

# THE HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1961



*Published by*

**THE HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY**

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*Published in 1962*

*by the*

**HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY**

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

(A registered Society under the Hong Kong Societies Ordinance)



# THE HONG KONG BIRD REPORT 1961

Compiled by

E. J. Allen and J. L. Cranmer-Byng

## INTRODUCTION

During 1961 the membership of the Society remained steady at about fifty. As usual several keen members left, although the Society was glad to welcome a few new ones. Flight-Sergeant A.D. Macdonald left the Colony in the summer of 1961 after completing the 1960 Bird Report in his capacity as Honorary Recorder. This was a sad loss to the Society. Also during the summer Mr. Noble Smith, the Honorary Secretary, left.

Outings during 1961 were held as follows:—

2	January	Mong Tseng
16	February	Ping Shan
15	March	Lamma
19	March	Mai Po
3	April	Lam Tsun
22	May	Ping Shan
25	September	Mai Po
16	October	Mai Po
29	October	Ping Shan
13	November	Shatin Wai
3	December	Ho Chung
26	December	Mong Tseng

On these Society outings a number of comparatively rare birds were seen and most of them were recognized, though some of the various eagles seen in the Mai Po - Ping Shan area during the winter months were never definitely identified. The Society badly needs a specialist on birds of prey. No attempt was made during the year to count the number of Egrets breeding in the Colony. No separate account of game birds has been included, though the notes of one of our members (Mr. J.A. Ozorio), which have been included in the Report, give considerable details of game birds seen in Hong Kong during 1961.

During the year the Society bought *Birds in Japan* by Y. Yamashima. This is a useful field guide with a sensible text in English and 132 good coloured plates depicting nearly 150

different species, the majority of which are on the Hong Kong Check-List. Commander E.D. Webb kindly presented the Society with a copy of *The Birds of Borneo* by B.E. Smythies with 50 coloured plates by A.M. Hughes. This is another useful addition to the Library since a fair number of rarer birds on the Check-List are illustrated and described in this book. Mr. A. St. G. Walton presented a copy of *A Handbook of the Birds of Eastern China* by La Touche (2 vols.) which is another very welcome addition to the Library.

Apart from observing and reporting on species seen, the most important activity during the year was the writing of sixteen field descriptions by members of the Committee of birds not described by Dr. G.A.C. Herklots in *Birds of Hong Kong* and also not described in the *Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe*. These descriptions were issued to members of the Society and now that a start has been made it is intended to continue the issue of such field descriptions until all birds in the Check-List are covered. The need for a field guide to the birds of Hong Kong with good quality coloured plates is continually being felt, and there are some indications that this need may eventually be met though the task is likely to take a considerable time. There are now 342 species and subspecies on the Hong Kong Check-List, nine new records having been added to the List since 30th April 1960 when the compilers completed it for publication.\* These nine additions are listed on page 16 of this report.

During the year Mrs. T. Clemens, a visiting ornithologist from England, was taken out by members of the Committee and was lucky to see a Verditer and a Robin Flycatcher among other birds. The Society is proud to note that the honour of Knighthood has been conferred on one of its members, Dr. L. T. Ride, by Her Majesty the Queen.

Two new features have been introduced into this year's report: an article composed of short field notes contributed by various members and a guide to the areas in the Colony which currently seem to yield most birds.

Finally at the end of 1961 an event of some considerable interest to members of the Society occurred when a new species was deliberately introduced into the Colony. On 28th December

\* An Annotated Check-List of the Birds of Hong Kong. Compiled by A.M. Macfarlane and A.D. Macdonald. Copies are obtainable from the South China Morning Post price H.K.\$7.50.

36 pairs of Bamboo Partridge (*Bambusicola thoracica*) were released; 20 pairs at Wong Nei Chong Gap, 10 at Ho Chung, 6 at Tai Po Kau.

It is hoped that these birds will breed and that the species will become a permanent addition to the Colony's game birds. A field description is printed on page 12 of this Report.

The objects of the Society remain as originally laid down at its inception in 1957. They are printed on the back of the form of application for membership which will be found at the end of this report.

All correspondence and applications for membership should be addressed to:—

Hon. Secretary,  
Hong Kong Bird Watching Society,  
c/o The Chartered Bank,  
Hong Kong.

J. L. C - B.

## COLONY RECORDS 1961

### Facts and Figures

The fourth year of the Society's work brought records of 223 species and races, 100 of which were passerines. There were three additions to the Colony list.

### Weather

Slightly abnormally sunny and warm weather characterized 1961. Rainfall was somewhat below normal due to an exceptionally dry first half, but tropical storms in July and September brought with them torrential rains which offset to some degree the dryness of the first six months. While January was dry and sunny, February was equally wet and dull. A warm and sunny March was followed by the usually temperamental April with its thunderstorms and mist. May witnessed a mild typhoon, but June was the warmest and driest in 23 years. August was normal with two heavy rains. September brought three tropical storms and much rain to the Colony. October was clear and dry, and warmer than it had been since 1915. November and December were warmer than usual with the mean temperature of the former being the highest ever recorded.

### Summary

During the year three of the Society's most active members left the Colony and the amount of observation carried out during the year was proportionally less. Yet despite the smaller number of observers people did seem to get to the right places at the right times, and a respectable list of birds was recorded. The year started well (as it usually does) with a pair of Whitebrowed Hill Warblers seen in She Shan Wood in the Lam Tsun Valley. This is the first record for the Colony. On January 27th a Plaintive Cuckoo was seen in Mai Po Wood, which presumably was wintering in the Colony. Six White Ibis were seen at Lok Ma Chau and two Lapwings at Sha Kong. A Mountain Bush Warbler was seen at Luen Tak. This is the third Colony record. A Black Vulture was reported from the Yuen Long area, which is the fourth Colony record.

A Rough-legged Buzzard was seen at the end of January at Mai Po and again on Ma On Shan in February. During the latter month a Moorhen was seen at Fanling and a Verditer Flycatcher



in the Ping Shan area. Treepies were seen in Tai Po Forest Reserve in February and again in April and December in other areas.

The second Jack Snipe to be seen in the Colony, at Mai Po, and a first record of a White Stork made March qualitatively the best month. It was generally an active month for the Society and a good part of the spring records were made in this month. Mallards and a Spoon-billed Sandpiper were seen at Mai Po. A White-cheeked Laughing Thrush seen on the last day of the month in the University area brought an excellent month's watching to an end.

In April a number of interesting records were reported including a Black Bittern on two occasions at Mai Po, a Caspian Plover at Kai Tak, a Styan's Grasshopper Warbler at Mai Po, a White-cheeked Drongo on two occasions on the Island, a Jay in the Lam Tsun Valley, and an Ashy Minivet at Fanling. A Pallas' Grasshopper Warbler at Mai Po was the highlight of the month. Another was seen in September.

Both the spring and autumn passages were marked by the near absence of thrushes. This poor record for thrushes is the greatest single factor which lessened the Colony list for the year. May saw a Frigate Bird at Sha Tau Kok and a Watercock at Ping Shan.

In June an injured Swinhoe's Fork-tailed Petrel was brought from Lamma Island by a boatwoman. It was cared for by a member of the Society for a while, but its wings had been clipped by the boatwoman so that it could not fly, and the correct diet proved impossible to obtain, and so it subsequently died. This was the first Colony record for this species. On June 11th two Blue and White Flycatchers were heard singing in Tai Po Forest Reserve. This is a late date for the bird. Bonelli's Eagles were seen in June and July. Altogether there were six records for this species during the year which is more than in other recent years.

Near the beginning of July a Curlew Sandpiper was seen at Mai Po which establishes an early date for this species. At the end of August a Little Green Heron was seen over the Shum Chun River. In the middle of September an Avocet and a Stilt were seen at Mai Po on the same day. September also saw the first of three sightings of the Night Heron, this one at the watercourse on the north side of the Lion Rock ridge, a juvenile. Thirty were seen flying over the Shum Chun River in October and two juveniles were again seen in December.

In October a Stilt was seen at Mai Po. On the 12th and 29th of the month an Oriole was seen at Chung Hum Kok and Ping Shan respectively, late dates for this bird. A White-cheeked Drongo was seen at Chung Hum Kok and a Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike at Pokfulam.

In November a Chinese Babax was seen at Tai Po Kau, the third Colony record, and a Merlin was captured at Repulse Bay.\* St. Francis Xavier's Middle School in Kowloon continued to be a magnet for migrating birds as a von Schrenk's Reed Warbler and a Watercock were among the birds stunned against the seaward facing walls of the school.

Three birds not already mentioned were seen in the final month of the year: a Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher at Clearwater Bay, four Chestnut Buntings at Ping Shan, and a male Fire-breasted Flowerpecker at Sassoon Road.

Generally speaking, the number of individual birds recorded this year was a little less than in previous years. The spring migration was well covered, but compared with the records of the first six months, those of the latter half of the year were quite scanty. Although it is difficult to know just what should be considered important to report the Hon. Recorder feels that reports on more species should be handed in and when there is any doubt a record should be forwarded. In the words of the Hon. Recorder for 1960, birds which are resident but local may be well-known in one place but virtually non-existent in others. The present writer feels that a good rule-of-thumb is not to report Bulbuls, House Sparrows, Black-faced Laughing Thrushes and Crested Mynahs, but anything else is worth recording. For example, a resident like the Great Tit was poorly recorded this year and there is really no way for the Hon. Recorder to know whether numbers are actually less or whether for instance people are just not talking about the Great Tit this year. So when in doubt, record.

E. J. A.

\* See account given on page 14.



## FIELD NOTES

### FLYCATCHERS

In the *Annotated Check-list of the Birds of Hong Kong*, between pages 58 and 60 are listed 14 different kinds of Flycatchers which have been recorded in Hong Kong. Of these the Brown (sometimes called the Broad-billed), the Grey-spotted and the Red-breasted are fairly common and of a drab colour. However, all the others are relatively uncommon, and four of them have the status of vagrant (up to five records only). Since some of these less common Flycatchers also happen to be brightly coloured in plumage it is well worth trying to see them. To stand some chance of seeing them it is necessary to know approximately where and when to look for them. Firstly, let us consider the regular passage migrants. These are:

Ince's Paradise; Ferruginous; Narcissus;  
Tricolour and the Blue and White Flycatchers.

The most likely time to see these birds is during the spring migration, and in Hong Kong that means from late March until early May. As regards locality, one must look for them among trees though not necessarily in large or thick woods. It is dangerous to generalize, but on the whole Flycatchers seem to prefer to be under the cover of trees (where, perhaps, they feel safe from attack) but they also need space in which to manoeuvre in order to capture insects in the air. Plenty of Flycatchers use Hong Kong island during migration and one has a good chance of seeing them on the edge of gardens and wherever there are patches of trees—on the Peak, near the University, around Pokfulam, and Shouson Hill. If you look at the records of Flycatchers listed in the Hong Kong Bird Reports for the four years 1958-61 you will get a good idea of where and when they have been seen.

For example Ince's Paradise appears to have been seen more often in the autumn (mostly September) while the Narcissus has only been reported in the spring, between 22nd March and 1st May. There is some indication that in certain years the main spring migration may be early while in other years it may be a little later. Here are the records of the Bird Watching Society for the period 1959-60 for the Narcissus Flycatcher:

1959. Pokfulam; Cheung Chau; University area.

These three records were dated 29 April, 30 April and 1 May, which was somewhat late.

1960. Lam Tsun Valley; University area. 23 and 28 March. In 1962 it was reported from the University area between 28 March and 6 April, and at Pokfulam on 7 April.

The Tricolour Flycatcher is a rare passage migrant, so far only recorded in April, August and September. There are no recent records.

The Blue and White is seen more often than any of the other colourful Flycatchers, but if you want to see it you must set watch for it towards the end of March and keep looking on every possible occasion throughout April, as there is little chance of seeing it during the brief period of the autumn migration. This bird is usually found near water, even if it is only a small stream or nullah. It has been recorded from widely separated areas in the Colony.

A second group of Flycatchers may be termed 'occasional visitors'. These include some very colourful and rarely seen ones, viz:

Japanese Paradise; Grey-headed; Black-naped Monarch; Verditer; Robin and Hainan Blue Flycatchers.

These birds are not necessarily seen only on the spring and autumn migration, but may be met with in the winter, especially during December and January. Here follows an analysis of the months during which they have been recorded, based on the Annotated Check-list and the Bird Reports:

Japanese Paradise: April 1953; October 1957; April 1959.

Grey-headed: March and November 1960; January 1962.

Black naped Monarch: February 1956; March 1958; January 1960; December 1961.

Verditer: Most reports fall between early December and the end of March. There is one record for October.

Robin: It may be seen during any month between October and May, though December to January would appear to be the most likely time.

Hainan Blue: Only one record—September 1958.

Thus there is more chance of seeing a Verditer or a Robin Flycatcher than any other species in this group.

In conclusion, it is suggested that if you are keen to see any of these attractive Flycatchers you should first choose your time and go out regularly to look for them in the most suitable places.



Thus in December and January you might visit the various *fung-shui* woods beside villages in any of the valleys or on the hillsides in the New Territories, in particular the Ho Chung, Lam Tsun and Shatin Wai—Wong Nai Tai valleys, also the small woods along the Clearwater Bay roads. It is not necessary to find a large wood. Just walk slowly and quietly into any clump of trees and stand still for a while. If there is a Flycatcher in the vicinity he will sooner or later take a flight among the trees after insects. In December 1961, in one small strip of *fung-shui* wood above a village in the Ho Chung valley a male Verditer and a female Robin Flycatcher were seen within a few minutes of entering the trees. But it is not necessary always to visit the New Territories. Both Verditer and Robin Flycatchers have been reported from Hong Kong island. One further tip. Flycatchers seem to visit the same places regularly. For instance there is a particular strip of wood near the University where I found a male Narcissus on 28 March 1960, and on 28 March 1962 I again found a male Narcissus in exactly the same place. The three Colony records of the beautiful Grey-headed Flycatcher all come from the same wood. Incidentally this bird has a loud sweet song somewhat like a canary's which helps one to locate it. It is possible to see one or more of these rarer Flycatchers which visit Hong Kong provided that one has plenty of perseverance and a slice of good luck.

J. L. C-B.

## ESCAPED BIRDS

### 1. Sulphur-crested Cockatoo

There are at present several birds which have recently escaped from captivity. The most striking are the Sulphur-crested Cockatoos. Early in 1959 one escaped from a private aviary and established itself in the Shouson Hill area, though it visited the University grounds several times in August and September of that year. It has been seen at intervals at Shouson Hill ever since, and it clearly thrives there. It has been observed on about twenty occasions and has been seen tearing the seeds out of fir cones as well as eating the shoots of a small bush while perched on the ground. Several times it has been seen in company with Jungle Crows and also Magpies which seem to have taken it under their protection and have been observed flying round it as though providing an escort. While in flight the Cockatoo generally utters loud harsh cries. Its wing beats are laboured and hurried.

In November 1961 two white Cockatoos were seen together in the Colonial Cemetery at Happy Valley (A.O.B.) In January

1962 two Cockatoos were seen together in the University grounds on several occasions when they were observed cracking seeds in various trees. One was a large bird with a fine lemon-coloured crest, and a short length of chain dangling from one leg. This, however, did not appear to impede it in flight or when climbing about in the branches of trees. Its method of feeding was peculiar. It walked along branches very agilely and when it came to some seeds it would bend the twig over with its strong curved beak, hold it firmly with a claw and then proceed to crack the seeds one by one in its beak. The second Cockatoo was much smaller and although it had a small crest it did not appear to be lemon-coloured.

Since the bird at Shouson Hill (nicknamed Alexander for reference) does not sport a length of chain from his leg these two birds seen in the University grounds in January 1962 must be two further escapees. From records kept so far it would appear that an escaped cockatoo is quite capable of feeding itself on seeds and shoots and probably fruit, according to the season, while at large in the Colony. It would also seem that when the food supply is insufficient in one area it will fly to another part of the island where it will remain temporarily. No Cockatoos have been seen in the University area since the end of January 1962 though at the time of writing (end of April 1962) a pair have been reported regularly near the Central Government Offices and in the Colonial Cemetery.

Any evidence of mating among escaped Cockatoos would be of considerable interest, as would any further information on their food supply and which other parts of the Colony they visit. Have they been observed in Kowloon or the New Territories? Have three Cockatoos been seen together at any time?

J. L. C - B.

### 2. Other Escaped Birds

Occasionally in the autumn, and frequently in November and December 1961, a small parrot was seen in Government House grounds. It was often in the trees near the front gate and sometimes in the back garden, very active and noisy while feeding. Brief description—length about 9 inches, head and chin dark brown, sides of neck whitish, a broad crimson collar. Lower breast brown, back, wings and tail emerald, underparts greenish-yellow, bill orange. Resembles *Trichoglossus ornatus* (Linnaeus), the Ornamental Lory.



On three occasions in December, the Chinese Grackle or Talking Mynah (*Gracula religiosa*) was seen in Government House back garden. One bird was seen twice, two birds together were seen once. They were noticed because of their loud, clear sonorous whistle.

E. D. W.

Also in December 1961 an unidentified Paroquet was seen in the University grounds. Brief description: length about 12 inches; vivid green plumage with a crimson band on upper breast, a crimson beak, and a yellowish patch on the wings. Its tail was comparatively short. It spent some time feeding in each tree it visited, climbing among the branches. Its call was a loud, harsh screech, quite unlike the call of the Rose-ringed Paroquet. This same bird was seen three times during January and February 1962 in the University area and once in March near Pokfulam village, and near the Central Government Offices up to the end of April 1962.

From time to time other unusual birds have been reported, and these may have escaped or been released from captivity.

For example:—

July 1959. A pair of Zebra Finches (?) from Africa seen in the Forest Reserve, Taipo Kau.

March 1960. A Green-winged Ground Dove in the University grounds.

June 1961. A Silver Pheasant near Stanley.

#### INTRODUCED BIRDS

Some time between 1903 and 1913 the Rose-ringed Paroquet was introduced into Hong Kong and is now well established here.

At the end of December 1961, in an effort to augment the number of game birds in the Colony, 36 pairs of Bamboo Partridge were imported from Japan and released. Here follows a short field description:

#### BAMBOO PARTRIDGE

*Bambusicola thoracica*

Introduced game bird

Description: Upper parts brown with reddish-brown face, throat, sides of neck and lower breast, contrasting with grey upper breast and eyestripe. Belly dark yellow, black spots on female's belly. Upper tail coverts rich bright brown.

Habits: Spends most of time on ground, occasionally perches low down in a tree, roosts in trees.

Voice: *Male* — Distinctive 3-syllable call note "people pray, people pray, people pray". Occasionally repeated "kro-kro-kro-kro" or single "kyo".

Habitat: Open country, light woodland, gardens.

Range: Practically all S. China, except Yunnan. Introduced game bird in Japan.

Hong Kong Records:

Illustrations: Birds in Japan, P. 190;  
Birds of Japan, No. 422.

(M.E.M.B.)

Members of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society are particularly requested to look out for these birds, and any information about numbers, localities in which they are seen, and their habits will be of value.

#### BIRD ROOSTS

In the past years large numbers of Pied Wagtails have been reported roosting during the winter months in trees opposite the Majestic Cinema in Nathan Road, Kowloon, and on the Supreme Court and the palm trees outside it in Statue Square, Hong Kong.

In December 1961 parties of 7 or 8 Wagtails were seen crossing the harbour from the direction of Kowloon and Stonecutters Island and were found congregating on the grass of the cricket ground and on the roof of the Law Courts between 5.30 and 6 p.m. About 70 birds were counted.

On the evening of November 30th, between 50 and 60 South China White Eyes were observed congregating in a very large clump of bamboo at Silvermine Bay, calling shrilly the whole time. Suddenly they flew up and away across the paddy only to return to the same bamboo in a tight flock. This process was repeated several times until it was nearly dark.

One evening late in December about 50 Crested Mynahs were seen flying in to roost on large boulders on the coast just below Lyemun Barracks. They walked over the boulders until they were safely perched on ledges.

J. L. C. B.



## A MERLIN IN THE HOUSE

On 16th November, I was just starting out on a trip to Kowloon and going to my car in the forecourt of the house (12, Headland Road, Repulse Bay), when my attention was drawn to a mass of fluttering plumage dashing in and out of the big garage. Finally it made a dash at the front door from which I had just emerged and which was closed. Alongside this door is a large venetian type of window of glass slats which were half open, showing a gap of about three inches between each slat. The screaming birds, for there were two in that mass of plumage, went like a shot through the narrow opening between the glass louvres and disappeared into the house, at once to be followed by a crash of broken crockery.

I went quickly into the house and found that there were two birds lying stunned at the far side of the living room to the door, where they had obviously hit a big closed glass window and fallen to the floor, breaking an ornamental plate in their fall.

We picked them up, one was a small grey-blue type of dove, or very young pigeon, who died almost at once and who had been held in the claws and beak of the other bird which was a small Merlin Hawk, brown and with darker markings. The Hawk was, while still half stunned by its impact with the glass, safely placed in a small birdcage where it refused all water and meat in its captivity.

The next morning, the Hawk was taken to the residence of Commander Webb, who identified it and subsequently released it in the Botanical Gardens. The birds locked together had flown straight across the living room, about 35 feet, thinking that the big window, which looks on to the garden, was open space and a way of escape to the hillside.

K.W. Kirby (per E.D.W.)

## ENQUIRIES FOR 1962

1. The status of the Chinese Starling. In the Check-list the Chinese Starling is reported to be a summer visitor with occasional winter records. In 1961, however, there were many records of the bird in the winter and only one summer record. A similar situation existed in 1960. The Hon. Recorder also reports that he has seen the bird in February in the Homantin area in 1962. So members are asked to keep their eyes open for this bird, especially in the summer, to see if we can make a more definite statement about the status of this bird next year.

2. Oriental Skylark. This bird was seen on the top of Tai Mo Shan in May, 1961. It has also been reported there in May in past years. Members are asked to keep a lookout for it this year and to try to find nests.

3. Range of the Black-necked Starling. It appears that over the past few years the range of this bird has been extending eastward and southward. In 1961, it was reported in Ho Chung Valley and Clearwater Bay. Numbers of the bird seen east of the railway line would be of especial interest.

4. Fantail Warbler's range. It also appears that the immutable association of the Fantail Warbler and Mai Po in previous years needs to be corrected. Look for a possible increase in the numbers of the bird in places other than Mai Po during the spring and autumn passages.

5. Bonelli's Eagle. The number of reports for this bird was greater this year than in the past. It will be interesting to see if this increase in observations is maintained.

6. Finally, the Peregrine Falcon has long been recorded as a visitor to Hong Kong but no one knows whether it nests here or not. If you are of the mountain climbing type why not use your binoculars on the seemingly barren cliffs and see if you can pick out a nest.

E. J. A.

**A NUMBERING SYSTEM FOR BIRDS FIRST SEEN AFTER  
THE PUBLICATION OF AN ANNOTATED CHECK-LIST  
OF THE BIRDS OF HONG KONG**

Due to the number of birds which have been seen for the first time in the Colony since the publication of *An Annotated Check-list of the birds of Hong Kong* by A.M. Macfarlane and A.D. Macdonald, the problem of a numbering system for these newly discovered species can no longer be ignored. The present system is inadequate as it uses the same number for birds sometimes widely separated taxonomically. The proposed order, therefore, is to start a new numbering system at 1. After each number will occur a capital (X). The numbers will be given consecutively to each new species *in the order in time that the new species are discovered*. Therefore, Webb's Crow Tit becomes 1X because it was the first new bird for the Colony seen after the publication of the Check-list. The numbers for the new species are given below with an accompanying note as to where they should be placed in the taxonomic order of the Check-list. The number of the bird in La Touche's work is also given.

- 1X **Webb's Crow Tit** *Paradoxornis webbianus suffusus* Gray  
LT number 49; first seen March 29, 1960. Should come after number 233 in the Check-list.
- 2X **Lesser Crested Tern** *Thalasseus zimmermani* Rehw.  
LT no. 591; first seen May 29, 1960. Should come after no. 156 in the Check-list.
- 3X **Nordmann's Tern (Common Tern)** *Sterna hirundo longipennis* Nordmann  
LT no. 594; first seen June 10, 1960. Should come after no. 153 in the Check-list.
- 4X **Chinese Babax** *Babax lanceolatus lanceolatus* Verreaux  
LT no. 67; first seen July 19, 1960. Should come after no. 236 in the Check-list.
- 5X **Green-headed Flycatcher Warbler** *Seicercus affinis intermedia*  
La Touche  
LT no. 237; first seen December 5, 1960. Should come after no. 268 in the Check-list.
- 6X **Ruddy Sparrow** *Passer rutilans* Pallas  
LT no. 291; first seen December 10, 1960. Should come after no. 327 in the Check-list.

- 7X **White-browed Hill Warbler** *Prinia superciliaris* Anderson  
LT no. 247; first seen January 9, 1961. Should come after no. 270 in the Check-list.
- 8X **White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia boyciana* Swinhoe  
LT no. 676; first seen March 26, 1961. Should come after no. 24 in the Check-list.
- 9X **Swinhoe's Petrel** *Oceanodroma monorhis m.* Swinhoe  
LT no. 665; first seen June 12, 1961. Should come after no. 4 in the Check-list.

E. J. A.



# **SYSTEMATIC LIST OF BIRDS REPORTED IN HONG KONG DURING 1961**

## **2 Great Crested Grebe**

*Podiceps cristatus*

Winter visitor. Deep Bay: 2 birds on January 2 (ADM, EDW), c.10 birds on December 26 (Society outing).

## **4 Little Grebe**

*Podiceps ruficollis*

Winter visitor. Liu Pok: 1 on November 7 (JAO).

## **9X Swinhoe's Fork-tailed Petrel**

*Oceanodroma monorhis*

Vagrant. First record for the Colony. On June 12 an injured bird was brought from Lamma Island by a boatwoman. Before its subsequent death the bird was cared for by a member of the Society.

## **5 Spotted-billed Pelican**

*Pelecanus roseus*

Winter visitor. Deep Bay: seen on three occasions in January; last seen on January 27 when 12 birds were seen (ADM, DNG, EDW).

## **6 Cormorant**

*Phalacrocorax carbo*

Winter visitor. Rather common and widespread during the months of January, March, October, and December from Deep Bay, Shum Chun, Kai Tak, Stonecutter's Island, and Starling Inlet. Always in ones or twos except for January 15 when 7 were seen displaying near the Shum Chun River.

## **8 Great Frigate Bird**

*Fregata minor*

Vagrant. One seen at Sha Tau Kok on May 22 (SPMK). This is the third record for the Colony.

## **10 Yellow Bittern**

*Ixobrychus sinensis*

Summer visitor to the Deep Bay Marshes. Seen commonly from April 23 (ADM) until October 8 (SPMK). About 12 birds were observed nesting on May 22 (ADM).

## **11 Chestnut Bittern**

*Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*

Summer visitor. Seen from April 16 (ADM) at Mong Tseng until September 16 (EDW) in a paddy field off Route TWSK. Reports from every month of the summer except June.

## **12 Black Bittern**

*Ixobrychus flavicollis*

Vagrant. 24 were seen circling over Deep Bay on April 23 (ADM, DNG). Later the same day a single bird was seen from the bund connecting the Police Post (Mai Po) to the motor road. This is the second record of this bird since 1939, the other being of a single bird on May 2, 1960.

## **13 Bittern**

*Botaurus stellaris*

Winter visitor. Mai Po: 2 on September 27 (JS), an early date.

## **14 Night Heron**

*Nycticorax nycticorax*

Migrant. 1 juvenile seen at the head of the Sha Tin Valley in the watercourse on September 18 (EJA). On October 16 about 30 birds were seen circling over the Shum Chun River (Society Outing). 2 juveniles were also seen at Mai Po on December 31 (SPMK).

## **15 Pond Heron**

*Ardeola bacchus*

Resident. Common throughout the year with the largest numbers recorded from Starling Inlet where about 200 were nesting on July 4 (DSH). Besides being seen in the NT, it was also recorded at Kai Tak (DNG) and the Tai Tam Estuary (JLCB).

## **16 Cattle Egret**

*Ardeola ibis*

Summer visitor. Common at the Yuen Long egretries in April, May, and June. 1 was also seen on Ho Man Tin on April 12 (ADM).

## **17 Little Green Heron**

*Butorides striatus*

Summer Visitor. 1 seen near the mouth of the Shum Chun River on August 30 (EDW).

## **18 Little Egret**

*Egretta garzetta*

Resident. Very common in the Deep Bay marshes. Also reported in the Starling Inlet on July 4 (DSH).

## **20 Swinhoe's Egret**

*Egretta eulophotes*

Summer visitor. 5 nesting at the Wong Tsuen egretries on May 27 (ADM).

## **21 Reef Egret**

*Egretta sacra*

Resident. Recorded in nearly every month of the year in numbers generally 4 or less. Widespread from Kai Tak, Hebe Haven, Soko Is., Chung Hom Kok, Tai Tam, Clearwater Bay, and Starling Inlet.



- 22 Great Egret** *Egretta alba*  
Non-breeding visitor. Last seen on April 30 at Mai Po (EJA) and first seen in the latter half of the year on August 6 at Mai Po (EJA). After September 29 seen regularly at Mai Po (SPMK).
- 23 Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*  
Winter Visitor. All records from the Deep Bay marshes except for 4 seen at Sha Tau Kok on December 9 (JS). Last seen on April 30 at Mai Po (EJA) and first seen in the autumn on August 30 at Mai Po (Society Outing).
- 24 Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*  
Migrant. Mai Po: 2 on January 27 (DNG, ADM), 1 on April 30 (EJA), 1 on November 5 (EDW). 1 at Luen Tak on October 8 (EDW, JLCB).
- 8X White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia*  
Vagrant. First record for the Colony. 2 seen on March 26 at Clearwater Bay (ADM, DNG).
- 26 White Ibis** *Threskiornis melanocephala*  
Occasional visitor. Lok Ma Chau: 5 on January 6, 6 on April 16 (SPMK)
- 23 Lesser Spoonbill** *Platalea minor*  
Occasional visitor. Mai Po: 2 on February 25, 2 again on April 16. (SPMK).
- 29 Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*  
Occasional visitor. About 20 seen at Mai Po on March 19 (EJA).
- 30 Yellow Nib Duck** *Anas poecilorhyncha*  
Winter visitor. 3 seen at Kai Tak on April 20 (DNG). Mai Po: about 30 seen on April 23 (ADM), 1 on October 16 (DSH). 1 shot at Liu Pok on October 22 (JAO).
- 31 Falcated Teal** *Anas falcata*  
Winter visitor. Seen on 7 occasions in the San Tin and Mong Tseng areas during the first two months of the year. The largest number was 30 on February 16. On the other occasions up to 5 were shot. Last seen on March 12 at San Tin. Also seen at Silvermine Bay on March 3. One fall record: Sheung Shui: 2 females shot on the 19th of November. (JAO).
- 32 Teal** *Anas crecca*  
Winter visitor. Large flocks were seen in the Mong Tseng Peninsula and San Tin during January and February. Last seen on March 12 and first seen on October 1. Except for two large flocks seen at San Tin on December 24 the numbers of this species were lower than usual. (JAO).

- 33 Baikal Teal** *Anas formosa*  
Vagrant. 1 male in full plumage was shot at Mai Po on February 8. This is the second Colony record (JAO).
- 34 Garganey** *Anas querquedula*  
Migrant. 30 reported at Kai Tak on April 17 (DNG). This is the first time that these birds have been seen south of the Deep Bay Marshes. San Tin: more than 200 were seen on April 20-26 due to heavy rains and flooding; Sheung Shui: 1 male shot on October 1, 1 male shot on December 31 (JAO).
- 35 Widgeon** *Anas penelope*  
Occasional visitor. Mai Po: about 30 on March 12 (EJA).
- 36 Pintail** *Anas acuta*  
Occasional visitor. Mai Po: 1 female shot on October 24, (JAO). 1 shot on December 12 (JS).
- 48 Black-eared Kite** *Milvus migrans*  
Resident and winter visitor. Widespread but in small numbers during the summer, increasing in numbers in the winter and concentrating in the harbour area.
- 50 Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*  
Winter visitor. Quite common and widespread. Extreme dates were April 19 (JLCB) and October 29 (EDW). 1 seen near the corner of Prince Edward Road and Nathan Road every day from the beginning of the year until March 26. No summer records.
- 51 Rough-legged Buzzard** *Buteo lagopus*  
Vagrant. 1 at Mai Po on January 27 (ADM, DNG). 1 on Ma On Shan on February 5 (EJA). This is the third record for the Colony.
- 52 Sparrow Hawk** *Accipiter nisus*  
Winter visitor. Widespread and common. Extreme dates are April 16 (ADM, JLCB) and October 1 (MEMB, EJA). On both extreme dates the bird was seen at widely separated places.
- 56 Golden Eagle** *Aquila chrysaetos*  
Occasional visitor. 1 at Mai Po on January 27 (DNG, ADM). 1 at Mai Po on March 19 (GVK). 1 at Ping Shan on March 26 and April 2 (EJA).
- 58 Steppe Eagle** *Aquila nipalensis*  
Occasional visitor. Mai Po: 1 on January 27 (ADM).
- 60 Bonelli's Eagle** *Hieraetus fasciatus*  
Occasional visitor. More records than usual this year. Deep Bay: 1 on January 27 (ADM, DNG). Kowloon: 2 on February 5 (DNG). Pak Tamm: 1 on June 13 (ADM, JLCB). Tai Mo Shan: 2 on July 11 (JLCB). Tai Tam Yang: 1 on October 24 (JS). Luen Tak: 2 on October 8 (EDW, JLCB).



- 62 **White-bellied Sea Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucogaster*  
Resident. Recorded from widespread areas singly or in pairs.
- 65 **Marsh Harrier** *Circus a. aeruginosus*  
Winter visitor. Up to 3 seen in the Deep Bay area commonly during the winter. Extreme dates are April 16 (ADM) and November 5 (EDW).
- 67 **Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*  
Winter visitor. Mai Po: 1 female on October 16 (Society Outing), 1 female on November 5 (EDW), 1 female on November 19 (EDW, JLCB).
- 69 **Black Vulture** *Aegypius monarchus*  
Vagrant. One was found by a Chinese farmer in the Yuen Long area in January with an injured leg. It was brought to the R.S.P.C.A. and eventually released when its injury had healed. This is the forth Colony record. (per E.D.W.).
- 70 **Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*  
Winter visitor. Ping Shan: 1 on January 15 (GVK). Mai Po: 1 on March 5 (GVK). Deep Bay: 1 on October 16 (Society Outing) and 2 on November 7 (SPMK). A possible bird was recorded at Macao on June 18 (JLCB).
- 72 **Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*  
Non-breeding visitor. Single birds recorded in many places in the New Territories and on Hong Kong Island. Records are in January, March, April, May, September, November (ADM, JLCB, SPMK).
- 73 **Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*  
Visitor. Recorded in every month of the year except May and September singly or in pairs. Very widespread. One June record and three July records.
- 75 **Merlin** *Falco columbarius*  
Occasional visitor. On November 16-17 1 was recorded at Headland Road, Repulse Bay (EDW).
- 77 **Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus interstinctus*  
Winter visitor. Very common and widespread this year with 10 records in January. Extreme dates are April 7 (ADM) and September 23 (JLCB). Seen daily near Maryknoll Middle School on Boundary Street during the first three months of the year (EJA).
- 78 **Chinese Francolin** *Francolinus pintadeanus*  
Resident. All records this year are in the first six months of the year when the birds were commonly seen and heard on Ma On Shan and Tai Mo Shan.

- 79 **Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Five spring records when up to 6 were seen in the Deep Bay Marshes area (ADM, DNG, JAO). There are six autumn records, all of single birds from Sheung Shui, Mai Po, Tai Mo Shan, Lok Ma Chau, and Hatton Road (EDW, JS, JAO).
- 85 **Banded Rail** *Rallus striatus*  
Visitor. On April 2 two birds were heard at Luen Tak (EJA). Mai Po: 3 on August 6 (EJA), 1 on September 14 (JLCB). Although breeding has not yet been confirmed, the one summer record adds to the still tenuous evidence for breeding.
- 89 **White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus*  
Resident. Widespread reports from the New Territories in April, May, August, September, and December. 2 seen on the Soko Is. on July 5, when the young were also heard calling to the two parent birds (JLCB).
- 90 **Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*  
Winter visitor. A pair seen on February 7 in Fanling (DNG).
- 91 **Watercock** *Gallicrex cinerea*  
Occasional visitor. A female at Ping Shan on May 22 (JLCB, ADM). 1 found injured at St. Francis Xavier School in November (DSH).
- 92 **Coot** *Fulica atra*  
Winter visitor. Liu Pok: 2 on November 7. Sheung Shui: 4 on November 19 (JAO).
- 94 **Painted Snipe** *Rostratula benghalensis*  
Migrant. A female on Lamma Island on March 15 (JLCB, EDW). First seen on September 30 at Kam Tin where 1 male was shot. Seen on four occasions during October and November when a total of 10 birds were seen during the period; all but one were males (JAO).
- 96 **Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*  
Occasional visitor. 2 seen at Sha Kong Bus Terminal on January 2 (ADM, EDW).
- 97 **Grey-headed Lapwing** *Microsarcops cinereus*  
Occasional visitor. Ping Shan: 1 on October 12 (JAO).
- 99 **Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*  
Visitor. Most records are in March. Last recorded on April 19 (DNG). First recorded on August 30 (JLCB, MEMB, EDW). 14 seen on October 14 at Lok Ma Chau (SPMK).



- 100 **Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Common in the winter months with reports of a hundred or more in November and December. Extreme dates are April 25 (ADM) and September 20 (DSH).
- 101 **Greater Sand Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii*  
Visitor. Fewer records than usual. In April up to 11 birds were seen from the 21st to the end of the month at Kai Tak (DNG). About 40 birds were seen at Mai Po on April 23 (ADM). The first record of the fall is from Mai Po where about 50 were seen on August 6 (EJA). During the following two months only two records exist (SPMK).
- 102 **Mongolian Sand Plover** *Charadrius mongolus*  
Migrant. Kai Tak: 16 on April 25 (ADM). Mai Po: about 30 on April 23 (ADM), 1 on May 16 (SPMK).
- 103 **Caspian Plover** *Charadrius asiaticus*  
Occasional visitor. Kai Tak: 1 on April 27 (DNG).
- 104 **Grey Plover** *Charadrius squatarola*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Only three records: 1 at Mai Po on September 20 (JLCB), 1 at Luen Tak on October 8 (JLCB, EDW), 4 at Mai Po on November 5 (EDW).
- 105 **Golden Plover** *Charadrius dominicus*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Ha Tsuen: 2 on October 8, 1 on October 17 (JAO).
- 106 **Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*  
Migrant. Mai Po: 1 on April 30 (EJA), 1 on August 30 (Society Outing).
- 107 **Fantail Snipe** *Capella gallinago*  
Migrant and winter visitor. 3 seen on an Island off Sai Kung on January 8 (JAO). 1 at Kai Tak on April 25 (ADM). 1 at Mai Po on April 30 (JAO). More common in the autumn but not so common as 1960 (JAO).
- 108 **Pintail Snipe** *Capella stenura*  
Migrant and winter visitor. 1 at Kam Tin on April 30 (JAO). Also more common in the autumn but not so abundant as last year.
- 109 **Swinhoe's Snipe** *Capella megala*  
Migrant. 1 at Sek Kong on April 30 (JAO).
- 111 **Jack Snipe** *Limnocyrtus minimus*  
Vagrant. Mai Po: 1 on March 12 (EJA). This is the second Colony record.

- 112 **Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*  
Winter visitor. Sheung Shui: 1 on February 13 (JAO). 1 on April 3 in the Lam Tsun Valley (JLCB). 1 in Fanling on September 3 (JS).
- 113 **Curlew** *Numenius arquata*  
Migrant and winter visitor. The bird was seen once in March, once in April, once in August, and was common in September and October with 25 the largest number seen on September 20 at Mai Po (DSH). Aside from the Deep Bay Marshes there are reports in September from Sha Tau Kok and Kai Tak (SPMK).
- 115 **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*  
Migrant. Common in April and September, most records for April from Kai Tak (DNG, ADM) and those of September from Mai Po (EDW, DSH) with one from Tai O (JLCB). In addition a few birds were seen at Mai Po on August 30 (Society Outing) and a few also on October 8 (EDW).
- 118 **Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*  
Migrant. Mai Po: 1 on April 30 (EJA), 3 on September 23 and 24 (SPMK, JS), 1 on October 16 (JS).
- 119 **Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Seen frequently in the north and west area of the New Territories. Extreme dates are May 22 (ADM) and September 23 (JS, SPMK). Most abundant in September and October.
- 120 **Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*  
Migrant. Mai Po: 1 on September 20 (DSH), 30 on September 26 (SPMK), and 15 on November 3 (SPMK).
- 121 **Common Sandpiper** *Tringa hypoleucos*  
Visitor. Common in numbers up to 7 in all months except July and August in widespread areas.
- 122 **Redshank** *Tringa totanus*  
Migrant with some winter records. Recorded in April at Mai Po in numbers up to 12 (EJA, ADM), about 50 on August 6 at Mai Po (EJA), common in September. One winter record at Mai Po on December 30 when 1 bird was seen (SPMK).
- 123 **Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Mai Po: seen in February, April, September, and December in numbers up to 8 (EDW, ADM, DSH).
- 124 **Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Seen commonly at Mai Po up to May 7 (SPMK) and after September 13 (DSH).



- 125 **Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*  
Migrant. Mai Po: 1 on October 16 (DSH).
- 126 **Grey-rumped Sandpiper** *Tringa brevipes*  
Migrant. Mai Po: 1 on September 27 and 1 on October 12 (JS). 1 on September 29 at Starling Inlet (SPMK).
- 127 **Terek Sandpiper** *Tringa terek*  
Migrant. Mai Po: about 14 on April 23 (ADM), 1 on April 30, 1 on August 6 (EJA), and 2 on September 20 (DSH).
- 128 **Knot** *Calidris canutus*  
Occasional visitor. Mai Po: 1 on September 13 (DSH).
- 129 **Great Knot** *Calidris tenuirostris*  
Occasional visitor. Mai Po: 3 on April 23 (ADM).
- 130 **Eastern Little Stint** *Calidris ruficollis*  
Migrant. Mai Po: up to 200 seen between May 6 to May 22 (SMPK), about 10 seen on September 25 (Society Outing).
- 132 **Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Seen singly during the last four months of the year in the Mai Po-Lok Ma Chau area. (EDW, SPMK).
- 134 **Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Mai Po: 1 on April 30 (EJA), 50 on September 20, (DSH). During the last 3 months of the year 2 or 3 were seen commonly at Lok Ma Chau (SPMK).
- 135 **Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*  
Migrant. Mai Po: about 12 on April 23 (ADM), 8 on July 7, 3 on July 8, 3 on July 16 (SPMK). The last three records are extraordinary as the earliest previous fall record was July 18.
- 136 **Sanderling** *Crocethia alba*  
Migrant. Mai Po: about 20 on April 23 (ADM).
- 137 **Spoon-billed Sandpiper** *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*  
Occasional visitor. Mai Po: about 12 seen on April 23 (ADM). This is the seventh record for the Colony.
- 138 **Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limicola falcinellus*  
Migrant. Mai Po: about 15 on March 12 (EJA).
- 140 **Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus*  
Migrant. Spring records between March 30 and June 13. Seen in many areas in the south and east part of Colony in April. No records for May and no fall records.

- 141 **Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*  
Vagrant. Mai Po: 1 on September 13 (DSH), 1 on November 3 (SPMK). There are six previous Colony records.
- 142 **Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*  
Vagrant. Mai Po: 1 on September 13 (DSH). This is the third Colony record.
- 143 **Collared Pratincole** *Glareola pratincola*  
Migrant. Kai Tak: 2 on April 20 (DNG), about 8 on June 8 (DNG). Mong Tseng: many flights of birds on October 14 (JAO).
- 144 (a) **Vega Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus vegae*  
Winter visitor. Frequently seen in the Harbour during the first three months of the year with as many as 70 seen on March 3 at Kai Tak (ADM). First fall record for this and/or the following subspecies is October 18 when about 50 were seen off Kennedy Town (JLCB). About 100 individuals of this or the next subspecies were seen on Dec. 28 off Kennedy Town (JLCB).
- 144 (b) **Mongolian Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus mongolicus*  
Winter visitor. Frequently seen at Kai Tak or over the Harbour from the beginning of the year until April 3 (DNG). See the note on the above subspecies.
- 147 **Black Tailed Gull** *Larus crassirostris*  
Winter visitor. 1 in the Harbour on January 10 (ADM). 2 off North Point on February 10 (DNG).
- 148 **Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus*  
Winter visitor. Reports from the Mai Po-Deep Bay area in January, April, November, and December (ADM, DNG, EDW, JLCB).
- 150 **White-winged Black Tern** *Chlidonias leucoptera*  
Migrant. Except for about 6 seen at Tam Mei on October 3 (SPMK) all records are in May. Largest numbers were at Mai Po where 300 were seen on May 20 (SPMK). Also seen near Lantau, Green Island, Hebe Haven, and Tam Mei.
- 152 **Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica*  
Migrant. Mai Po: 12 seen on April 23, (ADM) 10 seen on April 30 (EJA).
- 153 **Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne caspia*  
Migrant and winter visitor. San Tin: 20 on April 21 (SPMK). Mai Po: 3 on May 19 (SPMK).
- 155 **Little Tern** *Sterna albifrons*  
Migrant. Mai Po: 3 on April 23 (ADM) 1 on April 30, (EJA).



- 158 **Rufous Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis*  
Migrant and winter visitor. At Mai Po 2 were seen on April 23 (ADM). 2 seen in the Lam Tsun Valley on September 24 (SPMK).
- 159 **Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis*  
Resident. Common and widespread.
- 161 **Rose Ringed Paroquet** *Psittacula krameri*  
Introduced. Seen daily in numbers up to 7 in Government House garden from the end of September on.
- 162 **Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*  
Migrant. Single birds were seen in the University Area on May 11 and 12 (JLCB), at Mai Po on September 13 (DSH), and in Victoria on September 26 (JLCB).
- 164 **Indian Cuckoo** *Cuculus micropterus*  
Summer visitor. Reports from widely separated areas during April, May, and June. Extreme dates are April 22 and June 4.
- 166 **Plaintive Cuckoo** *Cacomantis merulinus*  
Summer visitor with some winter records. 1 female bird was seen in Mai Po Wood during the first four months of the year (ADM, DNG, EJA). During this time 1 was also recorded singing on Prince Edward Road on February 21 (DNG), 1 singing in Ho Man Tin on March 30 and again on April 6 (ADM); in May there are two records, one of a hepatic bird a Ping Shan on the 22nd, and one at Wong Tsuen on the 27th. In August a juvenile hepatic form was seen at Mai Po Wood on the 6th (EJA) and the 30th (several observers).
- 169 **Koel** *Eudynamis scolopacea*  
Resident. Records from Ping Shan, Lam Tsun, Clearwater Bay throughout the year.
- 170 **Crow-Pheasant** *Centropus sinensis*  
Resident. Heard many times on Hong Kong Island (EDW) and seen and heard in widespread areas in the NT.
- 171 **Lesser Crow-Pheasant** *Centropus bengalensis*  
Resident. Common locally but not so abundant as the above species.
- 179 **Japanese Nightjar** *Caprimulgus indicus*  
Resident. Only two records: 1 at Mai Po Wood on April 30 (EJA) and 1 calling on the Peak on May 13 (JLCB).
- 180 **Savanna Nightjar** *Caprimulgus affinis*  
Resident. Ha Tsuen: 1 on July 7 (SPMK).

- 181 **Large White-rumped Swift** *Apus pacificus*  
Resident and migrant. 2 on January 27 at Mai Po (ADM) and about 8 at Mai Po on October 16 (DSH). All other records are in April, May, and June from Tai Po, Mai Po, Tai Mo Shan, and Sai Kung (ADM, EJA). Largest number on June 13 at Tai Mo Shan near the summit when about 50 were seen (EJA).
- 182 **House Swift** *Apus affinis*  
Resident and migrant. Except for about 8 seen on May 15 on Prince Edward Road (ADM) all records are in April from widespread areas.
- 183 **Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis*  
Resident. Luen Tak: 1 on February 16 (ADM). Mong Tseng: 1 on January 22 (GVK).
- 185 **Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*  
Resident. Common and widespread. All reports from coastal areas. There are still no definite records of breeding for this species.
- 186 **White-breasted Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis*  
Resident. Common at Mai Po, Ping Shan, and Mong Tseng. Seen at Ho Man Tin, and Prince Edward Road in March and April (ADM, DNG). A pair seen at the watercourse at the head of Sha Tin Valley in August and September (EJA).
- 187 **Black-capped Kingfisher** *Halcyon pileata*  
Resident and winter visitor. Recorded in every month except June and July from widespread areas. Most of the reports come in September and October.
- 189 **Broad-billed Roller** *Eurystomas orientalis*  
Migrant. 1 at Pokfulam on April 15 (JLCB). 1 on Sassoon Road on October 10 (JLCB).
- 191 **Great Barbet** *Megalaima virens*  
Resident. Records from Lam Tsun Valley, Luen Tak, and Tai Po Wood (ADM, JLCB).
- 194 **Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*  
Winter visitor. Mong Tseng: 1 on January 2 (ADM). Mai Po Wood: 1 on January 27 (ADM DNG), 1 on February 7 (DNG), 1 on March 15 (JLCB). Sek Kong: 1 on April 11 (SPMK). Mai Po: 1 on September 23 (SPMK).
- 195 **Oriental Skylark** *Alauda galgula*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Tai Mo Shan: 2 seen singing just below the summit on May 13 (EJA).



- 196 **Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*  
 Summer visitor and migrant with some winter records. On January 2 about 20 were seen at Ping Shan (ADM). On February 16 about 20 were seen at Yuen Long (ADM). During the spring small numbers were reported from widespread localities. On December 12 a number were reported at Yuen Long (JS).
- 199 **Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*  
 Migrant. Mai Po: about 14 on October 16 (Society Outing).
- 201 **Rufous-backed Shrike** *Lanius schach*  
 Resident. Widespread and common. Eight reports of the Dusky Shrike were made. The figure is a little more than half the number for the dark phase of this bird made last year.
- 203 (b) **Japanese Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus superciliosus*  
 Migrant and winter visitor. Both this bird and the subspecies below were extraordinarily common this year. 1 bird wintered at Government House and was last seen on April 14 (EDW). On April 30 1 bird was seen on High West (JLCB). In May up to three birds were seen at High West, Tai Tam, Black's Link, and Sassoon Road (JLCB). 1 was seen at the University Area on August 28. In September single birds were seen at Government House, Sha Tau Kok, Ping Shan, Lamma Island, the University Area and on Lantau (In Tsuen, and Ngon Ping), (JLCB, EDW, SPMK). 2 birds were seen at Fan Lao, Lantau on September 24 (JLCB). On October 26 1 bird was seen at Government House (EDW). In December single birds were seen several times at Government House and Lok Ma Chau (EDW, SPMK).
- 203 (c) **Philippine Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus lucionensis*  
 Migrant and winter visitor. April 30: 2 at Clearwater Bay and 1 on High West (JLCB). In May up to 4 birds were seen at Pokfulam, High West, Tai Tam Reservoir, Aberdeen Reservoir, and Black's Link (JLCB). On September 23 1 was at Ngon Ping, Lantau (JLCB). Chung Hom Kok: 1 on October 12 (EDW). In December single birds were reported from Fanling, Black's Link, and Tam Mei (JS, EDW, SPMK).
- 204 **Black-naped Oriole** *Oriolus chinensis*  
 Summer visitor with some winter records. First seen in Homantin on April 13 when a male was observed (ADM). A pair arrived at the University Area on April 22, were mating on the 25th, were observed with 1 young on August 17, and sometime after September 12 they left the area (JLCB). 1 was seen at Chung Hom Kok on October 12 (EDW) and another at Ping Shan on October 29 (JLCB). Both the latter dates are late records except for occasional winter records.

- 205 **Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus*  
 Summer visitor with some winter records. First seen on April 12 on Route TWSK (ADM) and last seen at Chung Hom Kok on October 13 (EDW).
- 206 (b) **White-cheeked Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus leucogenis*  
 Occasional visitor. 2 at Pokfulam on April 15 (JLCB). 2 at Tai Tam Reservoir on April 16. 1 at Chung Hom Kok on October 4 (EDW).
- 207 **Hair-crested Drongo** *Dicrurus hottentottus*  
 Summer visitor. First seen in Pokfulam on April 15 (JLCB) and last seen at Shouson Hill at October 23 (JLCB).
- 208 **Chinese Starling** *Sturnus chinensis*  
 Although considered a summer visitor there is but one summer record for the bird this year. Most records fall in the first three months of the year when up to 16 were seen at Ho Man Tin on many occasions. During this time the birds were also reported on Prince Edward Road and at Ping Shan (ADM, DNG). There are records in September and October from Pokfulam and Lantau (Io Tsuen) (JLCB, EDW). Since the extreme dates of this bird were April 13 and August 30, and since a similar situation existed last year, it seems evident that the status of this bird should be changed from that of summer visitor with occasional winter records to the exact opposite.
- 209 **Silky Starling** *Sturnus sericeus*  
 Winter visitor. Mong Tseng: about 30 on January 2 (ADM). Ping Shan: several on January 2 (EDW), about 22 on February 16 (ADM). Mai Po Wood: about 20 on December 17. Fanling: a flock on December 21 (EDW).
- 210 **Grey Starling** *Sturnus cineraceus*  
 Winter visitor. Ping Shan: about 5 on February 16 (ADM), 1 juvenile on October 29 (JLCB). Mong Tseng: about 100 on December 26 (Society outing).
- 211 **Black-necked Starling** *Sturnus nigricollis*  
 Resident. Common generally in the northern parts of the NT but also reported from Clearwater Bay on March 26 (ADM) and December 19 (JLCB). Also in the Ho Chung Valley on August 7 and December 13 (JLCB).
- 212 **Common Mynah** *Acridotheres tristis*  
 Resident in Mong Tseng and Ping Shan where up to 10 were seen throughout the year. The largest number was seen on January 2 at Mong Tseng (ADM).



- 213 **Crested Mynah** *Acridotheres cristatellus*  
Resident. Common from shorelines to 1,500 feet on Tai Mo Shan. No large groups of birds were recorded for the second year running.
- 214 **Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*  
Migrant with occasional winter records. Lam Tsun Valley: 1 on April 3 (ADM, DNG).
- 215 **Blue Magpie** *Urocissa erythrorhyncha*  
Resident. Recorded from all woodlands in the NT and many places on the Island. A nest and 1 young was found in the University Area on April 27. (JLCB).
- 216 **Magpie** *Pica pica*  
Resident. Common in populated areas. Flocks of twenty were reported in December in Fanling where it was very common (JS).
- 217 **Treepie** *Cyprisirina formosae*  
Occasional visitor. 2 at Tai Po Kau on February 8 (EDW). 3 at Mong Tseng on April 16 (ADM). 1 in the University Area on December 31 (JLCB).
- 219 **Jungle Crow** *Corvus macrorhynchos*  
Resident and winter visitor. Very widespread. Most records for this year are of 1 or 2 birds. The largest number was seen at the head of Sha Tin Valley in December where groups of up to 15 birds were seen.
- 220 **Collared Crow** *Corvus torquatus*  
Resident and winter visitor. No summer records except for August 30 at Mai Po Wood where two were seen (JLCB). The other extreme date is April 23 (ADM). Except for one record at Green Island on March 15 (JLCB) and one in the Lam Tsun Valley on November 26, all records are from the Deep Bay Marshes area.
- 221 **Black-winged Cuckoo Shrike** *Coracina melaschistos*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Pokfulam: 1 on October 5 (JLCB). Ho Chung: 1 on December 3 (EDW).
- 223 **Ashy Minivet** *Pericrocotus divaricatus*  
Migrant. Fanling: 3 seen on April 3 (SPMK).
- 228 **Crested Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus*  
Resident. Common and widespread.
- 229 **Chinese Bulbul** *Pycnonotus sinensis*  
Resident. Common and widespread.

- 230 **Red-vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus aurigaster*  
Resident. Common and widespread.
- 234 **Black-faced Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax perspicillatus*  
Resident. Common and widespread.
- 235 **Black-throated Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax chinensis*  
Resident. Records as usual all from Hong Kong Island where it was heard often during the second half of the year at Aberdeen and Pokfulam Reservoirs, Shouson Hill, Stubbs Road, and Deep Water Bay. No records for the first six months of the year.
- 236 **Hwamei** *Garrulax canorus*  
Common and widespread on Hong Kong Island. In the NT most reports are from Sek Kong where up to 3 were heard singing in the evening in July and August (SPMK).
- 237 **White-cheeked Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax sannio*  
Vagrant. University area: 1 on March 30 and 1 on December 31 (JLCB). There are two previous records for this bird in the Colony.
- 4x **Chinese Babax** *Babax lanceolatus*  
There is one previous record for this bird in the Colony. A pair bred on Tai Mo Shan in the summer of 1960. 1 was seen near Tai Po Forest Reserve on November 11 (JLCB).
- 243 **Black-naped Monarch Flycatcher** *Hypothymis azurea*  
Vagrant. Clearwater Bay: 1 male seen on December 30 (JLCB). This is the fifth Colony record.
- 244 **Brown Flycatcher** *Muscicapa latirostris*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Last reported from the University Area on April 25 (JLCB) and first reported at Mai Po on August 30 (several observers). The latter date is the earliest that the bird has ever been seen here in the fall.
- 245 **Grey Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa griseisticta*  
Migrant. University Area: up to 2 were seen during the period April 25 to May 26 (JLCB). The latter date is the latest in the spring that the bird has been seen here. On May 14 3 birds were seen at Blacks Link (JLCB). On October 1 one was seen in the Lam Tsun Valley (SPMK); 1 was at Sek Kong on October 15 (EDW).
- 247 **Verditer Flycatcher** *Muscicapa thalassina*  
Occasional visitor. Ping Shan Wood: 1 on February 16 (Society Outing). Ho Chung: 1 male on December 3 (EDW, JLCB, MEMB).



- 248 **Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa parva*  
Migrant and winter visitor. University Area: 1 on March 26 and 1 on March 29 (JLCB). 1 on October 4 and 1 on October 6 (JLCB). 1 in Fanling on October 1 (MEMB); 1 in Pokfulam on October 5, and 1 in Sha Tin on November 13 (several observers).
- 249 **Robin Flycatcher** *Muscicapa mugimaki*  
Migrant and winter visitor. University Area: 1 female on April 12 and 1 female on December 31 (JLCB). On December 3, 1 was seen in the Ho Chung Valley (JLCB, EDW).
- 253 **Blue and White Flycatcher** *Cyanoptila cyanomelana*  
Migrant. C.G.O. Compound: 1 on Feb. 25 (GVK). University Area: 1 male on March 26 and 1 male again on March 29 (JLCB). 1 at Ping Shan on April 2 (EJA). Tai Po Forest: 2 singing on April 9 and again on June 11 (EJA). The latter is a late date.
- 254 **Chinese Bush Warbler** *Cettia diphone*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Widespread reports, not particularly common this year. Last seen on February 3 in the Lam Tsun Valley (ADM) and first seen at Ping Shan on September 8 (JLCB). The latter is an early fall record for the bird.
- 255 **Mountain Bush Warbler** *Cettia montanus*  
Vagrant. 1 seen at Luen Tak on January 2 (ADM). This is the third Colony record.
- 257 **Pallas's Grasshopper-Warbler** *Locustella certhiola*  
Vagrant. Mai Po: 1 on April 23 (ADM, DNG) and 1 on September 20 (JLCB, DSH). There are five previous records for the Colony, and no previous spring records.
- 258 **Styan's Grasshopper-Warbler** *Locustella ochotensis*  
Vagrant. Mai Po: 1 on April 23 (ADM, DNG).
- 259 **Von Schrenk's Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*  
Migrant. Mai Po: 1 on September 20 (JLCB). 1 at St. Francis Xavier's School found stunned in November (DSH).
- 260 **Great Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*  
Migrant. Mai Po: 1 on April 23 (ADM, DNG). Then recorded in numbers up to 12 in Mai Po, Luen Tak, and Ping Shan between September 13 and November 19 (several observers).
- 262 **Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Last reported from Mai Po on April 30 (EJA). First reported at Mai Po on September 25 (EDW).
- 263 **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Widespread and common. Last reported from Lam Tsun on April 3 (ADM) and one autumn record on December 7 at Castle Peak (JS).

- 264 **Pallas's Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Last seen on February 16 at Ping Shan (ADM) and first seen at Shatin on November 13 (HKBWS).
- 265 **Arctic Warbler** *Phylloscopus borealis*  
Migrant. One April record, three records in May, two in September and two in October. Most reports from Hong Kong Island.
- 266 **Pale-legged Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus tenellipes*  
Migrant. Pokfulam: 1 on September 6 (JLCB). Mai Po Wood: 1 on September 17 (EJA). University Area: 1 on September 24 (EDW).
- 270 **Tailor Bird** *Orthotomus sutorius*  
Resident. Common and widespread.
- 271 **David's Hill Warbler** *Prinia polychroa*  
Resident. Tai Mo Shan: 2 singing on May 5 (ADM); 1 on July 11 (JLCB).
- 7X **White-browed Hill Warbler** *Prinia superciliaris*  
This is the first Colony record. 1 was seen at She Shan Wood in the Lam Tsun Valley on January 9. Another bird similar to it but not checked closely was seen with the bird, presumably the mate of the bird examined. (ADM).
- 272 **Brown Wren Warbler** *Prinia subflava*  
Resident. Common in the Deep Bay Marshes during the first half of the year. 1 seen at Pak Tam on May 13 (ADM).
- 273 **Yellow-bellied Wren Warbler** *Prinia flaviventris*  
Resident. Common, especially in the Deep Bay marshes.
- 274 **Fantail Warbler** *Cisticola juncidis*  
Resident and winter visitor. Common in the Deep Bay marshes especially in September. Also recorded from Pokfulam, Chung Hom Kok, Fanling, Shatin, and Lantau (Ngan Ping and Fan Lau).
- 277 **Rubythroat** *Luscinia calliope*  
Winter visitor. Last seen on March 15 at Lamma Island (EDW) and first seen at Sek Kong on October 30 (SPMK) where the bird was heard until mid-December.
- 278 **Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus*  
Winter visitor. Several widespread reports in January and February. The only other report is on December 30, where 1 female was seen at Clearwater Bay (JLCB).
- 279 **Magpie-robin** *Copsychus saularis*  
Resident and migrant. Common and widespread.



- 280 **Daurian Redstart** *Phoenicurus auroreus*  
Winter visitor. Last seen on March 26 at Ping Shan (EJA). First seen on November 13 at Shatin (Society Outing).
- 281 **Plumbeous Water-redstart** *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*  
Winter visitor. 1 female seen on April 19 at 3,000 ft. on Tai Mo Shan (ADM).
- 282 **Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Common and widespread. Last reported at Mong Tseng on April 16 (ADM). First seen on September 25 (JLCB).
- 283 **Grey Bushchat** *Saxicola ferrea*  
Winter visitor. Pokfulam: 1 female on November 18 (JLCB). This is nearly a month earlier than it has been seen before.
- 284 (a) **Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitaria pandoo*  
Winter visitor. Common on rocky coastlines and hilly areas. Last recorded on Tai Mo Shan on May 5 (ADM). First recorded on September 15 at Chung Hom Kok (EDW).
- 284 (b) **Red-bellied Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitaria philippensis*  
Winter visitor. Last reported on Kowloon Peak on April 16 (EJA). Only two records for the rest of the year. 1 on August 17 at Chung Hom Kok (DSH) and 1 at Crest Hill on November 20 (JS).
- 286 **Violet Whistling Thrush** *Myiophonus caeruleus*  
Resident. Most records for this year come from the streambeds running down Tai Mo Shan and the streambeds on the north side of the Lion Rock ridge.
- 290 **Grey-backed Thrush** *Turdus hortulorum*  
Winter visitor. Last seen at Ping Shan on April 2 (EJA). First seen at Aberdeen Reservoir on November 18 (EDW). Especially common on spring passage.
- 292 **Blackbird** *Turdus merula*  
Winter visitor. Lam Tsun Valley: 7 on January 9 (ADM); 1 on January 15 (EDW). Tam Mei: 1 on January 12 (SPMK). Sek Kong: 1 on February 11 (EJA).
- 293 **Grey Thrush** *Turdus cardis*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Widespread and common during spring passage. Last seen at the University Area on April 22 (JLCB). First seen at Mong Tseng on October 29 (EDW).
- 299 **Great Tit** *Parus major*  
Resident. Common and widespread.

- 301 (a) **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae richardi*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Last seen on April 30 at Mai Po (EJA) and at Clearwater Bay (JLCB). First seen at Luen Tak on October 8 (EDW).
- 301 (b) **Chinese Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae sinensis*  
Summer visitor. First seen on March 9 at Kai Tak (DNG) and last seen on High West on August 22 (JLCB). The former is an early record for the bird.
- 302 **Indian Tree Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*  
Winter visitor. Common and widespread. Last seen on April 22 in the University Area (JLCB) and first seen in the same place on October 10 (JLCB).
- 303 **Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus*  
Winter visitor. Last seen at Kai Tak on April 29 (ADM). One fall record at Mai Po where 3 were seen on October 3 (SPMK).
- 305 **Upland Pipit** *Anthus sylvanus*  
Resident. All records from Tai Mo Shan: 1 each time on May 5, 15, 29, 13 (ADM, EJA), on July 11 (JLCB), October 1 (MEMB). Several on October 15 (EDW).
- 306 **Forest Wagtail** *Dendroanthus indicus*  
Migrant. Ping Shan: 1 on April 2 (EJA). Fanling: 1 on October 1 (MEMB). University Area: 1 on October 4 (MEMB).
- 307 (a) **Streak-eyed Wagtail** *Motacilla alba ocularis*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Last seen April 25 at Kai Tak (ADM). First seen in October where this bird and/or the next subspecies were common in the northern parts of the Colony (JS) and were seen at the Victoria Law Courts on October 17.
- 307 (b) **White Faced Wagtail** *Motacilla alba leucopsis*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Last seen on March 12 at Kai Tak (DNG). For autumn first date see above note.
- 308 **Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Last seen at Ping Shan on April 2 (EJA). First seen at Pokfulam Reservoir on August 27 (EDW).
- 309 (a) **Blue-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla flava simillima*  
Migrant. Lam Tsun Valley: 1 on April 3 (ADM). Kai Tak: about 6 on April 25 (ADM). Tai Tam Estuary: 12 on May 5 (JLCB).



- 309 (b) **Grey-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla flava macronyx*  
Migrant. About 15 at Ping Shan on October 29, (EDW, JLCB).
- 309 (c) **Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava taiwana*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Last seen on April 25 at Kai Tak (ADM). First seen on September 3 at Mai Po (EDW). All reports from the Deep Bay marshes except for: Kai Tak: 3 on April 25 (ADM) and Tai O: about 40 on September 24 (JLCB).
- 310 **Fork-tailed Sunbird** *Aethopyga christinae*  
Resident. Tai Po Forest: 1 female on April 9 (EJA). Pak Tamm: 1 female on June 13 (JLCB, ADM).
- 311 **White-eye** *Zosterops japonica*  
Resident and winter visitor. Widespread and common with larger numbers of birds seen in the winter at Lam Tsun Valley (ADM) and Silvermine Bay (JLCB).
- 312 **Scarlet-backed Flower Pecker** *Dicaeum cruentatum*  
Resident. 1 at Homantin on January 3 (ADM). A female at Lam Tsun Valley on April 3 (JLCB). 1 at Pak Tamm on June 13 (ADM, JLCB). 2 at Lam Tsun Valley on October 1 (SPMK) and 1 at Tai Po Forest on December 2 (JLCB). Either this bird or the next species was seen: Shatin Wai: 1 on November 13. 1 on November 24 above Queen Mary Hospital. University Area: 1 on December 9, 2 on December 23, and 1 on December 29 (JLCB).
- 313 **Fire-breasted Flower Pecker** *Dicaeum ignipectus*  
Occasional visitor. Sassoon Road: a male on December 24 (JLCB).
- 314 **Lesser Black-tailed Hawfinch** *Eophona migratoria*  
Winter visitor. Reported in small flocks from the Lam Tsun Valley where it was most common. Also reported from Mai Po, Fanling, and near Queen Mary Hospital where a flock of about 20 was seen on December 1 (EDW).
- 315 **Chinese Greenfinch** *Chloris sinica*  
Resident and migrant. Reports from all months except June, July, October, and November. Young birds were seen at Kai Tak in May-June (DNG).
- 317 **Hodgson's Rose Finch** *Carpodacus erythrinus*  
Occasional visitor. Mai Po: 1 on April 30 (EJA). This is a late date. Lam Tsun Valley: 2 males on January 1 (ADM).

- 318 **Masked Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala*  
Winter visitor. Common especially in the first months of the year. Last seen at the University Area on April 22 (JLCB) and first seen at Shatin on November 13 (Society Outing).
- 322 **Chestnut Bunting** *Emberiza rutila*  
Vagrant. Ping Shan: 4 on December 26 (JLCB). This is the fifth Colony record.
- 323 **Yellow-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza aureola*  
Migrant. Kai Tak: 1 on April 27 (DNG). Mai Po: about 50 on October 16 (several observers) and 1 male on November 3 (SPMK). A female was seen at Cape d'Aguilar on December 31 (DSH).
- 324 **Grey-headed Bunting** *Emberiza fucata*  
Winter visitor. Small numbers commonly reported during the first three months from the NT. Last seen on April 2 at Ping Shan (EJA). No autumn records.
- 325 **Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla*  
Winter visitor. Lamma Island: 6 on March 15 (EDW, JLCB). Lam Tsun Valley: 6 on April 3 (JLCB) and several on April 9 (EDW).
- 326 **Crested Bunting** *Melophus lathamii*  
Resident. Not as common or in as large numbers as in previous years. No large flocks were seen.
- 327 **Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*  
Resident. Common near human habitation. On December 22 at the Hong Kong Naval Base 1 albino bird was seen among 20 others of the same species (JLCB).
- 328 **Red Avadavat** *Estrilda amandava*  
Vagrant. Up to ten birds were seen between October 10 and December 17 at Mai Po (several observers).
- 329 **Java Sparrow** *Padda oryzivora*  
Occasional visitor. Ping Shan: 20 on September 30 (JAO).
- 330 (b) **Chestnut Munia** *Lonchura malacca atricapilla*  
Non-breeding visitor. Common in September where up to 60 were seen at Mai Po (JLCB, SPMK, JS, EDW). The earliest date is September 14. At Mai Po also in October and November in numbers between 20 and 30 (SPMK, EDW). 4 were at Cape d'Aguilar on December 31 (DSH).
- 331 **Spotted Munia** *Lonchura punctulata*  
Resident. Common and widespread during the winter. No reports May-August.



## DOUBTFUL RECORDS 1962

- 14 **Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax*  
About 60 flying fairly high over Mong Tseng peninsula on March 12 (EDW).
- 41 **Golden-eye** *Bucephala clangula*  
Vagrant. 2-3 on April 23 at Mai Po (ADM). There is one previous record.
- 54 **Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*  
Vagrant. 1 on Lamma Island on March 15 (JLCB, DSH).
- 66 **Pied Harrier** *Circus melanoleucos*  
Migrant and winter visitor. Mai Po: 5 on January 27 (ADM). 1 on September 20 (JLCB, DSH).
- 84 **Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*  
Occasional visitor. Mai Po: 1 on September 27 (JS).
- 116 **Little Whimbrel** *Numenius minutus*  
Vagrant. Ping Shan: 1 on April 16 (ADM, NS).
- 174 **Collared Scops Owl** *Otus bakkamoena*  
Resident. 1 at Fanling on December 26 (JS).
- 304 **Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*  
Winter visitor. Ping Shan: 1 on December 26 (Society Outing).

This list was compiled by the Honorary Recorder from the records of the following observers:

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## NOTES ON SOME BIRD WATCHING AREAS IN THE COLONY

Readers of Dr. Herklots' two books *Hong Kong Birds* and *The Hong Kong Countryside* will be familiar with the names of some of the localities in the Colony which have been proved to be consistently good for watching birds. However, since Dr. Herklots's time developments in the New Territories have changed the suitability of some of the areas which he mentions while the formation of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society in 1957 has led to the discovery of new areas. Even in the last two years there have been considerable alterations in parts of the New Territories and a review of suitable bird watching areas is now necessary. It is hoped that the following comments will help those who are not entirely familiar with the New Territories but who wish to make the best use of their limited free time when bird watching. It has not been found possible to print a suitably large map in the Bird Report but the reader is recommended to buy the newly printed map compiled by the Survey Division P.W.D. (Code No. 507 HKN) and sold at the G.P.O. price H.K.\$3.

### MONG TSENG Peninsula.

Approach from new road beyond Ha Tsuen village. High ground provides a good view over Deep Bay.

Cormorants; Grebes; Osprey; Crakes; Starlings and Indian Mynahs; Wryneck etc.

### PING SHAN

From Ping Shan village to the Luen Tak embankment. Paddy fields, marshes, and a small river.

Waders; Pipits and Buntings; Kingfishers; Rails; Greenfinches; Starlings; Rubythroats; Quails; Wagtails.

### MAI PO marshes.

From Mai Po village to Pak Hok Chau Police Post and out to the mouth of the Shum Chun river.

Large numbers of waders including: Stilts, Avocets, White Ibis etc. on migration. Herons; Bittern; Duck of various kinds; Avadavats; Chestnut Munias; Reed Buntings; Blue-throat.

N.B. Larger birds of prey such as Eagles, Buzzards, Goshawks and Harriers can be seen over the Mai Po marshes as well as in the Ping Shan area. A police pass is necessary for the Mai Po marshes.



## LAM TSUN valley

Between Tai Po Market and Sek Kong Camp.

According to Dr. Herklots this used to be the number one bird watching area in the Colony yielding a wealth of interesting birds whenever visited. To-day, because of the spread of vegetable farming, the paddy fields hardly exist and much of the land on the Fanling side of the valley has been built over by farmers or fenced in for chickens and ducks. As a result the Fanling side of the road is hardly worth a visit, though as recently as 1959 it was good for Bushchats, Plumbeous Water Redstarts, and Black-capped Kingfishers among other birds. Unfortunately the Hang Ha Po wood in which Dr. Herklots saw so many exciting birds has shrunk in size and is noisy and often birdless.

A visit to the woods on the Tai Mo Shan side of the valley is still worth the trouble. Here one may be lucky to see: Flowerpeckers; Woodpeckers; Drongos; Barbets; Flycatchers of various kinds, some rare ones included; Bush Chats; Whitley's Barred Owlet; Cuckoos in the summer, in particular the Great Hawk Cuckoo in the Tai Om valley; Koels; Jays; Hawks; Hawfinches; Pipits; Buntings (in winter the Crested Bunting), etc. This part is still a good area for birds.

## FOREST RESERVE (TAI PO KAU)

The forest paths, particularly in the vicinity of the seed beds, and also beside the stream, can provide surprises:

Plumbeous Water Redstart; Treepies; Swinhoe's Red-tailed Robin; Fork-tailed Sunbird; Flowerpeckers; Willow-Warblers and other leaf warblers; Flycatchers; Forest Wagtail.

## SHATIN WAI

Walk beyond the village of Shatin Wai and follow the valley that runs eastwards from the village of Wong Nai Tau. This valley has some paddy, some vegetables, and a number of small *fung shui* woods and a stream:

Pipits; Buntings; Flowerpeckers; Flycatchers; Daurian Redstarts; Warblers of various kinds; a few waders; Kingfishers; possibly Owls; Rubythroat, etc.

## HO CHUNG valley

Start walking from the Sai Kung road before reaching Hebe Haven. At present this is an excellent valley for a morning's walk, and is quite near to Kowloon:

Pipits; Buntings; Wagtails; some waders in the spring; Fly-

catchers; Fork-tailed Sunbird; Crested Buntings; Kingfishers; Plumbeous Water Redstart; Munias (Spotted and White-backed); Rubythroat; Greenfinch; Thrushes; Warblers of various kinds; White-breasted Waterhens, etc.

## TAI MONG TSAI and PAK TAM CHUNG valleys

Drive to the end of the road beyond Sai Kung. An energetic walker can cover the two valleys in one day but it is a long hike:

Pipits; Buntings; Kingfishers; Thrushes; Flowerpeckers; Rubythroats; Flycatchers; Hawfinches; Crested Buntings, etc. N.B. This area has not been properly recorded yet and would yield a more varied list than that given above if visited regularly throughout the year.

## HONG KONG ISLAND

Dr. Herklots saw many of his birds in the Pokfulam area (from Mt. Davis to Pokfulam village). Unfortunately this area has now lost most of its trees and is being steadily built over. However, it is still possible to see some interesting migrants in the vicinity of University Hall and Bethany.

The grounds of the University itself were, until 1961, excellent for all kinds of interesting and sometimes rare visitors. Unfortunately in the last year and a half the University compound has deteriorated into a small but busy public park and this, together with almost continuous building operations, has drastically disturbed the quietness of the grounds. However, some interesting birds can still be seen just outside the University compound.

The Shouson Hill area is quite rewarding, and Black-throated Laughing Thrushes live there, as well as a pair of Black-capped Kingfishers, and Drongos in the summer.

## LAMMA ISLAND

The best areas until now have been in the vicinity of Yung Shu Wan and Pak Kok. However, paddy fields have almost entirely given place to vegetables with the result that few birds now feed there. Also more land has been fenced in or built on. However, when the University's annual expedition to Lamma is held each year on March 16th the bird-watching members usually manage to see a good mixed bag of birds.

## LANTAO ISLAND

Insufficient data prevents any accurate assessment of the possibilities here, since few bird watchers seem to have visited



it. Silvermine Bay is now too thickly populated to encourage birds and is hardly worth a serious visit. It is likely that the vicinity of Tung Chung where there are still extensive paddy fields and some woods might provide a fair number of birds between January and the end of April, but this area does not seem very fruitful for bird watching at other times.

#### TAI MO SHAN

Very little has been recorded from the higher slopes of Tai Mo Shan. But this is a promising area to explore especially in the summer. Birds known to inhabit the part of Tai Mo Shan above 2,000 feet between May and August are:

Chinese Babax; Crested Bunting; David's Hill Warbler; Upland Pipit; Oriental Skylark.

There may be other birds there. It is worth visiting regularly. There are two ways up. Either drive to the top of route TWSK and take the small road towards the summit, stopping at the barrier. Or else approach from the Sek Kong end of the Lam Tsun valley and pay a visit to the Kadoorie experimental farm. Then climb above the farm until you reach a saddle above Sek Kong and explore the higher slopes of the mountain.

J. L. C-B.

#### TAPE RECORDING BIRD SONGS

With the production of good fidelity inexpensive portable tape recorders, the realm of recording situations in nature has been opened to the layman, a realm which, nevertheless, has been quite actively explored by professionals in the growing field of bioacoustics. Interest in the sounds of nature grew very rapidly in the years following the Second World War, and now respectable academic studies centre around sound production in insects, amphibians, and birds. The centre for the study of bird songs is in the United States at Cornell University, in New York State. Workers here have pressed several records of the songs of birds native to the United States. These records are now sold on the open market and have been rather well received.

Academically the recordings are useful in physiological studies which attempt to correlate the types of sounds that a bird makes with the type of voice-box that the bird has. An interesting example of such studies is the type of bird which imitates the songs of other birds. There is one very good mimic in Hong Kong, the Chinese Bulbul. The present writer has heard this bird mimic the Yellow-bellied Wren Warbler and the Francolin with such a degree of accuracy that unless both the mimic and the 'mimicee' were present at the same time (which in both cases happened to be so) it would have been difficult to know which was which.

But why should a layman be interested in such recording? One answer to this is similar to Hillary's answer to the question why he donned his oxygen tanks. Another answer is associated with the fact that the field of sound recording is still in its infancy, and materials from various parts of the world, especially the Far East, do not exist. As most work has been done in the States and Europe, sound libraries in these places have very little tape concerning the sounds of birds in a place like Hong Kong. Here an enterprising amateur could be of great help in this field.

The easiest way to start on such a venture is to purchase a simple portable tape recorder. Grundig makes a respectable machine but a better (and considerably more expensive) one is a British-made Fi Cord. Add to either of these units a good microphone, and you are ready for the field. The first difficulty that you will find in the field is that Hong Kong is incredibly noisy and although you can hear the bird well yourself, your tape doesn't hear it so well because it hasn't learned to turn off the barking dogs, screaming children and radios, and aeroplanes and cars which our ears are accustomed to doing. You will find that recording



near villages produces mediocre results because of background noise. So you rise before the sun rises to beat the racket and you find that Ping Shan is as noisy at sunrise as it is at noon, and the bell-like voice of that Koel still isn't coming through the way it should. So you retreat in disgust to Tai Po Forest Reserve, the Ho Chung Valley, Lamma, and Lantau with few, but qualitatively very good, results.

Fortunately, the noise problem up to a point can be fairly easily solved. It involves the purchase of a small parabolic reflector with a focal length of between 10-12 inches. You point this reflector at the sound source and place the microphone at the focal point, and the intensity of the desired sound is such that it makes all except the most unusual background noise unimportant. If you are electrically inclined a low-cycle filter fitted to your machine (if this can be done) is also helpful in increasing the fidelity of your recordings.

Finally, while it is true that the richness of vocal production of birds is not as great as that in the States or in Europe, there are a large number of birds here with very pleasing voices which admirably reward the effort made in recording them. And consider the seldom heard but nostalgically remembered song of the migrant Red-bellied Rock Thrush which a person at the right place and the right time could render a year around enjoyment.

E. J. A.

## CHOOSING BINOCULARS

The most important feature about binoculars for bird watching is their light-gathering power, which is dependent upon the field of view (measured as the diameter of the object lens in mm.) and magnification. Ideally the field should be not less than 30 mm. and not more than 50 mm.; and the magnification between 6 and 8 times. The more common combinations of magnification and field used in binoculars now are 6 x 30, 7 x 35, 7 x 50 and 8 x 30. Those with a field of more than 30 mm. tend to be rather large and cannot normally be carried in one's pocket, whereas the smaller ones may be.

Binoculars with a reasonably low magnification (about 7) and a large field (about 50 mm.) tend to have a greater depth of focus than do other types, and in practice you may find that on one setting the glasses will be in focus from about 20 yards to infinity. This is a distinct advantage when 'picking up' flying birds, for with some 8 x 30 models the bird has gone by the time the glasses are in focus.

Do not be tempted to buy larger models such as 12 x 50 for not only are they bulky and heavy but they are difficult to hold steady and tiring to use for long periods, and may result in eyestrain.

On the whole, if you prefer a smaller binocular suitable for carrying in the pocket then buy an 8 x 30 model. If you are not so concerned with weight and size then the 7 x 50 binoculars are very good and strongly recommended.

Types with central focusing are easier to use than those with separate eyepiece focusing, and there is no advantage in the latter type from the point of view of being more airtight, for none of the binoculars sold locally can be guaranteed airtight anyway.

The best makes of binoculars are undoubtedly Zeiss, Ross, Bausch and Lomb, etc., but are very expensive. However, several makes of Japanese binoculars are both good and quite cheap, these being Cannon, Nikon and Limer, for which one has to pay about H.K.\$100-200. The other Japanese makes are cheaper than this but may not be very good.

Limer also manufactures prismatic telescopes and various models are available in Hong Kong. The best ones have an objective of 60 mm. and magnifications of 2-40 times, are provided with a small tripod and cost about \$200.

D. S. H.



## COMPLAINT OF THE DISILLUSIONED BIRD WATCHER

All waders have white rumps, fly very fast in erratic, wheeling manoeuvres and make an identical piercing whistle. When on the ground, they are all but invisible.

If extremely large and untidy, all nests are magpies'. If not, they are all termites' nests.

All ducks are black blobs floating on the far horizon.

Except for the White-bellied Sea Eagle (which for once lives up to its name), all eagles look alike from underneath. They have black primaries and a black tip to their tail. The rest of the wing is an indeterminate earthy-brown with a few dirty blots. All the local bird books conspire to conceal the identity of eagles.

On the excuse that birds only sing where they breed, very few birds in Hong Kong sing in a respectable European manner. Instead, they make odd ticks and clicks, which not only sound alike but baffle all sense of direction or range.

You are always just three seconds too late when any rail or crane has been announced by any member of the party. This rule also applies to Rubythroats and Bluetails.

All warblers are greenish-yellow (or yellowish-green), have light eyebrows and dark eyestripes. Their legs are greeny-yellow-fleshy-brown. Whatever the book says, they all have one and a half wing bars.

Any bird called the Red-throated-something-or-other *may* be like that in Manchuria or Mongolia but it never has any red on its throat in Hong Kong.

All buntings have chestnut cheeks and an indescribable wealth of black and white coronal, medial, superciliary, malar and other meaningless stripes. They all have white edges to their tails to make identification easier.

However as nineteen out of every twenty birds you see are Chinese Bulbuls, you are likely to be right some of the time.

E. D. W.

## RECORDING

1. Records can be sent in to the Hon. Recorder at any time, but preferably quarterly or at worst half-yearly. 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".

2. Use a separate sheet of paper (4½" by 6" approx.) for each species.

3. Head each sheet and complete it as follows:—

YEAR	SPECIES	OBSERVER'S INITIALS
Date	Place	Numbers, age, sex, etc.
e.g. 1961	BONELLI'S EAGLE	
1st Jan.	Tai Mo Shan	One Male
4th Feb.	Ping Shan Marshes	Two immatures flying South about 2 P.M.

4. Please do NOT use diary form.

5. 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 from the start. 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 the observation a certainty. Subsequent events sometimes support a report of this kind, or it may tie in with those of other observers.

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

7. 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. J. L. Cranmer-Byng,  
Department of History, University of 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  
\$10 (\$5 if joining after 30th June) as my subscription for the current  
year.

**N.B.** From 1 January 1963 the yearly subscription will be  
\$20, or \$30 for husband and wife.

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 Flat, Hong Kong.
- Hon. Recorder:*
- Hon. Secretary:* Mr. J. L. Cranmer-Byng,  
Department of History, University of Hong Kong.
- Hon. Treasurer:* Commander E. D. Webb R. N. (Address as above).

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