

THE HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1987



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THE HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

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(A registered society under the Hong Kong Societies Ordinance)

Records compiled by M.L. Chalmers
Report edited by V.B. Picken

**Officers of the Society
(1987)**

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REPORT ON THE BIRDS 1987

M. L. Chalmers

As usual 1987 produced claims of several new species for Category A of the Hong Kong List. However, at the time of writing this report none has been accepted, although five species remain under review. In some cases this is because of inadequacies or contradictions in published references. The five species concerned are Besra, Mountain Hawk Eagle, Relict Gull, Spotted Bush Warbler and Two-barred Greenish Warbler. The first two are also the subject of further records in 1988, and the last three are all the subject of further correspondence with international authorities.

However, four species have been added to Category A by upgrading their status from Category D based on majority rulings of the Records Committee on additional 1987 records. These are as follows:

1. Brahminy Kite. One or two immatures were seen in the Deep Bay area in August and September. These are considered to be wild based on their fresh plumage when seen at close quarters. The two former records were both in the urban areas in 1955 and 1966, and the latter was obviously an escape due to its poor condition.
2. Orange-bellied Leafbird. The number of records of this species away from the urban area has been growing rapidly over the last few years. With the numerous scattered New Territories records in 1987, the majority of these birds are now considered to be wild.
3. Japanese Grosbeak. Two seen with Black-tailed Hawfinches in the Lam Tsuen Valley in February under similar circumstances to the first record in November 1985 led to the upgrading of this species to Category A.
4. Yellow-throated Bunting. A single bird in good condition at the remote village of Lai Chi Wo in January was similar to the only other record of one at Ho Chung in December 1979. Both are now considered to have been wild birds.

There was also one addition to Category D, the cautionary half-way house for species which may be wild, but for which the possibility of escape or release cannot be satisfactorily excluded. The bird concerned was a male Ruddy Sparrow seen at Ting Kok in December and conservatively placed in Category D instead of Category A because this was a single record near habitation of a passerine which is known to be occasionally traded.

Apart from firsts, the year produced a steady stream of seconds and thirds. These included a Swinhoe's Storm Petrel in eastern waters in June, a Little Stint at Mai Po in April, a Pectoral Sandpiper at Tsim Bei

Tsui and Mai Po in April and May respectively, a Long-billed Dowitcher at Mai Po in October, Penduline Tits at Mai Po in April, and a Daurian Jackdaw at Tsim Bei Tsui in September.

Other unusual records were two Bean Geese at Stonecutters Island in December and an unidentified skua near Cheung Chau in April. In Category D Vinous-throated Parrotbills were seen near the summit of Tai Mo Shan in April and a Brambling was recorded at Ocean Park in November.

The wader passage broke many previous records and produced some amazing spectacles due to the ideal conditions created on the WWF scrape at Mai Po. Up to 7,000 shorebirds were present in mid-April and a total of 43 separate wader species was recorded including an exceptional series of Nordmann's Greenshank. Many new extreme dates and maximum counts were established.

Regular projects and events which produced much useful data included the mid-winter waterfowl count in January, the Big Bird Race in April and the Christmas Count in December. The first and last are summarised in this Report and the Bird Race is the subject of a separate booklet published each year by WWF HK.

A monthly summary of notable records is given below followed by the Records Committee Report, Significant Breeding Records and updates to the Annotated Checklist.

The assistance of the other members of the Records Committee, Peter Kennerley, David Melville, Clive Viney and Mike Webster, is gratefully acknowledged. The Records Committee Report is based on written records submitted by the following observers:

J. Andrews, D.N. Bakewell, J.M. Barber, M. Barter, M.J. Bishop, C.L. Blake, S. Bouffard, D.A. Brooks, J.E. Burton, M.L. Chalmers, S.Y. Chan, G.C.H. Cooper, T.R. Costin, N.J.G. Croft, J.S.R. Edge, J.M.M. Flegg, N.S. Grimshaw, C.J. Hilton, H. Iozawa, P.R. Kennerley, N. Kjellen, C.Y. Lam, A.R. Lamont, N. and J. Latham, M. Lau, A.B. Lawrence, R.W. Lewthwaite, K.W. Li, D.S. Melville, B.S. Morton, N. Pertwee, K. Phillipps, V.B. Picken, E.G.B. Powell, S.P. Smith, G.J. Speight, G.E. Stevens, P.R. Stevens, J.M. Stott, R.D.E. Stott, R.P. Tipper, C. Tracey, M. Turnbull, C.A. Viney, M.A. Webster, S. Wilks, M.D. Williams, A.G. and W. Young.

January

The year began with two pairs of Orange-bellied Leafbirds and several Black Bulbuls at Tai Po Kau on 1st. The next day several Chestnut Bulbuls and one Chestnut-flanked White-eye were found there. The Chestnut Bulbuls continued to be seen in small numbers over the next two months. Seven Black-tailed Gulls were reported in Starling Inlet on 3rd and one Brown-headed Gull was found at Mai Po on 10th. The

Wildfowl Count on 10th/11th produced 38,767 birds of 62 species including one Ruddy Shelduck at Tsim Bei Tsui, seven Dalmatian Pelicans and 17 Saunders' Gulls from the Mai Po floating hide, 2,137 Pintail, 3,158 Shoveler and over 2,000 Shelduck in Deep Bay, 333 Curlew, 70 Asiatic Golden Plover, 1,087 Spotted Redshank and 30 Baer's Pochard at Mai Po. Many of these counts established new highs for the species involved. An odd-looking Wigeon at the Fence showed many of the characteristics of a drake American Wigeon, but after several further sightings it was decided that it was probably an aberrant example of the commoner species. Mild, sunny weather continued throughout most of the month. From 13th between one and two Barred Owlets were regularly seen and heard at Tai Po Kau while the outing to Lai Chi Wo on 17th produced an obliging Yellow-throated Bunting (second for Hong Kong). Also on 17th a possible White Stork was first reported from Shuen Wan, but could not be confirmed at the time. The same day several White-headed Munias were seen at Mai Po, and a male Hen Harrier with prey in its talons flew over Braemar Hill. Several Imperial and Spotted Eagles were seen regularly in the Deep Bay area and up to three Bitterns were reported intermittently from Mai Po. On 26th two Tristram's Buntings were found at the unusual locality of Wong Nei Chung Gap. Finally, on 30th the white-phase Asian Paradise Flycatcher, first noted in October 1986, was seen again at Lam Tsuen and several Treepies and a Chestnut Bulbul were found at Wu Kau Tang.

February

A flock of Red-breasted Mergansers was seen off Tsim Bei Tsui on 1st and again on 8th. The Ruddy Shelduck remained off the Fence where, apart from the very large numbers of Pintail, Shoveler, Teal and Shelduck, there were also Yellow-nib, Mallard, Falcated Teal, Wigeon, Gadwall and Garganey — all well represented. Also on 1st a large immature gull, possibly a Glaucous-winged hybrid, was seen off the Mai Po boardwalk and several other odd-looking large immature gulls were subsequently sighted. A Great Spotted Woodpecker was found at Pokfulam on 5th and at She Shan there were flocks of Scarlet Rosefinches and Black-tailed Hawfinches. A Ring-necked Pheasant (male) with half a tail and very suspect origins was located at Ha Tsuen on 8th and a Lanceolated Warbler was noted in song at Nam Chung. Following unconfirmed reports the White Stork was finally found and verified at Shuen Wan on 10th and was subsequently seen by many over the following few weeks. The 13th produced two Japanese Grosbeaks with the Black-tailed Hawfinches in the Lam Tsuen Valley. This is only the second record and follows the November 1985 report of a single bird in the same area. On 14th a Black-shouldered Kite was seen over Mai Po — coinciding in location and time of year with the few previous records and suggesting a possible regular movement in mid/late February. The next day a Scarlet Minivet was seen at Sandy Bay (unusual for Hong Kong Island) and a Golden-fronted Leafbird (escape) was found on the Peak. On 17th a Silver Pheasant was found trapped in the border fence at Ta Kwu Ling, yet another I.I. to have escaped from the restaurants and butcheries of Shenzhen (also note a Black Bear was found in a nearby

area in early March). The next day a Brown-headed Gull was seen in Deep Bay. Intensive searches of Tai Po Kau on 21st produced five Pekin Robins, one Orange-bellied Leafbird and one White-bellied Yuhina. Black and Chestnut Bulbuls continued to be seen in small numbers as well as up to three Ashy Drongos. Also on 21st a Water Pipit was located again at Nam Chung while the white-phase Asian Paradise Flycatcher was seen once more at Lam Tsuen and a Swinhoe's Egret was reported at the Fence. Thrushes remained thin on the ground, except for widespread Blackbirds. Isolated reports of White's Thrushes included one at Fanling Lodge. Another Orange-bellied Leafbird, this time at Barbecue Gardens, Siu Lam, was located on 24th. About this time Savannah Nightjars were also heard calling in the same area (early date). The month ended with 30 Black-tailed Gulls at Starling Inlet and a Sulphur-breasted Warbler at Tai Po Kau on 28th.

March

Up to four Painted Snipe were seen regularly at Ha Tsuen throughout the month and two Japanese Quail were also sighted there on 1st. Up to two Verditer Flycatchers were regularly seen at Hong Kong University where a male Asian Paradise Flycatcher with full tail was noted on 7th. Pelican numbers remained low with only eight on 7th. The next day four Imperial Eagles were seen at Mai Po and a white-phase Reef Egret was first located off the boardwalk and stayed in the area until at least mid-May. On 14th a Lapwing was seen at Mai Po and a Blue and White Flycatcher at Tai Po Kau. On 15th two Peregrines were watched at Crooked Island, Mirs Bay, the white-phase Asian Paradise Flycatcher was seen again at Lam Tsuen Valley where it remained until early April, and 25 Red-necked Phalaropes and a Wryneck were found at the Fence. By 21st passage wader numbers were increasing: a flock of 75 Asiatic Golden Plovers was found at the Fence and 1,100 waders of several species were seen at Mai Po. Four Bitterns were also present. Fantail, Swinhoe's and Pintail Snipe were located at Ha Tsuen together with one Dusky Thrush and two Bluethroats. Treepies were regular at Tai Po Kau with 20 reported on 22nd while small numbers of Ashy Drongos were also there. On 28th 13 Rosefinches and a Crested Bunting were reported at She Shan and the next day a male Narcissus Flycatcher was found at Mai Po.

April

One Barred Owlet and 14 Rosefinches were seen at She Shan on 4th. The same day nine Ashy Minivets were sighted at Shuen Wan and one Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle, two Hainan Blue Flycatchers and one Blue and White Flycatcher were recorded at Tai Po Kau. At the Fence there were two Swinhoe's Egrets and a Pectoral Sandpiper. The latter put in a brief appearance at a drained pond and was only the second record for Hong Kong. At Mai Po two Asian House Martins, four Sanderlings and at least three White-vented Needletails were reported. Wader numbers had by 4th increased to several thousand at Mai Po. Earlier in the year the offending reeds had been cut in the scrape area (gei-wai 16/17) and a plan of water level controls agreed. With conditions ideal for roosting,

large numbers of waders congregated there at each high tide. Totals rose to about 7,000 and 43 separate species were recorded. At times there were 35 species together in the same area. The instant success of the area exceeded the most optimistic hopes and has put Mai Po firmly on the map as probably the best site for viewing passage waders in Asia. Maximum counts for many species have been raised. Rarities included individual counts of three Spoon-billed Sandpipers, ten Nordmann's Greenshank and 62 Asiatic Dowitchers. There was also one Little Stint on 21st (second for Hong Kong) and a mystery wader seen briefly on 17th which showed some of the characters of Cox's Sandpiper but was not seen again and thus was not positively identified.

Other non-wader records were as follows: on 3rd a Ferruginous Flycatcher was found at Tai Po Kau. An Emerald Dove at Middle Gap Road was an unusual record for Hong Kong Island. A male Narcissus and Ferruginous Flycatcher were present at Tai Po Kau on 8th and Chestnut Bulbuls were reported there the same day. On 9th two Penduline Tits were seen at Mai Po and a Blue-tailed Bee-eater at Tsim Bei Tsui. Two more needletails (sp.) were seen at Mai Po on 13th and one White-throated Needletail was located there on 17th. A series of Japanese Yellow Bunting records began at the Mai Po casuarinas with one on 15th and up to three between 17th and 26th. A Japanese Paradise Flycatcher was seen at Tai Po Kau on 14th and another was found at Tai Tam the next day. On 17th a Styan's Grasshopper Warbler was netted at Mai Po. Visits to Tai Mo Shan produced two pairs of Chinese Babax, a Large Grass Warbler and a flock of at least six Vinous-throated Parrotbills. On 20th a flock of 40 Treepies, a Narcissus and an Asian Paradise Flycatcher were recorded at Tai Po Kau, and a Black Baza and Barred Owlet were found in the Lam Tsuen Valley. On 24th a single pelican was reported to have been seen daily at the Soko Islands. Sulphur-crested Cockatoos were found breeding at Hong Kong University and a trip to Tai Long Wan on 25th produced three Black Bazas, five Black-naped Terns, two Chestnut Bitterns and one Swinhoe's Snipe. The same day another Styan's Grasshopper Warbler was netted at Mai Po and 13 Whiskered Terns were also observed there. Red-winged Crested Cuckoos were reported widely and their incessant monotonous calls caused many sleepless nights. Intermittent sightings of Swinhoe's Egret continued at Mai Po and the Fence, suggesting that possibly one pair at least was breeding in the Deep Bay area.

May

On 2nd an Orange-headed Ground Thrush was seen again at Tai Po Kau. The next day an immature frigatebird was watched over the Mong Tseng egretty, several Sand Martins were reported at Mai Po and six Blue-tailed Bee-eaters were found at the Fence. There were several scattered records of frigatebirds during the month. A marked passage of White-winged Black Terns occurred on 9th with 450 at Mai Po and 1,500 in the Lamma Channel. Smaller numbers could be seen in Deep Bay for the rest of the month. On 9th the first of the Luk Keng thrashes took place. A thin line of lunatics, ignoring the possible unpleasant surprises

which may have awaited them, waded through the marsh and produced a female Von Schrenck's Little Bittern (second for Hong Kong) and a Banded Rail with nest and seven eggs. On 10th a Tufted Duck and Jay were unusual sightings at the Fence, and about 200 Common Terns were noted near Cheung Chau. The next day nine Horsfield's Goshawks were seen there. The second Pectoral Sandpiper of the spring, and only the third for Hong Kong, was found at Mai Po on 16th and remained until 23rd. A second visit to Luk Keng on 17th resulted in three Von Schrenck's Little Bitterns, a pair of Watercock and four Banded Rails. A Red-necked Stint with an Australian ring was controlled at Mai Po. The Great Reed Warbler trapped earlier this year was found to have been ringed three and a half years previously in August 1983 in East Honshu, Japan. On 23rd an Orange-bellied Leafbird was found at Kadoorie Farm and two Von Schrenck's Little Bitterns were still present at Luk Keng the next day. On 26th two Swinhoe's Egrets were watched at Starling Inlet. By the end of the month wader numbers had dropped to about 500 birds at Mai Po, marking the final stages of a remarkable spring passage. Late duck records included Wigeon, Mallard and Falcated Teal at the Fence and Mai Po.

June

The three summer months from June to August are traditionally the quietest and this year was no exception. Following the success of the Mai Po scrape in the spring, wader and duck records continued at higher levels than usual. On 1st a Spoon-billed Sandpiper and two late Dunlin (in breeding plumage) were located. Late records of single drake Mallard were reported up to 28th, when a drake Teal was also present. A Black-headed Gull remained until 21st. Intermediate Egrets continued to be seen in small numbers and three Black-faced Spoonbills were noted on 28th. Further interesting wader records included nine Oriental Pratincoles on 21st and 114 Terek Sandpipers, one Great Knot and seven Grey Plover on 27th. Two Great Reed Warblers with a partially constructed nest were also observed at Mai Po on 28th. On 21st a Swinhoe's Storm Petrel was seen near an island off Clearwater Bay at dusk. A visit to the tern colonies in Deep Bay on 27th produced 24 Bridled Terns, up to 12 Roseate Terns and about 70 Black-naped Terns at Gau Tau, with a further 15 Black-naped Terns at Kong Chau. The same day a Red-winged Crested Cuckoo was seen at Hebe Haven.

July

Two Black-faced Spoonbills were present at Mai Po all month. After reed-pulling at Mai Po on 19th, a Hoopoe was discovered on the return journey at Mid-levels. Several Golden Bishops (escapes) were seen towards the end of the month in reed beds around the Mai Po scrape. On 25th several wader species were counted at Mai Po including 55 Green-shank, 40 Redshank, nine Curlew and eight Whimbrel. 60 Yellow-nib Duck were also counted on the same day.

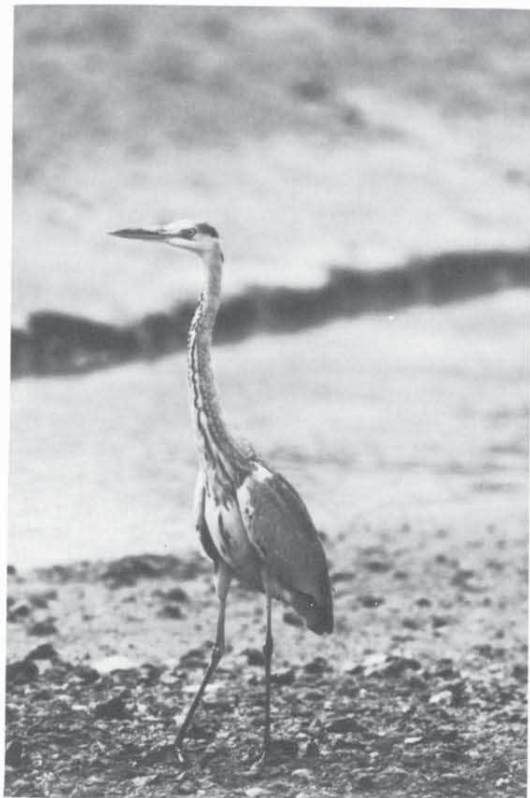
August

Another visit to Mirs Bay on 8th produced 75 Black-naped Terns,

including five juveniles and one *pullus*, about 40 Bridled Terns (all adults — a new maximum), and six Roseate Terns (including one juvenile). En route from Port Shelter about 200 Common Terns were noted passing in groups offshore. All were adult except for two juveniles. Virtually all had the blackish bill and legs characteristic of the northeastern race *longipennis*, but up to three had the red bill and legs which are characters of the central Asian race *tibetana/minussensis*. The same day a Red-necked Phalarope was seen off Clearwater Bay. By mid-month wader numbers were increasing and on 22nd 21 wader species were recorded at Mai Po including three Asiatic Dowitchers, 48 Red-necked Stints and one Broad-billed Sandpiper. Another frigatebird was seen the same day over Deep Bay. An immature Brahminy Kite was first observed in flight at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 29th. The same day several Pekin Robins, at least five Chestnut Bulbuls and five Serpent Eagles were seen at Tai Po Kau indicating possible breeding. On 30th an early Stonechat and Arctic Warbler were seen at Tai Mo Shan and over 20 Black-winged Stilts were reported at Mai Po.

September

A Forest Wagtail was reported at Wong Nei Chong on 3rd. On 6th Whiskered Terns were noted at Tsim Bei Tsui and 28 species of wader, including three Asiatic Dowitchers, seven Great Knot, one Australian Curlew and 40 Bar-tailed Godwits, were recorded at Mai Po. The immature Brahminy Kite identified last month at Tsim Bei Tsui was seen at Mai Po on 10th. The same day up to seven species of flycatchers were reported from Tai Po Kau. Asian and Japanese Paradise Flycatchers continued to be seen there throughout the month. Numbers of Bar-tailed Godwits increased to 140 at Mai Po on 11th and remained high throughout the month. On 12th two Asiatic Dowitchers and an early Bittern were reported at Mai Po. On 13th two Brahminy Kites were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui and an immature male Siberian Blue Robin at Cheung Chau. There were also occasional records of Forest Wagtails and Broad-billed Rollers from several areas. On 17th a Sooty Flycatcher was found at Mount Nicholson and 60 Red-necked Phalaropes were seen at Tai Long Wan. On 20th waders at Mai Po included 23 Great Knot, one Asiatic Dowitcher and 160 Bar-tailed Godwits, and a single Vinous-throated Parrotbill (probable escape) appeared in front of the HKBWS hide. A fall of Blue Rock Thrushes occurred around this time with widespread sightings. New migrants at Cheung Chau included one Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler on 23rd. A flock of over 100 Chinese Pond Herons was noted at Happy Valley that night and 53 Sulphur-crested Cockatoos were counted at Victoria Barracks. A Ruff was found at Mai Po on 24th while Sooty Flycatchers occurred on 26/27th at Lung Kwu Tan and Tai Po Kau. A Daurian Jackdaw, the second for Hong Kong, was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 26th where over 70 Red Turtle Doves and two Black-naped Orioles were noted near the Police Post. Other migrants around this time included five Ashy Minivets at Mount Nicholson on 27th, and 75 White-winged Black Terns in Victoria Harbour. On 29th a single Grey Heron was an unusual sight at Cheung Chau. The next day, an Ashy Drongo and a Treepie were seen at Tai Po Kau.



Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Tsim Bei Tsui, October 1987 (Ray Tipper)

October

As usual, large numbers of Arctic Warblers passed through during the first half of the month and there were widespread records of small sparrowhawks, almost certainly Japanese. On 1st at Tai Po Kau there were seven Black Bazas, three Asian Paradise and one Japanese Paradise Flycatcher. The same day a Tricolour Flycatcher turned up at Mount Nicholson. At Mai Po on 2nd waders included 40 Great Knot and 75 Bar-tailed Godwits. Also seen were two Purple-backed Starlings and two mystery *Phylloscopus* warblers which were netted, photographed and examined. One in very weak condition died and was sent to the British Museum. At the time of concluding this report these records remain under review. On 3rd a Painted Snipe was found at Ha Tsuen and 15 Broad-billed Rollers, a Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike, 12 Crested

Buntings and a juvenile Black-naped Oriole were seen at Fan Lau, Lantau. Single Kestrels were reported from widespread areas around this time. Yet another Sooty Flycatcher was reported on 9th, this time at Tung Chung. The next day two Eye-browed Thrushes and an Ashy (White-cheeked) Drongo were seen at Tai Po Kau and 30 Purple-backed Starlings and a Wryneck were recorded at Mai Po. On 16th a single Orange-bellied Leafbird was noted in Tai Po Kau. Two days later two Grey-faced Buzzard Eagles flew over Mount Nicholson whilst single Hobbies were sighted in the Deep Bay area around this time. On 24th at Mai Po waders included over 80 Black-winged Stilts, one Australian Curlew and 243 Greenshank, but pride of place goes to the Long-billed Dowitcher which was first found that day and seen again over the next two days. This is only the second acceptable record for Hong Kong. Another Japanese Paradise Flycatcher was found at Wu Kau Tang on 24th. On 29th two more Grey-faced Buzzard Eagles passed over Mount Nicholson. The last day of the month produced one Radde's Warbler near Luk Keng and nine White-winged Black Terns and a Peregrine in Hebe Haven.

November

On 1st a juvenile Bonelli's Eagle was seen taking a Grey Heron at Mai Po and three Japanese Sparrowhawks were reported at Tsim Bei Tsui. Duck numbers increased in Deep Bay while there were unusual sightings of Mallard, Garganey, Pintail and Yellow-nib at Pui O, Lantau on 3rd, together with one Pheasant-tailed Jacana. Oriental Pratincoles were noted in small numbers in widespread areas. The first Saunders' Gulls appeared on 6th and numbers rose to over 20 by the end of the month. On 8th an unidentified storm petrel was reported near Basalt Island (unexpectedly late date) and a large owl was flushed on Bluff Island. Up to 12 Grey-headed Lapwings, two Bitterns, several Imperial and one or two Spotted Eagles, and up to 1,000 Cormorants were noted regularly at Mai Po. Numbers of Black-winged Stilts had grown to about 200 by 14th and remained at this level. Buzzards were widespread by mid-month and a Styan's Grasshopper Warbler was netted at Mai Po on 14th. By 21st numbers of Black-faced Spoonbills had risen to 12 and over 20 Tufted Duck were seen at Mai Po. Four Pheasant-tailed Jacanas were observed at Mai Po on 29th, several hundred Grey and Silky Starlings were present at Tsim Bei Tsui and three Mallard were seen in Deep Bay.

December

Good numbers of Saunders' Gulls remained in Deep Bay throughout the winter with 39 counted on 3rd. On 5th the Black-winged Stilt flock had increased to 220 and one Pochard and three Scaup were reported at Mai Po. Five species of thrush were located at Tai Po Kau the same day with Black and Chestnut Bulbuls, four Robin Flycatchers and one Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher. At Tai Po Kau on 6th a White-bellied Yuhina and over 50 Pekin Robins were found whilst the first pelicans returned to Deep Bay the same day. A Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler and a Blyth's Leaf Warbler (one of several reported in December) were seen in Tai Po Kau on 9th. Two wild Bean Geese, the fourth Hong Kong record and the

first since 1976, were found at Stonecutters Island on 12th and remained until 28th. A male Ruddy Sparrow (formerly Category F) was reported at Ting Kok Village on 13th and 14th. A Hobby was seen over the Marshes on 19th. A smart drake Baikal Teal was first located at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20th and was regularly seen from then onwards. Two pairs of Pochard and a female Mandarin were also seen, the latter at rest in one of the tidal creeks, but this was almost certainly one of a pair released at Mai Po earlier the same day. Small numbers of Mallard were also noted and these had increased to 13 by 27th when a Baer's Pochard was also seen at the Fence. Also recorded on the Christmas count that day were a Black Stork at Tai Long Wan, Painted Snipe, Chestnut and Yellow Bitterns at Lantau, Great Reed Warbler, White-vented and Bank Mynahs (escapes), and a European Starling at Mai Po.

RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT 1987

M. L. Chalmers

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

5 Swinhoe's Storm Petrel

Oceanodroma monorhis

One at dusk near Sharp Island (between Clearwater Bay and the Ninepins) on 21 June was seen at close quarters in flight from a boat.

This is only the second definite record for Hong Kong.

Another small dark petrel was seen in mid-afternoon on 8 November between Hole Island and Basalt Island and may also have been this species.

7 Dalmatian Pelican

Pelecanus crispus

Reported from Deep Bay with a maximum of 17 (ten adults and seven immatures) up to 8 March and 13 from 6 December.

Disturbance from fishermen and extensive fixed fish nets in inner Deep Bay were considered to have reduced numbers at the beginning of the year. The fish nets on the Mai Po side were removed in November but disturbance from mud-scooters continued.

A single unidentified pelican was also seen at the Soko Islands for several days around 24 April.

[8/9 Frigatebird

Fregata sp.

An immature seen for about 20 minutes over the Tsim Bei Tsui egretty on 3 May had white axillaries as well as lower breast and flanks. According to Harrison (*Seabirds: an identification guide*, 1983) this is diagnostic of Lesser Frigatebird *F. ariel*.

Two immatures seen from the Cheung Chau ferry on 20 May had dark axillaries indicating probable Great Frigatebirds *F. minor* according to Harrison, 1983.

Other frigatebird records, not attributable to any one species, were one on 21 May over West Lamma Channel, one in Deep Bay on 23 May, two at Tap Mun on 26 May, and one in Deep Bay on 22 August.]

12 Von Schrenck's Little Bittern

Ixobrychus eurhythmus

A minimum of four recorded at Luk Keng between 9 and 24 May as follows: a female on 9th, two males and a female on 17th, a female on 23rd and two females on 24th.

20 Swinhoe's Egret

Egretta eulophotes

One or two at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21 February, 29 March, 4 April, one at Mai Po on 6, 28 and 30 April, 9 and 13 May, and one or two at Yim Tso Ha (Starling Inlet) on 18 April, 24 and 26 May. Although on one occasion a bird was seen in the island colony in Starling Inlet, breeding was not confirmed.

- 21 Reef Egret** *Egretta sacra*
A single white-phase bird, the first of this colour phase to be reliably reported in Hong Kong, was seen at Mai Po between 8 March and 17 May.
- 27 Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*
One in flight at Mai Po on 3 December and one soaring over Tai Long Wan, Sai Kung on 27 December.
- 28 White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia*
A single immature Oriental White Stork *C. c. boyciana* at Shuen Wan pond between 10 and 21 February was the fourth record for Hong Kong. These sightings followed an unconfirmed report on 17 January at the same place.
- 31 European Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*
All records are from Mai Po with five on 29 January and singles there between 7 February and 19 April and on 19 and 27 December.
- 32 Black-faced Spoonbill** *Platalea minor*
All records are from Mai Po or Deep Bay up to 26 May and from 20 August, except for two immatures which remained throughout the summer and three recorded on 28 June. Maximum counts were 28 on 7 February and 12 on 19 November. Two unidentified spoonbills also flew over Island House, Tai Po on 26 June.
- 34 Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis*
Two remained on Stonecutters Island between 12 and 28 December. The birds were wary and gave every indication of being wild.
This is only the fourth record for Hong Kong, the last being in November 1976.
- 36 Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*
One at Tsim Bei Tsui between 8 January and 14 February was the sixth record for Hong Kong.
- 39 Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*
A pair was released at Mai Po on 20 December. The female was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui the same day and the pair noted again at Mai Po on 23 December.
- 41 Falcated Teal** *Anas falcata*
Reported in the Deep Bay area including Mai Po up to 26 May and from 25 October with a maximum of 160 on 4 January.
- 43 Baikal Teal** *Anas formosa*
A male seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20 December remained until February 1988.
- 50 Common Pochard** *Aythya ferina*
Up to three males and one female at Mai Po between 2 and 4

January, and a male there between 30 November and 5 December. Also two pairs on the sea at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20 December and two at Mai Po on 27 December.

- 51 Baer's Pochard** *Aythya baeri*
A new maximum count of 30 at Mai Po on 10 January with nine there the day before and 22 there the next day. Also one at Mai Po on 13 December and Tsim Bei Tsui on 27 December.

- 53 Scaup** *Aythya marila*
Two males at Mai Po on 30 January and 3 February, and three there on 7 February, a new late date. Also three females/eclipse males there on 5 December.

- 59 Black-shouldered Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*
One at Mai Po on 14 February was the fourth record for Hong Kong.

- 60.1 Brahminy Kite** *Haliastur indus*
One immature first seen on 29 August at Tsim Bei Tsui and then at Mai Po on 10 September. Two immatures subsequently seen near Tsim Bei Tsui on 13 September. Both of these appeared to be wild birds.
This is the first record of this species since 1966. Formerly 701 of Category D.

- 65 Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*
A male in flight at Braemar Hill on 18 January and circling over Middle Gap, Hong Kong Island on 16 April.

- 66 Pied Harrier** *Circus melanoleucos*
A male at Tsim Bei Tsui on 24 December.

- 68 Japanese Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter gularis*
Single birds reported from Tai Po Kau on 9 April, Mai Po on 10 April and Siu Lam on 25 October. The last bird had injured itself against a window and subsequently died. Also three at Mai Po on 31 October and two there on 21 November, and one at Mount Nicholson on 26 October and 12 November.

Other small accipiters, probably this species, were reported at Mai Po on 10 and 18 April and 15 November, Cheung Chau on 4 October and at Lam Tsuen Valley on 25 October. One at Chung Hom Kok on 20 October stunned itself against a window, and one was seen inside the barbed wire on top of the fence at Mai Po on 16 November.

- 71 Horsfield's Goshawk** *Accipiter soloensis*
Four at Cheung Chau on 10 May and nine there the next day. The birds on 11 May were seen to rise together at 0830h, spiral upwards and head off in an east northeasterly direction.

- 72 Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle** *Butastur indicus*
One at Tai Po Kau on 4 April and 11 April, one at Cheung Chau on 19 April and two at Mount Nicholson on 18 and 29 October.

74 Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*
One or two reported at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui up to 8 March and from 3 November.

75 Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*
Up to four in the Deep Bay area until 8 March and up to two from 7 September, a new early date. Also one immature at Nam Chung on 15 February.

101 Painted Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*
Up to four at Ha Tsuen between 7 March and 3 May, and one there on 3 October. One at Lantau on 27 December.

116 Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*
Reported at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui between 22 March and 28 June, a new late date, and from 5 September until 8 November. Maximum count was 20 on 5 April and 40 on 3 October.

119.1 Little Stint *Calidris minuta*
One at Mai Po on 21 April seen from the HKBWS hide was only the second for Hong Kong.

121.1 Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*
One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4 April and one at Mai Po between 16 and 23 May.
These were the second and third records for Hong Kong.

125 Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus*
Single birds at Mai Po or Tsim Bei Tsui between 6 April and 20 May, with three at Mai Po on 12 April, and one at Mai Po on 1 June, a new late date. A minimum of 15 individuals was recorded during the spring.

127 Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*
Single males at Mai Po between 11 April and 9 May, a new late date, 24 September and 25 October. One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 26 April, and one juvenile at Lok Ma Chau on 16 October.

[128 Snipe sp.]
A very small snipe flushed at Tsim Bei Tsui on 10 April was probably a Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*.]

131 Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megala*
Up to eight reported from widespread areas between 21 March and 25 April and on 10 October.

133 Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*
One juvenile watched and photographed on drained ponds at Mai Po between 24 and 26 October.
This is the second record for Hong Kong.
Further reports of single dowitchers on 8 November and 18 and 20 December probably referred to the same bird.



Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*
Mai Po, October 1987 (Ray Tipper)

134 Asiatic Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*
Regularly recorded at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui between 22 March and 12 May and from 9 August to 12 September. Maximum counts in spring were over 60 on 9 April and 62 on 20 April, whereas the highest number in autumn was only seven on 9 and 23 August.

141 Australian Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*
All records are from Mai Po, usually in ones and twos but with a maximum of six on 19 April. Apart from irregular sightings of a single wintering bird in January, February and March, extreme dates were from 2 April until 31 May in spring. Single birds reported in autumn on 5 and 9 September and 24 October.

146 Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer*
An unprecedented series of regular sightings at Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui as reported in 'Nordmann's Greenshank in Hong Kong: a review of the identification and status', Kennerley and Bakewell, *Hong Kong Bird Report* 1986. In summary, extreme dates were between 6 April and 26 May except for one first-year bird on 16 June, and numbers ranged up to a maximum of ten on 17 May. The total number of separate individuals involved was considered to be a minimum of 33.

Other birds, probably this species, were one at Mai Po on 9 April and two there on 11 April.

[154 Skua *Stercorarius sp.*
A light-phase bird not specifically identified seen in flight from Cheung Chau ferry on 30 April.]

156 Great Black-headed Gull*Larus ichthyaetus*

A second-winter bird observed at rest at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 29 December.

This is the eighth record for Hong Kong.

157 Saunders' Gull*Larus saundersi*

All records are from the Deep Bay area up to 6 April and from 6 November. Highest counts were 25 on 4 and 25 January, 30 on 3 February and 39 (mostly first-winter) on 3 December.



Saunders' Gull *Larus saundersi*
Deep Bay, February 1988

(Ray Tipper)

159 Brown-headed Gull*Larus brunnicephalus*

One first-winter at Mai Po on 10 January and one adult at Tsim Bei Tsui on 18 February.

[162/163/164 Gull*Larus* sp.

Confusing large immature gulls have been recorded in ones and twos in recent years and these records continued with the following sightings in 1987:

A first-winter bird seen at rest from the Mai Po boardwalk on 1 February had primaries the same colour as the mantle, thus appearing to be Glaucous-winged *L. glaucescens*. However, in flight a dark secondary bar and tail band were present suggesting that the bird may have been a hybrid. Two similar birds were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 1 March.

Two immatures at Mai Po on 3 February and one immature at Tolo Channel on 7 and 8 March showed some of the characters of Slaty-backed Gull *L. schistaceus*. Also one large biscuit-coloured unidentified immature with dark pink legs and short wings seen at Mai Po on the late dates of 20 and 23 May may have been this species.]

170 Black-naped Tern*Sterna sumatrana*

Five in Tolo Harbour on 25 April, at least five near Cheung Chau on 10 May and two there on 22 May, and three in Port Shelter on 16 May.

Reported at the breeding sites in Mirs Bay between 23 May and 8 August with a maximum of 140 adults in the area on 5 July. At least four egg sites found on Kong Chau on 7 June and over 20 on Gau Tau on 27 June. Five juveniles and one chick noted at Gau Tau on 8 August.

171 Roseate Tern*Sterna dougallii*

Up to 12 reported around the Mirs Bay breeding site between 27 June and 8 August. One juvenile noted on the last date.

172 Common Tern*Sterna hirundo*

In spring two at Mai Po on 20 April, including one of the red-billed race *minussensis/tibetana*, at least 24 in Tolo Harbour on 22 April, up to 50 in West Lamma Channel on 6 and 7 May, and 196 counted there on 10 May. About 200, mostly adults, between the Ninepins and Tai Long Wan on 8 and 9 August. Most of these had black bills and legs (race *longipennis*) but up to three had red legs and bills (race *minussensis/tibetana*) and several intermediates had brownish legs and bills. Also one immature at Mai Po on 23 August.

173 Bridled Tern*Sterna anaethetus*

Recorded in Mirs Bay between 27 June and 29 August with a maximum of 24 on 27 June and about 40 adults, a new high, on 8 August. Breeding has still not been proven.

192 Oriental Cuckoo*Cuculus saturatus*

One in Tai Po Kau on 9 April. Other single cuckoos, either *saturatus* or *canorus*, seen at Mai Po on 30 September and 1 October, and Tai Po Kau on 11 April.

[198/199 Owl sp.

A large owl, possibly Eagle *Bubo bubo* or Brown Fish *Ketupa zeylonensis*, flushed from Bluff Island on 8 November.]

200 Barred Owlet*Glaucidium cuculoides*

Up to two at Tai Po Kau during January.

Single birds heard or seen in the Lam Tsuen Valley (She Shan) on 28 February and 4 and 20 April, Beas River on 9 April, Tai Tam and Tai Po Kau on 11 April.

206 White-throated Needletail*Hirundapus caudacutus*

Five at Sek Kong on 28 March and one at Mai Po on 17 April.

Other needletails *Hirundapus* sp. included four at She Shan on

4 April, one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 April, nine at Nam Chung on 14 April, some of which were *caudacutus*, and two at Cheung Chau on 2 May.

207 White-vented Needletail *Hirundapus cochinchinensis*
All records are from Mai Po with at least three on 4 April, one the next day and two on 13 April.

214 Crested Kingfisher *Ceryle lugubris*
The single bird observed at Nam Chung towards the end of 1986 was seen intermittently up to 3 February.

215 Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*
One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 9 April, a new early date, five at Mai Po on wires next to the WWF Education Centre on 27 April, and six at Tsim Bei Tsui on 3 May.
Also unidentified bee-eaters reported as follows: three at Mai Po on 21 April, one heard there on 26 April and one at Kai Tak on 30 April.

222 Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*
One at Mount Davis on 5 February and at Victoria Barracks (male) on 14 December. An unidentified woodpecker seen in silhouette at the Zoological and Botanical Gardens on 17 December was probably this species.

225 Small Skylark *Alauda gulgula*
Up to five noted at Kai Tak between 27 April and 17 May.

235 Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*
Up to two at Nam Chung on 29 January, 3 and 21 February, 14 and 15 November.
The Siberian Water Pipit is now considered by some (Shirihai and Colston, *Dutch Birding* 9: 8-12, March 1987) to be race *japonicus* of American Water Pipit *Anthus rubescens*.

251.1 Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*
One or two at Tai Po Kau up to 20 February, on 9 and 11 April (singing), 16 October and 13 December. One at Barbecue Gardens, 17 Miles Castle Peak Road on 1 March. Also two at Kadoorie Farm on 5 March and one there on 23 May, and one at Victoria Peak on 27 December.
Formerly 706 of Category D.

254 Japanese Robin *Erithacus akahige*
One at Tai Po Kau on 12 December was the fifth record for Hong Kong.

258 Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane*
An immature male on Cheung Chau on 13 September.

269 Orange-headed Ground Thrush *Zoothera citrina*
A singing male in Tai Po Kau on 2 and 4 May.

286 Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola*
One found dead near Island House, Tai Po on 30 September.

287 Styan's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella pleskei*
Single birds trapped at Mai Po on 7 March, 17 and 25 April and 14 November.

288 Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata*
One at Nam Chung on 8 February was the sixth record for Hong Kong.

292 Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler *Seicercus burkii*
One at Cheung Chau on 23 September and one at Tai Po Kau on 9 December.

295 Large Grass Warbler *Graminicola bengalensis*
One at Tai Mo Shan on 19 and 26 April.

297 Sulphur-breasted Warbler *Phylloscopus ricketti*
Single birds at Tai Po Kau on 28 February and 13 December. The latter had a whitish belly, a feature also noted on some of the other records from Hong Kong.

298 Blyth's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*
One or two birds exhibiting the typical nuthatch-like behaviour reported from Tai Po Kau between 2 January and 18 February and from 9 December.

304 Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*
One at Fung Hang (Starling Inlet) on 31 October.
This was the fifth record for Hong Kong.

311 Sooty Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica*
Single juveniles at Mount Nicholson on 17 September, Tai Po Kau on 26 September, Lung Kwu Tan on 27 September and Tung Chung on 9 October.

322 Chinese Babax *Babax lanceolatus*
One singing at Tai Mo Shan on 19 April and two there on 2 May.

331 Red-headed Tit *Aegithalos concinnus*
One at Victoria Barracks on 21 December with a flock of six White-eyes *Zosterops japonica* and one Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*.
This is the fourth record for Hong Kong, but a single bird in this urban location may have been an escape.

334 Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus*
A pair at Mai Po on 9 April was the third record for Hong Kong.

338 Chestnut-flanked White-eye *Zosterops erythroleura*
One at Tai Po Kau on 2 January.

341.1 Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus*

An adult male at the Chinese University was first seen on 11 December and then regularly through the winter of 1988.

351.1 Daurian Jackdaw *Corvus dauuricus*

One all dark-phase bird at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 26 September was only the second record for Hong Kong.

355 Purple-backed Starling *Sturnus sturninus*

Two at Mai Po on 3 October and a flock of 30 there on 10 October.

358 European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Two at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4 January, up to 12 there on 11 January and four there on 27 December.

370.1 Japanese Grosbeak *Coccothraustes personatus*

Two with Black-tailed Hawfinches *C. migratorius* at She Shan on 13 and 21 February. This is the same place as the first record in November 1985 under similar circumstances.

Formerly 715.1 of Category D.

372 Japanese Yellow Bunting *Emberiza sulphurata*

Up to three recorded along the casuarinas at Mai Po between 15 and 26 April.

373.1 Yellow-throated Bunting *Emberiza elegans*

One watched at close quarters at Lai Chi Wo on 17 January was only the second record for Hong Kong.

Formerly 716 of Category D.

CATEGORY B. SPECIES WHICH HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN AN APPARENTLY WILD STATE IN HONG KONG, BUT NOT WITHIN THE LAST FIFTY YEARS.

501 Ring-necked Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Distinctive single males at Ha Tsuen on 8 February and 19 April. The former had most of its tail missing. Both records are considered to be escapes.

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

703 Silver Pheasant *Lophura nycthemera*

An adult male caught by a villager between two high fences at Ta Kwu Ling on 16 February. The villager reported having seen the bird fly over the nearby border fence from the Shenzhen side. It is assumed that the bird had escaped from captivity.

704 Red-breasted Parakeet *Psittacula alexandri*

One at the Zoological and Botanical Gardens on 9 and 11 April, and one at Nam Chung on 14 November.

710 Vinous-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis webbianus*

A flock of five or six near the summit of Tai Mo Shan on 19 and 20 April appeared to be wild. Four at the Royal Observatory, Kowloon on 7 March and one at Mai Po on 20 September were probably escapes.

712.1 Ruddy Sparrow *Passer rutilans*

A male feeding in dry paddy at Ting Kok Village on 13 and 14 December. Transferred to Category D, not A, because, although the bird appeared wild, the record refers to a single passerine near habitation. Formerly 925 of Category E.

713 Red Avadavat *Amandava amandava*

Four at Ha Tsuen on 30 January, two there on 8 February and six there on 11 April. Six at Mai Po on 7 March, at least one on 9 May and four there on 19 December. Two at Tsim Bei Tsui Fence on 29 August.

714 Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

One at Ocean Park on 12 November may have been an escape, possibly from the new aviary, although the date suggests late autumn movement.

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

800.1 Swan Goose *Anser cygnoides*

One at Mai Po on 10 October was possibly the bird released there in late 1985.

803 Eclectus Parrot *Eclectus roratus*

A female at Shouson Hill on 11 January.

809 Fischer's Lovebird *Agapornis fischeri*

One at the Zoological and Botanical Gardens in April.

810.1 Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus goiavier*

One at Victoria Barracks on 25 December.

812 Golden-fronted Leafbird *Chloropsis aurifrons*

One near the Peak Café in February.

812.1 Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

One at Cheung Chau on 3 February.

815.1 Red-tailed Laughing Thrush *Garrulax milnei*

One at Kent Road, Kowloon Tong between 27 May and 1 June was

not the same race as those observed at Ba Bao Shan, Guangdong, China.

816 Silver-eared Mesia *Leiothrix argentauris*
At least two at Tai Po Kau with a minimum of four other birds, possibly this species, on 7 December.

818 Asian Pied Starling *Sturnus contra*
One at Pui O, Lantau on 28 March.

820 Bank Mynah *Acridotheres ginginianus*
One at Victoria Park on 25 October and one at Mai Po on 27 December.

[**821 White-vented Mynah** *Acridotheres javanicus*
Seven at Mai Po on 27 December were probably this species, the same day as a Bank Mynah *A. ginginianus* was seen there.]

822 Grackle *Gracula religiosa*
One at the Zoological and Botanical Gardens on 14 March and 11 April, and one at Mai Po on 20 June.

823.1 Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura*
A male at Mai Po on 13 September.

824 Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus*
Up to five at Mai Po between 26 September and 21 November. Single juveniles trapped on 26 September and 3 October. Feather wear consistent with wild birds suggests that local breeding may have occurred.

825 Golden Bishop *Euplectes afer*
Up to six males at Mai Po between 9 May and 12 September.

829 White-headed Munia *Lonchura maja*
One at Mai Po on 9 August, eight adults there on 19 and 29 October, and a flock of around 30 there on 22 October.

830 Java Sparrow *Padda oryzivora*
One at Mount Nicholson on 7 February and about seven at Pokfulam on 3 and 4 October.

831 Yellow-fronted Canary *Serinus mozambicus*
A singing male at Tung Lung Chau on 20 September.

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

5 Storm Petrel *Oceanodroma* sp. Two at Town Island on 17 May.

38 Cotton Teal *Nettapus coromandelianus* A female at Mai Po on 10 May.

50 Common Pochard *Aythya ferina* A female at Mai Po on 31 October.

54 Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca* A female at Stonecutters Island on 25 October.

66 Pied Harrier *Circus melanoleucos* One at Mai Po on 23 January and an immature at Tai Sang Wai on 21 March.

67 Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis* Single birds at Tai Po Kau on 15 February and Lam Tsuen Valley on 28 October.

68 Japanese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter gularis* One at Tai Po Kau on 9 and 11 April.

72 Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle *Butastur indicus* Five at Mai Po on 11 January and one at Cheung Chau on 19 April.

75 Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* Two at Tsim Bei Tsui on 15 August.

86 Yellow-legged Button Quail *Turnix tanki* One at Mai Po on 10 October.

99 Crane *Grus* sp. One at Mai Po on 6 December.

119.1 Little Stint *Calidris minuta* A juvenile at Mai Po on 26 September.

127 Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* A female at Mai Po on 19 April.

131 Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megala* Two at Ha Tsuen on 10 March.

146 Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer* One at Mai Po on 9 December.

172 Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* Four in Western Approaches on 5 April, 45 in Port Shelter on 3 May and one at Basalt Island on 11 May.

204 Japanese Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* One flushed at Stonecutters Island on 20 December and 11 January.

221 Rufous Woodpecker *Micropternus brachyurus* One at Tai Mo Shan on 16 July.

282 Mountain Bush Warbler <i>Cettia fortipes</i>	One at Mount Davis on 5 and 22 February.
288 Lanceolated Warbler <i>Locustella lanceolata</i>	One at Mai Po on 27 September.
298 Blyth's Leaf Warbler <i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i>	Two at Tai Po Kau on 3 March and one there on 4 October.
299 Eastern Crowned Warbler <i>Phylloscopus coronatus</i>	One at Tai Po Kau on 10 October.
331 Red-headed Tit <i>Aegithalos concinnus</i>	One at Tai Po Kau on 16 February.
814 Hill Blue Flycatcher <i>Cyornis banyumas</i>	One at Cheung Chau between 9 September and 2 October.
– Western Sandpiper <i>Calidris mauri</i>	One at Mai Po on 11 April.
– Blue-headed Parrot <i>Pionus menstruus</i>	One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 9 May.
– Bar-winged Flycatcher Shrike <i>Hemipus picatus</i>	One on the Peak on 7 December.

ADDENDUM TO 1985 RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT

- 368 Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*
Two at Lau Fau Shan on 6 November 1985 have been accepted on review of additional information.

SIGNIFICANT BREEDING RECORDS 1987

M.L. Chalmers

- 90 Banded Rail** *Rallus striatus*
A bird was flushed off a nest with seven eggs at Luk Keng on 9 May.
- 170 Black-naped Tern** *Sterna sumatrana*
About 70 pairs present and over 20 egg sites at Gau Tau, Mirs Bay and four at Kong Chau in June. At least six young noted on 8 August.
- 171 Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*
Up to six pairs at Gau Tau in June and at least one juvenile there on 8 August.
- 245 Grey-throated Minivet** *Pericrocotus solaris*
A nest found in Tai Po Kau on 31 March was still in use on 2 May.
- 250 Chestnut Bulbul** *Hypsipetes castanonotus*
Birds present in two separate areas of Tai Po Kau on 29 August may have been breeding.
- 290 Great Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*
Two at Mai Po on 28 June with partially constructed nest. (See separate note by D.S. Melville in this report)
- 307 Hainan Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis hainana*
A family of three at Tai Po Kau on 29 August.
- 328 Pekin Robin** *Leiothrix lutea*
Groups noted in Tai Po Kau in late August may have bred.
- 357 Chinese Starling** *Sturnus sinensis*
A pair bred at Peak Road, Cheung Chau in May/June and several pairs bred at Mong Tseng Village in May.
- 824 Baya Weaver** *Ploceus philippinus*
Single juveniles trapped at Mai Po in September and October with undamaged plumage suggest local breeding may have occurred.

**ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS TO THE ANNOTATED
CHECKLIST OF THE BIRDS OF HONG KONG, 4TH EDITION
1986**

CATEGORY A

- 5 Swinhoe's Storm Petrel** *Oceanodroma monorhis*
Two records. One off Clearwater Bay on 21 June 1987.
- 10 Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*
New early date of 12 September.
- 12 Von Schrenck's Little Bittern** *Ixobrychus eurhythmus*
A minimum of four at Luk Keng between 9 and 24 May 1987.
- 20 Swinhoe's Egret** *Egretta eulophotes*
New early date of 21 February.
- 21 Reef Egret** *Egretta sacra*
One white-phase bird at Mai Po from 8 March to 17 May 1987, the first record of this colour phase in Hong Kong.
- 28 White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia*
Four records. An immature of race *boyciana* at Shuen Wan between 10 and 21 February 1987.
- 32 Black-faced Spoonbill** *Platalea minor*
New late date of 26 May, except for between one and three immatures during summer.
- 34 Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis*
Four records. Two at Stonecutters Island between 12 and 28 December 1987.
- 36 Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*
Six records. One at Tsim Bei Tsui between 8 January and 14 February 1987.
- 39 Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*
A pair released at Mai Po on 20 December and seen again on 23 December.
- 40 Wigeon** *Anas penelope*
New late date of 31 May.
- 41 Falcated Teal** *Anas falcata*
New late date of 26 May.
- 45 Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*
New extreme dates from 23 August to 31 May. Replace second sentence by: 'In recent years seen mainly in the Deep Bay area in small numbers up to at least 20.'

- 50 Common Pochard** *Aythya ferina*
Also recorded at Tsim Bei Tsui.
- 51 Baer's Pochard** *Aythya baeri*
New maximum count of 30 at Mai Po.
- 52 Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*
New late date of 7 May.
- 53 Scaup** *Aythya marila*
New late date of 7 February.
- 59 Black-shouldered Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*
Four records. One at Mai Po on 14 February 1987.
- 60.1 Brahminy Kite** *Haliastur indus*
One immature at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 August 1987 and Mai Po on 10 September 1987. Two immatures at Tsim Bei Tsui on 13 September 1987. Formerly 701 of Category D.
- 68 Japanese Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter gularis*
Another specimen record of one at Siu Lam on 25 October 1987.
- 75 Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca*
New early date of 7 September.
- 103 Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*
New maximum of over 220 at Mai Po. New early date of 9 August.
- 104 Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*
New late date of 23 May.
- 109 Mongolian Sand Plover** *Charadrius mongolus*
At least three of race *atrifrons* between 12 April and 16 May 1987.
- 110 Greater Sand Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii*
New high spring count of 600.
- 112 Asiatic Golden Plover** *Pluvialis dominica*
Maximum winter count of 64.
- 113 Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*
New late date of 28 June.
- 115 Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*
New early autumn date of 6 September.
- 116 Great Knot** *Calidris tenuirostris*
New late date of 28 June.



Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*
Mai Po, April 1988

(Ray Tipper)

- 119.1 Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*
Two records. One at Mai Po on 21 April 1987.
- 121.1 Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos*
Three records. One at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4 April 1987. One at Mai Po on 16 and 23 May 1987.
- 123 Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*
New high count of over 2,000 in spring.
Two birds controlled at Mai Po on 26 April 1987 had been ringed at Queenscliff, Victoria on 3 January 1987 and Ralph's Bay, Tasmania on 10 January 1982.
- 125 Spoon-billed Sandpiper** *Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus*
New late date of 1 June.
- 127 Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*
New late date of 9 May.
- 131 Swinhoe's Snipe** *Gallinago megala*
New early date of 21 March.
- 134 Asiatic Dowitcher** *Limnodromus semipalmatus*
New early date of 22 March.
- 141 Australian Curlew** *Numenius madagascariensis*
New early autumn date of 5 September.

- 142 Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*
Maximum count of over 2,500 in April.
- 144 Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*
New autumn high of 66.
- 145 Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*
New maximum count of 233 in autumn.
- 146 Nordmann's Greenshank** *Tringa guttifer*
Up to ten between 6 April and 26 May (a minimum of 33 separate birds).
- 147 Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*
Unusual summer date of one at Mai Po on 12 June 1987.
- 149 Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus*
New late spring date of 28 June.
- 151 Grey-rumped Sandpiper** *Heteroscelus brevipes*
New high of 554 in spring.
- 152 Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*
New high of over 100. New late spring date of 13 June.
- 156 Great Black-headed Gull** *Larus ichthyaetus*
Eight records. A second-winter bird at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 December.
- 158 Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus*
Extreme dates from 20 August to 28 June.
- 172 Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*
Up to three in eastern waters on 8 and 9 August 1987 had the red legs and bills which are characters of the race *minussensis/tibetana*.
- 207 White-vented Needletail** *Hirundapus cochinchinensis*
Up to three at Mai Po between 4 and 13 April.
- 215 Blue-tailed Bee-eater** *Merops philippinus*
New early date of 9 April.
- 222 Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*
One at Mount Davis on 5 February and Victoria Barracks on 14 December 1987. An unidentified woodpecker seen in silhouette in the ZBG on 17 December was probably this species.
- 244 Ashy Minivet** *Pericrocotus divaricatus*
New late date of 3 May.
- 250 Chestnut Bulbul** *Hypsipetes castanonotus*
Correct scientific name and cross reference (LaT89).

- 251.1 Orange-bellied Leafbird** *Chloropsis hardwickii*
Irregular winter visitor since 1985, formerly vagrant. Up to five records at Tai Po Kau and other widespread localities between 20 October and 23 May. Formerly 706 of Category D.
- 254 Japanese Robin** *Erithacus akahige*
Five records. One at Tai Po Kau on 12 December 1987.
- 258 Siberian Blue Robin** *Luscinia cyane*
Six records. An immature male at Cheung Chau on 13 September 1987.
- 287 Styan's Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella pleskei*
Delete fourth line after 'except for' and add 'scattered winter records'.
- 288 Lanceolated Warbler** *Locustella lanceolata*
Six records. One at Nam Chung on 8 February 1987 was the first non-autumn record.
- 290 Great Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*
Attempted breeding at Mai Po in June 1987.
Two controls of ringed birds between Hong Kong and Japan.
- 304 Radde's Warbler** *Phylloscopus schwarzi*
Five records. One at Fung Hang, Starling Inlet on 31 October 1987.
- 311 Sooty Flycatcher** *Muscicapa sibirica*
Delete 'Vagrant' and insert 'Scarce autumn passage migrant'.
Recorded from widespread parts of the New Territories between 17 September and 8 November 1987.
- 320 Japanese Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone atrocaudata*
New early date of 31 March.
- 324 Black-throated Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax chinensis*
Also noted on Cheung Chau.
- 331 Red-headed Tit** *Aegithalos concinnus*
Four records. One at Victoria Barracks on 21 December 1987 may have been an escape.
- 334 Penduline Tit** *Remiz pendulinus*
Three records. A pair at Mai Po on 9 April 1987.
- 341.1 Bull-headed Shrike** *Lanius bucephalus*
Two records. An adult male at the Chinese University from 11 December 1987 until spring 1988.
- 345 Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus*
New high winter count of a loose flock of over ten.

- 347 Hair-crested Drongo** *Dicrurus hottentottus*
Up to 12 wintered 1986/87.
- 351.1 Daurian Jackdaw** *Corvus dauuricus*
Two records. One dark-phase bird at Tsim Bei Tsui on 26 September 1987.
- 354 Silky Starling** *Sturnus sericeus*
New late date of 11 April.
- 370.1 Japanese Grosbeak** *Coccothraustes personatus*
Vagrant. Two records. Two at She Shan on 13 and 21 February 1987. Formerly 715.1 of Category D.
- 372 Japanese Yellow Bunting** *Emberiza sulphurata*
Replace existing entry with the following:
Scarce spring passage migrant reported intermittently since 1984 in the Deep Bay area, particularly at Mai Po but also at Tsim Bei Tsui and at Wah Fu in small numbers between 2 and 26 April.
- 373.1 Yellow-throated Bunting** *Emberiza elegans*
Vagrant. Two records. One at Lai Chi Wo on 17 January 1987. Formerly 716 of Category D.
- CATEGORY B**
- 501 Ring-necked Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*
Single males on 8 February and 19 April 1987 are considered to be escapes.
- CATEGORY D**
- 703 Silver Pheasant** *Lophura nycthemera*
An adult male caught near Ta Kwu Ling on 16 February 1987 was assumed to be an escape.
- 704 Red-breasted Parakeet** *Psittacula alexandri*
One at the Zoological and Botanical Gardens in April and at Nam Chung in November 1987.
- 710 Vinous-throated Parrotbill** *Paradoxornis webbiana*
At least five at Tai Mo Shan on 19 and 20 April 1987 appeared to be wild.
- 712.1 Ruddy Sparrow** *Passer rutilans*
A male at Ting Kok on 13 and 14 December 1987. Formerly 925 of Category E.
- 714 Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*
One at Ocean Park on 12 November 1987.

CATEGORY E

- 803 Eclectus Parrot** *Eclectus roratus*
One at Shouson Hill in January 1987.
- 809 Fischer's Lovebird** *Agapornis fischeri*
One at the Zoological and Botanical Gardens in April 1987.
- 810.1 Yellow-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus goiavier*
One at Victoria Barracks on 25 December 1987.
(LaT—, C—, W—)
- 812 Golden-fronted Leafbird** *Chloropsis aurifrons*
One on Victoria Peak in February 1987.
- 812.1 Waxwing** *Bombycilla garrulus* (Linnaeus)
One at Cheung Chau on 3 February 1987.
(LaT325, C458, W—)
- 815.1 Red-tailed Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax milnei*
One at Kowloon Tong in May and June 1987.
(LaT66, C652, W—)
- 816 Silver-eared Mesia** *Leiothrix argentauris*
Two at Tai Po Kau in December 1987.
- 818 Asian Pied Starling** *Sturnus contra*
One at Pui O, Lantau in March 1987.
- 820 Bank Mynah** *Acridotheres ginginianus*
One at Victoria Park in October 1987 and one at Mai Po in December 1987.
- 823 Pin-tailed Whydah** *Vidua macroura* (Pallas)
Africa south of Sahara
A male at Mai Po in September 1987.
(LaT—, C—, W—)
- 824 Baya Weaver** *Ploceus philippinus*
Two juveniles trapped at Mai Po in September and October 1987 suggest that local breeding may have occurred.
- 825 Golden Bishop** *Euplectes afer*
Up to six males at Mai Po during summer 1987.

INDEX

Mynah, Bank	820
Peregrine Falcon	83
Waxbill, Black-rumped	828
Orange-cheeked	827

INTERNATIONAL WATERFOWL COUNT IN DEEP BAY, HONG KONG 10 and 11 JANUARY 1987

M.L. Chalmers

The eighth annual co-ordinated mid-winter waterfowl count, organised by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, was held in the Deep Bay area on Sunday 11 January 1987. For the third year simultaneous observations were also made in the Fu Tien Reserve, Shenzhen on the north side of the Bay. The main count was held on the afternoon of 11 January but supplementary counts were also carried out in some areas on the previous day and the higher total for each species on either day was used.

The results are presented in Table 1 under each main area. Counts for Deep Bay itself include observations from Tsim Bei Tsui, the adjacent Fence, Yuen Long Creek and, for the first time, from the Mai Po floating hide which was completed during 1986. Despite the loss of suitable habitat at San Tin and Lok Ma Chau due to fish pond construction and road development, these areas were again included but yielded little. On the other hand the ponds at Tin Shui Wai, which have recently been cleared for development, are attracting birds and this new area is shown under a separate heading with Ha Tsuen.

Bird numbers at Fu Tien were less than last year and this was considered to be due to loss of suitable habitat and harassment by hunters.

The results indicate that a total of 37,835 birds of 62 species were present. This is the second highest total ever achieved, the highest being 38,766 recorded last year. Sub-totals by major groups were as follows:

Group	Number	Species
Cormorants	33	1
Hérons, egrets etc.	3,958	10
Duck	11,248	14
Rails, Coots, Moorhens and others	1,586	7
Waders	4,638	25
Gulls and terns	16,372	5
TOTAL	37,835	62

Although wader numbers were down on last year, due to no large concentrated roost of Kentish Plover being located, new highs were achieved for Curlew (333) and Spotted Redshank (1,087). Herons and egrets as a group increased and new highs were set for Grey Heron (732), Little Egret (2,039) and Great Egret (564). Total duck numbers continued their growth of recent years and exceeded 10,000 for the first time. New maxima were established for Baer's Pochard (30), Shoveler (3,158) and

Pintail (2,137). Shelduck numbers remained in excess of 2,000 for the second year. On the negative side only 33 Cormorants were counted whereas in the past few years flocks totalling between 1,000 and 2,000 have been usual. The recent construction of extensive fixed fish traps in Deep Bay may have been a factor in their disappearance. Fortunately the Dalmatian Pelicans had returned as usual but only seven were recorded on the count. Several Scaup were also present in the area in January but not on the survey day. Irregular winter visitors included Garganey, Asiatic Golden Plover, Red-necked Stint, Whimbrel, Australian Curlew and Redshank.

The co-operation and assistance of the Guangdong Forestry Bureau and the following observers is gratefully acknowledged: G.C.H. Cooper, J.S.R. and P. Edge, M.D. Green, L.H. Hang, P.R. Kennerley, A.R. Lamont, S. Smith, R.D.E. and J. Stott, N.R. Townsend, C.A. Viney, Y.F. Wan.



Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta*
Ha Tsuen, December 1987

(Ray Tipper)

TABLE 1

RESULTS OF 1987 WATERFOWL COUNT

Species	10.1.87			11.1.87			10/11.1.87		
	Lok Ma Chau Mai Po	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung	Lok Ma Chau San Tin	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan Tsim Bei Tsui	Sub- total
Little Grebe	3	163	1	2	30	-	3	-	199
Great Crested Grebe	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	1	5
Cormorant	30	-	-	-	2	29	2	-	33
Dalmatian Pelican	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	7
Bittern	3	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	3
Chinese Pond Heron	4	128	8	28	54	73	71	70	432
Cattle Egret	35	-	4	12	155	-	2	1	174
Little Egret	61	199	9	254	760	656	75	86	2,039
Intermediate Egret	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Great Egret	150	42	2	1	343	158	14	4	564
Grey Heron	310	20	-	-	358	346	8	-	732
Purple Heron	2	1	-	-	4	-	-	-	5
White Ibis	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Black-faced Spoonbill	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	7
Ruddy Shelduck	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Shelduck	600	84	-	-	-	2,210	-	-	2,294
Wigeon	60	-	-	-	126	261	-	-	387

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species	10.1.87	11.1.87								10/11.1.87
	Lok Ma Chau Mai Po	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung	Lok Ma Chau San Tin	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan- Tsim Bei Tsui	Sub- total	Total
Falcated Teal	23	-	-	-	3	76	-	-	79	79
Gadwall	3	-	-	-	9	16	-	-	25	25
Teal	3	594	40	-	327	1,806	8	27	2,802	2,802
Mallard	-	-	-	-	-	13	2	-	15	15
Yellow-nib Duck	20	-	-	-	94	149	2	-	245	245
Pintail	4	73	-	-	*	2,064	-	-	2,137	2,137
Garganey	30	-	-	-	5	16	-	-	21	30
Shoveler	-	1	-	-	6	3,151	-	-	3,158	3,158
Baer's Pochard	30	-	-	-	28	-	-	-	28	30
Tufted Duck	45	-	-	-	26	-	-	-	26	45
Banded Rail	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	2
White-breasted Waterhen	7	4	3	-	6	2	8	2	25	25
Moorhen	59	3	-	6	14	1	52	6	82	82
Coot	450	407	-	8	716	-	135	-	1,266	1,266
Avocet	-	-	-	-	195	*	-	-	195	195
Little Ringed Plover	13	10	-	1	-	6	8	43	68	68
Kentish Plover	30	1,268	-	5	-	330	-	257	1,860	1,860
Greater Sand Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	8	8

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species	10.1.87	11.1.87								10/11.1.87
	Lok Ma Chau Mai Po	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung	Lok Ma Chau San Tin	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan- Tsim Bei Tsui	Sub- total	Total
Asiatic Golden Plover	-	-	-	-	73	*	-	-	73	73
Grey Plover	6	-	-	-	-	46	-	9	55	55
Grey-headed Lapwing	3	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	3
Lapwing	-	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	17
Red-necked Stint	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Temminck's Stint	-	-	-	1	-	31	-	-	32	32
Long-toed Stint	9	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	9
Dunlin	15	1	-	-	-	-	-	25	26	26
Small wader sp.	-	-	-	-	-	300	-	-	300	300
Fantail Snipe	117	46	-	3	3	2	157	1	212	212
Pintail Snipe	11	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	11
Black-tailed Godwit	-	-	-	-	*	24	-	-	24	24
Whimbrel	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	7
Curlew	8	*	-	-	333	*	-	-	333	333
Australian Curlew	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1
Spotted Redshank	450	25	-	-	1,045	*	17	-	1,087	1,087
Redshank	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1
Marsh Sandpiper	5	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	5
Greenshank	6	10	-	1	*	43	-	2	56	56

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species	10.1.87			11.1.87						10/11.1.87
	Lok Ma Chau Mai Po	Fu Tien	Ma Tso Lung	Lok Ma Chau San Tin	Mai Po	Deep Bay	Ha Tsuen Tin Shui Wai	Nim Wan- Tsui Bei Tsui	Sub- total	Total
Green Sandpiper	5	4	1	-	4	2	10	1	22	22
Wood Sandpiper	108	8	2	-	4	-	162	-	176	176
Common Sandpiper	3	15	3	7	12	1	5	12	55	55
Saunders' Gull	8	-	-	-	-	17	-	-	17	17
Black-headed Gull	101	1,380	850	78	1,141	9,900	658	2,070	16,077	16,077
Brown-headed Gull	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Herring Gull	250	21	-	-	3	247	-	1	272	272
Caspian Tern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5	5

* Indicates total deleted because of possible overlap with other areas

HONG KONG CHRISTMAS COUNT 27 DECEMBER 1987

C.Y. Lam

INTRODUCTION

The third Hong Kong Christmas Count organised by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society took place on 27 December 1987. It was modelled after the two previous counts in 1985 (Viney 1987) and 1986 (Lam 1987). The objectives of the count were:

- to survey all species occurring within Hong Kong on the selected day
- to estimate the abundance of the species recorded

The 'selected day' so far has been the Sunday following Christmas, hence the name 'Christmas Count'. With similar data accumulated over a number of years, it is hoped to build up a picture of the birds occurring in Hong Kong around the end of December, in terms of both species and numbers.

METHOD

As in previous counts, Hong Kong was divided into 15 areas. Each area was assigned a co-ordinator, who either covered the area himself or organised a group survey on the selected day. The co-ordinator then submitted a return of the counts made. Reports were also received from individual observers. All returns gave the estimated number of birds seen.

The returns were analysed and the numbers merged in eight regions with boundaries as defined in Viney (1987). The boundaries of these regions are shown in Figure 1. In this report, these regions are referred to as:

Region	Name
1	Hong Kong Island
2	Kowloon
3	Offshore Islands
4	Lantau
5	Central New Territories
6	Eastern New Territories
7	Western New Territories
8	Northern New Territories

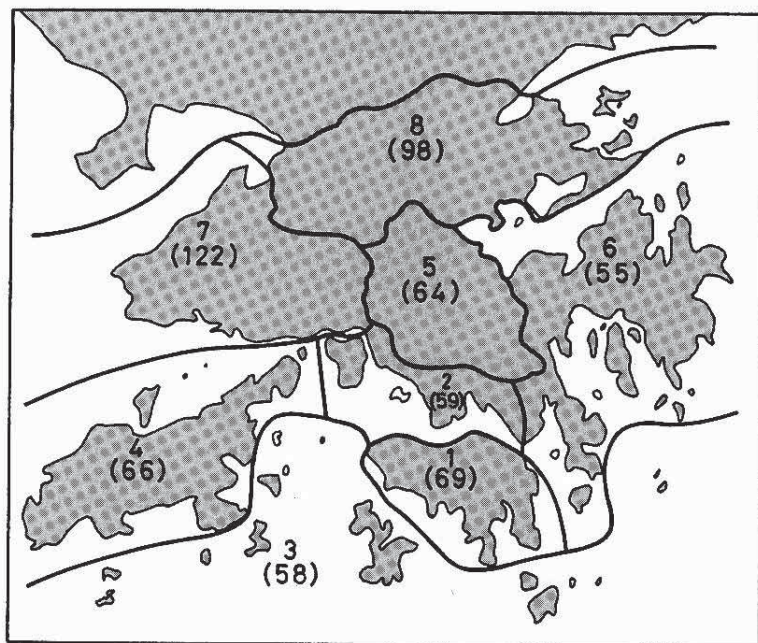


Figure 1. Christmas Count Regions. The number of bird species seen in each region is indicated in brackets.

COVERAGE

About 60 people were in the field on 27 December 1987, 50 per cent more than on the last count in 1986. There were considerable improvements in the coverage of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and Offshore Islands compared with the 1986 count. The places visited by birdwatchers included:

Hong Kong Island — various locations on the southern side from Big Wave Bay through Deep Water Bay to Baguio, Tai Tam, Aberdeen and Wong Nei Chong reservoirs, Mount Davis, Mid-Levels, the Peak area, Mount Butler.

Kowloon — Kowloon Tong and Beacon Hill were thoroughly scanned; Stonecutters Island was included in the count for the first time and produced a lot of birds.

Offshore Islands — Cheung Chau and Lamma Island were each covered by two parties or more; reports were also received from Po Toi.

Central NT — Tai Po Kau, Lam Tsuen Valley.

Eastern NT — Ho Chung, Nai Chung, Sai Kung Country Park (Hoi Ha, Pak Tam Au, Chek Keng, Tai Long, Ham Tin).

Western NT — Sek Kong Catchment, Sek Kong Woods, Castle Peak area, Ha Tsuen, Nim Wan, Pak Nai, Mong Tseng, Tsim Bei Tsui.

Northern NT — Mai Po, San Tin, Chau Tau, Ho Sheung Heung, Fanling Golf Course, Beas River, Lo Wu, Nam Chung, Luk Keng, Wu Kau Tang, Ting Kok Road.

WEATHER

It was a generally cloudy day with a mean cloud cover of 86% and only 0.1 hour of bright sunshine. It was also on the warm and humid side for this time of the year. Temperatures at the Royal Observatory ranged from 20°C to 22°C and the mean relative humidity was 76%. There was also a trace of rainfall. A number of birdwatchers in the field reported somewhat reduced visibility. The prevailing wind was a gentle breeze from the north.

RESULTS

For the purpose of this count, only bird species in Categories A – D in the *Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong* (Chalmers 1986) were considered, that is, excluding birds suspected of being escapes or released from captivity (Category E). This practice differed from the previous two counts which included Asian Pied Starling (both 1985 and 1986) and Small Niltava (1986 only), both of which were Category E birds.

A total of 173 species was recorded, which was two less than in 1986 and 10 less than in 1985 (both 1985 and 1986 figures have been adjusted to remove escapes; this has also been done in the tables that follow). The numbers of species recorded in the various regions are given in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Number of species recorded in the various regions

Region	29.12.85	28.12.86	27.12.87
1 Hong Kong Island	61	36	69
2 Kowloon	35	23	59
3 Offshore Islands	34	43	58
4 Lantau	75	63	66
5 Central NT	74	74	64
6 Eastern NT	68	55	55
7 Western NT	109	117	122
8 Northern NT	125	104	98

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

To facilitate comparison with previous counts, Table 2 also shows whether a species was recorded in 1985 and 1986.



Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus*
Ha Tsuen, January 1988

(Ray Tipper)

TABLE 2. Number of birds by species and by region

	order					Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986
	1-9	10-99	100-999	1,000-9,999	10,000+										
1 Little Grebe															+
2 Great Crested Grebe														+	+
6 Cormorant							2	2	2					+	+
7 Dalmatian Pelican														+	+
[8,9] Frigatebird sp.															
10 Bittern															
11 Yellow Bittern															
13 Chestnut Bittern															
16 Night Heron							2							+	+
17 Little Green Heron						1								+	+
18 Chinese Pond Heron							1			2	1	3	3	+	+
19 Cattle Egret												2	1	+	+
21 Reef Egret						1	2	2	1		1	1		+	+
22 Little Egret											1	3	3	+	+
23 Intermediate Egret												1		+	+
24 Great Egret											2	3	2	+	+
25 Grey Heron							1					3	3	+	+
26 Purple Heron															
27 Black Stork															
30 White Ibis											1		1	+	+
31 European Spoonbill															
32 Black-faced Spoonbill															
34 Bean Goose							1							+	+
37 Shelduck												4	2	+	+

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

	Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986
40 Wigeon	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	+	+
41 Falcated Teal	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	+	+
42 Gadwall	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	+	+
44 Teal	-	-	-	2	-	-	3	3	+	+
45 Mallard	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	+	+
46 Yellow-nib Duck	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	+	+
47 Pintail	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	+	+
48 Garganey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
49 Shoveler	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	+	+
50 Common Pochard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+
51 Baer's Pochard	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	+	+
52 Tufted Duck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	+	+
53 Scaup	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
56 Red-breasted Merganser	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
60 Black Kite	2	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	+	+
61 White-bellied Sea Eagle	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	+	+
63 Serpent Eagle	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	+	+
64 Marsh Harrier	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	+	+
68 Japanese Sparrowhawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
69 Sparrowhawk	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	+	+
70 Crested Goshawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
73 Buzzard	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	+	+
74 Spotted Eagle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	+
75 Imperial Eagle	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	+	+
76 Bonelli's Eagle	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	+	+
77 Osprey	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	+	+
79 Kestrel	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	+	+
83 Peregrine Falcon	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	+	+

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

	Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986
84 Chinese Francolin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
85 Japanese Quail	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
89 Water Rail	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
90 Banded Rail	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	+
95 White-breasted Waterhen	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	+	+
96 Moorhen	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	2	+	+
97 Watercock	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
98 Coot	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	+	+
101 Painted Snipe	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	+
103 Black-winged Stilt	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	+	+
104 Avocet	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	+	+
106 Little Ringed Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	+	+
108 Kentish Plover	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	3	+	+
110 Greater Sand Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
112 Asiatic Golden Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	+
113 Grey Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	+	+
114 Grey-headed Lapwing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	+	+
116 Great Knot	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
119 Red-necked Stint	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
120 Temminck's Stint	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	+	+
121 Long-toed Stint	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	+	+
124 Dunlin	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	+	+
129 Fantail Snipe	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	2	+	+
130 Pintail Snipe	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	+	+
135 Woodcock	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
136 Black-tailed Godwit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	+	+
140 Curlew	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	+	+
142 Spotted Redshank	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	+	+

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986
144	Marsh Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	+	+
145	Greenshank	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	+	+
147	Green Sandpiper	-	-	-	2	1	-	2	2	+	+
148	Wood Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	+	+
150	Common Sandpiper	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	+	+
153	Red-necked Phalarope	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	
157	Saunders' Gull	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2		+
158	Black-headed Gull	2	3	2	3	-	3	5	4	+	+
160	Black-tailed Gull	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
162	Herring Gull	-	-	2	2	-	-	3	2	+	+
168	Caspian Tern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
179	Red Turtle Dove	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1		+
180	Rufous Turtle Dove	2	1	-	-	2	-	2	2	+	+
181	Spotted Dove	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	+	+
183	Emerald Dove	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	+	
189	Plaintive Cuckoo	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	+	+
193	Koel	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	+	+
194	Greater Coucal	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	+	+
195	Lesser Coucal	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	+	+
196	Collared Scops Owl	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
209	House Swift	2	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	+	+
210	White-breasted Kingfisher	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	+	+
211	Black-capped Kingfisher	1	1	1	1	-	-	2	1	+	+
212	Common Kingfisher	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	+	+
213	Pied Kingfisher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+
218	Great Barbet	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	+	+
219	Wryneck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		+
225	Oriental Skylark	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986
227	Swallow	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	+	+
228	Red-rumped Swallow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2		
230	Richard's Pipit	-	-	1	1	-	2	1	1	+	+
231	Upland Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	
232	Olive-backed Pipit	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	-	+	+
234	Red-throated Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	+	+
235	Water Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	
237	Yellow Wagtail	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	1	+	+
239	Grey Wagtail	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	-	+	+
240	White Wagtail	2	2	2	1	2	1	3	3	+	+
242	Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
245	Grey-throated Minivet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
246	Scarlet Minivet	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	+	+
247	Crested Bulbul	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	+	+
248	Chinese Bulbul	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	+	+
249	Red-vented Bulbul	1	2	2	2	-	2	2	-	+	+
250	Chestnut Bulbul	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	+	+
251	Black Bulbul	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		+
255	Red-tailed Robin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	
256	Rubythroat	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	+	+
257	Bluethroat	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	+	+
259	Red-flanked Bluetail	1	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	+	+
260	Daurian Redstart	1	-	1	-	1	1	1	1	+	+
261	Plumbeous Water Redstart	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	+	+
262	Magpie Robin	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	+	+
263	Stonechat	-	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	+	+
264	Grey Bushchat	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	+	+
267	Blue Rock Thrush	1	1	2	1	-	1	1	-	+	+

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986
268	Violet Whistling Thrush	2	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	+	+
269	Orange-headed Ground Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	
270	White's Thrush	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	+	+
272	Grey Thrush	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	-		+
273	Blackbird	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	+	+
275	Grey-backed Thrush	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	+	+
276	Pale Thrush	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-		+
277	Eye-browed Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
278	Dusky Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	+	+
280	Short-tailed Bush Warbler	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	+	+
281	Chinese Bush Warbler	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	+	+
283	Fantail Warbler	-	-	1	2	-	1	2	1	+	+
284	Brown Wren-warbler	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	2	+	+
285	Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	+	+
290	Great Reed Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		
292	Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		+
296	Long-tailed Tailorbird	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	+	+
297	Sulphur-breasted Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	
302	Pallas's Warbler	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	+	+
303	Yellow-browed Warbler	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	+	+
305	Dusky Warbler	1	-	2	1	1	1	2	-	+	+
309	Verditer Flycatcher	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	+	+
313	Brown Flycatcher	-	2	1	-	1	-	1	-	+	+
314	Red-breasted Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	
315	Robin Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	
318	Grey-headed Flycatcher	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	+	
321	Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	+	
324	Black-throated Laughing Thrush	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

		Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986
325	Hwamei	2	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	+	+
326	White-checked Laughing Thrush	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
327	Black-faced Laughing Thrush	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	+	+
328	Pekin Robin	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
332	Yellow-bellied Tit	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	+	+
333	Great Tit	3	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	+	+
335	Fork-tailed Sunbird	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	+	+
336	Fire-breasted Flowerpecker	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
337	Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	+	+
339	White-eye	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	+	+
340	Black-naped Oriole	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		+
342	Brown Shrike	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
343	Rufous-backed Shrike	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	+	+
345	Black Drongo	1	2	2	1	-	-	1	-	+	+
346	Ashy Drongo	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	+	+
347	Hair-crested Drongo	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	+	+
348	Jay	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	+	
349	Blue Magpie	2	1	-	1	-	2	1	-	+	+
350	Treepie	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	+	+
351	Magpie	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	+	+
352	Jungle Crow	2	2	-	1	1	2	2	-	+	+
353	Collared Crow	1	1	-	-	-	1	2	2	+	+
354	Silky Starling	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	+	+
357	Chinese Starling	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2		+
358	European Starling	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-		
360	Grey Starling	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	+	+
361	Black-necked Starling	2	1	1	-	2	2	3	2	+	+

Continued ...

TABLE 2 continued

	Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	Offshore Islands	Lantau	Central NT	Eastern NT	Western NT	Northern NT	1985	1986
362 Crested Mynah	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	+	+
363 Tree Sparrow	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	+	+
364 White-backed Munia	2	1	-	-	2	-	2	-	+	+
365 Spotted Munia	1	-	-	2	2	2	2	2	+	+
367 Chinese Greenfinch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	+	+
369 Common Rosefinch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
370 Black-tailed Hawfinch	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	+	+
371 Masked Bunting	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
374 Tristram's Bunting	1	-	1	-	1	1	1	-	+	+
376 Little Bunting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
380 Crested Bunting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
601 Feral Pigeon	3	2	1	1	1	2	2	-	+	+
602 Rainbow Lorikeet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
603 Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
604 Rose-ringed Parakeet	2	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	+	+
605 Common Mynah	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
606 Azure-winged Magpie	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
706 Orange-bellied Leafbird	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
Number of species seen in each area	69	59	58	66	64	55	122	98		
Total number of species seen throughout Hong Kong: 173										

Species recorded for the first time in a Christmas Count included:

- 11 Yellow Bittern
- 27 Black Stork
- 34 Bean Goose
- 228 Red-rumped Swallow
- 290 Great Reed Warbler
- 358 European Starling
- 706 Orange-bellied Leafbird (7 species)

Viney (1987) labelled species seen in all eight regions as 'common and widespread'. Table 3 lists the common and widespread species in all three counts to date. The longer list in 1987 was largely due to the relatively good coverage of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and Offshore Islands compared with previous years. Seven species lost their 'common and widespread' status in 1986 because of the absence of records from the urban areas (Lam 1987).

TABLE 3. Common and widespread species

Species	29.12.85	28.12.86	27.12.87
60 Black Kite	+	+	+
95 White-breasted Waterhen			+
150 Common Sandpiper			+
181 Spotted Dove	+	+	+
194 Greater Coucal			+
210 White-breasted Kingfisher			+
212 Common Kingfisher			+
232 Olive-backed Pipit	+		
239 Grey Wagtail	+		
240 White Wagtail	+		+
247 Crested Bulbul	+	+	+
248 Chinese Bulbul	+	+	+
262 Magpie Robin	+		+
273 Blackbird	+		+
285 Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler	+		+
296 Long-tailed Tailorbird	+	+	+
303 Yellow-browed Warbler	+	+	+
305 Dusky Warbler	+		
327 Black-faced Laughing Thrush	+	+	+
333 Great Tit			+
339 White-eye	+	+	+
343 Rufous-backed Shrike			+
351 Magpie	+	+	+
362 Crested Mynah	+	+	+
363 Tree Sparrow	+	+	+
371 Masked Bunting	+		+
Number of species	19	11	23

Seven new common and widespread species were recorded in the 1987 Christmas count. On the other hand, three species so labelled in 1985 failed to be recorded from all eight regions in both the 1986 and 1987 counts. They are:

- 232 Olive-backed Pipit
- 239 Grey Wagtail
- 305 Dusky Warbler

In the 1987 count, the first two species were present in all regions except Mai Po while the last species was not recorded in Mai Po or Kowloon.

A few records of some interest were:

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------|--|
| 11 | Yellow Bittern | unusual winter Lantau record |
| 13 | Chestnut Bittern | unusual winter record (but already in three consecutive counts!) |
| 27 | Black Stork | scarce winter visitor |
| 34 | Bean Goose | vagrant (Stonecutters Island) |
| 179 | Red Turtle Dove | exceptionally large flock |
| 290 | Great Reed Warbler | rare December record |

Taking all three counts in 1985, 1986 and 1987 together, the total number of species recorded was 209.

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REPORT ON BIRD RINGING IN HONG KONG IN 1987

David S. Melville

1987 was a very successful year with a total of 1,745 birds ringed, almost all being caught at the WWF Hong Kong Mai Po Nature Reserve. Species totals are given in Table 1, together with totals for previous years.

Among interesting birds caught during the year were two Asiatic Dowitchers (the first ringed in Hong Kong), and a *Phylloscopus* warbler which was thought to be an Ijima Willow Warbler *P. ijimae*, but its identity is currently being reviewed. Two juvenile Baya Weavers were caught in the autumn, two other juveniles having been caught previously in the autumn of 1985 (Melville 1987). There is now no doubt that this species is breeding in southern China but the racial identification and origin of these birds remains uncertain (Melville in prep.).

The increase in the total numbers of individuals of each species caught is now allowing some interesting analysis of morphometric and moult data and notes on moult in the Japanese White-eye are presented on page 85 of this Report (Melville 1988).

1987 was notable for overseas movements, with four foreign-ringed birds caught in Hong Kong, and one Hong Kong-ringed bird caught in Japan (Table 2). The Japanese-ringed Great Reed Warbler was the first overseas record of this species for the Japanese ringing scheme. Remarkably Mr Kazuto Yoshida, who marked this bird, also controlled the Mai Po bird in Japan. The three Australian wader records follow three previous records of exchange of birds between Hong Kong and Australia (and vice versa).

There were ten following-season recaptures of known migrants. These are detailed in Table 3.

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 a permit issued by the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries. Many people have helped with ringing during the year and I thank them all, especially Simba Chan, Mary Ketterer (whose meticulous scribing is a dream to behold), Michael Lau, Richard Lewthwaite and Vicky Melville (for endless patience, longsuffering and catering).

TABLE 1. Birds ringed in Hong Kong 1966 - 1987

Species	MAPS*	1975-1986	1987	Total
Little Grebe			1	1
Yellow Bittern	15	1	18	34
Chestnut Bittern	1		1	2
Night Heron		1		1
Teal		2		2
Black Kite		37		37
Japanese Sparrowhawk	1			1
Imperial Eagle	1*			1
Kestrel	4*			4
Chinese Francolin	7**			7
Japanese Quail	1*			1
Yellow-legged Button Quail	1*			1
Barred Button Quail	1			1
Baillon's Crane	1			1
White-breasted Waterhen	1			1
Oriental Pratincole	1			1
Little Ringed Plover	1			1
Kentish Plover	1			1
Mongolian Sand Plover			2	2
Greater Sand Plover		2		2
Asiatic Golden Plover		20		20
Grey Plover		9		9
Knot		44		44
Red-necked Stint		5		5
Long-toed Stint		2		2
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper		2		2
Pectoral Sandpiper		156		156
Curlew Sandpiper		10		10
Spoon-billed Sandpiper		17		17
Broad-billed Sandpiper		1		1
		131	41	173
		2	1	3
		12		12

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975–1986	1987	Total
Fantail Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1	33		34
Pintail Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>			1	1
Swinhoe's Snipe	<i>Gallinago megala</i>		4	3	7
Asiatic Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus semipalmatus</i>			2	2
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>		1		1
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>		1	29	30
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>		3	59	62
Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>		4		4
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		90	81	171
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>		8		8
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>		3		3
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>		21	3	24
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>		38	72	110
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	4	34	13	51
Grey-rumped Sandpiper	<i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i>		2	8	10
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>			8	8
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>		7		7
Rufous Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>		1		1
Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	2	2	3	7
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	1			1
Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>		2	1	3
Lesser Coucal	<i>Centropus bengalensis</i>	2			2
Oriental Scops Owl	<i>Otus (scops) sunia</i>	2			2
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	2**			2
White-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	24	1	1	26
Black-capped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon pileata</i>	5		4	9
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	104	17	101	222
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>			1	1
Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	21	1	2	24
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	1			1

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975–1986	1987	Total
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	11	19	22	52
Richard's Pipit	<i>Anthus novaeseelandiae</i>	13			13
Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	86		2	88
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	6			6
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	18	1	3	22
Crested Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	80	5	17	102
Chinese Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus sinensis</i>	895	107	91	1,093
Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus aurigaster</i>	95	1		96
Chestnut Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes castanonotus</i>	2			2
Black Bulbul	<i>Hypsipetes madagascariensis</i>	1			1
Red-tailed Robin	<i>Luscinia sibilans</i>	6			6
Rubythroat	<i>Luscinia calliope</i>	95	5	6	106
Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>	9	4	2	15
Red-flanked Bluetail	<i>Tarsiger cyanurus</i>	30		3	33
Daurian Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus aureoreus</i>	16			16
Magpie Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	2		1	3
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	48	17	7	72
Grey Bushchat	<i>Saxicola ferrea</i>	1			1
Violet Whistling Thrush	<i>Myiophonus caeruleus</i>	11			11
White's Thrush	<i>Zoothera dauma</i>	2			2
Grey Thrush	<i>Turdus cardis</i>	53			53
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	1			1
Brown Thrush	<i>Turdus chrysolaus</i>	1			1
Grey-backed Thrush	<i>Turdus hortulorum</i>	209	3	2	214
Pale Thrush	<i>Turdus pallidus</i>	15			15
Dusky Thrush	<i>Turdus naumanni</i>	3			3
Short-tailed Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia squameiceps</i>	1			1
Chinese Bush Warbler	<i>Cettia diphone</i>	19	23	25	67
Fantail Warbler	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>		1		1
Brown Wren-warbler	<i>Prinia subflava</i>	12	52	54	118

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975–1986	1987	Total
Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler	<i>Prinia flaviventris</i>	39	79	71	189
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella certhiola</i>	5			5
Styan's Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella pleskei</i>	8		4	12
Von Schrenck's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus bistrigiceps</i>	21	55	31	107
Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	251	171	187	609
Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>		1		1
Long-tailed Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	11		1	12
Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>	12		13	25
Pallas's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i>	5			5
Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	19		5	24
Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	104	98	101	303
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		1		1
Ijima Willow Warbler?	<i>Phylloscopus ijimae?</i>			1	1
Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa latirostris</i>	6		6	12
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	1			1
Tricolour Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula zanthopygia</i>	2		1	3
Grey-headed Flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	1			1
Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>	1			1
Black-throated Laughing Thrush	<i>Garrulax chinensis</i>	2			2
Hwamei	<i>Garrulax canorus</i>	7**			7
Black-faced Laughing Thrush	<i>Garrulax perspicillatus</i>	18			18
Pekin Robin	<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>	9**			9
Vinous-throated Parrotbill	<i>Paradoxornis webbiana</i>			1	1
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	34			34
Fork-tailed Sunbird	<i>Aethopyga christinae</i>	1			1
White-eye	<i>Zosterops japonica</i>	217	72	382	671
(Bull-headed Shrike)***	<i>(Lanius bucephalus)***</i>	1			1
Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>	6	1		7
Rufous-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>	39	1	4	44
Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>			3	3

Continued ...

TABLE 1 continued

Species		MAPS*	1975–1986	1987	Total
Hair-crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>	1			1
Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa erythrorhyncha</i>	4			4
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	2**			2
Chinese Starling	<i>Sturnus sinensis</i>	2			2
Crested Mynah	<i>Acridotheres cristatellus</i>	2			2
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	92**	4	18	114
Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>		2	2	4
Spotted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	34	29	101	164
Chestnut Munia	<i>Lonchura malacca</i>	1			1
Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>	5			5
Chinese Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis sinica</i>	1			1
Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	12			12
Black-tailed Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes migratorius</i>	9			9
Masked Bunting	<i>Emberiza spodocephala</i>	219	128	90	437
Grey-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza fucata</i>	1	1		2
Tristram's Bunting	<i>Emberiza tristrami</i>	4			4
Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	2	7	14	23
Yellow-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza aureola</i>	28	2	2	32
TOTAL		3,190	1,619	1,745	6,554

* Details of MAPS birds 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 1987

Red-necked Stint <i>Calidris ruficollis</i>				
032-51501	ringed	6 December 1986	Ralph's Bay, Tasmania, Australia 43°2'S 147°26'E	
	controlled	23 May 1987	Mai Po, Hong Kong	
	(distance*	8020.9 km NW)		
Curlew Sandpiper <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>				
041-04218	ringed	10 January 1982	Ralph's Bay, Tasmania, Australia 43°2'S 147°26'E	
	controlled	26 April 1987	Mai Po, Hong Kong	
	(distance*	8020.9 km NW)		
041-24668	ringed	3 January 1987	Swan Island, Queenscliff, Victoria, Australia 38°15'S 144°40'E	
	controlled	26 April 1987	Mai Po, Hong Kong	
	(distance*	7445.9 km NW)		
Great Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus orientalis</i>				
VA23312	ringed	2 May 1986	Mai Po, Hong Kong	
	controlled	21 August 1987	Anan City, Tokushima Pref., Japan 33°56'N 134°41'E	
	(distance*	2384 km NE)		
030-98644	ringed	21 August 1983	Anan City, Tokushima Pref., Japan 33°56'N 134°41'E	
	controlled	17 April 1987	Mai Po, Hong Kong	
	(distance*	2384 km SW)		

* Minimum great circle distance between ringing site and control site

TABLE 3. Following-season recaptures of known migrants 1987*

Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	
DR53331	ringed 24 April 1986/recaptured 26 April 1987
Terek Sandpiper <i>Xenus cinereus</i>	
BV70365	ringed 21 April 1985/recaptured 26 April 1987
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	
BV70269	ringed 7 May 1986/recaptured 26 April 1987
Chinese Bush Warbler <i>Cettia diphone</i>	
C405115	ringed 16 March 1986/recaptured 7 March 1987
Dusky Warbler <i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	
1K2709	ringed 22 January 1985/recaptured 13 and 26 December 1987
1K2751	ringed 1 February 1985/recaptured 13 December 1987
1K2881	ringed 17 January 1986/recaptured 14 and 21 November 1987
1K2942	ringed 16 March 1986/recaptured 14 and 28 March 1987
5N7050	ringed 14 March 1987/recaptured 31 October and 26 December 1987
Masked Bunting <i>Emberiza spodocephala</i>	
C405089	ringed 15 March 1986/recaptured 19 December 1987

* All birds caught at Mai Po

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SOME NOTES ON 'RINGTAIL' HARRIERS OCCURRING IN HONG KONG

D.N. Bakewell, G.J. Carey and M.D. Williams

INTRODUCTION

Three species of harrier (*Circus* sp.) have been recorded in Hong Kong: Marsh *C. aeruginosus* of the eastern race *spilonotus*, Pied *C. melanoleucos* and Hen *C. cyaneus*.

While males in adult plumage are usually readily separable, (but beware confusion between adult male eastern Marsh and adult male Pied) females and immatures of all three species (collectively known as 'ringtail' harriers) are extremely similar to one another, presenting considerable identification problems. These are, if anything, compounded by misleading statements in some of the relevant literature on the region's avifauna.

During migration surveys at Beidaihe, Hebei Province, China in spring 1985 and autumn 1986, we observed large numbers of harriers of all three species. These notes are based on our experience of these birds and of harriers seen since in Hong Kong. It is hoped that they will dispel some of the confusion surrounding the identification of ringtail harriers.

STATUS

The Marsh Harrier is a visitor to the Deep Bay area in winter, where it is common between September and April (Viney and Phillipps 1988). It is presumably also a spring and autumn migrant through Hong Kong as it winters as far south as Malaysia (King, Dickinson and Woodcock 1975).

The Pied Harrier is sporadically recorded in Hong Kong during spring and autumn passage periods, and during winter. There is evidence of passage through the territory in late March and mid-September (Chalmers 1986). This corresponds well with peak passage periods recorded at Beidaihe (late April and early May in spring, and early September in autumn). Most accepted records refer to adult males, but there have been several unconfirmed sightings of females and immatures.

The Hen Harrier, as its alternative North American name of Northern Harrier suggests, has a more northerly breeding and wintering range than its congeners, and is an uncommon migrant in southeast Asia, though it has occurred as far south as Malaysia (King, Dickinson and Woodcock 1975). Extreme dates for Hong Kong are 22 September to 24 April (Chalmers 1986). From its distribution, it might be expected to be the scarcest of the three harriers occurring in Hong Kong.

IDENTIFICATION

MARSH HARRIER

The largest and most heavily built of the three harriers. Females and immatures show considerable plumage variation. Young males are smaller and slighter than females, and are thus perhaps more likely to be mistaken for other species. However, in flight, Marsh Harriers of any age and sex have a subtly but consistently different silhouette from other harriers, which, once appreciated, is distinctive.

Both the wings and tail are broader than on Pied and Hen Harrier (this breadth is best judged at the base of the wing and tail). The trailing edge of the inner wing has a noticeable 'bulge', an effect caused by relatively long outer secondaries. The neck is longer than on other harriers, making the slim head prominent. The bill is larger than on other harriers, and is especially noticeable on a hunting bird, when the 'face' is lowered. The body is heavier and the chest broader than on other species.

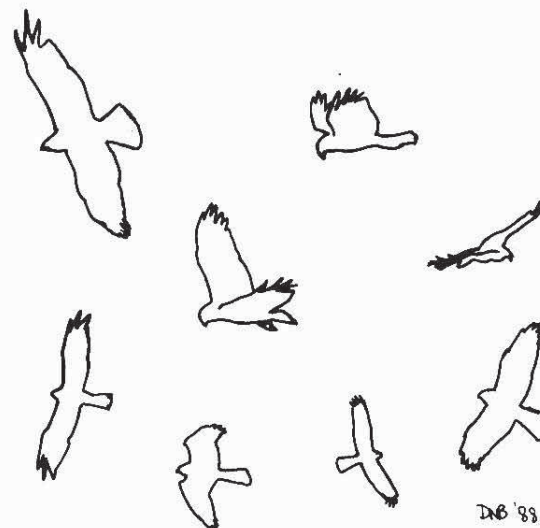


Figure 1. Upper four outlines: Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus spilonotus*
Lower four outlines: Pied Harrier *C. melanoleucos*

Plumage

Female and immature

Head. Extensively straw-coloured, though variable. The head becomes paler with age, and juveniles can show gingery or entirely dark brown heads. Most birds in Hong Kong show a pale straw head with a brown mark behind the ear coverts.

Body. Generally dark chocolate or cinnamon brown with occasionally some random straw coloured blotches (perhaps becoming more extensive with age). As a general rule, the body of female Marsh Harrier becomes blotched with age, while that of the other species becomes streaked. The upper breast is dark brown, and is often bordered by a pale straw lower breast-band, which is diagnostic.

Wings. Upperwing a warm mid-brown, with a variable amount of straw marking on the leading edge, lesser and median coverts, particularly near the wingbase. This is diagnostic when present, but is sometimes lacking on immature birds. Buffy tips to the greater coverts are an indication of immaturity, and are common to young birds of all three species. The underwing has no prominent barring. The wing lining is usually dark brown, sometimes with straw marking on the axillaries and lesser coverts. The secondaries are unbarred dark brown or grey, contrasting with a silvery-white patch of variable extent on the underside of the primaries. This is usually more extensive than that of immature Pied, and shows no noticeable dark barring. A dark carpal crescent of variable prominence is sometimes apparent on immatures.

Tail. Contrary to the statement that the tail is 'usually barred' (King *et al.* 1975), most birds in Hong Kong show unbarred plain brown tails. On the rare occasions when barring is present, it is not as prominent as on other species. An unbarred tail is diagnostic of Marsh Harrier.

Rump. Colour varies from brown through buff to white, and is not a useful field character. The extent of white on pale-rumped birds varies from a few flecks to a broad obvious crescent.

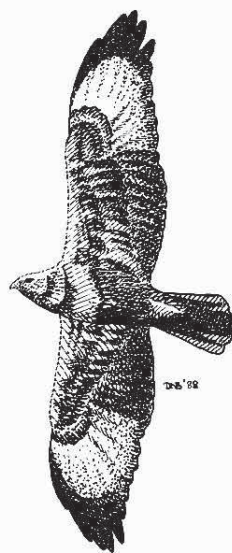


Figure 2. Female/immature Marsh Harrier *C.a. spilonotus*

Male

Subadult males may show paler undertail and underwing coverts than females and first-year birds, as well as other signs of adult plumage, such as grey tail feathers. Careful assessment of overall appearance should be made in these circumstances.

PIED HARRIER

Structurally sligher than Marsh Harrier, the tail and wings are narrower, and the trailing edge of the latter is much less curved, making the leading and trailing edge of the wing roughly parallel. The body is slimmer, the neck shorter, the head rounder and less prominent, and the bill smaller than on Marsh Harrier. Migrating birds seen at Beidaihe frequently glided on bowed wings though, when hunting, the wings were held – more typically – just above horizontal. The small size of this species is not always apparent.

Plumage

Adult female

Head. Facial disc pale brown, with a dark mark through the eye, but lacking the pale border of Hen Harrier.

Body. Below, white, overlaid with heavy brown streaking from head to breast and fore flanks. The rear underbody is white, and is a distinctive feature of adult female Pied Harrier.

Wings. Upperparts generally warm brown with darker remiges. There is no straw colouring on the wings but a thin white leading edge to the inner wing is visible if the bird is flying towards the observer. The primary bases have a greyish cast, more noticeable at some angles than others. The underwing is largely white, with greyish barring usually restricted to the axillaries and outer primaries. Well-marked birds show grey barring on the primaries and secondaries, but this is narrow and rarely prominent. All birds show a grey subterminal line along the trailing edge of the wing.

Tail. Uppertail has four or five prominent blackish bars, and a distinctive greyish wash at the base. Sometimes the central feathers are entirely washed grey (though still barred).

Rump. White, rectangular or crescentic in shape.

Whitish underwings and rear underbody, and greyish patches on the upper primaries and barred tail are distinctive plumage features of adult female Pied.

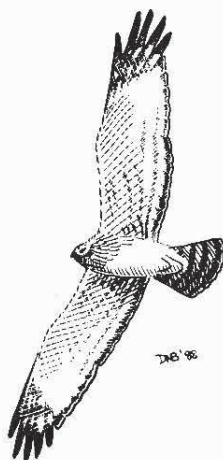


Figure 3. Adult female Pied Harrier *C. melanoleucos*

Immature

Head. Variable. Some show a pattern similar to that of the adult female. Others have cinnamon brown ear coverts, similar to the body colour, with a buff mark beneath the eye and a buff facial border. Some have two buffy nuchal spots, while others apparently lack this feature.

Body. Underbody rich cinnamon brown, becoming paler towards the vent on some birds.

Wings. Underwing pattern superficially similar to that of immature Marsh Harrier. The wing lining is rich cinnamon brown, lacking straw markings. The secondaries are dark brown or greyish and barred, though the latter feature may be difficult to discern except in good light. We have not noted barred secondaries on Marsh Harrier. The underprimary coverts are cinnamon or whitish with broad black tips, forming at least one, and sometimes two or three carpal crescents. These are often present on Marsh Harrier so are not a good field character. There is a silvery-white patch on the underside of the primaries. This varies in size from a small crescent at the primary bases to a large patch covering all but the feather tips, which are dark. There is a variable amount of blackish barring on the pale area. This barring is absent or faint on Marsh Harrier, and is usually prominent on Pied. From above, immature Pied Harriers have a neat appearance caused by rather uniform dark brown upperparts. There are usually no pale areas on the coverts, unlike Marsh and Hen Harrier, and the coverts are almost as dark as the remiges.

Tail. Apparently variable. Immatures noted at Beidaihe showed four broad dark tail bars (this observation is substantiated by photographs of autumn birds). However, several observers (including two of us) have noted five or six dark bars, which are thinner than the intervening pale ones, on ringtail Pied Harriers in Hong Kong. It is difficult to explain this apparent discrepancy, as harrier species in the Western Palearctic do not usually complete a tail moult in their first winter (Cramp and Simmons 1980).

Rump. Colour varies from brown through gingery-buff to white. It is most commonly white, a broad crescentic or rectangular patch that contrasts strongly with the rest of the upperparts.



Figure 4. Immature Pied Harrier *C. melanoleucos*

Subadult

A number of Pied Harriers seen in spring migration showed some plumage features associated with adulthood. It seems likely that these birds were in either their first or second summer. A brief description of the two types follows:

Presumed subadult male: head and throat black; thin pale whitish collar, bordered below by dark brown streaks on breast and flanks; belly and vent white; below, wing lining and secondaries dark; primary coverts and primaries extensively whitish; above, similar to immature.

Presumed subadult female: head and body as adult female. Below, wing lining pale cinnamon with some barring; secondaries dark cinnamon brown and barred; primary coverts whitish with broad dark tips, forming prominent carpal crescents; under primaries whitish, with two dark bars and black tips.

HEN HARRIER

The Hen Harrier is the least familiar of the three species to us in Asia. Structurally it appears rather similar to Pied, lacking the bulk and distinctive shape of Marsh. The following are plumage features considered useful or diagnostic, regardless of age.

Plumage

Female and immature

Head. The mid-brown ear coverts have a pale buffy border. (An immature Pied Harrier showing a buff facial border had cinnamon ear coverts).

Body. Background colour usually buff rather than white. Streaking extends to belly and flanks – further than on female Pied. Body always shows streaking and is never uniform cinnamon brown.

Wings. Below, the primaries have a buffy background colour, and are distinctly barred. The secondaries – buffy-white in adult females, dark grey in immatures – show several broad dark bars. The wing lining is brown and heavily streaked. Above, the wing coverts usually show a buff panel of varying prominence, caused by paler median coverts.

Tail. Four broad dark bands.

Rump. Rump patch white, tending to be larger and squarer than on other species.

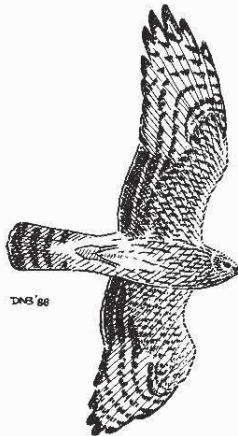


Figure 5. Adult female Hen Harrier *C. cyaneus*

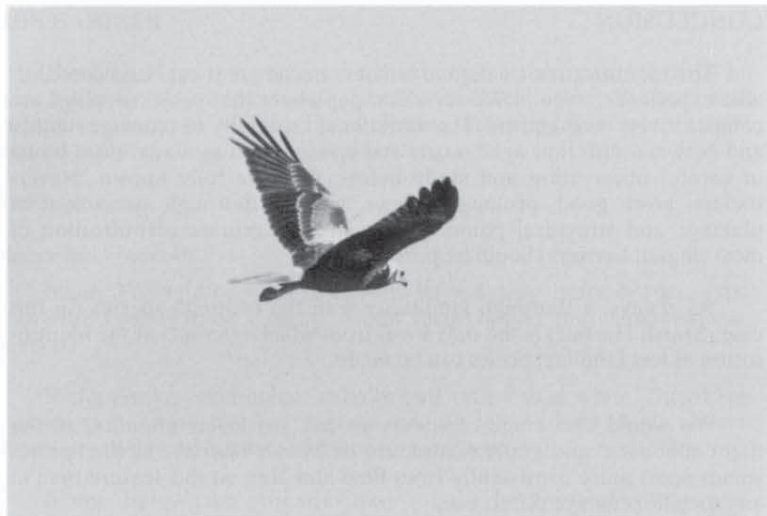
CONCLUSION

The identification of ringtail harriers needs great care and considerable experience, even in Western Europe, where the species involved are comparatively well-known. The variations, especially of plumage, within and between different ages, sexes and species require many more hours of careful observation and study before they are fully known. Nevertheless, given good, prolonged views, when a thorough assessment of plumage and structural points can be made, accurate identification of most ringtail harriers should be possible.

As always, a thorough familiarity with the common species (in this case, Marsh Harrier) is the only basis from which attempts at the identification of less familiar species can be made.

We would encourage observers to pay particular attention to the flight silhouette and general structure of Marsh Harrier, as the species stands apart more consistently from Pied and Hen on this feature than in any specific plumage difference.

A description where a combination of plumage and structural features has been noted is essential, as we do not feel confident that the pattern or shape of one or two features in isolation is sufficient to differentiate one species from another in this difficult group.



Immature Marsh Harrier *C.a. spilonotus*
Mai Po, November 1986

(Ray Tipper)



Adult female Pied Harrier *C. melanoleucos*
Beidaihe, China

(M.D. Williams)



Immature Pied Harrier *C. melanoleucos*
Beidaihe, China

(M.D. Williams)



Female/immature Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus spilonotus*
Mai Po, March 1984

(Ray Tipper)

TABLE 1. Summary of significant plumage features of ringtail harriers

	MARSH HARRIER female and immature	PIED HARRIER adult female	PIED HARRIER immature	HEN HARRIER female and immature
<i>Upperwing</i>	Straw markings on leading edge and wing coverts.	Grey cast to primary bases. White leading edge.	Uniform dark brown.	Buff wing covert panel.
<i>Underwing</i>	Dark, with pale primary patch. Remiges unbarred. Straw markings on wing lining.	Very pale. Barrings not prominent.	Dark, with pale primary patch. Remiges barred. No straw markings on wing lining.	Buff. Remiges prominently barred. Wing lining prominently streaked.
<i>Body</i>	Chocolate to cinnamon brown with straw blotches. Pale collar. Unstreaked.	White background. Streaking restricted to throat, breast and fore-flanks.	Chocolate to cinnamon brown. No straw blotches.	Buff to whitish background. Streaking extends to belly and rear flanks.
<i>Tail</i>	Plain or faintly barred.	Four or five dark bars. Grey cast to base.	Five or six dark bars.	Four dark bars.
<i>Rump</i>	Colour variable.	White.	Colour variable, usually white.	White, large.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Ray Tipper for providing an excellent and instructive series of photographs of Marsh Harriers in flight taken in Hong Kong, and Simon Thompson for his photographs of Pied Harriers at Beidaihe. Thanks also to Peter Kennerley, who constructively criticized the first draft of this paper, and to Mike Chalmers, Verity Picken and Mike Turnbull, who made various pieces of literature available to us at short notice. Finally, thanks to Juana Shek, Mabelle Yau and Connie Ng for their painstaking work on the computer.

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DOES THE GREAT REED WARBLER
Acrocephalus arundinaceus orientalis **BREED IN HONG KONG?**

David S. Melville

The Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus orientalis** was recorded as a 'passage migrant' in Hong Kong by the authors of the first three checklists (Macfarlane and Macdonald 1960, 1966, Webster 1975). Chalmers (1986) states that it is a 'passage migrant with isolated records in winter and summer' and notes three records in the period 25 May to 18 August, viz. two birds on 7 June 1981, and single birds on 11 July 1981 and 3 July 1985. Subsequently Chalmers (1987a, 1987b) has reported one on 21 June 1985 and up to three on 15 June 1986. All summer records have been from Mai Po.

On 12 June 1987 I heard two Great Reed Warblers singing at the WWF Hong Kong Mai Po Nature Reserve. I do not have a record of the last bird seen/heard prior to that date but at the time I noted that these were the first recorded 'after an absence of about three weeks' (the last bird caught prior to this was on 27 May, none being caught on 28 May or 6 June). On 19 June 1987 one bird was heard singing. On 28 June C.A. Viney and I heard at least two singing from a bed of *Phragmites communis* in gei-wai 18 near the 'HKBWS' hide. On examination I found a partly built nest at the edge of the reed bed beside a channel. The nest was examined again on 3 July but there had been no further building activity (Plate 1). Between 28 June and 3 July an experimental research plot had been set out by a student within 1.5m of the nest and it is possible that resulting disturbance had caused the birds to abandon the site.

The nest was about 1m above the mud level, the depth of the water varying in the gei-wai depending on the fishing cycle. The nest foundation (it was in an early stage of construction) was of fine grass/reed and fixed to four reed stems. The structure was too large to have been the foundation for a *Prinia* nest, and the materials too coarse. It is assumed that the nest foundation had been constructed by Great Reed Warblers. The site, in reeds near open water, appears to be typical for the species (Simms 1985, Kluyver 1961-2), as does the structure (Cheng 1963).

Although this appears to be the first recorded breeding attempt by the Great Reed Warbler in Hong Kong there are two previous records which suggest that the species may have nested or attempted to nest.

* I follow Voous (1977) in regarding the eastern form as a race of *A. arundinaceus* rather than as a separate species, as favoured by some authors e.g. Nisbet and Medway (1972) and Watson (1986).



Probable Great Reed Warbler nest at Mai Po, 3 July 1987.
(D.S. Melville/WWF Hong Kong)

In the latter half of May 1965 F.J. Walker visited Mai Po and noted 'every now and then the harsh "chack" of the Great Reed Warbler could be heard. An exciting discovery was of a 'reed' type warbler heard singing and watched collecting nesting material. This may well be one of the *Acrocephalus concinens agricola* (sic) and a new Colony record'. It appears that Walker never submitted his record or that it was rejected without comment since there is no mention of it in the 1965 Hong Kong Bird Report. From the published notes (Walker 1966) it is impossible to assess the record. Walker was a founder member of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society and an experienced observer and should not have confused Great Reed Warbler and Blunt-winged Paddyfield Warbler, since the latter is considerably smaller than the former (average wing length 82mm:55mm, Williamson 1968). The Blunt-winged Paddyfield Warbler is still not on the Hong Kong List although Chalmers (1986) notes that several autumn sightings of small unstreaked warblers may refer to this species, which breeds as far south as the Changjiang valley (Vaurie 1959). Cheng (1987) also records it breeding in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and notes only one record from Guangdong, in November.

On 29 September 1966 F.O.P. Hechtel caught a Great Reed Warbler at Mai Po. It was recorded as a 'juvenile' and a note made that the wing was about half grown and the tail about one third grown. The bird was ringed and released and subsequently recaptured on 19 October 1966. Autumn passage of Great Reed Warblers is heavy in late September (Chalmers 1986) and considerable numbers were present at Mai Po in 1966, a total of 70 birds being ringed there between 23 September and 1

October (F.O.P. Hechtel ringing records, unpublished). No other information is available on this bird and it is possible that it was an adult or young bird in heavy moult (see below), rather than a juvenile still completing feather growth. Unfortunately the weight of this bird was not recorded.*

La Touche (1925-34) recorded Great Reed Warblers arriving at Chinkiang (Jinjiang, Jiangsu) at the end of April when 'the reed beds soon come alive with these birds'. Breeding began there in May, the eggs being laid in late May and June. La Touche considered that the species may be double-brooded as he recorded fresh-laid eggs on 11 July, however it is usually single-brooded at least in the west (Simms 1985), although polygamy (Dyrce 1977, Haneda and Teranishi 1968) may confuse the picture somewhat. Dement'ev and Gladkov (1968) note that laying starts in the Maritime Territory (east Siberia) in early June, with large-scale hatching in the first third of July. From the foregoing it appears that the 1965 and 1987 possible breeding attempts fall within the normal breeding season for the species in East Asia, whereas the 1966 record does not.

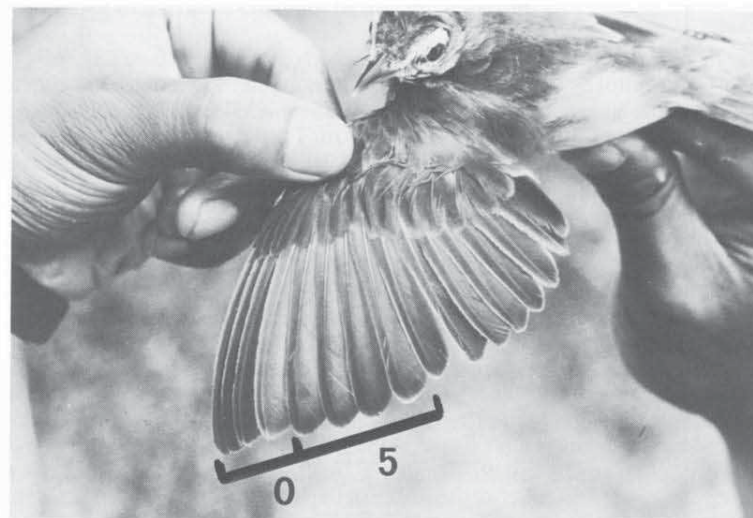
Both adult and juvenile *A. a. orientalis* undergo a complete post-breeding moult on the breeding grounds in Japan (Anon 1979, Ezaki 1984). Adults start to moult in mid-July and finish by mid-September, the juveniles starting a little later (late July) and finishing by mid/late October. The period taken to complete primary moult for juveniles is estimated at 40 days (Anon 1979) but the time for adults is currently unknown. The fact that both adults and juveniles have a complete post-breeding moult results in it being impossible to determine age away from the breeding grounds, thus birds passing through Hong Kong are of indeterminate age. In autumn birds passing through Mai Po have fresh or slightly worn primaries. In spring the primaries are moderately to very worn and almost all birds have old tertials (Melville unpublished). Western Great Reed Warblers *A. a. arundinaceus/zarudnyi* differ in that moult of both adults and young occurs away from the breeding grounds (Pearson 1975).

Details of six Great Reed Warblers caught at Mai Po in July and September are given in Table 1 (none have been caught in June or August), together with two other birds of interest. The sex of the birds noted in Table 1 is based on the findings of Nisbet and Medway (1972) that in Malaysia more than 90% of birds could be sexed correctly in spring according to wing length, those with a wing of 82mm or less being females and those above 83mm being males.

The first bird in Table 1 is aberrant in having had asymmetrical feather replacement in both the primary and tertial tracts — this could have resulted from accidental feather loss. Bird 2 had replaced the centre

* F.O.P. Hechtel (*in litt.* 28 June 1988) notes: 'I remember the bird because I was shocked to find a juvenile on migration. At the time we suspected that the Great Reed Warbler bred rather further north than Hong Kong. It was a juvenile for what it is worth. The bird was in excellent condition, but with every single remige in pin.'

tertial only, on both wings. Birds 3 and 4 were both in arrested/suspended moult. These appear to be the first records of this condition in the species. There are a number of records of adult passerines starting to moult the inner primaries after rearing a first brood, or, more likely, after a failed nesting attempt, and then suspending moult during the second/replacement attempt (Ginn and Melville 1983). However this appears to be unlikely in these individuals since both were in active body moult.



Great Reed Warbler VB32636, Mai Po, 2 July 1987. The four inner primaries are fully grown new (5), the outer primaries are old (0). Also note moult on head.

(D.S. Melville/WWF Hong Kong)

Bird 5 is of interest in being one of only two birds caught in Hong Kong in active moult in a 'normal' sequence. The fact that in both wings three primaries and five secondaries were growing at the same time, as well as all rectrices, indicates a rapid moult (as noted for Japanese birds above) and is of interest with regard to the bird caught on 29 September 1966 (see above). Such a rapid replacement of the plumage is apparently unusual among passerines in Hong Kong (Melville unpublished) and one could mistake such a bird for a juvenile which had recently left the nest. Bird 8 also shows a 'normal' moult. The outer, old primaries of this bird were moderately/very worn, suggesting that this bird was an adult rather than a juvenile (in which the feathers being only some three months old would be less worn). Williamson (1968) recorded a male from the Changjiang valley which had nearly finished moult in August, and another bird from the same area just completing on 23 October. Records of moulting birds from Fuzhou are dated 29 September, early October and October (Nisbet and Medway 1972, Williamson 1968).

TABLE 1. Details of some *Acrocephalus arundinaceus orientalis* caught at Mai Po

No.	Date	Sex	Wing length mm*	Weight g	Primaries **	Secondaries ***	Tail ****	Body
1	30 Ap 86	M	(87)	28.5	L 0 ⁶ 5 ¹ 0 ² R 0 ⁸ 5 ¹	005/0 ⁶ 000/0 ⁶	0 ¹²	no moult
2	2 Jly 87	F	(77)	—	L = R 0 ⁹	050/0 ⁶	0 ¹²	head
3	2 Jly 87	?	(82)	21.6	L = R 5 ⁴ 0 ⁵	050/0 ⁶	0 ¹²	general body moult
4	3 Jly 85	M	(90)	27.0	L = R 5 ⁵ 0 ⁴	—	0 ¹²	head
5	5 Sep 87	?	—	24.8	L = R 5 ⁶ 4 ³	555/4 ⁵ 5 ¹	4 ¹²	general body moult
6	5 Sep 87	M	93	27.5	L 5 ⁹ R 5 ⁶ 4 ¹ 5 ²	—	5 ¹²	no moult
7	19 Sep 87	F	77	21.7	L 0 ¹ 3 ⁰ 5 ⁵ R 0 ² 1 ¹ 0 ⁵	—	0 ¹²	—
8	3 Oct 87	F	(81)	23.9	L = R 5 ⁴ 4 ¹ 1 ⁰ 3	042/0 ⁵ 3 ¹	2 ¹²	—

* Wing lengths in parentheses where feathers heavily abraded.

** Stages of feather growth scored on scale 0 = old, 5 = new (Ginn and Melville 1983). Feather tracts recorded from left (inner) to right (outer), thus 5⁶4³ means that the inner six primaries were fully grown new feathers and the outer three were not quite fully grown. The much reduced outermost (10th) primary has been ignored.

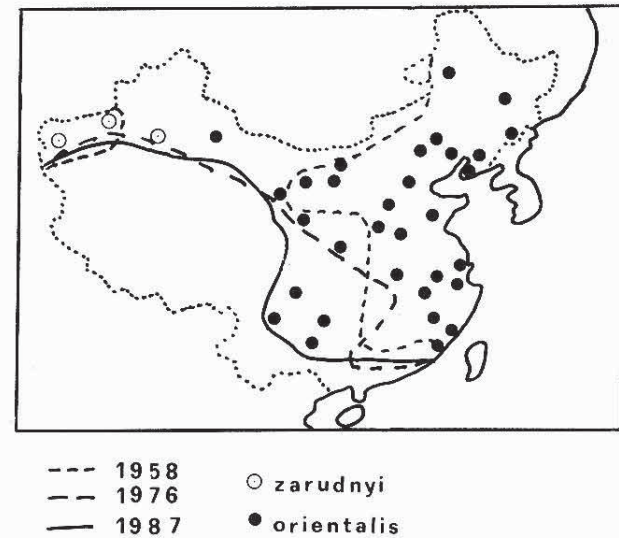
*** Stages of feather growth as for primaries. Read from left to right (inner to outer; the first three numbers refer to tertials).

**** Stages of feather growth as for primaries.

Birds 6 and 7 show aberrant feather replacement, the reasons for which are unknown.

Williamson (1968) records *A.a. orientalis* breeding from north Mongolia eastwards to southeast Transbaikalia, Amurland, Ussuriland, Japan, Manchuria, Korea and China south to the Changjiang (Yangtze) valley. Vaurie (1959) also records it breeding south to the Changjiang valley, however Cheng (1958, figure 245) shows the breeding range extending to northern Guangdong and Guangxi.

In the west of its range *A. a. arundinaceus* extended westwards in the 1960s in Denmark, Finland and Sweden (Voous 1960, Holmbring 1973, Simms 1985), possibly as a result of a rise in mean spring and summer temperatures in northern Europe. There is no information available regarding range changes in east Asia, however it is instructive to compare range maps given by Cheng (1958, figure 245; 1976, figure 609; 1987, figure 609), here summarised in Figure 1, which suggests a possible range expansion to the southwest. It should be noted that Cheng's maps are based on limited specimen collecting and it is uncertain how well they reflect the true breeding range. Thus although Cheng's 1987 Figure 609 suggests breeding in Guangdong the text only records the species on migration in that Province, the breeding range being 'southwards to Guizhou Prov. (southern part-Guiyang, Xingyi), Guangxi Zhuang Aut. Reg., Zhejiang and Fujian Provinces'. Hong Kong clearly is further south than previous breeding records but it is closer to the known range than for some other recently reported breeding species e.g. Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* (Melville 1980, Chalmers 1986) and Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* (Chalmers 1986, Viney 1987).

Figure 1. Breeding distribution of the Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* in China (after Cheng 1958, 1967, 1987)

From the above it is apparent that as yet there are no definite breeding records of the Great Reed Warbler in Hong Kong. Nonetheless there are summer records from Mai Po and at least in 1987 a breeding attempt appears to have been made. Careful observation in future years may result in the species being added to the Hong Kong breeding bird list.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PRELIMINARY NOTES ON MOULT IN THE JAPANESE WHITE-EYE *Zosterops japonica* IN HONG KONG

David S. Melville

INTRODUCTION

The Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonica* is a resident bird in Hong Kong, with numbers increasing in winter (Chalmers 1986). According to recent Christmas counts it is one of the most widespread and numerous birds in the Territory (Lam 1987, Viney 1987). Despite its abundance there is still very little known about the life history of the species in Hong Kong (Herklots 1935, 1967) and there have been no detailed studies of moult.

METHODS

I have ringed birds at the WWF Hong Kong Mai Po Nature Reserve since 1985, the birds being caught in mist-nets. Primary feather moult data have been collected from almost all birds handled as part of routine ringing activities. The present note summarises moult data from about 580 Japanese White-eyes caught up to 6 August 1988, the majority of birds being caught in 1987. Feathers were scored on a scale of 0 to 5, where 0 is an old feather, 5 a fully grown new feather and 1, 2, 3, and 4 intermediate stages of feather growth (Ginn and Melville 1983). Feather scores were summed for the right wing to give a 'total primary moult score', the maximum value for which is 45, there being nine primaries ($9 \times 5 = 45$).

This study (see below) has demonstrated that in Hong Kong Japanese White-eyes undergo a complete post-juvenile moult, after which it is apparently impossible to distinguish between young birds less than one year old and 'adults' over one year old, except possibly in a few cases where the change in iris colour is retarded or does not occur. (In recently fledged birds the iris is a dull grey/coffee colour, which becomes terra cotta in 'adults'). The timing of the change in iris colour has not been studied in detail but in at least some instances it appears that birds attain 'adult' type iris colour before the post-juvenile moult is finished. However 'adults' and juveniles can be distinguished until the late stages of moult by the differing amount of feather wear on the primaries and secondaries, the juveniles having fresh or slightly worn plumage, whereas that of adults is very worn.

RESULTS

Few moulting adults have been caught. Primary moult data are shown in Figure 1. One recaptured adult showed an increase of 10 moult

units over 20 days, i.e. a daily increase of 0.5 units, which suggests a total primary moult duration of 90 days. Least squares regression of date against moult score (see Ginn and Melville 1983, p. 29 for details) gives an estimated moult duration of 90.45 days.

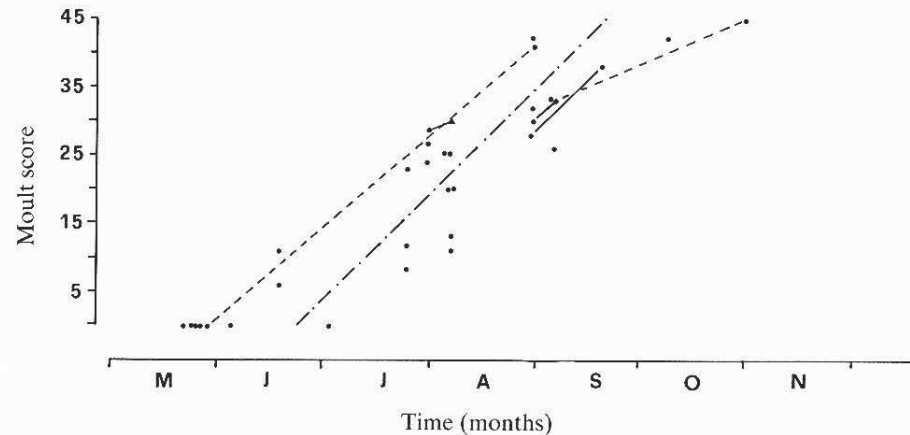


Figure 1. Moults scores of adult Japanese White-eyes. Lines join scores for same-season recaptures – solid lines for birds in active moult, dashed lines for birds caught with primary moult scores of 0 (all old) or 45 (all new). Triangle is bird in arrested/suspended moult. Equation for regression of date against moult score (dash-dot) $y = 53.87 + 2.01x$, where y = time (days) from 1 May (day 1) and x = moult score; $t = 6.57$ (significant); sample size = 25.

Figure 2 shows individual primary moult scores for juveniles, and Figure 3 details same-season recaptures. Data are sadly lacking for much of August (I was unable to conduct field work at that time in 1987 due to a foot injury), but the rest of the season is quite well covered. Data from retraps indicate a very similar rate of feather replacement for most birds, this being $0.44 \pm \text{S.D. } 0.13$ moult units per day (sample size = 22). This suggests a total primary moult duration of 102.27 days, assuming that all primaries take the same amount of time to grow. This is unlikely to be the case since not all primaries are of equal length or weight, but differences are probably less pronounced than in some large, long-winged species such as the Redshank *Tringa totanus* (Summers *et al.* 1983). Least squares regression of date against moult score gives an estimated moult duration of 89.55 days. The fact that the estimate of duration of primary moult resulting from regression analysis is less than that from recapture data is rather surprising. This could be a result of ringed birds moulting more slowly following capture, or the fact that relatively few birds of known age have been caught in the late stages of moult, thus affecting the 'normality' of the data on which the regression is based.

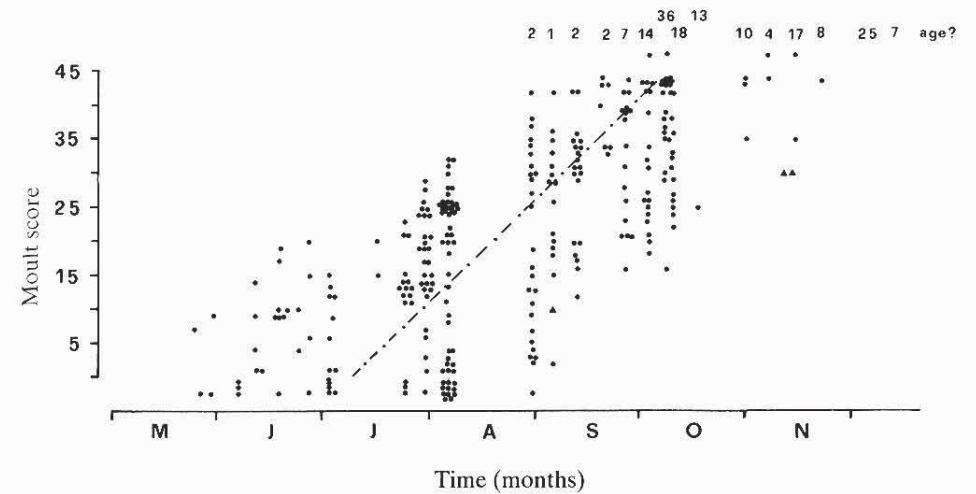


Figure 2. Moults scores of juvenile Japanese White-eyes. Numbers at the top of the Figure refer to birds of unknown age having finished moult (score 45). Equation for the regression of date against moult score (dash-dot) $y = 70.58 + 1.99x$, where y = time (days) from 1 May (day 1) and x = moult score; $t = 3.66$ (significant); sample size = 239. Triangles are birds in arrested/suspended moult.

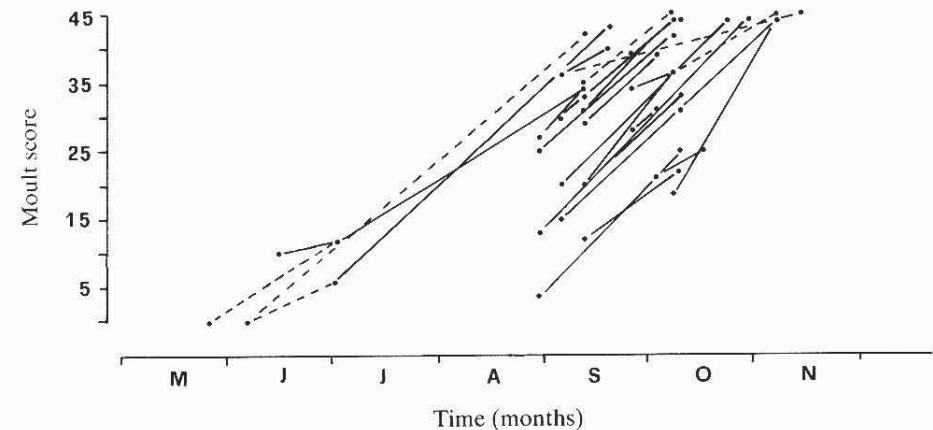


Figure 3. Moults scores of juvenile Japanese White-eyes. Lines join scores for same-season recaptures – solid lines for birds in active moult, dashed lines for birds caught with primary moult scores of 0 (all old) or 45 (all new).

Four birds have been caught in apparent suspended/arrested moult (i.e. some inner primaries replaced but no feathers in active growth) – one adult and three juveniles. Some adult passerines may replace some inner primaries before laying a second/replacement clutch, then suspend and continue the moult once all breeding activities are completed (Ginn and Melville 1983). In the case of the Mai Po adult it was first caught on 30 July 1988 with five new inner primaries and the sixth primary at stage 4, on 6 August 1988 it had six fully grown new primaries and three old ones but the secondaries were still moulting and the brood patch was refeathering – thus the bird was not going to nest again that season. It is unknown why any of the four birds interrupted their moult.



Juvenile Japanese White-eye in an early stage of primary moult. The secondaries have not yet started moulting.
Individual primary feather scores: 000000355
Mai Po, August 1988 (Ray Tipper)

Moult of the secondaries has been recorded for a few individuals only (Table 1). It is clear that in at least some juveniles primary moult is finished before secondary moult and this allows the ageing (by variations in secondary wear) of some otherwise apparently unageable birds, i.e. with all of the primaries new or growing. The pattern of secondary replacement is similar to that recorded for the Eastern Silvereye *Zosterops lateralis* by Swanson (1971), there being no apparent difference between adults and juveniles.

TABLE 1. Relationship between total primary moult score and number of old secondaries (adults and juveniles combined)

Primary score	Number of old secondaries remaining						
	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
0 – 15	40*						
17	1	2					
18		1					
19		3					
20		9	1				
21		3	2				
22			2				
23			1				
24		1	5				
25			11	3			
26			1	2			
27			2	1			
28			1	2			
29			1	4			
30			1	4			
31			1			1	
32				2			
33				1	1		
34				1			
35				1	1		
36				2	1		
37				1			
38				2	1		
39				1	4		
42					8	1	
43					3	4	
44					3	6	
45					1		**

* number of birds showing combination of primary score and old secondaries remaining.

** little attention was paid to secondary moult prior to 1988, and the samples at the end of the moult are biased in favour of birds which had not replaced all secondaries.

DISCUSSION

The Japanese White-eye breeds in Hong Kong from March to August, 'several broods being reared' (Herklots 1935). The species breeds at Mai Po but apparently in relatively small numbers. It is considered that the large flocks, of over 100 birds, present in late summer (July onwards) probably include birds from outside the area. The relatively few birds caught in May and June may be because it is difficult

to catch birds in the early stages of moult, but this usually only applies to birds which drop several primaries more or less simultaneously and thus suffer from reduced flight capability (Ginn and Melville 1983). The early stages of primary moult in the Japanese White-eye are gradual and the fact that birds in the early stages of moult are caught later in the season make this suggestion unlikely. It is considered that the low catch early in the summer reflects the low number of birds present at Mai Po at that time. The spread of juvenile moult scores in late August (Figure 2), suggests that young birds from several broods are present at that time, later-fledging birds being in the early stages of moult, while early-fledging birds have nearly finished.

The only previous information on moult in the Japanese White-eye in Hong Kong is that given by Pereira (1935), who wrote about captive birds:

'Early in October his pet begins to moult when the cage is immediately covered with black or blue cloth and hung in the darkest corner of the house. The diet is slightly changed. The bird is fed on powdered bean and special green grasshoppers, besides being sprayed with water the first thing every morning. These are all conducive to a quick moult and within six weeks it will have changed every single feather'.

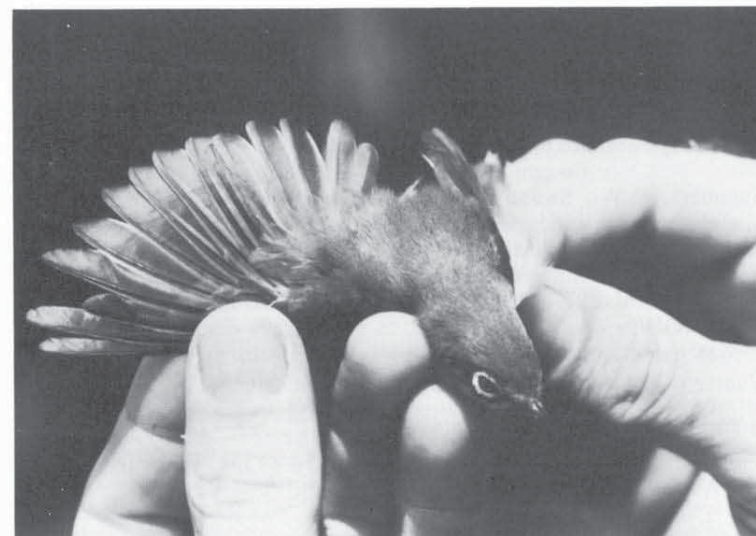
The suggested moult duration of about 42 days is much less than in wild birds at Mai Po. It is possible that the change in diet promotes feather growth and the fact that the birds do not expend energy on flying should allow more for feather growth. Against this is the possibility that captive birds might suffer from more stress than wild ones and this could delay feather replacement as Newton (1967) found in Greenfinches *Carduelis chloris* (but not in Bullfinches *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*). However, Pereira was writing about hand-reared birds and so they should have been quite tame, and unstressed.

The time taken by Mai Po birds to complete moult is comparatively long for such a small bird — for example in Europe the similarly-sized Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* undergoes a complete adult moult in about 60 days.

Little appears to have been published on moult in other *Zosterops* species. In the Nyika Plateau, Malawi/Zambia (10-11°S) Dowsett and Dowsett-Lemaire (1984) recorded the moult duration of adult Yellow White-eyes *Z. senegalensis* as 85 days. They also noted an apparently complete post-juvenile moult in the species, which was unusual for passerines at that location. In New South Wales, Australia, Swanson (1971) recorded an average primary moult duration of 83 days in adult Eastern Silvereyes. She found that early-fledged young birds underwent a complete post-juvenile moult in a similar time period to adults (85-90 days), but later-fledged young moulted more slowly and stopped at the onset of cold weather. Young which hatched at the end of the season only had a moult of body feathers, remiges being retained throughout the winter and, at least in some cases, moulted the next spring.

The Japanese White-eye has a wide latitudinal range, occurring as far north as about 43° in Hokkaido, Japan (Anon 1975, Vaurie 1959), where the summer is short. It would be of interest to investigate moult patterns elsewhere in the range. In Hokkaido it is unlikely that there would be sufficient time for the birds to undertake a complete post-juvenile moult, at least not at the leisurely pace of the Mai Po birds. It is possible that the species shows a varying post-juvenile moult pattern with latitude, as found for example in some European finches, e.g. Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*, and Greenfinch (Ginn and Melville 1983).

I am very grateful to those who have assisted with the collection of these data, especially Simba Chan, Mary Ketterer, Michael Lau, Richard Lewthwaite and my wife Vicky.



Juvenile Japanese White-eye in a later stage of primary moult. The secondaries are also moulting.

Individual feather scores: primary 001455555; secondary 541000

Mai Po, August 1988

(Ray Tipper)

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PRELIMINARY LIST OF THE BIRDS OF WUYANLING NATURAL RESERVE IN SOUTHERN ZHEJIANG PROVINCE, CHINA

Ben King and Zheng Guangmei

From 15 to 22 April 1987 we made a brief survey of the birds of Wuyanling Natural Reserve in Taishun County in extreme southern Zhejiang Province, Southeast China approximately 27.5°N, 119.5°E. We found 19 species (marked \pm) not previously encountered in the reserve (Zheng *et al.* 1986). Apparently nine of these species were the first records for Zhejiang Province (Yu *et al.* 1984): *Spilornis cheela*, *Ictinaetus malayensis*, *Coracina novaehollandiae*, *Enicurus schistaceus*, *Urosphena squameiceps*, *Bradypterus thoracicus*, *Bradypterus luteoventris*, *Phylloscopus reguloides*, and *Niltava davidi*. The list is a short one, based only on our visit and Professor Zheng's work in the reserve from 1982 to 1986 in spring and summer, which resulted in his paper (Zheng *et al.* 1986) on the summer birds of the reserve. Our assignment of abundance and altitudinal distribution is as incomplete as the list itself. We present our findings to indicate the existence of the reserve, provide a preliminary guide to visitors, and act as a basis for future lists and work.

During the 'Great Leap Forward' nearly all the remaining lowland forests in China were logged. A number of 'reserves' throughout the country were set up as 'tree farms' to provide a constant supply of fuel for the steel mills to be established all over China. Wuyanling Reserve was first established about 1958 as one of these tree farm reserves. Originally consisting wholly or mostly of mixed deciduous and evergreen broad-leaved forest, most of the area has been logged and only small remnants of this primary broadleaf forest remain in isolated pockets on the more remote and steeper slopes and gullies. A large percentage of its area is still devoted to fast-growing conifers, while there are also extensive tracts of secondary broadleaf forest. The forestry personnel also maintain tea gardens and raise crops for their maintenance. There is now designated a core area where no cutting is to take place, but there is evidence to the contrary.

The 'Natural Reserve' status came in 1980 and it is part of the provincial reserve system administered by the Forestry Department. Reserve headquarters is at about 600 metres elevation and represents nearly the lowest elevation in the reserve. The highest elevation is about 1,400 metres. There is a small guesthouse for visitors at reserve headquarters and two small rustic substations at 900 metres elevation (Shang Fang Xiang) and 1,000 metres elevation (Jin Gang Chang) at which visitors can also stay and be closer to the forest.

ANNOTATED LIST

[The English bird names have been maintained in accordance with the author's wishes; those which differ considerably from names commonly used in Hong Kong are marked with an asterisk — Ed.]

Crested Serpent-Eagle* *Spilornis cheela*
Uncommon; one seen or heard most days. Apparently the first for Zhejiang Province.

Japanese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter gularis*
Rare.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk* *Accipiter nisus*
Rare; one at 1,200m seen with live Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* in its talons. The jay escaped, apparently unharmed, perhaps because the hawk was spooked by our presence.

Northern Goshawk* *Accipiter gentilis*
Rare; one seen at 800m on 18 April.

Black Eagle* *Ictinaetus malayensis*
Rare; one seen on 15 April at 1,200m. Apparently the first record for Zhejiang Province.

Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus*
Rare (only old unverified sight record).

Northern Hobby* *Falco subbuteo*
Rare.

White-necklaced Partridge *Arborophila gingica*
Uncommon; two heard at 1,000m and two pairs observed at 900m.

Chinese Bamboo-Partridge *Bambusicola thoracica*
Common; three to eight heard daily and one pair seen, 600-1,200m.

Cabot's Tragopan *Tragopan caboti*
Uncommon; two males seen and one to three heard daily, 900-1,200m. Professor Zheng estimates the population at about 200.

Silver Pheasant *Lophura nycthemera*
Common; one seen most days (seven on one day), 900-1,200m.

Koklass Pheasant *Pucrasia macrolopha*
Uncommon; two to five heard 1,100-1,300m on the two days spent within earshot of the higher ridges.

Common Pheasant* *Phasianus colchicus*
Uncommon.

Elliot's Pheasant *Syrmaticus ellioti*
Rare; one female seen at 1,000m.

Oriental Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*
Rare; one heard on 19 and 20 April at 900m.

Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*
Rare.

Large Hawk-Cuckoo *Cuculus sparveroides*
Fairly common; three to six heard daily from 17 April (this appeared to be the first arrival date).

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*
Rare.

Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus*
Rare; one or two heard daily, 17-20 April, 900-1,000m.

Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus*
Rare.

[Australasian Grass Owl *Tyto longimembris*
No record for reserve; one collected near the reserve.]

Oriental Scops-Owl *Otus sunia*
Common; five to thirteen heard daily, 18-21 April (18 April may be first arrival date), 700-1,100m.

Collared Scops-Owl *Otus lempiji*
Uncommon.

Northern Eagle-Owl* *Bubo bubo*
Rare.

Collared Owlet* *Glaucidium brodiei*
Common; one to three heard daily, 900-1,200m. Two seen.

Asian Barred Owlet* *Glaucidium cuculoides*
Rare; one heard at 900m.

Brown Wood-Owl *Strix leptogrammica*
Rare.

Gray Nightjar* *Caprimulgus indicus*
Uncommon; one or two heard nightly, 18-21 April (18 April may be first arrival date), 900-1,000m.

Fork-tailed Swift* *Apus pacificus*
Uncommon in summer.

Common Kingfisher Uncommon at lower altitudes.	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
[Black-capped Kingfisher No record for reserve, but rarely found nearby.]	<i>Halcyon pileata</i>
Dollarbird* Rare.	<i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>
Great Barbet Uncommon; one to six heard daily, 900-1,200m. One seen.	<i>Megalaima virens</i>
Speckled Piculet Rare.	<i>Picumnus innominatus</i>
Gray-headed Woodpecker* Uncommon; two to four recorded daily, 900-1,200m.	<i>Picus canus</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker Uncommon.	<i>Picoides major</i>
Bay Woodpecker Fairly common; two to eight seen and heard daily.	<i>Blythipicus pyrrhotis</i>
Barn Swallow* Common; a pair seen at 900m on 18 April.	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Red-rumped Swallow Common.	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>
Gray Wagtail Common; one seen at 600m on 21 April.	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
White Wagtail Uncommon.	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
Olive Tree-Pipit* Uncommon to rare; three seen on 18 April at 900m.	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>
Upland Pipit Rare.	<i>Anthus sylvanus</i>
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** Uncommon to rare; two seen on 18 April and one seen on 19 and 20 April at 900m. Apparently the first record for Zhejiang Province.	<i>Coracina novaehollandiae</i>
Gray-chinned Minivet* Fairly common; three to fifteen daily, 700-1,200m.	<i>Pericrocotus solaris</i>
Collared Finchbill Common in summer.	<i>Spizixos semitorques</i>

Brown-breasted Bulbul* Rare.	<i>Pycnonotus xanthorrhous</i>
Light-vented Bulbul* Rare.	<i>Pycnonotus sinensis</i>
Mountain Bulbul Uncommon; two to four seen most days, 600-1,000m.	<i>Hypsipetes mccllellandii</i>
Chestnut Bulbul Common; three to twenty seen and heard daily, 700-1,200m.	<i>Hypsipetes castanonotus</i>
Black Bulbul Common in summer; two on 18 April, five on 19 April, and eight on 19 April, suggesting current arrival, 900-1,100m.	<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>
Orange-bellied Leafbird Rare.	<i>Chloropsis hardwickii</i>
Brown Shrike Rare.	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
Long-tailed Shrike* Uncommon.	<i>Lanius schach</i>
Black-naped Oriole Rare.	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>
Hair-crested Drongo Uncommon; one seen on 18 April at 1,100m.	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>
Eurasian Jay* Fairly common; two to six seen and heard daily.	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Blue Magpie Fairly common; two to five daily, 600-1,000m.	<i>Urocissa erythrorhyncha</i>
Gray Treepie* Fairly common; two to eight daily, 900-1,200m.	<i>Dendrocitta formosae</i>
Black-billed Magpie* Uncommon.	<i>Pica pica</i>
Collared Crow Rare.	<i>Corvus torquatus</i>
Brown Dipper Uncommon; a pair seen at 600m on 21 April.	<i>Cinclus pallasii</i>
Siberian Blue Robin Uncommon.	<i>Erithacus cyane</i>

Orange-flanked Bush-Robin* Common.	<i>Tarsiger cyanurus</i>
Plumbeous Redstart* Common; one to six seen daily at 600m.	<i>Rhyacornis fuliginosus</i>
Little Forktail Uncommon.	<i>Enicurus scouleri</i>
Slaty-backed Forktail* Uncommon; a pair seen at 600m on 15 April. This is apparently the first record for Zhejiang Province.	<i>Enicurus schistaceus</i>
White-crowned Forktail Uncommon; a pair at 1,200m on 17 April.	<i>Enicurus leschenaulti</i>
Gray Bushchat Rare.	<i>Saxicola ferrea</i>
Blue Rock-Thrush Rare in summer.	<i>Monticola solitaria</i>
Blue Whistling Thrush* Uncommon; single birds on 16 and 18 April, two on 21 April, 600-1,200m.	<i>Myophonus caeruleus</i>
Siberian Thrush Uncommon; specimen, May.	<i>Zoothera sibirica</i>
Scaly Thrush** Rare; one found dead at 700m on 17 April.	<i>Zoothera dauma</i>
Chinese Thrush Rare.	<i>Turdus mupinensis</i>
Spot-breasted Scimitar-Babbler Rare.	<i>Pomatorhinus erythrocnemis</i>
Streak-breasted Scimitar-Babbler* Common; two to ten recorded daily, 800-1,200m.	<i>Pomatorhinus ruficollis</i>
Pygmy Wren-Babbler Uncommon; one to five heard or seen most days, 600-1,200m.	<i>Pnoepyga pusilla</i>
Rufous-capped Babbler Fairly common; one to six seen and heard daily, 700-1,200m.	<i>Stachyris ruficeps</i>
Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush Rare.	<i>Garrulax monileger</i>

Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush Uncommon; flocks of four to eight seen three times, 900-1,200m.	<i>Garrulax pectoralis</i>
Moustached Laughingthrush Rare.	<i>Garrulax cineraceus</i>
Hwamei Uncommon; three at 600m on 21 April.	<i>Garrulax canorus</i>
Red-billed Leiothrix* Uncommon; probably heard at 900m.	<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>
Green Shrike-Babbler* Uncommon; one pair on 19 April and another on 20 April at 900m and a third pair at 1,000m on 20 April.	<i>Pteruthius xanthochlorus</i>
Dusky Fulvetta** Single birds daily at 700-900m, 18-21 April.	<i>Alcippe brunnea</i>
Gray-cheeked Fulvetta Abundant; five to 25 daily, 700-1,200m.	<i>Alcippe morrisonia</i>
Striated Yuhina* Abundant; 20-80 daily, 700-1,200m.	<i>Yuhina castaniceps</i>
Vinous-throated Parrotbill Uncommon.	<i>Paradoxornis webbianus</i>
Gray-headed Parrotbill Uncommon; 4-16 daily, 18-20 April, 900-1,000m.	<i>Paradoxornis gularis</i>
Asian Stubtail** Rare; one at 900m on 19 April. This is apparently the first record for Zhejiang Province.	<i>Urosphena squameiceps</i>
Brownish-flanked Bush-Warbler* Rare.	<i>Cettia fortipes</i>
Spotted Bush-Warbler** Uncommon to rare; one heard and seen daily at 1,200m, 15-17 April, and one heard at 900m on 21 April. The bird at 1,200m responded strongly to playback of his song. Its territorial behaviour suggests possible breeding. This would be a significant breeding range extension. It is apparently the first record for Zhejiang Province.	<i>Bradypterus thoracicus</i>
Brown Bush-Warbler** Rare; one came in and looked on while the Spotted Bush-Warbler was defending his territory against my tape-recorded playback of his song. Apparently the first record for Zhejiang Province.	<i>Bradypterus luteoventris</i>

Inornate Warbler* Uncommon; one on 16 April and another on 18 April at 1,200m.	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>
Lemon-rumped Warbler* Uncommon; one to two daily, 16-18 April, 900-1,200m.	<i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i>
Eastern Crowned Warbler* Common; one to five daily, 700-1,200m, 16-21 April.	<i>Phylloscopus coronatus</i>
Blyth's Leaf-Warbler* Uncommon; one to two daily, 15-17 April at 1,200m. Apparently the first record for Zhejiang Province.	<i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i>
Sulfur-breasted Warbler Rare.	<i>Phylloscopus ricketti</i>
Chestnut-crowned Warbler Common; three to 20 daily, 700-1,200m.	<i>Seicercus castaniceps</i>
Golden-spectacled Warbler* Common in summer; two on 16 April and one on 17 April at 1,200m.	<i>Seicercus burkii</i>
Rufous-faced Warbler* Common; five to 12 daily, 900-1,200m.	<i>Seicercus albogularis</i>
Striated Prinia Rare.	<i>Prinia criniger</i>
Brown-chested Flycatcher* Rare in summer.	<i>Rhinomyias brunneata</i>
Blue-and-White Flycatcher Uncommon; single birds on 15 April (1,200m), 19 April (900m) and 21 April (700m).	<i>Cyanoptila cyanomelana</i>
Fujian Niltava* Rare to uncommon; two females at 700m on 17 April. Apparently the first record for Zhejiang Province.	<i>Niltava davidi</i>
Black-throated Tit Common; five at 1,200m on 16 April, six at 900m on 18 April.	<i>Aegithalos concinnus</i>
Coal Tit Uncommon to rare; one or two daily, 15-17 April, 1,200-1,300m.	<i>Parus ater</i>
Great Tit Uncommon; one at 600m on 21 April.	<i>Parus major</i>
Yellow-cheeked Tit Uncommon; two on 15 April at 600m and one at 700m on 18 April.	<i>Parus spilonotus</i>

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker Uncommon in summer.	<i>Dicaeum ignipectus</i>
Japanese White-eye* Uncommon to rare; a flock of about five on 19 April at 900m.	<i>Zosterops japonica</i>
[Russet Sparrow* No record for reserve, but found nearby.]	<i>Passer rutilans</i>
Eurasian Tree-Sparrow* Uncommon.	<i>Passer montanus</i>
[White-rumped Munia* No record for reserve, but found nearby.]	<i>Lonchura striata</i>
[Scaly-breasted Munia* No record for reserve, but found nearby.]	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>
Gray-capped Greenfinch* Rare.	<i>Carduelis sinica</i>
Brown Bullfinch Uncommon; six to ten daily, 15-17 April, 1,200-1,300m; two to three daily at 1,000m, 18-20 April.	<i>Pyrrhula nipalensis</i>
Crested Bunting Uncommon.	<i>Melophus lathamii</i>
Meadow Bunting Common in summer.	<i>Emberiza cioides</i>
Tristram's Bunting* Rare? One at 900m on 18 April.	<i>Emberiza tristrami</i>
Yellow-browed Bunting Uncommon.	<i>Emberiza chrysophrys</i>
Yellow-throated Bunting Uncommon.	<i>Emberiza elegans</i>

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NOTES

BLACK KITE *Milvus migrans* TAKES BLACK-FACED LAUGHING THRUSH *Garrulax perspicillatus*

M.L. Chalmers

Whilst passing through Sulphur Channel at c1730 on 14 April 1988, a
Black Kite *Milvus migrans* flew across in front of the boat pursuing a
Black-faced Laughing Thrush *Garrulax perspicillatus*. The laughing
thrush, which was flying at speed directly between Green Island and
Mount Davis, was forced into the sea but recovered and took flight again.
The kite made another pass and this time successfully struck and held the
laughing thrush, which it then flew off with in its talons towards Mount
Davis. In over 12 years' birdwatching in Hong Kong, this is the first time I
have seen a Black Kite taking a live bird.

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FANTAIL SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago* PERCHING ON OVERHEAD WIRE

Verity Picken

At c0845h on 8 February 1987 at Ha Tsuen I saw a Fantail Snipe
Gallinago gallinago perched on an overhead wire about 10m above the
ground. Although there were up to 50 Fantail Snipe on the swampy
ground immediately below the wire and in the surrounding area, it
remained there, perched quite steadily for 20 minutes, occasionally being
joined by Black-necked Starlings *Sturnus nigricollis* and Grey Starlings
Sturnus cineraceus.

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JUVENILE FLOWERPECKERS *Dicaeum* spp. AT TAI PO KAU NATURE RESERVE

Clive Viney

At about 0800h on 4 October 1984 my attention was drawn to two
very small nondescript flowerpeckers behaving aggressively towards an
Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* — which was clearly much larger.

They uttered an insistent 'zip zip zip' and a more varied 'tzipp'. The only distinguishing feature was the bright salmon-coloured bill (obvious in full sunlight and at 5m range). Minute size, not really much larger than a cicada when hovering; a nearby Fork-tailed Sunbird *Aethopyga christinae* looked much larger. Upperparts greyish-green but in sunlight a greenish wash was evident, particularly on the closed wings. Underparts at a distance appeared uniform dirty greyish-white but on a closer view, from below, the centre of the abdomen and ventral area were creamy — contrasting with greyish breast and flanks. The greyish colouration was formed by close streaks on a paler ground (only noticeable at close range). No bright feathering seen. Hovered close by and seen preening when no contrasting colour on rump noted. Rump and upper tail coverts appeared plain grey-green, as mantle and wing coverts. Short blunt tail, contrastingly dark from above and below. Pale spot on carpal joint of wing. Bulbous dark eye. Bill clearly pinkish-orange (not pollen), comparatively long and slender and slightly decurved, which was accentuated by a black tip (only visible at close range). Legs black.

At first kept to canopy but descended to mid-storey. Kept returning to vicinity of a fruiting fig tree. Restless and often hovered. Broke off very small twigs and caught insects on the wing. Apart from agitation with warbler was mostly silent but in flight uttered a typical 'chip chip chip'.

DISCUSSION

My initial reaction was that these were Plain Flowerpeckers *Dicaeum concolor*, based on the following assumptions:

- i) minute size
- ii) lack of any brightly coloured feathering on upperparts
- iii) pale carpal spot
- iv) colouring of underparts (see King 1975)
- v) distinctive bill shape and colour (see King 1975 for juvenile)

However, subsequent research revealed the following:

- a) juvenile Scarlet-backed Flowerpeckers *D. cruentatum* have orange bills (Ali and Ripley 1983) and most immature flowerpeckers have yellow or fleshy bills (King 1975 — see entry for *D. erythrorhynchos*).
- b) King states that the immature Scarlet-backed is indistinguishable from the immature Plain except for a dull orange tinge on the olive-green rump and upper tail coverts, but that this is difficult to see in the field. A discussion with Gavin Cooper (who had Scarlet-backed Flowerpeckers breeding in his garden at Fanling

for several years) confirmed this and he even went further by saying that most immatures showed no colour at all, but interestingly he could not recall orange bills.

- c) the colouration of the underparts and bill shape could, by reading some accounts, be equally applicable to juvenile Scarlet-backed Flowerpeckers. Furthermore, as these were clearly juveniles (all adults have black bills) size may not be a good enough determining factor.

CONCLUSION

That these were probably juvenile Scarlet-backed Flowerpeckers and that earlier decisions of the HKBWS to reject claims for Plain Flowerpeckers (notably a series on Victoria Peak in February 1978,) were in the circumstances correct.

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POLYRECTRICYLY IN A DUSKY WARBLER

Phylloscopus fuscatus

David S. Melville

On 26 December 1987 at Mai Po, Hong Kong I caught a Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* which had 14 rectrices, rather than the usual 12. The bird, the age of which was uncertain, was ringed and released.

Most bird species have 12 rectrices with certain genera regularly having more or less e.g. *Gallinago* (up to 28), *Prinia* (10) and *Cettia* (10). Although it is usually assumed that birds have the 'correct' number of rectrices, polyrectricyly, a somewhat complicated term coined by Somadikarta (1984) for birds with 'extra' rectrices, is being recorded from an increasing number of species (Hanmer 1981, 1985, Melville 1985). However the only other example of polyrectricyly recorded in Hong

Kong was of a Black Kite *Milvus migrans lineatus* with 13 rectrices, rather than the usual 12 (Melville 1985).

The majority of passerines handled during ringing operations at Mai Po are examined for tail moult/wear and polyrectricity would be likely to be noticed. About 3,000 birds have been ringed (excluding retraps) but I have no detailed records of the number of birds in which the tail was examined. The fact that this is only the second bird found with additional rectrices in Hong Kong suggests that the condition is uncommon. In East Africa Hanmer (1985) recorded additional or missing rectrices, which she termed anisorectricity, in 0.55% of some 22,800 birds caught for ringing.

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Collared Crow *Corvus torquatus*
Tsim Bei Tsui, February 1988

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 × 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.

Nest Record Cards are also available from the Recorder for reporting breeding data.

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 observation is maintained. A list of species considered by the Committee is given below. The list may seem dauntingly long and to include some unmistakable 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 and 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.

Species for which written descriptions of all sightings must be submitted to the Recorder for consideration by the Records Committee.

The following list 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.

CATEGORY A

Red-necked Grebe	Jack Snipe
Black-necked Grebe	Swinhoe's Snipe
Streaked Shearwater	Solitary Snipe
Swinhoe's Storm Petrel	Long-billed Dowitcher
Dalmatian Pelican	Asiatic Dowitcher
all frigatebirds	Little Whimbrel
Von Schrenck's Little Bittern	Australian Curlew
Black Bittern	Nordmann's Greenshank
Japanese Night Heron	Lesser Yellowlegs
Swinhoe's Egret	all skuas
Black Stork	Great Black-headed Gull
White Stork	Saunders' Gull
Glossy Ibis	Brown-headed Gull
European Spoonbill	Common Gull
Black-faced Spoonbill	Slaty-backed Gull
Lesser Treeduck	Glaucous-winged Gull
all geese	Glaucous Gull
Ruddy Shelduck	Kittiwake
Cotton Teal	Greater Crested Tern
Mandarin	Black-naped Tern
Falcated Teal	Roseate Tern
Baikal Teal	Common Tern
Common Pochard	Bridled Tern
Baer's Pochard	Sooty Tern
Scaup	Ancient Auk
Velvet Scoter	Bar-tailed Cuckoo Dove
Goldeneye	White-bellied Green Pigeon
Crested Honey Buzzard	Thick-billed Pigeon
Black-shouldered Kite	Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo
Brahminy Kite	Emerald Cuckoo
Hen Harrier	Common Cuckoo
Pied Harrier	Oriental Cuckoo
Northern Goshawk	all owls except Collared Scops Owl
Japanese Sparrowhawk	Japanese Nightjar
Horsfield's Goshawk	White-throated Needletail
Grey-faced Buzzard Eagle	White-vented Needletail
Spotted Eagle	Crested Kingfisher
Imperial Eagle	Blue-tailed Bee-eater
White-legged Falconet	all woodpeckers
Amur Falcon	Chinese Pitta
Merlin	all larks
all button quails	Pechora Pipit
all crakes	Water Pipit
Common Crane	Citrine Wagtail
Pheasant-tailed Jacana	White Wagtail (all races other than <i>leucopsis</i> and <i>ocularis</i>)
Painted Snipe	Greater Cuckoo Shrike
Oystercatcher	Rosy Minivet
Ringed Plover	Orange-bellied Leafbird
Oriental Plover	Brown Dipper
Great Knot	Wren
Little Stint	Japanese Robin
Pectoral Sandpiper	Siberian Blue Robin
Spoon-billed Sandpiper	White-capped Redstart
Ruff	

Chestnut-breasted Rock Thrush
 Orange-headed Ground Thrush
 Siberian Thrush
 Brown Thrush
 Slaty-backed Forktail
 Mountain Bush Warbler
 Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler
 Styan's Grasshopper Warbler
 Lanceolated Warbler
 Blyth's Reed Warbler
 Thick-billed Warbler
 Yellow-eyed Flycatcher Warbler
 Chestnut-crowned Warbler
 Fulvous-faced Flycatcher Warbler
 Large Grass Warbler
 Sulphur-breasted Warbler
 Blyth's Leaf Warbler
 Eastern Crowned Warbler
 Pale-legged Leaf Warbler
 Radde's Warbler
 Chiffchaff

Fukien Niltava
 Sooty Flycatcher
 Chinese Babax
 Chestnut-flanked White-eye
 Red-headed Tit
 Penduline Tit
 Tiger Shrike
 Bull-headed Shrike
 Chinese Great Grey Shrike
 Daurian Jackdaw
 Purple-backed Starling
 Chestnut-cheeked Starling
 European Starling
 Rosy Starling
 Siskin
 Japanese Grosbeak
 Japanese Yellow Bunting
 Yellow-throated Bunting
 Rustic Bunting
 Reed Bunting

CATEGORY B

all (one!)

CATEGORY D

all

CATEGORY F

all

CATEGORY C

none

CATEGORY E

all, other than most obvious escapes