

THE HONG KONG  
BIRD REPORT 1965



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## HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1965

Records Compiled by  
MAURA BENHAM

### CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction ... ..	2
Colony Records 1965 ... ..	5
Systematic List 1965 ... ..	6
Shorter Notes ... ..	31
New Territories ... ..	33
Birds of the Island ... ..	35
Report on Bird Watching around Toronto during 1965 ...	39
In my Garden ... ..	48
Bird Selling in San Hui ... ..	49
Note on the Breeding of Three Malayan Birds ... ..	52
Bird Watching before Breakfast ... ..	56
Notes on how to keep Records ... ..	57
Sight-records of Rare Birds ... ..	58
Application Form and Objects of the H.K.B.W.S. ...	59
Map... ..	at the back

*Edited by*

**E. D. Webb**

*Published in 1966*

*by the*

**HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY**

**c/o The Chartered Bank, Hong Kong.**

(A registered Society under the Hong Kong Societies Ordinance)

## INTRODUCTION

Membership remains steady at our usual figure of 50 to 60, including a fair number of Overseas Members, most of whom are friends of long standing.

We are pleased to welcome back Major Macfarlane, who was the Society's first Hon. Recorder and co-editor of the check list of Hong Kong birds. Also Mr. Richard Hale who has kindly taken on the job of Hon. Secretary while Mr. Hechtel is heavily involved in the Ringing Scheme. We were very sorry to lose Major Dick Caunter, who was Hon. Recorder in 1963 and 1964 and who brought the check list up-to-date to the end of 1964. His wife kindly looked after our finances during the summer of 1964, enabling the Hon. Treasurer to enjoy a carefree home leave. Since the start of 1966, we have lost the Dales, who kept a special watch on the Cape Collinson eyrie, and the Clive Robinsons (who kept a special watch on our Library in the British Council). In the middle of May we were delighted to receive a visit from Flight Sergeant Frank Walker, co-founder and Hon. Life Member, on leave from Singapore where he was temporarily attached. Several rare species turned out to have a look at him, including a pair of Black-winged Stilts.

Outings during the year were as follows:—

1st January	Pak Tam valley, beyond Tai Mong Tsai
17th January	Lam Tsuen valley
3rd February	Ho Chung valley
21st February	Long Valley, near Sheung Shui
7th March	Ping Shan/Mong Tseng
28th March	Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau
19th April	Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau

(Summer holidays for birds and watchers. A little too hot for organised Outings, but a lot of good things were seen by individual members, and a watch was kept on the egret.)

30th August	Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau
10th September	Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau
3rd October	Mai Po/Lam Tsuen valley
18th October	Ping Shan/Luen Tak
31st October	Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau: evening meeting
15th November	Ping Shan/Mong Tseng

3rd December Ho Chung valley  
27th December Ping Shan/Mong Tseng

This was a few more than the dozen outings we have generally had in past years.

In 1965, Hong Kong was spared the close attention of any typhoons. But last year's battering has left its mark on all but one of the egrettries of the Colony which will take a long time to recover fully.

Negotiations with the publishers of the 1960 Check List, who may be the printers of the revised check list, took much longer than expected, and it is now proposed that Major Macfarlane should bring the new list, compiled by Major Caunter, up-to-date to 30th April 1966, which will be just six years since the first check list closed its entries.

In March, Lord Medway of the University of Malaya came to Hong Kong and approached the Society with a view to starting bird ringing in the Colony. Mr. Hechtel was fortunately in a position to undertake the job and the Hong Kong Ringing Project under the auspices of the University of Malaya is now well under way. At the end of the year it was still too early to draw any conclusions, but another year's ringing should bring some interesting knowledge about the pattern of migration through the Colony, and movement of residents in the area.

The Society played its part in the International Council for Bird Preservation's action to help defeat a Bill which had been introduced in the House of Assembly of Papua and New Guinea. The Bill sought to allow Birds of Paradise to be captured or killed for trading purposes under certain conditions.

Major Caunter kindly gave us a set of books of "The Identification of Birds for Ringers" as a parting present. Now that ringing has started here, these will be most useful, especially with those elusive warblers.

We have bought Volume II of "Birds' Life in Japan", of which we already possess Volume I. Volume II is entitled "Birds of the Waterside" and contains excellent photographs of many of the waders and seabirds that visit Hong Kong. We have ordered Vaurie's "Birds of the Palearctic Fauna, non-passeriformes". The Library already has the earlier volume dealing with perching birds. We have also acquired a copy of a splendid work

"Birds of Prey of the World", as payment in kind for an advertisement in the 1964 Bird Report. The United States Information Service in Hong Kong has generously given us a copy of "The World of Birds", by James Fisher and Roger Tory Peterson. Finally, Mr. D.W.B. Baron very kindly gave us the pick of his bird books before he left the Colony on retirement. Before very long we shall have to get a new and bigger bookcase.

Our thanks are due to the following gentlemen for permission to reproduce their excellent photographs illustrating Jack Cranmer-Byng's article:—

Mr. Richard D. Robinson, F.R.P.S., of Toronto;  
Professor Cy. G. Hampson, Ph. D.; and  
Mr. R. Dalton Muir, of Ottawa.

E. D. W.

## COLONY RECORDS, 1965

There is little that calls for comment in the weather of 1965, but the rain which has fallen more normally since the drought broke in the summer of 1964 has brought about a welcome thickening in the growth of trees and bushes.

The Deep Bay area as usual provided some of the most interesting sightings. Up to fifty-five Pelicans were around the mouth of the Shum Chun river during February and March, a Black Stork was seen over the Ping Shan marshes at that time, and a Black Bittern was recorded in the Mai/Po area on several occasions in the summer. Eight of Hong Kong's ten species of Tern were reported from the Mai Po/Lok Ma Chau district, with a fine sight of sixty Caspian Terns in flight. Pied Kingfishers seem to have increased in number, at least four birds being noted in 1965, one certainly a female. Another matter of interest in the Mai Po area was the appearance of the Purple Heron several times, and in numbers up to six, during the summer months. And finally in November, the area produced a new species for the Colony list, a Gadwall seen in flight and then shot by a huntsman.

A fair watch was kept on the Sha Tau Kok egretty, but it would be well worth making a fuller study of this the last remaining egretty in the Colony. Unfortunately most watchers live a long way from it, and the weather is apt to be very hot and wet at the time when observations should be made.

We seem to have lost touch with the Crimson-legged Crane, a bird some members became familiar with in 1962. The secret is to find a place where these birds feed, and sit quietly within sight of it just before sunset. Finding the place is the difficulty; experience suggests that wet ground bordering scrub-covered hillside is the likeliest.

Chestnut Bulbuls were seen in Hong Kong in the winters of 1959/60 and 1962/63, and they kept up this 3-yearly pattern by appearing in November 1965 after which they were seen in small numbers up to the end of the year.

The Hainan Blue Flycatcher remains elusive in its stronghold in the New Territories, and there is an interesting new record of a male seen on Hong Kong Island.

Female Plumbeous Water-redstarts are regular winter visitors in certain streams of the New Territories, but the adult male is something of a rarity, and the presence this year of at least two of these birds provided an attractive new sighting for many members.

## SYSTEMATIC LIST OF BIRDS REPORTED IN HONG KONG IN 1965

**2. Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

All records are from Deep Bay area. Two birds were seen on Jan. 10, Feb. 9, Mar. 7, and three to four on Dec. 27 (JRLC, FOPH, C&ED, S. O.)

**4. Little Grebe** *Podiceps ruficollis*

Two birds were seen on a new reservoir above Sek Kong valley on Mar. 21 (FOPH). All other records are for Tai Lam Chung Reservoir in January and March, the largest number being fifty on Mar. 12 (JRLC).

**5. Spotted-billed Pelican** *Pelecanus roseus*

Up to fifty-five reported in Deep Bay area between Feb. 2 and Mar. 14 (C&ED, JRLC, FOPH, DGR, WGM, EDW)

**6. Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Most reports are for January, February and March in the Deep Bay area, in small flocks of up to six birds. Thirty were seen in early February off N. Lantau and the same number in Deep Bay five days later. Up to six birds were reported at Tai Lam Chung Reservoir during March. (DGR, EDW, MEMB, C&ED, FOPH, JRLC). The only early winter records are of five to six between Ping Chau and Lantau on Dec. 16, and sixty (in flocks of ten and fifty) to the NW of Lantau on Dec. 17 (EA).

**10. Yellow Bittern** *Ixobrychus sinensis*

Earliest date is of one seen up watercourse behind Ting Kau on April 25 (DGR, WGM). First recorded in Deep Bay area on May 2 (EDW, ELH, MEMB), a late date. Small numbers reported in May, increasing to fifteen at end of month and to twenty in July and August. Last record, one at Mai Po on Oct. 31 (S.O.), was unusually late.

**11. Chestnut Bittern** *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*

One at Aberdeen on April 6, 7 and 13 (RAIW). One at Mai Po marshes on May 23, and Aug. 1 and 2 (EDW, FOPH, MEMB).

**12. Black Bittern** *Ixobrychus flavicollis*

One bird seen on two occasions in 1964 was the third sighting since 1939. This year there are several records. One was seen at Mai Po on May 23, June 13 and June 20 (possibly two), (EDW, FOPH). Also one at Mai Po on Aug. 1, 15, 18, 21, 22, 30 and Sep. 10 (EDW, DGR, MEMB, S.O.). One at Pokfulam Reservoir on Oct. 10 (MEMB).

**14. Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Recorded at Castle Peak, with five birds seen on Oct. 3, about four heard calling on Oct. 22, and one heard calling at 11 p.m. on Nov. 2 (EA).

**15. Chinese Pond Heron** *Ardeola bacchus*

Reported throughout the year in NTs. Also one near Aberdeen during early May (RAIW), and one at Little Sai Wan on May 14 (C&ED). 145 nests were counted at Sha Tau Kok egretty on June 7 (FOPH), there having been no sign of nesting on April 4. Young were seen away from the nests on June 13, and on Aug. 2 four birds were sitting on nests and two were seen to have young chicks (FOPH, MEMB, C&ED, EDW).

**16. Cattle Egret** *Ardeola ibis*

One bird recorded at Mai Po on Feb. 10 (JRLC), and many reports from NTs between April 4 and Nov. 11. Several birds at Sha Tau Kok on April 4 but no signs of nesting; twenty-six nests counted on June 7; many young birds away from the nests on June 13; feeding young on July 1 (FOPH, EDW, C&ED, MEMB).

**17. Little Green Heron** *Butorides striatus*

One in Lam Tsun valley (FOPH, JRLC) and one at Tai Lam Chung Reservoir (EDW), both on Jan. 24. One at Tai Lam Chung Reservoir on Mar. 12 (JRLC).

**18. Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Many reports throughout the year, mostly from Deep Bay area. Eighty seen at Ping Shan on Mar. 25 (JRLC). About six birds sitting on nests May 22 at Sha Tau Kok egretty (C&ED); fourteen nests counted high in trees on June 13 (FOPH); a number of fairly large immature birds in the wood on June 20, and young still being fed in the nests on July 1 (FOPH, MEMB).

**19. Lesser Egret** *Egretta intermedia*

One bird thought to be of this species was seen at Sha Tau Kok egretty on June 13 (FOPH).

**20. Swinhoe's Egret** *Egretta eulophotes*

All records are of birds seen at Sha Tau Kok egretty. Two were seen in flight on May 22 (C&ED); one on a nest and one moving around on June 7 (FOPH, EDW, MEMB, WGM); one sitting on a different nest in which it was thought there were either eggs or young birds, and a second bird flying about, on June 13 (FOPH, WGM, DGR); two birds on July 1 (DGR).

**21. Reef Egret** *Egretta sacra*

Reported at various times of the year from rocky shores on HK Island, Shek Wu Chau, Kai Tak, and near Rocky Harbour (JRLC, EDW, C&ED, FOPH, MEMB, EA).

22. **Great Egret** *Egretta alba*  
 Reports are all from the Deep Bay area, and cover the period up to May 31 and from Sep. 26 to the end of the year.
23. **Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*  
 Recorded as numerous in January and February, with twenty-one birds counted at Mong Tseng on Jan. 10 (FOPH). Last spring record was of one bird on May 23 (EDW, FOPH), and first autumn record one on Nov. 2 (DGR), an unusually late date. All records are from the Deep Bay area.
24. **Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*  
 Records cover a larger part of the year than usual. Five on May 16 (WGM), and May 23 (WGM, DGR). Three on May 25 (DGR, FOPH). Six on July 3 (FOPH, MEMB). One on July 4 (EDW). One on Aug. 30 (S.O.) One on Sep. 12 (EDW). Four on Sep. 13 (C&ED). One on Sep. 25 (C&ED). Two on Oct. 3 (S.O.). One on Oct. 10 (C&ED) and Oct. 18 (S.O.). Two, separately, on Oct. 24 (EDW). One on Dec. 27 (S.O.). All in Deep Bay area.
25. **Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*  
 Three records: one on Dec. 12 (EDW), Feb. 28 (EDW) Mar. 7 (S.O.), all in Ping Shan/Mong Tseng area.
28. **Lesser Spoonbill** *Platalea minor*  
 All records are from Mai Po. One on Oct. 31 (S.O.), seven on Jan. 31 (EDW), six on Feb. 10 (JRLC).
29. **Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*  
 Five at Mai Po on Feb. 5 (JAO).
30. **Yellow-nib Duck** *Anas poecilorhynca*  
 About fifteen at Mai Po on Mar. 28 (S.O.).
32. **Teal** *Anas crecca*  
 One at Mai Po on Mar. 6, six at Hung Hom on April 6 (last spring sighting) one female at Sheung Shui on Sep. 2 (first autumn sighting), (JAO). One female at Ping Shan on Oct. 18 (S.O.).
34. **Garganey** *Anas querquedula*  
 First autumn sighting at Mong Tseng on Sep. 23, one female (JAO).
- 13X **Gadwall** *Anas strepera*  
 First recorded in the Colony on Nov. 28, when a bird was seen shot by a huntsman at Ping Shan (EDW, REH).
42. **Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*  
 Fifteen to twenty birds at Mai Po on Mar. 28 (S.O.), and five off East Brother Island on Dec. 17 (EA).
43. **Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*  
 One at Mong Tseng in early December, and six males at Mai Po on Dec. 26 (JAO).

48. **Black-eared Kite** *Milvus migrans*  
 Common and widespread.
50. **Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*  
 Reported from many areas throughout early part of year up to Mar. 28 (S.O.), and again in latter part of year, the first autumn date being Aug. 30 (S.O.). One bird reported sitting on pylon in Government Stadium, Sookunpoo, every day from Jan. 1 to Mar. 23, except for a few odd days in mid-March (C&ED).
52. **Sparrow-hawk** *Accipiter nisus*  
 Reported from Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and NTs. Last spring date April 23 (EDW) first autumn date Sep. 15 (JMR). All records are for single birds except two at Lowu on Feb. 28 (WGM), two over Kowloon on Sep. 15 (JMR), two on Oct. 18 and three on Nov. 15, both sightings at Ping Shan (S.O.).
54. **Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*  
 Five records in March: one bird seen on Mar. 7 at Mong Tseng, on Mar. 10 between Stanley and Tai Tam, on Mar. 12 near Sek Kong, on Mar. 25 at Ping Shan (JRLC). One at Castle Peak on Nov. 16 (DGR).
55. **Horsfield's Goshawk** *Accipiter soloensis*  
 Adult male at Bethanie, Pokfulam, on April 21 (EDW, WGM).
56. **Golden Eagle** *Aquila chrysaetos*  
 One immature at Mai Po on Mar. 28 (S.O.).
57. **Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca*  
 Three adults on Feb. 7 (FOPH) and two adults on Feb. 10 (JRLC) at Mai Po. One adult and one immature at Lowu on Feb. 21 (S.O.). One adult and one immature at Mong Tseng on Feb. 28 (JRLC). One bird at Lowu on Mar. 2 (C&ED). One immature at Mong Tseng on Mar. 7 (S.O.). One immature at Ping Shan on Mar. 25 (JRLC).
58. **Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis*  
 One at Mai Po on Feb. 10 (JRLC). One at Sha Kong on Feb. 14 (EDW). One at Ping Shan on Dec. 18, and on Dec. 31 (juvenile), (AMM).
60. **Bonelli's Eagle** *Hieraetus fasciatus*  
 One over Happy Valley on June 7 and Nov. 15 (C&ED). Two over Chi Ma Wan, Lantau, on June 22 (C&ED).
61. **White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla*  
 One at Stanley on Feb. 13 (WGM), and one at Ting Kau on Sep. 22 (DGR). There was a doubtful record in 1963, but no other report since 1960.

- 62. White-bellied Sea Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucogaster*  
 Two adults and one immature in Cape Collinson area during first half of January. One immature at Tai Tam on Jan. 25. One bird in almost full plumage at South Bay on April 4 and June 7. One adult over western harbour on June 23. Two immatures over Mount Butler on June 30. Two adults over Cape Collinson on July 2, and three high over Victoria Barracks on July 3. One immature over Repulse Bay on Aug. 20. One over Shek O on Nov. 18, and Little Sai Wan on Nov. 20. Two at Cape Collinson on Nov. 24, where the nest site of 1963 had a new top covering. Bird on nest appeared to be sitting. (All recorded by C&ED). Two at Tai Tam on Sep. 29 (RAIW). One at Ho Chung on Jan. 23 and Pipers Hill on May 22 (JMR). Two off the Ninepins in early July (per MEMB).
- 65 (a) Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus*  
 Nine records for early part of year, mostly from Deep Bay area, last date Mar. 28 (S.O.). Four records for latter part of year, first date Sep. 26 (EDW).
- 65 (b) Striped Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus spilonotus*  
 One immature at Mai Po on Feb. 10 and Mar. 7 (JRJC).
- 66-68. Pied Harrier** *Circus melanoleucos*  
**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*  
**Montagu's Harrier** *Circus pygargus*  
 There are seven records of these Harriers. A female Hen H. was seen on Feb. 7 at Lok Ma Chau (EDW, FOPH), and on Mar. 25 at Mai Po (EDW). A male Hen H. was reported over Tai Lam Chung on Mar. 16 (DGR). One female Harrier was reported at Mai Po on Oct. 3 and Nov. 2 (DGR), and a white-rumped Harrier at Mai Po on Nov. 14 and at Luen Tak on Nov. 28 (EDW).
- 69. Black Vulture** *Aegypius monachus*  
 Three at Castle Peak on Dec. 29 (AMM).
- 70. Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*  
 Most reports are from the Deep Bay area, and are of one to two birds. Last spring date May 2 (EDW), and first autumn date Oct. 3 (S.O.). There is one summer record of one bird at Sha Tau Kok on July 1 (FOPH, EDW, MEMB). Three birds were recorded on Mar. 23 at Deep Bay (C&ED), and on Dec. 27 at Ping Shan (S.O.).
- 72. Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*  
 One at Ping Shan on Nov. 15 (S.O.), and one at Castle Peak on Oct. 23 (EA).
- 73. Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*  
 One at Mount Cameron on Jan. 9 (JRJC). One at Lowu on Mar. 2, and one sitting on pylon at Sookunpoo on Mar. 6 and 17 (C&ED). One at Sha Tau Kok on June 7, and carried off a young bird from the egretty on Aug. 2. Also reported in July, September and November from various parts of the colony (EDW, FOPH, WGM, DGR, MEMB, C&ED, JMR).
- 75. Merlin** *Falco columbarius*  
 One at Mong Tseng on Jan. 2 (EDW).
- 77. Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*  
 Reported regularly from many areas up to April 17 (FOPH), and from Oct. 3 (EDW).
- 78. Chinese Francolin** *Francolinus pintadeanus*  
 Heard in many areas from late March to mid July. A few reports of sightings.
- 79. Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*  
 Considered by huntsmen to be a poor year. Nine flushed at Sheung Shui on Mar. 7 and one on Mar. 13. No autumn sightings (JAO). One probable at Sheung Shui on Feb. 21 (S.O.).
- 81 & 82. Button-Quail** *Turnix suscitator or tanki*  
 One flushed at Yim Tin Tsai on Jan. 24 (JAO).
- 85. Banded Rail** *Rallus striatus*  
 One at Mong Tseng/Luen Tak on Mar. 14 (JMR), and one at Mai Po on June 12 (EDW). Two together at Mai Po on July 3 (FOPH, MEMB). One, either *R. striatus* or *R. aquaticus*, at Mai Po on Nov. 2 (DGR, EA).
- 88. Crimson-legged Crake** *Amaurornis akool*  
 Only record is of one beside Route 2 on Mar 2 (C&ED).
- 89. White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus*  
 One or two birds recorded in every month of the year. All reports are from NTs except for records of up to four birds at Aberdeen in April (RAIW), and one bird at Ma Wan island on April 14 (DGR).
- 90. Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*  
 One in Long Valley on Feb. 27 (MStA).
- 93. Pheasant-tailed Jacana** *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*  
 One seen at Ping Shan on Oct. 18 (S.O.).
- 94. Painted Snipe** *Rostratula benghalensis*  
 One shot in early December at Ping Shan (per MEMB).
- 96. Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*  
 Ten together on marshes near Ping Shan on Dec. 27 (S.O.).

- 99. Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*  
Reported from early February to May 23 (DGR), and from Aug. 21 (DGR) to end of year. Largest number about 50 on Feb. 10 at Mai Po (JRLC).
- 100. Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*  
Reported throughout early part of year up to June 13 (EDW), and throughout latter part of year from Aug. 1 (EDW). This is an exceptionally late spring date and an exceptionally early autumn date. Two hundred were recorded at Mai Po on Jan. 31 (EDW) and on Feb. 10 (JRLC), and a flock of five hundred Plover, mostly Kentish Plover, was noted on Feb. 15 (C&ED). Large flocks were seen again in autumn, with one hundred on Oct. 10 (C&ED), one hundred and fifty on Oct. 24 (EDW), and several hundred widely spread on Nov. 14 (EDW).
- 101. Greater Sand-plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii*  
Recorded throughout the year at Mai Po, the largest numbers being in early April and in September.
- 102. Mongolian Sand-plover** *Charadrius mongolus*  
All records are from the Deep Bay area, and cover the periods Mar. 28 to June 6, and Aug. 2 to Sep. 12, both the extreme dates of the autumn period being exceptionally early. Flocks of thirty were seen in April and May, and fifty in September, (EDW, JRLC, FOPH, C&ED, DGR, WGM).
- 104. Grey Plover** *Charadrius squatarola*  
Twentyone seen together with Kentish Plover on Jan. 31 (EDW). Three to four reported during April and May, and one on Aug. 15 and 22, and on Oct. 10, (C&ED, EDW, WGM, FOPH). All at Mai Po.
- 105. Asiatic Golden Plover** *Charadrius dominicus*  
Two on Feb. 7 (FOPH, EDW), three on May 1 (C&ED), two on Sep. 10 (S.O.), five on Oct. 10 (C&ED), one on Dec. 27 (S.O.). All from Deep Bay area.
- 106. Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*  
All records are from Mai Po in the spring. One on April 11 (EDW), five on April 19 (S.O.), three on May 1 (C&ED), and five on May 2 (EDW).
- 107. Fantail Snipe** *Capella gallinago*  
Five shot near Saikung between Jan. 10 and Feb. 9 (JAO). One recorded at Sheung Chuk Yuen on Jan. 24 (WGM). Nine shot at Ha Tsuen on Sep. 1 (JAO). Eight recorded at Ping Shan on Dec. 18, and one on Dec. 27 (S.O.). (Also seven seen in huntsman's bag on Dec. 27).
- 108. Pintail Snipe** *Capella stenura*  
One in Government House garden on Jan. 30 (EDW). Two at Sheung Shui on Mar. 13 (last spring sighting), and one at Sheung Shui on Sep. 23 (first autumn sighting), (JAO). One seen shot at Ping Shan on Oct. 18 (S.O.).

- 109. Swinhoe's Snipe** *Capella megala*  
Six on April 10 and one on April 13 at Sheung Shui (JAO).
- 110. Solitary Snipe** *Capella solitaria*  
The following records were also received:—  
107-108. One at Ho Chung on Dec. 19 and Dec. 22 (JMR).  
107-109. One to two at Lowu on Mar. 2 (C&ED). One at Ho Chung on April 10 (EDW). Up to ten at Ping Shan on Oct. 18 (S.O.).  
107-110. Ten to twenty at Mai Po on Feb. 7 (EDW, FOPH). One at Lok Ma Chau on Feb. 7 (FOPH). One at Sha Tau Kok on Feb 14 (FOPH). One or two seen in flight near Castle Peak from mid-October to end of year (EA).
- 112. Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*  
One at Mong Tseng on Jan. 10 (FOPH). One at Tai Lam Chung on Mar. 10 (DGR). One at Ho Chung on Dec. 19 (JMR).
- 113. Curlew** *Numenius arquata*  
Six on Jan 31 (EDW), five on Feb. 7 (FOPH, EDW), several on Feb. 20 and eighteen on Feb. 21 (WGM), one on May 1 (C&ED). No records for the summer months. Two on Sep. 9 (EDW), seven on Oct. 10 (C&ED), ten to twelve on Oct. 24, five on Nov. 14 and two on Dec. 19 (EDW), one on Dec. 27 (S.O.). All at Mai Po.
- 115. Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*  
One on April 11 (EDW), several on April 19 (S.O.), ten on May 2 (EDW), five on May 23 (DGR), two on May 23 and seven on May 30 (FOPH, EDW), eight on June 6 (WGM), ten on June 13 (EDW). One on Aug. 22 (EDW), several small flocks on Aug. 30 (S. O.), ten on Sep. 10 (EDW), one on Sep. 25 (C&ED) one on Sep. 26 (EDW), two on Oct. 3 (S.O.). All at Mai Po.
- 117. Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*  
Three at Mai Po on Aug. 15 (EDW).
- 119. Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*  
One or two birds reported from various parts of NTs up to April 19, and from Oct. 13 to end of year. Greatest numbers were: eight at Mong Tseng on Jan. 10 (FOPH), twelve at Lowu on Feb. 21 (S.O.), thirty at Long Valley on Feb. 27 (MStA), (this was an exceptionally large group), and ten to twelve at Ping Shan on Dec. 27 (S.O.).
- 120. Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*  
One on Feb. 2 (MStA), twenty on April 11 (EDW), small numbers at Mai Po and fair numbers at Lok Ma Chau on April 19 (S.O.). Up to five birds seen from Aug. 22 to Oct. 29, with one winter record of three at Ping Shan on Dec. 27 (S.O.).



- 121. Common Sandpiper** *Tringa hypoleucos*  
 Numerous records throughout the year from various areas including Kellett Island and Yaumati.
- 122. Redshank** *Tringa totanus*  
 One or two birds reported on Feb. 7 (EDW, FOPH) and Feb. 10 (JRLC). Spring records cover the period April 4 to May 23, the largest number being twenty on April 11 (EDW) and May 1 (C&ED). The autumn period was short, the first record being on Aug. 1 (EDW) and the last on Sep. 26 (S.O.), and the largest number of birds seen was twelve on Aug. 2 (EDW).
- 123. Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*  
 Seen regularly from January to mid-April, usually between nine and seventeen birds, in Deep Bay area (EDW, FOPH, AFA, JRLC, DGR). Only record for latter part of year is of one at Luen Tak on Dec. 18 (AMM).
- 124. Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*  
 Two at Mai Po on Jan. 31 (EDW). One or two recorded several times between April 11 and June 13 (EDW, FOPH, DGR, S.O.). One on Sep. 10 (S.O.), and thereafter larger numbers of up to eight, with sixteen at Luen Tak on Dec. 18 (AMM).
- 125. Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*  
 All records are for the second half of the year and from the Mai Po/Ping Shan area: one on Aug. 22 (EDW), nine on Sep. 10 (S.O.), twenty on Oct. 3 (S.O.), fourteen on Oct. 10 (C&ED) and one on Dec. 18 (AMM).
- 126. Grey-rumped Sandpiper** *Tringa brevipes*  
 Records cover the month of May, with numbers up to thirty, and a report of one on June 6 (EDW, FOPH, WGM, DGR). The only autumn report is of two on Aug. 15 (EDW). All reports are from Mai Po.
- 127. Terek Sandpiper** *Tringa terek*  
 Reported from April 11 to June 13, with a flock of fifty-five on April 19 (S.O.), and from Aug. 2 to Oct. 10, the largest number being thirteen on Sep. 25. All reports are from Mai Po.
- 130. Eastern Little Stint** *Calidris ruficollis*  
 About thirty at Mai Po and fifteen at Lok Ma Chau on Mar. 28 (S.O.). Seen in varying numbers up to thirty until May 30, (EDW). Two on Aug. 1 (EDW), an exceptionally early date, and thereafter in varying numbers up to ten until Oct. 31 (S.O.), an exceptionally late date.
- 132. Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*  
 There are two records for the spring: ten birds on Mar. 12 (MStA), and six on May 30 (FOPH). Records for the later part of the year are: one on Sep 25 (C&ED), six on Oct. 18 (S.O.), one on Oct. 25 (C&ED), four on Dec. 18 and one on Dec. 27 (AMM). All in Deep Bay area.

- 134. Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*  
 Up to thirty birds were seen during January and February, decreasing to smaller numbers of up to six in March and April, with a flock of eighteen seen in early May. Last spring date May 30 (EDW). First autumn date Sep. 25 (C&ED). Small numbers of two to six birds reported during September and October, with thirty seen on Nov. 14 (EDW). All reports from Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau.
- 135. Curlew-sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*  
 Three on March 28 at Mai Po, and the same number at Lok Ma Chau (S.O.). Three on May 23 (FOPH, DGR), and one on May 30 (FOPH), all at Mai Po. The only autumn record is of one at Mai Po on Sep. 26 (EDW).
- 136. Sanderling** *Crocethia alba*  
 Ten on Mar. 28 (S.O.), and ten on April 11 (EDW). All at Mai Po.
- 137. Spoon-billed Sandpiper** *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*  
 Three on May 23 (FOPH, EDW), and one on May 30 (EDW). All at Mai Po.
- 138. Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limicola falcinellus*  
 Four on April 19 (S.O.), one on May 2 (EDW), two on May 23 (EDW, DGR, FOPH), two on May 30 (FOPH). One on Sep. 10 (S.O.), two on Oct. 10 (C&ED). All at Mai Po.
- 139. Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*  
 One at Mai Po on Sep. 25 (C&ED).
- 140. Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus*  
 Groups of two to five birds seen swimming off Junk Bay, Little Sai Wan, and Joss House Bay on April 9 (EDW). About fifty in Port Shelter on April 19 (JAO). Twelve in Hong Kong Harbour on April 24 (EDW). One on fishpond at Mai Po on Sep. 26 (EDW).
- 141. Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*  
 One male and one female together at Mai Po on May 23 (FOPH, EDW, MEMB, DGR), and again on May 25 (FOPH).
- 143. Collared Pratincole** *Glareola pratincola*  
 At least twelve at Chuk Yuen on Mar. 26 (WGM). One at Mai Po on Mar. 28 (S.O.). One to three birds at Aberdeen between April 5 and 12 (RAIW). Two at Mai Po on April 19 (S.O.). Two at Mai Po on May 22 (DGR). The only autumn record is of two hundred seen flying over Mai Po in loose flocks on Oct. 31. (S.O.).
- 144. Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus*  
 In the early part of the year the only records from Hong Kong Harbour are of twenty on Mar. 7 (FOPH), and thirty on Mar. 11 (C&ED). Two were seen in Deep Bay on Jan. 10 (JRLC) and four in the same area on Feb. 9 (C&ED). Thirty were reported in Hong Kong Harbour on Nov. 6 (C&ED), twenty

on Dec. 27 (MEMB), one hundred on Dec. 29 and two hundred on Dec. 30 (FOPH, MEMB). Other reports are of small numbers off Tai Lam Chung on Nov. 19 and Castle Peak Bay on Dec. 16 (EA), Deep Bay on Dec. 27 (S.O.), Castle Peak Bay on Dec. 29 (AMM) and Cheung Chau on Dec. 30 (FOPH, MEMB).

**148. Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus*

Thirty to forty in the Deep Bay area on Jan. 10 (JRLC), six at Mai Po on Mar. 14 (C&ED). Two at Deep Bay on Nov. 14 (EDW), and up to sixty in the Deep Bay/Castle Peak area from Nov. 28 to the end of the year (EA, EDW, AMM, S.O.)

**149. Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger*

**150. White-winged Black Tern** *Chlidonias leucoptera*

**151. Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybrida*

Several small parties seen at Mai Po on Oct. 3 were considered to be of these species (EDW). Six of 149 were seen at Mai Po on May 23 (WGM, DGR). There are five definite records of 150: five birds on May 1 (C&ED), forty on May 9 (EDW), thirty on May 16 (WGM), two on May 23 (DGR, FOPH), and ten on May 25 (FOPH), all at Mai Po. Flocks of up to eighty seen at Castle Peak after Typhoon Agnes on Sep. 27 and 28 were thought to be either 150 or 151 (DGR, EA), one being seen again in the same place on Oct. 7 and 8 (EA). Twenty-five of 151 were reported on May 30 (FOPH), five on Sep. 10 (S.O.), and eighteen on Sep. 12 (FOPH), all from Mai Po/Ping Shan area.

**152. Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica*

Two on April 11 (EDW), eight on April 19 (S.O.), and reports continuing up to June 13, with twenty-five on May 16 (WGM), forty on May 25 and thirty on May 30 (FOPH). All reports are from Mai Po. No autumn records.

**153. Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne caspia*

All reports except one cover the period April 19 to June 6, and are of small groups of up to twelve birds increasing in early May with fifty seen on May 2 (S.O.). Numbers rose again in early June, and twenty were seen on June 6 (WGM). One bird was seen on Aug. 15 (EDW). All records are from the Mai Po area.

**3X. Nordmann's Tern** *Sterna hirundo longipennis Nordmann*

One on June 12 at Mai Po (EDW).

**154. Black-naped Tern** *Sterna sumatrana Raffles*

Two on June 13 and one on Sep. 26, all at Mai Po (EDW).

**155. Little Tern** *Sterna albifrons*

One found dead at Mai Po on April 19 (S.O.). Three on May 1 (C&ED) and three on May 9 (EDW), both records from Mai Po.

**156. Greater Crested Tern** *Thalasseus bergii*

One on May 30 at Mai Po (FOPH, EDW).

**158. Rufous Turtle-dove** *Streptopelia orientalis*

One on Feb. 10 at Mai Po (JRLC), and four on Dec. 27 at Mong Tseng (S.O.).

**159. Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis*

Common and widespread, both on HK Island and in NTs.

**160. Red Turtle-dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica*

One in Pokfulam on April 30 (MEMB).

**161. Rose-ringed Paroquet** *Psittacula krameri*

Seen throughout the year in usual area on north side of HK Island. Also the following records from Mong Tseng: one on Mar. 20, four on Oct. 26, seven on Nov. 9, four on Nov. 21, six on Dec. 27 (JMR, C&ED, FOPH, S.O.).

**162. Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus telephonus*

One on April 18 in Pokfulam (WGM), and one on May 23 in Lam Tsun Valley (EDW, FOPH, MEMB).

**164. Indian Cuckoo** *Cuculus micropterus*

One at Mong Tseng on April 25 and May 2 (JMR). One heard calling near Fanling on May 15 (per MEMB), and at Repulse Bay on May 28 (C&ED).

**165. Large Hawk-Cuckoo** *Cuculus sparveroides*

A pair reported in Mai Po wood on May 23 (WGM, DGR).

**166. Plaintive Cuckoo** *Cacomantis merulinus*

All records fall between April 10 and June 16, and many are of birds heard only. They cover HK Island and various parts of the NTs.

**169. Koel** *Eudynamis scolopacea*

Pair seen at Fanling on Feb. 10 and heard calling until April 19 when observer left (MStA). One heard calling on the Peak on Mar. 14 and 27 (MEMB), on April 15 (FOPH), and June 26 (MEMB). One seen at Mong Tseng on April 25, and two on May 2 (JMR). Male and female seen and heard by Sha Tau Kok egretty on April 30, May 9, May 16, June 20 (FOPH, DGR, MEMB), and two males noted there on May 22 (C&ED). Black-necked Starlings, of which this bird is a parasite, were nesting in this wood. One male was seen at Tai Tam on June 6 (C&ED), and one male at Mong Tseng on Oct. 26 (FOPH).

**170. Crow-Pheasant** *Centropus sinensis*

Seen and heard throughout the year in many parts of HK Island and NTs.

**171. Lesser Crow-Pheasant** *Centropus bengalensis*

Reported from various parts of HK Island and NTs during the year but not so common as 170.

172. **Barred Owl** *Glaucidium cuculoides*  
The only report is of one in Pokfulam on April 11 (MEMB).
173. **Scops Owl** *Otus scops*  
One (of the red form) ringed at Mong Tseng on Dec. 10 (FOPH).
180. **Savannah Nightjar** *Caprimulgus affinis*  
Two on Tai Mo Shan on Feb. 17 (MStA). One above Castle Peak Road, 11½ milestone, on June 13 (DGR, WGM). The usual influx reported at Castle Peak in the latter part of the year, (per MEMB), first seen Oct. 14 (EA). Two or three at Kai Tak on Dec. 12 (per MEMB).
181. **Large White-rumped Swift** *Apus pacificus*  
Reported in all months except January, November and December, the largest numbers being about one hundred seen at Castle Peak from Sep. 27 to 29 (EA).
182. **House Swift** *Apus affinis*  
Reported in small numbers from many parts of HK Island and NTs throughout the year, with more than one hundred over Sookunpoo on Sep. 15 (C&ED).
183. **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis*  
One seen at Mong Tseng on Mar. 14 (JMR), at Mai Po on April 4 (two birds) April 19, May 9, May 23 (one bird), June 12 (one female), Aug. 1, Aug. 22 (one bird), Oct. 3 (four birds, three of them together and at least one male), Oct. 24 (two birds). At Ping Shan on Oct. 18 (one female). At Mong Tseng on Oct. 24 (one female). (EDW, JMR, FOPH, S.O.). At Castle Peak on Oct. 29 and Nov. 10 (one bird), (EA).
184. **Crested Kingfisher** *Ceryle lugubris*  
One female seen at Tai Lam Chung on Mar. 8 and 10 (DGR), Mar. 14 (WGM), Mar. 20 (EDW).
185. **Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*  
Reported throughout the year from various parts of coastline, HK Island and NTs.
186. **White-breasted Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis*  
Reported throughout the year from many parts of HK Island and NTs, the largest numbers being in the late summer and early winter, with eight at Mai Po on Aug. 30 (S.O.), and ten at Ping Shan on Nov. 15 and 28 (EDW, S.O.) One ringed at Mong Tseng on Dec. 14 (FOPH).
187. **Black-capped Kingfisher** *Halcyon pileata*  
One to four birds seen in various parts of NTs throughout year with one record for HK Island, at Chung Am Kok on Sep. 13 (MEMB). Less common than 186.

189. **Broad-billed Roller** *Eurystomas orientalis*  
All reports are in autumn. One at Castle Peak on Sep. 24 and 26 (DGR). One at Mong Tseng on Oct. 3 and 18 (JMR). Five on Oct. 4 and one on Oct. 18 at Pipers Hill (JMR). Two on Oct. 8, three on Oct. 10, six on Oct. 17, one on Oct. 19, two on Oct. 22, all at Pokfulam (MEMB, EDW, C&ED).
191. **Great Barbet** *Megalaima virens*  
Seen or heard in the Lam Tsun Valley on Jan. 17, Jan. 23 and Mar. 7; at Tai Po Kau on June 7, June 20 and July 1; on Ma On Shan on July 11 (two heard), (JRLC, EDW, MStA, MEMB, FOPH).
194. **Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*  
Most sightings are in the Ping Shan/Mong Tseng area: four birds on Jan. 10, two on Mar. 7, one on Nov. 28, two on Dec. 27. Also one at Tai Lam Chung on Jan 24, one at Lowu on Feb. 21, and one at Mai Po on Oct. 4. (S.O., EDW, REH, FOPH). One bird was ringed at Mong Tseng on Dec. 18 (FOPH).
195. **Oriental Skylark** *Alauda galgula*  
About fifteen at Lowu and three at Sheung Shui on Feb. 21 (S.O.) One at Big Wave Bay on Feb. 24 (JRLC). Two at Lowu on Mar. 2 (C&ED). One at Chung Am Kok on April 27 (MEMB). Two at Ping Shan on Dec. 27 (S.O.). Also one unusual record of one at Ngong Ping, Lantau, on July 1 (AFA).
196. **Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*  
Reported in small numbers throughout the year, increasing to fifty in late March, thirty in early April, twenty in mid-June, and thirty in early July. Four juveniles were seen being fed on June 20 (FOPH, MEMB).
197. **Red-rumped Swallow** *Hirundo daurica*  
One at Chung Am Kok on April 25 (C&ED).
201. **Rufous-backed Shrike** *Lanius schach*  
Common and widespread. Dusky variant also reported in many areas. Four ringed at Mong Tseng, on Dec. 11, 14 (two) and 19 (FOPH).
202. **Bull-headed Shrike** *Lanius bucephalus*  
One at Tai Mong Tsai on Jan. 1 (S.O.). One at Mong Tseng on Mar. 14 (JMR). One male at Aberdeen from Dec. 8 to 11 (RAIW). One at Mai Po on Sep. 13 and one female at Ho Chung on Dec. 12 (C&ED). One female was ringed at Mong Tseng on Dec. 13 (FOPH).
- 203 (a) **Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus cristatus*  
(b) **Japanese Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus superciliosus*  
(c) **Philippine Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus lucionensis*  
Difficulty is found in differentiating between these birds in the field. Records are believed to be as follow:—

(a) One on the Peak on Sep. 4 (MEMB), one juvenile at Castle Peak on Oct. 27 and 31 (EA).

(b) One at Mai Po on Mar. 12 (MStA), one at Far East Farm on May 6 (AFA), one on the Peak on Sep. 28 (MEMB), one at Ho Chung on Dec. 5 (S.O.).

(c) One at Tai Mong Tsai on Jan 31 and at Lok Ma Chau on Feb. 7 (FOPH), one at Far East Farm from April 15 to May 1 (AFA), two at Mai Po (EDW) two at Mong Tseng (JMR), and one at Broadwood Road (C&ED), all on May 2. One found dead on east end of HK Island on May 3 (C&ED).

Also three records for which no race is stated: one bird at Mai Po on Aug. 30 (S.O.), one at Castle Peak on Sep. 28 (DGR), one at Sek Kong on Dec. 14 (DGR).

**204. Black-naped Oriole** *Oriolus chinensis*

Reported from HK Island and NTs. First date April 18 (heard) at Tai Po (per MEMB), last date Nov. 15, having been seen regularly up to that late day at Castle Peak (DGR). Four birds seen at Tai Po on June 20, one feeding young in nest (FOPH, ELH, MEMB).

**205. Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus*

All records fall between April 19 and Oct. 26, except for one at Pokfulam on Dec. 31 (RAIW), and one at Lok Ma Chau on Jan. 7 (C&ED). Twelve birds were seen together at Mong Tseng on April 25 (JMR).

**207. Hair-crested Drongo** *Dicrurus hottentottus*

Reported from HK Island and NTs. First date, one at Mong Tseng on March 7 (JMR); last date, one at Ting Kau on Oct. 5 (DGR). Six adult birds and one young being fed at Tai Po on June 20 (FOPH, ELH, MEMB).

**208. Chinese Starling** *Sturnus sinensis*

Reported from several parts of NTs. Also one record for HK Island, of three at Chung Am Kok on July 11 (MEMB). First date Mar. 14 at Mong Tseng (JMR), last date Oct. 18 at Ping Shan (S.O.).

**209. Silky Starling** *Sturnus sericeus*

Most records are from Deep Bay area. Also two at Sek Kong on Feb. 15 (C&ED), four at Ho Chung on Mar. 3 (JRLC), twenty-one at Lowu on Nov. 9 (FOPH). One record from HK Island of three at Aberdeen on Dec. 10 (RAIW).

**210. Grey Starling** *Sturnus cineraceus*

All reports are from Deep Bay area. Last spring date Mar. 23, one at Mong Tseng (C&ED); first autumn date Oct. 18, four at Ping Shan (S.O.).

**211. Black-necked Starling** *Sturnus nigricollis*

Reported in various parts of NTs. Nested in tree beside Sha Tau Kok egret; birds seen going in and out from May 16 to June 20, and two still in vicinity on Aug. 15 (MEMB, FOPH, CD, EDW).

**212. Common Mynah** *Acridotheres tristis*

Most records are from the Ping Shan/Mong Tseng area, and there are none for HK Island. No reports for the period May 23 to Oct. 3.

**213. Crested Mynah** *Acridotheres cristatellus*

Common and widespread.

**214. Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Two on April 18 and one on May 9 at Kowloon Reservoir (JMR). This is an unusually late date. One at Jubilee Reservoir on Nov. 5 (MEMB).

**215. Blue Magpie** *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*

Common on HK Island, and reported in parties of up to six birds in several areas of NTs, with eleven in one flock at Ho Chung on Dec. 22 (JMR).

**216. Magpie** *Pica pica*

Common and widespread. Noted as coming together in flocks during cold winter months, a flock of sixteen being seen at Sookunpoo on Dec. 26 (C&ED).

**219. Jungle Crow** *Corvus macrorhynchos*

One to four birds reported in various parts of HK Island and NTs throughout the year. Two larger groups were seen on coastal mud, six at Tai Po on Mar. 14 (JRLC), and forty at Mai Po on May 23 (DGR).

**220. Collared Crow** *Corvus torquatus*

One or two birds and occasionally three or four together reported entirely from the NTs and west end of HK Harbour.

**221. Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike** *Coracina melaschistos*

One or two birds reported at Mai Po wood in February and March. One at Castle Peak in late September. One in Mai Po wood in early October. The only record for HK Island is of one in Pokfulam on Sep. 19. (DGR, JRLC, FOPH, C&ED, S.O.).

**223. Ashy Minivet** *Pericrocotus divaricatus*

Up to ten birds seen in Pokfulam between April 7 and 16 (C&ED, MEMB, FOPH). One on the Peak on April 18 (per MEMB). One at Castle Peak on Sep. 24 (DGR).

**224. Scarlet Minivet** *Pericrocotus flammeus*

One female at Mong Tseng on Oct. 18, and Ho Chung on Dec. 5 (JMR).

226. **Chestnut Bulbul** *Microscelis flavalus*  
Seven on the Peak on Nov. 21 (REH). Six at Ho Chung on Dec. 5 (S.O.). Two at Ho Chung on Dec. 12 (C&ED). Four at Sha Kong on Dec. 27 (S.O.).
228. **Crested Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus*  
Common and widespread. Feeding young at Far East Farm in late June (AFA). One ringed at Mong Tseng on Dec. 9 and two in Pokfulam on Dec. 31 (FOPH).
229. **Chinese Bulbul** *Pycnonotus sinensis*  
Abundant and widespread. Nested successfully at Far East Farm March/April (AFA). Forty-two birds ringed at Mong Tseng Dec. 9 to 19, and six at Pokfulam on Dec. 31 (FOPH).
230. **Red-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus aurigaster*  
Common and widespread. Young reared in nest four feet from living room window at Mount Nicholson, June/July (MEMB). Nest containing young at Far East Farm, July 3 (AFA). Fourteen birds ringed at Mong Tseng, Dec. 9 to 18 (FOPH).
234. **Black-faced Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax perspicillatus*  
Common and widespread.
235. **Black-throated Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax chinensis*  
All reports are from areas on the Peak, and many are of birds heard only. One to six birds were seen on seven dates between Mar. 10 and May 3 (FOPH). One was seen on April 13 and two on April 15 (EDW). Three were seen on Sep. 15 (MEMB), and one on Nov. 2 (FOPH).
236. **Hwamei** *Garrulax canorus*  
Seen and heard throughout the year, both on HK Island and in NTs. Nest containing four bright blue eggs seen at Chung Am Kok on April 18, empty on April 27 (MEMB).
238. **Pekin Robin** *Leiothrix lutea*  
Several seen in bushes near Tsun Wan on Nov. 7 (DGR). Three ringed at Pokfulam on Dec. 31 (FOPH).
240. **Ince's Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone paradisi*  
One at Pokfulam on April 9 (MEMB). One at Castle Peak on Sep. 14 (EA), Sep. 24, Sep. 26, Oct. 27, and Oct. 28 (two), (DGR). One at Mai Po wood on Oct. 3 (S.O.).
242. **Grey-headed Flycatcher** *Culicicapa ceylonensis*  
One seen regularly at mid-levels, the Peak, from Jan. 1 to Mar 9 (MEMB, FOPH, JRLC, C&ED), and from Nov. 14 to Dec. 5 (MEMB).
243. **Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher** *Hypothymis azurea*  
One at Ho Chung on Dec. 22 (JMR), and one at Mong Tseng on Dec. 27 (S.O.).
244. **Brown Flycatcher** *Muscicapa latirostris*  
Reported from many areas throughout the winter. Last spring date April 19 (FOPH), first autumn date Aug. 29 (MEMB).
245. **Grey-spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa griseistica*  
Reported from April 4 to May 6, and two birds at Castle Peak on Sep. 26. April 4 (WGM) is a record early spring date.
247. **Verditer Flycatcher** *Muscicapa thalassina*  
One male at Ho Chung on Jan. 9 (EDW). One female on the Peak on Jan. 31 (MEMB). One bird at Castle Peak on Oct. 28 (DGR).
248. **Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa parva*  
Reported from the NTs in January, February and March, and from Castle Peak on Sep. 24 and Government House garden on Oct. 12. (WGM, MStA, FOPH, JRLC, DGR, EDW).
249. **Robin Flycatcher** *Muscicapa mugimaki*  
The only record is of one female at Ho Chung on Dec. 12 (C&ED).
252. **Hainan Blue Flycatcher** *Niltava hainana*  
Reported at Tai Po between June 13 and July 3, with one male seen and two birds heard on June 13, 20, and July 1. One male and one female both seen and heard on July 3. (FOPH, ELH, MEMB, EDW, WGM, DGR). The only other record is of one male seen in Pokfulam on April 19 (FOPH).
253. **Blue and White Flycatcher** *Cyanoptila cyanomelana*  
Two females at Mai Po wood on Mar. 28 (MEMB), and one male in same place later in day (S.O.). One male at Pokfulam on April 7 (C&ED), and April 19 (MEMB). One immature male at Mai Po wood on Oct. 3 (EDW).
254. **Chinese Bush Warbler** *Cettia diphone*  
There are seven spring records from the NTs, all of single birds, the last date being April 5 at Far East Farm (AFA). Four birds were seen at Castle Peak on Sep. 28 (DGR). The only records for HK Island are on the Peak, one bird on Mar. 27 and one on Nov. 20 (MEMB).
257. **Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella certhiola*  
Three at Fanling on Jan. 24 (MEMB).
259. **Von Schrenck's Reed-warbler** *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*  
One at Mai Po on Mar. 28 (JRLC).
260. **Great Reed-warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*  
Two spring records: one bird at Sha Tau Kok on May 16 (MEMB, C&ED), and one at Mai Po on May 23 (FOPH). Recorded as numerous at Mai Po during September. Three birds on Oct. 18 and one on Nov. 15 at Ping Shan. One at Lowu on Nov. 9. (EDW, C&ED, FOPH, DGR, S.O.).
262. **Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus*  
Many reports, all from NTs. Last spring date May 2 (EDW), first autumn date Sep. 26 (EDW). Four birds ringed at Mong Tseng between Dec. 10 and 15 (FOPH).

263. **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*  
Reported from many areas of HK Island and NTs throughout winter. Last spring date Mar. 28 (FOPH), first autumn date Sep. 12 (MEMB).
264. **Pallas's Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus*  
There is some difficulty in identifying this species, though it is believed to be common and widespread. The only three records received are: one in Lam Tsun Valley on Jan. 17, and one at Ho Chung on Feb. 3 (both S.O.), and one at Castle Peak on Dec. 26 (AMM).
265. **Arctic Warbler** *Phylloscopus borealis*  
One in Lam Tsun Valley on May 5 (WGM, DGR).
266. **Pale-legged Willow-warbler** *Phylloscopus tenellipes*  
One in Lam Tsun Valley on Sep. 10 (MEMB, C&ED). One in Mai Po wood on Sep. 25 (C&ED), and Oct. 3 (S.O.).
270. **Long-tailed Tailor-bird** *Orthotomus sutorius*  
Common and widespread.
- 7X **White-browed Hill Warbler** *Prinia superciliaris*  
One on Sai Kung peninsula on Mar. 14 (FOPH). This is the second Colony record.
272. **Brown Wren-warbler** *Prinia subflava*  
Noted only at Mai Po, between early February and late September.
273. **Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler** *Prinia flaviventris*  
Reports of many birds in north-west of NTs throughout the year. The only other records are from Big Wave Bay on Mar. 10, Big Wave Bay and Shek O on Mar. 24, and Plover Cove on Mar. 14, (JRLC). Several parties of young birds at Mai Po in early July (FOPH, MEMB).
274. **Fantail Warbler** *Cisticola juncidis*  
Several seen at Lowu on Feb. 21 and Mar. 2. Also Deep Bay area during March and at Sha Tau Kok on Mar. 28. No records for summer. Seen in Deep Bay area from Oct. 18 to end of year. (JRLC, S.O., DGR, EDW, FOPH, C&ED, AMM).
276. **Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica*  
One at Mai Po on Feb. 14 and April 4 (C&ED).
277. **Rubythroat** *Luscinia calliope*  
One male and one female on Feb. 18 at Big Wave Bay (C&ED). One male on Feb. 24 at Castle Peak (DGR). A pair on Mar. 13 and two males on April 18 in same area of Lam Tsun Valley (MStA). One bird on April 5 at Aberdeen (RAIW). One male on April 18 on the Peak (FOPH). No sightings recorded for latter part of year except for birds ringed, but many were heard in the last three months of the year. Five males and one female were ringed at Mong Tseng between Dec. 11 and 19 (FOPH).

278. **Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus*  
One female at Pokfulam on Mar. 16 (MEMB), April 1 (EDW), and April 11 (MEMB, ELH). One female at Castle Peak on Dec. 26 (AMM).
279. **Magpie Robin** *Copsychus saularis*  
Common, particularly on HK Island, and widespread.
280. **Daurian Redstart** *Phoenicurus aureoreus*  
Widespread reports for early part of year up to Mar. 14 when one male was seen at Mong Tseng (JMR), and one male on the Peak (MEMB). Also from Nov. 14, when one female was seen at Mong Tseng (JMR), to end of year.
281. **Plumbeous Water-redstart** *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*  
Only the female (or possibly immature male) was seen in the early months of the year: one at Ho Chung up to Feb. 3, one in Lam Tsun Valley in the latter half of January, and one at Tai Lam Chung on Jan. 24, (JRLC, EDW, FOPH, C&ED, S.O.). Several adult males were reported in addition to females in the latter part of the year: one female at Ting Kau on Oct. 24 and 25, (a record early date), one male and one to two females at Ho Chung between Nov. 28 and Dec. 30, one female at Kowloon Reservoir on Dec. 8, and one male in Lam Tsun Valley on Dec. 19. (DGR, JMR, S.O., EDW, C&ED).
282. **Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata*  
Widespread reports up to April 9 (RAIW), and from Oct. 3 (EA) to the end of the year. One male and two females ringed at Mong Tseng between Dec. 11 and 18 (FOPH).
283. **Grey Bushchat** *Saxicola ferrea*  
One male at Tai Lam Chung on Jan 24 (EDW), two females at Sai Kung peninsula on Mar. 14 (FOPH), one bird at Far East Farm from April 15 to 20 (AFA).
- 284 (a) **Blue Rock-thrush** *Monticola solitaria pandoo*  
Widespread reports up to Mar. 21, and from Sep. 15 to end of year.
- 284 (b) **Red-bellied Rock-thrush** *Monticola solitaria philippensis*  
Widespread reports up to April 28, and from Sep. 19 to end of year.
285. **Chestnut-breasted Rock-thrush** *Monticola rufiventris*  
One at Cape D'Aguiar on Feb. 24 (JRLC), one male on the Peak on Feb. 27 (MEMB), and one male at Castle Peak on Mar. 17 (DGR).
286. **Violet Whistling Thrush** *Myiophonus caeruleus*  
Reported throughout the year from various areas.
287. **Pale Thrush** *Turdus pallidus*  
One on the Peak on Jan. 23 (MEMB), two at Lowu on Feb. 21 (S.O.), one male on the Peak on Mar. 17 (JRLC).

- 288. Eye-browed Thrush** *Turdus obscurus*  
One at Pokfulam on April 19 (FOPH), and one at Ting Kau on April 25 (WGM, DGR).
- 290. Grey-backed Thrush** *Turdus hortulorum*  
Reported from many areas up to Mar. 27. The only records for the latter part of the year are for Dec. 26, 27 and 30. Ten males and four females were ringed at Mong Tseng between Dec. 9 and 18 (FOPH).
- 292. Blackbird** *Turdus merula*  
Records cover the period Jan. 9 to April 19, a record late date (JMR). The only note for the latter part of the year is of a male at Castle Peak on Dec. 26 (AMM).
- 293. Grey Thrush** *Turdus cardis*  
There are many records for the early part of the year, last date April 18 (WGM). First winter record Dec. 5 (S.O.). Four males and five females were ringed in Pokfulam between Dec. 9 and 31 (FOPH).
- 296. White's Thrush** *Turdus dauma*  
The only record is of one at Tai Lam Chung on Mar. 21 (FOPH).
- 299. Great Tit** *Parus major*  
Common and widespread. One ringed at Mong Tseng on Dec. 17, and one at Pokfulam on Dec. 31 (FOPH).
- 301. Richard's Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae richardi*  
Numerous records, mostly from the NTs. Last spring date May 2, (JMR), first autumn date Oct. 3 (S.O.).
- 302. Indian Tree Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*  
Common and widespread. Last spring date, May 2, (EDW), was unusually late. First autumn date Oct. 26 (FOPH). Five were ringed at Mong Tseng between Dec. 12 and 19 (FOPH).
- 303. Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus*  
One at Mong Tseng on Jan. 10, four at Mai Po on Feb. 7, (FOPH), and four at Ping Shan on Mar. 25 (JRLC). All records for the latter part of the year are in December: ten at Ho Chung on Dec. 11 (JMR), one at Mong Tseng on Dec. 12 (EDW), one heard at Ping Shan on Dec. 18 (AMM), and several seen at Ping Shan on Dec. 27 (S.O.).
- 304. Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*  
One at Ping Shan on Dec. 27 (AMM).
- 305. Upland Pipit** *Anthus sylvanus*  
Two on Ma On Shan on Mar. 13 (MStA).
- 307 (a) and (b) Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*  
Widespread reports. Last spring date May 12 (RAIW), first autumn date Aug. 27 (DGR). As in previous years considerable numbers roosted on the Supreme Court and nearby palm trees.

Thirty to forty were seen hovering and settling to roost on the centre spine of the palm leaves at dusk on Jan. 11, and about 130 were counted on these trees on the night of Feb. 20, (MEMB). A flock of forty to fifty were flying in Victoria Park just before dusk on Dec. 16 (C&ED).

- 308. Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*  
Widespread reports. Last spring date May 19 (RAIW), first autumn date Aug. 22 (FOPH).
- 309 (a) Blue-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla flava similima*  
One at Ping Shan on Oct. 18 (S.O.).
- 309 (b) Grey-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla flava macronyx*  
Three on Oct. 18 (S.O.) and one on Oct. 26 (FOPH), all at Ping Shan. One at Lowu on Nov. 9. (FOPH).
- 309 (c) Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava taiwana*  
Reported throughout early part of year, mostly from Deep Bay area, up to May 2 (EDW, JMR), with fifty birds at Mai Po on Mar. 28 (S.O.). Reports throughout latter part of year from Sep. 12 (EDW).
- 310. Fork-tailed Sunbird** *Aethopyga christinae*  
Most of the reports are from Tai Po, and cover the period June 7 to July 1, both males and females being seen (EDW, FOPH, MEMB). One male was seen on mid-level of the Peak on Mar. 15 and heard on Mar. 17 (FOPH).
- 311. White-eye** *Zosterops japonica*  
Common and widespread. Seen feeding young on the Peak on May 27 (MEMB). Twenty were ringed at Mong Tseng between Dec. 13 and 19 (FOPH).
- 312. Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum cruentatum*  
One male seen on June 7, three birds of which two were male on June 13, two birds on July 3, all at Tai Po, (FOPH, EDW, MEMB). One male on Dec. 5 (S.O.), and one female on Dec. 12 (C&ED), both at Ho Chung. Two birds in Government House garden from Dec. 1 to 18 (EDW).
- 314. Lesser Black-tailed Hawfinch** *Eophona migratoria*  
Five in Government House garden (EDW) and one female at Mong Tseng (FOPH) on Jan. 10. Two males in Lam Tsun Valley on Jan 22 (C&ED) and Jan. 23 (JRLC). One female on Feb. 10 (JRLC) and one male and two females on Mar. 14 (C&ED, both records in Mai Po wood. Small party at Fanling on Mar. 10 and 11 (MStA). Two birds at Mong Tseng on April 4 (JMR). One female in Lam Tsun Valley on April 18 (MStA). Two males and six females in Lam Tsun Valley on Dec. 19 (EDW).
- 315. Chinese Greenfinch** *Chloris sinica*  
Reported throughout the year in various parts of the NTs, with juveniles at Castle Peak on July 25 (DGR), and a flock of sixty gathering on power cables before going to roost in bushes at

Castle Peak on Dec. 31 (AMM). Also reported regularly from January to June in Broadwood Road area, and during the latter part of the year a large party was frequently seen near the race-course, (C&ED).

317. **Hodgson's Rose-finch** *Carpodacus erythrinus*

One male and one female on Feb. 14 (EDW), three males and two females together and one female alone on Mar. 7 (S.O.), all at Sha Kong.

318. **Masked Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala*

Widespread reports. Last spring date April 15 (FOPH), first autumn date Nov. 14 (JMR). Seven males, twelve females, and one not sexed, ringed at Mong Tseng between Dec. 10 and 20 (FOPH).

321. **Tristram's Bunting** *Emberiza tristrami*

One male at Tai Mong Tsai on Mar. 10 (MStA). One male and one female together at Tai Lam Chung on Mar. 21 (FOPH, MEMB).

322. **Chestnut Bunting** *Emberiza rutila*

One in Mai Po wood on April 19 (AFA, DGR).

323. **Yellow-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza aureola*

Two at Lowu on Feb. 21 (S.O.), an unusually early spring record. Three at Ping Shan on Oct. 18 (S.O.), about one hundred flying in a flock and perching on reed-tops at Mai Po on the evening of Oct. 31 (S.O.), two at Ping Shan on Nov. 15 (S.O.).

324. **Grey-headed Bunting** *Emberiza fucata*

One male at Ho Chung on Feb. 3 (S.O.), and Mar. 3 (JRLC). One female at Sha Kong on Feb. 14 (EDW), and one probably female at Mong Tseng on Mar. 7 (JRLC). One female at Ping Shan on Dec. 18 (AMM) and Dec. 27 (S.O.).

325. **Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla*

Reported from Big Wave Bay, the Peak, and various parts of NTs up to Mar. 25 (JRLC), and from Oct. 31 (EDW) to the end of the year.

326. **Crested Bunting** *Melophus lathamii*

Small flocks reported in the first three months of the year, and one male on April 19. No further records until one reported on highest point of route TWSK on July 1 and two high up on Castle Peak on July 7, (DGR). Also one male near the summit of Tai Mo Shan with a female and a juvenile lower down on July 11 (EDW). The only other reports are in December: two males and eight females together at Ho Chung on Dec. 5 (S.O.), one female at Ho Chung on Dec. 12 (C&ED), two males and two females at Mong Tseng on Dec. 27 (S.O.), three males and five females at Ho Chung on Dec. 30 (C&ED).

327. **Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

Common and widespread. Five birds ringed at Mong Tseng between Dec. 11 and 15 (FOPH).

329. **Java Sparrow** *Padda oryzivora*

One at Aberdeen in a flock of Tree Sparrows on June 10 (RAIW). One at Pipers Hill on July 1 and 2 and Sep. 12 and 15 (JMR). A flock of ten to fifteen at Yuen Long on Aug. 29 (DGR). Three in Government House garden on Nov. 10 (EDW).

330. **Chestnut Munia** *Lonchura malacca atricapilla*

Two at Ho Chung on Feb. 3 (S.O.), one at Plover Cove on Feb. 14 (FOPH), one at Sheung Shui on Feb. 21 (S.O.), two at Mai Po on April 10 (RAIW), three at San Hui on May 23 (AFA), three at Mai Po on Oct. 2 (S.O.), one with Spotted Munias at Ping Shan on Dec. 18 (AMM), six at Mai Po on Dec. 19 (EDW).

331. **Spotted Munia** *Lonchura punctulata*

Reported in small flocks at various times of the year in many areas. A flock of about one hundred was seen at Lowu on Feb. 21 (S.O.). Up to six birds, some young, were observed to visit a nest at Aberdeen during the summer and occasionally carry in nesting material, but there was no evidence of eggs being laid or young reared (RAIW). Three birds were ringed at Mong Tseng between Dec. 11 and 15, (FOPH).

## DOUBTFUL RECORDS

— **Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos*

Seen near Deep Bay Road on Mar. 23 (C&ED), (see article in 1964 Bird Report). Correspondence with the Bird Room, British Museum, London, indicates that still fuller records must be obtained before it can be claimed that this bird has definitely been seen in Hong Kong.

45-47 **Grey Goose** *Anser sp.?*

A skein of seventeen Grey Geese was seen flying south over Chuk Yuen, Mai Po marshes, early on the morning of Dec. 20. It was not possible to identify the species. (H. Campkin per AMM).

(LT No. 513) **Seibold's Green Pigeon** *Sphenocercus sieboldi sieboldi*

One female seen at Chung Am Kok on Sep. 18 (MEMB).

## ESCAPES

**Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** *Cacotua galerita*

This bird has been recorded as an escape each year since 1961. Two birds were seen together in 1961 and 1962, three in 1963, four in 1964, and now five in 1965, but there is still no evidence of breeding. The situation is now confused by a report that several of these birds are kept as pets and allowed to fly freely by day.

**Chinese Grackle** *Eulabes javanus hainanus*

One was observed almost every day over a period of ten days in September at Tsim Tsa Tsui Police Station (JMR).

**Ornamental Lory** *Trichoglossus ornatus Linnaeus*

One seen frequently during the first half of the year in Government House garden in company with Paroquets (EDW).



## LIST OF OBSERVERS

Mr. E. Anderson	Major A. M. Macfarlane
Major A. F. Appleton	Mr. W. G. Metson Jr.
Miss M. E. M. Benham	Mr. J. A. Ozorio
Major J. R. L. Caunter	Mr. D. G. Robertson
Mr. C. Dale	Mr. J. M. Rowlands
Mrs. E. Dale	Major M. St. Aubyn
Mr. R. E. Hale	Commander E. D. Webb
Mr. F. O. P. Hechtel	Mr. R. A. I. Wilson
Mrs. E. L. Hechtel	

Records received from Society Outings entered as S.O.

## NUMBERING SYSTEM ADOPTED FOR BIRDS FIRST SEEN AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF THE ANNOTATED CHECK-LIST OF THE BIRDS OF HONG KONG, 1960

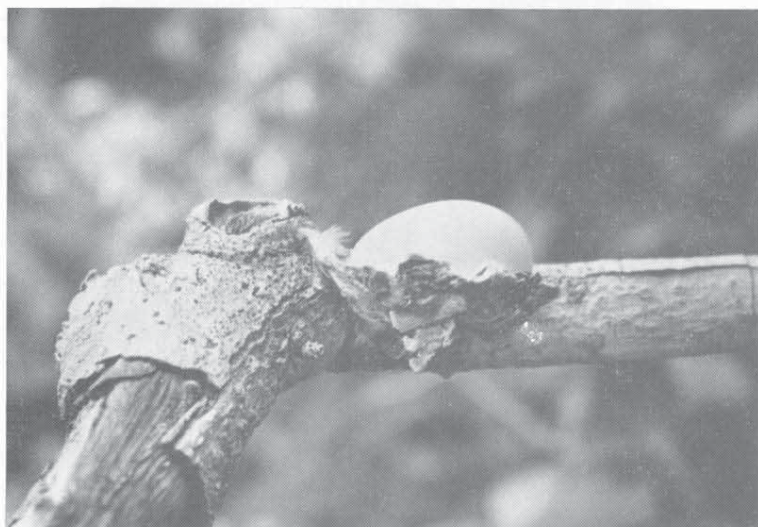
1X	Webb's Crow Tit	<i>Paradoxornis webbianaus suffusus</i>	
	LT no. 49; first seen March 29, 1960.		Should follow no. 233.
2X	Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalassus zimmermani</i>	
	LT no. 591; first seen May 29, 1960.		Should follow no. 156.
3X	Nordmann's Tern (Common Tern)	<i>Sterna hirundo longipennis</i>	
	LT no. 594; first seen June 10, 1960.		Should follow no. 153.
4X	Chinese Babax	<i>Babax lanceolatus lanceolatus</i>	
	LT no. 67; first seen July 19, 1960.		Should follow no. 236.
5X	Green-headed Flycatcher Warbler	<i>Seicercus affinis intermedia</i>	
	LT no. 237; first seen December 5, 1960.		Should follow no. 268.
6X	Ruddy Sparrow	<i>Passer rutilans</i>	
	LT no. 291; first seen December 10, 1960.		Should follow no. 327.
7X	White-browed Hill Warbler	<i>Prinia superciliiaris</i>	
	LT no. 247; first seen January 9, 1961.		Should follow no. 270.
8X	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia boyciana</i>	
	LT no. 676; first seen March 26, 1961.		Should follow no. 24.
9X	Swinhoe's Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma monorhis m.</i>	
	LT no. 665; first seen June 12, 1961.		Should follow no. 4.
10X	Chinese Pitta	<i>Pitta nymphea</i>	
	LT no. 377; first seen April 20, 1962.		Should follow no. 194.
11X	Large Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Graucalus maclei rex-pinetti</i> (?)	
	LT no. 189; first official record November 3, 1962.		Should follow no. 221.
12X	Bulwer's Petrel	<i>Bulweria bulweria</i>	
	LT no. 668; first seen May 28, 1964.		Should follow no. 4.
13X	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	
	LT no. 721; first seen November 28, 1965.		Should follow no. 34.



CRESTED TREE SWIFT ON NEST: PENANG



CRESTED BULBUL



NEST & EGG OF CRESTED TREE SWIFT: PENANG

(Photos by J. Cairns)

*See page 53*



BROWN FLYCATCHER  
(Photos by K.W. Eldred)  
*See page 48*



**CHINESE BULBUL**



**WHITE-FACED WAGTAIL**  
(Photos by K.W. Eldred)  
*See page 48*



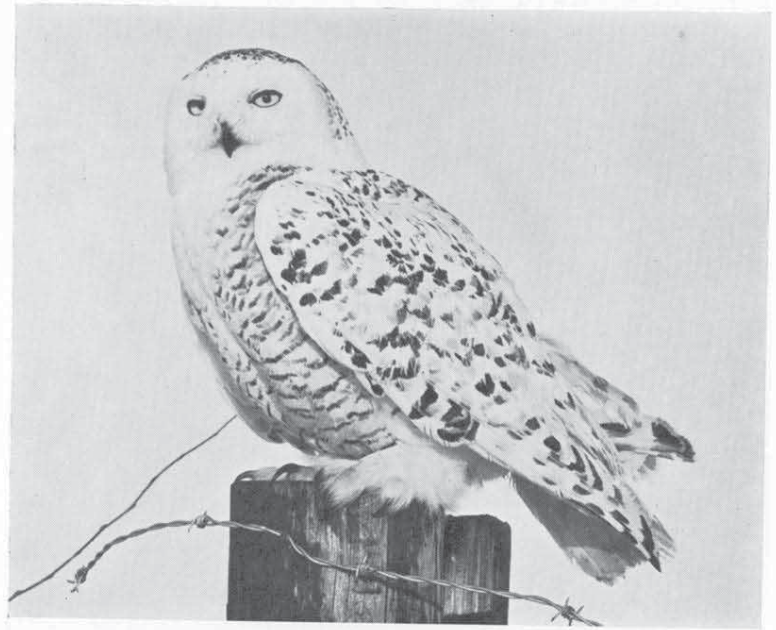
A pair of Horned Owls with a chick at nest  
*Photo: R. D. Muir*

*See page 40*



A Baltimore Oriole at nest  
*Photo: R. D. Robinson, F.R.P.S.*

*See page 43*



A Snowy Owl  
*Photo: Cy G. Hampson*

*See page 40*



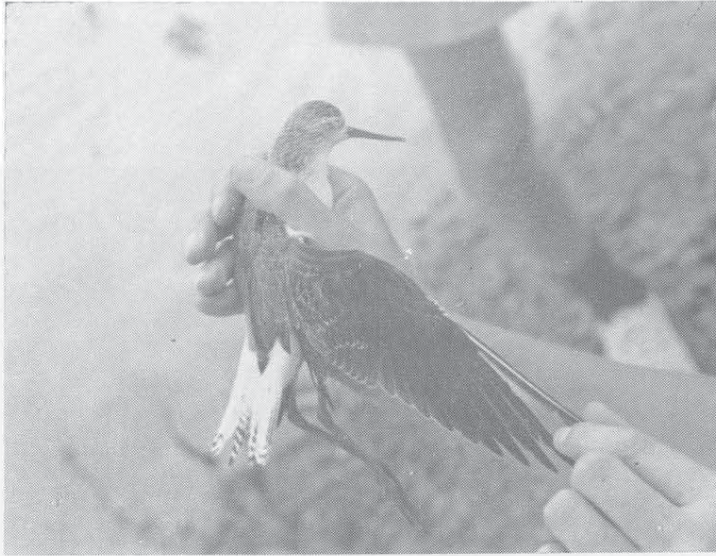
An American Bittern at nest  
*Photo: R. D. Robinson, F.R.P.S.*

*See page 44*



**PURPLE HERON APPROACHING NEST: PENANG**  
**(Photo by J. Cairns)**

*See page 52*



MARSH SANDPIPER  
(Photo by Eugene Anderson)



NEST & EGGS OF PAINTED SNIPE: PENANG  
(Photo by J. Cairns)  
*See page 54*

## SHORTER NOTES

### **A Peregrine in the Egretry**

While we were doing a count at the Sha Tau Kok egretty, early in the morning of 3rd August, a female Peregrine Falcon suddenly approached and without a cry and at a great speed she circled the egretty several times. She kept just above the tops of the trees which were laden with birds of all ages. These perching birds did not seem to be at all alarmed by the marauder or perhaps they were frozen to their perches with fear, for they did not make the slightest attempt to get away.

Then to our surprise, we saw that the Peregrine had seized a full-grown, immature Pond Heron and was dashing away with it. We saw white flaky feathers falling, but a moment later when the raider had not gone more than twenty five yards, the Pond Heron was falling to the ground. It made a recovery and landed on the mud at the edge of the water, from where it walked across the road before it flew up and back to the egretty.

The Peregrine now came back to the egretty and the whole scene was repeated. Even this time the inhabitants perched thickly along the branches, appeared to take a completely fatalistic view of the proceedings for they didn't even duck while the falcon flashed past just above their heads and finally grabbed an egret. It was not possible to say whether it was a mature bird or not, but it appeared to be very little smaller than the Pond Heron of the first attempt. This time we could see the Peregrine pecking savagely at its prey and as it disappeared behind a distant hill it left a trail of falling feathers.

E. L. H

### **A Snipe in the Telephone Exchange**

On the morning of 30th January, I was summoned to the Government House telephone exchange by our office messenger, who was incoherent with excitement. Instead of the electrical fire I half expected, I found the operator holding a snipe, in an admiring circle of one policeman, a house coolie and our messenger. The bird seemed quite unharmed though petrified into immobility, and there was a tangle of string round one shank.

The snipe, a Pintail I think, had been found by the policeman ensnared in a net over one of the flowerbeds and had fled from the law to the safety of the telephone exchange, which opens on the garden, and there the operator had captured it.

This was the first time that I had heard of a snipe in the urban area of Hong Kong island and I ought of course to have photographed it. But I was anxious to release it before the audience became too acquisitive. We had no difficulty in disentangling the string and off it flew into the shrubbery. I hope it did not become somebody else's breakfast.

E. D. W.

### One Good Tern Deserves Another

An evening session at Mai Po on Saturday 12th June produced no Waders as it was dead low water, but the big fishpond not far beyond the police post held two Little Egrets and a party of Caspian Terns. With them were two or three Gull-billed Terns and a slightly smaller bird that looked interesting. They seemed nearly asleep and a stalk was indicated. The ditch beside the bund was—most unexpectedly—only knee deep and thereafter it was a steady plod on hard slippery mud with water up to the ankles. The Egrets soon took off but the terns obligingly kept calm, allowing a good description to be made of the small one, which was later to be amplified when it flew and showed the colour of its legs (black) and tail (white). The watcher was ignorant of the less common terns and could not be accused of writing wishful field notes. In fact he came away with the impression that it was a Black-naped Tern, but on studying the books at home was delighted to find that it was the second Colony record of Nordmann's Tern, the local and darker version of the European Common Tern.

A return to the scene early next morning started with heavy rain but it soon cleared up, and a white patch in the distance heralded a large party of terns. At shorter range, these became twenty Caspian Terns and there were two smaller birds with them. Another stalk through the fishpond made it clear that they were not the same as yesterday's discovery. Black bill and legs, a broad black eyestripe barely joining at the back of the neck, pearl-grey wings with black primaries and the rest pure white. These were indeed Black-naped Terns, making two new species for the watcher in two days.

E. D. W.

## NEW TERRITORIES

The more widely known bird watching areas have been described by Cranmer-Byng in the 1961 and 1963 Bird Reports. Kent gave an excellent description of Mai Po in 1962 and Hale covered the flycatcher wood at Ho Chung in the same Report.

As I live and work in the New Territories, I have greater opportunity to explore and discard new birdwatching areas than members living in town. Some are quite promising, but like any area, there are good days and bad days.

### Castle Peak Monastery (HQ 045793)

Cross the new causeway (HQ 063797) just beyond the 20th Milestone at San Hui, and turn left. Follow the road to the top of a small hill and turn right and keep climbing until you can go no further. Walk up to and right through the Monastery, keeping to the left. Go to the top and back down to the water tank just above the main buildings. This area is always good; especially during migration; Black-winged Cuckoo-shrikes, Ince's, Verditer, Brown, Grey-spotted and Red-breasted Flycatchers, Ashy Minivets, Sunbirds; Crowned, Pallas and Arctic Warblers; Chestnut and White-headed Black Bulbuls; Broad-billed Rollers and thrushes.

### Castle Peak Hospital, paddyfields, A.F.D. Station and hillside (HQ 063817).

The Hospital turning is  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile North of San Hui at 21 Miles. The paddyfields or duckponds have yielded Pied Kingfishers, Rails, Brown Shrikes, Bush Warblers and Terns (if flooded). In the staff quarters opposite the Hospital, nightjars may be seen in the evenings after 9.30 p.m., and orioles in the day time. Beyond the Hospital is the A.F.D. Station, with orchards, paddyfields and hardwoods. Chinese Starlings (nesting), Goshawk, resident Kestrel, Munias, assorted Cuckoos. Behind the Station on the slopes of Castle Peak, Crested Buntings, Greenfinches and Crow Pheasants are resident.

### Ting Kau (JV 987768) 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ Miles Castle Peak Road.

There is a rocky gorge leading from the main road down to the sea. It is always worth peering into from the wooden sidewalk. Birds seen in it have included: Ince's Flycatcher, thrushes and Blackbirds, Daurian Redstarts, Plumbeous Redstarts, Plaintive Cuckoos and assorted warblers. After looking into the gorge, one can go up the road opposite the police box and explore the catchwater. At the top you can turn left or right. The left hand turning is a cul-de-sac about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles long. It is completely deserted and on occasion some interesting birds have been seen: Yellow Bittern, White-tailed Sea Eagle, Francolin (close up) and Hwamei. The right hand turning leads eventually to Route TWSK, but there is also a turning down to the

bus terminus at Tsun Wan West. This area is good for wagtails, drongos (both), crow-pheasants (both) nightjars (both) and rock thrushes (both). There are excellent views of Green Island, Kwaichung and Hong Kong Island.

#### **Tai Lam Chung Reservoir**

Turn off at the 16th Milestone on the Castle Peak Road and drive over the dam, then turn up sharp right and follow the road to the A.F.D. Forestry Quarters. Park the car and walk **slowly** down the hill, keeping an eye open for Woodcock, as you approach the stream look down and left for the Crested Kingfisher. Continue down the hill, cross the river and walk back along the opposite bank. After about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile there is a bridge which will take you back to the Forestry Quarters. Birds seen: Great Crested and Little Grebes, Cormorants, Thrushes, Tristram's Buntings, Mallard, Teal and Mandarin Duck.

#### **Tai Om Wood, Lam Tsuen valley (KV 047848)**

Approaching from Sek Kong, go past the Kadoorie Experimental Farm, down the hill and through the cutting. Park the car at the entrance to the cutting, (the NE side) and walk down the road, over the bridge to the little shop at the side of the road. Walk up to and round the school and aim for the right (South) edge of the wood. Make a detour round the edge and cut back left into the centre. Flowerpeckers, Barbets (regularly), Hawfinches, Grey Bushchats and many rarities including Collared Staphidas.

#### **She Shan Wood, Lam Tsuen valley (KV 058856)**

Park in one of the lay-bys in the village of Chung Uk Tsuen and aim for the wood which is also on the southern side of the valley. The right hand side is the easier to approach though the left hand can be better for birds. The paths inside are overgrown, and need pruning because progress is neither easy nor quiet. Everything from Black-naped Monarch Flycatchers to Woodpeckers have been seen in this wood.

#### **Tai Po Kau**

This is an immense area and takes a very long time to explore. You need plenty of luck and very rapid reflexes to see anything at all. The birds are always there but the undergrowth is so dense that it is pure chance whether you see and recognise one before it disappears. I have had most luck with the White walk (2.7 miles) as the vegetation is thinnest. Hainan Blue Flycatchers, Treepies, Three-coloured Munias, Chestnut and White-headed Black Bulbuls, Japanese Robin, Tristram's Buntings, Orioles, Sunbirds and many other rarities.

I feel sure that many of the birds I have seen in the areas mentioned have been due to the fact that I have been able to visit them frequently. However, do not be disappointed if there is nothing there as some areas appear to respond best to the occasional visit rather than the regular one!

D. G. R.

## **BIRDS OF THE ISLAND**

First impressions received by a newcomer to Hong Kong regarding the bird population tend, I think, to be pessimistic. The concrete jungle is uninviting and the natural jungle seems to be composed mainly of low-growing scrub and sparse woodland which looks inhospitable. Further exploration of the resources of the Island does something to dispel this feeling, but there appears to be little variety of vegetation and a very limited number of bird species in evidence. I think the shore-line was the first surprise, coming as I did from Europe where one is accustomed to the cry of waders and the busy mouse-like operations of the smaller members of the sea shore fraternity. Even unfrequented coves and bays seemed to be utterly deserted by the bird population, and the puzzle still remains as to why this should be so. It cannot be a question of food, surely, for the marine life and in-shore creatures seem to be plentiful, and one would have thought that the refuse of a teeming city such as this should provide for a thriving colony of gulls and scavengers. But no, only the kites wheel over the harbour and they seem to spend more time enjoying the drift and swirl of the air currents than in feeding.

First impressions are frequently misleading, and with some helpful advice from local enthusiasts, it is not difficult to find that the island of Hong Kong provides a permanent home for many attractive and interesting birds, and a temporary port of call for even more. However, it is possible to waste a considerable time looking in the wrong places unless this advice is forthcoming, for some of the spots which hold out the most promise prove in fact to be virtually barren, and the reason is as hard to fathom as the absence of the tide-line life. This is partly due to the fact that the birds tend to avoid the well-trodden paths, but to venture, without good briefing beforehand by someone who really knows his Hong Kong countryside, into little used paths and tracks on the hillsides is to court disaster. They all seem to end by getting narrower and narrower and finally disappearing in a mass of overgrown vegetation. Rather than retrace one's steps one is inclined to push on a little further in the hope that the path will open out again. This is merely to plunge deeper into more frightful bush interlaced with trailing and thorny creepers, and one is lucky to escape with nothing worse than scratched limbs and torn clothing. In quite a short space of time even good paths can become overgrown as the creepers take up the fight for existence, so that information about the paths to follow may well be misleading unless of recent origin.

Lest the picture should appear too gloomy let me assure the reader that the rewards of the regular and careful observer on the island are likely to be considerable, and there are indications that some of the birds which we used to consider great rarities



may be present in greater number than was previously supposed. First, some brief notes about the birds we already know a good deal about as to numbers and haunts, and then a few words about the apparent trends from recent observations.

No one familiar with the Colony birds spares a thought for one of our commonest species—the bulbuls, so I am just going to say: “What magnificent birds they are!” “Another bulbul” says the disappointed bird-watcher, focussing on what he thought was a rarer specimen; but our overseas visitors are delighted with them. Spend a few minutes studying them one day and you will be enchanted by their antics and sprightly conversation, to say nothing of their very handsome wardrobe.

The Peak, both at the top, and amongst the wooded valleys of its lower slopes, will produce a fairly representative list of our more familiar birds. There is usually a kite or two in the air over the higher regions, and often a hovering kestrel. One sometimes wonders what lies at the bottom of the steep dive to the ground, for the population of small rodents is inconsiderable; maybe a small lizard does not come amiss when times are hard. Hwameis sing, but are often not easy to see; they do not seem to want to show off that rather striking eye make-up. Also to be identified by sound rather than sight are the tailor birds and in season the francolin, though the latter seem to be less common than formerly. Further down the slopes, the larger trees hold a fair quota of spotted doves. It is always worthwhile taking a second look at these in the autumn and winter, for one or two may surprise you by turning out to be the Eastern Red Turtle Dove. Of the other larger birds, magpies are almost certain to be seen, most likely the familiar Pied, but quite probably the handsome Blue. They are likely to be on some malevolent errand, for those wicked bills resemble an executioner’s axe, and I suspect they frequently perform a similar function. A pair of young magpies, not long out of the nest, were once caught by my teenage son in England, and before being returned to an outraged parent they produced several pellets, as owls do. These contained the remains of several small birds and rodents, and were some indication of the damage magpies can do to their smaller cousins.

The lower bushes will probably contain plenty of bulbuls, including the migrant Chestnut Bulbuls if you are lucky; once you hear their call, which sounds like a single ring on a bicycle bell, you will be able to tell if they are about. Apart from the tailor birds, the other noisy inhabitants of the bush are the White-eyes, often in quite large parties, and the Black-faced Laughing Thrushes, which can be heard a mile away. These always seem to be going somewhere and calling to each other to hurry up, but none of them ever seems to arrive at a destination. If you look under the lower branches amongst the dead leaves, you are likely to make rather more exciting discoveries. It takes a good

eye to spot the small movement, and a good ear to hear the rustle of a turned-over leaf. Moreover, a quiet approach will be necessary to likely spots. Here are the thrushes at the right season, and an occasional Blackbird; in the trickles of water wandering down the small nullahs small birds come down to drink and catch insects. Red-tailed Robins, Short-tailed Bush-warblers are possibilities. There is much to be seen here which the incautious and noisy observer misses.

As far as the rest of the Island is concerned, mention should be made of the reservoir areas, where kingfishers may be seen. Ty Tam is sometimes favoured by a visit from a pair of White-bellied Sea Eagles which have been known in previous years to nest in the Cape Collinson area, and Pokfulam has wagtails and buntings round its lower end. Several of the small bays and beaches provide a home for rock thrushes, and sometimes a solitary Common Sandpiper. In most areas, Rufous-backed Shrikes have staked out territories and are almost always on the list after a day’s observations, whilst the smaller brown shrikes seem to be becoming more common. Also widespread are the Crested Mynahs, whose attitudes both when perched and when strutting round looking for what they can pick up, are so reminiscent of the familiar European starling.

Recently two factors have contributed to increase our knowledge of present-day trends in bird populations. One is an ambitious programme of ringing now in full swing, which entails the capture of quite large numbers of birds, enabling positive identification to be made where this is difficult. The other is that one or two areas of small extent have come under rather closer scrutiny over varying periods. Some of the information obtained has been new and unexpected. For instance, no fewer than five Peking Robins (*Leiothrix*) were trapped, three of them at one of time in the same net, in rather thick woods at Pokfulam. These birds have always been thought to be escapes, when they have on rare occasions been seen, but the latest evidence suggest they are present in some numbers. In the same woods, this year has brought numerous thrushes, both Grey and Grey-backed, and Red-tailed Robins have been seen quite often. The attraction seems to lie principally in the deep cool nullahs which attract insects and provide a welcome bath. Sometimes bulbuls will visit a pool in relays for a wash and brush up, returning to a branch above for a thorough preening. In the same area both the Grey-headed and the Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher have been seen during the winter.

The south side of the island round Brick Hill has also been the object of more regular observation recently, and has produced records of White-breasted Water-hens, an occasional Chinese Pond Heron, Common and White-breasted Kingfishers, and pratincoles on migration. Many wagtails haunt the veget-

able gardens below the hill, and this year there have been large flocks of Tree Pipits, White-eyes and Spotted Munias. The warmer weather brings the peculiar call and answer of the crow-pheasant from higher up the hill and one particular telegraph pole has been selected by a kite for his morning toilet. This is a long process and it often looks as if a large-size Hong Kong-made feather duster were being shaken at the top of the pole.

Mention has been made of some birds which may be more common than the records indicate, but there is unfortunately another side to the picture, and some species are, more obviously perhaps, on the decline. Three years ago there was a flock of Rose-ringed Paroquets which used to haunt the area round Government House and the Cathedral, but now seem to have almost disappeared, though there are a few in the New Territories. If one reads the records of observers from still earlier years, it would seem that several other species have gone the same way, unable no doubt to cope with the steady and remorseless incursion into rural areas of man and his building programmes. In competition with the loud voice of the dollar that of the naturalist is scarcely audible. One would like to think that we may get a nature reserve or a counterpart to a National Park, but the prospect appears remote. No sooner are plans put forward to set aside some area for this purpose than other plans for turning the same area into a tourist attraction are advanced. We have in Hong Kong a representative selection of the birds of South China, and since no scientific information comes out of China herself, this is the only place where such information (on wild-life generally) is available to the Western World. It would be a pity to see it all disappear under the reinforced concrete.

R. A. I. W.

## REPORT ON BIRDWATCHING AROUND TORONTO DURING 1965

We arrived in Toronto early in September 1964, and my first pleasant surprise was to find that one of my colleagues in the Department of History at Toronto University, Dr. R.M. Saunders, was a leading birdwatcher in this area and editor of the regular Newsletter issued by the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club. Under his guidance it did not take me long to get organized for birding and to begin to recognize some of the 322 species on the checklist issued by the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto and recorded within a 30 mile radius of the Museum. The first step was to buy **A Field Guide to the Birds** (all N. American species east of the Rockies) by Roger Peterson, set out in exactly the same format as the **Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe**. The next step was to borrow and read a copy of Dr. Saunders' own book **Flashing Wings** (published 1947), which is based on his own journals kept since 1938, and is organized on a monthly basis so that one can soon get an idea of the kind of birds one is likely to see in, for example, March and also the likely places for seeing them. Also his book contains a migration chart based on records kept over a 13 year period and this helps me to know when to expect the various migrants in the spring and autumn. The next step was to buy really warm clothing so that I could go birding in the coldest days of the winter. When we arrived in Toronto the temperature was in the eighties but by January it was sometimes down to zero. Having bought a large padded windbreaker jacket made of nylon, and a pair of padded trousers, thermal underwear, a pair of hunter's lace-up rubber boots with insulated soles, not to mention gloves and leather mittens and a woollen toque (hat) to pull over the head and ears I felt ready for anything. Meanwhile I joined the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club so that I could take part in their bird outings and profit from the knowledge of experienced members. At the same time I subscribed to the newly founded **Toronto Birdfinding Bulletin**, stencilled, and mailed to subscribers every week between October and May by a very keen member of the Club. This is a most useful publication since from it one can quickly find out what birds have been seen during the previous weekend and the exact locations. Subscribers phone their sightings of the week-end to the editor on Monday and receive the bulletin on Thursday or Friday, in time to plan their week-end outings. This is all the more useful in a place like Toronto which has a population of c. 1,800,000 and is a rapidly expanding city so that the good bird-watching places are constantly being encroached upon, and one cannot just set out and walk for a day. Most of the bird watching near Toronto has to be done by driving from one spot to another and walking for an hour and then driving on. It takes about 30-40 minutes to get clear of the city by car.

My first serious day's birdwatching was on New Year's day 1965 when Dr. Saunders took me out to an area east of the city and along the shore of Lake Ontario. Here there is some farming land, some woods and a number of marshes, besides the low cliffs and the beaches of the lake. One of our objectives was to find a Snowy Owl. Every few years there is an eruption of these owls from the north, and then a number pass the winter months around Toronto. We stopped by a small lake near a new housing estate and scanned the scene. There appeared to be nothing moving and nothing living within sight. Just as we were about to leave, however, we made one last sweep with the glasses and what looked like a mound of snow on a low post on the edge of the lake took on the shape of an owl, and we had seen our first Snowy. By now our feet and hands were cold and we were glad to climb into the warm car. This time we drove down a farm track to the cliffs above Lake Ontario and began to walk through a field of rough grass. Suddenly Dr. Saunders pointed to a headland of the cliffs and we got our glasses focussed. Just as I got a Snowy Owl into focus it flew up and towards us. Almost immediately a second owl appeared from over the shoulder of the cliff and started a mock attack on the first one. Both birds flew majestically towards us and as they swept past I was able to compare them. One was almost entirely white, while the other, possibly a female, was heavily barred with a mass of dark brown. These owls are large, 20-26", and are fearless day-flying birds—lords of the open fields and lakesides. Having seen these beauties we then drove to a wood where Dr. Saunders hoped to find a Long-eared Owl. Almost as soon as we entered the wood we found droppings and casts under the trees. Suddenly we both found ourselves looking up at a very large and fierce owl on a branch of a nearby tree. This was no Long-eared but a Great Horned Owl (20-23") with its ear-tufts raised and its yellow eyes glaring wickedly at us. For a moment I felt fear—it almost seemed that it might attack us, then off it flew through the wood. Back in the car we were driving along a lane when we saw a large flock of gulls, their white and grey plumage gleaming in the weak sunlight. We stopped and got out. They appeared to be Herring Gulls but when they all suddenly flew up and wheeled round Dr. Saunders pointed out one Iceland Gull, and as they landed again he showed me a single larger gull, very pale without dark wing-tips—a Glaucous Gull (26-32"). During the rest of the day we continued to see interesting birds including 2 Marsh Hawks (Hen Harriers), 2 Rough-legged Hawks (Buzzards), 3 Northern Shrike (like the Great Grey Shrike), a Red-tailed Hawk, a Brown Tree Creeper, and a Nuthatch. By the lakeside we saw some Golden-Eye Duck, 1 Common Merganser and some Black Duck and Old Squaw Duck. These last are quite common; the males have long pointed tails, and their plumage has a black and white pattern. Altogether we saw 30 different species—a very enjoyable day's outing.

During the rest of the winter—say until about mid-March when there are some signs of spring—I went out irregularly, depending on the weather, and saw, among other birds, the following: Ruffed Grouse, a bird of the brushy woodlands; 4 Long-eared Owls in one group of conifers; Red-breasted Nuthatch—rarer than the common White-breasted Nuthatch; it has a black line through the eye and pinky buff flanks; Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker; Ladder-back Three-toed Woodpecker (see European Field Guide p. 190). These Woodpeckers are normally not seen so far south, and were formerly listed as rare winter visitors but in the past few winters they have been fairly common in the Toronto area. The reason is that the Dutch elm disease has hit the elm trees badly in this part, and these Woodpeckers are specially fond of stripping the bark of the diseased elms and getting their supply of grubs in that way. Another bird, now widespread and resident, in the Toronto area, which has only quite recently changed its status, is the Cardinal. This is a handsome bird, especially the male which is bright crimson all over except for a black face, and it has a very definite crest. The female is brownish with a red beak (a thick seed-cracking kind) and a red crest. Their range formerly did not extend as far north as Toronto but in the past 20 years they have become acclimatised and now survive the winter here, and breed here very happily.

Just as there are periodic eruptions of Snowy Owls, so there are recurrent winters when there are invasions of finches. The winter of 1964-5 was a poor one for finches and I only managed to see Purple Finches. The male is a rosy colour especially on the head, upper breast and rump. I got among a large flock of them in late March when they had begun to sing 'a fast, lively warble', and they made Spring seem very near. This winter, however, has already proved to be a finch invasion year. By late October 1965 many birds had arrived and I saw my first Redpolls. In November there were many flocks of White-winged Crossbills about. The male is a dull red with black wings and tail; the wings have two white wing bars. The other fairly common bird this winter is the Pine Grosbeak—a largish bird (9½") with a heavy bill. Also a few Pine Siskin have arrived. But it is cold work trying to focus one's glasses on these flocks of finches as they hurriedly work through the pine trees—they never stay still for long, and one's fingers get colder and colder. At the end of March I had the luck to find a Horned Owl's nest in a metropolitan park near where we live. From the Bulletin I knew that a pair of Horned Owls had been seen there regularly so I set out to look for their nest. Usually this is high up in a large conifer and often is based on an old Crow's nest. After searching likely trees with my binoculars for some time I eventually spotted a tell-tale strip of white paper. From my experience searching for Kite's nests in Hong Kong I knew that this is a warning sign. As I readjusted my binoculars I saw the nest come into focus and

then I made out a pale buff shape on it which turned out to be one very large downy owl. After searching the nest for signs of a second chick I began to realize that what looked like the trunk of the tree immediately behind the nest was in fact the mother bird standing upright on the nest. It was an exciting sight especially since both the parent bird and the chick were so large. When I came back to the nest late in April the young owl had left and was in a clump of hemlock evergreens nearby, and was being mobbed by crows.

By late March there is evidence of spring on the way and the first of the migrants are passing through. April, May and early June form the crown of the bird watching year here. The Toronto Field Naturalists Club puts on a regular series of outings for its members at this time and even charters a motor coach to take us to the more distant places. However, the most memorable day's birding that I experienced in 1965 was on Toronto Island. In fact this is a series of connected islands lying out in the lake opposite the centre of Toronto. You drive to the Island Ferry Terminal, park your car, and board a ferry boat. It is all very reminiscent of Hong Kong, except that it only takes fifteen minutes to cross to the Island. This is now kept as a municipal park, though it contains a miniature air field for civil flying in small trainer planes, several yacht clubs, and an area of thicket and one island which is reserved as a wild life sanctuary. The spring outing to Toronto Island this year was on May 8th. We took the first ferry over, and it was still cool and very misty when we arrived. We walked to a spot where there is a large area of formal gardens with low clipped hedges and many paths among the flower beds, and higher hedges on either side. For some reason, either because of the very limited visibility, or because of seeds or insects in the hedges and gardens, the whole area was alive with birds. The first thing I saw was a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak—with a black head and back, some white on the wings and rump, a vivid rose red breast and white underparts and a heavy horn-coloured beak. There were several of these birds about together with the brown mottled females. Then I started to see the Warblers in their spring plumage. It would be impossible to describe all the combinations of colours in the various species which I saw all within about thirty minutes. These Warblers in the Spring are to Toronto what the Flycatchers are to Hong Kong for colour and variety. Here is a bare list of the Warblers I saw that morning:

Cape May; Yellow; Palm; Black-throated Green;  
Black-throated Blue; Nashville; Blackburnian; Myrtle;  
Pine; Yellow-throated; Black and White; Chestnut-sided.

A total of 12. But I only recognized them because experts all round me kept calling out the names. After this firework display of colour and movement you might think that anything else would

be dull, but not a bit. We moved on as the mist began to lift and soon had a good view of a male Red-headed Woodpecker. This is a black and white bird with a bright crimson head (the crimson comes down below the throat and round to the upper back). Later we saw a fine male Horned Lark (rather like the European Shore Lark), with a yellow-and-black face and throat pattern. In a thicket we watched a Ruby-throated Hummingbird (the only species of Hummingbird to visit Ontario) and I felt a little more reconciled to the loss of the Fork-tailed Sunbird of Hong Kong. This Hummingbird is about  $3\frac{1}{2}$ "', with a ruby-red throat and metallic green above. In a nearby tall bush we counted 6 male and 2 female Baltimore Orioles. The male is very handsome—black head and back, black wings with some white, orange rump, black and orange tail and bright orange underparts. During this outing we saw about nine different species of Sparrow (related to the Finches and Buntings in the family **Fringillidae**) which had me thoroughly confused since there is often not much obvious difference in their plumage and the experts pick them out chiefly by their song and calls.

Another enjoyable outing was held on May 16th about 45 miles north east of Toronto where the flat land just begins to be broken by some very slight 'hills' and a long geological fault — a limestone escarpment — gives the area an attractive character. Here we saw many of the same warblers which I had first seen on the Island but also a number of Thrushes and Flycatchers. Also here I saw my first Meadow Lark (9-11")—yellow throat and underparts broken by a black V like the neck of a sports sweater and brown back with white in the tail. The other bird I especially enjoyed seeing on this outing was a male Indigo Bunting which is a deep blue all over, some parts look purple blue, others a green blue. This is some compensation for not having the Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher here. Another memorable outing was on May 22nd to Presqu'ile Park about 100 miles east of Toronto on the shore of Lake Ontario in the Kingston direction. This is a Provincial Park of some 1,200 acres on a peninsula, and contains shoreline, marsh, woods and fields. We made a good start to the day when we stopped at a wayside cafe on the outward journey and some of the old hands among the members were out of the coach with their binoculars at the ready almost before it stopped. They soon discovered two Upland Plover (Upland Sandpiper in European Guide p. 120) in a nearby field. One of the chief attractions of the trip to Presqu'ile, believe it or not, was the chance of seeing Cattle Egrets. This is a strange story of bird wanderings. It appears that a number of Cattle Egrets flew on their own across the South Atlantic from Africa to the northern part of South America where they successfully established themselves as a resident species. As their numbers increased they moved northwards, crossed the Caribbean to Florida and then up the Atlantic coast of North America. Soon there was a colony at Cape May, New Jersey, and in 1962 nests were first made at

Presqu'île in Ontario. During the summer of 1964 three pairs successfully raised young. But on this occasion when we got to the park and looked across the water to the island sanctuary where they built last year we failed to see them. However there were plenty of compensations. On the shore we found Dunlin, Semi-palmated Sandpiper, and about 50 Hudsonian Curlew (Whimbrel), as well as two Gadwall on the water. There were a lot of Tern about and we had an excellent view of a Caspian Tern—quite made me feel as though I was back on the Maipo marshes—as well as Common Tern and Black Tern. The highlight for me was flushing an American Bittern (23-34"), seeing a pair of Redstarts—the male has orange in the wings and tail and the female has yellow—and another species of Warbler, a Wilson's Warbler—the male has bright yellow under parts with a black cap and olive green back. There were two more outings, the last being on 18th June when I saw my first Turkey Vulture (30"). Like all Vultures it was soaring, large and majestic.

By now the migrants had all passed northwards and the summer residents such as the Orioles, Red-winged Blackbirds and the Purple Grackles had settled down to raise their young. At this point most people give up birding around Toronto until the beginning of September; they complain that it is too hot and certainly the insects make birdwatching near trees or marshes something of a penance. In any case at this time most Torontonians take their summer holiday and go northwards to their cottages beside one of the many lakes in northern Ontario. We spent an enjoyable week in mid-August about 150 miles north of here by the Lake of Bays, and only 17 miles from the entrance to the vast Algonquin Park, a Provincial Park nearly 3,000 square miles in extent. In this area I was able to take another look at many of the Warblers which had passed through in the Spring, since they had either spent the summer here or were beginning to return south from even further north. While here I saw a pair of Loons (28-36"—Great Northern Diver) and also an Osprey, but the greatest thrill was one evening just as it was dusk when I drove the children into Algonquin Park and we managed to see a wild bear beside the road.

In many ways the birding year really begins again in September and true to form I was out with Dr. Saunders on September 2nd visiting a recently constructed reservoir where we saw, among other birds: Blue-winged Teal; Little Green Heron; Baldpate Duck; 3 Pectoral Sandpiper; Stilt Sandpiper; Greater Yellowlegs; Lesser Yellowlegs and one Baird's Sandpiper—a rarity (**European Field Guide**, p. 295). A few days later in a marsh near the shore of Lake Ontario I had a fine close view on the water of a male Wood Duck in winter plumage. In brightness of plumage this is the North American equivalent of the male Mandarin Duck. Peterson writes: "Highly iridescent, descriptive words fail." On the Island on September 12th during a club outing we saw a Whip-poor-will (Nightjar) which oddly enough was not resting

along a branch but was perched upright on a branch. On October 17th, on some waste ground beside the Lake, I saw my first Lapland Longspur (rather like the European Shore Lark—see **European Guide** p. 191). A few days later on the Island a friend and I were looking for the smallest owl in this part of N. America—the Saw-whet Owl (7-8½"). They pass through here in limited numbers in the autumn and most of them seem to use a particular area of bush on the Island as a staging post. We eventually found one and had a good look at it since these little birds are ridiculously tame. The value of the weekly Birdfinding Bulletin was demonstrated in November when someone heard that a male Red-bellied Woodpecker had been seen at a bird feeder on the outskirts of the city. This is considered a rare bird. The information was printed in the Bulletin and instructions on how to get to the location were given. For the next four or five weekends car loads of keen bird-watchers converged on this isolated cottage with its bird feeders beside the edge of a wood. The Sunday morning chosen by three of us to try our luck was November 14th. When we arrived at the spot we found several cars already in position so that the occupants could watch the feeders without standing about in the cold wind. One of the watchers was Mr. James Baillie, of the Division of Ornithology at the Royal Ontario Museum, and a professional ornithologist. He is perhaps the most experienced of all the members of the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club. We happened to be standing on the road talking when a woodpecker-type bird flew across a nearby field onto some dead trees. While we all called out "Woodpecker" Mr. Baillie said "Red-bellied Woodpecker". Several of us started to hurry across the field and eventually caught up with the bird in a dead elm. As I got my binoculars into focus I suddenly saw its red cap, and then its black and white zebra patterned back with buff underparts and sides of head. It is not as brightly coloured as the male Red-headed Woodpecker but its rareness makes it an even more exciting find. The Bulletin helped me again in mid-November when a Barred Owl (18-22") was reported from a particular area of evergreen woods near the Lake. This is a hornless owl which is barred crosswise on the breast and streaked lengthwise on the belly. It is regarded as uncommon. We soon found it, and it flew out into the open and perched on a branch of a tall leafless tree where we had an excellent view. It is a big bird. During the year I had so far seen five of the eleven Owls on the Toronto check-list and eight out of the nine Woodpeckers listed. The ninth, which I particularly wanted to see, was the very large Pileated Woodpecker (17-19½") which is listed as a local resident but it is certainly not common. On December 19th I went to the Boyd Conservation Area (about 600 acres of woodland and open ground with a stream running through it) which is a thirty minute drive from my house. After about an hour wandering about and watching White-winged Crossbills I heard a Woodpecker at work

nearby, and when I got to it was glad to find that it was a male Arctic Three-toed (Black-backed) and close enough to see its bright yellow crown very clearly. While watching it I heard another tapping nearby and when I got to the place expecting to see another Arctic I was delighted to see the scarlet crest of a Pileated Woodpecker. Although I knew that it is a large bird (Crow sized) still I was surprised by its bulk and by its long powerful beak. The plumage is mostly black with some white.

To end the birdwatching year a census of birds is taken on Boxing Day every year, which is organized by Mr. Baillie of the Royal Ontario Museum. The whole area within a thirty mile radius of the Museum is divided into 28 areas and parties assigned to each area. I joined three others to work over an area on the northern edge of Toronto quite near my home. Part of this area is built over and part consists of a golf course in a valley with trees on its banks and a stream. One of my colleagues was Fred Bodsworth, President of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, who led a round-the-world birdwatching tour in 1965 and was in Hong Kong in June, so we discussed birdwatching in Hong Kong during the course of the day. Our rendezvous was timed for 8 a.m. and to arrive at the given place, with the temperature at 5° F. and several inches of snow, so early in the morning requires no little fortitude. It wasn't until we had been walking nearly an hour that my circulation began to work at all. Luckily the sun shone clearly over the snow and in the end the temperature gradually crept up to nearly 20° F. During the course of the morning we visited several well known feeding stations where we were able to observe quite a number of different birds including 8 Cardinals, 2 Robins (orange-breasted Thrushes which ordinarily have migrated by now) and 2 Nuthatches, and in some rough ground near some bungalows we turned up one cock and 7 hen Pheasants (Ring-necked). The highlight of the walk was to surprise a Long-eared Owl in a clump of pine trees on a small hillside and see it fly off above the snow. Another exciting moment was when a Northern Shrike chased a Goldfinch out of some bushes near us and the Goldfinch twisted and turned while flying higher and higher into the sky. We watched it twisting and turning with the Shrike just a turn behind it for three full minutes until we were quite dizzy with the sight. Suddenly, just when the Shrike seemed certain to seize it he dropped out of the chase and plummeted down into a nearby wood and the Goldfinch continued triumphantly flying further and further away. At one of the feeders we were invited in for coffee and cake and were able to watch a Flicker, a Blue Jay, several Tree Sparrows, Chickadees and a Nuthatch feeding while we were feeding in the warm. Our total list for the day was 22 different species which is not bad for mid-winter in Canada. The total number of species seen by all groups turned out to be 82.

## Conclusions

My own list of birds identified in the Toronto area so far amounts to 176 species out of a possible total of 322. But I hasten to say that a good many of these birds were recognized with the help of experienced birdwatchers who told me what they were. I certainly could not be sure of recognizing that number yet on my own. So I still have plenty of work to do in order to recognize the majority of the birds on the Checklist. The mass of Warblers and Sparrows is enough to try the ability of any birdwatcher for a start. Also I still have plenty of rare or semi-rare birds to see for the first time such as Snow Bunting, Brown-capped Chickadee, Summer Tanager, Carolina Wren and King Rail. Perhaps some of the rarer birds will always evade me as did the Pheasant-tailed Jacana, the male Scarlet Minivet and the Frigate Bird in Hong Kong. If you ask me what birds I miss in Canada after coming from Hong Kong I would say immediately the Wagtails and Pipits. We have no Wagtails and only a Water Pipit which is not common. We also have only one Kingfisher, though he is a large and handsome bird and reminds me of the Pied Kingfisher especially because he hovers, and has a crest—this is the Belted Kingfisher (11-14"). Description: grey crest and upper parts, white breast, a grey band and a chestnut band on breast and chestnut flanks. Like many other enthusiasts in Toronto I have a bird feeder in my garden sited so that I can see it from my chair in the dining room and also from my study upstairs. We use a wild bird seed mixture and sunflower seeds with plenty of suet for the Chickadees ( Tits) and Woodpeckers. So far we have only attracted Cardinals, Chickadees, and the inevitable House Sparrows and Starlings,—oh yes, and Downy Woodpeckers and one Flicker. This is a largish Woodpecker (13-14"). Description: Barred brown upper parts, red band across back of head, black band across upper breast, underparts speckled white and black. But we hope for better things. Old hands tell us that it takes a long time to build up the goodwill of birds locally but once achieved one can expect some surprising results.

Meanwhile, what is the upshot of all this activity? I think the conclusion is fairly clear. However sad you may feel when you have to leave Hong Kong you should take heart because you can always take your hobby with you, and if you happen to settle in this continent you will find that some experience of birdwatching in Europe and the Far East is an excellent preparation for birdwatching in North America.

Toronto.

Jack Cranmer-Byng

## Postscript

I have just seen a Frigate Bird and a Pheasant-tailed Jacana—in the Royal Ontario Museum at Toronto.

## IN MY GARDEN

Not until I moved into quarters near Tsuen Wan was I aware that there were any birds in Hong Kong at all. Then on one of my first mornings I was awakened by what sounded like the soft whinnying of a horse. Somewhat puzzled I investigated this noise, when I was surprised to see a glorious brown and white bird with a large red bill and a blue back. I soon ascertained that this was a White-breasted Kingfisher and I am happy to say he continued to greet my mornings for the next two years. During this time I purchased a 500 mm. Asahi pentax lens, and started trying to photograph the birds in the garden. I started with my friend the kingfisher but this proved to be a mistake as he seemed to have a thing about cameras. I must have tried for a year before I caught him unawares from about 150'; the result photographically was not good, but at least I have him recorded for posterity.

The big problem, apart from getting near enough was to keep the lens steady, and this was only overcome by using the tripod with short legs.

One curious fact I have observed is that the smaller the bird the closer I am able to get to it. This results in all the birds having the same image size on the negative whether they be sparrow or egret.

Anyway back to my garden. Once I started looking, I recorded well over 30 different species. These were sparrow, Chinese Bulbul, Red-vented Bulbul, Crested Bulbul, Great Tit, Long-tailed Tailor-bird, Stonechat, Magpie Robin, Daurian Redstart, Chinese Greenfinch, Nightjar, Kestrel, Sparrowhawk, Peregrine Falcon, Kite, Blue Rock-thrush, White-eye, White-breasted Kingfisher, Common Kingfisher, Spotted Munia, Indian Tree Pipit, Crested Mynah, Rufous-backed Shrike, White-faced Wagtail, Grey Wagtail, Swallow, Swift, Hair-crested Drongo, Spotted Dove, Black-faced Laughing-thrush, Crow-pheasant, Masked Bunting, Buzzard, Yellow-bellied Wren-warbler.

Unfortunately I saw very few rare birds in Hong Kong. But unusual ones were Spoon-bill Sandpiper at Yuen Long, Ince's Paradise Flycatcher, a bright blue flycatcher at Ho Chung, Red-necked Phalaropes off Ma Wan Island. And I am sure I saw a spotted thrush while playing cricket at K.C.C.

Anyway the point to be made is the number of birds in Hong Kong is very great once you start looking for them.

I am now living in Norfolk which abounds with bird life and only a week or so ago saw my first Waxwing.

On September the 3rd 1965 there was the greatest influx of migrants ever recorded and 23 Wrynecks were ringed.

I look forward to returning to Hong Kong one day and to tramp among the marshes and also to see if my kingfisher is still in the garden.

K. W. Eldred

## BIRD-SELLING IN SAN HUI

The marketplace of San Hui, near Castle Peak Bay in the NT, is filled with local residents buying and selling a spectacular variety of commodities. Among the regular hawkers, an attractive and pleasant young woman is conspicuous. Her main product for sale is pigeons, but she also sells great numbers of wild birds; the larger ones are jammed with the pigeons into large tight wicker cages, but the smaller ones are kept in bamboo cages or tied on strings. All her birds are more or less alive.

On asking, you will hear that these birds are from Communist China, and therefore may be sold legally—which is not true, I believe, but prosecution would be difficult. However, this story is not entirely true. Bird-catching goes on in the marshes behind San Hui. Frequently, late at night, flickering lights appear over the duck farms and water-buffalo pastures there; and in the morning you may meet a man carrying in one hand a cluster of nets similar to butterfly-nets and in the other a string of marsh birds. He has been dazzling them with lamp and then netting them. Some, at least, of the birds sold in San Hui are derived from such seeking out. On the other hand, the bird woman also sells birds rare or absent from the area, such as Tufted Ducks and a Short-eared Owl; these may well be derived from across the border.

The young lady, with her pigeons and other fowl, appears about two days out of three in San Hui, and is probably always in the area. She slings the cages on a bamboo pole and carries them over her shoulder through the town, providing door-to-door service. Once in a while men may be the bird-sellers, sometimes selling the same (recognizable) birds. One I suspect is her husband.

Her crop changes with the seasons, except for the pigeons, and the Francolins, of which she always has a large supply. In summer, she sold many young egrets and herons, and many kingfishers; fall brought snipe, pipits, and waterhens; now with the winter she sells wild ducks and various hawks. The birds divide themselves into various classes: Those sold for food (francolin, snipe, quail, waterhens, rails, ducks); those sold as cage-birds (bulbuls, kingfishers, and small birds generally); and those sold as medicine (herons, nightjars, owls, at least some hawks). Chinese medicine's miraculous efficacy is of course universally believed in San Hui, and the mortality rate and the incredible number of diseased children are conveniently overlooked. So fledgling egrets, under the name of "white cranes", are boiled to produce a cure-all broth; Kestrels are boiled to cure the cough; and nightjars are plucked alive, as they are in the magical practices of several parts of the world.

During the past half year, I have been noticing the birds sold, and attempting to keep a vague sort of record. Since the beginning of August, I have noticed the following birds sold.

Egrets. Mostly young birds, apparently taken from nests just before flying. Apparently Cattle Egrets. "Medical" use as above. None after start of fall.

PondHeron. Once in a while with the Egrets.

Yellow Bittern. Once in a while with the Egrets.

Teal. Several, usually in pairs, from Dec. 21 into the new year.

Tufted Duck. A large number of ducks, apparently of this species (fitting all descriptive marks and certainly in the genus *Aythya*), appeared Dec. 29, and are still being sold as of early January. Since the species is so exceedingly rare in the Colony, I suspect it and possibly the Teal are indeed from Communist China.

Black-eared Kite. Three in a cage on Dec. 31; apparently to be sold for food, or so I was told. No takers at this writing. The same three birds still being offered as of early Jan.

Sparrowhawk. Once, fall.

Kestrel. Quite commonly available in fall and winter; "medical" use as above.

Francolin. Always a good number offered; the steadiest item among the wild birds.

Quail. Also usually available at any season; sometimes missing, sometimes half a dozen or more.

Banded Rail. Often sold in fall.

Baillon's Crake. Four observed on one day in early November; I carefully checked them in the hand, compared with published descriptions and when they came up for sale again (two on Nov. 19) was able to make certain of the identification.

Ruddy Crake. On Nov. 23, I met a bird-catcher with full regalia of nets, and with a string of Waterhen and one unmistakable Ruddy Crake. He was coming through Castle Peak Hospital grounds on his way home from a night's work. It would therefore seem highly probable that this crake was obtained in the marshes below the Hospital. This and the Baillon's Crake are both quite rare in the Colony, and if obtained locally they are rather interesting records. Unfortunately there is no proof, especially for the Baillon's.

White-breasted Waterhen. Very often sold, especially in fall, in numbers up to 8 or so.

Snipe. Very often sold in fall. Common in marshes behind San Hui. Identifiable (in the hand) were Pintail and Swinhoe's Snipe, both commonly; other species may have been there.

Short-eared Owl. Dec. 21, an apparent Short-eared Owl was noted. It lacked ear tufts, but had the other marks (Herklots says they sometimes do lack ear tufts). Again, I was able to go into Hong Kong, check the marks in the books at the HKBWS library, and return to re-examine the bird, for it turned up a day or so later too. This owl has apparently never been recorded

in the Colony. Herklots says it is common around Canton, whence this bird perhaps came, and that it is called the "mau-tau ying" (catheaded eagle), which name was used by the bird-sellers.

Nightjars. Several sold during fall, at the same time they stopped appearing around the lights at Castle Peak Hospital. I suspect a connection.

Common Kingfisher. Frequently sold in summer and early fall as a cage bird (so I was told).

White-breasted Kingfisher. As for Common.

Black-capped Kingfisher. Once, early fall.

Red-backed Shrike. Frequent in summer.

Bulbuls. All three species sold, especially in summer, as cage birds.

Hwamei. Sold as a cage-bird. I do not remember the bird woman of San Hui selling this, but it is of course sold almost everywhere.

Warblers. During early migration time, various Warblers appeared for sale. I remember noting the Great Reed.

Magpie-Robin. Occasionally, as a cage bird.

Blue Rock Thrush (Red-bellied form). Nov. 19 and once or twice near that date.

Grey-backed Thrush. One, Nov. 19.

Gray Thrush. One, Nov. 19 (a bad day for thrushes).

Richard's Pipit. Occasionally found in fall, as a cage bird.

White-eye. Occasional as cage bird. Very commonly sold in Yuen Long and elsewhere.

The total is thus at least 33 species of birds sold, and many individuals of most of them. (In addition, civet cats have turned up twice lately). It is obvious that this represents a serious drain on the neighborhood bird life. Such bird-sellers must exist in most of the towns of the New Territories, as well as in the cities. Whether the birds do come primarily from Communist China or not, they are being destroyed, without even the excuse that they are needed as food in the case of the majority (cage and "medicinal" birds). I wish to take this opportunity to urge that some way be found to suppress this traffic as fast as possible.

E. A.

Editor's Note—Through the efforts of the Society's representative on the Wildlife Conservation Advisory Committee this woman was brought to court and she was fined HK\$20.00 (25/- or US\$3.50). The magistrate returned the birds to her as the "prosecuting officer being unaware of the usual procedure, had indicated that the birds would be destroyed if confiscated." Illegal trapping will doubtless continue to flourish.



## NOTES ON THE BREEDING OF THREE MALAYAN BIRDS

### PURPLE HERON.—*A.p. manillensis*

Instantly recognisable by its rich plumage this bird is unlike any other Heron in the country. It is extremely scarce, its favoured habitats are few and even from these may be unpredictably absent. I never have encountered it along river banks, muddy sea margins or estuaries. In dense reed swamps one or two birds may be expected, yet although such areas are numerous in this tropical latitude only a small proportion attract these Herons. The bird is a skulker, in this respect rather Bittern-like and certainly crepuscular in feeding habits during the non-breeding season, but when young have to be nourished both parents provide food all day long. Handling the young makes them regurgitate and the identifiable components of such ejections usually are small fresh water fish, tadpoles, frog-spawn, frogs, lizards, and on three unusual occasions an eight inch water snake. In Malaya the nest and eggs of this striking Heron have not hitherto been described or photographed. On 3rd February 1957, one of the hottest days of the hottest and driest month of the year, I flushed a bird from its nest containing five blue-green eggs placed in a dense "islet" of reeds, one of many in a typical swampy area on Penang Island. This is the nest now featured.

On rising the bird uttered a throaty GARUNK twice and the physical features that impressed me most were the long legs trailing low and noticeably large feet, the latter being no doubt a definite aid to swamp stalking. The nest was a thick mat of dry reed stems — *Scirpus Grossus* — and its long axis exterior rims were twenty four inches apart, the shorter axis rims eighteen and the egg-hollow two and a half deep at centre. It was sited very low, the base barely four inches above foot-deep water. The fresh eggs averaged 2.35 x 1.65 inches but the date and season seemed wrong compared with breeding records from adjacent territories; although February breeding by *A.p. purpurea* is known in Africa.

Four eggs were hatched by 28th February the fifth being infertile. Under the white nestling down the skin of the new born chick was yellow-green. When two weeks old they spent each hot day scattered amongst the shady reeds where the parent found and fed each separately. The nest at this stage was used only for roosting at night. In different parts of the two mile-long swamp tract a pair has bred each year in February since 1957. I found a single nest as usual in the current year 1965 containing four eggs; but three months later on 10th May watched eight immature birds flying together and ranging about undecidedly; thus indicating a second brood from a nest not discovered. The present breeding ground for its whole length runs north and

south and parallel with a coastal mangrove forest, but the Herons have not at any time been observed to enter it or even alight on a forest tree.

### CRESTED TREE SWIFT.—*H.l. harterti*

In Penang this graceful bird may be seen and heard in many places varying in altitude from sea level to 2700 ft. but is nowhere numerous even in breeding localities. For this purpose the areas most favoured are of derelict rubber trees with decaying tops or normal healthy rubber trees 'wintering' in the hot season and completely leafless. Over many years of continuous observation I never have seen a nest on any other species of tree: or attached to dead wood. At this latitude the hottest and driest months are January and February, and the latter is the peak month for nesting activity. The male selects the site and alone fashions the tiny nest of wafer-thin bark flakes; minute flecks of lichen and one or two of its own downy body feathers cemented together with saliva. The first two items are collected from other rubber trees and brought to the site. By the same agent it is fixed to one side well out from the trunk of a living naked horizontal branch. Comparatively low trees up to 50 ft. in height are preferred and a nest may be near the top, but is much more likely to be somewhere in the lower reaches of the upper half. To date the highest found was 40 ft. up in hill rubber at an elevation of 600 ft. and the lowest 12 ft. in rubber at sea level. Some males begin their "site-seeing" during the second week of January and having chosen, complete their shell-like crescents in a week. By January 22nd the single egg may be expected and will be visible well above the rim, from any point on the ground on the same side as the nest.

The frail receptacle which holds it is slightly resilient, only an inch long between the extremities of adhesion; and the upper surface of the egg in the nest usually level with the upper surface of the branch. When incubating the bird appears to be doing nothing more than resting across its perch as the whole nest and egg are entirely hidden under the breast feathers. Both sexes incubate and in daylight at least the female undertakes the greater proportion. The egg is oval, blunt at both ends, pale grey-green in colour and measures .98 x .65 inches. It will be noted that the length of the egg is only .02 of an inch less than the length of the nest. Hatching occurs between the 15th and 17th day. Both parents bring food and two weeks later the chick leaves the nest and moves a little way along the branch to which it clings lengthwise and is fed there until it can fly. Fledglings are grey and show no promise of the bronze-green lustre of the adult plumage which they will eventually attain. Is it accidental or planned that the time of hatching coincides with newly burgeoning boughs and the young thrive amid the exquisite green of young rubber leaves and sprays of creamy flowers? A few nests may be found in April and odd

ones in May. Small scattered breeding colonies are usual and the same trees used year after year. Unaccountably, although a resident species, it disappears for months and as suddenly returns. It is strictly arboreal but drinks by sipping from still water-surfaces in full flight. The loud clear double call—che-pck, che-pck, che-pck — accent on the second syllable—is unmistakable; uttered frequently without apparent reason or significance when flying or landing on a bare tree-top beside birds already settled. These tree-top gatherings are a familiar feature of suburban gardens during the non-breeding season and in my experience consist entirely of males. Birds resting and relaxed hold the forehead crest erect but in flight it is not visible. Never on any occasion have I seen a Tree Swift settle on any type of overhead wire, or found one dead.

### PAINTED SNIPE—*R.b. benghalensis*

Three species of migratory Snipe visit Malaya annually. These are the Common or Fantail (*C.g. gallinago*), the Chinese (*C. mekala*) and the Pintail (*C. stenura*). All are true Snipe differing from Woodcock in having much more pointed wings; the long inner secondaries equalling the primaries in length, while the markings on the head are longitudinal and not cross-wise. Snipe always have a buff band down the centre of the crown. In the hand the three species may be readily distinguished from each other by their tails. That of the Fantail Snipe has fourteen feathers; the Chinese Snipe twenty and the Pintail twenty-six. Compared to the latter the first two are numerically rare birds. All of them breed in temperate northern latitudes and winter from August to May far south of these breeding grounds. My latest visual record is 10th June. This date is phenomenally late when one considers that the vanguard of south-coming birds are due again in a little over two months.

Related to, but different from these migrants is the Painted Snipe. This is a resident breeding bird though its presence is unpredictable. It is furtive and difficult to study as its favourite resorts are wide marshes generously sprinkled with tussocky herbage and stretches of wet naked soil. For breeding purposes it takes over selected areas within which there is a tendency to form thin colonies. Flight is slow and straight without zig-zag.

This bird breeds right through the year, the busy season is June to January; and the most prolific months are August, September, October and November, which bring the big rains. This year however on Penang Island an interesting phenomenon was noted: viz: a remarkable outbreak of nesting in April. I found nineteen occupied nests in that month, due I think to the fact that the land was prepared in March for a second crop of padi: thus with the requisite habitat provided the birds appeared and bred. Normally in March the same ground would be under a dense growth of weeds. Twenty five years ago I recorded—and now

confirm—the following “In districts where there is no shooting I am convinced that the same bird consistently uses the same plot of ground. This is ascertainable with some certainty by careful comparison of eggs which, although conforming to specific type, bear markings characteristic of one individual. In view of this constant factor I surmise that one female consorts with different males successively, and lays at least three clutches in a comparatively short period. In fact the second clutch is completed before the first, sponsored and brooded by the original male partner, has been hatched”. The nuptial call is a softly booming—ku—oo—ku—oo— mostly uttered late at night and sure indication of breeding intention.

The nest is of two types, very simple and quickly completed. The first of these is sited on a clod of wet earth showing above water: sometimes only three inches higher than the water surface. With further steady rainfall the eggs perish. A depression only an inch deep is formed chiefly by the female turning her body slowly round while pressing upon the soft soil. This bare foundation is then lined frugally with broken reed stems and flowers if available, and measures four inches in diameter. The second type is sited in luscious herbage growing in shallow water; with an overarching screen and a tunnel through the grasses on one side only. Except when suddenly startled the bird always uses this track to enter or leave the nest. The complete clutch is four laid on consecutive days. Average dimensions of a large recent series are 1.42 x .96 inches. An incomplete clutch, if taken or destroyed is never completed. Eggs are pyriform and in colouration resemble those of the Dotterel. The ground is either golden, greenish or greyish buff very handsomely and boldly splashed with umber upon which is super-imposed a deep black. Between the black blotches lie many specks of grey and fine black lines. This intricate pattern is fairly evenly distributed over the shell surface, and while the larger end may carry heavier groupings there is no suggestion of zoning. Incubation begins when the fourth egg has been laid, is undertaken solely by the male and lasts eighteen days. Newly born chicks are covered with buff and black down and become active as soon as they are dry. Within a few hours they abandon the nest and accompanied by the male move off along their destined ways.

In conclusion I have to report a unique event. On 22nd October 1965 when accompanied by Awang my Malay climber a male Painted Snipe suddenly rose a short distance ahead of us carrying a downy chick in its left foot and went down thirty yards on. We hurried to the spot and the bird got up again still carrying the chick which on this occasion was dropped just after take off. It bounced once then froze flat. I picked it up, found it quite unharmed and judged it to be not more than three days old. A determined search was made back at the original flushing point but no nest or other nestlings, if any, could be located.

J. Cairns

## BIRD WATCHING BEFORE BREAKFAST

If you can manage to get to the Peak by six thirty or soon after, a walk round Harlech Road and Lugard Road is most rewarding. At that hour the birds are full of joy and trust and you can see them on the path or singing on the bush; instead of singing **behind** the bush as they do later in the day. Blue Magpies and Violet Whistling Thrushes are all over the place, and you should see a Hwamei or two, a Crow Pheasant and perhaps a Black-throated Laughing Thrush, which is normally a very shy bird and a good ventriloquist, so that they are difficult to track down. Two people have been lucky enough to see six at once in the early morning, and if you can hear one singing close you can often get it to pop out and have a look at you by a little mimicry. You may also see a Francolin calling from the top of a rock.

No doubt other roads near the top of the Peak, and other areas elsewhere would be just as fruitful. The best time of year for this exercise is just before the clocks change to Summer Time.

E. D. W.

## RECORDING

Records should be sent to the Hon. Recorder half-yearly, in early July and early January. Anyone leaving the Colony is asked to send in his records before departure if possible; notes have a nasty habit of getting mislaid "en voyage".

Use a separate sheet of paper (6" by 4" used horizontally) for each species.

Head each sheet and complete it as follows:-

YEAR	SPECIES	CHECK LIST NO.
Date	Place	Observer's Initials
e.g. 1965	CROW PHEASANT	Numbers, age, sex, etc.
(1st half)		170
3rd Jan.	Tai Mo Shan	A.B.C.
		1 seen calling from small bush near summit
10th May	Lam Tsuen valley	Several heard, 1 juvenile seen

Please do NOT use diary form.

Whenever possible, obtain confirmation of a rarity by getting someone else to see it. At least take full notes on the spot and send them in with your records. Do NOT guess or imagine details afterwards. Please read the extract from the British Birds editorial on the following page. It is important that our standards in Hong Kong should be as high as possible. Nevertheless, it is hoped that members will send in reports of rarities even when they are doubtful whether they have enough supporting evidence to make identity certain. Subsequent events sometimes support a report of this kind, or it may tie in with those of other observers.

Remember that your records will be kept for future reference. Please type or write them neatly and legibly.

The following information about the Colony's birds is particularly needed:-

- (a) Positive breeding records for all species in all areas.
- (b) Nesting data, such as breeding period, clutch size, incubation and fledging periods.
- (c) Arrival and departure dates of summer and winter visitors.
- (d) Reports from the New Territories *East* of the Kowloon-Canton railway.

(a) and (b) are best recorded on nesting cards which may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary. Full instructions are printed on them. When completed they should be sent to the Hon. Recorder.

## SIGHT-RECORDS OF RARE BIRDS

(Extracted from the editorial in "British Birds",  
Vol. XLV, No. 1 January 1952)

Accurate sight-records of rare birds are important because they add to knowledge without causing the destruction involved in the alternative method of collecting specimens. However, sight-records are of very little use if not above suspicion.

Do not record a rare bird as seen for certain unless you have taken down on the spot its characteristics before consulting a work on ornithology. It is entirely unsatisfactory to view a bird in the field, taking insufficient notes, and then, finding its supposed portrait or description in a book, even a short time afterwards, to proceed to work out an account or sketch of what was seen.

Ideally field-notes of a rarity should cover the following points:-

1. Distance of bird from you, whether you were using glasses or not, and nature and direction of light.

2. Nature of ground it was on and what other birds (if any) it was associating with.

3. Whether you saw it from different angles; whether at rest or in flight; whether from above or below. (The more varied the conditions of observation the better).

4. What were its actions and what was the character of its flight compared with other birds.

5. Its general form as compared with other birds, and how it differed from other birds at all like it which are known to you.

6. Particular points in structure as compared with other birds, such as size and shape of bill, length of legs, shape of wing, length of tail.

7. Colour of bill, legs and feet; any distinctive white or coloured patches or markings and their exact position. A rough sketch or diagram is a great help. (Some general anatomy should be learnt so that you can give the colour of wing coverts, under tail-coverts, nape, throat, chin or other parts of the plumage accurately).

8. So far as possible, an exact description of the whole plumage of the bird, not only the parts which you think may help in identifying it.

9. Any calls or notes, indicating especially the quality of the sound (harsh, rattling, shrill, hoarse, liquid, etc.), and comparison with notes of other species if this assists the description.

## HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

### APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

(To be sent to the Hon. Secretary - Mr. R. E. Hale, c/o Hong-kong and Shanghai Bank, 1, Queen's Road, C., Hong Kong — who will pass on the application and subscription to the Honorary Treasurer).

Introduced by .....  
(If Applicable)

I support the objects of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (as reproduced overleaf) and wish to become a member. I enclose \$20-\$30 for husband and wife combination, or half these fees if joining after 30th June) as my subscription for the current year.

Date..... Signature.....

Name & Address.....

Telephone No.....(Home) .....(Office)

The objects of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society are:—

- (a) To facilitate and encourage the study of birds in Hong Kong.
- (b) To provide information and assistance to all persons, either visitors to the Colony or residents, who are interested in birds.
- (c) To correlate and publish from time to time the field records of all bird watchers in the Colony.
- (d) To publish and keep up-to-date a check-list of the birds of Hong Kong.
- (e) To assist in the enforcement of the law relating to the protection of birds (The Wild Birds and Wild Mammals Protection Ordinance, No. 8 of 1954).
- (f) To operate a lending library of books on birds.
- (g) To exchange information among members and with ornithological societies in other countries.

#### OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

- Chairman:* Commander E. D. Webb, R.N.,  
Government House Lodge, Hong Kong.
- Hon. Recorder:* Miss M. E. M. Benham,  
Medical and Health Department,  
Lee Gardens,  
Hysan Avenue, Hong Kong.
- Hon. Secretary:* Mr. R. E. Hale, c/o Hongkong & Shanghai  
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