

# HONG KONG BIRD REPORT

1996

香港鳥類報告



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紀錄委員會報告

一九九六年內錄得的品種分別為 A 類 362 種，D 類 8 種。前一年分別為 347 種及 8 種；一九九四年則分別為 342 種及 9 種；而一九九三年則為最高紀錄的 354 種及 8 種。年中新增的 A 類有六種，情況簡介如下：

新增 A 類品種：

1. 角鸛 *Podiceps auritus*：四月九日，在後海灣發現一隻繁殖期的成鳥。
2. 紅腳鰹鳥 *Sula sula*：八月九日，有一隻在維多利亞港出現。
3. 小杜鵑 *Cuculus poliocephalus*：十月十六日，在魔星嶺網獲一隻。
4. 樓燕 *Apus apus*：四月三至四日，米埔錄得一隻。
5. 姬啄木鳥 *Picumnus innominatus*：七月廿五日，在馬鞍山黃竹洋網獲一隻幼鳥。
6. 綠背鵲 *Ficedula elisae*：四月十一日，在大埔滘發現一隻雄鳥。

至於首次錄得的鮭色鳳頭鸚鵡 *Cacatua moluccensis*、灰喉鴉雀 *Paradoxornis alphonsianus* 及黃咀朱頂雀 *Carduelis flavirostris* 均歸入 E 類。

值得一提的紀錄還包括第一次在本港錄得的家燕 *tytleri* 亞種，在荃灣找到的斑脇田雞 *Porzana paykulli* 和在嘉道理找到的厚咀綠鳩 *Treron curvirostra* 的鳥屍同屬第二次紀錄；此外，還有十二月十一日在米埔的白鵲鴿新疆亞種 *Motacilla alba personata* 和粉紅棕鳥 *Sturnus roseus*；而八月六日在沙洲的白腹軍艦鳥 *Fregata andrewsi* 則是第三個紀錄。

憑藉在晚上獨有的雙音詳叫聲而提交的白喉斑秧雞紀錄，繼續獲得接納。不過，紀錄委員會希望得到這些本地雀鳥的聲譜，以便和其他地方的作比較。如有清晰的錄音，請提供予紀錄委員會。

至於以下的品種，原屬呈交報告時需附帶詳細說明的系列，現已由該系列名單中剔除：日本松雀鷹 *Accipiter gularis*、松雀鷹 *Accipiter virgatus*、紅胸鵲 *Charadrius veredus*、扁咀海雀 *Synthloramphus antiquus*、黃頭鵲鴿 *Motacilla citreola* 與及蘆鶯 *Acrocephalus aedon*。

紀錄委員會不斷覆核過往的一些紀錄，最近對一些舊紀錄有如下的決定：

3 赤頸鸛

原有唯一的紀錄（1982 年九月十九日），因提交人已撤回，是以該品種從 A 類中刪除。

252 河鳥

原有的三次紀錄都被否定，該品種從 A 類中刪除。

原有的冬季水禽調查在三月至十一月亦有繼續。新版的鳥類名錄的編輯工作也在如火如荼進行中，預期在1998年出版；而繁殖鳥類調查的資料，也會包含在其中。

越來越多觀鳥者提交紀錄予香港觀鳥會，這是一個可喜的現象，而1996年中的數目更是空前的。不過，似乎還有個別品種受忽略，紀錄較應有的為少。為提高這個方面的不足，紀錄委員會將發出一些有關的紀錄指引，以方便大家。

年中，紀錄委員會新增了兩名成員，全部名單如下：Mike Chalmers (紀錄委員)、Geoff Carey、張浩輝、Paul Leader、Mike Leven 及 Richard Lewthwaite。

本報告內的每月簡報由下列人士協助編寫：G.J. Carey(1至56、88至153、B至C類及罕有品種)、M.L. Chalmers(57至87)、P.R. Kennerley(156至177)、R.W. Lewthwaite(179至229)、D.A. Diskin(230至279)、P.J. Leader(280至321)與及張浩輝(321.2及以後)。

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**HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY**

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(A registered society under the Hong Kong Societies Ordinance)

Editor: G.J. Carey

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Recorder .....	M.L. Chalmers

Front cover: Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 24 November 1996 (G.J. Carey)

## EDITORIAL NOTE

Though a somewhat slimmer report than that for 1995, I hope that this one will not fail to interest, such is the variety of papers contained. The systematic list, naturally, takes up the bulk of space; the compilers and the Records Committee welcome the trend to record submission from a growing number of observers and hope that this will continue. The names used in the systematic list are those that will be contained in the new Checklist and will thus be used in future bird reports.

Waterfowl count reports are provided for two winters so as to bring the Bird Report as up to date as possible. It is intended in future to include reports on winter waterfowl counts up to the year of publication so as to make each report as useful as possible for planners and conservationists.

I would like to thank Mike Leven and David Melville for help in the production of this report, and I am also very grateful to Jeremy Pearse for his continued provision of illustrations despite his busy schedule and residence in USA. Chan Ming Ming has again kindly translated text into Chinese. WWF-HK has provided much-appreciated support in the form of photocopying and other facilities. I would also like to thank Paul Leader for help with proof-reading.

I envisage this will be the last Report that I edit. A victim of its own success, the time now involved in production of the Bird Report is more than I can continue providing comfortably. I would like to thank all those who have helped in any way, large or small, with the past five issues for which I have been responsible, but most especially the contributors of text and artwork without whom nothing could have been produced. The high quality of reports in recent years has ensured vigorous domestic and overseas sales which in turn have enabled us both to maintain standards and also make a contribution to ongoing Society projects, such as the new boardwalk hide, which, I am pleased to say, have benefitted all those birdwatching in Hong Kong.

Maintenance of the Report in its present format is due in no small part to the advertising and sponsorship that is included. I am very grateful for this support provided by Swarovski (HK) Ltd., Cezet Optical Co. Ltd. (agent for Carl Zeiss binoculars), Kolda Optics Co. (agents for Kowa), Schmidt and Co. Ltd. (Leica distributor), Pro Cam-Fis, Government Information Services and Woods Photo Supplies. Those who avail themselves of their services are encouraged to mention the Society and the Report when doing so. John Holmes again organised the advertising and sponsorship, as well as distribution, for which many thanks. Many thanks also to Wendy Young (UK), May Ho Tan (Netherlands), Yoshimitsu Shigeta (Japan) and Matt Heindel (USA) who are the Society's permanent or occasional international distributors.

Geoff Carey

## REPORT ON THE BIRDS 1996

### RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT

G.J. Carey

During 1996 the number of species recorded was 362 in Category A, a new high, and eight in Category D. This compares with between 342 and 354 in Category A during the previous three years and eight or nine in Category D in the same period.

During 1996 six species were added to Category A. The changes are summarised below while the categories used are defined in the Systematic List. It should be noted that this year's list uses English names that are intended to be used in the new *Annotated Checklist*. These are largely based on Beaman (1994) and Inskipp *et al.* (1996). The small number of names and taxonomic issues on which the Records Committee has taken its own line will be discussed in the forthcoming *Annotated Checklist*.

#### Additions to Category A

Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus*. A breeding plumage bird in Deep Bay on 9 April.

Red-footed Booby *Sula sula*. One in Victoria Harbour on 9 August.

Asian Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus*. One trapped at Mount Davis on 16 October.

Common Swift *Apus apus*. One at Mai Po during 3-4 April.

Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus*. A juvenile trapped at Wong Chuk Yeung, Ma On Shan, on 25 July.

Green-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula elisae*. A male at Tai Po Kau on 11 April.

In addition, the first records of Salmon-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua moluccensis*, Green-backed Tit *Parus monticolus*, Ashy-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis alphonisianus* and Twite *Carduelis flavirostris* were added to Category E.

Other notable records during the year included Hong Kong's first record of the central Siberian form of Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica tyleri*, the second records of Band-bellied Crake *Porzana paykullii*, Thick-billed Pigeon *Treron curvirostra* (both found dead), the northwest China form of White Wagtail *Motacilla alba personata* and Rosy Starling *Sturnus roseus*, and the third record of Christmas Island Frigatebird *Fregata andrewsi*.

Records of Slaty-legged Crake *Rallina eurizonoides* based on vocalisation alone, a distinctive double note call uttered at night, continue to be accepted as such, but the Records Committee is attempting to get sonagrams of birds calling

in Hong Kong to compare with those of known birds from elsewhere. If anybody can provide a good quality recording made in Hong Kong now or in the future, the Records Committee would very much like a copy.

The following species have been removed from the list of species requiring descriptions to be submitted: Japanese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter gularis*, Besra *Accipiter virgatus*, Oriental Plover *Charadrius veredus*, Ancient Auk *Synthloramphus antiquus*, Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* and Thick-billed Warbler *Acrocephalus aedon*.

Recent decisions made as part of the ongoing review of a number of past records has resulted in the following:

#### 3 Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

The observer who provided the only acceptable set of notes for the sole Hong Kong record on 19 September 1982 has now withdrawn them. Accordingly, the species is removed from Category A of the Hong Kong list.

#### 252 Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*

After review of the three claims of this species, none are considered acceptable and the species is removed from Category A of the Hong Kong list.

The Winter Waterfowl Census continued monthly counts from March to November. Progress with a new edition of the *Checklist* continues and it is hoped that publication will occur in 1998. Results of the Breeding Bird Survey and any further record or category reviews will be presented at that time.

A welcome trend in the *HKBR* in recent years has been the increase in the number of observers submitting records, and the number of observers submitting records for 1996 was higher than any previous year. However, it is still felt that a number of species remain under-recorded and the Committee welcomes increased record submission in the future. To that end, the Committee is working on providing guidance with regard to the kinds of records required.

The Records Committee changed during the year with the addition of two members: membership now comprises Mike Chalmers (Recorder), Geoff Carey, Cheung Ho Fai, Paul Leader, Mike Leven and Richard Lewthwaite.

The systematic list was compiled by G.J. Carey (1-56, 88-153, Cat. B-E and rarities), M.L. Chalmers (57-87), P.R. Kennerley (156-177), R.W. Lewthwaite (179-229), D.A. Diskin (230-279), P.J. Leader (280-321) and H.F. Cheung (321.2-end). Thanks are due to the following observers who submitted records for inclusion in this report:

H.G. Ackford, G.W.J. Ades, E.A. Barnes, J. Bell, M. Berlijn, L. Brinker, J.E. Burton, G.J. Carey, D. Cha, M.L. Chalmers, S. Chan, J. Cheesewright, Cheung H.F., A. Cornish, T. Dahmer, V. Dierschke, D.A. Diskin, J.S.R. Edge, J.R. Fellowes,

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1 Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* juvenile  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 28 September 1996

G.J. Carey

## MONTHLY SUMMARIES

G.J. Carey and C.Y. Lam

### January

It was warmer than normal and rainfall was well below average. There were five notable pushes of the winter monsoon: easterlies freshening on 4th, a cold front on 8th (eventually veering into strong easterlies on 12th), northerly replenishments on 15th and 19th, and a cold front on 25th. Both northerly replenishments evolved into easterly surges with strong winds on 17th and 24th respectively. Cloudy conditions with light rain patches prevailed between 11th and 24th.

An overwintering Yellow-legged Buttonquail was discovered at Ma Wan on 4th, and an immature Lesser Frigatebird was at Wah Fu on 5th; on 6th a Besra was trapped at Cape D'Aguilar. The female Citrine Wagtail first seen in December 1995 was seen again at Lut Chau on 12th. During the waterfowl count on 13th a total of 8009 roosting Cormorants represented 1.1% of the northern hemisphere population.

On 14th a Thick-billed Warbler was at Mai Po and a Two-barred Greenish Warbler was at Sha Lo Tung, the latter being seen again on 21st. A female Thick-billed Pigeon was found dead at Kadoorie on 15th, just a few metres away from the male that was found dead there in 1986. On 21st 2500 Night Herons, a new high, roosted at Tsim Bei Tsui and a male Baikal Teal was also present. A Lapwing was at Mai Po on 23rd and a female Baikal Teal was at Mai Po on 27th.

### February

It was colder than normal. Generally fine weather prevailed for the first half of the month but it turned gloomy in the second half. An easterly surge arrived on 6th and a northerly surge on 9th. A brief easterly surge on 16th was followed by an intense northerly surge arriving on the night of 17th. This marked the beginning of a prolonged cold spell and the weather remained generally gloomy for the rest of the month.

Up to three Buff-bellied Pipits were present at Lin Barn Tsuen during 2-3rd and again from 24th into March. The first of the winter's two unseasonal Watercocks was at Long Valley on 3rd, the second being noted later in the month on 24th at Lin Barn Tsuen. A Fukien Niltava was at Tai Po Kau on 3rd and 9th, and a new high of 387 Tufted Duck were noted on 4th. The winter's peak count of European Spoonbill, 14, was seen on 9th.

Four Buff-bellied Pipits were at Ma Tso Lung on 10th and three Bright-capped Cisticolas were at Sha Lo Tung the following day. A wintering Little Green Heron was at Plover Cove Reservoir on 12th and Hong Kong's second Paddyfield Warbler was at Mai Po during 13-15th. The winter's sole Oriental White Stork

was last seen in Deep Bay on 18th. On 19th a Reed Bunting was at Mai Po; four days later on 23rd an adult female Baikal Teal was present, the same day a Northern Skylark was at Long Valley. The male Baikal Teal was again seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29th.

### March

It was slightly warmer than normal. Rain was recorded every day from 9th till the end of the month. There were two significant surges of the winter monsoon. An easterly surge on 9th was the precursor of a major push of cold air southward across southern China. Another easterly surge arrived on 18th, bringing a notable temperature drop on 19th. The first active trough of low pressure of the year brought heavy rain on 29th.

The month began with an Ancient Auk near The Brothers on 1st. A Fukien Niltava was at Hong Kong University on 11th and 25th, and another Ancient Auk was at Sandy Bay on 20th. A Besra was trapped at Kadoorie on 25th, and another trapped there on 30th was subsequently retrapped in May.

At Mai Po village fish ponds a Ruddy Crake was present on 22nd and again on 31st, and from 22nd into early April up to four Reed Buntings were also there. The spring's highest number of Grey-faced Buzzards occurred on 24th when 106 flew north over Cheung Chau. A male White Wagtail of the form *personata*, which breeds in northwest China, was at Chek Lap Kok during 26-27th; this is the second Hong Kong record. The first of the spring's three Ferruginous Flycatchers was at Kadoorie on 29th and the year's only Red-breasted Merganser was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 31st.

### April

Cooler than normal, the first two-thirds of the month were generally gloomy with rain on practically every day. A northerly surge arrived on 1st, later veering into strong easterlies on 5th. A gentle push of the monsoon lasted from 9th to 13th, with strong easterlies in the last three days. A weak cold front crossed the coast on 19th bringing heavy rain as well as cooler conditions.

On 2nd a Swinhoe's Egret was at Mai Po, an Oriental Plover was at Chek Lap Kok and a Japanese Grosbeak was at Kowloon Park. The first Common Swift for Hong Kong was seen at Mai Po during 3-4th, and a Ruddy Crake and a type 1 swiftlet, probably Himalayan, were there on 4th, with another swiftlet seen at Nam Chung on 6th. A male Citrine Wagtail was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4th, and a female was near there on 9th. A Japanese Sparrowhawk was at Mai Po during 4-5th.

In the strongest passage of the species yet noted, a count of 18 Japanese Yellow Buntings on 6th was a new high. A Plain Flowerpecker was at Ho Chung on 7th, and the following day a Yellow-browed Bunting, a Water Rail and a Styan's Grasshopper Warbler were at Mai Po. The month's second and third firsts were

recorded in quick succession: a Horned Grebe at Mai Po on 9th and a Green-backed Flycatcher at Tai Po Kau on 11th. A Fukien Niltava was at Tai Tam on 10th and a male Siberian Blue Robin was at Kowloon Park on 11th. Seven Barn Swallows showing characters of central Siberian and north Mongolian form *tytleri* were at Nam Sang Wai on 14th. On 16th an Ancient Auk was south of Hong Kong Island and a male Siberian Thrush was at Kap Lung.

A Baillon's Crake was at Long Valley during 18-19th, and two rare waders at Mai Po at this time were a Little Stint during 19-20th and a Pectoral Sandpiper on the first of these dates. The spring's second Swinhoe's Egret was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20th and at Mai Po on 24th. On 20th a Crested Honey Buzzard was at Mai Po and the month's second Siberian Thrush was at Tai Po Kau. At sea, three Greater Crested Terns were seen near Po Toi on 21st and a Brown Hawk Owl was seen near Dong Ping Chau on 13th. A Japanese Sparrowhawk was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 22nd and a Pectoral Sandpiper was found at Nam Sang Wai on the same date, and seen again on 24th and 27th. The 22nd also saw two Little Whimbrels at Mai Po, with one at Tsim Bei Tsui the day after, and up to five Pechora Pipits at Nam Sang Wai which remained until 28th; these were to prove the first in an unprecedented spring for this species.

The month's second Baillon's Crake was at Nam Sang Wai on 24th, the same date that the month's second Brown Hawk Owl, which remained into May, was found at Tai Koo Shing. A Slaty-legged Crake was heard at Shuen Wan on 26th, and the spring's first Black Bazas were noted on 27th. A Citrine Wagtail was at Mai Po village fish ponds on 28th and the month finished with a Slaty-backed Forktail at Shing Mun on 30 April.

### May

It was slightly cooler than normal. The continental anticyclone maintained a steady supply of cool air in the first two-thirds of the month. Troughs of low pressure brought heavy rain on 5th and 29th. Tropical Storm Cam came close to Hong Kong during 21-22nd.

A female Schrenck's Bittern at Mount Hallows on 8th was the first of the spring; this was followed by another nine birds during the month. A White-throated Needletail at Kam Tin on 11th was the latest ever. Of most interest this month was a Band-bellied Crake found dead near the Tsuen Wan entrance to the Shing Mun tunnel on 13th; this is the second Hong Kong record. A Pintail Snipe at Long Valley on 16th is the latest on record, and the peak count of Pechora Pipits for the spring came during 16-17th with a total of ten birds at Mai Po and Long Valley (primarily the latter). A Baillon's Crake was at Mai Po on 22nd, and an Avocet at Mai Po on 25th is the latest on record.

## June

This was the hottest June on record. Hong Kong came alternately under the influence of stable southwesterlies or the stronger than normal subtropical ridge, both bringing fine weather. A trough of low pressure brought a spell of heavy rain between 21st and 24th.

A calling male Japanese Nightjar was at Yung Shue O on 1st and a Great Spotted Woodpecker in the closed area near Man Kam To was the first since 1990 and the only record away from Hong Kong Island.

## July

It was again hotter than normal. Southwesterlies prevailed most of the time. Two tropical cyclones, Frankie and Gloria, brought two spells of rain towards the end of the month.

The significant ornithological event of the month was the discovery of Hong Kong's first Speckled Piculet at Ma On Shan on 25th.

## August

It was cloudier than normal. Two tropical cyclones came close enough to cause the hoisting of local warning signals: Liza on 6th and Niki on 20th and 21st.

An immature Christmas Island Frigatebird was near Sha Chau on 6 August, and three days later Hong Kong's first Red-footed Booby was seen in Victoria Harbour. The autumn's only Asiatic Dowitchers were recorded at Mai Po on 12th and 28th, and two adult and a juvenile Orange-headed Ground Thrush were seen in Tai Po Kau on 28 August.

## September

It was a wet month with rainfall double the normal figure. Typhoon Sally came close on 9th, necessitating the hoisting of the No. 8 signal and causing gales in the early morning. A low pressure area near Hainan Island brought a spell of strong easterly winds offshore from 12th to 14th and more than 200 mm of rain on the last day. Tropical Storm Willie, also east of Hainan Island, brought heavy rain but little wind during 20-21st. The first spell of northerly winds this winter arrived on 28th.

A Black Bittern was at Mai Po on 7th and the first of the autumn's Siberian Blue Robins was at Ho Chung the following day. Two more were noted on 12th at Mount Austin and Kadoorie. On 15th a Tiger Shrike was at Hong Kong Observatory and a new high of 80 Chinese Starlings was at Long Valley. Two adult and a downy juvenile Slaty-legged Crane were at Kadoorie on 16th, only the second instance of confirmed breeding.

An immature Christmas Island Frigatebird was found at Ho Man Tin on 17th, and a count of 100 Pintail Snipe at Long Valley on 21st is the highest on

record for Hong Kong; 21 Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers were also there. A Thick-billed Warbler was trapped at Kadoorie on 24th and 28th; a Siberian Blue Robin was at Kadoorie on 27th and another was at Hong Kong University from 29th to 4 October. Finally, a Yellow-legged Buttonquail was at Shing Mun on 30th.

## October

It was warmer than normal. A cold front arriving on 8th brought northerlies which persisted to 14th under the influence of a low pressure area south of Hong Kong. The close approach of Typhoon Beth enhanced the northeast monsoon on the 20th and 21st, causing strong winds offshore. It was then meteorologically quiet apart from a transient push of cool northerlies on the 26th.

The month began with Thick-billed Warblers at Kadoorie and Ma On Shan on 3rd. The only record of Grey Bushchat of the year concerned a male at Sha Lo Tung on 5th and the sole autumn record of Schrenck's Bittern occurred at Long Valley on 6th; on the same day a Pied Harrier was at Mai Po. On 9th a Two-barred Greenish Warbler was at Sha Lo Tung. The first of a short series of Crested Honey Buzzards was noted at Kadoorie on 9th; two were seen on 12th, six were there on 25th and one was at Ma On Shan on 26th. A Yellow-legged Buttonquail was near Ping Yeung on 10th, and the day after a Chinese Goshawk, rare in autumn, was at Kadoorie. Raptor interest continued with the autumn's first Japanese Sparrowhawk trapped at Mai Po on 15th.

Highlight of the month was Hong Kong's first Asian Lesser Cuckoo, trapped at Mount Davis on 16th. A Pheasant-tailed Jacana was at Long Valley during 17-20th, another Two-barred Greenish Warbler was at Mui Wo during 18-19th, and one was seen at Tai Po Kau on 19th. A Yellow-streaked Warbler was trapped at Kadoorie on 19th, and a Barred Buttonquail was at Cloudy Hill on 21st, the same day that two Pectoral Sandpipers were at Long Valley. A Japanese Sparrowhawk was at Chek Lap Kok on 23rd and another was at Mai Po three days later. The year's only European Starling was at Kam Tin on 25th. An Eagle Owl was at Tin Shui Wai on 27th and an injured Japanese Nightjar was found at Hong Kong Observatory on 28th. A rather late male Siberian Blue Robin was at Kadoorie on 30th.

## November

It was almost the warmest November on record as a result of the absence of major surges of cold air during the month. A cold front crossed the coast on 2nd, followed by a prolonged steady northeasterly airstream over southern China until 29th when another cold front arrived in Hong Kong.

A Japanese Sparrowhawk was trapped at Kadoorie on 3rd and another was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5th. A Citrine Wagtail was at Long Valley on 9th, and another Japanese Sparrowhawk was trapped on 13th at Kadoorie. A hybrid male Wigeon x American Wigeon was at Mai Po on 15 November, the same date that the year's only Brown-headed Gull was present. On 16th a new high of 494 Black-winged Stilts was noted at Mai Po and a Brambling was near Lok Ma Chau.

An Oriental Scops Owl was at Robin's Nest on 17th. The Two-barred Greenish Warbler was seen again at Tai Po Kau on 19 November.

Single Radde's Warblers were trapped at Kadoorie on 21st and 24th, and at Kam Tin three Lapwings were seen on 17th, with one there on 22nd. Also on 22nd a Black Stork was seen soaring over Tin Shui Wai, a Siskin was at Mount Austin and a Black-shouldered Kite was at Long Valley, the only record in the second winter period. Back at Kam Tin a Pheasant-tailed Jacana was present on 24th. The first of the year's four Bitterns was at Mai Po on 27th, as well as a male Baikal Teal; on the same date two Brown Thrushes were at Po Toi. The month's third Radde's Warbler was at Tai Mo Shan on 28th and a new high of 124 Black-faced Spoonbills were seen on 29 November, representing about 25% of the world population. Finally, another Lapwing was at Mai Po on 30th.

## December

It was warmer than normal and generally fine and dry. The only events of note were the cold front on 5th and the northerly surge reaching Hong Kong on the evening of 17th.

The mildness of the month was reflected in its relative quietness in terms of birds. A Citrine Wagtail was at Long Valley on 2nd and a Grey Phalarope was near Sha Chau on 3rd. The autumn's fourth Radde's Warbler was at Kowloon Hills Catchwater on 7th, and the day after five Dusky Thrushes were at Kadoorie. The Lapwing was seen again at Mai Po on 12th and 14th, and on the latter date a count of 430 Grey Starlings at Nam Sang Wai was a new high.

A Siberian Thrush was trapped at Kadoorie on 15th, and on 17th three Bright-capped Cisticolas were on Po Toi; another three were at Sha Lo Tung on 21st, the same date that three Siskins were at Fanling Golf Course. A Japanese Sparrowhawk was at Mai Po on 14th and 21st. The spectacle of the month was undoubtedly the seven Black Vultures in the area between Crest Hill and Mai Po from 20th. The year ended on a high note in the form of a Rosy Starling at Mai Po on 31st, the second Hong Kong record.



2 Eurasian Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus*  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, December 1996

G.J. Carey

## SYSTEMATIC LIST

G.J. Carey, D.A. Diskin, P.J. Leader, H.F. Cheung,  
R.W. Lewthwaite, M.L. Chalmers and P.R. Kennerley

In the interests of brevity, records for species that are generally common and widespread in appropriate habitat throughout the year are not listed unless significant reports were received. The dates of the waterfowl counts referred to are 13 January, 10 February, 9 March, 16 November and 14 December, although it should be noted that these may include counts made up to a week either side. Species listed in Collar *et al.* (1994) are indicated by the appropriate categories in parentheses: C = critical; E = endangered; V = vulnerable; N = near-threatened. Other abbreviations used: KARC = Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre; KFBG = Kadoorie Farm and Botanical Gardens; CP = Country Park; NT = New Territories; ZBG = Zoological and Botanical Gardens, HKU = Hong Kong University.

## Category A

*Species which have been recorded in an apparently wild state  
in Hong Kong in the last fifty years*

### 1 Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

小鸊鷉

Waterfowl count totals in the first part of the year were 85 in January, 163 in February and 89 in March. Breeding was confirmed as follows: an adult and three juveniles at Nam Sang Wai on 27 April, an adult with four juveniles at Lin Barn Tsuen on 20 September, an adult and a three-week old juvenile in the waterfowl collection at Mai Po on 29 September, adults with two-week old young and a nearly full-grown juvenile elsewhere in the reserve on 20 October, and one adult and two juveniles at Long Valley on 26 October. The November and December waterfowl counts recorded 81 and 114 respectively. Away from Deep Bay, three were in Shuen Wan bay on 18th and 23 January with one there on 15 February, up to three birds were recorded at Kau Sai Chau from 25 March, one was in Shuen Wan bay on 5 November and 6 December and one was at Shing Mun Reservoir on 31 December.

### 2 Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

鳳頭鸕鶿

In January 151 were noted on 7th; 130 were recorded during the February waterfowl count, and on 3 March a new high of 255 was counted at Tsim Bei Tsui (MLC). Subsequently, 95 were noted during the March waterfowl count, 44 were present on 31st, six were noted on 3 April, three on 7th, one on 8th, 19 on 14th and one on 18 April, the final record of the spring. Unusually, one was noted on a fish pond at Mai Po on 20 March. The first record of the second winter period concerned seven on 5 November; numbers subsequently increased to 58 on 30th and 173 on 14 December. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

### 3.05 Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

角鸕鶿

An adult in breeding plumage was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 9 April (GJC,PJL,MRL). This is the first record for Hong Kong (see Carey 1998).



Great Crested Grebe (Jeremy Pearse)

[ **Shearwater/Petrel sp.** *Bulweria/Puffinus* sp.

An unidentified all-dark, medium-sized petrel or small shearwater was seen between Po Toi and Stanley on 3 May (ML,GR). The description was strongly suggestive of Bulwer's Petrel *B. bulweria*, but did not, in the view of the Records Committee, provide the conclusive evidence required for a first record.]

**5.3 Red-footed Booby** *Sula sula*

紅腳鸕鳥

One was seen in Victoria Harbour on 9 August (LKS); this is the first record for Hong Kong (see Lee 1998).

**6 Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

鸕鷀

Waterfowl count totals in the first part of the year were 8009 in January, 4521 in February and 3742 in March; the January count is a new high and represents 1.1% of the northern hemisphere population (see Rose and Scott 1994). Subsequent counts in Deep Bay were 30 on 5 April and singles on 8th, 9th and 20 April. In addition, 330 were seen in Tolo Harbour on 6 April, with one there the following day, and one was noted flying east at Cape D'Aguilar on 11 April. Recorded at Shuen Wan up to 1 April with the highest count being 340 on 4 March. In the second part of the year noted from 29 September when four adults were at Mai Po; subsequently numbers increased to 20 on 6 October, 625 on 20th, 4708 on 16 November and 6247 on 14 December. Coincident with a decline in numbers from the very high levels of the past two winters, the roost at Nam Sang Wai only held up to 40 birds in the second winter period. Elsewhere, the earliest record at Shuen Wan concerned four on 23 October with numbers subsequently building up to 80 on 24 November. Finally, six were seen flying east over Mount Austin on 7 December.

**7 Dalmatian Pelican** *Pelecanus crispus* (N)

卷羽鵜鶘

The highest count of the first winter period was of 23 (including two first-winters) which remained until at least 17 January; subsequently, up to 21 were

noted until 11 March, five were recorded on 18th, four on 23rd, and three then remained until 8 April (though four were seen on 5th). In the second winter period the earliest record concerned three adults and a first-winter on 30 November; numbers then increased to seven by 13 December and ten by 20th. The peak count of 23 continues the increasing trend noted since winter 1991-92 and is the highest count since winter 1987-88.

**7.9 Christmas Island Frigatebird** *Fregata andrewsi*

白腹軍艦鳥

One was seen near Sha Chau on 6 August (PJJ). This is the third Hong Kong record. In addition, one was picked up at Ho Man Tin on 17 September and kept in care at Kadoorie Farm until 2 November when it was released at Cape D'Aguilar (GJC,RWL); as this bird did not certainly arrive in Hong Kong unaided, this record will not be added to the species total.

**9 Lesser Frigatebird** *Fregata ariel*

白斑軍艦鳥

An immature was at Wah Fu on 5 January (JSRE).

[ **Frigatebird sp.** *Fregata* sp.

軍艦鳥類

**1995:** one was at Magazine Gap, HK Island, on 15 June (VBP,MT).]

**10 Great Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

大麻鵞

Only four records during the year, all at Mai Po: singles on 27th and 29 November and 27 December, and two on 17 December.

**11 Yellow Bittern** *Ixobrychus sinensis*

黃斑華鵞

Singles were recorded at Mai Po during the January and March waterfowl counts. The first passage bird there occurred on 3 April; the only subsequent spring records there concerned one on 18 April, two on 8 May, three on 10th and up to eight during 16-17 May. Elsewhere, one was at Tin Shui Wai on 20 April, up to three were at Long Valley during 12-17 May, two were at Nam Sang Wai and one was near Lok Ma Chau on 19 May, and up to two males were at Shuen Wan during 25-28th. Reported in summer from Mai Po (four on 20 July) and Kau Sai Chau (one during 20-21 June). More numerous in autumn with the higher counts being six at Mai Po on 12 August and 16 September, and up to five there during 31 August to 3 September. Also recorded at Long Valley (singles on 21st and 29 September and 1st and 27 October), Tin Shui Wai (one on 15 September) and Luk Keng (one on 9 October). Four were present at Mai Po on 21 September, three were noted there on 1 October, with two on 6th and, finally, one on 20 October.

**12 Schrenck's Bittern** *Ixobrychus eurhythmus* (N)

紫背華鵞

The first spring record was of a female on the north-facing slope of Mount Hallows on 8 May; this was followed by a female at Mai Po on 10th, one at Mui Wo on 12th, up to one male and three females at Long Valley during 12-19th, a male at Nam Sang Wai on 19th, a male at Long Valley on 22nd and, finally, a male at Mai Po on 25 May. The only autumn record concerned a male at Long Valley on 6 October.

**13 Cinnamon Bittern** *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* 栗草鵪

Recorded in spring from 4 April to 16 May with records of single birds at Long Valley on 4th, 19th, 20th and 28 April and 12 May, Mai Po on 20 April and 16 May, Tin Shui Wai on 20 April, Shuen Wan during 20-21st, Nam Sang Wai on 22nd, Tsim Bei Tsui on 23 April, Hong Kong Park on 10 May (the second record there) and Mui Wo and Tai O on 12 May. In autumn singles were noted at Kam Tin on 24th and 28 September and 14 October, Long Valley on 29 September and 6 October, and Mui Wo on 21 October.

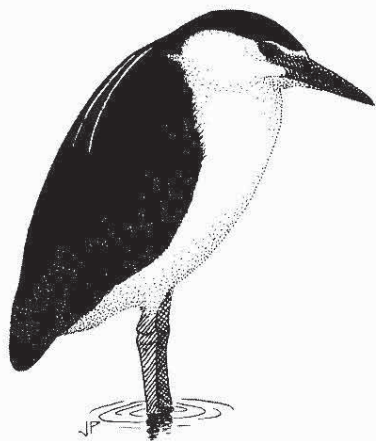
**14 Black Bittern** *Ixobrychus flavicollis* 黑鵪

One was at Mai Po on 7 September (PJL,MRL). After a review of all previous records of this species, this is now only the fourteenth record.

**1995:** one was at Mai Po on 20 September (WY).

**16 Black-crowned Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax* 夜鷺

At Tsim Bei Tsui on 21 January a flock of 2500 birds was seen (PJL,MRL), a new high; the only other significant count of the first winter period was 1254 during the February waterfowl count. Breeding was confirmed at six sites: A Chau (172 nests), Tai Po Market (eight nests), Penfold Park (one nest), Tsim Bei Tsui (150 nests), Mai Po (five nests) and Stonecutters (55 nests). An adult and a juvenile were also seen together at Aberdeen Marina on 20 July, and up to ten birds were present there throughout the year. Elsewhere, at Kowloon Park seen up to September with the highest count being 26 on 30 April, at Tung Chung one was seen on 23 May, at Lamma nine were noted flying to feed on the evening of 27 December, suggesting a previously unrecorded roost site, and at Shuen Wan generally up to 12 birds were seen during the year, though 120 were noted on 15 February.



Black-crowned Night Heron (Jeremy Pearse)

**17 Striated Heron** *Butorides striatus* 綠鷺

A wintering bird was seen at Plover Cove Reservoir on 12 February. One at KFBG on 25th and 28 March was possibly also an over-wintering bird; at Mai Po the first spring record concerned one on 1 April. The only subsequent April records were of singles at the Star Ferry pier, Central, on 11th, Mai Po on 20th and Big Wave Bay on 27th. In May up to three birds were noted during 8-16th and ten were recorded on 17th at Mai Po and one was at Pui O on 15th. Summer records consisted of one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 30 June and 28 July and four at Mai Po on 20 July. Noted in autumn from 12 August when four were present at Mai Po; subsequently, one or two were recorded there from 3 September to 1 October, apart from eight on 16th. Elsewhere, singles were at Kau Sai Chau during 24-25 August and on 8 September, Long Valley on 1 October, KFBG on 6 November and, finally, Wong Nai Chung Reservoir on 30 December.

**18 Chinese Pond Heron** *Ardeola bacchus* 池鷺

Waterfowl count totals in the first part of the year were 197 in January, 307 in February and 147 in March. Although generally considered to be resident in Hong Kong, sightings on 16 April of a flock of ten flying north over the sea south of HK Island and of one flying north at Cheung Chau suggest that at least some birds seen here are migratory. Breeding was confirmed at eight sites: A Chau (two nests), Tai Po Market, Penfold Park (one nest), Pak Nai (one nest), Mai Po (52 nests), Mai Po Lo Wai (ten nests), Ho Sheung Heung (40 nests) and Shuen Wan (ten pairs). Waterfowl count totals in November and December were 144 and 313 respectively. Away from Deep Bay the only significant counts were of up to 42 at Shuen Wan during the first winter period and 30 in the second.

**19 Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* 牛背鷺

Numbers in the first winter period were somewhat lower than usual, the highest counts being 35 at Mai Po on 20 February, 34 there on 24th and 28 on 14 January; at Kam Tin 25 were counted on 19 March. Noted in spring at Long Valley where up to six were recorded in April with nine there on 17 May, 11 on 24th, when 29 were also seen at Kam Tin, and 16 on 8 June. Flocks of ten and 15 heading northeast were noted at Cape D'Aguilar on 16 April; on the same date singles were seen over the sea near Cheung Chau (flying east) and south of HK Island; at Cape D'Aguilar one was seen on 27 April and up to two were noted during 7-11 May. One was at Penfold Park on 16 May. Breeding was confirmed at four sites: A Chau (15 nests), Tsim Bei Tsui (16 nests), Mai Po and Stonecutters (14 nests). Other summer records were four at Stanley Fort on 13 June and 55 at Kau Sai Chau on 20 June. In the aftermath of Typhoon Sally 70 were at Kam Tin on 9 September; subsequently, higher counts were 55 at Kam Tin on 22 September, 45 at Mai Po on 1 October, 50 at Tin Shui Wai on 5 November, 44 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 9th and 56 in Deep Bay on 16 November.

**20 Swinhoe's Egret** *Egretta eulophotes* (E) 黃嘴白鷺

In April singles were seen (most unusually) at Kowloon Park on 19th (SN), and at Mai Po on 2nd and 24th and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 20th.

**21 Pacific Reef Egret** *Egretta sacra* 岩鷺  
Recorded at Cape D'Aguilar, Stanley Fort, Gau Tau, Tolo Harbour, Starling Inlet, north Lantau, Tai O, The Brothers, the Ninepins, southern waters, Lamma Island, Deep Water Bay, Sai Sha and Tap Mun, the highest count being nine together at outer Tolo Harbour on 25 August.

**22 Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta* 小白鷺  
Waterfowl count totals in the first part of the year were 1202 in January, 1554 in February and 965 in March. Breeding was confirmed at eight sites: A Chau (eight nests), Tai Po Market (35 nests), Penfold Park (23 nests, maximum count of 40 juveniles on 16 May), Pak Nai (40 nests), Tsim Bei Tsui (200 nests), Mai Po (20 nests), Ho Sheung Heung (three nests) and Stonecutters (eight nests). The November and December waterfowl count totals were 1189 and 1046 respectively. Other significant records were 38 at Tai O on 20 January, 89 at Penfold Park on 2 February, 73 at Yung Shue O on 4 February, 150 at Castle Peak Power Station on 3 September, 30 flying west at Cape D'Aguilar on 27 September and one grey-phase bird at Mai Po on 16 May.

**23 Intermediate Egret** *Egretta intermedia* 中白鷺  
The highest Deep Bay counts in the first part of the year were 16 during the January waterfowl count and on 6 February, and 12 on 23 March. Spring passage continued until 25 May in Deep Bay, when four were at Mai Po, and until 26 May at Shuen Wan, where up to five birds had been present since 20 April with up to three birds prior to that date. One was also seen at Shuen Wan on 28 June and 15 July. Autumn passage was first noted on 5 September, peaking at 27 on 29 September at Mai Po and seven on 24 September at Shuen Wan, with six there on 19 October. Away from these sites, one was at Kam Tin on 24 May and one was at Tai O on 19 October. In the latter part of the year nine were recorded during the November waterfowl count and ten were noted in the December count.

**24 Great Egret** *Egretta alba* 大白鷺  
Waterfowl count totals in the first part of the year were 515 in January, 625 in February and 284 in March. Breeding was confirmed at four sites: A Chau (27 nests), Tai Po Market (eight nests), Tsim Bei Tsui (40 nests) and Mai Po. This is the highest number of breeding birds ever recorded in Hong Kong. The totals for the November and December waterfowl counts were 586 and 501 respectively. Other significant records were one at Tai O on 20 January, one at Penfold Park on 2 February, one over the sea near Chek Lap Kok on 25 March, one flying north over southern waters on 16 April, one at Tung Chung on 23 May and three flying east at Cape D'Aguilar on 11 April, with one flying west there on 27 September.

**25 Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea* 蒼鷺  
Waterfowl count totals in the first part of the year were 1391 in January, 1962 in February and 663 in March. About 30 birds remained at Mai Po until at least 19 April, but the only subsequent Deep Bay records received for spring and summer concerned two at Nam Sang Wai on 24 May and four at Mai Po the

following day. The earliest autumn record received for Deep Bay was of four adults at Mai Po on 28 August; subsequently, 12 were there on 1 October, 1103 were recorded in the November waterfowl count and 1201 were noted in the December count. Away from Deep Bay, up to 44 were at Shuen Wan in the first winter period and 41 were noted in the second winter period, two were at Long Valley on 19 October and one flew southwest at Cape D'Aguilar on 5 November.

**26 Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea* 草鷺  
Up to four (including two adults and one first-winter) were recorded in the Deep Bay area during January and February. There were then no reports until 26 March when one was at Mai Po; subsequent spring records primarily involved singles at Mai Po, Mai Po village fish ponds and Tin Shui Wai, the latest occurring on 17 May; however, three immatures, possibly juveniles, were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 28 April. The only other spring record concerned one at Tai O on 12 May. In autumn the earliest record was of two on 22 September; the highest subsequent counts were four (including one adult and two immatures) on 20 October and three on 6th and 11 October. The final records of the year concerned an adult on 1 November and one on 27 November. Apart from that mentioned, all records were in Deep Bay.

**27 Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra* 黑鸛  
One soaring over Tin Shui Wai on 22 November was the only record.

**28 Oriental Stork** *Ciconia boyciana* (E) 東方白鸛  
In the first winter period one remained in the Deep Bay area until 18 February.

**30 Black-headed Ibis** *Threskiornis melanocephalus* (V) 白鸛  
Single adults were seen in Deep Bay from 13 January to 10 February, and during 21-23 March and 1-22 April.

**31 Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia* 白琵鷺  
The maximum recorded in the first winter period was 14 on 9 February, a high count compared to recent years. Numbers subsequently declined to four on 18 February and two on 8 March, though five were seen at Tsim Bei Tsui on 31 March. During April up to two were present until 22nd, the final record of the spring. In autumn, one was seen at Mai Po during 26-27 October; given the relatively early date, this was probably the same as one shot and killed by illegal hunters over the Shenzhen River on 30 October. There were no further records. All birds were noted in the Deep Bay area.

**1995:** the summer record for last year was reported in error and is now withdrawn.

**32 Black-faced Spoonbill** *Platalea minor* (C) 黑臉琵鷺  
The highest count in the first winter period was 60 on 3 February; subsequently, 59 were noted on 10 February, 53 on 8 March and 28 on 31 March.

There then seems to have been an influx of migrants as numbers climbed again to 41 on 3 April and 51 on 10th, followed by a drop to 38 on 16th, 24 on 22nd, 14 on 16 May, three on 18th and, finally, three on 1 June. The earliest record in the second winter period concerned one on 1 October; numbers subsequently increased to 23 on 3 November, 66 on 9th and 124 on 29 November (RWL,PJL), a new high for Hong Kong that constitutes about 25% of the world population. All records were from Deep Bay.

**33 Lesser Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna javanica* 栗樹鴨

Single, unopinioned birds were seen on the reserve at Mai Po on 8 June (YYT) and in the waterfowl collection on 11 October (GJC). In addition, a presumed escaped bird was seen at Penfold Park on 2 February.

**37 Common Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna* 翹鼻麻鴨

Waterfowl count totals in the first part of the year were 1650 on 6 January, 1267 in February and 246 in March. On 30 March 14 were recorded, declining to 12 on 7 April and six on 14th and 16 April, the final records of the spring. The earliest in autumn concerned three on 16 November; numbers then increased to 300 by 10 December, 1600 on 14th and, finally, 1840 on 27th. All records in Deep Bay.

**40 Eurasian Wigeon** *Anas penelope* 赤頭鴨

Waterfowl count totals in the first part of the year were 2119 in January, 3392 in February and 2835 in March. Over 1000 were still present on 30 March, subsequent counts declining to 69 by 5 April, 80 on 18th, four on 4th and 16 May, and two on 25 May. Records at Mai Po of an eclipse male on 8 June, a male and a female on 20 July and a female on 22 August could well relate to the same birds as there are no previous summer records; the same applies to records of singles during the rest of September. Twenty on 1 October (RWL,GJC) is a new early date for autumn. Numbers then increased to 1127 by the November waterfowl count. All records in the Deep Bay area.

A male hybrid Wigeon x American Wigeon *A. americana* was at Mai Po on 15 November (MRL).

**41 Falcated Duck** *Anas falcata* 羅紋鴨

Waterfowl count totals in the first part of the year were 85 in January, 86 in February and 20 in March. Thirty were present on 5 April, ten were noted on 18th, six on 20th and, finally, a female on 25 May. The latter was possibly the same as one noted on 12 August; subsequently, a female was seen on 20 September, one was present on 27 September, 20 were noted in the November waterfowl count and 40 were present on 20 December. All records were from the Deep Bay area.

**42 Gadwall** *Anas strepera* 赤膀鴨

The highest counts in the first winter period were 30 on 26 January and 26 February. The only subsequent spring records concerned three on 1 March, two

on 8th, four during 25-26 March and also on 8 April. The only record in the second winter period concerned two on 2 November. All records were at Mai Po or Tsim Bei Tsui.

**43 Baikal Teal** *Anas formosa* 花臉鴨

A male was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 21 January and 29 February, and a female was at Mai Po on 27 January; in the second winter period a male was at Mai Po on 27 November.

**44 Common Teal** *Anas crecca* 綠翅鴨

Deep Bay waterfowl count totals in the first part of the year were 4193 in January, 5322 in February and 2580 in March; the February count is a new high. Subsequently, 340 remained at Mai Po on 5 April, declining to 200 by 9th, five by 18th and a male on 17 May and 8 June (DAD), the latter a new late spring date (apart from five on 3 July 1982). The earliest autumn record concerned two at Mai Po on 3 September; counts increased to 1200 by 21 October, 1452 during the November waterfowl count and 2719 in the December count. Away from the Deep Bay area, up to three were at Penfold Park during 30 January to 14 February, seven were at Kam Tin on 20 February, with four there on 13 October and up to 31 during 22 November to 8 December, and a female was at Shing Mun reservoir on 31 December. At Shuen Wan up to 29 were present in the first winter period and up to 16 were present in the second.

**45 Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos* 綠頭鴨

Waterfowl count totals in the early part of the year were 54 in January, 23 in February and two in March; the latter birds remained until 22nd. The earliest autumn record concerned a male on 31 August; however, this may have emanated from the waterfowl collection where free-flying birds were seen during the summer. Otherwise there were no records until the November waterfowl count when 14 were noted. All records were from Deep Bay.

**46 Spot-billed Duck** *Anas poecilorhyncha* 斑嘴鴨

Waterfowl count totals (including both *zonorhyncha* and *haringtoni*) in the early part of the year were 291 in January, 174 in February and 89 in March. During this period the highest count of *haringtoni* was ten on 10 February at Nam Sang Wai. The only summer counts of the two forms were 12 *haringtoni* and seven *zonorhyncha* on 8 June and ten of each on 20 July. Numbers began to increase in September with 13 *zonorhyncha* and 11 *haringtoni* on 13th; the November waterfowl count recorded 112 (including 90 *zonorhyncha* and four *haringtoni*) and the December count 78 *zonorhyncha*. Away from Deep Bay the only records were of three at Kam Tin on 20 February and one there 1 March.

**47 Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta* 針尾鴨

Waterfowl count totals for Deep Bay in the early part of the year were 6594 in January, 6000 in February and 3322 in March; the January count is about 1000 above the average of the past five years. In April, 17 were noted on 8th and

six on 18th; the final spring records concerned two males on 4th and 8 May. The earliest autumn record was of six on 27 September; numbers subsequently increased to 120 on 8 October, 1833 during the November waterfowl count and 2102 in the December count. The only record away from Deep Bay concerned a female at Shuen Wan on 19 October and 8 November.

**48 Garganey** *Anas querquedula* 白眉鴨

During the January waterfowl count 15 were recorded, followed by 88 in the February count and 100 in March. The highest April count was 20 on 5th; during May one was recorded on 4th, three on 16th and a pair were present on 25th, the latter remaining until 8 June, the final spring record. A full-winged male was noted in the waterfowl collection at Mai Po on 20 July. First recorded in autumn on 15 September when 40 were present; numbers increased to 200 on 29 September and peaked at 700 on 1 October, only ten below the high established last year. Subsequently, 50 were noted on 8 October, 11 were recorded in the November waterfowl count and 25 in the December count. All records in the Deep Bay area, primarily at Mai Po

**49 Northern Shoveler** *Anas clypeata* 琵嘴鴨

Waterfowl count totals for Deep Bay in the early part of the year were 7370 in January, 497 in February and 4010 in March; the only other records received for the first part of the year were of 18 on 5 April and two on 8 June. The only autumn records were of two on 15 September, three on 29 September and 92 on 1 October. During the November and December waterfowl counts 3939 and 5632 respectively were recorded.

**50 Common Pochard** *Aythya ferina* 紅頭潛鴨

In the first winter period four were recorded in the January waterfowl count, eight were noted on 27 January and eleven were present on 10 February (GJC,PJL), a new high. Numbers then declined to four on 19th and three on 25 February, the latest record. The only record in the second winter period concerned four on 14 December. All records came from Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui.

**52 Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula* 鳳頭潛鴨

The very high numbers recorded at the end of 1995 continued into 1996 with the peak count being 387 in Deep Bay on 4 February (RWL), a new high; prior to this winter, the previous highest count was 155 in 1986. Subsequently, numbers declined to 69 by 2 March. There were no further records until 4-5 April when two females were noted. The earliest record of the second winter period concerned a male on 1 October; the only earlier record concerns two on 16 September 1990. Subsequently, three were present on 19 October followed by 131 on 3 November; numbers reached 171 on 16 November, with 102 recorded on 21 December. All records were from Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui.

**53 Greater Scaup** *Aythya marila* 斑背潛鴨

Five were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 7 January, a female was at Mai Po on 28 January, eight were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4 February and an immature male, believed

to be wild and the same as that recorded in late 1995, was seen in the waterfowl collection at Mai Po on 6th and 21 February (RWL), a new late date. In the second winter period singles were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 3rd and at Mai Po on 9 November.

**56 Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator* 紅胸秋沙鴨  
The only record was of a male at Tsim Bei Tsui on 31 March.

**57 Black Baza** *Aviceda leuphotes* 鳳頭鵲隼

Three at KFBG on 27 April were the first of the year. These were followed in May by two on 1st at KFBG, singles at Cape D'Aguilar on 11th, Sai Kung on 12th, Wu Kau Tang on 17th and Lower Shing Mun on 23rd; eight at Mui Wo on 15th included displaying birds. In June, two at Yung Shue O and one at Wu Kau Tang were the only reports. In August, there were seven at Wo Keng Shan near NENT Landfill on 3rd, eight at San Uk Ling on 22nd, two at Starling Inlet on 26th, and three at Queen's Hill Camp, Fanling on 31st. Passage birds were noted in the next two months including over 40 in two flocks at Ma Wan on 1 September, six at Sai Kung and three at Kuk Po, Starling Inlet on 13th, and ten at Hang Tau on 29th. The last birds occurred in October with nine at Ho Chung on 11th and 17 plus six flying northwest at Hang Tau on 15th.

**58 Crested Honey Buzzard** *Pernis ptilorhynchus* 鳳頭蜂鷹

One was seen at Mai Po on 20 April (GAW). In autumn, an adult was at KFBG on 9 October (MRL), two were there on 12th (CHE,MRL) and six were seen there on 25th (MRL); in addition, one was at Ma On Shan on 26 October (GAW).

**1995:** six were seen flying south at Mount Davis on 29 October (MT).

**1987:** one was at Lam Tsuen Valley on 9 April (DNB).

**59 Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* 黑翅鵟

Three to four birds were recorded in the first half of the year: an immature at Long Valley on 15 January and Lin Barn Tsuen on 22 January, and an adult at Long Valley on 26 January and 24 February; one at Mui Wo on 14 April is one of the few reports away from the northern NT. The only record for the second half of the year was of one at Long Valley on 22 November.

**60 Black Kite** *Milvus migrans* 鳶

Recorded throughout the year, high numbers wintering as usual, with the highest concentration at the regular Magazine Gap roost. In Deep Bay, the highest count was 130 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 January. A small roost at Tai O, Lantau contained 37 birds on 20 January.

**61 White-bellied Sea Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucogaster* 白腹海鵟

One or two adults or single immatures were present at coastal and offshore sites in all months of the year. Recorded around southern and eastern seaboard including offshore islands, Tolo Harbour and Western Harbour, with nest-building

noted near Ma Wan on 4 January and adults displaying at Chi Ma Wan in May. Single immatures were also reported from Tsim Bei Tsui, Nam Sang Wai and Mai Po in Deep Bay between January and April and in October and December. Unusual inland records were a second year bird over KFBG on 8 September and one displaying over KARC on 29 September. An immature at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 December was harrying Coot *Fulica atra* in Deep Bay, and an adult at High Island Reservoir was mobbed by an Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* on 26 December.

**62 Eurasian Black Vulture** *Aegypius monachus* (N) 秃鹫

An exceptional influx late in December brought up to seven birds to the area between Crest Hill and Mai Po from 20 December until the end of the year; at least one bird was a juvenile.

**63 Crested Serpent Eagle** *Spilornis cheela* 蛇雕

One or two were regularly observed at KFBG from 20 March to the end of the year, soaring on most sunny days during 20 April-3 June, with a maximum of four on 26 April. Single birds were also seen at Tai Po Kau, Lok Ma Chau, Tin Shui Wai, Wu Kau Tang, Lam Tsuen Valley, Sha Lo Tung, Pat Sing Leng, Kat O Chau, Lai Chi Wo, Ho Chung and north of Sheung Shui. Calling birds were noted at Tai Po Kau in January, February and May, and Lam Tsuen Valley and Pat Sing Leng in October. There was a suggestion of passage on 7 April at Crest Hill when two out of four birds present flew off eastwards.

**64 Eastern Marsh Harrier** *Circus spilonotus* 白頭鵟

All records were from Mai Po, Tin Shui Wai and Lin Barn Tsuen in the Deep Bay area up to 9 April and from 21 September. In the first half of the year only one or two birds were sighted, but numbers were higher in autumn with six on 20 December and four on 21 October and 15-16 November. Most reports were of females or immatures but an adult male was seen on 5 April and single immature males were noted in January, February, April and September.

**66 Pied Harrier** *Circus melanoleucos* 鵟鵒

A female was at Mai Po on 6 October (PJL,CHF) and a juvenile was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 2 November (YYT).

**68 Japanese Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter gularis* 日本松雀鷹

In spring a second calendar-year female was at Mai Po during 4-5 April (GJC,VBP) and a male was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 22 April (MDW). In October a juvenile female was trapped at Mai Po on 15th (PJL), a female was at Chek Lap Kok on 23rd (GJC) and an immature male was at Mai Po on 26th (GJC); in November a juvenile female was trapped at KFBG on 3rd (MRL), a male was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5th (RWL) and a juvenile female was trapped at KARC on 13th (MRL); in December an adult female was at Mai Po on 14th and 21st (GJC).

**68.1 Besra** *Accipiter virgatus* 松雀鷹

A juvenile female was trapped at Cape D'Aguilar on 6 January (MRL), an

adult female was at Long Valley on 21 March (RWL), a second calendar-year female was trapped at KARC on 25 March (MRL), a third calendar-year male was retrapped at KFBG on 11 May (MRL), having been originally trapped on 30 March, a male was at KFBG on 12 September (GAW), a juvenile female was at Mai Po on 15 September (YYT), a juvenile female was at Long Valley on 6 October (RWL), single adult males were at Mui Wo (PJH) and Sha Lo Tung (RWL) on 19th and one was at Mai Po on 20 October.

**1995:** A female/immature was at Shing Mun on 6 September and a male was at Tai Mo Shan on 24 October (both GAW).

**69 Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus* 雀鷹

An adult female was at Mai Po on 21st and 23 February (RWL,PRK) and a female flew northwest at Mai Po on 8 April (GJC).

**1995:** an immature was at Ma Wan on 17 October (PJH).

[ **Sparrowhawk sp.** *A. gularis/virgatus/nisus* 雀鷹類

Unidentified small- or medium-sized accipiters were noted in widespread areas including HK Island, Lantau, and many parts of the New Territories including the Deep Bay area. The number of bird-days recorded each month is summarised below:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	4	5	4	3	-	-	2	8	13	11	6

The strong autumn passage in October of birds considered to be largely Japanese Sparrowhawks *A. gularis* is again clearly evident.

**70 Crested Goshawk** *Accipiter trivirgatus* 鳳頭鷹

Between one and three seen in widespread parts of Hong Kong Island and the New Territories in all months except June and November. Display flights were noted at Tai Po Kau, Sha Lo Tung, Ng Tung Chai, KFBG, Pok Fu Lam, Lei Yue Mun Park and Mount Davis. Two juveniles were seen with an adult female at KFBG on 19 August.

**71 Chinese Goshawk** *Accipiter soloensis* 赤腹鷹

As usual, virtually all the records were concentrated in the April passage period. The first sighting was of 60 in three flocks with Grey-faced Buzzards *Butastur indicus* at Mui Wo on 14th and four over Hong Kong University the same day. These were followed by singles at Cheung Chau on 16th, Shuen Wan on 21st, Ho Chung on 22nd, KARC on 23rd and 26th, Ng Tung Chai and Shing Mun on 24th, four at KFBG on 26th and two at KARC on 27th. The only autumn sighting was one over KFBG on 11 October.

**72 Grey-faced Buzzard** *Butastur indicus* 灰臉鵟鷹

All records occurred during spring passage between 23 March, when one was seen at Tsim Bei Tsui, and 13 May, when one was at KFBG. The largest numbers occurred on 24 March at Cheung Chau when 106 flew north between

1030h and 1320h in three flocks, the largest comprising 49 birds. Other reports were two at Luk Keng on 26 March, two flying north at Chek Lap Kok on 3 April, one at Chi Fu on 4th, two at Mai Po and one at KARC on 7th, one flying east at Mai Po on 8th, one at Shuen Wan on 10th, one at Cape D'Aguilar on 13th, one at Ho Chung and eight flying east at Aberdeen Country Park at 0700h on 14th, five at Tai Mo Shan on 15th, and single birds at KFBG on 20 April and 2 May.

**73 Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo* 普通鵟

Widespread in small numbers, usually singles but up to six were seen together at Mai Po on 11 February. Extreme dates were up to 14 April and from 16 October. Most reports were from the Deep Bay area but also regular on Hong Kong Island with scattered reports from Chek Lap Kok, Po Toi, KFBG, Kam Tin and Starling Inlet. Bird-days recorded each month are summarised below and indicate highest activity, presumably of passage migrants, in March.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
10	22	30	8	8	-	-	-	-	-	14	18

**74 Greater Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga* (V) 鳥鵟

Regular in the Deep Bay area from Tsim Bei Tsui to Mai Po and Lin Barn Tsuen, and in the border hills up to Chau Tau to 6 April and from 21 October. Numbers varied from single birds to a maximum of three at Mai Po on 27 October. Of the birds specifically aged, 14 were immatures and seven were adults. Bird-days recorded each month were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	7	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	6	2	11

**75 Imperial Eagle** *Aquila heliaca* (V) 白肩鵟

Regular in the Deep Bay area from Tsim Bei Tsui to Ma Tso Lung, including Chau Tau and Long Valley, to 14 April and from 28 October, in higher numbers than Spotted Eagle *A. clanga*. In addition, two were at Shek Kong Catchwater on 2 January and single birds were at Kam Tin on 3 February, 19 March and 8 December. Maximum numbers were five on 10 February and 13 March at Ma Tso Lung, 12 there on 10 November and five or six at Lin Barn Tsuen on 13 December including a juvenile feeding on a domestic duck carcass. Of the birds specifically aged, 33 were immatures and 17 were adults. Bird-days in each month were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
12	33	25	13	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	25

**76 Bonelli's Eagle** *Hieraaetus fasciatus* 白腹山鵟

Pairs of adults and single adults or immatures were seen in widespread parts of the NT and at Mui Wo and Discovery Bay on Lantau in all months of the year. A pair nested on a pylon in the Central NT.

**77 Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus* 鵟

Wintering birds were noted in Deep Bay and the adjacent marshes and fish ponds, including Kam Tin, up to 14 April and from 24 September. Maximum counts were seven on 19 February in the first half of year and four on 15 November in the second half. In addition, one was in the Tolo Harbour area up to 24 March and from 10 September. Elsewhere, single birds were at Lai Chi Wo on 27 January and 18 February, Shing Mun Reservoir on 12 April, Town Island on 29 July, Chek Lap Kok on 8 October and High Island on 26 December, and two were at Kat O Chau on 16 December. The July record is another interesting example of a bird over-summering.

**79 Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus* 紅隼

Widespread in ones and twos up to 14 April and from 27 September. The maximum count was three at Pat Sin Leng on 10 November.

**82 Eurasian Hobby** *Falco subbuteo* 燕隼

Apart from an adult at KFBG on the unusual winter date of 15 January, all records fell into two groups. The spring and early summer dates were from 3 April until 17 June, and the late summer and autumn dates were from 3 August to 26 October. Most reports were of one or two birds, except for three to four over Crest Hill and Long Valley on 17 May, and 7th and 17 September. These were possibly local breeding birds as this species was proved breeding in this area last year. The dates in June and August are outside the main passage periods and may also indicate summering or breeding birds. These records occurred at Yung Shue O and Shuen Wan on 8 June, Tai Mo Shan on 9 June, KFBG on 17 June, Ngau Tam Mei on 3 August and Sha Lo Tung on 12 August.

**82.1 Saker Falcon** *Falco cherrug* 獵隼

An adult was at Harlech Road, The Peak, on 15 April (RK,CWM). Given the late date and unusual locality, and the fact this bird allowed approach to within 15 feet, the Records Committee feels this is likely to be an escaped bird and it has not been added to the totals for the species.

**83 Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus* 游隼

One or two seen in all months except May, June and July. Regularly reported from the Deep Bay area, other scattered parts of the New Territories, urban Kowloon and HK Island. Also singles were at Chek Lap Kok on 9 February and Po Toi on 27 November. Birds considered to belong to one of the northern migratory forms were recorded on 16th and 30 November at Mai Po. On 21 April at Tsim Bei Tsui one took a swift *Apus* sp., and on 21 April at Lei Yue Mun a pair were swooping on Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* in the harbour. At Mount Davis on 30 November the presence of an immature with jesses indicates, unfortunately, that captive birds are still kept or traded in Hong Kong.

- 84 Chinese Francolin** *Francolinus pintadeanus* 鸚鵡  
Calling birds were reported in April, May and November from hilly areas of the NT. On HK Island one was calling throughout May at Cape D'Aguilar, and at Chek Lap Kok a male was still present on the remaining natural part of the island on 25 July.
- 85 Japanese Quail** *Coturnix japonica* 鸚鵡  
Similar to last year's pattern, relatively high numbers were again noted at Long Valley from 6 January to 16 May, with a maximum of ten on 30 March. Elsewhere, at Kam Tin up to two were noted from 19 March to 6 April, and at Sha Lo Tung four were present on 11 February with two on 20 April and one on 23 November.
- 86 Yellow-legged Button-quail** *Turnix tanki* 黃腳三趾鴉  
Singles were at Ma Wan during 4-5 January (PJH), at Shing Mun on 30 September (GAW) and near Ping Yeung on 10 October (JGH).
- 87 Barred Button-quail** *Turnix suscitator* 棕三趾鴉  
One was at Cloudy Hill on 21 October (JGH, JW).  
1995: a female was at Long Valley on 23 October (GAW).
- 88 Slaty-legged Crane** *Rallina eurizonoides* 白喉斑秧雞  
The double-note call attributed to this species was heard at Shuen Wan on 26 April (MRL); in addition, two adults and a large downy juvenile were at KARC on 16 September and an adult was there on 28 October (GAW).  
1995: the double-note call attributed to this species was heard at Yung Shue O on 22 June (MLC).
- 89 Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus* 普通秧雞  
One was at Mai Po on 8 April (GJC).
- 90 Slaty-breasted Rail** *Rallus striatus* 藍胸秧雞  
Up to four birds were reported from various sites in the Deep Bay area. Elsewhere, one was in coastal mangrove at Tai O on 20 January.
- 91 Baillon's Crane** *Porzana pusilla*  
In April singles were at Long Valley during 18-19th (RWL, VBP, GAW), at Mai Po village fish ponds on 20th and at Nam Sang Wai on 24th (MH); in May at Mai Po two were present during 17-18th (GAW) and one was found dead on 22nd (YYT).
- 92 Ruddy-breasted Crane** *Porzana fusca* 紅胸田雞  
Singles were seen at Mai Po village fish ponds on 22nd and 31 March, and at Mai Po on 4 April.

- 93 Band-Bellied Crane** *Porzana paykullii* (N) 斑脅田雞  
An adult female was found dead about 100m. downhill from the toll booths of the Shing Mun Tunnel at Wo Yi Hop, Tsuen Wan, on 13 May (MLC). This is the second Hong Kong record; the first also concerned a dead bird, found at Jardine's Lookout, HK Island, on 11 October 1977.



3 Band-bellied Crane *Porzana paykullii*  
Hong Kong, 13 May 1996

M.L. Chalmers

- 95 White-breasted Waterhen** *Amaurornis phoenicurus* 白胸苦惡鳥  
Deep Bay waterfowl count totals were 18 in January, 19 in February, 27 in March, 19 in November and 21 in December. Breeding was noted at Tai Po Kau Village, Shuen Wan and Big Wave Bay, HK Island; breeding on the Island is rarely reported.
- 96 Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus* 黑水雞  
Waterfowl count totals for Deep Bay in the early part of the year were 64 in January, 51 in February and 21 in March. There were no midsummer reports, although an adult was seen attending three chicks at Mai Po on 4 May. The November and December waterfowl counts produced 34 and 78 birds respectively. There were no reports away from the Deep Bay area.
- 96.1 Purple Swamp-hen** *Porphyrio porphyrio* 紫水雞  
Singles were seen at Mai Po on 24 February (GJC, PRK) and 20 December (RWL). The possibility that these records concern one of the birds which escaped from Fairview Park in late 1992 cannot be ruled out.

**97 Watercock** *Gallicrex cinerea* 董雞

Winter records are unusual and so singles at Long Valley on 3 February and at Lin Barn Tsuen on 24 February are of interest. In spring a female was at Long Valley on 4 April, a female was at Mai Po on 17 May, with a male there the following day, a male and a female were at Mui Wo on 23 May, with a male there on 31st, and a male was seen at Shuen Wan on 24 May. There were no autumn records.

**98 Eurasian Coot** *Fulica atra* 白骨頂

Waterfowl count totals for Deep Bay in the early part of the year were 1575 in January, 857 in February and 692 in March. Counts subsequently dropped to 30 on 30 March and ten on 19 April. There were no summer records. In autumn the earliest report concerned two at Mai Po on 19 October. During the November and December waterfowl counts 104 and 929 respectively were recorded. Away from Deep Bay four were at Shuen Wan on 16 January, with two there on 17 February and one three days later on 20th.

**100 Pheasant-tailed Jacana** *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* 水雉

A juvenile was at Long Valley during 17-20 October (trapped on the latter date) and one was at Kam Tin on 24 November.

**101 Greater Painted Snipe** *Rostratula benghalensis* 彩鶺鴒

At Long Valley one was present on 16 April, a pair were noted on 19 April and three, including a male giving a broken wing distraction display, were recorded on 16 May. In autumn noted regularly from 28 August, when 11 were present, until 13 October when eight were recorded; the peak count was 13 on 6 October. At Kam Tin two were noted on 13 March and 14 April, with one there on 24 May. Recorded regularly in autumn from 1 September, when eight were noted, to 22 December, when 16 were counted. The peak count was 40 on 14 October (PJL), a new high. Other high counts there included 30 on 19 October and 25 on 3 November. Also on 14 October, a nest was located containing four eggs that was considered to have been recently abandoned (LKS,PJL). There were no records away from these sites.

**103 Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus* 黑翅長腳鷸

The highest count in the first part of the year was 282 on 5 March at Ma Tso Lung where the wintering flock remained until at least mid March. The flock then moved to Mai Po from at least 23rd, the highest count there being 250 on 25th. In April 155 were still present on 4th, but numbers subsequently declined to 20 on 5th and 19th, with 21 on 20th. Thirteen on 22 April and seven on 25 May were the only later spring records. The first autumn record concerned 12 at Mai Po on 28 August; numbers subsequently increased to 35 on 13 September, 97 on 27th, 131 on 29 September, 202 on 12 October and 494 on 16 November (MRL), a new high. Thereafter, 390 were noted on 30 November and 233 were recorded during the December waterfowl count. A good year for this species.

**104 Pied Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta* 反嘴鹬

A record count of 1122 made on 17 January (PJL) marked a near trebling of winter numbers since 1993. Numbers subsequently declined to 948 on 9 March, 844 on 22nd, 586 on 3 April, 512 on 6th, 440 on 7th, 327 on 14th, 292 on 16th, 133 on 18th and 100 on 22nd; the only later records were of seven on 4 May, nine on 6th and one on 25 May (DAD), the latest spring date on record. The first autumn record was of one on 20 October; three were noted on 26 October but by the November waterfowl count 322 were present. This remained the highest count in the second half of the year. All records were in Deep Bay, mostly at Mai Po.

**105 Oriental Pratincole** *Glareola maldivarum* 普通鷸

A presumed over-wintering bird was seen at Kau Sai Chau on 12th and 22 January. Spring passage commenced on 22 February and continued until 17 May. Records on five dates to 19 March were followed by up to 26 birds at Kau Sai Chau during 24-25th. The next pulse occurred during 4-6 April when the largest flock recorded was 29 at Tsim Bei Tsui; finally, another surge of birds occurred during 14-20 April when peak counts were 20 in the Mai Po area on 17th and 22 at Long Valley on 19th. Thereafter, recorded on four dates to the end of spring passage. The only autumn record concerned two at Tin Shui Wai on 13 October. Away from Deep Bay and Kau Sai Chau, other records came from Chek Lap Kok, The Brothers, Kai Tak and Kam Tin.

**106 Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius* 金眶鸻

Waterfowl count totals for Deep Bay in the early part of the year were 67 in January, 197 in February and 94 in March. The highest spring count was 20 at Mai Po on 11 March and at Shuen Wan on 3 April. There was no proven breeding and the only summer records came from Shuen Wan. In autumn the higher counts were 33 at Shuen Wan on 20 August with 36 there on 10 September, 36 at Chek Lap Kok on 14 October and 40 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 27 October. Totals for Deep Bay in the November and December waterfowl counts were 74 and 75 respectively. The highest Shuen Wan count in the second part of the year was 46 on 28 November. Also recorded at Kau Sai Chau and Kam Tin.

**107 Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula* 劍鸻

One was at Mai Po on 14 December (PJL).

**108 Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus* 環頸鸻

The highest count of the first winter period was 880 on 10 February, somewhat lower than recent years; 150 were present on 23 March and 33 were noted at Chek Lap Kok on 26th. Spring passage through Deep Bay produced a maximum count of eight on 6 April, with six present during 15-16th. After 20th singles were noted on 17th and 25 May. The first record in autumn concerned two at Chek Lap Kok on 28 August followed by 19 there on 18 September. The first Deep Bay record occurred on 20 September when 16 were noted; numbers subsequently increased to 100 by 19 October, 500 by 9 November and 756 on 16 November; the latter was the highest count of the second part of the year. Away

from Deep Bay, six were at Tung Chung on 20 October, 15 were at Shuen Wan on 27 October, followed by one there on 15 November and 15 again on 28 November.

**109 Lesser Sand Plover** *Charadrius mongolus* 蒙古沙鵲

During the first winter period up to four were seen in Deep Bay until 20 February, with five there on 24th and six on 9 March. Spring passage was noted from 3 April to 25 May. Forty were noted on the earliest of these dates and numbers subsequently increased to 100 on 6th and 200 on 9th, with another influx bringing 175 on 14th; 120 were present on 18th, and 75 on 22nd was the penultimate record. Lack of observer coverage is thought to be at least partly responsible for the dearth of records in May. The earliest autumn record concerned one during 12-13 August; the only other autumn records were of two on 20 September and one on 19 October. An influx of birds in the second half of November marked either a second pulse of migrants or arriving winter visitors. Twenty were counted on 15th, rising to 46 on 16th, with 40 present on 10 December and 20 on 14th. Apart from singles at Chek Lap Kok on 8 February and 3 April, all records were from Mai Po.

**110 Greater Sand Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii* 鐵嘴沙鵲

An unusual winter record came from Chek Lap Kok where one was seen on 8 February. Three in Deep Bay on 23 March followed by 15 at Chek Lap Kok on 25th marked the commencement of spring passage which continued until 25 May. Numbers built up to 100 on 3 April, 350 on 6th and 400 on 9th, the highest count of the spring; 328 remained on 14th, and 120 on 16th declined to 75 on 18th and 25 on 22 April, before the final record of 27 on 25 May. The only autumn records were of four on 12 August, 16 on 28 August and 15 on 20 September.

**111 Oriental Plover** *Charadrius veredus* 紅胸鵲  
One was at Chek Lap Kok on 2 April (GJC).

**112 Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* 太平洋金斑鵲

The highest counts in the first part of the year were 171 on 25 February and 218 on 9 March; 100 still remained on 25 March. Spring passage brought 100 birds on 7th with 166, the highest passage count, present the next day; the only other significant counts were 89 on 18 April and 100 on 22nd. Thereafter there were singles on 28th and 30 April and three on 1st and 4 May. Return passage was noted from 20 August when one was at Shuen Wan; one at Kau Sai Chau on 26th was followed by the first Deep Bay record of the autumn, 40 on 28th. Up to 42 were present there at the end of September, and numbers subsequently increased to 61 on 1 October, 144 on 11th and 208 on 12th; the same number was counted on 9 November and this was the highest count of the second part of the year. The December waterfowl count recorded 186. Elsewhere, at Long Valley up to two were present during 1-7 April and up to seven were noted during 9-26 October, and one was seen in flight over the East Lamma Channel on 21 April.

**113 Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola* 灰斑鵲

The January waterfowl count total for Deep Bay was 689; 616 were noted on 7 February and 566 during the March waterfowl count. Sixty on 6th was the highest April count, numbers subsequently declining to 36 on 14th, 31 on 18th and 40 on 2nd. The only subsequent spring records were of 13 on 25 May and four on 8 June. Two on 20 July were followed by three on 12 August, two on 27th, five on 15 September and ten on 20th. The next record concerned 50 on 9 November; the wintering flock then increased to 91 by the November waterfowl count and 444 during the December count. All records were from Deep Bay.

**114 Grey-headed Lapwing** *Vanellus cinereus* (N) 灰頭麥雞

The first winter period saw up to three at Tsim Bei Tsui until 22 February and up to ten at Kam Tin until 14 April; one was at Nam Sang Wai on 29 February (presumably one of the Tsim Bei Tsui birds); after 20 February only singles were noted. One bird was also noted at Mai Po on 8th and 10 April. The first autumn record concerned six at Kam Tin on 8 October; numbers here subsequently peaked at 16 on 17 November. In addition, singles were at Mai Po on 26 October, at Tsim Bei Tsui on 16 November (with two there on 21 December), and at Long Valley on 23 November.

**115 Northern Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus* 鳳頭麥雞

In the first winter period two were at Mai Po on 23 January. The second winter period saw three at Kam Tin on 17 November, followed by one there on 22nd, and one at Mai Po on 30 November, and 12th and 14 December.

**116 Great Knot** *Calidris tenuirostris* 細嘴濱鵲

The wintering flock numbered nine during the January waterfowl count and 13 on 7 February. Spring passage was noted from at least 26 March to 8 June with numbers reaching 94 on 4 April and a peak of 150 on 8th. Subsequently, 115 were seen on 14 April, 87 on 16th and 30 on 22nd. The middle of May brought another influx, presumably of first-summer birds, with 40 on 17th increasing to 71 on 25th; the final spring record concerned seven on 7 June. Return passage was noted from 8 August, numbers peaking at 76 on 13 September; 44 were still present on 20 September, 19 on 28th and 13 on 12 October. The wintering flock was probably established by 9 November when ten were noted; 11 were present during the December waterfowl count.

**117 Red Knot** *Calidris canutus* 紅腹濱鵲

One bird was noted in the first winter period until 8 March when two were present; one or two were then seen until 22nd. Spring passage was rather weak; first noted on 2 April when two were seen, it was recorded until 8 June. Twelve were noted on 14 April and 15 on 22nd; the only subsequent count of note was 20 on 17 May. Return passage was noted from 13 September when eight were present; subsequently, numbers built up to 20 on 15th and 29 on 27 September. The highest counts for the remainder of the year were four on 3 November and six during 15-16 November. All records in Deep Bay, mainly Mai Po.

**118 Sanderling** *Calidris alba* 三趾鷸  
Spring records, all in April, were as follows: singles on 5th, 9th, 13-14th (at Dong Ping Chau), 16th (near The Ninepins) and 19th, and two on 10th and 22nd. The sole autumn record concerned one during 9-10 November. Unless stated, all records were from Deep Bay.

**119 Red-necked Stint** *Calidris ruficollis* 紅胸濱鷸  
The only record in the first winter period concerned one in Deep Bay on 24 February. Spring passage was first noted on 18 March and continued until 8 June, numbers peaking at 853 on 14 April. Other significant counts were 150 on 3 April, 200 on 9th, 671 on 10th, 530 on 22nd and 137 on 25 May. Return passage was first noted on 2 August when 16 were at Mai Po; the same number was also recorded on 13 September and 16 November with only three records in between. The final record of the year was of three at Mai Po on 27 December. Away from Deep Bay there were singles at Chek Lap Kok on 27 March and 19 November, and in April singles at Dong Ping Chau on 6th and 13th with two there the following day, two at Shuen Wan on 9th with one there the following day and up to 21 there during 16-17th, one at Long Valley on 14th, five at Kau Sai Chau on 26th and eight at Shuen Wan on 28th with three there on 30th.

**119.1 Little Stint** *Calidris minuta* 小濱鷸  
One was noted from the Mai Po boardwalk during 19-20 April.

**120 Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii* 烏腳濱鷸  
Rather scarce in the first winter period with the highest count being 18 at Lau Fau Shan on 6 January. The highest spring count was also 18, at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 April, and the latest spring record concerned one there on 19 April. The earliest autumn record was of one at Chek Lap Kok on 24 October; 15 were recorded at Tsim Bei Tsui on 27 October, 46 were noted during the November waterfowl count and 30 were present during the December count.

**121 Long-toed Stint** *Calidris subminuta* 長趾濱鷸  
Spring passage was noted from 3 April to 19 May with the highest count being 87 on 24 April at Nam Sang Wai; the only higher count is 120 on 12 April 1993. Noted in autumn from 2 August; apart from three on 28 August, all of the six records up to 9 November involved single birds. Subsequently, 12 were noted during the November waterfowl count and the final record of the year was of 21 at Lau Fau Shan on 22 November.

**121.1 Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos* 斑胸濱鷸  
In April singles were at Mai Po on 19th (GJC), at Shuen Wan during 19-21st (PRK *et al.*) and at Nam Sang Wai on 22nd, 24th and 27th (RWL). In autumn two juveniles were at Long Valley on 21 October (EMSK,CHF). These are the eighth to eleventh records for Hong Kong and include the first away from the Deep Bay area.

**122 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** *Calidris acuminata* 尖尾濱鷸  
The first record of two on 23 March (PJJ,RWL) is the earliest spring record in Hong Kong. Numbers grew to 20 on 7 April followed by a two-week period of lower numbers before an influx brought 62 on 22nd and 67 on 24th; this remained the highest count of the spring. The first half of May saw records only of single birds before ten were seen on 18th and 29 on 25th, the final spring record. Autumn passage consisted of records on seven dates: three on 28 August, two on 13 September, four on 15th, one during 28-29th, one on 1 October and two on 9 November.

**123 Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea* 彎嘴濱鷸  
Records of singles on 6th and 10 February presumably refer to wintering birds, though the status of three on 24 February and two on 9 March is unclear. Passage was first noted with certainty on 18 March when 12 were present. An influx brought 1500 birds on 3 April, increasing to 2000 on 7th and 4000 on 9th, the highest spring count. Subsequently 3000 were present on 14th and another influx occurred on 22nd that brought 3800. There were only four records before 38 occurred on 25 May and four were noted on 8 June, the final spring record. The first record of return passage was of 12 on 12 August; subsequently there were six more records up to 1 October, four involving between three and six birds, and the other two involving 20 on 15 September and 48 on 27 September. Apart from two at Chek Lap Kok on 25 March, one at Shuen Wan on 10 April, one at Long Valley on 16th, and six at Shuen Wan on 17 April with two there on 1st and 4 May, all records were from Mai Po.

**124 Dunlin** *Calidris alpina* 黑腹濱鷸  
The peak count of the first winter period was 2000 on 10 February, somewhat lower than previous years. Five hundred were noted on 24 February and there were no more records until a single on 9 March; this was followed by 40 on 23rd. During April one or two birds were noted from 3rd to 6th and during 19-20th, the latter proving the last spring record. The first autumn record concerned three on 15 September; three again on 29th and 12 on 1 October were followed by an influx that brought 1000 by 19 October. Subsequently, 1500 were noted on 9 November and this remained the highest count of the second winter period.

**125 Spoon-billed Sandpiper** *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus* (V) 勺嘴鷸  
At Mai Po there was the following series of records:

6 April	-	1	22 April	-	3
8 April	-	2	24 April	-	1
9 April	-	1	4 May	-	1
10 April	-	2	18 May	-	1
18 April	-	1	21 May	-	3
19 April	-	1	22 May	-	2

After the rather poor showing last year, this is a return to normal.

**126 Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limicola falcinellus* 闊嘴鷸

Spring passage was first noted on 18 March; there were then no records until 20 on 2 April; numbers remained in the range 10-18 until 9th when an influx brought 150, with 180 present the next day. There was then a decrease followed by another influx that saw 140 present on 22nd. There were then no more records until the final spring record of five on 25 May, though this was probably related to a lack of observer coverage. In autumn there were six on 28 August, up to six during 13-20 September, 17 on 27 September, three on 29th, two on 17 November and, finally, one on 14 December. All records were from Deep Bay.

**127 Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax* 流蘇鷸

In the first half of the year singles were recorded on six dates up to 11 February with two on 16 January; three birds were then noted on 12th and 25 February. Two on 10 March were followed by singles during 18-19 March, on 7 April and 17-18 May. Noted in the second half of the year from 15 August with singles on three dates in the following month; subsequently, up to four were noted on five dates to 1 October, succeeded by two on 12th. Singles were then noted on five dates from 22 October to 3 November, followed by two on 9th, three on 10th and two again on 15 November. Most birds assigned were males, though two females were noted in February and one was recorded on 1 October. A good year for this species.

**129 Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago* 扇尾沙雉

The highest counts in the early part of the year were 22 at Kam Tin on 8 January, 61 at Long Valley on 27 February and 25 at Kam Tin on 13 March. At Mai Po village fish ponds passage birds peaked on 22 March (33 birds) and 4 April (32 birds); at Long Valley the highest count was 40 on 4 April. Numbers then declined and after mid April there were no double figure counts. The latest record concerned one at Long Valley on 12 May. Noted in autumn from 17 September, numbers peaking in late September/early October when 100 were present at Long Valley on 6 October. Counts in December of 16 at Kam Tin on 8th and 12 at Lok Ma Chau on 21st indicate wintering birds. Recorded at Long Valley, Kam Tin, Mai Po, Shuen Wan and Lok Ma Chau.

**130 Pintail Snipe** *Gallinago stenura* 針尾沙雉

Up to three were recorded at Lok Ma Chau, Long Valley, Kam Tin and Mai Po in the first winter period. During spring passage ten were noted at Kam Tin on 6 April, 22 were at Mai Po village fish ponds on 14th and 20 were at Long Valley on 19th. Subsequently, there were only four spring records to 16 May; however, four on 12th (DAD) and one on 16th (MRL), both at Long Valley, are later than any previous spring record of this species. Autumn passage was first noted on 15 September; numbers peaked at 100 at Long Valley on 21 September (PJJ,GJC), a new high. Sixty were still present there on 29th, but subsequently numbers declined to 25 on 9 October. Thereafter, no more than three were recorded at any one site on five dates to 21 December.

**131 Swinhoe's Snipe** *Gallinago megala* 大沙雉

Recorded in spring during 4-21 April with a maximum of ten at Long Valley on 17th; apart from eight there on 14th, other counts were between one and four. Noted in autumn from 7 September to 27 October with a maximum of eight at Tin Shui Wai on 15 September; the highest count at Long Valley was five on 6 October. Recorded at Long Valley, Mai Po, Tin Shui Wai and Pui O.

**133 Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus* 長嘴半蹼鷸

After a review of all records, it is now considered that only three records can conclusively be identified as this species: a juvenile during 24-26 October 1987 (RPT *et al.*), one on 17 February and again during 21-22 February 1989 (PH,RWL) and two juveniles on 22 November 1995 (GJC,PJJ). It is now apparent that the difficulties of separation from Short-billed Dowitcher *L. griseus*, which has been recorded in Japan (Brazil 1991), have in the past been underestimated. A paper concerning this review and the features useful for identifying the two species is under preparation for the next HKBR.]

**134 Asian Dowitcher** *Limnodromus semipalmatus* (N) 半蹼鷸

First noted on 3 April, between one and three birds were recorded until 10th; subsequent numbers increased to 43 on 14th and 82 on the 22nd, the peak spring count. Thereafter, 33 were noted on 6 May and 11 were present on 11th; the final spring record concerned two on 8 June. There were only two autumn records: two juveniles on both 12th and 28 August. All records were from Mai Po.

**135 Eurasian Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola* 丘鷸

Singles were noted as follows: Sha Lo Tung on 6 January, Kowloon Park on 20th, Mui Wo on 20 February, KARC on 13th and 17 March, Chau Tau on 19 April, Sha Lo Tung on 12 October, Cloudy Hill on 19th, KFBG on 22nd, Mount Austin on 26 October, Cloudy Hill on 4 November, Wong Chuk Yeung (Ma On Shan) on 6 November, Ho Chung on 10th, Mount Austin on 30 November and Sha Lo Tung on 1 December.

**136 Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa* 黑尾膝鷸

Higher counts in the first part of the year were 177 on 12 January and 268 on 10 February; 270 were noted on 9 March and this was followed by the first certain passage birds, a flock of 450 on 23rd. Subsequently, numbers built up to 1200 on 3 April, 1460 on 6th and 2190 on 8th (RH), the peak spring count and a new high for Hong Kong. Numbers subsequently declined to 1980 on 12th, 1200 on 16th, 788 on 18th and 596 on 22nd. Thereafter, four were noted on 16 May, 13 on 25th and, finally, eight on 8 June. The first autumn record concerned one on 12 August; this was followed by 14 on 28 August, after which numbers increased to 50 on 13 September and 300 on 6 October. The highest subsequent count was 358 on 16 November; 277 were noted on 10 December.

**137 Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica* 斑尾塍鷸

One was noted from 10 February to 19 March, with two present on 20 February. Spring passage was recorded from 4 April when 90 were noted, the highest spring count, and subsequent numbers declined to 50 on 8 April, 27 on 14th, 20 on 19th and ten on 22nd. After this date two or three were noted on three dates during 4-25 May. Noted in autumn from 13 September to 23 November, usually involving one or two birds though three were seen on 27 September and 10 November, and four were present on 28 September. All records were from Deep Bay.

**138 Little Curlew** *Numenius minutus* 小杓鷸

Two were at Mai Po on 22 April and one was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 23 April.

**139 Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus* 中杓鷸

Spring passage noted from 8 March to 8 June. One or two birds were recorded up to 14 April when four were present; the period 18-22 April saw between 14 and 17 birds present each day. There were two May records, four on 16th and eight on 25th, and the final record concerned eight on 8 June. Noted in autumn from 12 August to 30 November; 12 on the earliest date increased to 31 on 28th followed by 92 on 13 September, the peak autumn count. Fifty were present on 20 September, ten were noted on 29th and, subsequently, one or two were recorded to the end of passage.

**140 Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquatus* 白腰杓鷸

Peak monthly counts in the Deep Bay area were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
674	553	573	30	14	5	-	38	48	84	175	273

The latest spring record was of five on 8 June; the earliest autumn record concerned 38 on 12 August. All records were from Deep Bay.

**141 Far Eastern Curlew** *Numenius madagascariensis* (N) 紅腰杓鷸

One was present on 24 February and two were present on 19 March. Spring passage was noted during 1-22 April with one or two birds on most dates, the exceptions being eight on 14th, 11 on 20th and four on 22nd. Autumn passage consisted of single birds on 9 November, during 15-16 November and on 20 December.

**142 Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus* 鵲鷸

Waterfowl counts in the first part of the year were 1425 in January, 411 in February and 910 in March. Spring passage peaked at 1400 on 8th and 12 April, and over 1000 birds were present on most dates from 6th to 22nd. The final record was of two on 8 June. Few records were received for the latter part of the year but included ten on 27 September, 707 on 16 November and 48 on 14 December. Apart from singles at Long Valley on 2nd and 5 April and 21 December, all records were from Deep Bay, mainly Mai Po.

**143 Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus* 紅腳鷸

Waterfowl counts in the first half of the year recorded 173 in January, 411 in February and 201 in March. Subsequent spring counts included 500 on 12 April and 1310 on 22 April. The final spring record was of 33 on 8 June. There were three July records: 400 at Mai Po on 20th and three and one at Shuen Wan on 22nd and 25th respectively. In August 300 were noted on 12th and 894 were present on 28th; subsequently there were three records: 30 on 27 September, 50 on 15 October and 126 on 16 November. Primarily recorded in Deep Bay, mainly Mai Po.

**144 Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis* 澤鷸

Waterfowl counts in the first winter period recorded 878 in January, 350 in February and 726 in March; these are relatively high winter counts. Spring numbers peaked at 1100 on 14 April, falling to 600 on 18th, 420 on 22nd and 151 on 24 April. May brought five records of singles up to 17th. Return passage was noted from 28 August and peaked at 500 on 27 September. The November waterfowl count noted 248 and the December count 199.

**145 Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* 青腳鷸

During waterfowl counts in the first winter period 323 were recorded in January and 594 in March. Spring numbers then peaked at 262 on 22 April, somewhat lower than previous years; the final spring record concerned eight on 8 June. Autumn passage was noted from 12 August when 50 were recorded; numbers peaked at 1260 on 28 August. The only subsequent records received concerned 330 on 27 September, 496 on 16 November and 169 on 14 December. Apart from one to three birds at Shuen Wan during 23 April to 8 May, all records were from Deep Bay.

**146 Nordmann's Greenshank** *Tringa guttifer* (E) 小青腳鷸

Recorded in spring from 3 April to 8 June, the highest count being 21 on 16 April; other counts included 18 on 5 April, 16 on 9 April and 15 on 17 May, all of those on the latter date being first-summer birds. All records were from Mai Po.

**147 Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus* 白腰草鷸

Waterfowl count totals for Deep Bay in the early part of the year were 23 in January, 10 in February and 9 in March. Twelve at Ma Tso Lung on 13 March was the highest count for an individual site during this period. Three at Lin Barn Tsuen on 7 April was the highest spring count, and the final spring record was of one at Nam Sang Wai on 27 April. Return passage was noted from 17 September when two were at Long Valley. Six were noted in the November waterfowl count and 14 were recorded in the December count. There were no records away from the northern NT.

**148 Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola* 林鷸

Waterfowl count totals for Deep Bay in the early part of the year were 85 in January, 50 in February and 45 in March; in addition, 63 were recorded at Lau

Fau Shan on 6 January. Noted in spring until 8 May with the highest counts being 150 at Long Valley during 5-6 April and 265 at Nam Sang Wai with 100 at Mai Po on 14 April; the latter is the highest day count since 450 on 12 April 1990. Recorded again from 20 July when three were at Mai Po and one was at Shuen Wan; counts increased to 100 at Kam Tin on 9 September and 50 at Long Valley on 21 September. Sixty-five were recorded in the November waterfowl count and 55 in the December count, though 74 were noted at Long Valley on 21 December. Away from the Deep Bay area, up to 45 (on 3 April) were noted in spring at Shuen Wan and six were recorded on 22 July; 20 were recorded at Kam Tin in the first winter period, seven were present on 14 April and ten were noted in the second winter period.

**149 Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus* 翹嘴鷸

The first spring record concerned seven on 23 March. Numbers subsequently increased to 66 on 8 April, though declined toward the middle of the month before an influx brought 55 by 18th. After this date the next record concerned 256 on 25 May, the final record of the spring. The first record of the autumn concerned four on 12 August, followed by 11 on 28 August, 44 on 13 September, five on 15th, six on 27 September, and singles on 1st and 12 October. All records were in Deep Bay apart from one at Dong Ping Chau on 13 April.

**150 Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos* 磯鷸

Waterfowl count totals for Deep Bay in the early part of the year were 25 in January, 65 in February and 22 in March. Noted in spring until 8 May with the highest counts being 15 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4 April and 12 at Mai Po on 22 April. Autumn migrants were noted from 20 July and the highest autumn counts were eight at Shuen Wan on 10 September, with seven there on 20 August. A total of 70 were noted in Deep Bay during the November waterfowl count and 31 were there in the December count. Away from the northern NT seen at Plover Cove Reservoir (one on 12 February), Dong Ping Chau (one on 6 April), Tai Po Kau village (four on 10 April), Sai Kung (one on 20 July) and The Brothers (seven on 28 August).

**151 Grey-tailed Tattler** *Heteroscelus brevipes* 灰尾鷸

There were seven spring records from 18 April to 25 May involving one to three birds, apart from 45 at Mai Po on the latest date. In autumn there were eight records from 12 August to 27 September, mainly of one or two birds apart from five at The Brothers on 28 August and eight at Sai Sha on 21 August. Records also came from Mai Po, Shuen Wan, Chek Lap Kok and Tolo Harbour.

**1995:** recorded in spring from 17 April to 26 May with single-figure counts until 30th when 20 were at Mai Po. During May up to 14 were noted apart from up to 33 at Mai Po during 25-26th. Noted in autumn from 13 August to 6 September, and again on 7 October. The highest count was seven on the earliest of these dates and others did not exceed four. Most records were from Deep Bay but also recorded at Shuen Wan, Dong Ping Chau, the Soko Islands and Lantau.

**152 Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres* 翻石鷸

Recorded in spring from 4 April to 25 May. One to three birds were noted at Mai Po until 14th when seven were present. Counts then rose to 17 on 18 April and 60 on 4 May, lower than the high spring counts of the previous three years. Nine on 25 May was the final record. Away from Deep Bay, in April up to six were at Dong Ping Chau during 13-14th, two were seen in flight over the East Lamma Channel on 21st and one was at Tai Long Wan on 27th. The only autumn record concerned two at Mai Po on 15 September.

**153 Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus* 紅頸瓣蹼鷸

The only winter record was of one north of Lantau on 23 February. Spring passage was first noted on 25 March in the same area; the higher spring counts were 240 in Victoria Harbour on 4 April, 320 in Mirs Bay on 6th, 450 off Cape D'Aguilar on 11th, 300 at Dong Ping Chau on 13th, 600 in Tolo Harbour and Mirs Bay the following day, 250 in the waters south of HK Island on 16th, 300 in the waters west of HK Island on 21st and 106 off Cape D'Aguilar on 27th. The final spring record concerned 40 at Mai Po on 25 May. In contrast to last year, a good spring showing. There were two autumn records: one at Mai Po on 13th and 15 September and 11 in the waters south of HK Island on 22 September.

**153.1 Red Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius* 灰瓣蹼鷸

One was near Sha Chau on 3 December (PJJ). This is the fourth Hong Kong record.

**155 Long-tailed Jaeger** *Stercorarius longicaudus* 長尾賊鷸

In April, 23 were near Dong Ping Chau on 13th (PJJ,RWL,VBP), one was near Cheung Chau on 15th (MDW), 26 were in the area south of HK Island on 16th (PJJ,MRL,RWL), three were in Tolo Harbour and two or three were in Mirs Bay on 20th (MDW) and two were in the West Lamma Channel on 21st (MLC,PRK). Such numbers are unprecedented.

**156 Great Black-headed Gull** *Larus icthyaetus* 魚鷸

An adult moulting into summer plumage was noted during 6-8th and on 10 February, an adult was present on 26 February and a further adult in breeding plumage was again seen on 21st, 23rd and 24 March; either or both of the latter may have related to the earlier bird. A second-winter bird was present on 11th and again on 21 February. In the second winter period an adult was seen on 15 December. The February records fell within the established spring passage dates but the December bird was fourth earliest. All records in Deep Bay in what was a poor year for this species.

**157 Saunders's Gull** *Larus saundersi* (E) 黑嘴鷸

The wintering population in January was approximately 79 birds which included at least 54 adults and 24 first-winters. Numbers increased during northbound passage in February and peaked at 113 (including 20 first-winters) on 9 February. Numbers subsequently fell with 77 present on 18th, 105 on 24 February,



4 Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaetus* adult  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 21 March 1996

Lo Kar Man

33 adults and 15 first-winters on 8 March and 11 first-winters on 23rd. The April showing was very poor compared to recent years and the only records were of two first-winters on 2nd and singles on 8th and 24th. The earliest autumn record occurred on 9 November when three were seen; numbers then increased rapidly throughout the month to 39 on 15th and 83 on 23rd. The highest count in the second winter period was 91 on 14 December comprising 52 adults and 39 first-winters. All records from Deep Bay.

#### 158 Common Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* 紅嘴黑頭

The January waterfowl count produced a record 20,629 birds in Deep Bay; this is the highest ever count in Hong Kong and shows a 10% increase over the equivalent January 1995 count. Although numbers fell after this a fairly high count of 15,000 were present during the February count. Numbers dropped quickly after this date and several observers noted an early departure of wintering birds with only small numbers present in March. The waterfowl count on 9th produced only 200 birds which compares unfavourably with 8080 counted in March 1995; 490 present on 26th were probably passage birds. April records were few with two birds at Mai Po on 8th and 9th, ten there on 14th and one on 24th. The latest date and only record in May concerned a single bird at Mai Po on 17th and 25 May. Away from Deep Bay small numbers were present at Shuen Wan, while numbers of passage birds at sea to the north of Lantau peaked at 107 on 25 March. The first autumn report concerned an adult at Mai Po on 29 September but there were no further records until November when at least 2000 were present in Deep Bay.

#### 159 Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus* 棕頭

The only record concerned an adult seen in Deep Bay from the boardwalk hide at Mai Po on 15 November. The poorest year for this species since 1986.

#### 160 Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris* 黑尾

Although most records still came from Deep Bay there was a shift back to the former status with several records at other locations. In Deep Bay a first-winter was present during 27-28 January; during February up to seven first-winters, one second-winter and an adult were noted; in March up to six first-winters and an adult were recorded up to 23rd, with nine first-winters present on 25th; in April up to three first-winters were occasionally noted up to 14th. Away from Deep Bay, five first-winters were seen at sea to the north of Lantau on 6 February with three there again on 6 March. On 1 March a group of seven adults and two first-winters flew south through the West Lamma Channel, possibly to roost. There were two first-winters off Black Point on 21 March, an adult was seen in the Tolo Channel on 8 April and a first-winter flew east past Cape D'Aguilar on 11th. The final report of the first winter period related to three first-winter birds at sea to the south of Hong Kong Island on 16 April. There were no reports in the second winter period.

#### 161 Common Gull *Larus canus* 海

1991: a second-winter was seen at Mai Po on 26 January (PRK).

#### 161.5 Heuglin's Gull *Larus heuglini* 太梅

Numbers wintering in Deep Bay were somewhat reduced compared to recent years with a peak count of only 285 on 22 February. Counts remained fairly stable during March, the highest being 190 on 3rd, 134 on 9th and 150 on 23rd. Most birds departed after this date with numbers falling to 20 on 26th and just two remained on 31st. In April the only reports concerned an adult at Mai Po on 7th and an immature at Tsim Bei Tsui on 19th. Away from Deep Bay passage birds at sea to the north of Lantau peaked at 96 on 23 February and at least 50 on 20 March, but only two remained on 25th March. The earliest autumn record was of six in Deep Bay on 15 November, increasing to 30 on 23 November and approximately 100 at the end of the year. All birds were of the subspecies *L.h. taimyrensis* and adults outnumbered all ages of immatures by approximately 10:1.

#### 162.2 Vega Gull *Larus vegae* 紅腿

A better understanding of the identification of this species is resulting in a clearer picture of its status in Hong Kong, and all the following records are of adults, unless stated. The first record of the year concerned one on 13 January followed by two on 25th. In February, five were present on 7th, three on 11th and 22nd, three with two first-winters and one second-winter on 24th, and three again with three first-winters on 25th. In March, one was present on 1st, ten occurred on 3rd and nine remained until 8th, falling to just two on 10th and one on 23rd. Away from Deep Bay singles were seen at sea to the north of Lantau on 6 February and 20 March. The only records from the second winter period relate to three adults in Deep Bay on 23rd November and one there on 27th December.

**162.3 Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans***

黃腳銀鷗

A better understanding of the status of this species in Hong Kong is emerging as the identification difficulties, particularly of first-winter birds, are overcome. In Deep Bay the first record of the year concerned two adults on 22 January which was followed by three (one adult and two first-winters) on 25th and 28 January. In February a record 21 were recorded in Deep Bay on 7th, all of which were first-winters apart from one adult; two adults were present on 11th, three adults were noted on 22nd and 24th with two on 25th. Two adults were seen on 3 March and four adults were recorded during 8-9th and on 23 March. The latest record in the first part of the year concerned three in Deep Bay on 6th April. Away from Deep Bay, at sea to the north of Lantau a first-winter was seen on 6 February, an adult was there on 23rd and seven adults were noted on 6th March.

**163 Slaty-backed Gull *Larus schistisagus***

灰背鷗

A poor year for this species with possibly as few as four birds present between 22 January and 26 March. All records were of first-winter birds seen from the Mai Po boardwalk hide. Two were present during 22-28 January, followed by two, possibly the same individuals, during 10-11 February. There were no further reports until one on 19 February that stayed until at least 22nd. Numbers then increased to four on 25th, but only one bird remained on 27th and this or another was seen sporadically until 26 March, the latest date of occurrence in Hong Kong. There were no records in the second winter period.

**1986:** a first-winter was at Pak Nai on 19 March (PRK).

**1984:** two first-winters were at Pak Nai on 17 March (PRK).

**164 Glaucous-winged Gull *Larus glaucescens***

灰翅鷗

A first-winter was north of Lantau on 6 February (GJC).

**167 Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica***

鷗嘴噪鷗

Spring passage started unusually early with one at Mai Po on 22nd March followed by 14 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 31st, the highest number ever recorded in that month. Deep Bay numbers in the first week of April increased to 38, and an influx in the second week brought the spring maximum of 136 on 14th. Numbers dropped rapidly after this date with only 30 present on 20th but a small influx on 22nd brought 47 birds, the last report in April. Small numbers were noted on five dates in May with the highest counts being 11 on 17th and 18 on 25th. Away from Deep Bay one was in the Tolo Channel on 8 April, seven were in Mirs Bay on 13 April and five were noted at sea to the south of HK Island on 16 April. There were no autumn reports.

**168 Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia***

紅嘴巨鷗

Another poor year for this species with no reports of wintering birds for the second successive year. The earliest report concerned one at Mai Po on 23 March. Numbers increased rapidly in the first week of April to peak at 101

on 7th, which is well below the average peak count over the last 10 years. Many birds departed the next day when only 46 remained and numbers remained around this level until 14th. Subsequently, there were reports on only three further dates in April. May reports were equally scanty with just four including a maximum of eight on 17th and 25th, the latter being the last spring record. The only autumn sighting was of a juvenile in Deep Bay between 15th and 29 November.

**169 Greater Crested Tern *Sterna bergii***

大鳳頭燕鷗

Three were seen at sea between Lamma and Po Toi on 21 April (PRK,MLC). This is the ninth Hong Kong record.

**1995:** an adult was at Tai O during Typhoon Sybil on 3 October (PJH). This is the eighth Hong Kong record.

**170 Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana***

黑枕燕鷗

In 1996 Black-naped Terns experienced their best ever breeding season with three occupied sites. Successful breeding was confirmed at one site, probably occurred at a second site while the third site held only very small numbers and successful breeding is considered unlikely. In addition to these sites, up to ten were seen around the Soko Islands in July and although there was no evidence of breeding, this is a site where breeding might have occurred in 1989. The earliest report concerns one at sea to the south of Hong Kong island on 16 April, matching that of the earliest ever in 1992. There were a further two birds in this area on 21 April but then no additional reports until July. Numbers on Tung Kwo Chau in the Ninepins were greatly reduced with only eight birds present on 8 July and no evidence of breeding. It is likely that birds from this former breeding site had moved to Shek Ngau Chau where at least 100 birds were present on 10 July, an estimated 85 adults, at least 16 fledged juveniles and two pulli were noted on 29 July and at least 30 were present on 24 August including several flying juveniles. During a helicopter survey of Kung Chau on 8 July approximately 60 adults were counted but breeding success is not known. Away from the breeding colonies the latest report concerned four birds to the south of Chep Lap Kok on 3rd September.

**1979:** one was at Ting Kau during Typhoon Hope on 2 August (MLC).

**171 Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii***

粉紅燕鷗

1996 was the most successful year for Roseate Terns in Hong Kong with record numbers of adults present and young successfully fledged. The only occupied breeding site was Shek Ngau Chau where successful breeding was confirmed. On 10 July an estimated 100 adults were present, while on 29 July a minimum of 30 adults and eight juveniles were recorded and two pulli were ringed. Almost all birds had left this site by 25 August when only one adult and two fledged juveniles were seen. There were no reports from other former breeding sites and the only report away from Shek Ngau Chau concerned two in outer Tolo Harbour on 25 August.

1979: two were near Cheung Chau on 7 September (HGA).

1978: a group of 20 was seen in the East Lamma Channel on 7 September (HGA,EAB). This becomes the earliest Hong Kong record.



5 Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*  
Mirs Bay, Hong Kong, 17 August 1997

Lo Kar Man

172 Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

普通燕鷗

An excellent spring for this species followed by a very poor autumn. The first report concerned a single bird of the form *longipennis* at sea to the north of Lantau on 25 March (GJC) which precedes by nine days the previous earliest of 2 April 1993. In April one flew northeast past Cheung Chau on 11th and eight were near Dong Ping Chau on 13th; a boat trip to the south of HK Island on 16th recorded 42 and although only nine birds were subspecifically identified, all these were of the form *thibetana*. At least 130, all in breeding plumage, were recorded around Lamma on 21 April; a minimum of 70 were identified as *longipennis* and at least ten of the form *thibetana* were present. The final spring record concerned an adult of the form *longipennis* on the scrape at Mai Po on 25 May. The only autumn reports occurred in August: four near Shek Ngau Chau on 24th and five in outer Tolo Harbour on 25th.

172.1 Aleutian Tern *Sterna aleutica*

白腹燕鷗

Spring passage was the best to date but was followed by the poorest autumn showing since its discovery in Hong Kong in 1992. A group of 23 in breeding plumage was seen in waters to the south of Hong Kong Island on 16 April (PJL); this is both the earliest spring record and also the largest group recorded in spring. A further nine birds in breeding plumage were seen around Lamma on 21 April. The only autumn reports concerned an adult at Shek Ngau Chau on 24 August and one near Kau Yi Chau, western Harbour, on 16 September.

173 Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus*

褐翅燕鷗

Record summer numbers were recorded at Shek Ngau Chau and successful breeding was noted for the first time in Hong Kong. At least 150 adults were present on 10 July and 15 nests were located; on 29 July 180 adults and at least two fledged juveniles were seen and 20 pulli were ringed. The final visits of the year during 24-25 August recorded at least 180 adults and 20 fledged juveniles. The only report away from the breeding site was of six birds flying southeast out of Victoria Harbour through Lei Yue Mun on 10 August, the day after Typhoon Sally passed closest to Hong Kong.

174 Sooty Tern *Sterna fuscata*

烏燕鷗

1995: single juveniles were seen on 3 October at Tin Shui Wai (DAD) and off Cheung Chau (MDW) after the close approach of Typhoon Sibil.

175 Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

白額燕鷗

A poor year for this species in Deep Bay with only six reports in April between 6th and 24th and just one in May. The earliest record concerned seven at Mai Po on 6 April which was also the highest spring count in Deep Bay; also noted on 8th, 14th, 16th, 20th and 24th. The only report in May was of three at Mai Po during 16-17th. Numbers away from Deep Bay were higher with one in Mirs Bay on 14 April, 58 at sea to the south of HK Island on 16th and a further 20 there on 21st April. In the autumn four were seen in Deep Bay on 13 September and one was at Mai Po two days later.

176 Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*

髯浮鷗

Although formerly reported regularly during the winter months, midwinter records have become very rare in recent years; one at Lut Chau on 28 February represents the first February record since 1975. There have only been two previous March records so a breeding plumage adult at Mai Po on 19th is very unusual and is also the earliest March record, though it may possibly relate to the wintering bird. Spring passage through Deep Bay was generally poor and the only April reports concerned a single at Mai Po during 3-9th, five there on 18th and 15 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 22nd. In May at Mai Po one was present on 8th, three were there on 16th and eight birds in breeding plumage were noted on 25th. Away from Deep Bay nine were seen at sea to the south of HK Island on 16 April and a further nine were also at sea to the south of Lamma on 21 April. The only autumn records all came from Mai Po: one on 31 August, 29 on 13 September and nine on 1 October.

177 White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

白翅浮鷗

Spring passage started on 24 April with one at Mai Po and three at Lin Barn Tsuen. There were no further reports until 4 May when four appeared at Mai Po. Passage through the Deep Bay area was generally strong after this with 100 at Mai Po on 8th, 30 on 10th, 300 at Mai Po and 12 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 16th and 150 at Mai Po on 17 May. A group of 75 on the Mai Po scrape were mostly first-summer birds not in breeding plumage. Away from Deep Bay the only spring report was of 15 in Tolo Harbour near Tap Mun on 12 May. There were two autumn reports: 35 at Mai Po on 20th September and four there on 22nd.

**178 Ancient Murrelet** *Synthloramphus antiquus* 扁嘴海雀

Singles were seen near The Brothers on 1 March (GJC), off Tap Mun on 6th (ML,GR) at Sandy Bay on 20 March (MRL), south of HK Island on 16 April (PJJ,MRL,RWL) and off south Lamma on 18 April (AC); in addition, seven were in Mirs Bay on 6 April (EMSK). In the second part of the year, one was off Shek O on 26 November (AC). These are the tenth to sixteenth Hong Kong records.

**179 Red Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia tranquebarica* 火斑鳩

One at Kowloon Park on 20 January was the only record of the first winter period. Spring passage was noted on just five dates and comprised one at Sandy Bay on 13 April, one at Kowloon Park on 20 April, one at Hong Kong Park on 10 May, two at Chek Lap Kok on 23rd and one at Tung Chung on 31 May. Autumn passage was also very thin, with one at Tsim Bei Tsui and two at Long Valley on 28 September, two at Tin Shui Wai reclamation on 6th and 13 October, and one at Mai Po on 20 October. The second winter period brought just two records: 27 at Mong Tseng on 2 November and one at Lin Barn Tsuen on 21 December. A very poor year continuing a steep decline since 1986 when numbers of this species peaked.

**180 Oriental Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia orientalis* 山斑鳩

A count of 706 on 3 January flying in the direction of the traditional winter roost at Mai Po (PJJ) more than doubled the previous high count (314 at Mai Po on 18 December 1985). Subsequently the only double figure counts in the first half of the year were ten at Ng Tung Chai on 20 January, 20 at Cheung Sheung on 4 February and up to 40 in the Mai Po area on 4th, 8th and 9 April. Smaller numbers were also recorded intermittently up to 18 April at Shuen Wan, Tin Shui Wai, Kam Tin, Yuen Long Park, Long Valley and Cape D'Aguilar, with up to three at the latter site on 30 March and 13 April considered unusual. None were recorded between 18 April and 21 May, when three were present at Tin Shui Wai. One at Chek Lap Kok on 23 May and up to six at Aberdeen CP during 23-26 May were the final spring records.

Following three at Mai Po on 1 October, the first of the autumn, highest counts in the second winter period were 54 at Nam Sang Wai on 16 November, at least 100 at Mai Po on 23 November and up to 20 at Sha Lo Tung on 24th and 28 November. Elsewhere, there were four at Kam Tin on 19 October and six at Po Toi on 27 December.

**181 Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis* 珠頸斑鳩

A recently-fledged juvenile attended by two adults at Mai Po on the early date of 3 February was the only significant record.

**183 Emerald Dove** *Chalcophaps indica* 綠背金鳩

Recorded at twelve sites and in all months of the year, most frequently at KARC where singles were noted on 13 dates between 14 February and 11 November. At Mount Davis one was constantly calling on 11 March, the same or another was heard and seen on 17 March and two were present on 16 July. At

Cape D'Aguilar one was trapped on 5 November and again on 9 December. Elsewhere, singles were noted at Sha Lo Tung in January, Ng Tung Chai, Lion Rock CP and Tai Tam CP in March, Kap Lung in March and November, Dong Ping Chau and Tai Po Kau in April, Ho Chung woods and KFBG in July and Tsim Bei Tsui in October.

**184.1 Thick-billed Green Pigeon** *Treron curvirostra* 厚嘴綠鳩

A female was found dead, apparently after hitting a fence, at KFBG on 15 January (GA,RG,RWL). This, the second Hong Kong record, was found within a few metres of the adult male that was found dead there on 8 November 1986, the first Hong Kong record.

**185 Chestnut-winged Cuckoo** *Clamator coromandus* 紅翅鳳頭鵙

One to three adults were recorded during 12 April-19 May and 4-30 July, including one calling as late as 13 July. The only apparent long-staying birds were at Lok Lo Ha (21 April-19 May) and KARC (14 April-13 May and 4-13 July). Most other records occurred during 14-19 April, when a minimum of seven were reported at five localities in the central NT, and during 1-9 May, when at least nine were noted at seven widespread localities. A juvenile in Tai Po Kau on 13 August was begging persistently and associating with Greater Necklaced Laughingthrushes *Garrulax pectoralis*, the only known foster-parent of this species in Hong Kong.

**186 Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo** *Hierococcyx fugax* 棕腹杜鵑

One was picked up at Fanling on 29 September and taken into care at KFBG; it was eventually released on 8 October (per GJC,RWL). While likely wild, the exact provenance of this bird is uncertain.

**1995:** one was heard at Cheung Chau on 7 April (MDW). This is the third Hong Kong record.

**1994:** one was tape-recorded at Tai Po Kau on 15 April 1994 (MDW). This is presumed to be the same bird as heard the previous day.

**187 Large Hawk Cuckoo** *Hierococcyx sparveroides* 鷹鵒

Heard calling from 19 March, the first record of the year, until 17 July, with one seen at Shuen Wan on 4th and a juvenile trapped at KFBG on 8 August the only subsequent records. There was no evidence that the latter bird was locally reared. Birds were heard regularly at five sites as follows: one at Lok Lo Ha from 19 March to 20 June, up to two at Lower Shing Mun from 21 March to 23 May, up to two at Aberdeen CP from 22 March to 9 May, up to three at Shuen Wan from 29 March to 17 July, and up to two in Tai Po Kau from 13 April to 24 May. Elsewhere, there were isolated reports between 25 March and 30 April involving single birds at ten sites in the NT, including Mai Po where one was calling on 8 April. Although this species has been a regularly occurring summer visitor since 1978, there are still no confirmed breeding records and its host species in Hong Kong remain unknown.

**189 Plaintive Cuckoo** *Cacomantis merulinus* 八聲杜鵑

In a poor year, recorded on just 23 occasions, mostly between 3 April and 26 May, with extreme dates of 2 January and 9 November. Juveniles were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 28 July and Tin Shui Wai on 5 November. Almost half the records came from two sites, Long Valley (March, April and November) and Shuen Wan (April, May and July). Elsewhere, recorded at Lin Barn Tsuen and Nam Sang Wai (January), Kam Tin, Yuen Long, Tai Po Kau Tsuen and Shing Mun (April), Yuen Long and Luk Keng (May) and Fung Yuen and Ting Kok (August). All reports referred to single birds.

**190 Indian Cuckoo** *Cuculus micropterus* 四聲杜鵑

All records occurred during the period 13 April-17 June and referred to single calling birds, the exceptions being one seen at Mai Po village on 8 June and two at Nam Sang Wai on 19 May, Tong Fuk on 14 June and Mai Po on 16th. Birds were regularly recorded at Shuen Wan (20 April-16 May), Nam Sang Wai (22 April-16 May), Stanley Fort (25 April-16 June), and Mai Po and Chai Wan (both May-16 June). Elsewhere, in a better than average year, recorded on single dates at Dong Ping Chau, Mong Kok and Chau Tau (April), Cape D'Aguilar, Long Valley, Luk Keng and Kam Tin (May), and So Kun Po and Tai Po Kau (June).

**192 Oriental Cuckoo** *Cuculus saturatus* 中杜鵑

Noted during 7-21 April and 16-24 September, fairly typical dates, as follows: singles at Ho Chung and Kam Tin on 7th, Chau Tau and Mai Po on 18th, Long Valley on 20th and Shuen Wan on 21 April, and Mai Po on 16th and 20th, Long Valley on 19th (juvenile) and KFBG on 24 September.

**192.5 Asian Lesser Cuckoo** *Cuculus poliocephalus* 中杜鵑

One was trapped at Mount Davis on 16 October (MRL). This is the first Hong Kong record (see Leven 1998a).

**193 Koel** *Eudynamis scolopacea* 噪鵲

Calling birds were noted from 22 January at KARC until 2 September at Stanley Fort. Present throughout the year at Shuen Wan, where a juvenile closely associating with two adult Magpies *Pica pica* on 3 May was the second such record from this site in recent years, suggesting that Black-necked Starling *Sturnus nigricollis* may not be the only foster-parent of this species in Hong Kong.

**194 Greater Coucal** *Centropus sinensis* 褐翅鵲鵒

No significant records.

**195 Lesser Coucal** *Centropus benghalensis* 小鵲鵒

Records were received for six sites: Sha Lo Tung (up to four, January, October and November), Shuen Wan (up to two, April and July), Chuen Lung and Wu Kau Tang (both May), Tai Mo Shan (August and October) and Fung Hang (October).

**196 Collared Scops Owl** *Otus bakkamoena* 領角鴞

Mostly single birds were recorded at 16 sites between 2 February and 20 November. Most reports were of calling birds, but up to two were seen at Cloudy Hill on nine dates during 19 October-15 November. Also noted at Lok Lo Ha (February and March), Stanley Fort (March and July), Shuen Wan (April, October and November), KARC and KFBG (February), Grass Island, Kau To Shan and Yim Tso Ha (March), Mount Nicholson and Po Toi (April), Kau To Shan and Ha Miu Tin (May), Aberdeen and Yung Shue O (August) and Sha Lo Tung (November). Fledged young were recorded at two sites: at KFBG on 16 May and KARC on 9 July.



6 Collared Scops Owl *Otus bakkamoena*  
Cloudy Hill, Hong Kong, October 1996

John Holmes

**197 Oriental Scops Owl** *Otus sunia* 紅角鴞

One was seen at Robin's Nest on 17 November (JHG,JW). This is the ninth Hong Kong record

**198 Eurasian Eagle Owl** *Bubo bubo* 鵂鶒

One was seen at Tin Shui Wai on 27 October (MRL).

A large owl, probably this species which has previously been recorded at the site, was seen at Chau Tau on 11 February (MRL).

1995: one was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 January (JEB)

**199 Brown Fish Owl** *Ketupa zeylonensis* 褐魚鴞

One was at Yung Shue O on 1 June (PRK).

A large owl, probably this species which has previously been recorded at the site, was seen at Yung Shue O on 13 August (RWL).

**200 Asian Barred Owl** *Glaucidium cuculoides*

斑頭鵂鶒

Noted at a record 15 sites, surpassing 1995, and in all months except May and September. No doubt reflecting increased observer activity in the period leading up to the Big Bird Race, about 25% of reports occurred during 13-20 April. Records were otherwise fairly evenly spread throughout the year. Sites where this species was most frequently recorded were Tai Po Kau (five dates in January, March, April and November) and Shuen Wan (seven dates in June, November and December). Other reports were received from Chau Tau, Mai Po, Wong Chuk Yeung (Ma On Shan), KFBG, Shing Mun, Lower Shing Mun, Shek Kong, Wo Hop Shek, Tai Mong Tsai, Yung Shue O, Long Valley, Ho Chung, Sha Lo Tung and Ting Kok. All records were of single birds, mostly heard.

**201 Brown Hawk Owl** *Ninox scutulata*

鷹鴞

One was seen in flight over the sea near Dong Ping Chau on 13 April (PJJ,RWL) and one was at Taikoo Shing on 24th and 27 April, and again on 12 May (FLNY *et al.*). Although it is known that this latter bird was seen on intervening days, no record cards were submitted for other dates.



7 Brown Hawk Owl *Ninox scutulata*  
Taikoo Shing, Hong Kong, 3 May 1996

Lo Kar Man

**204 Grey Nightjar** *Caprimulgus indicus*

普通夜鷹

A male was at Yung Shue O on 1 June (PRK); this is the second year in succession that a calling male has been recorded at this site. In addition, an injured bird that subsequently died was found at the Hong Kong Observatory, Tsim Sha Tsui, on 28 October (CYL) and one was at Sha Lo Tung on 9 November (RWL).

**205 Savanna Nightjar** *Caprimulgus affinis*

林夜鷹

In the first half of the year singles were seen at Wong Nai Chung Gap on 4th and at Lung Kwu Chau on 30 January; one was heard at Chau Tau on 10 February, two were heard at Port Island on 3 March, one was heard at Kau Sai Chau on 14th and at least two were at Tin Shui Wai on 31 March; up to three were at Chau Tau during 8-19 April, singles were at Lin Barn Tsuen, Ma Tso Lung and Tin Shui Wai reclamation on 19th, a female was sitting on two eggs at the latter site on 20 April (DAD,MRL) and one was heard at Shuen Wan on 30 June. The nesting record at Tin Shui Wai is only the second for Hong Kong, the first being at the same site on 2 May 1994. The only record in the second half of the year concerned one at Cloudy Hill on 3 November.

**206 White-throated Needletail** *Hirundapus caudacutus*

白喉針尾雨燕

An even poorer set of records than in 1995: one at Ho Chung on 12th, five at KFBG on 15 April and four over Kam Tin valley on 11 May (GAW); the latter, however, is a new late date, there having only been two other May records (3rd and 5 May 1991).

1989: three were at Mai Po on 23 April (RWL).

**207 White-vented Needletail** *Hirundapus cochinchinensis*

灰喉針尾雨燕

Excepting six at KARC on 20 March, all records occurred in April, with 40 there on 2nd, 50 at Mai Po on 4th, two at Ho Chung on 5th, two at Mai Po on 12th, 30 at Mui Wo on 14th, 100 at KFBG on 15th and three at Tai Po Kau on 23rd. In terms of bird-days, 1996 was the third best year for this species.

Unidentified Needletails, either this or the previous species, were recorded in April as follows: twelve at Ng Tung Chai on 20th, two at Kap Lung on 23rd and eight there on 26 March; 105 at KARC on 3rd and one there on 17th, 50 at Ho Chung on 12th and five there on 20th and one at Wong Chuk Yeung (Ma On Shan) on 29th.

1989: five were at Ng Tung Chai on 28 March, at least four were at Mai Po on 8 April and up to two were seen at Tai Po Kau during 8-11 June (all RWL).

**207.5 Common Swift** *Apus apus*

樓燕

One of the form *pekinensis* was at Mai Po during 3-4 April (DM,NM *et al.*). This is the first Hong Kong record (see Massie and Massie 1997).

**208 Pacific Swift** *Apus pacificus*

白腰雨燕

Following seven at Mai Po on 7 February, up to ten at Lin Barn Tsuen on 28 February and 20 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 9 March, the first major arrival of spring migrants occurred on 12 March, slightly later than in recent years, and comprised 100 at Lut Chau and 40 at Lin Barn Tsuen. Smaller numbers were then seen at Lin Barn Tsuen, Ma Tso Lung and Mount Davis until 23 March when 100 were noted at Mai Po. There were no further counts until the arrival of the third and strongest pulse during 2-5 April. This comprised 50 at Mai Po and ten at Nam Sang Wai on 2nd, 250 at Mai Po on 3rd, 30 at Nam Sang Wai, 50 at Lut Chau and 400 at Mai Po

on 4th, the highest count of the year, and 100 at Mai Po on 5th. Numbers then fell, with 10-30 at Mai Po during 6-12th and 50 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 14th (quite a sizeable count for mid April), the last double figure count of the year. Subsequently there were very small numbers at Nam Sang Wai and Mai Po up to 17 May and one at Chek Lap Kok on 24 May. The only reports during the summer months concerned up to three at Stanley Fort during 16 June-26 August, singles at Shuen Wan on 29 June and 26 August, Pok Fu Lam on 23 July and Sharp Peak on 26 August, and five at Wong Chuk Yeung, Ma On Shan, on 29 August, the final record of the year.

**209 Little Swift** *Apus affinis* 小白腰雨燕

Counts of 200 on 24th and 115 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 28 February and 400 at Lut Chau on 12th and 300 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 21 March generally accorded with the established pattern of a pulse in late February followed by a second pulse in the third week of March. The most sustained passage this year occurred during 2-9 April, peaking during 3-5th, with counts at Mai Po rising from 100 on 2nd to 1000 on 3rd and 5th, the highest of the year, then falling to 200 on 6th, 100 on 8th and 70 on 9th. Peak numbers elsewhere during this period were 500 at Nam Sang Wai and 200 at Lut Chau on 4th. Thereafter, the only sizeable counts were 50 at Long Valley on 16th and 25 at Mount Austin on 17 April, 100 at KFBG on 25 May and 80 at Nam Sang Wai on 16 November, all of which may have been local resident birds.

**209.5 Swiftlet sp.** 金絲燕類

Singles were seen in April at Mai Po during 3-4th (PIL,RWL), at Lut Chau and at Nam Sang Wai on 4th (PIL) and at Nam Chung on 6th (ARL,JSRE).

**210 White-throated Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis* 白胸翡翠

Urban reports came from Kowloon Park (2 January, 10 February, 21 August and 5 September), Penfold Park (up to two, 18 January, 2nd and 23 April, and 8th and 29 August) and Tuen Mun Park (5 March). During the breeding season pairs were noted at two sites: Cape D'Aguilar from 30 March throughout the summer and Shuen Wan from 20 May to 20 August. Breeding activity was once again noted at the latter site with adults repeatedly carrying food in the direction of an undiscovered nest during 23-29 May and a juvenile closely attended by an adult on 28 June. The only records from elsewhere concerned singles at Tsim Bei Tsui on 19 February and 19 April, at least three there on 28 July, and singles at Stanley Fort on 31 July, Chek Lap Kok on 5 September and 26 October, and Mai Po on 9 November (though it is known that this species is regular at the latter site, at least outside the breeding season). More records of this species would be welcome, especially during the breeding season.

**211 Black-capped Kingfisher** *Halcyon pileata* 藍翡翠

In the first half of the year recorded at Shuen Wan (22nd and 31 January, 21 April and 28 June), Tsim Bei Tsui (19 February), Tai Po Kau Tsuen (10 April) and Amah Rock (1 June). Reported in the second half of the year at Shuen Wan

(five dates between 30 August and 8 December), Mai Po (29 September and 1 October), Luk Keng (28 October) and Sham Chung (19 December). All records were of single birds. This species appears to have declined since the 1980s when counts of 8-20 in Deep Bay in October and December were not unusual, though it is known to still be regular there, at least outside the breeding season. More records would be most welcome.

**212 Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis* 普通翠鳥

Ten at Mai Po on 20 December was by far the highest count of the year. Urban reports were received from Sha Tin Park (singles on four dates between 9 January and 14 May) and Yuen Long Park (one on 15 February). Elsewhere, one was at Tai O on 20 January, up to three were noted at Shuen Wan on five dates between 21 April and 8 December, one was at The Brothers on 28 August and up to three were seen at Long Valley on 17th and 29 September.

**213 Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis* 斑魚狗

Recorded in smaller numbers and at fewer sites than in 1995, as follows: two at Ma Tso Lung on 5 March, three at Kam Tin on 7 April, singles at Shuen Wan on six dates between 20 April and 8 December, one at Nam Sang Wai on 27 April and up to two at Mai Po on five dates between 19 October and 14 December, though it is undoubtedly under-recorded at the latter site.

**214 Crested Kingfisher** *Ceryle lugubris* 冠魚狗

Single birds were heard at Chung Mei, Plover Cove Reservoir on 27 January and at Tai Lam Chung Reservoir on 30 November (JSRE).

**215 Blue-tailed Bee-eater** *Merops philippinus* 栗喉蜂虎

Six flying north over Long Valley on 23 April and eight at the same site on 9 October were the only records. A disappointing year after the high numbers during 1995.

**216 Dollarbird** *Eurystomus orientalis* 三寶鳥

An exceptionally good year with the highest spring numbers since 1988 and the strongest ever autumn passage. In spring 27 bird-days were recorded from 12 April to 12 May. In April Ho Chung was a particularly favoured site with up to nine during 10-13th and two on 22nd. Elsewhere, birds were noted in April at Dong Ping Chau on 13th, Mui Wo (two) on 14th, Tai Po Kau on 14th and 20th, Cheung Chau on 16th and Kap Lung on 18th, and in May at Mount Davis (two) on 4th, Yung Shue O on 8th and Tai Long Wan on 12th.

Autumn passage occurred from 13 September to 12 October and involved a record 52 bird-days. The two most productive sites were KARC (up to three daily during 25-28 September and up to four on five dates during 1-10 October) and Sha Lo Tung (two on 1st and 4th, four on 8th and two on 12 October). Elsewhere, noted at Ho Chung on 13th and 15 September (two), Pok Fu Lam on 15th and 24th, Mount Davis on 16th, Shek Kong Catchwater on 18th, Mui Wo on 21st (two), Chek Keng and Dong Ping Chau on 22nd and Pak Nai and Mong

Tseng (three) on 28 September, and at Sha Lo Tung, Pok Fu Lam and Ng Tung Chai (two) on 1 October, Hok Tau on 4th, Mong Tseng on 6th and Shuen Wan on 8 October. Except as indicated, all records concerned single birds.

**217 Eurasian Hoopoe** *Upupa epops* 戴勝

In the poorest year since 1988 one at Long Valley on 26 January and 23rd and 27 February and one at Tai O on 29 December were the sole records.

**218 Great Barbet** *Megalaima virens* 大擬啄木鳥

Earliest calling dates were 14 January at Tai Po Kau, 22 January at KARC and 4 February at Yung Shue O. An adult was seen emerging from a hole in a tree, a possible nesting-site, near Tai Po Kau on 17 May. This species was also recorded at Kap Lung, Sham Tseng and Shing Mun.

**219 Eurasian Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla* 蟻鴲

In the first winter period one at Sha Lo Tung on 14th and 20 January was presumably the same as had been recorded there in December 1995. At Mai Po, singles were trapped on 28 January and 4 February and one was seen on 15 February. Singles were noted at Kowloon Park on 27 February, Nam Sang Wai on 3rd and Tin Shui Wai on 31 March. The first in autumn was one at Tin Shui Wai on 28 September. All subsequent records were in October, with singles at Shuen Wan landfill on 5th, Long Valley on 9th, Sha Lo Tung on 19th and 20th, Tung Chung on 20th and KARC on 29th. Although this was an average year in terms of the number of records, the apparent absence of birds in November and December is unusual.

**219.5 Speckled Piculet** *Picumnus innominatus* 蟻鴲

A juvenile was trapped at Wong Chuk Yeung (Ma On Shan) on 25 July (MRL). This is the first Hong Kong record (see Leven 1998b).

**222 Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major* 斑啄木鳥

A female was at Heung Yuen Wai, in the closed area between Man Kam To and Lin Ma, on 30 June (LY,DC). This is the only record away from HK Island and the first since 24 April 1990.

**225 Oriental Skylark** *Alauda gulgula* 小雲雀

All reports were from Tin Shui Wai, as follows: four including two in song flight on 31 March and two singing on 20 April, two on 15th, one on 22nd and three on 28 September, four on 6th and six on 27 October, and finally two on 22 November.

**225.1 Eurasian Skylark** *Alauda arvensis* 雲雀

One was at Long Valley on 23rd and 27 February (PJJ,DAD).

**226 Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia* 灰沙燕

Spring passage was once again noted during two separate periods: 1-21 April and 10-17 May. Highest counts during the earlier period were at Lut Chau

with 50 on 4th and 20 on 5th; other counts were generally low with one or two at Tsim Bei Tsui and Mai Po during 1st-5th, singles at the latter site on 9th and at Lin Barn Tsuen on 14th and up to two at Shuen Wan during 19-21st. The second spring pulse was noted on just two dates with 300, the largest flock of the year, feeding over fish ponds at Mai Po on 10th and 12 there on 17 May. Autumn passage was thinner than in recent years and comprised five near Chek Lap Kok on 2 October, one there on 3rd, 20 at Tin Shui Wai on 7th and one at Lin Barn Tsuen on 8 October and, finally, one at Mai Po on 15 November.

**227 Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* 家燕

Reports early in the year included 37 at Lin Barn Tsuen, presumably the flock present there in December 1995, and up to 20 at Mai Po on 12th and 18 February, with very small numbers elsewhere in Deep Bay. On 19 February there were 200 at Lin Barn Tsuen. In March, following 100 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 10th, the first large passage flock was 1400 at Lut Chau on 12th, with 200 at Ma Tso Lung the next day and smaller numbers noted at Chung Hom Kok, Penfold Park and Deep Bay during 17th-21st. Passage was heaviest during 1-9 April, especially on 4th when the highest counts of the year were recorded, and on 14th. Counts were as follows: 500 at Nam Sang Wai and 100 at Mai Po on 2nd, 1000 at Mai Po on 3rd, 2000 at Mai Po, 2500 at Lut Chau and 1000 at Nam Sang Wai on 4th, 1000 at Mai Po and 300 at Lut Chau on 5th, 250 at Mai Po on 8th, 300 there on 9th, and 600 at Lin Barn Tsuen, 800 at Tsim Bei Tsui, 1200 at Nam Sang Wai and 100 at Dong Ping Chau on 14th. Autumn passage, which was as usual considerably lighter than in spring, comprised 30 moving southwest off the coast of north Lantau on 6th, 40 at Long Valley on 17 September and 20 near Chek Lap Kok on 2 October. Subsequently, none were reported until 16 November when 30 were seen at Mai Po. The final records of the year were 15 at Tin Shui Wai on 30 November, 30 going to roost in a reed-bed at Mai Po on 20 December and three at Ma Tso Lung four days later.

Seven birds showing characters of the form *H.r. tytlteri* were at Nam Sang Wai on 14 April (RWL). This form, which has not been reported in Hong Kong before, breeds in central Siberia south to northern Mongolia.

**228 Red-rumped Swallow** *Hirundo daurica* 金腰燕

Following 40 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 3 January, the peak count of the year, there were no records until 2 April, when one was at Tsim Bei Tsui. Spring passage was most evident during 3-5 April, with up to 20 at Mai Po, 12 at Nam Sang Wai and smaller numbers elsewhere in Deep Bay. Thereafter in April, singles were at Pui O on 9th and Dong Ping Chau on 13th and two were seen at Nam Sang Wai on 22nd. Autumn passage was first noted on 27 September when three moved west over Lion Rock. In October, eight were seen moving southwest near Chep Lak Kok on 2nd and 3rd, two were at Long Valley on 6th, two were at Lin Barn Tsuen on 8th and twelve were at Mount Davis on 31st. Subsequent reports comprised one at Tsim Bei Tsui on 2 November, two at Buffalo Hill on 23 November and four at Lin Barn Tsuen on 20 December.

**229 Asian House Martin** *Delichon dasypus* 煙腹毛腳燕

Spring passage occurred between 10 March and 20 April and was most marked during 10-12 March and 4-5 April. Reports in March concerned 25 on 10th and 75 on 12th at Lin Barn Tsuen and 20 at San Tin on 11th; in addition, up to five were at Hatton Road on 12th, Ma Tso Lung on 13th and KARC on 20th. The higher counts in April were ten at Tsim Bei Tsui and 12 at Nam Sang Wai on 2nd, 20 at Mai Po and 30 at Pak Nai on 3rd, ten at Mui Wo, 100 at Lut Chau, 100 at Mai Po and 150 at Tsim Bei Tsui (the highest count of the year) on 4th, 70 at Mai Po and 100 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5th and 20 at Mai Po on 8th. Smaller numbers were also noted during this period at Long Valley, Kam Tin and KFBG. The final records of the spring were one at Pok Fu Lam on 13th, two at KFBG on 15th, and three at Tai Po Kau and one at Shuen Wan on 20th. Ten near Chek Lap Kok on 2 October was the only autumn report.

**230 Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi* 田鸫

In the first part of the year counts at Long Valley included 15 on 23 January, 20 on 7 February and 15 on 14 April. The only other double-figure count was of 13 at Tin Shui Wai on 9 March. A distinctly small, buff individual was seen at Penfold Park on 2 February and the last record of the migrant race consisted of a single bird at that site on 27 April. The first autumn record concerned 18 at Tin Shui Wai on 15 September and passage was evident at this site until mid-October with peak counts of 27 on 28 September and 26 on 13 October. The highest counts from Long Valley were 25 on 9 October and 15 on 9 November. The only record submitted of the breeding race *A. n. sinensis* was of two at 500m asl at Grassy Hill on 31 December.

**231 Upland Pipit** *Anthus sylvanus* 山鸫

Four were in song at Sharp Peak on 26 August, one was trapped at KFBG on 2 September, singles were reported from different areas on Ma On Shan on 17th and 19 October and 23 November, one was singing at 750m asl on Tai Mo Shan on 18 December and one was flushed at 400m asl at Shek Uk Shan, Sai Kung, on 31 December.

**232 Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni* 樹鸫

High counts during the first part of the year were 30 at Sha Lo Tung on 20 January, 25 at Long Valley on 27 February with 20 there on 21 March and 25 on 6 April, and 20 at Nam Sang Wai on 2 April. The last spring record was of three at Long Valley on 20 April. The first autumn record was of one at Chek Lap Kok on 14 October, and the only double-figure counts reported in the second winter period were 20 at Sha Lo Tung on 23 November and 16 at Mai Po on the same date.

**233 Pechora Pipit** *Anthus gustavi* 北鸫

In an unprecedented spring for this species, the following were recorded: up to five at Nam Sang Wai during 22-28 April (RWL,MH,DAD), one at Tai O (PJH) and two at Long Valley (DAD) on 12 May, nine at Long Valley (PJL,MRL,RWL *et al.*) and one at Mai Po during 16-17th (PJL,MRL,GAW), three

at Shuen Wan on 17th (MRL,RWL,PJL), one at Mai Po village on 19th, one at Long Valley on 21st (YYT) and, finally, singles at Luk Keng (YYT) and Long Valley (DAD) on 24 May. In autumn, singles were at Mount Davis on 16 October (MRL) and at Long Valley two days later on 18th (YYT).

**234 Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus* 紅喉鸫

Up to 35 were at Long Valley in January and February, with smaller numbers elsewhere in the northwest NT. Higher numbers were recorded during March with peak counts of 65 at Lut Chau on 12th, 50 at Ma Tso Lung on 13th, 40 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 20th and 22nd, and 40 at Long Valley on 21st. Spring passage peaked during the first week of April with high counts of 80 at Lut Chau, 60 at Mai Po, 50 at Nam Sang Wai and 150 at Long Valley on 4th with 150 again at the latter site on 6th. The combined total of 340 birds on 4 April is the highest ever day count of this species in Hong Kong. Numbers dropped markedly during the second and third weeks of April, the last birds being reported on 19th, apart from a straggler at Long Valley during 12-17 May (EMSK *et al.*), a new late date. Three at Long Valley on 29 September were the first of the autumn and birds were reported from here and three other sites until 9 November with peak counts during October of 23 at Tin Shui Wai on 13th, ten at Kam Tin on 19th and 25th, six at Tung Chung on 20th and 35 at Long Valley on 27th. The only reports toward the end of the year were of five at Long Valley on 30 November with at least six there on 27 December.

**235 Buff-bellied Pipit** *Anthus rubescens* 水鸫

At Lin Barn Tsuen up to three were present during 2-3 February and during 24 February to 13 March (PJL,YYT), by which time one had moulted into summer plumage. In addition, four were at Ma Tso Lung on 10 February (GJC,PJL).

**236 Forest Wagtail** *Dendronanthus indicus* 林鸫

One at Shing Mun on 6 January was presumably the wintering bird seen there at the end of 1995. The only spring record was of two birds, including a singing male, at Mai Po on 14 April. There were only two autumn records of single birds at Mount Davis on 18 August and at KFBG on 22 October. A poorer than usual year even for this scarce species.

**237 Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava* 黃鸫

In the first winter period the highest counts by far of the race *taivana* came from the fish ponds in the northwest NT. At Lin Barn Tsuen there were 150 on 19 February, 100 on 24 February, 100 on 10 March, 100 on 20 March and 130 on 14 April; at Lut Chau there were 150 on 12 March and 200 on 4 April, and at Ma Tso Lung there were 100 on 13 March. The last definite record of this subspecies was one at Nam Sang Wai and 25 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 28 April.

The subspecies *simillima* was recorded on passage in the NT from 14 April to 25 May. Numbers were usually less than three figures but the highest counts involved 150 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 22 April and 250 at Shuen Wan on 3 May with 120 there on 17 May.

A single bird of the race *macronyx* was at Kam Tin on 2 January, four were at Nam Sang Wai on 10 February, two were at Mai Po on 24th and 25 February and four were at Lok Ma Chau on 9 March. Spring records consisted of two at Lut Chau on 4 April, with singles at Lin Barn Tsuen on 14 April and at Long Valley on 14th and 17 April.

The first record of this species in autumn was a single bird unascrbed to race at Chek Lap Kok on 23 August and the high autumn count of 250 at Mai Po on 16 September was also of unascrbed birds.

The race *taivana* was first identified at Chek Lap Kok on 4 September and generally small numbers were recorded until the end of the year with high counts of 50 at Long Valley on 19 October and 9 November, 20 at Kam Tin on 11th and 19 October, and 30 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 21 December.

The race *simillima* was recorded in small numbers at Long Valley from 31 August until 9 November, except for a late bird on 22 November. The peak count was 20 on 9 October.

The race *macronyx* was recorded at Long Valley from 9 October to 9 November with peak counts of 15 on the first date and about 35 on 26 October. One was also at Kam Tin on 8 December.

#### 238 Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*

黃頭鵪鶉

In the first part of the year a female was at Lut Chau on 12 January (GJC), the same bird as was present there in late 1995. In spring a male was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4 April (VD), with a female near there on 9 April (CWM,RJLK), and a female was at Mai Po fish ponds on 28 April. In the latter part of the year first-winters were at Long Valley on 9 November (CHF) and 2 December (MRL).

1986: a first-summer male was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 April (PRK).

#### 239 Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

灰鵪鶉

Fifty at Lin Barn Tsuen on 12 March with 59 at Lut Chau on the same date were indicative of spring passage. The last spring record was one at Nam Sang Wai on 24 May. First recorded in autumn from 29 August when one flew over Wong Chuk Yeung, Ma On Shan. One hundred and fifty at Mai Po at dusk on 21 October was the only significant report in the second part of the year.

#### 240 White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

白鵪鶉

The highest count of this species during the first winter period involved at least 1000 birds going to roost at Nam Sang Wai at dusk on 10 February; of 270 of these birds seen at rest, over 90% were of the race *leucopsis*. The only other three figure count involved 240 unascrbed to race at Lut Chau on 30 January. There was a dearth of reports of the race *ocularis* during this period, the only counts of note being 16 at Penfold Park on 2 February and 60 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 19 February. The last spring report of *ocularis* was of two at Lin Barn Tsuen on 28 April but, as is now to be expected, small numbers of *leucopsis* continued to be noted at several sites throughout the summer and juveniles were seen at Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau, Long Valley, Shuen Wan and Chai Wan. The first record of *ocularis* in autumn was four at Long Valley on 9 October, but there were no



8 Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*  
Ho Chung, Hong Kong, October 1996

Martin Hale

further records until 5 November when at least 25 were present at Penfold Park; thereafter only reported on single dates at Mai Po, Chek Lap Kok, Long Valley and Ma Tso Lung, with no more than three at any one site. Counts of *leucopsis* were generally low, the maxima recorded being 30 at Kam Tin on 8 October and 60 at Long Valley on 26 October.

A male of the form *personata*, which breeds in northwest and winters in southwest Xinjiang, and has been recorded on migration in Gansu, Hubei and Tibet (Cheng 1987), was at Chek Lap Kok during 26-27 March (GJC). This is the second Hong Kong record, the first having occurred in April 1985.

1995: A male of the form *lugens*, known as Black-backed Wagtail, was at Dong Ping Chau on 1 January (EMSK).

#### 242 Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina melaschistos*

暗灰鵪鶉

In the first winter period one was at Kowloon Hills on 11th and 18 January, two were at Sha Lo Tung on 14 January, and singles were reported at Hatton Road on 8 March, HKU on 12th and 24 March, and Tai Po Kau on 23 March and 2 April. The last spring record concerned one trapped at KFBG on 28 April. The first autumn record was of one at KFBG on 24 September, after which two were at Sha Lo Tung on 12 October with singles there on 24th and 28 November, one was at Lion Rock on 19 October and one was in Tai Po Kau on 25 November. A poor year for this species.

#### 244 Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus*

灰山椒鳥

Four were at Mui Wo on 6 April, two were at Dong Ping Chau on 7 April with one there the following day, two flew north over Cheung Chau on 10 April and one was at Tin Shui Wai on 20 April. There were no autumn reports.

- 245 Grey-chinned Minivet** *Pericrocotus solaris* 灰喉山椒鳥  
Present at Tai Po Kau throughout the year where a female was seen collecting twigs, presumably for nest construction, from a *Delonix regia* on 13 March, and a flock of 30 was seen on 13 August that included two begging juveniles. Other reports involved six at Kowloon Hills on 11 January with eight there on 18 January and one on 25 January, 20 at Shing Mun on 21 March and 60 at Kap Lung on 15 September.
- 246 Scarlet Minivet** *Pericrocotus flammeus* 赤紅山椒鳥  
Present at Tai Po Kau throughout the year. The only other reports received were of up to three at Kowloon Hills catchwater in January, a female at Fo Tan from 30 April to 29 May and six at Shek Kong on 9 November.
- 247 Red-whiskered Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus* 紅耳鵲  
Pre-roosting flocks totalling 218 birds were seen entering tall grass at Shuen Wan on 16 August.
- 248 Chinese Bulbul** *Pycnonotus sinensis* 白頭鵲  
No significant reports.
- 249 Sooty-headed Bulbul** *Pycnonotus aurigaster* 白喉紅臀鵲  
No significant reports.
- 250 Chestnut Bulbul** *Hypsipetes leucocephalus* 栗背短腳鵲  
Three juveniles were seen at Tai Po Kau on 13 August and another juvenile was at KFBG on 21 August. Several were heard at Tai Tam on 3 November, which, perhaps surprisingly given that this species is now widespread in the NT, is only the second record of this species from HK Island since 1983, the first being three at Mount Austin in February 1995.
- 251 Black Bulbul** *Hypsipetes madagascariensis* 黑短腳鵲  
The only reports during the year concerned one at Shing Mun on 21 March and two at KFBG on 25 November. The poorest showing since 1991.
- 251.1 Orange-bellied Leafbird** *Chloropsis hardwickii* 橙腹葉鵲  
Up to three were recorded at Tai Po Kau until 17 May, although the only report received from there later in the year was of two on 24 November. Elsewhere, one was at Kowloon Hills on 5 January, up to two were at KFBG between 7 February and 29 March, one was at KARC on 14 February, a pair were at Kap Lung on 17 April and an immature was at Shing Mun on 30 September.
- 254 Japanese Robin** *Erithacus akahige* 日本歌鵲  
1995: a female was at Ng Tung Chai on 22 December (MT).

- 255 Rufous-tailed Robin** *Luscinia sibilans* 紅尾歌鵲  
During the first winter period 15 birds were reported from seven sites, a stark contrast to the record numbers of last year. No more than two birds were noted at any one site and the last record of the spring was of one retrapped at KFBG on 17 April; this bird had first been trapped there on 7 February. In autumn one was trapped at KARC on 25 October, after which at least 41 birds were reported from seven sites. As usual most records came from KFBG/KARC where 27 different birds were trapped between 25 October and 21 December and, as in 1995, peak passage occurred during 17-19 November. The highest count from a single site, however, was eight at Ngong Ping on 1 December.

- 256 Siberian Rubythroat** *Luscinia calliope* 紅點頰  
In the first winter period at least 45 birds were recorded from 12 widespread sites. High counts were four at Sha Lo Tung on 14 January and at Lut Chau on 12 March, and six on Dong Ping Chau on 13 April and at Mai Po on 14 April. One trapped at KARC on 26 April was the last spring record. One trapped at Mount Davis on 16 October was the first autumn record. Thereafter, recorded in small numbers from widespread sites apart from unprecedented counts from Po Toi as follows: 59 on 27 November, 54 on 17 December and 32 on 27 December (PJL). The previous highest count from a single site was 13 at Sha Lo Tung on 6 November 1995.

- 257 Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica* 藍點頰  
Recorded at Long Valley from the beginning of the year until 28 April, the maximum count being five on 21 March and 8 April. Single birds were reported sporadically at other sites in the northwest NT as follows: Ma Tso Lung on 2 January and 13 March, Mai Po on 28 January, 11 February, 21 March, 8th and 20 April, Kam Tin on 3 February, Nam Sang Wai on 10 February and 22 April, Lin Barn Tsuen from 11 March to 20 April and Tin Shui Wai on 14th and 20 April. One at Ma Tso Lung on 10 November was the first of the autumn. Present at Long Valley from 13 November with high counts of five on 7th and 27 December. Singles were reported from the border fence near Lok Ma Chau on 14 November, Tsim Bei Tsui on 8 December, Tin Shui Wai on 14 December and Lin Barn Tsuen during 20-21 December.

- 258 Siberian Blue Robin** *Luscinia cyane* 藍歌鵲  
The only spring record was of a male in Kowloon Park on 11 April. In autumn a female was at Ho Chung on 8 September, a first-winter male was at Mount Austin on 12 September, an adult female was trapped at KFBG on 12 September and a female was seen there on 27 September as was a male on 30 October, and a first-winter male was present at HKU from 29 September to 4 October.

- 259 Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus* 紅脅藍尾鵲  
Fifty different birds were trapped at KFBG/KARC from the beginning of the year until 24 March, the maximum number caught on one day being ten on 27

January. Away from the Kadoorie area at least 36 different birds were recorded from ten sites, the highest counts being eight at Tai Lam CP on 2 January and nine at Chek Keng on 25 February. The last record in spring was of three at Mount Austin on 5 April. The first records of the autumn involved three birds trapped at KARC and a single seen at Chek Lap Kok on 19 November. The species remained generally scarce throughout the second winter period with 27 birds being reported from 12 widespread sites, numbers never exceeding six at a single site. At KFBG/KARC 37 birds were trapped during November/December (c.f. 71 during the same period in 1995).

**260 Daurian Redstart** *Phoenicurus auroreus* 北紅尾鶇

Reported from 15 different sites during the first winter period; all sightings were of single birds except for two at Mai Po on 11 February and three males singing at Mui Wo on 3 March. The last spring record concerned a female at KARC on 14 April. The first autumn record was of a female trapped at KARC on 25 October. A male was at Mount Austin on 2 November and single males were seen at the same site on 9 November and 7 December, a female was at Sha Lo Tung on 24 November and 1 December, a female was trapped at Wong Chuk Yeung (Ma On Shan) on 26 November, five were seen on Po Toi on 27 November although only one was present there on 27 December, and a female trapped at Tai Mo Shan on 28 November was retrapped there on 18 December. A generally poor showing for this species.

**261 Plumbeous Redstart** *Rhyacornis fuliginosus* 紅尾水鸫

A male was seen at Hatton Road on 2 January, 11 February, and 8th and 12 March, and a female was at Shing Mun on 2 December.

**262 Oriental Magpie Robin** *Copsychus saularis* 鶉鴂

No significant reports.

**263 Common Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata* 黑喉石鸫

The highest counts were of ten birds at Long Valley on 21 March, at Mai Po on 22 March and at Lin Barn Tsuen on 8 April, dates indicative of light passage at this time. The last spring record was of one at Nam Sang Wai on 24 April. The first autumn sighting was of one at Tin Shui Wai on 15 September and 35 birds were counted at that site on 13 October. The only other counts of note came from Long Valley where 20 were seen on 27 October and 16 on 21 December.

**264 Grey Bushchat** *Saxicola ferrea* 灰林鸫

The only record was of a male at Sha Lo Tung on 5 October. The poorest year since 1989.

**267 Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitarius* 藍磯鸫

In the first winter period at least 11 birds were reported from six sites, the highest count being four at Chek Lap Kok on 2 February. The last record was of one at Carolina Gardens on 16 April. In the second half of the year at least 25

birds were reported from nine sites, the first sighting being of three birds at Cape D'Aguilar on 22 September. All other records involved single birds except for 14 at Po Toi on 27 November (PJJ), a new high for Hong Kong. Seven were present at the latter site on 17 December.



**9 Blue Rock Thrush** *Monticola solitarius*  
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Lo Kar Man

**268 Blue Whistling Thrush** *Myiophonus caeruleus* 紫嘯鶇

A pair again bred on the external part of an air-conditioner on the first floor of a village house at Fo Tan, raising two broods that fledged in April and June.

**269 Orange-headed Thrush** *Zoothera citrina* 橙頭地鸫

The only record received was of two adults with a juvenile in Tai Po Kau on 28 August.

**270 Scaly Thrush** *Zoothera dauma* 虎斑地鸫

In the first winter period at least 15 different individuals were recorded from 13 sites; all records involved single birds except for two at Ho Chung on 10 February. The last spring record was of one trapped at Cape D'Aguilar on 13 April. The first autumn record was of one at KFBG on 8 November; one was at the same site on 2nd and 8 December. Other records came from Mount Davis, Po Toi, Kap Lung, Mount Austin, Tai Lam CP and Tai Po Kau; as in the first winter period, all sightings were of single birds apart from two at Kap Lung on 30 November. A fairly typical showing for this species in contrast to the exceptional numbers that occurred in the 1994/95 winter.



10 Orange-headed Thrush *Zosterops citrina*  
Tai Po Kau, Hong Kong, January 1997

John Holmes

271 Siberian Thrush *Zosterops sibirica*

白眉地鵲

A male was at Kap Lung on 16 April and a female was in Tai Po Kau on 20 April. A first-winter male was trapped at KFBG on 15 December.

1995: A male was at Peel Rise on 15 January.

272 Japanese Thrush *Turdus cardis*

烏灰鵲

Between 6 January and 2 March only ten birds were recorded from five widespread sites, the most at any one site being three trapped at KARC on 2 March. At least 27 birds at 11 sites were noted on passage between 24 March and mid-April, with no more than three being reported from any one site except for 12 feeding on *Schefflera octophylla* fruit at Kap Lung on 26 March. The last spring sightings were of two in Kowloon Park and one trapped at KFBG on 17 April. In the second winter period at least 38 birds were seen at ten widespread locations, the first record being of one trapped at KARC on 9 November. High counts were 20 at KFBG on 24 November and five at Wong Chuk Yeung (Ma On Shan) on 25 November.

273 Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*

烏鵲

In the first winter period reported from widespread sites although numbers never extended into double figures, the highest counts being six at HKU on 5 January and seven at Long Valley on 23 February. There were no reports in March but one was at Fung Yuen, near Tai Po Industrial Estate, on 5 April and one was in Kowloon Park during 2-13 April. At Fung Yuen a young juvenile was attended by two adults (see Hackett 1996). The first autumn record was of one at Penfold Park on 29 September; there were only four records, all of single birds, in

October, and passage peaked in the second and third weeks of November with high counts of 40 at Sha Lo Tung on 16 November and 12 at Shuen Wan on 21 November. No more than four birds were reported from any one site during December. The poorest year for this species since 1987.

274 Brown-headed Thrush *Turdus chrysolaus*

紅腹鵲

The only record was of a male and female at Po Toi on 27 November.

275 Grey-backed Thrush *Turdus hortulorum*

灰背鵲

Widespread in rather small numbers during the first winter period, the only counts of note being eight in Tai Po Kau on 9 February and 20 passage migrants at Mount Austin on 5 April. The last spring record was of two at Mount Austin on 7 April. A single bird trapped at KARC on 8 November was the first of the autumn and 21 different birds were trapped at KFBG/KARC up to 13 December. Twenty seen at KFBG on 8 December was the only double-figure count of the second winter period. Away from Kadoorie ones and twos were reported from seven other sites. The poorest year for this species since 1990.

276 Pale Thrush *Turdus pallidus*

白腹鵲

In the first part of the year not recorded until spring when one was at Kap Lung on 26 March, one was at Mount Austin and two were in Tai Po Kau on 2 April, one was at the latter site on 24 April, and one was at KARC on 26 April (GAW), a new late date by just one day. In the second winter period recorded as follows: in November, one at Ho Chung on 24th and one at Kap Lung on 30th; in December, one at KFBG on 2nd with three there on 8th, one at Mount Austin on 7th, four on Po Toi on 17th with five there on 27th, one at Bride's Pool on 21st and one at Kap Lung on 27th.

277 Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus*

眉鵲

Three were at Kap Lung on 27 January with one there on 8 February, and further singles were at Cheung Sheung on 4 February and at Ng Tung Chai on 10 February. There were no other records during the first part of the year until 21 March when two were at HKU; these birds were present on the following day and one was again seen on 24th. Passage was more pronounced in April with records as follows: one at HKU on 1st, one at Lower Shing Mun on 2nd, ten in Tai Po Kau on 2nd with four there on 16th, one at Hatton Road on 3rd, one at Coombe Road on 12th, four at Kap Lung on 16th, seven at KFBG on 17th, one in Kowloon Park on 18th with four there on 19th and three on 20th, one at Shuen Wan on 19th, two at Mount Austin on 20th and two at KARC on 25 April. Scarcer in the second part of the year, when most records were from KFBG as follows: six on 25 October, singles on 7th and 19 November, five on 24 November, two on 8 December and six on 21 December; in addition one was at KARC on 7 November with two there on 30 November and one was at Ping Shan Chai on 21 December.

278 Dusky Thrush *Turdus naumanni*

斑鵲

Five were seen at KFBG on 8 December; 15 other thrushes present there on the same day were probably also this species.

**279 Slaty-backed Forktail** *Enicurus schistaceus* 灰背燕尾

The resident pair was again present at Ng Tung Chai throughout the year; one of them narrowly evaded an accipiter on 27 December (EMSK). Singles were also present at Tsing Tam storage reservoir, Shek Kong catchment, on 5 January (present from 1995) and at Shing Mun on 30 April (RWL).

**1995:** one was at Tsing Tam storage reservoir, Shek Kong catchment, from 26 October into 1996 (DS,WY).

**280 Asian Stubtail Warbler** *Urosphena squameiceps* 鱗頭樹鶯

Recorded during the first part of the year up to 12 April, when one was in Kowloon Park, this record being one month later than any other during this period. The highest count was four on 6 January at Ho Chung woods. Present in autumn from 2 November when one was in Tai Po Kau; the peak count for the year was at the same site, five on 7 December. Recorded at fifteen sites during the year.

**281 Japanese Bush Warbler** *Cettia diphone* 短翅樹鶯

Recorded regularly until 15 April when one was at KFBG, after which singles were trapped at Cape D'Aguilar on 23 April and 8 May. Peak counts during this period were 11 at Mai Po on 3 March and ten there on 4 April. First noted during the second half of the year at Nam Sang Wai on 16 November, after which widespread. The highest counts of the year came from Po Toi, where 15 were present on 27 November and 24 on 17 December.

**282 Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler** *Cettia fortipes* 山樹鶯

Singles were noted at Lantau Tea Gardens on 3 January, Ho Chung on 27 January, KARC on 14 February, KFBG on 1 March, Ma Tso Lung on 10 November, Grassy Hill on 31 December, and four were on Po Toi on 17 December.

**282.5 Russet Bush Warbler** *Bradypterus seebohmii* 高山短翅鶯

One to two in song on five dates at Chek Lap Kok between 23 January and 13 March, one at Sha Lo Tung on 11 February, one at Cape D'Aguilar on 13 February and another at Coombe Road on nine dates between 2nd and 18 March were the only records in the first half of the year. In the latter part of the year recorded from Ping Shan Chai, Ma Wan, Po Toi and Sha Lo Tung from 10 November, with the peak count being seven at the latter site on 21 December.

**283 Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis* 棕扇尾鶯

Present until 18 April and from 15 September, when 60, the highest count of the year, were present at Tin Shui Wai. Forty were at Long Valley on three dates in the first part of the year.

**283.1 Bright-capped Cisticola** *Cisticola exilis* 黃頭扇尾鶯

Three were at Sha Lo Tung on 11 February, three were on Po Toi on 17 December and three were at Sha Lo Tung on 21 December.

**1995:** three, including one male, were at Tung Chung on 8 January (PJH);

these were the same birds as recorded at the same site in late 1994. In addition, five were at Sha Lo Tung on 19 November and at least ten were there six days later on 25th (MT), making this the highest count of the autumn.

**284 Plain Prinia** *Prinia inornata* 褐頭鷓鴣

One seen flying over the sea, at least 200m from the Tuen Mun coast was the only record of interest.

**285 Yellow-bellied Prinia** *Prinia flaviventris* 灰頭鷓鴣

No significant reports.

**286 Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella certhiola* 小蝗鶯

Recorded between 31 August and 22 October with almost all records in September. Present at six sites with high counts of 24 at Long Valley on 21 September, and ten at Tin Shui Wai Reclamation the following day.

**287 Styan's Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella pleskei* 北蝗鶯

One was retrapped at Mai Po on 8 April (per MRL), having first been trapped on 26 November 1994 and 5 November 1995.

**1995:** one was retrapped at Mai Po on 5 November (MRL,PJL), having first been trapped on 26 November 1994.

**288 Lanceolated Warbler** *Locustella lanceolata* 矛斑蝗鶯

One on 18 May above Discovery Bay is one of only a few spring records. In autumn singles were at Long Valley on 6th and 13 October, two were at Tin Shui Wai on 4 October, with further singles there on 7th and 21 October, and one was at Mai Po also on 21 October.

**1995:** the Kowloon Park record for 21 September was included in error.

**289 Black-browed Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps* 黑眉葦鶯

Prior to spring passage singles were at Mai Po on 28 January, 11th and 15 February and at Nam Sang Wai on 10 February. In an exceptionally poor spring, recorded between 4 April and 19 May, the peak count being only three. Autumn passage was also unimpressive, the first being recorded on 20 September at Lin Barn Tsuen; regularly noted thereafter to 26 October when one was at Long Valley, though the only subsequent record concerned three trapped at Mai Po on 17 November. Autumn high counts were six at Tung Chung on 20 October and 15 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 8 October.

**289.07 Paddyfield Warbler** *Acrocephalus agricola* 稻田葦鶯

One was at Mai Po during 13-15 February (PJL). This is the second record for Hong Kong, the first having occurred on 1 January and 29 February 1992.

**290 Oriental Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus orientalis* 大葦鶯

One at Long Valley on 13 January was the only record until spring passage commenced on 20 March when two singing males were at Lin Barn Tsuen.

Recorded regularly thereafter until 16 May when six were at Mai Po. The peak spring count was 25 at Mai Po on 14 April. In autumn the first record concerned two at Mai Po on 31 August. Thereafter, regularly recorded until the end of October, followed by one at Mai Po on 9 November and two at Tsim Bei Tsui on 16 November. High counts included 100 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 20 September, with 80 there four days later, 48 at Tin Shui Wai on 28 September, 40 at Mai Po on 29 September, 100 at Tin Shui Wai on 4 October, 75 at Mai Po and 67 at Tin Shui Wai on 6 October, and 150 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 8 October (PJJ). This last record is a new high.

- 291 Thick-billed Warbler** *Acrocephalus aedon* 蘆鶯  
Singles were at Mai Po on 14 January (PJJ), at KFBG on 24th and again on 28 September 1996 (trapped) (MRL) and 3 October (GAW), and at Wong Chuk Yeung (Ma On Shan) on 3 October (trapped) (MRL).

**1995:** one was at Sha Lo Tung on 19 November (MT).

- 292 Golden Spectacled Warbler** *Seicercus burkii* 金眶鸚鵡  
Singles were at Ng Tung Chai on 3 March and at HKU on 7th and 28 March and also 25 November.

- 293 Chestnut-crowned Warbler** *Seicercus castaniceps* 栗頭鸚鵡  
**1995:** One was at Ng Tung Chai on 22 December (MT).

- 295 Large Grass Warbler** *Graminicola bengalensis* 大草鶯  
One was at Sha Lo Tung on 14th and 20 January. Recorded during the summer months at Tai Mo Shan between 14 April and 30 September with a peak of eight there on 15 April, and also at Chuen Lung on 31 May. Finally one was at Sha Lo Tung on 23 November.

- 296 Common Tailorbird** *Orthotomus sutorius* 火尾縫葉鶯  
No significant reports.

- 297 Sulphur-breasted Warbler** *Phylloscopus ricketii* 黃胸柳鶯  
During the early part of the year present at Tai Po Kau on four dates between 23 January and 13 March, at Ng Tung Chai on 20 January and 3 March, at Ho Chung on 19 February and Kowloon Hills on 28 February. In the latter part of the year noted at Tate's Cairn on 10 November and Ho Chung on 10 December. All records related to single birds.

- 298 Blyth's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus reguloides* 冠紋柳鶯  
Recorded until 7 March on sixteen dates. Most records came from Tai Po Kau with three there on 16 January being the highest count of the year. Other records during this period came from Cheung Sheung, KFBG, Cheung Chau, Kowloon Hills Catchwater, Kap Lung and HKU. The only records during the second half of the year concerned singles in Tai Po Kau on 27 November and 13 December and two at Ng Tung Chai on 27 December.

- 299 Eastern Crowned Warbler** *Phylloscopus coronatus* 冕柳鶯  
In spring one was noted at Mong Kok on 13 April and two were at KFBG on 26 April. In autumn present between 20 August and 5 October on thirteen dates, all records concerning single birds other than three at Kap Lung on 17 September.

- 300 Pale-legged Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus tenellipes* 灰腳柳鶯  
Recorded in spring during 10-20 April at six sites, with a maximum of six present on Cheung Chau on 16 April. In autumn present from 4 September to 30 October at widespread sites. Peak counts were nine at Kap Lung on 17 September and eight at KFBG on 24 September.

- 300.2 Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides* 暗綠柳鶯  
Singles were at Sha Lo Tung on 14th and 20 January (MT), KFBG on 9 October (trapped) (MRL,PJJ), Sha Lo Tung on 12th (RWL), Mui Wo during 18-19 October (GJC,PJH), near Tai Po Kau on 19 October and 19 November (RWL), and KFBG on 24 November.

**1995:** one was at HKU on 13th and 31 December (CKWM).

- 301 Arctic Warbler** *Phylloscopus borealis* 極北柳鶯  
Spring passage was noted between 12 April and 24 May at nine sites with a peak count of three on Dong Ping Chau on 13 April. Present in autumn from 7 September at widespread sites. Numbers were generally low, the highest count being six at Mai Po on both 20th and 29 September. The last record was of one trapped at KFBG on 3 November.

- 302 Pallas's Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus* 黃腰柳鶯  
Regularly recorded until 12 April when one was present in Kowloon Park. Peaks counts were 15 at Ng Tung Chai on 20 January and 21 in Tai Po Kau on 16 January. Six singing males were noted in Tai Po Kau on 23 March. In autumn one was near Tai Po Kau on 19 October; the next record was not until 22 November. Subsequently recorded in low numbers except for 100 present in Tai Po Kau on 13 December.

- 303 Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus* 黃眉柳鶯  
During the first part of the year regularly recorded until 24 April at widespread sites. Prior to the end of March numbers did not exceed ten, but then increased during April to a maximum of 21 at Mai Po on 14 April, presumably passage migrants. Other high counts during April included 11 in Tai Po Kau on 5 April, of which seven were in song, and twelve on Dong Ping Chau on 13 April. The first autumn record concerned one at Pak Nai on 28 September. Thereafter, noted from widespread locations with ten being the highest count during this period.

**304 Radde's Warbler** *Phylloscopus schwarzi* 巨嘴柳鶯  
One was trapped at KARC on 21 November, another was trapped at KFBG on 24 November, and singles were seen at Tai Mo Shan on 28 November and at Kowloon Hills on 7 December.

**304.5 Yellow-streaked Warbler** *Phylloscopus armandii* 棕眉柳鶯  
A first-winter was trapped at KFBG on 19 October (MRL,PJL); this is the sixth Hong Kong record.

**305 Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus* 褐柳鶯  
Noted at widespread locations up to 13 May when one was at Heng Fa Chuen, the highest count during this period being 15 at Ma Tso Lung on 2 January. Three at Long Valley and one at Mai Po on 29 September were the first in autumn, after which recorded in low numbers until the end of the year at widespread sites but mainly in the Deep Bay area.

**306 Fujian Niltava** *Niltava davidi* (N) 棕腹大仙鶯  
A first-winter male was at Tai Po Kau on 3rd and 9 February (MRL), a male was at HKU on 2nd, 11th, 21st and 25 March (YYT,MT) and a female was at Tai Tam Reservoir on 10 April (VBP). As with previous records of females, the latter record does not exclude the presumed extralimital Orange-bellied Niltava *N. sundara* which is apparently indistinguishable in the field.

1995: single males were at Tai Po Kau on 26 December (ICW) and at King's Park on 31 December (YYT).

**307 Hainan Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis hainanus* 海南藍鶯  
Present at Kap Lung on 17 April and 6 July, when two singing males with single juveniles were seen, at Tai Po Kau on 20 April, 17 May, 30 June and 7 July, Shing Mun on 20 April when four were heard singing, and 30 April when two males and one female were recorded, at KARC on 4 July when a juvenile was trapped and a bird was heard the next day, and KFBG where a juvenile was trapped on 15 July and a female seen on 2 September.

**308 Blue-and-white Flycatcher** *Cyanoptila cyanomelana* 白腹鶯  
In spring recorded during 5-20 April at seven sites, the highest count being seven males on Dong Ping Chau on 6 April. Two males were seen flying over the sea near Po Toi on 16 April. In autumn, two were trapped at Tai Mo Shan on 31 October and one was at Mount Austin on 9 November.

**309 Verditer Flycatcher** *Eumyias thalassina* 銅藍鶯  
Records of single birds came from Shuen Wan on 20 January, Tai Po Kau on 14 January, Mui Wo on 20 January, Coombe Road on 21 March and Kap Lung on 23 March. In the latter half of the year noted at KARC on 23 October, Barker Road on 22 November and Mui Wo on 29 December.

**310 Ferruginous Flycatcher** *Muscicapa ferruginea* 紅褐鶯  
Singles were at KFBG on 29 March, Dong Ping Chau on 8 April and Tai Po Kau on 10 April.

**311 Dark-sided Flycatcher** *Muscicapa sibirica* 烏鶯  
One was trapped at Tai Mo Shan on 28 August and singles were at Tai Po Kau on 1 September and 1 October, Mai Po on 29 September and 13 October, and KFBG on 19 November.

**312 Grey-streaked Flycatcher** *Muscicapa griseisticta* 斑胸鶯  
In spring recorded from 20 April to 18 May at Mai Po, KARC, Tai Po Kau, Mount Austin and Mui Wo, all records referring to single birds except for three at the latter site on 12 May. In autumn present during 15-29 September and on 27 October when one was at Tai Po Kau; also noted at Mai Po and Long Valley. All autumn records refer to singles.

**313 Asian Brown Flycatcher** *Muscicapa dauurica* 北灰鶯  
Up to three recorded at widespread locations up to 18 April; most records during this period referred to single birds, the highest count being three in Kowloon Park on 12 April. The first autumn record concerned one trapped at KARC on 3 September; thereafter regularly recorded until 20 October with a maximum of ten at Mai Po on 3 October. One near Tai Po Kau on 19 November was the last record of the year. Noted at 25 sites during the year.

**314 Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Ficedula parva* 紅喉鶯  
Singles at Mai Po on 21 February and 10 December and at Mong Tseng on 21 October were the only records. A remarkably poor year.

**315 Mugimaki Flycatcher** *Ficedula mugimaki* 鶯鶯  
In the first half of the year recorded at Ho Chung on 19 February, KFBG on 1 March, Tai Po Kau on 13 March, Kap Lung on 17 April and Kowloon Park the following day. Autumn passage spanned 2nd to 27 November with a high of three at KFBG on 19 November. Singles were present at Ngong Ping on 22 December and Ng Tung Chai on 27 December.

**316 Yellow-rumped Flycatcher** *Ficedula zanthopygia* 白眉鶯  
Present during 1-22 September at Mount Davies, KFBG, KARC, Mai Po, Ho Chung Wood and Tai Po Kau with the highest count being only four at Mai Po on 22 September. A poor year.

**317 Narcissus Flycatcher** *Ficedula narcissina* 黃眉鶯  
Single males were recorded on 6th, 12th, 13th and 17 April at Dong Ping Chau, Kowloon Park, Mount Davies, Ho Chung and KFBG.

**317.1 Green-backed Flycatcher** *Ficedula elisae* 綠背鶯  
A male was at Tai Po Kau on 11 April 1996 (RJK,CWM). This is the first record for Hong Kong (see Kemp and Melgar 1998).

**318 Grey-headed Flycatcher** *Culicicapa ceylonensis* 方尾鵲

Noted until 3 March at Cheung Chau, Tai Po Kau, Lam Tsuen Valley, Island House and Kowloon Hills Catchwater, with a maximum of five at the latter site on 11 January. First noted in autumn on 19 October near Tai Po Kau; one to two present at Mai Po from 10 November is the first record for the reserve. Also present at Kowloon Hills Catchwater on 7 December, and two were at Tai Po Kau on 31st.

**319 Asian Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone paradisi* 壽帶鳥

In spring one was in Kowloon Park during 11-13 April, and another was on Dong Ping Chau the following day. Present in autumn from 11 August, when one was at Mount Austin, until 28 September when three were in Tai Po Kau. One at Wu Kau Tang on 10 November was very late. Also recorded at Kap Lung, Ng Tung Chai, Mai Po and KFBG.

**320 Japanese Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone atrocaudata* (N) 紫壽帶鳥

One to two birds were recorded on 31 March and during 11-14 April at Kowloon Park, Dong Ping Chau, Shing Mun and Tai Po Kau. In autumn singles were trapped at KARC on 27th and 28 September and at KFBG on 9 October.

**321 Black-naped Monarch** *Hypothymis azurea* 黑枕王鵲

Singles were present on Cheung Chau between 9 January and 2 February, at Ho Chung on 20 January, at Mount Davies on 11 March and at Long Valley on 4 April. In the second part of the year singles were recorded at KFBG on 12 October, Tai Po Kau on 13 November, Cheung Chau on 27th and 30 November and 28 December and Kat O Chau on 16 December.

**321.2 Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler** *Pomatorhinus ruficollis* 棕頸鉤嘴鵲

On HK Island singles were heard in spring at Tai Tam CP and Mount Nicholson, and birds were also heard regularly throughout the year in the area south of Magazine Gap and occasionally at Mount Austin. In winter, two were present at Mount Davis on 24 December. In the NT up to three were present in the Shing Mun/Lower Shing Mun area from March to May, one was heard at Wong Chuk Yeung (Ma On Shan) on 30 July and 3 August, two were at Kap Lung Forest Trail on 15 September and at least one was at KARC on 16 December.

**321.5 Vinous-throated Parrotbill** *Paradoxornis webbianus* 棕頭鸚雀

The only report was of two at Tai Mo Shan on 31 May. This is the poorest showing for this species since 1990.

**[322 Chinese Babax** *Babax lanceolatus* 矛紋草鵲

No records of this species were submitted for the first time since 1986. Viney *et al.* (1994) suggested that the Hong Kong population of this species, which is restricted to the Tai Mo Shan massif, was declining, but there is no quantitative data and observer effort may also be a factor affecting the recording of this and the preceding species.]

**323 Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush** *Garrulax pectoralis* 黑領噪鵲

Seven at Tai Tam CP on 20 March was the only record from HK Island. In the NT there were records from Ng Tung Chai, Kap Lung Forest Trail, Ho Chung, Kowloon Hills Catchwater, Tai Po Kau, Sha Lo Tung and Wong Chuk Yeung (Ma On Shan). The largest flocks were parties of 20 at Ng Tung Chai on 3 March and 12 at Wong Chuk Yeung on 25 November.

**324 Black-throated Laughingthrush** *Garrulax chinensis* 黑喉噪鵲

On HK Island up to three were recorded at Hatton Road, ZBG, Mount Davis and Cape D'Aguilar. In the NT up to three were reported at Ho Chung, Kowloon Hills Catchwater, Ng Tung Chai, Shing Mun CP, Tai Po Kau and Wong Chuk Yeung (Ma On Shan). The only higher count was of seven to the north of Ho Chung on 10 November.

**325 Hwamei** *Garrulax canorus* 畫眉

No significant reports.

**326 White-browed Laughingthrush** *Garrulax sannio* 白頰噪鵲

Up to two were recorded on HK Island at Admiralty, ZBG and Cape D'Aguilar. Elsewhere there were up to three at Chau Tau, Lead Mine Pass and Shing Mun. Most records came from Chau Tau in spring where adults were seen carrying food on 18th and 20 April; food-carrying was also noted at Shing Mun on 1 August. In addition, newly-fledged juveniles were accompanied by an adult at Kowloon Park on 2 April.

**327 Masked Laughingthrush** *Garrulax perspicillatus* 黑臉噪鵲

No significant reports.

**328 Red-billed Leiothrix** *Leiothrix lutea* 紅嘴相思鳥

As usual, most reports came from the central NT where up to six were recorded at Kowloon Hills Catchwater, Shing Mun, Tai Po Kau, Ng Tung Chai and Tai Mo Shan. A total of 27 birds was trapped at KARC/KFBG throughout the year with a maximum of seven caught on 30 March. The only report from elsewhere was of three at Hatton Road, HK Island on 5 January.

**329 Striated Yuhina** *Yuhina castaniceps* 栗頭鳳鵲

Six were recorded at Ng Tung Chai on 10 February, with four there on 18 February, and five were at Kowloon Hills Catchment on 11 March. The only autumn record was of two adults plus two juveniles trapped out of at least five birds present at KFBG on 2 September; the adults showed signs of having been in captivity but the juveniles had been raised in the wild (MRL).

**330 White-bellied Yuhina** *Yuhina zantholeuca* 白腹鳳鵲

Most reports were from Tai Po Kau in the first half of the year and the highest count there was of four on 20 April. Single birds were reported at Kowloon

Hills Catchment on 18th and 21 January and 1 March, and two were there on 28 February. Elsewhere, one was at A Ma Wat on 21 January and one was at Shing Mun on 12 April. In the second part of the year one was at Tai Po Kau on 1 July with two there on 28 September, and the only other report in the latter part of the year was of at least one at Sheung Tam Shui Hang (near Sha Tau Kok) on 29 November.

**331 Black-throated Tit** *Aegithalos concinnus* 紅頭山雀

At Tai Po Kau two were recorded on 14 January, with one there on 16th; six were present on 23 January and again on 7 April. The only record from there in the second half of the year was of a single bird on 13 December. The only report elsewhere was of one at Kowloon Hills Catchwater on 18 January.

**332 Yellow-bellied Tit** *Parus venustus* 黃腹山雀

All records were from Tai Po Kau Park in the first winter period and perhaps related to the same three birds: two adults plus one immature on 14 January, three on 29 March, and two or three on 14 April.

**333 Great Tit** *Parus major* 大山雀  
No significant reports.

**333.1 Yellow-cheeked Tit** *Parus spilonotus* 黃頰山雀

In the first winter period one or two were recorded at Tai Po Kau on eleven dates up to 20 April. There was also one at the Kowloon Hills Catchwater on 28 February and 1 March and up to two at Shing Mun between 21 March and 22 April, including a male carrying food on the last date. The only reports in the second winter period were of one at Tai Po Kau on 19 October and two there on 24 November and 7 December.

**334 Chinese Penduline Tit** *Remiz consobrinus* 攀雀

Regularly recorded at Mai Po and also seen at Lut Chau in January and February; most reports were of fewer than ten birds, though 25 were noted at Mai Po on 11 February. Slightly higher numbers were noted in March with peaks of 20 at Mai Po on 9th and 23 at Lut Chau on 12th; also recorded at Ma Tso Lung. Passage was apparent during April when, unusually, 15 were recorded at Long Valley on 4th increasing to 34 on 8th with ten still present on 19th. The peak count at Mai Po was of 40 on 14 April, when there were also 12 at Nam Sang Wai. After five were seen at Lin Barn Tsuen on 28 April the only subsequent record was of four at Mai Po on 17 May (TaR), a new late date for Hong Kong. In autumn, heard at Ma Tso Lung on 10 November; subsequently four were noted at Mai Po on 15 November with five there on 24 November.

**335 Fork-tailed Sunbird** *Aethopyga christinae* 叉尾太陽鳥  
No significant reports.

**336 Buff-bellied Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum ignipectus* 紅胸啄花鳥

Eight records were received: one at Tai Lam CP on 2 January, one at Tai Po Kau on 23rd, two males at Bride's Pool on 12 February, a male and a female at Lai Chi Wo on 18 February, two males in song at Shing Mun on 30 April, another in song at Tai Po Kau on 17 May, two juveniles at Shuen Wan on 26 August and, finally, one at Sha Lo Tung on 27 October.

**337 Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum cruentatum* 朱背啄花鳥  
No significant reports.

**337.1 Plain Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum concolor* 純色啄花鳥

One was at Ho Chung on 7 April (RJK,CWM). This is the ninth Hong Kong record.

**338 Chestnut-flanked White-eye** *Zosterops erythropleurus* 紅脅嘯眼鳥

There were three birds at Tai Po Kau on 29 February, at least two at KARC on 9 November and two at Tai Po Kau on 13 December.

**339 Japanese White-eye** *Zosterops japonicus* 暗綠嘯眼鳥

Flocks of 115 at Po Toi on 27 November and 50 at Tai Mo Shan on 28 November both occurred in locations where this species is scarce and were probably migrants.

**340 Black-naped Oriole** *Oriolus chinensis* 黑枕黃鸝

On HK Island singles were at Cape D'Aguilar on 27 September and Mount Austin on 26 October. Elsewhere, in the NT there were singles at Island House on 15 February, Kap Lung on 16 April, Man Kei Toi Government Quarters on 12 May and Mai Po on 16 May. In autumn there were two at Mong Tseng on 28 September with one there on 6 October, and singles at Tsim Bei Tsui on 28 September and Mai Po on 3rd and 8 October.

**341 Tiger Shrike** *Lanius tigrinus* 虎紋伯勞

A first-winter was at the Hong Kong Observatory on 15 September (CYL). This is the ninth Hong Kong record.

**342 Brown Shrike** *Lanius cristatus* 紅尾伯勞

Birds of the form *lucionensis* were recorded in spring from 4 April to 19 May. Singles were at Kowloon Park, Tai Po Kau, Long Valley and Nam Sang Wai in April, and in May one to six birds were recorded at Shuen Wan, Chuen Lung, Cape D'Aguilar, Mai Po, Mui Wo, Tai Long Wan, Pok Fu Lam, Yung Shue O, Ngong Ping, Chi Ma Wan, Tai O, Penfold Park, Nam Sang Wai and Po Toi. High counts were twelve at Cape D'Aguilar on 8 May and ten at Mui Wo 12 May. In autumn the earliest records were of one at KFBG on 31 August and one of the form *cristatus* at Chek Lap Kok on 4 September. Subsequently, during September up to two birds were recorded at Tin Shui Wai, Mai Po, Mount Davis, Mui Wo and Shing Mun. In October up to two birds were recorded at Long Valley, Mai Po and

Sha Lo Tung during 1-12th. There was also a winter record of one at Long Valley on 8 December.

- 343 Long-tailed Shrike** *Lanius schach* 棕背伯勞  
No significant records.

- 345 Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus* 黑卷尾  
Up to three birds were noted at widespread locations during the first winter period. Spring passage was not well recorded but four in Kowloon Park on 20 April and five at Chek Lap Kok on 27 April were clearly migrants. In early autumn there were counts of more than ten at Kuk Po, Dong Ping Chau, Mai Po, Tin Shui Wai, Chek Lap Kok and Kam Tin with the highest counts at Long Valley, where there were 25 on 21 September and 30 on 6 October. After a record of 13 at Chek Lap Kok on 8 October, up to three were recorded at various localities in the Deep Bay area until the year end.

- 346 Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus* 灰卷尾  
In the first winter period one of the race *leucogenis* was in Tai Po Kau on 16 January with one of the race *salagensis* there on 3 February. Two *leucogenis* were at Kowloon Hills Catchwater on 3 March with one of each race at Shing Mun on 21 March and single unassigned birds at Mount Davis on 6th and 13 April. In the second winter period the only reports were of one at Mui Wo on 28 September and one *leucogenis* at Tai Po Kau on 13 November.

- 347 Hair-crested Drongo** *Dicrurus hottentottus* 髮冠卷尾  
A flock of nine birds was in Lam Tsuen Valley (a regular location for winter flocks) on 4 February and eight birds were at Kap Lung on 26 March. Two were at Dong Ping Chau (where breeding has not yet been reported) on 13 April; otherwise there were no significant spring passage or summer reports. In autumn, the highest counts were 62, a new high for Hong Kong, at Mui Wo on 15 October (PJH) and ten were at Tai Po Kau on 1 October; two at Chek Lap Kok, also on 15 October, were migrants.

- 348 Eurasian Jay** *Garrulus glandarius* 松鴉  
One was at Tai Long Wan on 17 May, two were at Wu Kau Tang on the same date, two were together at Lower Shing Mun on 5 July, two were at Kap Lung on 28 October and one was at Kap Lung on 30 November.

- 349 Blue Magpie** *Urocissa erythrorhynchus* 紅嘴藍鵲  
No significant records.

- 350 Grey Treepie** *Dendrocitta formosae* 灰樹鵲  
In the first part of the year recorded up to 1 June at Tai Po Kau, Lam Tsuen, KARC, Kap Lung, Yung Shue O, Mount Kellett, HKU, Pok Fu Lam and Mount Davis; four at Kap Lung on 26 March was the highest count. Noted again from 28 August with records in the second half of the year at Ho Chung, KFBG,

Kap Lung, Tai Po Kau and Lam Tsuen; all involved single birds apart from two at Ho Chung on 3 December, the final record of the year.

- 351 Common Magpie** *Pica pica* 喜鵲  
No significant records.

- 352 Large-billed Crow** *Corvus macrorhynchus* 大嘴烏鴉  
No significant records.

- 353 Collared Crow** *Corvus torquatus* 白頸鴉  
In the first winter period all records came from the Deep Bay area, with a peak count of 21 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 7 January. Two were at Dong Ping Chau on 6 April and 25 were counted at Mai Po on 20 April. A flock remained at Shuen Wan all summer with monthly peak counts of 40 on 24 May, 42 on 30 June, 40 on 17 July and 26 on 20 August. There were five at Dong Ping Chau on 22 September and 18 at Mong Tseng on 6 October; the highest counts subsequent to these were six at Shuen Wan on 15 October and five at Chek Lap Kok on 9 November. One inland at Sha Lo Tung on 12 October was unusual.

- 354 Red-billed Starling** *Sturnus sericeus* (N) 絲棕鳥  
During the first half of the year high counts were 400 at Kam Tin on 28 February, 500 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 3 March and 800 at Ma Tso Lung on 5 March; also recorded in smaller number at Shuen Wan, Penfold Park, Mai Po, Sha Po, Lin Barn Tsuen, Nam Sang Wai and Long Valley. The latest record was of four birds at Long Valley on 14 April. During the second winter period the earliest record was of three at Tsim Bei Tsui on 7 October. High counts subsequently were 1200 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 29 October, 600 between Mai Po and Ma Tso Lung on 16 November, 800 between Mai Po and Lok Ma Chau on 14 December and 1000 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 21 December. Also recorded at Nam Sang Wai, Shuen Wan, Chek Lap Kok, Kam Tin and Sha Lo Tung.

- 355 Purple-backed Starling** *Sturnus sturninus* 北棕鳥  
Singles were at Ho Chung on 10 May, Mui Wo on 21 September, Lin Barn Tsuen on 8 October and Long Valley on 19 October, and two were Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 October.

- 356 Chestnut-cheeked Starling** *Sturnus philippensis* (N) 紫背棕鳥  
Single males were at Long Valley on 4th (MT) and 14 April (YYT) and a male and a female were at Ho Chung on 20 April (MH). In October a female was at Nam Sang Wai on 18th (RWL), a male was at Long Valley on 20th (CHF) and a female or immature was there on 27 October (CHF).

- 357 White-shouldered Starling** *Sturnus sinensis* 灰背棕鳥  
From January to March singles were recorded at Penfold Park, Mai Po and Tsim Bei Tsui. Recorded virtually throughout Hong Kong in April, with high counts of 79 at Mui Wo on the 4th, 45 at Long Valley on the 14th, 45 at Tsim Bei

Tsui on the 19th and 30 at Mai Po on the 20th. Breeding was confirmed at Mui Wo, where there were at least ten pairs in three colonies, and Lok On Pai (Castle Peak); other breeding season reports came from Tai O, Nam Sang Wai, Cape D'Aguilar and Shek O (where three juveniles were noted on 22 August). Autumn passage was much less obvious than that in spring but 80 (a new high) were at Long Valley on 15 September (PJL) and seven were at Chek Lap Kok on 18 September. During the last three months of the year there were records from Mong Tseng, Mai Po, Tsim Bei Tsui, Nam Sang Wai, Kam Tin, Lok Ma Chau Border Fence and Lin Barn Tsuen. High counts were 32 on 16 November and 23 on 14 December, both at Nam Sang Wai.

**358 Common Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris* 紫翅椋鳥  
One at Kam Tin on 25 October was the only record.

**359 Rose-coloured Starling** *Sturnus roseus* 粉紅椋鳥  
A juvenile was at Mai Po on 31 December (EMSK). This is the second Hong Kong record, the first having occurred during 30 December 1984 to 16 March 1985.

**360 White-checked Starling** *Sturnus cineraceus* 灰椋鳥  
In the first winter period records were, as usual, concentrated in the Deep Bay area. The largest flocks were 103 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 6 January, 118 at Mai Po on 24 February and 120 at Tsim Bei Tsui and 50 at Ma Tso Lung on 3 March. Away from the Deep Bay area, there were two at Shuen Wan on 5 January, a regular flock at Kam Tin which peaked at 50 on 25 February and 30 at Lam Tsuen valley on 12 March. Fifty were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 2 April but few were present thereafter; the latest records were of one at Cape D'Aguilar on 10 April (apparently the first record on Hong Kong Island since 1992), two at Tin Shui Wai on 14 April and one at Long Valley on 17 April. In the second winter period the first three were at Kam Tin on 13 October; subsequently, there were four at Nam Sang Wai on 15 October and four at Mai Po on 20 October. Numbers remained low for the next three weeks with 120 at Ma Tso Lung on 10 November being the first substantial flock. A flock of 155 at Nam Sang Wai on 16 November increased to 430 on 14 December (RWL), exceeding the high count for Hong Kong set at the same site in the previous year. Fifty at Mai Po on 27 December was the only other sizeable flock reported in the Deep Bay area; elsewhere, one was at Long Valley on 9 November, up to 15 were at Kam Tin in November, two were at Kat O Chau on 16 December and one was at Penfold Park on 31 December.

**361 Black-collared Starling** *Sturnus nigricollis* 黑領椋鳥  
High counts were 191 on 6 January, 270 on 12 October, and 280 on 29 October, all at Tsim Bei Tsui. Elsewhere, there were 112 at Mai Po on 3 September and 250 at Nam Sang Wai on 16 November. Two present for about a week from 8 April at Coombe Road, HK Island, is unusual for this locality.

**362 Crested Myna** *Acridotheres cristatellus* 八哥  
The highest counts received were 389 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 6 January, 500 at Tsim Bei Tsui on 12 September, 415 at Nam Sang Wai on 16 November and 400 at Chek Lap Kok on 19 November.

**363 Eurasian Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus* 麻雀  
No significant records.

**364 White-rumped Munia** *Lonchura striata* 白腰文鳥  
Flocks included 23 at Shuen Wan on 19 January, 30 at Kowloon Park on 28 February, eight at Ngong Ping on November and 29 at Kowloon Hill Catchwater on 7 December.

**365 Scaly-breasted Munia** *Lonchura punctulata* 斑文鳥  
Recorded at Shuen Wan, Fung Hang (Luk Keng), Long Valley, Chau Tau, Tin Shui Wai, Mai Po, Nam Sang Wai, Tai O and Cape D'Aguilar. High counts were 40 at Nam Sang Wai on 16 November and 20 at Long Valley on 30 March and 4 April. A newly-fledged juvenile was trapped at Cape D'Aguilar on 9 December.

**366.1 Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla* 燕雀  
One was along the border fence near Lok Ma Chau on 16 November (GJC).

**1995:** a tame, presumed escape was at Magazine Gap on 8th and 10 May (VBP).

**367 Grey-capped Greenfinch** *Carduelis sinica* 金翅雀  
There were two at Chi Fu, HK Island on 3 February, with one there on 16 March, three at Sha Tin Central Park on 3 April, one at Kau To Shan on 6 July, one at Wu Kau Tang on 21 December, and two at High West on 22 December.

**368 Eurasian Siskin** *Carduelis spinus* 黃雀  
A female was at Mount Austin on 22 November and a male plus two females were at Fanling Golf Course on 21 December.

**369 Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus* 朱雀  
Single female/immatures were at Mui Wo on 20 January and at Lam Tsuen on 12 March; a juvenile was trapped at Tin Shui Wai on 15 October and three were at KFBG on 8 December.

**370 Yellow-billed Grosbeak** *Eophona migratoria* 黑尾蜡嘴雀  
In the first winter period five were at Mong Tseng on 21 January, nine were at Tsim Bei Tsui on 25 January with six there on 29 February, three were at Kowloon Park and 65 were at Nam Sang Wai on 2 April, and 38 were at the latter locality on 14 April. The only record in the second part of the year concerned one at Nam Sang Wai on 16 November.

**370.1 Japanese Grosbeak** *Eophona personata* 黑頭鵙雀  
One was at Kowloon Park on 2 April (VD). This is the eighth record for Hong Kong, but only the second away from Lam Tsuen Valley.

**371 Black-faced Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala* 灰頭鵙  
Recorded in small numbers at widespread areas from January to April and after November. The highest counts were 60 and 40 at Mai Po on 3rd and 4 April respectively, with 40 again there on 14th, 20 at Nam Sang Wai on 4 April, 15 at Sha Lo Tung on 20 January and 14 at Lut Chau on 12 March. The latest spring record concerned ten at Mai Po on 8 May; the earliest autumn record was of one at Long Valley on 26 October. Subsequent counts in the second half of the year were no higher than six.

**372 Japanese Yellow Bunting** *Emberiza sulphurata* (V) 硫黃鵙  
Counts in April at Mai Po and Long Valley were as follows:

	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	12th	14th	17th	19th	20th
MP	14	6	1			1	1	3	2		2
LV		3	17	10	2			7	4	2	

In addition, one was at Tsim Bei Tsui on 4th, at least four were at Pok Fu Lam on 7th, one was at Tai Tam on 9th, up to four were at Tai Po Kau village during 9-10th, three were at Sandy Bay during 11-12th, eight were at Dong Ping Chau on 13th, two were at Ho Chung on 14th and one was at Nam Sang Wai on 22nd and 24th. Surpassing even 1993, this was a record spring; the count of 17 (PJL) is a new high.

**373 Chestnut-eared Bunting** *Emberiza fucata* 赤胸鵙  
The only spring records were in April at Long Valley: one on 14th, two on 18th and two on 29th. In autumn two were at Tin Shui Wai on 21 October, two were at Long Valley on 26 October with one there on 19 December, one was at Ma Wan on 28 October and one was at Luk Keng on 7 December.

**373.1 Yellow-throated Bunting** *Emberiza elegans* 黃喉鵙  
Single males were seen in April at Mount Nicholson on 7th (VBP), near Tai Po Kau on 8th (LB) and at Tai Tam CP during 9-10th (MT, VBP). These are the fourth to sixth Hong Kong records. In addition, a tame, possibly cage-damaged female was at Hatton Road, HK Island, on 10 January. (MT).

**373.2 Yellow-browed Bunting** *Emberiza chrysophrys* 黃眉鵙  
A female was at Mai Po on 8 April (GJC).

**374 Tristram's Bunting** *Emberiza tristrami* 白眉鵙  
Up to 12, though usually five or fewer, were reported from Kap Lung, Tai Po Kau, KFBG, Ng Tung Chai and Kowloon Hills Catchwater up to mid March. Presumed passage birds were noted at Ho Chung, Tai Po Kau, Sandy Bay, Chau Tau, Mai Po, Dong Ping Chau and Kowloon Park from 21 March to 20 April, usually singles though two were reported on 21 March and five on 16 April. In autumn there was only one record, a female at Kap Lung on 28 October.

**375 Rustic Bunting** *Emberiza rustica* 田鵙  
A male was at Mai Po on 20 April (VBP).

**376 Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla* 小鵙  
Up to 20 widely recorded in the first winter period up to 21 April. Most records were from Sha Lo Tung, Long Valley, Lin Barn Tsuen, Mai Po and Shuen Wan. Also recorded at Ma Tso Lung, Shek Kong, Chek Lap Kok, Mount Austin, Nam Sang Wai, Lam Tsuen, Lut Chau, Pok Fu Lam, Tai Tam Reservoir, Tai Po Kau Village, Sandy Bay, and KFBG. High counts were 100 at Sha Lo Tung on 20 January, with 50 there on 28th and on 11 February, 50 at Lin Barn Tsuen on 5 April and 40 at Mai Po on 3rd and 14 April. In autumn the only reports received were from Sha Lo Tung where up to 150 were present.

**377 Chestnut Bunting** *Emberiza rutila* 栗鵙  
In spring recorded during 5-22 April, mostly at Long Valley, but also at Lin Barn Tsuen, Sandy Bay, Shing Mun, Mai Po and Nam Sang Wai. Most concerned one or two birds, though 15 were at Long Valley and eight were at Mai Po on 14th and six were at Long Valley on 17th. Autumn records fell within the period 16 October to 12 December. Most records were from Mount Austin and Sha Lo Tung but also recorded at Mount Davis, Kap Lung, KFBG, Kowloon Hills Catchwater and Chek Lap Kok. High counts were 40 at Sha Lo Tung on 24 November, 20 at Sha Lo Tung on 28 November, 20 at KFBG on 25 October and 15 at Long Valley on 14 April.

**378 Yellow-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza aureola* 黃胸鵙  
In spring recorded from 11 March to 17 May mostly at Mai Po, Lin Barn Tsuen and Long Valley but also at Kam Tin, Shuen Wan, Tin Shui Wai, Tsim Bei Tsui, Sandy Bay and Tai O. All records were of one to ten birds apart from 40 at Tin Shui Wai on 20th. Noted in the second half of the year from 28 August to 20 December. About half the records occurred during October, and the most favoured site in autumn was Long Valley but it was also recorded at Chek Lap Kok, Mai Po, Lin Barn Tsuen, Sha Lo Tung, Tin Shui Wai, Dong Ping Chau, Mount Davis and Kam Tin. Most counts were of one to ten birds but 20 were at Tin Shui Wai on 13 October and 30 were at Long Valley on 13 November.

**379 Common Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus* 蘆鵙  
A male was at Mai Po on 19 February (DAD). At Mai Po village fish ponds up to four (three females and a male) were present from 22 March to 5 April (PJL *et al.*).

**379.x Black-/Red-headed Bunting** *E. melanocephala/bruniceps* 黑/褐頭鵙  
An unidentified Black- or Red-headed Bunting was at Mount Austin on 26 October (MT).

**380 Crested Bunting** *Melophus lathami* 鳳頭鵙  
A male was in song at Tai Mo Shan on 26 April, a male was at Chuen Lung on 31 May and one was at Robin's Nest on 3 August.

### CATEGORY C

*Species which, although originally introduced by man, have now established a regular feral breeding stock that may or may not be self-supporting*

- 601 Rock Dove** *Columba livia* 野鴿  
No significant reports.
- 603 Lesser Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** *Cacatua sulphurea* 小葵花鳳頭鸚鵡  
No significant reports.
- 604 Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri* 紅領綠鸚鵡  
Up to two were noted in Penfold Park during January, March and April, and although singles in Hong Kong and Kowloon Parks in April were the only reports, also present in other areas of HK Island. Apparently not as numerous or as widespread as previously, this species appears to be declining.
- 605 Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis* 家八哥  
No significant reports.

### CATEGORY D

*Species that have occurred in an apparently wild state but for which the possibility of escape or release from captivity cannot be satisfactorily excluded*

- 705.1 Brown-breasted Bulbul** *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous* 黃臀鸚  
Two were at KFBG on 30 September (GAW).  
**1995:** singles were at Kowloon Park on 5 April (YYL) and at Tsim Bei Tsui on 14 April (VBP).
- 706.6 Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher** *Ficedula strophilata* 橙胸鵲  
**1995:** one was at Ng Tung Chai on 3 December (PA). This is the fourth Hong Kong record.
- 709 Rufous-capped Babbler** *Stachyris ruficeps* 紅頭穗鵲  
At the now traditional site of Shing Mun singles, unless stated, were present on 8 February (MDW), 8 March (MDW), 21 March (two) (MT), 12 April (five) (MT), 24 April (two) (DAD) and 20 July (two) (YYT).  
**1995:** at Shing Mun up to five males in song were noted during 9-16 February (MDW) and two were noted on 11 March (MDW).
- 711 Grey-headed Parrotbill** *Paradoxornis gularis* 灰頭雀鵲  
One was at Kowloon Hills Catchwater on 11 March (DAD). One trapped at KARC on 23 May (MRL) had damage to plumage and bare parts and was clearly an escape.

- 712 Grey-cheeked Fulvetta** *Alcippe morrisonia* 灰眶雀鵲  
There were three records during the year, all of single birds, at Ng Tung Chai on 11 February, 22 November and 27 December.

**1995:** a flock of six was at Beacon Hill on 24 September (GET).

- 712.1 Velvet-fronted Nuthatch** *Sitta frontalis* 絨額鸛  
Reported at Tai Po Kau throughout the year, the maximum count being 11 on 16 January; a family party of two adults and two juveniles was present on 7 July. Single birds were also noted at Kowloon Hills Catchwater in January and February, Shing Mun in April and Kap Lung in September.

- 712.5 Chestnut-tailed Starling** *Sturnus malabaricus* 灰頭椋鳥  
The resident pair at Kowloon Park were reported in January, March, April, May and September, though were no doubt present all year. On 20th and 29 April they were recorded visiting a tree hole nest.

- 712.7 Russet Sparrow** *Passer rutilans* 山麻雀  
A female was at Long Valley on 13 November (EMSK). In addition, a male at Sandy Bay on 1st and 4 May (MRL,MT) and one of two females seen at Kam Tin on 30 November (DAD,EMSK) had feather damage indicating captive origin.

- 715.3 Meadow Bunting** *Emberiza cioides* 三道眉草鵲  
Two (at least one of the form *castaneiceps*) were at Hatton Road, HK Island, during 15-19 January (YYT *et al.*), a male of the form *ciopsis* was at Chek Lap Kok during 26-27 February and again during 12-13 March (GJC), one was at Sandy Bay on 11 April (MT) and one of the form *castaneiceps* was at Sha Lo Tung on 23 November (MT). The latter, perhaps, is the most likely to have been a wild bird.

**1995:** a male was at Cheung Chau on 31 December (MDW).

### CATEGORY E

*Species for which all published records are suspected of being birds that have escaped or been released from captivity*

- 801.5 Red Lory** *Eos borneo* 紅色吸蜜鸚鵡
- 802.8\* Salmon-crested Cockatoo** *Cacatua moluccensis* 鮭色鳳頭鸚鵡
- 805 Alexandrine Parakeet** *Psittacula eupatria* 亞歷山大鸚鵡
- 812 Golden-fronted Leafbird** *Chloropsis aurifrons* 金額葉鸚
- 812.5 Blue-winged Leafbird** *Chloropsis cochinchinensis* 藍翅葉鸚
- 814 Hill Blue Flycatcher** *Cyornis banyumas* 山藍仙鵲
- 814.3^ Ashy-throated Parrotbill** *Paradoxornis alphonsianus* 灰喉鸛雀
- 816 Silver-eared Mesia** *Leiothrix argenteauris* 銀耳相思鳥
- 816.01 Blue-winged Minla** *Minla cyanuroptera* 藍翅希鸚
- 816.8\* Green-backed Tit** *Parus monticolus* 綠背山雀

819	<b>Vinous-breasted Starling</b> <i>Sturnus burmannicus</i>	紅嘴椋鳥
821	<b>White-vented Myna</b> <i>Acridotheres javanicus</i>	林八哥
822	<b>Hill Myna</b> <i>Gracula religiosa</i>	鵲哥
833.6*	<b>Twite</b> <i>Carduelis flavirostris</i>	黃嘴朱頂雀
824	<b>Baya Weaver</b> <i>Ploceus philippinus</i>	黃胸織布鳥
831	<b>Yellow-fronted Canary</b> <i>Serinus mozambicus</i>	黃額綠雀

The species marked \* were first recorded in 1996; that marked ^ was first recorded in 1995.

Silver-eared Mesias were regularly seen at KFBG and KARC throughout the year; other records came from Shing Mun, Kowloon Hills Catchwater, Tai Po Kau and Ng Tung Chai, the latter locality registering the highest count of 20 on 3 March. Up to ten were also noted in the Hatton Road area of HK Island. Blue-winged Minlas were recorded from the same localities as Silver-eared Mesia though in smaller numbers. Baya Weavers again nested at Mai Po, and the maximum count in the area was 14.

*The following records were submitted to, but not accepted by,  
the Records Committee.*

Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus*, Tsim Bei Tsui 14-15 April; Shearwater sp. *Puffinus* sp., southern waters 3 May; Pacific Reef Egret *Egretta sacra*, Mai Po 17 May; Blue-breasted Quail *Coturnix chinensis*, Tai Mo Shan 10 May; Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*, Kam Tin 17 November; Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*, Mai Po 23 September and 15 October; Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*, Lam Tsuen 21 October; Japanese Sparrowhawk *Accipiter gularis* female, Tsim Bei Tsui 22 April; female, KARC 8 November (all accepted as *Accipiter* sp.); Besra *Accipiter virgatus*, Shuen Wan 3 February, Mai Po 6 February, Shuen Wan 15th, 20th and 24 May, Lut Chau 3 September, Shek Kong 18 September, Mai Po 21 September, Tsim Bei Tsui 16 November, Shuen Wan 19 November, Ping Shan Chai 21 December (all accepted as *Accipiter* sp.); Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*, Kam Tin 28 September, Long Valley 9 November (accepted as *Accipiter* sp.); Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*, Sha Tin 22nd and 23 February, 16 March; Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*, Sha Tin 3 March; Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*, Tsim Bei Tsui 18 March; Merlin *Falco columbarius*, Sha Tin 6 May; Baillon's Crane *Porzana pusilla*, Long Valley 19 May; Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Shing Mun 4 April; Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*, near Cheung Chau 15 April; Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*, Mai Po 14 January; Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx fugax*, Mount Nicholson 20 April; Grass Owl *Tyto capensis*, Sha Chau 1 February; Brown Hawk Owl *Ninox scutulata*, Tai Tam Reservoir 2 March and Mount Nicholson 20 April; Blue-throated Bee-eater *Merops viridis*, two, Mai Po 25 April; Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*, Sha Tin 3 March; Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*, Lam Tsuen 19 October; Bay Woodpecker *Blythipicus pyrrhotis*, Shing Mun 11 March; 'Black-backed Wagtail' *Motacilla alba lugens*, Dong Ping Chau 6 January (two) and 19 October (three); Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata*, Ho Chung 7 April; Styan's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella pleskei*, Mai Po 24 September; Thick-billed Warbler *Acrocephalus aedon*, Liu Pok 29 September; Snowy-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra*, KFBG 21 December; Olive-backed Sunbird *Nectarinia jugularis*, Sha Tin 15 April to 4 October; Brown-capped Fulvetta *Alcippe brunnea*, Tai Po Kau 5 April; Brown-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus xanthorrhous*, Kau Sai Chau 25 August and Woo Pavillion 1 October.

1995: Besra *Accipiter virgatus*, Shing Mun 16 February; Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*, Tung Chung 25 November; White-legged Falconet *Microhierax melanoleucos*, Sha Tin 19 May; Styan's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella pleskei*, Nam Sang Wai 11 November and Mai Po 6 December; Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*, Ma Wan 13 March, Kowloon Park 10th and 16 September, Ngong Ping, 23 December.

1993: Owl sp. Wong Nai Tuin 18 July.

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## WINTER WATERFOWL COUNTS 1995-96

G.J. Carey

Coordinated mid-monthly counts of wintering waterfowl in Hong Kong were again carried out from November to March. These were conducted on 11 November, 9 December, 13 January, 10 February and 9 March. The January count was carried out as part of the Asian Waterfowl Census under the auspices of Wetlands International Asia Pacific (formerly Asian Wetland Bureau). In accordance with guidelines provided by Wetlands International, other counts, if higher, were included from the one-week period either side of the coordinated count date. It should be noted that for the majority of species this means the single count must be higher than the total number provided by the coordinated count for it to be included. Coverage was good with only four areas not surveyed: Fu Tian during November and January, Tin Shui Wai during December and Nam Sang Wai during March.

The results of the five counts are summarised in table 1. The January count is provided in full in table 2 to allow comparison with previous years. Full details of all counts can be obtained from the count coordinator.

Table 1. Winter 1995-96 Waterfowl Count totals by group and site

group	site	Nov <sup>1</sup>	Dec <sup>2</sup>	Jan <sup>3</sup>	Feb	Mar <sup>4</sup>
Cormorants	DB	1617	6550	8009	4521	3742
	SI/SW	0	0	0	0	0
Ardeids	DB	3029	4339	5944	5847	2191
	SI/SW	378	614	472	636	577
Ducks and grebes	DB	12,050	15,485	23,037	22,264	13418
	SI/SW	26	0	32	26	0
Rails, Coot etc.	DB	556	1376	1658	930	740
	SI/SW	4	3	15	3	5
Waders	DB	2306	4824	8887	8678	6755
	SI/SW	28	1	32	2	6
Gulls and terns	DB	1887	7561	20932	15,331	496
	SI/SW	0	0	183	80	0
Total	DB	21,445	40,135	68,467	57,571	27,342
	SI/SW	520	631	734	747	588

DB = Deep Bay area; SW = Shuen Wan; SI = Starling Inlet

1 - Fu Tian not counted; 2 - Tin Shui Wai not counted; 3 - Fu Tian not counted; 4 - Nam Sang Wai not counted.

During the January count a total of 68,467 waterbirds of 67 species were recorded in the Deep Bay area; excluding Nam Sang Wai, which was only included in the list of count sites last winter, the total is 67,786. The latter count represents a new high and is 7218 or 11.9% higher than the previous high of 60,568 attained in January 1995. In addition, 437 birds of 14 species were recorded at Shuen Wan and 300 birds of nine species were recorded at Starling Inlet.

New Deep Bay highs were noted in January for Night Heron (2500), Avocet (1122), Marsh Sandpiper 878 (a new winter high, a little over 200 higher than the previous highest) and Black-headed Gull (20,629). In other months, new highs were established in February for Grey Heron (1962), Teal (5322 - more than 2000 higher than the previous highest), and Tufted Duck (387). The number of Avocet wintering in Deep Bay has now doubled since 1993; this may be related to changes in water quality. Cormorant numbers reached a new high of 8009 which constitutes about 1.1% of the northern hemisphere population.

Although wader numbers dropped to one-third below the high set last year, the increase in numbers of duck and gulls and terns, both of which reached new highs, more than compensated. Other highlights were a maximum of 23 Dalmatian Pelicans, sustaining the improvement of recent years, and a Long-billed Dowitcher which is the first waterfowl count record.

If the highest Deep Bay counts in the winter period proper, defined as December to February, for each species are added together, the total is 72,960, about 6.6% higher than the Deep Bay count for January. This is, perhaps, a more accurate reflection of the importance of Deep Bay as it is the minimum number of birds that utilise its resources for at least part of the winter.

Raptor species were again counted and the following January totals were obtained: Black Kite - 155; Marsh Harrier - 3; Common Buzzard - 7; Spotted Eagle - 2; Imperial Eagle - 8; Osprey - 4.

The cooperation of the staff at Fu Tian Nature Reserve and WWF-HK is gratefully acknowledged. The following observers participated in the counts: G.J. Carey (coordinator), J.A. Hackett, P.J. Leader, R.W. Lewthwaite, D. Cha, W.H. Lee, D.A. Diskin, R. Ferguson, P.J. Hopkin, E.M.S. Kilburn, M.R. Leven, V.B. Picken, G.A. Walthew, P. Aston, R. Costin, M. Hale, H.F. Cheung, J.S.R. Edge, D.S. Melville, R.D.E. Stott, I. Tyzzer, Y.J. Wang, J. Webster, F.K.O. Wong, C.A. Viney, L. Young. I would like to express my thanks to all who took part.

在九五至九六年度的冬季裏（十一月至三月），水禽調查照舊在每個月的中旬進行，表一是該五次調查的撮要。其中一月的結果則詳列於表二，以便和過去幾年的紀錄比較。九六年一月，在後海灣一帶共錄得六十七個品種，合共68,467隻，若扣除（只在九五—九六年度起才加進調查範圍的）南生園的紀錄，則為67,786隻，即比1995年同期的60,568多出7,218隻（11.9%），又再創出一個最高的紀錄。此外，在船灣錄得十四個品種，合共437隻；而沙頭角海則有九個品種共300隻。若將十二月至二月在後海灣每個品種的最高數量加起來，總數則為72,960隻，比一月份的統計數字約高6.6%。

Table 2. Summary of Waterfowl Count January 1996

species	Shen-zhen River	Mai Po	Fu Tian	Deep Bay	TBT fish ponds	Nim Wan/ LFS	Tin Shui Wai	Nam Sang Wai	Lok Ma Chau	Deep Bay Area	Shuen Wan	Starling Inlet	total
Little Grebe	10	58			3		2	12		85	3		88
Great Crested Grebe				52		1				53			53
Great Cormorant	418	5592		2000	50	16				8009			8009
Dalmatian Pelican				23						23			23
Yellow Bittern		1								1			1
Black-cr. Night Heron				2500						2500	12	37	2549
Chinese Pond Heron	91	52		6	11	15	1	26	1	197	42	1	240
Cattle Egret	20				6				2	28			28
Little Egret	331	310		198	101	129	51	99		1202	43	31	1276
Intermediate Egret		10		1	4					16	2		18
Great Egret	199	209		50	10	4	1	17		515	50	208	773
Grey Heron	223	465		336	28	3		277		1391	44		1435
Purple Heron		2								2			2
Oriental Stork		1								1			1
Black-headed Ibis		1								1			1
Eurasian Spoonbill								9		9			9
Black-faced Spoonbill		58								58			58
Common Shelduck				1650						1650			1650
Eurasian Wigeon		517		1596	6					2119			2119
Falcated Duck		85								85			85

Table 2 (cont.). Summary of Waterfowl Count January 1996

species	Shen-zhen River	Mai Po	Fu Tian	Deep Bay	TBT fish ponds	Nim Wan/ LFS	Tin Shui Wai	Nam Sang Wai	Lok Ma Chau	Deep Bay Area	Shuen Wan	Starling Inlet	total
Gadwall		7			1					8			8
Baikal Teal					1					1			1
Common Teal	545	1460		1046	825		163	154		4193	26	3	4222
Mallard		7		47						54			54
'Chinese Spotbill'				45				22		67			67
'Burmese Spotbill'								1		1			1
Spot-billed Duck		158		65						223			223
Northern Pintail		141		6420				33		6594			6594
Garganey		15								15			15
Northern Shoveler				7370						7370			7370
Common Pochard		4								4			4
Baer's Pochard	1									1			1
Tufted Duck										212			212
Greater Scaup										2			2
Duck sp.				300						300			300
Slaty-breasted Rail				1						1			1
Wh-breasted Waterhen	1	10							5	18	3		21
Common Moorhen	14	32						9	5	64	6		70
Eurasian Coot	120	295			12					1575	4	2	1581

Table 2 (cont.). Summary of Waterfowl Count January 1996

species	Shen-zhen River	Mai Po	Fu Tian	Deep Bay	TBT fish ponds	Nim Wan/ LFS	Tin Shui Wai	Nam Sang Wai	Lok Ma Chau	Deep Bay Area	Shuen Wan	Starling Inlet	total
Black-winged Stilt	143									143			143
Pied Avocet										1122			1122
Little Ringed Plover		15		12		39	1			67	5		72
Kentish Plover				1						1	25		26
Pacific Golden Plover				134						134			134
Grey Plover				689						689			689
Grey-headed Lapwing				3						3			3
Great Knot				9						9			9
Red Knot				1						1			1
Ruff				2						2			2
Temminck's Stint	4									4			4
Dunlin				1						1			1
Long-billed Dowitcher				1						1			1
Common Snipe	5	7							6	18			18
Pintail Snipe							2		5	7			7
Black-tailed Godwit				80						80			80
Eurasian Curlew				674						674			674
Spotted Redshank		1425								1425			1425
Common Redshank		173								173			173

Table 2 (cont.). Summary of Waterfowl Count January 1996

species	Shen-zhen River	Mai Po	Fu Tian	Deep Bay	TBT fish ponds	Nim Wan/ LFS	Tin Shui Wai	Nam Sang Wai	Lok Ma Chau	Deep Bay Area	Shuen Wan	Starling Inlet	total
Marsh Sandpiper		878								878			878
Common Greenshank		323								323			323
Green Sandpiper	8	6				1		8		23			23
Wood Sandpiper	5	8					40	11	21	85			85
Common Sandpiper	8	7		4	1	1	1	3		25	2		27
Wader sp.		1		2998						2999			2999
Saunders' Gull				41						41			41
Black-headed Gull	722			19900		7				20629	170	13	20812
Large gulls				260						260			260
Slaty-backed Gull				1						1			1
Whiskered Tern				1						1			1
TOTAL	2883	12,318	n/a	51,130	1059	216	262	681	45	68,467	437	297	69,204

TBT = Tsim Bei Tsui; LFS - Lau Fau Shan; Deep Bay area comprises that part of Deep Bay outside the border fence within Hong Kong jurisdiction.

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## WINTER WATERFOWL COUNTS 1996-97

*G.J. Carey*

Coordinated mid-monthly counts of wintering waterfowl in Hong Kong were again carried out from November to March. These were conducted on 16 November, 14 December, 11 January, 15 February and 15 March. The January count was carried out as part of the Asian Waterfowl Census under the auspices of Wetlands International Asia Pacific (formerly Asian Wetland Bureau). In accordance with guidelines provided by Wetlands International, other counts, if higher, were included from the one-week period either side of the coordinated count date. It should be noted that for the majority of species this means the single count must be higher than the total number provided by the coordinated count for it to be included. Coverage was almost complete with only Lok Ma Chau not counted in March.

The results of the five counts are summarised in table 1. The January count is provided in full in table 2 to allow comparison with previous years. Full details of all counts can be obtained from the count coordinator.

Table 1. Winter 1996-97 Waterfowl Count totals by group and site

group	site	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar <sup>1</sup>
Cormorants	DB	4718	6227	5984	5579	2553
	SI/SW	0	0	0	0	0
Ardeids	DB	3184	3424	3255	2709	2334
	SI/SW	456	546	621	534	76
Ducks and grebes	DB	9126	19,761	33,763	25,681	6360
	SI/SW	27	6	26	17	9
Rails, Coot etc.	DB	160	1029	1022	1382	224
	SI/SW	7	7	13	7	10
Waders	DB	5184	9822	6919	7509	3987
	SI/SW	37	35	18	45	40
Gulls and terns	DB	4409	10,339	16,360	14,957	1660
	SI/SW	1	19	0	0	0
Total	DB	26,781	50,602	67,303	57,817	17,118
	SI/SW	528	613	678	603	135

DB = Deep Bay area; SW = Shuen Wan; SI = Starling Inlet

1 - Lok Ma Chau not counted.

During the January count a total of 67,303 waterbirds of 68 species were recorded in the Deep Bay area; excluding Nam Sang Wai, which was only included

in the list of count sites during winter 1995-96, the total is 66,369. These counts are slightly below the highs attained in January 1996. In addition, 182 birds of 16 species were recorded at Shuen Wan and 496 birds of ten species were recorded at Starling Inlet.

A new high of 1609 was noted in January for Avocet; the number of this species wintering in Deep Bay has nearly trebled since 1993. Over 5100 Teal maintained the very high numbers reached last year, and Shelduck numbers continued their recovery of recent years recording 2972, the second highest on record and the highest since 1988. In other months, new highs were established in November for Black-winged Stilt (494), in December for Black-faced Spoonbill (122 - though 124 were recorded earlier in the month) and in February for Pintail (8654 - about 2000 higher than the previous highest). Cormorant numbers peaked at 6227 in December, marking a decline in numbers from last winter's high.

Although numbers of ardeids, waders and gulls and terns all decreased overall, this was more than compensated for by a massive increase in duck numbers to 33,763 which is 46% over the previous highest reached last year. Other highlights were five Greylag Geese, one of only a few Hong Kong records, and a Long-billed Dowitcher which is the second waterfowl count record.

If the highest Deep Bay counts in the winter period proper, defined as December to February, for each species are added together, the total is 70,216, about 4.3% higher than the Deep Bay count for January. This is, perhaps, a more accurate reflection of the importance of Deep Bay as it is the minimum number of birds that utilise its resources for at least part of the winter.

Raptor species were again counted and the following January totals were obtained: Black Kite - 75; Marsh Harrier - 2; Common Buzzard - 4; Spotted Eagle - 6; Imperial Eagle - 14; Black Vulture - 1; Osprey - 12; Peregrine - 1.

The cooperation of the staff at Fu Tian Nature Reserve and WWF-HK is gratefully acknowledged. The following observers participated in the counts: G.J. Carey (coordinator), J.A. and M.M. Hackett, P.J. Leader, R.W. Lewthwaite, M.R. and E.P. Leven, Y.J. Wang, C. Ma, E.M.S. Kilburn, D. Cha, M.L. Chalmers, L. Cheung, J.S.R. Edge, M. Hale, P.J. Hopkin, K.S. Lee, F. Lok, S. McChesney, V.B. Picken, R.D.E. Stott, T.H. Wang, M.D. Williams, K. Wilson, D. Wong, J. Wong, L. Young, Y.T. Yu. I would like to express my thanks to all who took part.

在九六至九七年度的冬季裏（十一月至三月），水禽調查照舊在每個月月中旬進行，表一是該五次調查的撮要。其中一月的結果則詳列於表二，以便和過去幾年的紀錄比較。九七年一月，在後海灣一帶共錄得六十七個品種，合共67,303隻，若扣除（只從九五一九六年度起才加進調查範圍的）南生圍的紀錄，則為66,369隻，比1996年同期的略少。此外，在船灣錄得十六個品種，合共182隻；而沙頭角海則有十個品種合共496隻。若將十二月至二月在後海灣每個品種的最高數量加起來，總數則為70,216隻，比一月份的統計數字約高4.3%。

Table 2. Summary of Waterfowl Count January 1997

species	Shen-zhen River	Mai Po	Fu Tian	Deep Bay	TBT fish ponds	Nim Wan/ LFS	Tin Shui Wai	Nam Sang Wai	Lok Ma Chau	Deep Bay Area	Shuen Wan	Starling Inlet	total
Little Grebe	6	82	3		3	1		21		116	3		119
Great Crested Grebe				179						179			179
Great Cormorant		5945						39		5984			5984
Dalmatian Pelican				10						10			10
Great Bittern		1								1			1
Black-c. Night Heron			4			10				14	6		20
Chinese Pond Heron	22	47	101	17	1	16		26	1	231	9	2	242
Cattle Egret	1					4				5			5
Little Egret	316	236	152	75		224		72		1075	44	55	1174
Intermediate Egret		10		5						15		1	16
Great Egret	93	71	47	119	15			123		468	37	383	888
Grey Heron	198	627	15	317	66	7		103		1333	41	43	1417
Purple Heron		2								2			2
Black-faced Spoonbill		69	32							101			101
Greylag Goose				5						5			5
Common Shelduck				2972						2972			2972
Eurasian Wigeon		860	916		1	30		34		2533			2533
Falcated Duck		39								39			39
Common Teal	51	1692	20	3007	25	5		372		5184	14	9	5207

Table 2 (cont.). Summary of Waterfowl Count January 1997

species	Shen-zhen River	Mai Po	Fu Tian	Deep Bay	TBT fish ponds	Nim Wan/ LFS	Tin Shui Wai	Nam Sang Wai	Lok Ma Chau	Deep Bay Area	Shuen Wan	Starling Inlet	total
Mallard				13				1		14			14
'Chinese Spotbill'		14		81				37		132			132
'Burmese Spotbill'		2								2			2
Spot-billed Duck		4				8				12			12
Northern Pintail	37	78	920	280				14		1329			1329
Garganey		25								25			25
Northern Shoveler		31		1718						1749			1749
Common Pochard		6								6			6
Baer's Pochard		1								1			1
Tufted Duck				56						56			56
Duck sp.		79	12,000	7330						19,409			19,409
Slaty-breasted Rail				2				1		3			3
Water Rail		1								1			1
Ruddy Crake		1								1			1
Wh-breasted Waterhen		8	2	2		1		4	2	19	4		23
Common Moorhen	11	29		3				14	1	58	5	1	64
Watercock		1								1			1
Eurasian Coot	45	183	220	490				1		939	3		942
Black-winged Stilt	125	5								130			130

Table 2 (cont.). Summary of Waterfowl Count January 1997

species	Shen-zhen River	Mai Po	Fu Tian	Deep Bay	TBT fish ponds	Nim Wan/ LFS	Tin Shui Wai	Nam Sang Wai	Lok Ma Chau	Deep Bay Area	Shuen Wan	Starling Inlet	total
Pied Avocet				1609						1609			1609
Little Ringed Plover	4	11	8		5	19				47	8		55
Kentish Plover				1800						1800			1800
Lesser Sand Plover				4						4			4
Pacific Golden Plover				70						70			70
Grey Plover				502						502			502
Northern Lapwing				1						1			1
Great Knot				9						9			9
Red Knot				1						1			1
Red-necked Stint				35						35			35
Temminck's Stint										64			64
Long-toed Stint				2						2			2
Dunlin				680						680			680
Common Snipe	1							1	1	3	6		9
Pintail Snipe									5	5			5
Long-billed Dowitcher				1						1			1
Black-tailed Godwit				130						130			130
Bar-tailed Godwit				2						2			2
Eurasian Curlew				432						432			432

Table 2 (cont.). Summary of Waterfowl Count January 1997

species	Shen-zhen River	Mai Po	Fu Tian	Deep Bay	TBT fish ponds	Nim Wan/ LFS	Tin Shui Wai	Nam Sang Wai	Lok Ma Chau	Deep Bay Area	Shuen Wan	Starling Inlet	total
Spotted Redshank				690						690			690
Common Redshank			8							8			8
Marsh Sandpiper			4	190						194			194
Common Greenshank			85	345						430			430
Green Sandpiper	7	9								21			21
Wood Sandpiper	2	5			5					12	1		13
Common Sandpiper	4	10	2	5	2	12		2		37	1	2	40
Grt Black-headed Gull				2						2			2
Saunders' Gull				77						77			77
Black-headed Gull				16,000						16,000			16,000
Black-tailed Gull				3						3			3
Heuglin's Gull				236		38				274			274
Slaty-backed Gull				1						1			1
Yellow-legged Gull				3						3			3
TOTAL	923	10,196	14,539	40,203	123	375	n/a	934	10	67,303	182	496	68,981

TBT = Tsim Bei Tsui; LFS = Lau Fau Shan; Deep Bay area comprises that part of Deep Bay outside the border fence within Hong Kong jurisdiction.

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## REPORT ON BIRD RINGING IN HONG KONG IN 1996

David S. Melville and Michael R. Leven

A total of 3570 birds of 150 species was ringed in 1996. Species totals are provided in Table 1, together with those from previous years. The most recent report on bird ringing in Hong Kong is given by Melville (1996). Ringing activities continued to be concentrated at the WWF Hong Kong Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve, and at the Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden (KFBG) and adjacent University of Hong Kong Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre (KARC), near Shek Kong. MRL's postgraduate project has resulted in regular ringing at Ma On Shan, Tai Mo Shan, Mount Davis and Cape D'Aguilar, while some netting took place at both Kam Tin and Long Valley, particularly for Painted Snipe.

Two species new for Hong Kong were caught during the year: a juvenile Speckled Piculet was caught in July at Ma On Shan (Leven 1998a), and a Lesser Cuckoo at Mount Davis in October (Leven 1998b). Other notable captures included a Paddyfield Warbler (the second Hong Kong record) and a Yellow-streaked Warbler (the fourth ringed, and the sixth Hong Kong record). Bridled Terns were recorded nesting successfully in Hong Kong for the first time and a total of 23 young was ringed.

There were three overseas recoveries/controls of birds ringed in Hong Kong. The Curlew Sandpiper was the fourth record of this species ringed in Hong Kong and subsequently controlled in northwest Australia - five Curlew Sandpipers from northwest Australia have been controlled in Hong Kong. The body of ringing records, together with sightings of leg-flagged birds (Table 3) clearly demonstrate that a large number of birds which spend the non-breeding season in northwest and southeast Australia pass through Hong Kong on northward migration in spring.

The Black-browed Reed Warbler movement is our first. This species is a common summer visitor to Japan from Kyushu northwards (Brazil 1991). The date of control suggests that the bird was a migrant, Brazil (1991) noting that some birds remain in Honshu until mid October. There do not appear to be any other overseas ringing records of this species to/from Japan, although there have been several controls within Japan, including one ringed in Shimane Prefecture in September and controlled in June two years later to the east in Ibaraki Prefecture (Anon. 1997).

The Common Rosefinch movement is also a first for us. Two races of Common Rosefinch winter in southern China: *grebnitskii* and *roseatus*. Information given by Cheng (1987) indicates that the winter ranges of the two are uncertain, *grebnitskii* being shown as occurring in Fujian and *roseatus* in Guizhou, with the wintering population in Guangdong being indeterminate. Vaurie (1959), however only records *roseatus* from 'southern Yunnan', while *grebnitskii* is said to winter in 'southeastern China'. Common Rosefinch does not breed in Liaoning, being only a passage migrant (Anon. 1986, Cheng 1987), thus it is assumed that

this bird was moving to breed further north. The race *grebnitskii* breeds in eastern Siberia (Kamchatka, shores of the Sea of Okhotsk, northern Sakhalin) and northern Inner Mongolia (Cheng 1987, Vaurie 1959). This recovery is the first confirmation that *grebnitskii* winters in Hong Kong, although plumage of males seen in the field in Hong Kong suggests this race (G.J. Carey pers. comm.).

The marking of waders with colour-flags continues to result in a growing body of information on their movements. Despite an expedition to mark waders in northwest Australia in March-April 1996 which resulted in 8135 birds being flagged (Minton *et al.* 1997), there were rather few sightings from Hong Kong (Table 3), probably due to difficult viewing conditions at Mai Po. We did, however, have our first sighting of a bird flagged in Japan.

Paul Leader's efforts to catch Painted Snipe resulted in a large number of birds caught and one local movement: a juvenile ringed at Long Valley on 24 September controlled at Kam Tin (distance 9 km) on 14 October. This species favours freshwater wetlands with a mixture of dense vegetation and open shallow water areas, a habitat which is fast disappearing in Hong Kong, and the two remaining areas of any size are likely to be lost to development within the next five to ten years.

There were 793 handlings of recaptured birds in Hong Kong during the year, some of which were multiple captures of the same individuals. Such recaptures highlight site-faithfulness among migrants and winter visitors, as well as providing valuable information on weight changes, moult, etc. A selection of the more interesting recapture records for known migrants is given in Table 4. Longevity records of 'resident' species are given in Table 5 where these either exceed Hong Kong records previously published or are of species not previously listed.

We wish to thank the Ringing and Migration Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology for permission to use their rings in Hong Kong. Trapping is carried out under permits issued by the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries. Ringing at KARC is conducted with the kind permission of the University of Hong Kong, and we also thank the Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden for permission to work on their land, and Hong Kong Telecom for permission to work at Cape D'Aguilar. We are grateful to fellow ringers David Carthy, Cheung Ho Fai, Paul Leader, Li Kwok Shing, Fox Wong, and Yu Yat Tung. Many others assisted with ringing during the course of the year and we thank them all, especially Liz Leven for her assistance in computerising the records. Paul Leader kindly collated the leg flag sightings.

Bird ringing in Hong Kong is a WWF Hong Kong project made possible through the generous support of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong South. We are most grateful for their support.



Table 1. Birds ringed in Hong Kong 1966-1996

species	MAPS*	1975-1995	1996	total
Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		1		1
Great Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		1		1
Great Bittern <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>		1		1
Yellow Bittern <i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i>	15	80	3	98
Schrenck's Bittern <i>Ixobrychus eurythmus</i>		2		2
Cinnamon Bittern <i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>	1	3	1	5
Black-cr. Night Heron <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>		6		6
Striated Heron <i>Butorides striatus</i>		11	1	12
Chinese Pond Heron <i>Ardeola bacchus</i>		99	2	101
Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>		2		2
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>		6		6
Eurasian Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>		2		2
Falcated Duck <i>Anas falcata</i>		1		1
Common Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>		42		42
Spot-billed Duck <i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>		3		3
Northern Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>		2		2
Garganey <i>Anas querquedula</i>		9	3	12
Northern Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>		2		2
Black Kite <i>Milvus migrans</i>		40		40
Besra <i>Accipiter virgatus</i>		18	5	23
Japanese Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter gularis</i>	1	24	4	29
Eurasian Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i>		1		1
Crested Goshawk <i>Accipiter trivirgatus</i>			2	2
Chinese Goshawk <i>Accipiter soloensis</i>		1		1
Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila heliaca</i>	**1			1
Bonelli's Eagle <i>Hieraaetus fasciatus</i>		1		1
Common Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	**4	2		6
Eurasian Hobby <i>Falco subbuteo</i>		2		2
Saker Falcon <i>Falco cherrug</i>			2	2
Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i>		1		1
Chinese Francolin <i>Francolinus pintadeanus</i>	**7			7
Japanese Quail <i>Coturnix japonica</i>	**2	1		3
Yellow-legged Button-quail <i>Turnix tanki</i>	**1	1		2
Barred Button-quail <i>Turnix suscitator</i>	1	2		3
Slaty-legged Crake <i>Rallus eurizonoides</i>		2		2
Slaty-breasted Rail <i>Rallus striatus</i>		1		1
Baillon's Crake <i>Porzana pusilla</i>	1			1
White-breasted Wren <i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	1	24	1	26
Common Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		7	1	8
Watercock <i>Gallinula cinerea</i>		1		1
Eurasian Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>		5	1	6
Pheasant-tld Jacana <i>Hydrophasianus chirurgus</i>			1	1

Table 1 (cont.). Birds ringed in Hong Kong 1966-1996

species	MAPS*	1975-1995	1996	total
Greater Painted-snipe <i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>		23	84	107
Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>		1	1	2
Pied Avocet <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		12		12
Oriental Pratincole <i>Glareola maldivarum</i>		3		3
Little Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius dubius</i>		9		9
Kentish Plover <i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>		45		45
Lesser Sand Plover <i>Charadrius mongolus</i>		69		69
Greater Sand Plover <i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>		283		283
Pacific Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis fulva</i>		119	16	135
Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		87	1	88
Great Knot <i>Calidris tenuirostris</i>		95		95
Red Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>		107		107
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>		1		1
Red-necked Stint <i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	6	207		213
Temminck's Stint <i>Calidris temminckii</i>		1		1
Long-toed Stint <i>Calidris subminuta</i>		31	2	33
Pectoral Sandpiper <i>Calidris melanotos</i>		1		1
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper <i>Calidris acuminata</i>		46	2	48
Curlew Sandpiper <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	1	1111	2	1114
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>		400	7	407
Spoon-billed Sand. <i>Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus</i>		3		3
Broad-billed Sandpiper <i>Limicola falcinellus</i>		117	1	118
Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>		3		3
Common Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1	119	29	149
Pintail Snipe <i>Gallinago stenura</i>		21	2	23
Swinhoe's Snipe <i>Gallinago megala</i>		13	3	16
Asian Dowitcher <i>Limnodromus semipalmatus</i>		28		28
Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i>		64	1	65
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>		84		84
Whimbrel <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>		459	5	464
Eurasian Curlew <i>Numenius arquatus</i>		29		29
Far Eastern Curlew <i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>		2	1	3
Spotted Redshank <i>Tringa erythropus</i>		18	2	20
Common Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>		1550	7	1557
Marsh Sandpiper <i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>		112	3	115
Common Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>		65	2	67
Nordmann's Greenshank <i>Tringa guttifer</i>		2		2
Green Sandpiper <i>Tringa ochropus</i>		3		3
Wood Sandpiper <i>Tringa glareola</i>		205	6	211
Terek Sandpiper <i>Xenus cinereus</i>		591		591
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	4	148		152
Grey-tailed Tattler <i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i>		71		71

Table 1 (cont.). Birds ringed in Hong Kong 1966-1996

species	MAPS*	1975-1995	1996	total
Ruddy Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>		36		36
Red-necked Phalarope <i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>		12	4	16
Red Phalarope <i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>		1		1
Common Black-headed Gull <i>Larus ridibundus</i>		1		1
Black-naped Tern <i>Sterna sumatrana</i>		11	3	14
Roseate Tern <i>Sterna dougallii</i>		6	3	9
Bridled Tern <i>Sterna anathetus</i>			23	23
Oriental Turtle Dove <i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>		49	2	51
Spotted Dove <i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	2	222	7	231
Emerald Dove <i>Chalcophaps indica</i>		18	6	24
Rose-ringed Parakeet <i>Psittacula krameri</i>	1			1
Budgerigar <i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>		4		4
Chestnut-winged Cuckoo <i>Cacomantis coromandelianus</i>		3	3	6
Large Hawk Cuckoo <i>Hierococcyx sparveroides</i>			2	2
Plaintive Cuckoo <i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>		15		15
Oriental Cuckoo <i>Cuculus saturatus</i>		2		2
Asian Lesser Cuckoo <i>Cuculus poliocephalus</i>			1	1
Koel <i>Eudynamis scolopacea</i>		14	2	16
Greater Coucal <i>Centropus sinensis</i>		13	4	17
Lesser Coucal <i>Centropus benghalensis</i>	2	4	1	7
Grass Owl <i>Tyto capensis</i>		1		1
Collared Scops Owl <i>Otus bakkamoena</i>		1	1	2
Oriental Scops Owl <i>Otus (scops) sunia</i>	2	1		3
Eurasian Eagle Owl <i>Bubo bubo</i>			**1	1
Asian Barred Owllet <i>Glaucidium cuculoides</i>		**2		2
Short-eared Owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	**2	1		3
White-vented Needletail <i>H. cochinchinensis</i>			1	1
Pacific Swift <i>Apus pacificus</i>		18		18
Little Swift <i>Apus affinis</i>		62	18	80
White-throated Kingfisher <i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	24	70	4	98
Black-capped Kingfisher <i>Halcyon pileata</i>	5	51	2	58
Common Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>	104	1031	29	1164
Pied Kingfisher <i>Ceryle rudis</i>		5		5
Dollarbird <i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>			2	2
Eurasian Hoopoe <i>Upupa epops</i>		1		1
Great Barbet <i>Megalaima virens</i>		2	1	3
Eurasian Wryneck <i>Jynx torquilla</i>	21	34	4	59
Speckled Piculet <i>Picumnus innominatus</i>			1	1
Fairy Pitta <i>Pitta brachyura</i>		1		1
Oriental Skylark <i>Alauda gulgula</i>		3		3
Pale Martin <i>Riparia diluta</i>	1			1
Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	11	281	3	295
Asian House Martin <i>Delichon dasypus</i>		26	7	33

Table 1 (cont.). Birds ringed in Hong Kong 1966-1996

species	MAPS*	1975-1995	1996	total
Richard's Pipit <i>Anthus richardi</i>	13	9	1	23
Upland Pipit <i>Anthus sylvanus</i>			1	1
Olive-backed Pipit <i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	86	82	5	173
Pechora Pipit <i>Anthus gustavi</i>		3		3
Red-throated Pipit <i>Anthus cervinus</i>		1		1
Forest Wagtail <i>Dendronanthus indicus</i>		2		2
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava</i>		74		74
Grey Wagtail <i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	6	5	45	56
White Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	18	496		514
Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike <i>Coracina melaschistos</i>		1	1	2
Ashy Minivet <i>Pericrocotus divaricatus</i>		2		2
Collared Finchbill <i>Spizixos semitorques</i>		2		2
Red-whiskered Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	80	1888	229	2197
Chinese Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus sinensis</i>	895	2998	361	4254
Brown-breasted Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus xanthorrhous</i>		1		1
Sooty-headed Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus aurigaster</i>	95	27	2	124
Chestnut Bulbul <i>Hypsipetes castanonotus</i>	2			2
Black Bulbul <i>Hypsipetes madagascariensis</i>	1			1
White-tailed Robin <i>Cinclidium leucurum</i>		1		1
Rufous-tailed Robin <i>Luscinia sibilans</i>	6	112	35	153
Siberian Rubythroat <i>Luscinia calliope</i>	95	273	37	405
Bluethroat <i>Luscinia svecica</i>	9	35	2	46
Siberian Blue Robin <i>Luscinia cyane</i>		10	1	11
Red-flanked Bluetail <i>Tarsiger cyanurus</i>	30	421	68	519
Daurian Redstart <i>Phoenicurus aureus</i>	16	19	3	38
Common Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquata</i>	48	93	5	146
Grey Bushchat <i>Saxicola ferrea</i>	1	3		4
Pied Bushchat <i>Saxicola caprata</i>		1		1
Oriental Magpie Robin <i>Copsychus saularis</i>	2	100	17	119
White-throated Rock Thrush <i>Monticola gularis</i>		1		1
Blue Whistling Thrush <i>Myiophonus caeruleus</i>	11	19	5	35
Orange-headed Thrush <i>Zoothera citrina</i>		1		1
Scaly Thrush <i>Zoothera dauma</i>	2	9	4	15
Siberian Thrush <i>Zoothera sibirica</i>		3	1	4
Japanese Thrush <i>Turdus cardis</i>	53	55	22	130
Common Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	1	10		11
Brown-headed Thrush <i>Turdus chrysolaus</i>	1	1		2
Grey-backed Thrush <i>Turdus hortulorum</i>	209	287	39	535
Pale Thrush <i>Turdus pallidus</i>	15	9		24
Eye-browed Thrush <i>Turdus obscurus</i>		26	5	31
Dusky Thrush <i>Turdus naumanni</i>	3	1		4
Asian Stubtail Warbler <i>Urosphena squameiceps</i>	1	29	7	37

Table 1 (cont.). Birds ringed in Hong Kong 1966-1996

species	MAPS*	1975-1995	1996	total
Pale-footed Bush Warbler <i>Cettia pallidipes</i>		6		6
Japanese Bush Warbler <i>Cettia diphone</i>	19	428	45	492
Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler <i>Cettia fortipes</i>		32	4	36
Yellowish-bellied Bush Warb. <i>C. acanthizoides</i>		2		2
Russet Bush Warbler <i>Bradypterus seebohmii</i>		6	1	7
Brown Bush Warbler <i>Bradypterus luteoventris</i>		3		3
Zitting Cisticola <i>Cisticola juncidis</i>		28	1	29
Bright-capped Cisticola <i>Cisticola exilis</i>		5		5
Plain Prinia <i>Prinia inornata</i>	12	741	34	787
Yellow-bellied Prinia <i>Prinia flaviventris</i>	39	1343	101	1483
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler <i>Locustella certhiola</i>	5	44	6	55
Middendorff's G. Warbler <i>Locustella ochotensis</i>		3		3
Styan's Grasshopper Warbler <i>Locustella pleskei</i>	8	21		29
Lanceolated Warbler <i>Locustella lanceolata</i>		7	1	8
Black-browed Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus bistrigiceps</i>	21	439	38	498
Manchurian Reed Warbler <i>A. tangorum</i>			4	4
Blunt-winged Warbler <i>Acrocephalus concinens</i>		1		1
Paddyfield Warbler <i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>		1	1	2
Blyth's Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>		4		4
Oriental Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus orientalis</i>	251	2127	165	2543
Thick-billed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus aedon</i>		18	4	22
Golden-spectacled Warbler <i>Seicercus burkii</i>		5		5
Large Grass Warbler <i>Graminicola bengalensis</i>		3		3
Common Tailorbird <i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	11	289	119	419
Blyth's Leaf Warbler <i>Phylloscopus reguloides</i>		1		1
Eastern Crowned Warbler <i>Phylloscopus coronatus</i>		12	2	14
Pale-legged Leaf Warbler <i>Phylloscopus tenellipes</i>		86	33	119
Greenish Warbler <i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>		9	2	11
Arctic Warbler <i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>	12	236	43	291
Pallas's Leaf Warbler <i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i>	5	122	34	161
Yellow-browed Warbler <i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	19	316	61	396
Radde's Warbler <i>Phylloscopus schwarzi</i>		14	3	17
Dusky Warbler <i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	104	1591	153	1848
Yellow-streaked Warbler <i>Phylloscopus armandii</i>		3	1	4
Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		3		3
Hainan Blue Flycatcher <i>Cyornis hainana</i>		2	2	4
Blue-and-white Flycatcher <i>Cyanoptila cyanomelana</i>		11	2	13
Verditer Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa thalassina</i>		1	1	2
Dark-sided Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa sibirica</i>			1	1
Grey-streaked Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa griseisticta</i>		2		2
Asian Brown Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa latirostris</i>	6	46	8	60
Red-breasted Flycatcher <i>Ficedula parva</i>	1	19		20

Table 1 (cont.). Birds ringed in Hong Kong 1966-1996

species	MAPS*	1975-1995	1996	total
Mugimaki Flycatcher <i>Ficedula mugimaki</i>		78	19	97
Yellow-rumped Flycatcher <i>Ficedula zanthopygia</i>	2	86	11	99
Narcissus Flycatcher <i>Ficedula narcissina</i>		1	1	2
Grey-headed Flycatcher <i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	1			1
Asian Paradise Flycatcher <i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>		4	1	5
Japanese Paradise Flycatcher <i>T. atrocaudata</i>		7	3	10
Black-naped Monarch <i>Hypothymis azurea</i>	1	7	1	9
Rufous-capped Babbler <i>Stachyris ruficeps</i>		1		1
Streak-breasted Scimitar Babbler <i>Pomatorhinus ruficollis</i>			1	1
Masked Laughingthrush <i>Garrulax perspicillatus</i>	18	24	10	52
Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush <i>Garrulax pectoralis</i>		39	5	44
Black-throated Laughingthrush <i>Garrulax chinensis</i>	2			2
Hwamei <i>Garrulax canorus</i>	**7	125	36	168
White-browed Laughingthrush <i>Garrulax sannio</i>		2		2
Red-winged Laughingthrush <i>Garrulax formosus</i>		1		1
Red-billed Leiothrix <i>Leiothrix lutea</i>	**9	137	26	172
Silver-eared Mesia <i>Leiothrix argentea</i>		77	19	96
Blue-winged Minla <i>Minla cyanouroptera</i>			1	1
Grey-headed Parrotbill <i>Paradoxornis gularis</i>			1	1
Vinous-throated Parrotbill <i>Paradoxornis webbiana</i>		1		1
Black-headed Sibia <i>Heterophasia melanoleuca</i>		1		1
Striated Yuhina <i>Yuhina castaniceps</i>			4	4
Black-throated Tit <i>Aegithalos concinnus</i>		1		1
Yellow-cheeked Tit <i>Parus spilnotus</i>		1		1
Yellow-bellied Tit <i>Parus venustus</i>				
Great Tit <i>Parus major</i>	34	108	28	170
Chinese Penduline Tit <i>Remiz pendulinus</i>		231	27	258
Fork-tailed Sunbird <i>Aethopyga christinae</i>	1	66	31	98
Buff-bellied Flowerpecker <i>Dicaeum ignipectus</i>		24	2	26
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker <i>D. cruentatum</i>		5	2	7
Plain Flowerpecker <i>Dicaeum concolor</i>		2		2
Chestnut-flanked White-eye <i>Zosterops erythropleura</i>		21	2	23
Japanese White-eye <i>Zosterops japonica</i>	217	5921	1049	7187
Black-naped Oriole <i>Oriolus chinensis</i>		2		2
Tiger Shrike <i>Lanius tigrinus</i>		2		2
(Bull-headed Shrike <i>Lanius bucephalus</i> ***)	1			1
Brown Shrike <i>Lanius cristatus</i>	6	29	13	48
Long-tailed Shrike <i>Lanius schach</i>	39	58	4	101
Black Drongo <i>Dicrurus macrocerus</i>		7		7
Hair-crested Drongo <i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>	1	7		8
Eurasian Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		1		1
Blue Magpie <i>Urocissa erythrorhyncha</i>	4	7		11

Table 1 (cont.). Birds ringed in Hong Kong 1966-1996

species	MAPS*	1975-1995	1996	total
Common Magpie <i>Pica pica</i>	**2	2	2	6
Red-billed Starling <i>Sturnus sericeus</i>		34	4	38
Purple-backed Starling <i>Sturnus sturninus</i>		1		1
White-shouldered Starling <i>Sturnus sinensis</i>	2	13	2	17
White-cheeked Starling <i>Sturnus cineraceus</i>		1	3	4
Black-collared Starling <i>Sturnus nigricollis</i>		23	1	24
Crested Myna <i>Acridotheres cristatellus</i>	2	17		19
White-vented Myna <i>Acridotheres javanicus</i>		2		2
Ruddy Sparrow <i>Passer rutilans</i>		2		2
Eurasian Tree Sparrow <i>Passer montanus</i>	**92	563	5	660
Baya Weaver <i>Ploceus philippinus</i>		11		11
White-rumped Munia <i>Lonchura striata</i>		71	39	110
Scaly-breasted Munia <i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	34	727	19	780
Chestnut Munia <i>Lonchura malacca</i>	1	5		6
White-headed Munia <i>Lonchura maja</i>		1		1
Red Avadavat <i>Amandava amandava</i>	5	9		14
Yellow-fronted Canary <i>Serinus mozambicus</i>		9		9
Grey-capped Greenfinch <i>Carduelis sinica</i>	1			1
Eurasian Siskin <i>Carduelis spinus</i>		1		1
European Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		1		1
Common Rosefinch <i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	12	9	1	22
Yellow-billed Grosbeak <i>Coccothraustes migratorius</i>	9			9
Black-faced Bunting <i>Emberiza spodocephala</i>	219	1168	48	1435
Japanese Yellow Bunting <i>Emberiza sulphurata</i>		6	3	9
Chestnut-eared Bunting <i>Emberiza fucata</i>	1	4		5
Yellow-browed Bunting <i>Emberiza chrysophrys</i>		2		2
Tristram's Bunting <i>Emberiza tristrami</i>	4	49	16	69
Little Bunting <i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	2	255	8	265
Chestnut Bunting <i>Emberiza rutila</i>		150	14	164
Yellow-breasted Bunting <i>Emberiza aureola</i>	28	46	5	79
Common Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>		7	3	10
Pallas's Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza pallasi</i>		2		2
Japanese Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza yessoensis</i>		1		1
Black-headed Bunting <i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>		1		1
Crested Bunting <i>Melophus lathami</i>		3		3
Total	3191	34,192	3572	40,955

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

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

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

Table 2. Overseas movements of ringed birds during 1996

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

NV67787 ringed: 22 April 1993, Mai Po, HK  
 controlled: 16 April 1996, 80 Mile Beach, Western Australia  
 distance: 4704km south

**Black-browed Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*

J070697 ringed: 4 April 1993, Mai Po, HK  
 controlled: 18 October 1996, Hii Riverbed, Hirata-shi, Shimane Prefecture, Japan  
 distance: 2340km northeast

**Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus*

H367357 ringed: 10 November 1991, KARC, HK  
 recovered: 15 May 1996, Shenyang, Liaoning  
 distance: 2316km north-northeast

Table 3. Sightings during 1996 of waders marked with leg flags

**Greater Sandplover** *Charadrius leschenaultii*

yellow: 9 April (1), 10 April (1)

**Great Knot** *Calidris tenuirostris*

yellow: 20 April (1), 24 May (1)

**Red-necked Stint** *Calidris ruficollis*

orange: 19 April (1)

red\*: 20 April (1)

blue: 19 April (1)

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

yellow: 9 April (1), 19 April (2), 20 April (1-2), 1 May (1)

orange: 9 April (1-2), 20 April (2), 24 April (1), 24 May (1)

red\*: 19 April (1), 1 May (1)

**Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus*

yellow: 25 May (1)

All birds were seen at Mai Po. There have been a number of sightings of birds reported to be carrying 'red' flags. No birds have been marked with red flags in Australia and none are known to have been marked elsewhere in the flyway. Currently, all records of 'red' flags are being treated as orange by the Australasian Wader Studies Group (M.A. Barter *in litt.*).

Birds marked with yellow flags originate from northwest Australia, those with orange (red) flags originate from Victoria. These follow the pattern of flag sightings in previous years, highlighting the importance of Mai Po as a migratory stop-over site for birds from both northwest and southeast Australia. It is noteworthy that so far no flagged birds from

Queensland have yet been recorded from Hong Kong.

The pale blue flag (on the right leg) came from Lake Komuke, Honbetsu-shi, Hokkaido, Japan (44°16'N 143°29'E), and is the first sighting of a Japanese-flagged bird in Hong Kong.

**Table 4. Selected recaptures of known migrants in 1996\***

**Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*

VK53053    ringed:        3 March 1996  
                  recaptured:    23 November 1996

**Red-tailed Robin** *Luscinia sibilans*

J161511    ringed:        1 January 1994  
                  recaptured:    22 January, 20 March 1994; 17 November, 6 December 1996 (KARC)

**Rubythroat** *Luscinia calliope*

There were four recaptures, of which the oldest was:

VJ34005    ringed:        9 March 1991  
                  recaptured:    8 April 1996 (61 months c.f. 25 months).

This bird may have been on passage, whereas one at KARC was clearly wintering:

VK53103    ringed:        14 November 1995  
                  recaptured:    1 December 1995; 14 January, 29 October, 22 December 1996

**Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica*

J161803    ringed:        19 January 1995  
                  recaptured:    22 January 1995; 11 February 1996.

This is the second record of this species returning in successive winters, not just to Mai Po but to the same net site.

**Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus*

J161512    ringed:        1 January 1994  
                  recaptured:    22 December 1995; 6 January, 27 January 1996 (KARC) (25 months c.f. 1 month).

This is the first record of this species returning to a site in Hong Kong in a subsequent winter, despite a total of 489 having been ringed.

**Grey-backed Thrush** *Turdus hortulorum*

RS80444    ringed:        2 January 1995  
                  recaptured:    2 January, 14 January, 6 December 1996 (KARC) (23 months c.f. 13 months)

**Short-tailed Bush Warbler** *Cettia squameiceps*

8S9575    ringed:        6 November 1994  
                  recaptured:    27 February 1996 (KARC)

**Chinese Bush Warbler** *Cettia diphone*

There were seven recaptures, the oldest being:

F145072    ringed:        24 December 1988  
                  recaptured:    11 March 1990; 19 January 1991; 27 March 1993; 8 January 1994; 3 March 1996 (86 months c.f. 31 months)

**Mountain Bush Warbler** *Cettia fortipes*

J161557    ringed:        22 October 1994  
                  recaptured:    4 December 1994, 30 November 1996 (KARC) (25 months c.f. 12 months)

**Styan's Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella pleskei*

J161911    ringed:        26 November 1994  
                  recaptured:    5 November 1995, 8 April 1996

**Great Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

There were three recaptures, the oldest being:

VC76397    ringed:        2 October 1988  
                  recaptured:    7 September 1996 (95 months c.f. 111 months)

**Pallas's Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus*

There were two recaptures, the oldest being:

3F2574    ringed:        1 January 1992  
                  recaptured:    1 January, 22 January 1994; 7 January 1995; 24 March 1996 (KARC)

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*

9S0718    ringed:        14 February 1996  
                  recaptured:    13 December 1996 (KARC)

**Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

There were seven recaptures, none more than two years old.

**Fire-breasted Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum ignipectus*

8S9926    ringed:        7 January 1995  
                  recaptured:    3 February 1996 (KARC)

**Black-faced Bunting** *Emberiza spodocephala*

There were nine recaptures, the oldest of which was:

H043084    ringed:        7 November 1991  
                  recaptured:    16 March, 21 November 1992; 21 November 1993; 14 January, 22 December 1995; 22 December 1996 (KARC) (62 months c.f. 61 months)

\* All records refer to Mai Po unless otherwise indicated. The interval between recaptures is given, compared with details of the longest surviving bird recorded in East/Southeast Asia during the MAPS programme (McClure 1984).

**Table 5. Longevity records for some 'resident' Hong Kong birds\***

**Spotted Dove** *Streptopelia chinensis*

ER12065 ringed: 18 January 1992  
recaptured: 5 April 1996 (51 months c.f. 80 months)

**House Swift** *Apus affinis*

SB60044} ringed: 12 January 1993  
SB60047} recaptured: 13 June 1996 (Chinese University) (41 months  
SB60048} c.f. 26 months)

**Chinese Bulbul** *Pycnonotus sinensis*

RX79268 ringed: 29 April 1986  
recaptured 14 April 1996 (120 months c.f. 26 months)

**Crested Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus*

RS13365 ringed: 13 October 1991  
recaptured: 25 October 1996 (KARC) (60 months c.f. 59 months)

**Long-tailed Tailorbird** *Orthotomus sutorius*

8T4294 ringed: 9 December 1990  
recaptured: 6 January 1996 (KARC) (61 months c.f. 37 months)

**Greater-necklaced Laughing Thrush** *Garrulax pectoralis*

ER12094 ringed: 22 September 1993  
recaptured: 25 March 1996 (KARC) (30 months)

**Hwamei** *Garrulax canorus*

RA05414 ringed: 30 October 1990  
recaptured: 12 March 1996 (KARC) (64 months)

**Silver-eared Mesia** *Leiothrix argentea*

VK09405 ringed: 19 November 1992  
recaptured: 30 November 1996 (KARC) (48 months c.f. 67 months)

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

J070184 ringed: 17 January 1993  
recaptured: 20 October 1996 (43 months c.f. 38 months)

\* This Table only includes those species not noted in previous reports or those where previous longevity records have been exceeded. Hong Kong data are compared with the longest surviving birds recorded in East/Southeast Asia during the MAPS programme (McClure 1984).

1996年內環志的雀鳥共3,570頭，屬150個品種。表一列出了各個品種的總數，也有前幾年的數字可作參考。年內環志紀錄中，有兩個屬香港新發現的品種：七月在馬鞍山的姬啄木鳥幼鳥及十月在麗星嶺的小杜鵑。此外，在本港環志的雀鳥中，在海外再次被網獲的紀錄有三個。在涉禽腳上繫上顏色標記，帶來更多有關牠們遷徙的資料。表四顯示一些再度網獲的遷徙雀鳥的情況；而表五則是一些“留鳥”的居留時間長度的資料。

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## BIRDS NEW TO HONG KONG

### HORNED GREBE AT MAI PO: THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

G.J. Carey

On 9 April 1996 a Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus* in breeding plumage was found in Deep Bay in front of the boardwalk hide at Mai Po. It was seen by GJC, P.J. Leader and M.R. Leven (all of whom are familiar with most other Palearctic grebes) among others, and the description below is based on the field notes submitted by these observers. It was seen at ranges no nearer than 100-150m., and it eventually drifted out with the tide to at least 1500m. The following description was taken.

*Structure and size* It was identified as a grebe on the basis of the relatively thin pointed bill, characteristic tailless shape, horizontal body posture and very upright neck; the head in profile showed a horizontal projection of 'horns'. In terms of size alone Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* and Great Crested Grebe *P. cristatus* could be ruled out instantly as it was either too large or too small for these species; Red-necked Grebe was eliminated quickly on the basis of immediately obvious plumage features (see below), leaving only Black-necked *P. nigricollis* and Horned Grebe. Again, plumage ruled out Black-necked Grebe, but in addition, the head shape was incorrect for that species: the crown was flatter with a shallower slope down to the bill, and the peak of the crown lay behind, rather than above the eye.

*Plumage* The head was black except for orange to orange-gold ear tufts that lay horizontally across the rear of the head behind the eye, broadening to the rear. The neck was chestnut, and the upperparts were dark grey. At rest the visible underparts were dark rufous; however, it revealed at one stage that the belly was off-white. The bill was black and straight. The colour of the neck rules out Black-necked Grebe.

Horned Grebe breeds across the Holarctic. In the eastern Palearctic it breeds across southern Russia through Lake Baikal east to Kamchatka (Cramp and Simmons 1977); in China, where it is not common, it breeds in the northwest in Xinjiang province and is a passage migrant through the northeast to wintering areas in the lower reaches of the Chang Jiang (Yangtze River) and Fujian province (Cheng 1987). This would seem to be the most southerly record for the region.

After due consideration, and given that it is known to winter in southeast China, Horned Grebe was added to Category A of the Hong Kong List.

*Hong Kong Bird Report 1996: 114-115, Mar 1998*

1996年四月九日，在米埔浮橋觀鳥亭前發現了一隻角鸛，鑑定的根據為其身裁、體型及羽毛，排除了在區內其他鸛類品種的可能性。角鸛在整個全北界內都有繁殖，不過，在中國並非常見的品種，除在西北部的新疆繁殖外，亦有在東北過境，飛往長江下游及福建省渡冬。

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## RED-FOOTED BOOBY IN VICTORIA HARBOUR: THE FIRST HONG KONG RECORD

Lee Kwok Shing

On 9 August 1996 at 0755h I was on a HYF ferry returning from Peng Chau to Central after night fishing. Sailing alongside HK Island, I noticed a large bird near the Shun Tak Centre, Sheung Wan, flying toward the boat; it subsequently proved to be a Red-footed Booby *Sula sula*. The bird was roughly 25 metres above me, flying east to west, and I observed the bird through 8x42 binoculars for several minutes. The light conditions were very good as the bird flew past with the sun behind me. The weather was also good, with soft light and no cloud. The following description is based on notes written immediately after observation.

Size similar to Black Kite *Milvus migrans* but the shape was completely different. Compared to a kite the body was very slim with a longer neck, and a larger, conical bill; the tail was long and diamond-shaped. The wings were narrower and longer than those of Black Kite. The colour of the uppertail and upperwings was chocolate brown without any contrast; this faded gradually to light brown on the hindneck. The head was clearly paler and appeared dirty white; the facial skin adjacent to the bill was pink and very conspicuous. The chin, throat and rest of the underparts were white. The underwings were also white, the same as the breast and belly but with dark brown margins. The vent and undertail coverts were white. The legs were deep red and contrasted sharply with the white belly. The undertail was light grey. The bill was grey at the tip, changing to pink at the base.

After consulting pictures and photographs in Harrison (1987), I considered this bird to be an adult because of the pure white on the underparts and fully developed colour of the facial skin. Another good feature would seem to be the grey and pink coloration of the bill. These features suggest that it was an intermediate morph adult.

Red-footed Booby is widely distributed over the tropical oceans. There are three races: nominate *sula* breeds in the Caribbean, off Brazil and in Trinidad and Fernando de Noronha; *websteri* breeds on islands off the western coast of Mexico and Central America, and in the Galapagos Islands; *rubripes* occurs widely in the Pacific and Indian Ocean, including the Bay of Bengal, East Africa and Queensland, Australia. In Japan, *rubripes* is a locally uncommon breeding bird on Nakanoganjima Islands, in the southern Ryukyu Islands (Takano 1985), and La Touche (1931-34) found it breeding on the Paracel Islands (Xi Sha). Although *rubripes* would seem to be the most likely form to occur, the species has not been recorded in Taiwan or Thailand.

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1996年八月九日，在維多利亞港上，近距離看到一隻紅腳鰐鳥 *Sula sula*，紅色的腳部非常清楚。紅腳鰐鳥在熱帶海洋上分佈廣泛，日本南部的琉球群島間中有繁殖，中國的西沙群島也曾有繁殖的紀錄。所以，這個品種在香港出現也不足為奇。

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# ASIAN LESSER CUCKOO: THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Michael R. Leven

On 16 October 1996 I carried out a mist-netting session in shrubland at 200m asl on the southwestern slopes of Mount Davis. At 0830h I found a cuckoo, obviously a *Cuculus* sp., in one of my nets. My initial reaction was that it would prove to be an Oriental Cuckoo *C. saturatus*. However, it was smaller than I had expected and the possibility of it being an Asian Lesser Cuckoo *C. poliocephalus* crossed my mind. As I commenced processing the bird, a check of the tarsus diameter prior to ringing revealed it was two ring-sizes smaller than previous Oriental Cuckoos and, with mounting excitement, I realised that I had trapped what was probably Hong Kong's first Asian Lesser Cuckoo. I ringed and measured the bird and, conscious of the importance of the underwing pattern of *Cuculus* cuckoos as an identification criterion, ensured it was photographed. This was done by N.B. Anonuevo (see plates 11-12).

## Description

**Structure** A typical *Cuculus* cuckoo, albeit rather small with a relatively large head and short tail. As with all cuckoos, the feet were zygodactylous.

**Plumage** The bird had undertaken a partial post-juvenile moult, comprising most feathers of the body, only some of those on the head, but not those of the tail or the flight or contour feathers on the wings. The head was brownish-grey with extensive white flecking, most marked above the eye, creating the effect of an indistinct supercilium. The body feathers on the upperparts were mid grey with a thin white tip. The upperwing coverts were dark grey-brown, again with thin white tips, though not sufficiently pronounced to form a wing bar. The primaries and secondaries were also dark grey-brown with barring on both webs; this barring was most evident on the outermost primaries and almost absent on the inner secondaries. The bars were white on the inner webs but pale buff on the outer webs. The tail was strongly and regularly barred black and white.

The throat and upper breast were brownish-grey strongly mottled white, and the remainder of the underparts were white with narrow and incomplete blackish bars on the breast and only a few blackish-tipped feathers on the belly and undertail coverts. The underwing was very pale with a barred effect caused by the white lesser and median coverts, lightly grey-barred lesser primary coverts and white primary coverts contrasting with the grey-barred greater coverts and grey greater primary coverts and the extensive white bases to the inner primaries, secondaries and axillaries (see plate 11). All the flight feathers were barred dark grey and white distally with the white barring being most extensive on both webs of the outer primaries, becoming narrower on the inner primaries and almost non-existent and confined to the inner webs on the secondaries. The undertail was boldly barred dark grey and white.

Hong Kong Bird Report 1996:118-124, Mar. 1998

The upper mandible was largely black with the proximal half of the cutting edge yellow, and the lower mandible was yellow with only the tip blackish. The legs and feet were rather bright yellow; there was a thin lemon yellow eye ring and the irides were dark grey-brown.



11 Asian Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus*  
Hong Kong, 16 October 1996

N.B. Anonuevo

## Measurements

wing (max. chord)	162mm	bill (to skull)	22.9mm
tail	134mm	tarsus	23.2mm
weight	53g		

## Wing formula (primaries numbered ascendantly)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	ss
-49	-11	wp	-4	-19	-28	-38	-48	-57	-65	-74
+48*										

\* relative to longest greater primary covert

## Identification

Whilst I considered that the bird was an Asian Lesser Cuckoo, I soon discovered that there was relatively little published on the identification of Asian *Cuculus* cuckoos. Accordingly, I delayed submission of the record until I had the opportunity to visit Academia Sinica, Beijing to examine skins of Asian Lesser Cuckoo and the possible confusion species.

There are four *Cuculus* species in Eurasia and all of these species breed in China. Of these, the most widespread is Common Cuckoo *C. canorus*. There are

four races in China (Cheng 1987) of varying size, but all are relatively large; the smallest is *C.c. fallax* which breeds in southeast China. La Touche (1931-34) states the wing length of this race lies in the range 191-208mm whilst Zheng *et al.* (1991) give a wing length of 190 to 208mm. Indian Cuckoo *C. micropterus* is also a relatively large bird. The form occurring in China *C.m. micropterus* is stated to have a wing length of 197-207mm (La Touche 1931-34) and 180-201mm (Zheng *et al.* 1991).

It is considered that both of these species can be eliminated from consideration on the basis of size. Furthermore, an unusually small Indian Cuckoo would still have shown the diagnostic black subterminal bar on the tail which is present in all plumages of this species including juveniles (pers. obs.).

There are two races of Oriental Cuckoo *C. saturatus* in China (Cheng 1987) and these are apparently very distinct. *C.s. horsfeldi* breeds in northern China, largely to the north of the Huang He (Yellow River) and east of Shaanxi Province, but occurs throughout China as a passage migrant. Most individuals of this race are rather large. La Touche (1931-34) gives wing lengths for this form of 192-226mm whilst Zheng *et al.* (1987) provide a range of 185-210mm. Three Oriental Cuckoos previously measured in Hong Kong had wing lengths of 202, 207 and 221mm respectively and can probably be assigned to this race on wing length alone. The population of Oriental Cuckoos in northern India and the Himalayas was assigned to this race by Wells (1972) and a single specimen in the Academia Sinica from Xinjiang appears also to belong here (pers. obs.). These birds are relatively rather small with a wing length of 179 to 192mm (Ali and Ripley 1983). However, even these are substantially larger than the trapped bird.

The second Chinese race of Oriental Cuckoo, *C.s. saturatus*, breeds in China south of the Chang Jiang (Yangtze River). This race is much smaller than *C.s. horsfeldi* and has a wing length of 166-195mm (Cramp 1985) and 174-197mm (La Touche 1931-34). Ten birds in Academia Sinica had wing lengths from 176 to 192mm (pers. obs.). Thus, the smallest birds have a wing length only slightly greater than the trapped bird, so the possibility that it represented an unusually small example of this form cannot be ruled out on measurements alone.

However, reference to the appearance of the skins in the Academia Sinica suggested that there are plumage differences between the trapped bird and *C.s. saturatus*. Three specimens of juvenile *C.s. saturatus* were all very dark, being almost black on the upperparts, head and upper breast, while the underparts were also almost all black apart from thin white bars except on the belly and undertail coverts where the white bands were broader. The darkness of the plumage is well described by La Touche (1931-34) who states: 'The nestling is slate-grey above, all feathers and quills edged with white; lores, sides of head, and the underparts blackish-brown; chin, throat and breast with only the faintest white fringe to the feathers; abdomen and under tail coverts broadly banded white.' Unfortunately, the latest juvenile that I was able to examine (6 August 1960, Yunnan) had not commenced body moult into first-winter plumage; however two first-summer

birds from May of their second calendar year showed that *C.s. saturatus* moults into a plumage which shows an extensive ring of rufous on the upper breast, some coverts, the upper mantle and lower neck. The bird under consideration, which had commenced moult on the mantle, showed no rufous feathers either here or elsewhere.

In addition, Oriental Cuckoos show an underwing pattern that is very different from the trapped bird. Kennerley and Leader (1991) describe how Oriental Cuckoo *C.s. horsfeldi* shows a rather pied underwing pattern formed by the difference between the off-white bases to the inner primaries, greater underwing coverts and axillaries and the grey secondaries and lesser and median underwing coverts. Further research by P.R. Kennerley (*in litt.*) has demonstrated that *C.s. saturatus* shows a more or less identical pattern. In contrast, the trapped bird has a much whiter underwing with (in particular) the grey bar on the lesser and median underwing coverts being much reduced.

There are two small races of Oriental Cuckoo *C.s. lepidus* and *C.s. insulidae* in the mountains of the Malay Peninsula and in the Sundas (Wells and Beeking 1975, Wells 1982). The occurrence of these forms in south China is extremely unlikely but they are, in any case, morphologically distinct (PRK *in litt.*) and are not considered further here. Table 1 lists published measurements and birds measured at the Academia Sinica, Beijing.

Table 1. Measurements of Asian Lesser Cuckoo *C. poliocephalus*

location	no. of birds	wing (mm)	tail (mm)	source
India	?	142-162	126-137	Ali and Ripley (1983)
China	1	162	137	La Touche (1931-34)
China	17	149-168	125-141	Zheng <i>et al.</i> (1991)
East Africa	?	143-161	?	Wells (1972)
China (juveniles)	3	142-149	?	pers. obs., Academia Sinica
China (first-summer)	2	157-159	?	pers. obs., Academia Sinica
China (adults)	5	157-169	?	pers. obs., Academia Sinica

Note: measurements from Zheng *et al.* are of the unflattened wing. Measurements by MRL are of the maximum chord. The measurement method(s) used by Ali and Ripley, La Touche and Wells are unknown (see Appendix).

Differences in the methods of measuring wing length (see Appendix) make it necessary to be cautious in comparisons of data from different sources. However, the wing measurement of the trapped bird (162mm) falls comfortably within the range for Asian Lesser Cuckoo. It is, perhaps, surprisingly large for a bird with its first generation of flight feathers as it would be normal for these to be rather shorter than those of adult birds and the three known juveniles detailed above all have a wing length of less than 150mm. This may simply be a result of chance as the sample size is very small, but since two of the birds were males, it is not a consequence of their sex as most cuckoos females are smaller than males (Cramp 1985).

Nevertheless, the small size of the trapped bird points strongly towards its being an Asian Lesser Cuckoo. When this small size is taken together with the major plumage features observed (the extensive area of white on the underwing and the largely white underparts with only very limited barring contrasting with a very dark throat), the only possible confusion species, an Oriental Cuckoo of the race *C.s. saturatus*, is eliminated.

Accordingly, the record was submitted as an Asian Lesser Cuckoo and was accepted by the Records Committee of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. Asian Lesser Cuckoo *C. poliocephalus* breeds widely in China (Cheng 1987), and Lewthwaite (1996) lists summer records at Ba Bao Shan and Nan Kun Shan in Guangdong and Wu Yi Shan in Fujian. Since it is a long-distance migrant, wintering in east Africa, and since the trapped bird showed no sign of captive origin the record has been accepted onto Category A of the Hong Kong list.



12 Asian Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus*  
Hong Kong, 16 October 1996

N.B. Anonuevo

## Acknowledgements

Fieldwork at Mount Davis is conducted as a part of a research project under the aegis of the Department of Ecology and Biodiversity, University of Hong Kong with the approval of the Agriculture and Fisheries Department and the District Lands Office.

I would like to thank Professor Lei Fu Min and Professor Xu Yan Gong for their warm welcome and assistance during my visit to Academia Sinica, Beijing; and would also thank all those who have helped to confirm this record: Mike Chalmers, Richard Lewthwaite and, especially, Peter Kennerley (who provided me with some of his own unpublished data and checked skins of *C.s. lepidus* and *C.s. insulidae* in Singapore) and Paul Leader. Geoff Carey kindly translated Chinese text. Finally, thank you to Natalia Anonuevo for dropping everything in order to photograph the bird!

## Appendix

Since much of the discussion is concerned with the measurement of 'wing length' (actually a measurement of the distance from the carpal joint to the tip of the longest primary), it should be noted that there are different methods of recording this. In particular, Zheng *et al.* (1991) use the 'unflattened wing' rather than the 'maximum chord' which is standard practice in Hong Kong (Melville 1991) and in Birds of the Western Palearctic (Cramp and Simmons 1977). Obviously, the measurement obtained from the maximum chord will be greater than that of the unflattened wing. This difference is not a constant percentage and depends upon the species involved (Svensson 1992). The difference was tested on a specimen of Oriental Cuckoo *C.s. saturatus* in Academia Sinica and a maximum chord measurement 7% greater than that recorded on the specimen label was obtained (pers. obs.). In addition, measurements obtained from dried study skins are likely to be up to 3% less than those made on live birds (Svensson 1992). Unfortunately, in much of the literature (for example La Touche 1931-34) the methods used to obtain measurements are not stated, so it is necessary to interpret published data cautiously and not to rely too much on minor biometric differences.

在 1996 年十月十六日，在麗星嶺網獲一隻初次渡冬的的小杜鵑 *Cuculus poliocephalus*。小杜鵑在中國廣泛地區繁殖，長途遷徙，到非洲南部過冬，所以在本港出現，殊不為怪。不過，辨別並不容易：在文獻上鮮有小杜鵑幼鳥的描述，又要否定是中杜鵑的 *saturatus* 亞種，因為這個在華南繁殖的亞種比小杜鵑稍大一點，亦是長途遷徙者，並未曾確証在香港出現過。不過，根據參考樣本後判斷，這次紀錄無疑是小杜鵑。

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## COMMON SWIFT AT MAI PO: THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

David and Nancy Massie

At about 1130h on 3 April 1996 we were walking along the path underneath the Casuarina trees at Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve with members of a visiting Sunbinder tour group. We had been watching the large number of swifts and hirundines hawking low over the adjacent fish ponds. Due to the poor weather conditions (low cloud and showers) the swifts were flying close to the surface of the ponds affording excellent views.

A single type 1 swiftlet (probably Himalayan Swiftlet *Collocalia brevirostris*) had already been seen among the numerous House *Apus affinis* and Pacific Swifts *A. pacificus*. NM then noticed a large, all-dark swift present in the mass of birds over the water. This second bird was easily found by everyone present and the initial consensus was that it was a slightly paler version of Common Swift *A. apus* which the UK-based group were all familiar with. The bird made several low passes beside us and allowed views down to 25m. at eye level.

The bird remained in the area during 3-4th when it often fed above the car park of the Sir Peter Scott Field Studies Centre, and it was seen by many birdwatchers, both local and visiting. The following description is based on our notes, supplemented by those of others submitted to the Records Committee. Photographs of both the Common and accompanying Pacific Swifts, were taken by Geoff Carey (see plates 13-14).

**Structure** Compared to House Swift, the most numerous *Apus* swift in Hong Kong, the wings appeared longer and more rakish, and were very similar in shape to those of Pacific. The head was slightly smaller and the body marginally shorter in length than Pacific Swift, and also slightly bulkier and more cigar-shaped. The tail was less prominent on a side-view, and the tail fork was shallower; each fork had slightly blunter tips. Generally, the flight action was slightly less forceful. These differences were all slight but, taken together, they combined to produce a relatively distinct overall impression.

**Plumage** The overall colour was uniform dark brown with no white present on the rump nor any pale fringes to the underbody, as shown by Pacific Swift. The most striking feature was the slight translucency of the secondaries and inner primaries which thus appeared contrastingly paler compared to the leading edge of the wing consisting of the outer two or three primaries and the wing coverts. The throat was paler, similar in extent to House Swift but less extensive and not as obvious as that on Pacific Swift. The forehead and lores were slightly paler and contrasted with a darker eye patch.

*Hong Kong Bird Report* 1996: 125-127, Mar 1998



13 Common Swift *Apus apus pekinensis*  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 4 April 1996

Geoff Carey



14 Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*  
Mai Po, Hong Kong, 4 April 1996

Geoff Carey

The identification was confirmed with reference to Chantler and Driessens (1995) who note that the Asian form *A.a. pekinensis* averages paler on the forehead and has more contrast between the inner and outer wing than the nominate. Thus, on range and plumage details, the bird can be ascribed to this form.

*A.a. pekinensis* breeds from Iran eastward through the Himalayas to Mongolia and North China. It migrates through the Middle East and East Africa to winter primarily in Namibia and Botswana. Ali and Ripley (1970) state that Eurasian Swifts wintering in India are of the form *pekinensis*.

With the provision of detailed descriptions and photographs, acceptance of this species by the Records Committee into Category A of the Hong Kong list was straightforward. In addition, another record has been accepted by the Committee for 6 April 1997, near Mai Po. It may be that regular checking of migrant hirundine and swift flocks at this time of year will reveal Common Swift to be more than just a vagrant to Hong Kong.

1996年四月三日，一隻樓燕 *Apus apus* 在米埔出現，並停留至翌日。從身體結構及羽毛分析，該鳥應屬 *pekinensis* 亞種，繁殖範圍從伊朗，向東延伸過喜馬拉雅山脈至蒙古，與及中國北部。遷徙時經過中東及東非，到非洲南部過冬。除此之外，紀錄委員會亦接納了1997年四月六日的另一個紀錄。每年這個時候對過境的雨燕群的縝密檢查，日後可能會証實樓燕並非一個稀客。

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# SPECKLED PICULET AT MA ON SHAN: THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

Michael R. Leven

On 25 July 1996 I undertook the first of a series of standardised mist-netting sessions in shrubland at 270m asl near Wong Chuk Yeung on the eastern slopes of Ma On Shan. At approximately 1030h I found a small bird in my nets which I immediately identified as a Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus*. The bird was ringed, measured and a description was taken which is provided below. Fortunately, Richard Lewthwaite arrived in time to photograph the bird prior to its release (plate 15).



15 Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus*  
Hong Kong, 25 July 1996

R.W. Lewthwaite

**Structure** A tiny, stout-bodied, distinctly short-tailed and relatively large-headed woodpecker with a short but rather heavy bill. The feet were zygodactylous.

**Head** The crown was light rufous, becoming dull rufous on the nape, and there was a dull whitish-yellow patch above the base of the bill. There was a thin, dark brown lateral crown stripe commencing behind the eye and broadening towards the nape; a whitish supercilium began above the eye and extended down the nape and onto the shoulder, and a dark brown patch (with a hint of a black upper border) reached from behind the eye to include all the ear coverts. The lores were white, a whitish moustachial stripe reached the lores and there was an indistinct brownish submoustachial stripe. The throat was white.

Hong Kong Bird Report 1996: 128-131, Mar. 1998

**Upperparts** The mantle was lime green, the wing coverts were brown with green fringes to the lesser and median coverts and all the flight feathers were black with a green fringe on the outer web. The back and uppertail coverts were lime green. The four central tail feathers were black but at least one feather showed an extensive whitish-cream inner web. The outer tail feathers (which were still growing) had a yellow fringe on the outer web with a black tip and blackish inner webs.

**Underparts** The entire underparts except for the undertail coverts were yellow-cream, heavily spotted black, with the individual spotted feathers showing a black central spot and a whitish terminal fringe. The undertail coverts were unspotted cream, and the feathers here were downy.

**Bare parts** The iris was dull grey-brown. The bill was markedly two-toned with the distal third black and the basal two-thirds pale grey, though it was blackish along the cutting edge and the culmen ridge. There was a pale greyish patch around the eye (which was in the process of feathering) and the legs and feet were blue-grey. There was no damage to feathering or bare parts to suggest that the bird had ever been in captivity.

## Measurements

wing (maximum chord)	58mm	bill (to skull)	11.9mm
tail	32mm	bill (to feathering)	10.0mm
tarsus	10.9mm	bill depth*	4.8mm
weight	10.8g		

\* measured at proximal edge of nostrils

## Wing formula and primary moult

p1*	p2	p3	p4	p5	p6	p7	p8	p9	p10
+9	-10	-3	wp	wp	-3	-6	-	-9	-10
moult*	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	5

\* first primary measured in comparison with the longest primary covert (primaries numbered ascendingly, moult after Melville 1991)

Identification as a Speckled Piculet was straightforward: *P. innominatus* is the only member of its genus outside the Neotropical region and the other two Asian piculets, *Sasia abnormis* and *S. ochracea*, are plain rufous below and do not show the complex head pattern of *P. innominatus*. The chestnut crown confirmed that the bird belonged to the Chinese race *P. i. chinensis*; the two other races of this species have an olive-green crown (Winkler *et al.* 1995). It should be noted that the illustration of this species in Viney *et al.* (1994) appears to be incorrect, showing a head pattern intermediate between that shown by *P. i. chinensis* and that of *P. i. innominatus*.

The bird was identified as a juvenile by the relative dullness of the head pattern (Winkler *et al.* 1995), as well as the denatured undertail covert feathers, the growing tail feathers and feathers around the eye and the absence of a contrast in feather wear between the old and new primaries. An almost complete post-juvenile moult (which would normally commence with primary moult), excepting the secondaries and some coverts, is typical of the Picidae (woodpeckers) (Cramp 1985), and in the Picinae ('true' woodpeckers) may even start prior to fledging (Ginn and Melville 1983). The trapped bird, which had replaced the two innermost primaries (moult score 5 i.e. full grown new feathers) with the next still growing (moult score 2) and the remainder old (moult score 0), would appear to be following this pattern. However, Winkler *et al.* (1995) state that the piculets *Picumnus* do not follow this typical woodpecker sequence in that the post-juvenile moult is restricted to the feathers of the crown. It is suggested, therefore, that the moult pattern of *P. innominatus* (and by implication the genus) requires further study.

According to Winkler *et al.* (1995), the sex of an adult *Pi. chinensis* can be determined readily by the presence of an orange/yellow forecrown in the male and its absence in the female. The dull whitish-yellow patch above the bill on the trapped bird might, therefore, suggest that it was a male. However, juvenile woodpeckers often show very different head patterns from adults so it may be unwise to attach too much weight to this point.

#### Status

Cheng (1987) states that Speckled Piculet occurs almost throughout southern China, and Lewthwaite (1996) lists recent reports from Hei Shi Ding, Ding Hu Shan, Ba Bao Shan and Nan Kun Shan in Guangdong Province. Of these locations, Nan Kun Shan, about 150km north of Hong Kong, is the closest. Despite this wide distribution it appears to be rather scarce, or at least elusive, and is reported in very small numbers or is often missed completely during visits by birdwatchers from Hong Kong (R. W. Lewthwaite pers. comm.). It was, however, predicted as a potential addition to the Hong Kong avifauna by M.L. Chalmers as long ago as 1980 (Smith 1992).

The Records Committee of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society considered that the bird's being an escape from captivity could be ruled out; accordingly, the species has been placed on Category A of the Hong Kong List. Nevertheless, the occurrence of a moulting juvenile in July was a surprise! Birds in active wing moult do not normally move far and a bird undergoing post-juvenile moult is likely to remain in its natal area. There must, therefore, be a strong possibility that a small population of this species exists on the little visited slopes of Ma On Shan where there is ample habitat available. Whether this constitutes a recent colonisation or a relict population is another question, but the species has not been recorded again, despite subsequent monthly mist-netting sessions at the site.

#### Acknowledgements

The above observation was made during a research study conducted under the aegis of the Department of Ecology and Biodiversity, University of Hong Kong. I would like to thank the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for granting me permission to undertake fieldwork at this site.

1996年七月廿五日，在馬鞍山黃竹洋海拔270米處網獲一隻姬啄木鳥 *Picumnus innominatus*。這個品種的辨別並不複雜：姬啄木鳥是這個屬在新熱帶界外唯一的品種，而且和其他兩種在亞洲區的 *Piculet* 都有很大的不同。既然在差不多整華南地區有紀錄，在香港出現也早在預料中。該鳥正在成鳥前的換羽階段，所以網獲地有可能就是牠出生之處。由於有大量合適的棲息地，馬鞍山範圍內人跡罕至的山坡上，住有少量姬啄木鳥是非常有可能的。

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# GREEN-BACKED FLYCATCHER AT TAI PO KAU: THE FIRST RECORD FOR HONG KONG

R.J.L. Kemp and C.W. Melgar

While birdwatching near Tai Po Kau at about 0920h on 11 April 1996 during a holiday in Hong Kong, three Japanese birdwatchers pointed out to us a 'Narcissus Flycatcher' *Ficedula narcissina* in some trees along Tai Po Road near Tai Po Kau park. Our informants departed but we continued to watch the bird for about five minutes until it disappeared deeper into the forest. We subsequently identified it as a male Green-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula elisae*, at which time we also realised the full significance of the record i.e. that it was the first for Hong Kong. The following description was taken at the time of observation using Zeiss 10x40 and Jenoptem 10x50 binoculars, and Kowa 20x and Optolyth 30x telescopes.

We both made a sketch, of which RJLK's is reproduced below (figure 1), and took notes as follows.

**Upperparts** The crown, ear coverts, lores, nape and mantle were uniform dull olive-green or olive greenish-grey. Above the lores there was a short yellow supercilium that did not extend behind the front of the eye. The rump was yellow and contrasted markedly with a black tail.

**Wings** Wholly blackish apart from a large white patch covering the whole of the median and greater secondary coverts.

**Underparts** Wholly lemon yellow, slightly dingier on the vent and undertail coverts.

**Bare parts** The bill and legs were dark; no orbital ring was noted.

**Behaviour** The bird typically perched out on exposed twigs until it moved away from the roadside into the forest.

**Identification** Male Yellow-rumped *F. zanthopygia* and Narcissus Flycatchers *F. narcissina* can be ruled out immediately by the olive-green upperparts and the shortness of the supercilium; the females of both species are eliminated by the presence of a large white wing patch, wholly yellow underparts and very dark wings. Males of the form of Narcissus Flycatcher breeding and wintering wholly within in Japan, *F.(n.) owstoni*, also have olive-green upperparts. However, males of this form have underparts very similar to the nominate form (i.e. rich orange on the throat and upper breast, and paler on the belly and vent) and a supercilium extending behind the eye (Shigeta 1991).

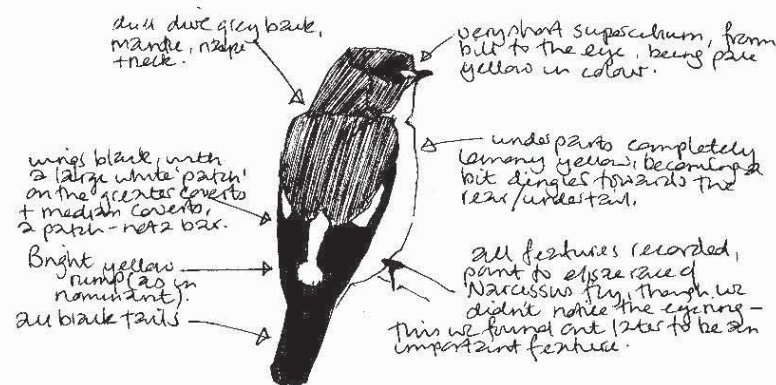


Figure 1. Green-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula elisae* male  
Tai Po Kau, 11 April 1996

R.J.L. Kemp

## Distribution

Green-backed Flycatcher breeds in the mountains of northern Hebei and in the Zhongtiao Mountains, southeastern Shanxi (Cheng 1987). Migrants have been noted in Hunan (de Schauensee 1984) and it is annual in small numbers in spring on the Hebei coast and in the Beijing area during the first half of May (G.J. Carey *in litt.*). It has been recorded in winter in peninsula Thailand (Lekagul and Round 1991).

As a long distance migrant wintering to the south and breeding due north of Hong Kong occurring during the peak of spring *Ficedula* migration, this species was accepted by the Records Committee of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society into Category A of the Hong Kong List. Whilst undoubtedly a candidate for the bird trade, its restricted distribution and rarity in the wild, in addition to the timing of occurrence, make this highly unlikely to be the provenance of the bird. In addition, the Records Committee has subsequently received and accepted another record for spring 1997.

Usually treated as a subspecies of Narcissus Flycatcher, the Records Committee, is following Alstrom *et al.* (in prep.) in treating this distinctive form as a full species on the basis of its morphological and vocalisation differences as well as the isolated breeding range.

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## IDENTIFICATION OF NIGHTJARS IN HONG KONG

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### Introduction

Two species of nightjar occur in Hong Kong, Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* and Savanna Nightjar *C. affinis*. In Chalmers (1986) *indicus* was stated to be a scarce passage migrant with one former breeding record at Ma On Shan in 1938, and *affinis* was stated to be resident. However, there had been confusion in the past over the identification of the two species in both summer and winter, and the true status of *indicus* was therefore uncertain. Since then, *indicus* has occurred as a spring and autumn passage migrant and has again been recorded in summer as a probable breeding species, at Yung Shue O, Sai Kung, not far from the location of the former 1938 record. However, confusion over identification continues for both field and specimen records, and this hampers establishment of their true status.

This paper therefore seeks to establish reliable criteria for their separation in the field or as specimens or remains from road-kills and bird-strikes. The text and photographs are based on examination of wings and tails collected by David Melville, mostly from bird-strikes at Kai Tak Airport between 1975 and 1979, and of skins at Academia Sinica in 1997. Details of the individual records concerned are given in Appendix 1.

### Status in China

Due to uncertainty regarding the true status of *indicus* in Hong Kong, it is relevant to summarise the published status of the two species in China as a background to the interpretation of local records. La Touche (1925-34) gave the status of *indicus* as that of a migrant and summer visitor to all China but added that in Guangdong it was possibly also a winter visitor and resident. He also stated it was an abundant migrant through the maritime provinces, with passage dates at Shaweishan near Shanghai from 29 April to 10 June and between 20 September and 3 November. He considered *affinis* to be a winter visitor and possibly a resident in Guangdong, although he quoted Swinhoe as noting this species was only a summer resident in Hong Kong and Macau. He concluded that it was probably resident in south China to the tropical limit and that some birds went up the coast in summer to breed in southern Fujian.

Cheng (1987) gives all of southern, central and northeast China within the breeding range of the migrant *indicus*, except for Hainan where it is only a migrant. He provides a much more restricted range for *affinis*, that of breeding in the most southerly parts of China and of being resident in Guangdong. Recent observations in forest reserves in south China have confirmed the presence of *indicus* in summer in Guangxi, Guangdong and Fujian Provinces, and there are confirmed breeding records in Guangdong at Ba Bao Shan (Lewthwaite 1996). Thus, Hong Kong is in the interesting position of lying in the limited overlap

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zone in China where both species breed. It is also possible that some *indicus* may winter, although the main wintering area is south to Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia, and that being near its northern limit, some *affinis* may be migrants.

## Field identification

### Size and shape

Whilst both species are of similar size, they have very different shapes in flight and this can be reliably used to separate them. While *indicus* has pointed wings and a long tail, *affinis* has shorter, rounded wings and a shorter tail. The difference can be illustrated by comparing the jizz of *indicus* to a falcon and that of *affinis* to a short-tailed accipiter. The broad rounded wing-tip and shorter tail of *affinis* combined with its slow flapping and gliding flight can also impart an owl-like appearance.

The differences in wing shape and tail length are clearly illustrated in the accompanying photographs; measurements are provided in table 1. Whilst there is some overlap in wing length, *indicus* averages longer than *affinis*, whilst in tail length it is always longer, especially for males. This feature is also useful for birds at rest as the wing tips of *affinis* reach almost to the end of the tail whereas on *indicus* the longer tail clearly projects, particularly on males.

### Plumage pattern

The main difference in the cryptic plumage patterns is that *indicus* shows black centres to the crown, mantle and scapular feathers, whereas on *affinis* these feathers are much more uniform. On skins the colour tones to the upperparts of the two can be very similar, although male *indicus* is markedly greyer. Single birds seen at rest in poor light, however, can be confusing and thus other features need to be used to confirm identity.

Table 1. Nightjar wing and tail measurements for forms occurring in south China

species	sex	wing	tail
<i>C. indicus</i>	male	216, 203-219 (LT)	130-140 (LT)
	female	215, 210-217 (LT)	120-132 (K)
<i>C. affinis</i>	male	191-207, 180 (LT)	111-117 (K)
	female	193-203	

Source: Hong Kong specimens unless noted. LT = La Touche (1925-34); K = King *et al.* (1975).

### Pale areas in wings and tail

Table 2 summarises the data on the 11 specimens obtained in Hong Kong, and is in agreement with La Touche (1925-34) and Lekagul & Round (1991). Differences in the shape and extent of the pale areas on the outermost primary on each wing of the two species are diagnostic (see plates 16-18). On *affinis* these pale areas are always larger and, more importantly, constitute patches that extend to meet broadly the shaft of the feather; on *indicus* they are isolated spots that, while they can be quite large, do not meet the feather shaft, though they may come very close. On *affinis* the wing patches of the male are white and those of the female are buff; on *indicus*, the male has white wing spots whereas these are brown or absent on the female. In addition, male *indicus* has white spots on two or three primaries whereas *affinis* invariably has four wing patches.

Male *affinis* also have diagnostic all-white outer tail feathers apart from dusky tips; female *affinis* have no white in the tail. Male *indicus* have white spots near the ends of the four pairs of outer tail feathers, whereas female *indicus* do not. In general, immatures are buff where adults are white. Thus, if the wings and tail are clearly seen, the presence or absence of patches or spots, together with their colour and extent, should be carefully noted.

Table 2. Pale areas in wing and tail of Nightjars in Hong Kong

species	sex	wing	tail
<i>C. indicus</i>	male	white spots on outer 3-4 primaries	white spots on outermost four pairs
	female	none	none
<i>C. affinis</i>	male	large white patches on outer four primaries	outer two pairs white apart from dusky tips
	female	large buff patches on outer four primaries	none

### Barring on remiges

On *affinis* the chestnut or rich buff bands on the inner primaries and secondaries are regular and wider than the intervening blackish-brown bands, whereas in *indicus* most of these flight feathers are blackish and the chestnut bands are irregular, often broken and less than half the width of the blackish bands.

### Underwings

While the underwings are not normally seen in the field, there are distinct differences between the two species with *affinis* being much paler than *indicus* (see plate 19). Male *affinis* have a sandy-buff ground colour to the wing coverts, secondaries and bases to the inner primaries; on females the corresponding area



**16** Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* male  
Compare wing shape, tail length and differences in shape and extent of white areas in wings and tail with plate 17.  
Remains collected at Shing Mun and Kai Tak, Hong Kong *M.L. Chalmers*



**18** Females of Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* (above) and Savanna Nightjar *C. affinis*  
Note difference in wing shape and presence of pale patches in outer primaries.  
Remains collected at Kai Tak, Hong Kong *M.L. Chalmers*



**17** Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis* male  
Compare wing shape, tail length and differences in shape and extent of white areas in wings and tail with plate 16.  
Remains collected at Kai Tak, Hong Kong *M.L. Chalmers*

[The cost of production of plates 16-19 in colour has been subsidised by Cezet Optical Co. Ltd., agents for Zeiss binoculars]



**19** Underwings of female Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* (upper) and Savanna Nightjar *C. affinis*  
Note presence of large pale area on *affinis*.  
Remains collected at Kai Tak, Hong Kong *M.L. Chalmers*



**20** Underparts of Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis* (left hand three) and Grey Nightjar *C. indicus*  
Note paleness and lack of barring on lower belly and vent of *affinis*.  
Specimens at Academia Sinica, Beijing, China

G.J. Carey



**21** Upperparts of Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis* (left hand three) and Grey Nightjar *C. indicus*  
Note more distinct and extensive black centres to crown and mantle feathers of *indicus*.  
Specimens at Academia Sinica, Beijing, China

G.J. Carey

[The cost of production of plates 20-22 in colour has been subsidised by Cezet Optical Co. Ltd., agents for Zeiss binoculars]



**22** Grey Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus*  
Hebei, China, May 1996

G.J. Carey

is equal in extent but is somewhat darker with slightly broader barring on the remiges. The underwings of *indicus* are more uniform with only paler lesser and median coverts.

#### Underparts

The chest of *indicus* is notably dark and lacks any distinct barring whereas *affinis*, though still rather dark on the upper breast, is paler and has narrow, fairly clear-cut barring (see plate 20).

#### Call

The call of *affinis* is a characteristic strident rasping *chweech*, that is repeated in flight and at rest every few seconds, often over several hours from sunset. This has alternatively been described as *sweesh*, *chweep*, *choo-ee*, *chait* or *chaweez*, and referred to as the 'whiplash' call. The call of *indicus* is a more typical nightjar churring comprising a rapid *chook...chook...chook* at the rate of between four and six notes per second. When disturbed, *affinis* can also give a chuckling call.

#### Identification of specimens and remains

Whilst there should not be difficulty in identifying a specimen in good condition, the problem often faced is one of identifying squashed or dismembered remains on a road or from a runway. Under these circumstances, checking the shape of the white areas on the outer primary, as described above, is the easiest feature to use. In addition, however, removal of the outer primary or of one of the inner primaries or outer secondaries will provide diagnostic support for any record.

### Acknowledgements

The assistance of David Melville is gratefully acknowledged for providing the specimens, most of which originated from his bird-strike studies at Kai Tak Airport, and stimulating interest in resolving the problems over nightjar identification and status in Hong Kong. I am indebted also to Paul Leader and Geoff Carey who kindly checked skins at Academia Sinica, Beijing and provided photographs from that collection and elsewhere, and constructively reviewed and added to the final paper. Finally, Academia Sinica and, in particular Prof. Xu Yan Gong, are thanked for allowing access to the collection.

### Appendix 1

Details of Hong Kong specimen records (all Kai Tak Airport unless stated)

#### Grey Nightjar *C.indicus*

14 November 1974	Adult male (Shing Mun)
29 September 1975	Female

#### Savanna Nightjar *C.affinis*

6 December 1974	Two males
30 May 1975	Male in wing moult
22 August 1975	Female in wing moult
28 November 1975	Female
26 December 1975	Male in wing moult
21 January 1976	Female
18 November 1978	Female
14 December 1978	Female

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## PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE WINTER ECOLOGY OF BLACK-FACED SPOONBILL IN HONG KONG

Paul J. Leader

### Introduction

Of the bird species that occur regularly in Hong Kong, the Black-faced Spoonbill *Platylea minor* is the most threatened. Listed by IUCN (1996) as Critically Endangered, it is facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future. This is defined as a population with a decline rate of 80% in ten years or three generations projected or suspected in the future based on a decline in the area of occupancy, extent of occurrence and/or quality of habitat (IUCN 1996).

Black-faced Spoonbill is known to breed only on several small rocky islands off the west coast of North Korea, where about thirty birds have been recorded during the breeding season, and in South Korea where a colony of 10-20 pairs was discovered on an islet in the Han estuary in 1994 (Collar *et al.* 1994). During 1996 a total of 83 birds and 12 nests were located in North Korea, and five nests were found in South Korea. Reports of breeding in northeast China remain unconfirmed. Two dead Black-faced Spoonbills were found in the Tumen River area near Vladivostok during summer 1996 (T. Dahmer pers. comm.).

Collar *et al.* (1994) listed the threats facing the species as the reclamation of intertidal mudflats and conversion to agriculture, aquaculture or industrial uses, increased disturbance, hunting and pollution. The site in Taiwan holding the largest known wintering population is under immediate threat from industrial development. Of further concern is the small number of pairs that have been located during the breeding season. Presumably unprotected breeding sites must remain undiscovered given the disparity between the winter population and the number of breeding birds.

The first literature census of the world population between 1988 and 1990 accounted for 288 individuals during the winter period (Kennerley 1990). Recent surveys have increased the estimated world population to 341 during winter 1993-94 (Dahmer and Felley 1994), 541-570 during winter 1994-1995 (Dahmer and Felley 1995) and 509 during winter 1996-1997 (Dahmer and Felley 1997). Almost all the known wintering sites are coastal or estuarine wetlands and over 90% of the population winters at just three sites: Tsen-Wen River estuary in southwest Taiwan, inner Deep Bay in southeast China and the Red River Delta in northern Vietnam. Smaller numbers occur elsewhere in China, Japan and South Korea.

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### Status in Hong Kong

Chalmers (1986) stated that the species is a winter visitor with isolated summer records and noted that the population increased during the period 1982-1984 from 20 to 33 individuals. This trend has continued: between 1987 and winter 1996-97 the peak count per year increased from 28 to 124 individuals (Hong Kong Birdwatching Society data) (Figure 1).

The increase in Hong Kong has largely matched the increase in the estimated world population, apart from the 1994-95 winter. For each of the four published population estimates, the peak count in Hong Kong has accounted for between 14% and 23% of the world population (see table 1).

Table 1. Percentage of estimated world population of Black-faced Spoonbills occurring in Hong Kong 1988-97.

period	world population	Hong Kong population	% of world population
1988-90	288	50	17%
1993-94	341	74	22%
1994-95	541-570	78	14%
1996-97	540-560	124	23%

Black-faced Spoonbill has continued to be considered solely a winter visitor to Hong Kong. However, a review of peak counts during the first and second half of the winter during the period 1987 to 1997 shows that consistently higher numbers are present during the periods October to December and February to April than are present during January (see table 2).

Table 2 indicates that some change in passage numbers at Mai Po has occurred in recent winters. During the period 1987-88 to 1993-94, the peak count each winter fell in the second half of the winter for all but one winter. During the 1994-95 to 1996-97 winters, the peak occurred during the first half of the winter. Table 2 also indicates that in most winters a variable number of the birds occurring during the first half of the winter are not present during the midwinter waterfowl count that takes place sometime during the middle two weeks of January. During the period 1987-1997 the peak count from October to December was higher than that recorded on the midwinter waterfowl count in nine out of ten winters. There would also appear to be a well-defined passage period, as the peak count during the first half of the winter fell between 11 November and 11 December during all ten winters.

For the second half of the winter, the peak count was also higher than the January waterfowl count in nine out of the ten winters, although the passage period was apparently longer, covering the period 23 January to 23 March.

Table 2. Peak counts of Black-faced Spoonbill in Hong Kong during early winter (Oct.-Nov.), midwinter (mid Jan.) and late winter (late Jan.-Apr.) 1987-1997

winter period	early winter peak count	date of count	January waterfowl count*	late winter peak count	date of count
1987-88	12	19 Nov.	7	42	23 Mar.
1988-89	28	26 Nov.	7	47	28 Jan.
1989-90	50	11 Nov.	42	42	6 Jan.
1990-91	25	17 Nov.	41	57	14 Feb.
1991-92	30	8 Dec.	14	47	22 Mar.
1992-93	62	24 Nov.	51	73	14 Feb.
1993-94	70	11 Dec.	28	74	23 Jan.
1994-95	78	3 Dec.	72	73	28 Jan.
1995-96	99	23 Nov.	55	59	10 Feb.
1996-97	124	29 Nov.	69	113	8 Mar.

\* Excluding Fu Tian Nature reserve.

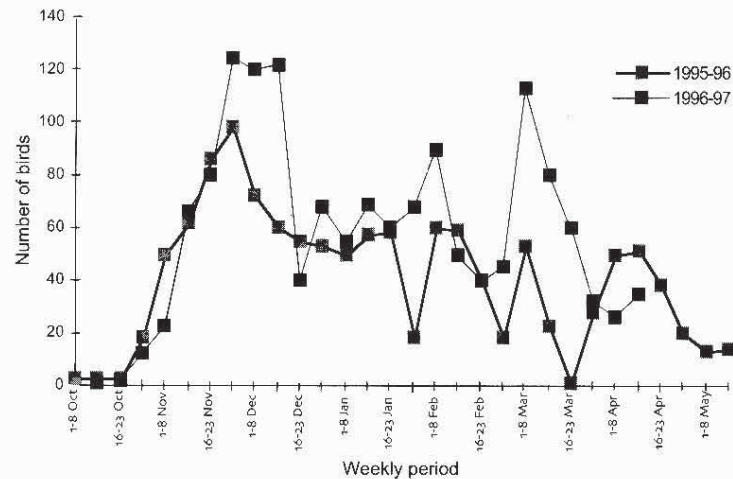
That during all ten winters either the peak count in the first half or the second half of the winter, or both, were higher than the midwinter count suggests that migrants pass through Mai Po on passage. It is possible that this variation in numbers is due more to local movements (rather than long distance migrations), with birds feeding more widely over the Pearl River estuary in response to food shortages in the Mai Po area. Records elsewhere in the Pearl River estuary are few but it is noteworthy that up to 22 Black-faced Spoonbills were present in Macau during the 1996/97 winter period (Christen Bohmer and Paul Aston pers. comm., James Cheesewright *in litt.*), and that the highest count coincided with a notable drop in numbers present at Mai Po.

To establish further the pattern of occurrence of Black-faced Spoonbills in Hong Kong, detailed count data available for the 1995-96 and 1996-97 winters were analysed (see figure 1).

During the winters of 1995-96 and 1996-97, the numbers of Black-faced Spoonbills in Hong Kong varied throughout. It is likely that some of the variability was due to birds foraging and roosting away from Mai Po for short periods. However, there are sufficient similarities between the two winters to suggest that not all of the variability was due to local movements. During both winters numbers built up rapidly to a peak during the first week in November, and then dropped off equally rapidly thereafter. Numbers present during the second half of December and January were approximately half that of the early November peak. For both winters there are peaks during the first weeks of February, March and the first

half of April. It is tempting to suggest that these peaks relate to the arrival of passage birds. It is possible that this is due to the differing arrival times of different age/sex classes, e.g. adult males followed by adult females, and lastly immatures. Clearly, this requires further investigation. However, the suggestion of three arrival periods could help explain the long passage period during the second half of the winter shown in Table 2.

Figure 1. Peak count per week of Black-faced Spoonbill in Hong Kong during the winters of 1995-6 and 1996-7 (source: HKBWS records).



It is apparent therefore that Mai Po and inner Deep Bay is not solely a wintering site for the species, but also a stopover site for birds wintering further south. The only known site with considerable numbers south of Hong Kong is the Red River Delta in northern Vietnam. Wintering birds there begin to arrive during early October, then build up to a maximum during January and early February, after which they begin to decline (J. Eames pers. comm.). Given the close relationship between the timing of the midwinter drop in Hong Kong numbers and the midwinter peak in Vietnam, and the current lack of any known major sites south of Hong Kong (Dongzhaigang, Hainan held only four individuals during winter 1996/97), it seems realistic at this time to assume that there is some exchange between the two sites.

That Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay is a stopover site and a site utilised by over-wintering birds heightens its importance to the species. Any deterioration of the area that leads to the habitat becoming less suitable for Black-faced Spoonbills could have a negative impact not only the birds that winter in the inner Deep Bay area, but also on the population(s) wintering further south.

## Winter ecology of Black-faced Spoonbills in Hong Kong

### Introduction

All aspects of the ecology of Black-faced Spoonbill are poorly known. Like other spoonbills it frequents shallow waters and occurs in tidal areas, saltmarshes, estuaries and sometimes on inland lakes (Hancock *et al.* 1992). The feeding behaviour is similar to that of other spoonbills, the bill being swept from side to side as the bird walks or runs through shallow water. It feeds mainly upon fish, shellfish, insects and crustaceans, including crabs and shrimps (del Hoyo *et al.* 1992); small fish, tiny crabs, snails and insect larvae, small fresh-water shrimps, insects, crustaceans and vegetation are also taken (Hancock *et al.* 1992). Nothing has been published regarding prey items in Hong Kong.

In Hong Kong the species is generally sociable, usually being recorded in flocks of 4-25 when foraging, but when roosting the entire local population joins together. Preferred roosting sites are undisturbed bunds between *gei wai* at Mai Po (Kennerley 1990). Little else has been published regarding the behaviour of the species in Hong Kong.

The aim of the 1997 study was to gather preliminary data regarding the Black-faced Spoonbills wintering in the inner Deep Bay area. Fieldwork concentrated on diurnal activity, foraging activity, age composition, and limited nocturnal activity analyses, including foraging behaviour. The immediate aim of the study was to provide information on the habitat requirements of the species in the Deep Bay area, with the longer-term aim of understanding the management requirements of the species. Manipulation of food resources elsewhere has had positive impacts on spoonbill populations, e.g. Kemper (1995) who showed that by increasing the size of anadromous sticklebacks *Gasterosteus aculeatus* in a Dutch polder, there was a positive effect on foraging efficiency of White Spoonbills *P. leucorodia* in the same area.

The results here should be treated as preliminary given the short time period that fieldwork covered. A more detailed project report is available from the author.

### Diurnal Time Budget

The diurnal activity of Black-faced Spoonbills was recorded from 0700h to 1830h, on 2nd, 12th, 20th and 28 February 1997; a summary of the results is provided in Appendix 1. Observations focused on the main roost site ('main roost') at Mai Po Nature Reserve (Pond 6). Every fifteen minutes the birds were counted and the activity of all birds was recorded for the following eight categories: foraging, sleeping, preening, allopreening, standing, walking, washing, and flying.

### Discussion

From Figure 4 it can be seen that the greatest number of birds were present at the main roost during 1000-1200h. This corresponds with the general pattern of arrival at the roost between 0900h and 1000h on each of the four observation

Figure 2. Summary of behaviour per hour at main roost February 1997

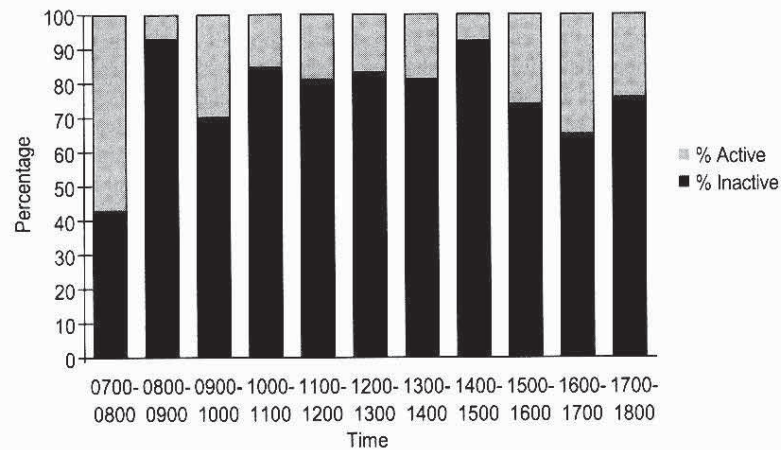
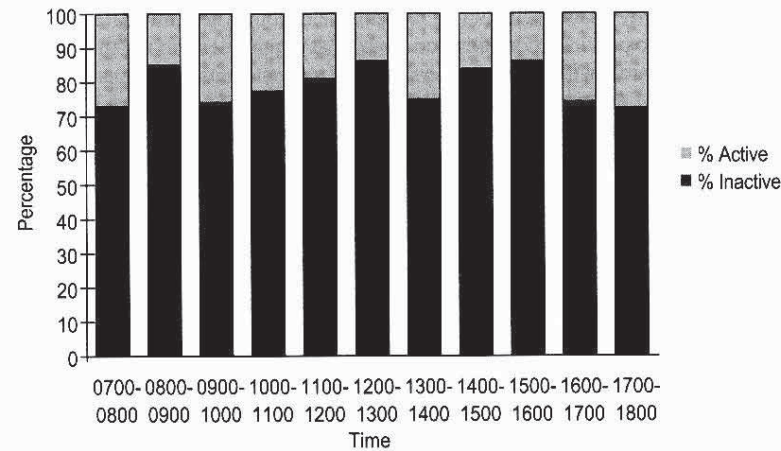


Figure 3. Summary of behaviour per hour at a winter roost in Taiwan (after Xue and Wang 1996).

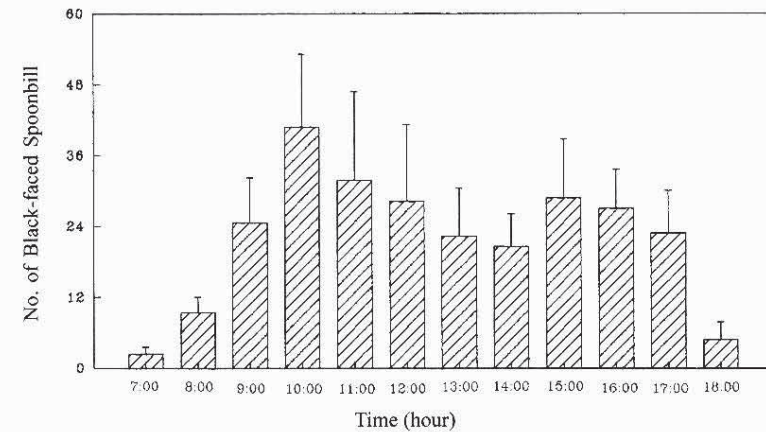


dates. The secondary peak during the afternoon is due to the marked arrival of birds during this period on 5 February 1997.

#### Comparison of diurnal behaviour with that from Taiwan

To allow for comparison with the diurnal behaviour of Black-faced Spoonbills in Taiwan, all behaviour was divided into two categories comprising active (foraging, preening, walking, and flying) and inactive (resting and standing), following Xue and Wang (1996) who studied diurnal behaviour at the Tseng Wan estuary, the main wintering site in Taiwan (see figure 3).

Figure 4. Mean number of birds present per hour at main roost during February 1997



With the exception of the first hour after dawn, the Black-faced Spoonbills in Hong Kong were largely inactive for most daylight hours. For the rest of the day, during each hour at least 65% of the birds were inactive. Peaks of inactivity occurred during 0800-0900h and 1400-1500h, when over 90% of birds were inactive. The general pattern accords well with the behaviour of birds in Taiwan studied by Xue and Wang (1996) (Figure 3), with the marked exception of the period 0700-0800h. This may be due to the low number of birds recorded during this period (mean per hour < 5 birds), and due to a single large flock observed in flight on one date.

The similarities between Taiwan and Hong Kong birds in diurnal behaviour in terms of time spent active and inactive is of interest, particularly given the differences in habitat that the birds roost in at both of these sites. The Taiwan birds roost on intertidal mudflats and Xue and Wang (1996) found that tidal movements resulted in an increase in foraging activity. The roost sites at Mai Po NR are not normally tidal (being in *gei-wai* where sluices control water level in relation to tidal movements), and as such, any increase in foraging activity at the roost cannot be tide related.

#### Diurnal foraging activity

Given the limited amount of data available regarding Black-faced Spoonbills, in particular preferred prey items, with none whatsoever available for Inner Deep Bay, fieldwork was undertaken to elucidate the foraging behaviour and preferred prey within the area, since this clearly has significant management implications for the area.

### Methodology

The Mai Po NR and adjacent wetlands were surveyed on bicycle until one or more foraging spoonbills were located. Observations on foraging behaviour were conducted on fourteen dates between 22 January and 10 March 1997, and were undertaken using a 32 x Kowa telescope. Birds were initially watched for a maximum of ten minutes, although this was later refined, and birds were then watched for two-minute intervals. During each minute the number of prey items captured and ingested, or captured only, and, where possible, the species of prey was recorded. Recording the number of items ingested is straightforward; when a spoonbill obtains a food item it transfers this from the distal part of the bill to the throat with a raising of the head and bill followed by a quick toss of the head (Vestjens 1975). However, small prey are rarely seen prior to ingestion making identification impossible.

All items were judged into different size categories, with the size of small prey estimated in relation to the width of the bill at its widest, and larger prey estimated in relation to the head length (from the base of the bill to the rear of the head at its fullest). Due to the large size difference in the small and large prey items tackled, estimating size using only one of these parameters proved problematic. Given the marked sexual variation in bill length of spoonbills (Hancock *et al.* 1992), this was not used to estimate prey size. All birds were aged either as adults (birds with no black in the wing tips in conjunction with all black bill) or immatures (birds with black in the wing tips and pinkish bill tip), and an attempt was made to sex individuals according to bill length after Jonker and Poorter (1996). Water depth during foraging was also recorded.

### Results

Flocks of feeding spoonbills numbered from three to eighty. Observations were conducted on 46 spoonbills for between one and ten minutes (mean = 4.98 minutes), of which 19 (41.3%) were adults and 27 (58.7%) were immatures; 1304 items were seen to be taken. The categories of prey were unidentified items less than and equal to bill width, *Macrobrachium* 1.5x head length, and *Tilapia* sp. at 0.5x, 1-2x, 3x and 4x head length (see Appendix 3 for results in detail). It should also be noted that the category 'immature' used here for Hong Kong Black-faced Spoonbills includes birds one or more years older.

A total of 98.8% of all prey items fell into the smallest size category (less than bill width) and remained unidentified. This was slightly higher in adults (99.1%) than immatures (98.6%), and all other prey accounted for less than 1% in each category. Immatures caught more *Tilapia* and *Oreochromis* spp. than adults, although adults were apparently more selective than immatures, capturing *Tilapia* in size classes 0.5x and 1-2x head length, immatures catching slightly more *Tilapia* in the 3x and 4x head length size classes. Of the two fish caught by immatures in the 4x head length class, neither was ingested as the large size of the prey made swallowing impossible. Handling time of the two failed attempts to swallow large *Tilapia* were not accurately recorded but were estimated immediately after observations ended to be 25 and 45 seconds each. That adults were not seen to

capture large *Tilapia* is interesting as one would normally assume that capturing one large *Tilapia* would be more profitable than many small items.

Adults (6.65 items per minute) were more successful than immatures (5.33 items per minute), adults catching 124.7 items for each 100 caught by immatures. Immature birds caught more medium-sized prey and *Macrobrachium* and fewer *Tilapia* per minute (although the sample size for each was low). That immatures caught more individual *Tilapia* but fewer per minute indicates their comparative inexperience, and suggests that time spent foraging for *Tilapia* rather than small prey items results in lower success overall. That adults seemingly ignore large *Tilapia* in favour of smaller prey items indicates that it is more profitable to prey on smaller items, possibly because they are easier to catch or more abundant than large *Tilapia*.

Vaestjens (1975) noted greater differences in intake rates between adult and juvenile Yellow-billed Spoonbill *P. flavipes* and Royal Spoonbills *P. regia*., for which adults of both species were markedly more successful than juveniles. The greater difference in foraging success may be due to a number of factors but the most likely would seem to be the greater immaturity of the juveniles observed given the timing of the breeding season (the middle of the northern winter) and thus some of the juveniles may not have been long-fledged and, as such, very inexperienced.

In an attempt to interpret the feeding data further, areas where spoonbills had been observed foraging were sampled for aquatic invertebrates using a hand net. Sweeps were not standardised, as the sampling was not intended to be quantitative, but to shed light on available prey species, in particular potential prey items in the smallest size categories, all of which were unidentified, yet accounted for 98.8% of all prey items caught. All invertebrates collected were stored for transportation, later identification, weighing and measuring. Sweep samples resulted in the capture of four species of crustacean and one small fish. All shrimp species were measured from the end of the rostrum to the tip of the tail spike with the body straightened; the total length of the fish was recorded. The results are presented in Appendix 2.

### Discussion

Nothing is published regarding bill width of Black-faced Spoonbill at the broadest part of the spatulate tip. However, four bird skins measured at Academia Sinica, Beijing had a mean bill width of 51mm. Taking this approximate bill width of 51mm and using the data collected on the invertebrates sampled, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. *Exopalaemon* sp.: half of all sampled were greater than 45 mm in length, so it is unlikely that this is the main prey species captured.
2. *Palaemonetes* sp.: all were within the range 10-35mm and thus within our main category size. This was the most abundant invertebrate encountered.

3. *Macrobrachium* sp.: only one was smaller than 67mm in length and therefore this can be excluded from the main category.
4. *Palaemon* sp.: all were between 30-50 mm; thus, some fell within the range of the main category size, but very few were sampled, making it unlikely that this is the main prey species.
5. *Gambusia affinis*: all were between 20-32 mm and thus within the size range

It would appear that the most likely species accounting for the prey in the smallest size classes are *Palaemonetes* sp. and *Gambusia affinis*.

Vestjens (1975) found that of 20 Royal Spoonbill stomachs examined, crustacea accounted for 25% of the volume, insects 33% and fish 42%. *Gambusia affinis* was the fish species recorded most with, on average, 24 per stomach. The next most abundant species had an average of three per stomach. Lowe (1982), who examined the contents of ten Royal Spoonbills, found the most numerous prey species to be Striped Prawn *Macrobrachium intermedium*, which represented an average of 73% of the ingested wet weight. The next most important prey was fish (23% of wet weight). Allen (1942) found that of one hundred fish, crustaceans, insects and gastropods in one Roseate Spoonbill *Ajaia ajaia* stomach, all were much less than 30mm in length, and most were less than 20mm.

#### Night-time behaviour

In order to investigate the nocturnal behaviour of Black-faced Spoonbills, observations were conducted from 1700h on 13 March to 0700h the following day. The number and activity of all birds was recorded using the same methodology for daytime observations. During the night feeding observations were also undertaken.

Most activity from dusk to dawn was foraging, although there was a marked lull in foraging activity between 0045h and 0215h. At this time no explanation for this can be offered but it is of interest that Zwarts and Dirksen (1990) found that Whimbrels *Numenius phaeopus* feeding on crabs had to pause to digest prey. It is possible that if feeding principally upon shrimps, spoonbills would experience a similar digestive 'bottleneck' due to an accumulation of exoskeletons in the gut.

The mean number of items ingested per minute at night was 0.83, which is much lower than the mean per minute during the day which was 5.86. It is perhaps surprising that there is such a marked difference in intake rates between day and night, given that most spoonbills feed at night and that only a low percentage are observed foraging during the day. It is not possible to explain why this should be, however, the data may be biased by the fact that much of the daytime data were collected in the late afternoon when most diurnal foraging activity occurs. Further, it may be the case that late afternoon is the optimum period but this has to be supplemented by nocturnal foraging. Alternatively, nocturnal foraging may be a mechanism for increasing intake rates and thus fat deposition prior to migration. It is also possible that the diet of the spoonbills

differs between night and day. Species that exhibit pronounced nocturnal activity that results in them being more accessible to the spoonbills would be expected to contribute more to spoonbill diet at that time.

It should be noted that most Black-faced Spoonbills were seen to leave the reserve at dusk. It is not known where they went but given the development pressure on fish pond habitat outside the reserve, it is vital that the question of night-time habitat utilisation is addressed.

#### Recommendations

It can be seen that this study has only partially explained the winter ecology of Black-faced Spoonbills in Hong Kong and that further study is urgently required to shed more light on the habitat requirements of this critically endangered species in Hong Kong. Further study should focus on the following.

1. Continue diurnal foraging studies with the aim of increasing the data set and confirm preferred prey items, in particular the indication that smaller prey are selected rather than larger prey. Management of the area for preferred prey species could increase the carrying capacity of the area for the species.
2. Elucidate further nocturnal behaviour and foraging areas. To establish whether nocturnal foraging accounts for a large part of the species energy intake, and to increase our understanding of the habitat requirements of the species.
3. Examine the variation in behaviour throughout the winter, especially diurnal and nocturnal foraging and intake rates.
4. Investigate further variations in numbers during the winter to help understand differences in intake rates etc.
5. Continue to examine the age composition of the birds present to help understand variations in intake rates and monitor breeding success.

#### Acknowledgements

The Environment and Conservation Fund very kindly funded the project. David Melville and Lew Young provided references, encouragement, helpful discussions and constructive comments on earlier drafts of this paper. Wang Tian Hou translated references, Dr Kees Svennen provided invaluable advice and encouragement. Mutsuyuki Ueta helped with data collection and provided helpful discussion. Lee Kwok Shing and Sabina Eckle helped with fieldwork, Jim Hackett provided references, Jonathon Eames supplied data on Vietnam and Christen Bohmer, James Cheesewright and Paul Aston provided data for Macau.

## Appendix 1

Summary per hour of activity of Black-faced Spoonbill at daytime roost sites in Hong Kong during February 1997 (percentages given to one decimal point).

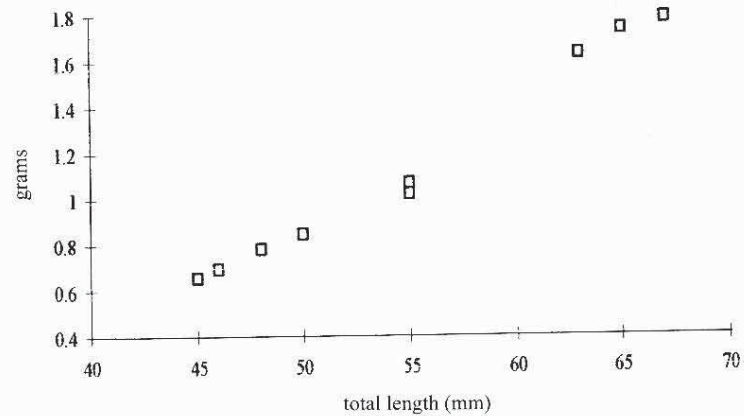
time	foraging	preening	allo-preening	standing	walking	washing	sleeping	flying
07-0800	19.2	9.6	7.7	19.2	0.0	0.0	23.1	21.2
08-0900	0.8	6.5	0.0	7.3	0.0	0.0	85.4	0.0
09-1000	1.5	23.7	4.2	5.7	0.6	0.0	64.4	0.0
10-1100	1.2	11.1	1.2	1.0	0.6	0.4	84.5	0.0
11-1200	1.6	6.3	0.0	2.2	0.8	0.2	79.3	9.6
12-1300	1.0	10.0	1.0	4.3	1.3	1.3	80.6	0.5
13-1400	2.0	17.2	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	80.5	0.0
14-1500	0.0	8.5	0.0	4.0	0.4	0.0	87.1	0.0
15-1600	1.6	23.0	1.0	6.0	0.3	2.2	65.8	0.0
16-1700	6.2	4.0	2.5	13.0	0.3	0.3	51.9	0.0
17-1800	3.0	41.6	3.0	23.4	0.0	0.0	51.7	3.7

all values are percentages

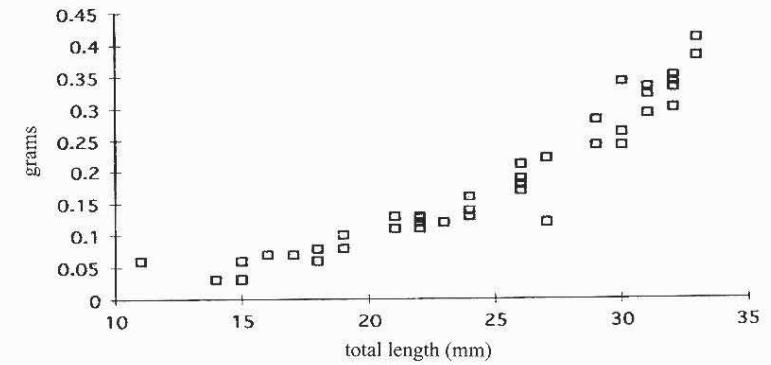
## Appendix 2

Length and mass of potential prey items of Black-faced Spoonbill at Mai Po, Hong Kong

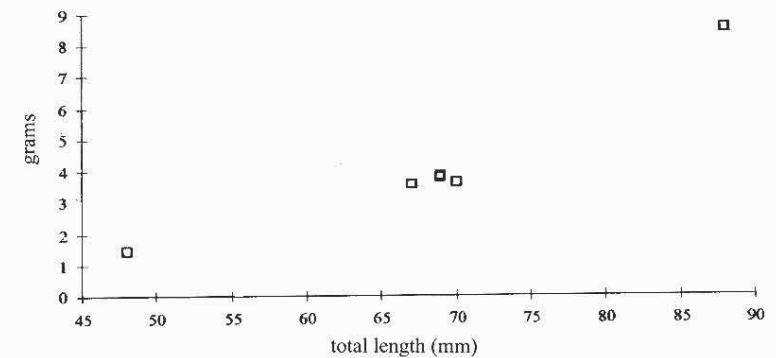
### 1. *Exopalaemon* sp.



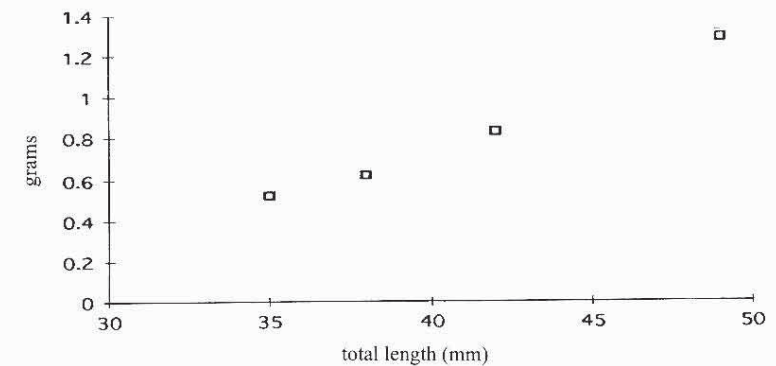
### 2. *Palaemonetes* sp.



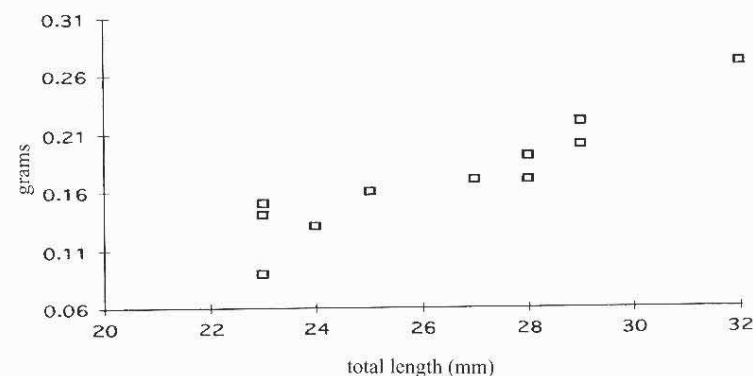
### 3. *Macrobrachium nipponense*



### 4. *Palaemon* sp.



### 5. *Gambusia affinis*



### Appendix 3

Prey ingestion rate per minute of adult and immature Black-faced Spoonbills at Mai Po January to March 1997.

age	no. of mins	no. prey items	prey not known		<i>Macrobrachium</i>	<i>Tilapia</i> sp.			
			< bill width	= bill width	1.5x bill	<head	1-2x head	3x head	4x head*
adult	68	6.647	6.51	0.015	0	0.015	0.029	0	0
imm.	161	5.329	5.248	0.043	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.012

\* caught but not ingested

在香港出現的雀鳥中，黑臉琵鷺 *Platalea minor* 是最瀕危的品種。是次初步研究主要針對冬季的生態，發現黑臉琵鷺在香港的紀錄，既有春秋兩季的遷徙鳥，也有冬候鳥。此外，日間牠們較少活動，主要的覓食時間似乎在晚上，最可能的食物是 *Palaemonetes* 及 *Gambusia affinis*。更進一步，還要了解牠們白天和夜間的覓食情況、冬季的活動，與及在冬季出現的鳥群中年齡的分佈。

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## THE WINTER STATUS AND CONSERVATION OF STYAN'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER

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### Introduction

Of the world's nine species of *Locustella* warblers, the species that breed in eastern Asia are the least known. Of these, only Styan's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella pleskei* is a regular winter visitor to Hong Kong. The taxonomic position of *pleskei* has long been disputed, some authorities, including Vaurie (1959), treating *pleskei*, Middendorff's Grasshopper Warbler *L. ochotensis* and Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *L. certhiola* as a single species. Williamson (1967) and Voous (1977) treated *ochotensis* and *pleskei* as conspecific and *certhiola* as distinct. Nazarov and Shibaev (1983), as a result of studies of both *ochotensis* and *pleskei* on the breeding grounds, regarded them as distinct species due to differences in morphology, vocalizations and ecology. The identification of the species has been dealt with in detail elsewhere by Kennerley and Leader (1993) and Leader (1994) who regard them as different species based on differences in time of arrival at and habitat and behaviour on the breeding grounds in Japan. However, Beaman (1994) has pointed out that these differences may simply reflect the difference in latitude of the areas occupied. Further, Inskipp *et al.* (1996) state that the extent of differences in vocalisations requires further study.

### Distribution

The breeding range of Styan's Grasshopper Warbler is confined to offshore islands in southern Japan, north to the Izu Islands (Brazil 1991) and South Korea; it has also recently been found to breed on small islands in Peter the Great Bay in the Russian Far East (Nazarov and Shibaev 1983). Austin and Kuroda (1948) state that it is 'a not uncommon but localised summer resident' in Korea. Cheng (1987) describes *pleskei* as a migrant through Jiangsu, Fujian and Guangdong provinces. Watson (1986), who accords *pleskei* specific status based on Nazarov and Shibaev (1983), notes that it is a migrant along the coast of China to Fujian and Guangdong. La Touche (1925-34), however, did not record it from Sha Wei Shan Island, off the east coast near Shanghai, or in northeastern China. Williamson (1968) records it as migrating through southeast China, the wintering grounds apparently being unknown. Dement'ev and Gladkov (1954) note that it winters in the Sunda Islands; however, White and Bruce (1986) only record *ochotensis* from that region. Cheng (1987) does not mention any records of *pleskei* during the winter months, and to date the only certain winter records from China or elsewhere appear to be from the Inner Deep Bay area in Hong Kong.

### Status in Hong Kong

Styan's Grasshopper Warbler is a scarce passage migrant and winter visitor to Hong Kong (Chalmers 1986, Kennerley and Leader 1993). Typical of *Locustella* warblers, the species' skulking behaviour makes it difficult to detect in the field.

*Hong Kong Bird Report 1996: 158-161, Mar. 1998*

Indeed, of 35 records during the period 1984-1996, 28 (involving 21 individuals) have been trapped at Mai Po Nature Reserve (NR) during the course of the WWF HK ringing programme there.

Figure 1. Temporal distribution of records of Styan's Grasshopper Warblers in Hong Kong 1984-1996.

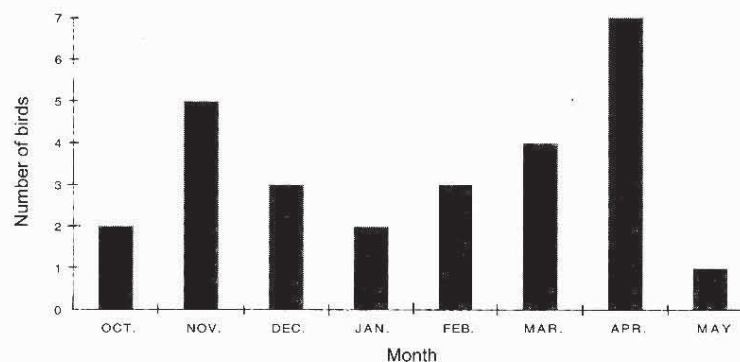


Figure 1 illustrates the monthly distribution of Styan's Grasshopper Warbler during the period 1984-1996. Extreme dates are 27 October to 8 May. Figure 1 suggests that April is the peak month of occurrence, with most other birds occurring during November and March. However, the true picture is probably not quite as it seems for the following reasons:

i) of four birds trapped during March, three were in active moult, and thus not recent arrivals;

ii) of 21 individuals trapped during 1987-1995 four have been retrapped, including a bird originally trapped in January 1991 that was retrapped on 12 April 1992 and then again on 17 October 1992, and another originally trapped on 26 November 1994 that was retrapped on 5 November 1995 and again on 8 April 1996 (this individual was actually trapped on the same fish pond bund on each occasion);

iii) the February total is largely due to four records of a single singing bird in the mangroves beside the floating boardwalk hide at the edge of Deep Bay during 1994.

Thus, although there is an apparent spring passage peak in March and April, it is possible that there is actually no passage through Hong Kong, and that the perceived pattern results because birds are more active on arrival in October and prior to departure, and consequently more likely to be trapped. The recapture data indicate that there is a degree of site faithfulness which, due to the skulking nature of the species, is likely to be greater than these data suggest.

Seven individuals have been recorded in active moult when trapped. As this is an energetically demanding part of any bird's annual life cycle, it is safe to assume that these birds were not in the process of any migratory movements. Moulting birds have been trapped between 17 October and 17 March.

### Habitat requirements

All recent records in Hong Kong have come from wetland areas, and only one record, a bird at Ma Tso Lung on 30 December 1995, has been outside the WWF HK Mai Po Nature Reserve. All trapped birds have come from either extensive areas of phragmites or from bunds with low shrubs and nearby phragmites. Field records have also come from the mangrove area along the floating boardwalk, where *Kandelia candel* and *Aegiceras corniculatum* predominate. The birds here are frequently heard to give a quiet subsong, and this, combined with regular sightings of some individuals, indicates that these birds are on winter territories. It is likely that birds are present in mangroves elsewhere in the area, but that those nearer the floating boardwalk are more easily detected due to the greater opportunity for observers to come into the proximity of vocalizing birds, which is often the easiest method of location.

The bird at Ma Tso Lung during December 1995 was present in an area of rank grass and Water Hyacinth *Eichhornia crassipes* with nearby *Phragmites*, in a low, wet area between commercially operated fishponds. It was seen to forage among the Water Hyacinth leaves (pers. obs.).

The lack of records from other sites in Hong Kong may simply reflect the difficulty in detecting the species in the field; however, given the number of other skulking *Locustella*, *Bradypterus* and *Acrocephalus* warblers recorded from a wide variety of habitats elsewhere in the SAR, it is likely that records away from the Inner Deep Bay area are exceptional. The Ma Tso Lung area has the largest areas of *Phragmites* in Hong Kong outside of Mai Po NR, and may well hold similar densities of the species.

### Conservation

Little information is available on the population of Styan's Grasshopper Warbler. Brazil (1991) states of both *pleskei* and *ochotensis* (which he treats as conspecific): 'Though fairly common in suitable habitats.....the total population must be very small'. It is undoubtedly very scarce in Hong Kong in winter, as it is still rarely recorded, despite fairly intensive trapping at Mai Po NR; the fact that these are the only known records during the winter months, making it possibly the smallest known wintering range of any palearctic migrant, is of concern, particularly given that the species is site-faithful in winter together with the ongoing loss of wetlands in coastal China: the Deep Bay reedbeds are the largest remaining in Guangdong (Gao Y.R. pers. comm. to L. Young). It is therefore recommended that the species be included in the Asian Red Data Book, and that its habitat requirements in the Deep Bay area, including Ma Tso Lung, be studied in more detail.

### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank David Melville and Mike Leven for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

北蝗鶯（東南亞種）*Locustella pleskei* 是香港的冬候鳥，大概每年都有，不過數目很少，繁殖地帶有限。近年本港的紀錄，都在濕地發現，當中亦僅有一次是在米埔以外其他后海灣範圍的濕地。鑑於這個品種極局限於原來的棲息地帶，而這類中國沿海的濕地正大幅減少，所以建議研究這種蝗鶯對環境的選擇，與及將這個品種列於亞洲紅皮書（Asian Red Data Book）名單中。

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## PHOTOSPOT: ASIAN AND JAPANESE PARADISE FLYCATCHERS

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Although more famous for migrant waders, Hong Kong witnesses an impressive passerine migration with approximately 100 species recorded regularly each year. In spring it is often the flycatchers that impress, none less so than full-tailed male Asian Paradise *Terpsiphone paradisi* and Japanese Paradise Flycatchers *T. atrocaudata*.

Both species are scarce passage migrants, although there are also a few winter records of Asian. Japanese passes between the last week in March and the third week in April, whereas Asian, though less numerous, has a longer spring passage period, from the second week in March to the first week in May. During this time Tai Po Kau is the favoured area for both species, although birds have been recorded from widespread areas, and recent records have come from Mai Po, Kowloon Park and Dong Ping Chau amongst other sites.



23 Asian Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi*  
Hong Kong, 31 August 1996 Paul J. Leader

At this time of year identification is relatively simple, especially of males, the tail of Asian being rich chestnut, and that of Japanese, dark black-brown, hence its alternative common name, Black Paradise Flycatcher. The shorter-tailed females can be similarly separated although female Japanese shows a slightly paler tail, being only dark brown, whereas the tail of female Asian is the same colour as that of the male.

In autumn Japanese passes through between the last weeks of August and October; the passage of Asian covers a similar period but commences a week earlier. There has been a degree of confusion over the identification of the two in autumn in past years, but an examination of skins at the British Museum, Natural History (Tring) and of birds seen in the field and trapped for ringing in Hong Kong, has shown that the two are easily separable at this time of year. All birds encountered in autumn are short-tailed as the males of both species lose their elongated tail feathers during the post-breeding moult. The tail of Asian remains rich chestnut, and the tail of Japanese is dark brown, similar to that of spring



24 Japanese Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone atrocaudata*  
Hong Kong, 9 October 1996 Paul J. Leader

[The cost of production of plates 23-24 in colour has been subsidised by Cezet Optical Co. Ltd., agents for Zeiss binoculars]

females, but either slightly duller or sometimes much paler. Other features separating the two include the colour of the mantle, which has a maroon wash in Japanese and is chestnut on Asian, and also that of the uppertail coverts which are sometimes conspicuously paler than the tail in Japanese, but of a similar colour to the tail on Asian. These differences are illustrated in plates 23 and 24.

Whilst abundance of the two in autumn has changed little over the years, both are now much more common in spring. The increase in spring is probably due to an increase in observer activity at this time of year, although a similar increase would be expected for the same reasons during the autumn period. Brazil (1991) states 'The Japanese Paradise Flycatcher was once a common summer visitor .....But numbers have decreased, and it has disappeared from many areas...' It would therefore seem unlikely that the apparent increase in Hong Kong is real, more likely it is due to increased observer coverage.

Asian has the widest distribution of the two, breeding from central and southern India, east to the Korean peninsula, as far north as Manchuria, and south Sumatra. Japanese is confined as a breeding bird to Japan, the Korean peninsula and Mindoro and Boto Island in the Philippines. It is listed as near-threatened by Collar *et al.* (1994).

本文討論壽帶鳥及紫壽帶鳥的情況和分辨問題。兩個品種都屬稀少的春秋過境遷徙鳥，紫壽帶鳥多見於春天，而壽帶鳥則較常見於秋天。一般而言，憑尾部顏色已可分辨：壽帶鳥的栗色，紫壽帶鳥的深棕黑色；除此之外，前者上身栗色，後者則有紫栗色的感覺。

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## SUGAR PREFERENCES OF FRUIT-EATING BIRDS IN HONG KONG

Ice W.P. Ko

### Introduction

Sugars are the major reward in the pulp of most vertebrate-dispersed fruits while lipids and protein predominate in insects (Johnson *et al.* 1985, Herrera 1987, Jordano 1995, Corlett 1996). In Hong Kong at least 27% (482 species) of the angiosperm flora of approximately 1800 species has fleshy, presumably vertebrate-dispersed fruits, and birds are the major seed dispersal agents (Corlett 1996, Dudgeon and Corlett 1994). More than 35 resident bird species and 40 migrant species here probably eat at least some fruit but the major avian fruit-eaters are resident species of bulbuls *Pycnonotus*, white-eyes *Zosterops* and laughingthrushes *Garrulax*, and migrant species of thrushes *Turdus* and chats *Luscinia* and *Tarsiger* (Corlett 1996, 1997).

Members of the bird families Sturnidae and Muscicapidae (including starlings, thrushes, chats and flycatchers) do not have the enzyme required to digest sucrose and avoid sucrose solutions when given a choice (Schuler 1983, Martinez del Rio and Restrepo 1993). Contrary to what might be expected, even birds having the enzyme may behave similarly (Martinez del Rio *et al.* 1992, Avery *et al.* 1995) apparently because they digest sucrose inefficiently. It thus might be expected that the pulp of bird-dispersed fruits is low in sucrose.

The aims of the study reported here were to determine which sugars are present in Hong Kong fruits in order to predict which fruit species might be important for bird conservation, and to test the acceptability of different sugars to local fruit-eating birds.

### Method

The sugar contents of the pulp of 58 wild fruit species (from 36 families) were analysed using High Performance Liquid Chromatography. The sugar preferences of Black-necked Starling *Sturnus nigricollis*, Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus*, Siberian Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope*, Japanese White-eye *Zosterops japonica*, Crested Bulbul *Pycnonotus jocosus*, Hwamei *Garrulax canorus*, Pekin Robin *Leiothrix lutea*, Orange-bellied Leafbird *Chloropsis hardwickii*, Gould's Sunbird *Aethopyga gouldiae* and Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis* were studied. In each test, equal concentrations of sucrose solution and a 1:1 glucose:fructose mixture were given to the birds. A sucrose preference ratio was calculated by dividing the intake of sucrose solution by the total intake of sugar solutions. A bird species is said to have equal consumption of both types of sugar solution if the mean preference ratio is 0.5; to reject sucrose if the mean ratio is statistically smaller than 0.5; and to prefer sucrose if the ratio is statistically greater than 0.5.

Hong Kong Bird Report 1996: 165-169, Mar. 1998

## Results

Among the 58 wild fruit species studied, glucose, fructose and sucrose were the only detectable sugars. All fruit species contained glucose (median 15.9%, range 1.6-26.9% of pulp dry weight), all but one (*Sarcandra glabra*) had fructose (17.3%, 0.0-32.6%) while only 11 had sucrose (10.1%, 2.8-41.1%). The glucose:fructose ratio in the fruits was usually around 1:1. Birds are known to eat 29 of the fruit species without detectable sucrose and four with sucrose, only one of which has sucrose as the predominant sugar (Appendix 1).

The lowest concentration at which sucrose was rejected for Black-necked Starling was 10%, for Crested Myna 2.5%, Siberian Rubythroat 20%, Crested Bulbul 10%, Pekin Robin 2.5% and Hwamei 15%. The result for Pekin Robin should be interpreted with caution as this species consumed very little sugar solution, although its sucrose rejection was consistent across all four test sugar concentrations. Black-naped Oriole, Gould's Sunbird, Orange-bellied Leafbird and Japanese White-eye did not avoid sucrose at any of the concentrations tested.

## Discussion

Digestive physiology provides a probable explanation for sucrose avoidance by birds lacking the enzyme (Black-necked Starling, Crested Myna and Siberian Rubythroat: Ko unpub.). Sucrose is a disaccharide which has to be broken down by an enzyme, sucrase, into its monosaccharide constituents, glucose and fructose, before absorption, while glucose and fructose can be absorbed intact (Sanford 1982). Consequently, sucrose ingestion by birds without the enzyme leads to an osmotic imbalance that may be distressful or even fatal (Avery *et al.* 1995; Martinez del Rio *et al.* 1988; Schuler 1983). However, the result for Siberian Rubythroat has to be interpreted with caution. Although this species did not seem to discriminate between the sugar solutions, except at high concentrations, this is probably because it consumed so little of them (Siberian Rubythroat is primarily an insectivorous species in Hong Kong, R. Corlett and M.R. Leven pers. comm.).

Birds having the enzyme sucrase showed varied responses in the choice test. Crested Bulbul, Pekin Robin and Hwamei still rejected sucrose at comparatively low concentrations. The relatively short gut passage times of fruit-eating birds (Karasov and Levey 1990) possibly do not provide enough time for the digestion of sucrose (Levey and Grajal 1991, Martinez del Rio and Restrepo 1993). Martinez del Rio and Stevens (1989) found that Cedar Waxwings *Bombycilla cedrorum* absorbed 92% of glucose and 88% of fructose but only 60% of sucrose, although the waxwings showed significant intestinal sucrase activities. Inefficient sucrose digestion kept the blood glucose level low and the birds appeared unable to maintain a positive energy balance feeding only on high-sucrose fruits (Avery *et al.* 1995). On the other hand, Japanese White-eye, Gould's Sunbird, Orange-bellied Leafbird and Black-naped Oriole did not avoid sucrose at any concentrations tested.

Although fruit-eating birds in Hong Kong mainly consume fruits rich in glucose and fructose, this is not evidence for sucrose avoidance in nature. Indeed, the one accessible sucrose-dominated fruit for which there are feeding records, *Acronychia pedunculata*, is eaten by bulbuls. *Rhodomyrtus tomentosa* and *Schefflera octophylla* are also known to be taken frequently by birds. Japanese White-eyes have been recorded to take *R. tomentosa* only occasionally (M.R. Leven, pers. comm.), although they did not reject sucrose in the choice tests. However, this can be attributed to the fact that *R. tomentosa* has skin which is too thick for the White-eyes to peck open (pers. obs.) and *R. tomentosa* fruits pecked open by other birds (for example, Bulbuls) may not be sufficiently widespread in the wild to be an efficient food source for them (Leven, pers. comm.). Thus, in order to generate a list of wild fruit species important for bird conservation or to estimate the loss of cultivated fruits (often sucrose-rich) due to bird consumption, further observations on fruit-eating by birds in the wild are required.

## Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Dr R.T. Corlett and Dr R.J. Xu for their supervision throughout my study. I would also like to thank Michael (especially) and Elizabeth Leven for their invaluable advice; L. Wong, V. Yeung and L. Ramsden for technical help; S.T. Chan and S.C. Ng for fruit-collection; the staff of the Animal House, Zoology Department, University of Hong Kong, for assistance in taking care of the birds. Last but not least, I am very grateful for the support of my family.

本文是一個研究香港 58 種野生果子的含糖量的報告。樣本中只測量到葡萄糖、果糖和蔗糖，而當中又以葡萄糖和果糖為主。研究十種常見食果類雀鳥對於糖類的選擇，有如下的發現：體內缺乏蔗糖消化酶的雀鳥拒絕蔗糖，即使含量很少，也不為所動；而體內有蔗糖消化酶的雀鳥則無固定的選擇。雀鳥似乎傾向低蔗糖的果子，不過這個表現可能基於本地缺乏含豐富蔗糖的果子。因此，雖然對果子含糖量的傾向是一個重要的因素，但仍然很難由此斷定哪種果子對鳥類的保育工作特別具有意義。

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## Appendix 1

Local wild fruits known to be dispersed by birds (from Corlett 1996). Data are shown as percentages of dry pulp weight (Ko unpub.). ND = Not detectable.

Family	Fruit species	Sucrose
Annonaceae	<i>Desmos chinensis</i>	ND
Aquifoliaceae	<i>Ilex asprella</i>	ND
	<i>Ilex pusecens</i>	ND
Araliaceae	<i>Schefflera octophylla</i>	4.60
Chloranthaceae	<i>Sarcandra glabra</i>	ND
Convallariaceae	<i>Liriope spicata</i>	ND
Daphniphyllaceae	<i>Daphniphyllum glaucescens</i>	ND
Ebenaceae	<i>Diospyros morrisiana</i>	ND
	<i>Diospyros vaccinoides</i>	ND
Ericaceae	<i>Vaccinium bracteatum</i>	ND
Euphorbiaceae	<i>Macaranga tanarius</i>	ND
Lauraceae	<i>Persea leptophylla</i>	ND
	<i>Persea longipedunculata</i> *	ND
Moraceae	<i>Ficus microcarpa</i>	ND
	<i>Ficus superba</i>	ND
Myrsinaceae	<i>Embelia ribes</i>	ND
	<i>Maesa perlarius</i>	ND
Myrtaceae	<i>Syzygium levinei</i>	ND
Oleaceae	<i>Ligustrum sinensis</i>	ND
Phormiaceae	<i>Dianella ensifolia</i>	ND
Rhamnaceae	<i>Berchemia racemosa</i>	ND
	<i>Sageretia theezans</i>	ND
Rosaceae	<i>Photinia prunifolia</i>	ND
	<i>Rhaphiolepis indica</i>	ND
	<i>Rhodomyrtus tomentosa</i>	5.24
Rubiaceae	<i>Psychotria rubra</i>	ND
	<i>Psychotria serpens</i>	ND
Rutaceae	<i>Acrornychia pedunculata</i>	32.64
Smilacaceae	<i>Smilax china</i>	ND
Thymelaeaceae	<i>Wikstroemia indica</i>	4.96
Ulmaceae	<i>Celtis sinensis</i>	ND
Verbenaceae	<i>Callicarpa kochiana</i>	ND
	<i>Lantana camara</i>	ND

\**Persea longipedunculata* (S. Lee & F.N. Wei) Kosterm. was misidentified as *Machilus thunbergii* in Corlett (1993, 1996).

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## NOTES

### Black-faced Spoonbill nest-building at Mai Po

At the end of a day's birdwatching at Mai Po on 27 December 1994, I was returning along the border fence past the Rocky Outcrop when I stopped to view the Black-faced Spoonbills *Platalea minor* on the exposed bund between ponds five and six, one of their then regular roosting sites. I was surprised to note two adults apparently constructing a nest of twigs in the top of a two-metre high tree or shrub growing on the bund. The 'nest' comprised an untidy shallow platform and appeared incomplete. One bird was attempting to weave in new twigs that it held in its bill. Subsequent visits commencing two days later showed no birds present and the nest no further advanced. I can find no records of this behaviour on the wintering grounds in this or any related species.

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### Tree Sparrow in the South China Sea

On 31 March 1993 while sailing across the South China Sea from Hong Kong to the Philippines aboard s/v Shady Lady, CA observed a Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* flying around the vessel. The bird landed on board at about 1000h and remained until 1500h. At the time when the bird first appeared the vessel was situated some 390nm (713km) south of Hong Kong at about 17°39'N 117°27'E, the nearest land being Luzon, approximately 100nm (183km) distant. When the bird departed it flew toward the north.

Tree Sparrows are known to migrate to a limited extent, those in the Far East apparently more so than those in Europe (Summer-Smith 1988, 1995). Tree Sparrows will cross areas of sea, however, they are seldom recorded far out to sea.

Styan (1891) reported thousands of Tree Sparrows on passage on Gutzleff Island, Hangzhou Bay, China in October, and La Touche (1912) recorded spring migration at Sha Wei Shan Island, 50km east of the Chang Jiang (Yangtze River) estuary between late March and early May. These sightings however, probably relate to birds 'island hopping' along the Zhejiang coast.

A review of landbird sightings at sea published in *Sea Swallow* reveal very few records of Tree Sparrows coming aboard vessels in the South China Sea/East Asia region. Tuck (1973) reports three sightings by D.M. Simpson:

One bird on 7 March 1971 at 26°52'N 128°35'E near the Nansei Shoto, Japan

Two birds on 22 September 1972 at 24°55'N 122°06'E off Taiwan

One bird on 30 September 1972 at 15°50'N 119°40'E off Luzon.

These records were relatively close to land. There is one further record, however, of a 'group of several' Tree Sparrows well out to sea, south of Japan at 29°17'N 137°09'E (Casement 1984).

Tree Sparrows are known to travel on boats in east Asia, and their arrival in Borneo is thought to have been on a ship from Hong Kong (Harrison 1974). In the Philippines Dickinson *et al.* (1991) note that 'it hitches a ride, or even nests on the regular inter-island boats'. However, the bird on board Shady Lady did not join the vessel until it was well at sea. It is possible that it came from another vessel, but there was none in sight at the time.

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### Eastern Marsh Harrier drowning Mallard

On 23 November 1996 while birdwatching at Mai Po, I noticed an Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus* standing up to its thighs in water in pond 8. On looking through my binoculars it appeared slightly unsteady and I wondered why it did not move to another, more stable surface, out of the water. After a few seconds the reason for this became obvious as it started to drag an object on which it was standing to a nearby island. It subsequently became clear that this was a female Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*.

The harrier had the wigeon gripped in its right claw and was pulling both itself and the duck toward the shore with its left leg anchored in the mud. However, the wigeon started to struggle, and the harrier then placed its left foot on the bird's head, its right claw already gripping the wigeon's chest. It proceeded to hold the wigeon's head underneath the water in an obvious attempt to drown it, or at least weaken it enough to continue dragging it to land. It held the bird in this way for some time, countering struggles to resist on the part of the duck before dragging it up on to the bank, presumably once it felt sure that the bird would not resist further. After dragging it on to the bank, although the duck still showed signs of

life it was far too weak to put up any serious resistance. The harrier then began to devour the duck, beginning on the head around the eye.

Clarke (1995) in his summary of knowledge of Marsh Harriers states that prey is normally killed by being pinned to the ground, and the death of prey is usually achieved by, effectively, stabbing with the harriers' talons. If the first strike fails, then a foot can be lifted off and a talon stabbed in again, several times if necessary (Redhead 1969, quoted in Clarke 1995). Alternatively, the coup de grace can be delivered with the bill (Clarke 1995). Thus, it would seem that deliberate drowning of prey has not been recorded before.

Unfortunately, just how the harrier had caught the wigeon in the first place was not observed. It may have been that the wigeon was a sick or weakened bird that did not need to be pounced upon to be subdued. However, even if this was the case it is still of interest that the harrier chose drowning as a means of killing its prey.

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## GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF RECORDS

### Recording

One of the most important functions of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society is the publication of the Hong Kong Bird Report. The value of this publication depends on members submitting records and all are encouraged to do this at the end of each year.

The Society provides 152 x 106mm record cards to facilitate analysis and storage and these are available from the Recorder. Completed cards are stored in a species-indexed filing system and members wishing to look at past records are asked to contact the Recorder. It is hoped that the ease with which records can be retrieved will result in interested people analysing migration patterns and population trends and undertaking other studies.

### Rarities

While the birds of Hong Kong are better known than those of many areas of the Far East, new species are continually being added to the Hong Kong List and the status of a number of other species is uncertain.

Field identification techniques for species in the area still need refining and the Society has a Records Committee to assess records and ensure that a high standard of reporting is maintained. A list of species considered by the Committee is given below. The list may seem dauntingly long and includes some apparently unmistakable species but, nevertheless, field descriptions of the birds listed are required if the record is to be considered for publication. Ideally, field notes of a rarity should cover the following points:

- a) Date, time and location of sighting.
- b) Power of binoculars/telescope used, distance of bird from the observer, weather and light conditions.
- c) Description of habitat and what other birds, if any, it was associating with.
- d) Angle of view and actions: at rest, in flight, swimming etc. The more varied the conditions the better.
- e) Its general size, shape and structure compared with other more familiar species. Structural features that may be important should be detailed e.g. bill length compared to length of head; relative position of wing tips to uppertail coverts; projection of primary tips beyond closed tertials; length of hind claw etc.
- f) The most detailed description possible of the plumage and bare parts, not just those parts thought to help in identification. This description should be logical and organised, and the following sequence is suggested:
  - i) head
  - ii) upperparts
  - iii) wings, including underwing if seen

- iv) tail, both upper and lower sides
- v) underparts
- vi) bare parts (iris, bill, gape if seen, legs and feet)
- g) Any calls, indicating especially the quality of the sound (harsh, rattling, shrill, hoarse, liquid etc.) and comparison with calls of other species.
- h) Notes on previous experience with the species or species with which it may be confused.
- i) Names of other observers present, if any.

More experienced observers will expand on features known to be critical e.g. extent and shape of supercilium and wing bars in warblers, pattern of scapular feathers in waders etc. A rough sketch or diagram is helpful. If possible try to get someone else to see the bird as two descriptions are better than one. Make sure that you take full field notes on the spot - it is all too easy to imagine field marks after consulting a book!

With regard to birds that have distinctive vocalisations, the Committee realises that in some cases call only records are acceptable. However, no matter how distinctive, the call should be described in as much detail as possible.

Even if you do not know what the bird is please send in the description as it may be possible for the Committee to identify it for you. Many species of cage birds have been recorded as escapes in Hong Kong and they may not be included in any of the local books.

The increasing number of field guides on the market often make positive identification appear straightforward, but it must be remembered that there are still many difficult species and groups of birds and it is only by careful, painstaking observation that such species can be identified.

The following list of species for which written descriptions are required is based on the Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong (Chalmers 1986) plus additions detailed in annual Hong Kong Bird Reports from 1984/85 onwards. In some cases brief notes added to the record cards describing the salient features, ranges and viewing conditions will suffice. However, full descriptions are required for the rarer or more difficult species, or any new species not yet on the Hong Kong List. In addition, the Recorder may request descriptions of other species under unusual circumstances. Observers are urged to be aware of the significance of any unusual sightings made and to take full details *at the time of observation*; these should then be submitted with the record card. The list is subject to revision each year to include new species and delete those for which descriptions are no longer needed because of better defined status or fewer identification problems. Records of species new to Hong Kong require detailed written descriptions.

# **Records of species on the list below that are submitted without descriptions will not be considered**

## **CATEGORY A**

Horned Grebe  
Black-necked Grebe  
Streaked Shearwater  
all boobies  
all frigatebirds  
all storm-petrels  
Black Bittern  
Japanese Night Heron  
white-phase Pacific Reef Egret  
Glossy Ibis  
Lesser Whistling Duck  
all swans  
all geese  
Cotton Pygmy-goose  
hybrid wigeon  
Ferruginous Duck  
Velvet Scoter  
Common Goldeneye  
Smew  
Crested Honey Buzzard  
Brahminy Kite  
Hen Harrier  
Pied Harrier  
Northern Goshawk  
Eurasian Sparrowhawk  
Upland Buzzard  
Mountain Hawk Eagle  
Amur Falcon  
Saker Falcon  
all buttonquails  
Water Rail  
all crakes except Ruddy  
Purple Swamp-hen  
Common Crane  
Common Ringed Plover  
Long-billed Plover  
Pectoral Sandpiper  
Jack Snipe  
Long-billed Dowitcher  
Lesser Yellowlegs  
Red Phalarope  
all skuas  
Relict Gull

Slender-billed Gull  
Common Gull  
Glaucous-winged Gull  
Glaucous Gull  
other large gulls apart from  
*taiyrensis* and *mongolicus*  
Kittiwake  
Greater Crested Tern  
Sooty Tern  
Barred Cuckoo Dove  
White-bellied Green Pigeon  
Thick-billed Green Pigeon  
Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo  
Common Cuckoo  
Asian Lesser Cuckoo  
all owls except Collared Scops  
and Barred Owlet  
Grey Nightjar  
all swiftlets  
Common Swift  
Collared Kingfisher  
Speckled Piculet  
Blue-throated Bee-eater  
all woodpeckers  
Chinese Pitta  
all larks except Oriental  
Plain Martin  
Pechora Pipit  
Buff-bellied Pipit  
White Wagtail forms except  
*leucopsis* and *ocularis*  
Swinhoe's Minivet  
Wren  
Japanese Robin  
Black Redstart  
Pied Wheatear  
White-throated Rock Thrush  
Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush  
Pale-footed Bush Warbler  
Yellowish-bellied Bush Warbler  
Brown Bush Warbler  
Styan's Grasshopper Warbler  
Middendorff's Grasshopper Warb.  
Blunt-winged Warbler

Paddyfield Warbler  
 Manchurian Reed Warbler  
 Blyth's Reed Warbler  
 Booted Warbler  
 Chestnut-crowned Warbler  
 Rufous-faced Warbler  
 Greenish Warbler  
 Hume's Leaf Warbler  
 Yellow-streaked Warbler  
 Chiffchaff  
 Brown-chested Jungle Flycatcher  
 Fukien Niltava  
 Green-backed Flycatcher  
 Plain Flowerpecker  
 Tiger Shrike  
 Daurian Jackdaw  
 Carrion Crow  
 Chestnut-checked Starling  
 Rose-coloured Starling  
 Brambling  
 Japanese Grosbeak  
 Yellow-throated Bunting  
 Yellow-browed Bunting  
 Rustic Bunting  
 all reed buntings  
 Black-headed Bunting

**CATEGORY B**  
 Ring-necked Pheasant  
 Pygmy Wren Babbler

**CATEGORY D**  
 Emerald Cuckoo  
 Blue-winged Pitta  
 Singing Bushlark  
 Greater Cuckoo Shrike  
 Brown-breasted Bulbul  
 Japanese Waxwing  
 Bohemian Waxwing  
 all Niltavas  
 Pale Blue Flycatcher  
 Blue-throated Flycatcher  
 Rufous-gorgetted Flycatcher  
 Rufous-capped Babbler  
 Grey-headed Parrotbill  
 Ruddy Sparrow  
 Burmese Shrike  
 Pallas's Rosefinch  
 Hawfinch  
 Rock Bunting  
 Meadow Bunting  
 Grey-necked Bunting

**CATEGORY E**  
 all new species

**CATEGORY F**  
 all

## NOTES FOR APPLICANTS WISHING TO VISIT MAI PO MARSHES NATURE RESERVE

The following information has been received from the Agriculture and Fisheries Department.

### Individuals

Individual members of the public can apply for a day permit; however, in certain cases, permits for a longer period may be issued. Applications should be made at least two weeks in advance of the proposed date and must include the following details.

Name in full, HK Identity card or passport number, date of proposed visit, purpose of visit, any other pertinent details (e.g. membership of relevant societies).

*It should be noted that visitors who wish to use the hides provided by World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong must be members of that organisation. Membership can be obtained at the reserve or by writing to GPO Box 12721, Hong Kong. In addition, users of the new boardwalk hide must be members of HKBWS (see next page).*

### Groups

Group permits will usually be limited to a maximum of 50 persons per group and will be valid for one day only. To enable the spacing of group visits to prevent excessive disturbance, applications should be made not less than one month in advance of the proposed date and should include the following details.

Name in full, HK Identity card or passport number of group leader(s), date of proposed visit, purpose of visit, number in group, other pertinent details.

All permit applications should be addressed to:  
**Director of Agriculture and Fisheries**  
**Canton Road Government Offices**  
**393 Canton Road, Kowloon**  
**Hong Kong**

Group visits are also arranged and guided by WWF HK (address above or telephone 25264473).

### Identity documents

Identity cards or passports must be carried by all persons entering Mai Po Marshes. In addition, those not on group visits must at all times carry proof of membership of WWF HK.