			
Magpie	•	7	Brown-breasted Bulbul	•	1
Jungle Crow	•	7	Indian Grackle	•	2

Duck species seen in 1990:	15
Raptor species seen in 1990:	12
Wader species seen in 1990:	43
Flycatcher species seen in 1990:	3
Number of species seen in 1990:	218
Total number of species seen in all seven Races to date:	280

本文是一九九〇年四月六日至七日第七屆觀鳥大賽的簡報。表列至今七屆大賽錄得的所有鳥類品種和錄得的年數。今屆錄得總數218種比去年少14種，不過亦爲大賽的累積品種名錄增添了九個新種。今年鷸、鵝和猛禽種類較少，但杜鵑種類甚多。又錄得鷺10種、鴨15種和涉禽43種。

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HONG KONG CHRISTMAS COUNT 1990

C. Y. Lam

INTRODUCTION

Following established practice, a territory-wide survey of birds in Hong Kong was mounted on 30 December 1990. The objectives were:

a) to survey all species occurring within Hong Kong on the selected day;
b) to estimate the abundance of the species recorded.

This is the sixth survey of its kind. Most previous counts took place on a day shortly after Christmas, hence the name 'Christmas Count'.

METHOD

The 1990 count was organised in the same way as previous counts (see Lam 1990). Members of the Society recorded birds in various parts of Hong Kong and their returns were analysed to give total numbers in eight regions, the boundaries of which are as defined in Viney (1987).

COVERAGE

About sixty people contributed to the 1990 count. The eight regions and the specific localities within them visited by birdwatchers are given here:

Hong Kong Island (HK) — the west side of the island from Mount Davis to the Aberdeen Country Park, the southeastern side of the island from Chung Hom Kok to Tai Long Wan, the Peak, Wong Nai Chung Gap, the Zoological and Botanical Gardens, Happy Valley

Kowloon (KL) — Kowloon Park, Cox's Road, King's Park, Stonecutters Island

Offshore Islands (IS) — Cheung Chau, Lamma Island

Lantau (LT) — Discovery Bay, Mui Wo, Cheung Sha, Pui 0, Tung Chung

Central NT (CN) — Lam Tsuen Valley, Tai Po Kau

Eastern NT (EN) — Ho Chung, Wong Chuk Yeung, Tai Mong Tsai, Tsam Chuk Wan, Chek Keng, Tai Long, Tai Tan, Tolo Harbour

Western NT (WN) — Tai Mo Shan to Shek Kong, Tsim Bei Tsui, Mong Tseng, Wang Chau (Yuen Long), Nim Wan, Pak Nai, Ha Tsuen, Siu Lam, Kadoorie Beach, Castle Peak Firing Range

Northern NT (NN) — Mai Po, Frontier Closed Area (Mai Po - Lo Wu), Lok Ma Chau, Nam Chung, Luk Keng, Wu Kau Tang, Plover Cove

Owing to practical difficulties, reports on birds observed at Tai Long and Tai Po Kau on 29 December 1990 and 3 January 1991 respectively were used to fill up gaps in the returns.

In anticipation of major destruction of the natural environment of Lantau Island arising from the construction of the Chek Lap Kok airport, the counting effort on Lantau was enhanced, with a team of eight travelling by private transport, which allowed more man-hours to be spent bird-watching for the count.

WEATHER

It was mainly cloudy and there was also some drizzle in various places. 0.1mm of rainfall was recorded at the Royal Observatory. Winds were moderate easterlies. Temperatures were on the warm side for the time of the year and ranged between 18°C and 19.6°C. The mean relative humidity was 85%.

TRENDS

Following the practice adopted since the 1987 count, only bird species in Categories A-D in the *Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong* (Chalmers 1986) were counted. Birds suspected of being escapes or released from captivity (Category E) were excluded. A total of 166 species was recorded in the 1990 count — four less than in 1989. It is also the second lowest total since Christmas counts began in 1985.

The numbers of species recorded in all the Christmas counts to date with breakdown figures for individual regions are given in Table 1. In this table and elsewhere in the report, figures for 1985 and 1986 have been adjusted to remove Category E species.

TABLE 1. Number of species recorded in the various regions in the six Christmas counts

	Region	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
1	Hong Kong Island	61	36	69	60	53	56
2	Kowloon	35	23	59	64	42	47
3	Offshore Islands	34	43	58	48	44	52
4	Lantau	75	63	66	51	53	62
5	Central NT	74	74	64	67	74	62
6	Eastern NT	68	55	55	43	54	55
7	Western NT	109	117	122	90	94	109
8	Northern NT	125	104	98	123	104	116
	All	**183**	**175**	**173**	**163**	**170**	**166**

In spite of the fall in the overall count total, a gain in the number of species recorded, relative to 1989 figures, was made in seven out of the eight regions, the exception being Central New Territories which includes Lam Tsuen and Tai Po Kau. The general downward trend in most regions reported last year (Lam 1990) was reversed. The failure of Central New

Territories to join the other regions in displaying the upturn might be related to the extensive civil engineering work taking place in the Lam Tsuen Valley.

SPECIES RECORDED

The estimated numbers of birds recorded are tabulated by species and by region in Table 2. The checklist numbers (in the first column) and species names correspond to those used by Chalmers (1986). In the table, the estimates are represented by an 'order of magnitude' number as follows:

Number	*Order*
1 — 9	1
10 — 99	2
100 — 999	3
1,000 — 9,999	4
10, 000 +	5

For each species, the number of times it has been recorded in all six Christmas counts so far (i.e. 1985 - 1990) is also indicated in the last column in Table 2.

As before, species recorded in all eight regions are labelled as 'common and widespread'. Table 3 lists such species in all the six counts to date. Black-necked Starling joined the list for the first time. This species has been expanding its range in the Territory in the past ten years or so. It is therefore not surprising to find it finally achieving the 'common and widespread' status.

Six species were recorded for the first time in a Christmas count, namely White Stork, Mongolian Sand Plover, Brown Thrush, Siskin, Rustic Bunting and Meadow Bunting. Details of these and other interesting records can be found in the Systematic List.

CONCLUSIONS

The cumulative number of species recorded in the six Christmas counts so far is 233. Over the six-year period 1985-1990, there was an overall decreasing trend in the total number of species recorded from the Territory in each count.

There were mixed signals in the results of the 1990 count. While the total number of species recorded in the whole Territory continued to fall, the downward trend in seven out of the eight regions was reversed. This could be due to a cyclical increase in the variety of winter visitors and/or better observer coverage in the face of continuing degradation of habitat in most places. Further counts will have to be carried out to shed light on long-term trends.

TABLE 2. Number of birds by species and by region in the 1990 Christmas count. The number of times a species has been recorded in all six counts to date is given in the last column.

1 - 9	order 1
10 - 99	order 2
100 - 999	order 3
1,000 - 9,999	order 4
10,000+	order 5

HK	Hong Kong Island	CN	Central NT
KL	Kowloon	EN	Eastern NT
IS	Offshore Islands	WN	Western NT
LT	Lantau	NN	Northern NT

		HK	KL	IS	LT	CN	EN	WN	NN	N6
1	Little Grebe	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	6
2	Great Crested Grebe	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
6	Cormorant	-	2	-	2	-	-	4	3	6
7	Dalmatian Pelican	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	6
[8,9]	Frigatebird sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
10	Bittern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
11	Yellow Bittern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
13	Chestnut Bittern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
16	Night Heron	1	1	-	1	-	-	2	2	6
17	Little Green Heron	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	6
18	Chinese Pond Heron	-	-	-	1	2	1	3	3	6
19	Cattle Egret	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	6
21	Reef Egret	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	6
22	Little Egret	-	-	-	1	1	2	3	3	6
23	Intermediate Egret	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	5
24	Great Egret	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	3	6
25	Grey Heron	-	-	-	1	-	1	4	3	6
26	Purple Heron	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6
27	Black Stork	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
28	White Stork	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1
30	White Ibis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
31	European Spoonbill	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
32	Black-faced Spoonbill	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	6
34	Bean Goose	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
36	Ruddy Shelduck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
37	Shelduck	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	6
39	Mandarin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
40	Wigeon	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	6
41	Falcated Teal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	6
42	Gadwall	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
44	Teal	1	1	-	2	-	-	3	3	6
45	Mallard	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	6
46	Yellow-nib Duck	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	6
47	Pintail	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	6
48	Garganey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
49	Shoveler	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	6
50	Common Pochard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6
51	Baer's Pochard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
52	Tufted Duck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		HK	KL	IS	LT	CN	EN	WN	NN	N6
53	Scaup	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
56	Red-breasted Merganser	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
60	Black Kite	3	2	2	2	1	2	3	2	6
60.1	Brahminy Kite	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
61	White-bellied Sea Eagle	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	5
62	Black Vulture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
63	Serpent Eagle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
64	Marsh Harrier	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	6
68	Japanese Sparrowhawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
69	Sparrowhawk	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	6
70	Crested Goshawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
73	Buzzard	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	6
74	Spotted Eagle	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	5
75	Imperial Eagle	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	6
76	Bonelli's Eagle	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	5
77	Osprey	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	1	6
79	Kestrel	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	6
83	Peregrine Falcon	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	6
84	Chinese Francolin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
85	Japanese Quail	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
89	Water Rail	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
90	Banded Rail	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
92	Ruddy Crake	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
95	White-breasted Waterhen	1	-	1	1	1	1	2	2	6
96	Moorhen	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	6
97	Watercock	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
98	Coot	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	6
101	Painted Snipe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
103	Black-winged Stilt	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4
104	Avocet	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	5
106	Little Ringed Plover	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	-	6
108	Kentish Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	6
109	Mongolian Sand Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
110	Greater Sand Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
112	Asiatic Golden Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
113	Grey Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	6
114	Grey-headed Lapwing	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	6
116	Great Knot	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
119	Red-necked Stint	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
120	Temminck's Stint	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3
121	Long-toed Stint	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
124	Dunlin	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	6
127	Ruff	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
129	Fantail Snipe	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	2	6
130	Pintail Snipe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6
134	Asiatic Dowitcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		HK	KL	IS	LT	CN	EN	WN	NN	N6
135	Woodcock	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
136	Black-tailed Godwit	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	5
140	Curlew	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	6
142	Spotted Redshank	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	6
143	Redshank	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
144	Marsh Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	6
145	Greenshank	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	6
147	Green Sandpiper	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	1	6
148	Wood Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	6
150	Common Sandpiper	1	1	1	2	-	1	2	2	6
153	Red-necked Phalarope	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
157	Saunders' Gull	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
158	Black-headed Gull	-	3	-	3	-	3	4	4	6
160	Black-tailed Gull	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
162	Herring Gull	-	1	-	2	-	-	2	2	6
168	Caspian Tern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
179	Red Turtle Dove	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	5
180	Rufous Turtle Dove	2	1	-	1	1	-	2	3	6
181	Spotted Dove	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	6
183	Emerald Dove	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
189	Plaintive Cuckoo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
193	Koel	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6
194	Greater Coucal	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	6
195	Lesser Coucal	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
196	Collared Scops Owl	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
209	House Swift	2	1	-	-	-	-	3	2	6
210	White-breasted Kingfisher	1	1	1	1	-	1	2	2	6
211	Black-capped Kingfisher	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	6
212	Common Kingfisher	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	2	6
213	Pied Kingfisher	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	6
217	Hoopoe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
218	Great Barbet	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	6
219	Wryneck	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4
225	Oriental Skylark	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
227	Swallow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
228	Red-rumped Swallow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
229	Asian House Martin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
230	Richard's Pipit	1	-	1	2	-	1	2	1	6
231	Upland Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
232	Olive-backed Pipit	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	6
234	Red-throated Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	6
235	Water Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
237	Yellow Wagtail	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	6
239	Grey Wagtail	2	-	1	1	1	1	2	1	6
240	White Wagtail	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	6
242	Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	4

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		HK	KL	IS	LT	CN	EN	WN	NN	N6
245	Grey-throated Minivet	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	4
246	Scarlet Minivet	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	5
247	Crested Bulbul	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	6
248	Chinese Bulbul	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	6
249	Red-vented Bulbul	-	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	6
250	Chestnut Bulbul	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	6
251	Black Bulbul	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
251.1	Orange-bellied Leafbird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
255	Red-tailed Robin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
256	Rubythroat	-	-	1	1	1	-	2	1	6
257	Bluethroat	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	6
259	Red-flanked Bluetail	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	6
260	Daurian Redstart	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	6
261	Plumbeous Water Redstart	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	5
262	Magpie Robin	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	6
263	Stonechat	-	-	1	2	1	1	2	2	6
264	Grey Bushchat	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	4
267	Blue Rock Thrush	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	6
268	Violet Whistling Thrush	2	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	6
269	Orange-headed Ground Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
270	White's Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
272	Grey Thrush	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	4
273	Blackbird	1	-	2	2	1	1	2	1	6
274	Brown Thrush	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
275	Grey-backed Thrush	-	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	6
276	Pale Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
277	Eye-browed Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
278	Dusky Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
280	Short-tailed Bush Warbler	-	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	6
281	Chinese Bush Warbler	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	6
282	Mountain Bush Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
283	Fantail Warbler	1	-	1	2	1	-	2	2	6
284	Brown Wren-warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	6
285	Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler	1	-	1	2	2	1	2	2	6
290	Great Reed Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
292	Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
296	Long-tailed Tailorbird	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	6
297	Sulphur-breasted Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
298	Blyth's Leaf Warbler	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
302	Pallas's Warbler	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	6
303	Yellow-browed Warbler	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	6
305	Dusky Warbler	1	1	2	1	-	1	1	2	6
309	Verditer Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
313	Brown Flycatcher	-	1	-	1	1	1	-	-	6

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		HK	KL	IS	LT	CN	EN	WN	NN	N6
314	Red-breasted Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
315	Robin Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
318	Grey-headed Flycatcher	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	5
321	Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
323	Greater Necklaced Laughing Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
324	Black-throated Laughing Thrush	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	6
325	Hwamei	2	-	2	-	1	1	2	-	6
326	White-cheeked Laughing Thrush	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	6
327	Black-faced Laughing Thrush	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	6
328	Pekin Robin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
330	White-bellied Yuhina	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
331	Red-headed Tit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
332	Yellow-bellied Tit	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	5
333	Great Tit	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	6
333.1	Yellow-cheeked Tit	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	4
335	Fork-tailed Sunbird	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	6
336	Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
337	Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	1	6
339	White-eye	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	6
340	Black-naped Oriole	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	4
342	Brown Shrike	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	5
343	Rufous-backed Shrike	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	6
345	Black Drongo	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	6
346	Ashy Drongo	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	6
347	Hair-crested Drongo	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	6
348	Jay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
349	Blue Magpie	2	1	1	1	-	2	2	-	6
350	Treepie	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
351	Magpie	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	6
352	Jungle Crow	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	6
353	Collared Crow	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	2	6
354	Silky Starling	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	6
357	Chinese Starling	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
358	European Starling	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
360	Grey Starling	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	5
361	Black-necked Starling	2	1	2	1	2	2	3	2	6
362	Crested Mynah	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	6
363	Tree Sparrow	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	6
364	White-backed Munia	-	-	-	-	2	2	1	-	6
365	Spotted Munia	1	-	-	2	1	1	1	2	6
367	Chinese Greenfinch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
368	Siskin	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		HK	KL	IS	LT	CN	EN	WN	NN	N6
369	Common Rosefinch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
370	Black-tailed Hawfinch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6
371	Masked Bunting	2	-	2	2	1	2	2	2	6
374	Tristram's Bunting	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	6
375	Rustic Bunting	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
376	Little Bunting	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	6
380	Crested Bunting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
601	Feral Pigeon	2	2	-	2	1	1	-	2	6
602	Rainbow Lorikeet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
603	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
604	Rose-ringed Parakeet	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	6
605	Common Mynah	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4
606	Azure-winged Magpie	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
711	Grey-headed Parrotbill	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
713	Red Avadavat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
715.3	Meadow Bunting	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Number of species seen in each region		**56**	**47**	**52**	**62**	**62**	**55**	**109**	**116**	
Total number of species seen throughout Hong Kong:		**166**								

Dusky Thrush *Turdus naumanni eunomus* *(Jeremy Pearse)*

TABLE 3. Common and widespread species in Christmas counts. The last column shows how many times a species was recorded as such in the six counts (1985-1990).

	Species	1990	No. of times
60	Black Kite	+	6
95	White-breasted Waterhen		1
150	Common Sandpiper		1
181	Spotted Dove	+	6
194	Greater Coucal	+	4
210	White-breasted Kingfisher		2
212	Common Kingfisher		1
232	Olive-backed Pipit	+	4
239	Grey Wagtail		1
240	White Wagtail	+	4
247	Crested Bulbul	+	6
248	Chinese Bulbul	+	6
249	Red-vented Bulbul		1
262	Magpie Robin	+	5
273	Blackbird		3
285	Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler		3
296	Long-tailed Tailorbird	+	6
303	Yellow-browed Warbler	+	6
305	Dusky Warbler		1
327	Black-faced Laughing Thrush	+	5
333	Great Tit	+	2
339	White-eye	+	6
343	Rufous-backed Shrike	+	4
351	Magpie	+	6
352	Jungle Crow	+	2
361	Black-necked Starling	+	1
362	Crested Mynah	+	6
363	Tree Sparrow	+	6
371	Masked Bunting		3
601	Feral Pigeon		1

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第六屆香港聖誕雀鳥普查於一九九〇年十二月三十日舉行，共錄得166種，是歷屆第二最低紀錄。累積六屆共得233種。首次在普查中錄得的品種有白鸛、蒙古沙鴴、紅腹鷸、黃雀、田鷚和三道眉草鷚。

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REPORT ON BIRD RINGING IN HONG KONG IN 1990

David S. Melville

Bird ringing activities during 1990 were once again concentrated at the WWF Hong Kong Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve. However, a considerable amount of effort was put in at the University of Hong Kong Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre at Shek Kong. Other sites worked included Lok Ma Chau marsh, a garden at Shek O, and a patch of woodland on the Peak.

The total number of birds ringed during the year was 5,186, this being over 2,500 more than in any previous year. The number of species ringed increased to 135, from 114 in 1989. Species totals are given in Table 1, together with those from those from previous years. Activities in Hong Kong under the Migratory Animals Pathological Survey (MAPS) programme were summarised by McClure and Leelavit (1972), and the most recent report on bird ringing in the Territory is by Melville (1990).

Captures during the year included two species new to Hong Kong: Pale-footed Bush Warbler (Melville *et al.* 1991) and White-throated Rock Thrush (Leader 1991).

Other notable captures during the year included: a juvenile Bonelli's Eagle, which had eaten so much of a juvenile Grey Heron that it was unable to fly and was captured by hand!; a juvenile Spoon-billed Sandpiper in October — the first to be caught since 1980, and one of only a few autumn records of this species; three Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers, which highlighted the variability of plumage in this species (Galsworthy 1991); two Thick-billed Warblers, the fifth and sixth records for Hong Kong; a Reed Bunting, the sixth record for Hong Kong; a Yellow-browed Bunting, the first 'acceptably' wild bird for the Territory; and a remarkable influx of Penduline Tits early in the year (Melville and Galsworthy 1991).

There were eight overseas movements of ringed birds recorded during the year (Table 2). The Curlew Sandpiper records followed the pattern of previous movements between Australia and Hong Kong. The bird ringed on 9 November 1983 in its second year of life (i.e. hatched in 1982) appears to set a longevity record for the species, as Cramp and Simmons (1983) note the oldest ringed bird as 6 years.

The Black-tailed Godwit recovered in Vietnam is our first recovery of any species from that country. It was discovered by a party of Australian ornithologists who visited the Red River delta in March 1991. This is an important shorebird site and it is likely that a number of Hong Kong waders pass through there.

The Bluethroat was caught by a bird fancier, who was apparently keeping the bird in a cage. This is our first passerine recovery from China.

In addition to captures/recoveries of ringed birds, there was an interesting series of sightings of colour-marked birds during the spring (Table 3). However, the uncertain origin of two of the birds highlights the urgent need for co-ordination of colour marking efforts throughout the flyway.

As ringing continues we are building up a valuable series of recapture data for many species, both migrant and 'resident'. These are summarised in Tables 4 and 5, respectively. The majority of ringing and biometric data has now been computerised through the tireless efforts of Tony Galsworthy, which will greatly facilitate future analysis.

We have continued to co-operate with the University of Hong Kong in studies of seed dispersal by birds (R. Corlett, Department of Botany), and of feeding habits of some insectivorous birds at Mai Po (G. Reels, Department of Zoology). The study on avian influenza (K. Shortridge, Department of Microbiology) was completed during the year.

I wish to thank the Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology for permission to use their rings in Hong Kong. Trapping of birds is carried out under permits issued by the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries. I am very grateful to fellow ringers Tony Galsworthy, Paul Leader, Michael Lau, Fox Wong and David Carthy for their enthusiasm and hard work throughout the year, without which we would have achieved only a fraction of the results. Many others have helped with ringing during the course of the year and I thank them, especially Carmen Anderson, Simba Chan, Jan Galsworthy, Peter Kennerley, Mary Ketterer, Vicky Melville and Lew Young. This study is funded by WWF Hong Kong.

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TABLE 1. Birds ringed in Hong Kong 1966-1990

Species		MAPS*	1975-1989	1990	Total
Little Grebe	*Tachybaptus ruficollis*		1		1
Cormorant	*Phalacrocorax carbo*		1		1
Bittern	*Botaurus stellaris*		1		1
Yellow Bittern	*Ixobrychus sinensis*	15	40	17	72
von Schrenck's Little Bittern	*Ixobrychus eurhythmus*			1	1
Chestnut Bittern	*Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*	1	2		3
Night Heron	*Nycticorax nycticorax*		3		3
Little Green Heron	*Butorides striatus*		2		2
Chinese Pond Heron	*Ardeola bacchus*		79	4	83
Cattle Egret	*Bubulcus ibis*		1		1
Little Egret	*Egretta garzetta*		3		3
Falcated Teal	*Anas falcata*			1	1
Teal	*Anas crecca*		18	1	19
Yellow-nib Duck	*Anas poecilorhyncha*		1	1	2
Garganey	*Anas querquedula*		4		4
Black Kite	*Milvus migrans*		37		37
Japanese Sparrowhawk	*Accipiter gularis*	1	3	2	6
Imperial Eagle	*Aquila heliaca*	1**			1
Bonelli's Eagle	*Hieraaetus fasciatus*			1	1
Kestrel	*Falco tinnunculus*	4**	1		5
Chinese Francolin	*Francolinus pintadeanus*	7**			7
Japanese Quail	*Coturnix japonica*	1**			1
Yellow-legged Button Quail	*Turnix tanki*	1**			1
Barred Button Quail	*Turnix suscitator*	1		1	2
Baillon's Crake	*Porzana pusilla*	1			1

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1989	1990	Total
White-breasted Waterhen	*Amaurornis phoenicurus*	1	5	4	10
Moorhen	*Gallinula chloropus*		2		2
Coot	*Fulica atra*			1	1
Painted Snipe	*Rostratula benghalensis*		2		2
Black-winged Stilt	*Himantopus himantopus*		1		1
Avocet	*Recurvirostra avosetta*		2		2
Oriental Pratincole	*Glareola maldivarum*		2	1	3
Little Ringed Plover	*Charadrius dubius*		2	1	3
Kentish Plover	*Charadrius alexandrinus*		22		22
Lesser Sand Plover	*Charadrius mongolus*		23	18	41
Greater Sand Plover	*Charadrius leschenaultii*		135	54	189
Asiatic Golden Plover	*Pluvialis fulva*		45	13	58
Grey Plover	*Pluvialis squatarola*		36	7	43
Great Knot	*Calidris tenuirostris*		26	21	47
Knot	*Calidris canutus*		17	13	30
Red-necked Stint	*Calidris ruficollis*	6	170	19	195
Temminck's Stint	*Calidris temminckii*		1		1
Long-toed Stint	*Calidris subminuta*		17	8	25
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	*Calidris acuminata*		32	6	38
Pectoral Sandpiper	*Calidris melanotos*		1		1
Curlew Sandpiper	*Calidris ferruginea*	1	406	135	542
Dunlin	*Calidris alpina*		295	55	350
Spoon-billed Sandpiper	*Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus*		2	1	3
Broad-billed Sandpiper	*Limicola falcinellus*		63	29	92
Ruff	*Philomachus pugnax*		1		1

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1989	1990	Total
Fantail Snipe	*Gallinago gallinago*	1	61	20	82
Pintail Snipe	*Gallinago stenura*		3	1	4
Swinhoe's Snipe	*Gallinago megala*		8		8
Asiatic Dowitcher	*Limnodromus semipalmatus*		13	5	18
Black-tailed Godwit	*Limosa limosa*		16	5	21
Bar-tailed Godwit	*Limosa lapponica*		50	8	58
Whimbrel	*Numenius phaeopus*		228	76	304
Curlew	*Numenius arquata*		9	6	15
Australian Curlew	*Numenius madagascariensis*			1	1
Spotted Redshank	*Tringa erythropus*		6	1	7
Redshank	*Tringa totanus*		668	270	938
Marsh Sandpiper	*Tringa stagnatilis*		33	9	42
Greenshank	*Tringa nebularia*		12	6	18
Green Sandpiper	*Tringa ochropus*		1		1
Wood Sandpiper	*Tringa glareola*		68	79	147
Terek Sandpiper	*Xenus cinereus*		267	140	407
Common Sandpiper	*Actitis hypoleucos*	4	70	16	90
Grey-rumped Sandpiper	*Heteroscelus brevipes*		43	18	61
Turnstone	*Arenaria interpres*		19	2	21
Red-necked Phalarope	*Phalaropus lobatus*		7		7
Rufous Turtle Dove	*Streptopelia orientalis*		3	19	22
Spotted Dove	*Streptopelia chinensis*	2	35	38	75
Emerald Dove	*Chalcophaps indica*		1	1	2
Rose-ringed Parakeet	*Psittacula krameri*	1			1
Plaintive Cuckoo	*Cacomantis merulinus*		1		1

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1989	1990	Total
Oriental Cuckoo	*Cuculus saturatus*		1		1
Koel	*Eudynamis scolopacea*			2	2
Greater Coucal	*Centropus sinensis*		8	3	11
Lesser Coucal	*Centropus bengalensis*	2		1	3
Oriental Scops Owl	*Otus (scops) sunia*	2			2
Short-eared Owl	*Asio flammeus*	2**	1		3
House Swift	*Apus affinis*		1		1
White-breasted Kingfisher	*Halcyon smyrnensis*	24	15	10	49
Black-capped Kingfisher	*Halcyon pileata*	5	7	13	25
Common Kingfisher	*Alcedo atthis*	104	342	220	666
Pied Kingfisher	*Ceryle rudis*		2	3	5
Wryneck	*Jynx torquilla*	21	9	5	35
Sand Martin	*Riparia riparia*	1			1
Swallow	*Hirundo rustica*	11	105	52	133
Richard's Pipit	*Anthus novaeseelandiae*	13			13
Olive-backed Pipit	*Anthus hodgsoni*	86	13	21	120
Pechora Pipit	*Anthus gustavi*			2	2
Forest Wagtail	*Dendronanthus indicus*			1	1
Yellow Wagtail	*Motacilla flava*			1	1
Grey Wagtail	*Motacilla cinerea*	6	2	1	9
White Wagtail	*Motacilla alba*	18	13	3	34
Crested Bulbul	*Pycnonotus jocosus*	80	89	139	308
Chinese Bulbul	*Pycnonotus sinensis*	895	591	362	1,848
Red-vented Bulbul	*Pycnonotus aurigaster*	95	6	4	105
Chestnut Bulbul	*Hypsipetes castanonotus*	2			2

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1989	1990	Total
Black Bulbul	*Hypsipetes madagascariensis*	1			1
White-tailed Robin	*Cinclidium leucurum*			1	1
Red-tailed Robin	*Luscinia sibilans*	6	3	11	20
Rubythroat	*Luscinia calliope*	95	27	53	175
Bluethroat	*Luscinia svecica*	9	13	4	26
Red-flanked Bluetail	*Tarsiger cyanurus*	30	15	64	109
Daurian Redstart	*Phoenicurus auroreus*	16		2	18
Magpie Robin	*Copsychus saularis*	2	7	27	36
Stonechat	*Saxicola torquata*	48	31	23	102
Grey Bushchat	*Saxicola ferrea*	1			1
White-throated Rock Thrush	*Monticola gularis*			1	1
Violet Whistling Thrush	*Myiophoneus caeruleus*	11		8	19
White's Thrush	*Zoothera dauma*	2			2
Grey Thrush	*Turdus cardis*	53	4	2	59
Blackbird	*Turdus merula*	1	1	7	9
Brown Thrush	*Turdus chrysolaus*	1			1
Grey-backed Thrush	*Turdus hortulorum*	209	15	33	257
Pale Thrush	*Turdus pallidus*	15		1	16
Eye-browed Thrush	*Turdus obscurus*			1	1
Dusky Thrush	*Turdus naumanni*	3			3
Short-tailed Bush Warbler	*Cettia squameiceps*	1	1	3	5
Chinese Bush Warbler	*Cettia diphone*	19	95	65	179
Mountain Bush Warbler	*Cettia fortipes*		1	2	3
Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler	*Cettia acanthizoides*		1		1
Pale-footed Bush Warbler	*Cettia pallidipes*			2	2

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1989	1990	Total
Fantail Warbler	*Cisticola juncidis*		1	6	7
Brown Wren-warbler	*Prinia subflava*	12	232	130	374
Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler	*Prinia flaviventris*	39	338	268	645
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	*Locustella certhiola*	5		3	8
Styan's Grasshopper Warbler	*Locustella pleskei*	8	4	7	19
von Schrenck's Reed Warbler	*Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*	21	116	97	234
Great Reed Warbler	*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*	251	762	418	1,431
Blyth's Reed Warbler	*Acrocephalus dumetorum*		1	1	2
Thick-billed Warbler	*Acrocephalus aedon*			2	2
Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler	*Seicercus burkii*			1	1
Long-tailed Tailorbird	*Orthotomus sutorius*	11	20	68	99
Eastern Crowned Warbler	*Phylloscopus coronatus*			3	3
Pale-legged Leaf Warbler	*Phylloscopus tenellipes*		1	6	7
Arctic Warbler	*Phylloscopus borealis*	12	32	20	64
Pallas's Warbler	*Phylloscopus proregulus*	5	1	5	11
Yellow-browed Warbler	*Phylloscopus inornatus*	19	25	37	81
Dusky Warbler	*Phylloscopus fuscatus*	104	427	324	855
Chiffchaff	*Phylloscopus collybita*		2		2
Two-barred Greenish Warbler	*Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*		1		1
Ijima Willow Warbler?	*Phylloscopus ijimae?*		1		1
Brown Flycatcher	*Muscicapa latirostris*	6	9	4	19
Red-breasted Flycatcher	*Ficedula parva*	1		6	7
Robin Flycatcher	*Ficedula mugimaki*		1		1
Tricolour Flycatcher	*Ficedula zanthopygia*	2	4	5	11
Narcissus Flycatcher	*Ficedula narcissina*		1		1

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1989	1990	Total
Grey-headed Flycatcher	*Culicicapa ceylonensis*	1			1
Asian Paradise Flycatcher	*Terpsiphone paradisi*		1		1
Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher	*Hypothymis azurea*	1	1	1	3
Greater Necklaced Laughing Thrush	*Garrulax pectoralis*		1		1
Black-throated Laughing Thrush	*Garrulax chinensis*	2			2
Hwamei	*Garrulax canorus*	7**	7	13	27
Black-faced Laughing Thrush	*Garrulax perspicillatus*	18	3	5	26
Pekin Robin	*Leiothrix lutea*	9**	3	11	23
Vinous-throated Parrotbill	*Paradoxornis webbiana*		1		1
Great Tit	*Parus major*	34	5	30	69
Penduline Tit	*Remiz pendulinus*		3	66	69
Fork-tailed Sunbird	*Aethopyga christinae*	1	1	3	5
Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	*Dicaeum ignipectus*			1	1
Chestnut-flanked White-eye	*Zosterops erythropleura*		2	5	7
White-eye	*Zosterops japonica*	217	1,160	858	2,235
(Bull-headed Shrike)***	*(Lanius bucephalus)****	1			1
Brown Shrike	*Lanius cristatus*	6	2	4	12
Rufous-backed Shrike	*Lanius schach*	39	18	9	66
Black Drongo	*Dicrurus macrocercus*		5	1	6
Hair-crested Drongo	*Dicrurus hottentottus*	1	1		2
Jay	*Garrulus glandarius*		1		1
Blue Magpie	*Urocissa erythrorhyncha*	4		3	7
Magpie	*Pica pica*	2**	1		3
Silky Starling	*Sturnus sericeus*		2	4	6
Chinese Starling	*Sturnus sinensis*	2	3	2	7

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975-1989	1990	Total
Crested Mynah	*Acridotheres cristatellus*	2	2	2	6
Ruddy Sparrow	*Passer rutilans*			1	1
Tree Sparrow	*Passer montanus*	92**	105	92	289
Baya Weaver	*Ploceus philippinus*		4		4
White-backed Munia	*Lonchura striata*		3	6	9
Spotted Munia	*Lonchura punctulata*	34	258	135	427
Chestnut Munia	*Lonchura malacca*	1	5		6
White-headed Munia	*Lonchura maja*		1		1
Red Avadavat	*Amandava amandava*	5		4	9
Yellow-fronted Canary	*Serinus mozambicus*			1	1
Chinese Greenfinch	*Carduelis sinica*	1			1
Goldfinch	*Carduelis carduelis*			1	1
Common Rosefinch	*Carpodacus erythrinus*	12	1		13
Black-tailed Hawfinch	*Coccothraustes migratorius*	9			9
Masked Bunting	*Emberiza spodocephala*	219	340	182	741
Grey-headed Bunting	*Emberiza fucata*	1	1		2
Yellow-browed Bunting	*Emberiza chrysophrys*			1	1
Tristram's Bunting	*Emberiza tristrami*	4	1	2	7
Little Bunting	*Emberiza pusilla*	2	71	32	87
Chestnut Bunting	*Emberiza rutila*		8	5	13
Yellow-breasted Bunting	*Emberiza aureola*	28	6	2	36
Reed Bunting	*Emberiza schoeniclus*			1	1
TOTAL		3,190	8,499	5,186	16,875

* The Migratory Animals Pathological Survey (MAPS) programme ran from 1964-1971. Ringing was done in Hong Kong between 1965 and 1968. Details of MAPS birds are from McClure and Leelavit (1972) and from F.O.P. Hechtel's personal records. In the few cases where there is a discrepancy the higher figure has been taken.

** Some or all of these birds released from captivity by the ringer.

*** The identification of all pre-1986 records of Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus* has been questioned by Chalmers (1986).

TABLE 2. Overseas movements of ringed birds during 1990

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*
NB19653 ringed 26 April 1987 Mai Po, Hong Kong
controlled 25 March 1990 Port Hedland, Western Australia
(distance 4,790 km S)

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*
NV52467 ringed 25 August 1990 Mai Po, Hong Kong
controlled 30 December 1990 Werribee, Victoria, Australia
(distance 7,200 km SSE)

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*
041-14038 ringed 9 November 1983 Port Hedland, Western Australia
controlled 8 April 1990 Mai Po, Hong Kong
(distance 4,790 km N)

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*
014-58597 ringed 1 January 1990 Yallock Creek, Victoria, Australia
controlled 4 May 1990 Mai Po, Hong Kong
(distance 7,479 km NW)

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*
DK09019 ringed 16 April 1988 Mai Po, Hong Kong
recovered — March 1990 Xuan Thuy, Red River Delta, Vietnam
(distance 840 km WSW)

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*
NV04265 ringed 31 August 1988 Mai Po, Hong Kong
controlled 29 March 1990 Broome, Western Australia
(distance 4,582 km SSE)

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*
XR62036 ringed 8 April 1990 Mai Po, Hong Kong
controlled 10 May 1990 near Hangu, Tianjin, China
(distance 1,892 km N)

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*
C405080 ringed 9 March 1986 Mai Po, Hong Kong
controlled 4 May 1990 near Qinhuangdao, Hebei, China
(distance 2,009 km N)

TABLE 3. Sightings of colour-marked birds during 1990

Species	Date	Colour-mark	Origin
Curlew Sandpiper	9 April	orange flag	Australia
Curlew Sandpiper	13 April	orange flag	Australia
Broad-billed Sandpiper	6 & 7 April	orange dye	?
Broad-billed Sandpiper	7 April	orange ring	USSR?*

* A Broad-billed Sandpiper with a yellow colour ring and a metal USSR ring was caught at Shanghai in 1990 (Wang Tianhou, pers. comm.)

TABLE 4. Selected following-season recaptures of known migrants 1990

Asiatic Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*
XS31458 ringed 30 September 1988/recaptured 25 August 1990

Fantail Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
XS31495 ringed 2 January 1989/recaptured 27 October 1990 (Lok Ma Chau)

Redshank *Tringa totanus*
DK09297 ringed 4 May 1989/recaptured 10 August 1990
DK09375 ringed 9 August 1989/recaptured 10 August 1990
DK21212 ringed 2 September 1989/recaptured 16 September 1989, 8 April 1990
DK21262 ringed 8 September 1989/recaptured 3 October 1990
DR53440 ringed 12 September 1987/recaptured 10 August 1990

Grey-rumped Sandpiper *Heteroscelus brevipes*
CE64192 ringed 8 September 1989/recaptured 8 September 1990

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*
NV04217 ringed 13 May 1988/recaptured 25 August 1990
NV38752 ringed 4 May 1989/recaptured 4 May 1990

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*
F145254 ringed 29 March 1990/recaptured 24 November 1990

Continued ...

TABLE 4 continued

Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope*
E051490 ringed 26 January 1990/recaptured 3 November 1990
F145032 ringed 19 November 1988/recaptured 15 April 1989, 17 December 1989, 24 November 1990
F145168 ringed 17 March 1990/recaptured 24 November 1990, 8 December 1990

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*
C995197 ringed 19 December 1987/recaptured 4 February 1990

Chinese Bush Warbler *Cettia diphone*
There were 15 recaptures, the oldest being:
C405070 ringed 9 March 1986/recaptured 17 March 1990

von Schrenck's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*
E051324 ringed 28 October 1989/recaptured 29 October 1990
F145190 ringed 17 March 1990/recaptured 10 November 1990
F145261 ringed 29 March 1990/recaptured 24 November 1990
F145387 ringed 21 April 1990/recaptured 1 December 1990

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*
There were 20 recaptures, the oldest being:
VA23206 ringed 3 July 1985/recaptured 10 May 1990

Few Great Reed Warblers winter in Hong Kong, but the following bird suggests that this may be a regular habit for some individuals:
VA23250 ringed 21 April 1986/recaptured 10 December 1988, 8 December 1989, 21 April 1990, 1 December 1990, 15 December 1990

Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes*
4V4308 ringed 10 December 1989/recaptured 6 October 1990 (Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre)

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*
35 birds were recaptured during the year, the two oldest being:
1K2922 ringed 15 March 1986/recaptured 3 March 1990
1K2944 ringed 16 March 1986/recaptured 24 November 1990

Masked Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala*
There were 13 recaptures, the oldest being:
C405069 ringed 9 March 1986/recaptured 24 March 1990

TABLE 5. Longevity records for 'resident' species*

White-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*
RA05301 ringed 8 March 1986/recaptured 10 October 1990 (54 months, cf. 66 months)**

Chinese Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis*
RX79268 ringed 29 April 1986/recaptured 7 January 1990, 10 June 1990, 23 September 1990 (45 months, cf. 26 months)

Brown Wren-warbler *Prinia subflava*
1K2876 ringed 17 December 1985/recaptured 1 December 1990 (60 months, cf. 12 months)

Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler *Prinia flaviventris*
1K2978 ringed 30 March 1986/recaptured 15 December 1990 (57 months, cf. 61 months)

White-eye *Zosterops japonica*
1K2817 ringed 25 September 1985/recaptured 22 September 1990 (60 months, cf. 25 months)

* These species are generally regarded as being 'resident' in Hong Kong (see Chalmers 1986), but there may be some movement.

** The Hong Kong records are compared with the longest surviving bird (in months) recorded by the MAPS programme (McClure 1984).

一九九〇年內，香港環志了135種，共5,186頭雀鳥。捕得的雀鳥包括兩個香港以前未見的新品種：淡脚樹鶯 *Cettia pallidipes* 和藍領磯鶇 *Monticola gularis* 。附表列出環志鳥類的詳情，在香港境內和海外的移動情況，以及留鳥的長壽紀錄。有八隻雀鳥在海外重新捕獲，包括在中國東北部的一隻藍點頦和一隻翹咀鷸中以及越南的一隻黑尾鷸。

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BIRDS NEW TO HONG KONG

SLENDER-BILLED GULL AT MAI PO AND STARLING INLET THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Peter R. Kennerley and *W. (Ted) Hoogendoorn*

While birding from the boardwalk hide at Mai Po at 1130h on 10 February 1990, PRK identified an adult Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei* at rest amongst the assembled mass of Black-headed Gulls *L. ridibundus*. The bird was in breeding plumage and therefore presented no identification problems. PRK pointed out the bird to Mike Turnbull who agreed with the identification. It stayed in front of the hide for the following hour or so and was seen by several other observers including Mike Chalmers and Richard Lewthwaite, during which time it occasionally flew around but always returned and landed in the gull flock. Eventually the entire flock took flight and the bird was lost to view and subsequently could not be relocated.

On 25 February, also at Mai Po, PRK met WH who informed him that he had seen an adult Slender-billed Gull between 0800h and 0830h that morning at Starling Inlet, so we decided to go there after leaving Mai Po. Almost immediately upon arrival at 1300h Paul Leader, who had joined us, located the Slender-billed Gull at rest in a flock of Black-headed Gulls sitting on the sea. After just a few minutes the flock took flight and the Slender-billed Gull plus a few Black-headed Gulls flew directly towards us giving excellent comparative views down to 50 metres in flight and eventually at rest on the water where at times it was the closest gull, only some 80 metres out from the shoreline. For several minutes it was observed in the company of an adult Brown- headed Gull *L. brunnicephalus* as well as several Black-tailed Gulls *L. crassirostris*. When we left the area at 1500h the bird was still giving good views and it was subsequently seen again on the following day by WH and others.

It is considered probable that only a single individual was involved in these sightings and that it had travelled the 20km between the two sites. The differences in plumage and soft part colours (see below) may have been due to continued advancement into nuptial plumage or merely better viewing conditions on 25 February at Starling Inlet.

The following details were noted at Mai Po on 10 February:

Located at a distance of about 150 metres from the boardwalk hide by the pink wash on the underparts; this pink coloration was much stronger than that seen on some Black-headed Gulls. Initially it was asleep but after a few minutes it raised its head to reveal the diagnostic head and bill shape.

Head and neck Very distinctive and quite different from that of Black-headed Gull. The head was larger and not as rounded as that of *ridibundus* — instead it sloped gently towards the crown. This, together with the longer and deeper bill, produced the typical long-headed appearance characteristic of the species.

When extended, the neck was longer and thicker than Black-headed's, producing a rather giraffe-like effect. However, for most of the period of observation, the neck was held into the body and this long-necked effect was lost. The head and neck were entirely white and unmarked.

Upperparts At rest, the mantle, scapulars and wing coverts were pale grey and not noticeably different in shade from those of Black-headed Gull. The visible primaries were black and unmarked.

Underparts The breast and belly were pink, more strongly coloured than those of any of the Black-headed Gulls present. It was this feature which initially drew attention to the bird.

In flight The pink underparts were conspicuous and enabled the bird to be located amongst the swirling mass of Black-headed Gulls. The upperwing pattern appeared identical to that of Black-headed, i.e. a pale grey mantle with a white wedge along the leading edge of the outer wing and black tips to the primaries. The head and tail were white and contrasted with the grey mantle. The underwing appeared identical to that of Black-headed. Structurally, it was longer-necked, broader- and longer-tailed and slightly longer-winged.

Bare parts The bill was longer and deeper than Black-headed's, and deep red in colour, while the legs were thicker and no colour was visible.

When the bird was seen again on 25 February, the following additional details were noted:

- slightly smaller and less heavy than Brown-headed Gull, and not as broad-winged as that species (an adult was present for direct comparison). The bill was approximately as long and deep as that of Brown-headed Gull but the culmen was slightly more down-curved
- nape and neck slightly paler pink than breast and belly
- the shade of grey on the mantle, scapulars and coverts was slightly paler than that of Black-headed Gull and clearly paler than that of Brown-headed Gull
- in flight, the rump was pale pink and contrasted with the white tail
- the black tips to the primaries were slightly broader than those of Black-headed Gull
- the underwing coverts were marginally greyer than those of Black-headed Gull, resulting in a slightly darker underwing
- the bill appeared blackish but may have been very dark red and was considerably darker than that of Black-headed Gull in breeding plumage. Legs and feet red — very obvious in flight when legs held against body
- pale iris occasionally seen in certain light conditions

DISTRIBUTION

The regular winter range of Slender-billed Gull extends from the coasts of Mauritania and Senegal interruptedly to the coastal regions of Pakistan and western India (Cramp and Simmons 1983). Although Cheng (1987) does not include Slender-billed Gull in the list of birds recorded in China, La Touche (1931-34) mentions two occurrences there: one at Tali Lake, north-western Yunnan in March 1902 and one in the Tali-fu Valley in February 1906. De Schauensee (1984) includes only one record of Slender-billed Gull, that being the record from Tali-fu in northwestern Yunnan but comments that the record requires confirmation and may very probably concern a mis-identified Black-headed Gull in winter plumage. In recent years however, there have been occasional records from Qinghai (Robson 1987, J. Hornskov *in litt.*), perhaps indicating that Slender-billed Gull occurs more regularly in western China than is generally realised and the lack of records is due to a paucity of observers.

Nevertheless, with an increasing number of records of Slender-billed Gull from Thailand, where it was first recorded in March 1979 (P.D. Round pers. comm.), and a single record of a bird wintering in Japan (Brazil 1991), its arrival in Hong Kong was not entirely unexpected. These records from eastern and southeastern Asia may indicate a relict or isolated breeding population to the east of the known (highly disjunct) breeding range which extends to approximately 75°E in Central Asia (Cramp and Simmons 1983, Zubakin 1988).

一九九〇年二月在米埔首次錄得一隻細咀鷗 *Larus genei* 。二月二十五日再在沙頭角海錄得。本文給出本種的描述和分佈狀況。這是香港的首次紀錄。

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COLLARED KINGFISHER AT MAI PO A NEW SPECIES FOR HONG KONG

J.S.R. Edge

On 7 October 1990 a Collared Kingfisher *Halcyon chloris* was found on the boardwalk leading from the closed area fence to the hide facing onto Deep Bay at Mai Po. The boardwalk lies along a tidal channel connecting one of the Mai Po gei-wais (shrimp ponds) with Deep Bay and at low tide it rests on exposed mud. It passes between extensive banks of mangrove, principally *Kandelia candel*. This is the first record of Collared Kingfisher for Hong Kong and only the second known record for China, the other being an adult female of the race *armstrongi* shot at Shaweishan Islands, Jiangsu Province, on 14 April 1908 (La Touche 1931-34, Cheng 1987).

The bird was watched for about ten minutes, between 1120h and 1130h, in bright sunshine. The following brief field notes were made at the time, as I was anxious to photograph the bird:

> 'Typical *Halcyon*. Bill black, dirty, large. Lower mandible convex; bill appears uptilted. Underparts white; centre of breast and belly muddy. Thick black eye-stripe extending around nape, white collar. Eyes black, large. Crown, upper-parts uniform turquoise, different shade from *H. smyrnensis*; rather greener. Legs and feet dark grey. Appeared to be slightly smaller than *smyrnensis*. Tail pumping noted; not heard calling. Flew in 10-20m "hops" along boardwalk rail. Tired-looking.'

7. Collared Kingfisher *Halcyon chloris*
Mai Po, 7 October 1990 *(John Edge)*

[The cost of reproduction of plate 7 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

After the ten minutes of observation, during which it was principally intent on cleaning itself, the bird flew south into the mangrove and was not seen again.

Identification of the bird as a Collared Kingfisher was straightforward; Forshaw and Cooper (1983) state that there are no confusion species but on a poor view confusion with the extra-limital Sacred Kingfisher *H. sacra* could conceivably occur. However, the clear white underparts of the Mai Po bird ruled out this species. The range of *H. chloris* is extensive, from the Red Sea coasts and the Gulf of Aden to the Arabian Gulf, the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia to New Guinea, northern Australia and islands of the South Pacific Ocean. There are, however, some fifty races (Forshaw and Cooper 1983), of which the most likely to occur in Hong Kong are *H. c. humii*, *H. c. armstrongi* and *H. c. collaris*. The race *humii* occurs in the Malay Peninsula, peninsular Thailand and coastal Burma, *armstrongi* in Thailand, Burma and much of Indochina, while *collaris* occurs throughout the Philippine archipelago.

The accompanying photograph shows a conspicuous whitish stripe extending from a point where the forehead meets the upper mandible almost to the back of the eye; there are also traces of white on the back of the crown, just above the black band around the nape, which was continuous, quite broad and well-defined. A further (poor) photograph shows the supercilium extending slightly behind the eye. Such a supercilium is not present in *collaris*, which is similar in this respect to the nominate race *chloris*; it is present in both *humii* and *armstrongi*, but the crown and upperparts of the latter are more greenish than the bright to rich blue crown, back and wings of *humii* (Forshaw and Cooper 1983).

It appears therefore that the Mai Po individual was of the race *armstrongi*, a second recorded instance of vagrancy of this striking species to the coast of China.

一隻白領翡翠 *Halcyon chloris armstrongi* 於一九九〇年十月七日在米埔出現。本文介紹當時的情況，並討論各亞種的特徵。這是香港的首次紀錄，亦是中國的第二次紀錄。

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank David Melville for his comments on this article and Peter Garland for giving me access to his references.

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RUFOUS-BELLIED WOODPECKER IN TAI PO KAU THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Richard Lewthwaite

On the morning of 13 November 1990, a few days after a cold front had passed through Hong Kong, I was birdwatching in Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve. In the grove of trees known as the Rhodoleias (*Rhodoleia championi*) I had brief views from a distance of about 50 metres of a medium-sized woodpecker *Picoides* sp. with horizontal black and white barring on the upperparts. There appeared to be no prominent facial markings, nor were there any large white oval patches on the scapulars or coverts, and the underparts were unstreaked and showed a pinkish-rufous coloration. Subsequent reference to La Touche (1925-1934), King *et al.* (1975) and de Schauensee (1984) pointed to Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Picoides hyperythrus*.

Early the next morning I returned to Tai Po Kau with Fox Wong Kai On. We succeeded in relocating the bird not far from the Rhodoleias and were able to take a more detailed description of the bird and confirm its identification as Rufous-bellied Woodpecker.

It was about the size of a Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*, though perhaps longer in the wings and tail. From the mantle to the tail the upperparts were barred black and white, with the barring broadest on the tail. The entire crown was crimson with a narrow stripe dotted black and white running down the centre of the nape and joining the crown and mantle. According to the descriptions given in La Touche (1925-1934) and de Schauensee (1984), this would indicate that the bird was an immature male. Apart from a few dark smudges around the base of the bill, there were no malar or moustachial stripes or any distinctive marks on the lores, ear coverts, chin or throat. The chin, lores and ear coverts were a rather dirty-looking greyish-white. The throat, sides of the neck, breast, belly and flanks were uniform cinnamon-buff, rather dull in tone and completely unmarked, apart from a small area on the flanks just above the legs, which was spotted black and white. The undertail coverts were pinkish-red, and the underside of the tail was broadly barred black and white. The bill was greyish with a slightly blue tinge, and the legs and feet greyish.

The bird behaved in typical woodpecker fashion, clinging to tree trunks, tapping the bark, prising out (presumed) insects and grubs, and embarking on short undulating flights between trees. It remained in Tai Po Kau throughout the winter until at least 17 April 1991, and was seen by many birdwatchers, some of whom reported hearing a 'laughing' call.

The three races of Rufous-bellied Woodpecker occurring in China are described by de Schauensee (1984). The nominate race, which is distinguished by its cinnamon-chestnut underparts, is resident in parts of Sichuan, Yunnan and Tibet; the race *marshalli*, which has the scarlet of the crown extending onto the rear of the ear coverts, is resident in the extreme

west of Tibet; and the migratory race *subrufinus*, which is characterised by light buffy-cinnamon underparts, breeds in northeast Heilongjiang and migrates through east and central China to winter in Yunnan, Guangxi and Guangdong Provinces. Similar ranges to those given by de Schauensee (1984) are shown on the map in Cheng (1987) for the three races, although in the text the wintering area of *subrufinus* is noted as Yunnan, Guangxi and Guizhou, but not Guangdong. Birds of this race are recorded as regular migrants at Beidaihe, Hebei Province, with autumn passage peaking in the first two weeks of September and continuing sporadically until mid-October. Spring passage occurs throughout May (M. D. Williams pers. comm.).

In the relatively dull tone of its underparts, the Tai Po Kau bird showed the characteristics of the migratory race *subrufinus*. Its discovery in mid-November following the passage of a cold front and its residence in Tai Po Kau until mid-April is also consistent with the expected wintering behaviour of this race.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks to Martin Williams for comments on an earlier draft.

一九九〇年十一月十三日大埔滘見到一隻棕腹啄木鳥 *Picoides hypenythus*，是香港的首次紀錄。本文描述該鳥，又討論了中國境內三個亞種間的分別。今次的紀錄，帶有遷徙亞種 *subrufinus* 的特徵。

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WHITE-THROATED ROCK THRUSH A NEW SPECIES FOR HONG KONG

Paul J. Leader

On 11 November 1990 David Carthy and I were mist-netting at the University of Hong Kong Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, Shek Kong when a small strange thrush was trapped. Its small size and distinctive plumage immediately ruled out all the thrush species I had previously seen and with a couple of missed heartbeats it occurred to me that it must be a female or immature White-throated Rock Thrush *Monticola gularis*.

8. Female/immature White-throated Rock Thrush *Monticola gularis* HKU Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, 11 Nov 1990 *(Paul J. Leader)*

It was roughly the same length as a Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* but was much plumper. It had a large-headed and large-eyed appearance. The crown was olive-brown. The mantle, rump, uppertail coverts

[The cost of reproduction of plate 8 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

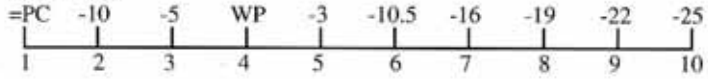
and lesser and median coverts were olive-brown with each feather having a black subterminal bar and a creamy-buff tip. This made the upperparts appear strikingly scaly. The tail feathers were grey-brown with thin buff tips while the greater coverts had black subterminal and buff terminal fringes. The bastard wing was brown with a cream fringe to the outer web. The remiges were also brown and there was a thin cream fringe to the outer webs of the secondaries — this was most obvious on the inner three. The underwing coverts were cream. The sides of the head, cheeks, breast, flanks and upper belly were buff, with each feather having a black subterminal crescent giving much of the underparts a markedly scaled appearance. This scaling was heavier on the cheeks, making them look almost blackish. The lores were paler buff and there was a buffy-white eye ring. The belly and undertail coverts were creamy-white. There was a very well demarcated triangular throat patch which was pure white. The bill was stout and dark horn in colour with a yellow-orange gape while the inside of the mouth was yellow. The eye was dark brown, and the legs and feet were flesh pink.

The bare parts and the flight feathers were in immaculate condition, ruling out the possibility of the bird's being an escape.

The following measurements were taken:

wing (maximum chord)	97 mm
bill (to skull)	22.4 mm
bill (to feathering)	17 mm
tarsus	64 mm
hind claw	8.5 mm
weight	39.9 g
fat score (after Anon 1984)	3
emarginated primaries	3, 4, 5

Wing formula



PC = longest primary covert
WP = wing point i.e. longest primary

The bird was ringed, photographed and released.

Reference made in the field to King (1975) confirmed the identification.

9. Female/immature White-throated Rock Thrush *Monticola gularis* HKU Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, 11 Nov *1990* *(Paul J. Leader)*

There is apparently nothing published on separating female and immature White-throated Rock Thrushes. However Svensson (1984) states that in the two European *Monticola* spp. the adults have a complete summer moult. Therefore a bird in such fresh plumage would probably be an adult female as an immature bird would show more feather wear.

On 29 November 1990 Richard Lewthwaite discovered a second bird in Tai Po Kau, and on 2 December Peter Kennerley and I found a third bird, also in Tai Po Kau. Both of these birds were females/immatures. The first of these was seen intermittently during the winter until April 1991 by a handful of observers including myself.

The behaviour of these two birds was quite striking. They were unafraid of humans and reasonably confiding, and their tendency to sit on low

[The cost of reproduction of plate 9 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

exposed branches for quite long periods of time allowed excellent views. This behaviour is similar to that of White-throated Rock Thrushes wintering in Thailand (P. D. Round pers. comm.). What was also surprising was how difficult it could be to see the white throat patch. If the bird was in a hunched position or was not breast-on looking directly at the observer, the throat patch was almost invisible.

None of the birds was heard to call. However a male at Beidaihe, Hebei Province, China in May 1991 gave a *Turdus*-like 'tsirp' call, and a call similar to the 'quack-quack' call of Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus* but much louder and more rasping (pers. obs.).

Cheng (1987), who considers *gularis* to be a race of *M. cinclorhynchus*, gives the breeding range of White-throated Rock Thrush as Nei Mongol Autonomous Region, Northeast Provinces south to Hebei and Shanxi Provinces. De Schauensee (1984) states that it breeds from Transbaikalia to Ussuriland and Korea. Cheng considers it to be a migrant in southeast Nei Mongol and most of eastern China, wintering as far south as Guangdong Province and Guangxi Shuang Autonomous Region. Williams (1986) states that it passes through Beidaihe, Hebei Province in moderate numbers in mid-May. De Schauensee gives the wintering range as Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi and south Yunnan, south Burma, northern Thailand, commonly along the Mekong in eastern Thailand, straggling to the Malay Penninsula. Its occurrence in Hong Kong is therefore not surprising.

一九九〇年十一月十日在香港大學嘉道理農業研究所以霧網捕得一隻藍頭磯鶇 ***Monticola gularis*** 。本文詳細介紹該鳥，給出羽翼方程式和分佈情況。此外，又形容十一月二十九日和十二月二日在大埔滘見到另外兩隻的活動情況。這是香港的首次紀錄。

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PALE-FOOTED BUSH WARBLER A SPECIES NEW TO HONG KONG

David S. Melville, A.C. Galsworthy and *Paul J. Leader*

On the morning of 6 October 1990 we were ringing birds at the University of Hong Kong Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, Shek Kong when an unusual bird was brought back from the nets by Fox Wong. It looked somewhat like a dark brownish *Phylloscopus* warbler with pale legs, and our initial reaction was a 'brown' Pale-legged Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus tenellipes*. However, the bird showed white on the carpal joint, which is characteristic of *Cettia* warblers, had a very rounded wing and a short square tail. We then examined the tail feathers and counted ten, there being no evidence of any feathers missing. It thus appeared that the bird was indeed a *Cettia* warbler but was unlike any of the species previously recorded from Hong Kong, all of which we are familiar with.

10. Pale-footed Bush Warbler *Cettia pallidipes*
HKU Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, 6 Oct 1990 *(Paul J. Leader)*

The bird was examined in detail and the following description taken:

Crown, back and rump rufous-brown. Greater coverts as back, primary coverts less rufous-brown. Remiges mid-brown with slight rufous tinge; upperside of rectrices darker brown, same as remiges. Pale buff supercilium extending to approximately 8 mm behind the eye, and dark brown eye stripe. Cheek brown, lores pale buff. Throat white. Upper breast

[The cost of reproduction of plate 10 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

creamy-buff; sides of breast brown. Belly bright white, shading on the flanks to creamy-buff, and then brown. Undertail coverts warm buff. Underside of remiges and rectrices grey-brown. Bend of wing white with yellowish tinge, axillaries grey-buff. Upper mandible dark brown, lower pale horn with dark tip, the ventral ridge all pale. Prominent rictal bristles. Iris dark brown. Legs pink-flesh, with a whitish appearance — when held for photography the legs became a deeper purplish-pink, but regained their former colour after the bird was returned to a cloth bag. Feathers on upper part of the leg brown, soles of the feet yellowish. Measurements are given in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Measurements of Pale-footed Bush Warblers caught in Hong Kong

	7 Oct 1990	11 Nov 1990
wing	47.5 mm	51 mm
bill (to skull)	12.4 mm	13.5 mm
tarsus	20.5 mm	19.5 mm
tail (centre rectrices)	37 mm	40 mm
weight	8.6 g	7.9 g
fat score (after Anon 1984)	3	1
P10	= secondaries	-
P2	< secondaries	-
P1 3 mm shorter than longest primary covert		-
Difference longest/shortest rectrices 4 mm		-

Wing formulae

7 Oct	-9.2	-9	-4	-2	-0.5	WP	-1	-2	-3	-6
11 Nov		-11	-4	-1	WP		-1	-2.5	-3.5	-4.5
primary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

WP = wing point (i.e. longest primary)

Reference in the field was made to Ali and Ripley (1983), Baker (1924), Delacour (1942, 1943), Inskipp and Inskipp (1985), King *et al.* (1975), and La Touche (1925-34), and the bird was identified as a Pale-footed Bush Warbler *C. pallidipes*, a species which both DSM and PJL have seen in Yunnan. Subsequently, reference was also made to Étchécopar and Hüe (1983) and Witherby *et al.* (1938). The only feature which did not fit the description of a 'typical' Pale-footed Bush Warbler was the rufous-brown upperparts, which are reported to be olive-brown. However, A.H.N. Roberts has kindly checked and photographed skins in the British Museum (Natural History), Tring. The specimens of *C. pallidipes laurentei*, including that collected in Macau (see below), all have fairly dark rufous-brown upperparts, and appear very similar to the Hong Kong birds.

[The cost of reproduction of plates 11 and 12 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

11. Pale-footed Bush Warbler *Cettia pallidipes*
HKU Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, 11 Nov 1990 *(Paul J. Leader)*

12. Pale-footed Bush Warbler *Cettia pallidipes*
HKU Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre, 11 Nov 1990 *(Paul J. Leader)*

Nine species of bush warblers of the genus *Cettia* have been recorded from China (Cheng 1987). The four which have been recorded from Hong Kong previously are: Short-tailed *C. squameiceps*, Chinese *C. diphone*, Mountain *C. fortipes* and Yellow-bellied *C. acanthizoides* (Chalmers 1986, Melville 1990).

The remaining five species are Pale-footed Bush Warbler, Large Bush Warbler *C. major*, Aberrant Bush Warbler *C. flavolivacea*, Rufous-capped Bush Warbler *C. brunnifrons* and Cetti's Warbler *C. cetti*. The latter four could be ruled out on the following characters:

Large Bush Warbler is much larger with a wing of 57-67mm. Aberrant Bush Warbler has the underparts yellowish or yellowish-olive, and the wing and tail are more or less of the same length. The Rufous-capped Bush Warbler has a similar wing formula to Pale-footed but the white underparts are tinged grey on the sides to the throat, breast and upper flanks, it has a prominent white supercilium and the axillaries are white. The wing and tail are of similar length and the tail is strongly graduated. Cetti's Warbler is larger, with a short whitish supercilium, a graduated tail, undertail coverts with dull white tips, and the first primary is longer than the longest primary covert.

None of the other members of the genus *Cettia* (including those of the genus *Urosphena*, which is sometimes differentiated, e.g. Watson 1986, King 1989) is known from mainland Asia. Thus they can be excluded from consideration — the likelihood of any of these insular forms being traded through Hong Kong and an individual being released or escaping being remote in the extreme.

The bird was ringed, photographed and released, having also been examined by, among others, P.R. Kennerley, A.H.N. Roberts, F. Wong and D. Carthy.

Remarkably, a second individual was netted at the same site on 11 November 1990 by ACG and PJL. It was generally very similar in plumage to the first bird. The following description was taken:

> Upperparts and wings rufous-brown. Longish, creamy supercilium. Dark brown eye stripe. Throat white. Upper breast pale creamy-buff; lower breast and belly silky white. Undertail coverts creamy-buff. Flanks dull grey-brown. Legs pink, claws pale flesh. Upper mandible black-brown with horn cutting edge; lower mandible yellowy-pink. Gape yellow-orange, with two tongue spots. Iris very dark brown. Measurements are given in Table 1. The bird gave a 'chek chek' call when released.

The Pale-footed Bush Warbler was first described by Blanford (1872) from Sikkim. It is of interest that he described it under the name *Phylloscopus pallidipes* — highlighting the superficial resemblance of the species to a member of the genus *Phylloscopus*.

The nominate race of Pale-footed Bush Warbler *C. pallidipes pallidipes* occurs across the lower Himalayas from Garhwal in the east to northern Burma (Watson 1986), and Cheng (1987) records it as a migrant and possible resident in western Yunnan, specimens apparently having been collected from Yingjiang and Luxi. The race *laurentei* was described by La Touche (1921) from a specimen collected at 2,700 feet (823m) at Poutoutsing in southeastern Yunnan, where Cheng (1987) notes it as possibly resident. Watson (1986) notes that this form winters in south-western China, northern Laos and northern Vietnam. In northern Thailand, Deignan (1963) noted *laurentei* as a visitor in winter and on migration. However, Round (1984) recorded one singing on Doi Inthanon in April and suggested that it may be resident in northern Thailand. There is one specimen record of *laurentei* from Guangdong Province, that collected by Vaughan and Jones (1913) on 12 March 1907 at Macau.

Bush warblers are usually skulking birds and thus difficult to observe in the field, and probably are also difficult to collect. Hence the scanty information given by Cheng (1987) and the fact that the species is not recorded by Yang *et al.* (1987). Recent observations in Xishuangbanna in southern Yunnan Province (including the play-back of tape recordings) have revealed that the Pale-footed Bush Warbler is not uncommon in suitable scrub habitat, being recorded in both June 1989 and March 1990 (WWF Hong Kong unpublished records). It is possible that the species has expanded its range and/or become more numerous as a result of forest clearance.

We thank A.H.N. Roberts for examining material at the British Museum (Natural History), and P.R. Kennerley for commenting on a draft.

一九九〇年十月六日在香港大學嘉道理農業研究所以霧網捕得一隻淡脚樹鶯 *Cettia pallidipes* 。這是香港的首次紀錄。一九九〇年十一月十一日再捕得一隻。本文給出牠們的羽翼方程式和詳細的描述。牠們帶有 *laurentei* 亞種的特徵。這個亞種以前祇有在雲南西南部錄得。

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PLAIN FLOWERPECKER AT HO SHEUNG HEUNG THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Gavin Cooper

When walking through Ho Sheung Heung wood in the forenoon of 2 April 1988 I came upon two flowerpeckers *Dicaeum* sp. nest building. Light conditions at the time were very good and I was able to keep them under observation for one and a half hours at distances down to about 15 metres. The fact that neither bird (presumably a pair) exhibited the distinct male plumage of either Scarlet-backed *D. cruentatum* or Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *D. ignipectus*, our two regular species, immediately caught my interest. Closer observation revealed all-black bills which excluded young birds of either species, no red on the back which eliminated Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker, and grey-white underparts which ruled out Fire-breasted Flowerpecker. I concluded that the birds were Plain Flowerpeckers *D. concolor*, a species I had previously seen on a trip to Fung Kai in western Guangdong Province, China where they were fairly common. Although suspected previously, this was the first definite record for Hong Kong.

My attention was first drawn by their very swift and direct flight when returning to or leaving the nest; this was a purse-shaped affair hanging about one metre off the ground from some old twigs and foliage within a clump of bamboo.

The birds were very small and, in size, shape and general structure, typical of our other flowerpeckers. Both were similarly plumaged. The upperparts, mantle, rump and wings were olive-green and were, in the prevailing sunshine, much brighter than might be expected, but they were presumably in full breeding plumage. Particular attention was given to the rump colouring and this showed no trace of red or scarlet. The primaries and tail were blackish. The underparts were grey-white with a clearly visible yellowish wash on the flanks. The bill, eyes and legs were completely black; the bill and eyes appeared more prominent than in Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker but this may have been because they were set in a much paler head.

The birds were observed from several angles, in flight along and across my line of sight, and at rest when in the act of nest building. At one point they were also seen coming together in what appeared to be some kind of display flight. The only call heard was a short burst of twittering at this time.

The Plain Flowerpecker is found from India, Burma, Thailand and Indochina to the Greater Sunda Islands (de Schauensee 1984). Cheng (1987) records this as a resident species in Xizang Autonomous Region and in Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou, Hunan and Guangdong Provinces as well as Taiwan and Hainan.

一九八八年四月二日在河上鄉錄得一對純色啄花鳥 *Dicaeum concolor* 。這是香港的首次紀錄。本文描述這對啄花鳥的特徵和牠們築巢的情況。

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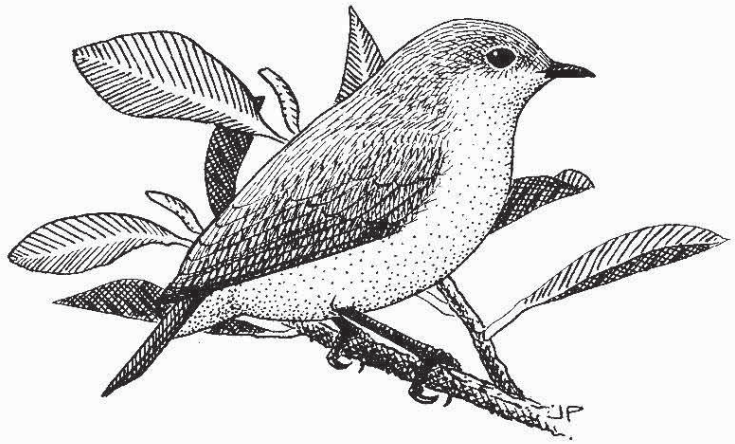
[The late publication of this paper is due to delayed acceptance of the record — Ed.]



Plain Flowerpecker *Dicaeum concolor* *(Jeremy Pearse)*

BLUE-WINGED PITTA ON CHEUNG CHAU A FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Martin D. Williams

On 4 May 1989 I saw a bird I thought was a Black-capped Kingfisher *Halcyon pileata* fly up from beside a footpath running through a wooded area on Cheung Chau. It was of similar size to the kingfisher, and also had royal blue wings with large white flashes. I was surprised to find a Black-capped Kingfisher there and looked at the bird through binoculars when it perched on a branch about ten metres from me, five metres above the ground. It was facing away, and I saw it had a green back, legs too long and a bill too short for a kingfisher. It could only be one thing: a pitta *Pitta* sp.! It flew down into a dense thicket but I found it again, this time perched low amongst the undergrowth five to ten metres away, and watched it for maybe five minutes. For most of this period, the wingtips, tail and vent were hidden by foliage.

The bird had a prominent black face mask: a wide band running from the hindneck to the front of the face. Seen side-on, this apparently tapered away to the rear of the neck, but when the bird briefly turned to face away from me I found that it continued across the nape. The head was pale (buffish?) just above the mask, and I noted the crown as 'duller (than the upperparts), not green.' The upperparts were green. There was blue along the folded edge of the wing although it was not clear which feathers were blue. The underparts were orange, shading to darkest on the belly and palest just below the black mask so making the mask more prominent. The bill was black, straight, and rather stout. The bird turned round on its perch, and I saw it had a bright red vent, and appeared tail-less. It then flew down the hillside, and was not seen again.

I initially identified the bird as a Chinese Pitta *P. nympha*, partly on the basis of range (this species breeds in south China [Cheng 1987], and there were three previous records for Hong Kong [Chalmers 1986]), but also because it was very similar to the illustration captioned as this species in Viney and Phillipps (1988) and it apparently fitted literature descriptions (de Schauensee 1984, King *et al.* 1975, Viney and Phillipps 1988) — though these seemed unclear on distinguishing this and the similar Blue-winged Pitta *P. moluccensis*, and the bird differed from the illustration in Sonobe (1982).

It was only after a group of Hong Kong birdwatchers including Richard Lewthwaite and Verity Picken saw Chinese Pitta at Nan Kun Shan, Guangdong Province, China in May 1989 that I released this identification was wrong. A notable difference was in the wing patches: these were prominent in the bird I saw, but VP noted only small white wing patches on a flying Chinese Pitta and RL, with briefer flight views, did not see any white on the wing in flight. They also said the blue on the wings was almost iridescent turquoise blue, not the royal blue I had seen, and the underparts of Chinese Pitta were basically warm buff.

This led me to believe the bird I had seen was a Blue-winged Pitta. I checked with Karen Phillipps, and found the illustration in Viney and Phillipps (1988) is based on a Blue-winged Pitta painted in Malaysia, the difference being that the illustrated bird has been given an enhanced pale 'eyebrow' running from lores to nape. In June 1990, I examined a specimen of Blue-winged Pitta in the South-west Forestry College, Kunming and found it matched the Cheung Chau bird. P.D. Round (pers. comm.) examined a Chinese Pitta specimen at Academia Sinica, Kunming and noted that the white wing patch was limited to a small area of maybe only two or three feathers, much as is illustrated in Sonobe (1982).

This is the first record of Blue-winged Pitta for Hong Kong. Although its range is not known to extend any closer than southern Yunnan Province (Cheng 1987) it is reported to be a partial migrant in Southeast Asia (King *et al.* 1975) and it is a summer visitor to Thailand (P.D. Round pers. comm). Trade in pittas is illegal in Hong Kong although it may continue. Given the date, and the fact that the Cheung Chau bird's arrival coincided with a 'wave' of migrants such as Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*, Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* and Grey-streaked Flycatcher *Muscicapa griseisticta*, it seems likely this was a wild bird. I noted the weather on 4 May as 'dull, overcast with some rain'; there was heavy rain early on 5 May, which was again dull and overcast.

The Blue-winged Pitta has been accepted to Category D of the Hong Kong list i.e. a species which might occur naturally but for which the possibility of its being an escape cannot be excluded.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Useful discussions were held with Richard Lewthwaite, Phil Round and Verity Picken.

一九八九年五月四日在長洲尋得一隻馬來八色鶇 *Pitta moluccensis* 。本文詳論跟藍翅八色鶇 *Pitta nympha* 判別的方法和當時的天氣情況。這是香港的首次紀錄。這個品種被接納成爲D類品種。

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BROWN-BREASTED BULBUL AT LUK KENG A SPECIES NEW TO HONG KONG

Geoff Carey

On 24 January 1990 Wendy Young, Shirley O'Brien and I were bird-watching at Luk Keng, on the opposite side of the road from the main marsh. WLY directed my attention to a bulbul loosely associating with a small group of Crested Bulbuls *Pycnonotus jocosus* in a bank of small trees. It was immediately obvious that this was not one of the common species of bulbul found in Hong Kong though it did strike me as being slightly familiar in some way. We proceeded to watch the bird for about ten minutes before it flew off with the rest of the flock. Later in the morning we came across this or a second bird at the side of the main marsh across the road. Two birds were noted subsequently by other observers.

Reference to the excellent illustration of the species in Viney and Phillipps (1988) allowed instant identification as Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous* and I realised it was a species I had previously seen in Yunnan Province, southwest China.

It was similar in size to Crested Bulbul with plumage characteristics superficially resembling Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster*. However, differences that quickly became apparent were the greater extent of the pale area on the head, the purer white underparts and the yellow undertail coverts. The head was not as peaked as on Red-vented Bulbul, being rounder, and the black here was more restricted, most noticeably on the sides where pale brown cheeks were distinctly demarcated from the black around the eye. The crown and lores were black, with a narrow line of black extending a short way back from the gape. The throat was extensively and contrastingly white with, below this, a broad brownish band across the chest. The belly was white and the vent and undertail coverts rich yellow, tinged slightly orange. The combination of brown breast band, pale well-defined cheeks and yellow undertail coverts is diagnostic of Brown-breasted Bulbul.

The coloration of the upperparts was similar to that on Crested Bulbul, browner than Red-vented, with a slightly paler rump. This and the narrow pale tips to the tail feathers were visible as the bird flew away, though neither was as obvious as on Red-vented Bulbul. The wings were concolorous with the mantle. The bill was dark grey and the legs slightly paler. The only call heard sounded typically 'bulbul-like' though slightly fuller than either Crested Bulbul or Chinese Bulbul *Pycnonotus sinensis*.

The two birds took up residence at the site and were recorded until the spring of 1991. They were seen to exhibit behaviour indicating they were a pair, and the presence of a third bird in autumn 1990 suggests that breeding may have taken place.

The range of this species is given as northeast, south and east Burma, northwest Thailand, north Laos and northwest Tonkin (King *et al.* 1975). It occurs in scrub and secondary growth usually between 1,200m and 2,300m, though sometimes down to 600m. De Schauensee (1984) states that it occurs as high as 4,300m in north Yunnan.

Two races of Brown-breasted Bulbul are given for China by de Schauensee (1984). The first, *P.x. andersoni*, is resident in east China from Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Jiangxi and Fujian to north Guangdong and Henan, along the Yangtze valley to south Shaanxi, southeast Gansu, the Red Basin of Sichuan, the area south of Batang and north Yunnan where it is intermediate with the second race, *P.x. xanthorrhous*. The latter is resident from southeast Tibet, southeast Sichuan and Guizhou south to south Yunnan, the Yao Shan range in Guangxi and southwest Hunan.

The race *P.x. andersoni* is distinguished by the virtual absence of the broad pectoral band (de Schauensee 1984) which indicates that the Hong Kong birds were of the nominate race *P.x. xanthorrhous*. The species has been accepted to Category D of the Hong Kong List, i.e. a species which might occur naturally but for which the possibility of its being an escape cannot be ruled out.

一九九〇年一月二十四日鹿頸有一隻黃腹鵐 *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous* 的報告。文章描述了情況和解釋何以把牠定爲 *xanthorrhous* 亞種。這是香港的首次紀錄，並已列入D類。

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MEADOW BUNTING ON LANTAU A SPECIES NEW TO HONG KONG

C.Y. Lam and *Roger Costin*

During the afternoon of 30 December 1990 we were in party of eight people walking across the disused paddy at Tung Chung, Lantau, recording birds for the annual Christmas count. As we neared the beach we noticed a small bird on a patch of open ground near the temple. It spent some time on the ground in the short grass and occasionally on the concrete apron at the rear of the temple. It then moved up to a low bush and subsequently up into the higher branches of a nearby tree. We had good views of the bird for several minutes at a distance of about ten metres. It had the silhouette of a bunting *Emberiza* sp. but was on the large side. The first impression was that of a female Tristram's Bunting *E. tristrami* but as details emerged it dawned on us that it was an unusual species for Hong Kong. It was subsequently identified as a female Meadow Bunting *E. cioides*, which CYL had seen in China near Lushan in early December 1990. It closely resembled the female Meadow Bunting illustrated in Nakamura (1988). During the same afternoon at Tung Chung we also identified Masked Bunting *E. spodocephala*, Little Bunting *E. pusilla* and Rustic Bunting *E. rustica*.

The head was clearly marked with a wide buffy-white supercilium extending behind the eye, and the ear coverts were grey-brown. A broad buffy-white malar streak was outlined in black. The chin and throat were whitish and this pale coloration extended round and developed into a greyish half-collar.

The upperparts were mainly a warm rufous-brown with blackish streaks, the streaks on the crown and nape being finer than those on the back. The bright rufous rump and uppertail coverts were very conspicuous. The feathers of the predominantly brown tail appeared to be fringed reddish-brown while the outer tail feathers were edged white.

The breast and flanks were a pale salmon-pink with faint pale streaks. The belly and undertail coverts were buffy-white, and the legs were dark brown.

The plumage was in good condition and the bird seemed lively and alert. There were several previous records of this species in 1990 but all were considered escapes because of the poor plumage condition (see Systematic List). As this bird showed no signs of having been kept in captivity it was accepted to Category D, the half-way house for birds which may well be wild but for which the possibility of escape cannot be ruled out.

De Schauensee (1984) gives the range of this species as Russian Turkestan, southern Siberia, Mongolia and across to the Pacific, Korea and Japan. The race *castaneiceps* is resident in eastern and central China from southern Hebei and Shandong south to Guangdong and inland in Shanxi, Shaanxi, eastern Gansu, eastern Sichuan, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangxi and Guangxi

Provinces. It is also described as party migratory. Within China, according to Cheng (1976), the southern limit of the breeding range of Meadow Bunting is located around 25-26° north, that is, north of Guangdong Province. It is also said to be possibly a passage migrant or a winter visitor in Guangzi. Recent observations at Ba Bao Shan, northern Guangdong Province (Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, unpublished notes) have shown birds present in June, probably breeding, and its occurrence in Hong Kong is therefore not unexpected.

一九九〇年十二月三十日，一隻三道眉草鵐 *Emberiza cioides* 在大嶼山出現，是香港的首次紀錄。品種已列入D類，文章描述當天見到的鳥和介紹牠的分佈情況。

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GREY-NECKED BUNTING AT MAI PO A FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Michael Turnbull

Around mid-afternoon on 17 March 1990 at a point roughly 100 metres before the east turnstile to the Captive Wildfowl Collection at Mai Po, my attention was drawn to a bunting *Emberiza* sp. on the path. It immediately struck me as a species with which I was unfamiliar. The relatively unmarked head and obvious eye-ring recalled Ortolan Bunting *E. hortulana*, of which I have some experience in Europe, or the rather similar Cretzschmar's Bunting *E. caesia*. This bird did not, however, appear to fit either of those species and I suspected that it might be a Grey-necked Bunting *E. buchanani*.

It was observed during two periods, each of about five minutes, at 1500h and at 1710h, at distances of about 15 and 30 metres in very good light. It was also seen in flight at roughly the same distance.

DESCRIPTION

Size and shape Clearly larger than both the other *Emberiza* spp. present, viz. Masked *E. spodocephala* and Little *E. pusilla*. Shape rather robust and sparrow-like.

Head and neck Head predominantly grey with whitish eye-ring. Whitish moustachial stripe bordered below by grey malar stripe, the latter a shade darker than the grey of the head. Crown extremely finely streaked with blackish feathering, only visible at very close quarters, but becoming more obvious on the nape. Chin and throat whitish.

Upperparts Upper mantle ashy-grey with dark streaking. Lower mantle, rump and uppertail coverts similar, though with less contrasting streaking. Median coverts mainly pale buff with small, dark centres. Greater coverts similar though dark centres proportionally bigger. Flight feathers and tertials mainly dark with pale buff fringes.

Underparts Breast a rusty tone of rufous with a cluster of buff fringes at the centre, giving a scaly effect. Rear flanks whitish with a row of dark spots.

Tail Mainly brown. Some white certainly present, but not apparently on outer webs of outer rectrices and seemed much less obvious in flight than on Masked and Little Buntings.

Bare parts Bill and legs a rather bright pink, especially the latter. Forehead and culmen ridge formed an almost continuous straight line.

Voice No call was heard.

During the two periods of observation the bird appeared to be feeding on stony areas in the tracks on the bunds. It seemed wary, constantly looking up at the sky. On both occasions it eventually sought cover in long grass at the edge of the bund and then proved extremely retiring before eventually being relocated each time less than 50 metres from the original spot.

When I was unable to relocate the bird after the initial sighting I went to the Ringing Hut near the Education Centre to inform A.C. Galsworthy and his ringing colleagues. Unfortunately we were again unable to find the bird. However, this did provide the opportunity to refer to de Schauensee (1984), which was sufficient to confirm, initially at least, that this was indeed a Grey-necked Bunting.

Subsequent further reference to de Schauensee (1984), and also to Ali and Ripley (1983), Bruun, Delin and Svensson (1986) and Delin and Svensson (1988), left no doubt as to the identity of the bird. The absence of any breast band and the whitish, not yellow or orange, throat are sufficient to eliminate both Ortolan and Cretzschmar's Buntings, while much of the finer detail noted is borne out in the descriptions available. Slight discrepancies are, however, the failure to note a pale rufous tinge to the flight feathers and greater and median coverts, and the apparent relative lack of white in the tail in comparison with the other two buntings (Little and Masked) present.

All authors refer to the sexes as being similar, with the female merely being slightly duller. This bird did not strike me as 'dull' and M.R. Leven (pers. comm.) has suggested that in the far west of the species' range in eastern Turkey females frequently exhibit a more 'washed-out' appearance than males. However, in view of the suggestion in Svensson (1984) that only extreme examples can be sexed in the hand, and in the absence of field experience of both sexes, it would seem impossible to determine the sex of this individual with certainty.

RANGE AND DISTRIBUTION

Howard and Moore (1980) give three races, with the following ranges:

E. b. cerrutii - Eastern Turkey, southwestern Russia and Iran
E. b. buchanani - Afghanistan, western Pakistan migrating to southeastern India
E. b. neobscura - Central Asia, western Mongolia

The reference to southeastern India is probably erroneous, as Ali and Ripley (1983) record the wintering grounds as being in the central and western parts of that country. They confirm that the wintering range of *cerrutii* and *neobscura* is apparently unknown, but state that there is evidence that all the races probably winter in India. Although the three races are not separable in winter plumage, heavy passage in Baluchistan indicates that more than just the Afghanistan population of the nominate race is involved. De Schauensee (1984) simply states that the species winters in India and gives the breeding range within China as 'western Xinjiang from about 90°E west to the Dzungarian Ala Tau, the Tian Shan, and the

foothills of the mountains of western Kashgaria'. Cheng (1987) gives a similar breeding distribution in northern and western parts of Xinjiang and gives the status as 'rare'.

All authors refer to the breeding habitat of the species as arid and rather barren mountain slopes with scanty vegetation, usually at altitudes of around 2,000m, but occasionally as low as 400m. In addition, Ali and Ripley (1983) describe its preferred wintering habitat as 'stony, sparsely scrubbed country ... sometimes stubble fields'.

DISCUSSION

The limited breeding range of Grey-necked Bunting in China, the remoteness of that region and the generally north-east/south-west migration pattern with little or no movement across other areas of the country would all suggest that it is unlikely that significant numbers are trapped and find themselves caught up in the massive trade in birds through Hong Kong. Moreover, a pattern of southeasterly vagrancy of species which mainly migrate south from Central Asia into the Indian subcontinent has recently emerged (for a summary to 1989 see Leader 1990). Yet, given the scale of the local trade and, in particular, of the number of buntings involved in it, the possibility of this bird's having been in captivity at some stage cannot be ruled out even though there was nothing about its plumage or behaviour to suggest this. It has therefore been accepted to Category D of the Hong Kong List, i.e. a species which might occur naturally but for which the possibility of escape cannot be ruled out.

一九九〇年三月十七日在米埔錄得一隻灰頸鷚 *Emberiza buchanani* 。這是首次香港的紀錄。文章討論這個品種的分布和描述見到的情況。

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THE HISTORICAL AND CURRENT STATUS OF THE ORIENTAL WHITE STORK

Simba Chan

The sudden occurrence of up to 121 Oriental White Storks *Ciconia boyciana* at Mai Po Marshes, Hong Kong during the 1990/91 winter was very unexpected and, in view of the species' low world population, its status, both historical and current, is of interest.

13. Oriental White Stork *Ciconia boyciana*
Mai Po, December 1989 *(John Holmes)*

The Oriental White Stork was first described by Swinhoe from a pair of live birds in the grounds of the British Consulate General in Shanghai in the early 1870s (Swinhoe 1873). These birds had been brought from Yokohama, Japan by R.H. Boyce, chief of the H.M. Office of Works at the Consulate, who hoped they would be companions to a young Red-crowned Crane *Grus japonensis* at the Consulate. However, the storks proved to be more aggressive than expected and Boyce offered them to Swinhoe, who regarded them as a new species which he named Boyce's Stork (hence *boyciana*). He sent the birds to England but both of them died on the way and the skins were not preserved.

Since Swinhoe's original description, the status of *C. boyciana* has been a matter of dispute. Vaurie (1965), who recognised *C. boyciana* as a full species, summarised the differences between this and *C. ciconia* thus: 'Although some ornithologists think it is merely a subspecies of *C. ciconia*, *C. boyciana* is considerably bigger and paler on the wings than *C. ciconia*

[The cost of reproduction of plate 13 in colour has been subsidised by Nikon]

and also differs from it by having a black bill and by having the bare skin around its eyes and on the lores and chin red, whereas the bill is red and the bare skin is black in *C. ciconia*. In addition, the bill of *C. boyciana* is much more massive, tilts upward rather than being straight, and in most of the specimens that I have seen is slightly opened or shows a tendency to be opened in the middle whereas the halves fit tightly in *C. ciconia*'. Recently, Kahl (1972), Voous (1973) and Cramp and Simmons (1977) relegated *C. boyciana* to a subspecies of *C. ciconia*. However, Sibley and Monroe (1990) treated it as a distinct species with the remark that it 'may be conspecific with *C. ciconia*.'

Baker (1922-30) reported *C. boyciana* wintering in Burma (now Myanmar), Manipur and Assam, and recorded that a pair he saw at Kulna, Bengal (now Bangladesh) 'had conspicuous black bills and must have been of this race'. Ripley (1983) noted *C. boyciana* as a 'winter visitor to Assam and associated states, and Bangladesh south to the Sunderbans. Status needs watching'. There is one record of *C. c. ciconia* from Thailand (Deignan 1963). The White Storks found in Xinjiang and Tibet (recorded in 1936 and 1922 respectively) proved to be *C. c. asiatica* (Academia Sinica 1983, Cheng 1987).

It now seems that *C. boyciana* is found only in East Asia. Hong Kong lies on the southernmost part of its wintering range as it has not been recorded from Hainan or Yunnan (Fan 1990) nor other parts of Southeast Asia.

HISTORICAL STATUS (RECORDS BEFORE 1971)

China

C. boyciana have long been known in China, although sometimes they were (and still are) confused with cranes *Grus* spp. In the *fangzhi* or district report of different counties written in the Qing Dynasty (1616-1911), there were several reports of storks. For example 'Andong Zhi' (Reports from Andong — now called Dandong — in Liaoning on the Sino-Korean border) recorded *C. boyciana* nesting in old pine trees and old elm trees in that county. They were seldom seen but, once found, were in flocks of several hundred. They were not migratory. Another county report, 'Fengcheng Zhi' (Fengcheng is about 50 km northwest of Andong), noted that a place in southern Fengcheng was called '*Laolao-wo*' ('Granny's nest') because storks used to nest there. (Storks were called *Shui-laolao*, which means 'granny-in-the-water', by local people) (Huang 1989). However, *C. boyciana* no longer nests in Liaoning (Cheng 1987).

In his book on the birds of eastern China (1931-1934), La Touche reported that Père Heude claimed *C. boyciana* was abundant in winter in the lakes and marshes of Wuho and Hsiayufan not far from T'ung Liu (Dongliu, in southwest Anhui, about 25km southwest of Shengjin Hu) between 1873 and 1878. Mollendorff also saw a small flock near Beijing in 1873 (Shaw 1936). However, Swinhoe had never seen it in China. Since Père David stated not very positively that he had seen one at Takoo (Dagu) only and von Schrenck recorded the occurrence of it only from the description by a native of the Amur country, Swinhoe regarded *C. boyciana*

as 'a peculiar production of Japan, probably wandering at times across to the Chinese continent' (Swinhoe 1873).

In the early 1920s, La Touche bought a subadult male bird at the market of Chinwangtao (Qinhuangdao, near Beidaihe) (La Touche 1921). It was considered to be a very rare bird at that time (La Touche 1931-34). There was one record of a bird seen in Chihli (now Hebei) on 15 April 1926 (Gee *et al.* 1926-27). Wilder and Hubbard (1938) considered it a rare migrant in north China while Cheng (1963) also regarded it as 'rare'. However, Danish scientist Axel Hemmingsen recorded over 1,000 *C. boyciana* in the Novembers of 1942, 1944 and 1945 at Beidaihe, Hebei Province. The number of *C. boyciana* recorded on 12 November 1945 was an astonishing but dubious 1,000-4,000 birds. In addition, Rev. W. Muller told Hemmingsen that he had shot two *C. boyciana* out of several hundred near Tianjin on 19 November 1944 (Hemmingsen and Guildal 1968).

C. boyciana is classified as a vagrant in Taiwan. Prior to 1971, there were only four records of singles comprising two specimens collected in 1911 (date of collection unknown) and December 1938 in Kaohsiung County in southern Taiwan (Kobayashi and Cho 1981) and two sightings, both in Yilan County in the northeast, in 1961 and 1963 (Yuan-hong Chuang *in litt.*).

Japan

Due to protection by the shogunate during the Tokugawa Era (17th to 19th century), storks remained fairly common until the early days of the Meiji Restoration (1860s to 1910s). Taneyasu Matsumori, an officer and a bird-lover, recorded *C. boyciana* nesting on the roof of the Buddhist Temples at Asakusa, Edo (now Tokyo) in the 1860s (Uchida 1991). In 1879 the storks were still reported to nest on the roofs of the temples in Tokyo (Austin and Kuroda 1953).

However, there has been a catastrophic decline since. During the Tokugawa Era, hunting of cranes *Grus* spp., storks *Ciconia* spp. and Crested Ibis *Nipponia nippon* was restricted to *daimyo* (feudal lords) only. With the fall of the shogunate and the hierarchy, these birds were no longer 'protected' (Komiya 1985). By the end of the 19th century there was only one known breeding site left in a place called Tsuruyama ('Crane Mountain') in Izushi-gun, Hyogo Prefecture in central Honshu.

This last colony was protected because the birds were regarded as a good omen to the military, as Japan was waging war with China at that time (around 1894 to 1895) (Austin and Kuroda 1953). They were declared a National Monument in 1920 (Komiya 1985). La Touche reported 20 or 30 storks which 'built large nests of sticks on pine trees in Izushi' in the 1920s and 30s (La Touche 1931-34). By 1931 there were eleven nests in or near Tsuruyama. Around 1930, the population reached a peak and it was estimated to consist of about 100 birds (Komiya 1985).

However, World War II brought doom to them. The shooting of heron

'pests' frightened the storks from their nesting place and big pine trees were felled as war-time fuel. Hirakazu Kobayashi visited Tsuruyama in 1944 and found about 50 storks and six nests, but when he returned in 1948 only 16 storks and three nests were found in the entire area and there were no storks actually inside the sanctuary. In 1950 Tamezo Mori found three young storks in small villages considerably south of Izushi (Austin and Kuroda 1953). Other breeding sites found in the neighbouring Fukui Prefecture in the 1950s contained very few breeding storks (Kobayashi 1956). The storks were declared a Special National Monument in 1953 (Komiya 1985) but this did not prevent their decline. By the early 1960s there was only one left in Hyogo (Yamashina 1961) and about a dozen birds left in Fukui. The last two young storks were seen in 1964 but they died soon after hatching (Takano 1975). There was a captive breeding programme in the 1960s for the remaining storks but all attempts failed, possibly because the birds were poisoned by mercury (Yamashina 1977). The last resident Oriental White Stork in Japan was taken into captivity in 1971 (Takano 1985) and it became extinct in Japan as a resident bird.

Korea

Campbell (1892) reported that numerous *C. boyciana* resided and nested in several parts of Korea in 1892 and they were 'by no means shy, and are easily approached and killed in the rice-fields.' In 1939 Mori noted that 'while very few Japanese Storks are now found in Japan proper, they may still be found in many places in Korea, though greatly decreased. Quite a few of them nest in Yonan and Haeju counties in Hwanghae Do. They do not build their nests congregated in tight colonies. The individual nests are at least several *cho* (109 metres) apart. They are usually scattered at the rate of one nest to one village...' (Austin 1948). Kwak *et al.* (1980) noted that until 1945 *C. boyciana* was still regarded as a common bird in Korea but the number decreased in the 1960s and the declaration of the bird as a National Monument in 1968 was not enough to save it.

It is generally believed that *C. boyciana* had disappeared as a breeding bird in South Korea before World War II. However, a nesting pair was discovered at Umsung, Chungchong-bukdo on 1 April 1971 and the villagers claimed that storks had bred there for at least 40 years. Unfortunately the male bird was shot while away from the nest on 4 April 1971 (Gore and Won 1971).

In North Korea, four pairs of storks were found to nest in the southern areas of Hwanghae-bukdo and Hwanghae-namdo before the Korean War. They were exterminated possibly because trees large enough to support the storks' nests were destroyed during the war (Sonobe and Izawa 1987).

Russia/USSR

According to Dement'ev and Gladkov (1951), *C. boyciana* was not numerous at the time of Przhevalsky's exploration in the Ussuri Territory in the 1860s to 1870s. Przhevalsky mentioned a number of cases of destruction of nests by the Asiatic Black Bear *Selenarctos thibetanus* and of human

exploitation — the meat was eaten by shamans, and the Chinese bought their long bones for making chopsticks! Przhevalsky observed about a score of nests near Lake Khanka on the border between China, Russia and Korea and also received information of nesting in the Prokhorovskie Hills near Sivakovka and on the upper Ussuri. Shul'pin reported a nest on the Krasnaya River near the village of Novorusanovka, and received information on nesting on the eastern side of Sikhote-Alin, in the Samarga River valley and on the Botchi River in the 1930s. It was regarded as a disappearing species in the 1950s.

It has also been recorded on Sakhalin (Vaurie 1965).

CURRENT STATUS (1971 - 1991)

With the disappearance of the breeding colonies of *C. boyciana* in Japan and Korea, it is now known to nest only in China and the USSR. The Chang Jiang (Yangtze) Basin is the most important wintering ground for this species.

BREEDING GROUNDS

China

C. boyciana is known to breed in northeast China. Breeding colonies are found only on the Song-nen Plains on the southeastern slope of Da Hingan Ling and the Sanjiang Plains where the Heilong Jiang (Amur), the Songhua Jiang (Sungari) and the Ussuri meet (Lu 1990). There are also records of *C. boyciana* nesting on the eastern slope of Da Hingan Ling (Fei 1989). Da Hingan Ling seems to be the natural barrier separating *C. boyciana* and *C. ciconia asiatica* since the latter was known to be a summer bird at Lake Hulun Buir, Inner Mongolia (Cheng 1987).

On the Song-nen Plains, a few pairs of *C. boyciana* are known to breed in the Horqin Plains, Inner Mongolia, in Zhalong Nature Reserve, Heilongjiang, and in Xianghai and Momoge Nature Reserves, Jilin (Lu 1990).

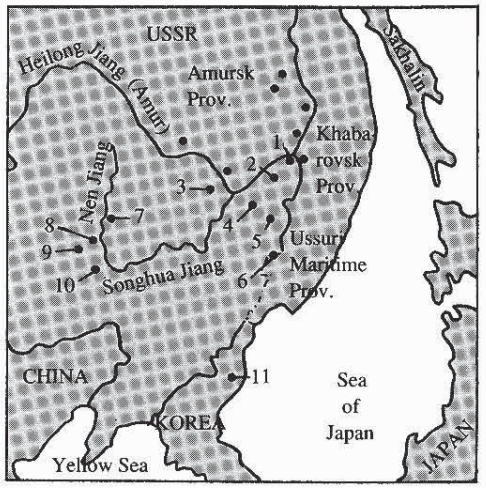
Oriental White Storks have been nesting in elm trees *Ulmus* sp. at Horqin for at least ten years, using the same nests each year. Although 40 birds usually spend the summer (late March to late October) in the nature reserve, the number of breeding pairs fluctuates (Yu 1991).

At Zhalong Nature Reserve birds arrive in early March, and start nesting in tall elm trees in mid-March. They will use the old nests for decades provided there is no disturbance (Gao 1990). During an aerial survey in May 1981, 19 *C. boyciana* were located in an area of about 186,800 ha in the basin of the Wuyu'er He River (Zhalong Nature Reserve) near Qiqihar, Heilongjiang (Ma *et al.* 1987). Fei Dianjin recorded a pair of *C. boyciana* nesting near Qiqihar from 1969 to 1986 (Fei 1989).

Four breeding pairs were recorded in Jilin in 1987 although only the pair nesting at Momoge succeeded. About 20 summering birds are recorded there annually (Ju *et al.* 1990). The director of the Xianghai National Nature Reserve, Yu Guohai, noted one or two pairs of *C. boyciana* nesting in the reserve and he has ringed five nestlings in the past few years (Yu Guohai *in litt.*).

Although the Song-nen Plain does not seem to be an important breeding site for *C. boyciana*, various sites on the Sanjiang Plains are said to be very important, namely the Hong He River, the Qixing He River, the lower reaches of the Dulu He River, the Yingchun Marshes and Xingkai Hu (Lake Khanka) (Lu 1990). These areas must account for the majority of breeding sites of the 100 or so pairs of breeding Oriental White Storks in China (Ma Yiqing *in litt.*). However, Fei Dianjin of the Qiqihar Teacher's College received information on only 30 nests in the mid-1980s (Fei 1986). In May 1984, during an aerial survey, 'many' *C. boyciana* were observed nesting at the Fuyuan Delta where the Heilong Jiang and the Ussuri converge, but no figures are given (Ma and Jin 1987). In the same month, 123 *C. boyciana* were located on the Sanjiang Plains (Wang 1987).

There were also reports of scattered nesting sites of *C. boyciana* on the eastern slope of the Da Hingan Ling (Fei 1989, Ma Yiqing *in litt.*)



1. Fuyuan Delta
2. Hong He
3. Dul He
4. Qixing He
5. Yingchun Marshes
6. Lake Khanka (Xingkai)
7. Zhalong
8. Momoge
9. Horqin
10. Xinghai
11. Rimmyon

(1 - 5 : Sanjiang Plains,
7 - 10 : Song-nen Plains)

Figure 1. Main breeding sites of *Ciconia boyciana*

Korea

Although the Oriental White Stork was suspected of breeding on the southern slope of the Changbai Shan Mountains on the Sino-Korean Border

(Yamashina 1977), this has not been proved. Some breeding occurred near the Rimmyon Plain, North Korea until the late 1970s, but no evidence of this was found in the 1980s (Sonobe and Izawa 1987). Very little is known about *C. boyciana* in North Korea and it might not breed there anymore.

USSR

It seems likely that certain locations along the Amur and Ussuri Rivers in the Soviet Far East are the main breeding grounds for *C. boyciana* as the known breeding population in China is much smaller than the known wintering population.

The report on the Second Japanese-Soviet Bird Conservation Symposium held in September 1984 revealed that about 700-800 pairs of *C. boyciana* were found during a survey in the mid-1970s in the Soviet Far East, with 200 pairs in Maritime Province, 200 pairs in Khabarovsk Province (300 pairs in the mid-1980s) and 200-250 pairs in Amursk Province (K. Sonobe *in litt.*).

According to the *USSR Red Data Book*, 660 pairs were observed in the east coast region (Sonobe and Izawa 1987). At the Fourth Japanese-Soviet Bird Conservation Symposium held in February 1989, V.M. Khrabry reported more than 700 pairs in the USSR, with the breeding grounds being located on the lower and middle reaches of the Amur River, the Ussuri River and the lowlands of Lake Khanka (Khrabry 1989).

S.M. Smirenskii from Moscow University ringed 19 young *C. boyciana* in the Ussuri region in July 1984 and two were recovered in China — one at Poyang Hu, Jiangxi Province in January 1985, the other at Huiyuan, Anhui Province in March 1986. The latter was transferred to a zoo in Bangpu City, Anhui (Wang 1987). A colour-ringing programmme is being established in the USSR and China. Nestlings will be ringed with plastic rings, having a colour specific to the region, to determine where the birds from different breeding areas spend the winter (Coulter 1990).

Nine reserves have been established in areas where *C. boyciana* is known to occur (Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Red Data Book — Japanese translation provided by the Wild Bird Society of Japan).

MIGRATION ROUTES

China

Northeast China is not only the location for breeding grounds of *C. boyciana* but is also on the migratory route of birds breeding in the USSR. There appear to be two main migratory routes in Jilin.

The first is from southeast Heilongjiang, along the Yalu Jiang (River) system to Zhuanghe, Liaoning Province (Ju *et al.* 1990). Fu *et al.* (1984) reported that the storks pass Changbai Shan Mountains in late March, and

again from late September to early October, staying there for 25 to 40 days. Zhao (1985) also noted that storks arrive at Changbai Shan in late March and from October to November. Since Changbai Shan and Yalu Jiang both lie on the Sino-Korean Border, the Changbai birds must be the birds taking the Yalu system route. They may either turn south to Korea or keep the southwestern course to the tip of the Liaodong peninsula. Sun Shide noted the migration of *C. boyciana* near Dalian. There were 24 in November 1988, and 15 in November and early December 1990 and a dead bird was found at a reservoir near Dalian in March 1988 (Sun *in litt.*). This number agrees with the notes of Ju Cheng and other observers in Jilin, that 'not many birds' use this route.

According to Xie Zaifu, the director of the newly established Changdao Nature Reserve which lies on the Yellow Sea between Liaoning and Shandong, a few exhausted *C. boyciana* were found and rescued by fishermen in the sea near Changdao (Xie pers. comm.). These birds might have flown over the Yellow Sea from Liaoning.

However, the more important route along the Nen Jiang passes Momoge and Xianghai reserves to the Liao He system. While the breeding and summer birds leave Momoge by late September, the migrants do not arrive until mid-October. They stay at Momoge for about 30-40 days, gather into a large flock of about 400-600, then fly south in early November. The migrants return, in smaller flocks, in late March and early April (Ju *et al.* 1990).

The autumn gathering of *C. boyciana* has also been observed in Liaoning. Sun Shide observed the migration at Shuangtaizihekou (now a nature reserve) in 1983. As in Jilin, the storks only stayed briefly in spring, and 52 were observed to fly north on 20 March. In mid-September, they began to arrive in a small flock of 10 or so birds, which increased to about 100 by late October. There were about 120 on 11 November 1983 but they were all gone the next day (Huang 1989). The total number of *C. boyciana* in the autumn of 1983 was estimated to be 300-400 by Sun. However, he did not find a single bird in the same area during his eight-day survey in October 1990. Although Shuangtaizihekou is suitable as a stop-over site for Oriental White Storks, they do not pass this place every year. He is not sure whether this is due to human disturbance or whether there is a regular changing pattern of migration (Sun *in litt.*).

It is reasonable to suppose that the storks stopping at western Jilin and Liaoning are the birds which pass Beidaihe, Hebei Province, the migration bottleneck point between northeast China and the North China Plains. In 1986, 2,729 *C. boyciana* were recorded passing Beidaihe (Collar and Andrew 1988).

C. boyciana is regarded as a rare passage migrant in Beijing. Two specimens of unknown age were collected about 30 years ago: one at Niulanshan, Shunyi County on 22 January 1964 and the other at Tongxian

County on 8 June 1955 (Cai 1987). The specimens were not collected during the passage seasons.

Korea

Birds migrating along the Changbai-Yalu route may turn south to the Korean peninsula. They are very rare in Korea, only a few having been observed on passage and in winter in Chongchon-Gang Estuary, Taedong Estuary and Taesong-Ho in western North Korea in recent years (Scott 1989, Scott and Poole 1989).

WINTERING GROUNDS

China

Without doubt, the most important wintering grounds of *C. boyciana* lie on the lower reaches of the Chang Jiang. Lu Jianjian has summarised these major wintering grounds in his book on wetlands in China (1990):

Jiangsu Province

Yancheng coastal wetland:	46 were counted on one day in January 1990
Shaobo Hu:	33 were counted on one day in January 1990

Anhui Province

Shijiu Hu:	70-80 annually
Shengjin Hu:	about 250 winter annually (Gu Changming pers. comm. to Wong Kai On)

Gu Changming has also noticed cranes and storks wintering at Wangjiang, Huaining and Susong counties in southwestern Anhui (Gu *in litt.*)

Jiangxi Province

Poyang Hu:	winter count of up to 863 in 1989

Hunan Province

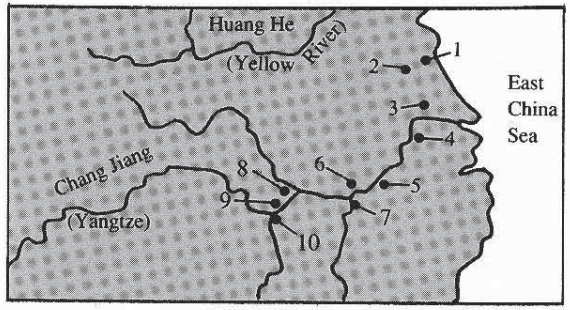
East Dongting Hu:	100-250 annually 219 at two locations between 6 November 1990 and 24 March 1991 (Chen Kuiwu *in litt.*)

Hubei Province

Chen Hu:	about 300 annually Illegal hunting caused heavy casualties. The number decreased from 478 to 316 from 1981 to 1987 (Wang and Zhou 1989). The maximum number observed in December 1988 was 229 (Wang Yongjun *in litt.*) but only 96 were counted in January 1990 (Lu 1990). Although the winter population is declining at Chen Hu (Wang Yongjun *in litt.*), according to the 'Zhongguo Huanjing Bao' (Chinese Environmental News, 17 January 1991), at least 300 were found wintering in the winter of 1990/91 (Zhang Weidong *in litt.*)
Longgan Hu:	Seventeen were found in March 1987. A count of 375 was reported in February 1988 (Anon 1988). The number and period coincides with the observations of Hu *et al.* (1990), that 375 Oriental White Storks were found at Chen Hu between March 1987 and March 1988. However, Longgan Hu is more than 250 km east of Chen Hu.

Hu *et al.* (1990) also reported 516 *C. boyciana* at Hong Hu, Chen Hu, Zhang Hu and Dayuan Hu (Longgan Hu) in Hubei in 1987/88.

Apart from the above lakes, the lakes of Hongze Hu in Jiangsu and Hong Hu in Hubei are also known to be important wintering grounds for *C. boyciana* (Wang 1987). Wang Qishan (1987) from Anhui University estimated about 700 storks were wintering in the lower reaches of the Chang Jiang. This might be a slight underestimation but adding all the known populations from the lower Chang Jiang basin together, it is still far from the figure recorded at Beidaihe in 1986.



1. Yancheng
2. Hongze Hu
3. Shaobo Hu
4. Shijiu Hu
5. Shengjin Hu
6. Longgan Hu
7. Poyang Hu
8. Chen Hu
9. Hong Hu
10. Dongting Hu

Figure 2. Main wintering sites of *Ciconia boyciana* in the Chang Jiang Valley

There are very few records of *C. boyciana* wintering far from the Chang Jiang valley: 15 were found at Beidagang, and four at Dongqilihai, Tianjin in January 1991 (Lu Jianjian *in litt.*). This is probably the northernmost wintering ground in China. Other birds found wintering north of the Chang Jiang were five at Jiaozhou Bay, Qingdao, Shandong Province in January 1990 (Lu 1990) and one at Pangzhai, Henan Province in January 1991 (Lu *in litt.*).

South of the Chang Jiang, *C. boyciana* is said to occur 'throughout Zhejiang' and two male specimens were collected in winter at Wenzhou and

Zhuji (Zhuge 1990). However, only single or paired birds were found and no large flock of wintering storks has been discovered in Zhejiang (Zhuge Yang *in litt.*). They are also known to winter in Fujian, Guangdong (including offshore islands) and Taiwan (Cheng 1987). However, there is no evidence that they winter in very large numbers in these provinces. Gao Yuren, the chief of Division of Rare Birds of the South China Institute of Endangered Animals, mentioned that there were no recent reports of *C. boyciana* in southeast China (Gao *in litt.*). The only recent report of *C. boyciana* in Guangdong was two storks at Baiteng Hu near Macau in the winter of 1981 (Guan Guanxun and Gao Yuren *in litt.*). These birds were probably the same birds which wintered in Hong Kong in the winter of 1981/82 (Chalmers 1986). There are no recent wintering records of *C. boyciana* in Guangxi although it is ranked as a 'passage migrant' in a recent Chinese ornithological list (Wu Mingchuan *in litt.*)

In Taiwan, a single White Stork was recorded in November and December 1985 and February 1986 in Ping-tung, Miau-li, Hsin-chu and Tai-chung counties on the west coast of Taiwan. These records probably all refer to one wintering bird. Another bird was seen at Tai-nan in January 1989 and one was recorded at Ping-tung in November 1990 (Yuan-hong Chuang *in litt.*).

14. Oriental White Stork *Ciconia boyciana*
Mai Po, December 1989 *(Martin D. Williams)*

Prior to 1990, there were only four records of one or two *C. boyciana* in Hong Kong, mostly in the Deep Bay area (1967,1979/80,1981/82) (Chalmers 1986) and one recent record (1987) at Plover Cove (Chalmers 1988). However, on 27 November 1990, some workers at the Mai Po

Marshes Nature Reserve saw six or seven *C. boyciana* in the shrimp ponds. This number rose to a very unexpected 80 or so on the following day and on 30 November 1990, 92 were counted. The storks remained at Mai Po throughout the winter and became a common sight. They were also observed gathering at Yuen Long Creek, Tsim Bei Tsui and flying in the direction of Lok Ma Chau and Lo Wu (M. Turnbull pers. comm.). The maximum count was obtained during the mid-January Waterfowl Count when 121 birds were counted (M.L. Chalmers *in litt.*). They finally left on 9 March 1991. During their stay at Mai Po, they were accompanied by an immature Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*. Though the Futian (Fu Tien) Nature Reserve in Shenzhen lies just across Deep Bay from Mai Po, when I was there during the mid-January Waterfowl Count on 12 January 1991, the reserve staff told me that no storks had been recorded. This was possibly due to human activity such as construction, poaching and fishing.

Although it has been suggested that the storks wintering at Mai Po in 1990/91 might have come from Poyang Lake, having been driven away from there by increased human activity and cold weather, this is by no means certain. Information that I received from various sources (detailed below) fails to give a firm indication of the numbers present at Poyang Lake National Nature Reserve in 1990/91. Different numbers received from different sources (all except Lam *in litt.*):

- A student of Zheng Guangmei from the Beijing Normal University, returning from Poyang in December 1990, suggested about 50
- Lu Jianjian and research students from the East China Normal University recorded only 52 during the mid-winter waterfowl census in January 1991, but reported slightly more than 100 *C. boyciana* in November and December 1990
- C.Y. Lam, who visited Poyang in December 1990, found approximately 100 (Lam pers. comm.)
- Wang Tianhou from the East China Normal University received a letter from the reserve office in December 1990 stating there was 'no abnormal increase nor decrease of stork numbers this winter'
- Song Xiangjin from the Jiangxi Nature Reserve Management Office said he had received information of about 200 storks wintering at Poyang

Given all these figures it is only possible to suggest that around 50 to 200 Oriental White Storks wintered at Poyang in 1990/91. Chen Bin and Zhou Xiaohua, who had studied *C. boyciana* in the winters of 1983/84 and 1985/86, found it difficult to estimate the number of birds wintering at Poyang because the storks tended to scatter in small flocks over all nine lakes at the reserve (Chen and Zhou 1987). Even if there were a sharp decline in the number at Poyang, it is still not certain that this is the solution to the stork mystery in Hong Kong. No other Poyang birds e.g. Swan Goose *Anser cygnoides* or cranes *Grus* spp. turned up in Hong Kong.

On the western front, one *C. boyciana* was shot at Pingli County (near western Hubei), Shaanxi Province in December 1985. This was the first

record of *C. boyciana* in that province but it was reported that storks were present again the following year (Cheng 1990). There were records of *C. boyciana* wintering at Zoige Marsh, northern Sichuan (Wang 1987, Ma Yiqing *in litt.*) and two specimens were collected from Aba, northern Sichuan (Wang Yingxiang *in litt.*). *C. boyciana* also winters at Lake Cao Hai, north-western Guizhou (Wu 1986), where eight storks were found during the mid-winter waterfowl census in January 1991 (Lu Jianjian *in litt.*).

In recent mid-winter waterfowl censuses held in China, the numbers of *C. boyciana* recorded were: 1,367 in January 1989 (Scott and Rose 1989), 714 in January 1990 (Perennou *et al.* 1990) and 409 in January 1991 (Lu Jianjian *in litt.*). However, this should not be viewed as evidence of a sharp decline in storks because the counts were only carried out on single days and according to Dr Wang Yongjun, who has been studying the stork populations in Hubei, populations vary daily. Moreover, some of the important wintering grounds, such as the lakes in Hubei, were not surveyed.

Japan

C. boyciana is now a rare winter visitor to Japan. Although it occurs throughout the country, it is more likely to be found in western and southern Japan, including the Ryukyu Islands (Sonobe and Takano 1982, Brazil 1987 and Robinson 1987). These birds probably come from Korea, though it is possible that those occurring in northern Japan flew there from Siberia via Sakhalin (Yamashina 1977). Breeding was attempted in Nagoya in 1980 (Brazil 1991). Nesting poles were put up by NTT (Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation) and the Wild Bird Society of Japan at the Utonai Bird Sanctuary in western Hokkaido in November 1990 to encourage storks to nest again in Japan (K. Sonobe *in litt.*).

Korea

In North Korea, 17 *C. boyciana* were reported in Hwanghae-namdo in January 1981 and a flock of five to six has been seen every winter in that area since (Sonobe and Izawa 1987, Scott 1989).

In South Korea, it is regarded as a scarce winter visitor (Scott 1989, Scott and Poole 1989). However, no information on numbers or wintering locations is given.

THREATS

At present there are probably about 2,000 *C. boyciana* in the wild, with nearly all of them occurring in the USSR and China. The lesson of the decline of the Japanese and Korean populations may serve as a warning to conservationists, especially since the Japanese storks were reduced from 'common' to 'near extinction' within 30 years in the late 19th century. At that time Japan was undergoing the process of modernisation, a situation more or less similar to that facing China today. Also, the fact that in spite of the efforts of conservationists the Oriental White Stork finally became extinct as a breeding bird in Japan in the late 1960s is an indication that more needs to be done.

Hunting/Human disturbance

Although *C. boyciana* is now on the list of the First Category of protected species in China (i.e. nationally fully protected), illegal hunting continues. Hu and Cui (1990) noted there used to be mass killing of *C. boyciana* in Hubei and the preserved meat filled the markets in Wuhan; the population of storks has decreased by 50-60 per cent since the 1950s. A study carried out by Wang Yongjun and Zhou Wei from the University of Hubei revealed that shooting of *C. boyciana* at Chen Hu took place from November 1981 to March 1988: 307 *C. boyciana* were *known* to be shot in this period — about 30 were shot on 11 January 1988 alone! The number of wintering storks declined from 478 in December 1981 to 316 in December 1987 — which might have included the 30 or so shot down in the following month (Wang and Zhou 1989). That 10-20 per cent of the present population was *known* to be shot in *one* of the wintering grounds within eight years is obviously a matter of great concern. If this trend continues Oriental White Storks will have been exterminated in China by the end of this century.

According to Wang Yongjun (*in litt.*), the local government took the 1988 poaching seriously and it is more or less under control now. However, since waterfowl hunting is still an important revenue for local farmers, the wintering storks are still threatened. Hunters and peasants are known to use poisoned bait as well as firearms; in 1981, 17 *C. boyciana* were found dead in Momoge having ingested poison left by fishermen (Ju *et al.* 1990).

Human disturbance is another factor in their decline. As noted above, during the Second World War, the shooting of herons in Hyogo, Japan resulted in fewer storks nesting. It was found that five out of six breeding attempts in Jilin since 1981 failed due to human disturbance. Once the nests had been deserted they were not used again (Ju *et al.* 1990). Yu Guohai reported local farmers collecting sticks from stork nests for use as firewood in Xianghai Nature Reserve (G. Yu pers. comm. to D.S. Melville)

Fei Dianjin of the Teachers' College of Qiqihar, Heilongjiang, studied the breeding of the only pair of *C. boyciana* nesting near Qiqihar from 1969 to 1986 (not the same pair throughout the period). He found that *C. boyciana* nested in only 10 out of the 18 years. A total of 22 eggs was laid but only half of them hatched. Of these 11 nestlings, two died, five were collected for zoos and parks, and only four fledged. Human disturbance was the main cause of breeding failure (Fei 1989).

Habitat destruction

The deterioration of wetlands in China has been going on for centuries, but the pace has speeded up during the past few decades as China has experienced a rapid growth in human population. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) wetlands were viewed as wastelands to be drained

for agriculture and disease control. Although slogans such as 'Seek crops from lakes' are no longer fashionable, people still reclaim wetlands for agricultural needs. The storks that wintered in Hong Kong in 1990/91 might have come from a little-known wintering ground in southeastern China that has recently been destroyed. The Xi Jiang (Pearl River) Delta has been regarded as 'already too degraded to merit any special conservation effort' (Scott and Poole 1989) and the wintering grounds of Yancheng Marshes, Shijiu Hu, Shengjin Hu and the lower Chang Jiang lakes are ranked as some of the most seriously threatened wetlands in Asia.

The proposed Three Gorges (Sanxia) Dam Project on the Chang Jiang would alter the seasonal difference in water level and would put nearly all existing wintering grounds of *C. boyciana* at risk. A study carried out by the Geographic Institute at Nanjing, Academia Sinica, predicts that after the construction of the Three Gorges Dam, the winter water level at the Poyang Lake National Nature Reserve will drop earlier than it now does resulting in less wetland habitat and food for wintering waterfowl. There will also be an increase in human activity because vegetation on the exposed area will germinate earlier. They predict that suitable habitat for waterfowl at Da Hu Chi and Bang Hu will be reduced by one third to one half. Wintering birds will probably be forced to move out of the reserve (Zhu *et al.* 1987).

Apart from encroachment, there is a very serious erosion problem in China due to large-scale deforestation. This increases the sedimentation rate and wetlands are silting up more rapidly.

On the storks' breeding grounds in Jilin, almost all tall elm trees by the banks of the Nen Jiang, the Songhua Jiang and the Huolin He have been felled (Ju *et al.* 1990). There is also a plan to reclaim Sanjiang Plains (Scott and Poole 1989).

According to Vinter (1982), nesting trees on the breeding grounds of *C. boyciana* in the Soviet Far East have been destroyed as a result of natural disaster and human activity (such as forest fires, cyclones and felling). In addition, intensive drainage and ploughing up of bogland has destroyed the feeding grounds. The construction of a hydroelectric power station at Talakanski Range will probably result in the destruction of one of the last nesting sites of *C. boyciana.*

Since *perestroika* the Soviet Union has shown an interest in developing southeast Siberia. If more forests are to be felled for timber export, this will probably affect the breeding grounds of *C. boyciana.*

Pollution

Takano (1975) regarded pollution by pesticides as one of the reasons why *C. boyciana,* although protected in Japan by bans on hunting and the logging of its habitat, finally became extinct as a breeding bird in the 1960s. Now China is going through a process of industrialisation and no reports, even official reports, on the water quality can be viewed as 'optimistic'. The

lower reaches of the Chang Jiang are a particularly highly populated and industrialised area.

There has been oil drilling along the lower reaches of the Nen Jiang in Jilin since the 1980s, and some of the sites are less than 10km away from the autumn gathering grounds of *C. boyciana,* bringing the threat of pollution and human disturbance to these areas (Ju *et al.* 1990).

SUGGESTED CONSERVATION MEASURES

Establishment of more wetland reserves and improvement in the management of present reserves

Habitat destruction has been one of the main reasons for the decline of *C. boyciana.* Although some of its breeding and wintering grounds are protected, other important ones are not, namely the breeding grounds on the lower reaches of the Dulu He and Yingchun Marshes in Heilongjiang, and the wintering grounds of Shaobo Hu and Hongze Hu in Jiangsu, Shijiu Hu and Longgan Hu in Anhui, Chen Hu and Hong Hu in Hubei. These areas should all be protected from hunting and encroachment.

Even inside some of the protected areas and reserves, management is not adequate. Poisoning of waterfowl, pollution, and encroachment of land still occur. It is essential that local people should appreciate the value of these birds and actually benefit from their existence, by way of job opportunities in the reserve or other forms of improved living standards. The farmers and fishermen adversely affected by the presence of *C. boyciana* should be compensated. Measures should also be taken to safeguard the habitat. For instance, other affordable forms of fuel should be available so that the local people have no need to cut trees or collect large branches for fuel.

Nesting posts and structures should be erected on those breeding grounds where tall trees have been felled.

At present *C. boyciana* has a low commercial value but nevertheless it is still hunted for its meat and feathers, or for sale to zoos and parks. However, it should be noted that there is an increase in illegal wildlife trade from the mainland to Taiwan and birds may also be sold to collectors in other countries. Since these birds are big and live in open habitat, they make easy targets for poachers, so it is very important to guard the protected areas.

China holds nearly all wintering *C. boyciana* and should be urged to take a more active role in its conservation. It is easier and cheaper to conserve wildlife through better management of nature reserves than through captive breeding and subsequent rehabilitation programmes after numbers have become critically low.

Study projects

There is an urgent need to investigate the total population of *C. boyciana* and the locations of their breeding and wintering grounds. The mid-winter waterfowl census organised by the Asian Wetland Bureau and the International Wetlands and Wildfowl Research Bureau serves as a useful source of information, but due to the fact that the count is held on only one day, and with limited geographical coverage, a more detailed investigation is needed, especially when the potential of many wetland sites in the lower reaches of the Chang Jiang still remains unknown. This investigation could partly be achieved by co-operation of the nature reserves, universities and forestry bureaux in the region. The recent formation of a wetland network in China should facilitate this work.

As it is possible that the storks which wintered in Hong Kong in 1990/91 originated from some unknown but important places, survey studies in southeast provinces of China should also be undertaken.

Captive breeding

This should be viewed as a last resort because previous attempts were not promising. The last wild bird in Japan was taken into captivity in the hope that it would mate with a stork sent from China (Takano 1975) but the breeding was not successful (Komiya 1985).

In the 28th issue of the *International Zoo Yearbook*, King and Coulter recorded the following numbers of *C. boyciana* in captivity in 1987: 17 in Europe, 85 in Asia and three in North America (Tan Bangjie *in litt.*). Oriental White Storks were known to have been kept at the following zoos outside China: Tama, Kobe, Toyooka and Kyoto Zoos in Japan, and zoos in Moscow (USSR), Seoul (Korea), Rotterdam (The Netherlands), Wuppertal and East Berlin (Germany), Strasbourg (France) and San Diego (USA) (Komiya 1985, Tan Bangjie and M. Müller *in litt.*). The only known captive breeding successes were at Shanghai, Hefei, Chengdu and Harbin Zoos in China, Tama and Toyooka Zoos in Japan (He Baoqing and Tan Bangjie *in litt.*), and Vogelpark in Walsrode, Germany where breeding has been successful every year since 1987 (M. Müller *in litt.*).

Although the low success rate of captive breeding shows that it would be preferable to preserve this species in the wild, further attempts to breed from the existing zoo birds (rather than letting them die of old age) should be made. As inbreeding was probably one of the reasons for the final decline of the breeding population in Japan (Takano 1975), there is a need to establish a stud book for all zoo birds. Kyoko Archibald compiled a stud book for captive *C. boyciana* in 1985 but it has still not been published (M. Coulter *in litt.*).

Most captive *C. boyciana* are kept in Chinese zoos and parks where facilities are usually poor and communication with other parks is minimal. There is a need to set up a nationwide network to facilitate breeding programmes and the compilation of a stud book. The existing Chinese Zoological Garden Association could help in organising this. The Ministry of Forestry should enforce the Wildlife Protection Law so that no new storks will be taken from the wild without permission.

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本文介紹東方白鸛 *Ciconia boyciana* 過去及現今的境況，包括本品種所在各國的詳情。目前相信只有約二千頭野鳥，幾乎全部在中國及蘇聯境內。本文給出遷徙路線、越冬和繁殖的地點。並討論威脅本品種生存的因素，以及建議有關的保護措施。

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THE 1989/90 PENDULINE TIT 'INVASION' OF HONG KONG

David S. Melville and *A.C. Galsworthy*

The Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus* was first recorded from Hong Kong at Mai Po on 20 April 1980 when three were seen (Chalmers 1986). They were further recorded in four springs prior to the 1989/90 winter, all at Mai Po, viz.

up to 5 between 17 March and 21 April 1984
2 on 9 April 1987
up to 12 between 26 March and 9 April 1988
4 on 16 March, 2 on 5 April, 1 on 29 April 1989

The 1989/90 winter was exceptional for the large number of Penduline Tits present at Mai Po, these also being the first winter records.

The birds were first recorded at Mai Po on 17 December 1989, when two were netted. There were no further records until 9 January 1990, when a further four were trapped. Following this they were seen more or less regularly, the last birds recorded being three on 6 May. It was difficult to estimate numbers since the birds frequented large reed beds at Mai Po, but flocks of least at 26 were seen. The only records away from Mai Po were of two at Luk Keng on 5 April, two at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 April and one there on 7 April.

A total of 69 Penduline Tits was caught during regular ringing activities at Mai Po during the 1989/90 winter, in the period 19 December 1989 to 21 April 1990 (details of the bird caught on 29 April 1989 are also included in the following discussion). The large number caught in March 1990 (see below) could be an artefact of trapping activity in a reed bed favoured by the birds, rather than an indication of more birds being present at that time.

Despite the high number of captures there were no recaptures of ringed birds. This suggests that either the population was very much larger than the number of birds caught, if the birds were wintering at Mai Po, or that there was a considerable movement of birds through Mai Po, or perhaps a combination of the two. Clearly the sight records underestimated the number of birds present.

Characters given by Svensson (1984) were used as a guide to determining the age of birds but were found to be not wholly satisfactory due to plumage coloration differences between European birds and those in the Far East. Greater coverts retained through the post-juvenile moult were a valuable character in those birds which had not undergone a complete covert moult — some birds retained up to five old greater coverts (Table 1).

Dement'ev and Gladkov (1970) state that the post-juvenile moult is complete 'involving also larger contour feathers' in the nominate, western European race. However, exactly what is meant by this is unclear. Svensson

15. Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus*
Note two ages of greater coverts
Mai Po, April 1989 *(David S. Melville)*

TABLE 1. Numbers of Old Greater Coverts retained by 'juvenile' Penduline Tits in Hong Kong

Number of OGCs	Number of birds
0	5
1	2
2	6
3	11
4	4
5	3
not recorded	13

[The cost of reproduction of plate 15 in colour has been subsidised by Zeiss Far East Co Ltd]

(1984) notes that one to four greater coverts are retained, but that in Spain juveniles appear to undergo a genuine 'complete' moult, i.e. including remiges and rectrices. Moult in other races has been little studied, but is thought to occur soon after fledging, being finished by late August or early September (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1970). The regular retention of juvenile coverts found in Hong Kong birds (see Plate 15) may be typical of eastern populations.

Of the birds caught, 25.7 per cent were aged as 'adult', 62.9 per cent as 'juvenile' (hatched in 1989) and 11.4 per cent were unaged.

In western populations adults undergo a complete moult in July-September after breeding, and similar patterns apparently occur in eastern populations. Dement'ev and Gladkov (1970) also note that adults undergo a partial pre-breeding moult in the winter quarters 'apparently during December and January'. Five of the birds caught at Mai Po were in active head and/or body moult:

17 March	adult male
29 March	unaged female
29 March	juvenile unsexed
29 March	juvenile female
31 March	juvenile female

Of the 70 birds caught 26 were male, 23 were female, and 21 were unsexed.

Dement'ev and Gladkov (1970) recognise ten races of the Penduline Tit, the two eastern ones being *Remiz pendulinus stoliczkae*, found across Transbaikalia and the middle reaches of the Amur River, and *R. p. consobrinus* in the Yangtze valley, south Japan and Korea. Cheng (1987) records *stoliczkae*, apparently as a resident, in northwest China, whereas *consobrinus* breeds in Inner Mongolia, Heiliongjiang and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, and migrates through Jilin, Liaoning, Shandong, Hebei and Hunan to winter in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze and in western Yunnan. Li *et al.* (1982) record *consobrinus* as a breeding species in the Shanghai area, which may be an indication of range expansion since Wilkinson (1935) did not record it breeding there. However, Wang (1986) only records the species as a winter visitor, occurring between November and April. Peng *et al.* (1987) also record the race from Yunnan, but apparently only on the basis of reference to Cheng (1976). Vaurie (1959) notes that this race 'is said to reach Yunnan', thus suggesting that he doubted the evidence for this.

Clearly *consobrinus* is the race which would appear to be the most likely to occur in Hong Kong, due to its known long-distance annual movements and the fact that it is the race occurring closest to the Territory. Vaurie (1959) notes that males of this race have the black frontal band on the head 'dusky or blackish, narrow and nearly obsolete, surmounted by a narrow band of

ADDENDUM TO THE HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1990

(Insert between pages 152 and 153)

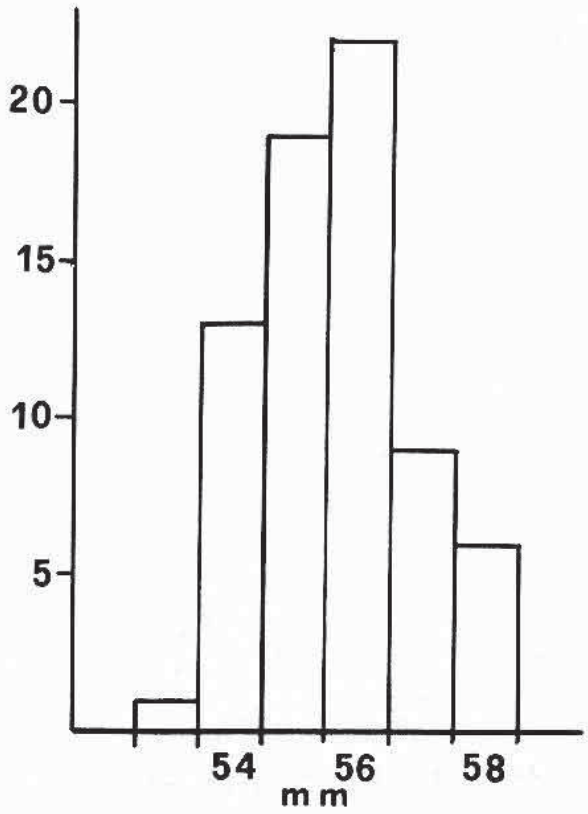

Figure 1. Wing lengths of Penduline Tits at Mai Po, Hong Kong

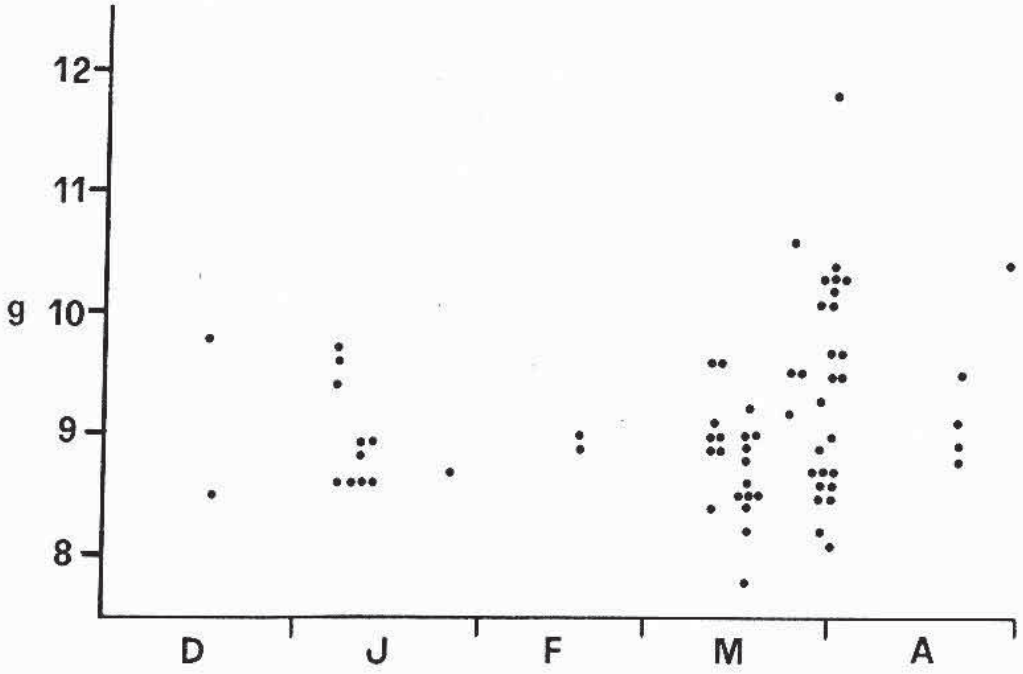

Figure 2. Weights of Penduline Tits at Mai Po, Hong Kong

white, and with the rest of the crown ashy grey with darkish shaft streaks; mantle sandy and chestnut pigments reduced' (compared with other races). This description fits the Hong Kong birds well. In contrast *stoliczkae* belongs to the '*coronatus*' group, which some authors regard as a separate species, and has a generally extensive coronal band.

Dement'ev and Gladkov (1970) give wing lengths of *stoliczkae* as ranging from 52 to 55mm. The wing lengths of Hong Kong birds (Figure 1) are too long for *stoliczkae*, even allowing for the difference due to measuring technique (minimum vs. maximum chord, cf. Anon 1984), and shrinkage in museum skins.

The average wing lengths of Hong Kong birds, for which both age and sex have been determined, are:

adult male	56mm
adult female	55mm
juvenile male	56mm
juvenile female	55mm

These are similar to measurements given by La Touche (1925-30), Cai (1987), and Zhao (1988) for *consobrinus*.

Weights of the Hong Kong birds appeared to be stable until late March when there was an increase (Figure 2). Visible fat deposits categorised on a scale of 1 (no fat) to 4 (furculum bulging) (Anon 1984) suggest that birds were carrying some fat throughout the mid-winter period, and that weight increases in March were due, at least in part, to increased fat deposits.

The fact that birds were carrying fat during the winter could be a response to a need to have energy reserves to survive periods of food shortage and/or increased energy demand during periods of harsh weather. Alternatively it could be an indication that they were migrating during this time. The latter is suggested by the fact that no birds were recaptured after ringing.

The food of the Penduline Tit is recorded as predominately small insects and spiders and western birds have been reported feeding on the seeds of the Common Reed *Phragmites communis*. The race *stoliczkae* also consumes 'large quantities' of willow *Salix* spp. seeds (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1970). La Touche (1925-30) notes that *consobrinus* 'feeds a good deal on small seeds'. The diet of the Hong Kong birds is unknown, but the reed beds which they frequented offered both seeds of *Phragmites communis* and small insects. On many occasions they were seen 'feeding on reedheads' (V.B. Picken *in litt.*, P.R. Kennerley pers. comm.); however the birds could have been feeding on invertebrates among the panicles.

One curious observation which may be related to their feeding behavour is that Penduline Tits when held in the hand regularly push their bills between the fingers and lever them apart with some force by opening the mandibles. We have not encountered this behaviour in any other bird. It has

been suggested that such behaviour might be related to opening reed stems in search of invertebrates.

Winter temperatures in Hong Kong are not severe, averaging 18.9-13.2°C in the period November through March, with absolute minima ranging from 0.0-6.5°C in the same period (Chin 1986). Seed availability would not be affected by these temperatures, but invertebrate availabilty might be reduced during cold spells.

In this context it is of interest that both the Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler *Prinia flaviventris* and the Brown Wren-warbler *P. subflava* appear to build up fat reserves in mid-winter, with maximum scores being in January and February, the period of lowest temperatures (unpublished data from Mai Po). Based on faecal samples it appears that both species feed principally on invertebrates (G. Reels pers. comm.), thus the increase in fat deposits could be an 'insurance' measure against reduced food availability during cold spells.

The timings of migrations of Penduline Tits in China are very little known. However, it is apparent that there has been a considerable expansion in the population size and/or range of Penduline Tits in East Asia. For example, at Beidaihe it is now very much more common on migration than formerly (Hemmingsen and Guildal 1968, Williams 1986, 1990). Nonetheless, in Jilin it is considered that the population is relatively small, and should be protected (Wildlife Conservation Society of Jilin Province 1987).

Prior to 1953 there were only six specimens of the race *consobrinus* known from Japan and it was still recorded as an 'accidental visitor' in the mid-1970s (Anon 1974). Brazil (1991), however, notes that there has been a considerable range extension since the early 1970s, and 'it is now an uncommon and even locally common winter visitor in certain parts of western Japan, particularly in Kyushu, and western Honshu'.

During the 1990/91 winter small numbers were present at Mai Po, but none were trapped. It will be interesting to see whether Penduline Tits become a regular wintering species in the Territory. It is of interest to note that the species has also been undergoing a range extension in western Europe during the last few decades (Valera *et al.* 1990).

一九八九年底，一九九〇年初的冬季，有大量攀雀 *Remiz pendulinus* 過港。觀察在米埔捕獲的攀雀，顯示直至一九九〇年初，牠們還在遷移中。論據是：環志後的雀鳥沒有再落網，以及大部份捕獲的雀鳥身上都儲有相當多的脂肪。

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SEPARATION OF FIRST-WINTER PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER FROM LANCEOLATED WARBLER

A. C. Galsworthy

Many of the *Locustella* species which occur or which might occur in Hong Kong are not particularly well known: they are not common, and even when present they can be hard to see. Three Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers *Locustella certhiola* were trapped and ringed in 1990, and a further single bird in spring 1991, and well illustrated some of the potential difficulties.

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler

The first two Pallas's were trapped at dusk on 8 September 1990 at Mai Po by David Melville, Michael Lau and myself. The two birds were very different, and our first impression was that they were of different species. The larger of the two was an obvious Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler in adult plumage, with an unmarked rufous rump, clear white spots at the tips of the rectrices, and unspotted underparts. The second bird was visibly smaller, had a well-spotted breast with narrow streaks extending along the flanks and onto the undertail coverts, and heavily marked upperparts, including the rump. In addition, on first glance it did not appear to have any white tips to the rectrices. Our initial impression was that it was probably a Lanceolated Warbler *L. lanceolata*.

However, on closer examination it became clear that the rather worn rectrices (perhaps unusually worn for a first-year bird) did have the faint remains of pale buff tips, and that on the underside there were still fairly clear white tips, forming circular spots at the ends of the feathers. This characteristic ruled out Lanceolated Warbler, and restricted the choice to Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler, Middendorf's Grasshopper Warbler *L. ochotensis* or Styan's Grasshopper Warbler *L. pleskei*. Both the latter would in fact have been ruled out by size, both being larger; additionally, Styan's has the darker feather centres on the upperparts almost entirely suppressed, giving it a uniform appearance. Middendorf's reportedly has darker feather centres, but not as dark as in Pallas's, according to Williamson (1976). However, specimens labelled *Locustella ochotensis* in the collection in the Academia Sinica in Peking have no darker feather centres at all, and are of a uniform rufous cast on the whole of the upperparts. Although the pale tips to the rectrices in this bird had almost worn off, the tail was distinctly dark brown, and contrasted noticeably with the more rufous ground colour of the mantle. In fact the bird could only have been a Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler, and the presence of extensive spotting on the underparts showed that it was a first-year bird.

Another first-year bird was trapped by Paul Leader *et al.* at Mai Po on 30 September 1990. It was generally similar to the above first-year individual, except that the spotting on the underparts was less extensive,

[The cost of reproduction of plates 16-19 in colour has been subsidised by Zeiss Far East Co Ltd]

16. First-winter Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola* F353701
Note rufous fringes to mantle contrasting with grey fringes on nape, and lack of pale tips to rectrices
Mai Po, 8 September 1990 *(A.C. Galsworthy)*

17. First-winter Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola* F353701
Note extensive spotting on breast
Mai Po, 8 September 1990 *(A.C. Galsworthy)*

18. Adult Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola* H043251
Note *narrow* pale tips to rectrices and clear colour difference between nape and mantle
Mai Po, 3 March 1991 *(Paul J. Leader)*

19. Adult Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata*
Note uniform olive-brown fringes to crown and back, and presence of faint pale tips to rectrices
Beidaihe, China, May 1991 *(Paul J. Leader)*

being almost confined to the upper breast, and did not extend onto the flanks or undertail coverts.

The spring bird was trapped on 9 March 1991, also at Mai Po. It was in fresh adult plumage, showing little sign of abrasion and with only the faintest spotting on the throat and upper breast, and an unstreaked rufous rump. Although in fresh plumage, this bird showed surprisingly thin white tips to the tail feathers.

Lanceolated Warbler

Lanceolated Warbler has been recorded a number of times but has not yet been trapped in Hong Kong. The corpse of a first-winter bird of this species, apparently killed by a cat, was picked up on Lamma Island by Jeremy Pearce in October 1990. Most of the plumage was intact, though unfortunately part of the face had been destroyed by ants. A detailed description is given in Appendix 2 below. The very small size of the bird was striking. The facial pattern was not clear, due to the damage, but if there was any supercilium it did not extend behind the eye. The pattern of the back was also slightly different from that of the Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers, with less contrast between the black feather centres and the ground colour, and smaller feathers, with the result that the streaking appeared generally neater. The ground colour was olive-brown, not rufous as in the Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers. The underparts were pale yellow with streaking on the breast, flanks, undertail coverts, and spotting/streaking on the throat. The yellow underparts appear to be a variable feature in immatures, and are not present in adult birds.

Another Lanceolated Warbler, which was thought to be a first-winter bird, and was sexed as a male on dissection, was found dead on the roof of the Education Centre at Mai Po on 31 October 1986. The measurements are included in Appendix 1 below. The partial description which is available refers to 'dull olive-grey upperparts with black streaking all over', as well as a marked pectoral band and no white on the rectrices.

SEPARATION OF THE SPECIES

The field guide literature is not particularly helpful in distinguishing young Pallas's Grasshopper from Lanceolated Warbler, and only Lekagul and Cronin (1974) refer to the possibility of confusion between the two. The emphasis is generally put on the smaller size of Lanceolated (difficult unless a comparison is available, and there is a degree of overlap), the spotting on the underparts of Lanceolated (present more or less extensively on both first-year Pallas's), the unstreaked rufous rump of Pallas's (streaked in the two first-year birds), and the presence of white tips to the tail (probably invisible in the field on both the first-year birds unless a clear view was obtained of the underside of the tail) (King *et al.* 1975, de Schauensee 1984, Viney and Phillipps 1988). Williamson (1976) says of the juvenile plumage of Pallas's only that it shows a gorget of brown spots, as well as having pale yellow underparts, which the Mai Po birds did not exhibit.

Svensson (1984), in setting out criteria for distinguishing the species, besides referring to the unstreaked or almost unstreaked rufous-brown rump and the pale tips to the rectrices, also drew attention to the irregular subterminal dark patches. If this were a constant feature it would certainly help to distinguish the species from Lanceolated, which has a rather uniform tail. However, although this feature was strikingly clear on the 8 September first-winter bird, it was much less so on the 30 September bird, and absent altogether on the spring bird. It seems likely that it is a variable feature. Its presence would certainly indicate Pallas's, but its absence would not rule out the species.

Hemmingsen, who was familiar with both species in the field and in the hand at Beidaihe, Hebei Province, China warned of the dangers of confusion between the two (Hemmingsen and Guildal 1968). While not referring to a specific race he drew attention to the contrast in Pallas's between the ground colour of the feathers on the crown and back, 'brownish grey' on the former, and 'yellowish tan brown' on the back, though he suggests that this is only visible in good sunlight. This feature was clearly evident on all the birds caught at Mai Po, including the first-winter birds, though I would not describe the ground colour of the back as 'yellowish tan'. It was, in fact, strongly rufous.

One additional feature which both the first-winter birds did have was a prominent, fairly broad, buff supercilium. This feature would tell against Lanceolated Warbler, which normally has only a very narrow pale supercilium, often absent altogether, as is well shown in photographs published in recent years in *British Birds* (Sharrock 1977, Rogers *et al.* 1978 and 1983, Robertson 1989). Hemmingsen suggests that this feature is important, pointing to the 'long light superciliary stripe extending from bill to far behind the eye' in Pallas's, whereas Lanceolated has at most 'a faint light superciliary streak'(Hemmingsen and Guildal 1968). Such a supercilium is shown in the photographs of Lanceolated in Takano (1985). Some caution is, however, needed: a recent photograph of a Lanceolated Warbler in Sweden (Tjernberg 1991) shows quite a narrow but prominent supercilium extending to the rear of the ear coverts.

Lanceolated Warbler does not usually have pale tips to the rectrices: a bird showing extensive white tips will certainly not be of this species. However, care needs to be exercised since Lanceolated in very fresh plumage may have slight pale tips to the tail feathers (see photograph).

EXAMINATION OF MUSEUM SPECIMENS

By kind permission of Professor Tan Yaoguang, I was able to examine the extensive collection of skins in the Zoological Laboratory of the Academia Sinica while on a visit to Peking in March 1991. The collection holds some 25 skins of Lanceolated Warbler, and many more of Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler, including a fair number in first-winter plumage. Many of these Pallas's had extensive spotting on the breast, which was often virtually indistinguishable from that on the specimens of Lanceolated. None

of them, however, had the spotting extending right down to the undertail coverts, as did the first-winter Pallas's trapped at Mai Po on 8 September, and it seems likely that this is unusual. Most of the first-winter birds had streaked rumps, whereas the adults all had the rumps unstreaked. Most of the specimens, whether adult or first-winter, appeared to have clear, fairly broad, supercilia, though the preservation of the specimens sometimes made this a little difficult to see. The pale tips to the rectrices were virtually invisible from the upperside in all the birds with even moderately worn plumage, though usually more visible on the underside.

However, the most striking difference between the two species was undoubtedly the ground colour of the crown and back, that is the colour of the fringes of the feathers. There was a marked contrast between crown and back in Pallas's, whereas in Lanceolated the colour was uniform throughout. The ground colour on the crown in Pallas's was olive-grey; this gave way abruptly at the base of the nape to a much more rufous ground colour on the mantle, leaving a clear line of demarcation between the two. This was constant in both adult and first-winter specimens, and present in all those I examined. It was also visible in all four birds trapped at Mai Po (see Plates 16, 17 and 18).

By contrast specimens of Lanceolated were very uniform on the upperparts with the dark streaking appearing rather finer and more regular than in Pallas's, producing a much neater appearance.

The bills of Lanceolated were generally much smaller than Pallas's, though there was much variation. As indicated above, Lanceolated may sometimes have quite a well-marked supercilium. Typically, however, the narrow supercilia present in some specimens of Lanceolated were much less distinct than in Pallas's. Even when Lanceolated does have a supercilium, the pattern of the face seems to be plainer than that of the Pallas's caught at Mai Po, with very little if any dark eyestripe. Normally therefore the presence of anything more than a fine supercilium ought to suggest that a bird is not a Lanceolated Warbler, especially if the facial pattern is well marked and contrasting. The absence of a marked supercilium by contrast should suggest Lanceolated rather than Pallas's, but unfortunately it cannot be regarded as conclusive evidence.

There has been some discussion about the extent of the supercilium in Pallas's. Kitson (1980) and Densley (1982) drew attention to the bold buffy-white supercilium of Pallas's seen in Mongolia, and Kitson's photographs bear this out. However, two first-year Pallas's trapped in autumn on Fair Isle, Shetland, had ill-defined supercilia (Page and Greaves 1983, Broyd 1983). Baker (1988) suggests that the differences are due to race and age, and that the prominent supercilia are confined to adults, while the supercilium is relatively subdued on first-years of all races, so that immatures of different races are difficult to separate. This was not, however, the case on either of the two first-year birds trapped in 1990, both of which had striking supercilia, nor on the specimens in Peking. Baker further states that the supercilium on eastern races of Pallas's is bold and contrasting in

adults. It seems possible that this also extends to first-year birds in East Asia. La Touche (1925-1934), who gives a description of the differences in first-year plumage, makes no mention of the absence of the well-marked supercilium he ascribes to the adults.

TAXONOMY

The subject is complicated by considerable confusion and disagreement among the authorities about the separation and distribution of the races. That occurring normally in Hong Kong should be *Locustella certhiola minor* David and Oustalet (recognised by Cheng 1987), and almost all the Peking specimens are ascribed to this race. However this race is not recognised by Vaurie (1959) or Williamson (1976), who regard it as synonymous with the nominate race.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the separation of adult Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler and Lanceolated Warbler should present no problems. However, first-winter Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler, at least of the subspecies *minor*, can appear similar to Lanceolated and I suggest that in identifying these two species some of the characters suggested in the readily available literature may be misleading. In particular the absence of white tips to the tail (unless a clear view of the underside is obtained), the extent of spotting on the underparts, and the absence of an unmarked rufous rump are not conclusive evidence of Lanceolated Warbler as opposed to first-winter Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler. The subterminal dark patches to the rectrices will distinguish some, but not all, Pallas's. The presence or absence, and the extent, of a supercilium is a strong pointer to specific identity. A small, fine bill would tend to suggest Lanceolated. Size is of some help, but in view of the overlap, again not conclusive. However, the most constant feature is likely to be the ground colour and pattern of the fringes to the upperpart feathers, and in particular the presence or absence of a contrast between crown and mantle.

APPENDIX 1

MEASUREMENTS (in mm)

	Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler				Lanceolated Warbler	
Date	8. 9. 90	8. 9. 90	30. 9. 90	9. 3. 91	Oct. 90	31. 10. 86
Ring no.	F353700	F353701	6X6615	H043251		
Age	adult	1st. W	1st. W	adult	1st. W	1st. W
Wing	63	59	60	63	55	58
Tail	49.5	45	45	50	-	45
Tarsus	21	20.5	23.6	22.5	17.5	18
Bill (to skull)	-	15.6	-	15.7	12.5	12

WING FORMULAE

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler

F353700	=PC		-5	WP	-5	-7.5				
F353701	=PC	-4	WP	-1	-4	-5	-6	-9	-10	-15
6X6615	PC+1	-5	WP	-2	-4	-6	-8	-10	-11.5	-14
H043251	PC+1	-3	WP	=WP	-2.5	-5.5	-7.5	-8.5	-10	

Lanceolated Warbler

1990	=PC	-2	WP	-0.5	-2	-4	-5.5	-7	-8	-9.5
Primary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

PC = longest primary covert
WP = wing point (i.e. longest primary)

APPENDIX 2

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS

[The species name is followed by the ring number]

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler F353700 Adult. Forehead buff; crown dark brown with grey fringes to feathers. Upper back rufous-brown with broad dark streaking. Rump unstreaked rufous; uppertail coverts with broad dark distal spots. Uppertail dark brown with broad creamy tips to all but central pair of feathers. Tertials and greater coverts with broad buff fringes. Flight feathers mid-brown, secondaries with narrow buff fringe on outer web. Broad creamy supercilium extending well behind eye. Lores and ear coverts light brown, malar area dull orange. Underparts uniform buffy-white. Flanks warm buff-brown. Undertail coverts warm buff. Underside of tail black with striking silvery tips. Soft parts: legs brown flesh; claws horn with yellowy flesh soles; upper mandible dark horn, lower yellow horn with dark tip; iris dark brown.

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler F353701 First-winter. Crown very dark with narrow pale grey fringes to feathers. Back feathers mainly black with narrow rufous fringes, giving heavily streaked appearance. Rump feathers with much broader rufous fringes, still appearing streaked but less heavily than back. Uppertail coverts darker rufous with elongated dark centres, broader towards tip. Uppertail dark brown with worn and indistinct pale buff tips. Broader and brighter fringes to tertials, as well as median and greater coverts. Flight feathers dark brown with narrow buff fringes to outer webs. Broad pale buff supercilium extending well behind eye. Lores and cheeks mid-brown. Malar area orange. Throat breast and belly creamy-white. Extensive spotting on upper breast reaching down to flanks, with a few spots on undertail coverts. Flanks orangey-buff. Undertail coverts warm buff. Underside of tail dirty brown with greyish tips to all but centre pair of feathers. Soft parts: upper mandible dark horn, lower yellow with dark tip; legs brown flesh.

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler 6X6615 First-winter. Forecrown buff, hind crown grey with dark centres to feathers. Mantle rufous-brown with larger dark centres forming broad streaks. Rump similar with streaking throughout. Tail warm-brown darkening towards tip, with traces of white just visible at tip. Lesser and median coverts similar but with more rufous fringes. Primary coverts similar with very narrow buff fringes. Flight feathers dark brown with rufous fringes on outer edges. Broad pale supercilium extending to nape. Brown eye stripe, cheeks paler brown. Throat buff, upper breast white, well marked with short narrow streaks in a gorget. Flanks rufous-buff, belly white.

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler H043251 Adult. Forecrown rich brown, top of crown rich brown with darker centres forming indistinct streaks. Rear of crown feathers grey with dark centres. Upper mantle rich rufous-brown with broad dark centres. Tail rufous-brown, with indistinct subterminal barring. Narrow white tips to outer five rectrices. Greater coverts dark brown with prominent narrow pale brown fringes. Primaries mid-brown. Underwing silky grey-brown. Long thin creamy supercilium extending to nape. Lores pale brown, cheeks brown. Throat white; upper breast warm buff with very faint spots. Lower breast to belly pale buffy-white. Flanks rich grey-brown with thin black streaks. Undertail coverts rufous-buff. Undertail dark with white tips. Soft parts: iris dark brown; upper mandible black-brown with horn cutting edge; lower grey-pink. Legs grey-pink.

Lanceolated Warbler: 1990 specimen. Crown and back olive-brown with black centres to feathers. Rump lost. Three rectrices remaining, dark brown

without pale tips. Lesser coverts olive-brown; median and greater coverts and tertials dark brown with prominent warm buff fringes. Flight feathers dark brown. Bend of wing yellowish. Underwing coverts and axillaries creamy. Alula dark brown with pale fringe. Cheek and face lost. No supercilium behind eye. Throat and breast pale yellow, most feathers with dark shaft streaks forming elongated spots in a gorget. Streaks extending down flanks to undertail coverts, where they are longer. Flanks olive-buff. Belly pale yellow. Longest undertail covert buff with dark shaft streak. Soft parts: upper mandible dark brown, lower pale horn base with dark tip; legs feet and claws pale horn.

首次過冬的小蝗鶯 *Locustella certhiola* 有時帶有一些野外圖鑑列爲辨認矛紋蝗鶯 *Locustella lanceolata* 的特徵，如：體下的斑點、腰部的直紋、尾羽缺羽端的白點等。最佳的分辨要點是小蝗鶯冠羽邊緣灰色，上背羽毛邊緣紅棕色。矛紋蝗鶯兩處的羽毛邊緣都是橄欖棕色。

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PHOTOSPOT: FUKIEN NILTAVA

Martin D. Williams

The photographs reproduced here were taken on Cheung Chau on 7 March 1990. The bird is clearly a male flycatcher, and the combination of blue upperparts and orange underparts may lead to thoughts of Blue-throated Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides glaucicomans* (also known as Chinese Blue Flycatcher *C. glaucicomans*) or Hill Blue Flycatcher *C. banyumas*. However, both these species can be quickly ruled out by the black throat, which identifies the bird as a niltava *Niltava* sp. Since the black throat meets the orange of the underparts in a straight line, we can also rule out Vivid Niltava *N. vivida*, in which the orange encroaches on the throat in a point (de Schauensee 1984).

20. Fukien Niltava *Niltava davidi*
Cheung Chau, February 1990 *(Martin D. Williams)*

This leaves two possible species: Fukien Niltava *N. davidi* and Rufous-bellied Niltava *N. sundara*. These are similar in appearance, but previous records of niltavas in Hong Kong have been listed as Fukien Niltava on the basis of range (Chalmers 1986). However, the bird shows several features which help clinch identification as Fukien Niltava.

Perhaps the best feature is the extent of iridescent cobalt blue on the crown. On this bird, the iridescence extends across the forecrown in an arc which barely reaches back to above the eyes. This is in marked contrast to Rufous-bellied Niltava, which typically has the whole crown iridescent. Another useful feature is the lack of iridescent blue at the bend of the closed wing. The iridescence here is indistinct in Fukien Niltava, very prominent in Rufous-bellied.

[The cost of reproduction of plate 20 in colour has been subsidised by Zeiss Far East Co Ltd]

More subtly, the orange of the underparts is less intense than in Rufous-bellied Niltava, and the iridescent 'niltava' patches at the sides of the neck are almost parallel to the black/orange division line, while they are at a less acute angle (i.e. more vertical) in Rufous-bellied Niltava.

21. Fukien Niltava *Niltava davidi*
Cheung Chau, February 1990 *(Martin D. Williams)*

The Fukien Niltava is apparently a vagrant to Hong Kong (Chalmers 1986), though with numbers appearing in the bird markets the possibility of escape cannot be ruled out. Its range extends across much of south China, though excluding Guangdong Province, whereas Rufous-bellied is found in southwest and central China (Cheng 1987).

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在這篇以照片爲骨幹的文章中，利用照片中可見的特徵來解說何以圖中所示的是棕腹大仙鶲*Niltava davidi* 而不是其他品種。

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[The cost of reproduction of plate 21 in colour has been subsidised by Zeiss Far East Co Ltd]

NOTES ON BIRDS OF SHUANGTAIZIHEKOU NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE, LIAONING PROVINCE, CHINA

David S. Melville

INTRODUCTION

I visited the Shuangtaizihekou National Nature Reserve in May and June 1990. The reserve lies at the head of Liaodong Bay in Panjin Municipality, Liaoning Province, People's Republic of China, approx. 40°52' - 41°03'N, 121°35' - 121°55'E. It spans the mouth of the Shuangtaizi River, covering an area of about 80,000 ha.

The annual average temperature is 8.3°C, with a maximum of 35°C and a minimum of -29.3°C. On average there are 172 frost-free days per year. Average total annual rainfall is 610mm, and total annual evaporation is 1,700mm. The uppershore freezes to a depth of about 100mm in mid-winter and the sea freezes along the coast.

Commercial reed *Phragmites communis* beds cover much of the west side of the reserve and part of the east side. The reed beds cover a total of some 24,000 ha which, it is claimed, is the largest commercial reed farming area in the world. The reeds, which are harvested in the winter by hand, are used principally for making paper — the annual harvest being about 180,000 tonnes. In summer the beds are flooded to a depth of about 200-300mm and reed growth is lush and vigorous. The reed beds present a nearly uniform habitat over large areas, with only occasional pools and areas of open water in ditches.

At the seaward side of the reserve there are extensive areas of shrimp ponds (approximately 460 ha). These receive tidal water via pumps and are stocked and fed artificially. On the landward part of the reserve, especially in the east part, there are extensive areas of rice paddy (1,270 ha).

The whole reserve lies above the Liaohe oil field, the third largest in China, and there are numerous oil wells throughout the area. Localised oil spills of up to one hectare in area are quite common, especially around well sites but these appear to have little adverse impact on birds — no oiled birds were seen in May/June 1990.

There are a number of villages and towns within the reserve and there is considerable human activity, especially around new oil well sites where temporary camps are established.

The Shuangtaizi River carries a considerable silt load and the coastline is rapidly accreting, the increase in tidal flats in the reserve area being estimated at about 2,668 ha per annum, while the mouth of the river moves seawards at a rate of about 250m per year. The tidal flats are colonised at the upper edge by a pioneer *Suaeda maritima* community. Inland of this a

mixture of *S. maritima*, *S. 'ussurriensis'* (?= *S. salsa*), *Phragmites communis* and *Nitraria scobri* occurs.

There is an important offshore fishery for the clam *Meretrix lusoria*. The clams are collected by hand from a 670 ha sandbank, half of which is rich in clams, at the mouth of the Shuangtaizi River. Most are exported to Japan. Jellyfish also constitute an important catch in autumn.

The Panjin Municipality is undertaking a major reclamation project at the mouth of the Shuangtaizi River, which will result in the creation of about 18,000 ha of new land for shrimp ponds, reed beds, rice paddies and a freshwater reservoir. The present programme is due to be completed in 1995. It is being funded by both Provincial and State sources. This reclamation project is resulting in the loss of major intertidal habitats, which is likely to adversely affect Saunders' Gulls *Larus saundersi*, ducks and waders. However, early in 1991 several areas were set aside as special Saunders' Gull Protection Areas, and the Saunders' Gull Protection Association of Panjin City was established in April 1991 to promote public support for this species and the reserve in general.

The Shuangtaizihekou Nature Reserve was established in 1985, the year of the founding of Panjin City. In 1987 it was first upgraded to a Provincial Level Nature Reserve and later the same year it was declared a National Nature Reserve. The area was declared a reserve to protect the breeding population of Red-crowned Cranes *Grus japonensis*, this being the most southerly breeding site for the species in China. Additionally a total of four First Category and 27 Second Category Protected birds have been recorded at the reserve and it is a calving site for seals *Phoca vitulina/largha*.

The reserve clearly faces management problems in so far as the management authority has control over land use only in the Saunders' Gull Protection Areas. WWF is currently working with the reserve to draft a management plan.

A survey of the Panjin Marshes by Jin *et al.* (1989) recorded a total of 160 species of birds. Further information about the area is given in Scott (1989) and Melville (1990).

I observed birds in the Shuangtaizihekou National Nature Reserve from 27 to 30 May and 8 to 12 June 1990 during a study of Saunders' Gull (Melville 1990). On 28 May I visited the area to the west of the Shuangtaizi River, and on 10 June a visit was made by boat to Huang Sha Gang of Ge Li Gang (the clam fishing bank off the mouth of the river). All other observations were made on the east side of the reserve. Notes on species of particular interest are given below, and a full list of species recorded is given in Appendix 1.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

One female on 8 and 9 May, and one immature female on 11 May are the first records of this species from the reserve.

Lesser (Mongolian) Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*

One in partial breeding plumage on 27 May; two in full breeding plumage and six in partial breeding plumage on 28 May. These are the first records of this species for the reserve.

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*

One on 28 May is a new record for the reserve.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*

The maximum number recorded was 270 on 8 June. Many of these birds were in rather dull-coloured breeding plumage and may have been first-summer individuals.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

This species was widespread on the tidal flats and along the Shuangtaizi River, with a maximum of c170 on 10 June. All birds seen were first-summer individuals, mostly in non-breeding plumage or with a trace of breeding plumage, only one bird being in nearly full breeding plumage. The species breeds in Jilin and Heilongjiang, some 400km to the north (Cheng 1987).

Saunders' Gull *Larus saundersi*

It was estimated that there were about 130 nests in the reserve, in five subcolonies (Melville 1990). Almost all birds seen were adults in full breeding plumage, one first-summer bird being seen on 30 May.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Very common in the reed fields, with a maxium of 30 seen on 29 May. They were frequently seen perched on the electricity wires which crossed the reserve, presumably watching for Great Reed Warbler nests.

Brown Hawk Owl *Ninox scutulata*

One on 12 June was the first record for the reserve.

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

Numerous. On 28 May I walked 1km of road between 1710h and 1840h. The road was 8m wide and all Great Reed Warblers singing within c10m either side of the road were counted. Forty-four birds were recorded, giving an estimated density of 22/ha. The total area of reed bed within the reserve is 24,000 ha, thus the estimated total number of singing Great Reed Warblers would be about 528,000! Clearly such an exercise in arithmetic is unwarranted (for example, birds might favour edges of reed beds), nonetheless it does give an impression of the great numbers of these birds present in the reserve. In contrast, Hudec and Šťastný (1978), studying the western race, recorded breeding densities of 2.09 pairs/ha in reed beds in Czechoslovakia.

von Schrenck's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*

Very few recorded in the reserve but common in Panjin City. On 27 May I estimated the distance between birds singing in reeds along a ditch in the city, where the average distance was 88.5m, with a range of 15 to 210m.

APPENDIX 1

List of birds recorded at Shuangtaizihekou National Nature Reserve, May-June 1990

Little Grebe	*Tachybaptus ruficollis*
Great Crested Grebe	*Podiceps cristatus*
Grey Heron	*Ardea cinerea*
Purple Heron	*Ardea purpurea*
Great Egret	*Egretta alba*
Yellow Bittern	*Ixobrychus sinensis*
von Schrenck's Little Bittern	*Ixobrychus eurythmus*
Bittern	*Botaurus stellaris*
Yellow-nib Duck	*Anas poecilorhyncha*
Garganey	*Anas querquedula*
Baer's Pochard	*Aythya baeri*
Shelduck	*Tadorna tadorna*
Pied Harrier	*Circus melanoleucos*
* Marsh Harrier	* *Circus aeruginosus*
Hobby	*Falco subbuteo*
Red-crowned Crane	*Grus japonensis*
Moorhen	*Gallinula chloropus*
Oystercatcher	*Haematopus ostralegus*
Lapwing	*Vanellus vanellus*
Grey-headed Lapwing	*Vanellus cinereus*
Grey Plover	*Pluvialis squatarola*
Asiatic Golden Plover	*Pluvialis fulva*
Kentish Plover	*Charadrius alexandrinus*
* Lesser (Mongolian) Sand Plover	* *Charadrius mongolus*
Whimbrel	*Numenius phaeopus*
Curlew	*Numenius arquata*
Black-tailed Godwit	*Limosa lapponica*
Redshank	*Tringa totanus*
Greenshank	*Tringa nebularia*
Wood Sandpiper	*Tringa glareola*
Marsh Sandpiper	*Tringa stagnatilis*
* Terek Sandpiper	* *Xenus cinereus*
Common Sandpiper	*Actitis hypoleucos*
Turnstone	*Arenaria interpres*
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	*Calidris acuminata*
Dunlin	*Calidris alpina*
Curlew Sandpiper	*Calidris ferruginea*
Red-necked Stint	*Calidris ruficollis*
Black-winged Stilt	*Himantopus himantopus*
Avocet	*Recurvirostra avosetta*
Black-tailed Gull	*Larus crassirostris*
Herring Gull	*Larus argentatus*
Black-headed Gull	*Larus ridibundus*
Saunders' Gull	*Larus saundersi*

Whiskered Tern	*Chlidonias hybrida*
White-winged Black Tern	*Chlidonias leucoptera*
Gull-billed Tern	*Geochelidon nilotica*
Caspian Tern	*Sterna caspia*
Common Tern	*Sterna hirundo*
Little Tern	*Sterna albifrons*
Oriental Turtle Dove	*Streptopelia orientalis*
Common Cuckoo	*Cuculus canorus*
* Brown Hawk Owl	* *Ninox scutulata*
Common Kingfisher	*Alcedo atthis*
Hoopoe	*Upupa epops*
Swallow	*Hirundo rustica*
Red-rumped Swallow	*Hirundo daurica*
Yellow Wagtail	*Motacilla flava*
Richard's Pipit	*Anthus novaeseelandiae*
Brown Shrike	*Lanius cristatus*
Bull-headed Shrike	*Lanius bucephalus*
Black-naped Oriole	*Oriolus chinensis*
Magpie	*Pica pica*
Great Reed Warbler	*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*
Black-browed Reed Warbler	*Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*
Tree Sparrow	*Passer montanus*

* Species not previously recorded from the reserve (cf. Jin *et al.* 1989)

文章簡述一九九〇年五月和六月在雙台子國家自然保護區見到的鳥類。保護區名錄增添了四個新品種。

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FIELD NOTES ON THE BIRDS RECORDED FROM THE SIMAO AREA IN SOUTH CENTRAL YUNNAN PROVINCE, CHINA

Ben King and *Han Lianxian*

We visited Simao (22°47'N, 100°59'E) in south central Yunnan Province, Southwest China in the latter half of April 1990. The city lies in a broad flat valley. Twenty kilometres to the north the mountains along the highway which leads north and east to Kunming reach an elevation of about 1,800m. There are some remnant patches of forest near the road there. To the south of Simao the elevation gradually decreases along the road to a point about 50-60km distant where the road climbs again through some hills. There are still extensive forests in these hills, which are in the northern part of Xishuangbanna. Closer to Simao, approximately 8-20km to the south, there are also some large forest patches. Forest cover in the Simao area and northern Xishuangbanna appears far more extensive than in the southern part of Xishuangbanna. There is almost no forest along the road from Kunming until a point about 30km north of Simao, two days' drive away.

Several areas near Simao were visited:

Zalayakou: some remnant forest patches and scrub 20km north of Simao at an elevation of about 1,650-1,780m

Xinfangshuiku: a forested area along the road 10km south of Simao at an elevation of 1,100-1,200m

a large forest tract along the road about 65km south of Simao at an elevation of c900-1,000m. This area is just south of Puwen, a small town in the northern part of Xishuangbanna.

The main objective of the brief survey was to find the Yellow-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax galbanus*. The only record of this species in Yunnan is three specimens collected in forest edge at the southeastern edge of Simao on 4 March 1956 by field workers from the Institute of Zoology, Academica Sinica and the Department of Biology, Wuhan University (Yang Lan *in litt.*). The race simaoensis (Zheng and Tang 1982) was named from these specimens. This race has not been seen since. We failed to find it. The type locality was clear-cut perhaps 15 years ago although the forest has been allowed to regenerate. It is likely that the laughingthrush still exists in the area as there is still a great deal of apparently suitable habitat present.

It was of interest to find that the Grey Peacock-pheasant *Polyplectron bicalcaratum* was fairly common in the forest next to the road just 10km south of Simao. There are several villages in the area, suggesting that this species can co-exist with man if there is adequate habitat. Furthermore, because of the extensive forests farther south from Simao, it appears likely that this pheasant is in no immediate danger in this area. Also notable were the Mountain Bamboo-partridge *Bambusicola fytchii* and the Red-faced Liocichla *Liocichla phoenicea*.

We wish to thank Professor Yang Lan for helping with the arrangements, and the Library of Natural Sounds at Cornell University for supplying tape recording equipment.

ANNOTATED LIST

[Bird names have been maintained in accordance with the author's wishes; those which differ from names commonly used in Hong Kong have been marked with an asterisk — Ed.]

Crested Serpent-Eagle *Spilornis cheela*
One at 1,700m, 20km north of Simao on 21 and 30 April; four at 1,100m, 10km south of Simao on 22 April.

Mountain Bamboo-Partridge *Bambusicola fytchii*
Six from 1,660-1,770m on 21 and two on 30 April, 20km north of Simao.

Grey Peacock-Pheasant *Polyplectron bicalcaratum*
Two at 1,160m on 21 April and one on 22 April, 10km south of Simao.

Thick-billed Pigeon *Treron curvirostra*
Five at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao. Fairly common.

Mountain Imperial Pigeon *Ducula badia*
Eight at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao. Fairly common.

Chestnut-winged Cuckoo* *Clamator coromandus*
One at 1,130m on 22 and 23 April, 10km south of Simao, one at 900m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Hodgson's Hawk-Cuckoo *Cuculus fugax*
Three at 1,160m on 21 and 22 April, and four on 23 April, 10km south of Simao.

Indian Cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus*
Two at 1,700m on 21 and 30 April, 20km north of Simao; two at 1,150m on 22 April and three on 23 April, 10km south of Simao.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*
Three at 1,700m on 21 April and two on 30 April, 20km north of Simao; one on 22 and 23 April at 1,150m, 10km south of Simao.

Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus*
One at 1,200m on 21 and 23 April, 10km south of Simao.

Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus*
Two at 1,750m on 21 and 30 April, 20km north of Simao; one at 1,150m on 21, 22, and 23 April, 10km south of Simao.

Banded Bay Cuckoo *Cacomantis sonneratii*
One at 1,180m on 22 April, 10km south of Simao.

Asian Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx maculatus*
One at 1,760m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao.

Drongo Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris*
One at 1,130m on 21-23 April, 10km south of Simao.

Collared Owlet* *Glaucidium brodiei*
One on 21 and 30 April at 1,740m, 20km north of Simao; 1 at 1,200m on 22 April, 10km south of Simao.

Asian Palm-Swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis*
Six at 950km on 29 April, 65km south of Simao. I follow Brooke (1972) in using this name rather than C. parvus.

Crested Treeswift *Hemiprocne coronata*
Twenty on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao. Common.

Great Barbet *Megalaima virens*
One on 21 April, two on 22 April and four on 23 April at 1,160m, 10km south of Simao; three at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Blue-throated Barbet *Megalaima asiatica*
Five at 1,750m on 21 April and two on 30 April, 20km north of Simao; three on 22 April and six on 23 April at 1,140m, 10km south of Simao; five on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao.

Eurasian Wryneck* *Jynx torquilla*
One at 1,760m on 30 April, 20km north of Simao.

Speckled Piculet *Picummus innominatus*
One at 1,130m on 22 April, 10km south of Simao; one on 29 April at 930m, 65km south of Simao.

Grey-capped Woodpecker *Picoides canicapillus*
One at 1,160m on 23 April, 10km south of Simao.

Silver-breasted Broadbill *Serilophus lunatus*
One at 1,140m on 22 April, 10km south of Simao.

Barn Swallow* *Hirundo rustica*
A few flying over each area.

Olive Tree-Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*
Six at 1,180m on 21 April and four at 1,130m on 22 April, 10km south of Simao.

Large Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina novaehollandiae*
One at 1,700m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao.

Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina melaschisto*
Five on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao.

Long-tailed Minivet *Pericrocotus ethologus*
Two at 1,760m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao.

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus*
Ten at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus*
One at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Striated Bulbul *Pycnonotus striatus*
Four at 1,760m on 30 April, 20km north of Simao.

Black-crested Bulbul *Pycnonotus melanicterus*
One on 22 April and four on 23 April at 1,160m, 10km south of Simao; two at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Red-whiskered Bulbul* *Pycnonotus jocosus*
Five at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous*
Six on 21 April and four on 30 April at 1,700m, 20km north of Simao.

Flavescent Bulbul *Pycnonotus flavescens*
Two at 1,760m on 21 and 30 April, 20km north of Simao.

Puff-throated Bulbul *Criniger pallidus*
Fifteen on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao.

Grey-eyed Bulbul *Hypsipetes propinquus*
Five at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Mountain Bulbul *Hypsipetes mcclellandii*
Six on 21 April and two on 30 April at 1,760m, 20km north of Simao.

Ashy Bulbul *Hypsipetes flavala*
One at 1,140m on 22 April, 10km south of Simao.

Black Bulbul *Hypsipetes madagascariensis*
Five at 1,160m on 22 April, 10km south of Simao; one at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*
Three on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao.

Maroon Oriole *Oriolus traillii*
Four on 22 April and three on 23 April at 1,150m, 10km south of Simao; eight on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao.

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*
Three on 22 April and two on 23 April at 1,150m, 10km south of Simao; three on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao; two at 1,700m on 30 April, 20km north of Simao.

Bronzed Drongo *Dicrurus aeneus*
Six on 20 April at 960m, 65km south of Simao.

Chestnut-tailed Starling *Sturnus malabaricus*
Two at about 1,000m on 23 April, about 16km south of Simao along the highway.

Green Magpie *Cissa chinensis*
Two at 920m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Gray Treepie* *Dendrocitta formosae*
One at 1,740m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao.

Large-billed Crow* *Corvus macrorhynchus*
One on 21 and 30 April at 1,750m, 20km north of Simao.

Lesser Shortwing *Brachypteryx leucophrys*
One at 1,780m on 30 April, 20km north of Simao.

Magpie Robin *Copsychus saularis*
One at 1,150m on 21 April, 10km south of Simao.

White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus*
Two on 22 and 23 April at 1,150m, 10km south of Simao.

Plumbeous Redstart* *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*
One at 900m on 29 April along a stream 65km south of Simao.

Slaty-backed Forktail *Enicurus schistaceus*
Three on 29 April at 900m along a stream 65km south of Simao.

Grey Bushchat *Saxicola ferrea*
One on 21 April and two on 30 April at 1,720m, 20km south of Simao.

River Chat* *Chaimarrornis leucocephalus*
One at 900m on 29 April along a stream 65km south of Simao.

Blue Whistling Thrush* *Myophonus caeruleus*
One at 900m on 29 April, along a stream 65km south of Simao.

Eye-browed Thrush *Turdus obscurus*
Eight on 21 April and three on 30 April at 1,760m, 20km north of Simao.

Puff-throated Babbler *Pellorneum ruficeps*
Two on 21 April, and four on 22 and 23 April at 1,160m, 10km south of Simao. Fairly common.

Buff-breasted Babbler *Trichastoms tickelli*
Two on 23 April at 1,130m, 10km south of Simao.

Spot-breasted Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus erythrocnemis*
Fourteen on 21 April and six on 30 April at 1,750m, 20 km north of Simao. I follow Vaurie (1954) in separating erythrocnemis from erythrogenys.

Streak-breasted Scimitar-Babbler* *Pomatorhinus ruficollis*
Ten on 21 April and four on 30 April at 1,750m, 20km north of Simao; four on 22 and 23 April at 1,150m, 10km south of Simao.

Rufous-capped Babbler *Stachyris ruficeps*
Ten on 21 April and three on 30 April at 1,760m, 20km north of Simao.

Striped Tit-Babbler *Macronous qularis*
Three on 22 April at 1,150m, 10km south of Simao; ten on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao.

Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush *Garrulax pectoralis*
Six on 22 April at 1,140m, 10km south of Simao.

Black-throated Laughingthrush *Garrulax chinensis*
Two on 22 April at 1,130m with the flock of Greater Necklaced Laughingthrushes, 10km south of Simao.

Red-faced Liocichla *Liocichla phoenicea*
Four at 1,760m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao.

Silver-eared Mesia *Leiothrix argentauris*
Ten on 21 April and two on 30 April at 1,760m, 2km north of Simao.

White-browed Shrike-Babbler *Pteruthius flaviscapis*
Ten on 21 April and three on 30 April at 1,760m, 20km north of Simao.

Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera*
Six on 21 April and eight on 30 April at 1,760m, 20km north of Simao.

Red-tailed Minla *Minla ignotincta*
One at 1,760m on 30 April, 20km north of Simao.

Rusty-capped Fulvetta *Alcippe dubia*
Eight on 21 April and nine on 30 April at 1,760m, 20km north of Simao. I follow Cheng (1987) and Sibley and Moore (1990) in using this name.

Brown-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe poioicephala*
Six on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao.

Grey-cheeked Fulvetta *Alcippe morrisonia*
Twenty-five on 21 April and 15 on 30 April at 1,760m, 20km north of Simao; five on 22 April at 1,150m on 22 April, 10km south of Simao.

Black-headed Sibia *Heterophasia melanoleuca*
Eight on 21 April and five on 30 April at 1,760m, 20km north of Simao.

Striated Yuhina* *Yuhina castaniceps*
Five on 22 April and eight on 23 April at 1,150m, 10km south of Simao; ten on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao.

White-bellied Yuhina *Yuhina zantholeuca*
Four on 22 April and ten on 23 April at 1,130m, 10km south of Simao; three on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao.

Spot-breasted Parrotbill *Paradoxornis quttaticollis*
One on 21 April at 1,700m, 20km north of Simao.

White-tailed Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus davisoni*
One at 1,750m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao; two on 22 April and one on

23 April at 1,150m, 10km south of Simao; five at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Golden-spectacled Warbler* *Seicercus burkii*
Two on 21 April at 1,750m, 20km north of Simao, one at 1,130m on 22 August, 10km south of Simao.

Mountain Tailorbird *Orthotomus cuculatus*
Two at 1,750m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao.

Common Tailorbird* *Orthotomus sutorius*
Two at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Grey-breasted Prinia *Prinia hodgsoni*
One at 910m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Rufous-bellied Niltava *Niltava sundara*
One at 1,760m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao.

Hainan Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis hainana*
Two on 22 April at 1,130m, 10km south of Simao.

Hill Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis banyumas*
Ten at 1,760m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao; five on 21 April and ten on 22 and 23 April at 1,150m, 10km south of Simao.

Verditer Flycatcher *Muscicapa thalassina*
Seven at 1,760m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao.

Grey-headed Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*
Two on 21 April at 1,760m, 20km north of Simao; two on 22 April at 1,140m, 10km south of Simao.

Black-naped Monarch* *Hypothymis azurea*
One on 21 April and two on 22 April at 1,150m, 10km south of Simao; four on 29 April at 950m, 65km south of Simao.

Black-throated Tit* *Aegithalos concinnus*
Four on 21 April and two on 30 April at 1,760m, 20km north of Simao.

Yellow-cheeked Tit *Parus spilonotus*
Two on 22 April at 1,140m, 10km south of Simao.

Sultan Tit *Melanochlora sultanea*
Three at 950m, on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum ignipectus*
Three on 21 April and six on 30 April at 1,760m, 20km north of Simao; eight at 1,150m on 22 April, 10km south of Simao.

Black-throated Sunbird *Aethopyga saturata*
One at 1,760m on 30 April, 20km north of Simao.

Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja*
Two on 22 April and one on 23 April at 1,120m, 10km south of Simao.

Streaked Spiderhunter *Arachnothera magna*
One at 1,760m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao.

Japanese White-eye* *Zosterops japonica*
Five on 21 April and four on 30 April at 1,740m, 20km north of Simao; two on 22 April and three on 23 April at 1,150m, 10km south of Simao.

Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosa*
Six at 950m on 29 April, 65km south of Simao.

White-rumped Munia* *Lonchura striata*

Twenty on 23 April at about 1,000, in a cultivated field along the highway about 16km south of Simao.

Black-headed Greenfinch *Carduelis ambigua*

Eight on 21 April and five on 30 April, 20km north of Simao.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

One at 1,720m on 21 April, 20km north of Simao.

作者到訪中國西南部雲南省思茅附近地區，目的在找尋黃腹噪鶇 *Garrulax galbanus* 。雖然在這方面失敗了，但作者發現孔雀雉 *Polyplectron bicalcaratum* 相當普遍，似乎沒有面臨滅絕的危險。其他較有趣的鳥類有棕胸竹雞 *Bambusicola fytchii* 和紅翅薮鶇 *Liocichla phoenicea* 。附有一份所見鳥類名錄。

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SOME BIRD OBSERVATIONS AT LAOYE SHAN, EAST QINGHAI PROVINCE, CHINA

Jesper Hornskov

Laoye Shan is a small mountain situated at Datong (36°N, 101°30'E), some 35km north of Xining, the provincial capital of Qinghai. It rises an estimated 400m above the valley floor to an elevation of about 2,900m. The mountain has the merit of supporting the only woodland in a very denuded area, of being very close to the starting point of birders' visits to the well-known Qinghai Lake (Koko Nur), and of being the home of the rarely seen Chinese endemic Crested Tit-warbler *Leptopoecile elegans*. Other birds of note that I have recorded on my five visits to the area (11 January, 12 April and 8 September 1989, and 24 and 27 November 1990) include Przhevalsky's Redstart *Phoenicurus alaschanicus* (so far seen only in early winter but presumably also occurring in spring), White-bellied Redstart *Hodgsonius phoenicuroides*, Chinese Bush Warbler *Bradypterus tacsanowskius*, Pine Bunting *Emberiza leucocephala* and more than 20 White-browed Rosefinches *Carpodacus thura* in one day. Japanese Waxwing *Bombycilla japonica* is apparently the first record for Qinghai and one of the most western occurrences. Although neither Cheng (1987) nor de Schauensee (1984) record Eurasian Siskin *Carduelis spinus* from the province, I have seen it regularly at Golmud, 600km west of Xining.

Approaching Datong one would hardly guess that the other side of the very steep, bare hillside blocking the northward expansion of the industrialised county town is covered in an attractive mixture of birch and pine woodland bordered by scrub and terraced fields. The mountain is under some protection as a burial place and many signs remind the visitor not to use fire. This protection, however, does not extend to stopping locals from collecting firewood and trapping birds on a small scale.

Although Kozlov, Roborovsky and Przhevalsky all passed close to the area (Vaurie 1972), to my knowledge no ornithologists other than myself and my occasional companions (J.H. Christensen, S. Holloway and S. Jensen) have actually visited this easily accessible pearl of a place; thus any additions, whether past or future, to the fifty-six species on the following list would be gratefully received and fully acknowledged in an update that I hope to produce after further visits.

ANNOTATED LIST

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Uncommon (April, September)

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Singles seen (April, September)

Northern Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

One seen (November)

Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius*
Two seen (November)

Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*
Two presumably migrating (April)

Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
One seen (November)

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*
Fairly common

Blue Hill Pigeon *Columba rupestris*
Fairly common (November)

Asian House Martin *Delichon dasypus*
Three seen (September)

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*
One seen (September)

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
One seen (September)

Japanese Waxwing *Bombycilla japonica*
Three seen on 27 November 1990, apparently the first record for Qinghai (and one of the western-most ever)

Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*
One seen (November)

Robin Accentor *Prunella rubeculoides*
Fairly common (January, November)

Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophiata*
Fairly common (April, September, November)

Siberian Accentor *Prunella montanella*
One seen (November)

Brown Accentor *Prunella fulvescens*
Uncommon (November)

Przhevalsky's Redstart *Phoenicurus alaschanicus*
Three or four seen (November)

Blue-fronted Redstart *Phoenicurus frontalis*
Singles seen (April, September)

White-throated Redstart *Phoenicurus schisticeps*
Fairly common and probably breeding

Guldenstadt's Redstart *Phoenicurus erythrogaster*
Fairly common (November)

White-bellied Redstart *Hodgsonius phoenicuroides*
One seen, one heard (September)

Black-throated Thrush *Turdus ruficollis*
Uncommon (January, November). Both *T. r. ruficollis* and *T. r. atrogularis* were seen.

Naumann's Thrush *Turdus naumanni*
Uncommon (November). The birds were of the race *T. n. naumanni* but at Golmud this form, intermediates and pure *eunomus* occur regularly.

Père David's Laughing Thrush *Garrulax davidi*
Common

Elliot's Laughing Thrush *Garrulax elliotii*
Abundant

Chinese Bush Warbler *Bradypterus tacsanowskius*
Fairly common (September); this appears to indicate a small extension of range from that given in Cheng (1987).

Tickell's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus affinis*
Very common (September)

Yellow-streaked Warbler *Phylloscopus armandii*
Very common (September)

Buff-barred Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus pulcher*
One seen (September)

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*
Very common (September)

Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*
Common (September)

Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*
Fairly common (September)

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*
Singles seen (January, November)

Stoliczka's Tit-warbler *Leptopoecile sophiae*
Uncommon (November)

Crested Tit-warbler *Leptopoecile elegans*
Uncommon (April, September) to fairly common (14 seen on one day in November)

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*
Fairly common (April, September, November)

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*
Very common

Rufous-vented Tit *Parus rubidiventris*
Common (November)

Great Tit *Parus major*
Uncommon

Wallcreeper *Tichodroma muraria*
Two seen (November)

Common Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*
Uncommon (November)

Pine Bunting *Emberiza leucocephala*
Common (November)

Rock Bunting *Emberiza cia*
Uncommon (January, April) to abundant (November)

Oriental Greenfinch *Carduelis sinica*
Two seen (January)

Eurasian Siskin *Carduelis spinus*
More than four seen (November). The species is not mentioned for Qinghai by Cheng or de Schauensee, but I have regularly recorded up to nine birds at Golmud between 8 November 1990 and 8 March 1991.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*
Very common (January, April) to abundant (November)

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*
Three seen (September)

Beautiful Rosefinch *Carpodacus pulcherrimus*
Fairly common (January) to abundant (November)

White-browed Rosefinch *Carpodacus thura*
Common (November)

Eastern Great Rosefinch *Carpodacus rubicilloides*
Uncommon (November)

White-winged Grosbeak *Mycerobas carnipes*
Fairly common (April) to common (January, November)

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*
Abundant (January, November)

Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauuricus*
Fairly common (November)

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*
Common (November)

Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchus*
Singles seen (January, November)

本文介紹中國青海省大通附近的一個小山嶺老爺山(譯音)。此處是中國特有種鳳頭雀鶯 *Leptopoecile elegans* 的家鄉。附表給出五次到訪的綜合鳥類名錄，並加以註解。

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NOTES

BULWER'S PETRELS AND OTHER SEABIRDS NEAR HONG KONG

Menno Huizinga and *Gerard L. Ouweneel*

On 18 April 1990 we took the 1330h High Speed Ferry from Hong Kong to Macau. On that and the previous day a surge of the winter monsoon coming down the Taiwan Strait brought strong easterly winds, overcast skies and some light rain. Just west of the Soko Islands in the Lantau Channel but before the Pearl River Estuary, small flocks of Cormorants *Phalacrocorax carbo*, Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus*, Herring Gulls *L. argentatus*, Gull-billed Terns *Gelochelidon nilotica*, Caspian Terns *Sterna caspia* and Common Terns *S. hirundo* were flying south to southeast in the direction of the open sea after presumably sheltering from the storm. Between these groups, an all-dark petrel appeared at a distance of 60-80 metres flying low over the waves with deep almost skua-like (*Stercorarius* sp.) wingbeats. We identified it as a Bulwer's Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii* based on the following notes:

> Size smaller than a Common Tern, proportionally long-winged with a relatively long tail. Plumage dark sooty-brown with a paler bar on upperwing coverts (underwing seemed completely dark). Head prominent with pronounced chest. Legs not visible. Flight easy, determined, low over waves with several deep buoyant flaps followed by a short, sometimes twisting glide.

The Bulwer's Petrel had not been long out of sight before we observed several other interesting seabirds, all within a fifteen to twenty minute period. A second Bulwer's Petrel, three Streaked Shearwaters *Calonectris leucomelas*, an adult Slaty-backed Gull *L. schistisagus* and a Bridled Tern *S. anaethetus* were sighted. The Slaty-backed Gull appeared in a small group of Herring Gulls and the Bridled Tern was flying loosely with several Common Terns. Most of the birds were found near the Hong Kong side of the estuary in the relatively sheltered waters there; towards Macau the sea seemed almost empty except for an occasional gull.

In Hong Kong the only probable, but not accepted, record of Bulwer's Petrel was on 28 May 1964 (Chalmers 1986). In the North Pacific its main breeding areas are on islands in the East China Sea, especially off Fujian (La Touche 1925-34, de Schauensee 1984, Cheng 1987), the Ryukyus and Bonin Island (Marchant and Higgins 1990). Dispersal from Pacific breeding sites is little understood, but Chinese birds are thought to spend the non-breeding season in either the central tropical Pacific and/or the Indian Ocean (Marchant and Higgins 1990). An increasing number of sight records from between northwest Australia and Indonesia in the period September-April suggests a movement of birds through this region into the Indian Ocean (Harrison 1983, Marchant and Higgins 1990, Cheshire 1990).

There are, however, very few records from the South China Sea or Java Sea (Harrison 1952, Melville and Webster 1978, Marchant and Higgins 1990). White and Bruce (1986) attribute W.R.P. Bourne as suggesting that the species probably winters commonly at sea immediately north of the Moluccas, but at present there seems to be no evidence of this. The lack

of observations makes speculation dangerous but it may be that most birds migrate to the east of the Philippine archipelago before moving to the Indian Ocean.

Bulwer's Petrel returns to its breeding grounds in the east China Sea in April (Shuntov 1974). The strong easterly winds associated with the monsoon surge at the time of our observations could have forced birds moving through the Luzon Strait towards the Guangdong coast.

Streaked Shearwaters are regularly seen close to Hong Kong from ferries which travel along the Chinese coast but are rarely recorded within its territorial waters. The status of Slaty-backed Gull remains uncertain with five published records of adults, including three in Hong Kong Harbour in April. However the problems of identifying immature birds may be obscuring its true status. Bridled Terns were recorded annually on a rocky island in Mirs Bay in eastern Hong Kong waters from 1985-88 (breeding may have occurred), and there is a further record from Cheung Chau in 1989. Although Cheng (1987) records this species as 'rare' on islets off Fujian, Morgan (1990) found it to be 'the typical seabird for most of the sea passage along the southern coast of China' in August and September 1990.

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[These records have not been assessed by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society Records Committee as the birds were sighted outside Hong Kong waters — Ed.]

HABITAT UTILISATION BY LITTLE EGRETS BREEDING AT MAI PO EGRETRY

Fox K.O. Wong

INTRODUCTION

Mai Po and San Tin districts are suffering from major environmental changes, in particular large-scale landfilling. This study, undertaken from 10 May to 28 June 1990, tried to identify the important feeding sites of breeding Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta* in order to provide information for use when considering future development plans.

STUDY SITE AND METHOD

Mai Po egretry is located beside the Castle Peak Road at Mai Po San Tsuen. It is a well-developed 'fung shui' wood containing several large old Chinese Banyan trees *Ficus microcarpa* with an average height of about 13 metres. Other tree species include Chinese Red Pines *Pinus massoniana* and Pond Spices *Litsea glutinosa*.

Feeding sites were categorised as follows: fishpond (with/without ducks), gei-wai (intertidal shrimp pond), scrape (shorebird high tide roost), intertidal mudflat in Inner Deep Bay, creek (polluted by organic agricultural runoff), and 'other' (included recent landfill sites, gei-wai drainage channels and treetops).

Fishponds at Mai Po are used to raise mullet (*Mugil* sp.) and carp (Cyprinidae). They are usually drained during the winter when the bottom sediments are excavated by bulldozers. Flooding takes place in the spring after which fry are introduced. Soya beans are put into the ponds as nutrition for the fish and an aerator is used to maintain the dissolved oxygen at an acceptable level during the night.

The study was divided into two parts. In the first part, 'Flight Rate', I counted Little Egrets as they flew out from and back to the egretry. Observations were made from 0600h to 1800h, the day being divided into four periods, each of three hours. I aimed to determine the periods of the day when the Little Egrets were most active.

In the second part, 'Flight Line', I followed an adult Little Egret departing from the egretry to its first landing site with a 22x telescope. The first landing site was regarded as being indicative of a feeding site for that bird (Custer and Osborn 1978). I also recorded whether the bird joined other birds when it landed, or remained single. The distance of flight and the exact position of each bird were found by co-ordinates (set personally) on a map. Birds which could not be followed because they flew too far (most over 3.35km) were put into the 'missing' category. The distances of those flight lines were measured from the miss points.

RESULTS

Flight Rate

Rates of arrivals to and departures from the colony during the day are shown in Figure 1.

Flight Line

Totals of 105 and 78 Little Egrets were followed at low tide and high tide respectively. The percentage distribution of feeding sites at the two different tidal conditions is shown in Figure 2.

Average distances flown at low tide and high tide were 2.125±0.11km (±1S.E.) and 1.918±0.13km (±1S.E.) respectively — the difference between these measurements is not significant (t-test, t=0.126). By mapping the location of where birds first landed, it was found that 59 Little Egrets out of 183 joined a feeding flock.

DISCUSSION

Flight Rate

The results showed that Little Egrets were most active in the period 0600h-0900h. Although, in fact, many egrets left the egretry in several big flocks before 0600h, it was too dark to identify the birds specifically. The fact that Little Egrets were most active during the 0600h-0900h period might be due to both chicks and adult Little Egrets being starved throughout the night, since little nocturnal feeding activity was noticed, although a few birds fed in areas illuminated by the border security fence lights.

Another reason could be the greater availability of prey in the early morning. At that time prey items might be expected to congregate just below the water surface due to oxygen deficiency in the water resulting from macrophyte and/or plankton respiration over night (Kerstern *et al.* 1991, Kushlan 1978). Also some prey items might be nocturnal e.g. the freshwater prawn *Macrobrachium.* Thus, early feeding by Little Egrets would be more rewarding. This is a topic which would repay study in Hong Kong.

Flight Line

A little over 50 per cent of the Little Egrets made use of fishponds no matter what the tidal condition and there is no doubt that fishponds are important as a feeding habitat for breeding Little Egrets. None was seen to land directly on the intertidal mudflats although some birds recorded as 'missing' might have done so. A reason for favouring fishponds could be that prey is more abundant because of artificial culture.

Observations at fishponds over a total of 63 minutes in the early morning (0600h-0700h) revealed that Little Egrets fed mostly on prawns of the genus *Macrobrachium.* (353 out of 463 successful pecks seized *Macrobrachium* sp.; the remaining prey items were unknown but might have been small *Macrobrachium* sp.). Such prawns may occur at high densities in

fishponds due to the high level of nutrient input added by the farmer to promote fish growth.

In addition, the chance of oxygen deficiency and the resulting increase in the availability of prey might be promoted by the high nutrient level. A possible explanation for the lack of feeding on mudflats (cf. Custer and Osborn 1978, Erwin and Ogen 1979, Richer 1986) might be that the gain of energy per prey capture per unit time is not energetically advantageous when compared with fishpond feeding. The fact that fishponds are found nearer to the egretry is probably not the reason because many birds were seen to fly over and beyond the Deep Bay mudflats before disappearing from view. It is possible that these birds landed at fishponds in Shenzhen, China.

Fifty-nine (32 per cent) Little Egrets out of 183 joined a feeding flock when they first landed. Although this was a minority, general observations indicated that the total number of egrets involved in flock feeding was probably more than the total number of solitary feeders. Little Egrets were expected to forage gregariously since their white dorsal plumage would be conspicuous to conspecifics against the background colour (Götmark *et al.* 1986, Kushlan 1978). Flock feeding might be a strategy to deal with a clumped and ephemeral food source. The latecomers and even the bird that found the food first might benefit (Götmark *et al.* 1986). The egretry could possibly act as an 'information exchange centre' (Bayer 1982, Krebs 1974) for food sources.

On two single occasions, Little Egrets were seen flying low over the water surface trying to catch prey. Ripples at the water surface made by the prey below suggested that it was abundant. Such an energy-consuming foraging behaviour would probably only be employed in such conditions (Young *et al.* 1988).

Predation of nestlings at the egretry was not recorded, although human predation has been noted in previous years. However, the egretry did suffer from human disturbance during 1990. Work to dig a water channel was carried out under the egretry and some branches on which birds had nested in previous years were chopped down. The population of Little Egrets nesting at Mai Po egretry dropped drastically from more than 110 nests in 1989 to approximately 55 nests in 1990! This is thought to be due to the disturbance from the construction work.

Infilling of ponds is taking place throughout the Deep Bay area (Figure 3). Such filling reduces the area of feeding sites and living habitats, not only for egrets but also all other waterbirds. The impact of infilling on egret populations, not just Little Egrets but all egret species, has yet to be determined in Hong Kong. However, the strong preference shown for feeding in fishponds suggests that continued filling will result in a reduction in populations, especially since pond habitats are being lost across the Border in Shenzhen also. Additionally, development will bring more people to the Deep Bay area and the human impact on wildlife will be

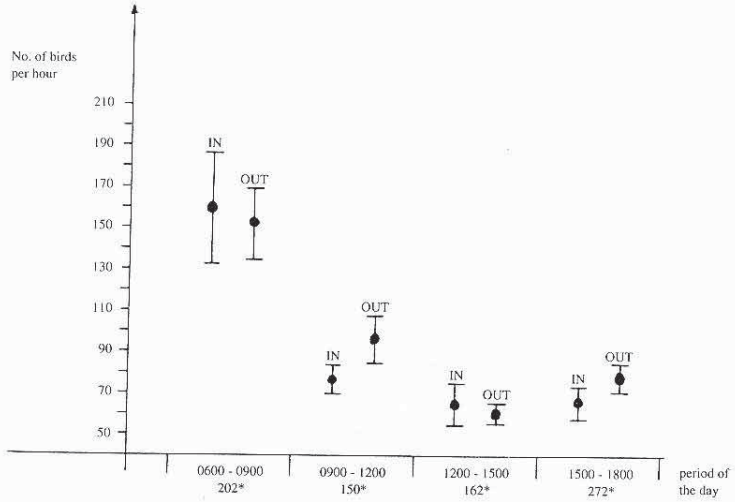

Figure 1. Flight rate to and from Mai Po Egretry at different periods of day
The graph is presented in standard error bar

* Minutes of observation in each period

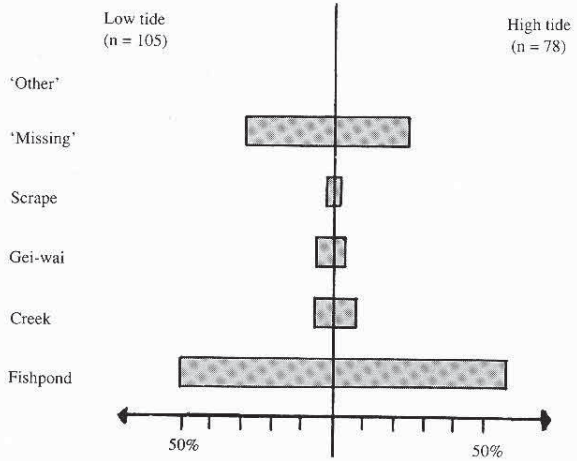

Figure 2. Percentage* distribution of feeding sites at two tidal conditions

* percentage calculated by: $\frac{\text{no. of birds at feeding site}}{\text{total no. of birds}} \times 100\%$

\# 'Other' includes recent landfill sites, gei-wai drainage channels and treetops

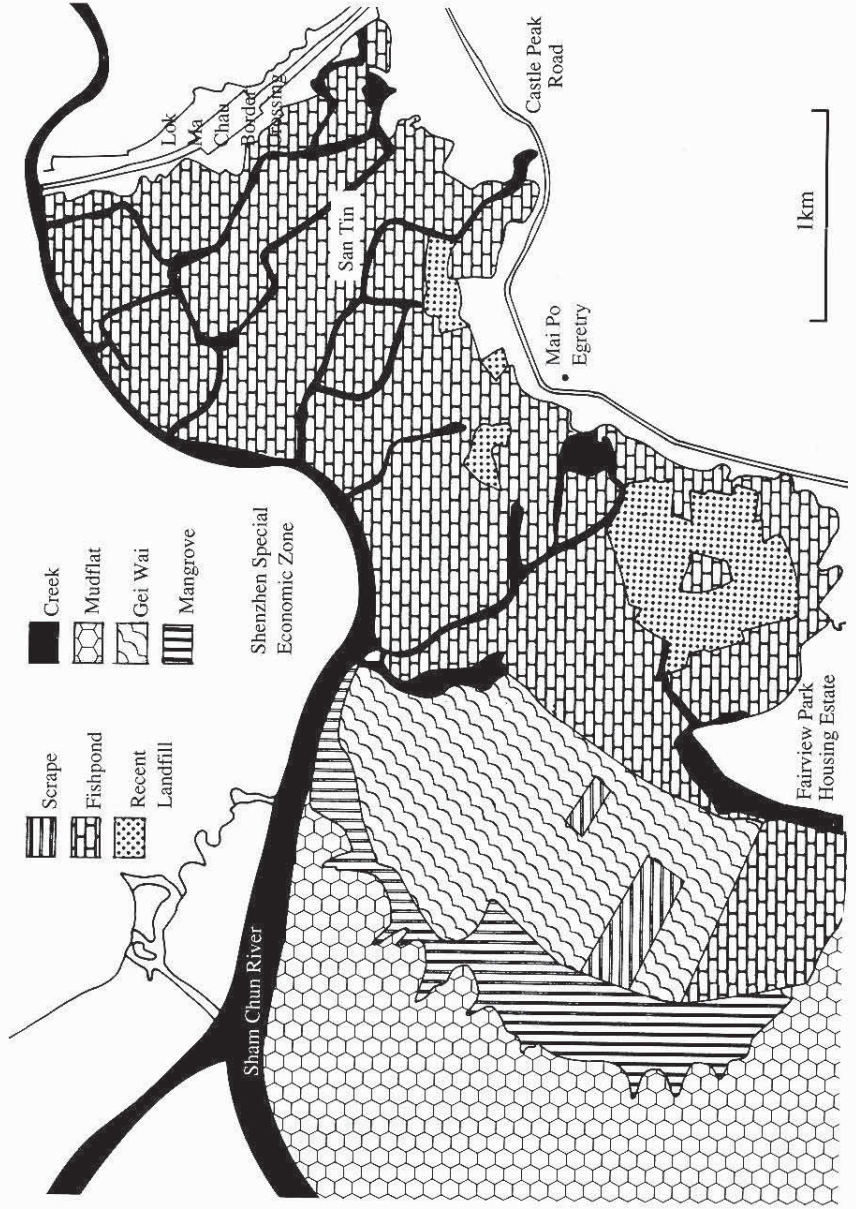

Figure 3. Area around Deep Bay showing feeding sites of Little Egret

amplified. It will be necessary to plan carefully for the development of the Deep Bay area so as not to lose this vital wetland and the egretries around it.

It is hoped that the Hong Kong Government's Territory Strategic Development Plan will meet the challenge of reconciling the needs of conservation with those of development.

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THE FIRST BREEDING RECORD OF GREY HERON IN HONG KONG

Llewellyn Young

Although Cheng (1987) notes that the Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* breeds in Guangdong Province, breeding has not been recorded in Hong Kong where it is reported to be mainly a winter visitor (Herklots 1967). A few individuals are also present in the summer (Chalmers 1986).

During the summers of 1989 and 1990 I have been collecting information on the species composition and the number of breeding birds using the various heronries around Hong Kong. The heronry on A Chau in Starling Inlet was of particular interest because in 1989 up to 12 Grey Herons were regularly seen there during the early part of the breeding season. At least two of these had red bills indicating that the birds were in breeding condition (Cramp and Simmons 1977). However, no nests or nesting activity were seen there throughout that summer.

On 26 April 1990, whilst counting the number of breeding birds at the same heronry, I noticed an unusually large nesting platform, 1-1.5m in diameter, on one of the trees on the island. Standing on the nest itself was a young Grey Heron and adjacent to it on another tree was a second young bird. Both had short grey bills, a grey crown and some downy feathers on the forehead. I estimated that they were about 3-4 weeks old.

When I revisited the site on 29 April, only one of the two young herons was seen on the nest. The second could have died since my last visit or might have been temporarily hidden by the thick vegetation. On neither of these two visits to the colony were the parent birds seen at the nest.

On my third visit on 19 May, the nest was deserted — possibly because the young had fledged. In Grey Herons fledging occurs 50-70 days after hatching (Cramp and Simmons 1977); this time factor would agree with the estimated age of the young birds the first time I saw them.

This is the first breeding record for Grey Herons in Hong Kong.

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FOOD OF THE SPOON-BILLED SANDPIPER IN HONG KONG

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It is often difficult to identify the diet of small waders by direct observation because of the very small food items that they take. One solution to this is to look at the undigested food remains found in the droppings (Dit Durrel and Kelly 1990). However, this method is biased towards animals with hard bodies since their parts will pass through the gut of the bird relatively undigested. These animals will therefore be more easily identified in the droppings. On the other hand, animals with soft bodies may be missed altogether because they have been completely digested.

On the night of 18 October 1990, when wader ringing at the WWF Hong Kong Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve, a Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus* was caught. As it was being ringed, it produced a dropping which was collected and preserved in alcohol.

On analysis, the dropping was found to contain the acicula* of polychaete worms and numerous shell fragments. From the acicula alone, it was impossible to identify the species of worm(s) the bird had been eating. However, as the Spoon-billed Sandpiper has a short bill and a unique way of feeding using a 'hoovering' action, (Melville 1978, Piersma 1986, McWhirter 1987, Swennen and Marteijin 1988), the worms were likely to be those found near the mud suface. At Mai Po a variety of polychaete worms have been found from the top 20cm of the mudflat, including two species of *Dendronereis*, two species of *Nereis*, a *Protula* species, *Nephtys paradoxa* and a species from the family Capitellidae.

The shell fragments found in the dropping belonged to a group of small marine snails called microgastropods, whose adults have a shell height of 10mm or less. Unfortunately, the fragments were too small to identify them down to species, but at Mai Po eighteen species of these microgastropods have been recorded (Tong 1990).

This is the only account of the type of marine invertebrate food taken by Spoon-billed Sandpipers apart from that by Ali and Ripley (1983), who reported 'minute red crabs' found in the stomach of a shot individual.

Accounts of the other types of food taked by Spoon-billed Sandpipers include that by Sugathan (1985), who observed them feeding on insects on a dry mudflat by pecking them off the ground or from the air. This was supported by the fact that the stomachs collected from two dead birds were found to contain the remains of beetles, Dipteran flies and the larvae of various insects.

On their breeding grounds in Russia, Portenko (1981) has also found the 'ground remains of tiny insects ... the larvae of coleoptera, a bit of elytrum and the phalange and other bones of a lemming' in the stomachs of adult birds. The bones were thought to be eaten in order to meet calcium needs. Clearly then, the diet of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper is fairly wide.

* Small rods found inside the legs (parapodia) of the worms, giving support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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AGEING OF FIRST- AND SECOND-WINTER COMMON GULLS

Peter R. Kennerley

Subsequent to the publication of Kennerley 1990, detailed observations of at least 85 Common Gulls *Larus canus* of the race *kamtschatschensis* at Mai Po and at Oi Yacho Koen, Tokyo in February and March 1991 have shown that the bird depicted in Plate 8 is a second-winter Common Gull, not a first-winter as captioned. This brief note is intended to clarify points made in the article which may result in the incorrect ageing of Common Gulls.

First-winter Common Gull

Contrary to the statement made on p.85, first-winter Common Gull exhibits a broad secondary bar and dark inner primaries. Furthermore, the tail band is broad, extending onto the outer rectrices, and contrasts with a finely barred white base to the tail and uppertail coverts. As such, it appears quite similar to first-winter birds of the western form *canus*.

Second-winter Common Gull

Second-winter birds are variable and it is at this age when confusion is most likely to occur with first-winter Relict Gull *L. relictus*. In this plumage, approximately 70 per cent of the second-winter birds seen in Japan displayed a vestigial tail band which was narrow and did not extend onto the outer rectrices (similar to that on the bird shown in Plate 8), while the remainder completely lacked a tail band. Additionally, all second-winter Common Gulls showed an indistinct darker subterminal spot on the secondaries to produce a faint secondary bar, similar to that of Relict Gull. The bill showed a broad dark band around the gonys and a pale tip, which was difficult to see except at very close range.

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THREE RECORDS OF SWIFTLETS OF UNDETERMINED SPECIES IN HONG KONG

Peter R. Kennerley

Between 5 and 11 April 1990 there were two confirmed and one unconfirmed records of swiftlets *Collocalia* sp. concerning four individuals

in Hong Kong. The first of these occurred at Shuen Wan on 5 April and was followed by a bird at Mount Davis on 8 April. Finally there was an unconfirmed report of two birds seen together at Mui Wo, Lantau on 11 April. Since there are no previous records of any species of swiftlet from Hong Kong or southeast China, it is considered useful to document these occurrences even though their specific identity could not be established.

22. Swiftlet *Collocalia* sp.
Shuen Wan, April 1990 *(Ray Tipper)*

The following details were noted by Ray Tipper regarding the bird seen at Shuen Wan on 5 April.

> 'At 0930h on 5 April 1990 J.J.M. Flegg, A.B. Lawrence and I were at Shuen Wan, just a short distance along the path which skirts the "swamp", when I noticed a swift flying at a height of approximately 10 metres. I felt it was different and as soon as I focused my binoculars on the bird I realised it lacked a white rump patch. It stayed faithful to a relatively small area throughout the 20 minutes we watched it, although shortly after we first saw the bird it moved into higher airspace.
>
> Essentially smoky-brown all over although the head and throat may have been slightly paler. At close range, the underwing coverts were slightly darker than the flight feathers. It was a small swift, appearing marginally larger than the Swallows *Hirundo rustica* which were the only other birds present for size comparison. The body tended towards cigar shape, as opposed to being spindly like an Asian Palm Swift *Cypsiurus batasiensis*, and appeared quite long — an impression heightened by its comparatively short wings. The wings were relatively broad based and not "pinched". The tail was notched rather than deeply forked, reminding me of Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*. Flight was reasonably leisurely and direct — not as fluttery as House Swift *Apus affinis* which we saw later and which, incidentally, was noticeably black compared to this bird. When gliding it did so on bowed wings.'

The second bird was found at Mount Davis on 8 April by PRK and the following details were submitted.

> 'A small swift, conspicuously smaller than a House Swift but with a noticeably deeper fork in the tail. It glided for long periods without flapping on wings noticeably more angled down than House Swift. When flapping, it was more rapid than House Swift but because the wings were relatively long, it did not appear to be a particularly fluttery flight. The fork in the tail largely disappeared when the tail was fully spread but was very obvious when closed.
>
> The plumage of the bird was rather nondescript. It was a dull greyish-brown colour both above and below, relieved only by a paler rump. This rump patch was well defined but narrower than House Swift's and did not extend onto the sides of the body. In colour, the rump was greyish-white, paler than the mantle and tail. Below, it was quite uniform greyish-brown — the same colour as the mantle. The throat was the same colour as the breast. There was an obvious contrast between the darker, greyish-brown underwing coverts and the paler, silvery-grey flight feathers. In body size, probably similar to a Swallow (without the tail streamers) but not actually seen directly alongside.'

The third report concerned two birds seen at Mui Wo, Lantau on 11 April by a group of visiting Australian birders. However, no specific details have been submitted and, as such, this record cannot be confirmed.

Swiftlets of the genus *Collocalia* are notoriously difficult to identify. There are wide variations in the plumage shades and tones. Cheng (1987) mentions Himalayan Swiftlet *C. brevirostris* and Edible-nest Swiftlet *C. fuciphaga* as occurring in China while de Schauensee (1984) includes Himalayan and Black-nest Swiftlets *C. maximus*. Furthermore Williams (1986) includes a description of a swiftlet of undetermined species seen at Beidaihe, Hebei Province on 26 and 29 April 1985. He formed the opinion that this individual was not Himalayan Swiftlet and may possibly be of a previously undescribed species.

Given this background, specific identification of the Hong Kong individuals was not possible but PRK had previously observed Himalayan Swiftlets at Nan Gong Shan, Xishuangbanna, Yunnan Province on 13 March 1990, only some four weeks earlier and considered the Mount Davis bird to be identicial to the birds seen there. Himalayan Swiftlet is a migratory species and is therefore probably the most likely species to occur in Hong Kong. However, Edible-nest has recently been discovered breeding on Dazhou Dao, Hainan Island (Xian and Zhong 1983) where the nests are harvested on a regular basis. Although Edible-nest occurs closer to Hong Kong than Himalayan it is not believed to be a migratory species.

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THE RECORDS COMMITTEE

M.L. Chalmers

Introduction

The object of this paper is to describe the background and working procedures of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society's Records Committee and to summarise some of the current identification and status problems which it is addressing.

Background

The declared aims in the Society's constitution include the collation and publishing from time to time of the field records of all birdwatchers in Hong Kong. One or more Committee members (Recorders) undertake this task. Up to 1975 the Recorder was solely responsible for decisions on records accepted for publication. However, in that year a Records Committee was first established to assist the Recorder in the unenviable task of assessing the growing volume of written reports. The Committee has functioned continuously since then with between three and five members, the Recorder being both the Secretary and Chairman. The present membership of the Committee comprises Peter Kennerley, Paul Leader, David Melville, Clive Viney and myself. Due to an increasing workload, it was decided in 1991 to appoint a separate Secretary and Paul Leader currently holds this post.

Objectives and Procedures

The objective of the Committee is to maintain a high standard of quality assurance and consistency in the Society's published records. Emphasis is placed on vagrants and scarce visitors, particularly those which are difficult to identify, to avoid distorting range and status data by misleading reports.

The current guidelines for the composition and workings of the Records Committee are given in Appendix 1. For new species to Hong Kong, votes for acceptance must be unanimous. For other records all but one member (for four- or five-membered committees) must vote in favour for acceptance. Decisions on which checklist category to allocate new species to are made on a majority basis.

Since its early years, the Society has maintained a card index system for records, each card having one observer's records for one species in a given year. These cards, with any additional notes, sketches or photographs, are circulated between the Committee members and comments are marked up on the cards themselves. After the report is written at the end of the year, the cards are then filed in a species ordered system for subsequent reference.

Up to and including records for 1983, a full systematic list of all species recorded was published each year. Because of the increasing volume

of records and the fact that the fourth edition of the Society's *Annotated Checklist* had been published in 1986 with more detailed notes on status for all species, it was decided to publish only selected species after this. To ensure cards were received for regular species of local interest as well as vagrants, a list of species for which notes were required was published each year in the Hong Kong Bird Report. This year it has been decided to revert to publishing a full list, due to assistance from other Society members and in particular Mike Turnbull, the Recent Reports Editor. In combination with increasing field identification skills, this has led to the revision and shortening of the list of species for consideration by the Records Committee. The revised list is given elsewhere in this Report.

Achievements

The work of the Committee has ensured a sound and consistent basis for the annual Hong Kong Bird Reports and the four editions of the *Annotated Checklists* published by the Society. In the process of reviewing records the Records Committee also draws attention to identification problems and aims to resolve these by focusing attention and research, consulting international experts and promoting papers on the identification of difficult or little-known species.

Successful examples of this process have resulted in recent papers on Nordmann's Greenshank (Kennerley and Bakewell 1987), immature Relict Gull (Kennerley 1990) and Pechora Pipit (Carey 1990). Other examples have included harriers (Bakewell *et al.* 1988), *Aquila* eagles (Chalmers 1982), snipe (Viney 1982) and Large Grass Warbler (Melville and Chalmers 1984). A paper in this Report on Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler continues this trend. Advances in field techniques now create fewer problems with former difficult species such as immature frigatebirds, von Schrenck's Little Bittern, Little Stint, Relict Gull, Oriental Cuckoo, Sooty Flycatcher, Mountain Bush Warbler, Pale-legged Leaf Warbler and Japanese Yellow Bunting.

The Committee has also encouraged the publication of detailed descriptions of first records of new species to improve identification skills and knowledge. With over 425 species on the Hong Kong List (Categories A to D) and new species being added at rates of 8, 6 and 8 each year over the last three years, this is expected to remain an active area.

Outstanding Identification Problems

The following groups or species are currently causing major problems due to lack of sufficiently detailed or agreed identification criteria:

Accipiters Wide variations in Asian accipiters and poor descriptions of diagnostic features in the field continue to cause difficulties, particularly among immatures.

Large Gulls Poor descriptions of immature plumages of the possible races of Herring Gull and the possibility of hybridisation between Slaty-

backed, Herring and Glaucous-winged Gulls among the flocks of large immature gulls in winter causes confusion.

Warblers Trapping of birds for ringing purposes has done a great deal in recent years to answer queries on *Cettia, Locustella, Acrocephalus* and *Phylloscopus* species. However, much remains to be achieved in the field. Recent advances have clarified identification issues for Pallas's Grasshopper/ Lanceolated Warblers, Blunt-winged/Paddyfield Warblers and Two-barred Greenish Warbler. A review paper on *Acrocephalus* warblers is under preparation for publication next year. *Bradypterus* warblers have also presented problems but these are about to be resolved based on extensive field work in the region and comparison of sonograms.

Others Other individual species which continue to cause problems although these are being resolved include White Phase Reef/Swinhoe's Egrets, Mountain Hawk Eagle/Crested Honey Buzzard.

Escapes and Releases

Given the very large volume of trade in wild birds in Hong Kong and the high level of ownership of caged birds, the problem of sorting out escapes and releases from wild birds will never be satisfactorily resolved. It is further compounded by the frequent habit of releasing wild birds.

In former years, location was an important criterion. If the bird was seen in such notorious habitats as the Colonial Cemetery or Kowloon Park it had to be an escape, whereas if it was in the New Territories it stood a much better chance of acceptance as wild. However, evidence in recent years has shattered that myth. In summer the Mai Po reed beds are populated by African bishops and whydahs, Tai Po Kau is a major release point for birds confiscated by the Agriculture and Fisheries Department and parrots, cockatoos and budgerigars seem to turn up everywhere. As Clive Viney has pointed out, Mai Po is closer to Shenzhen Market, a notorious centre of wildlife trade, than Mount Davis is to Wanchai's bird shops. Obviously what is or what is not an escape or release is going to plague us for evermore. Just because a species is known to be traded in large numbers or has just turned up in the bird shops does not mean it is automatically ruled out, although its chances of acceptance are thus much reduced. When considering a potential escape the following questions, first proposed by Clive Viney, are asked:

a) Does it or could it occur naturally in this region?
b) Is it a known migrant?
c) Is it the right time of year?
d) Was it in the right habitat?
e) Was it behaving properly?
f) Was it in good condition?

Depending upon the answers the species is allocated either Category A (wild), D (uncertain) or E (escape) status. The decisions made are intended

to remain essentially conservative. Better to underestimate a species' range or extent of vagrancy than to give a falsely optimistic status. For species where doubts remain, Category D is used as a half-way house for those awaiting respectability. If sufficient further records accumulate of birds satisfying all the positive criteria, then the species is upgraded to Category A. This has proved possible over the last few years for such species as Brahminy Kite, Saker Falcon, Orange-bellied Leafbird, Yellow-cheeked Tit, Japanese Grosbeak, Yellow-throated and Yellow-browed Buntings.

The Way Ahead

To maintain the standard set by the Society and remain effective, the Committee will continue to keep under active review all the above issues and criteria, and promote research into and publication of identification criteria. More use will be made of the Bulletin to keep Society members informed of current issues, and comments and assistance will continue to be welcomed.

APPENDIX 1

GUIDELINES FOR THE RECORDS COMMITTEE

1. In order to operate effectively, the Committee must command the respect of those submitting records. The prime qualifications for membership are widely acknowledged expertise in identification and proven reliability in the field. Membership may vary from time to time between a maximum of five and a minimum of three members.

2. One member will act as Chairman and another as Secretary.

3. Candidates for membership must be approved by the HKBWS Committee. Likewise, the guidelines governing the working of the Records Committee may only be varied by a decision of the HKBWS Committee.

4. A list of species considered is published at regular intervals in the Annual Report.

5. Records must be submitted in writing, preferably on or accompanied by an HKBWS standard record card.

6. Records are circulated for comments and voted on as follows: accept (✓), reject (x) or indeterminate (poss/prob/pend). With four or five members, all but one must vote in favour for a record to be accepted, except for first records for Hong Kong when a unanimous decision is required. For Committees of three members, decisions must be unanimous for all acceptances. Members may vote on their own records. Marginal cases may be recirculated. Records are sometimes referred to acknowledged experts overseas.

7. The Committee also allocates new species to a Checklist category and reviews the status of existing species. A majority decision is needed

to determine status by category. In the event of a tie, the Chairman has an additional vote.

8. Previously submitted records may be reviewed at any time. A previously accepted record can only be relegated to Category F by reject votes from all, or all but one member, on the same basis as acceptances under (6) above.

9. Records are considered on a calendar year basis and the findings of the Committee are published in the Annual Report. Rejected records will also be listed.

10. The Committee meets together at least once each year to discuss matters of policy, difficult records etc.

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GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF RECORDS

Recording

One of the most important functions of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society is the publication of the Hong Kong Bird Report. The value of this publication depends on members submitting records and all are encouraged to submit records at the end of each year.

The Society provides 152 x 106mm record cards to facilitate analysis and storage and these are available from the Recorder. Completed cards are stored in a species-indexed filing system and members wishing to look at past records are asked to contact the Recorder. It is hoped that the ease with which records can be retrieved will result in interested people analysing migration patterns and population trends and undertaking other studies.

The Society also maintains a collection of reports of birds recorded during members' visits to other parts of Southeast Asia and China to assist others in planning overseas trips.

Rarities

While the birds of Hong Kong are better known than those of many other areas of the Far East, new species are continually being added to the Hong Kong List and the status of many other species is uncertain.

Field identification techniques for species in the area still need refining and the Society has a Records Committee to assist the Recorder in the unenviable task of assessing records and ensuring that a high standard of reporting is maintained. A list of species considered by the Committee is given below. The list may seem dauntingly long and to include some unmistakeable species such as Oystercatcher. However, all members are requested to submit field descriptions of the birds listed.

Ideally field notes of a rarity should cover the following points:

a) Date, time and location of sighting.

b) Power of binoculars/telescope used, distance of bird from observer, weather and light conditions.

c) Description of habitat and what other birds, if any, it was associating with.

d) Whether you saw it from different angles; at rest, in light, swimming etc.; from above or below. The more varied the conditions the better.

e) Its actions and the character of its flight compared with other birds.

f) Its general shape and structure as compared with other birds e.g. size and shape of bill, length of legs, shape of wing, length of tail.

g) Colour of bill, legs, feet and iris.

h) As far as possible, an exact description of the whole plumage of the bird, not only those parts which you think may help in identifying it. A rough sketch or diagram is a great help.

i) Any calls, indicating especially the quality of the sound (harsh, rattling, shrill, hoarse, liquid etc.) and comparison with calls of other species.

j) Notes on previous experience with the species or species with which it may be confused.

If possible try to get someone else to see the bird as two descriptions are better than one. *Make sure that you take full field notes on the spot* — it is all too easy to imagine field marks after consulting a book!

Even if you do not know what the bird is please send in the description as it may be possible for the Committee to identify it for you. It should be remembered that many species of cage birds have been recorded as escapes in Hong Kong and they may not be included in any of the local books.

The increasing number of field guides on the market often make positive identification appear all too easy, but it must be remembered that there are still many difficult species and groups of birds and it is only by careful, painstaking observation that such species can be identified.

The following list (of species for which written descriptions are required) is based on the *Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong* (Chalmers 1986) plus additions detailed in the annual Hong Kong Bird Reports from 1984/85 onwards. In many cases brief notes added to the record cards describing the salient features, ranges and viewing conditions will suffice. However, full descriptions are required for the rarer or more difficult species, or any new species not yet on the Hong Kong List. In addition the Recorder may request descriptions of other species under unusual circumstances. Records submitted without descriptions may not be considered.

The list is subject to revision each year to include new species and delete those for which descriptions are no longer needed because of better defined status or fewer identification problems.

Species for which written descriptions of all sightings must be submitted to the Recorder for consideration by the Records Committee

Category A

Red-necked Grebe
Black-necked Grebe
Streaked Shearwater
all storm petrels
all frigatebirds
Japanese Night Heron
Swinhoe's Egret
White Stork
Glossy Ibis
Lesser Treeduck
all geese
Cotton Teal
Baikal Teal
Velvet Scoter
Goldeneye
Crested Honey Buzzard
Black-shouldered Kite
Brahminy Kite
Hen Harrier
Pied Harrier
all accipiters except Crested Goshawk
Upland Buzzard
Mountain Hawk Eagle
White-legged Falconet
Amur Falcon
Merlin
Saker Falcon
all button quails
all crakes
Purple Gallinule
Common Crane
Oystercatcher
Ringed Plover
Oriental Plover
Little Stint
Pectoral Sandpiper
Jack Snipe
Solitary Snipe
Long-billed Dowitcher
Little Whimbrel
Nordmann's Greenshank
Lesser Yellowlegs
all skuas
Great Black-headed Gull
Relict Gull
Slender-billed Gull
Common Gull
Slaty-backed Gull
Glaucous-winged Gull
Glaucous Gull
Kittiwake
Greater Crested Tern
Roseate Tern
Bridled Tern
Sooty Tern
Ancient Auk
Bar-tailed Cuckoo Dove
White-bellied Green Pigeon
Thick-billed Pigeon
Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo
Emerald Cuckoo
Common Cuckoo
all owls except Collared Scops Owl and Barred Owlet
Japanese Nightjar
all swiftlets
Collared Kingfisher
Crested Kingfisher
all woodpeckers
Chinese Pitta
all larks except Oriental Skylark at Kai Tak
Pechora Pipit
Water Pipit
Citrine Wagtail
White Wagtail (all races other than *leucopsis* and *ocularis*)
Greater Cuckoo Shrike
Rosy Minivet
Brown Dipper
Wren
Japanese Robin
Siberian Blue Robin
Grey Bushchat
Pied Wheatear
White-capped Redstart
White-throated Rock Thrush
Chestnut-breasted Rock Thrush
Orange-headed Ground Thrush
Siberian Thrush
Brown Thrush
Slaty-backed Forktail
Pale-footed Bush Warbler
Mountain Bush Warbler
Yellow-bellied Bush Warbler
Styan's Grasshopper Warbler
Lanceolated Warbler
Blyth's Reed Warbler
Thick-billed Warbler
Chestnut-crowned Warbler

Fulvous-faced Flycatcher Warbler
Two-barred Greenish Warbler
Yellow-browed Warbler
(race *humei*)
Radde's Warbler
Chiffchaff
Fukien Niltava
Sooty Flycatcher
Collared Siva
Gould's Sunbird
Plain Flowerpecker
Tiger Shrike
Bull-headed Shrike
Chinese Great Grey Shrike

Daurian Jackdaw
Purple-backed Starling
Chestnut-cheeked Starling
European Starling
Rosy Starling
Brambling
Siskin
Japanese Grosbeak
Japanese Yellow Bunting
Yellow-throated Bunting
Yellow-browed Bunting
Rustic Bunting
Reed Bunting

CATEGORY B

all (one!)

CATEGORY C

none

CATEGORY D

all

CATEGORY E

all new species

CATEGORY F

all

NOTES FOR APPLICANTS WISHING TO VISIT THE MAI PO NATURE RESERVE

The following information has been received from the Agriculture and Fisheries Department:

Individuals

Individual members of the public can apply for a 'day permit'; however in certain cases permits for a longer period may be issued. Applications should be made *at least two weeks* in advance of the proposed date and must include the following details:

Name in full
Hong Kong Identity Card no. or Passport no.
Date of proposed visit
Purpose of visit
Other pertinent details e.g. membership of relevant societies etc.

It should be noted that visitors who wish to use the hides provided by the World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong should be members of WWF HK. Membership can be obtained on the reserve at both the Peter Scott Field Studies Centre and the Wildlife Education Centre or by writing to GPO Box 12721, Hong Kong.

Groups

Group permits will usually be limited to a maximum of 50 persons per group and will be valid for one day only. To enable the spacing of group visits to prevent excessive disturbance, applications should be made *not less than one month* in advance of the proposed date and should include the following details:

Name in full and Hong Kong Identity Card no. of group leader(s)
Date of proposed visit
Purpose of visit
Number of group
Other pertinent details

All applications and enquiries should be addressed to:

The Director of Agriculture and Fisheries
Canton Road Government Offices
393 Canton Road
Kowloon
Hong Kong

Visits are also arranged by WWF HK who can be contacted by writing to GPO Box 12721, Hong Kong.

Identity documents

Identity cards or passports must be carried by all persons entering the Mai Po Marshes.